

background of poetry in Hebrew is examined. Poems “City of Light”, “Maalot Autumn-2008”, “At the Carnival”, and “VIP National Club” were under analysis. The stylistic devices which most often are met in landscape and city lyrics of Alik Beloglovsky were exposed, kinds of rhyme which the poet uses were analysed. The language composition of these works was under consideration. Perspectives of the further investigation were pointed out.

Keywords: lyrics, Russian-language poetry, composition of the work, poem, metaphor, alliteration, katren, rhyme, epithet, simile, aposiopesis.

UDC 821.163.2–3(09)

Tsocheva N. S.,
assistant,
Shumen University
Episkop Konstantin Preslavski
(Shumen, Bulgaria)

THE IMAGE OF BULGARIA AND THE BULGARIANS IN THE WORKS OF STANISLAV STRATIEV

The Bulgarian mentality

In “Lifestyle and spirituality of our people”, speaking about the historical changes, Ivan Hadgiysky renders account of the unchangeability of people, the preserved traditions under the surface of the historic layers [1, 594]. Stereotypes and prejudices have their periods of rousing and smouldering but they never die away. When Nayden Sheytanov proclaims the Balkan-Bulgarian titanism, Ivan Hadgiysky penetrates in the psychological stimuli and inhibitions of the Bulgarians in search for the “The optimistic theory of our people” [2, 19–119], in order to be under an illusion about his “world historic mission”. He suggests the overcoming of the parochial outlook, the retinence and the narrow-mindedness of the Bulgarians to be achieved via rationality – the Bulgarians deserve more if they succeed in understanding themselves better. The utopian project for overcoming the pragmatism and sober realism of the Bulgarian people via the European commensurations of Boyan Penev could also be reminded – borrowing the best from the other people but even here one could see the idea of the Bulgarian insufficiency mirrored in the “European sufficiency” which will be spoken about decades later by Stanislav Stratiev.

If the projections of “the Bulgarian lifestyle and spirituality” in Bulgaria are considered a part of United Europe, in the context of the national-psychological studies of Ivan Hadgiysky, it will be seen that the Bulgarians continue to search for the projections of their optimism and the contemporary creators keep on developing their ideas of presentability of the Bulgarians in their attempt to understand themselves. Stanislav Stratiev’s texts *Babylonian chronicles* [4] and *Bulgarian green* [5] represent an interesting point of view on the Bulgarian mentality and character through the prism of paradox and absurd. The author raises the issue about the disease – the languishing Bulgarian spirituality, incompetence in managing national life, consequence of the unsolved conflict between traditional and modern identity, between inherent and extrinsic as Stanislav Stratiev puts an emphasis on Bulgarian insufficiency which has turned Bulgaria into “the hypotenuse of The Bermuda Triangle where everything disappears”.

Babylonian Chronicles

The fifty short stories-essays of *Babylonian chronicles* are perceived through the prism of the modern narration technics – as “chapters of a novel with a protagonist (Pascal) with his family, relatives, friends, neighbours, social, political and cultural relations with the surrounding environment (the village); a wide panorama built with scarce text, brimming over with colours, sound and fragrances, pulsing with laughter, wit, now and then with poetry and bright grief or maybe bitter, sceptic, dispiriting; an indirect (denouncing) look at the democracy during the transition” [6].

The text refers indirectly to Borges’s *The Library of Babel* – to the idea of the world, the universe as a library, as branching of the sense in different lives-books-stories; complicated labyrinth through which the author develops his integral view on the world. The main philosophy of life there is Pascal’s, the Bulgarian contemporary, still living in the country, in his isolation from the world: “Everything depends on the point of view” (from his point of view the slaughtering of a pig at Christmas is tradition; from the pig’s point of view this is a real murder).

