

**Fecha de presentación:** octubre, 2020, **Fecha de Aceptación:** noviembre, 2020, **Fecha de publicación:** diciembre, 2020

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## TRADITION AND INNOVATION IN MODERN RUSSIAN WOMEN'S LITERATURE

### TRADICIÓN E INNOVACIÓN EN LITERATURA FEMENINA RUSA MODERNA

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#### Suggested citation (APA, seventh edition)

Kasumova, K. (2020). Tradition and innovation in modern russian women's literature. *Revista Conrado*, 16(77), 407-415.

#### ABSTRACT

The article is devoted to the new Russian literature. The focus is on the work of popular women writers. "Women's" literature is analyzed in the context of the history of Russian literature, which allows us to discover traditional and innovative principles. Specifically, the article examines the works of such modern Russian writers as Kucherskaya and Petrushevskaya. The work of these writers cannot go beyond the framework of those humanistic traditions, the foundations of which were laid by the great Russian prose of the 19th century. In the works analyzed, women's fates occupy a central place, but they are revealed against the broad background of modern culture.

#### Keywords:

Russian literature, women's literature, tradition, innovation, postmodernism.

#### RESUMEN

El artículo se dedica a la nueva literatura rusa. El foco está en el trabajo de escritoras populares. La literatura «femenina» se analiza en el contexto de la historia de la literatura rusa, que permite que nosotros descubramos principios tradicionales e innovadores. Específicamente, el artículo examina los trabajos de tales escritoras rusas modernas como Kucherskaya y Petrushevskaya. El trabajo de estas escritoras no puede ir más allá del marco de aquellas tradiciones humanísticas, las fundaciones de las cuales fueron puestas por la gran prosa rusa del siglo XIX. Con los trabajos analizados los destinos femeninos ocupan un lugar central, pero se revelan en el amplio fondo de la cultura moderna.

#### Palabras clave:

Literatura rusa, literatura femenina, tradición, innovación, postmodernismo.

## INTRODUCTION

Orthodox traditions have always been strong in classical Russian literature. This is understandable, since fiction is historically formed under the direct influence of spiritual literature. With the baptism of Rus and the appearance of liturgical books, book culture in general, the Russian literary tradition proper, begins. And if the language of the Bible on Russian soil was mixed with the living spoken language of the people, as a result of which the so-called Church Slavonic language was formed, then the literary tradition of a church character was inevitably mixed with the folk poetry tradition. When we talk about the mixing of two elements in the language of the 18th century - folk poetry and book-Slavic, this is, apparently, the result of the process, and not its beginning. The beginning was nevertheless laid in the 10th century.

The mixture of styles, characteristic of the 18th century, was not entirely formal; it directly affected the content of works of art. So, in the literature of the 18th century, i.e. during the period of the most intensive formation of the norms of the national Russian literary language, some artificiality was observed, manifested in the fact that, on the one hand, many comic and satirical works were written, on the other hand, fiction was considered a legal and natural means of praising the powerful. Therefore, on the one hand, there was an abundance of such works as "The Fitting Cook" and "The Minor" and on the other hand, there are many different odes dedicated to empresses, princes and generals. "Travel from St. Petersburg to Moscow" stands apart not only because of its accusatory character.

Russian literature as a form of national reflection, in our opinion, was formed in the 19th century. It was at this time that the main philosophical discourses of Russian fiction were structured. It is no coincidence that Russian literature of the 19th century was called classical, and the century itself is designated as the golden age of Russian literature. In the works of such writers as Pushkin, Lermontov, Turgenev, Goncharov, Leskov, Tolstoy and Dostoevsky, "painful" points of Russian thought (Veresaev, 1991) With equal intensity, the space of thought that is relevant for the Russian mentality is manifested both in fiction and philosophy. Undoubtedly, one of the most "painful" questions of Russian classical literature is the question of God, of the divine presence on earth, of man's duty and his fate and about his relationship to God.

Thus, the philosophical, culturological and, of course, literary analysis of the Russian literature of the golden age, of truly classical literature, testifies to the fact that "God-seeking" was one of its central themes.

