



Article

The Principle of Historicity in Autobiographical Novels

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Abstract: This article analyzes the specific features of the autobiographical novel genre and the mechanisms by which the principle of historicity is manifested within it. It explores how the socio-political landscape of a specific era, the cultural life of the people, and the zeitgeist (spirit of the time) are artistically reflected through the author's personal life trajectory. Using comparative and analytical methods, the article elucidates the correlation between subjective memory and objective historical truth, as well as the artistic interpretation of real historical figures and events in autobiographical works. As a result of the research, the study posits the scientific conclusion that an autobiographical novel is not merely an author's life story, but rather an artistic chronicle of the era.

Keywords: Autobiographical Novel, Principle of Historicity, Biography, Artistic Truth, Historical Truth, Subjectivity, Memoir, Individual and Era, Artistic Interpretation

1. Introduction

The study of autobiographical novels occupies an important place in literary scholarship, as this genre combines personal narrative with broader historical and cultural contexts. In modern literary theory, increasing attention is given to how individual experience reflects collective memory and social transformation. The principle of historicity, as a key aesthetic and analytical category, allows researchers to understand how literature not only depicts the past but also reconstructs it through artistic interpretation. In this regard, autobiographical novels serve as a unique medium where personal biography and historical reality intersect [1].

A specific focus of this study is the relationship between the author's subjective memory and objective historical truth. The autobiographical novel demonstrates a complex interaction between the individual and the era, where personal experiences are shaped by socio-political conditions and cultural dynamics. As noted in literary theory, particularly in the works of Mikhail Bakhtin, the autobiographical form represents a dialogue between personality and history. This relationship highlights how the author's life becomes a lens through which broader historical processes are interpreted and artistically expressed [2].

The major concepts underlying this research include historicity, documentality, artistic truth, and subjectivity. Historicity is understood not merely as the reproduction of past events, but as their aesthetic reinterpretation within the author's consciousness. Previous studies have explored the role of memory, narrative identity, and historical representation; however, there remains a gap in understanding how different layers of historicity—biographical, memorial, and social—interact within autobiographical novels.

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This gap necessitates a more integrated approach that connects theoretical perspectives with textual analysis.

The methodology of this research is based on comparative and analytical approaches. By examining selected autobiographical works, the study analyzes how historical events, cultural codes, and social realities are embedded in narrative structures. The expectation is that the findings will demonstrate that autobiographical novels function not only as personal testimonies but also as artistic chronicles of their time. Through this method, the research aims to reveal the mechanisms by which history is transformed into literary form[3].

The expected results suggest that the principle of historicity enhances both the aesthetic value and interpretative depth of autobiographical novels. It allows for a deeper understanding of the relationship between individual destiny and collective history. The implications of this study are significant for literary criticism, as they contribute to redefining the role of autobiographical writing in preserving cultural memory and interpreting historical processes. Ultimately, this research emphasizes that autobiographical novels are not limited to personal storytelling but represent a synthesis of individual experience and historical consciousness[4].

2. Materials and Methods

The methodology of this research is grounded in a qualitative literary analysis that integrates comparative, analytical, and interpretative approaches to examine the principle of historicity in autobiographical novels. The study relies on a close reading of selected autobiographical texts, focusing on how historical reality is reconstructed through individual memory and artistic narrative. Special attention is given to identifying the interaction between subjective experience and objective historical context, which is considered a central feature of the genre. The analytical process involves examining narrative structures, thematic elements, and character representations to reveal how socio-political conditions, cultural codes, and the spirit of the era are embedded within the text.

In addition, the research applies a comparative method to evaluate similarities and differences in the manifestation of historicity across various works, particularly in terms of biographical, memorial, and social layers. These layers are used as analytical categories to systematize the material and to trace how personal life events are interconnected with broader historical processes. The study also incorporates elements of theoretical interpretation by drawing on established literary concepts such as documentality, artistic truth, and narrative subjectivity. Through this integrated methodological framework, the research aims to uncover the mechanisms by which autobiographical novels transform historical facts into aesthetic representations, while preserving the authenticity and emotional depth of lived experience[5].

