



## THE MOTIF OF LONELINESS IN YOM SANSOP'S STORY "THE FROG IN THE LABORATORY"

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### ABSTRACT

In the literature of the peoples of the world, the problem of society and man is always a leading theme. In the works created based on this aspect, a person's alienation from society, isolation from people, and living alone are reflected in a tragic manner. In fact, there are two aspects of loneliness: first, one loses one's identity, and second, one realizes one's identity. In world literature, the theme of loneliness is interpreted as a positive and negative phenomenon.

### KEYWORDS

Adolescence, suffering, literature, Korean prose, Korean readers, naturalism, author-character, laboratory.

### INTRODUCTION

The artistic discovery of modern Korean prose of the 20th century was reflected in Yom Sansop's story "Frog in the Laboratory". According to the unwritten laws of literature, no matter how many and excellent works a talented writer creates, there are only a few works that show the peak of his entire creativity, and whose heroes immediately come to mind when the name is mentioned in the reader's mind. When Yom

Sansop is mentioned among Korean readers, his story and novel "Three Generations" are remembered.

According to literary scholars, the story "Frog in the Laboratory" was written in the direction of naturalism.

"...In the European and Russian literature of the late 19th and early 20th centuries, the influence of naturalistic views was very strong. Naturalists



believed that it is not necessary to create an artistic reality in the work, but to transfer the events of real events to the work. Since it was easier to describe life without changes in small genres, genres such as stories, etudes, and essays were widely developed in naturalistic literature. It would be possible to take a piece of life and describe the changes in it moment by moment (“second style”) [1]. Naturally, the characteristics of the image technique of naturalistic literature could be successfully used in realistic literature and give a good artistic and aesthetic effect [2].

Yom Sansop, who was influenced by Western literature, used this method effectively in his story and was able to turn the fragment of life included in the story into an artistic reality. In this small story, the writer’s keen eye and high artistic level are visible. The reader who reads the story will be aware of the reality of the period full of vital content along with the discovery of multiple meanings.

In this author’s story, a person who has fallen into the ocean of despair due to the ideological policy in the country, who cannot get out of the grip of fear due to the experience he saw at school during his adolescence, suffering, and a strong sense of self-doubt is described.

### **THE MAIN FINDINGS AND RESULTS**

The story “Frog in the Laboratory”, which is a unique synthesis of Yom Sansop’s creativity, is a story that tells about the suffering, helpless condition, and national tragedy of the Korean people during the Japanese colonial period. The story is told in the first person:

“Since any work of art (in its entirety) is created by a writer, the potential of the writer permeates the smallest “small” images (words) of that work, punctuation marks (such as periods, commas, exclamation marks, question marks), each of which has its own stamp press” [3].

The main character is the author-character himself. The years he went to study in Japan were an opportunity to forget the past events, to put his thoughts and behavior in order. But the main character, who returned to his homeland, could not get used to the situation in his country for a long time. The story begins with a special emphasis on this:

“After returning home, living a chaotic life for the past eight months had not only drained my soul but also broken my spirit” [4. 7].

The negative impact of the policies of the colonialists on social life, the endless worries, painful sufferings and mental sufferings of the people are fully reflected in the word “disordered life”.

The composition of the story is also unique. By drawing a portrait of the main character from the first lines of the story, the writer introduces him to the reader, depicts the situation of the person of the time in the image of the main character:

“The hot July is over, it’s time to dress warmly - the new season has begun, and I don’t bother to put myself in order like before, even when I’m walking on the street, I break out in a cold sweat, and if I talk to someone I know, I’ll fall asleep without saying two words” [4.7].

The fear and nervousness, restlessness, and anger in the psyche of the hero haunt him for eight years.



In this place M. Sultanova's: "It is important to express the state of the character, his mood at a certain moment, not with words, but with his appearance" [5], the main character's thoughts are reflected in his "standing hair, cold sweat covering his body".

This type of portraiture has its place in the story. By drawing the hero in this way, the writer shows a generalized type of people who are tired of social life, on the one hand, from the colonialists, and on the other hand, from the oppression of local officials. The words "...to put yourself in order" in the text have a great task. This means putting an end to the unrest in the country, bringing the people's lifestyle to order, and clearing the homeland from the invaders.

In the story of Yom Sansop, not all characters have names, both the main character and secondary characters are marked with capital letters of the alphabet. As the well-known literary critic G. Muradov rightly pointed out: "In some examples of world literature, there is an experience of shortening the surname (F. Kafka "Process"), shortening the name (F. Kafka "Kurgon") and reducing it to one letter. The use of such a literary method, first of all, helps to understand the ideological and artistic concept of the work, and also indicates the degree of connection to the above-mentioned works [6]".

At the same time, the title of the story is also wonderful: "Frog in the laboratory". Not an ordinary frog, but a laboratory frog. Here, the laboratory is a laboratory where animals are tested during practical lessons in schools.

