International Journal of Psychosocial Rehabilitation, Vol. 24, Issue 03, 2020
ISSN: 1475-7192

Dramatic Character of Lermontov's Pechorin: The Medium of Creative Embodiment

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Abstract--- *The relevance of the presented study is due to the lack of an adequate literary interpretation of the image of Pechorin, the main character of the novel by Mikhail Lermontov, who created one of the most hard-hitting works in the cultural history of Russia. The authors' proposed interpretation of Lermontov's Pechorin provides the reader with unbiased explanations of the essence of imagery, earlier related to the non-aesthetic perception of the creative image (socio-political, moral and ethical, etc.). The applied textual, comparative and psychological methods allowed following reasonable conclusion: the main value of Lermontov's novel lies in giving the reader an opportunity of aesthetic experiences in the form of empathy for the dramatic attitude of the protagonist to the world around. According to the authors, the drama of 'A Hero of Our Time' novel is created by virtue of the two-sided depiction of the principal character: if the first side corresponds to the outer (event-driven) boundaries of his being, then the second (implicit) exposes hero's modus operandi to extensive self-reflection; the principal character turns out wider and largely unsuited for the traditional boundaries and protests against them. The materials of the article are of practical value for successful teaching of literature as an art form on the secondary- and university levels.*

Keywords--- *Artistry Modes, The Modality of Drama, The Gradation of a Dramatic Character, The Image of Pechorin, 'A Hero of Our Time' Novel.*

I. INTRODUCTION

The relevance of this scientific article is due to referring to one of the mainstream images of Russian literature, the aesthetic modality of which has not yet become the subject of special monographic consideration.

The novelty of conducted research lies in the fact that the image of the principal character of 'A Hero of Our Time' novel by Mikhail Lermontov for the first time in Lermontov studies is considered from the methodological positions contained in the teachings on the modes of artistry by the Soviet and Russian literary critic Valery Tyupa.

The scientific value of the study consists in drawing another confirmation of the theory by professor Tyupa on the modes of artistry and its compliance with the aesthetic nature of art; this theory, therefore, represents an effective

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DOI: 10.37200/IJPR/V24I3/PR2020336
Received: 24 Feb 2020 | Revised: 28 Feb 2020 | Accepted: 18 Mar 2020

tool for studying the aesthetic content of world's fine literature masterpieces.

The presented article is referred to the image of Pechorin, the principal character of 'A Hero of Our Time' novel by Mikhail Lermontov. Despite the fact that this image is presented by Lermontov scholars as sufficiently studied, the latter is not entirely convincing. The named characterization is of exceptional value for Russian and universal culture, however, it has so far been considered one-sidedly, or more precisely, from an unaesthetic position, which impoverishes and distorts its essence. The authors tend to believe that the prospective way to study the image of Pechorin was suggested by Tyupa: 'Onegin and Tatiana, Pechorin, Ostrovsky's 'Without a Dowry' characters, Bulgakov's 'Master and Margarita', Tsvetaeva's lyrical heroine suffer from incomplete self-realization, since the inner determination of 'defined self' in these cases turns out to be wider than the outward givenness of their actual presence in this world' [24, p.64].

Thus, the purpose of the research is to analyze the image of Pechorin from the aesthetic point of view and to reveal its artistic modality. The study was also aimed to confirm the hypothesis that the protagonist of 'A Hero of Our Time' novel by Mikhail Lermontov is quite a dramatic character. In substantiation of this hypothesis, the authors rely on the teachings of professor Tyupa on the modes of artistry, as well as on the conclusions of the previously published article by Ahmed H. Akhmedov 'The aesthetic modality of the image of Onegin' (World of Science, Culture, and Education. № 2 (57); Gorno-Altaysk, 2016).

The research has a theoretical value due to the fact that it allows revising the well-established view of the main image of Lermontov's novel and stimulating literary thought to conduct a series of studies of the principal images of world literature from new methodological positions.

