

The Evolution of the Classic Russian Novel of the XIX Century: Background to the Problem Statement

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Abstract--

Scientific value: *The article presents an independent view on the development of the classic Russian novel of the XIX century with due consideration of peculiarities of the creative method and development trends; the authors also analyzed the forms of expression of the aesthetic ideal in classic Russian literature. The scientific value lies in the fact that modern study of the Russian classics in the context of Eurasian idea gives the formation of a new vision of social, spiritual, and cultural processes taking place in the life of modern Russian society; such study helps to identify the most optimal ways of sociocultural development of multicultural, multi-religious Russian society in modern conditions as well.*

The topical continuity of the presented study is primarily determined by the call for an interdisciplinary approach to the consideration of classic Russian literature of the XIX century in the context of world fine literature and art.

Novelty: *Due to the ongoing processes of globalization, the current evaluation and interpretation system of the creative and aesthetic perception of reality is changing. The presented article featured an attempt to describe the aesthetics of the classic Russian novel of the XIX century in the context of the Eurasian cultural and historical paradigm with reference to the universal aesthetic ideals and meanings achieved by global culture.*

The purpose of this article was to form a new methodological model of scientific understanding of cultural and historical 'storylines', clarifying the most important issues of the Eurasian ethnic identity of Russian culture and, respectively, the Russian literature. The problem of the aesthetics of the Russian XIX century novel in the selected perspective has not yet become the subject of a special study. The article substantiated the relevance of the study of Russian classical heritage and types of literary relations peculiar to Pushkin, Turgenev, Dostoevsky, Chekhov, which is determined, first of all, by the contemporary trend for an interdisciplinary examination of works of Russian classics.

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Methodology: *the case study was represented by comparative-historical, cultural and typological methods of research, allowing a comprehensive review of the development of Russian nineteenth-century literature. Russian novel of this period was first considered in the context of the Eurasian literary community, taking into account the methodology of the concept of Eurasianism, set out in the works of Nikolai Trubetzkoy, D. S. Mirsky, and Valentin Nedzvetsky on the stages of development of the Russian Social-Universal novel. Results: analyzing the features of the creative method of Russian writers, the revealed conceptual forms of expressing the aesthetic ideal of nineteenth-century Russian literature such as 'prophecy', 'superfluous man', 'Russian wanderer', and 'symphonic personality' were defined as unique Eurasian human characteristics and qualities.*

Conclusion: *the article reveals the features of the creative method, type, and genre as the immediate reality of the creative thinking of Russian classics. While studying the evolution of the Russian novel from Pushkin to Chekhov, the artistic nature of the literary process in its continuity and new ascending stages of development was also reviewed (Russian novel of ordeal, the invariable form of Russian classic novel, social-universal novel). The dialogue of cultures and the renewal of traditions, the properties of a soteriological type of consciousness, a parity principle, and the spiritual and moral dominants were established as the types of literary relations and the peculiarity of the Russian literary character typical for the studied period; the 'model' of a man in the XIX century novel was attributed to the concept of 'symphonic personality', which the adherents of Eurasian movement had comprehensively developed in their research.*

Keywords--- *Pushkin, Dostoevsky, Chekhov, The Novel of Ordeal, The Russian Social-Universal Novel, The Concept of a 'Symphonic Personality', Eurasianism.*

I. INTRODUCTION

Starting a topic that has a long and ambiguous history of coverage in Russian literature, the authors defined the main goal as an attempt to comprehend, based on the fiction of Russian nineteenth-century writers, the role the literature played in the past, as well as its modern contribution to the life of society; the latter issue, according to authors' estimation, is of the most immediate interest in modern 'competitive' conditions of the world of geopolitical and state structures. Furthermore, revealing the Eurasian ideological and creative features of the works of Russian classics allowed updating the potential fields of study of the evolutionary development of Russian literature.

The fulfillment of such objective implies, in turn, highlighting a set of interdisciplinary cultural concepts based on the search for new criteria for the study and assessment of the history and the cultural heritage of the peoples of Russia, such as philosophy of history; tolerance; polyethnic, multi-national and multi-religious space; dialogue of cultures and civilizations; mentality, ethnic identity and self-definition..

The noteworthy aspect of the creativity of Russian classics is the one reaching far beyond the 'local' stories of Russian classical literature. However, before proceeding to the disclosure of the topic, it is necessary to make a few preliminary remarks concerning Eurasianism in general and the applicability of its concepts to the works of Pushkin, Gogol, and Dostoevsky in particular. It is important to note that the very concept of Eurasianism in the context of Russian culture and literature for the first time was reviewed by one of the founders and theorists of Eurasian

movement, Pyotr Savitsky in his work 'Eurasianism' (1925), and his opinion naturally represents an important scientific and cognitive interest. In fact, a commonplace in the views of Eurasians (Trubetzkoy, Savitsky, Vernadsky, Gumilyov etc.) is Russia, occupying the main space of the lands of Eurasia.

