



## The image of the hero in the stories of Zakhar Prilepin (on the example of the collection “Sin”)

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### ARTICLE INFO

**Article history:**

Received June 2021  
Received in revised form  
20 June 2021  
Accepted 15 July 2021  
Available online  
15 August 2021

**Keywords:**

story,  
hero,  
type,  
loneliness,  
analysis.

### ABSTRACT

The article is devoted to comprehending the image of the hero in the stories of Zakhar Prilepin. With the help of typological and holistic methods of analyzing a literary work, the most important properties that characterize the “new hero” in the writer’s works established marginality, lack of clear life guidelines, and a tendency to reflection. With the “difference” of fate – the main characters in the collection “Sin”: experiencing a tragic military experience – Zakhar (“Sergeant”), who becomes the savior of his soldiers. The heroes depicted as genuine; looking for their own place in the new socio-cultural realities, the unifying link in the stories of the collection “Sin” is the names of the main characters – Zakhar.

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## Zakar Prilepin hikoyalarida qahramonning tasviri (“Gunoh” hikoyalar to‘plami misolida)

### ANNOTATSIYA

**Kalit so‘zlar:**

hikoya,  
qahramon,  
tip,  
yolg‘izlik,  
tahlil.

Maqola Zaxar Prilepinning hikoyalaridagi qahramon qiyofasini tushunishga bag‘ishlangan. Adabiy asarni tahlil qilishning tipologik va yaxlit usullari yordamida yozuvchi asarlaridagi “yangi qahramon”ni tavsiflovchi eng muhim xususiyatlar aniqlandi: hayotiylik chegarasi, aniq hayotiy ko‘rsatmalari yo‘qligi, fikrlashga moyillik. Taqdirning “farqi” bilan – “Gunoh” to‘plamining bosh qahramonlari: Zaxar (“Serjant”) fojiali harbiy tajribani boshdan kechirmoqda, u o‘z askarlarining qutqaruvchisiga aylanadi. “Gunoh” to‘plamining hikoyalarida birlashtiruvchi bo‘g‘in – bosh qahramonlarning ismi – Zaxar bo‘lib, ular chinakam tasvirlangan, yangi ijtimoiy – madaniy voqeilikda o‘z o‘rnini izlovchi obrazlardir.

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## Образ героя в рассказах Захара Прилепина (на примере сборника «Грех»)

### АННОТАЦИЯ

*Ключевые слова:*

рассказ,  
герой,  
тип,  
одиночество,  
анализ.

Статья посвящена осмыслению образа героя в рассказах Захара Прилепина. С помощью типологического и целостного методов анализа литературного произведения установлены важнейшие свойства, характеризующие «нового героя» в произведениях писателя: маргинальность, отсутствие четких жизненных ориентиров, склонность к рефлексии. При «разности» судеб – главных героев в сборнике «Грех»: переживает трагический военный опыт – Захар («Сержант»), который становится спасителем своих солдат. Герои изображены подлинными, ищущими собственное место в новых социокультурных реалиях, объединяющим звеном в рассказах сборника «Грех» является имена главных героев – Захар.

In the modern literary process in Russian prose, authors for the most part agree on the consolidation of the presence of polyphony and multidirectional aesthetic searches for words by contemporary artists. These topical areas will be examined by analyzing the relationship between “author and hero” in the context of the stories of Zakhar Prilepin, which, we believe, will not only show the originality of the genre. In addition, the typology of the hero of the late XX – early XXI century, reflecting the true picture of the life of a person of this period [1–6].