II. MATERIALS AND METHODS

The conducted research employed various scientific method of inquiry. The method of textual analysis allowed depicting theoretical propositions put forward by practical material and verifying their validity through correlation with the creative integrity of Lermontov's masterpiece. Through a psychological method, the study attempted to correlate mental processes (self-reflection) and the actions of the principal character with their aesthetic perception by the reader.

The theory of artistic modality developed by professor Tyupa, which allows considering an artistic observation as a communicative event (including the author, the 'hero', and the reader), was used as a theoretical base.

Applying the methodology proposed by the named researcher, the authors substantiated the modality of Lermontov's drama, which was most fully embodied in the image of the principal character.

The conducted research first put forward a hypothesis on the dramatic mode of the Pechorin image (when the inner determination of 'defined self' turned out to be wider than the outward givenness of its actual presence in the world) and then traced the creative implementation of the embodiment of the dramatic Pechorin's profile.

III. RESULTS

The conducted research allows the following conclusions.

DOI: 10.37200/IJPR/V24I3/PR2020336
Received: 24 Feb 2020 | Revised: 28 Feb 2020 | Accepted: 18 Mar 2020

Researchers of the Lermontov novel, as a rule, approach the image of Pechorin from non-aesthetic positions: the scholars are trying to unravel a certain secret meaning embedded by the author in this image, considering it as a tool through which Lermontov explores the era of the 30s of the XIX century, and thuswise concluding that Lermontov had created something like an artistic imaginary looking glass for his contemporaries. The authors tend to see the main value of the Lermontov's masterpiece in its correspondence to the readers of any epoch; its true value lies not in the experience of perception of the surrounding reality (which is its optional function), but rather in giving the reader the experience of aesthetic involvement in the form of empathy for the dramatic attitude of the protagonist to the world around.

The preservation of the reader's interest in the novel (as it also confirmed by the study) is achieved by strengthening and deepening the drama from chapter to chapter. It is precisely this task of the creation of a dramatic gradation that the composition of the novel caters to the needs of. According to the regularities revealed by the authors, each subsequent story greatly enhances the drama of the previous one. Therefore, the Lermontov's decision to break the timeline and place the 'Fatalist' tale in the final fully corresponds to the creative logic of the novel.

IV. Discussion

4.1. The Dramatic Behavior of Pechorin in 'Bela' and 'Maksim Maksimych' Tales

According to authors' observations, the drama of 'A Hero of Our Time' novel, as well as Pushkin's 'Eugene Onegin', is created by virtue of the two-sided depiction of the principal character. The first side corresponds to the outer (event-driven) boundaries of his being (in this aspect the title hero is evaluated through the eyes of other characters and appears as a demonic personality, a 'moral cripple'); during the second (implicit) one, the hero's behavior undergoes extensive self-reflection (i. e. when the readers evaluate a hero with his own eyes), the main character turns out wider and largely unsuited for the traditional boundaries and protests against them. In other words, the inner life of the protagonist is highly charged than the outer one, which makes his life so dramatic. This drama is the main nerve of Lermontov's creation: it manifests itself visually already in the 'Bela' tale (Book I), then gradually increasing and reaching its apogee in the finale of the novel, the 'Fatalist' tale (Book IV).

In the 'Bela' tale, the novel creator directs the reader's perception first along the wrong path, forcing the reader to evaluate the behavior of the hero solely through the eyes of secondary characters (by Maksim Maksimych, Narrator 2[1], and by the Circassian girl).

