



Romantic Irony In The Context Of Historical, Cultural And Typological Interactions

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ABSTRACT

The article presents an overview of the history of the study of irony from antiquity to the present, which aims to identify the main ideas underlying various theories of irony. The historical digression necessary for understanding the existing definitions covering the manifestations of irony in literary and artistic discourse is investigated. It is proved that in the era of Romanticism, irony acquires a new categorical status as a rhetorical tool.

Keywords: irony, comic, humor, satire, artistic text, aesthetic category, linguistic trope, stylistic device, antiphrasis, romanticism, theory of romantic irony, comic irony, tragic irony, romantic subjectivity, humanism, literary criticism, philosophy.

INTRODUCTION

In the last decades of the XX-XXI centuries, the interest of Russian and foreign scientists has increased in studying the features of literary reputation, the creative individuality of satirical writers, including the ironic side of works, which was noted by literary critics studying the history of literature in the field of comic. One of the most important methods of its expression in the works is the ironic detail as an attribute of the "poetics of infinitesimal quantities". Therefore, the conceptual role of the ironic detail in the artistic system requires further purposeful reflection.

THE PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

The purpose of the study is to consider irony as a meaningful category associated with the worldview and aesthetics of satirical writers. The ironic orientation of the writers' creativity is due to the rhetorical techniques of its expression in their works; proof that romantic irony is no longer just a rhetorical trope or stylistic device, but a way of philosophical attitude to the world and a form of manifestation of the creative subjectivity of the artist; irony is a much brighter palette of shades of meaning, which increases the expressiveness of the work and its significance for perception.

MATERIALS AND METHODS OF RESEARCH

The descriptive method and the comparative method are used in the work. The material for the study was contexts extracted from classical works on the theory of irony and the works of modern scientists in the field of the study of irony.

RESULTS AND ITS DISCUSSION

One of the first special studies of how irony manifests itself in works belongs to E.A. Polotskaya. In her opinion, irony distinguishes first of all dramaturgy, since the genre features of a dramaturgical work, which excludes the possibility of direct author's assessments and preserves the form of objectivity, assume all the conditions for the manifestation of irony.

Let's consider the manifestation of irony in fiction through the prism of the perception of some literary critics.

Some literary critics believe that the reception of "socratic irony", with which the history of the functioning of irony begins, has become essential for satirical writers. Socrates addressed her, arguing with the sophists and exposing their claims to omniscience. As M.M. Bakhtin writes, "socratic laughter (muted to irony) and socratic decline bring the world closer and familiarize it in order to explore it fearlessly and freely" [1,p.468].

The ironic orientation of the writers' creativity is due to the rhetorical methods of its expression in their works.

Irony as an aesthetic category was understood differently in different epochs, having undergone significant and significant changes. In addition, the category of irony is ambiguous, since it denotes both a linguistic trope, and a special type of cultural situation (what is commonly called the irony of fate or the "irony of history", according to G. Hegel), and a philosophical way of relating to being (the irony of Socrates, romantic, postmodern irony).

In modern science, irony is also understood as a mode of artistry, into the field of action of which all emotional and value orientations can fall, since irony is absolutely anti-dogmatic and mobile.

The complexity of the definition of irony is due to the formal and semantic diversity of its manifestations in the literary text. Prototypical irony is an antiphrase – a way to say one thing, meaning something opposite, in order to express a critical assessment of a phenomenon, situation or object.

However, this interpretation does not cover all manifestations of irony: for example, it does not correspond to absurd and plausible irony, as well as those cases when irony is expressed through rhetorical questions, comments or intertextual references.

From the time of antiquity to the present day, the category of irony has been comprehensively considered in philosophy, cultural studies, aesthetics, rhetoric, linguistics and literary studies. It is defined differently in the corresponding dictionaries.

In our opinion, the most scientifically correct description of the essence of irony is contained in the modern philosophical dictionary: "Irony (Greek *eironeia* – pretense) is a metalogical figure of the hidden meaning of the text, built on the basis of the divergence of meaning as objectively present and meaning as a design. It acts as a hidden mockery, which differs from satire and parody with their explicitly identified status" [7, p.184].

This general, modernized definition of irony is complemented by its functional description: "The figure of irony is semantically ambivalent: on the one hand, it is a mockery and in this respect a profanation of a certain reality based on doubt of its truth or even assuming the untruth of this reality, on the other hand, irony is a kind of test of this reality for strength, abandoning hope for its possibility or – with confidence in the opposite – based on regret about the absence of such ("bitter irony"). But in any case, it presupposes a meta-level of comprehension of the situation by the subject of irony involved in it" [7, p.185].

In the XIX-early XX centuries, views on irony were radically revised by romantics, so F. Schlegel, arguing about the ingenious subjectivity of the artist-creator, paid great attention to irony, which denotes the distance between the imperfection, incompleteness of the objectified design and the perfection of the ideal world of the artist-genius, which provides him with a free attitude to his own creation [2, pp. 319-322].

