

## **THE INFERNAL THEME IN M.Y. LERMONTOV'S POEM "DEMON"**

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### **ABSTRACT**

*Demonic theme manifested in a work of fiction in the presence of special substantive and formal properties, directly or indirectly indicating either the participation in the events of otherworldly forces, or the manifestation of the qualities inherent in the infernal beings, in humans themselves. Society's interest in supernatural phenomena, including the infernal, traced throughout the history of human culture. The attempt to make philosophical sense of the infernal themes and the world of the supernatural has always been characteristic of Russian literature.*

**Keywords:** *Demon (evil), literature, M.Y. Lermontov, infernal, theme.*

### **АННОТАЦИЯ**

*Демоническая тематика проявляется в художественном произведении в наличии особых содержательных и формальных свойств, прямо или косвенно указывающих либо на участие в событиях потусторонних сил, либо на проявление качеств, присущих inferнальным существам, в самих людях. Интерес общества к сверхъестественным явлениям, в том числе и inferнальным, прослеживается на протяжении всей истории человеческой культуры. Попытка философского осмысления адских тем и мира сверхъестественного всегда была характерна для русской литературы.*

**Ключевые слова:** *Демон (зло), литература, М.Ю. Лермонтов, inferнальное, тема.*

### **INTRODUCTION**

The subject of Demon appeared in Lermontov's work in 1829 in the poem "My Demon", and the same year the first edition of the poem "Demon" was written, which had eight editions in all, the last of which, as scholars suppose, was completed in 1839. In these early works, there is a declaration of evil that is not yet compatible with suffering. However, the Demon, alien to suffering and remorse, did not appear in Lermontov's youthful works for long. Almost at the same time (also in 1829) a sad and melancholy Demon was born. He "does not laugh at his evil deeds", dreams of love and, finally, "the dead man knows love".

This particular Demon gains power over the lyrical hero's soul not through the power of destruction, but through the power of his restlessness, his striving for "the image of perfection". The Demon seems to bifurcate between good and evil, light

and darkness in all versions of the poem [3]. Inferno has a literal translation from English inferno – “hell”, spiritual darkness. Infernality from the Latin infernal is – “being in hell, happening in hell, hellish; possessed by violent passions, demonic”, also “devilish lawlessness, wickedness”. words formed from this root in some Romance languages, such as Italian, Spanish, still denote hell, underworld, below, infernal, chthonic, underground in the generally accepted meaning – a generalizing concept for mythological and real events, which are based on the idea of immortality through the experience of death, the use of magic or an agreement with the devil [2].

## **DISCUSSION AND RESULTS**

On the contrary, the poet shows the incompatibility of both principles, where good and evil meet, there is eternal, unquenchable enmity. This is why the halo of the greatness of all Lermontov’s demonic heroes lies in this “proud enmity”. Thus, Lermontov’s demonism is not a philosophy of evil, and the demon is not a symbol of evil.

The growing consciousness in Lermontov that he is “not Byron”, that he is a poet “with a Russian soul”, is reflected in his growing protest against “buffoons of vice and selfishness” (perhaps insignificant imitators of Byronic heroes), affects Lermontov’s evolution as a singer strong personality. The images of Arbenin, Demon (III edition), Pechorin (“Princess Ligovskaya”) testify to the author’s critical attitude towards his characters, which is especially noticeable in the mature time of the writer’s work.

The image of the Demon revealed in a high tragic key in the works of Milton, Byron, Goethe, Moore, A. de Viny, on Lamartine. The image of the Demon – the people’s devil, sustained in a comic way. However, the Lermontov Demon reveals similarities with Milton’s Satan, Byron’s Lucifer, Goethe’s Mephistopheles, Vini’s Satan. In addition, descriptions of Caucasian nature, everyday life could recreate the natural world for Lermontov [2].

The new hero (romantic hero) is a free and rebellious person, independent of God, nature, and society. He is lonely, disappointed in the reality around him and opposed to his surroundings. Psychologically, this is an individualist and skeptic, who perfectly knows the weaknesses of people. He endowed with great moral strength, capable of high passions, but he never finds happiness, does not achieve inner harmony. Despising lies, pretense, petty passions, insignificant goals that dominate secular society, the romantic hero flees from him into a different environment, more consonant with his inner state.

The demon in the poem did not depict as usual: as an evil, disgusting and ugly messenger of hell, but as a “winged and beautiful” creature. The demon is not Satan, but a fallen angel who cast out of heaven for the sin of rebellion and disobedience. He deprived not only of death, but also of the gift of oblivion – such a punishment for his crime. Longing for a lost paradise, the loneliness of an outcast, a thirst for revenge, contempt for insignificant, vain people – this is what drives him in a continuous struggle with the divine idea of good and the whole of God's world, and in some kind of tired, indifferent deed of evil.

