

**MIRASOVA KAMILA NAILOVNA**

**AYN RAND'S NOVELS IN THE CONTEXT  
OF THE POPULAR LITERATURE OF THE USA**

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**Scientific supervisor:**

Doctor Litterarum, professor of the Department of Russian and Foreign Literature at Kazan Federal University  
**Nesmelova Olga Olegovna**

**Official opponents:**

Doctor Litterarum, professor of the Department of Russian Philology, Foreign Literature and Cross-Cultural Communication at N.A. Dobrolyubova State Linguistic University of Nizhny Novgorod

**Bronich Marina Karpovna**

Candidate of Philological Sciences,  
Associate Professor of the Department of Foreign Languages at National Research University "Higher School of Economics"

**Chernetsova Ekaterina Vladimirovna**

**External Reviewer:**

Lomonosov Moscow State University

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Scientific Secretary

of the Dissertation Committee

Candidate of Philological Sciences, Associate Professor

R.L. Zaini

## General Review

The Russian-born American writer Ayn Rand (Alisa Zinov'yevna Rosenbaum) (1905 – 1982) is the author of three novels, two of which, “The Fountainhead” (1943) and “Atlas Shrugged” (1957), got into the top-list of bestsellers in accordance with surveys conducted by *The New York Times* and The Library of Congress. Her first novel “We the Living” (1936) inspired by her own life experience in Soviet Russia before her emigration to the USA in 1926 has also sustained several reissues. The popularity of Ayn Rand’s novels has spread over the borders of the USA – they have been translated into many languages, since the 1990-s Russian among them.

Together with the mass reader Ayn Rand’s novels are favoured by some leading politicians and economists of the right wing, such as the former US Secretary of State Hillary Clinton, the former Chairman of the US Federal Reserve Board Alan Greenspan, the economic adviser of the Russian President Andrey Illarionov and others, who can hardly be identified as uncultivated consumers of popular culture.

Such wide-ranging success of Ayn Rand’s novels is caused, in the first place, by the underlying philosophy – “objectivism” as named by the author herself. It is remarkable that after writing “Atlas Shrugged” she switched over to philosophical publicism, and seven books on philosophy of objectivism came into being during her lifetime.

The quintessence of Rand’s materialistic philosophy is the ethical idea of rational egoism, which in its economic and political expression results in ardent advocacy of unfettered capitalism. Predictably this philosophical conception of Rand’s involved a negative reaction of the literary elite: Gore Vidal characterised it as “almost perfect in its immorality”, Flannery O’Connor described Rand’s fiction as “low” and worthy of “a garbage pail”.

Literary reviews are mainly negative as well. Their major part is comprised of works by American critics. However, some of them, written by the staff of the Ayn Rand Institute (Irvine, California)<sup>1</sup>, cannot be indicative in that respect due to their evident bias in favour of Rand’s literary and philosophical importance. Among significant American publications is the book by Gary Weiss “Ayn Rand Nation: The Hidden Struggle for America’s Soul” (2012). The most noticeable among Russian research are the articles by the culturologist A. Etkind, the publicist A. Tsvetkov, the sociologist V. Shlapentokh. However, at the time of researching on Ayn Rand all of them were working abroad, which means that academic interest in Rand is much wider in the West.

**The topicality** of the present research is determined by Ayn Rand’s popularity, which borders on cult-making. This fact alone necessitates academic studies of her novels. Besides, Rand’s literature and philosophy are challenging as specimens of mechanisms of attaining mass popularity.

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<sup>1</sup> An organisation established by the followers of Ayn Rand for the purpose of spreading her literary and philosophical legacy.

**The academic novelty** of the present work consists in the fact that both Rand's literature and philosophy are researched through the specificity of popular literature.

**The degree of the coverage of the subject.** Despite some individual statements in Soviet literary criticism, intensive studies of popular literature began in our country only in the post-Soviet period. The collection of articles "The Images of the US Popular Literature" (1991) presented by works of well-known literary critics A.M. Zverev, A.G. Cherchesov, E.A. Stetsenko and others, specializing in American literature, is indicative in that respect. Modern researchers of our country's popular literature continue developing the tradition of the analytical approach to this phenomenon, underlining the necessity of its complex studies.

In western literary criticism the process of reinterpretation of the phenomenon of popular literature began with the book "Adventure, Mystery and Romance: Formula Stories as Art and Popular Culture" (1976) by J.G. Cawelty. The monograph served as a precursor to many modern research works, which agree on popular literature being pseudo-realistic and stereotypical. These typological features of popular literature find reflection in its "genre and thematic canons"<sup>2</sup> or, in other words, its "structural and semantic fixedness"<sup>3</sup>. The latter constitute the ground for the present research – Rand's novels are examined for mythologemas and genres typical of popular literature.

**The goal** of the present research is examination of Ayn Rand's novels for the specificity of popular literature.

The goal necessitates the realization of the following research objectives:

1. To present Rand's conception of ethical egoism.
2. To elicit myths of national American consciousness in Rand's novels.
3. To trace the link between the romantic method declared by Rand as her own and the national American myth of individualism.
4. To elucidate the genre types in Rand's novels.
5. To analyse the style of Rand's novels.

**The object of the research** is the correlation of Rand's novels with the phenomenon of popular literature.

**The material of the research** are Rand's novels "We the Living", "The Fountainhead", "Atlas Shrugged".

**The methodological basis of the research** are academic works by J.G. Cawelty, A.F. Losev, Yu.M. Lotman, V.M. Zhirmunsky, M.M. Bakhtin, M.A. Chernyak, M.A. Litovskaya, and also by the leading Russian literary critics on American literature Ya.N. Zasursky, M.N. Bobrova, Yu.V. Kovalev, T.L. Morozova, A.M. Zverev, A.G. Cherchesov, E.A. Stetsenko, E.M. Apenko.

