

ФИЛОСОФСКО-ЭСТЕТИЧЕСКИЙ ДИАЛОГ: Ю.И. АЙХЕНВАЛЬД И П.М. БИЦИЛЛИ¹

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Аннотация: В статье проводится сопоставление философско-эстетических воззрений на русскую литературу и язык двух видных представителей русского зарубежья — критика Ю.И. Айхенвальда (1872–1928) и медиевиста, интерпретатора русской классики П.М. Бицилли (1879–1953). Осмысливается весь выявленный на сегодняшний день фактический материал, подтверждающий взаимный интерес Ю.И. Айхенвальда и П.М. Бицилли друг к другу, в том числе документы из личного фонда П.М. Бицилли в ИРЛИ (Пушкинский Дом) РАН. Ставится вопрос о воздействии айхенвальдовского имманентного метода анализа литературного текста на эстетико-индивидуализирующий метод П.М. Бицилли, о подходах обоих авторов к решению проблемы морфологии русской культуры и философии нации, о связи пушкинской темы в их творчестве с размышлениями о судьбе послереволюционной России и русского языка, артикулированных в ходе обсуждения книги С. и А. Волконских «В защиту русского языка» (1928). В Приложении републикуются рецензия Ю.И. Айхенвальда на «Этюды о русской поэзии» П.М. Бицилли в берлинской газете «Руль» (1926) и некролог Ю.И. Айхенвальду, опубликованный П.М. Бицилли в софийской газете «Голос» (1929).

Ключевые слова: Ю.И. Айхенвальд, П.М. Бицилли, русская литература, язык, эстетика, пушкинская традиция, имманентный метод, философия нации, морфология культуры.

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Research Article



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PHILOSOPHICAL AND AESTHETIC DIALOGUE: YULY AYKHENVALD AND PIOTR BITSILLI

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Abstract: The article compares for the first time the philosophical and aesthetic views on Russian literature and language of two prominent figures of Russian abroad — the critic Yuly Aykhenvald (1872–1928) and the medievalist, interpreter of Russian classical literature Piotr Bitsilli (1879–1953). The author takes into account all facts supported by various materials presently identified, confirming the mutual interest of Aykhenvald and Bitsilli, including documents from Piotr Bitsilli collection at the Institute of Russian literature (Pushkin House) of the Russian Academy of Sciences. Among the issues raised are the impact which Aykhenvald's immanent method of analyzing a literary text had on Bitsilli's aesthetically individualizing method, the approaches of both authors

to solving the morphology of Russian culture and philosophy of the nation, the connection of the Pushkin theme with thoughts about the destiny of post-revolutionary Russia and Russian language in their works, which they articulated during the discussion of Sergei and Aleksandr Volkonskii's book *In defense of the Russian language*. Aykhenvald's review for the Berlin newspaper *Rul'* on Bitsilli's *Studies on Russian Poetry* (1926), obituary of Aykhenvald, which was published by Bitsilli in the Sofia newspaper *Golos* (1929) are republished in the appendix to the article.

Keywords: Yuly I. Aykhenvald, Piotr M. Bitsilli, Russian literature, language, aesthetics, Pushkin tradition, immanent method, philosophy of the nation, morphology of culture.

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The names of Yuly Isaevich Aykhenvald (1872–1928), a famous literary critic of the first quarter of the 20th century, and his younger contemporary, the medievalist and subtle interpreter of Russian classics, Piotr Mikhailovich Bitsilli (1879–1953), have never appeared side by side in scholarly studies. Indeed, there is little factual evidence here. Although both were from Odessa and graduated from the same Novorossiisk University, they did not know each other personally, either before or after emigration, being quite far apart: Aykhenvald in Berlin, Bitsilli in Sofia. Nevertheless, a peculiar 'dialogue' between them is evident, although it is not a traditional conversation, or polemics, between two

equal participants, but rather a certain looking back of the younger interlocutor, Bitsilli, at the elder one, Aykhenvald, which persisted even after the sudden death of Yuly Isaevich in December 1928. In this article we would like to highlight the key themes of this largely reconstructed 'dialogue' in order to answer the questions: what makes Bitsilli look more closely at Aykhenvald's texts, and what are their philosophical and aesthetic convergences?

Speaking of Bitsilli's "aesthetic-individualizing method", it makes sense to take into account Aykhenvald's judgements, which could have been one of the impulses for Bitsilli to build his own system of comprehension of Russian literature and culture. Here, as it seems, we must first of all turn to the problem of method, or approach to the literary text analysis. The era of passionate struggle between different schools of literary studies — historical and cultural, psychological, formalist — was not yet outdated. Therefore, for Bitsilli who believed that "culture is the creative self-disclosure of the personality outside" [18, p. 148], with his "aesthetic-individualizing" approach to the text, when the focus of attention is "not the structure 'to investigate' but the individuality with its 'inexplicable', 'inexpressible' constant" [6, p. 113], Aykhenvald's method of immanent criticism is extremely appealing, convinced that principled impressionism requires literary history to be based on individual "intuitions", on the "creative individuality" itself [12, p. VI] of the writer. It is not without reason that both support their argumentation with an appeal to the monadology of G.W. Leibniz². When one reads in Bitsilli's 1942 paper *Chekhov's Creativity. An Experience of Stylistic Analysis* that

