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THE COUNT AND HIS LACKEY. AN ANALYSIS OF BORIS PASTERNAK'S
POEM "BALLADA"

БАЛЛАДА

Бывает, курьером на борзом
Расскачется сердце, и точно
Отрывистость азбуки Морзе,
Черты твои в зеркале срочны.

Поэт или просто глашатай,
Герольд или просто поэт,
В груди твоей — топот лошадный
И сжатость огней и ночных эстафет.

Кому сегодня шутится?
Кому кого жалеть?
С платка текла распутица,
И к ливню липла плеть.

Был ветер заперт наглухо
И штемпеля вlepлял,
Как оплеухи наглости,
Шалея, конь в поля.

Бряцал мундштук закушенный,
Врывалась в ночь лука,
Конь оглушал заужиной

Раскаты большака.

Не видно ни зги, но затем в отдаленьи
Движенье: лакей со свечой в колпаке.
Мельчая, копыт тополя, и аллея
Уходит за пчельник, истлев вдалеке.

Салфетки белей алебастр балюстрады.
Похоже, огромный, как тень, брадобрей.
Макает в пруды дерева и ограды
И звякает бритвой об грант галерей.

Впустите, мне надо видеть графа.
Вы спросите, кто я? Здесь жил органист.
Он лег в мою жизнь пятеричной оправой
Ключей и регистров. Он уши зарниц
Крюками прибил к проводам телеграфа.
Вы спросите, кто я? На розыск Кайяфы
Отвечу: путь мой был тернист.

Летами тишь гробовая
Стояла, и поле отхлебывало
Из черных котлов, забываясь,
Лашпу светоносного облака.

А зимы другую основу
Сковали, и вот в этом крошечке
Я - черная точка дурного
В валящихся хлопьях хорошего.

Я - пар отстучавшего града, прохладой
В исходную высь воспаряющий. Я -
Плодовая падаля, отдавшая саду
Все счета по службе, всю сладость и яды,
Чтоб, музыкой хлынув с дуги бытия,
В приемную ринуться к вам без доклада.

Я — мяч полногласья и яблоко лада.
Вы знаете, кто мне закон и судья.

Впустите, мне надо видеть графа.
О нем есть баллады. Он предупрежден.
Я помню, как плакала мать, играв их,
Как вздрагивал дом, обливаясь дождем.

Позднее узнал я о мертвом Шопене.
Но и до того, уже лет в шесть,
Открылась мне сила такого сцепленья,
Что можно подняться и землю унести.

Куда б утекли фонари околотка
С пролетками и мостовыми, когда б
Их марево не было, как на колодку,
Набито на гул колокольных октав?

Но вот их снимали, и, в хлопья облекшись,
Пускались снова без оглядки дома,
И плотно захлопнутой нотной обложкой
Валилась в разгул листопада зима.

Ей недоставало лишь нескольких звеньев,
Чтоб выполнить раму и вырасти в звук,
И музыкой — зеркалом исчезновенья
Качнуться, выскальзывая из рук.

В колодец ее обалделого взгляда
Бадьей погружалась печаль и, дойдя
До дна, подымалась оттуда балладой
И рушилась былью в обвязке дождя.

Жестоко продрогши и до подбородков
Закованные в железо и мрак,
Прыжками, прыжками, коротким галопом

Летели потоки в глухих киверах.

Их кожаный строй был, как годы, бороздчат,
Их шум был, как стук на монетном дворе,
И вмиг запружалась рыдванами площадь,
Деревья мотались, как дверцы карет.

Насколько терпелось канavam и скатам,
Покамест чекан принимала руда,
Удар за ударом, трудясь до упаду,
Дукаты из слякоти била вода.

Потом начиналась работа граверов,
И черви, разделав сырье под орех,
Вгрызались в создание гербом договора,
За радугой следом ползя по коре.

Но лето ломалось, и всею машиной
На август напарывались дерева,
И в цинковой кипе фальшивых цехинов
Тонули крушенья шаги и слова.

