



The Crisis of Consciousness and the Specifics of Dramatic Disastrophy in Monodra

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DOI:

<https://doi.org/10.47134/jsd.v2i2.3242>

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Received: 18-08-2024

Accepted: 19-09-2024

Published: 22-10-2024



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Abstract: *The proposed article is devoted to the theoretical understanding of the concept of monodrama. The main attention is paid to clarifying the features of the development of the action in the monodrama, as well as the specific features of its plot and chronotope. Based on this, the question of the organic presence of monodrama within drama as a kind of literature is solved. In the article, we come to the conclusion that the concept of catastrophe as an important structural element of a dramatic action can also be applied to monodrama. However, this catastrophe occurs not in the external world, but within the consciousness of the central character, and becomes not an object of joint observation (from the point of view of "witness and judge") from the audience (as in a non-monodramatic play). It is directly constructed "here and now" (in "true sympathy") and in the recipient's own mind, inevitably leading to provocative, simultaneous with the hero, "reforming" his system of life values.*

Keywords: Monodrama, Subjective Worldview, Asthetic Reality, Dramatic Conflict, Chronotope

Introduction

The development of the concept of "monodrome" belongs to the famous director and reformer of the silver age theater N. Yevreinov in his report "Introduction to the Monodrome" (1909). By monodrama N. Yevreinov means 'a dramatic performance which, striving to give the viewer the most complete impression of the actor's state of mind, presents on the stage the world surrounding him as the actor perceives it at any moment of his stage life' (Alima, 2014). As follows from the quotation, the necessity of covering all that happens on the stage by the subjective worldview of the 'single actor' is motivated by receptive considerations. The principle of "scenic <...> sameness with the representation of the actor," according to N. Yevreinov, "conducts the experience, the infectious nature of which, arousing in me sympathy, turns the drama alien to me at the moment of the stage act into "my drama". The teleology of the monodrama is thus connected with "the turn of

the viewer into an illusive subject, and not into a passive observer of another's private life" (Alimbetov, 2017).

All of the above about monodrama creates a number of problems, the main one of which is related to how organically a work of this type is present in the dramatic literary genre. First of all, it is necessary to theoretically explain certain stable (invariant) properties of the poetics of the dramatic work, which are reproduced in the monodrome (Vlasova, 2021). This is why it is necessary to clarify the features of the development of the action in the monodrome, as well as the specific features of the chronotope and the plot, especially since these aspects of the inner world of the play are related to understanding how in such a dramatic work "the preparation and implementation of the catastrophe, and therefore the catharsis" takes place. Without taking these concepts into account, it is impossible to talk about the "final event" of the drama, as well as how in the drama "the semantic border between the worlds of the heroes, on the one hand, and the author and the reader-viewers, on the other" (Berdimuratova, 1999).

The need to consider the issue of the peculiarity of the artistic representation in the monodrama of the dramatic catastrophe, which leads to a special emotional contact of the reader/viewer with the hero, is dictated by the following reasons. In ordinary drama, "in relation to the world of heroes, the reader-viewer is in another, though closely related, space" (Berdimuratova, 1999). This is due to the fact that the 'semantic boundary between the two realities' ('the aesthetic reality and the non-aesthetic reality of the reader-viewer') is here materialized as a felt spatial boundary between the stage and the audience (Berdimuratova, 2023). The monodrama suggests that this boundary "become as invisible," that the reader/viewer, "appearing on the stage (and not remaining in the position of "interested observer," as in the usual drama - A. P.), i.e. on the scene," must lose sight of this boundary (it must remain behind him, i.e. "disappear") (Alima, 2014). This allows us to assume that the character of the presence of a dramatic catastrophe, as well as the interaction of the hero's "worlds" and the reader / viewer, in the monodrome will still have its own specifics compared to the usual play. Therefore, the only possible statement when considering the monodrama will be the need to clarify the "internal measure" (N. D. Tamarchenko) in the ratio of its "tradition" on the one hand and "specificity" on the other. The first criterion allows us to see what makes a monodrama similar to a dramatic literary genre; the second - its differences from a non-monodramatic play (Poindexter, 2021).

