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**THE MYSTERY STRUCTURE OF “SMALL FORM” VERSE TEXT
IN V.S. SOLOVYOV’S POEM
“IN THE MIST MORNING UNSTEADY STEPS...”**

SUMMARY. For the first time the article depicts systematically the poem “In the mist morning unsteady steps...” as a practical arrangement of accomplishing mystic process for the purpose of transformation oneself and the world by the main character.

KEY WORDS. Solovyov, poetry, mystic, the art, the plot.

In Solovyov's opinion the real art can consist of only “any perceptible image of some object or an event from the point of view of its final state or its future”. The Solovyov's idea about the real, perfect art and the ways of its creation completely identifies narrative and conceptual structure in mystery plots. Consequently, if man's (creator's, artist's) consciousness, persecuting a supreme goal, is able to transform the reality in which he exists then a man becomes the main character of this mystic plot and “mystereality” appears to be axiological style quality of the real art.

Solovyov's theory about ideal form of art is unique (not taking into consideration its mystical constituent) by denying the formula ‘art is for art’, but by the aim of changing the existent reality, even if the art becomes just a ‘prediction’ of the ideal form of art: ‘in the long run the perfect art must portray the absolute perfection not only in imagination, but actually, it must inspire and enlighten our real life’ [1; 83]. So, the original formula can be transformed into the imperative: ‘Art is for a supreme goal’.

In relation to the conception described above, we should dwell upon the Solovyov's poem *In the mist morning unsteady steps...* (1884). It is significant that the poem was written before the idea of mystical plot. The poem consists of 15 lines, which are divided conceptually and graphically into three verses. All the verses are joined together in harmony and a reader can observe conceptual and lexical overlap between them. The main criteria dividing the poem into parts were spatial and temporal coordinates which are indicated in the poem. Pilgrimage is the transparent tie for all the verses.

The first verse of the poem (lines 1-5) describes the events which happened in the past. In this very verse an image of a “mystic”, new reality is observed; in other verses it is more distinct, with extended concept. The lyric character is not stated clear in this part. The second verse (lines 6-10) describes actual events in the present. The aim of pilgrimage can be easily distinguished, but it is still

not stated lexically in these lines, there is the motive of solitude. And finally, the author describes possible future in the third verse (lines 11-15) in which pilgrimage is also dominating, because achieving a goal seems not that real as someone's attempts of gaining it.

Conceptual and thematic overlap between verses is obvious, it follows one scheme. Evolution and change of any kind of conceptual or spatial and temporal coordinates can be observed in every line within the text. We witness the stages of the author's thoughts with the help of one edition which is listed in the comments to the sixth publication of the poems. Solovyov underlines that the poem was 'published in *The Russian Herald* <...> including variants: page 7: 'I am taking a trip to the same lands again'; page 9 and 10: 'That the mountain way is tricky, that the aim is still far, / That dreams have cheated and I do not believe them' [2; 301]. Evidently, Solovyov had to emphasize the space line with the lexeme 'far'. Moreover, all the lines make up the whole, which is significant within verses and within the mystic plot created by Solovyov.

Thus the beginning of every verse is a marker of time and action of the character: 'In the mist morning unsteady steps' (line 1); 'Following a lonely road by a frosty white day' (line 6); 'Stepping bravely till midnight' (line 11). The sign dynamics within a conventional astronomic day is obvious: 'in morning mist' → 'a frosty white day' → 'till midnight', and also the dynamics of the main character actions, which is directed at his courage: 'unsteady steps' → 'following a lonely road' → 'stepping bravely'.

The second line of every verse is very significant, because a lyric character is revealed there, being marked by the pronoun 'I', furthermore a new space image of a different country, a different world is being formed and developed: 'I took a trip to a mystic and miraculous land' (line 2); 'I wander in a foreign land again' (line 7); 'I will not stop aspiring the admirable lands' (line 12). Both the first and the second lines in every verse can be divided into two parts: in the first lines it concerns the description of natural temporal indicators and dynamics of the lyric character's actions, in the second lines it concerns a temporal indicator of an action in the reality and the space signs of another world. The other lines are structured in another way.