The author shows the reader around this “giddy net of parallel times” and points the different choices people face searching for the right directions – “a tangle” of approaching and branching times. Pascal and his fellow-villagers believe that they are Babylons; that Asparuh Bulgarians crossed the Danube near Vienna and the Babylons settled here after the peoples had scattered during the building of the unsuccessful tower of Babel. It is clear that God cannot be reached through a tower, they say, another tower should be built and they knock it up with rafters, hurriedly – from its watch-tower one can see far, when the people from the electricity company appear so that the village turn off the “by-passes” of their electrometers... The Babylonian chronicles of Bulgarian life splits up the sense – between the thinking reed “Pascal” (the protagonist’s name can be related to the man as a “thinking reed” by Blaise Pascal) and the village with its pragmatic, traditional stereotypes, stuck in the timelessness of the nonhappening. Pascal “sags, bends, grinds his bones and teeth but he is alive and continues to think, therefore he exists” unlike half of his fellow-villagers who toil to dusk, build houses, run after the livestock and in the evening, at home, have two hundred miligrams of alcohol and go to bed and do not even think of their existence. The Bulgarians get in touch with the world (Europe) in an absurd way, which registers the change which has not happened – the economy relying on the dancing bear in the centre of the village, on the Museum of the hoes, which is inaccessible due to the lack of a bridge which is a subject of European funds – the bridge symbolising the relation to the world, over which the civilisation reaches the village but which finally is not built; the absurd project to import computer specialists to enliven the economy of the village: following the example of Germany, it is necessary to import computer specialists to repair the bridge, to hoe the corn, to cover the road with gravel, the state, on the other hand, will build houses, will open shops, a hospital, a school, a bakery and a stadium for them; the village will be regenerated and its inhabitants will live finally like humans. Stanislav Stratiev presents a reality the Bulgarians have been living in for more than half a century as an absurd reading mater.

The absurds of the Bulgarian reality where come to life established stereotypes and behaviour models featuring the Bulgarian character and mentality, which are demythologized, continue in **Bulgarian green**.

The texts collect the Bulgarians' notion of themselves:

- of “the short sun” of life, of the Bulgarian green, of their lot, of the uniqueness of the sense which slips like sand through a sieve in the attempt to be named;
- of the burden with which a man trudges across the world, of the life which he fills with meaning or wastes going on a wild-goose chase (the meaninglessness);
- of the attempt to define the essence of a man – lost between words and things, between the opportunities to be happy, striving for power or for his own illusions (the fight for kingdoms), for invading, conquering the inaccessible (what he does not possess), not paying attention (not taking notice) or forgetting what he possesses.

The focus is transferred from the philosophical insights about life onto the Bulgarian existence and its nonhappening, born of the inability of the Bulgarians to govern their national life [7]. In an absurd reality the diagnosis is made – the change that does not happen, the melancholy of a people looking for their optimistic theory. A question is raised: What prevents us from being like the others?:

- Is it because Rosencrantz and Guildenstern – the eternal courtiers are alive: the sense of insufficiency of the eternal courtiers to stoop to power, to stoop in front of the icon: with iconlike thinking and consciousness not giving credit for anything but themselves, wrapped with totalitarian layers? The creator is interested in the moment of transformation but he refuses to tell stories or to present the other side of the change. In Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Stanislav Stratiev presents that moment through sad-ironic questions which he asks by drawing different cultural layers – pieces of time, characters, ages (Rosencrantz, Guildenstern, GOSR, Galileo Galilei). He bitterly concludes that there will be not change unless the mentality, the character, the servile self-consciousness, the courtiers' behaviour change and give place to that of free thinking people, who have really got rid of the totalitarian overlays in their consciousness and life.

- Is it because we live in other times? That question sounds in *An Orange Clockwork*, which seems to be a transformation of *A Clockwork Orange* by Anthony Burgess, insight into the transformation of man into a mechanical toy with a clock spring wound up by God, by the social machine – in the depersonalizing system in the contemporary matrix. Stanislav Stratiev highlights the idea of Bulgarian life, closed in the mythological cycle of timelessness – the motif of time which has stopped, of Bulgarian life, stuck in the past: an existence in the historic layers of time in passive voice.

