

**THE IMAGE-SYMBOLIC SYSTEM
OF THE NOVEL “OBLOMOV”
BY IVAN GONCHAROV**

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This monograph deals with the figurative and symbolic system in the novel “Oblomov” by I. A. Goncharov: it presents different interpretations of the image of Oblomov, demonstrates its complexity, organic combination of the typical and the individual. The author reveals the most significant artistic techniques of creating characters, typical for the novel and for the writer’s individual style in general. The study gives aesthetic characteristics of the novel characters, defines their artistic role and reveals polysemanticism in the novel structure.

The “Supplement” presents a reflective hero in Russian literature and Soviet cinema (from Onegin and Oblomov to Zilov). The characteristic features of the literary type of “superfluous person” are highlighted in N. Mikhalkov’s film “A Few Days from the Life of I. I. Oblomov,” as well as in A. Vampilov’s play “Duck Hunting” and in its film adaptation “Vacation in September,” directed by V. Melnikov.

The monograph is addressed to teachers and pupils, professors and students of philological faculties, as well as to everyone who reads and loves literature.

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INTRODUCTION

The interest in Goncharov's work among both Russian and foreign Slavic scholars has not disappeared with time, but, on the contrary, has been growing. The opinion that Goncharov's artistic world is complex and closed, and that the peculiarities of this world are misunderstood both by contemporary critics and by later philological scholars is increasingly being postulated. Most researchers recognize the need for a more adequate modern reading and comprehension of I. A. Goncharov's creative heritage.

The novel "Oblomov" remains the center of scholarly attention. The disputes that have arisen since the novel's appearance have not faded. They were set off by the articles by N. A. Dobrolyubov "What is Oblomovism?" and by A. V. Druzhinin "'Oblomov', I. A. Goncharov's novel," published in the year of the novel's appearance (1859). Dobrolyubov and his followers see in the characters and conflicts of the novel a social, temporary, transient sense. Druzhinin and his supporters emphasize the universal, eternal, fairy-tale-mythological, and enduring meaning of the novel. The interpretation of Goncharov's novel *Oblomov* and, in particular, of the main character seems to be the most controversial.

Thanks to research in recent years, the understanding of Goncharov's creative evolution has deepened and become more complex. A number of summarizing monographs and articles on the writer's aesthetics and worldview have appeared (works by V. I. Melnik, V. A. Nedzvetsky, E. A. Krasnoshchekova, L. S. Geyro, V. A. Kotelnikov, O. G. Postnov, and V. P. Krivolapov). Goncharov's artistic method, his poetics and stylistics, and some components of his artistic system – his typification principles, the structure of conflict, the temporal and spatial organization, the specificity of citation, the "idyllic" chronotope, etc. (The works of M. V. Otradin, P. E. Bukharkin, E. I. Lyapushkina and A. A. Faustov.)

Despite the fact that the interest in the study of I. A. Goncharov's work has not diminished and there are works that significantly deepen the understanding of the writer and his central novel, the problem of the originality of the artistic image and its structure in the novel "Oblomov" remains underdeveloped.

The present monograph is primarily dedicated to the interpretation of the artistic image, which today is almost the central problem of literary studies. This is due to the comprehensive nature of this "element" of poetics, which determines the nature, form and aesthetic function of literary fiction. The basis of the artistic image is the depiction of human life, presented in an individualized form, but at the same time concluding in itself the generalized beginning, behind which those laws of the life process, which form a certain artistic type are guessed. In other words, when creating artistic images-characters, the categories of *type* and *character* are brought to the forefront. The main

character in the novel “Oblomov” should be considered and studied as an artistic image that combines the features of type and character in equal measure. One must not limit oneself to singling out a general social type (“the psychology of the landlord” or “a superfluous person”), as Dobrolyubov and his followers did, or to identifying only individual character traits (a living soul, heart, conscience), which Druzhinin and his followers preferred. This approach destroys the integrity of the image, since the perception of Ilya Ilyich’s virtues and flaws is possible only in unity: the human drama, on the one hand, is predetermined by the social position of the hero, his upbringing and the behavior of the landlord, and on the other hand, by Oblomov’s moral, philosophical search for the answer to eternal questions about the meaning of existence.

The richness of an image is determined by its polysemantic nature, by the multitude of associative-imaginative connections both within and outside of the text: *“The structure of an image is determined by the reader, expanding or, on the contrary, narrowing the textual base of interpretation”* (Чернец/Chernets, 2003, p. 8). When examining the image of Oblomov its symbolic meaning is also revealed. The category of the symbol in art is close to the category of the image: *“In a broad sense, we can say that a symbol is an image taken in the aspect of its signification, and that it is a sign endowed with all the integrity and inexhaustible multivalency of an image. Every symbol is an image (and every image is at least to some extent a symbol); but the category of a symbol indicates the exit of an image beyond its own limits, to the presence of a certain sense inseparably associated with an image but not identical with it... Passing into a symbol, an image becomes ‘transparent’; meaning ‘transpires’ through it, being given exactly as a semantic depth, a semantic perspective”* (Щемелёва/Shchemeleva, 1987, p. 378). In other words, the semantic structure of a symbol is polysemantic. The interpretation of the symbol is designed for the active inner work of the reader, because the main feature of symbols is that they arise not only in the texts where we find them, but also go back to the ancient ideas about the world, to myths, rituals, literary and historical texts.

The symbolic nature of the image of Oblomov is manifested in its archetypal features, reflecting the Slavic (Russian) picture of the world. With the help of artistic details (*color, light, road, river, abyss, cliff, house, food, plants*), actualizing the symbolic meaning and interconnected in the system of the novel, the author creates and reveals the artistic images of the characters.

The concepts of “system” and “structure” are important in the monograph. When studying the figurative and symbolic system of the novel “Oblomov,” we consider the totality of elements (images, concepts, symbols), which are in relations and connections between each other and form a certain integrity, unity, i. e. the system. The interaction between the elements that make up the system is expressed by the structure, which results in a holistic system qualities that its elements do not possess. The

interdependence and interconnection of all components of the text make it possible to create an artistic image. Such an approach to the analysis of the artistic image in the novel of I. Goncharov allows us to get as close as possible to understanding the author's picture of the world and of a person, underlying the work and organizing it into a single structural and semantic whole, into a single system.

In modern philology, *“the image is interpreted as an indivisible unity of the general, the particular and the singular, as the reproduction of objects in their integrity... The general properties of the artistic image can be confidently attributed to the generalization contained in it (the terms are usually used for its designation: typical, characteristic); expressiveness (i. e. expression in the very structure of the image, the author's ideological and emotional attitude towards the object) and multivalence”* (Чернец/Chernets, 2003, p. 4).

When interpreting the literary concept “character image,” when characterizing the categories “type” and “character” we relied on the works of M. Bakhtin, G. Gachev, Y. Mann, P. Pustovoit, V. Toporov, L. Chernets, M. Epstein. When studying the concepts of “concept” and “symbol” – the works of A. Potebny, S. Averintsev, A. Losev, Y. Lotman, D. Likhachev, S. Askoldov, Y. Stepanov, V. Maslova.

The content of each of the three chapters of the monograph is determined in accordance with the highlighted components of the artistic image. The first chapter examines diametrically opposite interpretations of Oblomov's image in the critical literature of the 19th and 20th centuries, and also studies I. Goncharov's method of creating an artistic image, which is explained in detail in the writer's critical articles. It also reveals and comprehends typical and individual features of the image of the main character in the novel “Oblomov.” The second chapter reveals the image of Oblomov not only through the portrait, everyday life, behavior, speech, but also through comparing and opposing with other characters of the novel: Andrey Stoltz, Olga Ilyinskaya, Agafia Pshenitsina. The task of the third chapter is to identify figurative details-symbols, expressed by lexemes with semantics of color, light, road, river, abyss, cliff, house, food, plants, revealing the artistic image, helping to understand the idea of the work more deeply. The study of the symbolism of Goncharov's novel Oblomov has not yet been the subject of a special study. Separate articles on the theme of the house and light have been published (See Пырков/Pyrkov, 1998, 2000), as well as on the motif of “food” in the novel (See Краснова/Krasnova, 2000). But as lexemes-symbols, complementary and creating an artistic image (that is, being in the structure of the artistic image), the named figurative details have not been considered by anyone. In the final part the conclusions about the structural unity of the artistic image in Goncharov's novel “Oblomov,” which helps to reveal the main idea and shows the close relationship of existence and everyday life, eternal and temporal, social and psychological, tragic and comic are drawn.

CHAPTER 1.

THE ARTISTIC STRUCTURE OF OBLOMOV'S IMAGE

1.1. On the problem of Oblomov's image interpretation

Ivan Goncharov's novel "Oblomov" (1859) has remained the focus of academic attention for already 160 years. The disputes that arose with the appearance of the novel do not fade. Primarily, the identity of the novel's main character is being argued: whether he is positive or negative, and, if he is both positive and negative, then what the reason for this duality might be. Critics are uncertain what literary type to assign the protagonist of the novel to: whether he is the type of a country squire, similar to Gogol's country squires from "Dead Souls" (a lot of common features are found in Oblomov and Manilov); or whether he is the type of a "superfluous man" who culminates the gallery of Onegin, Pechorin, Belto, Rudin; or whether he is a national, all-Russian type similar to the character of Russian folktales Emelya and the hero of folk epics Ilya Muromets; or whether he is a ubiquitous type similar to Don Quixote, Hamlet, Prince Myshkin (and here we mean not resemblance, not a typical character, but the symbolism of the hero and the novel in general). Hence the ambiguity of the concept of "Oblomovism": whether it is a local, national, Russian phenomenon, or a global, universally human one; whether it is limited to the time frame of Russian life during the period of serfdom, or whether it is a timeless phenomenon, in which case a national archetype should be referred to.

Some critics, following Vissarion Belinsky and Nikolay Dobrolyubov, point out such a peculiarity of Goncharov the writer as the absence of an explicit authorial attitude to the world depicted: *"Mr. Goncharov draws his figures, characters, scenes primarily to satisfy his need and enjoy his ability to draw; he leaves his readers to speak and judge and derive moral consequences from them"* (Белинский/Belinsky, 1956, p. 312); I. Goncharov *"does not draw and, apparently, does not want to draw any conclusions"* (Добролюбов/Dobrolyubov, 1991, p. 36). The absence of an explicit authorial attitude toward the characters and events leads to various interpretations of the novel. Thus, M. V. Otradin notes: *"The question: what is the reason for Oblomov's apathy, his skepticism towards 'external' life? – was posed again and again. The answers offered by Russian critics were on different planes: sociological, philosophical, moral-psychological or even purely physiological"* (Отрадин/Otradin, 1991, p. 11).

N. A. Dobrolyubov's article "What is Oblomovism?" (1859) is an important stage in the critical comprehension of Goncharov's novel. Throughout the nineteenth and twentieth centuries readers perceived "Oblomov" according to N. A. Dobrolyubov, who saw in the novel a depiction of the decay of serfdom Russia, and in the main character – *"our indigenous folk type"* (Добролюбов/Dobrolyubov,

1991, p. 41), embodying laziness, inaction and stagnation of the serfdom system. N. A. Dobrolyubov is primarily interested in “Oblomovism,” so the critic focuses not on the individual, but on the typical features of the hero; the social is more important here than the personal. Oblomov is first and foremost a “barin” (rural aristocrat), and it is precisely this “rural aristocratism,” that is, life at the expense of others, which leads the hero to inactivity, helplessness and apathy. This brings Oblomov closer to the preceding “superfluous” heroes of Russian literature: Onegin, Pechorin, Belto, Rudin, who “see no purpose in life and find no decent activity” (*idem*, p. 47). “Oblomovism,” i. e. gentry’s inactivity and dreaminess, according to N. A. Dobrolyubov, “puts an indelible stamp of idleness, freeloading and utter uselessness in the world” (*idem*, p. 61) on Onegin, Pechorin, Belto, Rudin, Oblomov. Therefore, the critic calls for a “merciless judgment,” for the removal of the “halo of exclusivity” from the “superfluous people” and for the adoption of the “type of a doer” as an ideal.

N. A. Dobrolyubov, who unites all the “Oblomovs” by their external features – laziness, quasi-profound verbiage, idleness, apathy – does not speak about the inner world of the hero, which distinguishes Oblomov from others and makes him one of the few, and namely this fact was brought to attention by the critic A. V. Druzhinin, who sharply disagreed with N. A. Dobrolyubov and wrote in the same year (1859) the article “‘Oblomov.’ A Novel by I. A. Goncharov,” where he pointed out, in particular, that “it is impossible to know Oblomov and not to love him deeply” (Дружинин/Druzhinin, 1991, p. 112). A. V. Druzhinin saw a “bad” Oblomov, “almost disgusting,” lying on the sofa, arguing with Zakhar – in the first part of the novel, and a “good” Oblomov, “touching,” “deep,” “likeable,” “in love,” crying “over the ruins of his happiness” – in the second part. It is not the social essence of Oblomovism that is important to A. V. Druzhinin, but rather the true living poetry and the folk life, which are tightly connected in the novel. In Oblomovism the critic singles out both the negative and the poetic, the comic and the sad. N. A. Dobrolyubov categorically refused to notice anything in Oblomov except his “utter worthlessness”; for N. A. Dobrolyubov Ilya Ilyich is “repulsive in his nothingness” (Добролюбов/Dobrolyubov, 1991, p. 58). A. V. Druzhinin holds Oblomov dear as a “weirdo” and a “child” unprepared for adult practical life: “It is not good in the land where there are no kind and incapable of evil weirdos like Oblomov! Such people are sometimes harmful, but very often likeable and even reasonable” (Дружинин/Druzhinin, 1991, p. 122). Oblomov “is dear to us as a man of his land and his time, as a kind and gentle child, [...] we like him as a weirdo, who in our era of self-love, subterfuge and untruth peacefully ended his life without offending any person, without deceiving any person, without teaching any person anything improper” (*idem*, p. 125). Druzhinin’s point of view on the novel and the protagonist

was not as popular in the 19th century as N. A. Dobrolyubov's interpretation of the novel.

D. I. Pisarev in his article "I. A. Goncharov's Novel 'Oblomov'" (1859) highlighted that the novel "belongs to all centuries and peoples," but it is especially significant for the Russian society. The critic saw in the apathy of the hero something similar to Byronism, but he particularly pointed out the fact that Oblomov is a man of the transition era, who cannot step resolutely from the old Russian life into the European one. In the new European life, according to D. I. Pisarev, there is no place for the dreamer Oblomov; it will be the world of thought and labor, the world of Stoltz and Olga. In the articles written two years later, D. I. Pisarev would speak negatively about the novel "Oblomov," calling it a slander of Russian life. The change of D. I. Pisarev's opinion is bound up with the sharp negative appraisal of I. A. Goncharov and his novel by A. I. Herzen who in the article "The Superfluous People and Zhelcheviki (caustic people)" (1860) did not agree with N. A. Dobrolyubov, refusing to include Oblomov into the gallery of true and authentic "superfluous people," which he considered to be himself and his comrades, the best people of the 1830s and 1840s, who did not manage to make the most of their lives because of political reaction. M. A. Protopopov also wrote about it in his article "Goncharov" (1891): "*For Onegin, Pechorin, Beltov and Rudin [...] the course of their lives lay in involuntary inaction, while Oblomov believed all his happiness in inaction. [...] It is impossible to place next to each other people whose ideals of happiness are diametrically opposed. Oblomov, dying on three featherbeds from the paralysis that befell him because of gluttony and immobility, and, for example, Rudin, dying with a banner in his hand on the paving stones of Paris*" (Протопопов/Protopopov, 1991, p. 195).

The critic N. D. Akhsharumov in his article "Oblomov Goncharov's Novel" (1860) noted that there is no essential difference between Stoltz's labour and Oblomov's inactivity, because Stoltz works for his personal benefit and comes to the same Oblomovism. N. D. Akhsharumov concludes that such a "European" "Stoltzev's" life, as it is presented in the novel, cannot attract a Russian man (Ахшарумов/Akhsharumov, 1991).

Ap. Grigoryev shared M. F. de Poulet's opinion that Oblomov is a poet and a people's poet and that, if he were not a poet, he would not die (Григорьев/Grigoryev, 1967, p. 335). For Ap. Grigoryev the important thing about Oblomov is his connection to the national soil and the fact that Oblomovka is a literary embodiment of the national sources of Russian life, which give strength to love, live and think (*idem*, p. 327).

"Soil" ideas are also reflected in Y. N. Govorukha-Otrok's article "I. A. Goncharov" (1892). The critic interprets Oblomovka as a country of "traditions" where there is no spiritual movement but there is spiritual life. Thanks to folk and

Christian sources, Oblomov possesses love and spiritual beauty, “*but his soul is not awakened, it is tormented by the need for active love – and does not know where to find the satisfaction of this need*” (Говоруха-Отрок/Govorukha-Otrok, 1991, p. 209). For a “correct understanding of Oblomov’s type” Govorukha-Otrok proposes “*to correct Goncharov, [...] to completely eliminate the trait of physical illness in the character he (Goncharov) created*” (*idem*, p. 206).

On the basis of the fact that the hero lives his dreams and poetic experiences rather than everyday real life, it was suggested more than once in the 19th and 20th centuries that Oblomov is just a mentally ill, mentally unhealthy person, that I. A. Goncharov creates an almost clinical picture of Oblomov’s neuropathy (see Отрадин/Otradin, 1991; Пиксанов/Piksanov, 1952; Разумихин/Razumikhin, 2004).

Innokenty Annensky in his article “Goncharov and His Oblomov” (1892) urges not to “ *dwell on the question, what type Oblomov is. Negative or positive?*” (Анненский/Annensky, 1991, p. 226). The critic attributes this question to the “school-market” type, with “sticking labels” on the literary characters by a conspicuous trait. I. F. Annensky thinks that the definition “a type of a sluggard – Oblomov” established in school practice neither reflects nor reveals the artistic image of Oblomov. The researcher sympathizes with Oblomov: “*Why does not his (Oblomov’s) passivity produce an impression of bitterness or shame on us? Look at what is opposed to Oblomov’s laziness: the career, secular vanity, petty chicanery or cultural and commercial activity of Stoltz. Cannot one feel in Oblomov’s robe and couch the denial of all these attempts to solve the question about life?*” (*idem*, pp. 227–228). Analyzing the text, the critic highlights such qualities of Oblomov as honesty, humanity, kindness, decency. I. F. Annensky sees in Stoltz not a “man of action” of the Russian life, but a “dealer.” This assessment of Stoltz’s activities had become commonplace by the end of the 19th century: “*Practicality without an ideal element, without an ideological basis, is the same Chichikovism, no matter how aesthetically colored it might be*” (Протопопов/Protopopov, 1991, p. 203). A. P. Chekhov spoke negatively about Stoltz: “*Stoltz does not inspire any confidence in me. The author says that he is a great guy, but I don’t believe him. He is a sheer rogue, thinking very well of himself and self-satisfied*” (Чехов/Chekhov, 1976, pp. 201–202). In the diary entry of year 1921, Prishvin considers the confrontation between Stoltz and Oblomov as a moral and philosophical problem of national importance: “*No ‘positive’ activity in Russia can withstand the criticism of Oblomov: his tranquility conceals a demand for a higher value, for such an activity for which it is worth losing tranquility. It cannot be otherwise in the country where any activity aimed at improving one’s existence is accompanied by a sense of wrongdoing, and only the activity in which the personal is completely merged with the cause for others can be opposed to Oblomov’s tranquility*” (Пришвин/Prishvin, 1969, pp. 233–234).

At the turn of the 19th and 20th centuries, critics developed an interest in Goncharov as an artist and in the issues of his novel poetics. I. Annensky singles out such peculiarities of Oblomov's poetics as the prevalence of pictorial, visual elements over aural and musical ones, description over narration. Hence the exceptional imagery of Goncharov's word (Анненский/Annensky, 1991, pp. 211–212). D. S. Merezhkovsky was one of the first to regard I. A. Goncharov as a symbolist artist, paying attention to the symbolism of his realism in the article "The Outset of New Idealism in the Works of Turgenev, Goncharov, Dostoyevsky and Lev Tolstoy": "*Goncharov possesses, together with Gogol, the greatest capacity for symbolism among all our writers. Each of his works is an artistic system of images, below which an inspirational thought is hidden. The characters are only part of the whole, ...only a series of symbols necessary for the poet to elevate the reader from the contemplation of the private phenomenon to the contemplation of the eternal... It is not the contrast between such types... as the dreamy Oblomov and the active Stoltz the purest and, moreover, involuntary, deeply real symbolism*" (Мережковский/Merezhkovsky, 1990, p. 542). Here the term "symbolism" can be interpreted in different ways. Firstly, as a deliberate desire to conceal in an artistic image the idea, the author's thought; secondly, as an artistic direction; thirdly, as an opportunity to convey in words, forms, structures a specific meaning, which needs to be realized, disclosed while reading the work.

V. E. Maksimov, V. I. Chuyko and V. G. Korolenko also wrote about Goncharov's penchant for image-symbols during this period (see Отрадин/Otradin, 1991). Thus, I. A. Goncharov was no longer regarded only as an outstanding writer of humdrum daily life. There were distinguished in Oblomov not only the traits characteristic of Russian people, but also the traits of universal human types, such as Hamlet and Don Quixote, especially since these parallels were suggested in the novel by I. A. Goncharov himself. The essence of Oblomov's destiny acquired universal traits, not limited by the specific historical framework.

In his "First Speech in Memory of Dostoyevsky" (1881) Vladimir Solovyov spoke of the power of Goncharov's artistic generalization: "*It is the power of artistic generalization which enabled him to create such an all-Russian type as Oblomov, the breadth of which we would not find in any other Russian writer.*" In the footnote V. S. Solovyov clarified his thought: "*In comparison with Oblomov the Famusovs and the Molchalins, the Onegin and the Pechorins, the Manilovs and the Sobakevich, not to mention Ostrovsky's characters, all have only special significance*" (Соловьёв/Solovyov, 1990, p. 170).

Not all critics regard Oblomov as a national type embodying the Russian mentality. Thus, K. F. Golovin contrasted Oblomov with Peter the Great, believing that the strong-willed Peter is a more faithful representative of his people than the lazy

Oblomov (Отрадин/Otradin, 1991, p. 19). However, more often Oblomov was regarded as a national type, especially as it is known that I. A. Goncharov himself thought that his novel would be more understandable to a Russian person, as purely Russian problems were addressed in it (Гончаров/Goncharov, 1980, p. 471). V. V. Rozanov wrote in the year of the 25th anniversary of Goncharov's death: "*One cannot mention a Russian person without recalling Oblomov. [...] That 'Russian essence', which is called a Russian soul, a Russian element [...] acquired under Goncharov's pen one of the greatest self-awarenesses, the outlines of itself, the interpretations of itself, the reflections on itself. [...] 'Here is our intelligence', 'here is our character', 'here is the resume of Russian history'*" (Отрадин/Otradin, 1991, p. 19).

