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The Image of the Mother in the Novel Trilogy by I.A. Goncharov: Typology and Functions

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The image of the mother in the novels «The Ordinary Story», «Oblomov», «The Precipice» by I.A. Goncharov is analyzed, there are two basic types of mothers, and their functions are denoted in the article. The character of Tatyana Markovna Berezhkova occupies a special place in the paradigm of the images.

Keywords: I.A. Goncharov, the novel trilogy, poetics, the image of the mother.

Point

The importance of images of the mother in the three novels by I.A. Goncharov is undeniable; however, this topic has not yet received sterling literary understanding, although the woman-mother largely organizes the structure of the creative world of the writer's works. This explains the relevance of the proposed research.

Example

The image of the mother begins to form on the pages of "The Ordinary Story" (1847). At the beginning of the novel emotionally rich narrator's digression devoted to the mother attracts the reader's attention (Goncharov, 1997, 179). Even Peter Ivanych Aduyev, rather an unemotional person, twice refers to the parent topic. Describing the care of Lizaveta Aleksandrovna of her nephew, Aduyev remarks: "Is it only the mother could be so hot to take to heart all that up

for you, and she was unable to" (Goncharov, 1997, 330). And secondly – reproaching Alexander for lack of attention to Anna Pavlovna, the uncle says: "You are the one she has all over the world" (Goncharov, 1997, 331). Besides, the P. Aduyev's memories about Anna Pavlovna's blessings of him "like mother", makes him to change the decision and not to chase his nephew.

The episode of farewell of Evsei with his mother is also touching: "Farewell, Evseyushka, farewell, my beloved! – The mother said, hugging him – here's a scapular, it is my blessing. Remember the faith, Evsey, not become busurman! Otherwise I'll curse you! Do not drink, do not steal; you shall serve your master faithfully. Bye-bye!.. She covered her face with the apron and walked away" (Goncharov, 1997, 191). Apart from the usual in this case ritual teachings of the faith, consumer behavior, service, special expressions like *Evseyushka* and *nenaglyadny*

(my beloved), which were taken, apparently, from the folk weeping also attract our attention. At the background of a certain coarseness of the relationship of the bar with the servants, as well as the relationship among people, the mother's behavior stands out thanks to her tenderness and caring.

After his return from Petersburg Alexander heals his wounds in "The Rooks", especially feeling the healing power of the mother's love: "And in every phenomenon of quiet life, in every impression of the morning and evening and the meal and the rest the watchful eye of the mother's love attended" (Goncharov, 1997, 447). A.G. Zeitlin (1950) suggests that the image of Anna Pavlovna is biographical as well as the main crisis of Alexander Aduyev. The writer's mother Avdotya Matveyevna Goncharova was a prototype (Zeitlin, 1950, 56).

In the novel "Oblomov" (1859) the importance of parent topic increases. Each of the memory about the mother of Ilya Ilyich awakens the hero's best in his soul: "Oblomov saw long-dead mother, and in the dream began to tremble with joy, from the hot love to her from him: and two were still warm tears slowly floated out from under the lash" (Goncharov, 1998, 106). Apparently, the relationships with his mother made Ilya Ilyich look into adult life searching the same role – a child with his mother.

There are a lot of examples of Oblomov's childish behavior in the text: "He's lying, do not believe him, he is deceiving you in the eye, like a little child", – Tarantsev says to the character, trying to discredit Stolz (Goncharov, 1998, 52). In the same vein the narrator describes Ilya Ilyich: "To all this some childish timidity, the expectation of danger and evil of all that was not encountered in his daily life were back after years" (Goncharov, 1998, 59). Such childishness is absolutely unusual for Stolz – the antipode of Oblomov: "He stubbornly stayed at the threshold

of a mystery, without nether any child faith, no doubts of the fop, and waited for a law and with it the key of it" (Goncharov, 1998, 162). Andrew in relation to his friend often occupies the position of an adult: "He looked as a threatening teacher at the hiding of the child" (Goncharov, 1998, 436). Childishness is sometimes typical for Olga, the character who is similar to Oblomov in this. She exclaims: "Oh my God, we are the children!" (Goncharov, 1998, 279). But there is no a hint of infantilism in her childishness. On the contrary, Olga sometimes finds herself in the position of a parent: "It was a comedy of the mother who can not help but smile, looking at a ridiculous attire of her son" (Goncharov, 1998, 204). It is important to emphasize that Stolz and Olga also distribute the roles of a mother and a child between them. The narrator notes that Olga puts "her head on his chest as on the mother's one" in a scene with her future husband (Goncharov, 1998, 422).

Agafya Matveyevna Pshenitsyna also refers to Oblomov as a child, but she has not an insistence of Olga, only boundless love which Oblomov felt when he was a child. Let us note that Pshenitsyna was thrice a mother. Then, on the background of the general discourse in the development of maternal themes in the novels of Ivan Goncharov the relation to Pshenitsyna as the cause of Ilya Ilyich dying, as a helper of his "falling" should be reconsidered. Making a son of Oblomov she does not let the family fade away. She has a special role – to keep memory about Oblomov with Olga, Stolz and Zakhar. It is important that I.A. Goncharov gives his mother's middle name, Matveyevna, to this character.

