
LITERARY TEXT

BY N.S. LESKOV AS A SYSTEM OF LANGUAGE MEANS

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The article gives a linguistic and stylistic analysis of N.S. Leskov's fiction. One of the main ambitions of the author is to reveal the possible correlation between the language features of N.S. Leskov's heroes and the Russian cultural tradition of the past. Some original and vivid examples of the speech of representatives of specific Russian professions and estates are analyzed as well as linguistic parallels between complicated church language and the writer's system of stylistic devices are defined. We show new interlinks between historic, linguistic and literary aspects of the text and especially N.S. Leskov's unusual world as a form of culturally-historically determined consciousness. We pay special attention to Old Slavonic «experiment» in Leskov's texts and *skaz*, polyphony of names of his heroes and writers' examples of folk etymology. We came to the conclusion that in *The Notes of the Unknown* different stylistic and linguistic devices are combined.

Key words: language stylization, archaic text, linguistic parallels, book language, Slavonicisms, text semantics, literary speech, metaphorical sense, language picture of the world

In the narrative *The Notes of the Unknown* Leskov, who was an outstanding experimenter, used striking Old Slavonic collocations and citations from the Holy Writ. That was an expressive recreation of the language used by the clergy, and it was a most ingenious device to achieve the ironic overtone of *Notes of the Unknown*. In the context of his own time we can call his style even avant-garde because specifically Russian elements are presented alongside with Slavonicisms like «...нимало сумняся...» [9. Т. IV. P. 272] (not in the least doubting), «...его же любяше» [P. 277] (whom he had been loved by), «до умертвия...» [P. 277] (up to death), «...в превыспренние...» [P. 279] (to the heavens), «нози» [P. 280] (feet), «новоначатие» [P. 259] (innovation), «мироносицы» [P. 304] (here the meaning is not directly connected with myrrh, the referentiality of the word is altered and it means: female admirers of the chief of some sect), «войственники» [P. 326] (put by the author instead of *воины* — soldiers), «борзяся» [P. 330] (hastily), and others. And what is more, the writer borrows phrases from the Bible, which he uses in a slightly altered form to show the false learning of the ecclesiastics. The quotations in Leskov serve not for argument or evidence. They have the role of artistic analogies in relation to events and the characters' inner reality. Such a style gave the writer the possibility to disclose something of the secret deeds of God's servants. When explaining an episode which happened to Father Grigory, who was undecided as regards the difference between the Roman Catholic and the Protestant concepts of the sacrament of the holy penance [P. 270], the narrator put his own thoughts into the Archbishop's words who "cleared up" the Father's problem in this way:

Они (взгляды. — *О.Н.*) весьма противоположны, но я их не осуждаю, а даже скажу: обои не худы. Но мы, как православные, должны своего не порицать и держаться — тем более, что у нас исповедь на всякий случай и особое применение

в гражданском управлении имеет, которого нам лучше не касаться [9. Т. IV. P. 270] (1) ('These [views. — O.N.] are very contradictory but I don't condemn them and even say: neither of them is wrong. But we, as orthodoxials, should not dispute ours and should actually keep to it — especially because our creed has an application to every situation and a particular application in civil life, which should rather not be touched upon').

The passage suggests that the author considers it an obligation for the priest to denounce political offence if he gets to know about it through a confession. It is not too much to say that Leskov, the avant-garde artist, applied Slavonicisms in a function not exploited before. It was not even their phonetic cover (the though decorative phonetic design of the word as a special stylistic method was originally adopted by the writer) he was interested in. Leskov used archaic expressions not for their lack of pleophony and abstruseness of meaning, for specific initial combinations or availability of compound sounds, etc.

We can find confusion of language units close in form in the prose of Pustozer'sk, i.e. in *Житие протопопа Аввакума* and in his *челобитные* (petitions) to Tsar Alexey Mikhaylovich, and in "literary" works (messages) by his coprisoners, *инок* (anchorite) Epiphany, priest Lazař, deacon Feodor. In these writings we can often see the Holy Scripture as interpreted by the authors correlated with what they want to say, which is similar to Leskov's way of giving parallels to the convulsions of modern life, as for example: «...свет его может просветиться пред человеки...» [9. Т. IV. P. 309] (let his light so shine before men) — a free borrowing from the Gospel of Matthew, or «...что ми хошете дати?» [P. 312] (what would you give me) — the question of Judas about the reward for his betrayal; or one more example: «...мня ся быти яко первым по фараоне...» [P. 313] (I imagine myself to be as though the first after Pharaoh) — in Leskov's narrative it is said in honour of Father Pavel who considers himself to be the first after Pharaoh, and who, being very much displeased with refreshments prepared for him on a day of fast, finds an excellent remedy: a glass of undiluted punch rum with chemists' drops of English mint-*kholodianka*..., and, as a token of what it often compels, to alleviate pains... [9. Т. IV. P. 315] (2).