...man-monad, individuum, indivisible whole, a kind of closed system in which all elements are in a state of co-subordination, interdependence, being bound by gravitation towards a common centre [23, p. 330],

one inevitably recalls a fragment from Aykhenvald's 1911 Preface to *Silhouettes of Russian Writers*:

...the more one delves into the closed worlds of writers, into these indeed living monads, the clearer it becomes that they are not only literati,

² A paper by M.Ia. Vaiskopf P.M. Bitsilli — Gogol scholar delivered in the IWL RAS in November 2019 at the conference *Humanities of the Russian Abroad: towards the 140th Anniversary of P.M. Bitsilli's Birth* draws attention to the role of G.W. Leibniz's *Monadology*. The author spoke about Bitsilli's conscious use of the word "monad" in reflections on Dostoevskii or on Nabokov's *Invitation to a Beheading* (see M.Ia. Vaiskopf's article in present edition).

but also literature; that there are known problems, plots and motifs which unite them into one whole [12, p. XXVI].

Bitsilli, as it was pointed out by M.A. Vasilieva, believed that it was necessary to move from the “philosophy of history” to the “philosophy of culture”, because

it is in the philosophy of culture that the aesthetic-individualising synthesis becomes possible, the needed intuitive “encompassing of the universe” [23, p. 14].

Modern Aykhenvald scholars, speaking of his immanent method, are strikingly unanimous in ignoring the fact that Aykhenvald, being a professional philosopher by education, had denied cultural and historical, sociological, psychological, biographical or formalistic methods by the early 1910s, offering his own way of overcoming the crisis in literary studies, a way that is very close to the “morphology of culture” and, at the same time, to its philosophy. In his Preface to *Silhouettes of Russian Writers*, published in 1911, he speaks of the philosophical problem of “nature and culture”, which, from his point of view, “is the centre of those concentrations in the form of which Russian fiction could be schematized”. Hence his desire not only to identify the individual style of each writer, to give it as if from within, but also to determine the centrifugal and centripetal in the Russian literature development, the thing he calls “lines of spiritual continuities”, general “radii”, outlining such antitheses, categories, “concentrations” (‘concepts’, as we would probably say nowadays) as “sedentariness” and “wandering”, “nature” and “culture”, “village” and “city”, “humility” and “predation”. The originality and productivity of this approach, which Aykhenvald was the first among the Russian literature researchers to put forward, has unfortunately remained misunderstood or unnoticed.

It is probably the commonality of philosophical and aesthetic principles that explains the attention of Aykhenvald and Bitsilli to the same specific phenomena of the literary process.

It is only natural that Bitsilli directly refers to Aykhenvald’s observations on Chekhov’s style in his *Chekhov’s Works. An Essay of Stylistic Analysis* — on Chekhov’s motifs of “departure” and “road” [23, p. 311] from the essay *Chekhov*, published in 1906 in the *In Memory of Chekhov* collection and

included in Aykhenvald's book *Silhouettes of Russian Writers*, in a revised form. For Aykhenvald, Chekhov's work is a hope, a pledge, a prophecy of the discovery of unity,

that "single" Sphere, that "harmonic" ring in which the super-personal non-thinking nature and the unquenchable consciousness of the individual human personality would find their fusion, <...> the implementation of that even higher and more ideal roundness in which nature and culture, element and word, Pan and Logos unite [12, p. L].

A reference to Aykhenvald's opinion is also found in Bitsilli's 1932 review of Boris Zaitsev's book *The Life of Turgenev*. The critic's judgement about Turgenev's style, his lack of "true humour" was in demand here [23, p. 434]. Bitsilli's archive in the Pushkin House (RO IRLI (Manuscript department of Pushkinskii Dom), f. 804) contains a small book published by Aykhenvald in Berlin in 1925 *Two Wives: Tolstaia and Dostoevskiaia* [4, p. 142], which probably became known to Bitsilli while he was working on his article *The Problem of Life and Death in Tolstoi's Works*, published in 1928 in the Parisian journal *Sovremennye Zapiski*. It would be interesting to compare the views of Aykhenvald and Bitsilli on Derzhavin, or Khodasevich [11; 14; 16; 17; 26], or Bunin [9; 22], but we shall only speak about Pushkin's works that were of special significance to both of them.

In Aykhenvald's philosophical and aesthetic system Pushkin holds a key position (see: [5]). For him, Pushkin is a true "poetic theodicy" [13, p. 41], an eternal "irreplaceable companion" who "guides us through life", "whether we notice it, whether we are aware of it or not", as he will write in 1924 in the Riga newspaper *Segodnya* in the article *To the Great Memory: (To the 125th Anniversary of Pushkin's Birth)* [15].

