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THE SYSTEM OF IMAGES IN IVAN GONČAROV'S NOVEL "OBLOMOV"

Vladimir BRAJUC

Associate Professor, Ph. D.

(Alec Russo Balti State University, Republic of Moldova)

vladimir.brajuc@usarb.md, <https://orcid.org/0009-0002-6571-228X>

Abstract

The given article dwells on the system of images in the novel "Oblomov" by Ivan Gončarov. We have compared Oblomov's image with the symbols of Russian culture and literature ("laziness", "peace"), as well as with other characters of the novel (Andrej Štol'c, Olga Il'inskaja, Agafia Pšenicyna).

Keywords: *image, type, character, antithesis, concept, laziness, peace*

Rezumat

În articolul dat, cercetăm chipurile din romanul „Oblomov” de Ivan Gonciarov. Comparăm imaginea lui Oblomov cu simbolurile culturii și literaturii ruse („lenea”, „pacea”), precum și cu alte personaje ale romanului (Andrei Shtoltz, Olga Ilinscaia, Agafia Pșenițana).

Cuvinte-cheie: *chip, tip, personaj, antiteză, concept, lene, pace*

The Artistic Role of the Concepts "Laziness" and "Peace" in Creating the Image of Oblomov

In our previous articles "On the Problem of Oblomov's Image Interpretation" (Brajuc, 2018a) and "The Artistic Structure of Oblomov's Image" (Brajuc, 2018b) we analyzed the problem of Oblomov's image interpretation in the cultural-historical and literary aspects; defined that Oblomov is an integral artistic image and its unambiguous interpretation simplifies the meaning of the entire novel; demonstrated the unity of "type" and "character" in the structure of Oblomov's image; revealed the artistic techniques that the author uses to create the image of the main character; identified the main artistic technique in the novel – multi-stage antithesis; proved that the peculiarity of I. Gončarov's antithesis paradoxically tends to express synthesis and unity, despite its internal semantic – a total disconnection and separation.

It is evident that comparative analysis plays an important role in a novel comprehension. Thus, in order to understand the nature of Oblomov's image and, consequently, the essence of the novel, it is necessary to compare the image of the main character with the symbols of Russian culture and literature, as well as with the images of minor characters in the novel. In this respect let's appeal to the concepts of "laziness" and "peace" in their conceptual

content, as these concepts are already fixed in the reader's mind for the image of Oblomov.

An extensive literature on the concept theory has developed in which S. A. Askoldov's approach (1928 article "The Concept and the Word") is primary and principal. The researcher considers that the concept is first of all a "general notion" and its most essential function is a "substitution function" (Аскольдов/Askol'dov, 1997). Revealing the philosophical understanding and the essence of the concept, the scholar contrasts two kinds of concepts – cognitive and artistic. The cognitive concepts are common, while the artistic concepts are individual. The artistic concepts do not have logical clear limits. The cognitive concepts, in contrast, do not imply any feelings, desires, and other elements of the irrationality. In such case, the artistic concept is a combination of concepts, notions, feelings and emotions. Concepts of cognition always refer to a multiple subject. In other words, these concepts always signify what lies beyond their semantic borders.

This dichotomy (concepts of cognition/concepts of art) contributed to the development of different currents in modern conceptology: cognitive and linguocultural directions.

Representatives of the cognitive direction – D. Lakoff, V. I. Postovalova, in earlier works of A. Verbickaja, Y. S. Stepanov – include in the content of the concept only basic categorical features and the denotative meaning of a word. At the same time, it is worth mentioning that a connotative meaning of the concept lies out of the researchers' sight. There is actually an identification of the concept with the notion.

Representatives of the linguocultural direction develop the idea that the concept is much wider than the notion: the concept's content includes not only categorical features of the referent, but also involves the cultural and background knowledge. This viewpoint is held by N. D. Arutjunova, V. V. Kolesov, Z. D. Popova, I. A. Sternin, Y. S. Stepanov, V. N. Tel'ja, L. O. Černeĵko and others. According to N. D. Arutjunova, the concept is a notion of a practical (routine) philosophy, that reflects an interaction of such factors as national tradition, folklore, religion, ideology, life experience, images of art, feelings and system of values. Concepts form a kind of cultural layer, which serve as a mediator between man and the world.

Another linguist L. O. Černeĵko emphasizes that the concept includes the notion, but it is not exhausted by it. Moreover, it covers all the content of the word – both denotative and connotative, based on associative links.

Culturological definition of a concept was offered and fixed in the "Dictionary of Russian culture constants" by Y. S. Stepanov: a concept is "as if a clot of culture in the human mind; that in the form of what culture enters into the mental world of a person. A concept is that by means of which an ordinary person enters into culture, and in some cases influences it. <...>

Concepts are not only thought, they are experienced. They are the subject of emotions – sympathies and antipathies, and sometimes collisions" (Степанов/Stepanov, 1997, pp. 40-41). The concept, as D. S. Lihačëv notes, "does not arise directly from the meaning of the word, but it is the result of the collision of the dictionary meaning of the word with personal and folk experience. Concept's potential is wider and richer, if the cultural experience of a person is broad and rich" (Лихачёв/Lihačëv, 1997, p. 281). D. S. Lihačëv introduced the term "conceptosphere" into the scientific usage, which means the perspectives discovered through a person's vocabulary and through the entire language. The conceptosphere of language is the conceptosphere of culture, because the national language is not only a sign system for transferring messages, but also an "accumulative system" of the culture – its science, historical experience, religion, folklore, literature. It is certain that there is a direct connection between the culture and the conceptosphere of its language: the richness of the Russian culture determines perspectives and potential of the conceptosphere.

Our article adopts a linguocultural approach to understanding the concept. In accordance with this approach, it is important to emphasize that the concept has a multilayered structure, including a wide cultural background. The content of the concept consists of two main parts: a conceptual or notional part that is more generic and a cultural background part that is more specific. The first one forms the basis of the lexical meaning of the word and it is recorded in lexicographic sources; the second one forms the connotation meaning of the word and it is also partially reflected in dictionaries. Speaking about the concept's organization, V. A. Maslova (Маслова/Maslova, 2001) described the methodology of conceptual analysis based on the detection of the structural features within the core and periphery. So, the core comprises the dictionary definitions of a certain lexeme, which enclose great opportunities in revealing the content of the concept. Periphery, in turn, comprises a subjective experience, various pragmatic components of a lexeme, connotations and associations.

For a deeper understanding of Oblomov's image it is necessary to review the denotative, connotative and associative content of the words "laziness" and "peace" in culture and literature. It is all the more impressive that these words have been associated with Oblomov's image in the minds of readers. Gončarov's position should be considered regarding the historical and cultural background of the epoch in which the novel was written. At that time, "laziness" and "peace" became symbols of free creativity. And these symbols meant the same also for A. S. Puškin, the undoubted authority for subsequent generations of Russian poets and writers. Gončarov distinguished Puškin from all writers; he was influenced by Puškin's artistic style. Let us

note some similarities and opposites in the understanding of the concepts "laziness" and "peace" in Puškin's and Gončarov's works.

