

UDC 821.111

ENGLISH LITERARY CRITICISM

INTERTEXTUALITY AS AN ARTISTIC DEVICE

Isahakyan H. Ts.

The article is devoted to the study of intertextuality in literature. Studying the literature of the 20th century is meaningless without referring to intertextuality. Moreover, some theoreticians argue that modern author merely collects and arranges what has already been read or written in a variety of texts - none of them being original itself. In this respect an intertext may provide communication among different authors, expressing similar or different perspectives on the same issue (dialogue between similar or different world perceptions concerning the same issue). Intertextuality may serve as an artistic device to develop a plot for the novel or an issue of discussion. The article exemplifies an intertext taken from the 17th century poet J. Donne's "17 Meditation" which is activated in the works of 20th century American and British writers, such as T. Merton, E. Hemingway and J. Fowles.

Keywords: intertext, intertextuality, a dialogue between authors, artistic device.

Currently intertextuality is in the centre of attention of linguists, literary critics, film reviewers and art critics. The increase of the interest towards intertextuality can be explained by its wide usage in different genres of arts. The given article focuses on horizontal intertextuality, i. e intertextuality between literary works.

Intertextuality can be understood both in its broad sense where any text is an intertext independent of its author's intention and, in its narrow sense, defining intertextuality as a fact of existence of one or more other texts (pre-texts) within the same text. Intertextuality has become an umbrella term accounting for the possible ways texts include or are included in others. As a result of its broader scope, there is a potentially vast amount of information

that people see as intertextual, including elements from everyday life, historical references, social and cultural information [6, p. 12].

According to R. Barthes, the author is not the main creator of the text, but the latter is made of numerous writings, drawn from many cultures. R. Barthes argues about the existence of intertextuality of all writings, claiming that any text is an intertext, that other texts are present in it. Any text is a kind of new issue of past citations [2]. J. Kristeva shares the same view point, claiming that any text is a product of other texts [3, p. 14]. Tracing the ties of one text with others, showing the linkages and transformations of semiotic codes in the whole group of texts, reveals the way in which the particular "machine" in question produces meaning. G. Allen believes that, "if we were able to look inside the head of the author ..., we would not discover any original thought or even uniquely intended meaning" [1, p. 72]. The modern author merely collects and arranges what has already been read or written in a variety of texts - none of them being original itself.

"Intertextuality is less a name for a work's relation to a particular prior text than an assertion of a work's participation in a discursive space and its relation to the codes which are the potential formalizations of that space. In other words, the notion of intertextuality emphasizes that to read is to place the work in a discursive space, relating it to other texts and to the codes of that space" [4].

It is important to add that intertextual knowledge of readers plays a significant role in this sphere. "Intertextual knowledge refers to the particular type of knowledge individuals possess as a result of their engagement with literary texts. It is mainly activated while reading a literary text, but it may surface in 70 other contexts as well, when references are made to literary texts or entities. Intertextual knowledge comprises both linguistic and extralinguistic (cultural, historical, social) aspects". [1, p. 70-71]. One of the characteristics of intertextual knowledge is that it does not only apply to a particular text but has the potential of being triggered in numerous reading situations [11, p. 80]. The example below will illustrate this.

Intertextuality may serve as an artistic device to develop a plot for the novel or be an issue of discussion. One can observe different dialogues between a 17th century metaphysical poet J. Donne and 20th century writers: E. Hemingway, T. Merton, J. Fowles. The idea stated in J. Donne's "17 Meditation" has become a discursive space in all the above mentioned writers' works. It serves as a pre-text for all of them.

*No man is an island
 Entire of itself.
 Every man is a piece of the continent,
 A part of the main.
 If a clod be washed away by the sea,
 Europe is the less.
 As well as if a promontory were.
 As well as any manner of thy friends or of thine own were.
 Any man's death diminishes me
 Because I am involved in mankind.
 And therefore never send to know
 For whom the bell tolls,
 It tolls for thee [5].*

J. Donne's "17 Meditation" states the idea of wholeness, each person is connected with the others, is part of the whole. The author's viewpoint is expressed via the conceptual metaphor (*No man is an island*) which is actualized here via metaphorical simile *if a clod be washed away by the sea, Europe is the less, as well as if a promontory were*. For the purpose of vividness the author brings forth the lexemes **clod** "a lump of earth" and **promontory** "a high, long piece of land that goes out into the ocean". It does not matter whether a clod or a promontory were washed away by the sea, eventually the continent would become less. Similarly any individual is a part of the whole mankind. It should be mentioned that the two meanings of the lexeme **clod** are activated at the same time. The second meaning of the word "clod" is "someone who is not graceful and behaves in a stupid way", in the same way the author imparts connotational meaning to the lexeme promontory "someone very prominent". The idea is the following: every one has his/her own place in the world and it does not matter whether that someone is a prominent person or a stupid one, the world would still become less losing them. The author is very sentimental, he is involved in mankind and any man's death diminishes him.

