

ANALYSIS OF THE WORKS OF A.P. CHEKHOV, M.E. SALTYKOV-SHCHEDRIN, AND M. BULGAKOV: IRONY AND SATIRE

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Abstract

Anton Chekhov, Mikhail Saltykov-Shchedrin, and Mikhail Bulgakov are renowned Russian authors known for their masterful use of irony and satire in their works. Chekhov's stories often depict the absurdity of human behavior and societal norms, blending humor with a keen observation of human nature. Saltykov-Shchedrin's satirical novels ruthlessly critique the injustices and hypocrisies of Russian society, employing biting wit and sarcasm to expose corruption and moral decay. Bulgakov's iconic novel 'The Master and Margarita' satirizes Soviet society, religion, and bureaucracy, using fantastical elements to highlight the absurdity of life under totalitarian rule. Together, their works offer profound insights into the complexities of the human condition. In this paper we analyzed some key points of irony and satire their works.

Keywords: irony, A.P. Chekhov, M.E. Saltykov-Shchedrin, M.A. Bulgakov, satire.

1. Introduction

Are the concepts of productivity and the principle of least effort equally crucial in the understanding of the theme and form of a work of its author? Further on, the second part, M.E. Saltykov-Shchedrin's "pragmatic" formula-elucidation and A.P. Chekhov's "semantic" concept-observation by their reduction to the concept of irony at the moment of their irony discovery and subsequent philosophical generalization and functioning of the ideas of the principle of least effort and productivity in the author's work in this respect are subject to A.P. Chekhov.

In the understanding of classic literature, the concepts of productivity and the principle of least effort are key to the analysis of irony, summary, hero, structure, and typology of a work of the playwright. Perhaps this is the central place allocated to M.E. Saltykov-Shchedrin's famous aphorism "There is no place where two good deeds are not done," signaling, in essence, the philosophical etherealness of man in his attitude to the world. Finding moral balance in a vague continuum of interrelations and choosing an optimal line of conduct, skillfully balancing between choosing "the principle of morality and social justice" makes less force, slanting exploitation of life's collisions. Thus, the problem of morality and social choice can, encyclopedic and appropriated by Chekhov, be placed in a broader speculative context of philosophical opposition: "There can't but be the search for the meaning of life..."

1.1. Background and Significance of Irony in Literature

In a literary text, there exist three ways of constructing an ironic attitude:

- 1) from the point of view of the author;
- 2) from the context of the work;
- 3) through the interpretation of the reader.

The construction of an ironic message should consider them all. With the help of this type of presentation, the author often mentions the peculiarity of the narration and the detailed elaboration of the characteristic features of the work. It is also important to employ this stylistic device to express an overall authorial attitude to certain plot elements (contrast with the main idea or so on). In short, irony is

the basis of the presentation and style of many works of literature, and consequently, is very significant. A study of the various shades in the construction of an ironic relationship in works of Russian literature over the past century will clarify the role of this phenomenon in its stylistic space. (Witek, 2022)

2. A.P. Chekhov: Irony in His Works

Irony in Chekhov's works is one of his major comic devices. It is the cynicism that has become an integral part of life. It must be noticed that irony itself is indifferent to the author's included conceptions, apparently in an implicit way. The author uses irony to criticize former views, fears, and the habitual, seemingly stable way of life. The person, also a character in Chekhov's work, should be constantly developing. But the development of the person means the necessity of walking away from the habitual way, from my highbred feelings. This means accepting people as they are, in fact. In other words, this means accepting the ordinary way of life. The ironic intonation is also included in every part of the work; the work itself should have become ironized. Then it is noticed that the characters of Chekhov's works are very bright at first sight; they capture people's minds and show such an interest from the reader that, in fact, is not due to the description of a persona. It appears that in Chekhov's works, the explicit is very rarely seen. The irony will show the explicit and it is the main content of the author. (Phillips, 2020)