Since the publication of the first works of Zakhar Prilepin, his characters perceived as “new heroes”, “heroes of our time”. All of them are strong personalities, often tough in making decisions and actions, but at the same time endowed with the ability to total reflection, not hardened even after the hardships of life or tragic experience, who have learned the true value of being, trying to find their own place in the world. The collection of stories by Zakhar Prilepin “Sin” is very indicative in this respect [7–12]. Prilepin’s heroes are sentimental and at the same time ruthless, and their behavior is most often determined by circumstances: they find themselves in difficult conditions, where the line between life and death is erased, and decisions must be made immediately. For example, in the story “Carlson” throughout the entire story, the hero’s terrible loneliness and mental fatigue are conveyed: “That spring I quit my pub, where I worked as a bouncer. Tenderness for the world overwhelmed me so much that I decided to get a job in a foreign legion, as a mercenary. I had to somehow calm myself, in any way. “Without a doubt, this “tenderness for the world” was expressed in the hero’s anger and loneliness. His selfishness comes largely not from selfishness, but from the surrounding spiritual emptiness and inner spiritual emptiness, which he gradually tries to fill with reading, now drinking, now fighting. From the first lines of the work, we learn that his property is a small box with letters from his brother who is in prison. Thus, Zakhar wants to escape from such an innocent world, and ends up in an empty world of “worthless offices” and a half-drunk wandering life, but he also does not find himself there. It is difficult for him to fill the void that gradually fills him, and at the end of the story he “The next day I got a call from the legion’s office. I told them that I would not go anywhere”, abandons his dream, realizing that all this was not important, unnecessary [13–16].

In the story “Carlson” throughout the entire story, the hero’s terrible loneliness and mental fatigue are conveyed: “That spring I quit my pub, where I worked as a bouncer. Tenderness for the world overwhelmed me so much that I decided to get a job in a foreign legion, as a mercenary. I had to somehow calm myself, in any way. Without a doubt, this “tenderness for the world” expressed in the hero’s anger and loneliness. His selfishness comes largely not from selfishness, but from the surrounding spiritual emptiness and inner spiritual emptiness, which he gradually tries to fill with reading, now drinking, now fighting. From the first lines of the work, we learn that his property is a small box with letters from his brother who is in prison. Thus, Zakhar wants to escape from such an innocent world, and ends up in an empty world of “worthless offices” and a half-drunk wandering life, but he also does not find himself there. It is difficult for him to fill the void that gradually fills him, and at the end of the story he “The next day I got a call from the legion’s office. I told them that I would not go anywhere”, abandons his dream, realizing that all this was not important, unnecessary [17–20].

In the story “Wheels” – “loneliness”, “emptiness”, “melancholy”, “hopelessness” – is the “circle of life” of the protagonist, his inability to go beyond this circle, to break it does – this is the main idea of the story. The fact that the hero does not have a name is a sign of the generalization of the image, in other words, it is a typical modern hero [21–25]. Depersonalization of personality, inability to act, and moral inaction are the characteristic features of the infantile hero. It should be noted that all the elements of the composition, built in such a way as to most prominently reveal the nature of the hero. Therefore, the author very successfully uses the color painting “black wheels”, the sound painting “the noise of the train wheels”, as well as the season – the end of autumn and the beginning of winter as a time of wilting, death, total loneliness and emptiness.

The hero constantly feels that he is facing an abyss to hell, sometimes he loses his human face, but at the same time, he does not dissolve into meaningless existence: “Vova, have you ever thought ... that every year ... do you experience the day of your death? – I asked ... Vovka turns his head, not understanding a single word of mine”.

The main character is a degraded intellectual, inside of whom there is emptiness, perhaps from disappointment, perhaps from losing a job or poverty, he overcome by melancholy, blues. “... he quit writing poetry and never did it seriously again, quit one job, I didn’t hit another, then, I say, they hit me on the claw, and I found myself in the grave”, and he fills this void with alcohol: “The norm was three bottles per person. The three of us were supposed to drink nine bottles by midnight or a little later”. Thus, the state of the protagonist is the lowest dead center, a quagmire, and which draws him in more and more “I have been drinking for the fourth month already. In addition, I have been doing it every day ... Lying on the bed, gloomy, with a crushed head; I stroked my sofa with my hands and noticed that I was lying without a sheet. Moreover, a blanket without a duvet cover. “Pissing again ...”. Sometimes glimpses of the human make him feel, he is ashamed of his actions in front of loved ones: “Squinting from evil, to spasms in the brain, shame, I recalled how my mother and sister turned me over at night, pulling out a sheet from under me”. Nevertheless, these pitiful actions of an infantile and weak-willed person reveal his nature even more. Surrendering to chance, he gradually descends lower and lower. Lack of will, self-loathing are the main features of his character [25–29].

