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THE THEORY AND HISTORY OF THE GROTESQUE IN THE EUROPEAN LITERATURE (THE DYNAMIC OF THE NOTION)

Статтю присвячено теорії та історії формування й розвитку гротеску в європейських літературах. Простежено динаміку та різновиди поняття «гротеск». Головну увагу приділено визначенню гротеску та його семантиці в літературному процесі. Витоки гротеску виявлено вже в античних міфах, згодом гротеск набував різних форм. Терміни «гротеск», «мореск», «арабеск» тривалий час використовувалися як синоніми. У статті пояснено різницю між ними, а також визначено конститутивні ознаки гротеску.

У статті розглянуто погляди дослідників (з-поміж яких Ф. Шлегель, Ф. Шеллінг, Г. Шнеєганс, В. Кайзер) стосовно природи гротеску. Особливу роль у розвитку теорії гротеску відіграли праці М. Бахтіна, який дослідив своєрідність гротеску в добу Середньовіччя, а також у подальші епохи (Відродження, бароко, романтизм та ін.). Серед ключових ознак гротеску М. Бахтін виділив карнавал, фантастику, сміх, жахливість створеного художнього світу для людини та ін.

Гротеск визначено як принцип художньої типізації, що грунтується на поєднанні різнорідних елементів у єдину художню цілість або розкладання їх, що призводить до утворення нових естетичних структур, які виявляють приховану сутність подій і явищ. Гротеск – історична категорія, яка видозмінюється й наповнюється різним змістом, виконує різні функції залежно від викликів часу.

Ключові слова: гротеск, романтизм, реалізм, образ, роман, стиль, жанр, Е. Т. А. Гофман, М. Гоголь.

The grotesque as a phenomenon has appeared on the basis of the archaic myths. The ancient Greeks believed in some spirits which combined the traits of human being with the traits of animal and were endowed with real and magical features (Echidna, Chimera, Sphinx, Erinyes, sirens, Harpies, centaurs etc.). Such combination of heterogeneous characteristics was called a «mixanthropy», which appeared in the ancient myths of different nations and genetically was traced to the beliefs in the unity of man and nature, to the feeling of the indestructible ties among everything in the universe. Mythological grotesque has been manifested in the various forms of art: sculpture (décor elements of cathedrals), painting (vase-painting, mural painting) and literature (laughter).

In the culture of medieval Europe Christian grotesque was widespread as a reflection of the world complexity, the unity and the struggle in it of the various forces of light and darkness, of God and Devil, of the physical and the spiritual, of the real and unreal world. Christian grotesque was endowed with the sacred meaning, embodied in the stable symbols. The images of animals, plants, and objects of the material world were endowed with the particular semantics, and their bizarre combination acquired a symbolic meaning associated with the biblical myths.

The term «grotesque» came much later – at the end of the XV century, when Raphael and his pupils during the excavation of the palace of Nero in Rome discovered ancient paintings, ornaments, called in Italian «la grottesco» (from the word «grotto» – cave, located in the mountain). Rafael used techniques of this grotesque ornament in 1517-1519 while painting «Loggias» in the Vatican. This outstanding monument of the high Italian Renaissance was called the «Bible of Raphael», because the loggias arch was divided into 13 sections, each section was created as an artistic world: there were 4 stories from the New and Old Testaments (of 52). The sections were relatively independent, but at the

same time they were related as a part of a single plan – Heaven. Thus, in the «Loggias of Raphael» in the Vatican there were combined the principles of the ancient and Christian grotesque.

Grotesque paintings and sculptures quickly became popular in Europe. In 1778-1787 by the order of Empress Catherine II under the direction of J.F. Reiffenstein and H. Unterberger the copies of Vatican paintings in Rome were made to recreate the «Loggias of Raphael» in the Hermitage in St. Petersburg. According to the design of the architect Giacomo Quarenghi, they were incorporated into the building of the Old Hermitage and inaugurated in 1787, and later in 1842-1851 during the construction of the New Hermitage by the project of Leo von Klenze the «Loggias of Raphael» were saved.

