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**HISTORICAL DYNAMICS OF THE POETIC IMAGERY
IN THE RUSSIAN POETRY ON SIBERIA
OF THE XVIII — BEGINNING OF XX C. ***

SUMMARY. The vast historical and philological material allows to observe the historical dynamics of the Siberian text of Russian lyrics; the key-symbols of the fictional image of Siberian space are found out; the genesis and fate of the poetical topic are described; the dialogical character of the authors' poetic models of Siberian locus is shown.

KEY WORDS. Siberian text, lyrics, symbol, fictional space, topic, model, Siberian locus.

The artistic image of Siberia in Russian culture has been studied sufficiently well [1]. The poetics of the Siberian space and factors that influenced the formation of this poetics are in the focus of the Russian philological research [2-4]. Note, that most attention in the works of last few years is paid to the extra-literary impacts: the value of geosophic ideas [5-7], the understanding of the writer's life experience through the category of «life-here experience» [8], the establishment of the mythological substrate in the system of the author's imagery [9-11]. Inter-literary reasons for the historical dynamics of the spatial image of Siberia have been studied to a much lesser degree. Nevertheless, their role in the system of artistic codification of the Siberian space is significant primarily because it allows to make a different approach to the issue of symbolic filling of the spatial image. The Siberian locus is not only reproduced by the language of art, but it becomes itself one of those spatial languages through which the lyrical perspective speaks itself out, i.e. the language for modeling non-spatial content of a poetic work. In this case, the Siberian text of the Russian lyrics steps beyond the scope of regional themes and receives a universal artistic and existential meaning.

Considering a large corpus of texts that belong to different epochs and literary movements, we are faced with the problem of choice of the unit of research and the unit of comparative analysis, which would help to detect differentiating features of poetic loci. These units are the image as well as the motif as a form of the expressed relationship between the images. The units of comparative analysis are *capacity* (referential content) of artistic space as it creates the idea of the mobility of the paradigmatic system of spatial imagery; ratio of *connotative and denotative* meanings of the image or motif —

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fluctuations mainly between the direct and figurative ways of representation of perceptions; special features in the *association* of images and motifs.

Changing the capacity, the level of detailization of the artistic space is one of the most revealing signs of its historical dynamics. A priori it is assumed that the historical exploration of Siberia entails a greater specification of the Siberian poetic locus: filling it with concrete realias (including names of geographical features, of the leading figures in the Siberian history, details of the Siberian landscape). Indeed, as shown in the continuous sampling, carried out on the material of the fifteen XVIII c. poets' works, in the early stages of literary exploration of the Siberian topic the region has rather limited set of characteristics. At the same time the actual poetic semantics of spatial images is created with the help of known cultural symbols, brought by poets onto a new area of reality. These are ancient images of Boreas — the north wind, the Old Russian definition of the North as «midnight», chronical topos of a narrow path (a hole in the stone). The motivation for such transference lies in the similarities between the named and unnamed worlds according to the characteristics of the location, extent and value characteristics (rich-poor, good-evil, civilized-wild). Thus formed periphrases, where the ancient topography, biblical and the Gospel texts, Russian chronicles and Old Russian legends of the Siberian side bring the non-geographic sense into geographic realias.

The purpose of artistic exploration is the invention of a system of conventional symbols that could represent a new area of reality. The fact that the number of such symbols is small, does not alter the essence of what happened: in the poetry of rhetorical epoch Siberia is assigned a fairly definite place in the system cultural topography, the spatial image is «covered» with a net of humanitarian meanings. It acts 1) as a measure of Russian area and, consequently, of the greatness of the Russian state; 2) as a symbol of the heroic strive of the Russian people for new discoveries, places of deeds and, therefore, it is a bright metaphor for the triumphant reason; 3) as a foreign land within the boundaries of the domestic world.

