

CONCEPT OF HUMAN IN SHORT STORIES OF IVAN TURGENEV

Konul Aslanova, PhD Associate Prof.

Baku Slavic University, Azerbaijan

Abstract

Ivan Turgenev (1818- 1883) – a Russian novelist of the XIX centuries developed concept of human in his "Notes of a Hunter" which is the collection of short stories. As a representative of romanticism Turgenev comparing nature with society gives preference to the former. He expresses his sympathy to folk, peasants who are closer to nature, than representatives of higher strata. In his "Notes of a Hunter" Turgenev demonstrates a rich spectrum of the Russian national character. The "Notes of a Hunter" have also a generalized image that passes through all its parts. This is an image of nature which serves as a powerful force. Nature is considered by Turgenev as a measure of moral values as well as a criterion for assessing the actions of man, his inner world. Therefore, the characters of his works are often characterized by Turgenev through their relationship to nature, which affects to human and forms his inner world. Turgenev believes that human's character is being formed under the influence of environment. However, when Turgenev says about environment he means not only society but also nature. Correlation between nature and society is manifested differently in characters of his literary heroes. Elements of nature are stronger in characters of peasants. But in characters of landowners elements of society take supremacy over the nature. Therefore, peasants are closer to the nature than landowners. Also they are spiritually and morally are higher than landowners. The description of literary characters allows Turgenev to develop a philosophical concept of human.

Keywords: Ivan Turgenev, concept of human, nature, society

Introduction

Problem of human has been one of the central topics in literature of all peoples. Each concrete historical epoch offered its specific philosophical concept of human. The concept included definite system of value orientations, stable internal motives and attitudes of human activity determined by socio-economic and cultural conditions. It also expressed the public mood and social feelings and mentality of personality, its relation to human, society and nature. In such a situation the philosophical concept of human dominating in a society has had a great influence on representatives of literature. However, a literary concept of human has not been able to include all varieties of philosophical concept of human. The literary concept of man aims to express different forms of human individuality, to show contradictory complexity of human interactions and finally to influence on formation of certain public sentiment, to create various options of collective feelings and thereby express disobedience, disagreement with dominating interpretations of the conceptions of personality.

The article deals with analysis of concept of human in the literary stories of one of the most outstanding Russian novelists of the XIX centuries Ivan Sergeyevich Turgenev.

Main Text

Ivan Turgenev as a great Russian realist writer describing almost all main types of the Russian reality of the XIX century contributed very much to the characterology of the Russian literature.

In its ideological and aesthetic significance of the images and characters in the literary works of Turgenev are more important than plot- event aspect of his works. Explaining this distinctive feature of Turgenev's literary works prof. S.E.Shatalov notes that there is a definite discrepancy between author's interpretation of characters of his literary heroes and plot- event aspect of the works. Turgenev gives preference to the former (Shatalov, 1960).

It should be noted that above mentioned feature of Turgenev's works is especially evident in his short stories. It is enough to read the "Notes of a Hunter" by Turgenev to ensure diversity and completeness of characterology of the writer. In this story Turgenev approached the understanding of Russian life and Russian characters. Here the writer demonstrated a rich spectrum of the Russian national character, images. The "Notes of a Hunter" have also a generalized image that passes through all its parts. This is an image of nature, serving as a powerful force, and living outside people and social relations. Nature is considered by Turgenev as a measure of moral values as well as a criterion for assessing the actions of man, his inner world. Therefore, the characters of his works are often characterized by Turgenev through their relationship to nature, which affects to human and forms his inner world. Turgenev believes that human's character is being formed not only under the influence of society, but also nature. When Turgenev says about an environment he means not only society but also nature. The correlation between nature and society is manifested differently in characters of his literary heroes. Particularly in the characters of ordinary peasants elements of the nature dominate. The given domination serves as the source of moral purity and spiritual beauty of simple Russian people, peasants, notes Turgenev in his "Notes of a Hunter". But in the characters of landowners elements of society take supremacy over the nature. V. G.Belinskiy, one of the famous Russian literary critics of the XIX century notes that Turgenev wants to say that peasants are closer to the nature than landowners. Therefore, they are spiritually and morally are higher than landowners.