The diametrically opposite interpretations of Oblomov and Oblomovism also persisted in the twentieth century. At the turn of eras, in the period of world wars and revolutions, against the background of apocalyptic gloomy prophecies, the patriarchal Oblomovka seemed an apologia of peace, tranquility and unchanging stability.

During the Soviet period of Russian history, N. A. Dobrolyubov's point of view dominated. The literary character Oblomov became more and more a nominal figure, embodying laziness and inaction. Yet, there were also works that argued that the image of Oblomov should not be simplified. For example, N. I. Prutskov in his book "The Mastery of Goncharov the Novelist" (1962) showed the continuity of Gogol's school in Goncharov's works and noted that the comic portrayal of Oblomov reveals a tragic face.

In the years referred to as "stagnant," A. V. Druzhinin's point of view on the novel became relevant again. Ilya Ilyich was perceived as a "positively wonderful person" who had expressed by his life position and destiny "*a credo of non-action in the conditions of a deplorable reality*" (Краснощёкова/ Krasnoshchyokova, 1970, p. 151). "*Behind Oblomov's inactivity,*" wrote E. Krasnoshchyokova, "*there is not only natural laziness, nurtured since childhood dependency, but also apathy – the result of an intelligent and honest man's disappointment at the very possibility of real activity*" (*idem*, 1970, pp. 38–39). According to E. A. Krasnoshchyokova: "*In Oblomov Goncharov, following Gogol, denounces not so much a personality but a human type*" (*idem*, 1970, p. 11). The critic saw in Oblomov an "outer man" (the first part of the novel) and an "inner man," a mask and a face, the "bad" and the "good," a hidden "living soul" behind the image of a "vulgar man."

In the 1970s, Nikita Mikhalkov presented a sentimental interpretation of the central image of I. A. Goncharov's novel in the film "A Few Days from the Life of I. I. Oblomov." Already in the very title of the film, including the initials of the hero, the director focuses on the fact that Oblomov has a name, that he is a personality, thus breaking the established perception: "Oblomov – Oblomovism." There are no scenes

of guests coming to Oblomov's house, and the hero's lifeline at Agafia Pshenitsina's is also omitted. For N. S. Mikhalkov it was important to show a pure, honest, kind soul of a Russian man, whose breadth corresponds to the vast expanses of patriarchal Russia, which does not keep up with the world of fashion, progress, civilization, but which preserves the moral laws of life in the traditions and culture of its people. Proponents of N. A. Dobrolyubov's point of view accused N. S. Mikhalkov of poetizing the serf owner Oblomov and noted: the film is dominated by unmotivated admiration for the hero, decorativeness and untruth, superficial beauty opposing beauty (Рассадин/Rassadin, 1980).

A true apologia for the "imperfect" but wonderful and alive person Oblomov and for the defenseless, charming, idyllic Oblomovka can be found in Yu. M. Loshits book Goncharov (1977). The critic defines Goncharov's method as mythological realism and identifies the following strata in Oblomov: of fairy-tale folklore (Russian epos), of ancient books (biblical stories) and specifically literary (parallels with "Faust," "Don Quixote" and "Hamlet"). According to Yu. M. Loshits, Oblomov is Emelya, Ilya Muromets, Don Quixote and Hamlet. Stoltz, on the other hand, is a tempter demon, Mephistopheles, representing the activity of "dead-active" hoarders and the vanity of life, which destroys the Oblomovka Eden (Лошиц/Loshits, 1977, pp. 168–193).

The critic V. A. Nedzvetsky continues the line of E. A. Krasnoshchyokova and Yu. M. Loshits, considering that the opinion of "Oblomov's" author about the main character is expressed in the words of Stoltz: *"This is a crystal, transparent soul; such people are few; they are rare; they are pearls in the crowd"* (Недзвецкий/Nedzvetsky, 1996, p. 30). V. A. Nedzvetsky defines "Oblomov" as a novel about different kinds of love. The critic writes that *"love for Goncharov is the principal source of being, and not only that of individual, but also of familial and societal, even of natural and cosmic"* (idem, p. 31), *"love is not limited to the happiness of the lovers, but humanizes other relationships of people, up to those of social classes"* (idem, p. 32). The union of Olga and Stoltz is doomed precisely because it is *"self-contained and devoid of humanizing social ideals"* (idem, p. 34). The critic draws a conclusion that *"as the work develops, Goncharov's very hope of creating an image of a harmonious man and the similar love on the material of contemporary reality was a utopia... The main reason for the drama depicted in the novel shifts from Ilya Ilyich, who in the end preferred idyllic peace to eternal movement, to a spiritless and soulless social reality that 'is no good anyway'"* (idem, p. 34).

The researcher V. I. Melnik in his work "The Realism of I. A. Goncharov" (1985) challenged the point of view expressed by E. A. Krasnoshchyokova, Yu. M. Loshits and V. A. Nedzvetsky. He believes that it is impossible to regard I. A. Goncharov as a writer who idealizes Oblomov and simultaneously to relegate the problem of "Oblomovism" to the background, as not being important in the evaluation

of the hero and, therefore, not influencing the definition of the whole spectrum of problems of the novel, *“otherwise, one can come to a wrong one-sided conclusion, to the justification of Oblomov, to the apologization of the spiritual values of the supposedly idyllic Oblomovka”* (Мельник/Melnik, 1985, p. 11). V. I. Melnik defines Goncharov’s method as “synthetic,” that is, in the writer’s novels he sees an organic interrelation of the eternal and the modern, the philosophical and the everyday, the moral and the social: *“The strength of Goncharov’s realism lies precisely in the dialectical approach to the subject of representation, based on historicism in showing how complexly, contradictorily, sometimes dramatically, but always inseparably, interpenetratingly is intertwined in the human personality the ‘eternal’, the ‘natural’ – and the socially determined”* (idem, p. 10); *“the novelist, proceeding from contemporary social problems, rises to raising ‘eternal’ moral questions; the social and the moral in this work are inextricably linked, interdependent”* (idem, p. 13). In his work V. I. Melnik tries to show the “mechanism” of this interaction in the artistic fabric of the novel “Oblomov,” dwelling on the philosophical motifs and the genesis of artistic images in Goncharov’s work (from the “superfluous man” type to Hamlet and Don Quixote).

At the height of “perestroika” there was published an article by V. Kantor “The Extended Skill of Sleeping” (1989), in which the author criticized Yu. M. Loshits and N. S. Mikhalkov for the apologia for Oblomov, denouncing the “upbringing and way of life” that ruined the “noble man” Oblomov. The idyll of Oblomovka, according to V. Kantor, is parasitic; it is the cult of the dead. Because of the habit of sleeping and the rejection of any spiritual labor, the man is doomed. “Oblomov” is a novel-warning for Russia. In Stoltz Kantor sees a “new man,” urged to guarantee Russia’s bright future (Кантор/Kantor, 1989).

V. N. Krivolapov in his article “Once Again on ‘Oblomovism’” (1994) continued V. I. Melnik’s ideas, noting that Ilya Ilyich’s virtues and faults live only in unity, that I. A. Goncharov *“was able to discern in ‘Oblomovism’ both what is worthy of poetization and what deserves to be denounced. And not only to discern, but also to implement it artistically, so that the first is not able to live without the second”* (Криволапов/Krivolapov, 1994, p. 47). Let us highlight the critic’s thought that merely the idea itself without its artistic refraction has no meaning in literature.

In the 21st century the debates have not ceased; some still defend Oblomov while others criticize him. V. I. Kholkin in his article “The Russian Man Oblomov” (2000) defines I. A. Goncharov’s novel as a sensual-philosophical work; *“it is not types and characters that act in it, but it is soul, mind and flesh that live there; it is filled to the brim with confessions of love”* (Холкин/Kholkin, 2000, p. 27). A. V. Romanova sees in Oblomov’s inaction an act of opposition to the advancing progress (in its inhuman hypostasis) (Романова/Romanova, 2002, p. 70). A. Razumikhin in his article

“‘Oblomov’ The Experience of Modern Perusal” (2004), on the contrary, gives the “sick” Oblomov a clinical diagnosis: neurotic. A man can afford not to act, but humanity cannot: *“The book is about what awaits a people not willing to wake up”* (Разумихин/Razumikhin, 2004). Razumikhin compares Oblomov to Mitrofanushka, who did not want to study or work, but lived at the expense of others: *“How convenient it is not to know anything, and not to see that because of excitement, running, begging at benches, sleeplessness Agafia Matveyevna has lost weight, and her eyes have sunken in. What to call this: holy simplicity, or utter egoism?”* (ibidem). A. Ranchin in his article “What is Oblomovka?” (2006) ascends his critique of Oblomov to its climax, saying that *“Oblomov possessed not only inherent laziness and rural aristocratism, but also inexplicable, unmotivated cruelty”* (Ранчин/Ranchin, 2006, p. 30), he gives the example of Oblomov the child who killed a dragonfly, a spider and a fly. According to A. Ranchin, Oblomovka’s idyll is not poetic, but parodic and ugly.

Summarizing these points of view, we may conclude that the interpretation of Goncharov’s novel “Oblomov,” especially of the main character, seems to be the most controversial. Oblomov is an integral artistic image, the unambiguous interpretation of which leads to the simplification of the message of the novel. We can agree with the opinion of V. N. Krivolapov, who wrote: *“When it came to the image of Oblomov, the efforts of critics to understand its structure inevitably diverted to its (structure’s) simplification. The comprehension of the phenomenon was implemented while its rectification. The goals were different (either to debunk Oblomov or to exalt him), the tools used were also different (from categorically declaring ‘untrue’ everything positive about Oblomov to dissecting him into two characters, and the novel into two parts), but the main method remained uniform – straightening and simplification, the substitution of ambiguity with unambiguity”* (Криволапов/ Krivolapov, 1994, p. 30).

By constructing the narrative with the help of artistic images, the author expresses his point of view in relation to the depicted, thus revealing the idea of the work. With all the critics’ disagreements about the novel “Oblomov” the only thing they agreed on was the recognition of I. A. Goncharov’s artistic mastery. Thus, V. G. Belinsky pointed out that I. A. Goncharov is keen on his drawing skills. N. A. Dobrolyubov sees the strength of the writer’s talent in *“the ability to capture the full image of an object, to mint it, to sculpt it, ...the tranquility and fullness of his poetic worldview”* (Добролюбов/Dobrolyubov, 1991, p. 35). A. V. Druzhinin draws a parallel between Goncharov’s talent and that of the first-rate painters of the Flemish school (Дружинин/Druzhinin, 1991, p. 108), where artists, using various expressive means, fill the forms of ordinary things with lush colors, making us feel their color, taste, smell. For A. P. Milyukov the author of “Oblomov” is a master, which is confirmed by the “faithfulness of drawing,” “striking vividness of colors,” “nature,” “distinct forms,” but at the same time A. P. Milyukov considers untrue the characters,

ideas, understanding of Russian life in I. A. Goncharov's works (Милюков/Milyukov, 1991). As we have already noted, according to I. Annensky, the peculiarities of I. Goncharov's poetics lie in the predominance of vivid visual elements over auditory, musical ones, descriptions over narratives, hence the exceptional imagery (Анненский/Annensky, 1991, pp. 211–212). N. I. Prutskov wrote that *“Goncharov is a master of precise and plastic reproduction of domestic objects, all sorts of details, poses, gaze, gesture, figures, setting”* (Пруцков/Prutskov, 1962, p. 93). V. A. Nedzvetsky: *“In ‘Oblomov,’ Goncharov’s ability to draw Russian everyday life with picturesque plasticity and tangibility clearly manifested itself”* (Недзвецкий/Nedzvetsky, 1996, p. 38). I. Sukhikh says that I. A. Goncharov belongs to the number of objective, plastic writers, for whom the image (the image-character, landscape, object, detail) means more than the philosophy, thought or idea itself (Сухих/Sukhikh, 2006b, p. 225).

It should be noted that the unity of opinions on Goncharov's picturesque, masterful creation of artistic images is not reflected in the consensus on the main character of the novel “Oblomov.” Ideas, thoughts about the essence of the events and characters of a work of fiction can be conveyed only, or predominantly, in artistic images, in their connections and interactions. Consequently, when critics differently interpret Oblomov, they rather often highlight those traits in the image that support their ideological commitment. Thus, for the revolutionary democrat N. A. Dobrolyubov, Oblomov is a parasitic rural aristocrat (barin), while for the Slavophile Ap. Grigoryev he is a folk poet. If the images are masterfully written, they should fully express the author's ideas. There is a certain contradiction in I. Sukhikh's statement that for I. A. Goncharov the image means more than the idea. How can an image mean more than an idea? In a literary text an idea, a philosophy, a thought are expressed through artistic images. I. A. Goncharov was piqued that he was regarded only as a brilliant writer of everyday life: *“These praises would have been much more valuable to me if in my painting, for which I was especially praised, were found those ideas and generally all that ... fit into the images, pictures and simple, uncomplicated events written by me. Others did not find or did not want to find anything in my images and pictures, but more or less vividly drawn portraits, landscapes, maybe living copies of morals – and nothing more”* (Гончаров/Goncharov, 1980, p. 102). Accurate is N. I. Prutskov's judgment on the peculiarities of I. A. Goncharov's creative manner: *“Every detail in the novelist's artistic system becomes poetically tangible. It gets its own image and weaves harmoniously into the fabric of the novel, serves to reveal ideas and characters”* (Пруцков/Prutskov, 1962, p. 93).

I. A. Goncharov himself explains in detail his own method of creating an artistic image in his critical articles. Thus, in his article “Better Late Than Never” I. A. Goncharov separates and contrasts conscious and unconscious creativity: *“An*

artist thinks in images, – said Belinsky, – and we see it at every step... But how he thinks... Some say consciously, others – unconsciously. I think it is both: it depends on what predominates in an artist – the mind or fantasy and the so-called heart. He works consciously, if his mind is subtle, observant and dominates his fantasy and heart. Then the idea is often expressed apart from the image. And if the talent is not strong, it overshadows the image and becomes a tendency. The mind of these conscious writers completes what the image does not completely tell, and their creations are often dry and incomplete; they address the mind of the reader, talking little to the imagination and emotions. They persuade, teach, and assure, thus hardly affecting. And vice versa – with an excess of imagination and with – relatively less brilliant against the talent – mind the image absorbs the meaning, the idea; the picture speaks for itself” (Гончаров/Goncharov, 1980, pp. 104–105). It is worth noting the importance of the writer’s last-mentioned thought for the interpretation of his work.

I. A. Goncharov refers to himself as an “unconscious” artist who “writes by instinct,” by fantasy, more by heart than by mind. Arguing with the neo-realists who called for abandoning fantasy in art and “taking pictures of nature and life ‘by mind’,” I. A. Goncharov notes: *“These snapshots will never replace the paintings illuminated by the rays of fantasy, full of fire, awe and hot breath. To write artistic works by mind alone is like asking the sun to give only light, but not to have its rays shimmering – in the air, on the trees, on the waters, not to give those colors, tones and tinges of light that convey beauty and brilliance to nature! Is this real? And what is mind in art? It is the ability to create an image. Consequently, in a work of art only the image is clever – and the stricter it is, the cleverer it is. One mind in ten volumes cannot say what is said by a dozen faces in some ‘The Inspector General’”* (Гончаров/Goncharov, 1980, p. 141).

The image is a priority for I. A. Goncharov; it is a primary element in the poetics of the writer, more important than the plot and the architectonics of the work. Goncharov notes: *“Drawing, I seldom know at that moment what my image, portrait, character means: I only see him alive in front of me and watch if I draw him correctly, see him in action with others – hence, I see scenes and draw these others here, sometimes far ahead, according to the plan of the novel, not quite foreseeing yet how all the parts of the whole scattered in my head will be connected together... I always have one image and together the main motif: namely it leads me forward – and on the way I inadvertently grab what comes to hand, that is, what is close to it”* (Гончаров/Goncharov, 1980, p. 105). Since I. A. Goncharov classifies himself as a type of “unconscious” artists, stating that he “always has one image,” hence it is the image in Goncharov’s works that, as he himself understood it, “absorbs in itself the message, the idea.”

The basis of the artistic image is traditionally considered a way of depicting human life, presented in an individualized form, but simultaneously concluding in itself the generalized beginning, behind which are guessed those laws of the life process, which form the people namely of this type. In other words, the categories of *type* and *character* are brought to the forefront when creating artistic images-characters. If type is the manifestation of the general in the individual, then character is, primarily, the individual: “*Type is a social or class concept. Its formation is determined by historical conditions, class relations, everyday circumstances (Gogol’s landlord type, Ostrovskij’s merchant type). But each type has its numerous variations – characters, i. e. more individual formations of human psyche, depending on his or her inner qualities. Gogol and Ostrovskij focused on the portrayal of types; Turgenev and Tolstoy focused on the portrayal of characters*” (Пустовойт/Pustovoyt, 1974, p. 111).

In singling out and distinguishing between the categories of type and character, one should also take into account the theses of M. M. Bakhtin’s work “Author and Hero in Aesthetic Activity.” M. Bakhtin notes: “*The hero from the very beginning is given as a whole [...] everything is perceived as a moment of characterization of the hero, bears a characterological function, everything is reduced and serves to answer the question: who is he*” (Бахтин/Bakhtin, 1979, p. 151). “*If character is set in relation to the latest values of the worldview [...] expresses the cognitive and ethical attitude of a person in the world [...], then type is far from the limits of the world and expresses the attitude of a person in relation to the values already concretized and limited by epoch and environment, to benefits, i. e. to the essence, that has already become existence (in the action of character essence is still becoming existence for the first time). Character is in the past, type is in the present; the character’s environment is somewhat symbolized, the object world around type is inventoried. Type is the passive position of the collective personality*” (*idem*, p. 159). “*Type is not only tightly intertwined with the world around it (the object environment), but is depicted as conditioned by it in all its moments, type is a necessary moment of some environment (not the whole, but only a part of the whole). <...> Type presupposes the author’s superiority over the hero and his complete value noninvolvement in the hero’s world; hence the author could be absolutely critical. The independence of the hero in a type is considerably reduced*” (*idem*, p. 160).

The main character of the novel “Oblomov” should be viewed and studied as an integral artistic image that combines the features of type and character in equal measure. One should not limit oneself to singling out a general social type (“the psychology of a rural aristocrat-landlord” or “a superfluous person”), which was done by N. A. Dobrolyubov and his followers; or determine only individual character traits (a living soul, heart, conscience), which was preferred by A. V. Druzhinin and his followers. This approach gives a rather one-sided interpretation of the image of

Oblomov since the artistic expression of Ilya Ilyich's merits and demerits is possible only as a whole: the human drama, which, on the one hand, is determined by the social status of the hero, his upbringing and the landlord's behavior, and on the other hand – by Oblomov's moral and philosophical quest for the answers to the eternal questions about the essence of existence.

G. M. Fridlender emphasizes that *“Oblomov in Goncharov's novel [...] is an everyday household type, but at the same time a social and psychological one. And simultaneously Oblomov's life story has a philosophical meaning; it poses certain crucial and important moral and historical questions to the reader. In other words, everyday life and psychology, on the one hand, and history, sociology, philosophy, on the other, are inseparable in the subject of depiction with which the realist artist deals”* (Фридлендер/Fridlender, 1980, p. 345). It is the holistic approach to the image that allows to reveal the idea of the work of art and the author's position, to trace and to show the unity of the eternal and the modern, the philosophical and the everyday, the tragic and the comic, the moral and the social in I. A. Goncharov's novel: *“through the image, connecting the subjective with the objective, the essential with the real, the consent of all these opposing spheres of existence, their universal harmony is worked out”* (Эпштейн/Epshteyn, 1987, p. 252).

Not only the typical and individual, but also the writer's ideal is manifested in the artistic image. Fiction strengthens the generalized meaning of the artistic image, which is inseparable from the writer's idea of the ideal, emphasizes in it what helps to support this ideal or contradicts it. Two of I. A. Goncharov's statements about the ideal are of special interest. Thus, in a letter to I. I. Lkhovsky in 1857 he notes: *“It sometimes frightens me that I have not a single type, but all ideals: is it good? Meanwhile, to express my idea I do not need types, they would lead me away from the goal”* (Гончаров/ Goncharov, 1980, p. 244). In a letter to S. A. Nikitenko in 1866 we read: *“I will tell you at last this, which I have never told anyone: from the very minute I began to write for the press... I had one artistic ideal: it is the portrayal of an honest, kind, likeable human nature, a highly idealistic person, struggling all his life, seeking the truth, meeting lies at every turn, being deceived and, finally, cooling down and falling into apathy and powerlessness from the awareness of the weakness of his and others', that is, of human nature in general... But this theme was too vast, I would not have coped with it, moreover, the negative direction had so much overwhelmed all the society and literature (starting with Belinsky and Gogol) that I succumbed to this tendency; instead of a serious human figure, I began to draw particular types, catching only the ugly and ridiculous sides. Not only mine, but no talent would have been enough for that. Shakespeare alone created Hamlet – and Cervantes created Don Quixote – and these two giants absorbed almost everything that is comic and tragic in human*

nature. And we, pygmies, cannot deal with our own ideas – and so we have only hints” (*idem*, pp. 318–319).

There seems to be a contradiction in Goncharov’s words: at times he says that he has no types, but only ideals; then – that he always tried to portray an honest, kind, likeable person, who sought the truth and was disappointed; then – that instead of character he wrote particular types. In our opinion, there is no contradiction here: having organically combined in Oblomov’s image character (individual), type (historically and socially determined generalization) and ideal (timeless, universal generalization, which sometimes in literary criticism is termed a supertype, an eternal image), Goncharov thus expressed his social, historical, philosophical, psychological ideas. That is why Goncharov, on the one hand, enthusiastically accepting N. A. Dobrolyubov’s article on the novel “Oblomov,” wrote that “*the lazy image of Oblomov was the most conspicuous*” (Гончаров/Goncharov, 1980, p. 106), that “*Oblomov was an integral, undiluted image of the multitude, resting in long and undisturbed sleep and stagnation*” (*idem*, p. 117), and on the other hand, in the letter to P. G. Ganzen in 1878 he noted: “*in Oblomov [...] is expressed with love everything that is good in a Russian person*” (*idem*, p. 461).

