

УДК 82-312.4

*Mariia Pangelova,
Candidate of Philology, Senior Lecturer
of Department of Ukrainian and Foreign
Literature and Teaching Methods
SHEI «Pereiaslav- Khmelnytsky Hryhoriy
Skovoroda State Pedagogical University»
(t. Pereiaslav- Khmelnytsky, Ukraine)*

**THE NOVEL «PERFUMER» BY P. SUSKIND
AS A «PROGRAM» PRODUCT OF POSTMODERNISM**

Актуальність теми даної статті пов'язана з тим, що в період перегляду культурної спадщини, старих настанов, пошуку нових шляхів розвитку літератури, представляється особливо важливим досліджувати сучасні романи, в даному випадку – нову модифікацію жанру історичного роману на прикладі твору П. Зюскінда «Парфумер». Оскільки історичний роман нового типу існує і в сучасній Україні, висновки даного дослідження можуть створити основу для аналізу цього явища і на вітчизняному матеріалі. У зв'язку з цим піднімаються проблеми вивчення історії жанру, а також саме явище постмодернізму, зокрема, його ставлення до історії та минулого.

Ключові слова: роман, пастиш, постмодернізм, жанр, геній, запах.

Актуальность темы данной статьи связана с тем, что в период пересмотра культурного наследия, старых установок, поиска новых путей развития литературы, представляется особо важным исследовать современные романы, в данном случае – новую модификацию жанра исторического романа на примере произведения П. Зюскинда «Парфюмер». Поскольку исторический роман нового типа существует и в современной Украине, выводы данного исследования могут создать основу для анализа этого явления и на отечественном материале. В этой связи поднимаются проблемы изучения истории жанра, а также само явление постмодернизма, в частности, его отношение к истории и прошлому.

Ключевые слова: роман, пастиш, постмодернизм, жанр, гений, запах.

Relevance of the topic of this article related to the fact that during the revision of the cultural heritage of old units, the search for new ways of development of literature, it is especially important to explore the modern novels, in this case – a new modification of the genre of the historical novel on the example of the work by P. Suskind «Perfumer». The novel «Perfumer» («Das Parfum») – a unique phenomenon in modern German literature. Suskind 's novel can be called without exaggeration the first true post-modern German novel, farewell to modernity and the cult of genius. Because a new type of historical novel exists in contemporary Ukraine, conclusions of this study may create a foundation for the analysis of this phenomenon also on domestic materials. In this regard, raised the problem of studying the history of the genre, as well as the phenomenon of post-modernism, in particular its attitude to history and the past.

Key words: *novel, pastiche, postmodernism, genre, genius, smell.*

Actuality of the topic of this article relates to the fact that during the revision of the cultural heritage of old plants, the search for new ways of development of literature, it is especially important to explore the modern novels, in this case – a new modification of the genre of the historical novel by the example of the work by P. Suskind «Perfumer». Due to a new type of historical novel, which exists in today's Ukraine, the findings of this study may provide a basis for the analysis of this phenomenon on domestic materials.

The objective of this study is to determine the characteristics of the novel «Perfumer» by P. Suskind at the present stage – in a situation of post-modernism.

The novel «Perfumer» by P. Suskind can be attributed to the modern skeptical historical novel, because the aim of the author is not a re-creation of a specific historical period, the spirit of the past through the thoughts and actions of people, and the game with the literary codes.

The novel «Perfumer» («Das Parfum») is a unique phenomenon in modern German literature. Coming out of print in 1985, it achieved such international fame which in German literature used the latest works by Thomas Mann, H. Böll and G. Grass. Only in Germany circulation it amounted to more than two million copies and was translated into 31 languages. However, in philological circles of Germany novel was received pretty cool, and only a few years later began to appear critical articles and works about it, amount of which, however, is quite a few. Quotes from newspaper reviewers and critics of the novel hit polarity ratings from «kitsch» and «epigones», «artificial mix of styles and motives» to «shock the reader,» «phenomenal design» and «a happy event in the German-language literature».