The conceptually important is Savitsky's conclusion that Eurasian lands, constituting some third and independent continent, have not only geographic significance, but also cultural and historical content: the denotation of 'Eurasia' 'takes on the meaning of a condensed cultural and historical characteristic'. According to Savitsky, '...this denotation indicates that elements of the most diverse cultures have entered the cultural life of Russia in commensurate proportions. Alternating influences of the South, East, and West consistently dominated the world of Russian culture... Defining Russian culture as 'Eurasian', adherents of a doctrine act as recognizers of Russian cultural identity. In this respect, they had even more predecessors than in their purely geographical definitions; to those, in this case, have to be attributed all thinkers of the Slavophil orientation, including Gogol and Dostoevsky (as philosophers and publicists). Eurasians in a number of ideas were the successors of the powerful tradition of Russian philosophical and historical thinking' [19].

In this context, of particular interest are the works of modern scholars of 'literary' problematics, contained, in particular, in the theses of a report by the well-known researcher of the nineteenth-century Russian literature Anastasia Gacheva 'Eurasianism and Russian religious-philosophical thought', presented by the author at the IV Russian Philosophical Congress 'Philosophy and the Future of Civilization'. Herewith, the author's main postulates were clearly underlined, which can be considered as an expression of one of the modern historical and literary concepts of the Eurasian phenomenon in literature. The core of the work by A.G. Gacheva was the interpretation and refraction of Eurasian views through the prism of Russian religious and philosophical thought, representing the general historical-philosophical and cultural-historical concepts of Eurasianism. Thus, according to the author, 'Eurasia in the person of its ancestor and ideologist Nikolai Trubetzkoy began with a break with the tradition of Russian Christian historiosophy, which asserted the unity of the historical process', which, according to the co-founder of the Slavophile movement, Aleksey Khomyakov, was based on the idea that 'the fate of not just a particular nation but of all mankind is created in history' [4]. The quoted concept-generating thesis as it looks is excessively pronouncing one of the aspects of Prince Trubetzkoy's views, although in rather truncated Christian confessional paradigm, which is typical for Trubetzkoy's historiosophy. The latter was described in his writings, especially in the work 'Genghis Khan's heritage'. A look at Russian history not from the West, but from the East' [26] and stretched much wider; and therefore, in the opinion of Russian-Soviet literary critic Vadim Kozhinov, 'appeared, on the one hand, as the result of the entire development of Russian historiography in the XIX - early XX centuries, the development that created the possibility of a broad and multilateral review of the thousand-year path of Russia, and on the other hand, it was prepared by the spiritual work of the greatest creators of Russian historiosophy from Chaadayev and Tyutchev to Konstantin Leontiev and Nikolai Fedorov' [13].

II. MATERIALS AND METHODS

Along with the study of the evolution of the classic Russian novel of the XIX century, in the sphere of modern humanities, the problems of literary Eurasianism are of particular interest. At the same time, it has to be recognized

that just in this regard the available literary material is quite insufficient. Ultimately, of undeniable significance are the works of Eurasian literary scholars such as Trubetzkoy (Lectures on the history of ancient Russian literature at the University of Vienna, devoted, in particular, to the methods of studying Dostoevsky's legacy, as well as Trubetzkoy's academic studies on the genre and compositional features of 'The Journey Beyond Three Seas' by Afanasy Nikitin // Trubetzkoy, N. S. 'The Journey Beyond Three Seas as a literary monument'), D.S. Mirsky ('The history of Russian literature from ancient times to 1925'), and Fyodor Stepun ('Meetings'). The value of the works of the above-mentioned classics of Eurasianism is represented mainly by the fact that they enable and contribute to comprehending their Eurasian scientific methodology in literary criticism, so to speak, first-hand.