The conceptual metaphor *No man is an island* has become a matter of discussion for E. Hemingway [7], T. Merton [10], J. Fowles [9], building and expressing their views relating to it.

E. Hemingway, a modernist writer used the whole paragraph as an epigraph in his novel "For Whom the Bell Tolls"[7]. It is noticeable that the title itself is an intertext taken from the same Meditation (And therefore never

send to know *for whom the bell tolls*; it tolls for thee). The protagonist Robert Jordan, strong antifascist behind whom stands the author, shares J. Donne's belief that he is involved in mankind and thus he is responsible for people's fate. Here both the title and epigraph are the points which combine two different texts, as a result of which two different centuries merge into one novel. One can observe unity between those texts.

Another 20th century writer, monk T. Merton, whose writings are of religious themes directly alludes to J. Donne's "17 Meditation" entitling his book "No Man is an Island" [10], where he meditates on the spiritual life, underlying the importance of community, the strong connectedness that exists between people on the basis of spiritual life, notwithstanding the fact one lives in solitude or in the midst of crowd. Here as well one can see that the author shares J. Donne's ideas. In the prologue to the book he writes "Every other man is a piece of myself", which means in the spiritual life there is no idea of isolationism. It becomes obvious that there is a complete unification between two writings: J. Donne's "17 Meditation" and T. Merton's "No Man is an Island".

J. Fowles, a post-modernist writer, using the given intertext "no man is an island" in his novel "The Magus" [9], contradicts the author and expresses an opposite viewpoint. It is characteristic of the post-modern literature to infer intertexts in their writings, reshape them and show a new picture of the world [12]. The intertext "no man is an island" appears in the middle of the novel in the form of a dialogue between the protagonists of the novel – Nicholas and Conchis.

- *No man is an island.*"

- *Every one of us is an island. If it were not so we should go mad at once. Between these islands there are ships, airplanes, telephones, wireless what you will. But they remain islands. Islands that can sink or disappear for ever. You are an island that has not sunk [9, p. 146].*

It is as if the dialogue takes place between two characters from different generations. The younger one – Nicholas, begins his speech with the statement "No man is an island" and the reply is "Every one of us is an island". Actually, the interpretation of the given dialogue would be incomplete without resorting to the original text. The intertext "*No man is an island*" activates the whole excerpt of the pre-text in the reader's mind. In fact, the single sentence stands for a whole idea. The given idea is juxtaposed with the reply "*Every one*

of us is an island” made by another character, the older one – Conchis, behind whom the writer, i. e. J. Fowles, is hidden. As it is seen, it is a dialogue between opposing viewpoints, in fact, it is a dialogue between representatives from different centuries. Different viewpoints clash with each other.

Thus, in both texts man is associated with an island. J. Donne's “17 Meditation” states the idea of wholeness, each person is connected with the others, is part of the whole, whereas J. Fowles does not share this viewpoint. It should be mentioned that the idea of “the Many” and “the Elect” have their distinct place in J. Fowles' works. One can observe them distinctly in the given dialogue as well. So, he thinks that every one of us is an island. The pronoun **every one of us** emphasizes people's loneliness, isolation. The author thinks that every person deep in his/her heart is alone. It does not matter how many friends he has, who they are, deep in his/her heart human being is alone. Another technique used by the author to emphasize man's loneliness is the use of parcellated anadiplosis (But they remain islands. Islands that can sink or disappear for ever). Metaphorically the simile *there are islands that can sink or disappear* refers to people who die without leaving any traits after them. The author calls them the Many. However, as there are islands which do not sink, there are people who do not “die”, they live forever. They live in the hearts of many people and different generations. These are the “Elect”. So, J. Fowles had another goal to allude to J. Donne's “17 Meditation”, namely, to contradict it, to show that in modern civilization man is isolated [8].

Thus, as it is seen an intertext may become a dialogue between different authors, a dialogue between similar or different world perceptions concerning the same issue, in a way echoing as the ideology of the given time, culture, as the author's individual subjective perception of the objective reality. The study of the intertext “no man is an island” showed that for J. Donne, T. Merton and E. Hemingway man is not isolated from others, every single person has his/her distinct place in the world and the world diminishes with the death of each individual, whereas for J. Fowles, on the contrary, man is isolated, moreover, he thinks that if it were not so, men would go mad. J. Fowles has used the intertext to contradict the idea, which has been agreed on by prior writers, namely T. Merton and E. Hemingway.

