

# Graph-Guru in the Postmodernism Literature: On the Example of Verses by Andrey Golov. Simplicity Concept

Svetlana Valentinovna Gerasimova

Department of Russian Language and Literature History

Moscow Polytechnic University

Moscow, Russia

E-mail: metanoik@gmail.com

**Abstract**—In the works by Andrey Golov the playing with cultural strata does not lead to destruction, but to resuscitation of cultural strata that have faded in our minds; we find poetry, like the ancient glossolalia, fullness of semantic only in the context of detailed comments, the text is inseparable from the meta text explaining it; simplicity as a consolidation of the spiritual forces of man in Orthodoxy is opposed to elementary simplicity in Leo Tolstoy's understanding.

**Keywords**—glossolalia; Andrey Golov; God-seeking; St. Theophan the Recluse; simplicity

## I. INTRODUCTION

A capacious and concise definition of postmodernism can be found in T.T. Davydova's and I.K. Sushilina's textbook "The Modern Literary Process in Russia": "Distrust of ideology, rejection of politicized art, the search for aesthetic freedom and a new language of literature, an active dialogue with the culture of the past - quite natural facts in counteracting official culture - led them to postmodern poetics" [1]. The quote authors are talking about V. Sorokin (1955), A. Korolev (1946), V. Pelevin (1962). Although the poetics of A. Golov (1954-2008) differs from the aesthetic concept of these writers, he is also inherent in the search for a new language and an active dialogue with the culture of the past. However, the essential difference is that A. Golov has no ironic denial of the past, doesn't like the destruction. While plunging into the past, the poet revives it, but does not sacrifice it to the modern gaming readings. E. Vitkovsky (1950) called the poet's manner "irony in love". This style is clearly visible in verses about the Russian XVIII century, about the Greco-Byzantine chronotope, the Silver Age. The poems can be found on Russian-language sites [2] [3]. Specially for this article, the interlinear for poem "Graf-Guru" by A. Golov was made. The translation is followed by the Russian original, because the verses turned out to be hardly translatable; for example, it's too difficult to translate free transitions from Russian to the Church Slavonic language; gaming inclusions of vernacular ("Куда ни кинь" ("No matter how you throw it") was translated by the commonly used expression "Whatever you think." The original and translated phrases are connected through the

Russian phraseology "пораскинуть мозгами" - "to throw the brains around"). Language transitions are similar to the cinematic technique of combining color episodes and black and white chronicles. Russian-language lines look like color frames, they modernize verses. Church Slavonic vocabulary and grammar, as well as black and white frames, create the effect of a direct displacement into the past. A similar bilingualism is also characteristic of the novel by M.P. Shishkin (1961) "The Capture of Ishmael." The lyrical hero by A. Golov lives in two times and in two language flows: in the world of objective reality of the past, that is an image of truth, as well as documentary shots; and in a world of modern convention full of colors.

You need to analyze the realities of time of Leo Tolstoy, that have lost their relevance and seem incomprehensible to us, - to understand the poem. The cultural metatext of the work is so vast that the poem looks like a powerful icebreaker, cutting blocks of human unconsciousness. Leo Tolstoy is shown in the cultural environment of his era.

## II. POLARIZATION OF ART SPACE IN VERSES BY ANDREI GOLOV

The poetic chronotope has two poles, reflecting the real poles of the Leo Tolstoy era.

Firstly, this is the pole, that has concentrated around itself the forces leading to the dying of the Russian Empire, that has lost unity of spirit and power due to the mass of sects and teachings. The empires of the Ancient World, whether the empire of Alexander the Great or Darius I (Persian), quickly expanded and died. The Byzantine and Russian kingdoms lasted longer than the empire of the First Rome, that they became heirs of. Their relative longevity is explained by a single stream of spiritual culture, which united the Tsar and the holy fool. Holy fools are saints living in the noise of the city and speaking of Truth in the language of the absurdity of words and deeds. The holy fool is a sage under the guise of insanity, a saint under the cover of shocking. According to Andrei Golov, Leo Tolstoy became one of the forces that contributed to the transformation of the blossoming complexity of the Empire into the many-sided fragmentation

of the pre-revolutionary years. A complex organism has become a motley scattering of elementary particles. Tolstoy's idea of simplicity, deeply rooted in Christianity, has turned into its double – into spiritual elementary. Atoms remained instead of complex simplicity, that is uniting, like white, all tones and shades. For Tolstoy, a person is something indivisible. "I am I," – this slogan expresses the transformation of simplicity into elementary. Pre-revolutionary Russia is presented in the poem as a twist of elementary particles that have lost contact with the soil and each other and carried out into the cycle of history.

