

Philosophical ideas in drama on the example of women's drama

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Abstract

In this article, specific methodological approaches to analyzing drama from a philosophical point of view are formulated. Our research's principal conceptual basis consists of considering the personalities of the drama characters animated in the text (and especially in the stage action) as primary attractors for readers-viewers (recipients). Drama consideration (in addition to philological, psychological, semiotic, and other aspects) is proposed as a metaphor that leads to a holistic intellectual and spiritual understanding of its social and philosophical meanings in the unity of the personal-conscious, collective unconscious, and socially determined content.

In addition, a conceptual system of socio-philosophical analysis of drama as a unity of society's real microsocial and macrosocial environments, expressed by the images of the virtual world of the dramatic work in society as a whole, is proposed and implemented. The author explains and systematizes the socio-philosophical ideas and the geo-sociocultural aspect of feminism and feminist literature (features of feminism and feminist drama in the Anglo-American reality). In addition, the author contributes to understanding an important aspect of the modern Western mentality.

It is shown that women's drama is one of the most significant genres of expression of the "philosophy of women's lives" in the socio-cultural dimension and contains relevant social and philosophical ideas related to gender issues. The article considers the application of the modern literary approach of "feminist criticism" in combination with traditional philological and philosophical approaches, which allowed us to offer a more systematic understanding of the phenomenon of "women's drama" and revealed the links between the ideology and practice of the feminist movement with the peculiarity of expressing the positions of specific subjects in the form of dramatic works.

Key words: women's drama, drama, philosophical ideas, philosophical thoughts, dramatic works, subject, scientific and philosophical discourse, gender problems

Introduction

Drama is beyond the limits of strict philosophical discourses. Still, due to the language's specifics and the authors' socio-cultural affiliation, it expresses philosophical meanings that often escape the attention of professional philosophers. If not escape, they are expressed in another language (the language of the philosophical and conceptual terminological apparatus) and with other nuances of expressing philosophical ideas.

The development of modern society involves introducing the language of art, in this case, the language of drama, into the scientific and philosophical discourse. This reflects the tendency to expand the space of expressing philosophical meanings in modern culture, including social philosophy (Rasmussen, 1996).

Women's drama, especially women's Western drama of the 60s and 90s, is a unique phenomenon, as it reflects the modern processes of rethinking the role of women and men in the public consciousness. It can be noted that the above trends influence the expansion of feminist discourse in Anglo-American fiction and philosophical literature.

Naturally, but with some delay in relation to the West, the formation of feminist discourse began in the 1990s, and now it is rapidly spreading. In this regard, such a

phenomenon as Anglo-American women's drama in Kazakhstan has been ignored and practically not studied.

This article deals with the problems of the importance of philosophical understanding of the state of modern culture in its part, represented by such a phenomenon as women's drama. The attempt to introduce the literary component into the socio-philosophical research reflects the current need to integrate the humanitarian methodology within the framework of the philosophical paradigm (Sierotowicz, 2018).

Therefore, the literary problem in this context develops into a modern problem of the philosophy of culture and social philosophy.

Philosophical analysis of literature (mythological, artistic, religious) is a stable tradition of philosophical research from antiquity to the present. Here, without unnecessary comments and explanations, it is enough to name the names of philosophers who, in their works, specifically comprehended the cognitive significance and universal value of various genres and forms of fiction and other arts and created literary works themselves. Among them are Plato, Aristotle, Augustine, Mandeville, Rousseau, Schelling, Kierkegaard, Nietzsche, Camus, Sartre, Ortega y Gasset, Gadamer (Gremina, Ugarov, 2007).

Analysis

(1) From a philosophical and anthropological point of view, gender issues are reflected in the works of Aristotle, Rousseau, Kant, Schopenhauer, Nietzsche, in the works of famous philosophers such as S. de Beauvoir, M. Foucault, J. Deleuze, R. Braidotti, L. Nelson, M. Mead, G. Rubin, S. Ortner, D. Huber.

