



THE IMAGE OF THE SOUL USING THE EXAMPLE OF A.P. CHEKHOV'S WORK "TOSCA."

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Annotation: The article is devoted to the analysis of the image of the soul using the example of A. P. Chekhov's work "Tosca". This classic work is still relevant today. People in the hustle and bustle of their days, under the weight of their own worries, forget about those who need simple human warmth. And how much easier life would be if each of us had at least one kind word for a person in need of support.

Ключевые слова: внутреннее состояние, душа, тоска, одиночество, равнодушие, сострадание, маленький человек.

Soul is the core concept of Russian culture. Soul is the basis and support of everything that is called the world and man.

The soul is a complex concept from the field of philosophy and religion.

According to the Explanatory Dictionary of the Russian Language by **D.N. Ushakova:**

- 1) *In religious and idealistic ideas, the immaterial principle of life, sometimes opposed to the body; an incorporeal being that remains after the death of a person's body;*
- 2) *the inner, mental world of a person;*

From the point of view of M.M. Bakhtin, the "soul" in a work is an artistically experienced inner whole of the hero, becoming in time, which is positively formed and completed only in the category of the other, unfolds from the excess of the temporary vision of another soul: "The soul is what coincides with itself, an equal, closed whole of inner life, postulating the external loving activity of another." Thus, the "soul" turns out to be an analogue of the hero's self-awareness, his inner life, dissolved in the artistic whole, taking shape in the text through rhythm. ¹

The story "Tosca" is a very small but profound work that every educated person needs to read in their life. It was written by the recognized classic of Russian literature of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries - Anton Pavlovich Chekhov. He has a lot of similar stories to his name - small, vital and intensely social. Even after many years, subsequent generations read him, because eternal truths are written in his books.

The story was published in the Petersburg Newspaper in January 1886 in the "Flying Notes" section. Then it was included in the collection "Motley Stories" with minor amendments. Later, in 1898-1901, Chekhov included it in his third volume of works.

In literary circles, the story met with approving responses in the publications "Petersburg Vedomosti", "Russian Wealth" and "Bulletin of Europe". Leo Tolstoy also singled out this work as one of Chekhov's best creations.

"Toska" is a short story in genre, as it is a short prose work with narrative content. The narration is told in third person.

¹ Dal V.I. Explanatory dictionary of the living Great Russian language: in 4 volumes. T. 4: R-V. – St. Petersburg, 1999. – 688 p.

The story describes real life, the most plausible situations, feelings, and uses common language. This means that it goes back to such a direction as realism. We can safely say that all of Chekhov's works relate specifically to realism, like the prose of other writers of the second half of the nineteenth century. What happened to Jonah in the story is a very realistic and even mundane situation, but that doesn't mean it's not worth noting. Sometimes in simple things there lies a problem, solving which you can get to the truth.

"Tosca" is the central image of the work, embodied in the main character. This is the feeling that consumed him, and at the same time it is an important and complex problem that the author invites readers to think about. The meaning of the word "melancholy" in this case is equivalent to the meaning of the word "loneliness".

Here's how the title can be explained: "Melancholy" reflects not only the internal state of the hero, but also a peculiar illness of an entire indifferent city.

1. The main character of the story is the old cab driver Jonah. He belongs to such a popular type of literary hero as the "little man." This means that he is the owner of a low social status, not endowed with any special abilities or qualities, but also has not caused any harm to anyone. Jonah is a simple yard cab driver, earning crumbs for his bread. His desire is very modest and simple - to share his grief with someone. He does not bring any evil to this world, but he is also not endowed with heroic qualities. He does not even respond to the rudeness of his riders with the same rudeness, but only tries to start a pleasant conversation.

2. Another main character of the story can be called Jonah's horse, since without it this work would not have had the completeness and depth that Chekhov was able to achieve. It is she, a pitiful, exhausted animal, who is Jonah's true friend, who ultimately saved him from inescapable melancholy.