Methodology

This study employs a qualitative research approach to examine the monodrama as a theatrical form, particularly in the context of N. Yevreinov's contributions during the Silver Age of Russian theatre. The methodology consists of several interconnected stages aimed at analysing the monodrama's structure, thematic content, and its effects on the audience.

1. Literary Analysis

The first stage involves a comprehensive literary analysis of N. Yevreinov's monodramas, focusing on their textual elements and dramatic structure. Key texts,

such as scripts and critical writings, are scrutinised to understand how the single-actor format and subjective perspective are constructed. Particular emphasis is placed on the analysis of primary sources, such as Yevreinov's theoretical essays and dramatic texts like "Theatre for Oneself."

2. Contextual and Historical Analysis

The study incorporates a contextual and historical analysis to situate Yevreinov's monodramas within the broader artistic and philosophical movements of the Silver Age. Archival documents, contemporary critiques, and historical records are used to understand how the socio-political atmosphere and aesthetic trends of the time influenced Yevreinov's work and the evolution of monodrama as a form. This analysis is crucial for revealing the interplay between the artistic goals of the monodrama and the cultural environment of the Silver Age.

3. Comparative Analysis

To highlight the distinctive features of Yevreinov's monodramas, a comparative analysis is conducted with works by his contemporaries, such as L. N. Andreev's "Black Masks." This comparative approach allows for an exploration of the variations in dramatic techniques, thematic concerns, and the use of the single-actor format in different plays. This helps to identify the elements that set Yevreinov's work apart and contributed to the development of the monodrama as a unique genre.

4. Reception Theory and Audience Analysis

The study also employs reception theory to examine how monodramas create an emotional and intellectual impact on audiences. Contemporary reviews, memoirs of theatre-goers, and critical essays are analysed to understand how Yevreinov's monodramas were perceived by the public and critics during the Silver Age. This analysis provides insights into the subjective nature of monodrama and its ability to establish an intimate connection with the audience.

5. Thematic and Structural Analysis

The final stage involves a thematic and structural analysis of the chronotope and dramatic conflict in monodramas. This section looks at how the inner consciousness of characters is represented and how dramatic catastrophes unfold within a compressed temporal and spatial structure. The analysis of the grotesque-fantastic style and other artistic elements aids in understanding the aesthetic principles Yevreinov applied to create a subjective and immersive dramatic experience.

By combining these methodological approaches, the study aims to provide a comprehensive understanding of Yevreinov's monodramas and their significance in the development of Russian theatre during the Silver Age.

Result and Discussion

Before we move on to the coverage of the mentioned points, let's mention what is the main subject of the image in the monogram, especially since the specificity of the subject-semantic sphere of such a dramatic work, as we will show below, determines the uniqueness of the dramatic catastrophe in it. It was previously noted that the monodrama is based on

the stage "publication" of the consciousness of the "single actor." However, it is thought that the individual's consciousness can only become the subject of the monodrama's artistic interest under certain conditions (Peng, 2022).

Thus, according to V.E. Khalizev, one of the main differences between the epic and the dramatic form is that "in the narrative work there can be < > many and even dominant episodes, which reveal states of calmness and rest (add A. P., both in the external and inner life of a person). In dramas, such episodes are usually minimized. They give place to the depiction of dramatically tense situations" [8, p. The monodrama, like any dramatic work, does not seem to show life and man in their epic "calmness," depicting the latter not only "in moments of great tension" (K. Chapek), but first of all during the catastrophic "shifts" of his consonance, which is devoid of integrity, and therefore represents a "arena" of struggle of opposite intentions and aspirations. It may be said that the crisis of the consciousness of the 'single actor' becomes the subject of the monodrama's artistic conception (this crisis can be considered as one of the historical variants of the crisis of private life, aesthetically assimilated by drama as a literary genre [5, pp.

