



Social and Cultural Problem of Overcoming Violence against a Woman in Association with Historico-Literary Poetics

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Received date: May 06, 2016; Accepted date: June 20, 2016; Published date: June 24, 2016

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Citation: Razzhivin AI, Komar NG, Pashkurov AN, et al. Social and Cultural Problem of Overcoming Violence against a Woman in Association with Historico-Literary Poetics. Global Media Journal. 2016, S3:17

Abstract

The present article is devoted to the problem, which is pressing for a complex of socio-humanistic and natural sciences, that is, the problem of revealing factors of violence against women in culture and sociology of the society. Moreover, the authors are interested in the problem of elaborating approaches to solving the emerging contradictions. The authors of the research and development apply the data of axiological analysis in their investigation of gender topics. The first section of the article gives an overall context of the problem and a review of the major applied methods of scientific research. The authors are of the opinion that only synthesis of natural and medical sciences and humanitarian disciplines (sociology, philosophy, philology, psychology and culturology) can provide an adequate position from which the problem of violence can be best investigated. Taking into account the involved materials of historical and literary character, the investigation of spiritual healing is considered as one of the most effective measures in counteracting violence against women in society. The second section of the article serves as a necessary background for the study of the problem and is exemplified in the genesis of Russian literature, with priority attention to Ancient Rus' literature and its traditions in the successive culture (from Alexander Pushkin to Feodor Dostoevsky, and others). The value approach dominates here. The method of comparative-typological analysis, which is applied in the second section, becomes overriding in the third section of the article. Here, the authors deal with the context of social theories of the 18th-21st centuries that treat violence as a negative event in social and cultural life of the society. Definition of such specific event within this process as violence against a woman is given, too. The concept of feminism as one of the options for solving the acute social problem of violence is also presented in the review. The fifth, final part of the article, which goes after the section

dealing with a systemic review of the study testing stages, proposes a set of recommendations and prospects. They are associated both with applied tasks of social medicine, and with general moral and cultural milestones of upbringing and education required by modern society.

Keywords: Synthesis of medicine and theory and history of literature; Social/public problems of violence and healing; Gender approach; Axiological analysis

Introduction

General context of the problem and a complex of the study techniques

The essence of modern civilization, the level of development and evolution of the modern society is measured to a great extent by a societal attitude towards a woman. This attitude underwent multidirectional changes in the course of historical development at various times. Furthermore, the processes were by no means progressive, but in fits and starts, frequently - with dramatic collapses and typically occurring retrograde trends.

It is no wonder that the category of gender gradually becomes more and more stable in modern research and development (the given reference [1-5] from new general-purpose works is illustrative in this respect).

The method of gender approach gives a vivid opportunity to achieve new synthesis not only in the system of sociological and humanitarian disciplines, but in case of interaction of the given sciences with humanitarian and natural ones as well. Especially interesting findings can be obtained in the course of a complex medical and literary study. In the previous year, a number of coauthors of the present article published some results of the first stage of the carried out studies [6].

Both nature and history imposed a great mission upon a woman – to bear the ideals of humanism, the good and mercy, show sensitivity, compassion and readiness to make sacrifices, to keep family and home, give birth to children, raise and bring them up. A woman is a reliable supporter and helper, a faithful companion for a man [7].

Methodological questions of axiological analysis prove to be of major importance in acknowledging the value spiritual component priority arising out of such state of things [8,9].

However, the modern world with its escalated conflicts and crises considerably mystifies these original meanings. There is more and more aggression, violence against a woman at most diverse levels of modern civilization existence, from politico-economical to social-psychological ones. Humiliation and disdain more often than not deny and cross out the woman's social and historical role itself, her calling and mission. Due to such mind distortions of the modern society philosophers and psychologists speak of an acute problem of psychological trauma, alongside with such events as human diseases and death/death rate [10,11].