The mother of Andrew Stolz is another type, she was a woman absolutely opposite to the strict father, a German one: "The mother cries, cries, and then sits down at the piano and forgets for Hertz: tears are falling one after another on the keys" (Goncharov, 1998, 153). The scene when Andrew goes out to the town after the death

of his mother, dry farewell with the father and suddenly parent support appears, is important: “But suddenly a loud cry was at the crowd: a woman could not stand it. – Batushka, svetik! – she kept saying, wiping her eyes with the end of the headscarf. – Poor Orphan! You haven’t a native mother, nobody blesses you... Let me cross you, my dear!... Andrew rode up to her, jumped off his horse, embraced the old woman, and then wanted to go – and suddenly burst into tears as she baptized and kissed him. His mother’s voice came to him in her hot words, her gentle image appears for a moment” (Goncharov, 1998, 160).

Anna Pavlovna Adueva, Oblomov’s mother and then Agafya Matveyevna make some modifications of one type of simple, earthy woman, focusing on creating a comfortable life. The description of Stolz mother partly is repeated in the description of Raysky’s mother: “He digs in his memory and finds that once his mother held him, and he pressed his cheek against her chest and watched as she fingered the keys, as worn or frisky sounds vibrated and heard her heart pounding in the chest” (Goncharov, 2004, 54).

Of course, there are women who are not destined to experience the joy of motherhood in Goncharov’s novels: it is one of the reasons for dissatisfaction with life, women’s incomplete implementation of Lizaveta Aleksandrovna Aduyeva. Although she shows herself as a mother when she comforts her nephew. There are some pseudo-mothers in Goncharov’s novels: narrow-minded Mary Michaylovna Lyubetskaya, not taking care of her daughter; Pauline Karpovna Kritskaya, who sends her sons away so they will not remind others of her age.

The importance of parent topic for the writer is also manifested in the fact of his life: according to Yu. Loschits (2004), after Catherine Pavlovna Maykova’s departure from her family Goncharov blames her mainly for her leaving the children (Loschits, 2004, 244).

Thus, the most important images of mothers in the novels of Ivan Goncharov are divided into two types. The first one is a type of dreamy, lofty and gifted woman (Stolz, Rayskaya), and the second one – females quite simple, selfless love their child (Adueva, Oblomova, Pshenitsyna). Goncharov’s mother was a strict, simple and practical one, not prone to reverie, – N.D. Staroselskaya writes about her (Staroselskaya, 1990, 91). Therefore she can be largely attributed to the second type. However the writer needs the images of the first type to implement the concept of motherhood in all its fullness. The image of grandmother Berezhkova plays a very special role in our paradigm.

At the beginning of the novel “The Precipice” (1869) the narrator often emphasizes that Tatiana Markovna didn’t get married, took care of her orphans, then with tension of the conflict increasing the definition *the mother* appears near her. This appeal to her is frequent in Raysky and Vera’s talking (Goncharov, 2004, 622). The narrator is also insistently repeating: “But he also has a duty to plunge deeper into the knife in the heart of this – his mother!” – So Raysky’s suffering after his grandmother is expressed (Goncharov, 2004, 645). Finally Vera certainly recognizes her spiritual motherhood: “Grandma! is it possible to forgive the mother? You are the holy woman! I have no another mother...” (Goncharov, 2004, 687). Thus Raysky, Vera and the narrator himself reinforce grandmother Berezhkova in the status of the mother to the finale of the story.

I.A. Goncharov admits in a letter to Ek.P. Maykova of 1869: “... the features of my mother have been embodied in the image of the grandmother” (Goncharov, 1980b, 352). That is why the importance of image of the mother for the structure of the creative world of the writer becomes clear. And R. Lachmann is right, that the space of writer’s novels is a “concentric built space”, where the mother often becomes the center of it (Lachmann, 2009, 228).

The main function of grandmother Berezhkova – a spiritual mother – to preserve and protect the space of Malinovka and people living under her roof. So the name of the character is semantically significant (*Berezhkova* is from *Berech* means “to protect”). It is symbolic that the grandmother has keys of the main buildings on the estate in her belt. According to her role of guardian, the grandmother grieves about Vera: “What do I need to preserve, to protect, to hide, my child...” (Goncharov, 2004, 471). And after the disaster she promises: “Your grandmother will defend, will protect you” (Goncharov, 2004, 708). She “will protect and defend” Leontius Kozlov after his unfaithful wife’s departure and the destruction of his world. Given her own central position as a fact, the grandmother shocked the secrecy of Raysky and Vera: “Something mysterious and serious is around her, by the people closest to her, and they leave her on the sidelines as an alien one or as an old, obsolete, incapable woman” (Goncharov, 2004, 665).