Of course, the artist’s desire while creating an image may not be fully realized in the work. I. A. Goncharov himself says about himself that he has only “hints”: “*I do not pretend to being deep, I hasten to note: and contemporary critics have already written that I am shallow*” (*idem*, p. 107). Therefore, some critics believe that the typical in the image of Oblomov prevails over the individual, while others, on the contrary, see in Oblomov a “living soul,” and not a type, but an ideal close to supertypes, to the eternal images of Hamlet and Don Quixote. Though Goncharov, like any true artist, has a tendency to doubt the power of his talent, let us note that the author of “Oblomov” is “profound,” and one cannot agree with the critics opting for detaching a single dominating component in the image of Oblomov. The pursuit of limiting the analysis of the text to the abstract social essence of the hero leads to schematism, to the leveling and discoloration of the literary image, and to its emptying out of its individual richness and singularity. On the contrary, focusing attention only on the hero’s individual traits leads to the loss in the image interpretation of historical, social, and temporal components, which are also important in an artistic image. “*The purpose of the image is to transform a thing, to turn it into something else – the complex into the simple, the simple into the complex, but in any case to reach between the two poles the highest semantic tension, to reveal the interpenetration of the most different plans of existence*” (Эпштейн/Epshteyn, 1987, p. 252). It is necessary to consider the unity and interdependence of all the elements of Oblomov’s image on the actual textual material, thus demonstrating that focusing only on one of the elements of Oblomov’s image turns

the image into a scheme, distorts the author's position and leads to the impoverishment of the artistic message and the idea of the work as a whole.

1.2. The unity of *type* and *character* in the structure of Oblomov's image

In order to show the unity of "type" and "character" in the structure of Oblomov's image, it is necessary to examine the artistic techniques used by the author to create the image. One of the dominant techniques in the novel "Oblomov" is the antithesis. In I. A. Goncharov's work the antithesis is multi-staged: in the novel everything is built on comparisons and oppositions. The peculiarity of the antithesis lies in the fact that it conveys not a total disconnection and nonconformity, but paradoxically expresses synthesis, unity.

From the first pages of the novel, when describing the portrait of Oblomov, the author avoids unambiguous interpretations of his character, using modal words "as if," "seemed," "maybe," the negative particles "not," "nor." He does not insist on any definite features of the hero, but describes Oblomov in detail, unhurriedly, ironically and lyrically. The description of the protagonist of the novel is built on the contrast, on the opposition of external and internal: on the one hand, dark gray eyes, lack of idea in the facial features, an expression of fatigue and boredom in the gaze, on the other – a thought walking like a free bird on the face, softness – the dominant and basic expression of not only the face, but the whole soul, which shines openly and clearly in the eyes, in a smile, in movements.

The hero does not live in a large house on Gorokhovaya Street, but lies in bed there: "*In Gorokhovaya Street, in one of the big houses ... in the morning Ilya Ilyich Oblomov was lying in bed in his apartment*" (Гончаров/Goncharov, 1981, p. 3. Hereinafter quotations from the novel are given according to this edition, with the pages in parentheses). Moreover, lying down is the norm: "*Ilya Ilyich's lying down was neither a necessity, like the sick man or the man who wants to sleep, nor an accident, like the tired man, nor a pleasure, like the lazy man: it was his normal state. When he was at home – and he was almost always at home – he was lying down all the time, and all the time in the same room*" (4). And in this case there is no certainty: he is not sick, he is not tired, he is not lazy, but he lies down, this is the way of his existence. The lexical-semantic repetition (lying down) emphasizes his "normal state." The amplifying and separating repetitive particle "all" (he lay all the time, and all the time in the same room) actualizes the continuity of the action. But if the hero is neither sick nor lazy, why does he lie down? Why is it normal for him to do what others think is unnatural?

On the first page of the novel we find two possible views of the hero, which are expressed through the semantic opposition ("a superficially observant, cold man" / "a deeper and more sympathetic person") – a device of contrast: "*And a superficially*

observant, cold man, having looked at Oblomov in passing-by, would say: 'He must be good-natured, a simpleton!' A deeper and more sympathetic person, gazing into his face for a long time, would step back in pleasant reflection, with a smile" (3). Let us pay attention to the definitions of the two people looking at Oblomov. One, a cold person, which indicates his callousness, relying only on facts, observations, but these observations are superficial, that is, he notices what clearly catches his eye. First of all, these are the typical features of the landlord, lazy, unwilling to take care of the affairs of his estate, flabby beyond his years, who lives in the dirt, and dust and resembles the thing itself, like Gogol's landlords: it is not by chance that the noun "folds" is used in the description of the hero's coat and forehead, the coat is soft and supple, like the hero himself. The use of the perfect participle "having looked," expressing the meaning of the briefness and finality of the action with the adverb "passing by" emphasizes the superficiality of the look: passing-by means – neglectful, not stopping to understand and get to the bottom of it, in this way the "cold man" (the reader) draws conclusions. The description of the other person uses the imperfect participle "gazing," which expresses the meaning of incompleteness, duration of action, with the adverb "long," and therefore, attentively, so when defining the second person, the author uses not the dry, close to the scientific term "observant," but the metaphor "the deeper man." In other words, the second person looks long and, accordingly, penetrates deeper into the essence. The "deeper man" also has a second definition, "more sympathetic." What does this mean? To whom is he more sympathetic: to the author, to the narrator, to the reader? And why is he more sympathetic than the first one? In all likelihood, the use of these non-conjugated definitions with emotional-expressive connotations (deeper, more sympathetic) expresses the author's attitude toward the hero. Since he is able to see through the dirt, dust and cobwebs not only the "man-coat" lying on the couch, but also the softness of Oblomov's face, the light of his soul, the "grace of laziness."

The "colder" person expresses his opinion about the hero: "He must be good-natured, a simpleton!" where the very word "simpleton" suggests that to the superficially observant person Oblomov is not complicated, not difficult, easily understandable, a silly hero. "The deeper and more sympathetic man" does not define the protagonist; he does not give his opinion, but withdraws in "pleasant reflection, with a smile." The lexeme "reflection" suggests that the hero is far from being simple and one cannot interpret his appearance unambiguously, especially since contemplation is pleasant, bringing joy, or a smile. The first man's expression and the second man's silence convey the peculiarity of the construction of Oblomov's artistic image: everything that is on the surface, that catches the eye, more often refers to the typical features of the landlord, to the social problems of the novel; everything that is hidden in the subtext (in the silence) refers to the complexity of the hero's inner world, to the "metaphysical" side of the novel. *"Reproducing the full way of life, the novelist*

seeks to turn Oblomov not only by his comic side. This side is balanced in Goncharov's portrayal by the tragic fate of the hero, by his inner torment" (Пруцков/Prutskov, 1962, p. 91). The antithesis of the external (type) and internal (character) in the structure of Oblomov's image expresses the unity of the image, since without any of the opposition sides the very image of Oblomov disappears.

The description of the interior of Oblomov's study is also based on the artistic device of contrast. The reader sees the study from different points of view. At first glance: it is a beautifully decorated room. The experienced eye sees some effort of keeping up "unavoidable properties, just to get rid of them." The master of the room himself is indifferent to the decoration. On close inspection one notices neglect and carelessness: everything is covered with dust and cobwebs, the carpets are stained, on the table there is "a plate with a salt shaker and a nibbled bone from yesterday's dinner... bread crumbs" (5). If it were not for the plate and the lying host himself, one would think that "no one lives here," no "living traces of human presence" (6). Such a way of depicting the hero is characteristic of Gogol's manner ("natural school"). Gogol's reminiscences are evident in the depiction of Manilov's interior: unwrapped books, covered with yellowing and dust on the open page; newspapers of last year's issue lying around; an inkwell with a frightened fly flying out of it. It would seem that in the description of the interior, typical features of the life of a landowner who lives at the expense of others, running his own house, not interested in anything, indifferent to everything, lazy to the extreme are striking first of all. However, attention should be paid to the fact that Oblomov tries to observe decorum in his apartment, "just to get rid of it," so he looks at the room decorations coldly, and does not go into the other three rooms at all, where furniture is covered with slip-overs and curtains are pulled down. This is the difference between Oblomov and Manilov, who does not notice the vulgarity in the interior of his house. Further, when we get acquainted with Oblomov's idyllic dream of patriarchal life in his native Oblomovka, in the vastness of fields and birch groves, it becomes clear why the hero is indifferent to the decoration of his room. As in the description of the portrait, in the interior sketch the critical, condemning nominations of the hero's way of life are softened with humor, the author's irony. Colloquial proverbial words in Oblomov's statement ("*Who dragged and set all this here?*") are next to lofty, pathetic words and formal business constructions: "*Oblomov's cold attitude towards his property, and perhaps even colder attitude of his servant Zakhar towards the same subject*" (5).

Besides, Gogol's description of landlords is full of comic background, perhaps even "*...direct, harsh, merciless satire, unraveling and defining the negative in Manilov's character, focusing the artist's attention exclusively on this negative, subordinating all other features of the character to it*" (Пиксанов/Piksanov, 1952, p. 87). Whereas Goncharov aspires to a multifaceted (and not only ironic) portrayal of

Oblomov's character: *"In Goncharov, an impartial, strict, thoughtful and humane judge of Oblomov, one sees a deep sympathy, a cordial attitude towards his sadly funny hero, condescension towards him, dictated by a clear understanding of the social evil that has ruined him"* (Пруцков/Prutskov, 1962, p. 89).

The author (and the hero himself) seeks to instill to the reader the idea that Oblomov is not only a type of landlord-lazybones, but also an individual character. From the beginning to the end of the novel the hero is opposed to the masses, the crowd, the population, society; he is different, not like everyone else. This implicitly follows from the very first sentence of the novel: *"In Gorokhovaya Street, in one of the large houses, the dwellers of which would be enough for an entire district town, Ilya Ilyich Oblomov was lying in bed in the morning, in his apartment"* (3). The house is likened to a whole "provincial town." Further we learn that Oblomov is moved out from the house, because the owner, arranging the wedding of his children, wants to make repairs in the house. The wedding and repairs, as well as the place of residence (Gorokhovaya Street is one of the central streets in St. Petersburg) are signs that life is boiling in the "provincial town," and only Oblomov alone does not want to move. He alone is not bustling, but on the contrary, he is afraid of the bustle surrounding him, trying to get away from it, to escape into a dream, where everything is quiet and calm.

The antithesis "hero/society" is also expressed explicitly. Thus, the guests visiting Oblomov "breathe life and movement" and "shine with health and merriment," in contrast to the hero lying peacefully on the couch; but it turns out that their movements (life) are an empty, meaningless pastime. Over the course of two and a half hours, Oblomov, having moved from the couch to an armchair, receives guests, and the appearance of each visitor reveals unexpected features of Ilya Ilyich's nature, character and worldview.

The reader is faced with "all of Petersburg" – mundane, bureaucratic, "cultural" and "mass." Goncharov caricaturedly typifies the guests, endowing each one with a meaningful surname. The twenty-year-old Volkov (Volk – Wolf from Russian), "glistening in health," expresses the bustle of life (the wolf feeds due to his feet), mundane splendor, a jovial life, following fashion ("one is dazzled by the freshness of his face, underwear, gloves and tailcoat," a glossy hat, patent-leather boots). Volkov describes to Oblomov with gaiety and enthusiasm the balls and formal dinners in the luxurious salons of the aristocratic and officials' houses of St. Petersburg: the Tyumenev house, the Mussinsky house, the Savinov house, the Vyaznikov house, the Maklashin house. A big number of houses indicates to Volkov's typical lifestyle in mundane St. Petersburg: visits, dinners, dancing, hunting, partying – with spiritual poverty and lack of work: *"Thank God my service is such that I don't have to be in office. Only twice a week I sit and have lunch at the general's, and then go on visits, where I have not been for a long time"* (18).

For the second visitor, the official Sudbinskiy (Sudba – Destiny from Russian), with whom Oblomov began to serve together, the main thing in life is a career, instead of destiny determining a person's life: *“Devil's service... One cannot dispose of oneself for a single minute”* (20). Advancement on the career ladder is not always associated with professional growth and really meaningful affairs: *“It is pleasant to serve with such a man as Foma Fomich: he will not let one remain without rewards; he does not forget even those who do nothing”* (21). The work becomes *“erecting dog kennels near buildings belonging to... the department in order to preserve the state property from plunder”* (23). The ability to live and build a career is determined by the ability to use public funds for personal purposes: *“In the summer I will rest: Foma Fomich promises to invent a business trip on purpose for me... here, I will get money for five horses trip, daily allowance of three rubles a day, and then a reward...”* (22). In order to make a career, in marriage it is not love that matters, but the rank of the bride's father: *“Father is a full State Counsellor; he gives ten thousand, the apartment is government property. He gave us a whole half of it, twelve rooms; state furniture, heating and lighting also: one can live...”* (23).

Sudbinskiy is not alone, his typicality is revealed through a string of officials mentioned in the conversation with Oblomov, who live by the same interests: Foma Fomich (a reminiscence from A. Griboyedov's play: *“Here is Foma Fomich himself, do you know him? He was head of a department by three ministers...”*), Svinkin, Peresvetov, Murashin, Kuznetsov, Vasilyev, Makhov, Oleshkin. N. A. Nikolina pays attention to the “speaking” surnames of officials in the novel, they openly characterize the activity of these characters (Gogol's tradition): the surname Makhov converges with the verb “to sign sth. quickly, without reading,” the surname Zatyorty is motivated by the verb “to wipe out” in the meaning “to hush up the case,” and the surname Vytyagushin – by the steady combination “to draw out the soul.” The surname Mukhoyarov converges with the word “muhryga” – “a blowhard deceiver and knave,” as well as reminding of the fluttering of flies (Николина/Nikolina, 2003, p. 198).

Oblomov's third visitor is the literary writer Penkin, an omnivorous journalist, eager to make noise, speaking in the stamps of denunciatory literature of the 1950s. The surname Penkin is associated not only with the word “foam” and “froth,” but also with the phraseological phrases “to foam” and “with foam at the mouth” and *“actualizes the image of foam with its inherent signs of superficiality and empty fermentation”* (Николина/Nikolina, 2003, p. 198). Oblomov's fourth interlocutor Alekseyev is a man without a face and a name, *“of indefinite years, with an indefinite face... neither handsome nor unkempt, neither tall nor short, neither blond nor brunette”* (29). Alekseyev is a generalizing portrait of an impersonal society: *“Many people called him Ivan Ivanovich, others called him Ivan Vasilyevich, others Ivan Mikhaylovich. His surname was also called differently: some said he was Ivanov,*

others called him Vasilyev or Andreyev, others thought he was Alekseyev... All this Alekseyev, Vasilyev, Andreyev, or whatever you want, is some incomplete impersonal hint of the human mass, a deaf echo, an indistinct reflection of it” (29–30).

The guests call Oblomov to the park Ekaterinhof for a walk. The main argument in favor of going is the formula “everyone is there.” The lexemes “all” and “everything,” the most frequent in this chapter, encapsulate a kind of sign of society with its interests and needs: “*Everyone!... They!... Let’s go there!... To them... Everybody thinks so... There they talk about everything... Everybody wears it... We need... There’s everything...*” “*‘We should go to Ekaterinhof on the first of May! What do you say, Ilya Ilyich!’ said Volkov in amazement, ‘Yes, everyone is there!’ – ‘Do you really think so? No, not everybody!’ – Oblomov remarked lazily*” (16). “*‘Where are you from, Oblomov? Don’t you know Dashenka! The whole town is crazy about how she dances!’*” (17). “*‘Half the town goes there... It’s such a house, where they talk about everything...’ – ‘That’s what’s boring, that it’s about everything,’ said Oblomov*” (18). Society is impersonal. Everything that society is interested in is boring and unacceptable to Oblomov.

The visitors represent a stage in Oblomov’s life that has already passed, which brought him disappointment and condemnation: “*From the first minute when I became conscious of myself, I felt that I was already going out! I began to go out while writing papers in the office; I was going out while reading in books the truths that I did not know what to do with in life; I was going out with my friends, listening to speculation, gossip, mockery, evil and cold chatter, emptiness, looking at friendship, supported by meetings without purpose, without sympathy; ...I am extinguished in dull and lazy walking along Nevsky Prospect, among raccoon coats and beaver collars; I am extinguished and wasting my life and mind on trifles, ...defining ...all life – by a lazy and peaceful slumber, like others...*” (191). “Life is burning” is a traditional metaphorical archetype; “life is extinguishing” is an individual-author metaphor. Where Volkov “glitters” and “burns with life,” Oblomov “goes out.” The recurring lexeme “extinguish” emphasizes the hero’s rejection of life, where book truths do not work, where there is no true friendship and love, and where people, dehumanizing themselves, turn into “raccoon coats and beaver collars.”

Oblomov repeats the same phrase to each of the guests: “*Don’t come up, don’t come up: you have come from the cold,*” although the time of action is spring (the first of May), and the guests say that the day is good, “there is not a cloud in the sky.” The lexeme “cold” symbolizes the outer world, which is in opposition to the inner world of Oblomov’s house. Oblomov responded with annoyance to Alekseyev’s repeated offer to go to Ekaterinhof by saying: “*Do you really need that Ekaterinhof! Can’t you sit here? Is it cold in the room or does it smell bad that you just stare outside*” (32). None of the guests wants to listen to Oblomov when he starts talking about his “two

misfortunes”; the outside world is indifferent and cold to the hero’s problems. Everyone is primarily interested in himself, the guests drop in at Oblomov’s place – and disappear. Here the image of the “*superficially observant, cold man*” who glanced at Oblomov in passing and gave him a characteristic (on the first page of the novel) appears associatively.

Note that the opposition between interior and exterior is reinforced by the description of the clothing. Oblomov’s wide robe is contrasted with the guests’ tight tails: “*Oblomov always went about home without a tie and without a vest, because he loved space and freedom*” (4). Volkov’s remark that Oblomov’s dressing gown has long gone out of fashion does not bother the hero. He only clarifies that it is not a dressing gown, but a robe, “*lovingly wrapping oneself up in the broad flaps of the robe*” (16). The author’s remark reveals Oblomov’s priorities, his preferences in life: his love for freedom and space, his avoidance of the obligation to obey the social norms and regulations.

Oblomov feels sorry for his guests, unhappy, restless, fidgeting, running around, wasting human dignity on trifles: “*They visit ten places in one day – miserable!*” thought Oblomov. ‘*And that is life!*’ He shrugged his shoulders vigorously. ‘*Where is the man here? What is he crumbling and crumbling into... – miserable!*’ he concluded, turning over on his back and rejoicing that he does not have such empty desires and thoughts, that he does not wander, and lies here, preserving his human dignity and his peace” (19). The guests consider themselves happy people, while Oblomov views their lives as emptiness, “extinguishment.” Although at first glance it is Oblomov’s life that seems devoid of meaning.

The author reveals the philosophy of Oblomov’s peace, which allows for the preservation of man in man only away from the hectic world. It is no coincidence that the word “man” appears so often in Oblomov’s monologues and the word “all” in the speeches of his guests. The hero’s rejection of society is due to the fact that society dehumanizes a man, turns him into “everyone”: “We also call it a career! And how little a man needs here: his mind, his will, his feelings – what is that for? Luxury!” (24). That is why Oblomov gets into an argument with Penkin, who tries to cover “everything” in his literary opuses, forgetting the most important thing – the man. A man is not only a representative of the environment, but also its victim, hence, according to Oblomov, he must be understood and loved already for the mere fact that he is a man, a creature of God, the highest beginning: “...portray a thief, a fallen woman, a puffed-up fool, and don’t forget a man here as well. Where’s the humanity? You want to write with one head! Do you think that no heart is needed for thought? No, it is impregnated with love... A man, give me a man!” (27).

Each of the visitors illustrates Oblomov’s thesis about the “fractionality” of man, who has lost his “wholeness.” But note that the pathos of Oblomov’s “denial” of any

“vanity” is reduced by the author’s irony. Yes, and the very “unhurried” “lying poses” of Ilya Ilyich to some extent make his pathetic speeches senseless. This again indicates the impossibility of a one-sided interpretation of the hero’s character: he is exalted and beautiful and at the same time ridiculous and pathetic. And these characteristics not exclude each other, but complement each other, revealing the unity of type and character in the image of Oblomov.

The answer to the question of how and why Oblomov departs from a life in society and comes to a philosophy of peace is also found in the fifth and sixth chapters of Part One, which tell us about some facts of the hero’s biography. He was like everyone else: “...*full of different aspirations, he kept hoping for something, expected a lot from fate and from himself, ...thought about his role in society; finally, in the long run, ...family happiness flashed and smiled upon his imagination*” (56), but all this could not come true, because life turned out more prosaic than it had seemed in his youth.

Thus, the co-workers were not one family: “*He believed that the officials of one place formed a friendly, close-knit family among themselves, indefatigably caring for each other’s peace and pleasure*” (56). And the chief was not a “father” and only instilled fear and terror into his subordinates: “*He had heard at home about the chief, that he was the father of his subordinates, and so he made himself the most laughing, most familial notion of this person. ...Ilya Ilyich thought that the superior would enter into the position of his subordinate to such an extent that he would question him anxiously: how did he sleep at night, why were his eyes cloudy and did he not have a headache? But he was cruelly disappointed on the first day of his service*” (57). One had to pretend and not be natural, just the way one is: “*And Ilya Ilyich was suddenly timid, not knowing why, when the chief entered the room, and his voice began to disappear and appear the other, thin and ugly, as soon as the chief spoke to him*” (58). Two artistic senses of the word “voice” are realized: voice – sound, voice – individuality, personality. The expected combination “the voice was missing” isn’t there, an attribute-pronoun “his” is inserted, and the noun “voice” it explains is not used in its direct meaning, so that not only the sound was missing, but also, and most importantly, the personality was missing; and the attribute-pronoun “the other” reinforces the figurative sense of the statement by a semantic opposition, the negative evaluation increases thanks to qualifying attributes-epithets – “thin and nasty.”

Ilya Ilyich, on the other hand, was waiting for the warmth, understanding, and caring that he had been accustomed to receive since his childhood, living in the idyllic Oblomovka: “*Raised in the depths of the province, among the gentle and warm manners and customs of his native land, passing for twenty years from hug to hug of relatives, friends and acquaintances, he was so imbued with the family spirit that future service seemed to him like some family activity, such as lazy note-taking of income and*

expenses, as his father had done” (56). Positive, most important feelings in life – warmth, “the customs of the motherland” – are associated with the image of the family. Family, mutual understanding and kinship support were necessary to Oblomov. Goncharov, however, moves away from the unambiguous justification of the hero and from the portrayal of lofty feelings, immediately using the connective conjunction “and,” passes to mockery, irony: the family’s excessive care for the little Ilyushenka led the adult Oblomov to fear the hardships of life.