Но вы безответны. В другой обстановке
Недолго б длился мой конфуз.
Но я набивался и сам на неловкость,
Я знал, что на нее нарвусь.

Я знал, что пожизненный мой собеседник,
Меня привлекаая страшной из тяг,
Молчит, крепясь из сил последних,
И вечно числится в нетях.

Я знал, что прелесть путешествий
И каждый новый женский взгляд
Лепечут о его соседстве
И отрицать его велят.

Но как пронести мне этот ворох
Признаний через ваш порог?
Я трачу в глупых разговорах
Все, что дорогой приберег.

Зачем же, земские ярмаги
И полицейские крючки,
Вы обнесли стеной религий
Отца и мастера тоски?

Зачем вы выдумали послух,
Безбожие и ханжество,
Когда он лишь меньшей из взрослых
И сверстник сердца моего.

1916, 1928

Boris Pasternak's poem "Ballada" was written in 1916 and published in the poet's second collection of verse "Poverch bar'erov". A second part of the poem was published in the journal "Novyj mir" in 1929. In the edition of Pasternak's poems 1929, "Poverch bar'erov. Stichi raznych let", the poet has shortened and changed the first part and furthermore added a third part, the concluding six stanzas of the poem. This complex origin of the completed poem makes the study of this text very intricate. The slavist scholar Lazar Fleishman has noted the difficulty of understanding this poem in his book on Pasternak in the twenties.² Anna Achmatova is even more categorical in her view of the poem: "Kak ni starajsja, a ničego ponjat' nel'zja. Tut ešče kakoj-to sjužet mel'težit."³

These commentaries do not sound very encouraging when beginning an analysis, yet at the same time they are somewhat intriguing, rousing our curiosity. And let us start our analysis with the assumption that when something is difficult to understand, it often means that there is something important to discover. Here in my article I will mainly discuss the revised text of the poem but also briefly touch on the early variant of 1916. The poem will also be viewed in the context of Pasternak's literary work as a whole and in connection with the poet's biography.

The first two stanzas of the poem depict the moment when agitation, that is inspiration, grasps the poet. The beginning verb "byvaet" gives the whole poem an iterative aspect, that is, the poem turns into a description of the function of inspiration in general. The heart begins to beat and that is compared to the Morse code and the clattering of the horses' hoofs. The clattering of the horses' hoofs associates with a courier, and that metonymic shift is continued in the next stanza when the protagonist is defined as a poet, who in his turn is defined as a herald. As a matter of fact we are here given an image of the poet not as a prophet or demiurge, which is common in the Russian poetic tradition, but as a courier.⁴ The poet becomes a Hermes-figure, the messenger of gods.

The protagonist is looking into the mirror in a moment of self-inspection before inspiration has come to him. As in other poems by Pasternak the mirror means a contact between the room of the poet and the outer world. In the second part of the poem /stanzas three to five/ the clattering of the

hoofs is transposed from a vehicle of a metaphor of the heart beats to a real scene of an equipage travelling at enormous speed on the main road. It is a rainy night, a courier is travelling with his message. The situation is serious and crucial:

Komu segodna šutitsja?

Komu kogo čalet'?

Typical for Pasternak's poetical technique, the courier is not described at all, only his surroundings. The change from the metaphorical representation to a concrete scene is followed by a change in rhythm from amphibrachic trimeter in the first part of the poem to an alternation between iambic tetrameter and trimeter in the second.

In the third part of the poem /stanzas six and seven/ the courier arrives at his destination, which seems to be a mansion surrounded by a garden, metonymically alluded to by words as "baljustrada", "prudy", "dereva" and "ogrady". The metre is again changed, now from iambs to amphibrachic tetrameter, denoting that the fast journey is over. The courier is met by a lackey, who is compared to a barber, "bradobrej". The lackey has a menacing and frightening implication because of a row of words: "ten'", "ogromnyj", "zvjakaet", and the metaphor of the razor which perhaps denotes the sharp shadow of the lackey. The word "bradobrej" as such has a negative ring because of its connection with Peter's forced shaving of his people in the beginning of the 18th century. Mandel'stam has used this connotation in the

poem "Ariost":

V Evrope chłodno. V Italii temno.