3. Results and Discussion

In autobiographical works, documentality and historicity are literary categories that coexist and presuppose one another. While documentality enhances the authenticity of the information provided and the depicted reality, thereby defining the author's position, historicity serves as an artistic criterion that determines the overall value of the author's creative output.

In literature, the principle of historicity involves reflecting the collective social memory of humanity in an aesthetic form by creating an artistic model of historical reality within the text. As M. Bakhtin noted, «the autobiographical form is, above all, a dialogue between the individual and history». In this regard, through the principle of historicity, the writer artistically reinterprets reality through the lens of their own era or the past. Historicity is particularly expressed in autobiographical works by inextricably linking the triad of «author's personality – historical period – artistic image». By its very nature,

historicity does not merely denote the presentation of facts related to the past, but rather their reinterpretation based on the author's perception, aesthetic thinking, and personal experience. Specifically, in autobiographical novels, the concept of historicity emerges on two levels: personal biography and social history. In Uzbek autobiographical novels, historicity relies not only on facts but manifests as an aesthetic history shaped within the authorial consciousness[6].

In artistic creation, historicity is the process of reflecting the zeitgeist (spirit of the era), social thought, and human destinies through the artistic interpretation of past events and periods. It has been considered a vital aesthetic criterion in classical literature as well as in modern and postmodern literary movements. The balance between historicity and artistry in fiction is the fundamental principle that determines the quality of a work. Historicity ensures the alignment of the realities within the piece with the actual historical context, events, and figures.

In literary criticism, historicity is interpreted from two primary perspectives: documentary historicity – the depiction of historical events in a literary text based on facts and evidence; and aesthetic historicity – the artistic re-elaboration of history in harmony with the author's perception, personal experiences, and memories.

Mikhail Bakhtin interpreted historicity as «the center of the temporal variability of the novel's structure and the dynamics of historical thinking». According to him, the historical-artistic novel does not merely reflect history; rather, it reconstructs it and enriches it with new meanings[7].

By its very essence, the autobiographical novel manifests as an artistic interpretation of a personal biography. In such works, the author's life frequently intersects with significant historical events and social shifts. Consequently, we have classified historicity in autobiographical novels into the following three layers:

Biographical Historicity – historical processes witnessed by the author throughout their own life;

Memorial Historicity – history as preserved and refined within the author's memory;

Social Historicity – general social phenomena related to the era depicted in the work.

These layers influence one another, and their artistic synthesis gives rise to the aesthetic manifestations of historicity. Furthermore, in autobiographical novels, historical events are illuminated not in a chronological or chronicled manner, but as a reflection and impression within the human consciousness; that is, personal experience takes center stage[8].

In autobiographical works, the author relies on specific aspects of the principle of historicity. Through historicity, the author expresses the collective memory of society in an artistic form. In this context, unlike a historical document, a literary text becomes a medium for the aesthetic and emotional perception of the past. Historicity serves to articulate the cultural codes of an era (language, mentality, ideology, social values). Ideologies, ideas, social conflicts, and the popular mood of the past are expressed through artistic images within the fabric of the literary text. Historicity reveals the interconnectedness between the author's life and social history. The dependence of personal destiny on historical conditions intensifies the dramatic tension of the work. History is not merely «reflected» in a literary text; rather, it is recreated by the author and imbued with aesthetic significance based on subjective perception[9].

Historicity and the author's position are considered fundamental aspects of autobiographical works. In this genre, historicity reveals the author's attitude toward the era. This attitude is expressed through: *a nostalgic lens* – a longing for the past and a desire to restore values; *a critical stance* – exposing historical injustices and social problems; and *a philosophical perspective* – reflections on the cyclical nature of history and human memory. Consequently, historicity is not merely a collection of information; it is also a vehicle for

articulating the author's moral-aesthetic views, their position relative to the times, and their philosophical conclusions.