Thus, it was no coincidence that Aykhenvald would pay attention to Bitsilli's book *Etudes on Russian Poetry* (1926) where almost all sections (*The Evolution of Russian Verse; Pushkin's Poetry; Lermontov's Place in the History of Russian Poetry; On the Nature of Russian Verse; The Dream and Other Things in Pushkin's Dictionary; The Artistic Conception of the Bronze Horseman*) were directly or indirectly related to Pushkin. Aykhenvald would refer to it in the same year, 1926, in the Berlin newspaper *Rul'* [8]³.

³ Herein forth summaries of this review are given without specific references to the text. During the preparation of the article's translation for publication, the complete edition of Aykhenvald's articles in the newspaper "Rul'" was released: [27].

Bitsilli's book attracted Aykhenvald with its many "subtle remarks, which testify to how well the author can, as Nietzsche put it, 'read slowly'", and how capable he is of evoking in his readers "general thoughts about the nature of creativity, especially poetry". Aykhenvald believes that Bitsilli has a rare gift — he is "an unusually sensitive listener of poems, diving deeply into its sound waves, and like a skillful diver, bringing out from there new pearls, new shades of meaning". Aykhenvald, like another reviewer of the *Etudes on Russian Poetry* — Georgii Adamovich, is impressed by the fact that Bitsilli, seeing rhythm as the most essential feature of poetry, is not a representative of the formal method that became fashionable these years, that "he does not muffle poetry with poetics", that his analysis "thus helping the truth" "takes a turn towards content, while psychology and philosophy desirably triumph over poetics, taken as such". "Always lively, happily alien to one-sidedness, not substituting, as it often happens, formalism for pedantry, perhaps consciously compromising the straightforwardness of methodological restraint for the sake of the complexity of art itself...", Aykhenvald is also impressed by Bitsilli's attention to the content of the poetic word, to the language itself, understanding that "lack of respect for the inner value of the word" ruins poetry and its inner rhythm, that poetry needs a "cumulative word" that synthesizes the semantic and the sonic (rhythmic) into one. "And, therefore, the Logos-word, the word as the incorporeal vessel of reason and feeling, never refuses to be a wise guide to our analyst". Aykhenvald, having studied philosophy for many years, sympathizes with Bitsilli's assertion that "'true poetry is always philosophical' and always psychological", that "it is not the parts, not the elements, but only the whole that constitutes the phenomenon of art, and that each such organic phenomenon is individual and, therefore, limited in a certain sense".

While paying tribute to the breadth of Bitsilli's views, to his "profound aesthetic impressionism", Aykhenvald at the same time seems to criticise the researcher for the fact that some of his judgements about poetry "can only support the scepticism of those who doubt the fruitfulness of a scientific analysis of poetry at all" — for example, Bitsilli's idea that "poetic individuality" can never be described by any scientific analysis, that any attempts to "express in concepts the peculiarities of rhythm" are futile. If "poetic individuality" is basic to poetry, "and if science does not grasp it, it grasps nothing", Aykhenvald wrote. Similarly, if it is not scientific analysis that is needed to understand rhythm, but feeling, if rhythm "cannot be expressed in concepts, then it is worth approaching it with a scalpel of research that is obviously unsuitable", "for where feeling begins, science

ends". But it is not Aykhenvald, whom traditionalist literary critics have always blamed for subjectivity, excessive aestheticism, and the rejection of literary history as a science, but someone else who would seriously criticize Bitsilli for his apologia of "the beauty of poetry", for his belief that "beauty is 'something directly convincing, axiomatic, and therefore not subject to proof, but only to observation'". Although Aykhenvald seems to criticize Bitsilli for the weakness of his "argumentation in favour of beauty", he rather criticizes the weakness of the argumentation (if "beauty is unprovable, beauty is on the other side of all argumentation — but then all scientific studies on poetry are doomed to failure") rather than the apologia of beauty itself. Aykhenvald rhetorically asks: if the

the last and highest, and in fact the only instance to which aesthetics can appeal is the immediate feeling, the elusive intuition, the inexplicable impression — and, therefore, the trampled rights of free impressionism are returned...

It is unlikely that Aykhenvald is really saddened that "after Prof. Bitsilli's masterly research, not only the mystery of the word, but also the mystery of sound, remains undiscovered". The fact is that he himself, as a supporter of that very "free impressionism", is absolutely convinced that "no matter how cleverly one decomposes the instrumentation of verse into its separate parts and no matter how further one studies the poet's vocabulary and the nature of his epithets", one can never uncover the mystery of the word; on the contrary, one can only kill it by doing so. Art, according to Aykhenvald, presupposes the reader's co-feeling, co-creation, not deadening analyticism. Bitsilli, from Aykhenvald's point of view, differs from such formalist-analysts as Salieri in that he has "the insight of analysis <...> has nothing destructive in itself and is combined with a sense of artistic measure and artistic tact, and here the mind does not interfere with the ear, just as the ear does not interfere with the mind". It is not without reason that the critic himself concludes his review with words of approval, emphasizing that, despite all the objections, Bitsilli's book is

so informative and fresh, so full of witty observations, significant ideas of original interpretation of some samples of poetic creativity, that in our aesthetic criticism it is an undeniably valuable contribution.