In modern Russian literature, despite the dominance of postmodernism, traditional themes still make themselves felt. Of course, to make it readable, modern God-seeking is woven into the fabric of modern life. So, people living among rock music, sex, drugs, punks and hippies suddenly start going to church and looking for God in everyday life. Moreover, it is characteristic that the seeking of God in modern Russian literature takes shape as a purely Russian phenomenon. That is, it remains national in form.

That why in this article, it is set the goal of identifying the traditional and the innovative of feminine thinking in contemporary Russian fiction taking as a case of study the works of M. Kucherskaya and Lyudmila Petrushevskaya.

## DEVELOPMENT

One of the most significant works of this kind, of course, is the novel by Maya Kucherskaya "The Rain God". The word god in the title does not at all serve as a symbol and is not intended to guide the reader. It would be too primitive. However, the novel is about God and seeking God. The structure of the novel's content and its emotional richness may well suggest something else. For example, seeking God in a novel is an external factor. A novel is about life and love but in this story the search for God is not an optional, but a necessary link.

The novel is about the life of a student who is madly in love with her teacher. The novel itself begins with a tragedy, or rather a drama, since a way out has been found. A teacher is a person you can really fall in love with without memory. Moreover, a person from whom you can make an idol. A person from the world of culture who lives exclusively by the values of the spirit. Everyone is in love with him, his lectures recruit a huge number of students, which no one audience can accommodate. And such a person dies. Of course, the whole world dies with him. Of course, there is nothing to live after. The heroine's condition is described very colorfully: "She is nauseous, she tightly closes her eyes, but this is even worse.

He gropes for a pack in his pocket, he really wants to smoke, but then they will surely take its place. And the ride is still long. She remains seated. She takes out a newspaper, opens it and shudders noticeably. From the second page, the one they buried yesterday looks at her. Photo, short obituary, next to a large article about him. She cannot read, she closes herself with a newspaper, the newspaper trembles slightly. The train picks up speed, a breeze breaks through the window cracks, several stations are already behind, and she lifts her head, looks into his face, into the gentle eyes behind the glasses, into the

finely typed text (Kucherskaya, 2007). The novel begins with the girl going to die. *“She was on her way to the dacha. She was driving to die, and she had not the slightest doubt about that ... He lived, and it was clear why these books, these shadows wandering in the myrtle forest, why an endless series of former and non-former heroes, mischievous gods, vengeful goddesses, Trojans, Dardanians, always fighting with each other, always waiting for a favorable wind and sailing towards fate. Their stubborn progress was mesmerizing, and there was a mystery hidden in their readiness to die. Previously, she only studied them, now she followed them”*. (Kucherskaya, 2007).

Thus, very accurately describing the state of the heroine, the author connects the loss of a person with the loss of culture. In this sense, the Trojans and Dardans are by no means accidental and deeply logical. The world of culture is ephemeral. Ancient Greece - Was it or not? How important is its historical and cultural life? Only a specific person can be for us the personification of the reality of that world, the world of culture. Therefore, it was clear why books and shadows are needed. Because this ancient man Zhuravsky was alive, proving with all his being that culture is alive and real. Indeed, when such a person dies, a living connection with the world of culture dies.

The personification of the world of culture is very significant in itself. Therefore, the reader is already imbued with respect for Zhuravsky, the emotional state of the heroine is conveyed to him. But this is not enough. The author wants to show that Zhuravsky was not by chance like this: *“From what transcendental heights did he descend, from what lands did he come to them? Nothing was really known. They said that his mother was a close relative of Innokenty Annensky, his father was a career officer, the professor himself once admitted that his grandfather and grandmother lived under serfdom”* (Kucherskaya, 2007). Thus, with a few strokes, the writer creates a valuable connection for him with the history of culture.

The connection with culture and, in general, the affection that a contemporary can be in any way connected with this world of culture is designed for the deep emotional sympathy of the reader. The peculiarity of the culture is emphasized by the exclamation, *“From what transcendental heights did he descend?”* The fact that the grandfather and grandmother lived under serfdom suggests that the professor was of noble, aristocratic origin. Lived under serfdom does not mean that they were serfs. Rather, it means that they owned serfs. And finally, the mention that the professor's mother was a close relative of Innokenty Annensky is absolutely amazing in terms of the power of influence on the reader's imagination. Special attention should be paid here to two circumstances. Firstly, relative

to someone, namely Innokenty Annensky. If we take into account the role played by this poet in the history of the Silver Age, then the content of the symbol becomes clear. Secondly, it is important that she was not just a relative, but a close relative of Innokenty Annensky. It does not say who exactly. Thus, the professor has a password and a pass to the sky-high heights of Russian and world culture.

