A Comparative-Typological Analysis of the Concept of the "Little Man" in Isi Malikzade's "Varyete" and Raymond Carver's "A Small, Good Thing"

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Abstract

This article examines the artistic and philosophical transformation of the concept of the "little man" in Isi Malikzade's "Varyete" and Raymond Carver's "A Small, Good Thing" from a comparative-typological perspective. The primary aim of the study is to identify the typological characteristics of human figures who are socially invisible, possess limited opportunities for social influence, yet have complex moral and psychological worlds in Azerbaijani and American prose.

The study traces the semantic transformation of the concept of the "little man," beginning with its socio-aesthetic foundations in nineteenth-century Russian realism and continuing through twentieth-century modernism, existentialism, and American minimalism of the second half of the twentieth century. In Isi Malikzade's "Varyete," Khankishi is analyzed as a model of the "little man" who attempts to redefine himself in the face of socio-cultural changes and an unfamiliar environment while preserving his moral integrity. In Raymond Carver's "A Small, Good Thing," the concept of the "little man" is reinterpreted through the social invisibility of the Franklin family, their vulnerability in the face of arbitrary violence, and the baker's communicative and moral isolation. The article distinguishes between the concepts of the "ordinary person" and the "little man" and demonstrates that, in Carver, the "little man" is no longer merely a person occupying a lower position in the social hierarchy, but a modern individual who has lost control over life and experiences existential vulnerability and a crisis of communication. The scholarly novelty of the study lies in relating the concept of the "little man," beyond the framework of social deprivation, to the categories of social invisibility, alienation, existential vulnerability, and communicative restoration.

Keywords

"Little man," Isi Malikzade, Raymond Carver, "Varyete," "A Small, Good Thing," realism, modernism, existentialism.