Vlast' otvratitel'na, kak ruki bradobreja.⁵

Here the word stands for the naked power of the authorities.

The fourth part of the poem /stanza eight/ begins with a request from the protagonist of the poem to the lackey that he will let him in to see the count. The lackey asks him who he is and there follows an enigmatic piece of self-analysis:

Vy sposite, kto ja? Zdes' žil organist.

On leg v moju žizn' pjateričnoj opravoj

Ključej i registrov. On uši zarnic

Krjukami pribil k provadam telegrafa.

These lines are very difficult to interpret. I think it would be possible to understand them in the way that an organist has lived in the mansion before as the guest or the servant of the count /but not as a lackey - he belongs to quite a different category in the poem/. The organist in spe is naturally Johann Sebastian Bach, and perhaps his music has settled in the soul of the poet, has influenced him, has put the principle of music symbolized by the note-rules /"pjateričnaja oprava"/ in the mind of the poet. The note-rules are compared to the telegraph lines and the notes on the lines are indirectly and visually compared to the birds sitting on the wires. The musician is transforming nature /"uši zarnic"/ into music. The word for note, "kruki" which means "neume", that is the notes used by the Old Believers goes very well with the association string from the word "bradobrej" connected with Peter's battle

against the order, but together with the "organist", a word foreign to the Old-Russian tradition, it is certainly anomalous. The allusion to the barber and the neumes implies that the poet is a heretic.

The question of the identity of the protagonist is put once more in this stanza:

Vy sprosíte, kto ja? Na rozysk kajafy
Otveču: put' moj byl ternist.

The question of the lackey is connected with Caiphas' interrogation of Christ, and the journey of the courier poet is compared to the thorny-path. The Biblical text about the interrogation of Christ /Matthew 26:64/ stresses that Christ is God's son, and here the poem suddenly identifies the protagonist with Christ or a Christ-like figure.

The next part /stanzas nine and ten/ describes the thorny path and the rhythm changes back to amphibrachic trimeter. As in the second part, the protagonist is not mentioned at all. The movement of the protagonist is more movement in time than through a landscape. These two stanzas create an opposition between summer and winter, where summer stands for death /"tiš' grobovaja"/ and for vegetating life /pole otchlebyvalo ... zabyvajas'"/ and winter for the opposite principles. Winter means movement and creation through the equation of the snow storm with the construction of a warp. The common denominator in the metaphor is "whiteness" /of the snow and of the thread/ which then can be associated with the white paper before the poet.

The last two lines in this part are even more difficult to interpret:

Ja - černaja točka durnogo
V valjaščichsja chlop'jach chorošego.

I suggest that we connect these lines with the description of the note-lines in stanza eight. The black point is then the bird on the wire in the winter, the note on the note line and the letter the poet writes on the white paper. The poet is metonymically represented by what he writes, the letters. The opposition "durnoj" - "chorošij", "bad" - "good" can be continued by "black" - "white" and be seen as an ironical commentary to the view of the poet as an heretic in society.

In the sixth part of the poem /eleventh stanza/ the rhythm is changed to amphibrachic tetrameter. The self-analysis of the poet is continued here. The poet is what is absorbed into nature /"par otstučavšego grada"/, the mist after a hailstorm, the windfalls which are disseminated over the earth. The poet is absorbed in nature and not the other way around, the result of this absorption is music. This is an example of what Jakobson calls the metonymical principle in the poetry of Pasternak.⁶ The poet however, is, also the bearer of harmony: "mjač polnoglasija", "jabloko lada". The role of the poet is to be absorbed nature and create and create harmony through the medium of language.

The seventh part /stanzas twelve to twenty two/ is a description of nature interwoven with music. The twelfth stanza begins with a new request from the protagonist to be let in to

see the count. He is waiting for him. We learn that Chopin has written ballads about him and that protagonist's mother played them. The rain outside is equated with the tears coming when one plays Chopin on the piano. Music is connected with running water, an association which will be continued later in the poem.