As a refrain in Oblomov’s mind, the phrase repeats: “*When shall I live?*” (57). Life in labor is not perceived by the hero as a real and authentic life. After all, the work of officials is shown in the novel as vanity and meaningless running around, and such work imposes on the hero “fear and great boredom”: “*Oblomov became even more pensive when he saw packages with the inscription ‘necessary and very necessary’, when he was forced to make various references, extracts, dig through the files, write notebooks two fingers thick, which, just for fun, were called notes; besides, everything was required quickly, everything was in a hurry somewhere, nothing was left to chance: no sooner had they got away with one thing than they were already rushing furiously into another, as if that was where all their strength lay, and when they had finished they would forget it and rush off to a third – and there was never an end to it!*” (57). One can see that the hero does not work of his own free will, but he was “forced,” “demanded,” “rushed.” Everything is in constant motion – “packages flashed,” there is no time to get to the heart of the matter, and the officials themselves rather resemble the world of beasts, where the strongest survives: “they grab with fury,” “throw themselves.” Oblomov’s idea of peaceful tranquility is naturally opposed to this kind of labor. “*Ilya Ilyich suffers from fear and longing in the service...*” (58), which is why “*life in his eyes was divided into two halves: one consisted of labor and boredom, which were synonyms for him; the other consisted of peace and peaceful merriment*” (56). Oblomov quits his service because he sent “some necessary paper to Arkhangelsk instead of Astrakhan.” Moreover, the author gives an important clarification for understanding the character: Oblomov leaves not so much out of fear, as because “*his own conscience was much stricter than a reprimand*” (59). If in the author’s descriptions of the bureaucratic life, where Oblomov’s non-self-direct speech and condemnation of vanity are presented, we see the hero as different, both lazy and philosophical, then in the author’s account of his conscience the reader is clearly presented with an important feature not of type but of character, a feature that the author speaks of already without humor or irony.

And so Oblomov gradually withdraws from public activity into himself, into his “rope,” “into his solitude and seclusion.” “*He was not accustomed to movement, to life, to crowds and bustle. In the cramped crowd he felt stuffy*” (61), it did not suit him to be like everyone else, it was difficult “*...to reciprocate, to take part in what interested*

them; ...everyone understood life in his own way, as Oblomov did not want to understand it, and they drew him into it too: all this displeased him, repulsed him, was not to his liking” (61). There is no poetry and peace in reality, only turmoil.

In this position, Oblomov is naturally defeated by Stoltz, who tries to bring Oblomov back to life by suggesting that the means of treatment is what he is running away from, i. e. society. Stoltz literally pulls Oblomov from the confined space of the room by force, repeating: “Hurry, hurry!” He has to give up his favorite roomy robe and put on a cramped tailcoat. “‘Where is he going? What for?’ Oblomov said longingly. ‘What have I not seen? I’ve fallen behind, I don’t want to... I don’t like this St. Petersburg life of yours! Everything, the eternal running around, the eternal game of trashy passions, especially greed, knocking over each other, gossip, rumor, snapping at each other... Boredom, boredom, boredom!... Where is the man here? Where is his integrity? Where has he gone, how has he wasted himself for any trifle?’” (179). St. Petersburg life (running, games, gossip) is not acceptable to Oblomov. The hero says that this is “your” life, that is, “not mine.” “Beau monde, society! ...All these are dead men, sleeping men, worse than me, these members of the beau monde and society!” – “No one has a clear, peaceful look, ...all are infected from one another by some painful concern, longing, painfully searching for something. And if only for the truth, for the good of themselves and others – no, they pale at the success of a comrade.” – “What kind of life is this? I don’t want it. What will I learn there, what will I learn?” (180–181). Behind the screams of the bored Petersburgers Oblomov sees “a sleepless sleep,” the “disease” of the whole society, a sleep even more disgusting than his own: at least Oblomov does not do evil to others. For Oblomov, there is no natural norm, no ideal in St. Petersburg life: “I do not touch them, I do not seek anything; I just do not see normal life in it. No, it is not life, but a distortion of the norm, of the ideal of life, which nature has indicated the man’s purpose” (182). Thus, Oblomov’s life around him is “not genuine,” “not real,” it is a “distortion of the norm”: there is no family life, humanity, morality.

Shut up at home, Oblomov does not write, does not read, and does not study. Goncharov ironically reveals the typical features of the lazy bourgeois who is not interested in anything. And here we see not only society’s fault, but also the very way of Oblomov’s life, the very Oblomovizm, when Ilya is not interested in school, when science has no connection with life in his mind, when his fathers and grandfathers lived by “God’s blessing,” relying more on God than on himself and his own labor.

It should be noted that Oblomov’s lying down was never equal to the vanity of society, for Oblomov’s lying down itself is active, which is confirmed by the text. If the figure of the hero is shown in a static state, his inner world, on the contrary, is depicted in dynamics: implicit oppositions of external and internal. Not once in the novel do we encounter the words expressing that Oblomov is simply lying on the

couch. Even at the beginning of the novel, the author notes that Oblomov's lying down is neither laziness nor fatigue, but a normal state. All of his "lying down" is accompanied by sometimes ironic, sometimes serious explanations: "*thought walked a like free bird on the face, flitted in the eyes, sat on the half-open lips;*" "*the gaze darkened,*" "*the soul glowed in the eyes,*" "*a cloud of concern came over the face,*" "*the gaze was foggy;*" "*plunged into thoughtfulness,*" "*I was preoccupied,*" "*thoughts tormented me,*" "*plunged into reflection,*" "*tormented by the tide of restless thoughts,*" "*I was awake – thinking,*" "*I was torturing myself with consciousness;*" "*deep in my soul I wept,*" "*experienced... suffering and longing,*" "*suddenly thoughts light up in him, walking and walking around in his head.*" The frequency of process words that actualize additional evaluative meanings, close to the various semantics of the state category words (light, foggy, sad, longing), gives dynamism to the seemingly static description. "*No one knew or perceived this inner life of Ilya Ilyich: everyone thought that Oblomov was nothing, just lying around and eating to his heart's content, and that there was nothing more to be expected of him; that he hardly had any thoughts in his head. This is the way they talked about him wherever they knew him. Only Stoltz knew about his abilities, about this inner volcanic work of his ardent head and humane heart*" (68). The hero's inner work is defined as "volcanic," i. e. similar to a volcano, where the dreams and inner power are juxtaposed. It is no coincidence that the hero tells Stoltz about himself that there was a light trapped inside him, which sought an exit, but could not break free and died out.

More often than not, Oblomov has debates and dialogues about the good, about happiness, about truth with himself, about himself. Ilya Ilyich Oblomov is most fully realized in inner speech and in the author's indirect speech. The volume of internal monologues and dialogues in Oblomov's discourse, according to a rough estimate, occupies more than fifty percent, which in itself can qualify this individual as a person leading an intense inner spiritual life, filled with moral experiences and emotional reflection (see Краснова/Krasnova, 2003).

It is impossible to determine exactly who Oblomov is – a sloth or a philosopher? Irony removes seriousness, seriousness limits irony, and we see an artistic image, in which the typical and the characteristic are in complex interaction and complementation, one reveals the other. On the one hand, the author ironically tells us how the hero, "not sparing his strength," works while lying on the sofa, and on the other, we see the beauty and poetry of the hero's inner world and can no longer smile indulgently, but sympathize and experience together with Oblomov, thinking about the fate of the world. Thus, Oblomov combines, on the one hand, a poet and a philosopher (Stoltz gives these nominations in the text) with an honest and kind soul, "with a passionate head and a humane heart," and on the other hand, a landlord and a lazy man,

not willing to do anything to get closer to his dream, hoping that everything in his life will somehow happen by itself, by magic.

The peculiarity of the author's narrative lies in the special approach to his hero, a hero unusual for artistic depiction – on the one hand, experiencing suffering and longing from the imperfection of the world, “human sorrows,” and on the other – capable of the maximum “feat” to correct human vices – “to rise to half on the bed.” It turns out that Oblomov's enthusiasm, his moral impulses are sincere, pure-hearted, but empty: he is only able to “change poses.” The depth of the author's portrayal lies in the fact that the positive and negative evaluation of the thoughts, feelings and actions of the hero flow one into the other, intertwine.

The possibility of viewing the hero from different points of view is also proven by the surname, which embodies all the possible meanings of interpreting Oblomov's artistic image, both social and metaphysical. Let us present several points of view expressed by different researchers regarding the hero's surname. A. F. Rogalyov believes that Goncharov foresaw fundamental changes in Russian life, which would lead to a break in continuity and tradition, to a “break” or “knock down” of traditional Russian society and the whole way of life (Рогалёв/Rogalyov, 2004). V. Melnik notes the correlation of the words Oblomov and Oblomok (oblomok – splinter, fragment, chip, fraction from Russian) and refers to the poem by E. Baratynsky “Prejudice! It is a fragment of ancient truth...,” which raises the question of the loss of established moral values in connection with the onset of the “Iron Age.” Oblomov in this interpretation is a fragment of the “ancient truth” left in the past (Мельник/Melnik, 1985). According to P. Tirgen, the parallel “man-fragment” characterizes the hero as an “incomplete,” “unfulfilled” man, “signals the dominant fragmentation and lack of wholeness,” in place of the whole are the decaying remnants of what was once laid down and could have become a whole (Тирген/Tirgen, 1990). T. Ornatskaya sees in the words “Oblomov,” “Oblomovka” a folk-poetic metaphor “dream-oblomon.” The image of sleep in this metaphor is associated with the “enchanted world” of Russian fairy tales, with its inherent poetry, and with the “Oblomov dream,” destructive for the hero, which crushed him with a grave stone (Орнатская/Ornatskaya, 1991). N. Nikolina writes that the hero's surname can be motivated both by the noun “splinter” – a thing broken off round (Vladimir Dal), a chipped or broken off piece of something, a remnant of something that existed before, disappeared, and by the adjective “obly” (round). *“In this case the hero's surname is interpreted as a contaminated, hybrid formation, combining the semantics of the words ‘obly’ (round) and ‘break’: the circle, symbolizing the absence of development, static, unchanging order, appears torn, partially ‘broken’”* (Николина/Nikolina, 2003, p. 200). All the multiple motivations of the surname Oblomov complement and reveal the essence of the artistic image of the hero. One cannot be limited to one interpretation, because the hero is not unilinear.

There is a lack of wholeness in him, expressed in the unrealized way of life, in Oblomovism, and at the same time – the integrity of a man who lives in a circular cycle, the dream of family and home, not squandered on the vanity of society, believing in the moral values of good old times.

At times Oblomov is ridiculous and pathetic. For example, when, offended at Zakhar for comparing him to “the other,” he pathetically and pompously begins to lecture Zakhar, proudly emphasizing his landlord prerogatives, which do not adorn the hero at all, but, on the contrary, humiliate him. “*Wait, look at what you’re saying! ...Haven’t you been following me since childhood? You know all this, you have seen that I was brought up gently, that I have never suffered cold or hunger, I have never known want, I have never earned my own bread and in general have never done black work. So how is it that you got the guts to compare me to others? Am I as healthy as these ‘others’? Can I do and bear all this?*” (95) The comic situation is created by the discrepancy between Oblomov’s hotness, excessive excitement, and the very subject of the conversation: “I” don’t work, I don’t run, I don’t rush, I don’t even pull a stocking over my legs myself and at the same time I don’t starve, I don’t know the need – and the earning itself is a “black job” that “the other” does. From the hero’s point of view it is impossible to compare him with the “other” “low people” doing the work. The naturalness, the justifiability of the labor of “others” is the humiliation of the “I.” The author’s portrayal of Oblomov’s “anger” reaches the apogee of irony in the content of the last phrase, which at first glance seems insignificant (adjectival construction), but in fact creates the highest degree of ridicule: even “my health” is not the same as “others” – such strains “I” cannot endure. The hero’s “righteous” anger turns out to be, against his will, a farce: the comic destroys seriousness.

Oblomov tries to point out to Zakhar how he has “bitterly offended the landlord,” who toils day and night, taking care of the peasants so that they “do not endure any need,” that they “pray and remember the landlord with kindness. When Oblomov describes how in his plan he has set Zakhar a special house and a vegetable garden, appointed a salary, made him a steward, a majordom and an attorney, to whom all the peasants bow at the waist, he is so moved by his own kindnesses that his voice trembles and tears come to his eyes. Oblomov and Zakhar do not hear each other. Oblomov is intoxicated with his poetic pathos, but Zakhar’s crying and misunderstanding of his speech removes the pathos of his speech: “*Zakhar lost absolutely all ability to understand Oblomov’s speech; but his lips were pursed with inner turmoil; the pathetic scene was booming, like a cloud, over his head*” (96). “*‘Father, Ilya Ilyich!’ pleaded Zakhar. ‘Enough of this! What in God’s name are you talking about! Oh you, Mother Holy, Mother of God! What misfortune suddenly happened out of the blue...’ Both of them stopped understanding each other, and finally each of them also stopped understanding himself*” (96). By the way, Zakhar’s words are an accurate assessment

of the landlord's hotness: "you carry such a load." Oblomov is both ridiculous and pathetic: his lofty pathetic phrases ("*Is it humanly possible to bear it all*"), gestures of an offended and injured man, his attempt to present himself as a martyr – all that combined with the subject, the theme of the conversation look ridiculous and comic. Yes, and the whole pompous recitation ends with the prosaic and everyday address of the baron to the servant: "*Give me some kvass!*" We see first of all the type of landlord, proud of the fact that he does not work, and that others do it for him.

But left alone, Oblomov "*thought, thought, thought, worried, worried*" (98). "*He went deep into comparing himself with 'the other'. He began to think, to think: and now he was forming an idea quite opposite to the one he had given to Zakhar about 'the other'*" (99). The author says that "*there came one of the clear conscious moments in Oblomov's life*" (99). This minute is worth much, we see Oblomov from a different side, we see once again the inner world of the hero, the special features of his character. "*How terrible it became for him when suddenly in his soul a vivid and clear idea of human destiny and purpose arose and when a parallel between this purpose and his own life flashed... He became sad and pained for his underdevelopment, a stop in the growth of his moral strength... In his timid soul he developed a painful consciousness that many aspects of his nature had not awakened at all, others were just a little touched, and none of them was developed to the end ...Meanwhile, he painfully felt that in him some good, bright beginning is buried, as in the grave*" (100). An important technique of the author: the "deepening" of the hero into himself, that is, reflection, which Oblomov constantly does, allows us to "justify" him by showing his moral suffering.

The hero is frightened, sad, and hurt. An agonizing consciousness reveals to him his wrong, nasty, disgusting landlord's life, which has led to sleep and apathy, although a moment ago Oblomov was proving the opposite to Zakhar. In a strange way, Oblomov's speech that he is not "the other" comes down not on Zakhar, who does not understand his master anyway (the author does not accidentally constantly emphasize this), but on Oblomov himself. This is expressed lexically and semantically. Thus, the greatest punishment in Oblomov's speech for Zakhar are the "pathetic words," those lofty words that Zakhar does not understand and which therefore have the power of punishment over him. The author italicizes the repeated construction "*pathetic words.*" In addition, Oblomov calls Zakhar a "poisonous man" and a "snake": "*That's what kind of snake he warmed on his chest*" (96). "*'What a poisonous man you are, Zakhar!' Oblomov added with feeling. Zakhar is offended. 'Here,' he said. 'I am poisonous! What kind of poisonous person am I? I have not killed anybody.' 'Why not poisonous!' Ilya Ilyich repeated, 'You're poisoning my life.' ... 'What is this, Ilya Ilyich, this punishment! I am a Christian: why do you call me poisonous? No way: poisonous!'*" (82). After Oblomov's conversation with Stoltz (in the second part of the novel), when

the word “Oblomovizm” is uttered, the metaphorical epithet “poisonous” appears again: “*‘Oblomovizm! One word,’ thought Ilya Ilyich. ‘And how... poisonous!’*” (193).

Pathetic, sting, poison, snake are metaphorically and phonetically transformed in Oblomov’s reflections, and it turns out that this “ugly” speech of Oblomov was not poetically sublime, as he imagined it, but pathetic. It was not Zakhar who stung the hero, but himself. It is not Zakhar who poisons him, but he himself: “*He became bitter from this secret confession to himself. Fruitless regrets of the past, bitter reproaches of conscience plagued him like needles, and he strove with all his might to throw off the burden of these reproaches and find the guilty one outside himself and turn the sting of them on that person. But to whom? ‘It is all ... Zakhar!’ he whispered. He remembered the details of the scene with Zakhar, and his face burst into a fire of shame*” (100). The hyperbolic metaphor “fire of shame” speaks of the power of the hero’s suffering. Pity, compassion, sadness, regret replace the mockery and irony of the preceding pages. Even in the gesture of the hero, no longer sitting proudly on the couch and issuing maxims, but hiding under a blanket, one can see the desire to escape from himself, to hide from his unsightly behavior, to get away from the questions that torment and do not allow to live peacefully: “*‘Why am I like this?’ Oblomov almost tearfully asked himself and hid his head under the blanket again. ‘Why indeed?’*” (101). The hero never finds an answer to his question. But the following ninth chapter of “Oblomov’s Sleep” makes it possible to get closer to the answer to this question.

How to distinguish between the typical and the characteristic in Oblomov’s image? If the hero did not have the traits of a serf landlord, an oblomovizm that believed in a miracle, in a fairy tale, in fate (“*It must be fate... What can I do here?*” (101)), in the fact that not he himself, but “someone,” “something,” “some” had prevented him, ruined and broke his life, there would be no suffering and remorse about his failed life. What would remain would be the metaphysical, philosophical component of the artistic image, where the hero is opposed to society, searching for the truth, revealing its flaws, but not identifying himself with society in any way, and in this form being close to the Romantic hero. The tragedy of the hero is largely due to his social position. Oblomov, on the one hand, is not identical to society, this is shown in the fragments depicting the arrival of guests, walks with Stoltz, when Oblomov does not accept all that concerns the hustle and bustle of St. Petersburg. But, on the other hand, while telling Stoltz about his extinguished and meaningless life, Oblomov remarks: “*Am I alone? Look: Mikhaylov, Petrov, Semenov, Alekseyev, Stepanov... you can’t count: our name is legion!*” (192). Oblomov is part of this world and especially of the world of the patriarchal Oblomovka, where he is both a landlord (“Oblomovizm”) and a simple man who can easily merge with the world of other people, ordinary relations and feelings.

1.3. The antithesis *life/paradise* as the semantic dominant of Oblomov's image

In the complex interweaving of Oblomov's diverse features a special role is played by the way the character is represented, when the antithesis as an artistic device is brought to the forefront. It is primarily the antithesis that reflects the character's philosophy of existence – "life/heaven."

What does Oblomov think and dream about, what does he want and expect, what does he see as the natural norm, the ideal and goal of human life? This is a very important question for understanding the hero's personality, because after a superficial reading of the novel, one is still left with the feeling that Oblomov is like everyone else. It seems that his lying down and their bustling are the same thing in essence. And what does he dream about? Peace, a wife, a samovar, friends with double chins. Why is that better than what his guests, his society, have? But we should not rush to conclusions, for there is a danger of absolutizing outward signs and facts without noticing the inner idea of Oblomov's philosophy.

Let's look more closely at the hero's dream. What details-nominations accompany it? Oblomov dreamed of various things, he saw himself as a brave general, or a famous poet or artist, or just a man mourning the fate of the unfortunate and destitute. But the main dream of his life was the idea of building a new home away from the world of vanity and passions, in an earthly paradise called Oblomovka, in the land of quiet childhood and good fairy tales.

In "Oblomov's Dream" the reader is faced with a wonderful, vivid, imaginative, poetic, fairy-tale and socially concrete world of the landlord estate. The perspective of "double vision," that is the representation from different sides of the hero and his way of life is preserved in the dream style: descriptions of nature, people, customs, manners, order, on the one hand, lyrical and poetic, on the other hand – imbued with the author's irony. The author both poetizes the fairy-tale and idyllic existence of the hero and shows the reasons why Oblomov was not ready for life.

Oblomovka is described as a world alien to Romantic consciousness and close to idyllic consciousness, a point that has been made many times in criticism (see Бахтин/Bakhtin, 1975; Ляпушкина/Lyapushkina, 1996; Отрадин/Otradin, 1992). The signs of the idyllic chronotope were described by M. M. Bakhtin. Let us list them: "*...An organic attachment, an attachment of life and its events to a place – to one's native country with all its corners, to one's native mountains, native dale, native fields, river and forest, one's native home. ...This spatial world is limited and self-sufficient, not essentially connected with other places, with the rest of the world. ...The unity of place brings together and merges the cradle and the grave (the same corner, the same ground), childhood and old age (the same grove, the same river, the same lindens, the*

same house), the lives of different generations who lived in the same place, in the same conditions, who saw the same things. ...The combination of human life with the life of nature, the unity of their rhythm, the common language for the phenomena of nature and the events of human life. ...Love, birth, death, marriage, labor, eating and drinking, ages are the basic realities of idyllic life. ...Eating and drinking in the idyll are most often familial, generations and ages coming together over food. Typical of the idyll is the proximity of food and children, ...this proximity is imbued with the beginning of growth and renewal of life. ...Death is devoid of tragedy. ...Patriarchal household” (Бахтин/Bakhtin, 1975, pp. 374–376).

In the world of Oblomovka all the signs of the idyll, noted by M. M. Bakhtin, are realized. The landscape is ideal, man and nature are united, a person is comfortable, it is good to live in such a world, there is no feeling of unsettled and unprotected. “The description of Oblomov’s nature is dominated by the anthropomorphic principle: winter – ‘unapproachable beauty,’ the moon – ‘round-faced village beauty,’ the rain – ‘the tears of a suddenly overjoyed man.’ This nature, as it were, is oriented to man, man is a module of this world” (Отрадин/Otradin, 1992, p. 6). The sky, like a domestic roof, “presses against the earth,” protecting the Oblomovites and their “blessed,” “chosen,” “wonderful” land, where the sun always shines, the river runs “merrily” and “sweetly,” where the atmosphere of love, harmony and accord reigns. There is no place in this world for romantic individualism of poets and dreamers, no mountains, sea, cliffs, abyss, forest; no passions, shouts, vanity; no “wild” and “grandiose:” “A poet and a dreamer would not be satisfied even with the general appearance of this modest and unpretentious area” (106). Everything here is quiet and sleepy, cozy and comfortable: “...Deep silence and peace also lie in the fields. ...Silence and imperturbable tranquility reign also in the characters of the people in that land. Neither robberies, nor murders, nor any terrible accidents occurred there; neither strong passions nor daring ventures worried them” (107).

The world for the Oblomovites is mysterious, sacred and logically unexplainable, all of which speaks of the mythical consciousness of the residents of Oblomovka. Space is closed and has no connection with the outside world, which, like everything unknown, frightens and scares the Oblomovites. Time is cyclic and conventional: “The annual circle is made there right and unperturbed” (103). This is how fathers and grandfathers lived, and how children and grandchildren will live. The independent, integral and complete world of Oblomovka lives according to its age-old traditions, laws and rituals: love, marriage, birth, labor, death – this circle is unchanging. “And so to the imagination of the sleeping Ilya Ilyich the three main acts of life, played out both in his family and with his relatives and acquaintances, began to open in turn, like vivid pictures: the birth, the wedding, the funeral. Then a motley procession of merry and sad subdivisions of his life followed: baptisms, namesakes,

family celebrations, starting fast, breaking fast, noisy dinners, family gatherings, greetings, congratulations, official tears and smiles” (127).