According to the biblical legend Joseph, who had been sold by his brothers into Egyptian slavery, became the first in Egypt after Pharaoh. A similar method of the interpretation of the Holy Writ was artistically used by Avvakum: he read contemporary events by the light of the holy rites. This elevates the occurrence described to the rank of a holy mystery [19. P. 33]. In it his life-story and the end of the history of the world gets entangled: «Ты, Господи, изведый мя из чрева матере моея, и от небытия и бытие мя устроил i аще меня задушат, причти мя с митрополитом Филиппом Московским...» [19. P. 45].

Like in the case of Avvakum, where the change of the personal tone and the stylization of language lead to exposing the pathos of the preacher, Leskov uses archaic church elements in the oral colloquial speech of the characters in his *Notes* as well. In both works we see symbolic parallels corresponding to different parameters of view: *житие*-narrative, saturation of the texts with church Slavonic terms, creative intuition to show events which happened during the life of each author, and eventually their religious moral stance is conveyed in the ancient book style in its primordial state.

When studying the problem, however, the danger of mixing up the two notions, style in its diachronic conception and the "normative" comprehension of it, might arise. The

historic approach presupposes some system and we may easily be bogged down in multilingual and multicultural problems. Normative style is more or less a static category representing a whole complex of questions. It is a totality of indications characterizing an art or literary piece of a definite period and a tendency in attitude to the substantial idea and the artistic form. Here style has found its position on the basis of timelessness. We have a propensity for source study. It might appear an absolute necessity for anyone to develop analysis in such a key because Leskov compiled his work from original sources, and to elucidate his historic method has always born more substantial fruit than concentrating research exclusively on the text. It is also important to remember that “various styles of speech within limits of one and the same written language... can go back to different historic traditions” [5. P. 232] (3). For instance, it is known that in Russian literary speech of the beginning of the 19th century some Slavonicisms like *млеко*, *брег*, *выя*, *вран*, etc., which had their primordial Russian synonyms-duplicates, were in active use. In that particular period this trait characterized literary language on the whole in contrast to secular, epistolary or domestic language in its written form. Closer to the 30s the use of Old Slavonic was not any longer an attribute of the artistic mode of speech, it was rather a characteristic of the language of poetry as contradistinguished from that of prose. Thus it would be an error to consider every language feature in Leskov’s narrative as evidence for his use of the real language situation of his time. Here we should keep a linguistic distance and take into consideration essentially different conditions for the language in diverse spheres. That is why the writer’s Slavonic world should be explained in the context of the literary aesthetic traditions of his time as well as of his own views expressed in letters, articles, etc. Seen in this way the abundance of Church Slavonic lexemes and syntactic constructions can be said to make no impression of a surcharge of the text as a result of primitive stylization. His comprehension of the notion of stylization is entirely different from some of the definitions we can find in modern dictionaries, e.g. “1. Stylization — imitation of outward [i.e. superficial — *O.N.*] forms, typical illustrations of a certain style á...ñ 2. Literary work being as to the form an imitation of some style” [8. P. 455]. Stylization for him was not mere imitation, it was not even connected seriously to it (in this period of his creative activities). Leskov’s inward requirement “to stylize” comes out of his own artistic struggle against any unreasonable treatment of language ligatures on the one hand, and out of his speculations on artistic taste on the other. It is evident that Slavonicisms have a special part to play in the structure of his texts. Their emotional mood, musical pitch and grammatical harmony create a fascinating atmosphere of skilful puns and whimsical imagination. They are very carefully attributed to the oral characteristics of his protagonists and do not upset the balance of composition. Look at their inner phonation: *епитимейка* [9. Т. IV. P. 269] (penance) — here used with the diminutive hypocoristic suffix instead of *епитимья*; *притязание* [P. 257] in the meaning of grabbing); *дражае* [P. 284] (dearly, here in the sense ‘having more importance’); *снемлются* [P. 299] (are gathering); *оспособлять хозяев* [P. 298] (to help the hosts); ... *возгреваема духом благочестивой ревности...* [P. 299] (warming by the spirit of pious zeal) — describing the anger of a bishop. Obviously, the use of archaic models of official business style filled with Slavonicisms and lexemes of religious meaning let us come to the conclusion that there is an appreciable connection between Leskov’s language and

some of the language features of the 17th century but Leskov's medium is more stylized. Leskov relied on a tradition which emerged in a later period, in the 1700s, when Old Slavonic words which used to have mostly ecclesiastic and cult semantics before were subjected to a redefinition of their language status, sometimes their field of dissemination was narrowed down (or changed in a way) and they preserved their primary sense only in obsolete stylized church speech. Leskov was also right when he noticed the most peculiar feature of written business style in the 18th century: the collation of church speech with phraseological locutions with figurative meaning (4). This made wordy modifiers metaphoric and inimitable in artistic beauty.