In the first case a particular importance is laid on the geography. The feature of «outstretch» along with «a long distance» belongs to the most frequent characteristics of the artistic image of Siberia, being preserved in the panegyric ode up to the end of the XVIII century: «От невских красных берегов / До Кети, Оби отдаленной»* (N.M. Karamzin) «От Туры до острова Ильи»** (P.A. Slovtsov). The axiological sense of the space is defined with the boundaries marked by the poets. So, in the Letter «To the Prince Nikita Yurievich Trubetskoy» and the auto-commentaries to the text A. Cantemir creates an idea of the greatness of Russia, pointing at its borders with China:

В покое правишь крайние пределы
Пространна царства, что близи Китая.***

The reference to the Chinese borders of the Siberian locus is in the spirit of the time, and it also requires a special commentary: the consistent delineation of the Siberian and Far Eastern possessions of Russia - its northern, eastern and southern

* From the red shores of Neva / To the Ket', distant Ob

** From Tura to the Isle of Iliya

In peace you rule over the extreme edges // of the expanding kingdom that is near China.

limits - is relatively recent, starting from the end of the XVII century. The border with China along the Amur River was marked out by Nicholas Spafarija in «Description of the Amur River.» Together with Spafarija's grandson N. Milesco Cantemir arrived in Russia in 1711. China, as a source of exotic treats, first of all, tea (cf.: «Manchu» drink as G.R. Derzhavin called it), became much closer to Russia after Siberia had been annexed to it.

The eastern and northern borders of Russia, put in the map, also serve as signs of greatness of the Siberian kingdom: in M.V. Lomonosov's «Ode... on Taking Khotin, Year 1739» the Barents Sea and Kamchatka (Sea of Okhotsk) Sea are included in the «seven extensive seas», washing the shores of the Empire. On the Great Northern Expedition, conceived by Peter I, but carried out after his death in 1734-1740's Lomonosov writes in the heroic poem «Peter the Great». Unlike Cantemir, Lomonosov concentrates on the northern borders and thereby changes the semantic content of the spatial image: Siberia is not intended for «pleasures», but for the war and glory, for scientific discoveries, equal to those made by Magellan or Columbus. The Northern «icy seas» and the western Baltic Sea, the eastern Lena and the southern Caucasus create an image of great Russia in the «Ode on the Day of the Highest Birth of Her Imperial Majesty in Year 1768», written by M.M. Kheraskov. To oversee such a space requires a special point of perception - beyond the earth borders, at the sky heights - and a special observer, positioned above people. A terrestrial analogue of the hyperbolic horizon is a geographical map and the vision of the academic geographer. All together it creates an image of an enlightened observer, who is addressed by the poet, and an image of the enlightened poet.

The real motivation for the Siberian topography, that prevails over others, is a characteristic feature of the rhetorical style. Even in those cases where the authors use poetic metaphors a figurative image is subject to a rational interpretation: for example, the fixed symbol of a winged or a fierce Boreas provides for the definition of Russia as a Northern Empire, although the comparison with the Russian monarch with the northern sun is already found in Simeon Polotskiy's «A Poem on the Happy Return of the Tsar from Riga».

In the ode «On the Day of Accession to the Throne of Her Majesty Empress Elizabeth Petrovna in Year 1748» Lomonosov emphasizes that Elizabeth inherits the northern expanses of Russia. The Siberian and Far Eastern realias (the Lena, the Amur, Manchuria, the islands of the eastern seas) not only show the power and richness of Nature, but also draw a picture of space for the mind, serve as a place to apply efforts of art, science, art, governmental and religious institutions, a call to educate their «own Platos and quick-minded Newtons». The image has a distinctly ideological content: Lomonosov extends the loyalty of the royal power over the people («many nations») and the Siberian nature: «В моей послушности крутятся // Там Лена, Обь и Енисей»*. From the West to the East - to the Amur and Ob - stretches not only the fame of the wise ruler, but the fame of the poet faithful to him (A.I. Klushin «Greatfulness to Catherine the Great for the Gracious Dismissal of Me with a Salary to Foreign Lands»).