The research is done on the basis of the historical-literary approach in combination with the elements of the biographical, historical-functional and sociological methods.

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<sup>2</sup> Chernyak M.A. The Phenomenon of Popular Literature in XXth Century // Philological Sciences. – 2008. – №20. – P. 4.

<sup>3</sup> Litovskaya M.A. Popular literature Today: a textbook. – M.: Flinta, 2016. – P.36.

### **Postulates for defence:**

- Rand's philosophy is eclectic: it combines some known philosophical ideas, which involves its superficiality, and as a result – its simplicity for the mass reader's acquisition.
- Rand's literary method, which is declared as Romanticism by the author herself, is reduced to romantic stamps, remaining far from the esthetics of Romanticism.
- In Rand's novels well-known national American myths are completed with the author's ethical conception of rational egoism, which itself is a specimen of the process of myth-creating.
- Genre organization of Rand's novels, presenting a great variety of canon genres, meets the requirements of popular literature poetics.
- The plots of Rand's novels are built on popular formulas, thus demonstrating strict "fixedness" of popular literature.
- The style of Rand's novels is a specimen of literary language, which meets the requirements of the cultivated reader.

**Theoretical relevance of the research** consists in the fact that its main propositions can be used for further eliciting and studying the tendencies of US popular literature development in Russian literary criticism.

**Practical relevance of the research** consists in the fact that the material of the research, its main propositions and conclusions can be used in lecturing on the XXth century foreign literature, in classes in modern American literature and in courses on the problems of popular literature.

**Approbation of the research.** The main propositions of the research were rendered in reports at the conferences of various levels: V International Conference "Synthesis of Fiction and Non-fiction in Literature and Art" (Kazan, KFU, 2014); IX, X, XII, XIV All-Russian Conferences "Literary Criticism and Esthetics in the XXI Century" ("Tatiana's Day") (Kazan, KFU, 2012, 2013, 2015, 2017).

The main propositions of the research are reflected in seven publications on the theme of the research, four of which are issued in journals reviewed by the State commission for academic degrees and titles.

**The structure of the research.** The present research consists of introduction, three chapters, conclusion and list of literature.

### **Content of the Research**

**Introduction** contains the justification of the topicality, the review of critical literature on the topic, the wording of the academic novelty, object, goal and objectives, postulates for the defence, the definition of the theoretical and practical relevance of the research.

The first chapter *Mythologized Reality of Rand's Novels* focuses on the content of Rand's novels. It exposes the mythological nature of the depicted reality, which constitutes one of the typical features of popular literature.

The first paragraph *Philosophical basis of Rand's Fictional World* throws light on the philosophical conceptions of Rand's novels, drawn from her philosophical essays.

In the book called "The Virtue of Selfishness" (1964) Rand expounds on the ethic of rational egoism. She justifies the kind of egoism which is not aimed at defying other people's rights and therefore does not result in conflict of interests. As is noted by critics, Rand's theory shares common points with both the doctrine of the French materialists of the 18 century (Gelvétius, La Mettrie, Diderot, Holbach) and Chernyshevsky's theory of "sensible egoism". Moreover, the extreme radicalism of Rand's theory, which results in glorifying ruthless, uncompromising characters, enables some critics to speak of the Nietzschean roots of her philosophy – Rand's egoist hero is, in their estimation, the embodiment of Nietzsche's superman.

Rand's individualistic outlook, being in full concord with the national American idea of individualism, has also something in common with R.W. Emerson's doctrine of "self-reliance". A certain similarity can be traced in the view on owing property, the negative attitude to the state. But if with Emerson the negative manifestations of egoism are reduced by his notion of "Over-soul", which is responsible for general harmony and justice, Rand, being an ardent opponent of transcendentalism, on the contrary, develops them to the extreme degree.

Another key question in Rand's philosophy – the problem of reason – finds its reflection in the book under the title "Return of the Primitive: The Anti-Industrial Revolution" (1971). Rand holds I. Kant responsible for, in her opinion, the widespread underestimation of the abilities of reason on the ground that Kant restricted the borders of man's knowledge, leaving room for God and faith. At the same time it is obvious that Rand borrows both the starting points of Kant's philosophy such as, for instance, a man being a bearer of the faculty of reason, and some of his wordings, for instance, "man ... is *an end in itself*".

In the book "The Romantic Manifesto: A Philosophy of Literature" (1969) Rand declares her adherence to Romanticism under the conditions of its "destruction", as she puts it. She associates Romanticism with the "benevolent", i.e. light, cheerful, rational outlook ("sense of life", "metaphysics", in her terminology). Rand accuses the contemporary realistic literary schools, combining them under the name of "naturalism", and modernism of shaping a pessimistic view of life, characterising their outlook as "malevolent", i.e. dark, frightening, irrational.

In our opinion, such philosophical eclecticism of Rand's conceptions, which finds reflection in her literary works, is a manifestation of a literary manner typical of popular literature.

The second paragraph *The Theory of "Rational Egoism" as a Specimen of Myth-making in Popular Literature* is based on the proposition that popular literature depicts reality in accordance with myths circulating in mass consciousness and creates myths itself. In the context of popular culture the notion "myth" is defined as "representations of truth", "supposed truth".