This statement is corroborated by our analysis of changes in Leskov's attitude to the literary language. He began with imitative genres, and the main form of stylization was "mimicking of style" (of course, we have his fiction and not his essays or journalism in mind). That was not, however, simple imitation or assimilation to the concrete manner of writing but its intentional and spiritually realized reproduction. Moreover, Leskov came to literature with a definite view of Russian existence. In his first story, *Овцебык* ('The musk-ox') [1862], the principal traits of his artistic stance was already outlined: recollection, aptly combined with fantasy, was based on exposing the biography of a hero by short and impressive episodes [11. P. 216]; short stories inserted into the main body of the text; a heightened sensitivity to folk speech and its richness in unexpected turns; trustworthy sketches of the clergy (5).

In the second part of the 1860s and 1870s, Leskov's writing is notable for the broad range of expression. In this period the following language and style features of his literary works can be distinguished: a significant presence of elements of language naturalism, an active search for style-forming elements and modes of organizing the genre system, heightened sensibility to the minute description of the representatives of national types, and last but not least, a graphically pronounced social orientation of turns of speech (*Соборяне*, *Запечатленный ангел*, *Очарованный странник*). Historic truth is subordinated to artistic truth in Leskov's literary works of this time just as in A. F. Vel'tman. The fantastic and real were the two principles forming the subject-matter of his fiction during the period. This perhaps indicated a shift from what is called conventional historicity, i.e. Leskov moved away from the important problems of modern life, which are screened by reveries and romantic dreams, to conscious historicism in which the tale as a source blends with a critical insight into the spiritual contradictions of the present (6).

Later Leskov himself defined the method he used in the last period of his career. "I wrote in small chapters", — he said. L.P. Grossman [7. P. 265] comments on Leskov's statement as follows:

«Leskov mastered this gift to cut up a story and enhance the interest of the reader by a skilful distribution of parts to perfection. He created his independent type of short story in sections: the general figure of his stories, which emerges in a series of quickly succeeding short chapters resumed nearly in every page, gives that lucid coherence to the whole which is assimilated by the reader with no strain or tiredness" [7. P. 265].

Notes of the Unknown, indeed, consists of short but richly condensed chapters (all in all twenty two). Each of them has its own plot, each is certainly vivid, satiric and easily retained in memory. Every chapter has its own title, sometimes playful or ironic. Here

are some of them: *Искусный ответчик* [‘The clever respondent’], *О вреде от чтения светских книг, бываемом для многих* [‘On the harm of reading secular books which affected a great many’], *Излишняя материнская нежность* [‘Superfluous motherly tenderness’], *О Петухе и его детях. Геральдический казус* [‘About Petukh and his children. A heraldic casus’]. A similar device to specify the main idea was applied by Leskov in his articles and essays, as we have already noticed. He thought that the title should be lively, sonorous, alluring and easy to memorize. Following this principle he created out-of-the-way, enigmatic and inviting titles.

The last story of the cycle is most remarkable in this respect. Let us first examine the title and its complex meaning — “A heraldic casus”. It emphasizes the mystery of the contents and creates a considerable metaphorical aura. This is the result of an unusual concept of the word, of its interior structure. In it the unit of the language appears not in the function of a conditional sign for expressing an idea but like an artistic image [3. P. 1]. We shall try to penetrate into the substance of this figurativeness. Thus, “heraldic” can be traced back to the lexeme “heraldry”. The “Dictionary” of foreign words [18. P. 266] gives the following definition: it derives from Middle Latin *heraldus* which can be traced back to herald. Heraldry is the science of insignia. The name comes from the fact that in the Middle Ages at the time of a tournament the armorial bearings of a new knight appeared, and the herald was supposed to explain the meaning of the arms depicted on the shield of the new contestant. But this interpretation does not contain the sense we are looking for, the very mysterious implication which Leskov managed to give the word. To reveal its concealed significance we shall follow the writer’s mode of treating language: having “turned” the word to one side we shall now turn it to the other. “Herald” springs from Old German *hariwalt* — ‘steward of force’. It had three different meanings:

1. A public or town crier (in Russia — *глауатай*) in ancient times whose duty was to announce wars; 2. a person who proclaimed the names of knights in a tournament; 3. an official who announced important events to the public, e.g. coronations [18. P. 270]. For the understanding of Leskov’s intention the third meaning is of special interest.

As it becomes obvious, the author tries to bring the reader closer to his true-to-life narrative style and tries to convince him of the authenticity of his words. As far as we can know on the ground of the written evidence, Leskov was elaborating this problem at the time of publishing the cycle and somewhat later in the articles *Благословенный брак...* (7) and *Бракоразводное забвение. Причина разводов брачных...* (8) [‘The divorce unconsciousness. A motive of divorce proceedings...’]. In particular, the writer cites a curious passage from a rare book which has an indirect relationship to *The Notes of the Unknown*. That is how Leskov describes an episode of Russian cryptogamia [spacing out and sequence of words made by the writer are presented here without any changes. — *O.N.*]: “...in the accomplishment of marriage the church, i.e. “the gathering of believers”..., does not participate neither does any “executor of *treb*” [occasional religious rites: christening, marriage, funeral, etc. — *O.N.*]. All the chanters and benedictors only “coattend”, as witnesses, but “the performer [of rites. — *O.N.*] is absent” (9). This elliptical device artistically confirms “A heraldic casus” in which Leskov, with grotesque metaphorical allusions, represents the fictive marriage (misalliance) of Petukh and Pelageya describing the essence of the matter as a criminal farce. What is more surprising, the writer finds quite a marvelous solution to settle the problem. It was really “A Simple Means” — such