For a long time, the terms «grotesque», «arabesque» and «moresco» were used as synonyms. Arabesque (from the Spanish and the Italian «arabesco» – Arabic) is a kind of ornament that consists of geometric figures, fanciful combination of lines, curls, and stylized flowers. The idea of arabesque ornament is consonant with the views of Islam about « the eternally continuing Universe.» Arabesque is based on the repetition and multiplication of one or more pieces of the pattern (it can be stopped or extended at any moment). This ornament virtually eliminates background as one pattern fits into the other. If floral motifs are used more in arabesque, the moresco ornament consists of lines and geometric shapes. The similarity of the concepts of «grotesque», «arabesque» and «moresco» was founded on the principle of combining different elements and filling the space with intricate ornaments that embodied the imagination of the world as a union. Sometimes the concept of «rafaelesque» was used as a synonym for the grotesque and arabesque.

By the XVIII century the grotesque had been represented in European culture mainly as a category of plastic arts. It was widely used in building construction, especially in the Baroque period (XVI-XVIII centuries), which tended towards eclecticism and synthesis of different elements. The Grotesque was also used in painting and in everyday life. For example, in Russia and in Ukraine in the XVIII-XIX centuries it was a tradition to decorate not only palaces, but manor houses as well in grotesque style (walls, tiles, stained glass, painting on porcelain, textiles, etc.). It's a well known fact that in the early 1800s E.T.A. Hoffman painted the scenery at the Warsaw Academy of Music and the tower of the Bishop's Castle Altenburg near Bamberg with grotesques and he published the series of cartoons on Napoleon I in Dresden. N. Gogol developed the patterns of arabesques and moresco for walls and stained-glass windows in his family estate in Vasiljevka (Poltava province) and also studied and copied grotesque compositions from the temples of Rome.

Grotesque forms in fiction literature since ancient times has been not just the result of imagination, but has reflected the writer's view on the world. It can be confirmed with the works from the Middle Ages to the Enlightenment such as «The Divine Comedy» by Dante, «Gargantua and Pantagruel» by F.Rabelais, «Don Quixote» by Cervantes de Saavedra, «Gulliver's Travels» by J. Swift, and «The Life and Thought of Tristram Shandy, Gentleman» by L. Stern. The main purpose of the grotesque forms until the XIX century was expressed in the context of laughter, revealing the ugly phenomena of reality by the comic means (satire, irony, sarcasm, humor, parody, etc.). According to M. Bakhtin [1], hence there is the connection of the grotesque forms with the folk forms of laughter. Meanwhile, the grotesque had different functions: Christian and educational, social and critical, political and subjective.

The grotesque as a category of aesthetics became the object of an in-depth study of German scientists, philosophers and writers in the late XVIII century. J. Meser in «The Harlequin, or protection of the grotesque and comic» (1761) revealed the grotesque features such as fancifulness, the violation of proportions, and the principle of laughter [22]. K.F Flegel in the «History of comic grotesque» (1788) noted that «the grotesque and comic» is shown in the cartoon, in the individualization brought to the borders of the impossible, and in a humorous contrast, where "not comic things" can be combined [19]. K.F Flegel pointed out that the grotesque is the borderline between the comic and tragic. J.W Goethe in his essay «About the Arabesque» (1789) did not distinguish the concepts of «arabesque» and «grotesque», and also interpreted them as something «distorted», «strange», «unnatural»[2].

The concept of «grotesque» attracted special attention of Jena Romantics, who included this category in their philosophical and aesthetic research. The theory of Romantic grotesque was developed by F. Schlegel (although he also did not distinguish among the concepts of «grotesque», «arabesque» and

«moresco»). In «The Talk on Poetry» (1800) by F. Schlegel the grotesque was defined as a bizarre mix of elements of reality when right world order is violated [15].

According to F. Schlegel, the grotesque inherited unrestricted fabulousness of the images and a «change of enthusiasm and irony». For Schlegel as the Romanticist the grotesque expressed «mystical», «absolutely free foreboding of infinity and perpetual motion», «visible music» and the perfect «pure form». He distinguished such feature of the grotesque as «strangeness» and dynamism» i. e. the ability to move and to be changed. Another F. Schlegel's important conclusion was that he combined the concept of «genre» and «grotesque». In the era of romanticism, the novel was approved as modern and plastic genre, as synthesis of the different styles. It was F. Schlegel who in his work «Letter about the novel» (1801) defined the novel as «a arabesques collection» of poetry and prose, reality and fantasy [15]. The synthesis of the novel corresponded perfectly to the synthetic nature of the grotesque. So the grotesque was actively explored by the Romantic writers in the genre of the novel, including F. Schlegel («Lucinda», 1799).

