

Historiosophy & Eros in Russian anacreontics

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Abstract. “Love is the eminence grise of history”, – once one of the greats of the past said. Few doubt that history is driven by human, more or less conscious interests – economic, political, religious, etc. As for feelings, passions and instincts, their role in the historical process is not so obvious, particularly of those that are connected with policy or economy indirectly. The objective necessity to rehabilitate the position of Eros in the political life of 18th-century Russia determines the significance of the current research. The article aims to analyse how the feeling of love and/or the underpinning instincts of procreation and self-preservation affect the political life and the course of history. The most important task is to examine some of the poetic texts of the 18th – early 19th centuries, the authors of which are the part of this still non-trivial historiosophical paradigm. So, it is mainly going to be about love, but not always – about love poems. The novelty of the conducted research lies in the fact that mythological and political issues of Anacreonic poetry have already become the matter of literary criticism [1, 2], while the hidden historiosophical senses have been still neglected. Certain creative works of the 18th-century poets: M.V. Lomonosov, G.R. Derzhavin, S.S. Bobrov served as research material. The practical significance of the investigation consists in the fact that the results can be used for further studying of 18th-century literature and historiosophical problems as well as to develop special courses in historical poetry.

1 Methods

Our investigation is based upon a multifaceted approach which determines the application of several methods: the evolution of the historiospeme “Love” from Antiquity to the end of the XVIII century is evident through comparative-historical method; historical and literary, historical and cultural methods allow analyzing philological interpretations of poetic works; a comparative-typological method is also used to determine literary parallels. As the problem of “Love”, considering in the political and historical context, is directly connected with the historiosophical works of the eighteenth-century thinkers, we also use the historical-philosophical method.

The most important literary and aesthetic treatises of the 18th century (M. Lomonosov, A. Sumarokov, M. Kheraskov, G. Derzhavin), as well as studies of our contemporaries (T.E Abramzon, A.V. Petrov, S.A. Salovoi, E.A. Nikolaev, R.S. Wortman) form the basis of the article.

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2 Introduction

The first ideas known to human culture in which the history (its beginning, the creation of the world) is associated with love – either of mating “pairs” of elements (the Heaven – the Earth), or gods, or a god and a man; or with the division of a bisexual being (androgynous) into two halves, are reflected in marriage myths [3]. The prehistoric era includes the myths and legends about the Great (Goddess) Mother (Nature) as the source of all existence as well as the embodiment of creative, constructive, and female origin in nature [4, 5]. These archaic historiosophemes will receive the second life in a number of poetic genres of the XVIII century.

An important source already emerged in the written cultures of views on the importance of the woman’s role (because after all, with woman’s primarily the word „love” is associated) in social and historical life there are references of the antique historians (Herodotus, Polybius, Pliny).

If we assume that an epoch of matriarchy was replaced by patriarchy, the stage of development of human culture corresponds to the so-called „epic” mythology. In the related “myths of creation” there was a place for Love. It appeared as a cosmic force, before which according to Hesiod (VIII–VII centuries BC), only Chaos, Gaia and Tartarus had existed. Then about Love as a goddess or a force that controls the processes of birth (fusion of “female” with “male”) and development of world, thought “the senior physics” (Parmenides, V century BC) and “the junior physics” (Empedocles, V century BC) [6]. These semi-scientific, semi-mythological ideas received the second birth in the Renaissance (J. Bruno, N. Cusa) [6]. In the XV–XVI centuries, the Christian mystics also appealed to Plato's doctrine about Eros and, in particular, to the idea of the "ladder of knowledge" – the movement of a person, drawn by Eros, from bodily beauty and earthly love to "the idea of the fine" and "heavenly love", from imperfect to perfect forms of the essence. In the XVIII century the complex of these ideas would be meaningful to the masons and would be reflected in their literary works.

In the ancient time (Heraclitus, Plato, and Aristotle) initial ideas about the passions that rule human actions began to form and thus turn out to be the driving force of history. Maturity and theoretical completeness of voluntaristic concept was achieved only by the XVIII–XIX centuries (the French materialists; T. Carlyle, Nietzsche, etc.).

During the New Age the first scientific theory was rationalist doctrine of the passions by René Descartes (“The Passion of the soul”, 1650). The French thinker believed that people by means of reason and will are capable to operate passions, bring them up and “discipline” them [7]. The ideas of Descartes impregnated artistic psychology and socio-historical creation of French classicism of the XVII century, and by the means of it - Russian classicism of the XVIII century. So, for the Russian writers of this century M.V. Lomonosov's reasonings in the sixth chapter of the first part his “Rhetoric” (“Ritorika”) – “On the excitation, quenching and the image of passions” [8] became authoritative.