1. Vladimir Nabokov in his 'Foreword to A Hero of Our Time' reflected on the tales timeline:
In the first two – 'Bela' and 'Maksim Maksimych' - the author, or, more precisely, the hero-narrator, an inquisitive traveler, describes his trip to the Caucasus on the Georgian Military Highway in 1837 or so. This is the Narrator 1. After leaving Tiflis in a northerly direction, he meets the old warrior named Maksim Maksimych on the way. They travel together for some time, and Maksim Maksimych spreads the word to Narrator 1 on some Grigory Alexandrovich Pechorin, who, carrying out military service five years ago in Chechnya, north of Dagestan, once abducted a Circassian girl. Maksim Maksimych is a Narrator 2, and his story is called 'Bela'. At the next roadside encounter ('Maksim Maksimych'), Narrator 1 and Narrator 2 meet Pechorin himself. The latter becomes Narrator 3; after all, three more stories will be taken from Pechorin's diary, which Narrator 1 will publish posthumously. The attentive reader may note that the whole trick of this composition is to bring Pechorin closer over and over again until finally, this character speaks out; however, by that time he will no longer be alive. In the first story, Pechorin is in the 'remote distance' from the reader, because we learn about him from the words of Maksim Maksimych and also in retelling by Narrator 1. In the second story, Narrator 2 seems to withdraw, and Narrator 1 has the opportunity to see Pechorin with his own eyes. With what touching impatience Maksim Maksimych hastened to present his hero life-size! And here we have the last three stories; now that Narrator 1 and Narrator 2 stepped aside, and we meet Pechorin face to face.

DOI: 10.37200/IJPR/V24I3/PR2020336
Received: 24 Feb 2020 | Revised: 28 Feb 2020 | Accepted: 18 Mar 2020

It is believed that Bela becomes a victim of Pechorin's willfulness: they say she was forcibly pulled out of the midst of the natural course of her life. Professor Boris Udodov remarked in that regard that: 'The beautiful in its naturalness, but fragile and short-lived harmony of inexperience and ignorance, doomed to inevitable death in contact with real, even 'natural' life, and even more so with more and more powerfully invading civilization, was ruined' [19].

The authors do not share this point of view as simplified. A Russian officer, who at first glance sunk into the soul of a spoiled princely daughter, is not just her captor, but also her secret Wishmaster. Lermontov does not disclose the details of her abduction; most likely, she voluntarily played the role of abducted. This assumption is supported by the dramatic content of the song that Bela performs for the guest of honor at the wedding: *'Handsome, they say, are our young horsemen, and the tunics they wear are garnished with silver; but handsomer still is the young Russian officer, and the lace on his tunic is wrought of gold. Like a poplar amongst them he stands, but in gardens of ours such trees will grow not nor bloom!'* [13].

Using the language of folklore images, Bela tells Pechorin about her secret desire to become his lover, thereby provoking the protagonist to her abduction. However, it is commonly known that Bela was not destined to become the happy lover of a Russian officer; the authors rather agree with the seemingly paradoxical opinion of Maksim Maksimych that her tragic death was the best solution in this situation: she wouldn't be able to cope with the melancholy of the woman fell out of love favour and, most likely, she would lay hands on herself.

Also noteworthy is that in the web of novel characters' relationships, Bela (as well as Grushnitsky) is Pechorin's dramatic counterpart: her inner world is wider than the 'garden' where the horsemen wearing silver tunics live (it is quite logical that this 'garden' embodied in Kazbich did not forgive her way beyond its borders). However, the main drama of her life is something else: the 'handsome Russian officer with golden laces' who stole her from this cramped 'garden' ceases to love her. This wound is immeasurably stronger than the physical one received from the dagger of Kazbich, and undoubtedly it is the main cause of her death.

Thus, evaluating the behavior of the main character in this story through the eyes of Bela and the narrator Maksim Maksimych (which Lermontov forces the reader to do), Pechorin appears to be a morally flawed person, bringing only misfortunes to everyone faces his fate.