In the poetry of the XVIII century the toponym «Siberia» acquires not only positive axiological characteristics. The hedonistic evaluation of Siberia is only possible within the framework of colonial theme, widely represented in the poetry of the XVIII century. However, it comes out against the background of the already established disrespect

* Obeying me, there are whirling // Lena, Ob and Yenisey

for hedonism and the reminder that the territory, from where «silver» and «gold» come, may be a place of terrible disasters. After the exile of the former Peter's companions to Siberia, the name of his favourite is read as a symbol of exile. In auto-commentaries to satires A. Kantemir indicates that the periphrasis «between sables» means exactly the «Siberian exile» («In exile in Siberia, where the sables come from»). The jest is very illustrative in the text, being built on the substitution of prepositions: in the land of sables, symbolizing wealth, the character of the satire is in misery «among the sables». Since that time, the comments on the topic of exile in Siberia are no longer required: «the road to Siberia» is a transparent allegory of exile and hard labor, for example, in the poem by I.S. Barkov «The Pope Vavila» or in the comedy by Y.B. Knyazhnin «Oddities».

Another connotation of the Siberian space formed in the rhetorical system can be described as its «exorbitance». The idea of it is created not only with the help of the sign of «the outstretch» (distance), but also with the help of evaluative descriptions of the Siberian nature, emphasizing the greatness of rivers, piles of ice, mountains, forests' density, low passableness of the space itself. In the fable by I.F. Bogdanovich «The Excesses» Siberia serves as an allegory of the mindless strive for extremes, envy of another's fate. A Russian «pilgrim» oscillates between the excessive heat of China and the excessive cold of Siberia. In this text the image of a narrow road to Siberia, as a road which is not for everyone but only for the chosen or for the unhappy, appears for the first time in the annals of the Russian poetry. Coinciding with the idea of the exorbitance of the Siberian history for a «moderate» (harmonical) poet is the refusal to write about Ermak in the poem «Bowa» by A.N. Radishchev.

In the poetry of the rhetorical epoch a stable system of associating Siberia with some qualifying definitions is established. Let us select a number of fixed epithets that accompany the image of the region. Among them the reference to cold dominates: «a land horrible, freezing» (A.N. Radishchev), «ice» serves as a metonymy of cold, in particular when applied to defining the seas surrounding Siberia. As it has been already noted, in Siberia the idea was fixed of the region of exile and penal colony: among the definitions we come across the epithet «exilous» (V.V. Kapnist, «To a Friend of My Heart»). The evaluative epithet «sullen» combines nature and a human condition with the help of some common quality of theirs (A.N. Radishchev).

Stable analogies and antitheses play an essential role in the formation of conventional meanings of the geographical image. As a furthest extreme of nature Siberia is associated with Africa, and serves as the limit of norm in works of M.V. Lomonosov, I.F. Bogdanovich, V.V. Kapnist:

И ссылочной Сибири холод,
И средь песков Ливийский зной,
Меж лютых кафров жажду, голод
Охотно б претерпел со мной.*

(V.V. Kapnist, «To a Friend of My Heart»)

Thus, the reasonable XVIII century has already expressed the idea that for the poetic exploration of Siberia there is a need for a special sort of talent - a poet, prone to go to extremes, ready for heroic asceticism and feats, endowed with «excessive» imagination. This literary polemical message was addressed to the poets of the past

* And the cold of exilous Siberia // And among the sands the heat of Libya // Among the fierce Caffres thirst, hunger // He would readily tolerate with me.

with their baroque hyperbolic imagery (Lomonosov) and poets, whose time was just approaching - romantic poets. Through a system of plastic symbols an internal, subjective and purely literary (conventional) side of the Siberian theme in the Russian poetry revealed itself. This fact explains in this or that way why until the end of the XIX century the poetic image of Siberia does not go beyond the aesthetics of romanticism.