The most famous concept of Modernity, in which the main driving factor of human activities and historical development was recognized as a factor of biological, especially sexual energy, was created at the turn of XIX–XX centuries by the Austrian Sigmund Freud. A century before the Englishman T. R. Malthus spoke about a reproduction instinct in the historiosophical context [9]. In general, the views of Malthus, Freud (and behind them the tradition), centered on the disclosure of relationships between biological and socio-historical, can be attributed to socio-historical materialism (as long as the love, the pursuit of enjoyment and libido result from human nature).

The historiosophy and literature of the XVIII century is aware of another, competing philosophical tradition – socio-historical idealism. Within this paradigm the love is under-

stood as a spiritual feeling (ideal – in the philosophical sense) as well as a form of public opinion, and, therefore, it is both a subjective and socio-historical feeling.

In addition to the focus on the historiosophy "love" educational character of the XVIII century proved also in the gender sphere. The female reign lasted (with interruptions) almost seventy years, dramatically changed the ideas of Russians about the nature of the domineering behavior and about the role of women and feminine in politics and in history [10]. The first purposeful actions for creation of "the gynaeocratic myth" were taken by Peter I who presented to his contemporaries – on the example of his second, "western" family – new, European type of the attitude towards women, marriage and love. Catherine I is "created by the emperor becomes a symbol of the European woman" by the end of Peter's reign (aka: Cinderella), his successor and "the embodiment of a new secular order" [10].

The reign of Catherine II marked the fusion of love and science. Catherine the Great says R. S. Wortman, introduced "love" in her power script. This word ideologeme expressed, on the one hand, the humane feelings of the monarch, his concern for the welfare of his subjects, the principle of ruling in accord with the voice of the heart. On the other hand – expectations that "the subjects will express their approval with demonstrations of love", affirming the right of Catherine, who did have it neither by "blood" nor by "law" to the throne. In any case, "love" assumed "independent impulse" from both sides, and "not pre-orchestrated reaction". In support of his reasoning R. S. Wortman refers not only to the manifest and the description of the coronation of Catherine II, but to Lomonosov's odes [11]. Thus, the aim of the article is to show how 18th-century Russian poets artistically interpreted the alignment of Eros and politics.

3 The gynaeocratic historiosophy of M. V. Lomonosov

An official nature and state focus of the odic genre have put a substantive term for poets trying to interpret the correlation between the Eros and History/Politics. Lomonosov, perhaps, earlier, than other poets, develops historiosopheme "Love is like the Cradle of Life and the Beginning Owing of Everything". The fact that the "Dialog with Anacreon" (1756–1761) ("Razgovor s Anakreonom") [8] contrasted the "love" and "heroes" (the first couple of poems) was noted long ago, but researchers seldom notice that Lomonosov considers "heart tenderness" and "glory" to be values and simultaneously the most ancient and, above all, equal topics in the poetry history. E. N. Lebedev even remarks: "we can see comparison of love and the Love rather than love and heroism" [12], that is, love as a selfish feeling and that combining the private and the common matters.

Lomonosov scholars are often inclined to split the woman character ideal of the fourth poem pair into distinct halves: a she-lover (love and erotic ideal of Anacreon and related historical poetry) and a mother (epic and citizen ideal of Lomonosov and contemporaneous Anacreonic poetry being developed by the poet). The Mother Russia character depicted in "Dialog with Anacreon" ("Razgovor s Anakreonom") is a result of natural development of the odic and mythology-and-politics Empress one, which, as we recall, combined features of the Mother, Blessed Virgin, Fiancee, She-Lover, Russian Land, etc.

The same series shall include the latest (as of 1770s) variant of this historiosopheme – the Empress character (Catherine the Great) as the Head of the Royal House, i.e. practically a grandmother waiting for grandchild births. In 1796, V.P. Petrov writes an epithalamic ode devoted to the marriage of the Catherine grandson– Konstantin Pavlovich [13]. It is only natural that the 67-year-old Empress is called herein as the Ancestress, who will soon "kiss" her "great grandchildren". Certainly, she can only "strain" them to the "breast" and shed "tears of joy", but Petrov retains the Lomonosov's character apparently etched in his memory and develops its metaphorical (in "Dialog with Anacreon" ("Razgovor s Anakreon-om") literal as well) sense. Cf.: Compare: Lomonosov's verse: Raise your milk-

wealthy nipples <...>,. Petrov's verses: And You will nourish Them / by Your nipple bounty, <...>.

In other words, Lomonosov asks a painter to paint the portrait of Catherine, as she was beloved by him and Russian poets in 1740s rather than as she became over her last five autumn years.