Yom Sansop compares the laboratory to the colonized country, and the frog chosen for the experiment to the miserable, oppressive condition of its people. After the struggle for independence ended unsuccessfully, the pain, suffering, suffering experienced by the nation is depicted in the condition of the experienced frog:

"...In the laboratory, a bald teacher split open a frog, removed its internal organs one by one and gently placed them in a jar of alcohol, then turned to the students gathered around him as if he had made a great discovery:

– Look, he's still alive! he exclaimed" [4. 8].

From the tone of the teacher's speech, one does not feel pity for the situation of the frog: he is a cold-hearted and inhumane person. The experimenting teacher is equated with the colonizer, the conqueror. In each movement of the teacher, the situation of the gradual conquest of the Korean people is given: "cracked the frog" – "the country was conquered"; "he took out his internal organs one by one" – "men aged 16-40 were recruited by the Japanese government, 9-5-year-old children were mobilized to work in toxic factories and factories, young girls and brides were "gifted" to the soldiers"; "gently put in a jar of alcohol" – "a situation where there is no way out and escape (the jar is a closed container, there is only one way out - life or death)" (emphasis ours Sh.).

In order to understand more deeply the difficulties and problems of the invaders, the writer pays special attention to the next actions of the teacher:



“He began to poke a needle here and there in the frog, whose belly had been split open and its internal organs had been removed. The frog was thrashing about in agony” [4. 8-9].

The main character is not an observer of the events, but a participant. Because of this, the suffering he experiences is similar to the condition of the frog being experimented on. If the main character had not lived in Japan for a long time, he would not have reached his current state, and the work would not have been artistically perfect. The author gave the main character a lot of mental freedom, so the plot of the story is formed on the basis of spiritual experiences and incomprehensible feelings. The author holds the reins in his hands, setting this state of mind of the main character against the whole head ideology. As a result, the situation between the author and the main character converges at the central point - the struggle against ideology, and the artistic value of the work increases even more.

A detail that served to deepen the fear of the main character - the needle was used as a weapon in the teacher’s hand. At the same time, in order to show the pain caused by the needle to the frog, the author included a picture about the need to be vaccinated before going on a trip:

“There, an elderly nurse began to press on me with a needle in her hand...I closed my eyes and let myself be pricked by the needle...On the train I began to regret leaving again, but the strength of the sharp whiskey, the tremors in my body, the resistance, the spinning wheels I forgot everything because of the noise, the speed that broke

through the night, the sharp pain where the needle had entered...”[4. 13-14].

Looking back on Yom Sansop’s life, he went to study in Japan at the age of 15, that is, when he was just a teenager. The fact that the main character of the story is also a teenager is a natural choice. According to adolescent psychology, he is a developing adolescent who is going through a period of transition, and his “I” is being reshaped. First of all, it is natural for a teenager to change his attitude towards himself, his interests, direction of values, and then towards the people around him. Psychologist D.I. Feldstein shows two stages of development in personality formation: “I in society” and “I and society”. It takes a person five to six years to go through these stages, the main character went through these stages for eight years, formed, realized his identity.

Yom Sansop was well aware of the reality of the colonial period, and the people of the time became the backbone of his stories. One of such people is the writer himself. This is a scene that has not left this person’s eyes for eight years, and now it has robbed him of his night’s rest - his sleep. The body of the main character, who was both physically and mentally compressed, “...was smelling of nicotine and alcohol.” His body smells like a mixture of tobacco and alcohol. This is actually a portrait of a people standing on the street of desperation, with difficult living conditions.

Injustice, oppression and violence in his country also tired his nerves. In the scene of the events of eight years ago, the “bloody scalpel, the piercing needle, the trembling in the body” deepened. He



suffered from insomnia. The darkness of the night has now joined the fearful memories. To overcome this, the main character decided to sleep without turning off the room light. But the lamp did not let me sleep. As soon as he turned off the light, he saw a bald teacher, a scalpel and a sharp razor.

When drawing the portrait of the main character, the artist introduces a new detail - a sharp razor. Through this detail, the motif of madness, death and suicide is formed.

“What, am I crazy? Maybe these are the first signs of madness?” [4. 10]

In the mind of the main character, who wanted spiritual freedom, the desire to live freely, from breathing freely, did not let him rest like thirst. Only independence can satisfy this thirst. The state of going crazy, of going crazy without escaping the vortex of spiritual thirst, is intended to show how strong the pressure of the dominant ideology was. At the same time, some symbols are embedded under the text:

“Come on, don't be afraid even after that. As if in a dream, I removed the blanket and got up and reached for the drawer. But at that moment the thought crossed my mind: “Here I am reaching out...” and I felt as if I had woken up from a deep sleep, I found a match and lit it, and by its light I opened the drawer” [4. 10].