is the title Leskov gave to the final part of this short narrative. The consistory bailiff comes to Luka's rescue who is so much in despair that he has no idea of what to do, saying that «отчаяние есть смертный грех, а на святой Руси нет невозможности» [9. Т. IV. P. 332] ('despair is a mortal sin, but in holy Russia nothing is impossible').

What is his "remedy"? It is not a forgery or a criminal act ("There is a mind not only in big heads but in small ones" = «Ум-то не в одних больших головах, а и в малых» [9. Т. IV. P. 333]). So, Luka Aleksandrovich gets the book from the archives and finds the name "peasant Petukh" in it written in a different ink in a scraped space. As soon as no one remembers who has done it, an investigation is undertaken. During it all testify that Pelageya married Luka, and Petukh was simply standing by. That proves to be a cogent argument, and the true matrimony is confirmed. "...but the bailiff did not do any forgery, he only added in the book the very thing that he had wiped out in it. That was his "simple means" («а приказный никакой фальши не сделал, а только подписал в книге то самое, что в ней и вычистил. То было его „простое средство“» [9. Т. IV. P. 333]), — the narrator concludes finishing the story.

The second word of the subtitle has relatively richer semantic colouring. *Casus* means 'case' — this is the well-known definition today. In the earlier period it also had the meaning "an awkward circumstance" or "a remarkable case" [18. P. 438]. Modern sources add to the aforementioned definitions useful and pertinent semantic explications, i.e. 1. Case, usually difficult, intricate or uncommon, ridiculous; 2. *jur.* A case, an accidental action, having external signs of transgression but deprived of the element of a guilt therefore non-punishable [20. P. 211].

All these possible interpretations of "heraldic case" are important to take into account as they prompt us the idea that the very word in Leskov's fiction appears in the role of a literary image. It possesses not a single information ground but contains various groups of conditional indications and connotations which Leskov wants to mobilize.

Somewhat later, in 1886, Leskov would reflect on the problem of cases presenting highly convincing proofs based on his own experience in the article *Геральдический туман. (Заметки о родовых прозваниях)*. Alongside with some interesting facts he gives in it an analysis of names and surnames which seem foreign in origin, in term of their genealogy, however, they are primordially Russian (10).

Critics have pointed out the most characteristic peculiarities of Leskov's fiction: his ability to create a language which can convey the inner processes and the spewch habits of his protagonists as well as the astonishing vividness of his description of domestic scenes. How is this manifested in *The Notes of the Unknown*, and what shades of textual meaning does his language display? We would like to return once more to the short story "About Petukh and his children". The narrator's speech is imperceptibly inserted into the dialogue so that what was said before could be explained:

Petukh was a *бестягольный* (having no family) *muzhik* in the master's poultry-yard — dirty and half-witted, with a red nose, jabbering away in a squeaky voice, and was forty or so (Был же Петух бестягольный мужик на господском птичьем дворе — нечистый и полоумный, с красным носом, и говор имел дроботливый с выкриком по-петушьему, а лет уже сорока и поболее) [9. Т. IV. P. 324].

Here the author employes specific words to create a true-to-life domestic atmosphere. The words have their own shades of meaning peculiar to the nature of the person implied,

e.g. *бестягольный* instead of *бессемейный*. In Old Russian *тягло* was used basically in two meanings: labour conscription or a family executing their duties at the time of serfdom. Interesting notes on it are given in the Dahl's "Dictionary":

«...тягловой крестьянинъ, который тянеть полное тягло, за двѣ души; ... обычно крестьянинъ остается *тяглымъ* отъ женитьбы своей до 60 лѣтъ, затѣмъ либо онъ идетъ в полутяглые, и на четверть тягла, или смѣщается вовсе. ... Тягло ср. мужъ с женою или семья, въ крестьянствѣ, доколѣ мужикъ, по лѣтамъ своимъ и по здоровью, числится *тяглымъ*» [4. Т. IV. Рр. 900—901].

Leskov can very well be supposed to have known the numerous proverbs which were connected with this notion and which had wide currency in the social environment described by the writer in his cycle.