Suskind's novel can be called without exaggeration the first true post-modern German novel, farewell to modernity and the cult of genius. According to Wittstock, the novel is elegantly disguised by journey through the history of literature. The first and foremost problem that interested author is a problem of

creativity, creative personality, the cult of genius that nurture by writers since the days of the German Romanticism. Of course, the problem of genius troubled and romantics in England and France, and «Perfumer» has allusions to literary works in those countries. But the genius of German literature has become a cult figure in the works of German writers can gradually trace the evolution of the image of the genius, his rise and degradation. In Germany, the cult of genius proved to be more tenacious and, finally, in the XX century in the perception of millions of Germans was embodied in the sinister and mysterious figure of Hitler and turned into ideology. The post-war generation of writers was aware of a considerable share of the blame lying on literature fostered this cult. Suskind's novel destroys it, using a favorite method of postmodernism – «use and abuse», «the use and insult», i.e. the simultaneous use of some kind of theme, style, tradition and demonstration of its insolvency, the undermining, questioning. Suskind uses a huge number of works by German, French and English writers, relating to the theme of genius, and with their help criticizes the traditional notions of originality, exclusivity of the creative personality. Suskind enters his novel in the tradition of the cult of genius, undermining it from within.

«Perfumer» – is typical of the postmodern layered novel. Its genre like any other postmodern works is not easy to determine, because the boundaries of genres are blurred in modern literature and constantly violated. By outward appearances it can be attributed to the historical and detective genres. Subtitled «The Story of a Murderer», and a reproduction of the painting by Watteau with a dead naked woman on the cover is clearly designed to appeal to the general reader, and make it plain that this is a detective. Beginning of the novel, which is the exact duration, describes the life of Paris of that era, typical of the historical novel. Of course the story is aimed at a wide range of interests of readers: highly literature language, stylistic virtuosity, ironic game with the reader, the description of the private sphere of life and the gloomy picture of the crime. Description of birth, education, studies of the hero involve the genre education (Bildungsroman), and the constant references to the genius, originality of Grenouille, his extraordinary talent who leads his life and subordinates all other properties of nature and even the body, hinting at what is in front of us is a real «Künstlerroman» – a novel about the artist, a genius.

However, none of the reader's expectations, caused by a hint of a particular genre, is justified. The detective needed that evil was punished, offender unmasked, world order restored, none of these conditions is not met in the novel. V. Fritz called «Perfumer» a requiem for crime novels. The value system of Bildungsroman is undermined. «Teachers» of Grenouille do not experience any feelings for him, except hostility. Education of Grenouille comes to learning and memorizing scents and mix them in the imagination. Love, friendship, family relations as factors in the formation of identity, without which it is impossible to imagine a novel of education, here are absent, the hero is completely isolated from the outside world spiritually. Until some time Grenouille does not feel any sort of feeling as if all of his senses, there is only the sense of smell. The

theme of love, compassion, friendship and other human feelings of Grenouille is closed from the beginning, when he voted with the first cry «against love and nevertheless for life». «He was a monster from the beginning» [2, p. 27]. The only feeling that ripens in Grenouille – it is aversion to the people, but even this does not find their response. Forcing people to love himself, rejected and ugly, Grenouille realizes that they are disgusting to him and, therefore, their love does not need by him. Grenouille's tragedy is that he cannot find out who he is, and cannot even enjoy his masterpiece. He realized that people perceive and love only his mask from the flavor. Parody or pastiche, parody and historical detective novel, educational novel, on the different genres of Romanticism and Symbolism freely flow from one to the other, impeding the reader's perception. A parody of the novel of education, detective, historical novels scattered in the fantasy, Dionysian finale, where the irrational takes over rational prescription of crime novel.

«Perfumer» can be called a program product of postmodernism, because there with a good literary language and thrilling narrative form embodied practically every major installation of postmodernism. Here are layering, and criticism of education, ideas about the originality of identity, the game with the reader, farewell to the modernist longing for an inclusive order, integrity and aesthetic principles that confront the chaos of reality, and of course, intertextuality – allusions, quotations and stylization. In the novel embodies the rejection of the totalitarian power of the mind, of the novelty, the free circulation of the past, the principle of entertainment, the recognition of a fictional literary work.