(2) From the point of view of the social construction of gender and feminist theory, they are reflected in the works of the well-known authors P. Berger, G. Garfinkel, I. Hoffman, T. Lukman.

E. Aston, B. Bassnett, K. Bigsby, J. Brown, M. Vandor, S. Case, M. Daly, J. Dolan, L. Goodman, H. Keissar, P. Lauter, J. Miles, M. Pfister, S. Robinson, J. Stein, H. Stephenson, S. Stovell, and M. Vandor conducted special studies of feminist theater from a philological, gender, and cultural point of view (Gottschalk, Whitmer, 2013).

At the same time, it is noted that in the scientific circulation of works on the analysis and explication of philosophical meanings in women's fiction, there are significantly fewer works dedicated to the study of feminist literature, which is a big omission for the theory and history of culture, and in our case - for social philosophy.

In philosophical and literary studies, women's drama in the United Kingdom and the United States remains a little-explored area, especially concerning its philosophical interpretation. Domestic literary critics, as a rule, either avoided analyzing radical left-wing phenomena in literature as manifestations of "bourgeois reformism" (Anjaparidze) or "false protestors" (Bernatskaya). Instead, they tended to study the work of professional playwrights in general without particularly highlighting the work of women playwrights and the philosophical meanings expressed in it (Mead, 2015). The problem of the philosophical idea in drama can be found in the dramatic works of North American women playwrights, such as Lillian Hellman (a world-famous playwright who composed plays mainly before the 1960s); Lorraine Hansberry and Alice Childress, representatives of the African-American tradition in the US drama of the second half of the 20th century; and the work of the hitherto unknown American women playwrights Marsha Norman and Beth Henley (Vakhshstein, 2003).

The direction of "women's drama" remains unexplored in domestic criticism. It is only mentioned in the article by V. Bernatskaya, "New American Plays of 1987," in connection with the representatives of English drama K. Churchill and P. James. The significance and influence of the women's movement on the literary process of Great Britain and the United States in the second half of the 20th century was noted only by

the literary critic G. Anjaparidze in the introduction to his book "The Consumer? A rebel? Wrestler?", where women's prose is highlighted in a separate chapter. In such a situation, there can be no question of other aspects of the study of women's drama - in our case, we are talking about social and philosophical meanings (Welsh, 1990).

In Western literary studies, there is increased attention to the problems and achievements of women's drama as it increasingly becomes the subject of feminist research. There is a gradual rethinking of the role of women's drama in the history of all drama in Great Britain and the United States. In this regard, the empirical material of this philosophical research will mainly be presented not by secondary sources but directly by dramatic works in the original language.

"Women's drama" is not literature about women's issues, literature for women, or feminist literature, but drama, the author of which is a woman. Its meanings can be both general philosophical (not tender) and feminist-oriented (tender).

Dramaturgy is one of the forms of the entire variety of literary expressions of the spiritual life of a person and society, which can rightly be called intersubjective. It is appropriate to once again draw attention to the fact that the Cartesian principle of cogito has not only an abstract-philosophical sphere of its understanding and development. The word "think" can be understood not only in the spirit of scientific rationalist purism but also as a complex internal tense state of a person and, thus, inevitably comes into contact with the meanings of the words "feel," "express," which are the fundamental modes of human existence, along with "think" (Iser, 1980).

The moment of self-irony is not alien to female playwrights. On the contrary, by portraying their heroines, they allow the reader to realize two possible ways of perceiving the qualities of their character-seriously and with irony. It is important to note that the qualities emphasized in the heroines - the need for love, intellectual and creative talent-are not objectively negative. But, drawing the bitter, uncoordinated fate of the heroine, the female author saturates the text of the play with ironic remarks, one way or another, questioning the unconditional interpretation of these qualities as virtues. They, in turn, begin to be perceived as a possible cause of the life disorder of the heroines (Jedlikowska, 2016).