The contribution to the development of the romantic theory of the grotesque was also made by A.V. Schlegel in the «Lectures on Dramatic Art and Literature» (1809-1811), F. Schelling in his lectures on the philosophy of art (early 1800s), Kant in the «Critique of Judgment» (1790) and Jean-Paul (J. P.F. Richter) in the «Preparatory School of Aesthetics» (1804). Their works defined such features of the grotesque as «independent beauty» (Kant), «a scathing humor» (Jean Paul), internal connection of comic and tragic, the low and the high (A. Schlegel, F. Schelling).

In the XIX century philosophers and scientists began considering if therewas a hidden meaning in the combination of incongruous in the grotesque (arabesque, moresco). Here, opinions were divided: some believed that the grotesque was a «meaningless form», a «senseless distortion of life», a «game» (Fisher, F. Ast), and others thought that the grotesque was a «different world», a «secret meaning» (F. Schlegel, A. Schopenhauer, etc.).

G. Schneegans in «The History of Grotesque Satire» (1894) distinguished among the concepts of «grotesque», «arabesque» and «moresco» and singled out the synthesis of satire and science fiction as a key feature of the grotesque [23]. In the XX century, the problem of grotesque was studied by German researchers. The problem of the grotesque evolution became the subject of a study by W. Kayser in his work «Grotesque: Its Formation in Painting and Poetry» (1957) [21]. He singled out the grotesque of romanticists and modernists as «the most authentic». W. Kayser wrote that there were only some features of the grotesque imagery in realistic literature, but realism in general, in his opinion, excludes the grotesque as «chaos», provoking criticism from J. Mann and other literary critics. In the work «On the Grotesque in Literature» (1966) J. Mann defended the term «realistic grotesque», considering that it was «like life itself: the more we scrutinize it, the more sense we discover in it» [8, p. 102]. In the 1920s Russian formalists, particularly Eichenbaum in the article «How was «The Overcoat» by Gogol made?» [16], offered the idea of selectivity of fabulousness in grotesque. He proved that «move of reality planes», reality recreation, «plans shift» was enough to create the new world, but even so «the reality stays real».

M. Bakhtin in his book «Rabelais' Art and Folk Culture of the Middle Ages and the Renaissance» (1965) revealed the grotesque features of the Middle Ages and the Renaissance: the connection with national culture, national character, the idea of unity and inexhaustibility of objective reality, universalism, freedom, reviving laughter, principle of a play [1].

In this work M. Bakhtin outlined prospects for studying the Romantic grotesque, singled out some of its features:

1) Chamber Carnival;

2) reduction of laughter from humor into irony and sarcasm, reduction of a regenerating moment of laughter;

3) change of the picture of the world - the world is strange and terrible to a man;

4) the embodiment of the mystery of the world and the inner life of an individual.

M. Bakhtin defined the main motifs of German romanticism associated with the grotesque forms: madness, masks, puppets and its tragedy. His observations of the romantic grotesque were extended in

the article «Rabelais and Gogol» (1940, 1970), but, as it is known, they, in contrast to the forms of laughter, had pretty local character and were not the main subject of his research.

In 1969 two works by M. Bakhtin «The Grotesque Image of the Body» [17] and «The theory of the Grotesque by Wolfgang Kayser» [18] were published in the German language and became a new step in the study of theoretical problems of the grotesque. However, the evolution of its historical forms and the interaction between them not often drew the attention of researchers.

Despite the large number of works on the grotesque which appeared in the XX century(F. Dürrenmatt, F. Hyde, M. Curtis, B. Guenther, R. Gakkenbraht, A. Haydzik, L.B. Jennings, Eichenbaum, H. Zundelovich, J. Mann, D. Nikolaev, Shaposhnikova, T. Lyubimov, A. Dezhurov and others), the problem of the grotesque remains open to the scientific debate.

Thus, in our article, we'll try to identify the methodological perspectives of solving this problem. First of all, based on the literary achievements, we'll attempt to give the definition of the grotesque and to identify its constitutive features. In our opinion, the grotesque is the principle of artistic typification based on the combination of different elements into a single unit or the expansion of these elements, which leads to the formation of new aesthetic structures that identify the deep essence of the phenomena.

