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The relationship between reality and metaphysics in the poetics of plays Roland Schimmelpfennig

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Abstract. The article analyzes the specifics of the relationship between reality and metaphysics in the poetics of the plays of Roland Schimmelpfennig (Germany). A feature of the poetics of the playwright's plays is the presence of a metaphysical level: in them, through the gray everyday life and routine boredom, the unusual, supernatural, and bewitching shine through. The heroes of the works experience an essential conflict, as they encounter the Other, the Unknown in themselves.

Keywords: *Roland Schimmelpfennig, "Golden Dragon", "Woman from the Past", genre transformation, postdramatic theater, postmodernism, metaphysics, deheroization of characters.*

Roland Schimmelpfennig is a famous German playwright whose work is extremely popular: his dramas have been staged in theaters in more than 40 countries. His work has not yet been sufficiently studied in national and foreign literary studies.

The aesthetics of postmodernism in literature is given much attention in foreign literary studies (works by F. Mennemeier, J. Ryan, N. Yuhan, T. Prokhorova, V. Shamina, E. Shevchenko) [3 – 4; 5, p. 235–307; 12 – 14]. Of particular interest is such an aspect as "postdramatic theater", as well as modernism and postmodernism in an interdisciplinary context (for example, studies by G. Brandstetter, E. Fischer-Lichte, N. Frei, Ch. Weiler) [6 – 10].

The dissertation of S.I. Gorodetsky is devoted to a review of the literary work of R. Schimmelpfennig in general and the introduction of the term "kaleidoscopic theater" into scientific circulation [1]. Articles by N. Yuhan "Chronotopisches metaphorisches Modell der Wirklichkeit in Roland Schimmelpfennigs "orientalischen Märchen" wie "Die

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arabische Nacht“ und “Der goldene Drache“, “Genretransformationen im deutschen postmodernen Drama“ and “At the Crossing of Cultural and Literary Traditions: Intertextuality and Intermediality of Roland Schimmelpfennig's Play “A Woman from the Past“ is devoted to the study of the poetic features of Schimmelpfennig's plays “Arabian Night“, “Golden Dragon“ and “Woman from the Past“ [12; 16–19].

The range of themes in R. Schimmelpfennig's plays is clearly outlined: the kinship of the concepts of love and death, relationships in the family sphere, the psychology of modern people, their disunity and insurmountable loneliness, rivalry between women and men, lack of faith, hope and love, the likening of people to animals, the presence emptiness, time and memory, a state of general war.

As has been noted many times, according to classical theory, conflict in drama is the source of action. The action develops thanks to the clash of characters who defend opposing interests or are bearers of antinomic principles. Changing the category of character leads to modification not only of the conflict, but also of composition, dialogue, organization of space and time.

The characters in R. Schimmelpfennig's plays are ordinary people, representatives of the middle class, ordinary, unremarkable residents of megacities. Although they have names, these are not proof of their individuality, but rather a means of differentiation, and the plays emphasize not only the similarity of the characters' thoughts and feelings, but also the sameness and hopeless routine of their daily lives. The author emphasizes the disappearance of individuality in the modern world, the unification of everyday life and the dominance of stereotypes in people's minds.

In the dramas of R. Schimmelpfennig, there is often duplication of character stories. In the play “A Woman from Past Times,” the story of the relationship between a young couple in love, Andi and Tina, repeats the story of the older generation, Frank and Romy. Twenty-four years ago, Frank promised Romy to love her forever, but after a while he forgot the girl, got married and turned into an ordinary man in the street. Romy, a woman from the past, comes to Frank to make him fulfill his promise. Andi, Frank's son, makes a similar promise to his friend Tina, knowing that they must part and never see each other again. Romy, having learned about Andi's vow to love Tina to death, kills him, preventing a deliberate

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violation of the oath. At the same time, this act becomes an atonement for Frank's guilt. His responsibility for failure to do what was said is shifted to his son, thereby appearing in the text a biblical motif about punishing sons for the sins of their fathers.

The conflict in the play stems from the collision of past and present. The past is personified by Romy, the present by Frank's wife Claudia. The hero is in a situation of choice between two women, in other words, before choosing himself, his behavior, his future fate. Frank's internal conflict, his growing insecurity and uncertainty develop against the background of external rivalry between women and each other.

