

## **PECULIAR FEATURES OF AMERICAN STORYTELLING**

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**Abstract.** *This article analyzes the peculiar features of American short stories written by American writers. An article begins with the emergence of the short story genre in American literature, its widespread use up to the present time, the writers who wrote in this genre, their great contribution to American short story writing, as well as the concept of the American dream in their stories. In addition, we explore the diversity of themes and ideas, the ability to adequately reflect irony and parody in American stories.*

**Key words:** *American literature, story, unexpected ending, national-cultural views, unique writing style, American dream, irony, humor.*

**Introduction.** The history of the development of the novel genre in American literature includes two hundred years. It has undergone significant changes throughout its development, and continues to develop, presenting problems that require new artistic solutions. It is no exaggeration to say that, the leading term in literary criticism is "short story", and certain social and economic conditions have motivated its development. In the United States, the term "short story" has hardly rooted and was rarely used.

**Main part.** The famous American writer K. Porter writes in the preface of his collection of stories: "We have four titles, exhaustives next division: short story, long stories, short novels, novels." The term "story" was coined by Henry James, he named his book "Daisy Miller: and other stories". From the beginning of the 20th century, "story" began to be used more widely. "...was born the American short story, something distinctively and unquestionably our own in the world of letters"<sup>1</sup>

Along with the term "novella" in literary criticism: in Uzbek - story, short story, in Russian - rasskaz, in French - contre, in German - Geschichte, Kurz-geschichte, in English there are terms like - story, short story, short-short story , long story, long short story. Like any national literature, American literature has developed on the basis of the past. It is the traditions that contribute to the artistic assimilation of the present, and thereby enter into the content and form of the modern story.

In the first half of the 19th century the short story genre took an important place in the American literature. Writers such as W. Irving, N. Hawthorne, G. Melville and E. Alan Poe, who became the founder of the theory of this genre, worked effectively in this genre. Edgar Allan Poe's name is directly associated with the discovery of the compositional principles of American stories. E. Poe put forward

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<sup>1</sup> Pattee, Fred Lewis.( 1923). The Development of the American Short Story. An historical survey. Harper and Brothers. New York and London. P. 3

the requirements that the creator should pay serious attention while creating short stories. According to him, a skillfully written story should have its own characteristics, compositional and artistic completeness. A work of art should leave a certain "effect" on the reader. The author should choose a plot that interests him and lead the reader to the goal in a consistent, step-by-step manner.

The storyteller believed that the main advantage of a work of art is unity, that is, the integrity of the effect or impression it creates. That is why short prose - a story that can be read in one sitting - is given great priority. It is in the story that he sees the desired complete form of the composition, the structure of the work. The general idea of the work, its plot and other components should find their final expression in the solution. The American writer stated that novelty, originality of thought and imagination, that is, creation of beauty, is the essence of art. He was the first in the history of American literature to try to theoretically understand "story" as an independent genre. Since many famous American story writers were representatives of romanticism, for them the emotionality of a work of art was considered its main feature. E. A. Poe was able to define the poetic principles of the story, which makes it possible to emphasize that the genre of the story reached a certain maturity in the first half of the 19th century. Obviously, American storytelling did not develop as a separate and independent phenomenon. It is worth mentioning that there were direct and indirect effects on it during the development process. Many American short stories of the first half of the 19th century can be traced back to European, particularly German, short stories. For example, W. Irving's work is distinguished by the influence of both English and German romantics: W. Scott, I. Burger, E. Hoffmann, the Grimm brothers.

At the end of the 19th century, the American story became an independent genre and took a leading place in the American national literary process. In the 20th century, the story develops as quickly as the works, and it expresses the most important features of the social and literary development of the modern era. In the critical works dedicated to the study of the novelistic genre of the first half of the 20th century, various definitions and interpretations were given to it. The name of story or short story represents the essence of such a diverse genre that changes from time to time, that the attempt to give a single definition of the genre of the story is not really successful. American literary scholars J. Gardner and L. Dunlap give a special place to the story among the genre forms of short prose: "A short story is a work in which the central conflict is in one act."<sup>2</sup>

One of the main characteristics of a story is to make an impression. A short story is a prose work that reflects the artistic and holistic repetition of life through many literary devices, primarily themes, characters, conflicting or crisis actions, setting and style.<sup>3</sup> The famous American researcher R. West said, "The final definition of a short story is almost impossible to find. ...We will never arrive at an adequate definition, ...to define a short story is to limit it. It destroys its attractiveness in many ways."<sup>4</sup> Difficulties in defining the short story genre are explained by the historical variability of literary forms and the diversity of the genre itself. Such a definition means narrowing the short story, canonizing and absolutizing the characteristics of the genre. Thus, taking into account the existence and characteristic features of this sub-genre, the short story was studied with all types of forms. Novelists of the 20th century, such as M. Twain, J. London, T. Dreiser, and S. Anderson, aspired to the realistic stories of European writers such as I. Turgenev, Guy de Maupassant, L. Tolstoy, R. Kipling, and A. Chekhov.

In fact, a story is a complete episode, mood, situation and action taken from life. The

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<sup>2</sup> Gardner, J, Dunlap, L.( 1962). *The Forms of Fiction*. Random House. New York. P 4.