In the words “I took the blanket off me” in the text, the strength of fear is convincingly described, the hint in the text is a symbol of the desire to get rid of muteness, to get rid of external pressure. “...I felt as if I had woken up from a deep sleep” is understood as the end of the evils that

are happening in social life, the burdens that have fallen on the nation, and coming to one's self is understood.

Munaqqid H. Umurov's: “the analysis of the human psyche, the ability to deeply understand and describe it is one of the characteristics that determine the essence of literature” [7], thoughts can be seen in the artistic interpretation of the characteristics of the main character of the story, his mentality, changes in his mind, fear, etc. The main character is interpreted in the vortex of internal and external conflicts, in a deep psychological image.

A person becomes lonely due to various factors: loss of loved ones, childhood orphanhood, inability to communicate with others due to fear, breakdown of personal relationships, insanity, excessive devotion to faith, asceticism, grief, exile, imprisonment, hatred of people, entering the streets of crime, indulgence in foreign thoughts, poverty, despair, distrust, etc. The main character's isolation was caused by the lack of freedom of his country, the loss of his people's independence, the dark days of his nation, and the experiment conducted on a frog by a cold-hearted teacher while studying at school as a confirmation of the same events.

The main character, who is alone, is afraid to mix with many people, to sleep with the lights off. Therefore, he aims to change his place of residence, whether it is a desert island or hell, it doesn't matter to him, as long as no human foot has ever set foot there.

The main character is alienated from the society in which he lives, he has no purpose in living, because





the moral values that were based on his upbringing in the family, which he followed and knew, were in crisis. That's why for two months he felt alone, superfluous and alien, he didn't go outside, he didn't dare to interfere in what was happening around him.

There are many works based on the motif of loneliness in world literature, which is confirmed by R. Saidova's thoughts: "From Eastern classic poetry to ancient literature, from European romanticism to Chinese and Japanese philosophical prose, to the highest examples of realism, symbolism, and modernism literature of later periods, the motif of human loneliness has been reflected in various forms. It is probably impossible to even list the works of prose and poetry directly called loneliness".

Two features of Yom Sansop's work can be distinguished from these opinions of the scholar: firstly, the writer touched the theme of loneliness in modern Korean prose for the first time through this story, and secondly, he got acquainted with Japanese literature while studying in Japan and was influenced by the work of the Japanese writer Arishima.

"Solitude was a program of discipline and spiritual guidance in the Middle Ages. Both in the West and in the East, solitary people - hermits, dervishes - are examples of perfection and ascension, reflected in fiction" [8].

In fact, in the first Korean novel "A Cloudy Dream of Nine" by Kim Manjun, written in the middle ages, the motif of loneliness is formed by the image of a person who left the human world and

chose the path of a monk, tried to purify his inner world.

Since the 19th century, the motif of loneliness began to acquire a new meaning in the works. In the new context, human isolation reflected the psychological state associated with alienation. Therefore, in the stories of Yom Sansop, loneliness was used as a phenomenon associated with despair, helplessness, impatience. In this place, the ideas of literary scholar Edward Engelberg are confirmed: "While the 18th century equated beauty and loneliness, the 19th century began to imagine beauty and loneliness in a dark sense".

The author uses metaphors such as pain, suffering and fear to show the loneliness of the main character in his story: "I could not even move a finger because of the fear that gripped my body", "...but I was afraid that if it went out, terrible visions would begin to torment me"; from a natural phenomenon such as night, darkness: "...the speed that breaks through the night", "I lay down to sleep in the dark night, but as soon as I closed my eyes I was dazzled by the glint of a scalpel raised over the south window"; temperature characteristics of loneliness: "...even when walking on the street, I break out in a cold sweat...", "...beads of sweat broke out on my forehead..." made good use of such things. It can be seen that Yom Sansop creates a psychological impression by assigning symbolic meaning to metaphors, natural phenomena and temperature. All the events included in the plot of the story are presented in the image of the psychological world of the main character.



When drawing the portrait of the main character, the author includes elements such as alcohol, nicotine, signs of insanity, as well as details such as a scalpel, razor, needle, and a blanket, as a result, a depressed character is embodied in the eyes of the reader.

### CONCLUSION

Yom Sansop sees the roots of the tragedy of the “poor nation” in the influence of three religious-philosophical teachings that have been ingrained in the behavior of his compatriots. The national character, the oldness of the national views and the backward feudal way of life, illiteracy brought dark days to the people. The Korean national character meant by the writer is acceptance of fate, distrust, optimism.

In the story “Frog in the laboratory” symbols are used relatively often, these symbols can be grouped as follows:

1. laboratory, blood, night, scalpel, razor, needle
2. lamp, river, sun, sea

The details included in the first group serve to reflect human tragedy, while the details in the second group celebrate the beauty of the color of life and encourage people to live.

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