In the sentence quoted above Leskov uses *дроботливый говор* instead of more common words like quick, fast, pattering. And the sentence is immediately followed by the description of the conversation of the priest and his wife which is presented in another manner closer to *skaz*:

Попадья ничего не внимала, а сказала такой *skaz*, что если поп ее заранее осведомит, когда бригадиршин сын съедет в город, а Поленьку с мужиком свенчают, то она никакого мешанья не сделает, но если он от нее это скроет, то ее любопытство мучить станет, и тогда она за себя не поручится, что от нетерпения вред сделает [9. Т. IV. Р. 324] (11) ('The priest's wife didn't listen to him but said such a tale that if the priest informed her in advance when the brigadier's wife's son was going to go up to town, and Polen'ka and the *muzhik* were going to be married, then she would not make any *мешанья* (trouble), but if he hid that from her then she would be tormented by curiosity, and then she could not vouch for herself and might, out of impatience, do some harm').

After this verbose *skaz* Leskov inserts a single statement: «поп уступил» [9. Т. IV. Р. 324] ('The priest gave in'). Nothing superfluous is added by the narrator. His syntactic phrases are efficiently constructed and thought out. This fluent passage gives the reader the impression that he can actually arrest the flow of the narrative and try to realize what is behind the narrator's words. That compositional device is called retardation. In connection with Leskov's *skaz* A.S. Orlov was the first to notice that particular narratological element. He claims that "the *skaz* of Leskov can be characterized by its excitement being supported by the curiosity of the listener to be able to hear how every person speaks in accordance with his typical nature" [16. Р. 146]. The priest uses a different language: there are no diffuse phrases, his voice sounds mild, and it is briefly interrupted by the narrator's elucidation:

«Ну, ладно, — говорит, — я тебе лучше все скажу, только уж ты знай, да никому здесь не сказывай» [9. Т. IV. Р. 324] ('All right then, — he says, — I would better tell you everything, but remember you must not tell anyone here').

Soon enough the speech of the officers is defined: it is shaped in the imperative mood without any additions and explanations; *skazovost'* here is not an expressive stylistic device to be applied. The traits of the people of this social stratum require another artistic method in another linguistic medium:

— Сейчас нам отпереть! Ибо знаем, что в храме насильный брак совершается, и мы не допустим и сейчас двери вон выьем... [9. Т. IV. Р. 326]

— (Open now [the door]! Because we know that in the church a forcible matrimony is happening, but we won't let it go on, we'll rather knock out the doors in no time...).

Their speech is an expression of their intentions. This approach to representing character is most subtle. As we have already suggested, each estate in Leskov's fiction has its own unique language and style. By the means of speech constituting his characters Leskov creates a comic atmosphere. Manipulating elements of comedy, irony and satire the writer defines the characteristic features of the heroes' interior speech and inner world (12).

Leskov's special interest in heraldry has already been pointed out. In *Notes of the Unknown* the names of the representatives of the clergy are gleaned by the writer very carefully. Their etymology is a means by which the author subtly shows to readers what role the protagonists they belong to play in the narrative. Some of them function as mirror reflections of certain tempers and moral characteristics. Of course, behind the form of the bearer of a proper name stands the narrator's ulterior device. Leskov liked one of the statements of Theocritus which he used as an epigraph at the beginning of the article *Геральдический туман...*: "Everyone gets his name at a blessed hour" (13). Leskov himself followed this dictum in his creative writings. Thus, for instance, Father Ioann (the name is a translation of the Hebrew 'God's grace') «прежде во всю жизнь свою не пил» [9. Т. IV. P. 259] ('he had not drunk all his life before'); Father Pavel (from Latin *paulus* — 'small') «был роста высокого, осторожного понимания и в разговорах нередко шутив» [9. Т. IV. P. 261] ('was of large stature, of keen comprehension, and in speech often enough jocular'); Father Grigory (in Old Greek — 'be awake, cheerful, vigilant') «в служенье хорош и весьма способен, но католиковат, и то было в нем заимствованное...» [P. 268] ('in service is good and very capable, but *католиковат* (is like a Catholic), and that was borrowed in him...'); hieromonk Theodosy (the name is compound from the two Old Greek words: 'God' + 'a gift', 'a donation', i. e. granted to God) «нарицаемая друг, но не верный, и втайне зложелатель...» [P. 288] ('called a friend, but not faithful, and secretly malevolent...'); another Father Pavel, who imagined himself "to be as though the first after Pharaoh (мня ся быти яко первым по фараоне), endeavored to sit [in the *дрожки*] outstretched in a place for two..." [P. 313]; lastly, junior deacon (*прчетник*) Porphiry (compare to Old Greek 'purple, crimson; dark-red, violet; generally dark'; the name also has the root meaning 'purple clothes or a mantle') who was named 'the dull-born' (*глупорожденный*) and "rough" (*комоватый*), was tall and of a very submissive disposition (= *нрав*) [P. 313].

It might be surprising to see that Leskov practically never mentions the surnames of his characters, especially if they belong to the church. Surnames were not used in clerical circles. Besides, it could have been rather a stiff and artificial device. Their real temper and deeds are of the greatest importance for Leskov who in hardly visible traits created picturesque satirical portraits of the local clergy.