The play contains several storylines associated with individual characters, the action of which develops in parallel. The unifying factor for them is the space of an apartment building and the night time, which brings the play to the metaphysical level. The storyline associated with the story of Francisca Dequet contains an allusion to the fairy tale of the sleeping princess, whom the prince must awaken with his kiss. Franziska's every day looks the same: she works during the day, then comes home, takes a shower, suddenly tired, lies down on the sofa, falls soundly asleep, and the next morning cannot remember how her previous day went. As soon as Franziska falls asleep, she and Ouch. Both women are equally lonely, both have sacrificed their own femininity to their careers, and their clash has a false basis.

Two other characters, Robert and Patricia, experience an internal conflict between feeling and ambition. Being strong personalities and successful managers, on the one hand, they admire each other, feel a tender attraction to each other, on the other hand, they enter into a fierce struggle for primacy in the service. Their newly born love dies under the pressure of ambition - neither of them wants to take the first step, thinking not about their happiness, but about "who is cooler"; in the end, they engage in open combat, seeking to advance their own advertising concept and destroy the enemy.

We observe a similar situation in relation to the third pair of characters - friends Hans and Frank. Having known each other for many years and having done a lot for each other, they turn into cold, calculating rivals, trying to get the desired place in the foreign representative office of the company. Consequently, adhering to the classification of I.M. Bolotyan, we can talk about the presence of an essential conflict in each of the named characters in the play. The

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characters do not realize that they suffer primarily from an internal split, and therefore they see the reason for their dissatisfaction either in their partner (at work, in a relationship) or in the absence of the desired external conditions.

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In the play "Eternal Mary," the motif of the repetition of the situation is already contained in the title. Maria embodies the eternal principle of female expectation of a man and self-sacrifice, and a prediction of her future fate can be seen in the parallel story of Eva and Hans. Before, Eva, like Maria Karl, had a lover whose return she was waiting for, but whom she had to forget, and she married Hans, who was always there. The same fate awaits Maria. A young woman is in a situation of choice between her love for Karl (past) and circumstances (her present situation). External conflict between family members - father and son - serves as a source of internal contradiction for Mary. As in previous plays, this type of conflict is duplicated.

The monotony of everyday life in the plays of R. Schimmelpfennig is broken by chance. The case does not

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appear here as a temporary disruption to the usual course of events, but expresses the concept of the plurality of the world, the idea of the world as chaos. Unlike classical dramatic texts, in which chance, as noted by V.E. Khalizev, reflects the idea of the wealth and mobility of being, only locally and temporarily disrupts the balance and harmony in it and, as it is overcome, becomes an important element in proclaiming the strength of the world order, then in the dramas of R. Schimmelpfennig, chance willfully and unreasonably invades the lives of the heroes, to the core destroys it, becomes a manifestation of the omnipotence of chaos and the inability of the characters to resist it. Using the example of the play "The Arabian Night," we will consider how, due to accidents, the usual course of things changes and how accidents lead to a tragic ending.

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From the window of the opposite house, Peter Karpati sees Francis taking a shower. He feels a sudden attraction to the girl, a persistent desire to kiss the stranger. Under the influence of this desire, he leaves the house and goes to look for Francis. Meanwhile, in the house where the girl lives, the elevator breaks down, and the housekeeper Hans Lohmeier forgets to put up a sign about the malfunction in time, and Kalil finds himself trapped in the elevator, hurrying to a date with Fatima. Fatima is waiting for Her friend, sees his motorcycle parked below, in search of

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Kalila runs out of the house, leaving the door open and forgetting the keys in the apartment. While going down the stairs, Fatima runs into Peter, who finds the right apartment and kisses the sleeping Franziska. At this time, the girl dreams that the sheikh is kissing her. The sheikh's first wife is jealous of Francis and curses her. The curse is that Franziska is doomed to bring misfortune to all men, will lose her memory and will not be able to wake up until the man destined for her wakes her up. This characteristic technique for R. Schimmelpfennig - the inclusion in the text of the play of dreams, dreams, fantasies, memories - serves not only the purpose of expanding space, not only testifies to the equality of the real world and the fantastic world, but also indicates the duality of the characters.

Franziska's kiss brings disaster to Peter: like the student Anselm from *The Golden Pot* by E.T.A. Hoffman, he ends up "under glass" - he finds himself enclosed in a bottle with the remains of cognac. Meanwhile, Lohmeyer comes to the apartment to check the plumbing. He has a waking dream in which he is transported to the Arabian desert and meets his ex-wife with a terrible scar on her neck. She turns out to be the sheikh's first wife, who cursed Francis and was executed for it. Lohmeier, seeing the sleeping girl, under the influence of a sudden impulse, kisses her and leaves. The girl wakes up and thinks she is in a palace.