*Sad Demon, spirit of exile  
He shone, a pure cherub,  
Greedy for knowledge, he followed  
When he believed and loved  
Long outcast wandered  
In the wilderness of a world without shelter  
He sowed evil without pleasure,  
In addition, evil bored him [1].*

The Demon of Lermontov is a “powerful image”, “mute and proud”, which for so many years shone to the poet with “magically sweet beauty”. In Lermontov's poem, God depicted as the strongest of all tyrants in the world. In addition, the Demon is the enemy of this tyrant. The cruelest accusation to the creator of the Universe is the Earth created by him:

*Where there is no true happiness  
No lasting beauty  
Where there are only crimes and executions,  
Where petty passions only live;  
Where they do not know how without fear  
Neither hate nor love [1].*

This evil, unjust god is, as it were, the protagonist of the poem. He is somewhere backstage [1-12]. However, they constantly talk about him, they remember him, and the Demon tells Tamara about him, although he does not address him directly, as the heroes of other Lermontov's works do. “You are guilty!” – The reproach thrown to God by the heroes of Lermontov's dramas, accusing the creator of the Universe.

The goal of the Demon is not another creation of evil, the death of a seduced soul. This is a rebellion against the world order established by God, an attempt to change fate and your sentence, to get away from painful eternity alone with evil and

a well-deserved punishment. He longs to find new happiness and life, to overcome the curse and exile from paradise, the angelic song of the nun Tamara awakens earthly love in the spirit and sheds tears, but his tear itself is unearthly, it burns the wild stone near the monastery walls.

The tragedy of the Demon lies not so much in the fact that he rejected by God and doomed to loneliness [13-28]. However, in the fact that evil entered his soul and began to control him. M.Y. Lermontov represents the demon at that fatal and tragic moment for him, whom he immersed in memories. In those days, “he believed loved”, “knew neither malice nor doubt ...” God and the world, the Demon turned his life into a meaningless and empty fun. Sowing evil, he did not experience pleasure. In this – that tragic moment of memories of the former pure, direct faith and love of the senseless pleasure of evil, which “bored him”, we find the Demon. There was a crack in his once firm and proud stance. He is aware of the internal inconsistency of his being; he recognizes the senselessness and futility of the individualistic rebellion, which only separated him from world life. Both heaven and earth live in their own way, I do not need the Demon, but the Demon needs them: he sadly recalls the past days in paradise and looks at the earth with “cold addiction” [3].

An internal contradiction drives the thoughts of the Demon – he again wants to find a connection with the world, and at the same time with the earth and the sky, but is unable to overcome the evil inclination of his soul, proud contempt for both worlds [29-42]. In the scientific literature, a point of view expressed, according to which the Demon seeks an alliance with people, rejecting the world of slavish obedience created by God. In the name of a better world, the Demon approaches Tamara, who, however, did not justify his hopes, since she was bound by the chains of traditions and cannot escape from the power of the existing order. However, one can hardly agree with such a view. The natural, patriarchal world does not at all symbolize for Lermontov the civilized order denied by the Demon, the Demon addresses precisely the best, who are on the periphery of the author’s intention. They have already separated from the natural world. There is no longer “neither true happiness nor lasting beauty”, there the “flame of pure faith” has died out. With these people, the Demon does not seek an alliance.

*However, there is a big feast in it today -  
Zurna sounds, and guilt pours -*

V. Belinsky accurately described the inner meaning of Lermontov’s poem: “The demon,” the critic wrote, “denies for affirmation, destroys for creation. ...”[5].

M.Y. Lermontov romantically showed the hopelessness of such moods of denial and put forward the need for other ways of fighting for freedom. Overcoming romantic individualism, revealing the inferiority of “demonic” denial, confronted Lermontov with the problem of effective ways to fight for the freedom of the individual, the problem of a different hero.

V. Belinsky revealed the symbolic meaning of the image of the Demon. The demon, he wrote, “denies in order to affirm, destroys in order to create; it makes a person doubt the reality of truth as truth, beauty as beauty, good as good, but as this truth, this beauty, this good. He is so terrible, because he is powerful, that he will hardly give birth to doubt in you that hitherto you have considered it an indisputable truth, as the ideal of the new truth already shows you from afar. In addition, while this new truth is only a phantom, a dream, an assumption, a hunch, a presentiment for you, until you have realized it, have not mastered it. you are the prey of this demon and must know all the torments of unsatisfied aspiration, all the torture of doubt, all the sufferings of a desolate existence” [5]. The originality of artistic solutions found by M.Y. Lermontov testified to the variety of forms and ways of development of infernal themes. as an example, one can cite the story “Shtoss”, the works “Azrael”, “Angel of Death”, “Demon”, as well as in the ballads “Gifts of the Terek”, “Dispute”, “Airship” («Штосс», «Азраиль», «Ангел смерти», «Демон», «Дары Терека», «Спор», «Воздушный корабль».).

## **CONCLUSION**

Thus, the manifestation of the infernal theme in the work accompanied by the presence of a certain type of heroes with infernal characteristics. Most often, the infernal theme realized in fantastic works. Its basis is mythology, folklore, religion, as well as Gothic traditions. Archetypes used to create characters. A common form of expressing the theme is the incarnation of demonic characters or, conversely, the acquisition by a person of the traits of a demon. It is also possible indirectly express the infernal theme. An unusual or supernatural event is one of the frequent manifestations of the infernal theme. It accompanied by a conflict based on a person’s meeting with evil spirits.

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