The little Oblomov is surrounded by close people (his mother, father, nanny, numerous relatives), who take care of him, caress, nourish, cherish him. His mother is especially close to him: *“Oblomov, having seen his mother who was dead long ago, even in his sleep trembled with joy, with a burning love for her: two warm tears slowly came out from under his eyelashes and became motionless” (110).* The memories evoke tenderness and an extraordinary spiritual uplift. His mother showered passionate kisses on him, examining him with caring eyes, praying with him, putting her whole soul into the prayer, slowly brushing Ilyusha’s soft hair, dreaming of finding a girlfriend (who is also healthy and beautiful) for him when he grows up.

The main concern of the Oblomovites was the kitchen and dinner. Eating together was a motif of family unity. *“For the Oblomovites, eating together is a confirmation of feelings unaffected by time, a testimony of kinship that cannot be undone” (Отрадин/Otradin, 1992, p. 7).* The sense of family determines one’s attitude to the world and to people. *“Many oddities in the behavior and consciousness of the adult Oblomov are explained by this unquenchable family origin in him, which is sharply discordant with the norms of St. Petersburg life” (Отрадин/Otradin, 1992, p. 7).*

Oblomov’s dream helps to reveal the essence of the character’s artistic image. The overprotection of the mother, the nanny, the servants leads to the fact that loving and caring people have raised a completely passive, voiceless and helpless man, not ready for an independent life, relying on fairy tales told by the nanny and the Russian “maybe” (авось/avos): *“...He is always drawn to a place where they only have to promenade, where there are no worries and sorrows; he forever has the disposition to lie on the stove, walk in a ready-made, unearned dress and eat at the expense of a good sorceress” (121).* In this case we see the author’s reflections, they are serious in contrast to the lyric-comic presentation of the hero’s thoughts and feelings. The hero himself in the author’s representation comes to the idea that it is easy, pleasant not to earn and eat as if by magic. But on the other hand, *“The boy’s imagination is inhabited by strange ghosts; dread and longing have settled for a long time, perhaps forever, in his soul. He looks around sadly and sees all the harm in life, misfortune, all dreams of that magic side, where there is no evil, troubles, sorrows, where Militrisa Kirbityevna lives, where they feed and clothe so well for free...” (123).* Sorrow also appears in the midst of bliss. A new antithesis: there are no sorrows, but the hero is sad.

Studying makes you bored, you have to part with your beloved family, you cannot eat well, you cannot sleep well, you have to work. The ideal of Oblomov’s life is peace and inactivity: *“They endured labor as a punishment imposed on our forefathers, but they could not love it, and where there was a chance, they always got*

rid of it, finding it possible and proper” (126). At fourteen, Ilya is already quite barbaric and can afford to kick Zakhar in the nose, and if he wants something, all he has to do is blink and the servants rush to fulfill his wish.

This is how the typical traits of the landlord in Oblomov are formed. But this is only one side of the artistic image. The warmth of family relations, the poetry of ordinary simple life, without worries and fuss, love for the child, fairy tales, mystery – all this developed in the character of Oblomov a broad soul, good nature, softness, refinement, features of dreaminess, imagination, poetic perception of life, the desire for quiet family everyday joys. As M. Bakhtin notes, the novel “...shows the exceptional humanity of the idyllic man Oblomov and his ‘pigeon-like purity’” (Бахтин/Bakhtin, 1975, p. 383).

Chapter IX, “Oblomov’s Dream,” allows us to get closer to the essence of the protagonist’s image and to understand his dream. Let us pay attention to such words-concepts, which occur and recur throughout the novel, as “home, family, peace, paradise.” In these words lies the basic meaning of Oblomov’s philosophy, which could be formulated as “In Search of Paradise Lost.” According to the Bible, life on earth is suffering, and therefore man always seeks peace. To Stoltz’s accusations of a wrong life and bourgeois dream, Oblomov replies: “Yes, the purpose of all your running, passions, wars, trade and politics is not the attainment of rest, not the pursuit of this ideal of a lost paradise, is it. ...All seek rest and peace” (187–188).

From his nanny’s tales “about some unknown land, where there are neither nights nor cold, where all miracles are performed, where rivers of honey and milk flow, where no one does anything all year round,” life and fairy tale are mixed in Oblomov’s mind, “and he is unconsciously sad at times, why a fairy tale is not life, and life is not a fairy tale” (121). For Oblomov there is no natural norm, no ideal in St. Petersburg life: “I do not touch them, I do not seek anything; I just do not see a normal life in it. No, it is not life, but a distortion of the norm, of the ideal of life, which nature has indicated as the purpose of man” (182). For the Oblomovites the ideal of life, the norm is peace, inactivity, stability, quiet love, family life, unity with nature, tradition. The Oblomovites avoided fuss and haste, did not wrestle with unsolvable mental or moral questions: “That is why they always bloomed with health and gaiety, that is why they lived long lives; men at forty were like young men; old men did not fight against the difficult, painful death, but, having lived to the point of impossibility, died as if stealing, quietly settling down and imperceptibly letting out their last breath. That is why they say that previously people were stronger” (126). “The norm of life was ready and taught to them by their parents, and they accepted it, also ready, from their grandfather, and their grandfather from their great-grandfather, with a will to guard its integrity and inviolability, like the fire of Vesta. As what was done under the

grandfathers and fathers, so was done under Ilya Ilyich's father, so, perhaps, is still done now in Oblomovka" (126).

In his life in St. Petersburg Oblomov does not want to be like everyone else and live like everyone else, he withdraws from the worldly bustle, for it is a violation of the norm in his understanding. However, in Oblomovka, where peace, quiet, true love and understanding reign, Oblomov is part of this world. And here the pronoun "all" no longer realizes its negative semantics, but is evaluated as a natural normal collective life. In Oblomov's dream the world is viewed and seen not from the perspective of an individual, but through the eyes of the collective. In this world, there is not an "I," but a "we": *"Happy people lived thinking that it should not and could not be otherwise, certain that all others lived the same way and that to live otherwise was a sin"* (108). Until noon, food was cooked and *"everything was bustling and caring, everything was living such a full, ant-like, such a conspicuous life"* (115). Then everyone eats and goes to bed.

Nature is inseparable from the collective consciousness and lives by the same experiences as humans: *"Neither tree nor water moves; there is an imperturbable silence over the village and the field – everything is as if it had died out. ...And dead silence reigned in the house. The hour of universal afternoon sleep has come"* (115).

"Everyone scattered to their corners; ...in the servant's room, everyone lay down to sleep. ...It was a kind of all-consuming, unconquerable sleep, the true likeness of death. All was dead, only from all corners came a variety of snoring in all tones and modes" (116). After universal sleep, they gather for tea, and again: *"All of this sniffing, groaning, yawning, scratching his/her head and stretching, barely coming to their senses"* (118). And in the evening all have dinner, and afterwards get back in nature again: *"Everything is silent. ...There are moments of universal, solemn silence of nature, ...in Oblomovka all rests so firmly and peacefully"* (120).

Oblomov dreams of the idyllic life of Oblomovka, despite the fact that this life is monotonous and similar to a "dead dream." He has one desire: to escape the hustle and bustle of Petersburg and return to the world of childhood, warmth, care, and family. To build his own home, where he would live with his beloved wife and children, and where he would meet with friends and have long pleasant conversations with them: *"A heart worn out with worry, or not at all acquainted with it, yearns to hide in that corner, forgotten by all, and live a life of unknown happiness. Everything promises there a peaceful, long life until yellow hair and inconspicuous, sleep-like death"* (103).

When asked by Stoltz what, in his opinion, is the ideal and the norm of life, Oblomov describes in detail his long-held dream. A wife, nature, food, space, freedom. No cares, passions, worries. Nature and man are one, harmony and happiness in everything. In Oblomov's dream there is no place for rain, bad weather, cold, hunger, burning passions, no place for cramped tailcoat and St. Petersburg vanity, no thoughts

of toil and work. In his world peace, satiety, sunshine, quiet and tender love reign. Nature, home, family, friends, food are the idyllic constants of the hero's happiness; one cannot exclude, refuse at least one thing. All the components of the dream are closely intertwined and connected to each other. Without an idyllic landscape there is no family happiness, and family happiness, in turn, according to Oblomov, is possible only in such a landscape, in unity with nature. Without home there is no family, and without family there can be no home; without family there is no joy of food or friends.

Oblomov's world is sincere, honest, there is no need to lie, to deceive, to be a hypocrite, to fit in. Food unites everyone at one table, both family and friends. Everyone gathers at one table not for profit, as in St. Petersburg, when a trip to Ekaterinhof for a common celebration is a necessary ritual of politeness, but because they love each other sincerely and want to share the joy of family happiness at one table, satisfy their desires and enjoy conversation, jokes, silence. Let us recall the talk, the jokes, the laughter, the silence one evening in Oblomovka, when they talk about everything and at the same time about nothing, when they remain silent for a long time, when they laugh long, "like the Olympic gods," about the sledding three years ago. *"Such 'coupled with openly trusting human communication', laughter testified to the 'idyllic potential of life'. Laughter in this life is a joyful sense of one's 'balance' in this world, or a joyful experience of victory over fears"* (Отрадин/Otradin, 1992, p. 7). The unity of man, nature, and food reaches its climax by evening: *"Then, as the heat goes down, we would send the cart with the samovar, with dessert to the birch grove, or else in the field, on the mowed grass, we would spread out carpets between the stacks and so we would bliss until the okroshka (cold soup – V. B.) and steak"* (186).

In fact, the hero's dreams depict paradise as it is presented in the Bible: eternal summer, everyone is fed, happy, only joy on their faces, no worries about daily bread. Even the men and women who come from the meadow in Oblomov's dream (hence, someone is still working to create a sweet and peaceful life for Ilya Ilyich) are happy. Life is patience, labor, and distress, which Oblomov considers "a punishment sent down by heaven for our sins."

Let us build the lexical-semantic fields of the lexemes "life" and "paradise," that is, find in the text semantically and associatively close lexical units, reflecting the conceptual sphere of these lexemes. Here is how Oblomov sees life and paradise (dream):

Life – *abyss, trouble, gossip, chitchat, unhappiness, vanity, work, torment, lies, hypocrisy, boredom, worries, running around, play, anxiety, longing, sleepless nights, deception, passion, battle;*

Paradise – *childhood, fairy tales, dream, ideal, goodness, love, peace, tenderness, understanding, silence, happiness, poetry, books, piano, family, wife,*

children, friends, sun, fields, vastness, food, sleep, fullness of satisfied desires, reflections of pleasure.

Lexical units reflecting the conceptual sphere of the units “life/paradise” enter into an antonymic semantic relationship in the novel (life – trouble, vanity, battle / paradise – good, peace, love).

All his conscious life Oblomov has lived in other people’s homes. A new home for the hero does not just mean the construction of a building. The dream of a house is a dream of peace, of a family, of a paradise life. But it is impossible to stop time, to return to childhood, to build a family paradise on earth, and therefore it is impossible to find happiness and fulfill Oblomov’s dream. In reality, to have a home and a family one must work, earn money, which means, according to Oblomov, a lifetime of hustling, running, searching, adapting. So there is not and cannot be a home for Oblomov here and under such conditions. And only in dreams do visions of a lost paradise arise, and only in dreams is Oblomov truly happy, because there he finds what he lacks in life: warmth, kindness, love, understanding, a home, a wife, children:

“Oblomov’s face was suddenly flushed with a blush of happiness: the dream was so bright, so vivid, so poetic... He suddenly felt a vague desire for love, a quiet happiness, suddenly longed for the fields and hills of his homeland, his home, wife and children... His face shone with a meek, touching feeling: he was happy... He thought of the little colony of friends who would settle in villages and farms, fifteen or twenty versts around his village, how they would alternately come to each other every day to visit, have lunch, dinner, dance; he sees all clear days, clear faces, without cares or wrinkles, laughing, round, with a bright blush, with a double chin with an unfading appetite; there will be eternal summer, eternal merriment, sweet food and sweet laziness... ‘Good god, Good god!’ he uttered from the fullness of happiness and woke up. And there came a five-voiced boom from the yard: ‘Potatoes! Sand, don’t you want some sand? Coal! Coal!... Donate, merciful gentlemen, for the building of the temple of the Lord!’ And from the neighboring, newly-built house came the clattering of axes and the shouting of the workers. ‘Ah!’ sighed Ilya Ilyich sorrowfully aloud. ‘What a life! What an outrage this capital city noise! When will the paradise, the desired life, come? When to the fields, to my native groves?’” (78).

The writer’s thoughts, feelings, his inner monologue merge with the author’s narrative, which at first is identical in tone to his monologue, but then suddenly turns into irony, even sarcasm: the hero perceives reality once again as evil, an obstacle to his ideal. The passage below particularly vividly demonstrates the contrast between Oblomov’s inner dream and the outer space of his daily life. Outside the window, life is boiling and houses are being built, but this is not paradise; it is “ugliness” that disturbs the happiness of sleep and dreams in which, as in a fairy tale, houses are already built and there is no shouting, running around and bustle. It is no coincidence

that the antithesis of paradise – hell arises in the moments when the guests come to Oblomov, when they describe St. Petersburg life. In response to Volkov's tales of fun in the noble houses of St. Petersburg with a large number of invited guests, Oblomov reacts: "*What a bore it must be as hell!*" (17). *Sudbinskiy says of his activities: "diabolical service," "hellish work"* (20).

But the greater the desire to escape to the expanse of his native fields, the more and more the space around Oblomov narrows. Thus, from the large estate in Oblomovka he finds himself in a house in Gorokhovaya Street, then a summer cottage, then Pshenitsina's cottage, and finally the coffin, the last house where there is no space but peace.

Stoltz calls Oblomov's dreams "Oblomovizm," seeing in them "the same things that were with his fathers and grandfathers. Oblomov, taking offense, objects: "*...where is that? Would my wife conserve jams and mushrooms? Would she count skeins and sort out country linen? You hear: notes, books, grand piano, fine furniture*" (186). In dreams of a samovar and a wife one usually sees only the idea of bourgeoisness and does not notice that the main thing for Oblomov is that there is no hypocrisy in paradise, it is not bourgeoisie, but the search for purity in relations between people. In other words, paradise is a place where there is no need to think about daily bread, and therefore, there is no need to lie and cheat to get something to eat, and, therefore, there is an opportunity to be yourself and to be surrounded not by envious and hypocrites, but by those with whom "*... Everything is to your liking! What is in one's eyes, in one's words, is in one's heart...*" (186). In such a world of Oblomov, culture, art (notes, books, piano) supplant everyday life and become the basis of an idyllic existence. It is not by chance that in Oblomov's dream everyday life and poetry, food and music coexist: "*'Damp in the field.'* Oblomov concludes. *It is dark; the fog, like an overturned sea, hangs over the rye; the horses shudder with their shoulder and beat their hooves: it is time to go home. The house lights are already lit; five knives are banging in the kitchen; a pan of mushrooms, cutlets, berries... there is music... 'Casta diva... Casta diva!' Oblomov sang. 'I cannot indifferently remember Casta diva...'*" (186).

As the researcher M. Otradin notes, "Oblomov's thinking is not analytic, but figurative, poetic; therefore the dream comes so vividly to life in his conversation with Stoltz; associations, comparisons, and figurative approaches come so easily to him" (Отрадин/Otradin, 1994, p. 75–76). It is no coincidence that, listening to Oblomov, Stoltz says: "You are a poet, Ilya!" and Oblomov replies: "Yes, a poet in life, because life is poetry. People are free to distort it!" (185). Oblomov's dreams express his position in life, in which the objects of everyday life are poetized as well. After all, in the basis of everything is the hero's good heart, his desire for an ideal.

CHAPTER 2.

THE SYSTEM OF IMAGES IN THE NOVEL “OBLOMOV”

2.1. The artistic role of the concepts *laziness* and *peace* in creating the image of Oblomov

In order to understand more deeply the nature of Oblomov's artistic image and, consequently, the essence of the novel, it is necessary to compare the image of the protagonist both with the symbols of Russian culture and literature, and with the images of other characters in the novel. In this respect let's appeal to the concepts of “laziness” and “peace” in their conceptual content, as these concepts are already fixed in the reader's mind for the image of Oblomov.

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

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

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

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

cultural layer, which serve as a mediator between man and the world. Another linguist L. O. Cherneyko emphasizes that the concept includes the notion, but it is not exhausted by it. Moreover, it covers all the content of the word – both denotative and connotative, based on associative links.

Culturological definition of a concept was offered and fixed in the “Dictionary of Russian culture constants” by Yu. S. Stepanov: a concept is *“as if a clot of culture in the human mind; that in the form of what culture enters into the mental world of a person. A concept is that by means of which an ordinary person enters into culture, and in some cases influences it. <...> Concepts are not only thought, they are experienced. They are the subject of emotions – sympathies and antipathies, and sometimes collisions”* (Степанов/Stepanov, 1997, pp. 40–41). The concept, as D. S. Likhachyov notes, *“does not arise directly from the meaning of the word, but it is the result of the collision of the dictionary meaning of the word with personal and folk experience. Concept’s potential is wider and richer, if the cultural experience of a person is broad and rich”* (Лихачёв/Likhachyov, 1997, p. 281). D. S. Likhachyov introduced the term “concept sphere” into the scientific usage, which means the perspectives discovered through a person’s vocabulary and through the entire language. The concept sphere of language is the concept sphere of culture, because the national language is not only a sign system for transferring messages, but also an “accumulative system” of the culture – its science, historical experience, religion, folklore, literature. It is certain that there is a direct connection between the culture and the concept sphere of its language: the richness of the Russian culture determines perspectives and potential of the concept sphere.

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

For a deeper understanding of Oblomov’s image it is necessary to review the denotative, connotative and associative content of the words “laziness” and “peace” in

culture and literature. It is all the more impressive that these words have been associated with Oblomov's image in the minds of readers. Goncharov's position should be considered regarding the historical and cultural background of the epoch in which the novel was written. At that time, "laziness" and "peace" became symbols of free creativity. And these symbols meant the same also for A. S. Pushkin, the undoubted authority for subsequent generations of Russian poets and writers. Goncharov distinguished Pushkin from all writers; he was influenced by Pushkin's artistic style. Let us note some similarities and opposites in the understanding of the concepts "laziness" and "peace" in Pushkin's and Goncharov's works.

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

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

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

In the Bible there is no clearly expressed negative attitude toward "laziness." So, in the first centuries of Christianity "laziness" was interpreted as a type of "rest" and "indolence": "*Laziness seems to me a desire for rest, – but only the Lord has a true rest*" (Augustine Blessed "Confession") (Зеленин/Zelenin, 2004, p. 26). Later in Western Christianity laziness was enlisted to the seven deadly sins, while in Eastern

(Orthodox) tradition “sadness” is mentioned in the list of sins instead of “laziness.” *“Laziness is a concept that refers to a person’s worldly (physical) life and is opposed to work. Herein lies an important difference between Orthodoxy and Catholicism. Labor, in Orthodox doctrine, is primarily a “spiritual act;” on the contrary, in Catholicism, since the eleventh century, it was the social, physical activity of man that was recognized as leading and saving. ... Russian Orthodoxy did not see the spiritual value in the amount of material wealth earned by labor; Catholicism, on the other hand, began to consider diligence in work, labor, accumulation of material goods as one of the ways to save the soul”* (Зеленин/Zelenin, 2004, p. 27).

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

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

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

This understanding of laziness is reflected in all Pushkin’s poems where the lexeme “laziness” appears: “Town” (1815), “Dreamer” (1815), “My Epitaph” (1815), “To My Aristarchus” (1815), “A Message to Yudin” (1815), “A Message to Galich” (1815), “To Delvig” (1815), “Dream” (1816), “Delvig” (1817), “Turgenev” (1818),

“Solitude” (1819), “All Ghost, Vanity...” (1819), “To My Inkwell” (1821), “In the hours of amusement or idle boredom...” (1830), “To Delvig” (1830). Most of the above poems are the friendship messages, where “laziness” is on a par with love and friendship: *“Love, friendship and laziness / Sheltered from worries and troubles, / Live under their reliable shadow; / In solitude you are happy: you are a poet”* (“To Delvig”) (Пушкин/Pushkin, 1974a, p. 31).

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

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

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

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

In Pushkin's poems laziness is carefree, free, deep, solitary, philosophical, dreamy, poetic, lyrical, quiet, peaceful, sleepy, proud, holy, friendly, royal, queen, divine, goddess. Laziness as a companion of creativity is possible in a certain topos: the wilderness, desert, the open air, remote shade, village, town; forest, grove, garden, meadows, fields, river, brook; house, private nook, hovel, couch. The landscape in this context is always peaceful, the sky and rivers are calm. It is worth mentioning that previously listed meanings of the concept "laziness" are the antithesis of the noise and vanity of cities, rich houses, feasts, balls; thunder, lightning, storms, seas. *"Hurry up to the peaceful rural shelter / There you can live idle and carefree, / There is a paradise; but stay away from the cities, / Where the cry and noise forever bother sloths"* ("Dream") (Пушкин/Pushkin, 1974 a, p. 415).

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

"Laziness is laudable, but there are limits to everything," without creativity, without labor, without movement, laziness is burdensome and painful: *"Beware, oh, children, of wise laziness! / The deceptive shadow of calm..."*; all life on the couch and bed leads to gout, melancholy and sickness; *"In the midst of peaceful villages, without any work. / What's the need? – Movement, gentlemen!"* ("Dream") (Пушкин/Pushkin, 1974 a, p. 415). Laziness and labor in Pushkin's poems are interrelated: *"Blessed is he who in a distant shadow, / Far away from exacting ignorance, / Divides his days between labor and laziness, / Memories and hopes"* ("Solitude") (Пушкин/Pushkin, 1974a, p. 372).

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

Russian culture has preserved a similar line of "defense" of laziness, most vividly represented in the novel "Oblomov" by I. A. Goncharov. The writer doubted the necessity for condemnation of laziness as a "harmful" quality of human nature. In a letter to Yu. D. Efremova (20 August 1849) Goncharov wrote: *"Here I have finally comprehended poetry of laziness. And this is the only poetry to which I will be faithful"*

to the grave, unless the misery forces me to grab a crowbar and a shovel” (Гончаров/Goncharov, 1980, p. 155).

It is obvious that Pushkin’s interpretation of the laziness is associated with a poetic labor, and his character is not lazy to live. Whereas in I. A. Goncharov’s depiction of Oblomov, in addition to dreaminess and avoidance of vanity, the laziness becomes a severe disease, which leads to a loss of will to live. “*It seems to me, that you are lazy to live, aren’t you?*” Stoltz asked. *‘It’s true: I’m lazy to live, Andrei’*” (177). The laziness for I. Goncharov is a corrupting and a decomposing trait (this is Stoltz’s position), but it is a kind of poetry. Of course, it comes from A. S. Pushkin (Onegin with his “brooding laziness”) and the “Arzamasians.”