In autobiographical novels, historicity is manifested not as a mere narration of past events, but as a process of aesthetic recreation within the authorial consciousness. Historicity introduces social and cultural depth, as well as psychological and philosophical layers, into the text. Within the literary fabric, historicity exists at the synthesis of individual experience, national memory, and aesthetic formation. It is precisely through this aspect that the principle of historicity in autobiographical novels serves as a medium for understanding, preserving, and aesthetically interpreting the past[10].

The presence of the principle of historicity in a work and its emergence in the foreground is, undoubtedly, a positive phenomenon. Through this principle, the author preserves national memory within literature by illuminating events from their own life. The parallel depiction of the author's life and the history of society harmonizes personal destiny with the destiny of the entire nation. Conducting socio-historical analysis within an autobiographical work reveals the cause-and-effect relationships of historical events through the medium of the novel's text. As a source of aesthetic power and dramatic dynamics, historicity enhances the artistic effectiveness of events against a historical backdrop. Furthermore, historicity is significant because it provides fuller and more precise information regarding historical dates, customs, social relations, historical events, and their associated episodes and figures. Within the reality of the historical background evoked by historicity, the author shapes artistic characters around themselves or a character representing their alter-ego. Through the speech activity of these characters, a database of the era's vocabulary, characteristic idioms, and jargon is formed[11].

Historicity shapes the retrospective composition of an autobiographical work, wherein the author narrates events from the perspective of the past. In such novels, historicity is not merely a description of historical facts, but an artistic expression of historical experience within the authorial consciousness. In these works, history is reflected through subjective memory, enriched by psychological experiences, and elevated to a level that prompts philosophical and aesthetic conclusions. Through personal destiny, the fate of the nation, society, and the era is revealed. Historicity is deeply rooted in the system of artistic images, events, and styles, and it is recognized as one of the most vital aesthetic criteria of the Uzbek autobiographical novel.

History is indeed written within an autobiographical work, yet it depicts not only what happened—as found in history books – but also how those events unfolded. While such works reflect a contemporary perspective on events, their essence also encompasses the future. When an autobiographical work serves the truth even more than it serves its own time or the future, its educational, spiritual, and moral impact becomes far more profound[12].

It is well known that a degree of documentality and authenticity prevails in autobiographical and biographical works. This is because the life and personality of a specific individual stand at the center of such narratives. In literary criticism, biographical information brings the creator, whose work is being studied, closer to the reader as a living human being. Consequently, one does not remain indifferent or treat the personality of someone so relatable – or their work – with mere detachment[13].

The presence of historicity, precision, and documentality in an autobiographical work significantly enhances its level of credibility[14]. Autobiographical works are noteworthy because they are created based on specific documents pertaining to the life and activities of a particular creator. In such works, in addition to the author's narrative, a diverse array of documents – including letters, diaries, and memoirs – occupies a substantial place[15].

4. Conclusion

In conclusion, this study demonstrates that the principle of historicity plays a fundamental role in shaping the autobiographical novel as both a literary and cultural phenomenon, revealing that such works function not merely as personal narratives but as complex artistic reconstructions of historical reality. The findings highlight that historicity operates through the dynamic interaction of biographical, memorial, and social layers, allowing authors to integrate subjective memory with broader socio-historical contexts while preserving authenticity through documentality. This synthesis enhances the aesthetic depth, emotional resonance, and interpretative richness of autobiographical texts, positioning them as valuable sources for understanding collective memory and cultural identity. The implications of this research extend to literary criticism and interdisciplinary studies, as it reinforces the significance of autobiographical novels in interpreting historical processes and preserving national and cultural heritage. Furthermore, the study suggests that future research should explore cross-cultural comparisons of autobiographical writing, the influence of postmodern narrative techniques on historicity, and the role of digital memory and contemporary media in reshaping autobiographical forms, thereby expanding the theoretical and methodological scope of this field.

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