Leskov's interest in the meaning of names and in their genealogy is obviously deeply rooted. In the 1870s he elaborated his own system of categorizing the surnames of the Russian priesthood. He established six categories: surnames which go back to the names of holidays (for instance, *Rozhdestvensky*), to the names of figures in antiquity like *Platonov*, or to words for virtues of character, etc. [7. P. 272]. Leskov's names are artistic images which have a life of their own and a complex aura of connotations. Somewhat

later, in the 1900—1910s, the philosopher Father P. A. Florensky also expounded his view of names. He thought it was a grave mistake to “declare all the literary names, — *and the name as it is* [italicized by P.A. Florensky. — *O.N.*], — arbitrary and accidental... Names are the main kernels of the very images...” [22. P. 25]. As well as Leskov, he considered names artistic images forming complex spiritual organisms and characterizing the persons who carry them. According to P. A. Florensky’s concept, they possess various moods of their being (*бытие*): ecclesiastic, humiliated, diminutive [22. Pp. 40, 94—96]. The hypostasis of every name determines its significance and should be analyzed as part of the cultural process (14). It may be interesting to compare the theological tradition with Leskov’s own concept of names. His gift as a creative writer, his idealism and severe critical views helped him find an artistic form to convey his experiences as well as the findings of his research. In point of fact he formulated the very group of notions which later on were to become the basis of a modern branch of science — onomastics — the art of giving names (that is calque translation from the corresponding Old Greek word). Leskov’s feelings and thoughts combined to find the concrete object of his writing — the representatives of the clergy. It was not only a coincidence but one of his stylistic devices permanently present in his literary works. This combination of satirical literary expressions and intellectual penetration to the depth of a problem seems to be the articulation of two features of his individuality: his intransigence as a social being confronting moral perversion and his profound intellect in search for truth. The very term “onomastics” covers not only the art of giving names, but also scholarly proficiency in studying them. The latter now belongs to linguistics, Leskov, however, was the master of both approaches, and what is more, that ability of his appears in two forms: in scholarly conjectures and hypotheses which he managed to translate into the terms of the imaginative world of his art as a writer. Leskov’s creative work, his world-view and his understanding of aesthetic problems merged all together in his fiction moulding his style and extending his penetration into national history and culture.

Leskov’s work as a writer is most unique in the wide range of the questions he treats and the variety of ways he describes them. His narrative style is constituted of a great diversity of stylistic figures and dialects. The playful language abounds in parodistic elements given in a cover of archaic Slavonic expressions in combination with quotations from the Holy Writ which results in paronomastic effects. On the other hand, there are a lot of professional patters and words of folk terminological lexis. Sometimes they are simply misrepresented in their meaning and structure. In another case, as though explaining the real sense of the word Leskov binds it in the consciousness of a speaker with a different lexeme. This device — attraction paronymique — is widely applied in *Notes of the Unknown*. It is used to express the difference in the cultural status of his characters [16. P. 167]. Somewhere he changes the sense, and a wrong letter used by him, as if by mistake, has its own shade of meaning and colour indication. Thus, for instance, in the collocation *посторонние вольнодомки* [9. Т. IV. P. 262] the letter *o* is substituted for *u* because those people were not “free thinkers” (the correct root of the second word is *дум*), but people who stayed at home (*на дому*). In the sentence «Иеродиакон немолодых лет, но *могущей* (= of mighty flesh) *плоти* ... имел страсть к биллиардной игре...» [9. Т. IV. P. 284] the word *могущий* (might) is revised and changed into *могущая*

which now absorbs the nuance of suggesting a self-indulgent, unrestrained character who never hesitates to take liberties. Father Preferants (whose nick-name is associated with a card game preference) has a son *богослов* (theologian) who would better be called *бог ослов* (the God of donkeys) [9. Т. IV. P. 291]. In this example folk etymology is combined with the process of redistribution of the stem. As a result, quite an opposite meaning is suggested by the evocation of a curse commonly used in the 19th century in theological seminaries, an ironic nick-name for a foolish person, the same as “ass” in English. After that statement the narrator defines the word by the following reference: “...[сын] по пороку беспамятства никак не мог научиться служению...” [9. Т. IV. P. 291] “...[the son] because of a defect of unconsciousness could hardly be taught to preach...”. This feature illustrates the significance of and the reason for the use of this rather uncommon idiomatic expression.

In the short story *Удивительный случай всеобщего недоумения* [‘A wonderful case of general perplexity’] Leskov uses the word combination *мадемуазель попадьа* (as a reference to a priest’s wife) putting it in inverted commas. It is organized on the principle of placing together incompatible (because of their dissonant meanings) notions or of correlating words having contradictory meanings in a collocation. Similarly, for instance, to the French oxymoron *une sage folie* — “a wise folly” (see: [13. P. 186]; or the Russian phrase: *звонкая тишина* (a ringing silence), etc.