Aykhenvald's review was cut out by Bitsilli and preserved in his collection in the Pushkin House [4, p. 161]. The review helped to attract

Bitsilli to more active co-operation with the editors of the Parisian journal *Sovremennye Zapiski*. Aykhenvald's articles and reviews were closely monitored in the editorial office of *Sovremennye Zapiski*, especially since he regularly responded to the next issues, but he was not allowed into the journal itself, despite the efforts of F.A. Stepun, who was a friend of Aykhenvald. Having read Aykhenvald's praise of Bitsilli, I.I. Fondaminskii immediately decided that Bitsilli's articles on literary themes should be included in *Sovremennye Zapiski* [28, p. 293], and in the same year Bitsilli's publication *Pushkin's Testament* appeared in the journal (1926. Book 29. P. 467–473).

The Pushkin theme in Aykhenvald's mind, to a much greater extent than in Bitsilli's, is connected with reflections on the fate of post-revolutionary Russia and the fate of the Russian language itself. In the article *To the Great Memory: (To the 125th anniversary of Pushkin's birth)* the critic mentioned above writes about the "too non-Pushkin" time, that "the present Russia remained without Pushkin, without his spirit" [15]. However, as Aykhenvald believed, it was impossible to abandon Pushkin's "unceasing name": both because "it was under Pushkin's star" that "Russian education moved on", and because it was Pushkin's speech that "fertilized our speech" [15], the speech of every Russian.

The question of the Russian language and its preservation was one of the most acute for Russian emigrants. A vivid example of this is the discussion concerning the article of the famous theatre figure Prince S.M. Volkonskii *On the Russian language* (1923), and then the book *In defence of the Russian language* published by him in 1928, together with his brother Alexander [29]. Bitsilli took a very active part in this discussion. In the late 1920s and early 1930s his articles and notes appeared one after another — first publicistic, historiosophic, then purely scientific ones: *In Defence of the Russian Language* (1927), *Issues of Russian Linguistic Culture* (1928), *On Spoiling the Russian Language* (1929), *In Defence of Barbarisms in the Russian Language* (1929), *Nation and Language* (1929), *Language and Nationality (On Formation of the Russian Literary Language)* (1930; published in 1932), etc.⁴

G.V. Adamovich, who became involved in Bitsilli's polemic with Prince S.M. Volkonskii, writes quite correctly that "the issue of language is, of course, the one of the spiritual life of the nation" (cited in [18, p. 661]). However, he himself, trying for the sake of building a new language of a new living culture, to combine and reconcile all positions, calls for a

⁴ Most of the articles are included in P.M. Bitsilli's volume "Selected Writings on Philology" [18].

third way — without Bitsilli's 'indifference' to linguistic framework/conditions, without Volkonskii's 'conservative intransigence', and at the same time without the unconditional authority of classical authorities, including Pushkin.

Bicilli's position in the language dispute was analyzed in the commentaries to the volume of his *Selected Works on Philology* published back in 1996, in the monographs of I.V. Annenkova [1; 2], and in Michela Venditti's report *P.M. Bicilli and the disputes about the Russian language in emigration* in IMLI RAS in November 2019 at the conference *Humanitarian Science of the Russian Abroad: Towards the 140th Anniversary of the Birth of P.M. Bitsilli* initiated by O.A. Korostev, M.A. Vasilieva and the author of these lines⁵. However, the researchers missed the fact that there was another participant in the conversation about language — Aykhenvald. It is no coincidence that the Bitsilli collection in the Pushkin House contains a newspaper clipping with his article *Tongue-tied Russia* from the newspaper *Rul'* of 1 August 1928 (see: [4, p. 161]) in which Aykhenvald dwelt on A.M. Selischev's book *The Language of the Revolutionary Era* (1926; 2nd ed. — 1928), abundantly quoting the examples of post-revolutionary 'novozyaz' (Newspeak), confirming that as "the Russian cause has gone mad", so "the Russian word has gone mad" too [7].

In the article *Tongue-tied Russia* he only mentioned the book by the Volkonskii brothers. He specifically addressed it a week later, on August 8, 1928, on the pages of the same *Rul'*. It seems that this Aykhenvaldian text, although absent from the Bitsilli collection of the Pushkin House, was certainly read and taken into account by the scholar.

"...The Volkonskii's 'clever and witty book', as Aykhenvald admitted, pleased him 'even when he did not quite agree with it' [10]⁶. Unlike the Volkonskii's, Aykhenvald was convinced that one cannot "identify language with spelling, i.e., music with musical notation, the unconditional with the conditional". For confirmation he appealed to Pushkin:

Pushkin said that orthography is "the heraldry of language"; heraldry, however, is something great, valuable, beautiful, but still external. A language remains a nobleman, though its coat of arms changes. Its nobility does not suffer from the fact that over the centuries its inscriptions are not frozen in immobility. It's not the letter, but the spirit. It's about the word.