The critic A.G. Cherchesov explains the tendency of popular culture "to construct myths and cater for them" by the necessity of creating "certain pillars",

which could offer, even if only on the superficial level, a solution to the complicated problems of today's life, with their further becoming stereotypes.<sup>4</sup>

Another researcher E.M. Apenko attributes the untruthfulness of depiction by popular literature to its inherent "strict morality", which meets society's need for moral justice.<sup>5</sup>

Ayn Rand's magnum opus "Atlas Shrugged" is most remarkable in that respect. The novel is partly fantastic and only some details – geographical names, realities of a certain time – enable the reader to correlate its events with the USA of the XX century. The most successful businessmen, representatives of various professional fields – industry, economy, science, culture – indignant at the state's encroachment on the results of their work, go secretly on strike and one after another disappear from the country, which involves complete destruction of its economy. Thus raising a serious problem – the fate of an efficient businessman is in the hands of the government, which decides how much of his earnings will be taken as taxes to maintain state officials and meet the social needs of those who do not produce anything – Rand identifies a situation of moral injustice and offers her own theory of ethical egoism for its solution.

The first thing that qualifies Rand's idea of rational egoism, which determines her characters' way of thinking and behaving, as a myth is its being presented as something undoubtedly "good" – thus the popular mythological opposition of "good versus evil" is shaped in Rand's novel. Egoism is claimed moral groundlessly, as something certain, without admitting the relevant character of the notions of "good" and "evil" themselves.

Another thing that contributes to the perception of the idea of rational egoism as a myth in the novel is its extremely positive and extremely negative characters, whose interaction creates the two-dimensional flat world of the novel. The polar qualities of the polar characters are determined at that by egoism – the least convincing criterion of morality, declared however as such a *priory*.

Also, the quality of a myth in Rand's theory is reflected in the sphere of its interaction with the official state ideology. Unlike the main stream of popular literature known for its compliance with authorities and people's moods, Rand's theory seems, at first sight, to confront them: society is more used to the conception of altruism, and the state hates the ideology that declares it "looters". However, the present-day vivid rise in the right moods in society, shattered by economic problems, testifies to the fact that Rand's theory just anticipated the forthcoming changes. The tendency of popular literature to catch keenly and react promptly to imminent social needs is obvious here.

Finally, a convincing argument in favour of Rand's conception being a myth is the fact that it is easily refuted by reality. Ayn Rand's own life frustrated

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<sup>4</sup> Cherchesov A.G. Phantom or Phenomenon // The Images of the US Popular Literature. – M.: Nauka, 1991. – P. 43 – 44.

<sup>5</sup> Apenko E. Transcultural Modes and Myths of Mass Literature //TRANS. Internet-Zeitschrift für Kulturwissenschaften. 2002. – № 14. – [Electronic resource]. URL: <http://www.inst.at/trans/14Nr/apenko14.htm>. (date of application 8.11.2013).

her theory. At an old age, being sick, she had to apply for social medical care, which she had claimed disgraceful all her life.

Thus, Rand's ethical doctrine proves to be that same "pillar", which offers a superficial solution to the problem, claiming to restore moral justice.

The third paragraph *Myths of the American Mass Consciousness in Rand's novels* elicits some national myths occurring in Rand's fiction. The most noticeable among them is "the myth of an active individualist, free of social determinism", as A.M. Zverev puts it. The leading role of that myth in Rand's novels is conditioned by the writer's philosophical and artistic views. Philosophically supporting individualism in all her novels, Rand regards romanticism, which she subjectively reduces to the admitting of a man's right to a free choice of objectives and actions at achieving them, as the only rightful method of its artistic expression.<sup>6</sup> These two major propositions are responsible for the fact that Rand's hero is an individualist arranging his own life circumstances in accordance with his own free choice.

The embodiment of the individualistic myth in its pure expression in "Atlas Shrugged" is life descriptions of the heroes' grandfathers, the founders of the biggest enterprises in their professional fields – Nathaniel Taggart and Sebastian d'Anconia. The symbolic meaning of these two little plots consists in the fact that both of the characters are the representatives of the XIX century, lauded by Rand as an epoch of "Romanticism in esthetics", "individualism in ethics" and "capitalism in politics". These characters embody the image of a self-made man which is typical of American literature on the whole. However, they also bear some traits that are characteristic only of Rand's hero, which makes each of them an individual image as well. These traits get most vivid in the sphere of the characters' interaction with the state – for instance, defending his property rights, Nathaniel Taggart murders a state official and the author's sympathy lies unmistakably with her character.

The myth of individualism closely interrelates with the myth of "the golden age", in E.A. Stetsenko's wording. The XIXth century is presented by Rand as a symbolic image of the nation's prosperity in every sphere of its functioning.

Some other easily recognizable myths in the novel are the ones of "the American exclusiveness and the advantage of the New World over the Old One", in T.L. Morozova's wording; of "America as a country of equal opportunities", of "a good business as an honest business", in A.G. Cheresov's wording. However, each of these myths acquires a peculiar individual tint due to the fact they all undergo the influence of Rand's own philosophy. As a result, national myths get, to some extent, transformed in Rand's novels, which characterizes them as popular literature of a higher level.

So, all the myths traced in Rand's novel reflect the national American consciousness. Also, it is evident that they all serve for the apologia of capitalism. The latter constitutes the philosophical basis of Rand's novels. So, staying within the

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<sup>6</sup> Rand A. "The Romantic Manifesto: A Philosophy of Literature. – M.: Alpina Publisher, 2011. – P. 101 – 102.

borders of the typical American consciousness, Rand's radically individualistic doctrine develops national individualistic views to their extreme point, thus distancing them from reality still farther.