This *alliance des mots* conveys a delicate sense of irony and humour, especially as those are words of different origins: *mademoiselle* (Fr.) + *попадьа* (Rus.). When describing “the spiritual inclination” to the unfrocked archimandrite the narrator says that «в числе писем, оставшихся после смерти расстриги, было одно от женщины настоящего высокого звания русских фамилий, которая даже называть его прежнего сана не умела и вместо того, чтобы писать «архимандрит», выражалась: «парфемандрит», что ей было более склонно к французскому штилю» [9. Т. IV. P. 310] (‘in the number of letters remaining after the death of the unfrocked monk was one from a lady of one of the really high rank Russian families, who did not even know how to name his former order, and instead of “archimandrite” she wrote: “parfemandrite”, which she found more familiar since it was closer to her French style’).

In the passage quoted above Leskov’s neologism consists of the prefixoid *нарфе* — which could be brought into correlation with the French adjective *parfait* — ‘perfect, absolute’. That is an instance based on an expression etymologically unclear for the national language environment. Here it is partly paraphrased just like *револьвер* at the turn of the 20th century when many borrowings were in active use. It was understood owing to its artificial rebuilding as *ребродер* (15).

Original puns are close in nature to folk etymology. They used to be organized as metaphoric idioms and constituted a phrase which had a double sense. Here are some characteristic examples of Leskov’s individual thinking-in-words: *неодолимая пассива* [9. Т. IV. P. 319] (irresistible passion), *опытные резоны* [P. 320] (serious reasons); “And Polen’ka... became idleless, and having, as one can see, from her mother innate French *кокetteria* (coquetry)...” [P. 320]; “If he [Father Grigory. — O.N.] *на духу* (with courage) for the better perspicuity exhorted in French, then this moved the audience so intensely that they *гистерически* (hysterically) sobbed violently...” [P. 320]. The phrases quoted

above can be interpreted in two ways: they provoke laughter because of a contradiction between their meaning and the actual situation of the characters, on the one hand, and because of the reference in them to the protagonists' civilized temper and bent for French manners and mentality, on the other. This idea has an interesting justification. The Russian *каламбур* (pun) has a concrete event for its origin, which, we may assume, was used by Leskov a subtextual device.

It was known that in 18th-century French aristocratic memoirs the term *calambour* was explained in terms of the following genealogy: in a gathering of high society it was decided that everybody was to make up some verses for fun. There was a dull-witted abbot who had no idea about poetry. When his turn came, after some vain attempts, in a sweat at last he invented the following lines:

Pleurons tous dans ce jour
A bois de calambour...

This rot made the whole *monde* laugh to excess, and the *casus* was not forgotten for a very long time. Leskov may be supposed to have wanted to make use of the episode. We can say that puns (here on the preciousness of French style and manners) were very popular in Russia in the 18th–19th centuries (16).

We can also quote some specifically Russian puns and language pigments from Leskov's narrative, e.g. *большая претрашка* [9. Т. IV. P. 331] (a great fear), *притязание* [P. 257] (grubbing), *сивуха* [P. 322] (in the context the horse is meant, but generally the word is associated with raw vodka), *усилок* [P. 326] (strong man), *в животе* [P. 329] (during his life time), [deacon] *положил... всему такое краегранение* [P. 328] (began fabricating a story); «Священник... в разговоре голландский джин, отбивавший во вкусе своем *мозжухой*, даже критиковал...» [P. 308] ('During the conversation the priest... even criticized the Dutch gin which savoured of *мозжуха*...') (here the italicized word is associated with juniper having the specific suffix *-ух-* (compare to *краснуха* — ten rouble banknote, etc.)). These phrases have undoubtedly a vivid appeal to the senses. They all look unusual (as to their structure and meaning), they do not, however, break the rules of the genre. The analysis of similar instances would require an approach which is not exclusively linguistic.

We have tried to correlate the elements of Leskov's language with his peculiar stylistic system, with the facts of his biography and with the traditions of the history of literature [see also: 23]. Looking for the sources of his fiction we have also tried to clarify the theoretic positions which could be useful for textological and source studies.

Thus, in *The Notes of the Unknown* different stylistic devices are combined. Creating picturesque portraits of the people of many professions and estates gives Leskov ample scope to charge his style and language with vivid features of various manners of speech and enunciation. Leskov's later style becomes a very complicated system, thoughtfully organized and elaborated to a nicety. His linguistic expressiveness, sophisticated use of words, his kind and keen irony, his ability to bring the narrator's speech closer to the tale tradition as well as the polysemanticism of the plot of each story based on original archive material lead to a conclusion of the following character: stylization in Leskov's later creative activities develops into an artistic principle which enables the writer to convey the complex vision he aspired to articulate.

