

Specificity of Poetic Metaseuse in the Cycle "Crossroads" by Alexander Blok¹

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Abstract

The "Trilogy of Incarnation" by Alexander Blok is a unique phenomenon not only of Russian, but also of world poetry. "The novel in verses", structured by the poetic meta-plot of the path, became the embodiment and reflection of the spiritual experience of the poet himself. And if the path as a super idea of the Blok trilogy has repeatedly been the subject of research interest, then the meta-plot of individual poetic cycles is not fully considered. So, for example, without proper scientific understanding of the problem under consideration, the "Crossroads" cycle, which ends the first volume of the lyrics, remains. The noted state of affairs in block science reveals the scientific novelty and relevance of this article. The special nature of the time led to the specifics of the representation of both the lyrical hero and his experience, including the mystical one. In this case, the authors use the following methods: comparative-typological method, linguistic analysis of the poetic text, historical and literary. As a result of the study, the authors conclude that the "Crossroads" cycle represents the development of the final points of "Poems about the Beautiful Lady": the myth of Eternal Femininity, the Soul of the world does not decline, but its implementation is increasingly questioned. Correspondingly, the system of relations between the lyrical hero and the addressee of the cycle is complicated, which ultimately changes the general characteristics of the picture of the world as a whole.

Keywords: Russian Poetry; Alexander Blok;"Crossroads"; Lyrical Character; Faust.

1. Introduction

The path myth as the main structure-forming element is widely represented in the literature of the Silver Age (in addition to A. Blok's work, an example of this is, for example, the lyrics of N. Gumilyov). He is associated not so much with the

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real movement of the lyrical hero, but, highlighting the path of his spiritual quest, demonstrates the formation of the myth of the world. A specific feature of the path myth is the combination of vertical and horizontal spatial projections. In some cases, as, for example, in Gumilyov's lyrics, the triple archaic structure of space is restored, while the horizontal path of the hero turns out to be either a "fall" to the lower world, as evidenced by the appearance of chthonic hypostases of the female image ("Ondine"), or "Ascent" to the upper world, confirmation of this is the appearance of a female image in the incarnation of Beatrice. In addition, the functioning of the path myth may be associated with the mythology of dying / resurrection, this is characteristic both for the work of A. Blok and for the poetry of A. Bely.

The trilogy of "humanization" of Alexander Blok is not only a holistic, but also a dynamic entity. If integrity is achieved by unfolding the myth of the path, then the dynamism of the trilogy is associated with the development of the main characters that determine the content and structure of each book, with the movement of the lyrical "I" and the image of the lyrical addressee (female figurative series).

The central symbolic image that defines the lyrical plot of each volume is closely correlated with the literary context of its time. In the first book, it is the Soul of the world, a symbol dating back to the Solovievsky myth of the world; in the second volume - this is the element, a symbol widely rooted in the symbolist tradition, represented in the work of almost every of the symbolist poets (K. Balmont, Vyach. Ivanov, A. Bely, etc.); in the third book is the Spirit of music. The change of one central symbolic image to another leads to the transformation of the whole picture of the world, causes a change in the content of the image of the lyrical hero and lyrical addressee. At the same time, the lyrical hero retains a "memory" of his past incarnations, which largely ensures the perception of Blok's creativity as a single text.

2. Methods

This article continues a series of articles by a group of authors dedicated to the study of Russian poetry at the turn of the epoch (Afanasev & Breeva, 2016; Afanasev et al., 2017; Tejeda & Dominguez, 2019). The special nature of the time led to the specifics of the representation of both the lyrical hero and his experience, including the mystical one. In this case, we rely on the technique found in the works of researchers V.V. Matveeva, Yu.V. Domansky, A.E. Skvortsov, V. Shamina (Matveeva et al., 2017; Shamina, 2016; Nazoktabar, & Tohidi, 2014). Linguistic analysis, which is also used in the analysis of the lyrics of the "Silver Age", contributed to a deep penetration into the poet's symbolism (Nurullina & Usmanova, 2018; Bochina & Starostina, 2016). Regarding the poetry of A. Blok, literary scholars often apply the comparative-typological method of research, revealing the connection of his texts with previous works (Tchougounova-Paulson, 2018; Magomedova, 2017; Magomedova, 2016). All of the above methods allowed us to achieve the following results.

