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The urban environment of Italy in prose of W. D. Howells

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Abstract

The Italian experiences of an American writer of the late nineteenth century, William Dean Howells (1837-1920) reflected in travelogues provide researchers of literature the opportunity to study the genesis of his work in the paradigm of the culture of the United States. Accompanying him throughout life, they were the aesthetic basis for literary work of Howells. The influence of Italian works of art and literature can be seen in the choice of the individual style of the writer. Of special interest is the influence of the process of the creative development of American writer on his attitude to changing environment in the capital and the provincial towns of Italy. The topicality of this work is associated with the peculiarities of artistic interpretations of the different cultural environment through the author's perception of reality. The mental concept of "another" life, the recognition of the specificity of the foreign country" often take place in the process of reading the literary works of different genres. In prose of W. D. Howells the perception of the city is connected with the author's point of view on the depicted object, so the leading method in the study was the biographical. This is the first time in the Russian literature of XXI century that the travelogues by W. D. Howells are analyzed, the main motives of the narration are identified, the archetypal images, expressed in literary form, are determined. Fiction affects the formation of the cultural image of the city, the perception of its environment, plunging into the epicenter of the described lives of citizens. The practical significance of the research of the cultural phenomenon of the city is to identify the specific features, forms and techniques creating its image, enclosed in the space-time continuum of the works of W. D. Howells.

Keywords

American prose, Image of the city, Italian motifs, The dialogue of cultures, Travelogues, Urban environment

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