

“THE WOMAN FROM THE PAST” BY ROLAND SCHIMMELPFENNIG AS INTERTEXT

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The famous German playwright Roland Schimmelpfennig was born in 1967 in Göttingen. He worked in Istanbul as a freelance journalist and playwright, and since 1990 he studied directing at the Otto Falkenburg School (Munich). After completing the course, he became an assistant director and then a member of the artistic management of the Kammerspiele Theater in Munich, and was a playwright at the German Drama Theater in Hamburg. R. Schimmelpfennig became the laureate of Germany's highest award for a playwright (Else-Lasker-Schüler-Prize).

His work has been studied in many scientific works: the monograph of G. Brandstetter analyzed the general features of the playwright's poetics [1, p. 97-112]; E. Fischer-Lichte described his artistic method as "kaleidoscopism" [2, p. 81-89]; N. Fry drew attention to the world of things in Schimmelpfennig's drama [3, p. 114-117]; N. Yuhan considered genre transformations in the works of the German author [4, p. 291-299], as well as genre features of the play "Woman from the Past" [6], and features of the playwright's creative method [7, p. 191-193]; F. N. Mennemeier studied the early work of R. Schimmelpfennig in a literary context [5, p. 83-98].

Schimmelpfennig's play "The Woman from the Past" (2004) [8] depicts an old house. Married for 19 years, Frank and Claudia and their young son Andi are moving away. There is no, and most likely never was, love between a man and his wife; and the son is an absolute stranger to his parents and, moreover, as a result of the move, he must leave his beloved girlfriend Tina.

This beginning of Schimmelpfennig's work, at first glance, resembles a comedy as one of the many comedies about relationships within a love triangle." However, for the dramaturgy of the 20th – early 21st centuries. this situation is not new at all, rather typical, or even archetypal and, most importantly, not so comedic. After all, many women and men "from the past" disturbed the peace and peaceful life of ordinary heroes. Let us remember Claire Tsakhanasyan from F. Dürrenmatt's tragicomedy "The Old Lady's Visit." This "richest woman in the world," who, after forty years of absence, arrives in her native Gullen, offers residents of the regular city a billion for the murder of Alfred Ilya, who once trampled their love. Or the "romance play" "Santa Cruz" by M. Frisch, where the romantic pirate Pellegrin penetrates the gloomy castle, who seventeen years ago loved its current owner, Elvira. Or, say, Harold Pinter's drama "The Room," in which elderly Rose and Bert, locked in their limited "room-world," feel threatened and in danger from the outside. This also includes the mystical "uninvited" in the "theater of silence" by M. Maeterlinck ("Uninvited", "The Blind", "In There"), who sow death and turn people into silent puppets, numb with horror of the Unknown.

A similar situation can be resolved on the theater stage in different genre and style planes, looking for answers in traditional realistic, socio-psychological theater, or using the existential model of freedom of choice; interpret the "visit of a lady" from the past as an invasion of the life of the absurd, or carry out a search in the dimensions of the aesthetics of modern post-dramatic theater. Roland Schimmelpfennig tries to organically fuse different,

sometimes polar and at first glance incompatible theatrical concepts and genre forms. Indeed, in his drama "A Woman from the Past" there is a place for both the classical, even somewhat archaic tradition (everyday, realistic theater), and the no less revered theatrical avant-garde, which has already turned into a classic (the aesthetics of Antonin Artaud, the epic theater of B. Brecht, theater of the absurd). But the main thing is that the style of the work is not eclectic (although the postmodern era can justify any eclecticism), but harmonious, and various stylistic fabrics - first of all, tradition and avant-garde - are woven into each other masterfully and organically.

In "A Woman from the Past," the playwright himself constantly turns to the aesthetics of epic theater, the theorist and creator of which was B. Brecht, because from him in modern theater comes the tradition of destroying the fourth wall and pushing away from the system of "reincarnation" of K. S. Stanislavsky. Elements of epic drama appear in Schimmelpfennig's text primarily in Tina's monologues. In a number of episodes (episodes 3, 5, 10, 12.4, 18) Tina plays the role of a kind of narrator; she reports on the behind-the-scenes events of the drama, delivering her monologues directly to the audience:

Among other artistic contacts of "Women from the Past," it is worth noting the intermedial rapprochement of her theatrical language with the language of modern cinema - also a convergence, but no longer genre, but interspecific, transmedia. This, in particular, is manifested in the situation of a double repetition (i.e., a kind of rewinding of the "film") of the scene of Romy's appearance in the house of Frank and Claudia, and the "second take" covers the events "ten minutes before," as the playwright explains in remark. Also, for example, before the start of episode 11, the author's remark "two days before" follows. Similar retrospective techniques are readily used by film directors: from Kurosawa and Fellini to Tarantino and Tykwer, but it is interesting that this poetics of "takes" and playing-scrolling situations also comes into drama (Biography by Max Frisch, The Seagull by Boris Akunin).

An important place in the text of the drama is also occupied by the intermedial connection with music. Music in "The Woman from the Past" plays not just an auxiliary, accompanying, background role. She essentially turns into another actor. The musical leitmotif is the song by John Lennon and Paul McCartney I will: Who knows how long // I've loved you // You know // I love you still... you know, I still love you...). It symbolizes the past love of Romy and Frank, and also marks the rapprochement of the "woman from the past," once young and still in love, with his son Andi, who is young and very similar to Frank's ex. Romi seduces Andi and then kills him, also for betraying love. After all, Andi, a minute before the passionate kiss with Romi, swore eternal love for Tina.

In the final scene, the meaning of the ancient intertext of the drama is revealed in its entirety. After all, the news that Claudia was delighted with Romi's gift (in Dzekun's stage version the emphasis is on the Greek outfit (peplos) - truly, "fear the Danaans") indicates the overlap of Schimmelpfennig's drama with the tragedy of Euripides "Medea".

Medea, burning with jealousy and thirst for revenge, sends a poisoned wedding dress as a gift to the Corinthian princess, who "intercepted" the former Argonaut and father of Medea's children, Jason, and dies in terrible agony. So, Medea awakens in a loving woman from the past. Tina tells how Claudia got busy: "at the moment when she puts her hand into the bag, (at least that's what it looks like through the window), her fingers, arms, shoulders are suddenly on fire. The entire figure of the woman in the bedroom is engulfed in fire. She is burning, her whole body is burning, burning incredibly quickly and terribly... It seems that she is not even able to scream, behind the closed windows I can't hear anything, but her mouth is open, painfully open..."

It is noteworthy that ancient motifs are heard throughout the entire action of the play.

Tina compares her house to an "antique tombstone" (episode 10). And the characters of the modern film that she watched with Andi were in search of a "Pandora's box" according to ancient mythology. That the lover should beware is signaled by another intertextual connection in "Women from the Past."

Thus, genre convergence in R. Schimmelpfennig's play leads to genre polyphonism, in which almost all the main traditional genres of drama are represented: comedy and farce, drama and melodrama, tragedy and mystery. At the same time, each of them, moving closer to the other, maintains its autonomy, so one can argue about a postmodern genre collage. The poetics of Schimmelpfennig's drama is determined by broad intertextual ("Medea" by Euripides) and intermedial (the musical leitmotif "I will" (Lennon and McCartney) connections.

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