The fiction of the protagonist, Grenouille, highlights from the first lines: «... his genius and his phenomenal vanity limited by the sphere, leaving no trace in history» [2, p. 5]. He could not leave traces because he was torn to pieces and eaten to the last shred in the final novel. In the first paragraph, the author claims a genius of his hero, which is inextricably linked with evil, Grenouille – «ingenious monster» [ibid]. Generally, in the image of Grenouille author combines many features of genius, as it is represented by Romanticism to Modernism – from Messiah to the Fuhrer. These inherent personality traits of gifted author borrows from a variety of products – from Novalis to Grass and Boll. The grotesque combination of these features into one reminiscent of Dr. Frankenstein creation of his monster. The author calls his creation the «monster», it is devoid of almost all human qualities, but hatred, being rejected by the world and itself turning away from him, seeking to subjugate mankind with his talent. Lack of own smell at Grennouille means his lack of personality, his own «I». His problem is that, faced with the inner emptiness, Grenouille is not trying to find own «I». Here we are dealing with the quest. Search of fragrance would be symbolize the creative search of them. However, the genius of Grenouille is able to create a clever fake human odor. He is not looking for his personality, but only masks its absence, which results in self-destruction and the collapse of the genius in the final. Complete disintegration of Grennouille

ironically presented as literally eating him by vagabonds, under the influence of spirits that made them cannibals.

On the image of Grenouille V. Fritzen builds an entire medical history of genius. Firstly, because the genius should stand out from the crowd externally, he certainly has a physical disability. Hero of Suskind's bears grotesque features of degeneration. His mother was ill, so he got a bad heredity. Grenouille has a hump, mutilated leg, all kinds of serious illnesses have left their marks on his face, and he came out of the cloaca, «he was even less than nothing» [2, p. 129].

Secondly, anti-rational genius, always remains a child, it cannot raise, as it follows its own internal laws. But, the teacher of romantic genius was nature. Grenouille, however – his own work. He was born, he lived and died like a contrary to all laws of nature and destiny, just as he wished. Suskind's genius as the absolute subject of Fichte, creates himself. Moreover, the nature of it – a bare material, Grenouille seeks to wrest soul from it, broken down into component parts and joining in the correct proportions to create his work.

Thirdly, the genius and intellect are not the same thing. Grenouille has a unique gift – his sense of smell. Thus all consider him an imbecile. Only to four years Grenouille learned to speak, but with abstract, ethical and moral concepts he had problems: «... the conscience, God, the joy, gratitude ... was left for him too vague» [2, p. 31]. By the definition of Schopenhauer, genius combines great strength of will and a greater share of sensuality – there is no question deals with mind. Grenouille is so obsessed with the work and the desire to achieve power, that this subordinates all his vital functions (for example, work at Baldini, in Grasse).

Fourthly, genius tends to madness, or at least to the eccentricity, never taking the norms of life inhabitant. Therefore, in the eyes of romantic burgher the genius always crazy, a child of nature, he does not consider the foundations of society. At the end of the XIX century bond of genius and insanity becomes a subject of scientific study. For Nietzsche's genius – the insane kind of criminal. Grenouille – is the offender a priori, the verdict handed down to him already in the subtitle – «Story of a Murderer», and commits the first murder of Grenouille just born, his first cry, which has become a death verdict for his mother. And in the future the murder will be something natural for him, devoid of any kind of moral coloring. In addition to the 26 murders committed in the elder age, Grenouille magically brings misfortune to people associated with him, and killed Grimal Baldini, disappears Marquis, Drouot was executed. Grenouille cannot be considered immoral, as all sorts of moral concepts were alien to him. He is out of morality, he is over it. Grenouille, however, did not at first opposes the outside world, masquerading with the help of the spirits. Romantic conflict is transferred to the internal sphere – Grenouille is faced with himself, with the lack of himself that is seen in the post-modern conflict.

Fifthly, the genius is the outsider of society, the exile. Genius lives in an imaginary world, in a world of fantasy. However outsidership of Grenouille

goes into autism. Due to the lack of smell, Grenouille is simply ignored by people, or they feel to him incomprehensible for themselves disgusted. At first, Grenouille does not care, he lives in a world of smells. In the mountains, where he removes from the world, Grenouille creates a realm of smells, lives in an air castle of flavors. But after the crisis – the awareness of lack of his own smell – he returns to the world, to enter into it, and the people, deceived by «human spirits» of Grenouille, accept him.