However, at the same time (when the protagonist is preoccupied with self-reflection), Pechorin also appears in the reader's eyes in a different light; his inherent dissatisfaction with the outer limits of existence from his youth is exposed in the confession before Maksim Maksimych. Living in a social framework that is natural to others does not satisfy his seething and deep nature, bringing quite some frustration and boredom: *'...in my early youth, from the moment I ceased to be under the guardianship of my relations, I began madly to enjoy all the pleasures which money could buy—and, of course, such pleasures became irksome to me. Then I launched out into the world of fashion—and that, too, soon palled upon me. I fell in love with fashionable beauties and was loved by them, but my imagination and egoism alone were aroused; my heart remained empty... I began to read, to study—but sciences also became utterly wearisome to me. I saw that neither fame nor happiness depends on them in the least, because the happiest people are the uneducated, and fame is good fortune, to attain which you have only to be smart. Then I*

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grew bored... Soon afterwards I was transferred to the Caucasus; and that was the happiest time of my life. I hoped that under the bullets of the Chechenes boredom could not exist—a vain hope! In a month I grew so accustomed to the buzzing of the bullets and to the proximity of death that, to tell the truth, I paid more attention to the gnats—and I became more bored than ever, because I had lost what was almost my last hope. When I saw Bela in my own house; when, for the first time, I held her on my knee and kissed her black locks, I, fool that I was, thought that she was an angel sent to me by sympathetic fate... Again I was mistaken; the love of a savage is little better than that of your lady of quality, the barbaric ignorance and simplicity of the one weary you as much as the coquetry of the other. I am not saying that I do not love her still; I am grateful to her for a few fairly sweet moments; I would give my life for her—only I am bored with her... Whether I am a fool or a villain I know not; but this is certain, I am also most deserving of pity—perhaps more than she. My soul has been spoiled by the world, my imagination is unquiet, my heart insatiate. To me everything is of little moment. I become as easily accustomed to grief as to joy, and my life grows emptier day by day' [13].

The very form of confession, as is known, evokes the listener's sympathy for the person professing, however, in general, the negative background for the image of the principal character still prevails as the first story unfolds. This is how Maksim Maksimych describes Pechorin's reaction to the death of a young Circassian girl who gave him such sweet moments of life: *'I led Pechorin from the room, and we went on to the fortress rampart. For a long time we walked side by side, to and fro, speaking not a word and with our hands clasped behind our backs. His face expressed nothing out of the common—and that vexed me. Had I been in his place, I should have died of grief. At length he sat down on the ground in the shade and began to draw something in the sand with his stick. More for form's sake than anything, you know, I tried to console him and began to talk. He raised his head and burst into a laugh! At that laugh a cold shudder ran through me...'* [13].

The second tale presents a new status of Maksim Maksimych - if earlier he was a subject of the narration, he now becomes an object; however, Pechorin's behavior is again assessed mainly through the perception of the staff captain, a person of high moral character. The plot intrigue of the story 'Maksim Maksimych' tale is that the reader, who has not yet studied the mysterious hero of the novel from the first story well enough, along with the simple head captain tunes into a stormy, joyful meeting of former colleagues.

Famously, the reader is deceived in his expectations: Pechorin inflicting Maksim Maksimych a cruel emotional wound with his coldness, which the narrator confirms in corresponding comments: *'The kind-hearted Maksim Maksimych had become the obstinate, cantankerous staff-captain! And why? Because Pechorin, through absent-mindedness or from some other cause, had extended his hand to him when Maksim Maksimych was going to throw himself on his neck! Sad it is to see when a young man loses his best hopes and dreams, when from before his eyes is withdrawn the rose-hued veil through which he has looked upon the deeds and feelings of mankind; although there is the hope that the old illusions will be replaced by new ones, none the less evanescent, but, on the other hand, none the less sweet. But wherewith can they be replaced when one is at the age of Maksim Maksimych? Do what you will, the heart hardens and the soul shrinks in upon itself...'* [13].