**ՄԻՋՏԵՔՍՏԱՅՆՆՈՒԹՅՈՒՆԸ ՈՐՊԵՍ ԳԵՂԱՐՎԵՍԱԿԱՆ ՀՆԱՐ
Իսահակյան Հ. Յ.**

Հոդվածը նվիրված է միջտեքստայնության քննությանը՝ գրականության մեջ: Ուսումնասիրել 20-րդ դարի գրականությունը՝ առանց անդրադառնալու միջտեքստայնությանը, անիմաստ կլիներ: Ավելին, որոշ տեսաբաններ գտնում են, որ ժամանակակից հեղինակը պարզապես հավաքում և կարգավորում է այն, ինչ արդեն ասվել կամ գրվել է: Մույն համատեքստում միջատեքստը կարող է դառնալ երկխոսություն տարբեր գրողների միջև՝ արտահայտելով նման կամ տարբեր տեսակետներ: Միջատեքստը կարող է հանդես գալ որպես գեղարվեստական հնար՝ ստեղծագործության սյուժեն կառուցելու, հինը նորովի մեկնաբանելու կամ հակադրվելու համար:

Հոդվածում միջատեքստի օրինակ է բերվում 17-րդ դարի գրող Ջ. Դոնի պոեմից, որն արտացոլվել է 20-րդ դարի ամերիկյան և բրիտանական այնպիսի հեղինակների ստեղծագործություններում, ինչպիսիք են Թ. Մերտոնը, Է. Հեմինգուեյը, Ջ. Ֆաուլզը:

Բանալի բառեր. միջատեքստ, միջտեքստայնություն, երկխոսություն տարբեր գրողների միջև, գեղարվեստական հնար

**ИНТЕРТЕКСТУАЛЬНОСТЬ КАК ХУДОЖЕСТВЕННЫЙ ПРИЕМ
Исаакян Е. Ц.**

Статья посвящается рассмотрению проблемы интертекстуальности в литературе. Изучать литературу 20-го века без обращения к интертекстуальности немислимо. Более того, некоторые теоретики считают, что в современных текстах нет ничего оригинального, а лишь обобщается и упорядочивается то, что уже было сказано ранее. В этом аспекте интертекстуальность может служить диалогом между авторами, художественным приемом для построения сюжета или переосмыслением старого в его новой трактовке. В статье приводится пример интертекста, взятый из поэмы Дж. Дона, английского писателя 17 века, который отразился в произведениях американских и британских писателей 20 века, таких как Т. Мертон, Э. Хемингвей, Дж. Фаулз.

Ключевые слова: интертекст, интертекстуальность, диалог между авторами, художественный прием.

REFERENCES

1. Allen G. Intertextuality. London. Routledge. 2000. 238 p.
2. Barthes R. S/Z. Translated by Miller R. Blackwell Publishing. URL: https://monoskop.org/images/d/d6/Barthes_Roland_S-Z_2002.pdf
3. Cuddon J. A. Dictionary of Literary Terms/ Revised by C. E. Preston, Penguin Group. Penguin Books Ltd, 1999. P. 1026.
4. Culler J. Presupposition and Intertextuality// Comparative Literature. MLN. 1976. Vol.91. N6. P.-1380-1396. URL: <http://www.jstor.org/stable/2907142?origin=JSTOR-pdf>
5. Donne J. Poem: <https://web.cs.dal.ca/~johnston/poetry/island.html>
6. Genette G. Palimpsests: Literature in Second Degree. Lincoln. University of Nebraska. 8th edition. 1997. 491p.
7. Hemingway E. For Whom the Bell Tolls. Moscow. Progress Publishers. 1981. 560 p.
8. Isahakyan H. Intertextuality or Allusion? A Dialogue Between Authors. In: Banber. 1(38). 2016. P. 252-258.
9. Fowles J. The Magus. Revised by the Author. London: Triad Grafton Books. 1981. 656 p.
10. Merton T. No Man is an Island
URL: <https://www.fisheaters.com/srpdf/xThomasMertonNoManIsAnIsland.pdf>
11. Panagiotidou M. Intertextuality and Literary Reading: A Cognitive Poetic Approach. Thesis for PhD. 2011.
12. Pfister M. How Postmodern is Intertextuality //Intertextualities. Berlin. De Gruyter Berlin. 1991. P. 207-224.

Information about the author

Isahakyan H. Ts. - PhD in Philology, Associate Professor
State University of Shirak
E-mail: heghineisahakyan@mail.ru

Received by the editorial office on 18.10.2019