The function of comparative methods of study is the most significant for summary and analysis of the data obtained by the authors of the present article. This phenomenon of socio-cultural life is studied in the context of other factors of civilization by means of a comparative-contrastive method. One of such major factors is the social structure of the society and a set of traditions, canons and rules accepted in it. A comparative and typological method is focused on creating the analysis theoretical paradigm. Applying it we include theories, which are related to a variety of fields in the knowledge system, into the field of analysis (first of all, this refers to the problem of gender). Findings of the genetic method are highly significant as well. Here, the major task is to study the event in historic and evolutionary perspective, i.e., revealing and analyzing the major patterns of its emergence, development, current status and perspectives. Therefore, we also involve findings of the medieval studies from the sphere of old Russian literature conceptology into the historic and literary aspect of the study. The method of historic and functional study determines many things for complex profile works. The given method is directed towards the study of the dynamics of the public and cultural life response to a certain process in it. And finally, a systematic approach allows to summarize and comprehend the obtained results and to shape perspectives of the future work as well.

It is our standpoint that a retrospective review of the moral program set up in fine and philosophical literature allows shedding light on many things in modern socio-medical concepts of coping with violence against women in society. The next section considers some of the most important examples in the general panorama of genesis and evolution of Russian literary culture from the times of Ancient Rus' to the beginning of the 20th century.

The problem of violence against a woman and the phenomenon of healing in Russian literature: axiological analysis

An ideal of moral standards in society inextricably connected with a woman was already laid in ancient times. The Scripture says: "And the Lord God said, It is not good for the man to be by himself: I will make one like himself as a help to him". There is no doubt that women can greatly influence state and public affairs, spiritual and cultural processes. Although a woman has no power, when acting under duress she is capable of bringing a man of character under her control, so that he even takes no notice of it, obeys a weak person without feeling restraint of his freedom. A spiritually axiological point of view is a guarantee of harmony [12,13]. In different epochs a woman's position differed considerably in different nations. But it is beyond dispute that female influence is notable. This influence is positive only if the entire woman's life is directed towards the good and excludes selfish, egoistic goals. (Theoretical patterns of literature and ethics interaction process are studied in the context of the narratology problems by A. Gefen [14]).

Mercy, femininity, softness, kindness and readiness to make sacrifices were always the most important female traits for the mankind. Such images as Princess Olga, Yaroslavna from "The Lay of Igor's Warfare", Fevronia of Murom, and Juliania Lazarevskaya are well known and have been favorite since the times of Old Russian literature.

The image of Princess Olga is one of the first bright images of Russian literary culture. Both her life and later on the fate of her grandson – Prince Vladimir are drastically divided into two periods: pre-Christian and Christian periods. And if she was revengeful, martial and cruel in the first period of her life, then in Constantinople, waiting for baptizing, she was already filled with humility and patience. Olga's life changed dramatically after she had been baptized. She applied all her efforts to fulfill a true female calling – she devoted her life to bringing up her grandchildren including Prince Vladimir, working the acts of mercy for her people, and taking care of the neighbors.

An illustrative female image is presented in a famous monument of Old Russian culture – "The Lay of Igor's Warfare". A trustworthy and loyal wife bewails with all her being not only her husband, but also all his squad (Druzhina) regretting that she is so far from them, that she cannot help her beloved husband, share his sufferings, "I would fly like a cuckoo, she pronounces, along the Danube, get my silver sleeves wet in the river Kayal, tender the bloody wounds on the knyaz' stiff body" ("Polechu – reche – zegitseju po Dunaevi, omochu bebryan' rukava v Kayale retse, utru knyazu krovavyya ego rany na zhestotsem ego tele") [15]. The traditions, which Russian classical literature will adopt, such as readiness to make sacrifices, compassion, self-sacrificing attitude, are already specifically manifested in the woman's life portrayal in this ancient monument. Yaroslavna's Lament is nothing more than a deep prayer for her husband and it is after it that Prince (knyaz) Igor managed to escape successfully from the nomad imprisonment.