Emphasizing the ambiguous nature of irony, F. Schlegel wrote: "she looks at all things from a height, infinitely towering above everything conditioned, including her own art, virtue and genius" [20, p. 177].

The ways of expressing romantic irony, according to the German philosopher, are different. Firstly, it looks like the conventional irony of the intellectual elite, helping to isolate itself from alien ideas. Secondly, it can manifest itself as a conscious or unconscious pose, which is based on the game of contradictions in life. Thirdly, irony is an attempt to escape from the cruel reality into a fantasy world, as in the works of E.T.A. Hoffman. At the same time, the real situation is translated into a subjective plan and reproduced anew. According to F. Schlegel, "in irony everything should be a joke and everything should be serious, everything is ingenuously frank and everything is deeply serious" [20, p. 176].

In the era of Romanticism, the destruction of the genre system of classicism began, which was a reflection of a more general desire to scrap genre thinking in general. Two trends contributed to this – firstly, the change in the way of being under the influence of the intensive development of modern society. The image of a static world, similar to a well-regulated mechanism, is replaced by the understanding of being as a dynamic integrity of the world, which is in the process of constant formation. On the other hand, there is a recognition of the uniqueness and self-worth of the individual. Hence the romantic attraction to expressive poetics.

In the history of aesthetics, the emergence of romantic irony is explained by unsatisfied subjectivity, which is eternally thirsty and never satisfied. Irony reveals the intimate, intimate gap between the creator and creativity, the creator can never be completely objectified in creativity, which remains his personal property. Irony hovers over everything and everything, rises above our own love and does not allow what we ourselves adore to be destroyed in thought. But from this absolute freedom of the artistic individual, who represents irony and with whom it is identical, comes joy. The joy of the mind from overcoming the object, nature, necessity. The joy of the spirit from the deed, intoxication with the pleasure of creativity.

Thus, irony in romantic culture manifests itself as a playful form of personal freedom, which makes it possible to fly away into the transcendental world of creative fantasy. Irony becomes a shield protecting the ideals of romantics from the clutches of ordinary people, a mask hiding a sensitive soul.

In the era of Romanticism, after several centuries of existence as a rhetorical tool, irony acquires a new categorical status. Romantic irony is no longer just a rhetorical trope or stylistic device, but a way of philosophical attitude to the world and a form of manifestation of the creative subjectivity of the artist.

In the history of aesthetic thought, irony, as a rule, is considered in connection with the cosmic. However, there is a tradition of studying irony outside the sphere of the comic. Thus, G.-V.-F. Hegel saw in the subjectivity of irony an essential difference between the "ironic" and the "comic", believing that the "comic" has its own object, whereas irony, in which negation comes entirely from the subject, can be directed at an object, in fact moral and true, which will show itself at the same time, insignificant and pathetic [4. pp. 71-72].

According to G.-V.-F. Hegel, "in this difference between the ironic and the comic, the content of what is being destroyed is essential" [5, p. 73]. "Irony is able to make every objective inner content insignificant and vain, and

thus it turns out to be meaninglessness and vanity itself," wrote the German philosopher, referring this characteristic to a greater extent to romantic irony.

G.-V.-F. Hegel associated this attitude with the infinite freedom of the ironic "I". In comic irony with its specific lightness, virtuosity, with its playful beginning, this possibility is realized as an aesthetic principle. In this form, irony characterizes the artist, in whom all his "actions and manifestations related to some content remain only an appearance" [5, p. 71].

Another German philosopher Karl Solger defined irony as "that state in which contradictions are mutually destroyed, and it is thanks to this that what we call irony or quirk and humor is preserved for us. What will become of all dramatic poetry, or theatrical performance, if there is no irony or humor in them? How would we be shocked by the bitterness in the tragedies of Aeschylus or the cruelty in Shakespeare's plays if everything focused on mournful seriousness and irony would not elevate us above everything? How would the naturalistic moments in Aristophanes' comedies be able to awaken in us disgust if they were not presented as jokes and if a feeling, a pure sense of innocence did not lead us through the most unbridled sensuality" [9, p. 144]. K. Solger called the tragic irony "the mood in which the dialectic of the finite and the infinite manifests itself" [9, c. 145]. Tragic irony, in his opinion, is present both in the works of the tragic genre and comic, so there is no dramatic art without irony.

G. Heine is considered to be the creator of a special technique of wit among Romantics. His works are characterized by ironic and self-critical self-parody ("White Elephant", "God Apollo"), playing on genre and emotional contrast, as in the poems "Atta-Troll" and "Germany", which combine satire and lyrics. The romantic irony in these works creates that artistic atmosphere in which, according to the German poet, "the reader is afraid to take the artist's words as an expression of sincere feeling, afraid to get carried away with this feeling, because the artist will immediately start laughing at what might seem like a sincere impulse, and then the reader, who has dissolved the weeping, falls into the sentimental fools who are not able to understand subtle irony. The artist, for his part, knows that the reader is wary and anticipates an ironic smile or a cynical trick, the artist is afraid of being more sentimental than the reader. Therefore, every feeling is deliberately expressed in such a way that there is no way to believe in its sincerity, not to say, probably, that irony lies here" [6, p. 91].