As a result, female images are grounded, refined, and deprived of the romantic aura present in the characters' interpretation by male playwrights. The designated "female" approach to the portrayal of heroines indicates the absence of attempts on the part of playwrights to explain the causes of life's ill-being by higher, existential causes independent of human causes. On the contrary, women tend to see the root of all the troubles in a person, his inner weakness, and the loss of his moral core (Schopenhauer, 2012). The position of the writers is expressed not only in terms of content and meaning but also through the emotional mood of their drama.

As a cultural phenomenon, the "women's" drama is unique and original, not inferior to the modern "men's" drama either in the completeness of knowledge and disclosure of topical problems of society or in the versatility of artistic images. Women playwrights have also confidently declared themselves about the renewal of dramatic styles, genres, and forms.

Women's drama is one of the most significant genres of expression of the "philosophy of women's life" in the socio-cultural dimension. It contains relevant content for our time of philosophical ideas related to gender issues (Storig, 1999). In women's drama, questions about a woman's life in the national and ethnic dimensions are raised and solved. This occurs in various forms: "in direct text," symbolically and metaphorically in images and stage actions. Important anthropological and social problems as the relationship between biological and social microcosms, the life of a woman in the context of the meeting of generations (mother and daughter, daughter and father, motherhood and family), a woman and a man in the family, and society, the problem of female self-identification, all come to the foreground in the text.

The philosophical concept of considering feminism from antiquity to the present day as a kind of “centerline” of cultural history, the “topography” of which in the socio-cultural space is determined by the intensity of the interaction of feminist mentalities in specific socio-cultural areas of world history, is introduced and defended. So, we know that today the actual ideas and original forms of expression of the socio-philosophical feminist meanings of modern women’s drama as a socio-cultural phenomenon of our time have been introduced into scientific and philosophical circulation (Zimmer, 2020).

The new concrete material shows that the artistic, metaphorical language of expressing philosophical meanings successfully competes with the traditional logical-rationalist philosophical discourse. The methodological approach to the analysis of drama from a philosophical point of view considers the fundamental conceptual basis of the following elements:

- animated characters of the drama characters in the text (and especially in the stage action) as primary attractors for readers-viewers (recipients);
- actions as the main object of the recipients’ intention and as a model of social action expressed in a metaphorical form;
- the final contemplative state of the recipients as a state of theoretical, philosophical reflection.

Also important is the concept of considering drama (in addition to philological, psychological, semiotic, and other aspects) as a metaphor that leads to a holistic intellectual and spiritual understanding of its social and philosophical meanings in the unity of the personal-conscious, collective unconscious, and socially determined content (Mikhailova, 2009).

The system of socio-philosophical analysis of drama as a holistic unity consists of:

- real micro-social environment in conjunction with “the author and the theater group;”
- virtual drama microenvironment;
- the real microsocial and macrosocial environments of society, expressed by images of the virtual world of a dramatic work, an organic and interacting system in various forms.

The author explains and systematizes the socio-philosophical ideas and the geosociocultural aspect of feminism and feminist literature (features of feminism and feminist drama in the Anglo-American reality); contributing to understanding one of the important aspects of the modern Western mentality. Western works show that women’s drama is one of the most significant genres of expression of the “philosophy of women’s life” in the socio-cultural dimension and contains relevant social and philosophical ideas related to gender issues.

In Western drama, “feminist criticism,” combined with traditional philological and philosophical approaches, offered a more systematic understanding of the phenomenon of “women’s drama” and revealed the connection of the ideology and practice of the feminist movement with the peculiarity of expressing the positions of specific subjects (a woman author) in the form of dramatic works (Chu, 2016). Women’s drama is a specific socio-cultural phenomenon, the artistic, metaphorical language that successfully competes with the traditional logical-rationalist philosophical discourse. In the second half of the twentieth century, women’s drama has become an original phenomenon. This is due to the cultural and historical background that contributed to the development of women’s drama in these years.