An ideal of Russian woman is also disclosed in the "Domestic Order" ("Domostroy" – a bright work of the 16th century, which was misunderstood and underestimated in Soviet times. A woman appears before the reader as a guardian of the hearth, a trustworthy wife and a perfect housewife; her calling is to support, reassure and strengthen her husband, to raise children and servants (if any), in pietism and love, and to be a good housekeeper. She is a support for her husband, and their home is a quiet shelter, where the husband will always find rest from toil and trouble: "If God gives someone a good wife, it is more precious than a jewel; it would be a sin to change such a wife even for the greatest of benefits, she will always give a happy life to her husband" [15], "A husband should be praised and honored for a good wife" ("Domostroy") [16]. Here, parallel with "The Praying of Daniil Zatochkin", who writes in reference to John Chrysostom (Ioann Zlatoust): "A good wife is a crown to her husband and life without sorrow and a bad-tempered wife is bitter woe and the ruin of the home. A worm munches a tree, and a bad-tempered wife depletes her husband's home" [16]. In general, the study attempts at making an important point as part of the theme, the key trends of the life strategies and culture correlations that are shown in an illustrative reference [17].

Female images shown by Ermolai-Erazm in "The Tale of Peter and Fevronia of Murom" are of no less interest. This work is of prime importance due to the fact that it was perhaps the first one to raise the problem of violence against a woman in national culture, while literature of the previous periods dealt mainly with the problem of female calling and her ideal role in society. The image of Princess (knyaginya), whose name the author does not give, but she experiences violence from a serpent (the evil spirit is hidden under its mask) is directly associated with the theme of violence in "The Tale of Peter and Fevronia of Murom". The Princess confidently and without confusion tells everything to her husband and supplicates his protection, she knows and believes that he will protect her. Another woman, the heroine, again brings a range of problems in the tale to moral standards, which are associated with the female world. This concerns the co-reigner of Prince (knyaz) Peter of Murom. The main character was struck with disease and the remedy for him was to find his God-given wife. At first Fevronia did not heal Peter completely, because he is ingenious: Prince has an intention to seduce a maiden. However, when next they met, seeing remorse in the man of her choice and his serious intention to marry her, Fevronia forgives him and heals him without any reproach. The maiden has a gift of healing (with respect to this phenomenon in the context of primary laws of literature [18], but uses it only when Prince (knyaz) Peter repents and becomes capable of changing his life. She endures his deceit, distrust and cowardice (having found himself in difficult conditions, the Prince lowers his head), shows exceptional resilience, strength and endurance, because she trusts not in her own strength, but relies on God and his help. As regards Fevronia's fate, the problem of violence acquires a pronounced social character: the woman suffers from the sneers of boyars and their wives, who do not want to have her as their ruler, dream of getting rid of her only because of her plebeian origin. In this literary

work, Fevronia never disputes with her husband, glosses over his vulnerabilities and helps to become strong and self-confident. The blessed Prince's and Princess's life was dedicated to serving their neighbors and bringing spiritual ideals into life. Not by accident, at the end of their life they retire to a monastery so that nothing could draw them away from preparation for another, higher life – life after death.

An exceptionally bright image is presented in "The Tale of Juliania Lazarevskaya", whose life was described by her son Druzhina Osor'in. In spite of the fact that since childhood Juliania had strived to devote her whole life to God and dreamed of retiring to a monastery, the relatives made her get married. She reconciled completely, made that decision and became a faithful and devoted wife, obeyed her husband in everything, and devoted herself to raising children and fulfilling acts of mercy to the people around. She is depicted against a background of everyday life, and this fact serves as a proof for many scientists who regard everyday life as Juliania's first consideration. However, the tale shows that everyday life is an integral part of woman's marital duties in Old Russia, that is why significant attention is paid to it, but these duties are imbued with spiritual strivings of the heroine. G.P. Fedotov noted, "The deed itself of the Righteous Juliania in its humble beauty implies the possibility of The Gospel's deep penetration into consciousness and transformation of an Old Russian man's life" [19]. No wonder that this tale was a favorite reading of its time.