In stanza thirteen the core of the music is described and this is also indirectly a description of the count:

Otkrylas' mne sila takogo scepnen'ja,
Čto možno podnjat'sja i zemlju unest'.

Music creates a thaumaturgic connection to everything on earth, that elevates both man and the earth.

The music could elevate the whole town if it were not for the octaves of the bell-towers. But the town still breaks loose and begins to whirl in the snowstorm:

No vot ich snimali, i, ohlop'ja oblekšis',
Puskali snovat' bez ogljadki doma,

When /stanza fifteen/ winter comes the music for a moment stops, denoted by the image of the closing of a note-book:

I plotno zachlopnutoj notnoj obložkoj
Valilas' v razgul listopada zima.

But the music starts again when the snowstorm fills up the window:

Ej nedostovalo liš' neskol'kich sven'ev,
Čtoby vpolnit' ramu i vyrasti v zvuk.

But why is music called the "mirror of disappearance" in the

sixteenth stanza? I think that we again have to do with the metonymical principle in the work of Pasternak. Music and art in general make the artist forget himself and be a medium for nature and reality around him, a mirror. This mirror-image is thus connected with the mirror in the first stanza of the poem.

The next stanza is even more complicated. Sorrow sinks to the bottom of a well and comes up as music. This is another mirror-image in the poem, the sorrow reflects itself in the bottom of the well and is transformed into music, into a new reality /"byl"/ and then taken into the custody of the rain. Sentiment, nature, music and poetry are here connected in a very intricate way. Music is the inspiration for nature and vice versa.

In the stanzas eighteen to twenty the arrival of spring is described with extremely complicated metaphors which are very difficult to decipher and visualize. The small streams of water in the beginning of spring are compared to soldiers on horseback. The sounds of the snow melting is compared to the sound of a coin, which supplements our paradigm of rhythmical sounds in the poem:

the music
the beat of a heart
the code of Morse
the clattering of the hoofs
the drumming of the rain
the sound of the coin
the stresses of the verse.

The invariants in this paradigm are artistic creation, communication and nature. The comparison between the creative process

and streams we find in many other Pasternak texts. In "Povest'" we read:

Dožd' byl pervoj podrobnost'ju nabroska, ostanovivšej Serežu. On perenes ee s osmuški na bumagu četvert'ogo formata i prinjal-sja marat' i peremaryvat', dobivajas' želannoju nagljadnosti. Mestami on vyvodil slova, kotorych net v jazyke. On ostavljal ich vremenno na bumage, s tem, čtoby potom oni naveli ego na bolee neposredstvennye protoki doždevoj vody v razgovornuju rec'.⁷

In his poem Pasternak is boldly uniting the image of the rain and the image of the courier in this metaphor of the melting snow water. It combines the idea of the segmenting and uniting functions of poetry and music.

In the twenty-second stanza, the last in this part of the poem, the summer and autumn are depicted, and the poem has completed the whole circle of the year. The falling leaves are compared to false coins. The steps and the words are muffled in the heaps of fallen leaves. If the running water stands for inspiration, the falling leaves stand for the end of creativity for the poet. The fallen leaves can be seen as a metaphor for the end of inspiration but also for epigonery in literature. The poem thus can be said to describe the process of creativity both for an individual poet and for the development of a literary school in terms of a journey through time and space.

The change of the seasons often combined with the theme of creativity, is of crucial importance in Pasternak's poetry /cf. for example the poem "Pro ští stichi" and the Živago-cycle/. Time in Pasternak's poetry is mythical and cyclical

rather than epical and linear. Spring stands for the perpetually new but still eternal aspect of creativity.