The fourth paragraph *Ayn Rand's Romantic Hero as the Embodiment of the American Ideal of Individualism* continues examining the interaction of the author's philosophy with the American individualistic ideal, though from a different angle – in the light of Rand's artistic method claimed as Romanticism by the author herself.

A.M. Zverev writes that the idea of individualism still remains “the domineering national ideal”, which modern popular literature, in accordance with its essential quality to meet society's ideological requirements, is built on. The scholar also maintains that “the ethical norms cultivated by this ideal appear (in this kind of literature) in the apologetic key”, while with the great American romanticists of the XIXth century they are subjected to multifaceted criticism.<sup>7</sup>

In Rand's novels the individualistic ideal is unmistakably presented in just the same apologetic key as A.M. Zverev speaks of. Most vividly it is reflected in the way Rand's characters are portrayed: her romantic heroes are impeccably positive. Such are Kira Argunova, an eighteen-year-old daughter of a former textile manufacturer and the passionate revolutionary Andrei Taganov from “We the Living”. They are the representatives of two opposing ideologies: individualism and collectivism. In accordance with the romantic principle of the world duality, both the heroes feel most acutely the incompatibility of their ideal with reality. Both are contrasted to their environment; at the same time their common attitude drives them close to each other. The inability to overcome the contradiction between the noble ideals of the Revolution and their profanation in life leads Andrei to committing suicide. That is his retribution for the adherence to the initially wrong altruistic ideal. As for Kira she struggles for her egoistic ideal – the value of man's (her own) life – till the end: she dies as a hero shot by a Soviet soldier while attempting to cross the border.

While in “We the Living” the idea of individualism is expressed by way of opposing the individual hero to his collective environment, in “The Fountainhead” it is fully focused on the protagonist Howard Roark. Roark is juxtaposed here to each of three leading characters – Peter Keating, Ellsworth Toohey, Gail Wynand. It is noteworthy that all the four books of the novel are named after these characters, including Roark. Keating is a second-hand man, adapting his life to the society standards; Toohey is the official ideologist of collectivism; Wynand is a rich man – the owner of a national tabloid, fancying himself the lord of the crowd but in reality turning out to be its slave. With these three characters the struggle between individualism and collectivism with the final victory of collectivism takes place in their souls. And this makes them look extremely unattractive against the back-

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<sup>7</sup> Zverev A.M. An Individuum in “Wonderland”. (Social Mythology of American Society and Popular Literature) // The Images of the US Popular Literature. – M.: Nauka, 1991. – P. 84.

ground of Roark – the only bearer of individualism. The opposition of the characters makes up the romantic contrast.

By way of concluding it may be said that the image of a romantic character in Rand's novels is practically canonical. It is a noble hero whose exclusiveness shows even through his appearance, it is a bright, passionate, creative personality, the focus of the conflict between the ideal and reality, a rebel, an advocate of freedom in the fight between two antagonistic parties: the state and the individual. However, the nature of the ideal the hero aspires to is far from the aesthetics of romanticism. Rand's romantic hero is the vivid embodiment of the ethical norms resulting from the national individualistic idea so vigorously rejected by the great American romanticists, which justifies the identification of Rand's fiction as popular literature.

The second chapter *The Genre Specificity of Rand's Novels* concentrates on the examination of the genre organization of her literary works, which as a result also helps to correlate them with popular literature.

The first paragraph *The Role of Science Fiction in the Genre Organization of "Atlas Shrugged"* researches into the novel which is the most diversified among all of them in genre varieties.

Right after the novel was issued its genre varieties were noted by the well-known journalist J. Chamberlain in his review in *The New York Herald Tribune* of 6 October, 1957. He valued the novel's assets in the genres of science fiction, psychological detective and, most of all, political parable. The distinguishing of political parable as the domineering genre variety seems quite justified – among the novel's main messages is the thought that the country's contemporary political arrangement is responsible for the widely spread attitude to capitalism as an immoral social formation. Developing Chamberlain's genre hierarchy it is possible to distinguish two more genre components within the political parable: a political thriller, the main conflict of which centres round a conspiracy of an organized group of people against the state, and a dystopia. The thriller shows through the gripping, dynamic plot – here is a conspiracy, pursuit, increasing suspense; the dystopia – in the depiction of the imaginary world, where the present-day negative tendencies reach their monstrous culmination. The didactic meaning of the parable resides in the idea that society whose citizens are deprived of the possibility to produce freely and to own what they have produced is doomed to dying.

The psychological detective is traced to Dagny Taggart's performing the role of a "sleuth" while searching for her mysteriously disappearing business partners, her attempts to guess her enemy's motives and convictions. Here, one more device of popular literature, i.e. a trick ending, shows itself – the "enemy" John Galt turns out to be a completely like-minded person, and a passionate feeling that flares up between the former opponents overshadows all the previous infatuations of the heroine.

However, science fiction, being the most complete embodiment of the novel's theme worded by the author as "the role of mind in man's life", acquires a special importance in its genre organization.

The elements of science fiction find reflection in the description of scientific discoveries which appeared to be far ahead of their time. Among them – super tough steel, named Rearden Metal after its inventor; John Galt’s Motor, converting static electricity from atmosphere into the power for its own work; a screen of refractor rays or Gulch mirage, creating the phenomenon of mirage by obscuring the real view by the image of some distanced locality; Gulch power station, capable of replacing all of the country’s power stations and thus saving people’s time, effort and material resources for higher goals and their enjoyment of their lives; a technological process of extracting oil out of shale, which was thought to be impossible. It is noteworthy that while depicting the scientific discoveries Rand known as an ardent advocate of a material incentive in production emphasizes an ethical aspect of these discoveries rather than their financial side, and the value of the technical mechanisms is presented here not in physical but in philosophical dimensions.