The turning point in the development of the lyrical theme of Siberia is marked by a series of texts XVIII - XIX centuries. These are mainly voluminous works of lyric-epic character, where a synthetic form aids to discover the space of Siberia from a new angle. We will start with the poem "Yermak" by I. Dmitriev. This poem is a constitution of a synthetic genre: P.A. Vyazemskiy, Dmitriev's contemporary, considered "Yermak" to be a poem, G.K. Makogonenko refers it to odes [12; 47], sometimes "Yermak" is defined as a ballad [13]. The text of the poem is built in form of a dialogue, which contrasts two perspectives on the early history of Siberia: the first one is expressed by "the Siberian shamans"; the second is represented by a Russian poet, in whose imagination all the poem's events take place. The Shaman's voice is merged with the voice of nature itself, a characteristic feature of the peoples of Siberia, in fact, becomes a part of a single natural complex: the description of the characters' appearance and clothing enhances their «animality» (clothes made of animal skin, feather adornments, even weapons are depicted as raw metal). The choice of verbal imagery is aimed at solving the same problem of art: the most frequent epithet in the text is the attribute «terrible», which characterizes both the Siberian nature and its peoples. When assessing Yermak, the characters of the poem speak of him as of some elemental natural force, the death of Yermak without a grave or a monument reinforces this motif. The only - and the most important - feature, which distinguishes the story of a Russian hero from the tales about Siberian bogatyr is the poet's word - a man-made monument, not an oral tradition. This is a rational solution for the Dionysian themes - a concession to the epoch of Enlightenment. But the nature of imagery corresponds to the objective: to show the region in its turbulent motion, expressing the horror of a European before the indomitable Siberian element.

The same motifs of the immeasurable power of nature characterize the Siberian landscape in thoughts of K.F. Ryleyev with their bright heroic pathos. A gloomy and stormy Siberian landscape metaphorically doubles the lyrical theme of a lonely seeking soul, be this Natalia Dolgoruky, Yermak or Voynarovskiy. All artistic vision of these thoughts is aimed at establishing the correspondence between the character's state of mind and the state of nature. Siberia with its unexploredness happened to be a perfect metaphor not only for the rebellious imagination and passion, but also for other states and senses of the lyrical subject. Siberia as a recognizable metaphor for the cold of the soul is found in the «Address to the Russian Women» by N.M. Karamzin: «Несчастный Мизогин в Сибири век живет // Напрасно Феб над ним в величии сияет - // Душа его от хлада умирает»*. Melancholy and sadness become qualities of the gloomy Siberian landscape in the poetry of exile poets: «Угрюмый сын степей, хранительниц Китая, // Роптал стесняемый утесами Онон»** (V.K. Küchelbecker. «Three Shadows»).

* The poor Mizogin has lived for ages in Siberia // Phebus shines above him in vain - // His soul is dying of cold.

** The sullen son of steppes, the keepers of China, // Onon grumbled, cramped by the rocks

It is characteristic of the Romantic poetry in general, that the lyrical image becomes less flexible. The artistic dimension of the Siberian landscape is motivated not by geography, but emotions of the lyrical subject, his or her spiritual experience:

Что скажу я при исходе года?
Слава богу, что и он прошел!
Был он для изгнанника тяжел,
Мрачный, как сибирская природа.*
(V.K. Kiichelbecker. «When Year 1841 Ended»)

As a result, the stylistics of the Siberian landscape is changing. Not descriptive, but psychological epithets dominate there. With the help of these epithets mental states are transferred onto external objects: not only «dark», «gloominess», but also «hot», «cold» mean not climate properties, but «spiritual qualities» of Siberia:

Прими же, о Аргунь, мое благословенье!
Ты лучше для меня, чем пасмурный Онон:
И там мне было разлученье;
Но перед тем меня прельщала безумный сон,
И чуть не умертвило пробужденье!**
(V.K. Kiichelbecker. «Argun'»)

In the poetry of the mid-XIX century the romantic image of Siberia is seen as a literary cliché (see, for example, in the poem of I.S. Nikitin «Siberia! When you write this word...»). However, the tendency to transfer stable characteristics of the Siberian landscape onto a human being is firmly established in the literary use, as evidenced by the lyrical plot, dedicated to the Siberian poet E.L. Mil'keev [14, 15]. Only in the work of the Siberian regionalists the artistic paradigm of the image of Siberia is changing - its transformation occurs shifting it into the space of the Russian province, moreover, one of the most impoverished, and into the space of the colonial type.