You can't just fall in love with such a person. Such a person can become the content and meaning of life. What does the writer imply? You believe him because you feel the same longing for the world of the lost spiritual culture. The idol is ready and if an idol dies, there is no need to live.

But the heroine does not miraculously die. She is experiencing stress, the consequences of which should lead her somewhere. Characteristically, they bring her to church and to church. To church because she just starts going to church and to the Church, because she seeks to fill the spiritual emptiness not in people, but in the Church, in faith. This is very meaningful in two ways. First, the death of a person, no matter how beautiful and exalted he might be, is just the loss of a person. Don't make an idol! Loss does not mean death if God has not turned away from a person. She also comes to God as if she is replacing an idol with God. However, on the other hand, the heroine understands God as Christ, and perceives Christ as a loved one! After all, thinking about him is based on knowledge about him. Knowledge is gleaned from the Bible and the theological books that she reads.

For the development of the storyline in the novel, it is characteristic that the heroine from a human idol comes to a humanized god. It is no coincidence that at the end of the novel she dreams or sees in reality the same Zhuravsky, whom she does not recognize at first. *“This is Zhuravsky, who is riding next to her, in the same elevator, what an accidental luck and happiness, she will finally ask him about the most important things. You just need to catch up to the ninth floor. Zhuravsky smiles at her with only his eyes through thick glasses and slyly keeps silent, as if offering to first look around, take a closer look around”* (Kucherskaya, 2007) And it is not at all accidental that at the end of the novel the classic phrase sounds: *“Ducunt volentem fata, nolentem trahunt”* which means: *“Fate leads the one who wants, and drags the unwilling one”*.

The heroine's coming to God in the novel is connected with life. The comprehension of life in God is completely natural and organically connected with feelings of love, studies at the university, charity, smart reading, simply the physical existence of a woman in the world. It is characteristic that the author can afford an ironic attitude to what

is happening to the heroine. But it is very important to understand that irony has nothing to do with the depth of what is happening in a person's soul. For example, even the subtitle of the chapter, which describes the metamorphoses of a girl who came to church, is ironic. It is called "The Triumph of Orthodoxy", where the idea of the triumph, of course, is ironically exaggerated. Equally ironic are the remarks about the behavior of the morally renewed Anya: *"On the same day, instead of half a pack, she smoked two cigarettes. And soon I quit smoking altogether, although the most nervous time began - the session. However, the inner depression with which experienced throwers frightened her so much lasted four days, and after the consolations of Father Anthony disappeared altogether. Anya appeared less and less on the net now, less and less participated in general conversations ("holidays!"); some female friends got lost from this, and it was a little uncomfortable in a rapidly emptying, rarefied space, but this is - for Christ's sake, for Christ's sake!"* (Kucherskaya, 2007)

Irony should not interfere with the correct diagnosis of what is happening to the heroine. Kucherskaya manages to build a very correct model. In fact, Ani's coming to God means her coming to herself. Life with all its charms attracts her. But going into life, she leaves herself. It's not that she leaves God and Father Anthony, she leaves herself. The soul is balancing between life and itself: *"In January, just in the middle of the session, Yura Naumov stopped by in Moscow; even earlier, at the suggestion of university hippies, she listened right on the net to a hoarse high tenor emerging from "Electronics" - with poorly caught, but obviously some clever and difficult words... Vichka persuaded Anya... After hesitating, Anya agreed: so after all, life will pass. Moreover, she has never been to sessions before"* (Kucherskaya, 2007)

The most important sign in this context is that this is how life will pass. This is an extremely significant thought, especially since it belongs to Anya herself. The formation of a person takes place at the junction between life with all its delights, to which he is drawn and to meet with which he has every right, and himself. And by himself in this context means with God.

From a session, a party where a fashionable singer performs, she simply runs away in panic: "Through the stuffiness and cigarette smoke, a new, strange smell suddenly leaked ("Do you hear? Anasha!" - Vichka said directly into her ear). In the middle of the song about the Chaldeans ("You don't know who it is?" - a soft whisper was heard) Anya felt someone's hand reaching out from somewhere behind and quietly hugging her waist ... suddenly the hand began to move in the wrong direction. And instead of joy - shame, wild, suffocating, squeezed her throat and

threw it away, pulled it right in the middle of the song... glory to You, Lord, - she rushed out (Kucherskaya, 2007).

