

FIGURATIVE REALIZATION OF THE SUBJECT OF SOLITUDE IN HERMANN HESSE'S WORKS: THE WOLF IMAGE

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The issue which is put under the consideration is the artistic realization of the solitude subject in H. Hesse's works through the analysis of the wolf image interpretation in the novels 'Steppenwolf' and 'Journey to the East'. It is shown that the given image was used by the writer to reveal the lonesome and extremely complicated soul of an artist. The wolf image is analyzed from mythological, philosophical and psychological aspects. The mythological component of the given image implies the characters' feeling of disharmony with the environment and society, ferocity, rudeness towards people. From the point of view of philosophy the wolf nature of characters is a sign of lone geniuses standing out from the crowd of everymen. The psychological component of the image refers a reader to the characters' subconscious, to the unconsciously instinctive power. And as soon as a person releases this power they may find spiritual harmony.

The German-speaking poet and writer, artist and Nobel prize laureate Hermann Hesse overcame a difficult way to the top of self-knowledge and creative activity. His works include the person's unique search experience of their unrepeatable individuality, their 'I'. This way got through psychoanalysis, retiring into their shell, always accompanied by solitude. Most of the writer's works are largely autobiographical, and at the same time they reflect the social and political problems of the XX century.

An important role in the comprehension of the lonesome and highly complicated human soul in H. Hesse's works belongs to the wolf image. The symbolism of the image underlies the concept construction of the protagonist personality in the novel "Steppenwolf" (1927). The image is also found in the writer's later work — his novel "Journey to the east" (1931).

The protagonist of the novel 'Steppenwolf' is a writer and intellectual Harry Haller who badly lives through isolation of his soul from modern reality. He suffers from the fact he cannot find the balance between commonplace world and his own spiritual needs. The wolf part of the character's soul despises the philistine environment, its false manners and depraved morals, and the human part tries to come to terms with it, to find its life guiding lines and to enjoy art and creativity. In the novel the human-wolf image is revealed not only through the opposition of the intellectual and spiritual, and the natural and biological components of human nature, but also includes the synthesis of its mythological, philosophical and psychological interpretations.

In the mythologies of many nations 'wolf' is one of the most common zoomorphic images representing an evil and fiendish animal, hostile for a human, which, however, was often sacrificed [3]. Harry Haller's behavior is identical to this definition. From the first pages of the novel we notice his wolf habits: «*Er aber, der Steppenwolf, hatte seinen scharfen kurzhaarigen Kopf witternd in die Höhe gereckt, schnupperte mit der nervösen Nase um sich her und sagte, noch ehe er Antwort gab oder seinen Namen nannte: «Oh, hier riecht es gut.»*» [5, S. 11] // «*He, however, the Steppenwolf, stuck his sharp, closely-cropped head sniffingly up in the air, scented around him with his nervous nose and said: "Oh, it smells good here."*» [7, c. 6]. In relation to the commoners he often behaves as a wild, angry wolf. For this reason, he has to avoid the society and to put up with his solitude. According to 'Treatise on the Steppenwolf' we learn that Harry's hatred towards everything trivial started to emerge already in his early years. Harry Haller's wolf nature expresses itself in the episode of the protagonist's visit to the familiar professor. Harry-wolf does not want visiting the professor but the human side of his soul suddenly desires to feel itself as a part of the society. And here Harry Haller has to be polite, amiable and friendly, he feels anger and contempt in relation to himself because of it. The character hates the deceitful commoners: «*...Stunde um Stunde zwanghaft und ohne es eigentlich zu wollen, machen Besuche, führen Unterhaltungen, sitzen Amts und Bureaustunden ab, alles zwanghaft, mechanisch, ungewollt, alles könnte ebensogut von Maschinen gemacht werden oder unterbleiben...*» [5, S. 93] // «*...hour after hour, compelled without really wanting to, making visits, spending hours behind desks at offices and bureaus, all compulsory, mechanical, involuntary, all of which could just as well be done by machines or left undone*» [7, c. 60]. Harry Haller makes fun of commoners' lack of will and hypocrisy who, in his opinion, are not able to accept all the worthlessness and meaningless of their existence. However, he does not judge these people because he knows from his own experience that the path of the uprising against the usual way of life isn't easy. The professor and Harry are talking about wars and art. During the talk the protagonist is convinced once again of the ignorance and inspirituality of modern minds. Harry can not stand, his wolf nature breaks out with all the force, he is rude towards the house