When in the poetry a stable image of the Russian national landscape is established, the Siberian landscape is annexed an alternative system of the national theme: penal way (A.A. Fet. «Convict», A.K. Tolstoy. «Convicts», V.V. Krestovskiy. «Vladimirka»; N.A. Nekrasov. «Praise God Our Lord...» «Another three», etc.), infernal space of Russia (N.A. Nekrasov. «Russian women»), biblical, i.e. a sacred center of the Russian landscape (E.L. Mil'keev. «Abalak»).

The Silver Age brings a different vision in the history of poetic exploration of Siberia, and therefore it changed radically the artistic sense of the Siberian space. A «new vision» affects its whole structure, of which Y.N. Tynyanov wrote in connection with the work of Khlebnikov [16; 291]. The laws of this new vision are manifested in different ways by different poets of the XIX-XX centuries. It is characteristic of the new poetry to view the space within the space itself, in the flow of its growth, inseparable from the formation of the subject, when the position of the subject of perception is not placed beyond the borders of the image, but is included in it. I. Konevskiy in his poem «To the Plastic» writes the following on this principle of vision:

* What shall I say when the year ends? // God bless, it has passed! // It was a hard one for the exiled, // Gloominess like the Siberian weather.

** Take, oh Argun', my blessing! // You are better for me, than the cloudy Onon: // And I had there a parting: // But before that a mad dream tempted me, // And the awake nearly killed me!

Я в зрелища вхожу неудержимо
И жду, куда мой путь меня умчит,
А ты стоишь и внемлешь недвижимо,
И дух твой прям, и голос твой молчит* [17; 133].

Siberia in the poetry of not only I. Konevsky, but also Alexander Blok, Andrei Bely, Vyacheslav Ivanov and other poets of modernism becomes a fact of the inner biography and psychophysiology of the artist, the starting point in assessing their own destiny, soul, national character. Siberia embodies the law and the call of blood, that the subject of poetry hears inside himself or herself. Hence the paradoxical «geography» of the «far country», the country of spirit: «Far and between us - the alien country...», the identification with the Huns, Scythians, Tatars - the ancient peoples that marked the threat and the end of Western Civilizations:

В крови моей - великое боренье.
О, кто мне скажет, что в моей крови?
Там собрались бывшие поколения
И хором ропщут на меня: живи!
Богатые и вековые ткани
Моей груди, предсердия и жил,
Осаждены толпою их алканий,
Попреков их за то, что я не жил** [17; 130].

Siberia as an embodiment of the vital force, Dionysian energy, is the image, extremely subjective, deeply psychological, destined to symbolize mysteries of the unconscious. But it is through the subjectiveness that the perception of metaphysical semantics of the Siberian space is performed. Here is the full text of the poem by I. Konevsky «Dwelling», that demonstrates the artistic mechanism of synthesis of the exclusively subjective interpretation of the image of Siberia and its generalized historical understanding.

Обетование

Из туманов и топей мшистых
Мы когда-нибудь да умчимся
За края морей золотистых,
Где давно уж в мечтах кружимся.
Наглядимся на тамарисы,
Разбежимся по странным взморьям,
А потом проникнем в край лысый,
К незапамятным плоскогорьям.
Что в тех странах свершится с нами,
На безвестных лугах Памира,
Заодно с волшебными снами,
В праотчизне людского мира?
Обретем ли родник гремучий,
Где впервые жизнь закипела,
Где, под шорох кедров дремучий,
Няня рода людского пела?