Comparison of women portraits in Anacreon poems, at the one hand, and those of co-poets of the 18th century, at the other, makes it clear that an ideal of woman (queen) beauty was changing over time and depended not least on the empress age and love mood of the poet. It should be noted that all "oles" the author attributes to the monarchess, whether a she-lover, a fiancée, a mother or an ancestress, retain her feminine, erotic charm. Without its presence, manifestation, so to speak, the authority appears impaired, and the poet does not feel himself a full-valued subject.

4 G. R. Derzhavin's "Anacreontic Songs"

The channel Lomonosov devoted for Anacreonic poetry, the love and epicure poetry was finally disregarded. However, it mastered the serious, in particular, philosophical content, as evidenced, for example, by "Anacreontic Songs" ("Anakreonticheskie pesni") by G. R. Derzhavin. Here is one of the most graceful poems by Derzhavin – a miniature "Little Forget-Me-Not" ("Nezabudochka") as of 1809: Milyj nezabudka cvetik! / Vidish', drug moj, ja, stenja, / Edu ot tebja, moj svetik, – / Ne zabud' menja [14], – and on in the same vein: if you have an involvement with somebody, forget me not, if you will swim, forget me not; if somebody beckons and starts to kiss you, forget me not. Where is historiosophy here? The answer may be as follows.

A conditional emblematic description of what can happen when living apart from each other conceals the Derzhavin's notions of a human nature, how the very love lives. When living apart, that is, for some time, any "changes" are possible, and inevitable: new meetings, fancies, funs, temptations. However, there is something, the author believes, that always connects him and his "little forget-me-not" and resists to destiny- the march of time and natural instincts of a human nature. It is a memory: forget-me-not – the refrain adjures.

The fact that the memory, in Derzhavin's opinion, is a historiosophical term is certainly clearly demonstrated by his other writings, for example, "Waterfall" ("Vodopad"), "Monument" ("Pamjatnik"), "Swan" ("Lebed"), "To Eugene. Life in Zvanka" ("Evgeniju. Zhizn' Zvanskaja"), "On the Decay" ("Na tlenost") [14]. A lot has been written about their philosophical and historical content. The only we need is to find out the historiosophical idea favored by Derzhavin and being developed in these poems and other Anacreonic ones: all human deeds live in the memory of other people only. And these are not only the deeds of the "great" Potemkin and Rumyantsev (that have already gone down in history) or the "immortal" poetry writing of Derzhavin himself (meant to go down in history), but also the love feeling of the unknown characters in "Little Forget-Me-Not" ("Nezabudochka") (which will never go down in history in the high sense of the word, but do make up the history).

Nevertheless, let us get back to "bucolic poetry" – the poem written in 1809, too: "To Aspazia" ("Aspazii") [15]. It was made in support of Marya Antonovna Naryshkina, the mistress of Emperor Alexander I. Derzhavin puts the known events occurred in the 5th to 4th centuries. B.C. with hetaerae Aspasia and Frina into complimentary verses. As Anacreon refused to "praise" heroes, so his contemporaries became obsessed by love and feminine beauty: Mudrecy po nej vzdychajut, / I Perikl v nee vlyublen.

"Beauty is a terrible force" – the maxim known since antiquity is confirmed by the poet of the turn of the 18th-19th centuries who adds: the force driving the history both in the past, in Pericles's time, and currently, under Alexander's rule. The beauty rules everything

and everyone: monarchs, politicians, heroes, scientists, artists, judges. Except for the public mind: *Zly molvy o nej svobodno / Uzh ne shepchut – vopijut <...>*.

This is a paradox constantly repeated throughout the history of society - in the days of both Pericles and Alexander. However, another law also remains the same: *No snjala lish' pokryvalo – / Pal pred nej Areopag!*

The third Derzhavin's verses addresses, along with feminine beauty and sensual pleasures, a traditional Anacreonic motive – a wine. Derzhavin remarks that his poem "Various Wines" [15] (1782) ("Raznyja vina") was made "without any aim, for young people". Its immediate idea is that a good wine is "sweet" and tasty in its own way, as well as every beautiful woman. "You are <blush, dark-skin, fair-skin, tender> – Derzhavin lists the types of beauty with a great taste. – Authors' note> and pretty as well, – / So, kiss me, my sweetheart!" Actually, the conclusion that seems absurd against the logic background ("you are pretty enough, why don't you kiss me?") is enough to find the ingenuity of the poet artistic imagination. Furthermore, it conceals philosophical and aesthetic implication and Derzhavin's world-view attitudes.