Laziness is an essential element of the human nature. It sets the limits of any activity, forcing us to weigh the advantages and disadvantages of the upcoming case. Laziness differs from unwillingness to act in its special state. The ontological essence of laziness is not obvious. On the one hand, laziness is conceptualized in language as an element that defeats a person from outside: "laziness has overcome"; "laziness was born before us"; "dream came from seven villages, laziness came from seven villages"; "laziness attacks, overpowers" etc. On the other hand, laziness is the nature of human being: "I am annoyed by his laziness and folly" (Зализняк и др. /Zaliznyak et al., 2002).

It goes without saying, that laziness is a negative trait, which slows down the self-realization of a man. And some Russian words with pejorative meaning (lobotryas, lodiri, slacker, loafer, lazy) prove it. Explanatory dictionaries define the word "lazy" as "a lack of desire to work or do something, dislike of labor" (Ефремова/Efremova, 2000). Dahl's *Explanatory Dictionary* provides the following definition: "Laziness – reluctance to work, aversion to work, to business, to occupation; inclination to idleness, inclination to loafing". In Slavic mythology, Laziness and Otet are the spirits that corrupt people and prevent them from being productive. Laziness is the first stage of fall. A higher second stage is Otet. A man becomes fat and clumsy; in a critical situation, he does nothing to save himself and his loved ones. Next stage of decay relates to stillness, immobility and the death from gluttony.

However, there are words related to laziness with meliorative meaning: "lazy man", "lazy mother" or the name of a Moscow street – "Lenivka". And originally the word "lazy" did not contain a negative meaning: in Russian (and in most Slavic languages) it came from Old Slavic with the meaning: "slow, quiet, sluggish, calm". The origin of the word is Latin: lenis – soft, gentle, meek (Фасмер/Fasmer, 1986, p. 482).

In the Bible there is no clearly expressed negative attitude toward "laziness". So, in the first centuries of Christianity "laziness" was interpreted as a type of "rest" and "indolence": "Laziness seems to me a desire for rest, – but only the Lord has a true rest" (Augustine Blessed "Confession") (Зеленин/Zelenin, 2004, p. 26). Later in Western Christianity laziness was enlisted to the seven deadly sins, while in Eastern (Orthodox) tradition "sadness" is mentioned in the list of sins instead of "laziness". "Laziness is a concept that refers to a person's worldly (physical) life and is opposed to *work*. Herein lies an important difference between Orthodoxy and Catholicism. Labor, in Orthodox doctrine, is primarily a "spiritual act"; on the contrary, in Catholicism, since the eleventh century, it was the social, physical activity of man that was recognized as leading and saving. ... Russian Orthodoxy did

not see the spiritual value in the amount of material wealth earned by labor; Catholicism, on the other hand, began to consider diligence in work, labor, accumulation of material goods as one of the ways to save the soul" (Зеленин/Zelenin, 2004, p. 27).

In the Russian cultural tradition we can notice some uncertainty in the condemnation of laziness. From the proverbs we can see that "laziness" is assessed mainly in a negative way, because a lazy person shifts his work to others. At the same time, "laziness" on its own, without reference to other people does not cause much irritation, being perceived as an understandable and forgivable weakness, and sometimes as a reason for mild envy ("A lazy person always has a holiday"). This perception agrees well with the fact that an excessive activity looks unnatural and suspicious in the eyes of the Russian people. The proverb "Hunting is more than unwilling" expresses mistrust toward a person who develops a rough activity. Let us recall Tarantiev's attitude to Štol'c.

Oblomov is considered to be the main "sloth" in Russian culture. Oblomov embodies traits that are typical for the Russian national character. The word combination "Russian laziness" is as standard as "Russian soul". We shall note that Russian laziness is not sluggish, not sleepy, but rather dreamy. "Russian culture also allows a philosophical justification for laziness. It has not only deeply absorbed the complex of ecclesiastical and New Testament ideas about vanity of vanities, about the futility of all activity and about the fouls of the air, which neither sow nor reap. It also interpreted them as an apology of inactivity. It is very natural for the Russian person, in the midst of vigorous activity, to stop suddenly and wonder about existential meaning. ...In this context inactivity can be perceived as a manifestation of the highest form of wisdom, and laziness as a virtue" (Зализняк и др./Zaliznjak et al., 2002).

For Puškin, Baťuškov and Delvig, the word "sloth" (in Russian it traditionally rhymes with "lucky") refers to a poetic nature that chose the peaceful pleasures of friendship and love over the temptations of wealth and career. In this sense, laziness is perceived as a state akin to inspiration, bringing a touch of poetry into everyday life.

This understanding of laziness is reflected in all Puškin's poems where the lexeme "laziness" appears: "Town" (1815), "Dreamer" (1815), "My Epitaph" (1815), "To My Aristarchus" (1815), "A Message to Yudin" (1815), "A Message to Galich" (1815), "To Delvig" (1815), "Dream" (1816), "Delvig" (1817), "Turgenev" (1818), "Solitude" (1819), "All Ghost, Vanity..." (1819), "To My Inkwell" (1821), "In the hours of amusement or idle boredom..." (1830), "To Delvig" (1830). Most of the above poems are the friendship messages, where "laziness" is on a par with love and friendship: "Love, friendship and laziness/Sheltered from worries and troubles,/Live under their reliable

shadow;/In solitude you are happy: you are a poet" ("To Delvig") (Пушкин/Puškin, 1974, vol. 1, p. 31).

Solitude is necessary for creativity, for poetry. In the poem "Town" (1815), addressed to his childhood friend N. I. Trubeckoj, the author laments that in St. Petersburg he bogged down in the fuss, "spinning, having fun in the theaters, at feasts" and continues: "But thank God, thank God!/On a smooth road/I have come out;/I have pushed out the door/The worries and sorrows,/Which had been playing before,/I am ashamed, so long;/And in the silence of the holy/*Philosopher lazy*/Away from the noise/I live in a town/The unknown happy.../Here there is no thunder at all..." (Пушкин/Puškin, 1974, vol. 1, p. 333).

The word combination "a smooth road" in these lines acquires a metaphorical meaning: the road – the way of life – is bustling, sad, noisy in St. Petersburg and peaceful in a distant provincial town, where there is no thunder and where the silence is holy, therefore the author exclaims: "glory to God"; wherever there is a holiness there is a peace. These topos and environment are just right for a lazy philosopher: "Blessed is he who has fun/In *peace*, without cares,/Who secretly befriends Thebes/And little Eros;/Blessed is he who in the open air/In a private nook/Who does not think about grief,/Walks in a cap,/Drinks and eats when he wants,/Does not bother about the guest!/No one, no one bothers him/To be lazy alone/In bed..." (Пушкин/Puškin, 1974, vol. 1, p. 334).

