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PORTRAIT OF WOMEN'S DESTINY IN "FATHER GORIO" NOVEL OF HONORÉ DE BALZAC

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Abstract

In 19th century France, women were considered as second class citizens in society. They were deprived of the opportunity to gain independence, preserve their wealth and determine their own destiny. Honoré de Balzac, who lived and worked during this period, depicted the real picture of French society in his novels of the "Human Comedy" series, and also artistically interpreted the struggle of women to gain power and control in their lives. In this article, through the analysis of female characters in Balzac's novel, the specific features of the fate of women in bourgeois society are revealed.

Keywords: Balzac, "Father Goriot", female fate, bourgeois society, French literature of the 19th century, Anastasia, Delphine, realism.



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Introduction

In 19th century France, the legal status of women made them completely dependent on men. After marriage, a woman's dowry - the property given by her parents - was transferred to her husband. A woman did not have the right to independently manage her property. This system condemned women to complete economic dependence. In his novels, Balzac tried to show exactly this problem - those women became a "commodity" in the hands of their fathers and husbands. Although the principle of equality was introduced after the French Revolution, in practice the society retained the character of "hereditary capitalism". A person who got an inheritance lived much more prosperously than a person who lived by work and study. In this system, the only way for women to "succeed" was to marry a rich man. But this marriage took them from one slavery (father's dependence) to another (husband's dependence). It is this social conflict that forms the basis of Balzac's novel. In "Father Goriot", the author describes the most tragic consequences of this system - the sacrifice of two sisters by their father and their own by their husbands.

Analysis and Results. The most vivid female characters in the novel "Father Gorio" are Countess Anastasie de Restaud and Baroness Delphine de Nucingen. Both sisters were married off with large dowries by their father, Gorio, a former vermicelli maker. However, their marriage was not built on love, but on the basis of social status and material benefit.

Anastasia is the eldest daughter of the family; she is married to Count de Resto. He has a place in the high society of Paris; he was even accepted in the palace. However, his marriage is unhappy. She has an affair with Count Maxime de Trey, and gradually leads her into poverty by asking her father for money for her lover.



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Anastasia's tragedy is that she is ashamed of her origins. When Rastignac arrives at his house, he sees his father Gorio leaving. Anastasia and her husband are cold towards Rastignac, because the young man knows their "shameful" secret - that their father is a simple merchant. Anastasia is ashamed of her simple background. Delfina is the youngest daughter, who is married to Baron de Nucingen, a German banker. Unlike her sister, her position in society is not very high. Anastasia was received in the palace, but Delfina did not have such an honor. Because of this, there is a conflict between the sisters, they do not talk to each other. Delfina was economically stifled by her husband. She has no control over her dowry. His relationship with Rastignac gives him not only love, but also the hope of economic freedom. Through the boyfriend, she is looking for an opportunity to separate from her husband and manage her finances.

Both sisters have the same attitude towards their father: they remember Gorio only when they need money. As their father becomes poorer, they become more and more distant from him. When Gorio is on his deathbed, none of his daughters come. Delfina arrives at the last minute at Rastignac's request, although does not have time to say goodbye to her father.

Anastazi and Delfina's selfishness, revenge for money and luxury, rude attitude towards their father infuriates the reader. However, in that time and place, such a situation became a natural way of living. This showed that values and pure feelings are rotting from the bottom, true feelings are suffering, if people do not understand this, society will decline, and as a result, Gorio will be humiliated like his father.

A distinctive feature of Balzac's realism is that it shows women's weaknesses and strengths, their duality as victims and perpetrators, without idealizing them. It realistically depicts the real situation of women in society - their economic



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dependence, disenfranchisement, and at the same time, their struggle to expand their sphere of influence.

Balzac condemned both sisters to the same fate. As they rose to the higher ranks of society, they became less human. Gorio considered them to be the rarest jewels of the world, nevertheless the world has reduced them to the level of only a commodity - an article. Anastasia and Delfina unknowingly became victims of that system: they betrayed their father, because they were betrayed by their husbands; they ruled the money, still they themselves remained slaves to the money.

The tragedy of the two sisters in the novel is that they were never truly free. In her childhood, she became a slave to her father's will, then to her husband's economy, and finally to her passions. Neither wealth nor a career in society could fill the void in their hearts. With Father Gorio's last breath, they were condemned to complete solitude - princesses who had lost their crown but never had their own.

In this way, Balzac conveys to the reader a truth as in the eastern narratives: in bourgeois society, the value of a woman is measured by her dowry, her name, her husband. Anastasia and Delfina are the worst example of this scale. Through their fate, the writer seals this for life: if a woman is loved only for money and status, then she has never been loved. And if he loves only these things, he may never have been human.

Conclusion. Honoré de Balzac's novel "Father Goriot" is an artistic encyclopedia of the fate of women in the bourgeois society of the 19th century. The novel has not lost its importance even today. The issues of economic dependence, freedom and self-determination of women depicted in it - gender equality, women's rights - are directly related to today's topical issues. This work of Balzac shows the



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tragedy of a woman of the 19th century and invites today's reader to rethink the fate of women.

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