The concept of «the grotesque» can be used in different ways: 1) the method in fictional text («inclusion» of a certain grotesque images, situations with a plot, etc.), 2) a way to organize the text as a whole. In both cases, the grotesque is the principle of art typification – implementation of typical features in specific images and forms with artistic methods [3]. The Grotesque as a combination of incongruous things or expansion of the unit can occur at different levels of the text structure:

• at the level of artistic images (imagelogy), when one artistic image combines heterogeneous elements, features, characteristics, functions, and so on.

• at the subject-compositional level – the shift of a composition plans, dramatic and improbable plot twists, unmotivated conflict, compositional contrast and asymmetry, plot violation via digression, insert, break, etc;

• at the level of themes and motifs. It may be observed as concentration (actualization) of certain themes and motifs around grotesque structures.

• at the spatial level. The narrowing or expanding of a space, shifting of spatial planes, the free movement in them, and the incredible spatial formation and deformation etc.

• at the temporal level. A violation of the chronological flow of time, the time offset plans, expansion and combination of diverse temporary streams, their acceleration or deceleration, the lack of a causal connection of events, the introduction of the fantastic (magic) element into the time of the artistic work, etc.

• at the level of the genre – genre diffusion, genre canon overcoming, destruction and the combination of different genre matrix, genre features mixing.

• at the level of style – the combination of different stylistic elements.

• at the level of language – a violation of the semantic valence of words, rules of language, piling up of certain verbal means (sounds, synonyms, hyperbole, etc.), the occasional structures, etc.

The characteristic features of the grotesque as the principle of artistic typification are:

1) synthesis (in the broad sense it is the combination of incompatible: comic and tragic, ridiculous and horrible, the real and the fantastic, high and low, etc.);

2) integrity (the grotesque is always integral and indivisible structure, some elements of it have meaning only in their organic unity);

3) wide subtext – «bundle of meanings» of historical, social, political, psychological, philosophical, aesthetic (the «iceberg» effect means that in the grotesque it is not important what is on the surface, not a direct meaning, but what is hidden; the overflow of meanings is often observed in the grotesque);

4) dynamism (the ability of the grotesque structures to move, transform, modify, integrate, expand);

5) conceptualism (the grotesque reflects the artistic conception of the world and a man);

6) symbolism (the grotesque is a sign of another world, another reality, of the hidden nature of the phenomena);

7) poetics of «strange» (methods of fancy, carnival features, fantasy, aesthetic game, the introduction of different points of view, their mixing, application, etc.).

The grotesque is able to detect the deep essence of the real world phenomena as well as the processes in the human mind and the subconscious. Because of its synthetic character the grotesque is open to different senses, that gives opportunity to use the grotesque for various representatives in different literature epochs and trends.

The fantastic is often the basis for the combination of incompatible things in the grotesque, but, as it has already been noted by scholars (Eichenbaum, Y. Mann, L. Menglinova, A. Dezhurov, etc.), fabulousness is not an obligatory feature of the grotesque. Often grotesque images and situations correspond to reality, though in some way they re-create it through the shifting planes, for example in the «grotesque realism» (M. Bakhtin) and «realistic grotesque» (Y. Mann).

The ways to create grotesque structures (images, plots, topos, etc.) are various: contrast, hyperbole, litotes, metonymy, paradox, parody, etc. But they are not identical with the very notion of «the grotesque», which is much wider and only relies on a certain way or ways.

Depending on the position of the author, the different kinds of grotesque can be singled out: comic, tragic, and ambivalent. The grotesque is often used by writers to create the satirical image. However, the grotesque can be used as a way to detect a terrible, ugly, absurd, unnatural, and in the function of regenerating category known as catharsis (M. Bakhtin). The multyfunctionality of this notion should be noted: the grotesque is able to reflect a disharmony (the absurd, the destruction of life), and the dream of the writer about the harmony between the whole world and a man.

In the structure of the text the grotesque can be considered as a dominant of a style, and as a peripheral component that is manifested at the different textual levels (the role of the grotesque in the text may vary). The grotesque can organize the whole artistic world of the work, it can hold all the compositional structure of the text, or take the form of separate images, plot changes, motifs, etc. But whatever the place of the grotesque in the text is (formation of the individual elements or creation of the entire grotesque world), it manifests both general (reflection of the philosophy, culture, religion, art thinking, epoch, artistic tradition, literary movement, style, genre) and individual characteristics (the individual style of the writer, author's position, innovation).

