

Realism and Modern Characters in Chekhov's Works

^{1,2}Ali Reza Bonyadi and ¹Zaven Avetisyan

¹Literature Institute, Yerevan National Academy of Sciences of Republic of Armenia,
Grigor Lusavorich, 0015 Yerevan, Armenia

²Department of Theatre, Art and Architecture Branch,
Islamic Azad University, 7185755164 Shiraz, Iran

Abstract: Unlike previous authors such as Gogol and Tolstoy, Chekhov is recognized as a different realist who has violated the heroic tradition of husbandry and he has created a new style on fictional and dramatic characters in humour themes. In fact, all the characters from his masterpieces are basic and important those are not nobleman and ideal hero but are ordinary people. As the matter of fact, Chekhov by inventing a new method did not feature all the weaknesses in a certain character but he has shared all the people in their destinies and undoubtedly, the modern writing has begun by this created new style.

Key words: Chekhov, character, drama, short story, realism

INTRODUCTION

Real live people ...! We have to show life as we see it in our dreams, not as it is or as it ought to be (Chekhov, 1973)

Some critics have strongly believed that the Chekhov's works are filled with sorrow, sadness, boredom and depression even though it seems that the Chekhov (1973) has placed such issues in his works but when we carefully review his works with a background about his writing style, social and personal life with his contextualize method we cannot claim that his thought has confirmed these tragedies and concerns but it became with all his sympathy senses which it is expressed by typical and ordinary people from the low level of the society. Considerably, Chekhov's did not have a certain theory of life to expound the worldview. As an instance, Maurice Valency seemed to think that a writer can simply describe life without any world's view underpinning and descriptions. According to Valency's idea, Chekhov (1973) did not have any theory for life to expound no point to make and no thesis:

It is quite unnecessary for the understanding of his drama to discuss his world view and if he had anything under this discussion, it was irrelevant to the subject of his art. Meantime, his great talent lay in his sensitive depiction in the meaning of life around him, the physical and psychic landscape in which he lived (Valency, 1966)

It seems that Chekhov has selected characters for readers that to be new and strange. Notably, Chekhov's works are different from some of the past masterpieces like Shakespeare's works that the readers have been influenced by historical and cultural background plays. Some authors like Philip Callow claimed that:

There is no doubt that the Chekhov was disillusioned with contemporary theatre from the outset. He commented biting to various correspondents on the egotism and obtuseness of actors not to mention their incompetence; on the limitations of the repertoire, the stupidity of directors, the passive acceptance of audiences (Callow, 1998)

Actually, Chekhov did not use the classical hero to show life passion presentations but also analyzed ordinary characters such subtlety and skill. He has used humor effective ways too but not the humor worthless method that such some authors which wrote some works during the Chekhov's age. Chekhov's characters are funny but also being compassionate. Chekhov lived at a time of enormous social, political and scientific changes. Living as he was at a time of transition when modernism was displacing romanticism, the problem of matching vision and form was acute for him. The sets of conventions that go to make up a literary movement like modernism are attempts to find appropriate forms in which

to express a changed view of the nature of the world. Naturalism with its emphasis on empiricism and positivism and the new ideas promulgated by scientists like Darwin and Comte were fast replacing the outdated idealism of the romantic vision as the accepted world view (Gaskell, 1972).

The features of Chekhov's researches are not only focus on a particular person but also true about his work atmosphere. Considerably, features are in a context with the atmosphere and means that he has used to show the environment around him. Time passes and in activity characters that there are in Chekhov's researches are the result of this trend. Other feature of Chekhov's characters is lack of dialogue between them in the meaning establishment. Sadeghi the famous Iranian researchers writes:

In this lack of mutual dialogue that should be revealed the subtext or untold by slowing down the rhythm through observe too silence. That is floating on the dream and mental world. The bases of great performances that each word or object convert to the Means with away from the action (dramatic action). Perhaps among of Chekhov, the characters, situations and objects are equally saturated of meaning so the case has caused

The characters which Chekhov has drawn in his stories and plays are free population and easygoing those created comic situations is classified by lack of understanding from one another, similar aimless characters in writers Absurd Theater writers such as Vladimir and Estragon in *Waiting for Godot* written Samuel Beckett. The fact is one of the Chekhov's writing style is not focused on his character in the works and have not Champion Husbandry such author of works of absurd theater:

There is only a small step from Chekhov's images of a society deprived of purpose and direction to the far more emphatic presentation of a world deprived of its' metaphysical dimension in the plays of Beckett, Genet, Adamov or Ionesco

Subsidiary characters of Chekhov research as his main characters are important. The method of writing had caused more stable in the minds of audiences and not to disappear among the other characters also, this mechanism caused the balance in terms of form and content characters and creating rightfield for harmonious atmosphere between humor and serious. Importantly, another note about Chekhov's masterpieces is that all the

characters in his dramatic and fictional works are already known or they even met quickly in the early works. None suddenly appeared in the middle of the story and not suddenly disappear and actually, theendis known and then author concepts ideas with his own psychological explanation to from it as the best possible way to present:

He wrote very often not invariably about the weak and unsuccessful ... When Chekhov presents such characters he is not trying to rouse us into a state of false indignation against life and fate; he did not intend to put the blame for anything that is wrong with the world of men upon those vague and convenient scapegoats he wanted us to put the blame where it belongs on ourselves (Emeljanow, 1981)

Although, in the Chekhov plays and short stories, we do not see classical hero and most characters have a kind of mental disorder-social but Chekhov does not divide own characters into two groups bad and good or evils and angels. His characters are combines the features of negative and positive that move on the Causes and Incuses theme. Can be said Chekhov's characters are ignorant more than to be cunning and lying. They have not evil quality and weakness, selfishness, misery, surrender in front of own instinct are cause for destroy them. Less, the Chekhov stories is without humor and incidentally and it present the beauty and prominent features of Chekhov works. He blends story and display their content humor or even laugh and to bring joy the most ordinary people. People the more read and sees his works deeper, more sense to Chekhov concept and bitterness and sadness themes that was beyond the layers of humor. Nicholas Moravcevic writes of Chekhov's mellowing in his views. He claims that he underwent an aesthetic transformation that involved the rejection of his youthful aesthetic creed which had been based on his commitment to strict objectivity which condemned concern with a message and denied any usefulness of a didactic stance in the presentation of reality (Moravcevic, 1970).

Chekhov believed that every ridiculous is painful and he has reflected these importances in his research. He used to use special techniques. Putting people in an abnormal situation based on Chekhov's humor on the principle of Moving Expectations in the comedy method. Characters are located in places that are not expected and audience reads or sees characters that are not expected. Usually when we read or criticize the characters in his masterpieces it seems that they are ridicule and ironic but

if you put yourself in the shoe of those characters, undoubtedly you will realize their deep pain and sorrow and you will feel a sense completely fulfilled with tragedy. Considerably if we ignore a character like Lopakhin (in *Cherry Orchard* play) most of the characters are affluent and wealthy class. Relatively can assume that it is natural because Chekhov knew such people from his childhood and he was witness of their arrogant and selfishness. As the matter of fact, Chekhov's plays reflect the emotional aspect of human nature and notably, we can mention two reasons for his choices. In one hand, his masterpieces is about the people whom are able to bring own feelings because of education and in some cases due to the gaze and they are able the language on the exact syntax and are transmitted to the viewer. In the other hand, experience of people to kind of pathetic.

Perhaps Chekhov have seen the strictest and the deepest kind of feeling in people and in the nobility class and this is the best color images without the sense of drama that plays has experienced. It seems that many of Chekhov's characters have not the attributes and can be face to events. They exist in the stories because of have special place in society that such officers, lovers, teachers and writers.

Therefore, he has used this mechanism not only to undermine their importance in society but this people they often should be part of educators are cause about general public misery and frustrations; like Prichibeyev (*Sergeant Prichibeyev* story) and Trigorin (*Seagull* play). Many of Chekhov's characters pursue their dream even those who are in love or do not know how to the ones who have failed in love or fail among goals which they cannot even succeed to overcome on them as an instance Treplov in *Seagull* plays.