The linear development of different concepts is evident. Despite the concepts stated above, other two concepts can be projected. The first one is a natural indicator of the space limits for the character, so to say, his environment. The second one is that the main character aims for something, manifestation of the aim itself. The first concept is clearly observed in the third lines of every verse — 'The spring of day was fighting with the stars' (line 3); 'The mist has vanished and the view is clear now' (line 8); 'There, where under new stars on the mountain' (line 13). In fact, every line is a continuation of the precious one; they portray step by step the stages of dawn, the way the mist disappears and the fact that the main character can see his aim clearly. That is why the second concept was created, which unites the last lines of every verse: 'The dreams still flitted — and the soul / Followed by the dreams prays to an unknown god' (lines 4-5); 'That the mountain way is tricky, that everything is still far, / Everything is far that I dreamt of' (lines 9-10); 'Being enlightened by victorious glow / My temple will be there to come' (lines 14-15). In the beginning of the poem the author reveals the objects which the main character

strives for, even though they have clearer and more distinct forms, they get more mystic. If the main character had a blurry mind when he woke up in the beginning of the poem, because his trip was about to start only, then in the third verse a reader observes an 'enlightened temple' which he reached, when he came across a 'foreign land'.

The plot of the poem consists of a great number of the events (for a comparatively short piece of writing). These events overlap smoothly: 1) the main character hesitates in the 'mist' ('unsteady steps'), having a trip to 'mystic lands'; 2) the morning fight in the nature — 'The spring of day was fighting with the stars // The dreams still flitted...'; the change of the day ('the spring of day' as the beginning of the day) and night ('stars', 'dreams' as its constituents); 3) interaction between soul and dreams, the changes in soul because of dreams ('followed by the dreams'); 4) the lyric character follows a 'lonely road' by day, but he is not in the 'mist' already, but in a 'foreign land'; 5) day signifies enlightenment of the main character — 'the mist has vanished and the view is clear now'; 6) the description of what the main character has seen and, as a result, what he is contemplating about — these are a tricky way and dreams are hard to achieve yet; 7) there is a temporal frame — 'till midnight' and then 'unsteady steps' become brave, that means that the lyric character supposes his actions to be right, that he is on the way to his goal — the 'admirable lands'; 8) the characteristic of the main character's aim — this place is situated, so to say, neither on the heaven nor the ground — on the mountains and under the stars; 9) the 'dreams' as stated in the second verse are 'my temple'. The plot is made up from a complex of motives; they are added to the central through the motive, pilgrimage. It psychologically explains a mystic transformation of a lyric character for a reader. Compositionally it can be observed through changes in space and temporal coordinates, it gives dynamics to the poem, takes reader's attention away from the blurry events and balances the sacral features of the text and its availability for those who are not confided.

Such an unbroken action, when space and temporal coordinates overlap, is observed in many poems by Solovyov. We would like to illustrate it through the example of the other poems written in different years: 'Even though we are bound with unseen chains, / Being stuck to this land...' (*Even though we are bound with unseen chains...* was written between June 29 and October 28, 1875); 'Abandoned and left alone, I am wandering in a foreign land / Missing the sky of the native land // My star shines lonely far away. / Its light lures me to a miraculous land...' (*I can not change my fate...*, June, 1875-1877); 'I flew the double border / Of space and centuries on swans' (to A. A. Fet, October 19, 1884); 'It was an exhaustible long journey, though / We were amused by nature's blessing' <...> // 'And to the new land of endless dreams / Love-fairy brought me...' (*It was an exhaustible long journey, though we were amused...*, January 1892) or 'Even though Pergamum is in ashes for a while, / And Quiet Flows The Don is in slumber: / Andromacha's groovy grumbling, / And the same moan above Putivl' (In the respond to *Yaroslavna's lament*, June 19 1898). In fact, there are much more similar examples which reveal the peculiarities of Solovyov's poetry, he describes the movements of an object in reality through his own consciousness (it can be shown with the help of motives of retention, pilgrimage and dialogues with images belonging to those centuries, with definite poets etc.).

Correlating the general and local schemes of mystic transformation within the observed poem, we can state that a stage of conceptualization almost coincides with the plot.