Having run away from the seishen (glory to You, Lord), where does Anya come running? Naturally, to church! Straight to the church! On a private trader, through a snowy drift - under a piercing wind into the courtyard, in order to catch at least the end of the evening service. Father Anthony! I attended the council of the wicked. But I left, ran away from there straight to you! Only Father Anthony was not there that time, he did not serve.

Kucherskaya takes her heroine through all the circles of the hell of modern life. Of course, she does not become an outcast, does not suffer physically, she is not beaten or raped. By the circles of hell, we mean the temptations of life itself. Because she walks the beaten path, and the soul resists. In this sense, of course, Kucherskaya creates the typical circumstances. This is a wide canvas of modern life, despite, in general, a small novel in volume. Typical is the revival of Orthodoxy in everyday life after long years of Soviet lack of spirituality. Typical is the image of a girl whose soul wants to escape into the world of spirituality from the vulgarity of everyday life. "Soon after Naumov came a new star of the hip sky, from St. Petersburg, Jane, also composed songs, already different, more girlish, gentle, but the green sun was shining in them, and scratched veins were bleeding in them, and again they staged a session, the easy-going Vichka called her again, but Anya never went anywhere. And I didn't want to. Soon she stopped watching TV, although more and more interesting things appeared there. But all this growing stream of revelations somehow ceased to affect her. Well, the Soviet government was bad, and Stalin was a bastard, so what? All these brave journalists, the Vzglyad programs, the clear-eyed furious knight Alexander Nevzorov, from whom her mother melted, seemed to Anya ostentatious, empty, did not say anything to her soul (Kucherskaya, 2007).

The given fragment is also very characteristic in terms of the development of character psychology. Special attention should be paid to the phrase it was not interesting, although a lot of interesting things appeared. It is not denied that a lot of interesting things were shown on TV, but this is not interesting, because interests are in something else. Thus, interestingness is determined not by the content of what interests, but by the needs of the soul. Kucherskaya shows the path that Anya takes in order to acquire peace of mind.

On this path, both ritual and thought await her. So, she begins to read the prayer rules, morning and evening, *"after twenty minutes, which was spent on reading, her legs literally gave way, but she still did not give up, on the contrary,*

*she read additional two or three psalms?* (Kucherskaya, 2007)

Anya reads the church fathers, is tormented by their torment, the suffering of people who lived long before her and tried to understand what life is and is not in Christ. Thus, Kucherskaya poses problems fundamental to the Christian consciousness.

Everything that happens to the heroine of the novel is well known to Kucherskaya. She knows modern life, knows why people come to God today, knows what satisfies them and what repels them. It is no coincidence that today in Russia, and throughout the post-Soviet space, various sects have launched wide missionary activities. It is characteristic that Kucherskaya seems to be telling the story of an ordinary girl, but at the same time depicts life in all its contradictions. The external plot must not deceive us. For example, it is quite natural that a girl, communicating with a priest, turning to him with countless questions, finally falls in love with him. And this is also typical in typical circumstances. If a girl addresses all the time, then she is satisfied with the answers. Otherwise, she would simply turn away. Constant appeal and satisfaction lead to feelings. This is a commonplace story but it is not the essence of the novel. The external plot remains a shell behind which the ideological content is hidden. A novel is about a woman's soul and, in our opinion, the suffering soul is not accidental. The novel is not only about a suffering woman's soul, but also about how bad a woman is in modern Russia. Therefore, the God-seeking of the heroine of Kucherskaya's novel seems to be a natural and logical result of life in modern Russia, in the modern world.

There is a correlation of Anya with the heroes of Dostoevsky, Tolstoy and Leskov. The literary process is a unified and continuous humanitarian search. Therefore, there is nothing illogical in comparing Anya with Sonechka Marmeladova, or with Zhenya from "Nowhere" by NS Leskov, or even "Father Sergius" by Leo Tolstoy. One thing is clear: Russian literature is true to its traditions. And again, one of the central places is occupied by God-seeking. A characteristic feature of this literature is also the inseparability of a person's spiritual life from the search for the divine. In Kucherskaya's novel, these searches are associated with modernity and the inner world of the most ordinary Russian girl. Perhaps this is the value of both the image and similar prose, that it reveals in the most ordinary life of modern Russian students a connection with the eternal questions of the spiritual culture of this people.