A large part of the poem "The Town" is a conversation with the great ancient and modern writers, whose works support and keep the poet busy: Voltaire, Virgil, Homer, Horace, La Fontaine, and others. All day long he is with them, glorifying their immortality and hoping that his work will not fade into oblivion. Laziness here is a condition that helps him to find the peace that is associated with companionship, with reading, with dreaming, with philosophizing, with creativity.

In the poem "Dream" (1816), an excerpt from the unrealized poem "Justified Laziness", the title of which remained in Pushkin's manuscripts, we find out that laziness is the goddess and a queen, thanks to laziness the poet creates; paints, brush, lyre – everything is given to it: "Come, oh laziness!/Come to my desert./Coolness and peace are calling to you;/You are the one my goddess;/All is ready for a young guest./...Here is my couch. Come to the residence of the peace;/Be a queen, I am your prisoner now./Everything, everything is yours: here are paints, brush and lyre –/Teach me, guide my hand" (Пушкин/Puškin, 1974, vol. 1, p. 414).

In Puškin's poems laziness is *carefree, free, deep, solitary, philosophical, dreamy, poetic, lyrical, quiet, peaceful, sleepy, proud, holy, friendly, royal, queen, divine, goddess*. Laziness as a companion of creativity is possible in a certain topos: *the wilderness, desert, the open air, remote shade, village, town; forest, grove,*

garden, meadows, fields, river, brook; house, private nook, hovel, couch. The landscape in this context is always peaceful, the sky and rivers are calm. It is worth mentioning that previously listed meanings of the concept "laziness" are the antithesis of *the noise and vanity of cities, rich houses, feasts, balls; thunder, lightning, storms, seas.* "Hurry up to the peaceful rural shelter/There you can live idle and carefree,/There is a paradise; but stay away from the cities,/Where the cry and noise forever bother sloths" ("Dream") (Пушкин/Puškin, 1974, vol. 1, p. 415).

Pushkin is ironic in glorifying and praising the laziness. There is an irony in all the referred poems about laziness (except: "The Dreamer" (1815), "Solitude" 1819). "Oh, Delvig! The muses have inscribed/My fate to me;/But do you want to multiply my sorrows/Between Laziness and Morpheus/The carefree spirit cherishes/Let me laze around one year/And enjoy the bliss,/I am, right, *a son of laziness!*" ("To Delvig") (Пушкин/Puškin, 1974, vol. 1, p. 31). "Here Pushkin is buried; he with a young muse,/With love and laziness, he spent a blessed century,/He did not do good, though had a good soul,/By God, a good man" ("My Epitaph") (Пушкин/Puškin, 1974, vol. 1, p. 372).

"Laziness is laudable, but there are limits to everything," without creativity, without labor, without movement, laziness is burdensome and painful: "Beware, oh, children, of wise laziness!/The deceptive shadow of calm..."; all life on the couch and bed leads to gout, melancholy and sickness; "In the midst of peaceful villages, without any work./What's the need? – Movement, gentlemen" ("Dream")! Laziness and labor in Puškin's poems are interrelated: "Blessed is he who in a distant shadow,/Far away from exacting ignorance,/Divides his days between labor and laziness,/Memories and hopes" ("Solitude") (Пушкин/Puškin, 1974, vol. 1, p. 372).

Most of the poems where the word "laziness" frequents were written by young Puškin. The poet coherently combined laziness and creativity, thus ennobling the word-notion of "laziness", returning the word to its original meaning: slow, quiet, calm, gentle, meek, and soft, i.e. not vain, dreaming.

Russian culture has preserved a similar line of "defense" of laziness, most vividly represented in the novel "Oblomov" by I. A. Gončarov. The writer doubted the necessity for condemnation of laziness as a "harmful" quality of human nature. In a letter to Y.D. Efremova (20 August 1849) Gončarov wrote: "Here I have finally comprehended poetry of laziness. And this is the only poetry to which I will be faithful to the grave, unless the misery forces me to grab a crowbar and a shovel" (Гончаров/Gončarov, 1980, p. 155).

It is obvious that Puškin's interpretation of the laziness is associated with a poetic labor, and his character is not lazy to live. Whereas in I.A. Gončarov's depiction of Oblomov, in addition to dreaminess and avoidance of vanity, the laziness becomes a severe disease, which leads to a loss of will to live. "- It seems to me, that you are lazy to live, aren't you? – Štol'c asked.

– It's true: I'm lazy to live, Andrei" (Гончаров/Gončarov, 1981, p. 177). The laziness for I. Gončarov is a corrupting and a decomposing trait (this is Štol'c's position), but it is a kind of poetry. Of course, it comes from A. S. Puškin (Onegin with his "brooding laziness") and the "Arzamasians".

The laziness is often associated with a desire of rest. Puškin never despaired even at the worst of times. The motive of rest is most fully represented in the poem by A. S. Puškin "It's time, my friend, it's time!" (1834). When Puškin scholars divide Puškin's life into periods, they usually define 1834 as the starting point of the last period – the most painful and the darkest. In this year "The Bronze Horseman" was forbidden, critics contend it was time of the poet's prostration. In early 1834 Puškin became a chamberlain that was humiliating for a poet. The necessity of attendance at the royal court was burdensome for the poet. In April 1834 the post censorship illegally unsealed Pushkin's letter to his wife about disadvantages of the chamberlain work; this letter was handed over to the police and it was subsequently forwarded to Czar.

The money issues were also unsolved. Keeping 30,000 in a year, Puškin was unable to collect even a half of this amount. Family needs became more complicated: the number of children increased; parents were ill, becoming helpless; his wife sheltered two sisters in their house; his brother requested for payment of endless debts, his son-in-law – for the division of property.

Under the influence of the story with the letter, due to the rejection of the imperial court, under the pressures of material necessity, Puškin decided to resign (the idea of escaping to the countryside as the only way to salvation) and wrote a letter to A. H. Benckendorff. Czar disapproved Puškin's resignation. Žukovskij got involved and settled the matter. But one thing was irreparable – Puškin's injured honor and dignity. The poet was upset because he was considered to be a smerd, with whom one could do anything. In Puškin's diary records of 1834 we find out the author's attitude to this trouble: "I want to be a royal servant, a slave, but I will not be a smerd and a jester even for the king of heaven" (Пушкин/Puškin, 1976, vol. 7, p. 287).

During this difficult period the poem "It's time, my friend, it's time...", which was addressed to his wife, appears. This poem was probably written in the summer of 1834 as a result of failed attempt to retire and go away to the village. The same state of mind is reflected in the letters of this time to his wife. "It is time, my friend, it is time! *The heart demands for peace – / A day by day does fly, and every hour's taking/ A piece of being, and we together do assume/ To live, and maybe just, we will be dead quite soon./ There is no happiness in world, but peace and freedom./ For a long time I've been desirable fate dreaming – / Like tired slave, I've planned myself to make released/ For distant residence of works and pure bliss*" (Пушкин/Puškin, 1974, vol. 2, p. 315). The structure of this conversation, a philosophical reflec-

tion is created due to the form of address, the lines wrap, which consists of iambic hexameter with pyrrhics. The theme is stated from the first line: the desire for peace. Chronos is inseparable from the topos: days fly by, life passes, and it is time, time has come for rest, which is tantamount to happiness; every hour is taking a piece of being, that is, time destroys matter, and the man puts stuff aside and assumes as there is still time to live. Pyrrhic in the second foot of the fourth verse ("suppose"), slows down the rhythm of the poem, as if to emphasize that man plans to start a new life after the completion of affairs, but he dies before it even started. The light, the world is contrasted with a distant residence, where silence, creativity and pure bliss, that is, complete contentment and joy.