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

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

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

During this difficult period the poem “It’s time, my friend, it’s time...,” which was addressed to his wife, appears. This poem was probably written in the summer of 1834 as a result of failed attempt to retire and go away to the village. The same state of mind is reflected in the letters of this time to his wife. “*It is time, my friend, it is time! The heart demands for peace – / A day by day does fly, and every hour’s taking / A*

piece of being, and we together do assume / To live, and maybe just, we will be dead quite soon. / There is no happiness in world, but peace and freedom. / For a long time I've been desirable fate dreaming – / Like tired slave, I've planned myself to make released / For distant residence of works and pure bliss” (Пушкин/Pushkin, 1974b, p. 315). The structure of this conversation, a philosophical reflection is created due to the form of address, the lines wrap, which consists of iambic hexameter with pyrrhics. The theme is stated from the first line: the desire for peace. Chronos is inseparable from the topos: days fly by, life passes, and it is time, time has come for rest, which is tantamount to happiness; every hour is taking a piece of being, that is, time destroys matter, and the man puts stuff aside and assumes as there is still time to live. Pyrrhic in the second foot of the fourth verse (“suppose”), slows down the rhythm of the poem, as if to emphasize that man plans to start a new life after the completion of affairs, but he dies before it even started. The light, the world is contrasted with a distant residence, where silence, creativity and pure bliss, that is, complete contentment and joy.

In the manuscript we find a plan for the continuation of the poem: *“Youth has no need for at home, maturity is afraid of its solitude. Blessed is he who finds a friend, and then goes home. Oh, I'm going to find out whether I get into the village – fields, garden, peasants, books; the poetic production – family, love, etc. – religion, death”* (Пушкин/Pushkin, 1974b, p. 603).

Such interpretation of the “peace” coincides precisely with I. Goncharov's understanding upon this notion: peace means family, love, dreams of a wife, friends, fields, books, notes, – that we find in the novel “Oblomov.” The novel's main character embodies the metaphor of peace and idyll. Oblomov has been looking for peace and lost paradise all his life. The word “peace” is one of the most frequent in the novel. Oblomov responds to Stoltz's accusations: *“And yet isn't it true, that the purpose of all your running around, passions, wars, trade and politics is the quest for peace, and the striving for this ideal of a lost paradise”* (187).

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

The word “rest” here is polysemantic: it also means silence, rest, inactivity, absence of movement, restlessness; it is also sickness (hospital emergency room); it is also death (eternal rest, the deceased). Thus, the figure of Oblomov symbolizes, on the

one hand, a connection with eternity, silence, a rejection of vanity, and on the other hand, lifeless, painful, mortal state. It is not by chance that the author depicts the peace of Oblomovka and Vyborg as “a dead silence and a dream like death,” there are no poetic works and books. And in Oblomov’s dreams true peace and happiness, like in Pushkin’s works, are there, where one can hear music, where one can discuss with his wife what he has read, and where conversations with friends bring joy and peace of mind.

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

2.2. Female images as a reflection of the typical and individual in the main character of the novel

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

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

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

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

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

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

Love in reality turns out to be not as poetic for Oblomov as it began, in the spring, at the moment when the grass and trees were in bloom. Love turns after the marriage proposal, which Olga accepted, into a heavy duty, where there is no place for dreams and poetry. Love fades, the life comes with its daily problems. "*Happiness, happiness! ...How fragile you are, how unreliable! Bedspread, wreath, love, love! Where's the money? and how to earn a living? And you must buy, love, pure, lawful good. From*

that moment on, dreams and calmness left Oblomov. He slept badly, ate little, absentmindedly and gloomily looked at everything” (341).

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

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

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

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

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

“Peace suits me, though it is boring and sleepy, it is familiar to me; but I cannot handle storms” (263). Pshenitsina has something that is lacking in Olga, and with her Ilya Ilyich finally finds the desired, sweet, long-awaited peace. This is expressed in the lexemes conveying the emotional experiences and actions of the hero: “willingly stayed,” “quietly opened the door with his foot,” “all this was done in peace,” “did not worry with anxiety.”

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

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

The most important thing in family life for Oblomov has always been peace, not passion, like his ancestors, he avoided passion. In this the hero saw the norm of human life and the norm of love. *“A person is sleeping carefree beside the proudly shameful, restful friend. He falls asleep with confidence, waking up to meet the same meek, cute look. And twenty, thirty years later, at his warm gaze, he would have met in her eyes the same gentle, quietly flickering ray of sympathy. And so on to the grave! ‘But isn’t this the secret goal of every man and every woman: to find in your friend an unchanging physiognomy of peace, an eternal and even smooth of feeling? After all, this is the norm of love, and a little something deviates from it, changes, cools, – we suffer: therefore, my ideal is a common ideal?’ he thought”* (212). There is a norm in life and the norm in love is peace.

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

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

2.3. Comparison and opposition of the images of Oblomov and Stoltz

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

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

Oblomov and Stoltz are two images, two types of consciousness, two understandings of life, on the juxtaposition of which the novel is built: the poetic-soul (Oblomov's) and the analytical-rational (Stoltz's). *"The juxtaposition underlying the*

novel and determining its structure,” writes M. V. Otradin, “*is clearly not reducible to a comparison of two love stories. It is a comparison of two types of life, in one of which the main thing is cyclicity, the repetition of events, ‘staying’, and in the other – directed, irreversible movement, ...change, ‘becoming’, that is a comparison of two worlds, the centers of which are the bearers of sharply opposed consciousnesses – Oblomov and Stoltz”* (Отрадин/Otradin, 1994, p. 97).

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

“*Different national-cultural and socio-historical elements – from patriarchal to burgher ones – created, united in the personality of Stoltz, a temper that is alien, in the novelist’s opinion, to any limitation and extremity*” (Недзвецкий/Nedzvetsky, 1996, p. 33). Goncharov intended to relate to the image of Stoltz the idea of the norm of life, combining in the image Russian poetry with German practicality. “*In order for such a temper to take shape, it may be that such mixed elements as Stoltz was made of were also needed. ...How many Stoltz should appear under Russian names!*” (171). In these words one can hear the hope for the future, for the realization of Stoltz’s ideal in the real world.

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

Everything about Stoltz, from his name and appearance to his way of life, is the antithesis of Oblomov. Stoltz, from the German “stolz” (proud), while Andrey is translated from the ancient Greek as “courageous,” “brave,” “husband,” “man. “*He is*

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

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

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

Stoltz calls Oblomov’s dream of finding peace and lost paradise “oblomovizm,” rebuking his friend for apathy and laziness. Oblomov asks Stoltz: “*So why ... do you*

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

Many features of Oblomov’s ideal were embodied in the Stoltz family idyll. *“They settled in a quiet corner, on the seashore. Modest and small was their house.” “But amidst this motley furniture, pictures, amongst things of no importance to anyone, but marked for them both by a happy hour, by a memorable moment of trifles, in the ocean of books and notes reeked of warm life, ...all around shone the eternal beauty of nature.” “A network of grapes, ivy, and myrtles covered the cottage from top to bottom. From the gallery one could see the sea, from the other side – the road to the city”* (468). *“There could be no rampant wild passions: everything was harmonious and quiet. ... Outside they did everything like others. Although they got up not at dawn, but early; they liked to sit for a long time at tea, sometimes even as if lazily silent, then they went to their corners or worked together, had lunch, went to the fields, made music... like everyone else, as Oblomov dreamed too”* (474). Goncharov says that Stoltz and Olga are happy, but this does not convince the reader. *“The union of the heroes in fact turns out to be self-contained, deprived of the main meaning of true love – its humanizing social results. The idea of a harmonious, real-poetic personality in the figure of Stoltz is not adequately embodied in the novel”* (Недзвецкий/Nedzvetsky, 1996, p. 34).

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

In order to understand what for the author is an ideal, it is necessary to turn to I. A. Goncharov’s travel sketches “Frigate Pallada,” written during the voyage around the world in those ten years that separate the first and last parts of “Oblomov,” and built on the same technique of comparison and contrasts as in the novel. As the researcher V. A. Nedzvetsky notes, in the journey itself Goncharov is interested not so much in the external conditions of the peoples’ lives as in the national “ways of life”

repeated many times in everyday life and mores (Недзвецкий/Nedzveckij, 1996, pp. 41–59). “The Frigate Pallada” – a kind of narrative of world life with the bourgeois West and the feudal East opposing as its main characters. The West symbolizes movement, life- bustle, it was based on material, spiritless, soulless, hence alien to true “humanity” (England, the United States). The East, on the other hand, is peace, immobility, isolation, withdrawal, sleep, laziness, apathy (Japan, the Lucky Islands). But not everything in the West and in the East is unambiguous. For example, in the West there is England and Madera Island, and in the East there is Japan and Shanghai of China. In describing the Portuguese island of Madera, the author uses the same persistent images of sleep, stasis, detachment as he does in describing Japan (not coincidentally they are islands, something separate from the rest of the world). Shanghai, on the other hand, is closer to London: there is a bazaar, turmoil, noise, shouting, a departure from nature and peace. Thus, the private in Goncharov’s work becomes a universal law.

Let us compare the descriptions of the world around him in Goncharov’s travel sketches and his novel. Oblomov’s oriental robe and soft shoes are significant details. The motif of universal statics-stagnation, cycle-repeat, patriarchal-idyllic order pervades the sketches of Madera, Japan and Oblomovka. The mythological cyclical nature of time, the symbol of the circle can be traced in the composition of the novel, which is inscribed in the annual circle; in the architectonics (the last lines of the novel refer to the beginning of the story); in the plot (the end of Pshenitsina’s life repeats the beginning of life in Oblomovka); in the repetition of the name and patronymic (Ilya Ilyich) and in the name of the hero (Obly – round). Graphically, Oblomovka can be depicted as a closed circle, which also brings it closer to the islands of Madera and Japan.

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

Oblomov had that talent for kindness that turned him into an active person in relation to other people. “*Goncharov’s hero is one of the few who is naturally given the gift of awakening love in others and keeping it sacred in his heart. Such is the moral dominant of the image and its philosophical and psychological meaning*” (Гейро/Geyro, 1990, p. 14). As paradoxical as it sounds, Oblomov is active without doing anything. His honest and kind soul responded to the best in the people close to him. Next to Oblomov, Olga blossomed. Pshenitsina only lived those seven years by his side, thanks to him she knew “...*why she lived and that she did not live in vain.*” They remembered Oblomov as a very good person even after his death: “*They all share*

a sympathy, a memory of a dead man's soul pure as crystal" (514). The rare comparative phrases of Goncharov express the highest type of aesthetic evaluation.

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

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

In Goncharov's portrayal of Oblomov, the dominant detail is the heart. The people around him love him for his heart. Pure in heart, Oblomov expects the same from other people. He avoids insincerity and reaches for simple, open communication, dreams of living in a colony of close friends, with whom "*...Everything is to his liking! What is in the eyes, in the words, what is in the heart...*" In describing Stoltz, however, the dominant detail is the mind, with which he solves all problems, so he has no problems and no worries at all: "*We did not see that he (Stoltz) thought about anything painfully and painfully; apparently, he was not devoured by pangs of the heart; he was not sick at heart...*" (170).

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

with everyone, loved him sincerely alone, trusted him alone, perhaps because he grew up, studied and lived together with him. This is Andrey Ivanovich Stoltz” (41). Oblomov tells Taranteyev that for him Stoltz is “*closer than any kin*” (51).

Clever, kind Oblomov is in conflict with a soulless and “mechanical” environment, because the main thing in him is conscience, which makes him suffer throughout his life, i. e. “soul ache”: “*A snake gnaws at me: this is conscience... My conscience kills me... My own conscience was much stricter than a reprimand... Not a single stain of reproach in cold soulless cynicism lay on his conscience... He suffered for his lost manhood and honor, wept for the dirty fall of a woman who was foreign to him...*” (497). “*...No yoke weighs down my conscience: it is as pure as glass*” (190). “*In him all feelings curled into one lump – shame*” (214). “*‘It’s as if someone is persecuting you. And so persecuted. Who is it?’ ‘Shame...’ he whispered*” (217). The main thing in Oblomov is not that he was a serf and therefore died; not only because of “oblomovizm,” not only because he did not know how to put on stockings, the hero dies. He died because he was endowed with a suffering conscience, in other words, his conscience; because “*...in his soul he had faith in friendship, in love, in human honor, and no matter how many mistakes he made with people, no matter how many more, his heart suffered, but the foundation of goodness and faith in him has never been shaken*” (17).

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

“*The conscience of the Russian man in general does not manifest itself in his inner morality, but in the form of an emotional experience, a ‘remorse of conscience’.* Therefore, the conscience of the Russian man is more emotional than rational, of the Western man it is more rational than emotional. In the cultural archetype of the Russian man conscience is more a decoration than a component of spiritual intension of practical activity” (Чернева/Cherneva, 1998, p. 11). Oblomov suffers, but does nothing to remedy the situation. He promises Olga that he is ready to throw himself into the abyss for her sake. To which Olga remarks: “*Yes, in words you punish yourself, throw yourself into the abyss, give half your life, but there comes doubt, sleepless night: how tender you become to yourself, careful, caring, how far you see ahead...!*” (271). Oblomov is tormented by his conscience that he has not realized himself in life, is not

worthy of Olga's love, but small obstacles, such as divorced bridges or constant work and study for the sake of the woman he loves, become a painful burden for him. Therefore, Oblomov's conscience is more a path to remorse and torment than to concrete practical action.

The word "abyss" appears frequently in the novel. It has two meanings: the first is Oblomov's constant feeling that he is falling into an abyss; and the second is that Oblomov and society are separated by an abyss (he is on one side – they are on the other). The dismantled bridge, pushing back the meeting between Oblomov and Olga, symbolizes the fact that "*there also lies an abyss between reality and the ideal, over which a bridge has not yet been found, and will hardly ever be built*" (Гончаров/Goncharov, 1980, p. 253). Goncharov tried to build this bridge. He saw the achievement of harmony in the organic union of opposites: fantasy/reality, movement/peace, national/worldly. This is evidenced by Goncharov's portrayal in *The Pallada Frigate*. Siberia, a prototype of the future Russia, where pioneers are simultaneously dreamers and practitioners, where the norm is represented by the unity of all peoples: patriarchal and civilized, rational and emotional, practical and contemplative, northern and southern, western and eastern, ancient and young (Недзвецкий/Nedzvetsky, 1996, pp. 41–59). It is the same in the novel *Oblomov*. Pshenitsina says about Oblomov's son that "he looks like the dead man," it means that he realizes all the meanings associated with the word "peace" and repeats his father, but he is brought up by Stoltz, hence, in the future the new Oblomov is a poet and a practical man, hence the name and middle name Andrey Ilyich, made of the names (ideas) of his father and educator.

CHAPTER 3.

THE SYSTEM OF SYMBOLS IN THE NOVEL “OBLOMOV”

3.1. Aesthetic characteristics of the symbols *home, way, light*

Ivan Goncharov's novel is built on the basis of a system of certain symbols. Let us consider the role of this system in the content structure of the fiction text.

In the 21st century philology a scientific trend has emerged in which language is considered as the cultural code of a nation and not just an instrument of communication and cognition. Language not only reflects reality, but interprets it, creating a special reality in which a person lives. That is why the philosophy of the turn of the millennium is developing on the basis of studying the possibilities and peculiarities of using the language.

By studying the language of different people, we penetrate not only into the modern mentality of the nation, but also into the views of ancient people at the world, society and themselves. Echoes of bygone years, are surviving the centuries, are preserved today in proverbs, sayings, phrases, metaphors, symbols of culture. Language is intimately connected with culture: it grows into it, develops in it and expresses it.

Since every native speaker is at the same time a bearer of culture, linguistic signs acquire the ability to perform the function of cultural signs and thus serve as a means of representing the basic attitudes of culture. That is why the language is able to reflect the cultural and national mentality of its native speakers. Culture is correlated with language through the concept of space. So, each culture has its own keywords, for example, for Germans – attention, order, precision. A complete list of keywords for Russian culture has not yet been established, although a number of such words have already been well described – soul, will, fate, longing, intelligence, laziness, etc. When a linguistic unit is commonly used, frequent and is part of phraseological expressions and proverbs, then it is considered a key word of a culture. Each particular language is a distinctive system, which imposes its imprint on the consciousness of its speakers and forms their picture of the world.

V. A. Maslova notes: *“Despite the cumulative function, i. e. the function of being a means of accumulation and storage of information, language does not become a repository of culture. The unit of language – a word – is only a signal, the function of which is to awaken human consciousness, to touch certain concepts in it, ready to respond to this signal. Texts are the true guardians of culture. Not the language, but the text reflects the spiritual world of a person. It is the text that is directly related to culture, for it is permeated with a multitude of cultural codes, it is the text that stores information about history, ethnography, national psychology, national behavior, i. e. everything that constitutes the content of culture. The text is a set of specific signals,*

which automatically evoke not only direct associations, but also a large number of indirect associations in the reader brought up in the traditions of the culture” (Маслова/Maslova, 2001, p. 87).

The richness of an artistic image is determined by its multiple meanings, a multitude of subject-meaningful and associative links both inside and outside the text: *“The structure of an image is determined by the reader, expanding or, on the contrary, narrowing the textual base of interpretation”* (Чернец/Chernets, 2003, p. 8). In order to more fully reveal the content of the artistic images of the novel *Oblomov*, it is necessary to take into account the symbolism of the novel by I. Goncharov. The category of the symbol in art is close to the category of the image. The category of the symbol correlates with the nature of the artistic image, on the one hand, and a “sign” – on the other hand: *“In a broad sense we can say that the symbol is an image taken in the aspect of its signification, and that it is a sign endowed with all the organicity and inexhaustible multivalence of the image”* (Щемелёва/Shchemelyova, 1987, p. 378). A symbol is an image in which there is always a certain meaning, merged with the image, but not reducible to it. *“Every symbol is an image (and every image is, at least to some extent, a symbol); but the category of a symbol indicates the exit of an image beyond its own limits, the presence of a certain meaning, inseparably fused with the image, but not identical to it... passing into a symbol, the image becomes “transparent;” the meaning ‘transpires’ through it, being given exactly as a semantic depth, a semantic perspective that requires difficult delving”* (Щемелёва/Shchemelyova, 1987, p. 378). In other words, the semantic structure of the symbol is multi-layered, the symbol is endowed with a huge variety of meanings (in fact – incalculable). *“If polysemy is only a hindrance to the rational functioning of a sign for an extra-artistic (e.g., scientific) sign system, then a symbol is the more meaningful the more it is polysemous”* (Щемелёва/Shchemelyova, 1987, p. 378).

The image as a symbol reveals many meanings, which are perceived by the reader depending on his or her life experience. The interpretation of a symbol is designed for the active internal work of the perceiver, because the main feature of symbols is that they arise not only in the texts where we find them, but also go back to ancient ideas about the world, to myths, rituals, literary and historical texts. In other words, in order to interpret a symbol it is necessary to take into account both contextual and intertextual connections of the work. According to V. A. Maslova, *“a word-symbol is a kind of “data bank,” which can be imagined in the form of a spiral, i. e. circles, as if hidden in each other and passing one into another; it is a semantic spiral of a symbol, which includes a wide range of meanings, from implicit (hidden, potential), i. e. they are not expressed in any way, but being an integral part of it, and ending with a scale of semantic substitutes, i. e. programmed substitution of one meaning by another”* (Маслова/Maslova, 2001, p. 97).

“The meaning of the symbol objectively realizes itself not as a presence, but as a dynamic tendency” (Щемелёва/Shchemelyova, 1987, p. 378). This meaning, in essence, cannot be clarified by reducing it to an unambiguous formulation, but can only be explained by relating it to further symbolic entanglements that will bring it to greater rational clarity, but will not reach pure concepts. The interpretation of the symbol is devoid of the formal clarity of the exact sciences; its distinction from them is fundamental and substantive. *“The meaning of a symbol really exists only within the situation of communication, of dialogue, outside of which we can observe only the empty form of a symbol: by delving into a symbol, we do not simply parse and consider it as an object, but simultaneously allow its creator to appeal to us and become a partner in our spiritual work. The essence of the symbol will be lost if we close its infinite semantic perspective with some kind of final interpretation that attributes to a certain layer of reality the exclusive right to be the meaning of all meanings without denoting anything itself”* (Аверинцев/Averincev, 2001, p. 511).

If we consider the image of Oblomov in this respect, we can make sure that his features reflect the Russian picture of the world, that is, the literary hero (character) becomes a symbol embodying the national character. The figurative details associated with the image of color, light, road, river, abyss, chasm, house, food, birds, plants, considered in their symbolic meaning, participate in the creation and disclosure of artistic images of the characters of the novel.

Thus, for our understanding of the symbol it is fundamental to correlate it with the content of the cultural information transmitted by it. A. F. Losev wrote that a symbol contains a generalized principle of further deployment of the semantic content coiled in it. This same property of the symbol was emphasized by Yu. M. Lotman. He noted that culture is always, on the one hand, a certain number of inherited texts, and on the other hand, inherited symbols.

Literary critics and linguists understand the meaning of the term “symbol” in different ways. For example, Stepanov argues that a symbol is not a scientific concept, but it is a concept of poetics; it is always significant only within the framework of a particular poetic system, and in this system it is true. For example: the symbol of blizzard in Pushkin and the Symbolists, the desert symbol in Lermontov, the road symbol in Gogol, the border and threshold symbols in Dostoyevsky, the garden symbol in Chekhov, the wing and home symbol in Tsvetaeva. As a rule, one can say of these symbols, in the words of Yu. M. Lotman, that they are “the gene of the plot.” However, along with them there are linguistic symbols that are generated in the process of the evolution and functioning of language. Such symbols have a mythological or, more precisely, archetypal nature.

V. A. Maslova names the following features of a symbol: *“imagery (iconicity), motivation, complexity of content, multiple meanings, vagueness of meaning*

boundaries, archetypicality, universality in a single culture, intersection in different cultures, national and cultural specificity, built-in myth and archetype” (Маслова/Maslova, 2001, p. 98).

Culture is always associated with the past, and therefore it is a collective memory, which implies the preservation of previous spiritual experience, the continuity of the moral and intellectual life of people. This memory captures the ideas and images that are beloved by each people, repeated from century to century, cross-cutting motives of behavior and types of thinking, stable sets of perceptions and experiences.

Despite the fact that researchers often assessed the character of I. Goncharov, many concurred in his understanding of him as a national type. For Ap. Grigoryev it is important that Oblomovka is connected with the national ground and that it is an artistic embodiment of the national principles of Russian life which give strength to love, live and think (Григорьев/Grigoryev, 1967, p. 337). The religious philosopher N. O. Lossky wrote in his book “The Character of Russian People”: “*Goncharov being a great artist gave an image of Oblomov in such a complete form which shows the deep conditions which lead to the evasion of systematic work full of dull trifles and which in the end produce laziness... Oblomovism is in many cases a reverse side of the high characteristics of Russian man – striving for perfection and being sensitive to the flaws of our reality*” (Лосский/Losky, 1990, p. 55). I. Sukhikh notes: “*Oblomovism is a peculiarity of the Russian mentality (way of thinking) – this is how a culturologist or cultural historian could formulate this thought*” (Сухих/Sukhikh, 2006b, p. 231).