It should be especially noted that the language of the novel is a mixture of literary language, vernacular and student jargon. Such a language creates a special authenticity,

all events unfold against the background of a modern relaxed attitude to life, where the main thing is to have fun. Against this background, the problems of spirituality are presented prominently.

It is also important to note that the hero, acting in the role of a god-seeker is a girl, a woman. Consequently, contemporary Russian literature is characterized not only by the abundance of women authors, but also by the shifting of roles. Traditionally, women begin to play male roles. It is also of great importance that these roles are played naturally, the reader believes in the veracity of the image. You also believe that in modern life there are people who are not just believers, but who are trying to comprehend faith, seekers, and that young girls turn out to be such people.

One of the brightest Russian writers of our time is Lyudmila Petrushevskaya. Talking about the female images of Lyudmila Petrushevskaya is somewhat strange. The fact is that the nature of the depiction of life in the writer's works is such that a complete impression of the absoluteness of female images is created, as if there were no male images at all. Of course, this is not so, men are present in the stories of Petrushevskaya. However, female images and in general everything feminine is so dominant in these texts that men and all masculine are conditional and in their essence episodic.

Female images are not just central to Petrushevskaya's work. It would be natural. A woman writer describes the world reflected in her mind, she is not able to go beyond her own mentality. What is important is that completely neutral images of things become feminine in her image. If we draw an analogy with the grammar of the Russian language, then we can say that all masculine and neuter nouns in these texts become feminine nouns.

Humor and sarcasm, sad and funny, funny and ugly, the world of objects and the world of human feelings - everything is colored by feminine nature. Therefore, sometimes the narrative becomes unbearable. Not because a lot is simply scary but because women's anxiety, women's anxiety for the fate of this world is expressed so ringingly, the string of this anxiety is so taut that it seems that it is about to burst.

Petrushevskaya depicts the life of ordinary Russian people as it is, without any embellishment. In the image of the most ordinary and seemingly timeless things, the writer manages to inscribe details that are characteristic of our time. Therefore, in our opinion, everything that Petrushevskaya writes is highly reliable from the point of view of space and time.

Space and time do not at all exhaust all the characteristics of the texts created by Petrushevskaya. A very characteristic feature of her works is the cultural background of this space and time. Moreover, the cultural background here has two dimensions. The first is related to the consciousness of the characters; the second - with the peculiarities of life. The everyday life presented in her texts is a Russian phenomenon. However, it is Russian and completely modern Russian. Therefore, of course, someday, according to the works of Lyudmila Petrushevskaya, people will study Russia in the late XX - early XXI centuries.

In accordance with the nature of the image in the works of Petrushevskaya, in the first place are women suffering and, of course, suffering love. Moreover, both love itself and the attitude towards it are highly characteristic of both Russia and Russian women. So, one of the famous monologues for the theater, "Such a girl, the conscience of the world" is based on how the heroine lives by protecting her husband from women, and these women still take him away, but the point is that he returns. And finally, he does not return, leaving for the one about which the heroine did not think anything bad. This is the whole point of the "monologue". He returns this time, but only after the "girl, the conscience of the world", which the heroine could never suspect, makes him return, thereby proving her power over him. The ending of the story is characteristic in the Russian style. The returned husband and the suffering wife drink together, and then everything becomes clear: He said: - Will you drink with me? And I ran to the kitchen for glasses made of Czech glass. We clinked glasses. I said playfully: - For Raisa. For our kind genius. And Petrov grinned and somehow angrily said that the guys were saying right, she really is a wall. It was only then that I guessed everything and regretted that Raisa had betrayed me so. And she ceased to exist for me, as if she had died.

Perhaps a symbolic role is played by the fact that "such a girl, the conscience of the world" turned out to be a Tatar woman in Petrushevskaya. Look here: I have a photo, a contact, glued to the box with blank forms. It is she, Raisa, Ravilya, the stress on the last syllable.