In the manuscript we find a plan for the continuation of the poem: "Youth has no need for at home, maturity is afraid of its solitude. Blessed is he who finds a friend, and then goes home. Oh, I'm going to find out whether I get into the village – fields, garden, peasants, books; the poetic production – family, love, etc. – religion, death" (Пушкин/Puškin, 1974, vol. 2, p. 603). Such interpretation of the "peace" coincides precisely with I. Gončarov's understanding upon this notion: peace means family, love, dreams of a wife, friends, fields, books, notes, – that we find in the novel "Oblomov". The novel's main character embodies the metaphor of peace and idyll. Oblomov has been looking for peace and lost paradise all his life. The word "peace" is one of the most frequent in the novel. Oblomov responds to Štol'c's accusations: "And yet isn't it true, that the purpose of all your running around, passions, wars, trade and politics is the quest for peace, and the striving for this ideal of a lost paradise" (Гончаров/Gončarov, 1981, p. 187).

At the end of his life Oblomov "...was a complete and natural reflection of *peace*, contentment and a serene *stillness*; ...he managed to get away cheaply from life, to bargain with it and insure himself an absolute *peace*. He decided ... that his life not only was accomplished, but also it had been designed, even intended, in such a simple, unremarkable way, to express the possibility of the *perfectly peaceful side of human existence*. Others, he thought, were destined to express its anxious sides, to guide the forces of creation and destruction: everyone has his own purpose" (Гончаров/Gončarov, 1981, p. 497). In this case, as in many other fragments of the novel, it is difficult to separate the character's thoughts from the author's, because they merge.

The word "rest" here is polysemantic: it also means silence, rest, inactivity, absence of movement, restlessness; it is also sickness (hospital emergency room); it is also death (eternal rest, the deceased). Thus, the figure of Oblomov symbolizes, on the one hand, a connection with eternity, silence, a rejection of vanity, and on the other hand, lifeless, painful, mortal state. It is not by chance that the author depicts the peace of Oblomovka and Vyborg as "a dead silence and a dream like death", there are no poetic works and

books. And in Oblomov's dreams true peace and happiness, like in Pushkin's works, are there, where one can hear music, where one can discuss with his wife what he has read, and where conversations with friends bring joy and peace of mind.

Puškin's salvation was not just peace, but creative peace, "the residence of distant labors". As well as the concept of "laziness", Puškin's concept of "rest" is associated with an opportunity to get away from the bustle of city life in order to create. Oblomov, in contrast, only dreams about it, and runs away from labor, without actually realizing creative potential and wasting his life. This is the tragedy of the hero.

Female Characters as a Reflection of the Typical and Individual in the Main Character of the Novel

Puškin's ideal of a peaceful family life with a beloved wife and children in the lap of nature in a quiet village is not realized in the portrayal of Oblomov, since the unity of culture and life, music and food in the main character's dream is not feasible in reality. To achieve this harmony, two women who love Oblomov, Olga Il'inskaja and Agafia Pšenicyna, should be united in one person. In the image of Oblomov's dream woman we notice the synthesis sought by the hero: the harmony of intellect and heart, pride and peace, independence (emancipation) and obedience (traditionalism). Gončarov uses antithesis, juxtapositions and oppositions in the creation of female characters in the novel, which help to reveal the essence of Oblomov and the novel as a whole.

In the first place of Oblomov's dream there has always been a woman, and first of all, a wife, a keeper of the home, a mother, which connects the hero so closely to his childhood, to his Oblomovka. The image of the woman created by Oblomov's dream combines features of romance, poetry, and a restful family idyll. On the one hand, she is a mistress, tall, slender, with a proud look, thoughtful expression, on the other hand, she is a wife, a mother, embodying the quiet family life. If you look at the portraits of the two heroines created by the author, you can see that in each portrait there is a part of Oblomov's dream. In Olga – slimness, ease, pride, thought, poetry. In Agafia – simplicity, fullness, flesh, health, silence, peace. These words, denoting the external and internal qualities of each of the heroines, reveal a certain semantic proximity between them, becoming synonymous, but the contextual synonymic series characterizing Olga is opposed to the lexical units that characterize Agafia.

We observe a fundamental difference in the poetic and prose narrative portraits of both heroines. Olga's portrait emphasizes spiritual energy in every detail. Agafia's image excludes such energy.

The oppositional nature of the heroines can be traced throughout the novel. Such lexemes as "thought", "mind", "pride", "will", "curiosity", "energy",

"talent", "purposefulness"; "aristocrat", "queen" are dominating in the image and characterization of Olga. N. Nikolina notes about Olga that "in the text field of this character there are regularly repeated words with the "pride" semantics, and it is in this field (in comparison with the descriptions of other characters) that they dominate" (Николина/Nikolina, 2003, p. 203). The portrayal of Agafia Matveevna contains such lexemes as "diligence", "conscientiousness", "thriftiness", "simplicity", "kindness", "shyness"; "very domestic"; and these descriptors are used very often. The main character looks at Olga as an "angel," a "deity, but for him Agafia is like a "hot cheesecake," or "a horse with a collar." As we can see, in each of the heroines there is a reflection of part of his ideal. Poetry and everyday life, music and food, spiritual and physical are indissoluble in Oblomov's fantasy. But in reality this perfection is unattainable.

B. Kantor says that Olga's surname (Il'inskaja) evokes associations with the name of the main character (Il'ja), i.e. she is destined for Oblomov. Olga believes that she is destined for Oblomov, that her love for him was given to her by God, that her fate is forever linked to that of Il'ja Il'ič, she is determined to fulfill her duty of love to the end: "If you die... I shall wear eternal mourning for you and never smile again in my life. If you fall in love with another, I will not grumble, I will not curse, but in my heart I wish you happiness ... For me, love is like ... life, ... and life is a duty, a duty, therefore, *love* is also a *duty*: it seems to me like God sent it to me" (Гончаров/ Gončarov, 1981, p. 254).

Understanding her love for Oblomov as a duty, Olga tries to take care of him. She sees it as her duty to awaken Oblomov, to bring him back to life, to lead him away from indifference and laziness. This is the reason for the appearance of numerous dialogues, moralistic maxims, and heartfelt monologues. Olga's speech is individualized. Short, vigorous, exclamatory sentences are common in Olga's speech. They reveal Olga's impetuous passionate nature. The predominance of questioning intonations in Olga's speech expresses her restlessness, the questions push her to make decisions, to move.