So, the range of the genre varieties in “Atlas Shrugged” is rather diverse, which reflects a typical popular literature principle “many in one”. Still all of them are used most purposefully and skillfully to render and popularize the key propositions of the author’s philosophy of objectivism.

In the second paragraph *The Documentary Component in “We the Living” as a Constituent of a Novel about History* the starting point of the research resides in the autobiography that the novel contains, which is noted by critics. Rand herself characterizes her novel as “the autobiography of an idea”, particularizing that the events of her heroine Kira Argunova’s life are not her own, while their ideas, convictions and values are common.

Turning to the question of the documentary in Rand’s novel is conditioned also by the fact that Rand is known to be an adversary of naturalism in art.

Strongly opposing naturalism Rand criticizes the representatives of that literary school for their refusal of choice while constructing a plot of a literary work. Therefore, in accordance with that position of hers, the historical realities in her novel, closely interwoven with the fictitious story, appear to be of a subordinate character and cannot claim to present impartial archive documents. At the same time, the subjectivity of the depiction of the reality cannot be a solid ground for denying Rand’s novel its documentary component, since, as L.Ya. Ginzburg writes, even in documentary genres there appears “a ferment of falsity” which shows through “choice, evaluation, point of view”.<sup>8</sup> Thus, it is rightful to define the genre variety of “We the Living” as a novel about history as in it the fictitious events are set against the background of the real history, in depiction of which a documentary component can be traced as well.

The documentary component shows in the autobiographical facts (the Rosenbaum family, as well as the heroine’s family, escaped from the Revolution to the Crimea; Alisa Rosenbaum just like the novel’s heroine worked as a guide in one of the Petrograd museums); in the recreation of the post-revolutionary reality – the social and political events, such as the course of the New Economic Policy, collectivization, meetings, Soviet periodicals and the cinema; in the description of every-

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<sup>8</sup> Ginzburg L.Ya. On psychological prose. – L.: Khudozh. Lit., 1976. – P. 10.

day life with such of its attributes as a little stove called “Bourgeoise” and the Primus.

However, the documentary component does not add the expected objectivity to the novel due to the author’s selectiveness, which shows through the abundant depiction of only negative phenomena.

So, the documentary component in the novel can be characterized as a “simple human document” – the evidence of a person who appeared to be involved in the historical events of the time presented from his own individual viewpoint. This fact explains the biased nature of the novel, which constitutes a typical feature of popular literature.

The third paragraph *The Ethics of Egoism in the Genre of a Love Story* deals with the genre variety common to all the three of Rand’s novels. Another uniting feature for all of them is the apologia of egoism underlying a love story.

The presence of a gripping love intrigue in all of Rand’s novels stems from the author’s conscious belief that a thrilling plot is an inherent quality of the Romantic method. As for the ideological content of that intrigue, which is reflected in John Galt’s motto “I swear by my life and my love of it that I will never live for the sake of another man, nor ask another man to live for mine” and which evidences a poor correlation with the traditional understanding of love as self-sacrifice for the sake of a beloved person, it can be admitted to rightfully claim for the newness of the ideas.

The love triangle of “We the living” is made up of Kira Argunova, Leo Kovalensky and Andrei Taganov. Initially, Kira and Andrei are ideological opponents. Kira is in love with Leo who is laid up with tuberculosis. In order to cure him Kira of necessity becomes Andrei’s lover. Andrei is unconscious of Kira’s love for Leo. He is a high-ranking official in the Communist party, which involves a number of privileges, and Kira willingly accepts his generous help. So, this episode shows a first clash between the plot of the story and Rand’s philosophy – her heroine commits an unjustified in terms of the ethics of egoism deed – in the name of love she sacrifices herself – becomes her own enemy’s lover. But further this contradiction is overcome in the best traditions of popular literature – Kira falls in love with her noble benefactor. However, being an advocate of logic, Rand provides this turn of events with a rational development. As the story unfolds, Andrei’s vision begins to change, which leads him to suicide. The suspense, accompanying the situation and meeting the canons of popular literature, shows, however, another discrepancy with the author’s philosophy – the protagonist’s suicide contradicts the ethics of egoism. The only conclusion that can be drawn here is a suggestion that the power of the artistic embodiment of the author’s idea in the image of Kira, who fights for the value of her life till her death, is sufficient for the whole novel. And despite the tragic ending Kira is perceived as a winner, as it is ought to be with a bearer of Rand’s philosophy.

The love story of “The Fountainhead” is built on one by one relationships of three out of the four main characters with the same heroine Dominique Francon, which itself is perceived as a convention of popular literature. Being in love with the main protagonist Howard Roark, Dominique gets married first to Peter Keating

and then to Gail Wynand, both of whom she openly despises. By doing so, she protests against the society which is incapable of appreciating Roark both as a personality and an architect. Only at the end of the novel Dominique and Roark loving each other throughout the whole novel get united, much to the reader's pleasure. Evidently, Dominique's motives, hardly comprehensible from the positions of real life, are meant to be perceived through the angle of the author's philosophy.

The same farfetchedness is characteristic of the love plot of "Atlas Shrugged". The main heroine has love affairs with the worthiest protagonists – Francisco d'Anconia, Hank Rearden – but as soon as the main hero John Galt foregrounds those two step aside, admitting and respecting, from the positions of objectivism, the latter's indisputable superiority.