Among the contemporary scholars of literature in the context of Eurasian concepts noteworthy is the collective monograph by A.V. Ivanov, Yu.V. Popkov, E.A. Tyugashev, and M.Yu. Shishina 'Eurasianism: Key Ideas, Values, and Political Priorities' (Barnaul: Azbuka Publishers, 2007. 243 p.), in which Eurasianism is reviewed as a system of fundamental ideas and values, allowing to form an integral world view rooted in the traditions of the peoples of Eurasia and creatively responding to the current challenges. The monograph also challenges the philosophical and theoretical understanding and scientific heritage of the classics of Eurasianism (Trubetzkoy, Savitsky, Alekseeva, et al.), and explores the possibilities of its use for solving contemporary problems of sociology, political science, cultural studies, and literary criticism. Another interesting article by Vsevolod Sakharov, 'The Modest Charm of Oblomovism', which represents a new interpretation of 'Oblomov's Dream', the main character of Ivan Goncharov's novel 'Oblomov' and 'The Dream of a Ridiculous Man' by Dostoevsky, resembling, in authors' opinion, the Eurasian concept of 'symphonic personality'; this article was posted online. The presented study may also be contributed by the work of Albina Kinyabusova 'The spiritual potential of ideas of Eurasianism for the development of modern Russian society', which was published on the Internet as well.

III. RESULTS

The history of classical Russian literature of the XIX century begins with epochal events in Russian history and is associated, first of all, with the name of Alexander Pushkin. Creating his works in the spirit of romanticism, Pushkin already in the 'Caucasian Captive' draws a 'sketchy' (invective by Vissarion Belinsky) image of the protagonist, which is quite downgraded and does not meet the requirements of the romantic hero (deliberate refusal to save the Circassian girl). '...the best criticism that was ever written on the 'Caucasian Captive' belongs to Pushkin himself. His article 'A Journey to Arzrum', written seven years after the publication of the 'Caucasian Captive', reads: 'I found here an emaciated list of the 'Caucasian Captive' and, I confess, reread it with great pleasure. All this is weak, young, incompletely, but much has been guessed and expressed, right'. It is still remained unclear to what time should be attributed the following Pushkin's judgment on the 'Caucasian Captive', but it is quite telling, as a fact, proving how boldly Pushkin was able to look at his works: 'the Caucasian Captive' is the first unsuccessful experience of a character with which I raped; he was accepted best of all, no matter what I wrote, thanks to some elegiac and descriptive verses' [2].

Working on the characters of the poems of the Southern cycle, Pushkin understands the limitations imposed by romanticism; his genius does not fit the strict requirements of the main creative method and trends of the Russian

literature at the beginning of the XIX century. In his letter to Alexander Gorchakov Pushkin gives an explanation in response to the accusations on the partisan hero's image: 'I wanted to depict in him the indifference to life and its pleasures, the premature aging of the soul, which have become the characteristic features of the youth of the XIX century' [17].

Thus, the creative method of Alexander Pushkin demands objectification in the image of the 'main person'. So gradually (it ended in 'The Gypsies', the final poem of the Southern cycle, through the crisis of romantic ideas), Pushkin departs from the creative method of the romantics and moves on to the relatively new artistic method and trend - realism.

Pushkin created the first Russian realistic novel in verse 'Eugene Onegin'; that was the first time in Russian literature when the First Russian Poet raised the topic of 'superfluous man'. This refers to the people who had the best education, family traditions, noble culture; these were the representatives of the best families in Russia, whose fathers distinguished them in 1812 French invasion of Russia and even earlier. However, describing these people, all Russian realist authors noted a lack of will to bring any (practical) goal to an end. 'In his present position, he couldn't find a place for himself anywhere because he didn't understand the meaning of life at all and couldn't reach a reasonable view of his relationships with others. It is here that he gives us a reason for comparing with the previous types of our best writers. It has long been noted that all the heroes of the greatest Russian narratives and novels suffer because they do not see a goal in life and cannot manage to find a decent activity for themselves. Because of this, they feel boredom and disgust from any business, in which they are strikingly similar to Oblomov. In fact, revealing, for example, 'Onegin', 'A Hero of Our Time', 'Who is to Blame?', 'Rudin', or 'The Diary of a Superfluous Man', or 'Hamlet of the Shchigrovsky District' - in each of them, you will find the features, almost literally similar to the features of Oblomov. Onegin, like Oblomov, leaves society, then, that his

Cheating had tired,
Friends and friendship are tired...' [5]

Yet again, this refers to the best representatives of the nobility culture, a whole generation of people who have left no noticeable mark in the history of Russia. These are people who have received a European education, who grew up on European literature; for over forty years they spoke exclusively in French.

This generation was 'trying on' the 'eudemonic' type of European consciousness; this threatened, in turn, with the loss of national identity and national self-definition. Alexander Pushkin was the first to realize the danger of such a path for a Russian character, and for the best representatives of the noble intelligentsia as well. This was a terrible tragedy that could lead to 'historical amnesia' and loss of ancestral and historical memory (the logical end of Yevgény Bazarov in the warning novel by Turgenev - the image of Raskolnikov in the novel by F. Dostoevsky).