Turgenev's "Notes of a Hunter" includes several short stories. In the first story called as "Chor and Kalinych" Turgenev presents these two literary characters as typical representatives of the Russian people. Chor is clever and rationalist man. Kalinych is a romantic man. He is a dreamer. These two opposite characters are seen also in other stories of "Notes of a Hunter". Conditionally we can call the representatives of the first group as rationalists, and the representatives of second group as romantics. Between these two groups of characters Turgenev puts the representatives of the third group – Biryuk and Dikiy Barin, who are very complicated literary characters. Because on the one hand Biryuk and Dikiy Barin are strong, have a definite ideas, but on the other hand they are not consistent in the endeavors, activities.

Turgenev in the first story of his "Notes of a Hunter" describes three different types of the Russian men: Chor who is clever, rationalist man; Kalinych who is a dreamer, and Polutigin who is ridiculous landowner.

Kalinych as a romantic likes nature. He is aware of the nature's life. He like a bird of the nature is a kid of the nature. His closeness to the nature makes him kind, happy, and humanist man. He has a valuable knowledge on the nature. Turgenev characterizes Kalinych as a morally and culturally rich man. It seems that Kalinych is able to speak with flowers, trees, birds, animals. This closeness to the nature forms Kalinych as a representative of peasants. Turgenev does not hide his sympathy to this man. The writer wants to say that Kalinych is morally richer than Chor and Polutigin. According to prof. Shatalov, "The great merit of Turgenev is that he sees the source of genuine poetry and inspiration in the

characters of poor people like Kalinych, in beauty of the Russian nature and in the peoples' soul" (Shatalov, 1960).

Turgenev describes Kalinych amidst the nature. However he shows Chor in his own yard. Kalinych is closer to the nature than to society, so he deeply felt each event taken place in the nature. Therefore, when Kalinich spoke with other men he was interested in descriptions of nature, mountains, waterfalls, unusual buildings...". Turgenev notes that Kalinych does not show any interest whether he lives in a big or small house, whether he is walking in sandals or boots. His lovely place is the nature, and he was pleased and happy all that nature provides him.

Kalinych's poetic nature, his touching friendship with Chor, his musical talent, sensitivity to the nature, tell us about the rich moral forces of the Russian peasant, his ability to respond to the beauty in life and in the nature are distinctive features this Turgenev's hero. Thus, Russian peasants are being presented before a reader in a new light - as a spiritually rich man. Belinskiy meant these moral and spiritual features of people's life, when he said that the author of "Notes of a Hunter" succeeded to reveal such specific advantages of the ordinary Russian people which were not demonstrated so clearly earlier" (Belinskiy, 1956).

Chor presents another facet of the Russian national character. He is a typical representative of the rationalists. Turgenev in his "Notes of a Hunter" characterizes Chor as a clever man, having a great motivation and resources to realize his plans. He lives with practical interests, seeks to ensure all necessary conditions for his life. Chor is far from poetic perception of the nature. He has quite opposite features than Kalinych. "Chor grasps the essence of the reality, i.e. he built house, accumulated money, got married and have kids. Kalinych had also a wife but he was afraid of her. Later he was left by the wife. Kalinych stood closer to the nature; Chor did the same toward people and society...," notes Turgenev (Turgenev, 1982).

The difference in the characters of these two literary heroes is seen also in the process of the formation of their world vision. If the formation of the world vision of Chor took place under societal phenomena, society played a crucial role, the formation of the world vision of Kalinych is related to an influence of the nature. Chor gives priority to his own mercantile interests. He thinks primarily about his material interests. Unlike Kalinych, Chor approaches the nature as something which has purely material significance and brings benefit. He does not consider the nature as a source of the beauty. For him the nature is no more than a piece of work. Such a pragmatism in relation to the nature will be reflected in the words of other Turgenev's literary hero Bazarov (novel "Fathers and Sons"): "Nature is not a temple. It is a factory and a man is just a worker there" (Turgenev, 1982).

These two literary heroes differ from each other also physically. Turgenev describes Chor as a short, broad-shouldered and dense man, and Kalinych – as a tall, skinny man. It seems that Chor goes down to the ground, but Kalinych - up to the sky. Although the writer clearly demonstrates his sympathy to Kalinych, however the author pays tribute also to Chor when he notes: "Chor talked like a clever man. He could extensively explain his vision of some events" (Turgenev, 1982). However positive features of Chor are not stable. Furthermore, it is not clear in which direction they will further develop. That is why as noted above the character of Kalinych is nearer and dearer to the author than that of Chor.