As an example, let us consider L. N. Andreev's play "Black Masks." Let us analyze it in order, firstly, to theoretically determine the specifics of the dramatic explanation of this crisis, and secondly, to clarify how its presence predetermines the nature of the development of the action in the monodrame, as well as the features of the plot and chronotope characteristic of it (Mohammed, 2024).

Thus, the original plot situation of the play is related to the relative calm (not yet crisis) state of the hero (and his consciousness). It is due to the character's absolute existential belief in his own essence ("My heart is as bright as in this castle..."), in belonging to the pole of light. This belief is motivated by the hero's ideas about the world order as a whole - his conviction that the boundaries between good and evil, light and darkness, divine and diabolical, truth and lies, the true "content" of a person ("face") and hypocrisy ("mask") are clear. The character's moral position is determined by the circumstances of his life. Lorenzo was the son of a knight who had taken part in the campaign "for the emancipation of the Lord's tomb," and in his own words "the knight of the Holy Ghost." The development of the action in "Black Masks" is related to the characteristic for the dramatic genre of literature as a whole to the trial of the original moral position of the character, his "life truth" [5, p. 316]. If in an ordinary drama the "truths of life" of several characters are tested, and the confrontation of these human positions is the basis of the dramatic conflict, then in a monodrama the artistic attention is evidently concentrated on testing the "truths of life" of only one character - "the only one acting." (Kavoulakos, 2023)

On the other hand, interest in the depiction of the crisis of consciousness determines the peculiarity of the artistic representation of the inner action in the monodrama, as well as the very nature of the presence of a dramatic catastrophe in it in comparison with a non-monodramatic play that assimilates the inner action (Bologh, 2022).

Thus, in the last catastrophe (according to N. D. Tamarchenko, in the drama always "the course of the action creates the premises for the hero's catastrophe" (Berdimuratova,

1999), it takes place in the external world, is directly related to the course of external events (the sale of the estate in A. P. Chekhov's "Vishny Garden"; listening to the "confession" of Fedya Petushkov and subsequent betrayal of Artemyev in L. N. Tolstoy's "Living Corpse According to N. D. Tamarchenko, in the inner action of the non-monodramatic play "the external course of events is combined with the preparation of radical internal changes" (Berdimuratova, 1999) it can be said that it directly implements it. The reader/viewer learns that the hero changes from his "verbal actions" (V. Khalizev), independently assigning a certain replica of the character to the "status of eventfulness" (V. Tupa). This kind of receptive reaction is determined by the specifics of dramatic discourse. Due to the lack of "narrative intent" in the latter, the leading witness position is assigned to the reader / viewer, who is called upon to "confirm" the "event status of the represented in the drama" (Evreinov, 1909).

In the monogram, the situation changes. The concept of catastrophe as the most important structural element of dramatic action can also be applied to monodrama (without which it would be difficult to speak of the regularity of the presence of works of this type within the dramatic literary genre). However, this catastrophe occurs not in the external world, but within the central character's consciousness, and becomes not the object of joint observation (from the point of view of "witness and judge") from the audience (as in a non-monodramatic play). It is directly constructed "here and now" (in "true sympathy") and in the recipient's own consciousness, inevitably leading to a provocative, simultaneous with the hero, "reforming" his system of life values, a radical "shifting of his intentions" (V. Tyup). This is most likely due to the monodrama's two architectural properties, which the usual drama lacks.

On the one hand, we are dealing with the receptive worldview of the reader/viewers "attached" to the worldview of "the one acting" (thanks to which the former takes not an external, but an internal position in relation to the image, sees everything happening through the eyes of the hero, forgetting the existence of the boundary of the scene and the hall, as if leaving it behind (Alima, 2014). On the other hand, it is about the monodrama's attraction to the isomorphism of the structure of the depicted world to the structure of the crisis consciousness of the central character. Let us consider the second property more closely. To do this, let's turn to the play "Black Masks."