Interestingly in many of Chekhov's plays and stories, doctors have a major role and perhaps the reason are firstly; Chekhov was a doctor and naturally he closely observed their ethical behavior and ethical features and secondly, it illustrated the Chekhov's expectations of physicians as a educated class of society. But ironically many of his written works there is also a doctor, a doctor at the head of humans who are suffering from confusion and ambiguity.

There are many doctors who do not know medical science as well or they do not basically agree medical science. However, there are some doctors who have an excellent model as Kirilov (*Enemies* story). Although, some people believed that the Chekhov's characters are disappointed and sorrowful but it does not mean that they have no purpose for their lives and if there were existed they were differenced by Chekhov Realist's Creed:

The anguish that the Chekhov felt about the trivial emptiness of meaning of life around him has little to do with the quietist pessimism of the nothing to be done school of Absurdist's. Chekhov, particularly in his short stories has presented the human inactivity not as being inevitable but the result of human lethargy. Actual failure is seen in the light of potential achievement and not as an unavoidable part of the human condition. Chekhov has committed himself as an artist to the conventions of realism because he believed that literature is called artistic when it depicts life as it is

Generally, we can divide goals characters in Chekhov's researches into three groups; first ones, the characters who have generic goals and match by their community goals (like Treplov in *Seagull*). Second ones, the characters who have personal goals and their goals do not match by the community (like Sergeant Prichibeyev) and the last group the characters who achieve their goals, although, these goals are no significant in the author idea (like Tchimcha-Gimalayski-in *Gooseberries* story). Considerably, Chekhov has never used magnification and exaggeration in his research. Undoubtedly, he had noted and believed to the normal behavior, like everyday life and may be that's why he has written a letter to Olga knipper in January 2, 1900 and told:

I wrote to Meierhold and urged him in my letter not to be too violent in the part of a nervous man. The immense majority of people are nervous you know, the greater number suffers and a small proportion feels acute pain but where in streets and in houses do you see people tearing about leaping up and clutching at their heads suffering ought to be expressed as it is expressed in life that is not by the arms and legs but by the tone and expression not by gesticulation but by grace. Subtle emotions of the soul in educated people must be subtly expressed in an external way. You will say stage conditions. No conditions allow falsity

Interestingly, Tolstoy who was weary of his plays and believed that the Shakespeare's plays are more better than Chekhov's plays (Tolstoy did not like Shakespeare's plays) but he has another opinion about Chekhov's short stories and he believe that Chekhov is Pushkin of the prose as any reader can make felt something himself in the poems of Pushkin, the reader of Chekhov's stories find in himself and own thoughts certainly. Chekhov was a unique artist. Also, Mohammad Ali Jamalzadeh-Iranian famous writer said:

Every time that I read his stories and masterpieces, I feel a sympathy to his works that means intimate talk with the one of the characters. Interestingly, the characters are so familiar to me in an environment that it is maiden by Chekhov and sometimes I see enough alive people like the ones whom I have met them for many years and even I can assume that I recognize their parents or already knew their tone and hand gestures and faces during the time (Jamalzadeh, 1961)

Unlike Tolstoy and even Dostoyevsky, the Chekhov short stories and plays have studied the ordinary quotidian in middle class of the life. Themes, characters and atmosphere in Chekhov's works are quite understandable not just for the Russian people but for all people in world. As we have seen, Chekhov's plays are not simply mood pieces stuffed full of interesting characters fatalistically doomed to failure. His plays are social comedies which deal with issues that are of direct relevance to the lives of the audience. They provide a comic critique of the behavior of his characters who have abdicated their responsibility to act according to their knowledge and ideals. Gottlieb is correct when she points out that the never-ending critical discussion of whether Chekhov's plays are tragedies or comedies goes deeper than questions of content and form and becomes a philosophical and political debate. He has introduced in his works the backward culture and behavior which they had been presented in the works of writers such Gogol but by usage of his wisdom and courage he has overcame to the criticism and worthless speeches (using satire).

CONCLUSION

Contemporary, according to the common themes that it were used by Chekhov and the authors before him it seems that Chekhov has invited the other writers to debate by creating different works in terms of form and he has offered his thoughts on the new formats. As an instance in death of employee, the story should be searched in base of the lower class and the underling employees and not other place or the other levels.

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