The image of Masha Mironova in the novel "The Captain's Daughter" ("Kapitanskaya Dochka") by Alexander Pushkin carries on the best traditions of Old Russian literature. Masha, as Pushkin portrays her, is brought up in respect and love for her parents and non-possessiveness; her room, as the author puts it, is "a humble maiden cell". Her letter to Pyotr Grinyov, her fiancé, characterizes the young girl perfectly, she does not dare to violate the rejection of parental blessing of Pyotr's parents, i.e., she doesn't pursue her personal goals and profit motives. They loved her in Grinyov's house, and there the girl behaved wisely: in spite of all her emotional sufferings she kept silent, because "she was highly modest and cautious". It is Maria, who heals Peter, she, just like Fevronia did it to her husband, leads Grinyov to a gradual spiritual change: being in prison he "tasted the sweets of prayer for the first time", and at the time, when everything seems lost, he peacefully falls asleep thanks to his prayer and confidence in God. Masha is a sensitive and shrewd judge and incurious at the same time (she left Petersburg without taking in its sights, but having done her main duty – having asked Empress Catherine (Yekaterina) for a mercy to her fiancé and not vain. It is not by accident that Grinyov's servant admits that "such fiancée does not need any marriage portion". In Pushkin's opinion, the genuine marriage portion of a girl is her striking moral virtues, her rich spiritual inner world. Even a cruel Cossack-convict Yemelyan Pugachyev breaking human lives and soles gives in before the girl's inner force, he is not violent towards her, but, on the contrary, saves her from malevolent people and helps to meet her beloved (for details on axiology of the 19th century literature refer to: [20]).

The work "Living Skeleton" ("Zhyvye Motshy") by Ivan Turgenev shows how the whole life of a young thriving girl changes into sufferings, and she becomes such "a living skeleton" almost in the truest sense of the word, however she manages to find new important moral virtues as compassion and humility in herself. The storyteller sees her happiness, which is impossible to comprehend and encompass, he sees a bedridden woman, who has lost everything, but at the same time a woman, who is happy and who understands such things about life that cannot be understood by an ordinary person, who has not passed through these sufferings.

Fyodor Dostoyevsky likewise combines the problems of violence and healing by means of a woman's image and portrayal of her fate in his famous novel "Crime and Punishment". Sonya Marmeladova, who only a short time ago was, by will of fate and people, a fallen woman, suffering from violence and humiliation, looks after Rodion Raskolnikov who fell ill when being at penal servitude. Herewith the girl's soul and heart are depicted as a source of light, kindness, mercy and faith. It is Sonya who follows Raskolnikov to the place of his penal servitude. And here, even the most ignorant and cruel people love her sincerely, address her as "a tender mother", "piteous Sofia Semjenovna" and seek her medical advice, although she is not a doctor and has no medical education.

Sacrificial unconditional love has a curative effect of which the doctors are aware. A similar literary example is taken from early 20th century novel "The White Guard" ("Belaya Guardia") by Mikhail Bulgakov: Aleksey Turbin recovers thanks to his sister's care and prayers.

We can observe the contrary examples of cruel and cynical attitude towards a woman in the same literature. Disastrous passion, low acts and depravity appear to be fatal for women, for their female virtuous nature. It bears repeating that in the work by Ermolai-Erazm, the princess experiences violence from a serpent, but it, for the time being, is an external evil spirit incarnation, which is not within human power. However some centuries later, beautiful young heroines in Mikhail Lermontov's creative works suffer and perish from cynicism and direct violence of real, flesh-and-blood human beings. In his famous novel "A Hero of Our Time" we see that quite young Bela dies in tortures because of her entire and blind submission to her passion for Pechorin; the same thing happens to Princess (knyaginya) Vera Ligovskaya, she slowly dies of consumption, due to the same reason as the Caucasian princess (knyazhna) Bela. Princess Mary managed to escape death, but the author shows how greatly her relations with Pechorin have changed her, and she is in the state of severe mental disorder [10]; the reference is comparable from theoretical perspective of the problem. Apropos of female fates in the novel written by Lermontov, we can recollect Olga Il'inskaya's words from the novel "Oblomov" by Ivan Goncharov about the fact that all relationships based on passion terminate tragically resulting in development of consumption.

Nevertheless, modern researchers speak with more confidence about the increasing role of the phenomenon of

spiritual healing in resistance to violence as seen from the example of Lermontov's pessimistic creative work as well [21].

The problem of violence against a woman in the focus of modern social theories

In the most general terms, violence can be described as a specific type of public relations (characterized by the fact that certain individuals or groups using coercion or threats overmaster others, their will and skills. In case we speak of violence against women, we mean such public relationships, when certain individuals or groups (more often men, but there may be women as well) overmaster a woman or women as belonging to the socially opposite gender.