First, it represents the actual success of the second-wave feminist movement in the political, social, and cultural spheres. Secondly, the movement of alternative or experimental theaters gave impetus to the development of women’s drama. The combination of these factors served as the basis for creating independent feminist theaters, where women could freely work as playwrights, directors, and actors and

develop their skills. Third, women's drama was formed as an independent phenomenon of "feminist theater." And, despite women's drama becoming less biased after the 1960s, the feminist worldview continued to be its characteristic feature.

The analysis of the aesthetic side of the dramatic works of women playwrights shows that their originality is manifested at various levels. Ideological and thematic levels portray the theme of women's independence from society's prejudices, embodying the established stereotypes about women or the theme of the relationship of generations, which also raises the problems of women's independence from the traditions of a patriarchal society (Dinh, 2007). Using various methods and techniques, such as realism, expressionism, absurdism, happening, and referring to historical documents, events, diaries, female playwrights achieve the greatest "realism" of female images central to the plays. The artistic difference between the plays of women playwrights is that "each woman playwright uses her style, language, and discourse, with the help of which she legitimizes her personal experience, demythologizing the generally accepted stereotypes of the female nature. The combination of genre manifestations at different levels is the ideological and artistic peculiarity of the female drama of the considered period.

The problem of feminism from antiquity to the present day is a kind of "centerline" of the history of culture, the topography of which in the socio-cultural space is determined by the intensity of the interaction of masculine and feminist mentalities of specific socio-cultural epochs. A dramatic work (in addition to philological, psychological, semiotic and other perspectives) should be considered as a metaphor that determines a holistic intellectual and mental state when understanding the socio-philosophical meanings of the drama in the unity of the personal-conscious, collective unconscious and socially determined content (Hauer, 2016).

The drama is a holistic unity of:

- a) a real microsocial environment in a bundle of "the author and the theater team;"
- b) the virtual microenvironment of the drama;
- c) society's real microsocial and macrosocial environments, expressed by images of the virtual world of a dramatic work.

Drama should be studied as an object of a multi-level system: society as a whole, or the macrosocium; the atomic microsocium of the playwright; the virtual microsocium of the stage action; and the microsocium of the production team. Such a system is included in the methodology of our research through the use of the working concept of "space-time domain."

Women's drama is one of the most significant genres of expression of the "philosophy of women's lives" in the socio-cultural dimension. It contains relevant socio-philosophical ideas for our time related to gender issues. In women's drama, such important anthropological and social problems are raised and solved in various forms: "in direct text," symbolically and metaphorically in images and stage actions, such as:

- the relationship between biological and social microcosms,
- the life of a woman in the context of the meeting of generations (mother and daughter, daughter and father (motherhood and family)),
- a woman and a man in the family and society,
- the problem of female self-identification and breakthrough through the tender task (a woman outside the family and her sociosexual mask),
- the life of a woman in the national-ethnic dimension.

The study of women's drama as a peculiar expression of feminist thought provides additional factual and theoretical grounds for modern tender stratification, theory, and practice of social construction of the tender (Valova, 2013).

Previously, a woman appealed to external factors to explain her own problems to herself, but now, closing herself off, and concentrating on herself, she appeared simultaneously a mystery to herself. The main problem for a woman was herself. Memoirs, diaries, and letters were an objectified form or a way of expressing

subjective and intimate content, and they also served as material for the search for oneself. Its main motive was the search for a person's identity, authenticity, and finding one's self. In our time, a woman has the opportunity to express herself in the socio-cultural space of all social life, including in drama.

Note also that in plays written by women, there is usually no happy ending for either the woman or the man. Apparently, the authors of the plays do not particularly believe in the easy renewal of the social life of women and men in "real time." In addition to all of the above, we note that women's drama, which originates from socio-political movements rather than creative movements within its own history of artistic development of reality, has not risen to the level of the high art of classical drama models.

We are dealing here with an illustrative and instructive case when socially oriented art turned out to be simplified precisely as art and at the same time, poor in its primarily figurative and artistic language, which, as we showed in earlier sections, is just important for the original and deep expression of philosophical ideas (Alweiss, 2009).