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- (1) Compare the statement by N.O. Lossky: “Reducing the Church to the stage of servitors of the state, the government converts ecclesiastics into social servants” [11. P. 248].
- (2) The very remedy was called by the spiritual males *есмирмисменно вино* from *ес мир ми*.
- (3) In his other article G.O. Vinokur posits an interesting thesis which can be usefully adapted to historical analysis. He claims that “in application to the tasks of the reproduction of an old *glossa* the means of language of the following four types can be distinguished: firstly, the means of generally historic and folk colouring; secondly, the means with bookish colouring imitating Church Slavonic speech; thirdly, the means of narrow chronological colouring; in the fourth place, the means in expressiveness...” [6. P. 424].
- (4) Compare also Leskov’s following combinations to the business style of the 18th century [see: 14; 15]: he uses the 18th century grammatical concord with prepositions thus ascribing to them the meaning they used to have then and brings them into correlation with one of their sensitive units to polysemantic Slavonicisms (we put them in the bold type): «...по принесении же белья эконом оное весьма смотрел в достоинстве проверял...» [9. Т. IV. P. 278] (when the liven was brought the house-(exchequer-) keeper carefully looked through it and in virtue checked it up), etc.
- (5) It can be mentioned here that one of Leskov’s sisters, Natalija (1836—1920), was the nun Gennadija. See: [7. P. 26].
- (6) Compare, for instance, A. F. Vel’tman’s *Сердце и думка* (‘Heart and haze’) to Leskov’s *Очарованный странник* (‘Enchanted wanderer’).
- (7) See: Исторический вѣстникъ, 20 (1885), pp. 499—515.
- (8) See: Исторический вѣстникъ, 12 (1885), pp. 509—524.
- (9) Cited from: Исторический вѣстникъ, 20 (1885), pp. 503.
- (10) See: Исторический вѣстникъ, 24 (1886), pp. 598—613.
- (11) The usage of the rusified French borrowing *бригадирша* is extremely significant. By probing into its genealogy the real contextual time can be revealed. The Russian *бригадир* springs from *бригада* (brigade) which has been known in Russia from the very outset of the 18th century. Since that time *бригадир* has been used as a military term. It was ‘a brigade commander’, an officer of the fifth class in the tsarist army of the 18th century, in between the colonel and the major-general, and in the navy it was the rank corresponding to the captain-commodore. Consequently, *бригадирша* (in the dictionaries it is defined as “obsolete”) — the wife of a brigadier — as a character’s prototype could not exist beyond the first third of the 19th century. That is why we suppose that the real contextual time of this short story was the period between 1800 and the 1840s. See: [4. Т. I. P. 313; 24. Т. I. P. III; 12. P. 47; 21. Т. I. P. 759].
- (12) L.P. Grossman observed that “[Leskov] liked the inner world of his heroes by recreating their enunciation: one had a speech dull and unintelligible — his character is reserved and sullen; another spoke with such canning word ligatures (*извития слов*), that one is likely to get astounded by his speech, — but had a light and captivating temper” [7. P. 270]. See also the article *О некоторых особенностях языка «Заметок неизвестного»* [1. Pp. 59—63].
- (13) Исторический вѣстникъ, 24 (1886), p. 598.
- (14) Compare the following definition made by bishop Antony (Florensov): “Name is an omen of the moral education of a person, of a Christian, a testimonial of his individuality and inclination to one or another kind of activity”. See: [2. P. 76].
- (15) See the publication of “Terminological Glossary on Linguistics (1935—1937)” from the Archives of the Academy of Sciences of the USSR (now RAN) in: [17. Pp. 392—393].
- (16) Some scholars have supposed that the term can be traced back to an anecdote about priest Kalember or about the German count Kalember whose command of French was poor. See: [17. P. 463; 25. P. 24]. P. Ja. Černych quotes a passage from “The Letters of the Russian Traveller” by N.M. Karamzin where the word “calanbur” was used, and considered that already from the beginning of the 19th century this expression was in use. In Russian dictionaries it is mentioned from 1804. See: [24.

T. I. P. 370]. As we know, anecdote is one of Leskov's vivid devices, which was artistically employed by him for language disguise.

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ХУДОЖЕСТВЕННЫЙ ТЕКСТ Н.С. ЛЕСКОВА КАК СИСТЕМА ЯЗЫКОВЫХ СРЕДСТВ

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В статье проводится лингвистический и стилистический анализ художественного текста Н.С. Лескова. Одной из главных идей автора является выявление возможной взаимосвязи между языковыми особенностями героев Н.С. Лескова и русской культурной традицией прошлого. Анализируются некоторые оригинальные и яркие примеры речи представителей конкретных российских профессий и сословий, а также выявляются лингвистические параллели между художественным церковным языком и писательской системой стилистических приемов. Показаны новые взаимосвязи исторических, лингвистических и литературоведческих аспектов текста и особенно необычный мир Лескова как форма культурно-исторического сознания. Мы уделяем особое внимание старославянскому «эксперименту» в текстах Лескова и *сказу*, полифонии имен его героев и авторским примерам народной этимологии. Мы пришли к выводу, что в «Записках неизвестного» сочетаются различные стилистические и лингвистические приемы.

Ключевые слова: языковая стилизация, архаичный текст, языковые параллели, книжный язык, славянизмы, семантика текста, литературная речь, метафорический смысл, языковая картина мира

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