Another story of Turgenev's "Notes of a Hunter" is "Rendezvous". It speaks of unrequited and emotive love of Akulina to the waiter Victor, Turgenev, as in other stories of "Notes of a Hunter", again emphasizes the idea he raised in other stories - peasant women like Akulina are morally higher than vulgar and heartless representatives of higher class. Thereby Turgenev continues the theme of rich moral qualities of simple peasants. The story is built on the parallels and contrasts, in which descriptions of nature interspersed appearance and inner world of literary characters. The story begins landscape sketches birch wood . Then

it replaces the sketch aspen groves. After matching birch and aspen groves, he proceeds to describe literary characters. The character of Akulina is given within the frame of scene birch grove.

A birch wood, the image of the white birch is associated with the image of Akulina. Turgenev shows matching colors and details in his description – autumn birch grove and Akulina. Instability of the weather in autumn when the sky clouds are constantly changes fits the mood of a girl who is sad because of the impending separation from a loved one, then any hope of waiting for him. And if birch wood constantly change depending on whether the sun was shining or not, then Akulina is smiling happily, “illuminated ” and shines when she sees Victor.

The change of mood of Akulina depends on the appearance of Victor. Victor is the sun for Akulina, the sun of her life (at least , for it is so for Akulina). However, Victor is a perverse man. Victor ruined the life of this young girl. He has caused her bitter resentment trampling - extending her love. Victor did not become the sun of Akulina. He did not illuminate and warm by its light and warmth of his love. He turned darker and darker clouds and made her life bitter and unhappy. Thanks to him, she bitterly suffered. He brought her only tears, grief, unhappiness. Referring to the character of Victor Turgenev wants to say the people who are far from their native land, nature, folk, they follow the way a Victor does. People like Victor are without soil. His immediate proximity to the life of land owner corrupted him. He took egoistical aristocratic habits and immoral behavior. Although he belongs to the class of peasantry however he despises peasants imitating his master.

He considers himself above peasants, above the very Akulina, whose emotional subtlety, poetic nature are very higher. Turgenev presents Akulina a woman of great moral beauty and strength. Concerning Victor he is far from his class, his people. Opposing himself to the people leads to his alienation from nature. Losing direct contact with nature, and Victor loses the fine, deep feelings, moral purity, and integrity of nature. Victor completely indifferent to nature: he drops on the grass cornflowers that Akulina with great love gathered. He absolutely is indifferent towards her life and her fate. Naturally, he does not appreciate Akulina’s fondness for him. He prefers happiness in loving community, the city and its empty fun. As a result he abandoned Akulina’s unrequited love. He finds it impossible to stay in the village because "in winter it is boring in the village” and in St. Petersburg “you can find such wonders which Akulina and others like her villagers cannot even dream and imagine. The difference between him and peasants Victor sees in education. However his so-called "education" is to imitate his master.

To Turgenev Akulina is as simple and natural as nature itself. She, like Kalinych, knows and loves flowers, herbs. She smartly and lovingly said about each of flowers, herbs (Turgenev, 1982). Unlikely prof. S.E.Shatalov rights, noting that "In the "Rendezvous" a bouquet of flowers here says nothing for in-depth representation of the image" (Shatalov, 1960). I believe that flowers are the best complement of the image of Akulina. Without flowers her image was incomplete and one-sided. On the one hand, flowers say about her poetic nature, sensitivity to nature, everything beautiful about her ability to respond to the beauty in nature, on the other hand - they characterize Akulina as a typical representatives of Russian woman who cares about household. She knows the names of herbs, flowers, trees and their qualities. Also, in the episode with a bunch of cornflowers Turgenev compares his literary heroes in term of their relation to nature. Again sympathy of the author is on the side of people who love nature. Based on relation of his literary heroes Turgenev describes their inner world, their personal qualities. Turgenev considers a relation of his literary heroes as one of the main criteria for assessing their personal qualities.

At the end of the story the author returns to the description of nature. He perceives human and nature in parallel, in their organic unity. Turgenev characterizes the tragic fate of

Akulina through the description of nature: "Gusty wind quickly raced towards me through the yellow, withered stubble" (Turgenev, 1982). The end of love of Akulina coincides with the autumn withering of nature, and "yellow leaves" are associated with the destruction of dreams and hopes of this young girl. Landscape breathes impending cold winter. "Thanks to Victor" winter of young and full of dreams life of Akulina came too early.