* I enter diversions against my will // And wait where the way will take me. // And you stand and listen, motionless, // And your spirit is determined, and your voice is speechless.

** There is a great battle in my blood. // Oh, who will tell me, what is it in my blood? // The previous generations gathered there // And in unison they grumble at me: live! // Rich and old textiles // Of my chest, auricle and sinews, // Are besieged by the crowd of their cravings, // Their reproaches for that I never lived

Нет, змея, вся в бронзе узорной,
Из-под трав суровых восстанет,
Потрясет головой непокорной
И на нас внимательно взглянет.

Мы прильнем к ее кольцам гибким
И за ней поплывем без страха,
Вниз по травам крупным и зыбким,
На волне воздушного взмаха.

Будет пышно гордиться небо
Глубиной и ширью лазури,
Но оно - не наша потреба:

Мы вручились мудрой лемуре* [17; 112].

The plot of the poem is an imaginary journey into the future, beyond the borders of life, an experiment of esoteric insight into posthumous existence. It is in this respect we can speak about the psychological subjectivity of all spatial images - visions. And at the same time the poem has a generalized philosophical character. The poem reflects geosophic ideas of the second volume of «The Secret Doctrine» by Helena Blavatskaya, «Anthropogenesis» (1897). The image of the snake points to the connection between the poem and the ideas of Blavatskaya. The snake in the system of esoteric symbols meant Material and was opposed to the sky. According to the anthroposophical constructions, on the territory of modern Western and Eastern Siberia northern territories of Lemuria were located - a mainland, where the Third Native Race started. Thus, the center of human history is transferred to the north and east - to India and China, and Siberia occurs to be the northern edge of the ancient world. The history of modern mankind is represented as returning to its roots.

The concept of history as a permanent return to the source is a characteristic feature of Ivan Konevsky's art as a whole. It was inspired by eschatological visions of Vladimir Soloviev and connected with his theory of Panmongolism, first voiced in the poem «Panmongolism» in 1894. In the work «Three Conversations on War, Progress and the End of World History» (1899-1900) Soloviev writes about the «last war» sparked by the ideology of Panmongolism, and finished with the battle of Christianity with the Antichrist. The path to this war lies through the anti-Christian idea of establishing a kingdom of love on earth. For I. Konevsky the end of history means the elimination of the perpetual conflict between the earth and the sky, the return to the earthly androgynous realm, the geographical correspondent of which is Indo-China, Pamir, and Siberia.

*** Dwelling**

From the mists and mossy marshes // We shall fly away one day // Beyond the edges of golden seas, // Where we have been spinning long ago. // We shall tire our eyes of tamarisks, // Run along strange shores, // And then we shall enter in secrecy into a bald land, // Towards the immemorial plateaus. // What will happen to us in those lands, // At the unknown meadows of Pamir, // Together with our miraculous dreams, // In the ancient native land of the human world? // Will we acquire the roaring stream, // Where live first started, // Where, under the rustle of thick cerad-forests, // The nanny sang to the first people? // No, the serpent, overed in the carved bronze, // Will rise from the wild grass, // Will shakes its rebellious head // And look at us intently. // We will touch its flexible rings // And swim after her with no fear, // Down along the big and unsteady grass, // On the wave of an airy wisp. // The sky will be triumphantly proud // Of the depth and width of the azure, // But we do not need it: // We gave ourselves to another lemur.

Such inclusion of subjective and sometimes empirical (e.g., in the poetry of K. Balmont) images of Siberia, its geography and history in a broad literary and philosophical context adds another dimension of meaning to the Siberian theme. The language of spatial images acts as a material for the language of history, seen in the perspective of the mythological time. Siberia is not just visioned - it becomes a form of vision, a way of perception, a formula of reading historical and geographical facts. The removal of the spatial distance between Siberia as the object of perception and a poet - the subject of perception - highlights the distance of another kind - temporal. Siberia becomes a symbolic milestone in the way of formation of personality, Russia and all mankind.

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