<sup>3</sup> Grove Day, A, Bauer, W. (1953) *The Greatest American Short Stories*. McGraw-Hill. P 335.

<sup>4</sup> West, R. (1994)*The Short Story of America*. New York.

development of events in the story develops quickly and dynamically, the storyteller tries to unravel the knot in it as quickly as possible, and that knot contains the entire meaning of the story - first of all, with its help, the author gives an understanding of the event and the situation, evaluates described characters and events, puts emphasis in the right places. The plot develops dynamically due to the system of few characters in the story, usually their number is chosen according to what is necessary for the continuous development of events. The story, which is considered a small epic form, is distinguished by symbolic details. Especially in the description of nature, such epic details increase expressiveness and, as a rule, depend on the creative imagination of the reader - includes assumptions and recreation. A detail in a short story is a "compressed" idea that is not widely revealed by the writer. Details are often the carrier of the subtext, perform a metaphorical function, and thus stimulate the reader's thinking. The masters of artistic details in American literature were W. Irving, and A. Chekhov in Russian literature. "The American short story began in 1819 with Washington Irving."<sup>5</sup> Their short stories are distinguished by their beauty and graphic accuracy. They built their descriptions on the principle: one or two details - a hypothesis based on the impression of characters. This poetic tradition was continued by 20th century story writers (Eudora Welty, T. Capote, J. Updike, H. James, etc.).

Among the characteristics of the novel genre, psychologism has a special place. In the story, the image of the hero's inner world creates the leading emotional background, the atmosphere of the hero's current psychology. Edgar Allan Poe called this phenomenon the emotional psychological effect. In narrative composition, as in any short story, the denouement of the plot or the ending, which has the character of an emotional finale is important. The main meaning of the ending of a short story is to emphasize the theme of the story. In the works of novelists of the second half of the 20th century, the story is told in the first person, the author approaches the hero, in most cases the hero and the author become the same person, the subjective form of artistic thinking prevails. The most common form of the story is the first-person narrative, which allows to show reality through the individual experiences of the protagonist. At the same time, the lyricism is often combined with the objectivity, with the help of which a general picture of the directly visible reality is given. The analysis of novels by American writers of the 20th century allows us to distinguish a number of features of the narrative genre. They are manifested in the development of the internal plot and the weakening of the external plot, in the complexity of the composition, in its variety, in the tendency to lyricism, in the extensive use of subtext and internal monologue.

Literature is a broad category of published works found in not just one but almost every country. However, the literature of each country or region is different and has its own characteristics. All written works in the United States are considered as American literature, they are all-inclusive and remarkable. There are several factors that distinguish American literature from other types of literature, some of which are discussed below:

- **Beliefs and Traditions.** It is claimed that, American literature maintains traditions and beliefs from the country's early years. In these beliefs, innovative concepts of self-sufficiency and freedom have appeared repeatedly. On top of this, in American literature, authors highly appreciate the value and importance of the individual. They tend to reject authority in favor of a democratic republic, equality, and human rights, distinguishing American literature from other literary genres.
- **Theme.** The American literature presented a unique perspective and concepts to the world. In documenting the development of American literature, people studied various themes such as the "American Dream", "Youth", "Justice and Injustice", "The Pursuit of Happiness", and

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<sup>5</sup> Pattee, Fred Lewis. (1923) *The Development of The American Short Story*. An historical survey. Harper and Brothers. New York and London. 1923. P.1.

“Freedom and Dignity”. The focus was on separating American ideas of rationality and power from what was described as European social conservatism.

- **Style.** American literature is more logical and suspenseful, with different styles. Common themes in American literature are politics, economics, and social status. However, elements of parody, irony, and pessimism can also be found in the works of American writers.
- **Genre.** The genre of American literature included themes related to religion and politics in early literature. In the 17th and 18th centuries, American writers focused on revolutionary themes, American history, and social issues to evoke basic morals.
- **Comic strip.** You can always find a bright line of humor in American literature, from the earliest works to the current writings. This characteristic prevents the writing from becoming too dark or depressing.
- **Achieving the American Dream.** Another characteristic associated with American literature is the study of the American dream. Many stories in both prose and poetry related to the American Dream and describe this concept.
- **Writers.** American literature mainly includes the works of authors known for their contributions to the field of literature. (F. Cooper, Jack London, J. D. Salinger, E. A. Poe, Mark Twain, W. Faulkner, E. Hemingway). These authors are respected for their works and have had a profound impact on society both individually and collectively.

**Conclusion.** Many of the great writers of American literature attempted at least to write short stories, and some are better known for their stories than for their novels. Because short stories are a great way to try the new authors out, explore the environment closely, improve each skills and delve deeper into the world of American literature. The American story demonstrates the existence of different forms within the genre. The short story is considered one of the most dynamic genres of the 20th century, and the conditions of modern life help its development in quick rates. The technological age has placed man above the need to live in a close, ever-changing world. The peculiarities of this world and the people living in it are covered and reflected almost primarily in a short story. Since the short story genre occupies one of the leading places in the literature of the USA, it is relevant and effective to study the characteristics of the formation and development of this genre.

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