The beginning of the XIX century was a completely new era in which the Russian character, the Russian peasant, a representative of the people, in fact, determined the outcome of the events of 1812 French invasion of Russia. This understanding became a turning point in the minds of the advanced Russian intelligentsia and largely anticipated the Decembrist revolt of 1825. For the first time, the questions of the Russian national character, the Russian national spirit, national identity, the issues of nationalism and civic self-identity were heard in full force.

Yet again, Pushkin became a forerunner by determining for the first time in the history of Russian literature in the poem 'The Prophet' (1826) the historical mission of the poet, thinker, artist: to sacrifice all the best that is given by God and nature, and bring own life to the altar of service to the people '...and the voice of God called out to me...' [12].

Pushkin was as well the first ever in the history of Russian culture to raise the problem of the 'little man', anticipating the emergence of the leading trend of the 40s of the XIX century - the Natural School in the vein of realism. The aesthetics of the Natural School had expanded this topic and filled it with new content and meaning.

The revolutionary-democratic sector of society represented by Vissarion Belinsky demanded to bind the hero's character to the environment, postulating the thesis of personal characteristics being formed entirely under the influence of the environment and attendant circumstances. This understanding was decisive in the aesthetics of the Russian realistic novel of the 40s of the XIX century.

From Pushkin to Chekhov, the classic Russian novel of the XIX century follows the path of strengthening the psychological component. Following Pushkin's 'Eugene Onegin', Mikhail Lermontov creates a new novel about the superfluous man, 'A Hero of Our Time', filling the image and the subject matter with the new philosophical content, deepening the psychological conflict; however, this refers to the very continuation of the same matter, first revealed to the world by Pushkin's mastermind.

Pechorin is a romantic hero seen from a non-romantic, exterior point of view. The 'Russian wanderer', as Dostoevsky [8] would call this type of 'superfluous man' after the appearance of Eugene Onegin. This thought highlights the fact that Russian nineteenth-century literature has developed in line with the Pushkin tradition and with the aesthetics of the classic Russian psychological novel. 'Following Pushkin's Onegin, Lermontov is making a consistently clear and very ambitious attempt: what kind of person is the carrier of the key properties of the time, his era? It is followed by another question: how this 'Russian wanderer' character is motivated by external conditions? Why exactly such a person lives at this time. Here it is appropriate to recall the 'Duma' by Lermontov - a poem about people who live in the 1830s. Their life seems to exist separately from the world in which they happened to live. These are the people who could not realize their talents, could not generate significant results in culture; these people are, in general, failed in life' [14].

The novels by Turgenev and Goncharov, which appeared in the 40-60s of the XIX century, testified to a new stage in the development of the classic Russian novel - the novel of ordeal stage. The protagonist of the novels by Turgenev and Goncharov is tested by love, friendship, and by the life itself. Already in his first novel ('Rudin'), Turgenev tried to completely differently interpret the topic of the 'superfluous man', portraying this man dying for an idea. This is how the 'new hero of the time' should look like - being from among the noble intelligentsia, but able to bring the main idea to the end. And this is how the perception of the essence of 'superfluous man' and the motive of 'Russian wandering' changes, against the opinion of Alexander Herzen that the time of 'smart uselessness' and 'superfluous people', which 'you constantly find near yourself or in yourself', [3] has already passed, the time has come for active heroic personalities.

In his 1861 'Fathers and Sons' novel Ivan Turgenev, in spite of his liberal-aesthetic position in art, as the principal character had portrayed the democrat belonging to Raznochintsy (XIX century Russian intellectuals not belonging to the gentry); the novel, which caused a lot of controversies, was preceded by the epigraph-dedication to Vissarion Belinsky, who was well-known to be the apologist of the revolutionary-democratic camp. Faithful to his artistic method, Turgenev tested the hero with love, believing that it is this feeling that reveals the best traits of a person's character. In accord with aesthetic views of Turgenev, Ivan Goncharov closes the line of 'superfluous people' in Russian literature with the image of Oblomov (which absorbed the best features of the original Russian national character) and argues that the strength of the character of this hero lies in his ability to withstand the environment, while increasing the humanistic pathos. An important methodological tool for the concept of the article presented is the doctrine of the 'symphonic personality', developed by the theorists of classical Eurasianism Pyotr Suvchinsky, Pyotr Savitsky, and Nikolai Trubetzkoy. 'The symphonic style of Eurasianism is nothing more than a theoretical, methodological and concrete political requirement of prioritizing a consensus approach, in which a constant and uninterrupted search for consensual decisions is conducted based on mutual respect of the parties taking part in political and cultural interaction. As a matter of fact, an accord/consonance is a 'symphony' in which neither side closes the possibility of contact with any participant, any position. Moreover, it is assumed possible to discover its 'potential' interest in any position, even if it appears opposing and irreconcilable at first glance' [15].