I. Goncharov believed that his novel would be understandable to a Russian person because it touched on purely Russian problems. He writes about this to his like-minded translator of his works into Danish, P. G. Ganzen: “*I never not only did encourage, but as much as it depended on me, even kept translators from transferring my works into foreign languages. It happened... because all characters in my works, manners, terrain, flavor – too national, Russian – and therefore, it seemed to me always, they will be little understood in foreign countries, little familiar... with Russian life. Oblomov is so Russian that he will seem pale, incomprehensible and uninteresting to foreigners*” (Гончаров/Goncharov, 1980, p. 460, p. 471).

It is no coincidence that the image of Oblomov became a reflection of the national consciousness, the archetype of the Russian man. I. Goncharov does not build a special symbolism, but appeals to the tradition inherent in the language and culture of the people. The symbols of “home,” “way” and “light” are the main, defining symbols in fiction. Often a particular literary work from a compositional point of view is built entirely on one of them. These intertextual symbols help to reveal the specificity of artistic images, the idea of the work. Before proceeding to the disclosure of the symbols of “home,” “way” and “light” in the novel, it is necessary to understand the

very essence of these symbols, to show their archetypal and universal features, their connection with the national Russian worldview.

The image of home is associated with the understanding of everything native and close to a person: family, clan. For this reason the hut, the house had a great importance for man even in ancient times. The house, according to the observation of A. N. Afanasyev, “was the first ...temple.” That is why the word “mansion” (house, dwelling, hut) is quite close in its semantic features to the lexeme “temple” (a sacred place). The image of a house in its entirety reveals its symbolic load due to the unity of the associated motifs of unity, warmth, comfort and kinship. The house in folk culture is the center of the main values of life, happiness, prosperity, unity of family and clan (including not only the living, but also ancestors). The house, built by the hands of the owner or his parents, embodies the idea of family and clan, the connection of ancestors and descendants.

The most important symbolic function of the house is protective. In byliny and fairy tales, a man takes shelter in a house from pursuing enemies who are unable to cross the threshold. Gates, thresholds, windows – a symbolic boundary between home and the outside world, between their own, mastered space and another’s.

Parts of the house symbolize its sacred elements. The most revered places are the red corner, the stove, and the table. The red corner is the part of the house where the icons hang and the table stands; it is the most ceremonial and significant place in the dwelling.

The most sacred place in the home, in particularly among the Slavs, has always been the hearth. “*The izba, in the ancient language of Nestor, ispka, comes from the verb ‘to sink’*” (Афанасьев/Afanasyev, 1986, p. 67). Therefore it is not difficult to explain the connection between “house” and “fire,” which symbolize all warmth, life and resurrection. Not coincidentally, according to the legends, when a family member set off on a journey, the warm influence of the hearth followed the wanderer and protected him/her in a foreign land during the whole journey.

The stove is one of the sacred centers of the house, it is the most mythologized and symbolically significant household item among the Slavs. The stove is opposed to the red corner in which icons are kept, and man feels as if facing God. In the stove they cook food, sleep on it, and in some regions, it is also used as a bath, it is mostly associated with folk medicine. “*The symbolism of the stove is attributed mainly not to the sphere of ritual or etiquette of human behavior, but to his intimate, ‘womb’ life in such its manifestations as coitus, defloration, fetal development, birth and, on the other hand, agony, death and posthumous existence. The stove plays a special symbolic role in the interior of the house, combining the features of the center and the border. As a receptacle of food or home fire, it embodies the idea of home in the aspect of its*

completeness and well-being and in this respect is correlated with the table” (Топорков/Торорков, 1995b, p. 310).

The table was an object of special reverence. The table, standing in a red corner, was an integral part of the house; for example, when a house was sold, the table was necessarily given to the new owner. Such properties of a table as its immovability and inseparability from the dwelling are used in a number of ceremonies.

The symbolic meaning of the table in the folk tradition was largely determined by its likeness to the church throne, especially since both words have the same root: in the second case the Old Slavic prefix “pre” was added. The formulas “table is a throne” and “table is the throne of God” are known to all East Slavs. Prescriptions such as “*the table is the same as the altar throne, and therefore one should sit at the table and behave as in church*” are also widespread. For example, it was not permitted to place extraneous objects on the table, since it was the place of God Himself. The Slavs constantly had bread on the table, which transformed it into a throne, cf. the proverb: “*Bread on the table, so the table is a throne, but not a piece of bread – and the table is a board.*” The constant presence of bread on the table was to ensure prosperity and well-being at home.

“In the Orlov district during lunch and dinner the peasants tried to sit at the table longer, ‘because, in their opinion, as long as you sit at the table, you will stay in the kingdom of heaven’. There was a ceremony ‘to go (to sit, to gather) in heaven’, during which, in particular, people walked around the table or sat at the table in Harkiv Province on the second or third day after the christening. Apparently, the correlation with paradise of the table is explained by one of the meanings of the church altar: ‘the earthly paradise, where our parents lived’. ... The symbolism of the table at the East Slavs is correlated with the idea of way; as a sacral center of dwelling it is both initial and final point of any way” (Топорков/Торорков, 1995d, pp. 366–367).

The everyday or festive meal, the meal, plays an important symbolic role in many peoples. The meal is furnished as a peculiar ritual designed to reveal the inner structure of the collective, to affirm the unity and solidarity of people gathered around one table and eating in the face of higher powers.

The most honorable place was at the head of the table, in the red corner under the icons. If there was no father in the family, his place was taken by the eldest married son, and if he was not yet married, the mother was in charge. It was observed that the host should not sit in the corner under the icons, but moved a little away, leaving a place for God. In keeping with the notion of God as the “dispenser of goods,” the meal was organized in such a way as to present the food served by the cook as gifts coming from God. In the end, the meal is presented as a kind of exchange with God: for the food that comes from the Lord, the fellow diners give him thanks and express their reverence. The host, who takes his place at the head of the table, under the icons,

presides over the meal on behalf of God, who is invisibly watching over the people and their attitude toward his gifts.

“There were not allowed to curse food in Rus. ‘If anyone blasphemes meat eating and drinking in the Law of God... let him be cursed’, reads the Old Russian monument ‘From the Apostolic Commandments’ (manuscript of the 14th–15th centuries)” (Топорков/Toporkov, 1995a, p. 176). Taste qualities of food, according to “Domostroy,” depend not only on the skill of the cook, but also on the behavior of the participants of the meal. “If one eats with reverence and in silence or while having a spiritual conversation, the food and drink are sweet, but if one slurps them, it is as if they turn into garbage. We need to praise God’s gift and eat with thanksgiving, then God will send fragrance and turn bitterness into sweetness. In traditional households, they thanked God for food, not the hostess” (idem, p. 176). The joint meal of young people in the wedding ritual, known in many Slavic peoples, marks their entry into an intimate relationship. “In the Russian tradition, the erotic symbolism of food is clearly traced” (idem, p. 177).

Bread is considered the most sacred food by the Eastern Slavs: a symbol of wealth, abundance, happiness and prosperity at home. Bread is a gift from God and at the same time an independent living being or even an image of the deity himself. It requires a special and almost religious attitude. *“As for specially baked sacred bread-pie, it is an indispensable attribute of majority of calendar and family holidays (Christmas pie ‘чесница/cesnitsa’ for Serbs, Easter ‘кулич/kulich’ or ‘пасха/paskha’ for Eastern Slavs, wedding ‘коровай/korovay’ for Eastern Slavs). To the same circle belong Russian pancakes obligatory on Shrovetide and at funerals” (Толстой/Tolstoy, 1995a, p. 25).*

“Home,” “hearth,” “table,” correlated with the idea of the road, are the starting and ending points of any path. The symbolism of “way” is connected with the meanings of “life,” “destiny” of a person and the world. The way is an exit, meeting, separation, distance, escape, search, testing, obstacle (abyss, pit), loss, discovery, return. Often, the way symbolizes fate, and the fate of appearing to be a path from which you can not turn – “you can not escape from the fate. A constant and inherent property of the path – is its difficulty. A Meeting in Slavic beliefs is a manifestation of fate. It is associated with the designation of happiness, destiny. Meeting may have both positive and negative consequences, the latter is often explained by the action of evil forces.

The symbolism of light, coming from folk mythopoetic tradition, is associated with the embodiment of world order, beauty, truth, righteousness. *“According to folk-Christian views, God the Father and Jesus Christ, angels and saints have a luminous, sunny nature, darkness is embodied by devilish forces. While heaven is located in the east and is called ‘sunny’, hell is located in the west and is submerged in darkness. By illuminating the earth’s surface, the sun seems to hand it over to the power of the divine*

forces, and by hiding at night it leaves it in the power of evil. Sunlight is poured out on man as God's grace, and it also repels unclean powers. The people assimilated and developed the biblical teaching about the divine origin of light and its separation from darkness as the first divine act (Genesis I: 1–4). According to the 'Verse on the Book of Doves', the heavenly bodies have a light-bearing nature: 'We have white free light conceived from the judgment of God, / The sun red from the face of God'. The supernatural origin of sunlight is also due to its dazzling nature, intolerance to the human eye (only the righteous man may look at the sun and see how it plays, shimmering in different colors)'' (Топорков/Toporkov, 1995c, p. 349).

To the greatest extent, human eyes are associated with light, and not only perceive light from outside, but they emit it themselves, and when a person dies, the light is “lost” from the eyes. Darkness corresponds to the state of a grief-stricken person and the picture of the sun setting at night or hiding behind clouds.

According to the legend, people first built a house without windows and tried to carry light into it by gathering it outside in sacks or louvers, and only later an angel prompted them to cut through windows. The window provides access to light and air into the room, is a symbol of the sun and the eyes of the house. *“Hence the symbolism of the window as an image of light, clarity, supervisibility, which allow the connection of man, his soul with the sun, heavenly luminaries, God”* (Соколов/Sokolov, 1992, p. 250).

The sun is the source of life, warmth and light. In folklore, the sun was called clear and red, bright and holy, divine and righteous, good and pure. In folklore, the sun is represented as an intelligent and perfect being who is either a deity himself or does God's will. In popular beliefs, the sun is the face, the eye or word of God, or the window through which God looks at the earth.

The sun is something eternal. The disappearance of the sun is death to all life, a complete disaster, not only at the level of nature, flora and fauna, human civilization, but also at the level of the cosmos, the planetary world, the entire universe.

The morning sun is a symbol of birth and awakening, resurrection. The evening sun is death and sleep, sunset. This is how the image of the sun is interpreted in literary and pictorial works: death, as a rule, is illuminated by the last rays of the sun going over the horizon; birth – against the background of the first, gentle rays of the sun. *“The light of the sun is a symbol of life, prosperity, joy, peace and harmony. The light of the stars, the moon are symbols of old age, fading, sorrow, boredom, deceit, betrayal, and fading away”* (Багдасарян и др./Bagdasaryan et al., 2005, p. 430).

The earth's equivalent of the sun is fire. Fire is the emblem of the sun. Fire and the sun are closely intertwined in their properties, their capabilities and significance both in nature and in human civilization. In addition, fire has always been considered a product of the sun's rays, the earthly ambassador of the sun. And the element of the

sun is also fire. Fire is the symbol of the Spirit and of God, the triumph of light and life over darkness and death, universal purification.

The sun is the wheel of the chariot on which Elijah the prophet rides across the sky, and according to another version, sun is lifted on its wings by the angels of God. Symbols of the sun are the circle, the wheel. *“One of the most ancient pan-Slavic images is the image of the wheel-sun”* (Иванов, Топоров/Ivanov, Toporov, 1992, p. 452). The image of the thunderer’s chariot originally symbolized his connection with the sun (the chariot of Elijah the prophet). *“The wheel is a figure symbolizing the solar way. ...The wheel symbolizes the dialectic of perpetual motion. In the spinning wheel, motion repeats itself. The wheel is the sign of the solstice. There were calendar projections of the wheel, where each spoke fell on a particular turn in the weather. The six-spoked wheel was the sign of Elijah’s day”* (Багдасарян и др./Bagdasaryan et al., 2005, p. 229). *“The circle is the primary symbol of unity and infinity, the sign of the absolute and perfection. ...The circle is the ancient pre-Christian sign of the wheel-sun. A complex symbol combining the idea of perfection and eternity, the circle surpasses all other geometric forms. The line of the circle is the only line that has neither a beginning nor an end and all its points are equivalent. The center of the circle is the source of the infinite rotation of time and space. ...The circle is one of the most widely used figures to express the idea of eternity, as movement around the circle symbolically means a constant return to itself”* (Багдасарян и др./Bagdasaryan et al., 2005, p. 252).

The circle confines internal finite space, but the circular motion that forms this space is potentially infinite. In temporal terms, the idea of the circle finds even fuller embodiment. *“In numerous mythological plots and motifs, in everyday representations and corresponding customs in the language itself (cf. Russian ‘время/vremya’ (time) from ‘vert-men’ – ‘that which rotates, returns’) the cyclic concept of time is reflected. The daily and annual circular motion of the sun united the cyclicity of time with the cyclicity of space... ...Naturally, the sun symbolized as such a deity most often on the basis of its form and the circular nature of its daily and annual motion”* (Топоров, Мейлах/Toporov, Meilakh, 1992, pp. 18–19).

According to folk beliefs, the life time forms a closed circle with sacral and magical power. The motif of “life” of a person, plant or object is presented in rituals, roundels, games, riddles, incantations. The folk calendar gave to the continuous cyclic natural time a character of ritual system (strict alternation of holidays and weekdays, periods of fasting and meat-eating, good and evil days).

As we can see, the concepts of “home,” “path” and “light” can be viewed symbolically, and in this aspect they complement and reveal themselves and thereby deepen the artistic images of the work in which these names are frequent, especially when introducing the characters, describing their nature and the circumstances of life. A symbol is always an image in which a number of meanings are revealed behind the

phenomenon depicted. A slow reading of the text, which allows us to comprehend first of all the integrity of the artistic structure and provides an opportunity to perceive not only the totality of its individual elements in their integrative relationship, but also the “dissimilarity” and uniqueness of origin and mode of existence of each text particle, is impossible without taking into account symbols that, among other things, often form a new meaning and renewed image of the word, including it in the system of unusual synonymy, antonymy, homonymy, paronymy as well as associative series.

3.2. The artistic role of symbols in the structure of Oblomov’s image

When considering the artistic images in the novel *Oblomov* it is necessary to take into account the symbolism of the concepts of “home,” “way” and “light” as complementary and revealing the artistic essence of the novel. It would be possible to consider each of these symbols separately and their role in the creation of the image, but it is not by chance that we consider these symbols in their interconnection: in the novel *Oblomov*, they complement each other and it is in their unity that they reveal the essence of the images. The symbolism of “Oblomov’s house” is linked to the symbolism of “light” (sun, fire, and hearth) and to the symbolism of “the way” (cyclicality, return). The symbolism of “light,” in its turn, cannot be imagined without a connection with “home” (without fire there is no hearth, table, food) and without a connection with “road” (wheel, circle), which is associated with the hero’s life journey and the motif of “burning” and “extinguishing.” Comprehension of the symbolism of the “way” (life, destiny, dreams) is impossible without taking into account the symbolism of “home,” family (what the hero dreams of and strives for, from where and where he is going), and the symbolism of “light” (the sun and the hearth). Recall that *“the meaning of the symbol objectively realizes itself not as a presence, but as a dynamic tendency”* (Щемелёва/Shchemelyova, 1987, p. 378). This meaning cannot be clarified by reducing it to an unambiguous formulation, but can only be explained by relating it to further symbolic entanglements, which will lead us to greater rational clarity, but it is impossible to achieve unambiguous understanding.

Let us turn to the text of the novel and show how the symbols of “home,” “way,” and “light” help to reveal the essence of artistic images. The characteristics of the main characters in the novel *Oblomov* are always connected in one way or another with the symbols we have identified, whether it is a portrait characteristic, a landscape, an interior or a live setting, a monologue, a dialogue of the characters. Let us specify the composition of the lexical material relating to the semantic fields of the symbols in question.

The symbolism of “home”: family, mother, father, relatives, wife, husband, children, estate, house, dwelling, habitation, abode, room, chamber, rest, bedroom,

study, reception room, attic; furniture (desk, cabinet, table, sofa, bed, chair, curtains, rugs, paintings); kitchen, meal, food.

The symbolism of “way”: walk (go out), wander, run, gallop, cross, move, step over, run over, shift, flip over, stop, pull out, take out, wean, leave, return; movement, road, steps, trip, journey, abyss, whirlpool. This symbolism is represented in the opposition of movement/rest. The image of the way symbolizes “human life,” “destiny,” helps to reveal the nature of the characters.

The symbolism of “light”: sun, dawn, illuminate(s), moon, star, fire, flash, blaze, burn, flame, comet, spark, explosion, beam, light, illuminate, candle, lamp, lightning, fireworks, flash, lamplight, glitter, shine, sparkle, shine, glow, zenith, clarity, burn, fade, extinguish, flicker, scorch, dazzle.

The mythological cyclic nature of time, the symbol of the circle can be traced in the composition of the novel, inscribed in the annual circle; in the architectonics (the last lines of the novel refer to the beginning of the story); in the plot (the end of the hero’s life in Pshenitsina repeats the beginning of life in Oblomovka); in the repetition of the name and patronymic (Ilya Ilyich) and the last name of the hero (Obly – round). *“Graphically, the letter ‘O’ in all languages looks like a disk of the sun, symbolizing perfection”* (Багдасарян и др./Bagdasaryan et al., 2005, p. 336). Oblomov and Oblomovka are associated with the symbolism of the sun and the circle. *“Correctly and unperturbedly the annual circle is made there”* (108). *“Now the day has passed, and thank God!” The Oblomovites used to say, going to bed, groaning, and lighting themselves with the sign of the cross. ‘We lived safely; God grant that tomorrow too! Thank you, God!’”* (120). In Oblomovka’s world time is “static;” it is measured not by hours, days or years (the Oblomovtsi even confused “the names of months and the order of numbers”), but by holidays, seasons, and domestic occurrences.

It is no coincidence that the name of the main character is associated with the symbolism of “light” (the sun), with the symbolism of “way” (the cycle), with the symbolism of “home” (fertility, food). Elijah in the Old Testament legends is a prophet; in the folk tradition of the Eastern Slavs – the lord of thunder and rain, a character on whom fertility and crops depend. *“...In folk songs under the name of Elijah appeared a saint – the patron saint of crops and fertility, sower, reaper, and giver of blessings. One of the most noticeable events of Elijah’s Day was the ‘bratchina’ or ‘supper’ – a collective meal that brought together the inhabitants of several neighboring villages. ...On Elijah’s Day, they served bread from the flour of the new harvest: ‘Peter with a spike, Ilya with a pie’”* (Агапкина/Agapkina, 1995, pp. 205–206). *“Elijah (‘my god Yahweh’) in the Old Testament lore (third and fourth books of Kings) is a prophet. ...It is a miracle worker gifted with almost divine power, a prophet through whose mouth God speaks, a preacher who predicts the future in the name of God. ...Different versions have been made of Elijah’s fate after his ascension to heaven: he dwells in*

heaven where human deeds are recorded; in paradise, he accompanies the righteous and extracts the souls of sinners from Gehenna. He is called 'the bird of heaven', for he, like a bird, flies around the world and appears wherever divine intervention is needed. ...Elijah appears as a miraculous healer, counselor in marriage disputes, reconciler of children and parents" (ИВАНОВ/Ivanov, 1990, p. 237).

When depicting the inner world of Ilya Oblomov, the author constantly refers us to the symbolism of light and the motif of a bird, which is associated with the name of the hero. "Thought walked like a free bird across his face ... and his soul shone so openly and clearly in his eyes, in his smile, in every movement of his head and hand" (3). Oblomov's thought is like a bird, it "walks," and it is "free." The image of the bird runs through the whole novel, symbolizing the hero's desire for space, for the will, for home, for the nest. The nest symbolizes home, family, hearth ("to make a nest" means to arrange his family life). The wing is a symbol of air and flight. Not coincidentally, "...beautiful screens with embroidered birds and fruits unprecedented in nature" (5) in Oblomov's St. Petersburg room. Stoltz, on the other hand, "Torn from his pointer, ran to ravage birds' nests with the boys, and not infrequently, amidst class or at prayer, the squeaks of loonies were heard from his pocket" (158). From Stoltz's point of view, Oblomov had "wings," but Oblomov himself unleashed them.

The need to move already at the beginning of the novel disrupts the hero's settled, peaceful life and frightens him. The symbolism of the "path" here appears as the final chord: the hero has gone through everything, experienced a lot, he is uncomfortable with the hustle and bustle of modern life, and would like to build a house and live in peace and at rest of patriarchal cyclical time, as his fathers and grandfathers.

The big house in Gorokhovaya Street is not the hero's home, although he does not want to move out of it. It is a house where many people live, and in its content, it does not encapsulate the idea of family, warmth, coziness for Oblomov. In the house on Gorokhovaya, the hero's idyll is unattainable. "How is it possible not to leave someone else's house if he is persecuted? If it were my house, I would move with all my pleasure" (14) – says Zakhar to Oblomov. In general, it is impossible to have a hero's house in St. Petersburg. This is evident from Oblomov's conversations with Volkov, who describes to Oblomov the secular houses, luxurious salons known in aristocratic and official Petersburg, and there – balls and solemn dinners, but the hero is calm because in these houses there is no idea of a happy family nest, where warmth, comfort, intimacy, idyll, peace would reign. "One of the burning problems solved in the novel through the fate of the main character is precisely the problem of his home, his abode, his corner, his own nest. ...Oblomovka has spawned, released into life her pet, which, fledged, yearns and dreams of it hourly, but does not know the way back there" (ПЫРКОВ/Pyrkov, 1998).

The symbols of “journey” and “home” are linked in the novel. The move is not a return. It is a replacement of one place of residence with another, maybe better, but not ideal, not as it appears to Oblomov. The reluctance to move is symbolic of the nature of the main character. On the one hand, it symbolizes the typical traits of the lazy, indifferent baron looking at everything. On the other hand, the desire to move and change something would suggest the possibility of solving the problem of Oblomov’s finding his lost paradise, but, as events in the novel show, an idyllic circle and eternal return only happen in fairy-tale dreams: one cannot go back to childhood, one cannot find paradise on earth, hence, the hero’s home on earth is also impossible.

The hero tells all the guests about the impossibility of moving. “*Imagine having to move out: all the breaking and bothering... it’s scary to think about it!*” (33). The verb “persecute” in the hero’s speech conveys Oblomov’s perception of the external world about himself: the external world is hostile, it gives no peace. Oblomov, in his conversation with Zakhar, constructs a whole series of reasons for his inability to move. All this looks comical and ridiculous. Oblomov forbids Zakhar to remind him of the move. Moving, walking, leaving, running, fiddling in the hero’s mind is tantamount to changing the world order. The pathos-filled phrases “it will suck all the soul out,” “you won’t want to live,” “boredom will gnaw,” “will the human strength to bear it all” emphasize the comicality of the situation: an ordinary thing (moving) causes so much suffering.