Women here seem to be divided into two parts. Some women are left without love, others are some kind of monsters of love. In this sense, the story "Music of Hell" is very characteristic, the essence of which is that a girl sticks to a girl, persistently inciting her to intimacy. The heroine fights back in every possible way, but in the end, remaining blameless, she yearns and cries, moreover, already, being married. This story is characterized by both the beginning and the ending. At the beginning of the story, disappointed in everything, the heroine goes to a Komsomol construction site. In the carriage, as if by chance, a sleeping

girl is leaning against her: Then one of the girls, a monster with glasses, caught her once, coming home from dinner, the one whose admiring glances our heroine had caught on herself from the first night in the carriage on a mattress. The monster's name was somehow complicated, like Glumdalklich, something Asian, and where she emerged from, Nina did not know. This G. saw the views, which the girls in the trailer spoke respectfully about. G. herself spent the night in the air in a tent among her especially trusted friends. It is later revealed that the entire female part of the camp is a Glumdalklich harem.

Throughout the story, Petrushevskaya consistently describes Glumdalklich's purposeful attempts to seduce Nina, the heroine of the story, by persuading her to "unnatural" love, how staunchly Nina defends herself, how she weakens and is now ready to surrender, but still does not give up. Finally, Nina gets married and she is doing well and then by chance on the bus she meets Glumdalklich. He hears G.'s conversation with his beloved and yearns for love and cries. "Glumdalklich's speech was about why you (she meant her interlocutor, a young woman also in a rabbit hat, but newer) - why did you get married then and never came to me, and this interlocutor, a pretty face under the hat, bright honest eyes, plus unclean, tangled curls from under the fur - she happily objected that everything, already a divorce, everything, I left him. But you left me, Glumdalklich hummed muffled, I was evicted from the hostel, I was starving right out of the box. Everything, everything, the bright eyes and curls repeated warmly and with conviction, "now everything, you will see!. Nina is afraid and tries so that, God forbid, G. does not see her. The couple fell into the underground and disappeared. - Tell me that you love me, - Nina sang softly in the frost (people sometimes sing for themselves on the street) - and suddenly she began to cry, remembering her cute Cat and this time of crazy love when she was sitting at the phone waiting, and instead Kota called annoying Glumdalklich, accompanied by a choir with a guitar, kept calling and calling, through the smoke of the fire of his hell. "Tell me... that you love me... Nina sang, choking on tears.

Longing for love, literally languishing for love is the main motive of Petrushevskaya's works. Whatever she writes about, she writes about love longing. At the same time, it is extremely important that the description of love longing and love fever is of a national cultural nature. This is the love of a Russian woman who is accustomed to fighting for a "man" and not giving up on this path. The biggest betrayal is betrayal due to the motive of the selfish lust for the "muzhik".

An analysis of Petrushevskaya's works allows us to assert that their national and cultural value consists in a realistic and aesthetically designed depiction of life through the prism of one characteristic feature of this life. This analysis result should not be in doubt. Of course, modern Russian life is full of the horrors of disorder, age-old hereditary alcoholism, child crime and teenage prostitution, bureaucratic arbitrariness and corruption of the state apparatus. All this is also reflected in modern Russian literature. This is reflected in the work of Lyudmila Petrushevskaya. However, all this does not at all neutralize some of the fundamental features of the mental life of the Russian people, which for many centuries determined the spiritual face of this people and, perhaps, to some extent, its fate. In our opinion, one of the central places in the mental structure of this people is occupied by the motive of love.

Today everyone writes about love. Moreover, in Russia, many people write in accordance with the priorities of the time, i.e. write about "unusual" love, meaning by this word the whole gamut of "permissions" assumed by the political correctness of Western ideas. Petrushevskaya writes about love in Russian showing the traditionalism of her prose.

Therefore, Petrushevskaya's love is both tragic and light. It is tragic for two reasons, one of which is of a traditional aesthetic nature, the second is space-time. The traditional-aesthetic character of love in Petrushev's way is associated with the "love tragedy" of Russian literature in general. Therefore, such an image is purely aesthetic in nature. The spatio-temporal nature is directly related to the peculiarities of life in modern Russia. But Petrushevskaya's love is bright. The writer manages, despite all the tragedy of our time, to portray life in bright colors and this is only because the heroes of Petrushevskaya are still capable of love.