In it, everything that happens in the mind of the Duke of Lorenzo is reflected in the very structure of the depicted world, namely - in the grotesque-fantastic chronotope of the play, whose properties also demonstrate the hero's conscious flexibility between all phenomena and values.

Discussion

Thus, in the first picture, everything seems to indicate that the action is not yet taking place in Lorenzo's sick mind, but in "objective" ("healthy") reality. Preparations are underway for the masquerade, and there is still no indication of the hero's insane state - the hero's dialogues with his wife and courtiers relate to the expectation of the coming

masquerade. At the same time, however, a fragment appears in the first picture that contradicts the type of perception to which the text also sets the reader/viewer. Thus, the servant informs Lorenzo that "a black serpent crawls among the cypresses." On the one hand, this phrase can be interpreted in such a way that the servant actually sees the procession of guests dressed in all black (and therefore resembling a large serpent) ("realistic" motivation of the characters' words). On the other hand, this image is related to the images of black masks from the duke's vision (so to speak, "grotesque-fantasy" motivation). There is a possibility of a double (and even multiple) interpretation of the servant's statement: either what he sees is an optical deception, or in fact, the guests invited to the masquerade make such an impression, or the boundary between real and unreal, imaginative begins to blur from the very beginning of the play. It should be noted that the possibility of motivating events is not only preserved further in the play, but even strengthened. In this connection it can be said that the chronotope of the play, corresponding to its initial situation, has a much greater degree of definiteness. For example, at the masquerade, the Duke of Lorenzo speaks to "masks" that embody his lies, his heart, and his thoughts. On the one hand, the presence of these masks can be assessed as part of the character's delusion. On the other hand, the "realistic" motivation for the appearance of these "strange" characters at the ball does not disappear. All that happens can also be taken as a cruel joke of drunken guests (cf. for example, the refrain of Christopher: "These gentlemen." "they drink wine like camels in the desert"). However, the same masks speak with horror of the black masks, the creations of darkness, which "fled" into the castle without invitation (and therefore are hardly a part of the primary, "objective" reality).

The fifth (final) scene of the play sharpens the existing semantic (and even factual) ambiguity, even grotesquely "completes" it. On the one hand, the impression arises that a return to normal, "healthy," reality is taking place, as evidenced by the presence of points of view on everything that is happening to Lorenzo from the outside and the appearance of a rational explanation for what has happened. It is spoken by the manager, Cristoforo, and his wife, Lorenzo Franchesca (the madness of Lorenzo, who takes his face for a mask). On the other hand, in the so-called 'real' world there are traces of the duel, which occurs only in the duke's imagination, in spite of their 'realistic' explanation: 'You are stabbed with something, Duke Lorenzo, your shirt is bleeding' - although before that, in the second picture, this mortal (!) wound had been inflicted on the stage of 'Lorenzo entering' 'Lorenzo entering' (this 'doubling' is the result of the former duke's consciousness).

The play's finale, too, does not place the accents expected by the reader/viewer. The question of who (God or Satan) awaits the duke of Spadaro in the final remains unanswered. Lorenzo simply addresses the guest "Signor," and his own words in the 5th picture contradict each other - at first he calls Satan "the lord of the world," and then says that the one invited to the feast is God.