The eighth and last part of the poem begins with stanza twentythree. We are back in the situation of stanza eight with the protagonist standing before the lackey and asking to be let in, but the lackey refuses to answer: "No vy bezotvetnyj". The following stanzas describe the count whom the lackey hinders the poet from meeting. He is both silent and the conversational-partner of the protagonist. Perhaps he does not exist at all, but at the same time he is giving the poet a terrible burden:

Ja znal, što požiznennyj moj sobesednik,
Menja privlekaja strašnejšej iz tjad,
Molčit, krepjas' iz sil poslednich,
I večno čislitsja v netjach.

Who then is this enigmatic count? I think that we have the key in the last stanza with the word "bezbožie" which represents the opposite principle of the count. I think therefore that the count in the poem partly represents a God image. If we look at the next last stanza, the count even seems to be called "the father and the master of sorrow". If we permit ourselves to connect that expression to the count, with this identification God is more clear. This decoding of the count-figure would make many pieces of the poem fall in place. God then stands for the deepest form of inspiration, he becomes the bearer of the principle of connection, "Sceplenie". The terrible burden he gives to the poet is the cross, which

goes very well with the notion of the thorny path earlier in the poem. The 25th stanza then turns into a sort of ascetic credo for the poet, in a Christian and artistic context.

The protagonist of the poem is thus both a courier, a musician, a poet and Christ. The garden of the count is partly turned into Gethsemane. The oxymoronical description of the count as both present and absent links Pasternak's God image to the theology of Master Eckhart and his thought about God as "the present absent". The line "kogda on liš' menšoj iz vzroslych" can also be interpreted from a theological point of view, as God leaving his attributes of power to come closer to man, the so called kenotic principle. The poet also has such a kenotic role according to the poem to dissolve nature, into reality, into that is the way poetry is created.

The poem "Ballada" then introduces the motif of the identification between the poet and Christ which will be developed some thirty years later in the Živago-cycle in poems like "Gamlet" or "Gefsimanskij sad".

Another clue supporting our line of interpretation is that nature is called "county", "grafstvo" in the original version of the poem:

Mne nado ego videt' - zatem, čto stichijno
Nad grafstvom šafran sentjabrja zalinjal.⁸

But still it seems somewhat strange to call God "count". Therefore I think that we still have not exhausted the semantic charge of the word "graf". One more suggestion is to link

it with the Greek root morpheme "graf", from a verb meaning "write", and see the word as a symbol for the deepest idea of creation more generally. Then it will be possible to connect the count in the poem with the name of the half-brother of Jurij Živago - Evgraf, who is a half mythical figure in the novel with his unexpected appearances. He is, in a way, the bearer of the principle of connection in the novel.

And still more. The "count" in spe in Russian literature is of course count Lev Nikolaevič Tolstoy. The poem will then be a mystical call to the dead great writer to help the poet find the way to creativity. The setting of the middle part of the poem in a mansion can thus be seen as an allusion to Tolstoy's estate Jasnaja Poljana. The notion of "sceplenie" can be seen as a direct allusion to a famous letter on creativity from Tolstoy to the critic Strachov:

Vo vsem, počti vo všem, što ja pisal, mnoju rukovodila potrebnost' sobranija myslej, sceplennyh meždu soboj, dlja vyraženijsja sebja. No kazdaja mysl', vyražennaja slovami osobo, terjaet svoj smysl, strašno ponižaetsja, kogda beretsja odna iz togo sceplen'ja, v kotorom ona nachoditsja. Samo že sceplenie sostavleno ne mysl'ju /ja dumaju/, a čem-to drugim, a vyrazit' osnovu etogo sceplen'ja neposredstvenno slovami nikak nel'zja; a možno tol'ko posredstvenno slovami opisyvaja obrazy, dejstvija i položenija.⁹

Some biographical data support this line of interpretation. Tolstoy was a friend of the Pasternak family and he partook in a piano evening at Pasternak's where Boris's mother performed. In his autobiography he has described this event as his first

memory:

Posredi nee /štoj noči/ ja prosnulsja ot sladkoj, ščemjaščej muki, v takoj mere ranee ne ispytannoj. Ja zakričal i zaplakal ot toski i stracha. No muzyka zaglušala moi slezy, i tol'ko' kogda razbudivšuju menja čast' trio doigrala do konca, menja uslyšali... Obraz drugogo, kak u bol'šinstva, prošel čerez vsju moju žizn', v osobennosti potomu, čto otec illjustriroval ego, ezdil k nemu, počital ego i čto ego duchem proniknut byl ves' naš dom. Što byl Lev Nikolaevič.¹⁰

I think we can find at least these three aspects of the figure of the "count" in Pasternak's poem.