In the end Vera after the “break” leans on grandmother’s maternal strength: “Previously Vera hid her secrets, and went herself, reigning unchallenged in her inner world, alien to the society, feeling herself stronger than all others. Now it’s vice versa. A single force seems to be untenable after the first serious experiment <...> Now she went to seek help, with bowed head, curbed the pride, feeling the power stronger than her own, and wisdom wiser than her selfish will” (Goncharov, 2004, 705). Goncharov doesn’t make a secret. In his article “The intentions, goals and ideas of the novel “The Precipice” he writes, that Vera loves grandmother as the mother (Goncharov, 1980a, 463). In one chapter, not included in the final text of the novel, there are characteristic words: “Vera pressed her face to the chest of her grandmother and in a dream she made a motion with her head as if leaving deeper in this loving mother’s breast, as if she

wanted to dig deeper into her arms” (Goncharov, 2008, 485). The discourse of the narrator here clearly relates to the image of the grandmother and the folk image – mother raw land. Generally speaking, Vera tried to leave the “circle” of Tatyana Markovna, the scope of the “old” truth. But she came back. Centering grandmother’s role extends to the fact that she even agrees to accept Mark already “stole her pearl” near herself, agrees for his wedding with Vera. In the chapters, the author subsequently excluded, after learning about Volokhov’s departure Berezhkova gives Raysky a considerable sum for Mark: “I do not want his lost <...> shall go on the road...” (Goncharov, 2008, 503).

A special place of the image of Berezhkova in the art world is recognized by scholars of Goncharov’s novel. Thus, A. Rybasov in the biography of the writer (1954) pays much attention to the fact that during the 60-s the author makes a lot of significant changes in the character of the grandmother: from the minor narrow-minded landowner (she has few serfs and the small estate) it grows into a symbolic image of the grandmother-Russia (Rybasov, 1954, 200). N.D. Staroselskaya writes: «As Raysky links all events, story sites, characters of the novel, so Tatyana Markovna is a kind of pivot of the narration...». And further: «... The psychological center of the novel is concluded in the grandmother», besides she becomes a conductor of several ideas that belong to I.A. Goncharov (Staroselskaya, 1990, 113).

In the fifth part of «The Precipice» Marfinka got married Nikolenka Vikentev, thus seemingly leaving the grandmother's «circle». But the meaning of this character is that Marfinka becomes the base of the hearth, repeating the mode of Malinovka. Goncharov's position is quite clear: Marfinka is the second grandmother. He writes in his autocritical article «The intentions, goals and ideas of the novel «The Precipice»: «... in time <...> with the

experience and the years, she will turn the same grandmother herself» (Goncharov, 1980a, 455). The researcher P.P. Alexeev believes that unlike Marfinka from Vera is the ability to be for others (Alekseev, 2003, 123–145). This is evident in the chapter that describes the Birthday of Marfinka, general hustle and bustle around her, her tears of emotion and lack of understanding «what they are all so fond of me». I.A. Goncharov shows that Marfinka, however unwittingly, contains the future center – when she will learn to be a wife and a mother, as rightly observes the grandmother. Vera understands the same thing: «So, she, Vera, have to be a grandmother too, and give life to others and through debt, endless sacrifices and labor to start a «new» life, not similar to the one that pulled her to the bottom of the precipice...» (Goncharov, 2004, 688–689).

Resume

Thus, the analysis of the novel trilogy shows the writer's whole conception of motherhood. Goncharov from the novel to the novel works out two main types of mothers, each of which is essential for the formation and development

of male characters. In addition the image of the mother occupies a special place in the creative world of the writer: the character of woman-mother, who gives life, not a man is at the centre of it – contrary to popular opinions. A superior feminine is not something new for Russian literature: for example, female characters of I.S. Turgenev are often stronger, morally healthier than his own male characters. However, the character is more often in the center of the story (Kovtun, 2012, 256). Hence the pathetic hymn of Raysky in the final of the novel “The Precipice”, dedicated to the beauty and power of women, their heroism in the highest sense, becomes understandable. Some sacred significance of the texts of Russian classical literature of the XIX century is given by not only countrymen readers, but also Europeans (Goriunov, 2005, 653–654). Hence the constant attempts to detect moral timeless values in Russian classics. In the form of Tatiana Markovna Berezhkova “the other grandmother” – Russia is expressed, the value of which is maternal care and guard, charity of orphaned and poor, the fallen and rebellious, the “old” and “new” – any and all.

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Образ матери в романной трилогии

И.А. Гончарова: типология и функции

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В статье анализируется образ матери в романах «Обыкновенная история», «Обломов», «Обрыв» И.А. Гончарова, выделяются два основных типа, обозначается функция образов в художественном мире автора. В названной парадигме характеров особое место занимает образ Татьяны Марковны Бережковой.

Ключевые слова: И.А. Гончаров, романная трилогия, поэтика, образ матери.