The grotesque is a historical category. The content, forms and functions of the grotesque has been changing over time. So the grotesque at different stages of the literary process had its peculiarities. In the history of the European literature there have been such types of the grotesque distinguished: ancient, medieval, Renaissance, baroque, romantic, realistic, modernistic, and postmodernistic (classicism tended to strict proportions and rational constructions, did not accept the poetics of the grotesque).

There are no vivid boundaries the grotesque types in the literary process. The grotesque types show a surprising openness and a tendency to artistic synthesis of achievements of different ages that clearly becomes apparent in the romantic, realistic and modernistic discourse.

E. T. A. Hoffman is a key figure of the grotesque and fabulous trend in the European Romanticism. This trend appeared during a mature romanticism and had such characteristic features:

• interest in the social and philosophical, social and psychological aspects of a human life and a life of humanity;

• criticism of the negative tendencies in society, the image of «mechanization» of life, the alienation of the individual;

• creating phantasmagoric (often absurd) paintings that reflect the spiritual shifts in society and in the inner world of the individual;

• contrast, allegories are used in depicting the disharmony of reality.

What is the specificity of Romantic grotesque of E.T.A. Hoffman?

Romantic grotesque of E. T. A. Hoffman absorbed contrasts and symbolism of Christian grotesque, biblical mythology. The division of the grotesque world of E. T. A. Hoffman into the Philistines (townspeople spiritually limited) and the enthusiasts (creators spiritually rich) goes back to the biblical myth of the Philistines who fought against Israel (in German, Philister is the representative of the Old Testament people, the Philistine).

The romantic grotesque of E. T. A. Hoffman embodies the idea of the artistic synthesis. In his prose, including the grotesque structures, the writer used the principles of musical and theater art. The contrast is the basis of characters, the main attention is drawn to the emotion revealing, but not to a psychological depth (such as in the plays by E.T.A. Mozart). B. Shalaginov noted that «Little Tsakhes» contains grotesque and ironic transformation of mistrial plot in «The Magic Flute» by Mozart [13]. In addition, the grotesque structures of E. T. A. Hoffmann are based on visual methods of creating images (detailed descriptions of appearance, clothing etc.) that is due to the author's passion to visual arts (cartoon).

Romantic grotesque by E. T. A. Hoffman is based on the poetics of folklore, particularly singspiel (in German Singspiel literally means «playing, singing» from singen – «sing» and Spiel – «game»). This music and drama genre was popular in Germany and Austria in the second half of the XVIII century and the beginning of the XIX century. These plays were either a musical or opera with spoken dialogue (instead of recitatives), and had mostly comic content. It led to the compound of heroic, lyrical and comic subjects in the works of writer. The main function of the Hoffman's grotesque is the identification of a devastating effect of «society mechanization» on the individual and mass consciousness and two dimensions filled with contrasts and control (not just in the external world, but also in the inner world of the character).

When Nikolay Gogol was entering Russian literature, the Romanticism had already been well established in the different kinds of art and it interacted with realism. This interaction has been clearly manifested in the grotesque of the writer. The grotesque of N. Gogol can not be defined unambiguously, it can not be called only «realistic» because Gogol's grotesque absorbed the achievements of romanticism, realism, baroque, and Christian grotesque. In addition, N. Gogol used traditions of Ukrainian folklore and pagan mythology, which also affected the specificity of his grotesque structures.

In the early creative works of N. Gogol («Evenings on a Farm near Dikanka», 1831) the grotesque was mainly determined with folk traditions (myths and Slavonic folklore) as well as with the achievements of the Baroque and Romanticism. Researchers (V. Matsapura, V. Denisov and others) have noted the synthesis of pagan and Christian traditions in the early prose by N. Gogol, which was evident in the grotesque structures (images, plot conflicts, motifs, the art world in general). From the Ukrainian Baroque Gogol borrowed the combination of high and low, comic and tragic, the different plans (domestic, fantastic, historical, fabulous, etc.). The combination of the incompatibility was reflected in the language of early stories by N. Gogol, where the elements of Russian and Ukrainian languages were united. The combination of literary and colloquial speech in his works, full of historical exoticism. Rhetorical elements, the fictional narrator dialogues with the reader and the author, the effect of changing points of view (which causes shifting plans) are also associated with the traditions of Ukrainian Baroque.

