



# **Женская литература эпохи бидермейера: Аннетте Дросте-Хюльсхофф и Божена Немцова (к постановке вопроса)**

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# **Women's Literature of Biedermeier: Annette Droste — Hülshoff and Bozena Nemcova (formulation of the problem)**

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## **Аннотация**

В ряде литератур переход от романтизма к реализму проходил в эпоху бидермейера. Вопрос о правомерности понятия «славянский бидермейер» вызывает дискуссии.

К чешским писательницам бидермейера относится Божена Немцова (Božena Němcová). Ее произведения соединяет с произведениями немецкой писательницы Аннете Дросте-Хюльсхофф (Annette von Droste-Hülshoff) ряд общих черт. Именно бидермейер, сложный и противоречивый, сблизил творчество этих выдающихся женщин.

## **Abstract**

In the literature of some countries the transition from romanticism to realism occurred in the period of Biedermeier. The term "Slavonic Biedermeier" causes a lot of discussion. Czech author Bozena Nemcova can be called a Biedermeier writer. Her works are characterized by the same features as the works of German writer Annette von Droste-Hülshoff. It was Biedermeier that made for the closeness of the works by these outstanding women.

**Ключевые слова:** Бидермейер, славянский бидермейер, Аннете Дросте-Хюльсхофф, Божена Немцова.



**Keywords:** Biedermeier, Slavic Biedermeier, Annette von Droste-Hülshoff, Božena Němcová.

1. In some literatures, including Czech and German literatures, the transition from romanticism with its power and interest in the exceptional individual to realism, which nominated a problem of an ordinary person coincided with the epoch of the Biedermeier period.

2. One of the controversial issues of Slavic studies is associated with the implementation of "Biedermeier" concept to Slavic literature [Biedermeier in Slavic and European context, 2016]. Most scientists are inclined to believe that consideration of the Slavic region literatures in the context of the Biedermeier problems will allow to take a fresh look at the literary process in the Slavic countries. Although, "in case of a superficial approach an effect of a sharp clash of comprehension traditions of the national literature will be inevitable. Thus, the Slovenian poet France Prešeren (1800-1849), who in his national tradition, as well as in Soviet science is seen as a romantic poet, while German-speaking researcher relates him as a Biedermeier poet" [Mikhailov, 1997].

3. The main arguments of the opponents of the use of "Biedermeier" term to Slavic literature come down to the fact that the era of Biedermeier chronologically coincided with the time of formation of romanticism and National Revival.

A). The concept of "silence" in the Slavic and Germanic tradition probably has a different meaning. Nem.Stille means "silence", "voicelessness", "calm", "dumbness", "calm sea". According to Vasmer dictionary Common Slavic \*tixъ is connected <...> with tĕxa, tĕšiti / tĕšit se "rejoice" (Czech.), relates to the Lithuanian teisu ° s "fair", tiesa ° "truth" [Vasmer, 4: 63]. According to P.E.

Buharkina, the famous M. Lomonosovs "beloved silence" contains "poetic (ie polysemantic, not reducible to the logical) idea of harmony, actively beloved by the man and in turn ascending him to the beatitude, which is expressed by topos of silence" [Bukharkin 2001: 35].

B). Coziness for the Czech man was made up by his native idyllic landscape rural as well as urban, which were not designed in a literary space, but rather appeared as an immutable given, associated with peculiarity of the geographical location of the country and the formation and development of its towns and villages, the specifics of the architecture of the country and its landscape.

C). Private life and family for a Czech man is not just a family, but a national Czech family from which subsequently grows the national elite. Czech patriots in such kind of peace and coziness of the native nature lived through the National Revival.

4. Biedermeiers ideas, closely intertwined with the National Revival ideas. Politics mingled with private life. "<...> And in fact, during this period, which we like to consider now as the time of nice and cozy slumber, smug joy against all manifestations of life, highly cultured and distinguished with a good taste, was in fact only a political period! <...> It was permeated with politics <...> Lyrics served it, as well as theater, epos and novel" [Mikhailov, 1997].

5. Concerning resignation, the Czech Biedermeier researchers believe that it is associated with the inability to express personality, especially after the events of 1848, so the leave to private life is the acceptance of the inevitable [Biedermeier v českých zemích 2004], which is so common for the Czech culture and Czech mentality. At the same time such leave



opens up the space of inner freedom [Tureček 1996].

6. A German writer Annette (Anna Elizabeth) Droste-Hülshoff (Annette von Droste-Hülshoff) (1797-1848) entered the history of German literature as a subtle lyricist. Her prosaic legacy is of interest as well. Her work has absorbed the best features of German Romanticism and incipient realism with his attention to a simple fate of an ordinary person. The work of German writer can be referred to the Biedermeier style. Her work is based on the triad of the homeland, the family and nature.

7. A Czech writer Božena Němcová (Božena Němcová) (1820 - 1862) is known primarily as a writer, although she began as a poet («Slavné ráno», «Moje vlast»). Němcová's creative work, especially her novel "Grandma", refers to the prime example of the Czech Biedermeier.

Creative work of both writers appeared close in many respects, despite the fact that the works of the first are dominated by poetry and prose is dominant for the second.

8. The first thing that brings them together is the autobiographical character of the works. Childhood of both writers passed in the vicinity of locks: Vassershloss in Westphalia (Wasserschloss Westphalia) and Ratibořice (Ratibořice) in the northeast of the Czech Republic. Native nature, patriarchal castle life was the El Dorado of childhood, in which subsequently women's literature tends to plunge. Not only Droste-Hülshoff lyrics, but her novel "Ledvina" is full of the author's attitude. Authors beginning clearly emerges in Němcová's "Grandma", where the writer describes her childhood in many respects.

9. Hence the following common feature of their work - a description of the patriarchal family and its enduring moral values: respect for elders, respect and

gratitude to their parents, religiosity, respect for others, etc.

10. Further came the passion for antiquity, folklore and the outgoing national daily graft. In the dedication to the publication in 1819, Wilhelm Grimm, Droste-Hülshoff thanks for their help in collecting tales and parables. The collected tales by Němcová have entered the treasury of Czech literature, her novel "Grandma" is imbued with ethnography and folklore.

11. Another feature is the lyrical description of the native nature:

*Schwertlilienkranz am Ufer steht  
Und hört des Schilfes  
Schlummerliede;*

*Ein lindes Säuseln kommt und geht,  
Als flüstere's: Friede! Friede! Friede!*  
(Annette von Droste-Hülshoff «Der Weiher»)

*Na panské louce kvítí až strakato;  
uprostřed louky mez, na mezi  
mateřídoušky jak by nastlal* (Božena Němcová «Babička»)

12. And finally depiction of the characters of ordinary people with their mundane thoughts and actions.

13. What could be the cause of such proximity: the vicinity of the biographical facts, the commonness of the literary process, the influence of German literature or gender peculiarities? Maybe. It is thought, however, that the affinity is due to the fact that both individuals were writers of the Biedermeier epoch. It is a complex and contradictory Biedermeier that pulled together the works of these outstanding women.

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