Secondly, this is the pole of Orthodox Russia, which is represented by coenobites, the Monk Seraphim, who called for the acquisition of the Peaceful Spirit, that is the Holy Spirit (lines 17–21). Father Seraphim explained the innermost through the understandable and ordinary. The father was a native of the merchant rank and knew how trade was conducted, so he taught to strive for finding the Peaceful Spirit, just as merchants strive for profit, because it is a condition of salvation not only for one ascetic who has loved such acquisitions, but for thousands of people who will find themselves next to him. The Peaceful Spirit is not an indifference, that Tolstoy was frightened by, calling it "a meanness of the soul" (line 21), but an outward manifestation of holiness and dispassion. A. Golov describes the monks with irony in love, calling them the "army". This word is correlated with the concept of "spiritual warfare", that is conducted by monks against fallen spirits in the air and sinful thoughts in their head, while ascending to the Kingdom of Heaven and to spiritual perfection. But the main thing that opposes the many-sided variety of sects and elementary atoms is the Church, that was created by the Lord. Christ becomes the support and the most important condition for the spiritual unity of the Russia.

Already in the first line, Tolstoy was called a "roof overlap." The roof is the ironic name of the head associated with the phraseology "the roof is flowing. It is pronounced if a person behaves like crazy. A. Golov believes that Tolstoy thinks of himself as a teacher of life, who will help all the crazy to become wise. Tolstoy considered Rousseau the great sage. This sage praised nature. An ironic attitude towards Rousseau is expressed by using the word "Rousseauist" (follower of Rousseau) (line 2), – associated with the French Enlightenment, saturated with atheistic tendencies, – in the word form of the Church Slavonic language that a person speaks with God. The poet's skill is expressed in the using of a word form that points to the religious worship Rousseau by Tolstoy, who wore an incense with his portrait instead of a cross at the age of 15. The humorous effect of the second line is achieved due to the collision of the Church Slavonic form with the neutral word "nature" in its outdated meaning

It is amazing that the neo-Hindu preacher Maharishi (1917-2008), mentioned later, born 37 years earlier than the poet, died one year with him. Tolstoy, on the other hand, is represented not only as the forerunner of the Maharishi, but also as the worshiper of the gurus who executed the Apostle Thomas (commemorated on October 6 according to the Julian calendar) and was commenting, or stripping three

skins off jataks, that was about reincarnations of Buddha Gautama, in search of their deepest meaning.

Tolstoy's interest in Hinduism and the Mahabharata is recorded in his works by E. Yu. Poltavets [4]. In a saint life written by St. Dimitri of Rostov it is said that the apostle is pierced with spears by order of the king of the Kalamid country named Muzdiy, who is considered the Indian ruler. In the poem, India is perceived as a spiritual virgin, waiting for its Baptists.

Prayer is named by spiritually sublimated power. The poet plays with a word in the context of Soviet tradition, teaching to name the phenomena of spiritual reality: God, prayer – scientific terms, becoming ciphers of sacral reality. It's a kind of Aesop's language.

### III. POETIC GLOSSOLALIA

So the poet seeks to create a new language. Firstly it occurs in the process of playing with linguistic norms and strata, with words and word forms combinations of different languages (Church Slavonic and Russian) and styles (highly poetic and ironically vernacular). Secondly it occurs due to the transition to the level of intellectual glossolalia (lines 9 and 10). In apostolic times glossolalia sounded as a result of fervent prayer, when the Holy Spirit descended on a Christian preacher and a person began to preach in languages unknown to him. All the hearing this sermon perceived it as something unintelligible. The apostles preceded the holy fool by the sacrament of glossolalia, while revealing holiness under the cover of the gracious speaking of incomprehensible word. Andrey Golov creates a stream of intellectual glossolalia that make sense if each word is filled with meaning and commented on.