The main theme of the story is the longing of the main character, whose son died. He is a "little man" whom no one notices. In the huge and harsh outside world, where a blizzard rages and where hundreds of indifferent people pass by, Jonah is just a speck of dust, but his inner world is filled with feelings. His grief cannot be poured out, it is crowded inside, and he is in dire need of other people's compassion. But even a small share of this compassion does not reach the old cab driver, and he is forced to remain alone with terrible melancholy. No one wants to ease his grief. The main problem raised by the author in this work is the problem of the loneliness of the "little man" in a large crowded city. Pain and melancholy take possession of Jonah, and readers become imbued with sympathy for him, which cannot be said about the other heroes of the work with whom he interacts. Loneliness can be a terrible internal state, and Chekhov vividly and expressively conveys this to the minds and hearts of readers. In addition, another problem highlighted in the text is the problem of indifference. None of the passengers Jonah met during the day showed proper attention to him. Whether it was a military man, the three young men whom he gave a lift to, or the janitor and the man from the yard - all of them, although they knew about the driver's grief, were purely occupied with their own thoughts and plans. Moreover, the riders treated him rudely when the old man did not drive as skillfully as they would like. Here we can see some cruelty of the townspeople towards each other.²

However, not everything is so bad, there is still a ray of light. Surprisingly, Jonah's "horse" turns out to be more "humane" than other people. She is the old man's only friend, a

² Chekhov A.P. Collected Works in eight volumes. – M., 1970.

friend to whom he can tell everything as if it were a kindred soul. Because even though she is a horse, she is truly a kindred spirit. Sometimes animals can help their owner even more than their surroundings, and this is a clear example of this.

The image of a horse is closely intertwined with our main character. His little horse is also white and motionless. If we focus on this sentence, there is a hidden thought of the image of the soul, that is, the white color emphasizes the pure soul like snow. She is motionless, in the stage of devastation. The horse is mentally in another place, his soul is not here. She thinks who was torn from the plow, etc.

The first traveler appears before the reader in the guise of a military man. Our main character again takes up his task and the horse, as if in unison, also cranes its neck, bends its stick-like legs and moves hesitantly.

The military man scolds Jonah and says: "what scoundrels they all are." Jonah wryly smiles and can't say anything, but from the pain in his soul, from the loss of a loved one, he says: "And for me, master, that's.... my son died this week."

The military man asked for what reason and changed the topic of conversation. Throughout the entire work, no one listens to Jonah's grief. For them, the death of a loved one is commonplace. Without any feelings, regrets about the past.

Having received the money he earned, Jonah is not happy. Money has no meaning for him. His pain and longing in his soul are insurmountable. Chekhov conveys the internal state of the main character and the general atmosphere of the entire picture with the help of landscape. Cold winter with twilight and large wet snow expresses melancholy, pain, and indifference of the surrounding world towards an individual. The world is alien, prickly, unfriendly to the hero, and this is clearly felt thanks to the surrounding environment.

Our hero wants to tell other travelers about his grief, but young people are not interested. One of them says: "We'll all die." How Jonah wanted to find people who would share his grief together, who could console him and say a kind word.

At the end of the story we see Kuzma Ionych pouring out his soul to his horse. The horse, by its actions, lets its owner know that he shares his grief with him.

A.P. Chekhov wanted to show us in this work how vulnerable the human soul is. We must be able to appreciate other people's feelings, regardless of the person's status. The author wanted to show readers how terrible loneliness and indifference of others really are. The main idea is that we all need to be more attentive to other people, help in difficult situations, be sensitive and compassionate. After all, anyone could find themselves in a situation like Jonah's, and this is very difficult. By depicting the sad story of Jonah, the author allows us to look at the situation from the outside. Indeed, in ordinary life we might not pay attention to an old man isolated from this world, although perhaps it is he who needs our help.

Therefore, it is extremely important to take care of others, not just yourself. Good multiplies good, and vice versa. If the idea of compassion does not spread in the world, then no one will help another in trouble.

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