A frivolous narrative intended for young people describes how wonderful it would be to taste different wines and different women. It tells a more mature beauty connoisseur that the beauty can emerge in a number of different guises. In other words, "Various Wines" ("Raznyja vina") is devoted to the relativism aestheticization. Derzhavin will write a completely aesthetic treatise "Discourse on Lyric Poetry, or Ode" ("Rassuzhdenie o liricheskoi poezii, ili Ob ode") on different tastes that will highlight this issue from the philosophical and historical positions, too.

The lyrics under consideration has also a worldview implication. "Creative Life" by G. R. Derzhavin was based on several principles including the Horatius' *carpe diem* ("enjoy life while living", "use the present, do not trust the future"), referring in turn to the Epicurus' hedonistic ethics. The above "paralogism" should be associated with this principle. "While you are pretty, enjoy your life, live for the day, rejoice and grant joy to others", the poet talks to the youth and beauty. This "philosophy" conceals yet another gloomier one- the second principle, which can be clearly seen in Derzhavin's verses "To Death" or, for example, in letters to "neighbors". This is *memento mori*, a religious-ascetic doctrine implemented completely in the life practice of medieval monastic orders. The historiography of the above principles is in the fact that they are both related to "life creation", living of the current time, and to recognition of the nearby eternity everyone would rather forget (especially indicative in this relation is "Waterfall" ("Vodopad").

The final paragraph of this section will be devoted to the author, who was always a "wallflower" at the background his more popular contemporaries but always went his own way that he chose a little later than Derzhavin did. This is about S. S. Bobrov.

5 The History and the Eros by S. S Bobrov

In 1785, S. S Bobrov went in for philosophical justification of relationship between the History and the Eros. He published the "Love" ("Ljubov'") ode on in the "The Resting Industrious Person" journal ("Pokojashhijse trudoljubec"). Twenty years on, it was included into the third part of the "Dawn of Midnight" ("Rassveta polnochi") under the title "The Kingdom of Universal Love" [16] ("Carstvo vseobshhej ljubvi").

It is quite possible that the title of the poem refers to the "kingdom of love" described by Lomonosov in the ode of 1745 and in the "Rhetoric" ("Ritorika"), but the Bobrov's and Lomonosov's images are of the unified religious and mystical origins and should be directly compared with the Christian Paradise (as an option: the Chiliastic millennial Kingdom of God). In a festive ode, Eden is known to correspond to the "golden age", of to "the kingdom of Astrea" in Masonic literature [17]. At the same time, Bobrov rejects a

Christian concept of Love. We believe that the poem has esoteric narratives; the follower of Schwartz, Kutuzov, Novikov, and Kheraskov probably wrote it with that purpose. However, let us concentrate exclusively on historiosophical components of the writing.

The first of them may be the theory of the erotogenesis, the Love origin theories developed by Bobrov. They are eclectic, not fully clarified, but generally go back to antiquity and even to the mythopoetic antiquity. That is exactly where the poet could borrow the ideas of Love as a cosmic force preceeded by the Chaos only: *Eshhe vkrug Solncev ne vrashhalis' / V prevysprennih stranah miry; / Eshhe v Haose sokryvalis' / Sii visjashhie shary, / Kak ty, ljubov', zakon prijala, / I ih nachatki ozhivljala. <...>*

Love is a prime force inhaling life (compare: “as a spirit spreading in their plants”) into “creatures” (“worlds”, “the hosts of heaven”) or controlling them accorsing to the harmony laws: *Miry gorjashhi sobljudajut / Zakon tvoj v gornej vysote; / Vertjas' vkrug solncev pobuzhdajut / Chudit'sja strojnoj krasote. – / Ne tyl' ih vodish' horovodom? / Ne tyl' ih pravish' mernym hodom? <...>*

The idea of existence of the host of worlds and "suns" easily detectable in the above verses could be borrowed by the poet of the late 17th century both from the developer of the heliocentric system as of 16th century and from ancient thinkers.

Toward the end of the poem, the Love gradually acquires the features of a divine (“peacefully Divine”) and is personified: *Ljubov'! – vezde ty upravljaesh'; – / Kogda usmeshku iz#javljaesh'; / Ty mrachny tuchi otzhenesh', / Ty vosparish' nad oblakami; / Il' v pole kupno s pastuhami / Vospljashesh', v horovod pojdesh'. (Similar concepts we can find, for instance, in epithalamiuma as of 1773)*

The final verse contains, in our opinion, allusions to the myths about the sacred marriage and the birth of Aphrodite: *O dshher', – ot vlagi pervobytnoj / Rozhdenna prezhde vseh planet, / Dajushha zhizn' prirode skrytoj <...>*

However, exactly who has engender the Love remains unclear; Bobrov obviously tries to avoid mentioning creationism, creating the world from emptiness by Demiurge or by the Word of the Christian God.