Among the most difficult for understanding realities we should mention "fans of the Lubavitcher star", who founded their center in the village of Lubavichy [5], and Stundists, Redstockists (Pashkovites), Dukhobors. These are sects based on Jewish (line 9) and Christian (line 10) doctrine. The latter are close to the Quakers.

Fronde and outcasts are different types of splintering and schism. It often becomes the result of pride, unwillingness to maintain unity and live in love with the One Body of the Church and the state. Initially the Fronde is an aristocratic resistance to royal power in France. Subsequently this term began to mean dissident dissatisfaction with the authorities, expressed mainly in words. In Russian literature, the Fronde is described in the biographical (and at the level of symbols at the autobiographical) novel "The life of M. de Moliere" by M. Bulgakov.

Andrey Golov saw the reason of the emergence of all the sects and schisms in rationalism of the Enlightenment, that denies everything that cannot be based on the arguments of reason, and challenges the spiritual mystical experience of the Church. During the Tolstoy's era the Enlightenment was long behind, but the writer, figuratively speaking, "swallowed" its values, so he is still tormented by heartburn, and as a result has sympathy for sects, but not for the Church. It was accepted among the schismatics to eat only with

fellow believers, since there were many sects and sub-sects among the Russian protestants so close relatives refused a general meal if they belonged to different types of schism. All of them are symbolically united by L. Tolstoy at his table, sharing with them the meal and income ("ringing of coins"). Tolstoy calls such behavior charity. This image of a common feast reinforces the motive of heartburn and a taste for Freudianism. It means that problem of gender worried the writer to a very old age.

At the end of the poem, Tolstoy is called not only the God-seeker, but the tactile of Truth (line 28). He is likened to Apostle Thomas, who needs to touch everything with his fingers to gain faith. The image of the Apostle Thomas preceding the denouement of the poem appears at its beginning. Thomas is called an unbeliever unfairly, because having convinced by reason and experience that Christ was resurrected, he became stronger in faith and died for Christ. Tolstoy is not so much compared with the apostle, as opposed to him, because his rationalism is insatiable and he cannot believe, therefore there is no cross on his grave – that says the final lines of the poem about where Tolstoy is compared with the teraphim. The teraphim is a pagan additive to Judaism, small idols, patrons of the hearth, who initially apparently were worshiped by Jews's non-Jewish spouses who brought their gods. Judaism was refined and fought against such "innovations" - the case ended with a ban on mixed marriages.

Andrey Golov testifies to the danger of going beyond the boundaries of spiritual tradition in search of God. This exit is similar to an exit into open space, it is pernicious for the person. The truth is precisely inside the tradition, and not outside it. The tradition bears fruits in the saints, therefore doubting on it we deny the experience of the saints, that is not a mystical transcendental experience, but an experience we understand as people like us who have reached the heights of holiness. A person who wants to feel the truth precisely may encounter spiritual mines. Collective conciliar experience is more guaranteed to preserve a person during his spiritual quest than trusting solely his mind and personal experience.

Only after a detailed commentary the innovative language of Andrei Golov's intellectual glossaries becomes understandable, so let us return to reading the poem:

#### Count-Guru

- Oh Count Tolstoy, roof overlap,
- A fan of Rousseauist nature,
- Forerunner of Hindu Maharish
- And of the guru with juicy cheeks; they
- Tear three skins off Gautam's Jatak,
- Apostle Thomas having executed in fetters -
- And his blood burns on them as a sign
- Gracelessness. Enemies of Christ,
- Fans of the Lubavitchy star,