Everything that Lyudmila Petrushevskaya writes its about modern Russia. This statement itself would be superfluous, if not for one circumstance. This statement may seem superfluous for the reason that a Russian writer, by definition, should write about Russia. What else is it about? As for the circumstance that makes this statement not at all superfluous, it is the writer's peculiar patriotism. Yes, we will not be afraid of this word patriotism, we will not be afraid to use it in the age of postmodernism in relation to perhaps the most popular writer of modern Russia.

The main content of the century of postmodernism in general and in fiction, in particular, is determined, in our opinion, by universal disbelief and, naturally, mistrust. In the aesthetics of postmodernism, this disbelief or distrust is designated as epistemological uncertainty Erofeev

(1998); Rudnev (2000); Ilyin (2001). Why uncertainty? Simply because uncertainty sounds more correct than distrust or disbelief. It is believed that epistemological uncertainty should be correlated with trust. That is, the bearer of knowledge, in principle, would like, of course, to be confident in knowledge, but the situation of the post-industrial information society is such that, being a bearer of knowledge, in principle, is not sure of it. Why in principle? But because he does not set himself the goal of being unsure of this knowledge. This is why uncertainty is not absolute but relative. It is directly related to the state of consciousness of a person in a post-industrial society. Consequently, she herself is a special psychological state.

Epistemological uncertainty means that the knowledge we receive from our fathers is not good for life. When speaking of life, of course, a happy life is assumed. After all, what is knowledge? This is, first of all, what provides the advantage of the bearer of knowledge over those who do not have it. That is why it is said: learning is light, ignorance is darkness! Epistemological uncertainty means that everything that fathers and grandfathers lived for does not inspire confidence in children in terms of such a goal as achieving a happy life. So, the everyday situation is common when children, in response to the parents' admonitions to study well, answer that Vanya did not study well, and now he earns well, and Petya just studied well, but is in poverty. As a rule, the responses to appeals for decency are maintained in the same style.

Petrushevskaya is old-fashioned, because the pain for the country has not left her. She writes about ordinary women, about their passions and sorrows. Her pain for Russian women becomes the pain of Russian women for her. This is probably the reason why it is extremely popular. Popular because it is understandable. It is understandable because it is close in this sense, Petrushevskaya is a truly Russian female writer. Thus, if you try to determine the main thing in Petrushevskaya's work, then it is pain for the country and people such a story as "Country" is highly characteristic.

The story "Country", if you write about it, does not require any analysis. It can simply be cited in full; it speaks for itself. The story can stand up for itself, because it is eminently reliable moreover, it is timeless in terms of human destinies. At the same time, it is also reliable from the point of view of a specific time, since the destinies of people are objectively concrete. If a person's fate is tragic, then this tragedy is realized and concretized from the point of view of the peculiarities of time. Thus, a drunken mother, but a loving mother, is a timeless phenomenon. However, the concerns of a modern Russian drunk mother

are concrete, since the objective and eventual world of our time is concrete.

The story "Country" fit into two pages. It begins realistically: *"Who can say how a quiet, drinking woman with her child, who is not visible to anyone in a one-room apartment, lives? How every evening, no matter how drunk she is, she puts up her daughter's little things for kindergarten, so that in the morning everything is at hand"* (Petrushevskaya 2020). It ends almost mystically: *"And they save money, turn off the lights, go to bed at nine o'clock, and no one knows what divine dreams daughters and mothers have, no one knows how they touch the pillow with their heads and immediately fall asleep to return to a country that they will leave again early in the morning to run along a dark, frosty street somewhere and for some reason, while they should never wake up."* (Petrushevskaya 2020)

Unlike many other stories by Petrushevskaya, the story "Country" is serious in its tone. Talking about the seriousness of Petrushevskaya's work as a certain quality of the text requires a separate discussion. All the writer's works are serious, moreover, they are sad. Petrushevskaya writes about sad things, because she writes about life. But she writes about sad things with a kind of humor. There is a lot of funny in all her stories and novels, although in general all her works are sad. The story "Strana" is also deeply sad in the tone of the narrative. This ending is not just sad, it represents, in a sense, a departure from the principles of artistry. Petrushevskaya, as it were, breaks down, arguing that "one should never wake up."