⁵ See M. Venditti's article in this edition.

⁶ Further summaries of this review are given without specific references to the text.

However, even while arguing, Aykhenvald solidarized with the authors in the struggle against the “depersonalization of the Russian people”, against violating the language of the “Russia-hater in the Kremlin”, and for the creation of a new volunteer army — the “army of the word”. For him, “to defend the purity of the Russian language means also to defend the purity of Russian thinking”: “...for the language, it is the people”. That is why he considers the Volkonskii’s book “highly important and inspiring”, emphasizing that the “linguistic patriotism” of the authors is far from the “bureaucratic and ossified patriotism”, that they see the ‘revolutionary’ and ‘protective’ beginnings inherent in the language itself, their dialectical interaction, but remember the importance of holding on to the ‘protective’ beginning not only in language, but also in life itself.

Analysing Bitsilli’s polemic with the Volkonskii’s, M. Venditti considered the main distinguishing point to be that Volkonsky’s position in the dispute about language was “purely political”, whereas Bitsilli’s one was “scientific”. However, it seems impossible to discount the fact that Bitsilli became involved in this dispute at the time of his fascination with Eurasianism and that the Eurasian term ‘place-development’ appears among the examples he gives. It is natural that Bitsilli’s reflections on language arise in parallel with his reflections on people and nation: he is not only concerned with the dispute with Volkonskii on a specific issue, this dispute is closely connected with his linguocultural and sociolinguistic views in general⁷.

As for the evaluation of the Volkonskii brothers’ book, Bitsilli and Aykhenvald’s positions clearly diverge: Bitsilli emphasizes the ‘revolutionary’, ever-renewing beginning, accepting and assimilating everything new; Aykhenvald, on the contrary, stresses the protective, conserving one. It was not for nothing that S.L. Frank, who was a friend of Aykhenvald, wrote a very emotional obituary in the newspaper *Rul’*, published immediately after the critic’s death, calling the deceased a “knight of the Holy Spirit”, a defender of the Russian cause:

He — being a Jew and a member of the liberal intelligentsia — came from love for Pushkin and for the spiritual culture of the old imperial, Petrine Russia <...> to strictly conservative convictions [25].

And somewhat differently the same thought was expressed a month later on the pages of the Parisian magazine *Put’*: Aykhenvald was one of

⁷ Bitsilli’s views on the development of the Russian literary language are covered in two monographs by I.V. Annenkova [1; 2].

the most honourable representatives of “the Russian cause struggling for spiritual values, for the spiritual beginnings of life” [24, p. 126].

It is noteworthy that despite the divergence with Aykhenvald in the dispute about language, Bitsilli similarly assessed Aykhenvald’s role in Russian culture in an obituary printed in January 1929 in the Sofia newspaper *Golos* [21]⁸.

It would be too simplistic to consider the writing of the obituary as a reciprocal gesture of gratitude for the positive review of *Etudes on Russian Poetry*. But while the authors of other obituaries — B. Zaitsev, G. Landau, I. Matussevich, V. Nabokov, S. Frank, V. Khodasevich, I. Shmelev — knew Aykhenvald personally, Bitsilli is an obvious exception in this sense. Reading their texts, Bitsilli observes “a rare unanimity”, confirming, in his view, that the late critic “was undoubtedly what they characterize him as”. Bitsilli draws particular attention to the fact that Aykhenvald is spoken of as “a man of high moral qualities, exceptional kindness, sensitivity, sincerity and nobility”, but “not as a writer”. This, according to Bitsilli, is because Aykhenvald is “treated in his own way”, which means a special interest in the author’s “individual mental character”. Bitsilli emphasizes that while Aykhenvald was “a great connoisseur of the artistic word”, he was alien to the desire to see a word as a “self-contained value”, what Bitsilli calls a spiritual ‘Alexandrianism’, that the critic always wanted to find a more meaningful “beauty of the soul” “behind formal beauty”. Bitsilli refers to the opinion of one of the obituaries (unfortunately, I have not yet been able to establish whose it was), who claimed that Aykhenvald “was not a critic at all: rather a moralist <...> in the sense of a researcher of the human soul”. However, this soul had to be one that carried thought through the word, this “highest and most perfect expression of the life of the spirit”. According to Bitsilli, Aykhenvald equated culture and literature. It is interesting to note that Bitsilli, apparently quite deliberately, ignores everything that Aykhenvald wrote about Western European literature: he creates the image of a critic whose field of enquiry “was always one and the only Russian literature”, and therefore Russian culture. Bitsilli is unlikely to have been unaware of Aykhenvald’s articles on Western authors, but it was crucial for him to paint the image of a foreigner, a Jew, a son of a rabbi, for whom Russian culture turns out to be a culture of “the greatest value and absolute significance”. Bitsilli emphasises that Aykhenvald in this sense was “in his tastes, in his convictions, in his whole state of mind as Russian as it is possible to be”. Bitsilli argues, almost defiantly, that Aykhenvald was so “intimately connected”

