ISSN:2828-6235
Impact factor:13.77

International Journal of Literature and Language Studies(IJLLS)

A COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF THE CHARACTERS OF MARTIN EDEN AND YEVGENY BAZAROV IN THE CONTEXT OF THE EVOLUTION OF THE REALIST HERO

Umida Zarifjonovna Zhuraeva
Independent Researcher
Kakhkhor Vakhobovich Yulchiev
Doctor of Philological Sciences (DSc),
Associate Professor at Fergana State University
doi:https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.23308210

Abstract: This article examines the development of realist literary characters, Yevgeny Bazarov and Martin Eden, within the context of their life journeys. It also explores their attitudes toward life and philosophical worldviews, which ultimately lead them to tragic consequences and alienation from society. The role of love in the lives of the protagonists is analyzed as an element that comes into conflict with their inner worlds and subconscious impulses. While love serves as a stimulus for self-development for one of the characters, for the other it leads to the rejection of previously proclaimed personal principles.

Relevance of the Study. From the perspective of contemporary psychological principles and approaches to the study of classical literature, uncertainty and contradictions in an individual's attitude toward life may result either in tragedy or in personal and spiritual development. Every individual determines their own path based on personal characteristics, social status, and level of consciousness. However, the uncritical acceptance of certain ideas and attempts to implement them in real life without relying on personal experience and objective reality may lead to internal conflict, alienation, and disappointment. This issue remains relevant in contemporary society.

Keywords: realist hero, attitude toward life, internal conflict, alienation, rationalism, nihilism, spiritual crisis, egocentrism.

Introduction

Russian and world literature frequently portray rationalist characters whose lives reveal not only the positive aspects of everyday existence but also its difficulties, contradictions, and complexities. Such characters are usually shaped by the environments in which they grow up, and these circumstances directly influence their views, values, and fundamental beliefs.

In Ivan Turgenev's novel Fathers and Sons, the young nihilist Yevgeny Bazarov is presented as a character who rejects the traditions and beliefs of the older generation, including love, which he considers an obstacle to rational thinking and scientific reasoning. However, this position leads him to internal conflict, loneliness, and misunderstanding within society.

This is particularly evident in his ideological and personal confrontation with Pavel Petrovich Kirsanov, which eventually culminates in a duel. Bazarov possesses considerable knowledge of the natural sciences and believes that scientific knowledge can transform the world. Nevertheless, his radical rejection of spiritual and moral values gradually undermines his own convictions. He is unable to accept his emotions, and the contradiction between his beliefs and lived experience ultimately leads him to a tragic outcome and alienation.

The statement, “A good chemist is twenty times more useful than any poet,” characterizes Bazarov as a realist hero for whom science is more important than art, while feelings and emotions occupy a secondary position. This statement also reveals his tendency toward rejection and a certain degree of egocentrism.

Bazarov's assertion, “We act on the basis of what we consider useful,” reveals the essence of his worldview, which, as previously noted, is based on rationalism and the rejection of traditional

values. He opposes superficial aristocratic behavior and socially accepted inequality, rejecting established norms of conduct, including conventional expressions of respect toward the older generation. Such a position becomes a source of misunderstanding and dissatisfaction among those around him.

Unlike Bazarov, his friend Arkady Kirsanov, although influenced by him and initially sharing the principles of nihilism, nevertheless preserves his attachment to family values, including both their positive aspects and their more superficial manifestations. Despite outwardly following his friend's views, Arkady continues to respect his relatives and maintains his connection with aristocratic traditions.

Eventually, Arkady Kirsanov achieves a sense of harmony. He rejects radical negation, recognizes the impossibility of completely abandoning traditional values, and finds personal happiness while preserving a conventional understanding of such essential aspects of human life as love and family.

Against this background, Bazarov's tragedy becomes particularly evident. He proves unable to establish a balance between his theoretical convictions and the realities of life. His inability to reconsider his beliefs and accept his internal contradictions ultimately leads him to a profound spiritual crisis.

Thus, it can be argued that Bazarov, the protagonist of Fathers and Sons, becomes a victim of his own philosophical framework, which constitutes the foundation of his tragedy and personal defeat.

A similar situation is depicted by Jack London through the character of Martin Eden, the protagonist of the novel bearing his name. His life journey is closely connected with self-education, which he initially undertakes because of his love for Ruth Morse**: "He studied eagerly, striving to rise to her level."**

This statement can be interpreted as evidence that Martin's pursuit of self-education is motivated not so much by an independent intellectual need as by his desire to win Ruth's love. His education initially becomes a means of achieving a particular goal rather than a value in itself.

