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ПРИРОДА ВОСПОМИНАНИЙ В «ДНЕВНИКЕ РАЗМЫШЛЕНИЙ» ДЖАКОМО ЛЕОПАРДИ

Аннотация

Статья посвящена «Дневнику размышлений» Джакомо Леопарди (1798-1837). Это произведение автор писал на протяжении многих лет, и оно является результатом размышлений о природе вещей. «Дневник размышлений» по форме соединяет в себе дневниковую форму и жанр литературного фрагмента. Статья концентрируется на природе воспоминаний в данном произведении. Роль памяти и воспоминаний здесь важна, поскольку именно через воспоминания автор коммуницирует с самим собой. Линейность времени здесь не важна, и природа воспоминаний у Леопарди все больше походит на «непроизвольные воспоминания» в романах Марселя Пруста.

Ключевые слова: Леопарди, память, дневник, фрагмент.

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ON MEMORIES IN THE ZIBALDONE BY GIACOMO LEOPARDI

Abstract

The article is devoted to the *Zibaldone* by Giacomo Leopardi (1798–1837). The author wrote this work for many years, and it represents his reflections about the nature of things. The article concentrates on the nature of memory and reminiscence. The role of memory and reminiscence is very significant as through reminiscences the author communicates with himself. The linearity of time isn't important here, and the nature of memory by Leopardi resembles “involuntary memories” in the novels by M. Proust.

Keywords: Leopardi, reminiscence, *Zibaldone*, fragment.

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Introduction

The *Zibaldone* (1817-1832) by Giacomo Leopardi (1798-1837) is a text consisting of several thousand pages. Leopardi wrote this diary for many years, and during the different periods of his life the work on the *Zibaldone* was intensified or stopped. The *Zibaldone* is a result of long reflections about the nature of things, about abstract matters and concrete events, about the author's personal experiences and experience of all mankind. The *Zibaldone* was published for the first time at the end of the 19th century (from 1898 to 1900).

In Leopardi's works researchers see lines which connected him with *Enlightenment philosophy*, German idealism and Romanticism. For a long time Leopardi was deeply immersed in work on antique treatises so his knowledge of antiquity was very extensive. Having received a Catholic education, he wanted to dissociate himself from everything connected with religion, and sought rationalism. On the other hand, in the poetry and philosophical prose by Leopardi we can easily find the conflict between unusual sensitivity and rationality, methodicalness of reflections, thirst for asceticism and mysticism. At the same time, in pages of the *Zibaldone* the author addresses future generations pointing out benefits and shortcomings of habitual methods of knowledge.

Discussion

Leopardi considers himself a transcendent observer of reality but quickly loses that habit of excluding himself from the world that he studies: “And from these observations we learn that the philosopher is not a philosopher in his life and actions if he does not look at himself and his behavior as if they were those of another, if he does not observe them from above as he does those of another, if, in short, he does not rid himself of the natural habit of excluding himself and his behavior from what he has learned in general about men and

their behavior in the world”. [7, P. 837] The poet and philosopher Leopardi turns an individual experience into the predictable theorem and pessimistically watches how the thought destroys the possibility of natural life. [10, P. 10] Real life, in his opinion, consists in possession of illusions and hope: “Thus all human pleasure consists in the hope and expectation of the best”. [7, P. 1062] Leopardi's reflections find terminological parallels with the principle of hope (Das Prinzip Hoffnung, 1954-1960) described by Ernst Bloch (1885-1977) in the 20th century. The German philosopher states that hope doesn't pass away, it only gives way to new images. [2]

From the Age of Enlightenment Leopardi inherited instruments of reason [4, P. 52] — love for comparisons, analogies, classifications and generalization. [3, P. xxxvii] And watching himself, Leopardi comes to a conclusion that each person can see, through his own life, that general laws of nature do work: “Man is stupefied to see in his own case that the general rule is shown to be true”. [7, P. 2071]

The *Zibaldone* expands because of the persistence with which Leopardi systematizes intimate experiences, memories of things seen or heard. [3, P. xxxvii] According to Leopardi, experience is first of all a supervision over the personality (over himself), over all impressions and passions. From the results of this supervision he creates not so much a philosophical system as an attention to each individual psychological reality. [9]

The fragmentary form of the *Zibaldone* has no alternative. This form allows one to present how strongly human consciousness depends on the passage of time. Speaking about category of time by Leopardi, it is possible to draw parallels between real and existential time. In the *Zibaldone* these types of time are marked by seasons, repetition of public and personal rituals. [3, P. xxxviii] All of that fills life with sense, allowing human experience to

crystalize. In contrast, Leopardi doesn't register the facts and events of his everyday life. Rather, he concentrates on the sphere of feelings and mental conditions.