- Shtundists, Redstokists, Dukhobors
- Are highly respected by Count for their work,
- The Fronde's pride and the outcast's temper,
- And Count shares with them the table and the ringing of coins -
- Bursting out of Enlightenment heartburn -
- The Orthodox only has in his heart
- No faith, no forgiveness, no inheritance.
- Today the whole monastic army
- And the Seraphim - timeless and ancient -
- Are going to get the peaceful spirit in vain,
- Because Yasnaya Polyana guru renamed
- The Peaceful Spirit to a meanness of the soul, without
- Losing taste to Freudianism to the grave.
- Church only – that was created by Jesus -
- Is waiting Spiritually Sublimated Strength
- From the Count in vain. Whatever you think -
- The God-seeker is the mine-seeker.
- He as the toucher of truth wanders
- Among forests, dens and deserts, -
- But the explosion has already struck for a long time ago ... Is God with him
- Or is another - Holy Russia does not know,
- While laying teraph exhausted by pride
- Under the hillock without cross.

#### ГРАФ-ГУРУ

- О граф Толстой, перекрыватель крыш,
- Поклонник руссоистския натуры,
- Предтеча индуистских махариш
- И сочнощеких гуру, что три шкуры
- Сдирают с гаутовых джатак,
- Апостола Фому казнив в оковах -
- И кровь его горит на них, как знак
- Безблагодатности. Врагов Христовых,
- Поклонников любовичской звезды,
- Штундистов, редстокистов, духоборов
- Граф сильно уважает за труды,
- Гордыню фрondы и изгойский норov,

- И делит с ними стол и звон монет -
- Изжогой просвещенческого дела -
- Лишь православным в его сердце нет
- Ни веры, ни прощенья, ни удела.
- Напрасно вся монашеская рать
- И Серафим - вневременной и древний -
- Стремится днесь дух мирен стяжевать:
- Ведь мир душевный - подлостью душевной
- Нарек яснополянский гуру, вкус
- К фрейдизму не утратив до могилы.
- Лишь Церковь - ю же созида Исус -
- Духовно сублимированной силы
- Напрасно ждет от графа. Как ни кинь -
- Богоискатель суть миноискатель.
- Среди лесов, вертепов и пустынь
- Бредет он, горней правды осязатель -
- А взрыв давно уж грянул... Бог ли с ним
- Или иной - не знает Русь святая,
- Измученный гордыней терафим
- Под бугорок бескrestный полагая.

Tolstoy's theme also arises in other poems by Andrey Golov, but this is the only one of them devoted entirely to him.

The key to understanding Leo Tolstoy's spiritual catastrophe as a God-seeker can be the difference in the interpretation of the idea of simplicity in Tolstoy's work and in the Orthodox tradition. It is inexhaustible, therefore, we confine ourselves to the writings of St. Theophan the Recluse.

#### IV. ST. THEOPHAN THE RECLUSE AND LEO TOLSTOY

The most famous work of St. Theophan the Recluse was the translation into Russian of the code "Φιλοκαλία" ("Philokalia") (lit. "Love of Beauty"), which was based on the anthology of the works of the fathers IV – XV "Philosophy of the Sacred Sober-Wise, collected from our holy and God-bearing Fathers, in which through active and contemplative moral philosophy, the mind is cleansed, enlightened, and perfected" compiled by Saint Macarius, Metropolitan of Corinth (1731–1805), edited by the Rev. Nicodemus Svyatogors (1749–1809) and published in 1782 in the Greek language, and then translated into Slavic Reverend Paisy Velichkovsky (1722-1794). St. Theophanes not only translated the works of ancient ascetics into modern Russian, but set forth them in relation to his spiritual experience, that is the experience of the saint.

Tolstoy's philosophical constructions are contradictory and some views are refuted by others, since he does not so much develop philosophy as he develops himself, therefore, in understanding Tolstoy's philosophical categories I will limit myself to his later works, in which, for all their complexity, there are more stable concepts that I rely on, and unexpected twists and branches of thought.

Both for Tolstoy and for the whole patristic tradition, the contradictory nature and complexity of a person's inner life is not so much a virtue as a painful state of the soul. It is no accident that Tolstoy denied the Shakespearean theater, whose inner world of heroes is complex and woven from contradictions.