The successor of the theory of romantic irony was S. Kierkegaard. "In contrast to Hegel, Kierkegaard sees the essence of "Socratic irony" in the fact that Socrates knows about God as an absolute and an idea, i.e. about God as the extraordinary basis of our being and our integral belonging to him, which penetrates into our entire existence. Moreover, – and this is especially emphasized by Kierkegaard, – the reliability of the knowledge of God achieved with the help of "socratic irony" as the basis of human existence, and the sense of belonging to the divine being cannot be represented in any objective cognition. This in this case means that subjectivity, revealed in the "socratic irony", is separated from the existing being, becomes absolutely independent in relation to the world, or it has the intrinsic property of direct, independent from any "external" being and from any "objectivity" of communication with God, divine being"[8].

F. Nietzsche took up the baton of romantic understanding of irony to a certain extent. "How little joy it takes," he exclaims ironically, "for most people to consider life good! How modest a man is!" [18, p. 279], wisely continuing: "A criminal who knows all the circumstances of the case does not find his act as incomprehensible and out of the ordinary as his judges and detractors, but punishment is imposed in the form of an act that seems incomprehensible to him. If the defender of a criminal knows well enough both the circumstances of the crime and the whole life of his client up to that time, then the so-called mitigating circumstances that he cites one after another should eventually mitigate the guilt until it disappears completely. Or, to put it more clearly, the defender will, step by step, mitigate the surprise that condemned and determined the punishment, and finally dispel it, forcing every sincere listener to admit to himself that the criminal should have done as he did; by punishing him, we would punish eternal necessity" [18, pp. 286-287].

Nietzsche's nihilistic irony is an indicator of extreme disillusionment with universal values, when nothing sacred and absolute remains in the soul of the ideologue–ironist, except life itself.

A new and peculiar interpretation of irony belongs to the German thinker and writer T. Mann. Linking irony with an objective, epic beginning in art, he contrasted his understanding of irony with romantic arbitrariness and romantic subjectivity: "... I put," he writes, "a broader and higher content in the concept of irony than that which romantic objectivism gives him. Due to its inherent equanimity, this content is almost limitless, because it is the content of art itself ..." [16, p. 277].

T. Mann brought irony closer to a new understanding of the essence of modern man, with the problem of humanism. For him, irony is a means of recreating anthropological integrity. In the article "Goethe and Tolstoy", he notes that "irony develops between contrasts and is in no hurry to take sides and make a decision: for it is full of premonition that in big issues where a person is concerned, any decision may turn out to be premature and untenable, and that not the decision is the goal, and harmony, which, perhaps, lies somewhere in eternity and already carries a playful reservation named "irony" [17, p. 603-604].

The German writer wisely said that the intellectualism of irony does not exclude emotionality, it does not mean indifference, coldness, mockery or mockery at all: "Epic irony is rather the irony of the heart, the irony of the fulfillment of love, it is greatness that nourishes tenderness for small things" [16, p. 278].

Romantic irony is a worldview category expressing a universal picture of the world. It gives the writer or poet the possibility of a universal view of the world. Irony is inherent in every work of fiction, and, above all, comedy.

Romantics described the ancient comedy in detail. They showed that ancient Greek comedy played an important role in the creation of romantic comedy, which romantics sought to imitate in their work. Romantics show the dynamics of the development of comedy from antiquity to modern times, while pointing to its degradation and hoping for a revival of the comedy genre in their work. Therefore, they create a model of comedy, which they think it should be.

The model of the ideal romantic comedy is based on ancient examples, the works of Shakespeare, Gozzi, Moliere and others. The romantics knew well the preceding aesthetics, the history of comedy. In their aesthetic and artistic works, they reinterpreted and developed the best that had been discovered before them in the field of the comic.

CONCLUSIONS

Let's summarize the historical coverage of the category of irony in literature. Traditionally, irony is defined as one of the forms of the comic along with humor and satire. Irony always expresses a discrepancy between the subjective representation and the objective state of things, but unlike other manifestations of the comic, irony does not have its own subject, choosing any object or phenomenon itself. On the one hand, in the typology of the types of comic irony is on a par with parody, grotesque, burlesque, etc.; on the other hand, it is self-sufficient as a kind of emotional-value attitude of the author to reality, has a playful, illusory character, is directly related to temperament, mentality, humor. Unlike finished, static forms (such as antique irony), romantic irony is open and dynamic.

Thanks to the era of Romanticism, irony gets a worldview status, being a starting point for postmodernism in understanding the surrounding world, history, and text.

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