It is possible to define the *Zibaldone* as recording of personal reflections of the outside world and internal experiences of the individual. Leopardi writes that research such as this is always difficult inasmuch as it is hard to trace the birth of a thought, its development and type of this development.

Leopardi treated modern European civilization critically because it gradually removed mankind from humbly following the laws of nature. [8, P. 123] He writes in the *Zibaldone*: "Civilization has introduced refined labors, etc., that consume and exhaust and extinguish human faculties such as memory, sight, strength in general, etc., labors that were not required by nature. And it has taken away those labors which conserve and improve the faculties, such as agriculture, hunting, etc., and primitive life, which were willed by nature and necessary for such a life". [7, P. 112]

The huge volume of the *Zibaldone* allows Leopardi to fully express the thoughts and experiences, almost recovering them. At the same time reflections are a translation of internal life of soul into words on paper. Leopardi writes that they are gradually transformed into impressions of temporary conditions of the personality which the same personality will understand in the future differently (i.e. not as itself), and over time it won't recognize itself in them at all.

For Leopardi continuity of time isn't self-evident any more. This feeling becomes later apparent in novels by Proust so in the *Zibaldone* we can see the beginning of the theory of involuntary memory. Leopardi claims that "good memory and discernment and attention" are required to restore the broken threads of the personality that should be rediscovered again and again. [7, P. 801]

Results

The reminiscence, in essence, becomes interpretation, and each represented reminiscence – a reinterpretation. In this sense, memory is similar to art. Memory is the instrument allowing the restoration of not only the personal but also cultural past. Thus, memory is transferred from personal to cultural and historical category. Memory is most of all operated by teachers who help to create a worldview of a child. Leopardi writes: "Likewise, one can say that all habituations, and hence all conceptions, and all human faculties, are simply imitation. Memory is but an imitation of past sensation, and subsequent remembrances are imitations of past remembrances. Memory (that is, in short, intellect) is like an imitation of itself". [7, P. 776]

Leopardi analyzes memory as a tool given to the individual by his mind. In childhood everyone only learns to use this tool, and, therefore, significant events from the childhood are kept in mind. On the other hand, any event repeated many times cannot be remembered at all: "no one remembers events from infancy, however much the impressions from that time may be most intense of all and however many times a given impression may have been repeated in the child in infancy, more often indeed than is necessary for any impression or notion to persist in the memory of the full-grown man". [7, P. 599]

The *Zibaldone* represents the collection of memories and reflections, reactions to external and internal events. And Leopardi repeatedly comes back to some subjects, each time enduring them anew and making a new entry. This manner of analyzing has something in common with how Walter Benjamin describes memory: "Language has unmistakably made plain that memory is not an instrument for exploring the past, but rather a medium". [1, P. 22]

The memories become the narration and give to the individual a chance to investigate himself and his inner world. The narration demands connectedness and logic so memory gains these properties, becoming memory-narration.

Conclusion

In the *Zibaldone* Leopardi describes his book the *Canzoni* (1820-1823) as evidence of such return to memories. The narrator himself lives not in memories but in the process of reminiscence that restores the dead text to life. In this sense, it is possible to state that the *Zibaldone* is completely personal, even intimate text, and it has only one reader (the author). The *Zibaldone* would have remained forgotten. And, if it weren't for a coincidence, it would have been so. It was published in the epoch when rendering of memories became the creative method based, for example, in novels by M. Proust, on impressions remaining in the mind and capable of restoring the past. [6, P. 67] The new epoch opened with the avant-gardes and modernism. Modernism was a generic cultural tendency, which, taking note of the crisis of positivism, was inspired by the epistemological break represented at the end of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries by Nietzsche, Bergson and Freud. And the *Zibaldone* belonged to this time and to this break as in this text we can observe a mental process created almost in the spirit of the aesthetics of the twentieth-century. The conscience of a radical separation from the past, according to Jauss, marks the full establishment of the modern. [5, P. 11]

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