#### V. PHILOSOPHY OF SIMPLICITY IN ORTHODOXY

However, the views of Tolstoy and St. Theophanes on the ideal of simplicity, contrasted complexity, differ significantly. In the "Philokalia" by St. Theophan the Recluse, the concept of "simplicity" occurs 77 times, sometimes in the everyday sense of artlessness, sometimes in the theological meaning of integrity, becoming an attribute of Adam's totality before the fall, as a result of which he fell and crashed, finding complexity that can only be overcome through the reunion of all his spiritual forces. The simplicity of St. Theophanes brings man together, its symbol can be white sunlight, combining all the colors of the rainbow.

"2. <...> Do not tell anyone: I crashed in the fall, I can't get up and the walk right..."

3. Watch how St. the fathers sowed, reaped, gathered into their granaries, and now rejoice, waiting for the appearance of the last day, on which they will shine like the sun". [6]

In the Philokalia the concept of simplicity is often explained through the concept of humility and inner silence.

In Greek humility is "tapeinotita (tapeinofrosini)", which in its internal form is close to our "low". In addition the root of the word "peisa" (ion. "peisi") means "obedience", "obedience". It is included in such complex words as "peisibrotos" - "forcing mortals to obey" - and "peisitanatos" - "convincing to die" (also the nickname of Hegesius, philosopher of the Cyrena school), in addition it is similar in sounding to "pinageos" - "hungry, empty". [7]

According to Russian etymology the word "humble" is associated with the root of "measures", that is "moderate, soften, suppress" [8], which intersects with the Greek peisibrotos ("forcing mortals to obey"), and according to folk etymology, with the root "peace", then it turns out "humble" - forced to peace and silence, which is in good agreement with many statements from the "Φιλοκαλία". So, here is the characterization of St. Theodosius: he lived "with the aspiration of all the natural forces of the soul to nothing else, but to the lust of the Creator ... was pleased to collect feelings and arrange them to return inside ... And who were the same among the crowd and in solitude? - So the great this Theodosius, because he gathered feelings and introduced them inside, became wounded by love for the Creator. ("From the Life of Theodosius of Kinoviarch") [9].

"13. Passionate lust fades by abstinence with humble wisdom; flaming anger was tamed by love; the running thought was concentrated by diligent prayer, by the memory of God. Thus, all three parts of the soul are purified. Desiring to correct them, the Divine Apostle said: Have peace and shrine, but they will see the Lord except for anyone (Heb. 12, 14). " [10]

These three forces of the soul: lusting (or irritable), angry (or heart) and rational, - who came into conflict with each other both in life and in the soul of the tragic hero, - must unite, come to terms with each other, because the inner world is the most important condition of gaining lost integrity and simplicity.

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Here are a few quotes where simplicity in the "Philokalia" by St. Theophanes is associated with humility, peace and inner unity of the personality, childish kindness, obedience, which liken man to the Creator:

"25. The emotional feeling in one's action was monolithic when it was in a state of innocence; it has doubled having fall, and the grace of the Holy Spirit again elevates it to the simplicity of unity.

That natural feeling is monolithic one, this is taught us by the very action of holy knowledge (mind enlightened by grace). By the crime of Adam, it was divided into two actions; but by the Holy Spirit it is again made one and simple. However, nobody can see this in themselves, except for those alone who, in the hope of future blessings, willingly renounce themselves from the blessings of this life, and by abstinence dry up all lust for bodily feelings. For only in such cases the mind, due to complete lack of care, making its movements soundly and vigorously, can senselessly taste the divine alms, and at the same time, as it succeeds, communicate its joys to body, expressing its joy with confession by an immense certain word in love, saying: He Who my heart trusts on, help me: and my flesh prosper, and by will we will confess unto Him (Psalm 27, 7). Such joy, which is in this case in the soul and body, is an unflattering reminder of the eternally incorruptible life.