owner and leaves with the idea of suicide. In the description of Harry Haller's wildness and rudeness Hesse uses the appropriate epithets: «*der wilde Wolf*» // «*the wild wolf*», «*der böse Wolf*» // «*the angry wolf*»¹.

Grey ordinary days, useless pastime is harmful for the creative nature of the Steppenwolf. He thinks the life is absurd and worthless when you rejoice that the day is over «...*ohne besondere Schmerzen, ohne besondere Sorgen, ohne eigentlichen Kummer, ohne Verzweiflung...*» [5, S. 34] // «...*without special pains, without special cares, without particular sorrow, without despair...*» [7, c. 22], that «...*kein Krieg ausgebrochen, keine neue Diktatur errichtet, keine besonders krasse Schweinerei in Politik und Wirtschaft aufgedeckt worden ist...*» [5, S. 34] // «...*no new war has broken out, no new dictatorship has been established, no particularly crass scandal has been uncovered in politics or the economy*» [7, c. 21]. Harry Haller sees red because of such a normalized life. His spiritual principle, refinement of the soul gives way to destructive and immoral ambitions, the desire to destroy his life. The efforts to live «like everyone else» disappoint the character, he feels fatigue and he is thinking of suicide.

The destiny of the Steppenwolf, a dualized personality, which hates both people and itself, is lonely existence, eternal wandering and torment. During the description of Harry Haller's wolf nature Hesse appeals to epithets not once: «*unzugehörig*», «*einsam*», «*fremd*» // «*detached*», «*lone*», «*strange*». Harry Haller is incomprehensible for ordinary people. In the eyes of the society he looks like a crazy person suffering from schizophrenia. The character painfully lives through the tragedies and problems of modern reality: wars, the degradation of art and morality. He writes the pacifist newspaper articles and urges people to humanity, compassion and love. At the cost of his well-being and spiritual balance the Steppenwolf struggles with his present as if he sacrifices himself: he wish people to awaken, rebel against the established unjust order.

From the philosophical point of view the wolf image combines two hypostases at once: a lone human and a genius. Such an interpretation of the image can be found in F. Nietzsche's works who opposed a gregarious human-being to «a beast» or a lone genius, a differentiated personality². Harry Haller stands out from the crowd of ordinary people. He exists in the society but he does not accept its order and rules. We learn that the character does not admit the labour of ordinary people for the state benefit, its politics, he doesn't like bureaucracy. Harry Haller, a lone genius, is used to wandering alone like the Steppenwolf, to lead the life of a hermit: «*heimatlose Steppenwolf*» // «*the rootless Steppenwolf*», «*einsame Hasser der kleinbürgerlichen Welt*» // «*a lone hater of the small philistine world*». He lives on his own: spends time in his room among the books and manuscripts, attends music concerts, walks alone through the city. He does not have his own house, a permanent place of residence. The Steppenwolf is incapable of family life, of sedentism; his destiny is constant wandering and searching for himself. For the description of Harry's severe mental condition caused by the unproductive life and impermanence Hesse uses the following comparison: «*richtig wie ein Wolf im Käfig geht*» // «*goes as a wolf in a cage*».

Harry Haller's occupation is mental work, writing. He constantly reads, discusses the classical writers and composers such as Goethe, Novalis, Mozart, Bach etc. However, he does not consider them as the framework and format celebrities, but the exceptional personalities, geniuses, who have managed, like the Steppenwolf himself, to feel deeply the troubles of their age, to rise above the sphere of everyday life; who were trying to comprehend the true essence of human life and the mysteries of the universe.