He neither specifies the place of the Love stay: Your throne is between the Angels and in the couple.

This versus is completely unclear: Christian or pre-Christian angels are meant (in another place, they are called “the sixth-winged one”); which (married) “couple”, and therefore marriage is meant, where the throne stands, etc. The last versus mentions Daughters-Love, about its “complete innocence” and other, undoubtedly esoteric, things, is generally one of the most mysterious in the poem.

The second historiosophical component of the poem is the issue of the Love “functions”, about the limits of its “power”. The above verse state that the Love rules the inanimate chaotic and unenlightened nature according to harmonic laws. Cf.: *Iz bezdny vyshedshi uzhasnoj / Sobor nebesnyh sih svetil / Byl smes'ju vnov' by nesoglasnoj, / Kogda by ty lish-ilas' sil <...>*

By the way, the second verse provides is a power image – the Fire forging arrows, with which the Love “pierces” all “creations” through “great and small lights”.

The Love has an almost absolute power over a living nature, where it unites, creates, facilitates life reproduction, that is, performs direct, at least its usual functions: *Ne tyl' v prirode soprjagaesh' / I muzheskij i zhenskij pol? / Ne tyli – tajnyj sozidaesh' / V veshhah dvurodnyh svoj prestol? – / Gde v'jutsja vinogradny lozy; / Gde dve drug k družke zhmutsj rozy; / Gde ptichki v'jut gnezdo vesnoj; / Gde otrok mater' obnimaet: / Ne tvoj li plamen' obitaet / V krase ih svjazi takovoj? <...>*

Bobrov also attempts to identify the Love and the Good, but he is inspired by ancient philosophy and mythology, rather than by Christian traditions. The seventh and eighth

verses describe some “ancient world” intruding “the world with rage”: On rvet druzej, suprugov uzy; / On rushit vseh veshhej sojuzy, / On svet ot#emlet, t'mit jefir.

The “Serpent”, however, is not emblematic of metaphysical evil; it symbolizes the destructive forces that exist in the nature and in the man. The corresponding verses refer to the same ancient mythology, for example, to the plot about the battle between Typhon and Zeus, or about the struggle of the Love and Enmity in the Empedocles' theory: Tumany, buri, gromy, volny / Tifony sut', chto v mir on shlet; / My takzhe tuch i gromov polny; / I sih Tifonov on mjatet. – / On v nas, i v vidimu prirodu / Puskaet groznu nepogodu. – / Izdrevle na lice nebes / Zev adskij nenavist'ju dyshet; / On vihr' pustiv ves' mir kolyshtet, / I v nas tvorit stihij preves.

The “being rushing about in thunderstorms” is calmed by the Love, a “peaceful Divine”.

Thus, in Bobrov's opinion, the world's origin and its further existence depend on the Love as a harmonizing cosmic force. The artistic historiosophy created by the young poet in 1785 had in its genesis the broadest backgrounds: ancient philosophy, mystical teachings and natural sciences.

6 Conclusion

On the basis of the work carried out, we have come to the following conclusions.

In the 18th-century poetic works the general tendency in development of the historical consciousness of Russian poets is emerging - a combination of mythologization and historicization. In the poets' historiosophical conceptions of this period, Eros' role in political life and historical process is given special attention.

The Poets, especially Lomonosov, apparently regard love for a woman and love for a country as two passions controlling people behavior both in ancient time and in the New Age. Furthermore, love acts as a historical feeling in the poems. Two types of world perception developed by the Western civilization, the hedonism (Anacreon) and the stoicism (Cato) are dialectically reconciled in their view of life [10]. The main themes of lyrical works are the relationship of the love of rulers and the Good of the country, the ability of understanding of the female nature as metonymic symbol of gynecocracy in general and women on the throne in particular. Thus, in the center of the 18th-century poets' historiosophical concept the love of the rulers transforming all things was put. The creative love of the monarch must establish the universal harmony – the initial heavenly bliss comes back to the earth.

The alliance of historiosophic ideas and erotic fantasies of Russian poets could be expressed, in particular, in mythological political matters; in the “praise” of women and parts of their bodies; in approaching the memory subject; in reflections on the historicity of the beauty phenomenon and on hedonistic ethics, etc.

The poetry gradually verifying its rights during the 18th century conceals a number of historiosophic ideas, including those connected with Eros. Being scheduled by poets, the dual – erotico-political – ideological complex will be crucial for poets until the end of the 18th century – early 19th century.

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