The idea of interdependence of the three layers is replaced by the presence of a single layer – the historic one, a life of changes which do not happen, stuck in the sacrifice of the existence. The lack of any change at all: a standstill, freezing in the non-happening point, a lack of civilization progress; standstill in the *retardation* complex – in the ice age, stone age, overlaid with the absurds of the present day. The Bulgarians are thought through the idea of time, marking the idea of otherness (the difference not as uniqueness but as an absurd).

The national complexes, born of the unsolved conflict between traditional and modern identity are presented by Stanislav Stratiev in a unique way:

- *reatardation* (through standstill in the time matrix despite the small spatial geographical distinctions) and sufferance (sacrifice) in *An Orange Clockwork*;

- *shortage* (insufficiency) – from time immemorial, centuries-old insufficiency which is counterbalanced with imported *European sufficiency* (*Local insufficiencies*);

- waiting and martyrdom (inability to take personal responsibility for the state we are in, relying on someone else to finish the work, relation to the traditional model of dependence (*The world according to Stoyan I and II*); we are sinking because we are OUTSIDE and we keep it dark (*Stoyan and the board*);

- *lack of self-confidence*, lack of faith in their own abilities – the *loser of all time is Stoyan* (*Stoyan and the elections*) and there is no salvation;

- “the Bulgarian contribution” to the world practice in solving problems: ignoring the problem; to sink up to the neck in it, living and looking for the perpetrator of the situation – fastening the responsibility on the others (*Solving problems*). Thus we come to the definition of life – *Life – reason to search for culprits*;

- *the separation* – the diagnosis “everything separates us” (*Growing wild for a second time*);

- *the sense of dependence*, the sense of servility – to believe in icons, in totalitarian truths; a new connotation of the notion *intelligence*, related to the concept of the suited man who does not ask questions, does not cross limits;

- profanation of speech, demagogy, ramble between words and things. According to Stratiev the failure starts with the language: “We breath words. Drink words... Claptrap. Nonsense... Behind words is vacuum. Nothing. Desert... Bouquets of syllables. Prosperity of nouns. Hope of consonants. Word pyramids... But what if they want a deed behind each word?” (*The discreet charm of credit millionaires*);

- *lack of responsibility* – “we write on sand” (*What does it mean*) and as a result *everything disappears* like the Bermuda Triangle (*The Bulgarian hypotenuse*);

- we know more about the foreigners than we do about ourselves – “when I see that I have nothing to eat in the morning I realise I am not American”. (*Gone with the wind*);

- the unlearned is the weapon (*The deep constants*);

- the final stage which a nation at the end of 20th century can reach – “Ducks graze mind”. When ducks start grazing mind, the nation falls apart and disappears. When the mind disappears, the mutual destruction begins and eventually – the stone axe...

At last we come to the question: “Where is the salvation?” and the sad conclusion – there is no salvation – honest people go to prison, they are protected there, whereas the criminals are free to commit crimes.

In order to present the absurds of the Bulgarian reality, Stratiev uses the principle of demythologization of established stereotypes, known since the Renaissance. The author deals with confirmed mental images and stereotypes, established during our millennial development in order to present our destructive essence – Botev (*Patriot*), Khan Asparuh crossed the Danube and said: “Bulgaria will be here”, the Bulgarian ideologeme about Bulgaria – paradise land, which is also in the Bulgarian anthem, sign of the Bulgarian

state system (transformation of paradise into hell). The paradise images are used – the garden, sign of harmony, bliss and nonchalance, is transformed into desert (space of trials, lack, nonlife). Like a topos-stereotype in the Bulgarian consciousness is established the notion Slavic *soul* with its enigma, spirituality (mysteriousness, religiousness, great sorrow) unlike Faust's soul (the west). Even B. Penev raises the issue of *stereotypes* as “*our deep knowledge about the world related to the idiosyncrasies of the respective culture and mentality, with the originality and the typology of the respective other*”. Hence it could be claimed that Stratiev builds a stereotypical image of Bulgaria which he bases on man's love for home land, which is demythologized, though – love and spirituality are absent, only the sinking in pragmatism of a world where the Slavic soul has disappeared, there is no soul – there is money, whereas the love for the native land is transformed into a desire for another identity – everything is being exported and as a result the paradise land is being transformed into a desert.