Thus, the search for a harmoniously developed personality leads Russian authors to reflect on the fate of the new Russia in the era of a turning point, or even crisis, when all advanced Russian society was divided into three opposition camps (raznochintsy-democrats, liberals-aesthetes and 'man of the soil' nationalists), depending on their opinion on the prospective Emancipation Reform. The bitter struggle between liberals and democrats was the nerve of the era. Liberals talked about the need to abolish serfdom, but insisted on its peaceful abolishment, first of all, by educational reforms.

The issue of the 'hero of the time' was disputed fiercely; it was resolved in different ways: in a revolutionary-democratic and liberal manner.

Another very important issue that was acutely discussed in the press of that time was the question of the purpose of art, and of the relationship between art and religion.

Nikolay Chernyshevsky in his famous master's thesis 'The Aesthetic Relation of Art to Reality' has put forward the idea that '...art is the reproduction of reality, its substitute. What is the most beautiful thing in the world? In human life – beauty and love...<...> the beauty is in life, not in art; an important principle is the principle of benefit. Art and literature 'mirrors' the reality' [24].

The liberals had a completely different attitude to art. Many provisions of this thesis were refuted by liberal critics; Druzhinin, Annenkov, and even Dostoevsky talked about the weaknesses of these provisions:

Art is not a slavish imitation of reality and not a dead reflection, but a newly created world; it is an old reality, shaped through creativity, fantasy, and aesthetic vision of reality.

The most important shortcoming of Chernyshevsky's mechanistic materialism is the thesis that 'art is the second reality'; the issues of national spirit and serfdom had emerged many years before the Emancipation reform of 1861.

Thus, Chernyshevsky reduced the role of literature and did not see the main role of literature as a predictive and active influence.

Literature has a huge moral and educational impact. All the problems, ideas, and events relevant to the literature are framed as moral problems, i.e. even political and social issues appear as moral problems in literature.

Herewith, Chernyshevsky also delivered certain indisputable messages: '...literature can be an excellent textbook of life; with the help of literature, you can better educate yourself as a person' [24].

But the peculiarity of art lies in the fact that all these philosophical, moral, and political ideas are conveyed by images. Criticizing 'Pochvennichestvo' ('return to the soil' Slavophile movement), Dostoevsky in his programmatic article 'Mr. — bov and the Question of Art', published in the 'Vremya' ('Time') magazine, stated that there is no 'pure' art and an 'art for the art', as liberal representatives of 'pure' art may say [6]. Liberal aesthetic critics in 'The Reader's Library' ('Biblioteka Dlya Chteniya' monthly magazine) opposed the essay by Chernyshevsky; they declared that literature is not a surrogate, and the main task, the main subject of art, is a man, and his love and beauty.

Art must meet the requirements of only beauty and love for a man; as well as pretty much any creation must meet these requirements.

Dostoevsky in his 'Vremya' magazine opposed both the concepts of 'pure' art and the provisions of revolutionary democrats. He spoke out against extremes of aesthetic criticism, including Druzhinin, Annenkov, Chernyshevsky, and Dobrolyubov.

Dostoevsky argued that art is, first of all, free, and it is impossible to prescribe a recipe on what to write; the artist creates in accordance with his aesthetic vision and moral requirements, and therefore, the question of the usefulness of art, in the true sense of the word, cannot even exist. 'Creativity... is an integral, organic property of human nature... It is a necessary accessory of the human spirit. It is just as legitimate in a human being like two hands, two legs, or a stomach. It is inseparable from a human being and is part of a human being. Of course, the mind, for example, is useful, so to speak useful in the same sense to the person as hands and feet! In the same sense, creativity is beneficial to a man.

But taken as something integral and organic, the creativity develops out of itself unconstrainedly and requires full development; most importantly, it requires complete freedom in its development. Therefore, any constraint, submission, or any other purpose, any exceptional task set for creativity will be illegal and unreasonable' [7]. (The latter demand was directed against the revolutionary democrats), the writer was convinced that representatives of 'pure' art, who argued that the main subject of the image in art is only love and beauty, are wrong.

Dostoevsky asks, turning to the adherents of Chernyshevsky: 'What is the way to express the 'idea of a high boot?' The author fairly speaks on the need for perfection of forms that express any given idea (the perfection as the unity of content and form).