At the junction, the work appears a railway, with a freight train going along it, characterizes the motive of a search, a life path that has a terminal station. The main character miraculously does not fall under the wheels of the train, but even such a contact

with death does not make him feel anything but “hot, stuffy, frenzied emptiness”. Thus, the main character’s lifestyle is a way of avoiding reality on the one hand and rejection of the cruelty of the world on the other. One plot replaces another, the hero is drunk and joyful when he finds something to eat, but despite this melancholy, a feeling of loneliness and emptiness eats him up. At the end of the story, the hero goes home drunk and, crossing the railway tracks, almost falls under a train. Lying at the very rails, he sees the “black shiny wheels” rushing past, the hero tired of life is looking for death under the wheels of the train, and the “Wheel” meanwhile, and everything rolls like life.

When analyzing another story, which has the same title with the collection “Sin” in the image of the main character – Zakhar, two types coexist, one of them is Zakhar the brother, and the other Zakhar is a teenager. In addition, we see that the first of these types prevails over the second, and this proved by our above examples from the story. Also in the story, there is a lot of descriptions of the localities of life of people and even where the lovers go when they want to retire, hide from everyone: “For bridges” was the name for those cozy meadows where village lovers left on motorcycles or left as a couple. In addition, the plot of the slaughter of a pig plays a special role; curiosity and fear simultaneously absorb Zakhara, with all this he talks about life and death through the prism of the perception of a dead pig: anticipating the heat. It was hot in the hands, in the heart, in the kidneys, in the lungs: Zakharka clearly saw his organs, and they looked the same that smoked before his eyes a minute ago. And from the realization of his own warm, moist animal life, Zakharka felt especially passionately and not at all painfully how his heart was contracting, a real meat heart, pushing blood to his hands, to hot palms and to his head, scalding his brain, and down to his stomach, where everything was ... proudly from the realization of endless youth. “Further, the contrast increases and it seems to Zakhar that all the inhabitants of the barnyard know what happened and they feel uneasy about it, it hurts: “And seeing this head, even the chickens went a little crazy, and the rooster walked around, and the goat looked out of the darkness with Jewish suffering eyes”. It seemed to the main character: “that the pig wants to howl, is about to howl” and this is the peculiarity of adolescence, where love and death coexist. The first is the feelings of 17-year-old Zakhar for his cousins, and the second is the death of a pig”. Therefore, in the story, the main character, Zakhar, revealed from a different angle, for example, a relationship with a three-year-old nephew. Rodik shows our hero – loving, sweet, caring “Zakharka fiddled with him, put him on his neck, and they wandered around, a tanned guy and a white child with fluffy hair”. But the spirit of a child is still felt in him, although on the other hand his love to his cousins proves the opposite, which manifests itself and seethes in him, raging like a hurricane, especially to the eldest – Katya: “I didn’t get enough sleep, closed my eyes, immediately seeing Katya, about Katya, Katino, Katina ...”. He compares them all the time: “I fell behind a little, looked at the ankles, calves of the sisters, saw Ksyusha’s frog, tanned legs and – through the sundress filled with sunlight – Katya’s hips, only prettier after childbirth”, from this example it can be revealed that Zakhar is more drawn to Katya. This can be understood so that Katya is much older than he is and this attracts him (this is called gerontophilia in psychology – the attraction of young people to older people), and Ksyusha is his age. Nevertheless, despite this, he controls his feelings: “Zakharka took off his shorts and ran into the water so as not to see the sisters undress. “I wouldn’t see them at all ...,” I thought cheerfully, untruthfully, and immediately turned to their voices”.

Thus, the heroes of Zakhar Prilepin continue the series of characters who embody the Russian national character, embody the most characteristic features of the Russian ethnos at a historical break – the desire for spiritual search, love of freedom, independence, self-esteem, the right to self-determination and conscious choice (moral, life), extreme maximalism.

However, some of the images of the writer in the collection of stories “Sin” personify the most odious and pretentious features of the lost generation of the “noughties” and are partly determined by the socio-political realities of the turn of the XX–XXI centuries.

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