Thus, in the genre variety of a love story the Romantic method claimed by the author, which she associates with a gripping plot, results in the formula poetics of popular literature (an invariable love triangle made up of attractive young heroes, obstacles on lovers' way get solved in a miraculous way and always in favour of those who are most appealing to the reader, the heroine is always granted to the best of the rivals). Thereat, the degree of unlikelihood, characteristic of popular literature, keeps changing from novel to novel. Thus, of all the three novels the love story of the first one "We the Living" is most realistic due to the binding of the characters' deeds to the real historical events of the epoch. At the same time the ethics of egoism in that novel is not rendered quite consistently, which shows in a number of evident deviations from it. The love stories of "The Fountainhead" and "Atlas Shrugged", on the contrary, display a complete absence of likelihood, while the author's abstractions find in them their fullest expression.

The third chapter *The Stylistic Specificity of Rand's Novels* contains the analysis of the author's individual style.

The first paragraph *The Symbolic Images in Rand's Novels* begins with the author's definition of style, which she characterizes in "The Romantic Manifesto" as "the most complex aspect of literature and, psychologically, the most revealing". Style, in her theory, consists of two elements: the "choice of content" and the "choice of words". The object of that part of the research – the symbols of her novels – closely correlates with both of the components of style named by Rand.

Symbols in Rand's novels serve for rendering her philosophical ideas, one of which is the apologia of technical progress. The scope of the latter's embodiments is rather wide but a special significance is attached to New York's sky-scrapers. The recurrence of that image in all the three novels speaks for its symbolic meaning. Presenting no stylistic difficulties for the reader's deciphering, New York's sky-scrapers symbolize a number of notions of great importance for the author: the power of man's thought, freedom, individualism and civilization.

An identical symbolic meaning is imparted to the Taggart Transcontinental Railroad and Wyatt's oil wells. Both symbolize healthy economy. Both are interesting not only as objects standing for something else, but also as self-sufficient artistic images created by metaphor. On the railroad map the network of the Taggart Transcontinental marked in red lines appears like the system of blood vessels on the country's body. In the same image of blood that feeds, provides life Wyatt's

oil wells are presented. Both these metaphors correlate with another one which appears in Dagny's speculations in which she sees the country's economy as living flesh devoured by maggot. Such uniformity of the artistic imagery provides the integrity of the whole industrial-economic image.

The country's political state finds its reflection in the image of an oak, outwardly powerful but inwardly rotten. That is a symbol of the USA presenting in its contemporary way only a covering of what once used to be a mighty political formation. The antinomy of the oak is the sign of the dollar, which is engraved on the cigars of those whom Galt has already led away to the Gulch but who from time to time appear in the outer world to watch Dagny, who still remains there.

All the above-mentioned symbols enable us to elicit some of the author's peculiarities in accordance with the dictionary definition of style as "a summary of the main ideological and artistic peculiarities of a writer's creative activity". The first of them consists in the fact that Rand employs the symbols canonical for the XXth century American literature imparting them, however, with the opposite meaning. If with her New York's sky-scrapers, railroads, the dollar are positively charged symbols, for J.D. Salinger's hero, for instance, New York is a stony desert, with F. Norris and Th. Dreiser the railroad is an octopus, with J. Steinbeck the bank and the tractor are monsters.

The author's peculiarity shows also in the philosophical ideas rendered by these symbols. Most obviously they are seen in the genre of dystopia. If in the best known dystopias of the XXth century (K. Vonnegut's "Player Piano", R. Bradbury's "Fahrenheit 451") technical progress becomes a weapon by means of which a totalitarian state subdues an individual, with Rand, on the contrary, the degradation of a person's individuality is reached through purposefully creating obstacles on its way.

One more peculiarity – on the level of the artistic method – shows in Rand's difference in a number of positions from great Romanticists, given that she declares the American Romanticism of the XIX century to be her literary ideal. As is known, the Romanticists were skeptical about technical progress, criticized capitalism for encouraging a passion for acquiring wealth.

On the whole, the imagery used by Rand for rendering her philosophical ideas is quite rational and unambiguous, which accounts for the "utilitarian", "ultra-naturalistic" style of such an ardent opponent of naturalism in art and to the same extent an adherent to rationalism in epistemology.

The second paragraph *The Verbal Expression of Music in Rand's Novels* continues studying the symbolic meaning and the form of the expression of another image common for all of Rand's novels – music, which is known to be the writer's favourite art.

To define the role of music in Rand's novels in accordance with her artistic intention it is necessary to start with her vision of the nature of music, on which she expounds in "The Romantic Manifesto". According to Rand, in the process of art perception the artist's sense of life evokes response in the viewer's or reader's sense of life. Such kind of interaction shapes itself, in Rand's term, into psycho-epistemological process. In the kinds of art where works of art are physical objects

(books, paintings, sculpture) the psycho-epistemological process is expressed by the pattern “from perception – to conceptual understanding – to appraisal – to emotion”. Music, however, affects the listener’s emotions first; therefore, the pattern changes into “from perception – to emotion – to appraisal – to conceptual understanding”. As a consequence, a sense of life and the process involved in perception of music have a major common component – emotion. In perception of other kinds of art emotion also takes part but only in the process of perception of music it comes first, thus providing an immediate response. The fact that music is meant to be heard and not to be read sets a complicated task before the writer – the effect of the verbal description of music must be close to its natural sound influence.