⁸ Hereafter, the obituary is summarised without special references to the text.

with Russian culture that to speak of Russian culture is “to continue to speak of him”, Aykhenvald. For Bitsilli it is undeniable that although “the Russian cultural element <...> is permeated with the spirit of Orthodoxy”, it is “possible to be Russian <...> without being born into it”, since “all culture” at a certain point in its development “outgrows the confessional framework”⁹. That is why Bitsilli includes Aykhenvald in a list of Jews — A.L. Volynskii, S.A. Vengerov, A.G. Gornfeld, M.O. Gershenzon — those “few admirers and interpreters of Russian culture”, for whom Russian culture was an independent real “spiritual magnitude” and whom Bitsilli calls the “knights of Russian literature”. According to Bitsilli, this very fact testifies “to the mighty attractive and assimilating power of Russian culture and the Russian ‘element’”. That is why Aykhenvald, “a man not indifferent to political questions”, according to Bitsilli, in emigration wrote only about Russian literature — “for him it was somehow ‘first’, more essential, in a sense ‘more real’ than anything else”. Aykhenvald’s fate, his great “faith in the soul of Russia” turns out, in Bitsilli’s view, to be a kind of example and moral lesson for all Russians: “This is the meaning and significance of his life for us, his posthumous testament, a lesson and a high example”.

Everything Bitsilli said about Aykhenvald seems to make sense to consider taking into account that set of articles on the “philosophy of the nation”¹⁰, which he printed in 1928–1930 in *Sovremennye Zapiski: Nation and People* (1928. Book 37. P. 342–355), *Nation and State* (1929. Book 38. P. 380–400), *Nation and Language* (1929. Book 40. P. 403–426), and *Evolution of Nation and Revolution* (1930. Book 42. P. 374–384). In the articles *Nation and People* and *Nation and Language* the nation, in contrast to ethnographic people, is understood as a “cultural union” [19, p. 403], as that part of the people for whom “culture” is “a realized ideal”, “a stimulus of personal activity, a source of creative energy” [20, p. 353]. In his “philosophy of the nation” Bitsilli does not limit himself to “historical morphology” [20, p. 353]. It is not without reason that in the article *Nation and Language* he speaks of the “morphology of culture” addressed to the sphere of language as meeting the requirements of “the greatest generality and the greatest identity” [19, p. 404]. At the same time, for

⁹ Cf. Bitsilli’s earlier judgement: “If national culture and national religion are one and the same thing, then not only Tiutchev, but also Turgenev, Pushkin, Tolstoi, and in fact Russian culture itself would have to be expunged from the history of Russian culture” [20, p. 350].

¹⁰ In a letter to V.V. Rudnev, the editor of *Sovremennye Zapiski*, dated January 28, 1930, Bitsilli retroactively recorded that he had conceived and was implementing (with the approval of the editors) a set of articles on the “philosophy of the nation” (see: [3, p. 114]).

Bitsilli, who, like Aykhenvald, had Jewish roots [3, p. 19], Aykhenvald's obituary becomes another incentive to speak of a unified Russian culture and of a nation irreducible to nationality, just as the great Ocean of language was irreducible for him to the language of different peoples.

Thus, as we see, the service of the Word and Culture not only gave rise to disputes and discussions, but also abolished various political, confessional, national, and scientific partitions. The convergence of philosophical and aesthetic positions created emotional and worldview empathy between Russian emigrants separated by spatial boundaries, building individual statements, judgments and publications into a fruitful intellectual dialogue about the morphology of Russian culture and the individual uniqueness of its representatives.

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ПРИЛОЖЕНИЕ

Ю.И. Айхенвальд

Литературные заметки

Книжка проф. Бицилли «Этюды о русской поэзии» интересна не только тем, что в ней разбросано много тонких замечаний, свидетельствующих, как хорошо умеет автор, по выражению Ницше, «медленно читать», но и тем, что она вольно и невольно пробуждает в своих читателях общие мысли о природе творчества, особенно поэзии.

К уразумению последней, ее сущности, П. Бицилли подходит путем изучения прежде всего ритма. Поэзия для него это — ритм. Других существенных признаков в ней он не находит. Ариосто он славит за его музыкальность, за то, что им можно наслаждаться, и не понимая ни единого слова по-итальянски. И, например, в стихотворении Пушкина «Я вас любил; любовь еще быть может...» для него «единственное, что действует на душу, это — неподражаемый, изумительный по богатству и тонкостям оттенков ритм». Из ритма рождается содержание.