Despite his considerable efforts, his studies do not produce the desired results for a long time. This is largely connected with his lack of previous experience in sustained intellectual work. Having formerly worked as a sailor, he is accustomed to physical labor, harsh living conditions, and a relatively unrestricted way of life that is far removed from the standards of etiquette observed in upper-class society.

Consequently, adapting to his new social environment and meeting its expectations proves particularly difficult for him. The internal inconsistency between his previous experiences and his new aspirations becomes one of the main causes of his failures and intensifies his subsequent existential conflict.

However, his gradual ambition to become a member of upper-class society eventually leads him into a profound internal crisis. Having achieved success and recognition, he becomes disappointed in other people and in himself, which results in loneliness and a deep psychological transformation.

Thus, despite belonging to different historical periods and national literary traditions, both protagonists share several fundamental characteristics: a pursuit of truth, internal contradictions, and ultimately tragic destinies.

The Role of Love in the Development and Tragedy of the Protagonists

The theme of love plays a crucial role in both literary works and largely determines the destinies of their protagonists.

For Yevgeny Bazarov, the experience of love undermines his nihilistic beliefs and demonstrates the limitations of his theoretical worldview. He encounters emotional experiences and values that cannot be fully explained through rational reasoning alone.

Because of his rationalism and personal stubbornness, he loses the opportunity to experience mutual love and personal happiness.

Before his death, Bazarov recognizes the inadequacy of his convictions, realizing that his theoretical principles have failed to account for the complexities of real life and have contributed to his internal crisis and tragic fate.

Before meeting Anna Odintsova, he firmly believes in the validity of his principles. However, falling in love forces him to question those beliefs and reveals the contradictions underlying his worldview.

His complete rejection of emotions and spiritual values ultimately contributes to his internal disintegration and alienation from society.

In contrast, love becomes a driving force behind Martin Eden's personal development. Motivated by his feelings for Ruth Morse, he begins to educate himself and attempts to transform his life.

However, repeated failures, a lack of emotional support, and the eventual breakdown of his relationship with his beloved lead him to profound disappointment.

Ruth does not fully accept Martin as he is, expecting him instead to conform to the social standards of her own class. During the most difficult period of his life, the protagonist particularly needs emotional support, but instead encounters rejection and loneliness.

This becomes a severe psychological blow to him. Even after achieving literary success and social recognition, he fails to find satisfaction, loses his sense of purpose, and ultimately makes a tragic decision.

Thus, in both literary works, love has a tragic dimension. It becomes a significant psychological and existential test that exposes the internal contradictions of the protagonists, transforms their worldviews, and ultimately contributes to the tragic outcomes of their lives.

Conclusion

In conclusion, it can be argued that, from the perspectives of such different writers as Ivan Turgenev and Jack London, extreme ideological positions, whether expressed through the rejection or idealization of fundamental human values, inevitably create the conditions for an internal crisis of personality.

The harmonious development of an individual is possible only through the ability to balance reason and emotions, personal convictions and the realities of everyday life. This problem remains highly relevant in contemporary society.

Thus, it may be concluded that extreme attitudes toward life, including the complete rejection or excessive idealization of human values, inevitably lead to internal psychological and spiritual conflicts. The harmonious development of personality requires an appropriate balance between rational thinking and emotional experience, as well as between individual beliefs and objective reality. This issue continues to retain its importance in modern society.

References

1. Turgenev, I. S. Fathers and Sons. Moscow: Khudozhestvennaya Literatura, 1983.
2. London, J. Martin Eden. Moscow: AST Publishing House, 2010.
3. Lotman, Yu. M. The Structure of the Artistic Text. Moscow: Iskusstvo, 1970.
4. Belinsky, V. G. Selected Articles on Russian Literature. Moscow: Khudozhestvennaya Literatura, 1979.
5. Pisarev, D. I. Bazarov. In: Literary Criticism. Moscow: Sovetskaya Rossiya, 1984.
6. Bakhtin, M. M. Questions of Literature and Aesthetics. Moscow: Khudozhestvennaya Literatura, 1975.
7. Khalizev, V. E. Theory of Literature. Moscow: Vysshaya Shkola, 2004.