Sixthly, the genius requires autonomy and independence. It requires self-centered of the genius: his inner «I» is always more valuable and richer than the world around us. Loneliness is required by the genius for self-improvement. However, self-isolation represents for the artist also a major problem. Forced isolation from the world of men accepted tragically by a romantic hero-genius. Not the surrounded, rejected him world made Grenouille unsociable, but an inner necessity. With his first cry a newborn Grenouille put himself against the outside world and to stand after all the cruel blows of fate with inhuman tenacity, from the first years of life, moving toward the goal, did not even realizing it. The seven-year staying of Grenouille in the mountains, where he plunges into own existence, is a brought to the absurd allegory of apolitical existence of the artist, his irresponsibility and out-of morality.

Finally, in the image of Grenouille we can also outline such feature as an exceptional genius, messianism, which is emphasized throughout the narrative. Grenouille was born for some higher purpose, namely – «a revolution in the world of smells» [2, p. 54]. After the first murder he opened his destiny, he realized his genius and the direction of his own destiny, «... he was supposed to be the Creator of smells. the greatest perfumer of all time» [ibid]. V. Fritzen notes that in the image of the hero of Suskind lurks myth about foundlings, which should grow into a savior of his people, but grows the monster, the devil [3, p. 30].

When Grenouille creates his first masterpiece – human smell, likened himself to God, he realizes that he can achieve more – he can create superhuman flavor to make people fall in love with himself. Now he wants to be «almighty god flavor – in the real world and over real people» [2, p. 183]. In rivalry with God Grenouille sees a hint of favorite romantic myth of Prometheus. Grenouille robs from nature, from God the secret soul-flavor, but he uses the secret against people stealing their souls. In addition, Prometheus did not want to replace the gods, his feat, he made out of pure love for the people. Grenouille acts of hatred and lust for power. Finally, in the orgy scene perfumer realizes himself «The Great Grenouille», experiencing «the greatest triumph of his life», «The Promethean feat» [2, p. 280].

In addition, the hero of Suskind combines almost all the features that the writers of the Romanticism to modernism endowed a genius, Grenouille goes through several stages of development – from romanticism to Postmodernism. Up to go to the mountains Grenouille stylized like romantic artist. At first, he collects, absorbs odors, and continually makes new combinations of flavors in

his mind. However, he works without any aesthetic principle: he creates and destroys own imagination «as a child, playing with blocks – creatively and destructively, without discernible creative principle» [2, p. 46].

Grenouille artist develops and met his first victim, he found the supreme principle in the victim, according to which the rest of the flavors will be build. After killing her, he is aware of himself as a genius, finds his highest predestination. «He wanted to express outwardly his inner «I», which he considered more worthwhile than anything of the outside world could offer» [2, p. 131]. Therefore Grenouille retreated to the mountains for seven years. But there he did not open any secrets of the universe, nor the path of self-discovery. Instead of updating Grenouille was faced with a lack of self. Renaissance through death did not work, as there was no «I», which could be reborn. This internal disaster destroyed his fantasy world and forced to return to the real world. He is forced to make a return escape – from himself to the outside world. According to V. Fritzen, Grenouille leaves to the mountain as a romantic and comes down like a decadent: «On his» magic mountain «original artist was old, became a decadent artist» [3, p. 71].