At this time, Fatima runs out into the street, a gust of wind slams the door, and she remains outside. Using the intercom, Fatima tries to get inside, while Kalil struggles to get out of the elevator. He succeeds, and he hurries upstairs to his beloved. In the apartment, Kalil comes across a half-naked Franziska, who begs him not to leave her. Meanwhile, Fatima gets into the house, she hurries upstairs and sees

Kalila next to the naked Franziska. Fatima misinterprets the situation, thinking that her boyfriend deliberately set up everything in order to cheat on her with Franziska, she grabs a knife and wants to avenge herself. Kalil runs away, and Fatima packs her things and leaves the apartment. Kalil, in search of shelter, runs into neighboring apartments, where, against his own will, he cheats on his ex-girlfriend with unfamiliar women. Fatima finds Kalil in one of the apartments and kills him.

At this time, Lohmeyer returns to Franziska's apartment, a conversation begins between him and the girl, the characters

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fall in love with each other. Lohmeier takes the bottle containing Peter, goes to the balcony and, while he is kissing Franziska, the bottle accidentally tips over, causing Peter to fall from the seventh floor to his death. We see how the interweaving of many accidents leads to a tragic ending. Thus, the heroes of the play become hostages of entropic chaos. They are unable to understand either what is happening to them or themselves. The heroes do not reflect on their relationship with higher powers, do not understand the causes of the ongoing catastrophe and are not able to resist the hostile universe.

We find the same tendency in the play "The Woman from Past Times," in which, due to small accidents—a thrown stone, a late return home, the sound of water drowning out a cry for help—Andi dies and Frank's relationship with his wife Claudia collapses. The role of chance, capable of turning people's lives upside down and destroying them themselves, reflects the unauthorized and inevitable invasion of chaos into the apparent orderliness of life. Chaos controls people's actions - characters in plays often cannot explain to themselves the reasons for their actions: "Tina. I can't say why, but I take the stone. I take a stone and throw it at a woman, which I miss" [15, p. 651]. "Lndy. ...and I can't say why, she irritates us, something about her, in her walk, I don't know what, she irritates us, we feel it at the same time, and then Tina takes a stone and throws it at her" [15, p. 655]. Characters lose control of themselves: "Angelika. Throwing coffee in her face is, of course, too much. Loss of control" [15, p. 326].

The characters turn out to be "led" by transpersonal will, the body acts separately under the influence of sudden impulses, affects: Peter Karpathy from "The Arabian Night", against his will, is drawn to France ske, which he sees for the first time; Franziska and Robert from the play "Under Pressure 1-3", having first met at a party, immediately enter into an intimate relationship; Karl, the hero of the play "Eternal Mary," obeys a momentary impulse and gouges out the boy's eye. The reasons for the characters' actions are hidden, subconscious, and logically difficult to explain. The clash between the characters and their own internal contradictions are created by transpersonal, powerful and inevitable forces. The heroes experience an essential conflict because they are faced with the Other, the Unknown in themselves.

Thus, a feature of R. Schimmelpfennig's plays is the

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presence of a metaphysical level: in them, through the gray everyday life and routine boredom, the unusual, supernatural, and bewitching shine through. Anna Patacek writes about the dramaturgy of R. Schimmelpfennig: "... all his plays deliberately pose a riddle. Various storylines are woven into a rich whole, fantastic and real layers are layered on top of each other" [12]. The plays of R. Schimmelpfennig are inhabited by spirits, such as Bruno - the spirit of farewells and Ilse - the forest spirit in the play "From cities to forests, from forests to cities"; here are the eternally young characters Vandermaster and Tara from the play "Double", corresponding to W. Shakespeare's heroes Oberon and Titania from the comedy "A Midsummer Night's Dream"; characters are faced with manifestations of the inexplicable. There are many examples of this: the unlucky thieves Stanko and Peter from the play "Double" open a mysterious casket in a strange house and are endowed with eternal youth; Heide, Anna, Peter, Katharina and Hans in the play "From Cities to Forests, From Forests to Cities" find themselves in an enchanted place in the forest and turn into trees, etc. The existence of the characters in the plays "The Arabian Nights", as already mentioned, also unfolds on two planes - the real and the metafictional. The magical element associated with the oriental setting is also present in Schimmelpfennig's play "The Golden Dragon".

We see the prospect of further research into the work of R. Schimmelpfennig as the study of the poetic features of plays that can be classified as "postmodern theater" (according to Lehmann's classification).

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