The psychological component of the wolf image is associated with the certain side of the human mind ousted into the subconscious (the unconscious and instinctive energy). The Jungian psychology interprets the division of a personality into a human and a wolf in the following way: «*A human carries a masculine, rationalistic and spiritual principle, i.e. ousted natural instincts, theoretically — nullified women's influence within a separately taken individual*» [2]. K.G. Jung assigns the category of «spirit» to a human principle, as an animal has only natural instincts. The wolf symbol «*is the result of Eve's disobedience, who, in her turn, is the embodiment of a female, passionate, motherly, natural, irrational principle*» [2]. Thus, the wolf in Harry Haller is his natural instincts, emotions and passions. And as in many beliefs nature is associated with God, the protagonist's frightening and alien wolf character also represents the divine principle. Therefore, the awakening of the protagonist's wolf side can be explained also as an attempt to free his sensual principle from the Christian dogmata (the atmosphere of eroticism and ecstasy at the masquerade in «Globe» halls, sensual pleasure with Mary), i.e. the aspiration of the individual for spiritual freedom.

Harry Haller's wolf nature reveals itself through self-examination. In «Harry Haller's Records» the narration is the first-person one, in which the narrator plunges into the depths of his inner «I», analyzes his personality, true desires and behavior. In the novel, which is under our consideration, the protagonist aims to resolve the contradictions of the inner life and to find mental integrity. Hence, the wolf image represents the dark sphere of Harry Haller's mind, which should be taken out from the subconscious and reconciled with the conscious side of life. That's why the development of the wolf principle in the novel «Steppenwolf» doesn't mean the character's

¹Hereinafter translation is mine – Vitalina Nikolaevna Sapega's

²Look. Ницше, Ф. Воля к власти / Ф. Ницше // Избранные произведения : в 3 т. – М. : REFL-book, 1994. – Т. 1. – С. 35–90;

degradation, but favors the formation of a harmoniously developed, whole individual. The novel is not so much about a spiritual illness of the protagonist, but about how to get rid of it.

«Treatise on the Steppenwolf» distinguishes two types of a human — the bourgeois «I» and the so-called «immortal», who has overcome his own «I» and has reached a higher level of the development, awareness and understanding of life. The Steppenwolf relates to the third type — he is between the «bourgeois» principle and the «immortal» one. However, it is very difficult to reconcile the two conflicting opposites, and most people choose only one side. Harry Haller cannot make a choice, as he is unhappy with his life and is seeking a solution to the problem in a suicide. In «Treatise on the Steppenwolf» we see the reference to humor as one of the ways out of the situation, and it is the path to the «immortal». But it is necessary to pass the way of self-knowledge and overcome the inner mental conflicts in order to become proficient in the art of humor. «Treatise on the Steppenwolf» reveals that wolf nature, in fact, is the best part of a personality. It pushes a human to the liberation of bourgeois thinking and cowardice. A «wolf» lives only in genial people, who are close to the immortal. Wolf nature helps to unveil a genuine person. Such an interpretation of a wolf side is akin to the divine principle of wolf essence. «Treatise on the Steppenwolf» leads a reader to the understanding of coexistence of not only the wolf and the bourgeois side in a person. The inner world of a human is much more complicated and consists of many principles.

A final fight between the «Human» and the «Wolf» occurs in «Magic Theatre». It is the allegorical climax of the Steppenwolf's dramatic searching. Here Harry Haller plunges into the dark depths of his subconscious, takes out his wolf nature and reconciles it with the conscious side of life. «Magic Theatre» symbolizes the habitat of eternal values, where the immortal live, namely the great artists and creators: Goethe, who represents humanity, the thought depth and humor in the novel, and Mozart, standing for cheerfulness, freedom and humor.