Having got to the Marquis-charlatan, Grenouille learns the art of illusion, created the human scent, mask that covered his lack of personality and opened the way to the human world. In Grasse, Grenouille mastered the science of perfume odor extraction technique. However, the purpose of Grenouille is not a revolution in the world of smells. The first masterpiece created by him allowed Grenouille to be so confident in his own genius, that he is not content with just making him to the environment of people, he wants to get them to love himself as God. The genius-decadent deteriorating further – to the Fuehrer, when the pursuit of integrity and unity turns into totalitarianism. In the orgy scene in Grenouille recognized Napoleon, Bismarck and Hitler. After the collapse of the monarchy society longed genius of the Fuhrer and the teachers, who had to withdraw from the chaos, to combine. The parallels with Hitler is quite clear. V. Fritzen quotes a passage from a speech by Goebbels, which states that «genius is building a new world» [3, p. 75]. Documentary footage of Hitler's public statements indicate mass ecstasy, in which he hath caused his hearers, they literally fell into madness and felt great love for the Fuhrer. The orgy scene Grenouille, not having his own personality, makes others to lose it, people turn into a herd of wild animals. A work of art must confront the chaos of reality, and Grenouille, on the contrary, spreads around him chaos and destruction.

Finally, Grenouille is a postmodern genius. He creates his masterpieces like a true postmodernist: not creating his own, but stolen from the blending of nature and living beings, however getting something original, and most importantly – have a strong impact on the viewer / reader. According to V. Fritzen, Grenouille – is a not a real genius of (post) modernism – creates his own purposes, stealing someone else's to dazzle his. Postmodernism genius of Grenouille is that it combines all the historical phases of the cult of genius with disappointing in him, awareness of his insolvency. Creativity of Grenouille comes down to the fact that he steals from the nature of the soul, a little

different from Baldini – philistine who steals the works themselves. Grenouille is the genius impotent.

«Perfumer» is not accidentally incurred the charge of imitation, fashion eclectic styling, if only because the author just been revised ingenious idea of individuality, originality, following the concept of postmodernism. Indeed, the novel is extremely polyphonic, voices from different eras and genres heard quite clearly. The novel is woven from allusions, quotations, sex quotes, themes and motifs of German and not only German literature. Suskind uses the technique of homogenization quotes by members of other texts – on the basis of the composition of perfume. The image of the genius idea organize a creative story and novella of Hoffmann, mainly «Scudery Maid», is a system of coordinates for the orientation of the reader. Suskind novel is not a conglomerate of quotes and carefully constructed dialogue game with both literary tradition and the reader, or rather his literary baggage. As for text decoding, then the German reader is in better position: the majority of allusions in the novel are for the familiar for Germans childhood literary canon.

Yu. Ryan believes that the complexity of the post-modern interpretation of the text comes from a unique situation in which the text is – between parody and pastiche [4, p. 92]. Ryan has resorted to the parallels between the author and his hero: the novel as exists between parody and pastiche as Grenouille – between the world of humans and nature, applies to both, but does not belong to any of them. Suskind novel perfectly illustrates this situation. Pastili – stylistic imitation – called neutral option of parody, parody in terms of intertextuality, often considered a sign of poor quality work. Suskind teetering on the brink between pastiche and parody, so it is difficult to interpret the novel than, for example, «Name of the Rose», which outweighs the beginning of parody.

«Perfumer» – is a typical post-modern novel because it consciously secondary. This pastiche novel, a game novel, it can be subjected to endless interpretations, finding ever new allusions. The secret of the readers' success of Suskind novel, certainly is not only in the general advertising, but also in exclusive styling, high-quality counterfeits detective and historical novels. Entertaining story and a good literary language provides a novel focus on the part of the intellectual public, as well as by the general reader – fan of trivial literature.

Undoubtedly, Suskind's novel and his character have predecessors. This «King and the Clown» by M. Stade, and «Clown» by H. Boll, and «The Tin Drum» by G. Grass. For the postmodern writer of particular interest is a view of history and society through the eyes of an outsider. That such an outsider is Grenouille, and Oscar Matzerath Grass, Böll's clown. For the post-war German literature figure of the clown, and Don Quixotes was very relevant, as the literature on the one hand has lost faith in the educational possibilities of art, and on the other grieved about the loss. The new attitude was reflected in the art of the theater of the absurd borrowing, mostly receiving «alienation», in preference sarcasm, even cynicism, in a narrative tone. In our opinion, Grass and Boll cannot be unambiguously attributed to postmodernism, yet in their work is clearly demonstrate some of postmodern techniques and motifs.