Love in reality turns out to be not as poetic for Oblomov as it began, in the spring, at the moment when the grass and trees were in bloom. Love turns after the marriage proposal, which Olga accepted, into a heavy duty, where there is no place for dreams and poetry. Love fades, the life comes with its daily problems. "Happiness, happiness! ...How fragile you are, how unreliable! Bedsread, wreath, love, love! Where's the *money*? and how to earn a living? And you must *buy*, *love*, pure, lawful good. From that moment on, dreams and *calmness* left Oblomov. He slept badly, ate little, absentmindedly and gloomily looked at everything" (Гончаров/Gončarov, 1981, p. 341).

Olga encourages Oblomov to do everything that, in the main character's opinion, is bustle and from which he has tried to escape. The hero tries to do her errands, just to please her. "Even stronger than from reproaches, vigor awakened in him when he noticed that she was tired from his fatigue, and she became careless and cold. Then a fever of life, strength, activity appeared in him, and the shadow disappeared again, and sympathy again beat with a strong and clear energy" (Гончаров/Gončarov, 1981, p. 251). From an enthusiastic, poetic perception of Olga the hero comes to a negative assessment of her: she seems "careless, cold". It is not clear which is better: Agafia's "stupid" thoughts or Olga's coldness.

For Oblomov, Olga's eternal striving for somewhere, for something, the eternal movement of life and love is unacceptable. It is no accident that when he forgot about Olga's demanding nature and began to believe in the serenity of life, he again dreams of Oblomovka, embodying peace and tranquility. There is no place in Oblomov's dream for Olga, for she is the tireless movement, but he is the embodiment of peace.

The differences between the heroes largely account for the initial doom of this union: their mutual feelings are fading, Oblomov is tired of demanding love, and Olga – of the burden of responsibility. He feels that she will leave him because their views of the world are too different. "Accept me as I am, love what is good in me" (Гончаров/Gončarov, 1981, p. 387), – Oblomov tells Olga at their last meeting. She refuses and chooses Štol'c because her love for Oblomov has gradually turned into a burdensome concern for her, because Olga's feeling is reasonable and self-loving. Olga failed to comprehend and recognize the ideal of Oblomov himself. Believing in the power of her love, she hoped to make Oblomov happy ("bring back him to life") on the basis of her personal judgment of life. In the end, she realizes that she cannot "bring Oblomov back to life" and decides that he "died long ago." Born Il'inskaja, she becomes Štol'c (from the German "stolz" ("proud")), which suits her image better.

Oblomov never sees an earthly woman in Olga. She appears to him as "a deity, with this sweet babbling, with this graceful, white face, thin, delicate neck...", she is an "angel" before whom mere mortals have only "to bow down". Oblomov will worship before his "pure angel" for the rest of his days and he will never forget how he "lived in paradise" near her, even when he finds another happiness in the house of Pšenicya. Olga will forever be Oblomov's "soul." However, the ideal of Olga is unattainable for Oblomov, and she herself remains an inaccessible "goddess of pride and anger," whom Il'ja Il'ič dares not approach (see Ким Чжон Мин/Kim Jung Min, 2004).

Oblomov's love for Olga ignites and he awakens to life, but he cannot find the harmony of happiness with her. It is no coincidence that his love for Olga is described as a disease ("smallpox," "measles," "fever"). In his letter to

Olga Oblomov writes: "Peace suits me, though it is boring and sleepy, it is familiar to me; but I cannot handle storms" (Гончаров/Gončarov, 1981, p. 263). Pšenicyna has something that is lacking in Olga, and with her Il'ja Il'ič finally finds the desired, sweet, long-awaited peace. This is expressed in the lexemes conveying the emotional experiences and actions of the hero: "willingly stayed", "quietly opened the door with his foot", "all this was done in peace", "did not worry with anxiety".

The spiritual and reverential feeling for Olga Il'inskaja is gradually replaced by earthly love, which is born by degrees in Oblomov from the physical sense of warmth and comfort exuded by the image of Agafia Matveevna Pšenicyna, a woman of flesh and blood. Oblomov admires Agafia's troubles, appreciates her skill as a hostess: "glorious coffee," pies "no worse than Oblomov's," and homemade vodka. He, who is used to idleness and has no patience for rush, is won over by Pšenicyna's industriousness, absorbed in the care of her own household. Pšenicyna's activity is measured and unhurried. She "moves all day like a well-organized machine, slender, correct, walks smoothly, speaks neither softly nor loudly, grinds coffee, breaks some sugar, sows something, sits at her sewing, her needle walks measuredly, like a clock hand; then she gets up without fussing; there she stops halfway in the kitchen, opens the cupboard, takes something out, takes it away" (Гончаров/Gončarov, 1981, p. 397). She is active, and it is expressed in the variety of action verbs in her description. But this activity itself is "measured, like a clockwork hand," that is, it does not lead to changes, but leaves the impression of rest. "The whole nature of Agafya Matveevna exudes calm, and Oblomov not only falls under the charm of her earthly attractiveness, her innocence and hard work, he discovers in Pšenicyna his ideal of artless harmony and peaceful comfort, which lived in his memories of Oblomovka" (Ким Чжон Мин/Kim Jung Min, 2004, p. 99).

Only Pšenicyna loves Oblomov strongly and unselfishly. The meaning of her life was the peace and comfort of Il'ja Il'ič. Agafia's selfless devotion is seen when, forgetting about herself and her children, she takes care of the sick Oblomov, sitting by his bedside at night, when she sells everything to feed Oblomov.

The most important thing in family life for Oblomov has always been peace, not passion, like his ancestors, he avoided passion. In this the hero saw the norm of human life and the norm of love. "... A person is sleeping carefree beside the *proudly shameful, restless* friend. He falls asleep with confidence, waking up to meet the same meek, cute look. And twenty, thirty years later, at his warm gaze, he would have met in her eyes the same gentle, quietly flickering ray of sympathy. And so on to the grave! "But isn't this the secret goal of every man and every woman: to find in your friend an unchanging physiognomy of peace, an eternal and even smooth of feeling?

After all, this is the norm of love, and a little something deviates from it, changes, cools, - we suffer: therefore, my ideal is a common ideal? - he thought" (Гончаров/Gončarov, 1981, p. 212). There is a norm in life and the norm in love is peace.

Against the background of the peaceful and unhurried course of life, Oblomov's relations with Pšenicyna are smooth and unpretentious; unlike his stormy and passionate love affair with Olga, there is no tension in them. "Longing, sleepless nights, sweet and bitter tears – he experienced nothing. He sits and smokes and watches her sewing, sometimes he will say something or say nothing, and meanwhile he *is calm*, doesn't need anything, doesn't want to go anywhere, *as if* everything is here, what he needs" (Гончаров/Gončarov, 1981, p. 401).