At the same time, Dostoevsky categorically opposes the assertion that the representatives of pure art Afanasy Fet and Fyodor Tyutchev compose absolutely useless creations; Dostoevsky states: 'there is no useless art at all' [7].

The meaning of life is in the love for one's neighbor and to all the people. Art impels this love; therefore, art is always useful, especially during periods when discord and confusion reigns. It is also important to remember that according to the Russian classics, the main customizing concept in art was the tradition itself.

Dostoevsky, referring to the traditional theme of 'little man', continues the tradition of the Natural School as the leading direction in the 40s of the XIX century and uses a natural background (sketches of life of slums, basements, attics, pubs, brothels) in order to show how these vile living conditions give rise to a vile, disgusting ideas. Thus, using the 'entourage' and the aesthetics of the Natural School, Dostoevsky expands this field into a deeply religious and philosophical picture and starts a 'great dispute with the all-Russian literature', speaking out against the theory of 'environment' and reviewing religious and metaphysical motives of human behavior.

So, after the classic Russian novel by Pushkin, Lermontov, Turgenev, Goncharov, the Russian novel of the XIX century follows the path of strengthening psychologism; the novel undergoes the evolution from the novel of ordeal stage through the invariant form of the novel by Saltykov-Shchedrin (where there is no love at all) to a completely new stage of development in the works of Dostoevsky and Tolstoy - the Russian Social-Universal novel.

Following the creative nature of the literary process in its continuity and the new ascending stages of development (Russian novel of ordeal, invariant form of the Russian classic novel), XIX century Russian literature, addressing traditional themes and problems, but deepening them and filling with new philosophical content, reached the highest creative embodiment in the form of the socio-philosophical novel and its most significant stage of development - the social-universal novel [16].

Thus, the concepts of continuity, linearity, tradition, and spiritual heritage become the main, fundamental and leading in the aesthetics of Russian classical literature of the XIX century.

The following conclusion, resulting from the general statement formulated above, is that in the epoch of the turn of the XVII-XXI centuries, when a number of established traditions and values collapsed, literary criticism revealed greater flexibility and the ability to skillfully apply and adapt the methods and techniques for analyzing social, political, economic, cultural, and creative phenomena. The named criticism purposefully turned, in particular, to the works of the classics of Eurasianism, seamlessly using Eastern philosophy and religion in their concepts of Russian originality, as well as soteriological type of Russian human consciousness, which, in their opinion, were always focused on and can also be successfully employed to suspend the moral lapse of a person, and thuswise contribute to the preservation of the world unity and the integrity of all its components - racial, religious, and civilizational.

IV. DISCUSSION

The previous analysis revealed that a lot of research has been devoted to the problematics of the 'superfluous man', nevertheless, in the context of the matter of 'Russian wandering' it is still under-developed (which has recently been acknowledged); the latter issue is also related to the ever-increasing call to rethink the spiritual

heritage of Russian classics. The topical discourse presented in the article opens wide opportunities for comprehending the creative masterpieces of Russian classics in the context of a parity dialogue of cultures.

The development of Russian literature was predetermined by the matters of national spirit and the new active heroic personality; by the problematics of the Russian national character; the topics of the ‘little man’, ‘superfluous man’, and the chronotope of St. Petersburg in the aesthetics of the Natural School; the theme of the new nascent Russia in the era of transition to the bourgeois development path (‘What Russia has to expect from the bourgeois state’ and ‘Is everything permitted to the man?’); and by the theme of the intelligentsia in the works of Anton Chekhov (when the structure of the Russian novel was already formed, but there was no such thing as the Russian drama, except for the foundation laid by the first public theater of Alexander Ostrovsky).

Chekhov, striving for an epic scale, carried the craving for a novel through all his creative work, but never wrote one (Chekhov believed that only noblemen should write novels); Chekhov attained the freedom of the novel in works of the small epic form using religious exactitude in detailing. The detail in Chekhov’s stories, carried into the headline and carrying a deep semantic load, performs the plot-forming function and develops ‘saturnalia rings’ from the center-to-edge, thus reaching a universal scale. This is a completely new creative and aesthetic method, where the main ‘favorite’ hero as the spokesman of the author’s position is also missing. The time itself is often the principal character in Chekhov works (in this regard, Gogol has laughter, Turgenev has the life itself).

However, time called for the unification of social stratum. But they could not, they failed, and did not want to preserve the best that was given by God, nature, ancestors, and merits of fathers; they blew it, squandered, drank or gamble away (Madame Ranevskaya sells a cherry orchard, a symbol of flourishing Russia in order to pay the debts of her lover in France).