In the story "Kasian" Turgenev highlights one more aspect of Russian peasant truth-seeker. Kasian – literary hero of this story is a truth seeker. He wants thirst for justice, the humane treatment of humans and animals. As a representative of romantic group Kasian tries to get knowledge on natural phenomena, forest medicinal herbs. In the face of Kasian Turgenev first in Russian literature was able to create a poetic image of the peasant - truth-seeker. This is a new type of Russian peasant in general typology of folk characters, although much of his kinship we can find among other dreamers, romantics. He strikes the narrator and his appearance, and his spiritual wealth.

Every detail in the form or behavior of Kasian is something new and unexpected feature for narrator. Kasian is an original and exclusive character. It seems that Kasian lives out of the social relations, in the natural environment. In the forest, he feels like at home. Birds understand and speak with him. However his shelter is poor and uncomfortable. He tries to go out his shelter, to nature which is associated with freedom. He dreams of a life in the area where he may find not only fertile land, but also forests, rivers, pastures. Kasian was looking for the truth", and he dreams of another, better life. Kasian words of warm seas, about fairy countries show his desire to see the kingdom of happiness and justice. And this is natural because Turgenev's literary heroes are close to nature, they spiritually rich. They are concerned with the fate of their motherland, and life of their people and urgent societal issues. These features are inherent also to Kasian, who has high and rich moral and cultural qualities. By these features he surpasses representatives of the landlord class. He is exceptionally close to nature, and has a sensitive perception of it. Kalinych's attitude to nature was a natural and simple, Kasian's attitude to nature is defined by its complexity. His closeness to nature is inspired. The main thing in ideas of Kasian is protection of all life in nature. He says that "a lot of it, all the forest creatures, and field and river creatures, and marsh and meadow, and hors, and grassroots - and sin to kill her, and he believes that creatures should live on the Earth" (Turgenev, 1982). Careful respect for all living things, creatures in nature is distinctive feature of Kasian. He cares about animals, birds, protects them. During hunting Kasian makes everything in order hunter could not shoot birds. And no wonder that long hunts – nickname did not find any game. And when the hunter killed the cornrake, Kasian closed his eyes and did not move until the hunter raised bird. Then he came to the place where the dead bird dropped, bent down to the grass, shook his head, glanced anxiously at the hunter and whispered: "Sin ! .. Oh, that's a sin! Well, why did you kill the bird? " (Turgenev, 1982). Incidentally, it should be noted that until now Kasian, who barely answered questions of hunter suddenly started talking. And when the hunter said that he killed the bird to eat. Kassian said him: "You say not correctly. You will not eat the bird. You did kill the bird for fun" (Turgenev, 1982). And in this he supports Lukerya who is too angry to hunters because they shoot swallows. Kasian and Lukerya love nature. Both have a keen sense of unity with nature. Kasian spends much time in nature. Kasian is also a child of nature. "No wonder that he was called fleas, says the narrator" (Turgenev, 1982). But despite the fact that Kasian common with birds zachilikal after porshku , would pick up the song of a lark , he did not speak to the hunter. Kasian prefers to talk with birds rather than with those "kill birds".

Thus, Kasian like other literary heroes of Turgenev who love nature and people is a typical representative of romantics.

Conclusion

Creating images of folk, peasants in his short stories Turgenev shows them talented, intelligent, poetic, humane, and emphasizes that they are not different from an educated landowners. Furthermore, in some respects they even surpass landowners. Kalinych, Kasian, Jakob-Turok, Akulina, Lukerya and others are the same kids of nature, like birds, flowers, plants. They advocate the continuation of natural phenomena and complement them. To Turgenev, human and nature form part of a unified and harmonious whole. Deep and unbreakable bond between man and nature, a sense of unity between man and nature, the desire for harmony with nature are the basis of the philosophical concept of human. Nature for Turgenev is the basis of characterization and worldview of the writer. Sense of nature - it is not only admiration and admiration of her beauty. It is more and it is not available to everyone. Nature is the basis of human character. It is a force capable to influence the character of human and change way of moral development, to determine moral world of human. According to Turgenev those who loves nature cannot be indifferent to people.

References:

- Belinskiy, V.G. A Glance on the Russian Literature in 1847, Moscow, 1956. 2.
Shatalov, S.E. "Notes of a Hunter" by Turgenev, Volgograd, 1960
Turgenev, I.S. "Notes of a Hunter", Moscow, 1982.