78. God, through His own baptism, gave us the water of salvation for rebirth: because we are reborn in water by the action of the Holy and Life-giving Spirit, as a result of which we are immediately cleansed both in soul and body, if we approach God with full trust. At the same time, the Holy Spirit dwells in us, and sin (or the father of sin) is cast out by Him, since it is impossible that, with unity and simplicity, the characteristic properties of the soul, two these antagonists would be in it together, as some thought. [11]

The citation can be continued, but the general idea is this: through the unification of the three parts of the soul, which is achieved not so much through self-improvement, but through

the help of Above, a person becomes like the Creator, Who, being the Trinity, is Simple and One.

St. Theophanes say about the building of the soul, which has gained after the fall the wholeness and unity, if it's built on simplicity and humility:

"If according to the meaning of the Gospel parable (Lk. 14, 28-30) we had not calculated and collected in advance everything that is needed to build this exalted spiritual pillar, then when it was prepared, it would not go into business as it should, and it would not allow to correctly lay on it the last heights of perfection..." (Word 9: 196). [12] So if there is no simplicity that underlies as a foundation, then there will be no spiritual pillar of perfection.

Philokalia teaches how to find the unity of all spiritual forces in their original paradise integrity.

## VI. THE CONCEPT OF SIMPLICITY IN THE WORLD OF LEO TOLSTOY

The simplicity for Leo Tolstoy is different, he is looking for the first principle not to erect on it a whole building and help soul to be healed from the fragmentation, but to exfoliate all that is "superfluous" from this first principle:

"Each person, if he lived a long century, was first a baby, then a child, then a man or woman, then an old man or an old woman. But no matter how a person changes, he always said to himself "I". And this "I" was always the same in him. The same was in the infant, and in the adult, and in the old man. This invariable "I" is what we call the soul" (January 2, 5th saying). (43.5)

This reflection on the relationship between Tolstoy's changing and unchanging is very close to the concept of Socrates, expressed in Plato's "Fedon", that discusses the variability of the flesh and the immutability of the soul and concludes from this that it is immortal. (The third argument: the self-identity of the idea (eidos) of the soul). [13]

For Tolstoy, who repeatedly proposed excerpts from Plato's Socratic dialogues as a weekly reading in the Reading Circle, every person's spirit is akin to the Platonic *eidos*: a simple, indivisible, and therefore immutable and immortal beginning.

A similar, almost Socratic and close to Tolstoy, correlation of the visible and the invisible was recorded in the New Testament: "The visible is temporary, but the invisible is eternal" (2 Cor. 4:18). Even seeking to reform Christianity, Tolstoy remains in its context, thinks in categories, conceptualizes and reinterprets them.

Following Plato, the simplicity of the soul for Tolstoy is the basis of its immortality, but this simplicity is perceived as a natural given inherent in the infant and the elder, the simple and the sage.

For Tolstoy, the nature of man is good, therefore simplicity is a natural property given to man by nature itself.

## VII. CONCLUSION

So, the Tolstoy's theme of the global finding of truths, the finality of knowledge and the futility of spiritual throwings corresponds the topic of the search for spiritual perfection in the world of St. Theophan, for the nature of man is fertile for Tolstoy and the simplicity and the eternal, immortal grain are rooted in it from birth, in the world of St. Theophanes the nature of man appears distorted by original sin, and therefore only a sense of the path, only intense spiritual work will lead a person to perfection and to a personal meeting with God.

However, Tolstoy, apparently dissatisfied with his own static spiritual and philosophical space, begins a new round of moral searches before his death, the incompleteness of which is visible from the symbolic correlation of spiritual significance for the writer Yasnaya Polyana and Astapovo station.

Inner world and philosophy of L.N. Tolstoy are full of contradictions. His work develops between the poles. On the one hand he was seaching and God-seeking, on the otherand - his vocation was to teach, because of feeling of attaining ultimate truths.

For Andrei Golov Tolstoy is a man of the path who, of course, seeks good, but, like his autobiographical hero, Pierre, can not always distinguish good and evil; the search for God and fleeing from under His Authority, which leads the writer to a personal disaster, described by the poet in the context of a wide range of realities that sometimes thicken so much that a new version of postmodern glossolalia is born.

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