3. Results and Discussion

As a result of the study, the authors conclude that the "Crossroads" cycle represents the development of the final points of "Poems about the Beautiful Lady": the myth of Eternal Femininity, the Soul of the world does not decline, but its implementation is increasingly questioned. The first poem - "I kept them in the aisle of John ..." - becomes evidence of the invariability of the general lyrical situation, which is based on the relationship of the lyrical hero and a certain female image that has a sacred nature. Evidence of this is the preservation of the poetics of ambiguity in the characterization of this image, which allows us to convey the "inexpressible" - "She," "To Her," the general liturgical orientation of the hero's attitude to the addressee - "my Hosanna," "I have been in the Service for many years," "She gave me the Royal Answer", while the possibility of the previous experience of perceiving the Higher is being questioned: "And on Another Day - one participant in the Meeting - / I did not share these meetings with anyone" (Block, 1971, p. 173). Correspondingly, the system of relations between the lyrical hero and the addressee of the cycle is complicated, which ultimately changes the general characteristics of the picture of the world as a whole. In the previous cycle, the main emphasis was placed on spatial characteristics, allowing to realize the aspiration of the lyrical hero to the Beautiful Lady, while the temporal characteristics receded into the background, due to the invariability of the world of the Beautiful Lady ("imperturbable in the depths"), the artistic embodiment of which was the circle as a symbol of the eternal life, gaining the semantics of eternity. The restoration of the course of time was carried out only in relation to the lyrical hero. Now, the motive of the passage of time is becoming increasingly important, the activation of temporal characteristics, as opposed to the symbols of eternity, is due to the transformation of the entire art system of the Block, the basis of which is the expansion of the thematic layer and the figurative structure of "Poems about the Beautiful Lady". The poet himself defined the new character of the world's picture as "the mystic of everyday life", attention is focused not on the spatial vertical, but on the horizontal plane, which allows conveying the disharmony of earthly existence, where the tragedy of state, social and personal existence are only private ways of manifesting a common metaphysical evil. Accordingly, if the idyllicity of the world of "Poems about the Beautiful Lady" is threatened only by the possibility of a negative transformation of the lyrical addressee, casting her into the created world of earthly existence, then "Crossroads" demonstrate the initial fragmentation of the world, indicating the dominance of a chaotic beginning. The artistic embodiment of this is the dominance of the yellow-black color scheme, the appearance of the image of the fateful force that predetermines human fate, the creation of which uses the poetics of ambiguity, significant for the structure of the image of the Beautiful Lady in the previous cycle (appeal to indefinite pronouns). The generality of the technique is combined with the semantic difference: the atmosphere of the approaching transformation created with the help of this technique in "Poems of the Beautiful Lady" is replaced in

“Crossroads” using a similar image structure as a symbolic embodiment of formless chaos that opposes divinity and spirituality (“Factory”, “- Is everything calm among the people?” etc.) In addition to the poetics of ambiguity that creates the image of fatal force in the cycle, its personified expression appears - the image of the black man (“A black man was running around the city ...”) and the synonymous image of *the hunchback* (“The child is crying. Under the crescent moon ...”).

4. Summary

A different picture of the nature of the lyrical "I" begins to correspond to the new picture of the world. Since that time, the theme of harlequinade has been activated in the work of the Blok; So, one of the hypostases of the lyrical hero becomes the hypostasis *clown, harlequin*, reflecting his involvement in formless chaos ("I was all in colorful patches ..."). In addition, the hypostasis of *the poetis* activated, which, however, is not identical to its manifestations in the Ante Lucem cycle, where it became a way of designating the otherness, exceptional character of the lyrical hero in relation to the world around him. In the “Crossroads” the appearance of this hypostasis is due to the transformation of the author’s ideas about comprehending the highest ideal: the idea of the poet as a conductor of mystical reality undergoes a romantic irony. His experiences lose the character of universality and are revealed not through the symbolism of sleep, but through the symbolism of a fairy tale, a dream that preserves the traditional semantics of fiction assigned to them ("You are at the fireplace, turning gray hair ...", "Bright dream, you will not deceive ...", etc.). If the image of a dream appears in poems, then it is recognized as one of the variants of a fairy tale. The creator of *fairy tale* is declared *poet*, it is precisely this goal that is followed by mandatory indications of age (“gray hair” and “decrepitude”), along with age symbols, they become a means of designating the fabulous, dreamy nature of the dream of the Higher, creating only the illusion of time overcoming (“When I began to decrepit and freeze ...”, “You are by the fireplace, turning gray hair ...”, etc.): “When I began to decrepit and freeze, / The poet, accustomed to gray hair, / I wanted to push back / The End, destined for old people” (Blok, 1971, p. 196).