Who then is the lackey according to this model of interpretation? I presume two answers. First of all he stands for all falseness connected with official Christianity:

Začem že, zemskie jarygi
I policejskie krjučki,
Vy obnesli stenoj religij
Otca i mastera toski?

This criticism of official Christendom was developed by Boris Pasternak in two poems from 1914 "Artillerist" and "Durnoj son" in connection with the cheap religious-nationalistic propaganda at the beginning of the First World War. But the above stanza is written in 1928 when the situation was quite different. "The wall of religions" can perhaps mean the Church as an institution. At the same time the lackey stands for all falseness and hypocrisy surrounding a great writer, for example Lev Tolstoy.

In general Pasternak shunned the use of open autobiographical details in his poetry. This poem is an interesting exception to this. We have already discussed the allusion to the evening of music in 1894. The commentators to the new edition of Boris Pasternak's poetry stress an additional biographical element in "Ballada": In 1903 Boris fell off a horse and was severely hurt. In a letter to A.L. Stich ten years later he described this event: Mne žalko 13-letnego mal'čika s ego katastrofoj 6-go avgusta. Vot kak sejčas ležit on v svoej nazatverdevšej gipsovoj povjazke, i čerez ego bred pronosjatsja trehdol'nye, sinkopirovannye ritmy galopa i padenija. Otnyne ritm budet sobytiem dlja nego, i obratno - sobytija stanut ritmami; melodija že, tonal'nost' i garmonija - obstanovkoju i veščestvom sobytija.¹²

Rhythm, creativity and the running horses unite in this autobiographical event in the same way as in "Ballada". One more biographical detail of importance for the interpretation of the poem is the fact that Pasternak himself wanted to become a composer in his youth.

In the original version of the poem from 1916 this autobiographical element is missing, as well as the description of the count in the second half of the stanza. As is often the case, the revised version is clearer and easier to understand. The introduction of the autobiographical element in the new version of the poem can be linked with Pasternak's work on his autobiography "Ochrannaja gramota" in the last years of twenties. This autobiographical interest was a result of a new and deepening understanding of the role of the poet as a person in the new Soviet reality.

The music of Chopin - as poetry - represents the divine connection in the world. In his article on the Polish composer, Pasternak calls his music "a theology in tones":

Esli nastavlenija Bacha k igre na organe i na rojale /iz nich samoe znamenitoe "temperirovannyj rojal"/ chočetsja nazvat' praktičeskim bogoslov'em v zvukach, to takovy štjudy Šopena.¹³
This is almost a decoding of the words "o nem est' ballada" in our poem as well as of the figure of the organist discussed earlier. The ballades of Chopin also generate the romantic setting in the poem, which otherwise seems to be a bit confusing.

In Pasternak's novel "Doktor Živago" there is a passage where the sounds of the horses, hoofs are connected with the ballades of Chopin in the same way as in our poem. The protagonist is writing a poem about St. George:

On uslyšal ohod lošadi, stupajuščij po poverchnosti
stichotvorenija, kak slyšno spotykanie konskoj
inochodi w odnoj iz ballad Šopena.¹⁴

In 1930 Pasternak wrote two more poems to which he gave the title "Ballada". As in our poem the ballad is treated as a musical form and not as a poetical one. In the first of them "Drožat garazi avtobazy" Chopin is explicitly mentioned, in a description of a thunderstorm over Kiev:

Udar, drugoj, passaž, - i srazu
V šarov moločnyj oreol
Šopena traurnaja fraza
Vplyvaet, kak bol'noj oreol.¹⁵

The second ballad describes rain and a storm outside a dacha in summer. Here the ballad represents the wonder of nature. Both these poems connect music, nature, rain and human feelings. This is the deep connotation of the word "ballada" in the poetic world of Boris Pasternak. It represents the principle of connection, or "scept'enie" as this principle is called in the poem "Ballada".