Some researchers see the realization of Oblomov's dream, the return of the hero to the good old Oblomovka in the "Vyborg" chapters. One cannot agree with this. It is no coincidence that the author's remark says "as if everything were here". If Oblomov's dream had come true, there would be no tragic notes at the end of the novel about the hero's death, because in Oblomovka they died without tragedy. In his last meeting with Shtoltz, Oblomov says that he is in the pit, that he is dead. Although "peace and quiet rest over the Vyborg side," it is not the peace and quiet of Oblomovka, where there was space, family, where the hero was a child who believed in a miracle. Life just shows that you can't stop, peace is not only the antithesis of rush, but it is also death, you can't go back to childhood and find the lost paradise. Pšenicyna has warmth, comfort, food, but no poetry, dreams, music, no communication with friends. Consequently, the dream is only half realized. "Olga least of all resembles "the unheard of beauty Militrisa Kirbievna," who, as we know from an old folk tale, was not the wife but the mother of the hero Bova Korolevič. She was promised by the nanny to Il'ja Il'ič. The mythical Militrisa Kirbievna embodies the ideal of a wife-mother, Olga – a wife-friend, an equal; for the first one can remain surrounded by the daily care of a beloved child, next to the other you need to work continuously, improve yourself, grow; the first promises the desired peace, the second requires continuous movement" (Белокурова, Дуговейко/ Belokurova, Dugovejko).

The female characters in the novel highlight the image of the protagonist. The typical and characteristic is vividly revealed in the descriptions of Oblomov's relationships with the women he loves. On the one hand, there is laziness, bourgeoisness, Oblomovism; on the other hand, there is poetry, peace, kindness, conscience, and love.

Comparison and Opposition of the Images of Oblomov and Štol'c

The comparison and contrast of the images of Oblomov and Štol'c is the most significant in the novel, because it expresses the essence of the author's worldview.

In all three of Gončarov's novels ("An Ordinary Story", "Oblomov" and "The Precipice"), which he regarded as one novel, "a significant place is occupied by the co- and opposition of two types of hero: a personality prone to an individually creative, but abstractly idealized perception of the world, with a striving for "high, great, graceful" (A. Adujev, Oblomov, Rajsky), and a hero pragmatist as the embodiment of "sober, businesslike, necessary" (P. Adujev, Štol'c, Tušin)" (Гейро/Gejro, 1990, p. 8).

Oblomov and Štol'c are two images, two types of consciousness, two understandings of life, on the juxtaposition of which the novel is built: the poetic-soul (Oblomov's) and the analytical-rational (Štol'c's). "The juxtaposition underlying the novel and determining its structure," writes M. V. Otradin, "is clearly not reducible to a comparison of two love stories. It is a comparison of two types of life, in one of which the main thing is cyclicity, the repetition of events, "staying", and in the other – directed, irreversible movement, ...change, "becoming", that is a comparison of two worlds, the centers of which are the bearers of sharply opposed consciousnesses – Oblomov and Štol'c" (Отрадин/Otradin, 1994, p. 97).

Oblomov's ideal is peace, Štol'c's ideal is movement. Poetry is only one part of the knowledge of life for Štol'c, a general educational material. Poetry is life for Oblomov. For Štol'c, life is a work; his rule of life is formulated as follows: "Labor is the image, content, element and purpose of life" (Гончаров/Gončarov, 1981, p. 189). Unlike Oblomov, Štol'c is able to change, adapt to new conditions in public and personal life. Štol'c's character is dominated by practicality, Gončarov explains this by his German roots and the upbringing he underwent under the guidance of his father, who sought to make a "good bourche" out of his son. The basis of Štol'c's upbringing: system, consistency, reason, practical activity, independent work, and faith in one's own strength, which contrasts with Oblomov's upbringing – with the dominance of a fairy tale and faith in a miracle rather than in oneself. Although Andrej's mother, a Russian noblewoman with a tender heart and a poetic soul, tried to instill in her son a sense of beauty and spirituality, a pragmatic and rationalistic element prevailed in Štol'c's character due to his German origins (see КИМ ЧЖОН МИН/Kim Jung Min, 2004).

"Different national-cultural and socio-historical elements – from patriarchal to burgher ones – created, united in the personality of Štol'c, a temper that is alien, in the novelist's opinion, to any limitation and extremity" (Недзвецкий/Nedzveckij, 1996, p. 33). Gončarov intended to relate to the image of Štol'c the idea of the norm of life, combining in the image Russian poetry with German practicality. "In order for such a temper to take shape, it may be that such mixed elements as Štol'c was made of were also needed. ...How many Štol'c should appear under Russian names!" (Гонча-

пов/Gončarov, 1981, p. 171). In these words one can hear the hope for the future, for the realization of Štol'c's ideal in the real world.

But the positive interpretation of Štol'c's image was not accepted by the critics. Many critics believed that Štol'c's image could not be regarded as an ideal. The imperfection of Štol'c was seen in the narrowness of his ideal, focused only on the interests and goals of the hero himself. "As it turned out with the development of the work, Gončarov's very hope to create an image of a harmonious man and the same love on the material of modern reality was a utopia" (Недзвецкий/Nedzveckij, 1996, p. 34).

Everything about Štol'c, from his name and appearance to his way of life, is the antithesis of Oblomov. Štol'c, from the German "stolz" (proud), while Andrej is translated from the ancient Greek as "courageous," "brave," "husband," "man. "He is ceaselessly *in motion*. ...He is all made up of bones, muscles, and nerves, like a purebred English horse. He *is lean*; his cheeks are almost absent, that is, there is bone and muscle, but not a sign of fat roundness; his complexion is even, swarthy, and no blush; his eyes, though a little greenish, are expressive. He *had no unnecessary movements*. As there was nothing unnecessary in his body, so in the moral activities of his life, he *was looking for a balance of practical aspects with the subtle needs of the spirit*. He *walked firmly, cheerfully*; he lived on a budget, trying to spend each day as each ruble, with a minute-by-minute, never dormant *control of the time, labor, strength of soul and heart*. He seemed to *control* both sorrows and joys like the movement of his hands, like the steps of his feet, or how he handled bad and good weather. ... *The dream*, the enigmatic, the mysterious *had no place* in his soul. ...We never saw him thinking about something painfully and sorely; apparently, he was not devoured by the remorse of a weary heart; he *was not sick with his soul*, he was never lost in difficult or new circumstances" (Гончаров/Gončarov, 1981, pp. 167-170). As we can notice, Shtoltz's character and portrait are presented by the author not only "analytically", but also "plastically". Antithesis is used not to describe Štol'c's features, but to contrast him with those who had a "dream" and a state of "dreaminess", "morbidity" of thoughts as the basis of "soul and heart".

Štol'c's phrases are short and concise. One can feel the energy and assertiveness of the speaker. The fourth chapter of the second part presents the dialogue of Štol'c with Oblomov: Oblomov mostly speaks about society and his dream, while Štol'c's remarks are short and laconic, he does not reason, but mostly states. Štol'c's speech becomes longer when he explains to Olga her actions and her relationship with Oblomov. Štol'c's speech is often moral and didactic in relation to both Oblomov and Olga. The lexical composition of his speech reveals the social essence — it often contains words of business vocabulary.