But at the same time, the narrator also reveals the complexity of Pechorin's psychological state in this scene;

DOI: 10.37200/IJPR/V24I3/PR2020336
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Pechorin clearly had no intention of inflicting a spiritual wound on his former colleague: *'...He (Maksim Maksimych) was about to throw himself on Pechorin's neck, but the latter, rather coldly, though with a smile of welcome, stretched out his hand to him. For a moment the staff-captain was petrified, but then eagerly seized Pechorin's hand in both his own. He was still unable to speak. "How glad I am to see you, my dear Maksim Maksimych! Well, how are you?" said Pechorin. "And... thou... you?" murmured the old man, with tears in his eyes. "What an age it is since I have seen you!... But where are you off to?"..."I am going to Persia—and farther."... "But surely not immediately?... Wait a little, my dear fellow!... Surely we are not going to part at once?... What a long time it is since we have seen each other!"...*

"It is time for me to go, Maksim Maksimych," was the reply. "Good heavens, good heavens! But where are you going to in such a hurry? There was so much I should have liked to tell you! So much to question you about!... Well, what of yourself? Have you retired? What... How have you been getting along?"

"Getting bored!" answered Pechorin, smiling. "You remember the life we led in the fortress? A splendid country for hunting! You were awfully fond of shooting, you know!... And Bela?"... Pechorin turned just the slightest bit pale and averted his head. "Yes, I remember!" he said, almost immediately forcing a yawn. Maksim Maksimych began to beg him to stay with him for a couple of hours or so longer. "We will have a splendid dinner," he said. "I have two pheasants; and the Kakhetian wine is excellent here... not what it is in Georgia, of course, but still of the best sort... We will have a talk... You will tell me about your life in Petersburg... Eh?"...

"In truth, there's nothing for me to tell, dear Maksim Maksimych... However, good-bye, it is time for me to be off... I am in a hurry... I thank you for not having forgotten me," he added, taking him by the hand. The old man knit his brows. He was grieved and angry, although he tried to hide his feelings. "Forget!" he growled. "I have not forgotten anything... Well, God be with you! It is not like this that I thought we should meet."

"Come! That will do, that will do!" said Pechorin, giving him a friendly embrace. "Is it possible that I am not the same as I used to be? What can we do? Everyone must go his own way... Are we ever going to meet again?—God only knows!' [13].

Thus, the second tale leaves the reader with an ambivalent impression of the protagonist: on the one hand (with an external overview of his life), his demonic reputation is confirmed: the hero is doomed to bring only misery and suffering to those around. On the other hand, the character appears in a different light when unwittingly committed demonic acts bring him no less suffering than to the victims. The latter is evidenced by the fact that the hero is being permanently driven from places of dramatic events occurrence: in the final of the 'Bela' tale Pechorin leaves to Georgia, and in 'Maksim Maksimych' he goes even further - to Persia.

Completing the analysis of the second tale, it is quite reasonable to raise the question of the logic of the whole novel composition: what does the new story tell the reader about the hero? Does the second tale essentially repeat the first, the third goes by the second, and so on? According to the revealed creative logic of the novel, each subsequent story reinforces the drama of the previous one.

This gradation of drama in the second tale is due to the fact that at the end the reader not only empathizes with

DOI: 10.37200/IJPR/V24I3/PR2020336
Received: 24 Feb 2020 | Revised: 28 Feb 2020 | Accepted: 18 Mar 2020

the captain who received psychological trauma from Pechorin but also (when Maksim Maksimych mentions Bela's name) revisits the dramatic death of the Circassian girl. In other words, the second story exceeds the first in terms of the 'destructive' activity produced by the hero of the novel; accordingly, the aesthetic reaction of the reader is intensified.

4.2. Strengthening the Drama in 'Taman' and 'Princess Mary' Tales

The events depicted in 'Taman' and 'Princess Mary' tales (being the chapters of Pechorin's diary) are famously presented in the first person. The protagonist thus becomes closer to the reader, which creates an illusion that he is also becoming more understandable. It should be noted first of all that the 'Taman' and 'Princess Mary' tales (same as the previous ones) also leave a dual impression of the character: on the one hand, Pechorin's demonism receives a new confirmation, and on the other, the reader is again forced to empathize to the hero, who is suffering from misfortunes involuntarily caused by him to others.