Chekhov’s ‘little man’ no longer causes pity or even disgust, but appeals to serious reflections on the real truth, which, according to Chekhov, no one actually knows.

Chekhov's heroes unwillingly cause misfortune to others, even thou they do not have ‘badly intended will’ [11].

The 1904 staging of the ‘The Cherry Orchard’ in Moscow Art Theater by Konstantin Stanislavski and Olga Knipper exhibited the implementation of the supreme theatrical culture: satirical spins, merging with lyrical power in the topic of parting with the past, made the hearts of viewers shrink - but Chekhov was still unhappy, believing that the theater had destroyed the play. ‘The Cherry Orchard’ characters are confused; they are just losing the course of life. The famous insightful monologue about Russia is quite illustrative at this point: ‘Oh Lord, you’ve given us huge forests, immense fields, vast horizons; surely we ought to be giants living in a country like this...’ [22].

Chekhov captured that state of Russian society when there was only one step left from general separation, from hearing only oneself to the final disintegration and general enmity. He urged not to flatter with own ideas about the truth but to realize the guilt of everyone, the responsibility of everyone for the general course of life.

In Dostoevsky’s framework, ‘everyone is guilty before everyone’, in Tolstoy’s, ‘no one is to blame’, so a person undergoes nonresistance and forgiveness. Chekhov argued that the question of the Being of God is a specific question; it is not a matter of writers to solve it. Chekhov's ‘we are all guilty’ is a link in this quest for Russian

thought. Everyone is responsible for the evil that is happening: ‘do not harbor behind the illusions on your own non-participation’ - this is Chekhov’s understanding of justice.

The dialogue of cultures and the renewal of traditions, as well as the assimilation and denial – these are the type of literary connections featured by Chekhov. There is a convergence in time since there is no time limit or other frameworks for the art. Tolstoy once said that Chekhov is ‘Pushkin in prose’. As well as Pushkin, he moved the form forward, that is, Russian realist authors created new forms of writing for Russian literature and for the global culture.

Chekhov does not exhibit any didacticism; this is a completely new creative type of thinking, a creative artistic method. Tolstoy has noted two features of such artistic insight: ‘Chekhov cannot teach’ [8].

This clearly refers to Pushkin's spiritual independence and volume of life perception. Russian literature, so dearly beloved by Chekhov, is a part of our culture, the question of whose fate has sharply risen at the turn of the century. ‘When I write, I count entirely upon the reader to add for himself the subjective elements that are lacking in the story; I can stay brief speaking on the main long things’. ‘Man will become better when you show him what he is like’. ‘What a pleasure to respect people’ [19].

The small prose form as the third stage of the development of Russian realistic novel (Nedzvetsky) is represented by ‘The Lady with the Dog’, ‘Three Years’, ‘The House with the Mezzanine’

Recalling Anna Akhmatova’s poem:

‘At the burial of an epoch
no psalm is heard at the tomb
soon nettles and thistles
will decorate the spot
The only busy hands are those
of the grave-diggers. Faster! Faster!
and it's quiet, Lord, so quiet
you can hear time passing [1].

‘If an ordinary person, in whose activities there is no creative principle, being limited to frequently used words and quite familiar meanings, is engaged in repetition and quoting of what has already been repeated millions of times, then the creative person - whether this refers to the people of science or the people of art (‘physics and lyrics’) - is trying to produce a new meaning, something that has not yet been expressed before’ [9].

‘...the writers we call ‘eternal’ or just plain ‘good’ and who intoxicate us, share one important trait: they are all moving toward some definite point and they summon us to follow and make us comprehend – not just with our mind, but with our entire being – that they have a precise goal, just as in the case of Hamlet’s father, whose ghost has a motive for coming and stirring Hamlet’s imagination’ [21] (Anton Chekhov to Alexei Suvorin).

Thus, studying the evolution and the movement in time of the novel of the XIX century, the work of Russian authors is explored by the academicians as ‘creative vision and embodiment of Eurasianism, incorporating the

scientific understanding of the works of great Russian artists from the point of view of the 'symphonic personality' [25]. 'The symphonic approach denotes a constant and active search, monitoring of the common points (of a universal panhuman character) that reconcile the most opposite, namely, 'polar' positions both in the negotiation process and also in interethnic and interfaith coexistence' [15].

V. CONCLUSION

One possible way for a Russian character is to appeal to the classics and traditions, which rest on sympathy... Humanity must make a stop to overcome selfishness, licentiousness, feeble imitation, and maladjustment to life. Chekhov laughs while suffering. This is what civil society is good for.