The functions of the grotesque in the mature works by N. Gogol are different. With the help of grotesque images and situations, the writer reveals the illogic of social relations. The grotesque can also function as a spiritual test («Portrait»), which dates back to the traditions of the Christian grotesque (Chartkov comes into the fight with Devil). Piskarev's artistic imagination becomes the basis of grotesque paintings in «Nevsky Prospect,» which emphasizes the discord between dream and reality.

The grotesque in «Petersburg» stories was manifested at various levels of the text: narrative, compositional, spatial, temporal, figurative and motif level. Among the methods of N. Gogol's grotesque metonymy has been dominated (replacing human with job position, etc.) as well as the loss by the main character of his «I», the existence of borderline between dream and reality, the shift of the space-time plans, the «rumors», and contrast. The methods of romantic poetics were used by N. Gogol to discover new themes and issues: the tragic fate of a «small man», the purpose of art and the artist, and spiritual degradation of man under the influence of the social system, exposure of the world of officialdom.

The content of the grotesque in the «Petersburg stories» differs from «Evenings on a Farm near Dikanka». The grotesque became more evil, scary, demonic, and fatal. This is due to the destructive influence of the whole social system on the personality, and the influence of real forces in contrast to supernatural forces (as in Romanticism). Using traditional romantic grotesque motifs such as dolls, madness, escape from the strange and terrible world N. Gogol expanded motif grotesque system with new motifs: deadness, spiritual test, duality, and devilry. Many motifs are constant such as coat, nose, madness, and devilry [11].

Grotesque images by N. Gogol are flexible, plastic and dynamic, they turned to be different facets to the readers (for example, Poprishchin was a public officer, though he was more nobody, than the «King of Spain»).

In our article we have come to the following conclusions: the grotesque is a modifiable notion throughout the history of literature. However, with all its changes the semantic core of the concept remains the same: the tendency to the synthesis or degradation of the incompatible unity. The grotesque can occur at different levels of content and form of the creative work. Among particular historical forms grotesque has no clear boundaries at different stages of the literary process, confirming the interaction of romantic and realistic grotesque in the creative works of E. T. A. Hoffmann and N. Gogol. Today the grotesque remains one of the most dynamic concepts, which incorporates both tradition and artistic innovation of writers.

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OLGA NIKOLENKO

THE THEORY AND HISTORY OF THE GROTESQUE IN THE EUROPEAN LITERATURE (THE DYNAMIC OF THE NOTION)

The article deals with the history and theory of the grotesque in European literature. The dynamic of this notion is examined. The main attention of the author is paid to the definition of the notion and the changes in its meaning in the literary process. The origin of the grotesque can be found in the Ancient myths when this word appeared in the XV century. During this time «grotesque», «arabesque» and «moresco» were used as synonyms. In this article it is shown the difference of these phenomena in literature and art.

The main ideas of European researchers of the 18th-19th centuries on the grotesque are highlighted. The theories of F. Schlegel, F. Schelling, G. Schneegans, W. Kayser and many others are discussed.

The theory of the grotesque by outstanding Russian scientist M. Bakhtin is analyzed. As he studied the Romantic grotesque and highlighted some of its features such as Chamber Carnival, reduction of laughter from humor in irony and sarcasm, reduced regenerating moment of laughter; the changes in the picture of the world: the world is strange and terrible to man; the embodiment of world's mystery and the inner life of the individual.

The author of the article offers the definition of the grotesque as a principle of artistic typification based on the combination of different elements into a single unit, or the expansion of these elements, which leads to the formation of new aesthetic structures that identify the deep essence of the phenomena.

The concept of «grotesque» can be used in two different ways: 1) receiving in fiction («inclusion» of certain grotesque images, plot, etc.), 2) a way to organize the text as a whole. In both cases, the grotesque is a principle of art typification. The grotesque in the creative works of A. T. A. Hoffman and N. Gogol have been carefully studied at all levels of literary work.

Key words: grotesque, romanticism, realism, image, novel, style, genre, E. T. A. Hoffman, N. Gogol.

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