The final of the 'Taman' tale reads: '*For what reason should fate have thrown me into the peaceful circle of honorable smugglers? Like a stone cast into a smooth well, I had disturbed their quietude, and I barely escaped going to the bottom like a stone! <...> And would it not have been ridiculous to complain to the authorities that I had been robbed by a blind boy and all but drowned by an eighteen-year-old girl? Thank heaven an opportunity of getting away presented itself in the morning, and I left Taman. What became of the old woman and the poor blind boy I know not. And, besides, what are the joys and sorrows of mankind to me—me, a travelling officer, and one, moreover, with an order for post-horses on Government business!'* [13].

The last phrase, as if unambiguously negatively characterizing the protagonist, appears more complex in its semantics than the previous ones. In this statement, the hero of the novel (with assistance of the clarifying expression 'to me - me, a travelling officer'), casts an outward look on his life while preserving the inner one. As a result, the dramatic attitude to the world around is 'transferred' from the plot level to the level of the structure of a separate phrase. Thus, the gradation of drama in 'Taman' is achieved by transferring it from the external to the internal background.

The hero's protest against the event-driven boundaries of his life reaches an unusual intensity while unfolding the 'Princess Mary' story. Pechorin's next attempts to realize himself run up against fierce resistance from the social circle constituting the environment of his existence. This refers to the sad consequences of four combining lines in the sequence of events: the stories involving Grushnitsky, Princess Mary, Vera, and Dr. Werner; these stories highlight the different facets of Pechorin's dramatic worldview.

Professor Ivan Shcheblykin considered Pechorin to be a man of remarkable abilities, the revealing of which, along with the inconsistency of his nature and relations with the outside world, is subordinated to the event line in the novel, the most dynamically developing in the last three chapters of 'Pechorin's Diary'. The named researcher believed that Pechorin 'does not overestimate himself when he says that he feels 'immense strengths in himself'"; Shcheblykin certainly valued Pechorin way higher than members of the 'Noble's Club society': 'The window to Pechorin's soul is his diary (a sort of confession of 'superfluous man'), from which it is clear that the hero analyzes his actions and sensations with extraordinary scrupulousness, ponders questions of being, features of human

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consciousness and behavior, and tries to comprehend the meaning of things on earth and his own purpose. We may also learn out of the diary that Pechorin despises vulgarity, as well as people who do not possess a sense of personal dignity, condemns idle social life, and does not pursue a career, although he is neither rich nor an official. In particular, he dislikes people draped in the clothes of the Byronic 'sufferers' (Grushnitsky) or, on the contrary, who flaunt their ordinariness, often bordering on vulgarity and cynicism (the dragoon captain)' [21].

It should be added to that noted by professor Shcheblykin that the drama in the novel is intensified due to the fact that, besides committing his own dramatic acts, Pechorin provokes others to similar activity, pushing them towards an internally free action, rather than acting according to the canons of traditional class-limited morality. 'Behind the social role and the familiar mask, Pechorin wants to look at a person's face, to reveal its essence. And here he is often guided not only by the thirst for truth, the desire to disrupt all external covers and decorations, and to learn 'who is who', but also by the hope to discover, bring the 'man inside' to life [19].

A good example of the hero's intervention in the life of other characters, leading to increased drama in the novel, is the story of Grushnitsky. At this point, Pechorin kind of discloses the borrowed Byronic image of his former colleague, putting him in a truly dramatic situation in order to 'get to the bottom' of his soul core, to wake 'the part that makes him human'. At the same time, Pechorin does not give himself the slightest advantage in the life 'plots' he organizes, which requires him, as well as his 'partners', to exert maximum stress on his mental and physical strength. In a duel with Grushnitsky, Pechorin strives for the objectivity of the results of his deadly experiment, in which he risks his life no less than his opponent. *'I determined* - he says during their combat and spiritual duel - *to relinquish every advantage to Grushnitski; I wanted to test him. A spark of magnanimity might awake in his soul—and then all would have been settled for the best'* [13].