The greatest number of musical works of different genres are depicted in the novel “We the Living”. The most expressive among them is the only fictitious one – the “Song of Broken Glass”, which appears on the pages of the novel seven times disclosing the heroine’s emotional state. If at the beginning the emotion evoked by this gay jazz tune is described as “a profound joy of life”, “promise of happiness”, then gradually it gets dimmer – “the song of a nameless hope”, “she couldn’t even say that it was a promise”, reaching at the end its opposite – “pain”. By way of generalizing we can say that the ideal embodied in Kira’s song – an aspiration for happiness – is romantic. The way the song participates in the structural and ideological integrity of the novel, evolving as a self sufficient story that bears a certain ideological value, is highly artistic. But it is also evident that this high ideal is rendered through the simplified attribute of popular culture.

The main difference in the depiction of music in the other two novels lies in the author’s resort to classical genres: to Tchaikovsky and Rachmaninoff’s Concertos in the “Fountainhead” and the Fourth and Fifth Concerto of the fictitious composer Richard Halley in “Atlas Shrugged”. In “The Fountainhead” the great music is used to compare Roark’s architecture to. In “Atlas Shrugged” the depiction of music is partly similar to “We the living” – it also evolves but in the opposite direction. Despite the fact that the Fourth Concerto was created as denial of pain and inevitability of suffering, the use of words with negative emotive connotation – “torture”, “suffering”, “agony”, “pain”, “the worst pain”, “desperate” – still suggests an emotional feeling of pain. However, each of these words is accompanied by a word with negative semantics: “no”, “denial”, “no necessity”, “defiance”, like “a denial of suffering”, “the sounds of torture became defiance”. This results in the effect of the stylistic device of litotes, where two negative meanings combine to produce a positive one. The Fifth Concerto is entirely free of the atmosphere of suffering and is described as a “symphony of triumph” that “swept space clean and left nothing but the joy of unobstructed effort” which discovered that “there was no ugliness or pain” – thus the sense of life lying in the basis of the author’s philosophy is rendered. It is noteworthy that the Fourth Concerto was written by the composer at the time he was still living in the outer world while the Fifth Concerto was created in the Gulch among people with the identical labour ethics, who liked and knew how to work most efficiently and enjoy the fruits of their work.

A complete picture of music as a most important ideological component of Rand’s novels appears as follows: if in number it loses its weight with every next

novel, in ideological significance it gains it. Starting with the embodiment of quite a common ideal— a wonderful life abroad for the heroine in “We the Living”, the ideal expressed in the music develops into a creation of a genius in “The Fountain-head” and reaches its acme in the community of people of mind in “Atlas Shrugged”.

On the whole, the verbal depiction of music in Rand’s novels shows an adequate “choice of words” for depicting the content chosen by the author, which constitutes the author’s theory of style.

The third paragraph *The Artistic Means of Depicting the Negative* examines how Rand depicts the phenomena which she considers unacceptable.

The “choice of content” in depicting the negative, along with portraying the negative characters, is reduced to describing various laws initiated by state officials and different unions, alliances, committees which also appear by their efforts. The author’s irony can already be traced in the names of these laws and regulations, to say nothing of the description of their malevolent essence, which completes the powerful negative charge the author imparts them with. The “Anti-dog-eat-dog Rule” suggests associations with the aphorisms “a man is a wolf to another man” and “a man is a friend, comrade and brother to another man”, the first of which is a well-known expression of the egoistic moral while the second – of the collectivistic-altruistic one. “The Equalization of Opportunity Law” is devised to restrict a businessman’s activity to one business only, “the Preservation of Livelihood Law” is aimed at supporting incompetent producers at the expense of their efficient counterparts. “The Fair Share Law” dictates to the inventor and producer of super-tough steel to sell his product in equal parts to all who need it. “The Steel Unification Plan”, “the Railroad Unification Plan” sound in Rand’s description like the most disparaging characteristic of contemporary capitalism. The language of all those Directives is an expressive means in itself – they contain nothing but a set of bureaucratic clichés: “Confidential... Emergency... Priority... Essential need certified by office of Top Coordinator...”. Thus, from positions of objectivism, Rand shows the senselessness of the language which does not denote objective facts. Containing no objective information, yet such language creates the atmosphere of threat – that is how Rand depicts the style which she strongly opposes. The culminating point of such law-making is the Directive – 10-289 worked out in a desperate attempt to prevent the final economic collapse of the country. The meaningless figures in the name of that law is a demonstration of the same meaningless language. The Directive contains several points, which one by one forbid workers to leave their jobs, businessmen – quit, close or sell their businesses; oblige inventors and scientists voluntarily (one more violation of logic) turn over their patents and copyrights to the state; forbid to invent or produce anything new, to enlarge businesses; people are ordered to spend the same amount of money on their purchases every year; demand to freeze wages, prices, profits and interest rates. To control the fulfillment of the Directive the Unification Board with unlimited authorities is installed. Thus Rand depicts the advent of “the Anti-industrial era” – a neologism used by one of the characters, which is also the title of one of Rand’s essays. To describe the consequences of the Directive’s realization Rand starts with a concrete

case of a railroad accident, which finally acquires a generalizing scale and ends with accusations of both the authors of the Directive and those who meekly carried it out.