At the same time, Blok excludes the possibility of uniqueness of ironic meaning; thus, the designation of the “decrepitude” of the hero allows him to be included in the traditional imagery of an aging creator, internally correlating him, for example, with the image of Faust, and the very feeling of the finiteness of life is perceived as a criterion distinguishing the poet from the faceless mass: “the immortal vulgarity of the crowd”. In addition, thanks to such an associative connection, it becomes possible to activate the image of formless chaos in relation to the act of creativity, which loses its relevance to the process of theurgical transformation of life. Indicative in this regard is the poem “You are by the fireplace, turning gray hair ...”, where the infernal nature of “invisible dreams” is singled out (the image of “dreams” in the art system of the Blok is correlated with the creative insight of the highest

mystical reality), and, in this case, the exceptional correlation of creativity and Infernal forces are supported by the addressing of their actions: “Your daughter - in armchairs - is a spring of pink, / Stricter than evening shadows./ We never knocked at her, / We never naughty at her./ How nice and light it is - / It’s dark behind us ... / Let’s mess with, knock on the glass, / Let’s - get out of the window!” (Block, 1971, p. 207). Here the distinction of the mystical truth itself and the method of its comprehension is of particular importance. Comparing creativity to lower demonic forces demonstrates the exhaustion of previous approaches to gaining the Higher, a sign of this is the appearance of the image of “pink fools”, which includes the prophetic orientation of creativity, resulting in the creation of a subjective, devoid of genuine spell-telling power *fairy tale / dream* (evidence of this becomes their emphasis book nature - "I'm tired of believing in miserable books / The same pink fools!" (Block, 1971, p. 196). The image of a “pink girl” is correlated with the dream of a lyrical hero / poet, which is conceptualized in the categories of the earthly world: “When I walked along the road at dusk, / A red light was noticed in the window. / The pink girl stood on the doorstep / And told me that I was handsome and tall. / This is my whole story, kind people. I don’t need anything from you anymore: / I never dreamed of a miracle - / And you calm down - and forget about it” (Block, 1971, p. 195). The transformation that the female imagery undergoes is carried out, *inter alia*, by changing color symbols. In the previous cycle, one of the ways to ensure the ambiguity of the image of the Beautiful Lady was the dynamic development of the color gamut: pinkish blue - the dominance of red - fiery gamut - white. In “Crossroads”, however, a semantic divergence of “pink” and “red” occurs, the semantics of the first are ambivalent, in one case if it is associated with a characteristic of a female image, it is perceived as a reduced, lost character of universality, a sign, if it is related to details associated with with the symbolism of the sun, it retains a positive meaning ("Bright dream, you can’t deceive ..." - "pink bunny", "Prayers" - "pink angel"). The semantics of the “red” retains an indirect attribution to the symbolism of dawn / sunset as a prototype of mystical reality (“I dreamed funny thoughts ...”, “She was fifteen years old. But by knock. ”).

However, the associative field, which includes the lyrical hero in the Faustian context, involves not only profaning the creative act */of the tale* (perception by the blinded Faust of digging the grave as signs of perestroika of the world), but also its justification (the final ascension of Faust). In this sense, the semantics of the name of the cycle, “Crossroads,” is activated, which, on the one hand, demonstrates the need to review the old ways of gaining the Higher, and on the other, highlights the possibility of finding the true path to the mystical ideal. This is confirmed by the last poems of the cycle - "Prayers" and "Here it is - a series of grave steps." The epigraph to the first of them takes a line from Bely's poem “Argo” - “Our Argo!”, Which becomes an indication of the restoration of the entire figurative system of the previous cycle and the figurative symbolism of Bely's poem; therefore, there is a hidden contrast between the "pink fools" and the unity of the mystics - "Our Argo!"

At the same time, if earlier the entire figurative system of Blok and Bely (“heights”, “spring”, “azure”) was a realization of mystical action, now they are projected into the plan of searches, forebodings, which is reflected in the symbolism of the name of the work - “Prayers”. In the poem “Here it is - a series of tombstones” there is a transformation of the image of *princess* characteristic of “Poems about the Beautiful Lady” and only indirectly presented in “Crossroads”; Here the typical mythology of the sleeping princess of *the sleeping princessis* singled out, whose symbolism is associated with the designation of the value of the mystical ideal and its current unattainability.

5. Conclusions

Thus, we can say that the Blok’s cycle “Crossroads” is a transitional formation: on the one hand, it develops the main themes and motives of the previous poetry collection “Poems about the Beautiful Lady”, but, on the other hand, the changes that are taking place with the lyrical hero and his attitude to the world, they stretch the thread to the second volume of A. Blok's lyrics. The lyric hero has the appearance of a harlequin / clown, which reveals his craving for chaos, in turn, the world itself appears as a fragmented, penetrated chaotic beginning.

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