It is of significant importance for Pechorin that the choice is to be made entirely free and out of internal but not external motives and intentions. By creating extreme border situations of his own will, Pechorin does not interfere in a person's decision making, giving the opportunity to have an absolutely free moral choice, although Pechorin is not at all indifferent to its results. So, he notes: *'Tremblingly I awaited Grushnitsky's answer… If Grushnitsky had not agreed, I should have thrown myself upon his neck'* [13]. He gives this right of free choice to Grushnitsky even in the course of the duel: *'…now he was obliged to fire in the air, or to make himself an assassin, or, finally, to abandon his base plan and to expose himself to equal danger with me' [*13].

Researchers fairly assert that Pechorin could not destroy Grushnitsky's love for Princess Mary, because he never loved her. 'Grushnitsky was busy inventing poses and words. His soul was weak. But Pechorin was innocent of passionless amusements with the souls he observed. Unlike Werner, he knows how to dominate people and, unwittingly for himself, is not limited to a contemplative role in unmistakable observations of human passions. He actively intervenes, even if he was dissatisfied with himself' [20].

Boris Eikhenbaum in his article 'A Hero of Our Time' considered incidents with Grushnitsky and Mary as 'small-detailed' and not requiring particular attention: 'Pechorin's plotline, which has been lowered in 'Taman', rises, since the reader is already acquainted not only with Pechorin's actions, but also with his thoughts, aspirations, and even complaints - and all this ends with a meaningful 'prose poem', the meaning of which goes far beyond the

DOI: 10.37200/IJPR/V24I3/PR2020336
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petty fuss with Princess Mary and Grushnitsky: '*…I am like a sailor born and bred on the deck of a pirate brig: his soul has grown accustomed to storms and battles; but, once let him be cast upon the shore, and he chafes, he pines away, however invitingly the shady groves allure, however brightly shines the peaceful sun….*' [22].

Eikhenbaum, however, noticed that the hero 'may only dream' of big storms and battles, but at the most is that he will again avoid death, being at the edge of life, as it already happened more than once. This is exactly what happens in the 'Fatalist' tale.

4.3. The Fatalist' Tale as the Resolution of Pechorin's Dramatic Life

Another emphasis should be made on the fact that the researchers of the Lermontov novel, as a rule, approach the image of Pechorin from an unaesthetic position; they try to unravel some special meaning embedded by Lermontov in this image, considering it as a tool through which Lermontov explores the era of the 30s of the XIX century, and concluding that Lermontov created a certain projective reflection of his contemporaries. The authors of presented study tend to object this approach and attribute the main value of the Lermontov's masterpiece in its correspondence to the readers of any epoch; the authors are entitled to the opinion that its true value lies not in the experience of perception of the surrounding reality (which is its optional function), but rather in giving the reader the experience of aesthetic involvement in the form of empathy for the dramatic attitude of the protagonist to the world around.

In this regard, the composition of the novel is of particular interest. The authors believe that Lermontov's decision to place the 'Fatalist' tale in the final fully corresponds to the task of organizing the reader's aesthetic response. In this tale that completes the novel, the reader, along with the hero, has to endure something that was believed hopeless to happen after the events depicted in the previous parts of the novel. The reader approaches the last story with the conviction that Pechorin finally 'became a moral cripple': after all, he coldly parted even with Dr. Werner, who was very close to him in spirit. Here is how the protagonist describes this situation: *'He stopped on the threshold; he would gladly have pressed my hand... and, had I shown the slightest desire to embrace him, he would have thrown himself upon my neck; but I remained cold as a rock—and he left the room'* [13].