The poem "Ballada" is a sort of manifesto of the meaning of poetry and art in general. It unites everything on earth and is art in potential. The artist himself is dissolved into reality and his own creation. This is a good example of what Roman Jakobson calls the metonymical technique in the poetry of Pasternak: the poet is passive or disappears in the poem and the reality around him takes the initiative and becomes active.

I would like to suggest that the idea of connection develops in the works of Pasternak; in the early poems it compromises above all the unity between nature and the poet and his feelings, later on in "Ochrannaja gramota", for example, the stress is layed rather on the connection between historical epochs and cultures. This is especially developed in the chapter about the poet's Italian journey in that book. The encounter between Russian and Renaissance culture almost always leads to the feeling of difference, but Pasternak, on the contrary, sees the unity between these two cultures:

Glavnoe, što vynosit vsjakij ot vstreči s ital'janskim
iskusstvom, što oščuščenie osjazatel'nogo edinstva našej
kul'tury, v čem by on ego ni videl i kak by ni nazyval.¹⁶

Later on in the same chapter Pasternak discusses the

relevance of the Bible for all times and then he goes on to explain the symbolism of history:

Ja ljubil živuju sut' istoričeskoj simboliki, inače tot instinkt, s pomošč'ju kotorogo my, kak lastočki salangany, postroili mir, - ogromnoe gnezdo, slepennoe iz zemli i neba, žizni i smerti i dvuch vremen, naličnogo i otsutstvujuščego.

Ja ponimal, što emu mešacet razvalit'sja sila sceplenija, zaključajuščajasja v skvoznoj obraznosti vsech ego častic.¹⁷

Culture as such is the bearer of the principle of connection, of the principle of "sceplenie", the connection of the earth and the heaven, of life and death, of different spans of time.

"Ochrannaja gramota" was written about the same time as the later version of "Ballada" and these two texts are mutually commenting on each other. Both the poem and the above quoted text are a part of a broad discussion on the power of connection in the works of Pasternak.

In Doktor Živago this discussion is continued, and perhaps stresses the question of connection between people. The young Misov Gordon thinks:

Vse dviženija na svete v otdeľnosti byli rasčitanô-trezvy, a v obščej složnosti bezotčetno p'jany obščim potokom žizni, kotoryj ob'edinjal ich. Ljudi trudilis' i chlopotali, privodimye v dviženie mehanizmom sobstvennych zabor. No mehanizmy ne dejstvovali by, esli by glavnyim ich regulatorom ne bylo čuvstvo vysšej i kraeugol'noj bezzabotnosti. Štu bezzabotnost' pridavalo oščuscenie svjazannosti čelovečeskich suščestvovanij, uverennost' v ich perechode odnogo v drugoe, čuvstvo sčast'ja po povodu togo, što use proischodjaščee soveršaetsja ne tol'ko

na zemple, v ktoruju zakapvyvajut mertvych, a ešče v čem-to drugom, v tom, čo odni nazývajú carstvom Božim, a druhé istorie, a tretí ešče kak-nibud'.¹⁸

The principle of unity, here called "oščuscenie svjazannosti" is perhaps God, and is giving life its meaning.

This principle of connection, so important to Pasternak, can be seen in a broader Russian cultural context. It is an expression of the Russian Orthodox theological principle of Sophia, the principle of unity both on earth and between heaven and earth. Pasternak's idea of connection is a development of the principle of Sophia, worked out by the Russian religious philosophers at the end of the last century and in the beginning of this one: Vladimir Solov'ev, Sergej Bulgakov and Pavel Florenskij. The principle of Sophia was also important to the Russian symbolists, but for them it stood more for a longing for connection than for a real existing unity in reality.