Thus, the artistic means of depicting the negative serve for rendering Rand's negative evaluation of the socio-economic tendencies in the country. The expressivity of that evaluation is achieved by an evident exaggeration of the phenomena Rand disapproves of. Markedly she underlines the idea that they are conditioned by the domineering collectivistic-altruistic ideology. By means of antithesis she creates the positive image of her own individualistic ideas. Taken out of the context of her novels, outside a thrilling story of fight between the good and evil, these ideas of hers, (particularly her basic one which, in fact, can be reduced to "a man is a wolf to another man") can hardly anticipate wide acclaim. But with the help of genuine imagery, a wide range of expressive means she makes them attractive and convincing while the opposite ideas appear absolutely repulsive. It is evident that the author's skill lies in the sphere of popular literature technologies, which shows in the simplification of social phenomena by means of reducing them to two opposite colours of white and black.

In *Conclusions* the research is summarized.

The research leads to the conclusion that the artistic specificity of Rand's novels is in the first place determined by their content.

The conception of "rational egoism", not being absolutely new in the history of philosophy, can, nevertheless, claim for a certain newness as an alternative to the existing ideology in the present-day socio-economic circumstances which prove to be quite favourable for it.

However, such novelty does not raise Rand's novels above the level of popular literature, since it is reduced to the process of myth-making, which is typical of popular literature. The author's myth of morality of egoism and immorality of altruism evolves from novel to novel. The evolution shows in the change of proportion between the concrete and the abstract in favour of the latter, which in turn imparts the second and especially the third novel with a certain philosophical aspect.

Another factor that determines the literary status of Rand's novels is a set of issues they consider. Raising serious problems – the relations of a man and society, problems of a man of labour, work ethics, the role of the mind in a man's life, the fate of a genius, the position of the scientific-technical progress in contemporary society – Rand tackles them, however, quite voluntarily – in terms of the self-made myth.

In the question of determining the literary status of Rand's novels of much importance is also the nature of ethics of egoism itself. Stating egoism as the only moral principle in the interaction of a man with society Rand opposes the humanistic tradition of high literature, which since Homer has been calling for altruism – kindness, philanthropy, self-sacrifice.

This fact accounts also for Rand's lack of spiritual kinship with Russian culture, in midst of which she grew up. In this regard, it is more rightful to call Rand

an immigrant writer, who got fully integrated in a new culture, rather than an emigrant writer, who is known to be nostalgic about his home country.

Rand's novels thus show both images of popular literature – in its glorification of typical American values it is a product of mass consciousness and at the same time it is the latter's creator as it consistently shapes the newly-emerged buds of new social outlook caused by the unfavourable economic climate of the latest history.

The poetics of Rand's novels displays features that are also more characteristic of popular literature. Their plots are built on typical formulas, which are amplified by stamps and conventions. Structurally, all the novels have a closed-plot composition with vivid elements of the exposition, the story itself, the culmination and the denouement.

Rand's novels show a clear genre distinction characteristic of popular literature, unlike modern elite literature with its genre blur. The writer resorts to such popular genre varieties as a love story, science fiction, a psychological detective, a historical novel, a thriller.

The style of Rand's novels is rather simple – it lacks sophisticated exercises characteristic of the serious literature of the XXth century. At the same time it differs from the language of popular literature with its specific stylistic stamps. The lexis of Rand's novels is strictly literary, adequately shaping the author's thought.

On the whole, the individual specificity of Rand's novels is determined by the fact that for rendering a philosophical, though questionable, content the author resorts to the entertaining poetics of popular literature.

**The main propositions of the PhD dissertation are reflected in the following publications:**

Articles published in journals from the list recommended by State Commission for Academic Degrees and Titles:

1. Salimova K.N. "Genre Peculiarities of Ayn Rand's Novel *Atlas Shrugged*" in the Context of Popular Literature" // *Philological Sciences. Theoretical and Practical Issues*. – Tambov: Gramota, 2014. – № 3 (33): in 2 vol. V.1. – P. 159 – 162.

2. Salimova K.N. "Conception of Romanticism in the Love Plots in Ayn Rand's Novel *Atlas Shrugged* in the Context of Popular Literature" // *Philological Sciences. Theoretical and Practical Issues*. – Tambov: Gramota, 2014. – № 4 (34): in 3 vol. V.1. – P. 193 – 195.

3. Salimova K.N. "The Role of Music in Ayn Rand's Novel *Atlas Shrugged*" // *Philological Sciences. Theoretical and Practical Issues*. – Tambov: Gramota, 2014. — № 6 (36): in 2 vol. V.1. – P. 162 – 165.

4. Salimova K.N. "Ayn Rand's *We the Living* as a Novel on Soviet Russia" // *Philology and Culture*. –Kazan, KFU Publishing House, 2014. – № 3 (37). – P. 56 – 59.

Articles published in other journals:

5. Salimova K.N. "Romantic Heroes in Ayn Rand's Novel *We the Living*" // Collection of articles and materials of the IX Republican Scientific-practical Conference "Literary Criticism and Esthetics in the XXI Century" ("Tatiana's Day"). – Kazan, Nizhny Novgorod: Kuznetsov, 2013. – P.32 – 38.

6. Salimova K.N. "The Philosophical-social Content of Ayn Rand's Novel *The Fountainhead*" // Collection of articles and materials of the X All-Russian Conference "Literary Criticism and Esthetics in the XXI Century" ("Tatiana's Day"). – Kazan – Nizhny Novgorod: Fabrika Pechati, 2013. – P.51 – 57.

7. Salimova K.N. "Myths of Popular Literature in Ayn Rand's Novels" // Collection of articles and materials of the XII All-Russian Conference "Literary Criticism and Esthetics in the XXI Century" ("Tatiana's Day"). – Kazan, Publishing Centre "School", 2016. – Iss.12. – P.49 – 53.