A reader can find the description of a morning in the poem. The motive of the morning characterizes very important philosophic categories for the author. By the word the 'morning' he meant not only the beginning of a new day, not the usual events. Even in the early years of his career, Solovyov claims this motive to be mythological; he classified it into a system of traditional mythology in ancient Greece and into a way of forming his own myth. So, in the poem *To Prometheus* (August, 1874), in which the author refers to the well known myth in the title, Solovyov develops the motive in the line with his own opinion and in the end he concludes: 'The bars break down, the bonds are fused / By the god fire / And an eternal morning comes to a new life / For everyone and everyone is united'. That means that the morning motive signifies the beginning of a new life. Besides, in the morning light 'tzaritz'a' always appears, she is the key element in Solovyov's mythological motives. The author uses in his poetry the morning motive as often as the day motive. This is one of the examples of the morning motive: 'Do not mourn; the new / eternal day will come soon' (June 9, 1875). The understanding and handling of this motive is also connected with the new, another, perfect life, its beginning.

The author contributes to the description and understanding of the moment of nature change (from night to day) in the poem. Solovyov follows A. Tolstoy and F. Tyutchev. It was not a coincidence that he almost completely quoted A. Tolstoy in his poem 'Look at the sky, its vastness is transparent and pale...' (August 18, 1878). The experts say that 'Solovyov puts Tolstoy's line into Tyutchev's context and transforms it completely, so it seems like Tyutchev transformed it. <...> Solovyov replaces the adjective 'quiet', which Tolstoy has used, for the adjective 'miraculous'. Solovyov aims at depicting the climax (as Tolstoy said about it) in Tyutchev's poetry. For Tyutchev the word 'miraculous' means not only unusual, wonderful, but something coinciding different, sometimes opposite features' [3; 65]. In fact, the time of predawn dusk is characterized by uniting an opposition — night (darkness) and day (light). Solovyov effectively deliberately changes the tradition and adds the new concept of the word 'miraculous' to the ones (Tyutchev's and Tolstoy's) which were stated above.

In the article *The General Sense of Art* (1890) Solovyov continues to write about the beauty in art, quoting the article *Beauty of Nature*. But the author is no longer interested in mere beauty of nature, but its sense which arises while artist's consciousness dwells upon 'esthetic part of natural phenomenon'. So the author states that 'beauty, being spread in nature, its forms and colors, is more concentrated, highlighted in a picture' [1; 69].

The next motive is a motive of a land which is also characteristic of the poems by Solovyov. We will remind the reader some of the lines with this motive: 'Even though we are bound with unseen chains / Stuck to this land' (*Even though we are bound with unseen chains...*, it was written between June 29 and October 28, 1875); 'And your dulcet genius tempted / Unknown gods to our land' (to A.A. Fet, October 19, 1884); 'The land of hope and the land of desire / Splashes with a pearly

wave' (in the Alps, August, 1886). It is evident that this motive becomes mystic, putting borders of a new, perfect world.

The lyric character finds himself in predawn dusk, when his soul 'follows dreams' and prays to 'an unknown god' and he takes a trip to 'a mystic and miraculous land'. Actually Vorobyov considers the motive of dreams as a possibility to get away from the routine of life. He claims it clearly in the poem *A wingless spirit, bound by the ground...* (June, 1883): 'The only dream — and again bewigged, / You rush into routine worries'. In the observed poem the motive of dreams reveals a possibility to overcome a borderline among the realities.

The reader witnesses the release from impenetrability through the lyric character's consciousness: 'The mist has vanished and the view is clear now'. As a result, a mystic act takes place: the division of the world, observed by the main character, into two groups: reality ('Following a lonely road by a frosty white day'; 'That the mountain way is tricky') and some other reality ('in a foreign land', 'everything is still far, / Everything is far that I dreamt of'). However the fact that they are similar is not obvious and there is no feature which would contract them, making them the opposite notions.

The prevailing of nature motives is not coincidental. Actually, the connection between the nature and art is obvious, indemonstrable for the philosopher. Solovyov states that a human is 'a result of natural processes' and as he is 'the most beautiful' and 'the wisest creature', 'he stays no longer a result of a process, but he is able to change the world himself and he gets closer to his aim - the total interaction and the freedom of spiritual and material, ideal and real, subjective and objective factors and forms in the universe' [1; 70].