«The Tin Drum» by Grass (1953) – this is a provocation, as Suskind's novel, where the author is hiding from the reader, leaving him in bewilderment of reading. Hero of Grass – genius and an outsider, like Grenouille that resists to society. Grass's narrative is polyphonic and multi-layered, the conditionality story is not hiding, the author leads aesthetic game with the reader. By outward appearances, these two works seem to be close to each other, and there is a desire to classify Grass to postmodernists, but the main purpose of the authors and artistic techniques are different.

Grass's novel after the publication in 1959 caused a literary scandal, fierce debate, several right-wing parties even demanded the prohibition of the novel. Despite all the hype, «Perfumer» was not an explosion, but «a whimper». Of course, the perception of this novel influenced by the changed role of literature in society. Nevertheless, there are reasons for it rooted in the postmodern poetics and worldview. By the force of impact on the reading public postmodern works are often inferior to their predecessors. The reason for this lies mainly in the author's position.

«The Tin Drum» – a total, harsh criticism of post-war German society by Grass, a rebellion against everything. Cynical mockery of all the traditional values of the writer seeks to deideologize reader's consciousness, to free him from the stamps, undermine faith in any ideology, to abolish clichés and stencils. Moreover, the writer puts into question his character, his position and his rebellion.

Grass uses the technique of «theater of the absurd», satire, grotesque, burlesque – these literary devices annoying man in the street, which seeks the author. According to A. Gugin, they create the «alienation effect», which requires the reader constant intellectual effort to uncover the shady side of the historical and everyday conflicts [1, p. 99]. Denying everything, the author protests against the state of society in post-war Germany and is looking for an adequate expression of protest art form.

The game of Suskind with the literary tradition of criticism and protest cannot be called, it is parody, pastiche, stylization. If Grass deals with the immediate reality (in whatever grotesque form it appeared) Suskind refers exclusively to literary discourse, and in the absence of the referent is not possible to use satire or grotesque. The position of the author of «Perfumer» was not stated, we can only think about what problems trouble the author. Grenouille – is Macerata's double, but lifeless twin. A. Gugin speaks of two interrelated and interequal qualities of the personality and talent of Grasse: vitality, and intellectualism. Herein lies the main difference from each other of these two novels: in «Perfumer», as in true postmodern narrative, intellectualism outweighs the vitality, the novel demonstrates the art fatigue.

Literature

1. Гугнин А. Пророк в своем отечестве (о творчестве Гюнтера Грасса) / А. Гугнин // Проблемы истории литературы. – М., 2001. – Выпуск 13. – С. 34–46.

2. Зюскинд П. Парфюмер. История одного убийцы / Патрик Зюскинд. – М. : «Азбука», 2000. – 393 с.
3. Frizen Werner. Patrick Suskind, Das Parfum : Interpretation / Werner Frizen. – München : Oldenbourg, 1996. – 265 p.
4. Ryan Judith. Pastiche und Postmoderne. Patrick Suskinds Roman Das Parfum II Spatmoderne und Postmoderne, herausgegeben von P.M. Lutzeler / Judith Ryan. – Frankfurt a. Main : Fischer, 1991. – 313 p.

References

1. Huhnin A. Prorok v svoem otechestve (o tvorchestve Hiuntera Hrassa) / A. Huhnin // Problemy istorii literatury. – M., 2001. – Vypusk 13. – S. 34–46.
2. Ziuskind P. Parfumer. Istoriia odnogo ubiitsy / Patrik Ziuskind. – M. : «Azбука», 2000. – 393 s.
3. Frizen Werner. Patrick Suskind, Das Parfum : Interpretation / Werner Frizen. – München : Oldenbourg, 1996. – 265 p.
4. Ryan Judith. Pastiche und Postmoderne. Patrick Suskinds Roman Das Parfum II Spatmoderne und Postmoderne, herausgegeben von P.M. Lutzeler / Judith Ryan. – Frankfurt a. Main : Fischer, 1991. – 313 p.

*Статтю рекомендовано до друку
доктором філологічних наук, професором, завідувачем кафедри
української і зарубіжної літератури та методики навчання
ДВНЗ «Переяслав-Хмельницький державний педагогічний університет
імені Григорія Сковороди»
Мазохою Галиною Степанівною*

Стаття надійшла до редакції 14 жовтня 2015 року