Talking more about the subject

As a result, feminist and women's drama does not, in our opinion, cause deep intellectual upheavals in its philosophical interpretation. In addition, it should be noted that drama often poses problems that make sense as problems but are not developed until the final meaningful solutions. In short, modern women's drama is still in its infancy, including as an original figurative and artistic form of philosophizing.

Our work examines the socio-philosophical ideas and the geo-sociocultural aspect of feminism and feminist literature (features of feminism and feminist drama within and against the background of Anglo-American reality), and also contributes to the understanding of one of the important aspects of the modern Western mentality: its feminist orientation and specific form of expression in drama. Much material shows that women's drama is one of the most important genres of our time to express the "philosophy of women's lives" in the socio-cultural dimension. It contains socio-philosophical ideas related to gender issues relevant to our time (Lacey, 2013).

Additional new material on the feminist ideas of the socialization of women, the transformation of society, and philosophical worldview, in general, is introduced, which provides a serious factual and theoretical basis for modern tender stratification, theory, and practice of social construction of the tender.

In the works of women playwrights, the desire of the heroines for personal self-realization, for the knowledge of their own "I" is traced. They create a gallery of modern female types, ambiguous and contradictory, show innovative principles of creating these images, and reject the stereotypes of public consciousness and literary clichés associated with women's issues. Identifying the semantics of the female image in the psychological drama should be considered against the background of the "Soviet" plots that developed by the end of the 1930s. The drama development in the 1920s and 1930s is marked by the discovery of a "new human breed," new ideas about women, their social status and self-consciousness. In the drama of the late 1920s—1930s, it is legitimate to distinguish two main female types. In a social drama that addresses historical-revolutionary or industrial themes, the heroine of the demiurgic type is put forward, creating a new cosmos, a woman who is realized in a social act, which is the main pathos and goal of her life. Social history fills her life with content (Smith, 2018).

The feminist approach involves the problematization of hierarchies. Any list produces a hierarchy. Any review, any public text, means power. Here is the first sign of feminist optics: it reveals how oppression works. Feminists, along with Michel Foucault and other left-wing philosophers, were the first to see power dissolved in

everyday practices and to focus not only on meaning but also on who produces it and how (Weigel, 2016).

Creating plays by women in the era of stagnation was not perceived by anyone, including themselves, as a kind of exceptional act from a gender point of view, as the development of a priority area of creative activity for men. Theater and literary criticism of the era of stagnation and perestroika, speaking about the plays of female authors, did not separate them from male drama. Women playwrights were perceived not as representatives of “female” drama, but as representatives of the new wave, post-Vampilovskoy, post-Volodin, and postmodern drama, compared with male playwrights of their generation. In the situation of the Soviet culture that denied gender issues (i.e., gender-specific unique qualities), women playwrights did not feel that they were the creators of women’s drama proper, but of drama in general, in general, which affected the common problems of plays written by both men and women, which, of course, did not exclude a specific female view of the problems raised (Such, Szczepniak, 2005).

Conclusion

This article examined the phenomenon of women’s drama as a socio-cultural phenomenon that carried philosophical meanings important and relevant for our time. Based on the analysis of the texts of women’s drama in general, it was additionally shown that the artistic, metaphorical language of expressing philosophical ideas competes successfully with the traditional logical-rationalist philosophical discourse, and in our time has significantly displaced the positivist approach of “dry,” “logical,” “naked” empirical fact. The philosophical and methodological concept of considering feminism in the period from antiquity to the present day as a kind of “centerline” of cultural history, the topography of which in the socio-cultural space is determined by the intensity of the interaction of masculine and feminist mentalities of specific socio-cultural epochs, was proposed. It was proposed to consider feminist fiction, and feminist drama, in particular, from the original philosophical, ontological position, as a form of “feminist philosophical essentialism” (at least to some degree).

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