

Abstract

This bachelor's thesis is devoted to a specific type of text in which the narrator visits an asylum, is guided through it by a local doctor, and is told the stories of individual patients. The texts originate from the period between the late 18th and mid-19th centuries. However, from antiquity to the early modern period, a similar narrative scheme (where the narrator is in hell instead of an asylum) can be found in world literature. These texts expressed various social critiques or allowed authors to resolve their own personal conflicts and express their opinions. These asylums also represent critical engagement with the world and society, as various problematic phenomena are placed within them. During the observed period, however, there was a gradual reformulation of the critiques that the authors attempted to express through these texts, eventually leading to the complete emptying of the original function of this type of literature. This thesis aims to capture these changes in some of the motifs that recur in the texts and place them in a broader cultural and historical context.

Keywords: madness in literature, asylum, satirical literature, fantastic literature, late Enlightenment, Romanticism