Modern literature has now lost its centrality - basically, there is no idea, no form; the whole process has become very technological. The only possible way out is to return to the classics, the tradition of the classics, even to the saddest and most suffering of them. 'What beautiful trees, and, in reality, what a beautiful life they must have' [23] – says Baron Tuzenbach in 'Three sisters'.

The sound of a torn string breaks hearts in the very last act of the last Russian play of the last Russian author of the XIX century: the unification, to which all Russian literature has called for ages, has not happened.

However, the outcome of the Russian character, his historical mission and task were predetermined. Russia itself, located on the largest continent of Eurasia, already by its geopolitical position is presenting the idea of uniting all peoples and ethnic groups, all religions and confessions on conditions of equal rights and tolerance, which manifest the only possible discourse for Russia's historical destiny.

Analyzing the development of classical Russian literature in time, the authors of the presented study came to the conclusion that the political and civil relations (both international and domestic) in contemporary Russia are repeating over for the past two hundred years, being increased exponentially. If, according to the well-known Pushkin's catchphrase, 'the wondrous beginning of Alexander's days' was characterized by an attempt by the future Decembrist revolutionaries, as well as by their great contemporaries (Karamzin, Pushkin, Chaadaev), to return and revive the original and traditionally inherent Eurasian identity and mentality (ceased by the reforms of Peter the Great), then changes acquired by the country under the Yeltsin-Gaidar New Deal are causing general skepticism and outbursts of desperate resistance in society. In this regard, it seems appropriate to appeal to the 'Memoirs...' by Nikolay Karamzin, foreshadowing the future Eurasian multinational, multi-confessional and multicultural concept of Russia - the concept that historically and genetically incorporated such moral and ethical values as tolerance, and interethnic peace and harmony, which represent the only basis possible for the preservation of a multipolar world: 'Deep in the North, rearing its head between Asian and European kingdoms, it (Russia) represented in its civil image the features of these two parts of the world: a mix of ancient eastern morals, brought by Slavs to Europe; Byzantine morals, borrowed by Russians together with Christianity and refreshed, so to speak, by our long-standing contacts with Mongols; and certain Germanic ways, communicated to us by the Varangians.... This mix of morals, which had been produced by circumstances, incidentally, seemed to us natural, and Russians loved it as their national property' [10]. Thus, the appeal to the stated topic is due to many circumstances prevailing in literary science in recent years. The reference to the fundamental courses of literary history, mainly created in the middle and second

half of the last century, is complicated by the fact that despite the consummate professionalism of the analysis conducted, they as well are known to be strictly subordinated to economic and political schemes, as a result of which they lacked the volume of recreating the topic's development paths. Also, the lack of objective-historical use of the pre-revolutionary experience of criticism and literary studies affects the completeness of the review; the modern analysis clearly demonstrated that the works of Vissarion Belinsky, Apollon Grigoryev, Alexander Druzhinin, Nikolay Dobrolyubov, and Dmitry Pisarev were studied somewhat one-dimensionally. At the same time, many dedicated academicians, in particular, Yuri Lotman, Vadim Kozhinov, Vladimir Kantor and others, over the past decades have published works that represent scientific discoveries of primary importance. Recent studies have shown that previous interpretation of particular essential problems of the history of Russian literature and literature of the peoples of Russia was lop-sided or simply incorrect. The good example could be the problematics of the relationship between Russia and the Cuman-Kipchak confederation (the 'Polovtsian Steppe'), and the Khazar Khaganate in IX – X centuries (which, at the level of knowledge of that time, was considerably reviewed also by Karamzin).

Finally, it should be specially emphasized that interest in the works of Pushkin, Dostoevsky, Tyutchev, Goncharov has intensified in recent years when modern literary criticism has departed from sociologizing and has moved on to consider the philosophical layer of Russian classics. This refers to the tendency to rethink many works of Russian classics with respect to various religious, philosophical, cultural, sociological, literary, psycholinguistic and other humanitarian trends in the 'fields' of cross-cultural space. Combining the aforementioned allows consideration of the evolution of the classic Russian novel in the context of new modern concepts, including Eurasianism. It is in this respect that Pushkin, Goncharov, and Dostoevsky are especially relevant to the contemporary outlook since their political, aesthetic, and creative perfections are consonant with the simple and constructive Eurasian ideal: the relations between nations has to be built not on wars and feuds, but on peace and harmony. That is why Russia should focus on the achievements of synthetic culture, which was formed among the peoples of Eurasia - they are not enemies or competitors, but allies that may secure the future joint progress. The described comprehensive perspective lies in the foundation of the doctrine of the symphonic personality as the conceptual basis of the aesthetic theory of Eurasianism.

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