Thus we come to the sad ironical conclusion about the Bulgarian essence in *Bulgarian Samurai* (*Scrawl* prose) from the point of view of the opposition inherent-extrinsic with the hope for positive change – the Bulgarian has got acquainted and achieved himself:

*We are a country of Samurai.
The samurai on the Balkans,
At first we were the Belgians on the Balkans,
Then we were the Prussians on the Balkans,
Now we are the Samurai.
May be one day we will be
The Bulgarians on the Balkans.*

Literature

1. Hadgiysky Iv. Lifestyle and spirituality / Iv. Hadgiysky. – Sofia : East-West, 2002. – V. 1. – 594 p.
2. Hadgiysky Iv. An optimistic theory about our people / Iv. Hadgiysky // The Moral Map of Bulgaria. – Sofia : East-West, 2008. – P. 19–119.
3. Penev B. Our intelligence / B. Penev // Zlatorog. – Sofia, 1924. – V. – B. 1.
4. Stratiev S. Babylonian chronicles / S. Stratiev. – Plovdiv : Janet-45, 2000.
5. Stratiev S. Bulgarian green / S. Stratiev. – Plovdiv : Janet-45, 2011.
6. Mishev G. An absurd reading of the reality we live in / G. Mishev // Literature forum. – 2000. – 28.11–04.12. – Issue 14 (437).
7. Petrova M. Traditional and modern identity and the Bulgarian national character [Electronic resource] / M. Petrova // Psychology and Journal. – Mode of access : http://psychologyjournalbg.com/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=145&Itemid=64.

Summary

In the context of the national-psychological study of Ivan Hadgiysky on “Bulgarian lifestyle and spirituality” the present text searches for the particularity in presenting the Bulgarian mentality and character in the works of the contemporary Bulgarian writer Stanislav Stratiev *Babylonian Chronicles* and *Bulgarian Green*; through the prism of paradox and absurd the author raises the issue about the disease – the languishing Bulgarian spirituality, incompetence in managing national life, consequence of the unsolved conflict between traditional and modern identity, between inherent and extrinsic as Stanislav Stratiev puts an emphasis on Bulgarian insufficiency which has turned Bulgaria into “the hypotenuse of The Bermuda Triangle where everything disappears”. On the way to United Europe the contemporary creators continue to develop their ideas for presentability of the Bulgarians in their attempt to understand themselves.

Keywords: inherent – extrinsic, traditional – modern identity, stereotype, mentality, paradox, absurd.

Анотация

В контекста на народопсихологичните изследвания на Иван Хаджийски върху “бита и душевността на българина” настоящият текст търси спецификата при представянето на българската менталност и характер в текстовете на съвременния български писател Станислав Стратиев “Вавилонска хроника” и “Българско зелено” – през призмата на парадокса и абсурда Авторът тематизира болестта – залиняване на духовността у българина, неумение за управление на националния живот, следствие неразрешения конфликт между традиционна и модерна идентичност, между *свое и чуждо* – като Станислав Стратиев поставя акцент върху българската недостатъчност, превърнала България в “хипотенузата на Бермудския триъгълник, в която всичко изчезва”.

Ключови думи: свое-чуждо, традиционна – модерна идентичност, стереотип, менталност, парадокс, абсурд

Аннотация

В контексте народопсихологических исследований Ивана Хаджийского “Быт и душевность болгаров” статья ищет специфику представления болгарской ментальности и характера в произведениях современного болгарского писателя Станислава Стратиева “Вавилонская хроника” и “Болгарское зеленое” – с точки зрения парадокса и абсурда. Писатель рассматривает потерю духовности у болгарского народа, неспособность управлять национальной жизнью из-за неразрешенного конфликта между традиционной и современной идентичностью, между своим и чужим. Стратиев фокусируется на болгарской недостаточности из-за которой Болгария превратилась в “гипотенузу Бермудского треугольника, где все исчезает”.

Ключевые слова: свое-чужое, традиционная-модерная идентичность, стереотип, ментальность, парадокс, абсурд.