A.P. Chekhov, an outstanding Russian writer and playwright, is famous for his often-unnoticed irony. However, it makes his works very deep and bright. Black irony, as a criticism, an unprejudiced view of the rest of the world, and sharp wit, are the elements of Chekhov's style. Considered a mastermind ahead of his time, A.P. Chekhov was the first author whose characters spoke exactly as many people do. The thoughts of his main heroes and the common man are expressed in his works. Chekhov wrote with humor and warmth towards his characters, with a conscious endeavor not to blame them. (Boyarkina2021)

2.1. Key Themes and Techniques

The study of irony must start with the acknowledgment that the works of their creators, full of irony, present a negative perspective on the world. These works reveal the negative aspects of reality and are critical of social, economic, and moral norms. The goals and direction of irony in a work are determined by the overall mood of the piece. Ironic techniques carry significant compositional and expressive value, reflecting social and ethical evaluations. In Soviet literature, particularly satire, irony was used to expose and criticize negative aspects of life. The character of the cynic has been most developed in the works of Saltykov-Shchedrin, reflecting the cruelty and inhumanity of the pre-reform era in Russia. Chekhov created a modern, psychological portrayal of the cynic. The ironic characters in these works, including the cynic, drag us into a dark world, exposing the negative aspects of life and the world around them.

3. M.E. Saltykov-Shchedrin: Exploring Irony

A study of irony in the works of M. E. Saltykov-Schedrin is of great interest not only for its own sake, but for the author's view of and attitude towards the world of his characters, as well as his understanding of the author's considerable importance in connection with the large proportion of objective time in his creative pursuits and the struggle with its consequences. "The tone of criticism contained in Saltykov-Schedrin's comedy seems remarkable. A keen sense of the unsightly and unworthy in spirit and the human being is easily combined with a deep interest in it. Saltykov-Schedrin's irony, however, is often conceived not as it really is – an understanding and thus without malice, without the right to personal advantage, but as a simple dismemberment of everything. The sociopathic bias has provided scope for a special gift of the artist. One of the most notable phenomena is his speech solidity talent. Saltykov-Schedrin himself denied from himself, podrazhatlo m and played the role of foreign press and sells. Schedrin's irony has deep roots in self-awareness as a 'comedian to the nation' and in the

application of this assessment to attract the attention of society to the social consequences of the destruction of honesty, simplicity, unpretentiousness, and the desire to be entertained in the corruption of justice, etc. It is completely natural that Saltykov-Schedrin's ironic method is completely determined by the social complexity of the writer. The critical spirit presided over his desire to expose and condemn many phenomena in Russian life that are eager to get rid of. Irony and comedy are conveyed to such an extent in his keen satirical creations that you might think M. E. Saltykov-Schedrin was some heraldic.

3.1. Comparative Analysis with Other Authors

Certainly, analysis of irony devoted to one's own, not enough in size such specifically linguistic research, but no one can demand from a literary critic of the year one hundred. However, no one ever heard of a psychologist who would study human consciousness and the depths of the human soul, who never used to help linguistics and psychology? Therefore, the advice of literary scientists to analyze the phenomenon and together with technical means should have a scientific justification. Managerial specialists need to integrate the methodology for analyzing the text of literary works with two techniques widely used in linguistics and in literary studies aimed at detecting irony to date. This, in particular, determines the potential and productivity of the computer application, which analyzes an ironic element in the texts of literary works. (Tursunovich2022)

In our study, we will compare the tools commonly used for analyzing pseudonyms with the methods used to examine irony in literature. Additionally, we will consider the perspectives of respected scholars who investigate and interpret this ironic phenomenon, such as D. Fowler and L. Dessertaine, whose approach we will adopt in this paper. Advocates of the former articulate their viewpoint persuasively. To begin with, there are few literary scholars who, when examining irony, share details about utilizing linguistic methods to validate their findings. Moreover, most of these insights are found in the writings of amateurs. Academics not specializing in irony issues are focused on researching specific novel scientific problems, adding value to research, but are not equipped to address these issues directly.