Why is the poem so heavily encoded and thus so difficult for even such a qualified reader as Anna Achmatova to understand. One answer is obvious: such a complicated structure enriches the poem, it has at the same time an autobiographical, philosophical, religious and a lyrical level. Another explanation of the heavy encoding is that the poet was reluctant to use the great words of "God" "Christ", "heaven", at a time when these words were being misused in different ways. In the 1928 version the poet also had the censorship to deal with. An openly religious poem would have been impossible to publish

at the time of the most extensive RAPP attacks on religion.

"Ballada", according to our model of interpretation, becomes almost a manifesto for the literary creation of Boris Pasternak. But it is a manifesto so compactly composed, with so much content, with such a flowing metaphoric, that the reader sometimes would like to demand the same clearness from the poet that he himself demands from God when he asks him to repeat his word "členorazdel'no". This poem exemplifies the complicated style, which the poet himself will criticize later on. The connection of all elements in "Ballada" risks splitting the structure of the whole poem.

NOTES

- 1 The poem is quoted from: Boris Pasternak, Izbrannoe v dvuch tomach, tom pervyj, Moskva 1985, pp.60-64.
- 2 Lazar' Flejšman, Boris Pasternak v dvadcatye gody, München 1981, pp. 103-106.
- 3 Lidija Čukovskaja, Zapiski ob Anne Achmatovoj, t.1, 1938-1941, Paris 1976, p.78.
- 4 For the poetic image see: Victor Erlich, The Double Image. Concepts of the Poet in Slavic Literatures, Baltimore 1964.
- 5 Osip Mandel'stam, Stichotvorenija, Leningrad 1974, p.170.
- 6 Roman Jakobson, "Randbemerkungen zur Prosa des Dichters Pasternak", Slavische Rundschau 7, 1935, pp.357-374.
- 7 Boris Pasternak, op.cit. t.2, p. 124.
- 8 Boris Pasternak, op.cit. t.1, p. 478.
- 9 Lev Tolstoj, Polnoe sobranie sočinenij, t.62, p.269.
- 10 Boris Pasternak, op.cit. t.2, p. 227.
- 11 ibid. t.1, pp. 48-49.
- 12 ibid. t.2, pp. 431-432.
- 13 Boris Pasternak, op.cit., t.2, p. 503.
- 14 Boris Pasternak, Doktor Živago, Milano 1957, p. 452.
- 15 Boris Pasternak, Izbrannoe...., t.1, p. 311.
- 16 Ibid., t.2, p. 193.
- 17 Ibid., p. 194.
- 18 Doktor Živago, pp. 12-13.

ГРАФ И ЕГО ЛАКЕЙ. АНАЛИЗ СТИХОТВОРЕНИЯ БОРИСА ПАСТЕРНАКА
"БАЛЛАДА"

Резюме

Стихотворение Бориса Пастернака "Баллада" написано в 1916 году и опубликовано во втором сборнике поэта "Поверх барьеров". Второй и более обширный вариант был издан в 1929 году. Стихотворение описывает вдохновение поэта в картине быстрой езды по ландшафту. Цель путешествия - имение графа. Подробный анализ стихотворения и сравнение его с рядом других произведений Пастернака дает возможность расшифровать образ графа в трех аспектах: он - символ Бога, он - граф Лев Толстой и он - олицетворение "силы сцепления" в природе и в искусстве. Образ лакея символизирует в стихотворении все силы, разрывающие единство и связанность земли и поэзии. Поэт и часть этого всеобщего единства, и создатель его. Мысль о "силе сцепления" можно проследить по всему творчеству Пастернака от ранних стихотворений до романа "Доктор Живаго" в различных формах: единство природы и человека, разных исторических эпох, человеческих судеб. "Сила сцепления" у Пастернака - продолжение и углубление понятия Божественной премурости "София" религиозных философов конца прошлого и начала нашего века: Владимира Соловьева, Сергея Булгакова, Павла Флоренского.