However, the very final brings something that disproves the reader's expectations. Pechorin performs a highly noble act: for the first time in the novel, Pechorin's inner life gets fully implemented in the outer one.

According to Eikhenbaum, the 'Fatalist' tale plays the role of an epilogue, although, as with the 'Taman' story, this is not the last incident in the order of events that was told: the meeting with Maksim Maksimych and the departure of Pechorin to Persia occur later. 'However, such is the strength and such is the triumph of art over the logic of facts - or, otherwise, the triumph of plot composition over the storyline'. The death of the hero is reported simply as a biographical reference in the middle of the novel. 'Such a decision could not free the author from having to end the novel with the death of the hero, but gave him the right and opportunity to finish the novel in a cheerful tone - Pechorin not only escaped death, but also performed a brave socially useful act, apropos, not associated with any 'empty passions': the Love tune in 'Fatalist' is turned off whatsoever. Due to the peculiar 'double' composition and fragmentary structure of the novel, the hero does not perish in the artistic (plot) sense; the novel ends with a perspective into the future - with the hero leaving the tragic state of idly dooming. Thuswise, instead of a funeral

DOI: 10.37200/IJPR/V24I3/PR2020336
Received: 24 Feb 2020 | Revised: 28 Feb 2020 | Accepted: 18 Mar 2020

march the congratulations on the victory over death are chiming' [22].

Herewith, the Eikhenbaum's opinion that the 'Fatalist' is the epilogue of the novel is not shared by the authors, considering it to be the end, which gives the reader catharsis. There is no 'hero's escape from the tragic state of idly dooming' with a perspective into the future, as claimed by the academician since Pechorin's drama as a literary hero is his permanent attitude and correlation to the world around, which cannot be overcome in his life. The novel's denouement depicts a rare event from the life of the hero when his internal needs are fully met within the outer limits of his existence.

V. CONCLUSION

The approach to the study of the image of Pechorin that exists in Russian literary criticism does not take into account its aesthetic nature; literary scholars consider the image of the novel's hero as a tool through which Lermontov explores the social and political life of the 1830s. The novel 'A Hero of Our Time' in these works appears as a kind of mirror in which contemporaries and their spiritual world are reflected. In the present work, the image of Pechorin is regarded as a self-valuable artistic entity addressed to the reader of any epoch. The Lermontov's creation, in full accordance with the nature of art, is granting the reader the experience of aesthetic involvement in the form of empathy for the dramatic attitude of the protagonist to the world around. The value of the image of Pechorin as a creative experience in cognition of the surrounding reality, which is postulated in the works of Russian Lermontov scholars, appears as its optional function.

The authors revealed that the drama of 'A Hero of Our Time' novel is created by virtue of the two-sided depiction of the main character: if the first side corresponds to the outer (event-driven) boundaries of his being, then the second (implicit) exposes hero's modus operandi to extensive self-reflection; the character turns out wider and largely unsuited for the traditional boundaries and protests against them.

The architectonics of the novel is subordinated to the task of maintaining reader interest; the author of the novel managed to create a wide gradation of the dramatic image of Pechorin. The novel exhibits a clear pattern: each subsequent story significantly enhances the drama of the previous one. Lermontov's decision to break the timeline and place the 'Fatalist' tale in the final fully corresponds to the creative logic of the novel.

The conclusions made in this work contribute to a new reading of the Lermontov's novel and to the revelation of the author's intentions, which so far remained imperceptible. The results of the study can serve a theoretical basis for the fundamental reformatting of secondary- and university level teachings of literature as an art form, as well as for the new cinematographic interpretations of Lermontov's masterpiece.

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DOI: 10.37200/IJPR/V24I3/PR2020336
Received: 24 Feb 2020 | Revised: 28 Feb 2020 | Accepted: 18 Mar 2020

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Received: 24 Feb 2020 | Revised: 28 Feb 2020 | Accepted: 18 Mar 2020