On two pages of the story, there is a thread of events and experiences that are familiar and characteristic of modern Russian life, from which life is woven. The drinking mother frantically makes sure that her daughter is all right. The painfulness of this tracking is due to the drunken complex. But it is characteristic that the mother gives up the slack, because she rationally decides that the daughter should not care whether the mother drinks tea or medicine.

At first glance, the title of the story has nothing to do with its content. Indeed, what does the life of a single mother with a young daughter, deprived of a father, have to do with the country? Giving the story such a name, Petrushevskaya branded the country with all its vices. Therefore, the story "Country" is at the same time the question "Is it possible to live like this?" and the answer "while one should never wake up."

The word country itself is metaphorically used in the story. In the artistic space of the story, it denotes the wonderful world of dreams. After all, they get into the country only by putting their heads on the pillow and falling asleep. However, they have nowhere to get away from the real

country in which they live. Therefore, when leaving the country, i.e. the land of dreams, they go to another country in which they live. Perhaps the writer seriously raises the question of the reality of these countries, i.e. about which one is more real. If the reality of the world is associated with mental comfort, then the "country of residence" is certainly the country of dreams. Therefore, they should not have woken up at all.

In this short story, Petrushevskaya finds an opportunity to insert the motive of sick communication, characteristic of all her stories and stories. What is sick communication? It is characteristic of the life of people who are flawed in any way, who know about this inferiority, who strive to communicate with people because a person needs to communicate with someone, but stuttering about it with trepidation because they know that they are not welcome. This nagging pain of the Russian restless soul permeates all Russian literature. Dostoevsky said that there must be a place where a person can go. This is how Petrushevskaya (2020), writes about it: *"Several times a year, a mother and daughter go out to visit, sit at the table, and then the mother perks up, starts talking loudly and props her chin with one hand and turns around, that is, pretends that she is her own here"*. And as a last note: *"And now a mother, whose daughter is from a blonde, cautiously calls and congratulates someone on his birthday, pulls, mumbles, asks how life is going, but she herself does not say that she will come: she is waiting. She waits until everything is decided there, at the other end of the telephone line, and finally hangs up and runs to the grocery store for another bottle, and then to the kindergarten for her daughter"*. (Petrushevskaya 2020)

In the story "Country", which consists of only six paragraphs, all the images are characteristic. On one hand, it would seem that there are no images because what images can be discussed in six paragraphs. On the other hand, these images are highlighted because we recognize them for the reason that they are typical and recognizable. For example, why does the mother stop visiting? Why does her ex-couple appear there with his new wife? This new wife is an "antediluvian" type of Russian life: She was here her own, while she went with her husband, and then everything subsided, all past life and all past acquaintances. Now you have to choose those houses and those days on which a bright blond does not go to visit with his new wife, a woman, they say, of a tough warehouse, who does not let anyone down. How familiar it is a hard-wired woman, which does not let anyone down! It is quite possible to speak about the concept of "a woman of a tough warehouse who does not let anyone down" because in the minds of millions, these words are associated with a well-known image from numerous films and life.

## CONCLUSIONS

In Kucherskaya's works it is manifested the ordinary life of Russian woman with an special attention to the quest of God. This is seen from the point of view of these women rised in a society with its special characteristics

All the works of Lyudmila Petrushevskaya are about women but she writes about women not far-fetchedly and in the aspect of feminine logic and feminine outlook on life, but quite realistic. Despite some exaltation, the ability to laugh at a woman, a special humor, sometimes turning into black, Petrushevskaya meticulously writes out everything that is a feature of modern Russian life. The work of Lyudmila Petrushevskaya is characterized by the central position of modern Russian woman and as noted above, in whatever she writes about, everything is colored by the motive of love. The women of Petrushevskaya are jealous, abandoned by their husbands and therefore, they all have complexes with the fear of being abandoned; they make unnatural love, fight for men, drink bitter, even in old age they fall in love with movie characters and live with inspiration in the world of dreams; even in childhood they defend their right to have sex and the thought of love does not leave them even when they are bedridden with an incurable disease. Love as the strongest life stimulus determines all the behavior of the heroines of her tales and stories.

In our opinion, Russian women's prose, like prose in general, has not yet found objective and unbiased assessments. Apparently, this will happen when the stage of post-totalitarian euphoria comes to its natural end. Literature will be perceived and analyzed as thinking or artistic reflection over space and time.

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