И надо сказать, что наш исследователь в самом деле необыкновенно чутко слышит стихотворение, глубоко погружается в его звуковые волны и, как искусный водолаз, выносит оттуда новые жемчужины, новые оттенки смысла. При этом было бы несправедливо считать проф. Бицилли безусловным сторонником формального метода, который нашел бы теперь в России столько усердных последователей: нет, в «Этюдах о русской поэзии» то и дело с ущербом для внешней последовательности, но зато с выигрышем для истины, линия анализа сворачивает в сторону содержания, и над поэтикой как таковой желанно торжествует психология и философия. Всегда живой, счастливо чуждый односторонности, не подменяя, как это нередко бывает, формализма педантизмом, быть может — сознательно поступаясь прямой выдержанностью методологии ради сложности самого искусства, почтенный автор не только своих глаз не закрывает перед неудобными для его метода фактами, но и открывает на них глаза чужие, если они в этом нуждаются. Ценно то, что поэтикой он не заглушает поэзии. И потому он обращает свое и наше внимание на то, с какой особой осторожностью и бережливостью относятся русский язык и русская поэзия к содержанию слов и как мстит за себя, губя ритм, «отсутствие уважения ко внутренней ценности слова». И потому он, не боясь некоторого противоречия с самим собою, исповедует, что «слово, взятое в отвлечении от его смысла, утрачивает свою роль фактора поэзии», и что поэзия нуждается во всем, в совокупном слове, во «всем богатстве его содержания, и смыслового, и звукового». И потому

слово, как Логос, слово, как бесплотный сосуд разума и чувства, никогда не отказывает нашему аналитику в своем мудром путеводительстве. Проф. Бицилли слишком знает, что «истинная поэзия всегда философична» и всегда психологична. Он знает и то, что не складывается стихотворение из стихов, что не части, не элементы, а только целое представляет собою явление искусства и что каждое такое органическое явление *индивидуально* и, значит, в известном смысле ограничено.

Но как раз в силу этой широты своего воззрения и понимания, как раз в силу своей углубленной эстетической впечатлительности, П. Бицилли не однажды вынуждается ронять такие фразы, которые могут лишь поддерживать скептицизм тех, кто вообще сомневается в плодотворности научного разбора поэзии. Так, он высказывается за то, что только в известной степени поэтическая индивидуальность поддается научному анализу (стр. 149), — а ведь поэтическая индивидуальность, это в поэзии — единое на потребу, и если наука не улавливает ее, то она не улавливает ничего. Так, потратив столько ума и умения на анализ ритма, он в конце концов сочувствует Гундольфу¹, отказывающемуся от попытки выразить в понятиях особенности ритмики Гёте, и заявляет: ритм надо почувствовать (стр. 247), — а ведь где начинается чувство, там кончается наука, и если ритма нельзя понять, нельзя выразить в понятиях, то стоит ли и приближаться к нему с заведомо негодным скальпелем исследования? Так, «областью, посторонней науке» (стр. 271), он провозглашает самое главное — те «звуки небес», которые раздаются в стихах Лермонтова, и находит, что в красоте есть «нечто непосредственно убедительное, аксиоматическое и потому подлежащее не доказыванию, а только констатированию»; да, красота недоказуема, красота — по ту сторону всякой аргументации, — но тогда все научные этюды о поэзии обрекаются на неудачу. И как слаба аргументация в пользу красоты, можно видеть хотя бы из следующего аргумента, приводимого самим г. Бицилли: допустить одну особенность в строфическом построении «Евгения Онегина» значило бы признать недостаток «Онегина» как художественного целого, «между тем как мы непосредственно чувствуем, что это произведение прекрасно и безупречно» (стр. 185), — выходит, таким образом, что последняя и высшая, а в сущности, и единственная инстанция, в которую может обращаться эстетика, это — непосредственное чувство, неуловимая интуиция, необъяснимое впечатление, — и, следовательно, возвращаются попранные было права вольному импрессионизму...

Итак, и после мастерского изыскания проф. Бицилли не разоблаченной остается не только тайна слова, но и тайна звука. И сколько бы ни перечислять гласные и согласные звуки в том или другом стихотворении, как бы остроумно ни разлагали инструментовку стиха на ее отдельные части и как бы далее ни изучались словарь поэта и природа его эпитетов, все равно —

никаких существенных результатов здесь не достигнешь. Тем, что Сальери музыку разъял, как труп, и алгеброй поверил гармонию, он на высоту Моцарта не поднялся, он и ключа к музыке не нашел. Он только умертвил звуки, вынул сердцевину из их живого тростника. Об искусстве лучше не говорить и к нему не прикасаться. Искусство — прекрасная мимоза, трепетное «не тронь меня», и больше всего радо оно тем, кто, не мудрствуя лукаво, просто отдается ему в его пленительную власть. Правда, следует оговориться, что оно радо и своим ценителям типа П. Бицилли, потому что в этом типе пронизательность анализа, как мы уже и отметили, не имеет в себе ничего разрушительного и соединяется с чувством художественной меры и художественного такта, и ум здесь не мешает слуху, как слух не мешает уму. От звука наш тонкий автор смысла не отрывает. И хотя отдельные соображения г. Бицилли спорны (например, только ли Пушкину свойственна «многопланность», многосмысленность, способность своими произведениями открывать перед нами все новые и новые перспективы образов, мыслей и настроений? разве это не свойство каждого поэтического творения, неисчерпаемой сокровищницы символов и намеков, которые развивает дальше, в бесконечность ведет уже сам читатель, этот сотрудник писателя, непрменный участник его творческого процесса?.. или как трудно согласиться с утверждением автора, будто последняя строфа «Анчара» «выделяется своим каким-то намеренно ребяческим тоном, напоминающим тон детских сказок»). Хотя, повторяем, не все приемлемо в книжке проф. Бицилли, но в общем она так содержательна и свежа, так полна остроумных наблюдений, значительных идей оригинального истолкования некоторых образцов поэтического творчества, что в нашу эстетическую критику входит она неоспоримо ценным вкладом.