Talking about art, Solovyov classifies it as a part of the unity theory; this concept is explained in the article *Beauty of Nature*. Like the triad in the Bible (the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit), following the well known philosophic tradition, Solovyov points out the three ideas in his study, these are 'an idea is goodness', 'an idea is truth', 'an idea is beauty'. Despite the concept of beauty, the author pays attention to the distinctive features which differentiate the notions of goodness, truth and beauty. Beauty should consist of 'a general ideal nature' and 'a unique esthetic form'. According to it the union is 'the supreme good' for Solovyov. Beauty is completed only in the triad, portraying the idea in the reality and the triad is its 'specific feature'. So, the philosopher puts the notion of beauty to a significantly different level of its understanding not only in art, but in culture as a whole.

The mystic features, we observed in the text, are connected not only to the case of the main character's changing as described in the poem, but to different signs in manifestation of beauty, which are registered in Solovyov's pieces of writing. According to his works, 'beauty of the sky' is divided into several types, putting forward another triad. Solovyov considers that an 'idea' is a 'positive transparency or unity' and 'the order of its fulfillment' starts with the sky. The first one depicts the change of matter into a substance (containing beauty). Solovyov emphasizes the role of 'light' as the way to avoid 'stagnation and impenetrability of matter'. Then the author states that light plays the central role in mystic plots — the sun 'portrays world union physically'. There are different forms in the three types of beauty of the sky. The first type is the 'dawn' which depicts the 'image of active

art made by good'. The second one is the material nature which perceps sunlight: 'reflected light is passive womanly beauty of a moonlit night'. The third one is the 'beauty of the sky'. It contains 'a great number of independent matters, which are united by harmony which is found in the oneness', the idea of oneness is depicted 'more wholesome and more detailed' [4; 44]. In the poem entitled *In the mist morning unsteady steps...* the reader can find all the forms of beauty manifestation. The first type, 'dawn', is obviously observed in the first part of the poem; it is 'the spring of day' notion (line 3). The second one is not that evident; "midnight" is not highlighted, but the author mentioned it. It can be explained by the absence of women in the poem, women are personified by the 'moonlit night'. The third type, symbolizing beauty, is also stated in the poem. That is the image of 'starry sky' which is depicted twice in the poem, however these images differ significantly. Solovyov divides them intentionally: 'The spring of day was fighting with the stars/ (line 3) and '...under new stars on the mountain / <...> My temple will be there to come' (lines 13, 15). The image of 'stars' could show two-dimensions of space coordinates. On the one hand, the 'stars' in the first part are objective symbols, evidently, they belong to the reality (we mean that they are usual for everyday life, they just exist in the sky). On the other hand, the author shows the 'stars' which are clearly marked as new ones, in correlation with the image of the 'temple' it expresses the idea of 'positive oneness'. So the 'temple', 'being enlightened by victorious glow' is the symbol of the Oneness idea.

The issues which the author is trying to solve in the poem coincide with the issues which Solovyov recommends every artist to solve. So, general and the most important issues for the art are formulated the following way: '1) the direct objectivation of inner definitions and qualities of nature which can not be expressed by nature itself; 2) vivification of beauty by nature and through this 3) perpetuation its individual phenomenon'. And the Solovyov's triad correlated with the mystic scheme of changing the world. The general issue for the art is formulated the following way: 'the perfect manifestation <...> of spiritual life in the reality, actualization of the ideal beauty or creation united spirituality'. It is fascinating that the creation of a new (perfect) world coincides with the end of the existing one, according to Solovyov: 'the execution of this issue should manifest the end of the world' [1; 78].

Thus the author finds it important to note, esthetically and materially detect the moment of a transformation in the poem *In the mist morning unsteady steps...*, which becomes mystic in Solovyov's philosophy. It is not about the change between a night and a day, but about mystic change of life (the author's and the reader's ones) to a new perfect world. These are the ideas which nature changes and emphasizes by impulses with the help of a poet. The second form of mystic transformation is shown in the text in details. Every line saves the concepts and adds new ones, that method shows the author's desire to get every single detail of the transformation, to put everything in words. The poem reveals the author's way of achieving the supreme goal. This means that a human becomes a part of a material process, a doer. The whole text describes and manifests the mystic change of the lyric character, the author tries to get, comprehend and write down, express with words the moment of union of two worlds in the main character's consciousness.

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