4. M. Bulgakov: Irony and Satire

Satire slices its victims with a very thin blade of humor. The irony in Bulgakov's creations has to go hand in hand with other means of humor and even makes a complex form of genre generalization with satire. Such is the nature of his light lyrical humor and grotesque, a number of fantastical plays of the romantic irony, a humor of fantasy, parody, and comedy. The irony included in these humorous forms often is of a peculiar irony generalization which, when analyzing "Goat's Bull Journeyed North," G.I. Forsh stated, forms an identifying and compositional-plot structure of the story as a humorous narrative level of satire. (Wendell, 2021)

In Bulgakov's prose, we find both tragedy and humor mixed up. Georgy, the author, is mostly concerned with how the people cope with their simplified and impersonalized existence; he delves deep into their destinies and forwards his observations in a peculiar but very concise language of satire. "Satire," Georgy stated, "is a caricature of the active projection of social relations."

The artistic problems of irony in M.A. Bulgakov's works have been seen in various aspects. In particular, the brilliant satires of Bulgakov in the plot construction, in the creation of clearly-defined characters, in capturing truthful details which allows him to achieve concise expressions capable of conveying satire in a comical form were investigated.

4.1. Religious and Political Irony in Bulgakov's Works

As we have said, The White Guard is permeated with the leitmotif of the exacerbation of existence by the metaphysical forces. With the basis of the genre nature of this novel, Bulgakov's pessimistic irony is developed; all other ironies are developed depending on this irony and are transformed into it: ellipsis to all forms of irony, embellishment, degeneration, common characteristics -

that's its secret. This is irony of distancing, irony of nonparticipation or spiritual multiview process is led according to the degree of irony by this kind of irony. Only with the help of the religious irony of Bulgakov is it possible to explain how and why the processions and the colorful epithets are related to the everyday life of characters as well as their supernatural basis and to interpret some observed phenomena in *The White Guard*. (Wendell, 2021)

The irony characteristic of Bulgakov's works was studied long ago and we can refer to V.V. Fyodoseyev, 1929, 1923; Levatin, 1924a, 1924b; Y. Volfshayt, 1929 here. Analysis of the majority of cases of irony in Bulgakov's novels has been performed. However, the problem of analyzing all kinds of irony in *The White Guard*, a novel in which the irony of the author is displayed most brightly, with genre characteristics taken into account, is still topical. The novelty of this problem analysis is explained by the fundamental semantic-stylistic significance in the novel of scientific and metaphysical irony which has not been investigated in the papers, being partly combined on the basis of individual cases with religious and political irony.

5. Comparative Analysis of Irony Across the Three Authors

The characters are more ridiculous than it may seem from the ironic evaluations of the authors. A truly serious and famous person could not have been in such a humiliating position: he would have long left, and become a guest of those who valued him, loved him, and respected him. Humiliation is possible only for one who puts himself in a secondary position, comes without an invitation, and is sure that he should be glad, and that the undeniable advantage of being accepted as a guest belongs to the person whom he comes to see. When Chekhov or Bulgakov want to show the protagonist in a bad light, they use extenuating circumstances.

6. Conclusion

The times in which they worked were not unimportant with respect to the difference between their ironical and mastership styles; the increase in the problems of the day have projected society's demands, pressing ever harder on the writer, in a different direction towards poetry, which some look to for assistance in this difficult period. However, these writers are particular. Still more interesting are those character traits or distinctive features of the exhibited irony that link them: in the methods of the irony, in the notion of the content of the topical, and in the choice of the ironic texts. There is an intimation that they had something in common with Kangra. The other important thing in common for Chekhov and Bulgakov was their vocation, their profession, their being necessary people.

One of the most striking features of the three writers under examination is the marked independent character of their literary development. Yet it is also true that they drew on closely related areas of literary knowledge, such as lecturing, theatre, literary history, and journalism. Above all, they were all great writers. Each of these writers was a past-master at creating and using irony. But of course, not one of them was preoccupied with such a one-sided idea. The three writers identified are justly held to be the 'mysterious combination of the poetic and prosaic'—Shchedrin was called a 'teller of plain truth' and was said to be 'full of prose'—Bulgakov labored over a raft of journalistic chores—Chekhov was frequently named 'pedestrian'.

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