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¹ Фридрих Гундольф (псевд., наст. имя Фридрих Леопольд Гундельфингер; 1880–1931) — немецкий поэт, литературовед, автор монументального труда «Гёте».

П. Бицилли

Памяти Юлия Исаевича Айхенвальда

Все, откликнувшиеся на трагическую кончину Ю.И. Айхенвальда, сошлись в его оценке с редким единодушием. Это доказывает, что он несомненно был таков, как его характеризуют: человек высоких нравственных

качеств, исключительной доброты, чуткости, искренности и благородства. Замечательно, что в некрологах ему говорится преимущественно о нем, как о человеке — не как о писателе. И этим ему воздается должное. К нему применяется его собственный подход к тем, о которых писал он сам. В писателях, «Силуэты» которых он набрасывал, его интересовал прежде всего индивидуальный душевный облик каждого. За «литературой» он искал «человека». Большой знаток художественного слова и большой его ценитель, он, однако, не имел в себе ничего «александрийского»: «слово» было для него отнюдь не самодовлеющей ценностью, и за формальной красотой он старался угадать и показать красоту душевную. В сущности, как верно заметил один из писавших об Айхенвальде, он совсем не был *критиком*, скорее *моралистом*, не в смысле «учителя морали», а в смысле исследователя человеческой души. Но интерес его был обращен далеко не на всякую душу. Высочайшим и совершеннейшим выражением жизни духа была для него мысль, запечатленная в слове. *Культура* сводилась для него к *литературе*, и то, что полем его исследований была всегда и единственно *русская литература*, свидетельствует уже тем самым о том, чем была для него *русская культура*: культурой по преимуществу, культурой величайшей ценности и абсолютно-го значения. Еврей по происхождению, сын одесского раввина, Айхенвальд был по вкусам, по убеждениям, по всему своему душевному складу *русским* в такой степени, в какой это вообще возможно. Здесь есть нечто, на чем следует остановиться. Русская культура, как некоторая духовная величина, как некоторый реальный предмет, мало кому известна и мало кому понятна. Можно назвать лишь немного людей, которые задумывались и задумываются над общим смыслом этой реальности, для которых русская культура является такой *самостоятельной* реальностью, существующей независимо от различных обнаруживающихся в ней «направлений», — тех деревьев, за которыми обычно не видят леса. И вот и надо отметить, что в числе этих немногих поклонников и истолкователей русской культуры — поскольку она выражена в литературе, в числе этих верных рыцарей русской литературы, видное место занимают именно евреи. Чтобы говорить только об отошедших, назову, кроме Айхенвальда, Волынского, Венгерова, Горнфельда, Гершензона. Я коснулся этого вовсе не ради какой-то «апологии» еврейства, которое в ней не нуждается (а «убежденных ненавистников» все равно не переубедишь), а потому, что это важно для понимания той ценности, которой ушедший от нас Айхенвальд служил всю жизнь, с которой он был так интимно связан, что говорить о ней — значит продолжать говорить о нем. Русская культурная стихия — это не подлежит ни доказательствам, ни сомнению — насквозь пронизана духом православия; — и тем не менее, — мы это видим — можно быть русским, следовательно, как-то связанным с православием, — и не будучи рожденным в нем, оставаясь и всю жизнь

формально вне его (это последнее, впрочем, не относится к Айхенвальду, который, если я не ошибаюсь, исповедовал православную веру). Всякая культура коренится в религии, но в известный момент своего развития она как-то перерастает вероисповедные рамки...

Отмеченное явление свидетельствует еще об одном: о могучей притягательной и ассимилирующей силе русской культуры и русской «стихии». Айхенвальда она, во всяком случае, подчинила себе целиком и навсегда. Изгнанный из России за самостоятельность занятой им общественной и «идеологической» позиции, он, человек, по отношению к политическим вопросам отнюдь не безразличный, на чужбине продолжал делать только то, что он делал всю жизнь: писать о русской литературе и ни о чем больше. Как видно, для него она была как-то «первее», существеннее, в каком-то смысле «реальнее» всего остального.

Так велика была его вера в душу России. В этом заключается для нас смысл и значение его жизни, его посмертное завещание, урок и высокий пример. Вечная ему память!

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