Therefore it seems important to underline that violence against women in modern sociological literature is considered as a phenomenon, which is essentially different from violence in general: the fundamental cause (or source) of such violence is not sex or unmotivated aggression, but a pursuit of power. In other words, violence against women should be understood as one of the gender stratification measurements [22]. In this respect, violence against women is a variety of relations of power, which are unfair to women and do economic, social, physical and psychological harm to them.

With such approach to the problem, it is natural that a question emerges, if any relation of power, when one of the subjects is a man and the other is a woman, is violence against women? It is a logical question. Relations of power, as they are understood, for instance, according to M. Fuko, predetermine differentiation of any other types of social relations; they are within these relations and determine their development. If relations of power themselves are of a comprehensive character and cover all hierarchical relationships "... starting from the state to a family, from the sovereign ruler to a father, from tribunal to "coins for change" of ordinary punishments, from social authorities to the structures, which are constructive for the subject himself..." [23], then where is that line, which allows distinguishing relations of power from violence? In classical social theory it is widely accepted that the paternalistic relations of power (the mastery of mature adult will over immature children's one) or legal coercion specified by a preliminary agreement are not abusive. In this case, consent to exercise of power and coercion is obtained (or could be obtained) from those persons, against whom it is directed. In contrast to them, "violence, properly, is an action, consent to which cannot be obtained as a matter of principle from those persons, against whom it is directed, since it disregards their goals, rights and interests" [24].

This marker - consent, seems to be also completely applicable to situations of violence against women, but it can hardly be considered sufficient. Consent, if this is not about legal acts, is a too elastic notion with great cultural and personal variations, particularly in private spheres, for example, in a family. Therefore, the use of this criterion should be supplemented with others, clarifying and specifying ones.

In search of additional features, one can refer to interpretation of the notion of violence in international and

Russian legislation originating from the admission of cruel treatment of one person by another person as the classification criterion. Besides, the consideration of violence against women as a medical and social problem requires paying special attention to one more aspect of the problem. When speaking of such violence, not only and not so much isolated acts of human natural aggression towards a living being are meant, whatever devastating consequences for a woman they may have. It is obvious that this aspect of the problem should rather be in the subject field of criminalists' analysis.

The aspect concerning institutionalized violence forms, which are acts of consciousness, claiming validity in terms of viability, the good, justice or naturalness, propriety and impunity, is of priority for us. In such case violence and coercion against a woman acquire the properties of immanence of human communications in the abuser's opinion. It can be both explicit physical cruelty – beating, food restrictions, sexual offences, non-cooperation, prohibitions and threats, and, according to some authors, violence in more complex forms, such as fashion and beauty standards; oppressive ideals of motherhood, monogamy, chastity and heterosexuality; sexual harassment at work; rules dictated by gynecology, obstetrics and psychotherapy; free hard housework and a low-paid job [25].

Thus, after merging together all the specified features, the following definition can be given: violence against women is such public relationships, when an individual (or a group) by means of external constraint, cruel treatment, established social norms intentionally overmaster a woman (or women) in public or private (family) spheres, as socially belonging to the opposite gender infringing her rights and interests, causing her physical, psychological and social damage, renouncing subjective female independence.

The problems of violence against women, female disparity and oppression are found in many social theories of the previous epochs: one has only to think about the sayings of Ch. Fourier, D. Diderot, M. Condorcet, F. Engels, and J.S. Mille. However, these problems became a special subject of humanitarian and sociological studies with the appearance of modern feminist theory in the end of 1970-s. The theory of feminism is a multidisciplinary product, not only sociologists take part in its development, but representatives of other fields of science, for instance, anthropology, biology, medicine, history, philosophy, law, economics, political science, theology, literature and psychology [20]. The characteristic feature of feminist approach is that it goes beyond the analysis of micro-social relations, as, for instance, deviation theory or family theory. Feminism lays claim to analysis of society as a whole, in conjunction with its economic, social, political systems and culture. The major task of a rehabilitation process with regard to the victims of violence is to contribute to creation of a new lifestyle for females' good, in accordance with their interests, skills and emotions.