Such "inconsistencies" in the structure of the play's chronotope are necessary, because they are immersed in a state identical to the hero's inner state and the perceiving subject (which is what the monodrama achieves, according to N. Yevreinov). The latter, in the

process of receiving the play, like the character experiencing the painful event of meeting with an incomprehensible abyss both in the world around him and within his own "I," loses his calm, comfortable, confident state more and more. Faced with the "probability" of the depicted reality, with the insoluble contradictions present in it (the impossibility of "assembling" it by "drawing out" all the clearer boundaries), the perceiving subject, just like the hero, sinks into a crisis (catastrophic) state, comes face to face with the "tragic disconnection" of their existence and their own consciousness, experiencing the loss of their "simple ideas" (S. N. Brotman). The latter is no more than a comforting illusion in the world of the play (which is the core of the hero's life drama, transmitted directly to the recipient). Thanks to the "flattering" boundaries within the very depicted world, the author already builds reality analogous to the reality existing in the hero's perception on the "territory of the addressee's consciousness" (V. Tupa).

It should be said that the catastrophe of consciousness, experienced simultaneously by both the hero and the reader/viewer of the monodrama, does not imply a receptive stop of the latter in the "feeling" of the character, but is always internal, as it simultaneously creates the necessary distance between the hero and the reader/viewer. This distance allows the latter, according to N. D. Tamarchenko, to move "from the hero's point of view to the "higher" - and no longer emotional-ethical, but aesthetic-point of view" [5, p. 311].

As an example in support of this thesis, let us give the monogram "The Fool and Death" by G. von Gofmanstal, the main character of which is a wealthy gentleman of the 1920s. XIX century. Claudio. The original plot situation of the play "describes" the character's state of spiritual seclusion ("And my life, dried up in captivity <.> / Tks its web in these rooms of the noisy.") caused by deep disappointment in life ("Overwhelmed by the experience of the sick, / Hiding behind the wall of arrogance, / Without complaining, I live alone now"). The further development of the action in the play is also connected with the clarification of the main character's consciousness. First of all, the violin music that Claudio hears and takes it for the music of a stranger leads the hero to the rise of life, to the desire to go beyond the "walls of arrogance" and "melt" with life ("And my life is a relentless flow / Burlit, dams are old wrecks"). A catastrophe in the play, it seems, can be considered the hero's horror of realizing that this music is played by Death. She appears in Claudio's vision with a "knob in his hand" and "a violin at his belt," signifying the approaching end of the character, who literally just had a "sudden" "hurry" to life - it is the last factor and gives the event of Death's visit a catastrophicity sharply felt by the hero (and the addressee of the monodrama). Later on, everything that happens in the play becomes a stage explanation of the character's premature vision. In addition to Death, there are also the deceased mother, friend, lover of Claudio, whose voices convey the character's sense of guilt (which he did not think of before Death) before each of them. In the end, the encounter with Death is both painful and blessing for the hero, because it is related to the awakening of "spiritual hidden forces" in the character (which Claudio himself recognizes), as a result of which he "discovers for the first time the meaning and brilliance" of his life. Moreover, as in "Black Masks," the hero's spiritual disaster actualizes not only (and not so much his personal) life

parameters, but also, first and foremost, generic, universal, connected with the life of any person. Therefore, in their sentences, Claudio and Death are 'uplifted' to the level of necessary generalizations, not speaking of Claudio, but of man in general (whereas the empirical details of the situation mentioned at the beginning of the play - so to speak, the socio-temporal aspect of what is happening - completely disappear from both the hero's worldview and the reader's perceptive worldview).

Conclusion

The "carnival" of death, at which the perceiving subject (together with the hero) can look into her "immobile face," allows the reader/viewer to feel all the completeness of humanity in himself and thereby to become internally acquainted with the secret of man as a special being in the universe (what Death says in its last monologue). The reader/viewer, together with the hero, if not victorious over death, at least on his own existential experience affirms the greatness of man in spite of the "short duration" of his existence in earthly life. Therefore, as in L. Andreev's "Black Masks," the hero's (and the reader/viewer's) consciousness disaster is internally tormenting. The reader/spectator indeed cleanses himself in the process of living the hero's experience personally "from the emotions of pity and fear" (A. Nichev) [3, p. 14] and thereby reveals in the very existence of this inner catastrophe, despite all its painfulness, the "highest expediency" and necessity.

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