Andrej Štol'c's life position is expressed in his aphoristic judgment that "the normal purpose of a person is to live through the four seasons, that is four ages, without jumps and to bring the vessel of life to the last day without spilling a single drop in vain" (Гончаров/Gončarov, 1981, p. 170). While Oblomov tends to succumb to the game of imagination, Štol'c always maintains a sober clarity of thought. Štol'c carefully thinks over his life, relying on practical experience and knowledge of people, he does not tolerate obscurity, he fears his heart and imagination. "Most of all he feared imagination, that duplicitous companion, with a face friendly on one side and hostile on the other, a friend – the less one believes him, and an enemy – when one falls asleep trustingly to his sweet whisper" (Гончаров/Gončarov, 1981, p. 168). Imagination (associatively conjugated word-images – fantasy, dream, poetry, creativity), or rather, its presence or absence, is one of the central concepts organizing the Oblomov/Štol'c opposition in the novel (see КИМ ЧЖОН МИН/Kim Jung Min, 2004).

Štol'c calls Oblomov's dream of finding peace and lost paradise "oblomovšina", rebuking his friend for apathy and laziness. Oblomov asks Štol'c: "So why ... do you struggle, if your goal is not to provide for yourself forever and then to have *peace* and rest? ... Why should you suffer for the whole century?" (It is Oblomov who notices the main feature in Štol'c's appearance – he is always "fighting"). Štol'c replies: "For labor itself, nothing else. *Labor* is the image, content, element and *purpose of life*, at least mine" (Гончаров/Gončarov, 1981, p. 189). However, when he finds Olga, Štol'c contradicts his own words and rejoices as his friend might rejoice: "I have found my ...I have waited! So many years of thirsty feeling, patience, saving strength of soul! How long I have waited – all is rewarded: here it is, a person's last happiness! ...Olga is my wife! ...Everything is found, there is nothing to look for, there is nowhere else to go!" (Гончаров/Gončarov, 1981, p. 442). Paradoxically it turns out that, contrary to the hero's own reasoning, it is not labor, but love that becomes the assignment and goal of Štol'c's active life.

Many features of Oblomov's ideal were embodied in the Štol'c family idyll. "They settled in a *quiet corner*, on the seashore. Modest and small was their house". "But amidst this motley furniture, pictures, amongst things of no importance to anyone, but marked for them both by a happy hour, by a memorable moment of trifles, in the ocean of *books and notes* reeked of warm life, ...all around shone *the eternal beauty of nature*". "A network of grapes, ivy, and myrtles covered the cottage from top to bottom. From the gallery one could see the sea, from the other side – the road to the city" (Гончаров/Gončarov, 1981, p. 468). "There could be no rampant wild passions: everything was *harmonious and quiet*. ... Outside they did everything like others. Although they got up not at dawn, but early; they liked to sit for

a long time at tea, sometimes even as if *lazily silent*, then they went to their corners or worked together, had lunch, went to the fields, made music... like everyone else, as Oblomov dreamed too" (Гончаров/Gončarov, 1981, p. 474). Gončarov says that Štol'c and Olga are happy, but this does not convince the reader. "The union of the heroes in fact turns out to be self-contained, deprived of the main meaning of true love – its humanizing social results. The idea of a harmonious, real-poetic personality in the figure of Štol'c is not adequately embodied in the novel" (Недзвецкий/Nedzveckij, 1996, p. 34).

In the author's portrayal of Andrej Štol'c as a man is not devoid of contradictions and flaws, and the ideal professed by this character cannot be considered the ideal of man in Gončarov's understanding. The character of Štol'c embodies only one aspect of a full-fledged personality – the active beginning. The other aspects should be sought in the character of Oblomov.

In order to understand what for the author is an ideal, it is necessary to turn to I.A. Gončarov's travel sketches "Frigate Pallada", written during the voyage around the world in those ten years that separate the first and last parts of "Oblomov", and built on the same technique of comparison and contrasts as in the novel. As the researcher V.A. Nedzveckij notes, in the journey itself Gončarov is interested not so much in the external conditions of the peoples' lives as in the national "ways of life" repeated many times in everyday life and mores (Недзвецкий/Nedzveckij, 1996, pp. 41-59).

"The Frigate Pallada". – A kind of narrative of world life with the bourgeois West and the feudal East opposing as its main characters. The West symbolizes movement, life- bustle, it was based on material, spiritless, soulless, hence alien to true "humanity" (England, the United States). The East, on the other hand, is peace, immobility, isolation, withdrawal, sleep, laziness, apathy (Japan, the Lucky Islands). But not everything in the West and in the East is unambiguous. For example, in the West there is England and Madera Island, and in the East there is Japan and Shanghai of China. In describing the Portuguese island of Madera, the author uses the same persistent images of sleep, stasis, detachment as he does in describing Japan (not coincidentally they are islands, something separate from the rest of the world). Shanghai, on the other hand, is closer to London: there is a bazaar, turmoil, noise, shouting, a departure from nature and peace. Thus, the private in Gončarov's work becomes a universal law.

Let us compare the descriptions of the world around him in Gončarov's travel sketches and his novel. Oblomov's oriental robe and soft shoes are significant details. The motif of universal statics-stagnation, cycle-repeat, patriarchal-idyllic order pervades the sketches of Madera, Japan and Oblomovka. The mythological cyclical nature of time, the symbol of the circle can be traced in the composition of the novel, which is inscribed in the

annual circle; in the architectonics (the last lines of the novel refer to the beginning of the story); in the plot (the end of Pšenicyna's life repeats the beginning of life in Oblomovka); in the repetition of the name and patronymic (Il'ja Il'ič) and in the name of the hero (Obly – round). Graphically, Oblomovka can be depicted as a closed circle, which also brings it closer to the islands of Madera and Japan.

Eastern philosophy (Buddhism) suggests that life is suffering, the cause of suffering is desire, and in order to get rid of suffering, one must get rid of desires and passions by withdrawing from the world into complete peace and silence. Oblomov stays in search of peace and lost paradise all his life.

Oblomov had that talent for kindness that turned him into an active person in relation to other people. "Gončarov's hero is one of the few who is naturally given the gift of awakening love in others and keeping it sacred in his heart. Such is the moral dominant of the image and its philosophical and psychological meaning" (Гејро/Gejro, 1990, p. 14). As paradoxical as it sounds, Oblomov is active without doing anything. His honest and kind soul responded to the best in the people close to him. Next to Oblomov, Olga blossomed. Pshenitsyna only lived those seven years by his side, thanks to him she knew "...why she lived and that she did not live in vain". They remembered Oblomov as a very good person even after his death: "They all share a sympathy, a memory of a dead man's soul pure as crystal". (Гончаров/Gončarov, 1981, p. 514). The rare comparative phrases of Goncharov express the highest type of aesthetic evaluation.