Harry Haller realizes that those people, who cannot overcome the attachment to their epoch, in which inspirituality and philistinism prevail, should learn to laugh and play: «*In der Welt zu leben, als sei es nicht die Welt, das Gesetz zu achten und doch über ihm zu stehen, zu besitzen, als besäße man nicht, zu verzichten, als sei es kein Verzicht – alle diese beliebten und oft formulierten Forderungen einer hohen Lebensweisheit ist einzig der Humor zu verwirklichen fähig*» [5, S. 68] // «*To live in the world as though it were not the world, to respect the law and yet to stand above it, to have possessions as though "one possessed nothing," to renounce as though it were no renunciation, all these favorite and often formulated propositions of an exalted worldly wisdom, it is in the power of humor alone to make efficacious.*» [7, c. 43]. In the invitation to «Magic Theatre» it is said: «*Only for madmen*»; in other words, a person needs to discard philistine thinking and fettering conventions and to unleash their imagination.

In «Magic Theatre» the Steppenwolf understands that a human personality is more complicated, that not only a «Wolf» and a «Human» live in it. He sees himself in a magic mirror in many shapes: from the childish to the senile one. The mirror shows that the human «I» is a multilevel world, «*ein kleiner Sternhimmel, ein Chaos von Formen, von Stufen und Zuständen, von Erbschaften und Möglichkeiten.*» [5, S. 66] // «*a little starry heaven, a chaos of forms, of stages and states, of inheritances and possibilities.*» [7, c. 46]. The human's inner world gets liberated from reality, the overcoming of time dependence occurs, as a game can be always started over and according to the various rules which a person creates at their discretion. After finding himself in «Magic Theatre» Harry Haller plunged into the hell of his own soul, took his dark sides out of the subconscious and reconciled them with the conscious side of his life. He succeeded to realize that every person's soul has a dark principle. It is necessary to find a balance, to gain harmony between all parts of human nature. One of the gracious ways is to take life with humor, as a game.

The Steppenwolf's image, besides the above-mentioned meanings, also carries the symbol of transitional time, «*die Krankheit der Zeit selbst, die Neurose jener Generation*» [5, S. 34] // «*the sickness of the age itself, the neurosis of the generation*» [7, c. 29]. The Steppenwolf's image represents a generation which ends up to be between two epochs, between natural humanity and inhuman technological civilization.

The creation of a zoomorphic wolf image in the novel «Journey to the East» is no less interesting. An attentive reader will easily detect three main levels in the disclosure of this complex symbol: the mythological, philosophical and psychological one. The protagonist of the work, the writer H.H., as well as Harry Haller, lives through the decline of modern culture and moral values of the generation. H.H. lives in the burgher environment, but, being a man of art, feels uncomfortable in it. He aims to cognize the purpose of an artist-creator, to find the true meaning of life. The episode with the wolfhound Necker, in which the servant Leo demonstrates the friendship with the dog, symbolizes the harmoniously developed Leo's personality. He is the Supreme of the Brotherhood, i.e. a veritable human, genius, a man of art and, along with that, lives in the philistine environment and enjoys his life, is able to take it with humor. Meanwhile, the wolfhound Necker growls at H.H., showing to a reader the disharmony of the protagonist's personality, his inability to exist in two worlds simultaneously. At the

end of the novel H.H. gets judged by himself for his own «I» (a kind of the introspection dramatized form). H.H. is given one more chance – to learn humor and the game of life.

Hesse's wolf image represents, first of all, a lone creative person, a hermit. The mythological component of the image endows the characters with such traits as spite towards surrounding people and to themselves, rudeness and wildness. From the philosophical point of view the wolf image is treated as a lone genius personality standing out from the crowd of ordinary people. Such are the characters (Harry Haller and H.H.). They are the writers who by means of art aim to wake people's love, humanity, creation and the aspiration for self-knowledge. From the psychological point of view the wolf image symbolizes the dark side of a human (unconsciously instinctive power), which should be ousted from the subconscious and reconciled with the conscious side of life, in order to gain spiritual harmony and balance, become a holistic personality. The protagonists of the novels «Steppenwolf» and «Journey to the East» manage to do it. They find the path to salvation in humor. I.e. they realize that life is a game in which it is necessary to be able to laugh at all the conventions of the philistine world.

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