Thus, in our opinion, any pilot actions related to the need to resolve the current crisis, should be carried out in stages in accordance with a clear-cut system:

- a) Study of the axiological (value) system of society in its historical retrospective,
- b) Connection of the dynamics of public education and identity self-education,
- c) Combination in the process of implementing the aforesaid processes of religious and secular morality dialogue according to the multicultural situation.

The specific applied conclusions of the article authors' experiment are offered further in Section5.

Discussion

The results of the studies carried out by the authors of the present article over a number of years were not once tested and endorsed by them. In 2005 Rinat Sabirov defended the thesis "Socio-medical study of violence against women". In 2012 Natalja Muslimova and Natalya Komar organized a cycle of lectures on the problems of Healing in cultural life of the society for the interns on the basis of Kazan State Medical University. In 2013 Anatolij Razzhivin and Aleksej Pashkurov issued their two-volume scientific monography "Phenomenology of Russian literature of the 18th century" in Lambert - German Publishing House; the analysis of major concepts of literary culture in the focus of female axiology was carried out in review and culturological sections of the given book based on the material of the first century of the so called "New Time". In 2014 our article "Multicultural Problem of Woman's Position in Society and Family in Focus of Literary Studies and Medicine" (authors: Lyudmila Voronova, Aleksej Pashkurov, Anatolij Razzhivin, Rinat Sabirov and Natalja Muslimova) was published in International Journal of Asian Social Science. Moreover, a medical constituent of the study was tested and endorsed at the Ninth International Congress of Pediatricians of Russia (Moscow, 2004), and at the meetings of the Health Administration in the Republic of Tatarstan (in 2002 - 2004) as well. Simultaneously the analysis of medico-demographic situation in the Republic of Tatarstan and Volga region was carried out.

Conclusions, Solutions and Perspectives

It goes without saying that one should get out of current situation gradually and according to plan. The major task is to restore female primary mission, her social protection, confidence in her present and future and in her children's future, to bring the lost respect and obeisance, tactful attitude towards a woman. The following can be suggested in socio-medical survey of the problem:

1. The problem of domestic violence should be regarded in society as a negative social event claiming constant attention of the State. Only an integrated approach to the problem of female victims to male aggression can change the professional practice.

A multidisciplinary approach should envisage joint work of medical workers, lawyers, psychologists, social workers and

representatives of other humanitarian specialties with the purpose of forming a holistic approach to each individual case of violence against a woman and understanding of the victim's needs.

2. The following should be of key importance in the system of prevention of family abuse and rehabilitation of female victims of violence (including a domestic one) at the regional and municipal levels:

- Crisis centers and public organizations rendering psychological, emotional, legal and information support for women and children in critical situations on hot lines, in the course of personal consultations and in the support groups;

- In-patient departments - shelters for temporary stay of women and women with children in case of domestic violence;

- "Protection warrant" given by police, which gives a woman, leaving her offender, certain safety conditions.

3. The study of special sections on the problems of domestic violence against women and children is to be provided in educational programs for tertiary students (including medical students), in the course of post-diploma training of primary care physicians.

4. Specialists of various profiles studying a fact of violence against a woman and focusing on the development of the most optimal model of overcoming the consequences of this violence should take into consideration the internal mechanisms of family violence and existence of barriers in the form of public stereotypes considerably impeding effective preventive work.

5. Apart from medical, legal and social aid for victims of violence, psychological aid focused on intrinsic psychic potentials of women themselves and their own consciousness of their axiological position and self-esteem should be of crucial importance.

As to social and spiritual revival, it is important to rely on examples from classical and modern literature placing special emphasis on the woman's role and importance, cultivating respect, love, kindness and responsibility in the process of human upbringing in the society from childhood. When upbringing future generations one should also turn to inviolable axiological religious postulates (various existing official denominations and cultures). Reliance on historical experience, traditions of many generations of mankind and family values, knowledge in the field of psychology and pedagogy is of no less importance. Women's influence in society is great, they are to be taken care of and protected, for Beauty and Kindness are to save the world in our reality.

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