If we build up the imagery and semantic field, with Oblomov at its center, we will see that only Tarantjev calls him a sloth, while the other nominations are as follows: *bland, oddball, simple, spoiled, sybarite, incorrigible, carefree sloth, other, barin, poet, baby, gentleman, philosopher, honest, pure conscience, pure soul, bright, clear, thinking of others, careful, gentle, dove, kind, intelligent, noble, child, savage, humane heart, crystal soul, pearl in the crowd*. Positive connotational coloration predominates.

Oblomov has more Eastern irrationality than Western rationality, and therefore his emotions always prevail over reason, his passions over interests. The Russian man more often follows the "voice of the heart" than the intellect (see Касьянова/Kas'janova, 1992; Чернева/Černeva, 1998).

In Gončarov's portrayal of Oblomov, the dominant detail is the heart. The people around him love him for his heart. Pure in heart, Oblomov expects the same from other people. He avoids insincerity and reaches for simple, open communication, dreams of living in a colony of close friends, with whom "...Everything is to his liking! What is in the eyes, in the words, what is in the heart...". In describing Štol'c, however, the dominant detail is the mind, with which he solves all problems, so he has no problems and no worries at all: "We did not see that he (Štol'c) thought about anything

painfully and painfully; apparently, he was not devoured by pangs of the heart; *he was not sick at heart...*" (Гончаров/Gončarov, 1981, p. 170).

While Štol'c's character is dominated by practicality and faith in oneself, Oblomov's character is dominated by faith in miracles and "avos," as well as the Slavic trait of rooting for everything with one's soul. Štol'c does not rely on chance, on fate, but believes above all in himself. "He was not capable of arming himself with the kind of courage that, with his eyes closed, will leap over the abyss or throw himself against the wall *on the off-chance*. He will measure the abyss or the wall, and if there is no sure means of overcoming, he will step back, no matter what they say about him" (Гончаров/Gončarov, 1981, p. 171). During the last conversation between Oblomov and Štol'c, that very wall and the abyss opens up in front of Štol'c; for him Oblomov is dead. "Now Štol'c changed his face and rolled his astonished, almost senseless eyes around him. The abyss" was suddenly "opened before him," a "stone wall" was erected, and Oblomov seemed to be gone, as if he disappeared from his eyes, collapsed, and he only felt that burning longing, which one feels when rushing excitedly after a separation to see a friend and learns that he has long been gone, that he died" (Гончаров/Gončarov, 1981, p. 507). Whereas for Oblomov Štol'c and Olga will always be beloved and desired no matter what state they are in. "There was one man in his *heart*: he too would not give him peace; he loved the news, the light, science, and all life, but somehow more deeply, more sincerely – and Oblomov, though affectionate with everyone, *loved him sincerely alone, trusted him alone*, perhaps because he grew up, studied and lived together with him. This is Andrej Ivanovič Štol'c" (Гончаров/Gončarov, 1981, p. 41). Oblomov tells Tarantiev that for him Shtoltz is "closer than any kin" (*idem*, p. 51).

Clever, kind Oblomov is in conflict with a soulless and "mechanical" environment, because the main thing in him is conscience, which makes him suffer throughout his life, i.e. "soul ache": "A snake gnaws at me: this is conscience... My conscience kills me... My own conscience was much stricter than a reprimand... Not a single stain of reproach in cold soulless cynicism lay on his conscience... He suffered for his lost manhood and honor, wept for the dirty fall of a woman who was foreign to him..." (Гончаров/Gončarov, 1981, p. 497). "...No yoke weighs down my conscience: it is as pure as glass" (*idem*, p. 190). "In him all feelings curled into one lump – shame" (*idem*, 1981, p. 214). "It's as if someone is persecuting you. – And so persecuted. – Who is it? – Shame..." he whispered (*idem*, p. 217). The main thing in Oblomov is not that he was a serf and therefore died; not only because of "oblomovšina", not only because he did not know how to put on stockings, the hero dies. He died because he was endowed with a suffering conscience, in other words, his conscience; because "...in his soul he had faith in friendship, in love, in human honor, and no matter how many mistakes he made

with people, no matter how many more, his heart suffered, but the foundation of goodness and faith in him has never been shaken ". (Гончаров/Gončarov, 1981, p. 17).

Conscience is a person's ability to exercise moral self-control, independently undertake moral obligations, to demand from himself to fulfill them, and to reflect on the moral side of the actions performed. Conscience is manifested, on the one hand, as rational awareness of the moral content of one's own activity, and on the other hand, as emotional experience in connection with this content. Therefore, conscience is first of all a moral paradigm of responsibility, i.e. internal control by a person of his activity and its results. T. Efremova's definition: "A sense of moral responsibility for your behavior and your actions in front of yourself, people around you and society" (Ефремова/Efremova, 2000).

"The conscience of the Russian man in general does not manifest itself in his inner morality, but in the form of an emotional experience, a 'remorse of conscience.' Therefore, the conscience of the Russian man is more emotional than rational, of the Western man it is more rational than emotional. In the cultural archetype of the Russian man conscience is more a decoration than a component of spiritual intension of practical activity" (Чернева/Černeva, 1998, p. 11). Oblomov suffers, but does nothing to remedy the situation. He promises Olga that he is ready to throw himself into the abyss for her sake. To which Olga remarks: "Yes, in words you punish yourself, *throw yourself into the abyss*, give half your life, but there comes doubt, sleepless night: how tender you become to yourself, careful, caring, how far you see ahead..." (Гончаров/Gončarov, 1981, p. 271). Oblomov is tormented by his conscience that he has not realized himself in life, is not worthy of Olga's love, but small obstacles, such as divorced bridges or constant work and study for the sake of the woman he loves, become a painful burden for him. Therefore, Oblomov's conscience is more a path to remorse and torment than to concrete practical action.

The word "abyss" appears frequently in the novel. It has two meanings: the first is Oblomov's constant feeling that he is falling into an abyss; and the second is that Oblomov and society are separated by an abyss (he is on one side — they are on the other). The dismantled bridge, pushing back the meeting between Oblomov and Olga, symbolizes the fact that "there also lies an abyss between reality and the ideal, over which a bridge has not yet been found, and will hardly ever be built" (Гончаров/Gončarov, 1980, p. 253). Gončarov tried to build this bridge. He saw the achievement of harmony in the organic union of opposites: fantasy/reality, movement/peace, national/worldly. This is evidenced by Gončarov's portrayal in The Pallada Frigate. Siberia, a prototype of the future Russia, where pioneers are simultaneously dreamers and practitioners, where the norm is represented by the

unity of all peoples: patriarchal and civilized, rational and emotional, practical and contemplative, northern and southern, western and eastern, ancient and young (Недзвецкий/Nedzveckij, 1996, pp. 41-59). It is the same in the novel *Oblomov*. Pšenicyna says about Oblomov's son that "he looks like the dead man", it means that he realizes all the meanings associated with the word "peace" and repeats his father, but he is brought up by Štol'c, hence, in the future the new Oblomov is a poet and a practical man, hence the name and middle name Andrej Il'ič, made of the names (ideas) of his father and educator.

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