The description of the biography of the hero, his life, and his dreams is carried out through the symbolism of “home,” “way” and “light.” Thus, it is said that Oblomov lives in St. Petersburg “without a journey” for twelve years, “days go by,” “years flash by,” the “turn” from youth to maturity has taken place, with the “rays of eyes” (youthful romanticism) replaced by “dim dots” (disappointment), and the hero “*stands at the threshold, not moving forward a single step*” (56). At the same time, “*In his early years in St. Petersburg, in his early, young years, the resting features of his face come alive more often, his eyes shine with the fire of life, rays of light, hope, and strength pour out of them*” (59). The hero gradually becomes disillusioned with secular life, with bureaucratic work, with love: “*He is not accustomed to movement, to life, to crowds and bustle*” (61). The main character realizes not everything that is associated with movement, with the attempt to get somewhere and achieve something.

In Oblomov’s reflections on history and human life, everything is also understood through the prism of “home,” “way,” and “light.” “*History, too, depressed him terribly: you learn and read that at a certain date the people were overtaken by all sorts of calamities and were unhappy, then they summoned up their strength, worked, took infinite care, endured great hardships, laboured in preparation for better days. At last they came – one would think history might take a rest, but no, clouds gathered again, the edifice crashed down, and again the people had to toil and*

labour... *The bright days do not remain, they fly, and life flows on, one crisis follows upon another*" (63). In the perception of the hero, the constant running and bustle do not allow for the construction of a solid, eternal home as in Oblomovka. The building constantly collapses to be built again, hence the metaphor "life is a river" that flows without ceasing, it is no coincidence that the word "flow" is repeated twice in Oblomov's monologue. Oblomov's happiness comes when tomorrow repeats today, and today repeats yesterday.

If Stoltz himself follows the road of life and seeks new impressions, then Oblomov must be "dragged out," "taken out." *"Despite all these quirks, his friend, Stoltz, managed to get him out into the world"* (61). Although Oblomov and Stoltz were united by the same ideals in their youth, they "burned" with a thirst for activity and were going to follow the same path together. *"The poets touched Oblomov to the core... Mind and heart were enlightened: he shook off his slumber, his soul demanded activity... Taking advantage of the enthusiastic flight of the young dream, Stoltz inserted other goals than pleasure in reading the poets, pointed more strictly into the distance the ways of his and his life, and carried them into the future. Both worried cried and made solemn promises to each other to walk a sensible and bright road"* (63). *"Stoltz's youthful fever infected Oblomov, and he burned with a thirst for work, a distant but charming goal. But the flower of life blossomed and gave no fruit"* (64).

Fear of moving, traffic and the lack of a real rather than imagined plan for building a house prevent the hero from realizing his dream. "Oblomov's "trip" to Oblomovka is seen as a "feat." Oblomov does not know how and does not want to "ride headlong." Here is a vivid antithesis to Stoltz, who does nothing but ride around the world, and whom the author compares to a horse. "Ways of traveling" symbolically emphasize and reveal the essence of the characters, their way of life, and ideals.

The advice of the doctor who visits Oblomov is particularly comical. He appears as the last in a line of Oblomov's visitors and predicts much of how the hero's life will end. The doctor in a "deceased tailcoat" comes himself, no one has called him, and, describing the illness of Oblomov's neighbor, utters the prophetic phrase "the end is known" in the first pages of the novel. The doctor gives Oblomov unenforceable prescriptions: move, ride, dance, jump, do not think, do not suffer, avoid passions and abundant food, only then will Oblomov be healthy. Many things in the doctor's advice contradict Oblomov's inner essence: Switzerland, Paris, England, America – all this does not fit Oblomov's image as well as the advice "not to think," "not to suffer," to lead a secular lifestyle. Oblomov's "path" does not go beyond the borders of Oblomovka, so the doctor's advice given to Oblomov sounds comical and ridiculous.

This is not at all, what Oblomov is like in his dreams: movement, light, and desire appear here. The basic idea of the plan has long been ready in the hero's head, only details and numbers remain. The plan-dream gives the hero hope for the future,

makes his thought “sparkle” and “boil.” *“He worked untiringly on the plan for several years, thinking it over continually as he was pacing his room or lying down or visiting friends; he kept adding to it or changing various items, recalling what he had thought of the day before and forgotten during the night; and sometimes a new, unexpected idea would flash like lightning through his mind and set it simmering – and the work would start all over again”* (66). Oblomov’s plan includes the construction of the village house, the arrangement of rooms, windows facing the garden, and the sun. According to his plan, he lives there without a holiday. Summer, homeland, home, wife, children, friends – it is all permeated with the symbolism of “light”: the girls play burners, in the dining room sparkles and shines not only crystal but all-around – clear days, clear faces, bright blush.

A careful reading of the first part of the novel reveals that streams of light are present only in Oblomov’s dreams and in his dreams. The St. Petersburg spring day, about which Oblomov’s visitors talked so much, inviting him for a ride to Ekaterinhof, is not described at all. The day appears here more like a period than as a bright, sunny, springtime of the day. None of Oblomov’s guests uses the words “the sun,” “sunny” to praise the beginning of the day. The phrases that “the day is good” and “there is not a cloud in the sky” are heard. Alekseyev speaks well of the lack of light in Oblomov’s room: *“One cannot see the light of God”* (32). The windows in the rooms are curtained. As I. Pyrkov remarks: *“Word by word, phrase by phrase, Goncharov weaves the rhythm of muted light, color monotony, monotony, carrying it out with regular repetitions of strictly chosen definitions, verbs, subject nouns. There is no escape from Zakhar’s gray surcoat, in some paragraphs of the text it is repeated many times; and next to ‘the gray paper of the letter’, the letter itself is ‘so dirty’, just gray paper, pale letters, a pale ink stain, ‘a cobweb full of dust’, dust itself, prolonged talk about it, rubbish, piles of rubbish, ‘a pile of the old worn- out dress’, ‘yellowed pages’ of some book, oily notebooks, some dirty paper from Taranteyev’s pocket and the wavering smoke from his cigar, the dark stone of the ring on the doctor’s finger – all the micro details of this rhythmic yarn cannot be enumerated. Thus, in the textual space of the first part of the novel, everything that, so to speak, is ‘dusty and faded’ is evenly dispersed”* (Pyrkov, 1998). All this is the antithesis of the hero’s dream and desire.

Oblomov, locked in his apartment, has a dream. “Oblomov’s Dream” is a huge breakthrough of light, portrayed by Goncharov by a variety of artistic means. *“The inhabitants of Oblomovka, living by the sun. The sun in all its possible positions and manifestations: spring, summer, winter, autumn; morning, noon, evening. Solar birches. Sunny spaces. The morning shadows, the river reflecting the sun and dazzling the eyes. A land where one wants to live forever, to be born and die in this corner – this is the solar, sensual outcome of the perception of ‘Oblomov’s Dream’ after the*

monotonously dull lighting that prevailed in the previous chapters of the first part of the novel” (Pyrkov, 1998):

“The sun there shines brightly and hotly for about half a year and then removes from there not suddenly, as if reluctantly, as if turning back to look once or twice more at his favorite place and giving it a clear, warm day in the fall, amidst inclement weather” (103).

“The sandy and sloping banks of the bright river” (103).

“The peasant throws off his half-coat, goes out into the air in one shirt, and, covering his eyes with his hand, admires the sun for a long time, shrugging his shoulders with pleasure” (103).

“...There look for clear days, slightly burning, but not scorching rays of the sun and almost for three months of cloudless skies. As the clear days go, they last for three or four weeks; and the evening is warm there, and the night is sultry. The stars blink so amiably, so friendly from heaven. Will it rain, what a wholesome summer rain! It will pour down briskly, abundantly, bouncing merrily, like big and hot tears of a suddenly rejoiced man; and as soon as it stops – the sun is again, with a clear smile of love, inspecting and drying the fields and hills: and the whole country is again smiling with happiness in response to the sun” (104).

“Only in the distance, the field of rye burns with fire, and the river glistens and sparkles in the sun so much that it hurts the eyes” (112).

“The sun was already sinking behind the forest; it threw some slightly warm rays, which cut a fiery streak through the whole forest, brightly showering gold on the tops of the pines. Then the rays went out one by one; the last ray remained long; it, like a thin needle, thrust into a thicket of branches; but that too was extinguished. ...The first star in the sky sparkled brightly, like a living eye, and the lights in the windows of the house flickered” (119).

Pyrkov notes that the light palette of “Oblomov’s Dream” is also formed by other layers of functionally identical vocabulary, creating an image of a luminous environment: *“a blinking star; a starlet that looks like a living eye; the nanny’s eyes sparkling with fire; a crackling fire; hair crackling on the head; sparks from a splintering lighter; a cloudless sky; clear days, a bright river, a birch grove; someone’s mysterious lantern; eyes sparkling in the dark, etc. Even seemingly, tertiary details are subordinated to the author’s luminous strategy: the Oblomovs’ healing plant is called ‘dawn’, their favorite game is ‘burners’”* (Пырко́в/Pyrkov, 2000). Most of the scenes take place in the open air. The airy background determined the exceptionally strong light concentration created by the author in this fragment of the novel.

The most vivid and joyful images of Russian folk tales combined with the poetic image of ancient mythology enabled Goncharov to create a metaphor double in its luminosity, which became winged. Only once named, it throws light reflexes over the

entire text of “Oblomov’s Dream”: “Listening from my nanny to tales of our ‘*golden fleece – the Firebird...*’” The writer highlights this expression in italics as if to reveal its semantic and emotional and aesthetic halo (Пырков/Pyrkov, 2000). Zhar-ptitsa (the Firebird) is a wonderful bird in the East Slavic fairy tale. According to a Russian fairy tale, each of its feathers “is so wonderful and bright that if you bring it into a dark room, it so shines, as if a great many candles were lit in that resting place.” The golden coloring of the Firebird, its golden cage are associated with the fact that the bird comes from another (“thirty”) kingdom, where everything colored in gold comes from.

Associatively, one can refer to the mythological notion of the Golden Age that existed in the ancient world, of the happy and carefree state of primitive humanity. This idea is most clearly expressed in the poem “Labor and Days” by Hesiod and in Ovid’s “Metamorphoses.” The descriptions of the Golden Age by ancient authors resemble those of Oblomov, while the descriptions of the later (Silver, Copper, and Iron) Ages, filled with toil and sorrow, refer back to the reader’s perception of Oblomov’s life in St. Petersburg. “*According to Hesiod (Hes. Opp. 104–201), the first generation of men in the reign of the supreme god Kronos enjoyed complete bliss. ‘Those men lived like gods, with a calm and clear soul, sorrowless, knowing no toil. Moreover, sad old age did not dare to approach them... In addition, they died as if enveloped in sleep... A great harvest and plentiful gave themselves the grain-growing land...’ ... But after the Golden Age came the Silver Age, then the Copper Age – each heavier and more miserable than the last, ... and finally came the present – the Iron Age, when ‘neither toil and sorrow cease during the day nor night’*” (Токарев/Tokarev, 1991, p. 471). A peculiar version of the myth of the golden age is the biblical account of the life of the first people in paradise, from which they were later expelled by God for disobedience

It is no coincidence that Oblomov’s utopian dreams of the possibility of building a new home and a happy life away from the world of vanity and passions, in an earthly paradise called Oblomovka, in the land of quiet childhood and good fairy tales, where milk rivers and fairy banks flow and where the beautiful wife, Militrisa Kirbityevna, is waiting at home. It is not by chance that Oblomovka is described as “a place blessed by God” and “a marvelous land,” that is, God and the miracle created this part of the world, not people. Here reigns “*peace, silence, and undisturbed tranquility,*” so not only do the inhabitants of Oblomovka lie and sleep, “*deep silence and peace also lie in the fields*” (107). “Dead sleep,” silence, peace, and the joy of bodily existence, embodied in abundant food, are combined and unified. In Oblomov’s dream, as in Oblomovka itself, the pagan joy of earthly existence is intertwined with the Christian symbolism of a heavenly, divine, bright paradise. “*Paradise is an ideal region of eternal happiness and bliss of being with God, accessible only to virtuous people. In Christianity, paradise is perceived as a ‘good place’: a garden, according to the Bible...The origin of the Russian word paradise is associated with the ancient Iranian*

name, which translates as 'a place fenced off from everywhere', and with the Avestan word for 'wealth, happiness'” (Багдасарян и др./Bagdasaryan et al., 2005, p. 399).

Oblomovka, as an epoch of humanity’s childhood, where there is no sense of history and movement yet, as a paradisiacal, “out-of-the-way” place, where there is no great road or connection with the world, where wealth and happiness are associated with God and wonder, is included in the opposition Past/Present and the opposition West/East. Oblomovka is not accidentally located in the East. This emphasizes Russia’s greater connection to Eastern values than to Western values. “...*On the death of his father and mother, he became the sole owner of three hundred and fifty souls inherited in one of the remote provinces, almost in Asia*” (55). In the dimension of symbolic geography, the closer the country is to the East, the closer it is to the sacred, to tradition, to spiritual abundance. “*As a sunset country, the West, where the sun goes down, symbolizes spiritual decline, degradation, materialization, profanation, the transition from life to death*” (Багдасарян и др./Bagdasaryan et al., 2005, p. 178).

Endowed with a medieval consciousness, the Oblomovites live in their own space and cannot imagine life outside their topos, so anything that goes beyond the boundaries of their world is alien and not close to them. The world of the Oblomovites is permeated by duality: their “own” world is opposed to the world of the “alien,” “distant” world. “*The inhabitants of those villages lived far from other people... They knew that the administrative city of the province was sixty miles away, but very few of them ever went there; they also knew that farther away in the same direction was Saratov or Nijnij-Novgorod; they had heard of Petersburg and Moscow, and that French and Germans lived beyond Petersburg, and the world farther away was for them as mysterious as it was for the ancients – unknown countries, inhabited by monsters, people with two heads, giants; farther away still there was darkness, and at the end of it all was the fish which held the world on its back*” (107).

“*If paradise is located in the east and is called 'sunny', hell is localized in the west and is immersed in darkness. By illuminating the earth’s surface, the sun as if handing it over to the power of the divine forces, and hiding at night, leaving it in the power of evil. In hymns and spiritual poems 'svyatorusskaya' or 'svetorusskaya' land is depicted as an open, boundless space flooded with light; cf. the expressions 'white light' or 'free light' – about the world as a whole. In spiritual poems the epithet 'light' is generally close to 'holy': luminosity is seen as a manifestation of truth, righteousness and holiness (cf. halo in icon painting)*” (Топорков/Toporkov, 1995c, p. 349).

The East is the side of the world associated with the symbolism of the rebirth, the West with the symbolism of the sunset. Heaven is located in the east. It is no coincidence that prayers, temple altars, and red corners of huts face to the east. “*The ratio 'good' – 'bad' determines the semantic symbolism of the east – holiness, righteousness, justice, prosperity and abundance, vitality, primordiality, and the west*

– *uncleanness, unrighteousness, mortality, completeness. According to the beliefs of the Russians, the east was the home of God, the west of Satan, so the east should be addressed with a prayer*” (Толстой/Tolstoy, 1995b, p. 121).

When describing the inner world of the hero in his moments of reverie, the details of light, fire, and sun symbolically appear: “...*he was consumed by a desire to point out to man his sores, and suddenly thoughts were kindled in him, ... setting his blood on fire, ... moved by a spiritual force, he would change his position two or three times in one minute, and half-rising on his couch with blazing eyes, stretch forth his hand and look around him like one inspired... Oblomov turned on his back quietly and wistfully and, fixing a sorrowful gaze at the window and the sky, mournfully watched the sun setting gorgeously behind a four-storied house. How many times had he watched the sun set like that!*” (67–68). As I. Pyrkov states, “*Oblomov, the window, and the sun appear in the form of an indissoluble triad, where the window plays the role of a borderline, the boundary between the man on earth and the source of life spilling ‘pacific light’ and blazing ‘in a hundred and forty suns’*” (Пырко́в/Pyrkov, 1998). The hero and the sun are inseparable, Oblomov always turns his gaze to the sun, and his name refers to the symbolism of the sun. “*He was inclined toward tenderness and dreams; he turned his eyes to the sky, looking for his favorite luminary, but it was at its zenith and only cast a dazzling luster on the lime wall of the house, behind which is rolled up in the evening in Oblomov’s sight*” (77). While Oblomov speaks of time, fixed by the clock, with horror, watching the sunset and the day fade is a pleasure for him. The setting of the sun, like any recurring natural phenomenon, does not bring him a bitter sense of loss.

Oblomov’s dream is associated with the midday sun or its evening light: “*The river is slightly splashing; the spikes are stirring in the breeze, the heat... To sit in the boat, his wife rules...*” The place of his unfulfilled idyll is under the open sky, on the cut grass, on a carpet spread “between the stacks.” Oblomov says: “*One side of my house faces east,*” to the sunrise. He imagines “*Oblomovka, as bright as a holiday, all in splendor, in sunlight.*” His dream has “rainbow colors.” He and Olga walk hand in hand “on a hot afternoon.” Oblomov “is lost with her in the grove at hot noon...” They have “a hot summer reigning.” Oblomov thinks that love, “*like a sultry noon, hangs over the lovers and nothing moves...*” He sets his eyes on Olga “like a kindling glass.” Oblomov is constantly searching for “his favorite luminary.”

Stoltz’s words about “*the inner hard work of Oblomov’s ardent head and humane heart*” emphasize the symbolic significance of “fire” in the character of the hero. After Oblomov recalls the details of the scene with Zakhar, “*his face erupted in a fire of shame.*” Note how the symbolism of light metaphorically reflects the essence of the hero’s nature: “*...there was in Oblomov’s nature something good, pure, and irreproachable, which was deeply in sympathy with everything that was good and that*

responded to the call of his simple, unsophisticated, and eternally trustful nature. Anyone who once looked, whether by accident or design, into his pure and childlike soul – however gloomy and bitter he might be – could not help sympathizing with him and, if circumstances prevented them from becoming friends, retaining a good and lasting memory of him” (171). The antithesis of Oblomov’s “light” is the absence of “light” in the society to which Stoltz calls the hero: “Not one of them has clear, calm eyes, ...They all infect each other by a sort of tormenting anxiety and melancholy; they are all painfully searching for something. And if only it were for truth or their own and other people’s welfare – but no, they turn pale when they learn of a friend’s success” (181).

However, the “light” portrait of Oblomov also has a tragic side. Confessing to Stoltz, Oblomov laments: *“And where did it all disappear to? Why has it become extinguished? I can’t understand it! There were no storms or shocks in my life; I never lost anything; there is no load on my conscience: it is clear as glass; no blow has killed ambition in me, and goodness only knows why everything has been utterly wasted! ...You see, Andrey, the trouble is that no devastating or redeeming fires have ever burnt in my life. It never was like a morning which gradually fills with light and colour and then turns, like other people’s, into a blazing, hot day, when everything seethes and shimmers in the bright noonday sun, and then gradually grows paler and more subdued, fading naturally into the evening twilight. No! My life began by flickering out. It may sound strange but it is so. From the very first moment I became conscious of myself, I felt that I was already flickering out. ...You appeared and disappeared like a bright and swiftly moving comet, and I forgot it all and went on flickering out.....Yes, I am an old shabby, worn-out coat, but not because of the climate or hard work, but because for twelve years the light has been shut up within me and, unable to find an outlet, it merely consumed itself inside its prison house and was extinguished without breaking out into the open” (190–191).*

The repeated verb “to go out” in Oblomov’s confession emphasizes how painful and difficult it is for the hero to realize the meaninglessness of his life, in which there was “neither a saving nor destructive fire.” “Work,” “friendship,” “love” in their secular sense do not bring the hero satisfaction, “light.” “Life is burning” is a traditional metaphorical archetype; “life is extinguishing” is an individual-author metaphor. Stoltz is a “comet,” living “brightly” and “quickly.” It is interesting that the feeling of “extinguishing” begins in St. Petersburg, there is not a word about Oblomovka, the hero remarks that “twelve years the light was locked in me,” that is, we get to know the hero when he is 32–33 years old, and hence 12 years ago is 19–20, the time of arrival in St. Petersburg. I. Goncharov, in a letter to P. G. Ganzen, notes: *“You have perfectly summarized Oblomov’s character or dominant trait with the word ‘extinguishing’. ...The motif of ‘extinguishing’ is predominant in the novel, the key or*

overture to which is the chapter 'Sleep'” (Гончаров/Goncharov, 1980, p. 473). Why is it that the “dream of the sun” serves as the key to unlocking the “extinguishing” motif? Because “The Dream...” shows the formation of the character of the hero, the reasons that led to the “extinguishment.” And here the symbolism of the “way,” associated with the belief in “fate” and “luck” is important.

The key concept of the cultural archetype of the Russian man is “avos” (maybe) – the inclination to tease happiness, to play at luck. Oblomov's image is woven from the Russian predilection for indefinite particles. He is the living embodiment of all the “would, whether, either, or, or something.”

In Oblomovka, everything is kept on “chance.” The gallery and the porch are not repaired, despite the fact that they are dilapidated. And the repair itself, if it can be called so, is again the hope that it will stand for many years. And the porch with steps, through which “not only cats and pigs get into the basement,” is not repaired, despite the fact that it is wobbly, and hopefully it will stand, especially since it has always been wobbly.

In the hero's reflections on the two “misfortunes” (the headman's letter and the move), Goncharov focuses on the significant words of the hero's mentality: “avos,” “perhaps,” “somehow,” “in one way or another.” *“The troubles the bailiff is threatening me with are still far off, he thought. All sorts of things can happen before that: the rains may save the crops; the bailiff may make good the arrears. ...And perhaps Zakhar will succeed in coming to some arrangement so that it will not be necessary to move at all. Perhaps it could be arranged somehow! They might agree to put it off till next summer or give up the idea of conversion altogether; well, arrange it in one way or another! After all, I really can't – move. So he kept agitating and composing himself in turn, and, as always, found in the soothing and comforting words perhaps, somehow, in one way or another, a whole ark of hope and consolation as in the old ark of the Covenant, and succeeded with their help in warding off the two misfortunes for the time being”* (98). We can see that Oblomov always relied on the “luck” (“avos”) and that his fathers (let us stress the pronoun “our,” i. e. the covenants which are characteristic not only of Oblomov but also of the narrator and the people for a long time) did the same, they believed more in a miracle than in themselves. Having told Alekseyev of his “two misfortunes,” Oblomov looks at him questioningly, *“in the vain hope that he might think of something to allay his fears”* (34). It is interesting the very combination of “sweet hope,” sweet because there may be some means by which to solve all the problems and misfortunes: *“Oblomov would have liked to have his rooms clean, but he could not help wishing that it would all happen somehow of itself, without any fuss”* (13).

Belief in fate, in the life path, which determines the main moments of life, including the time and circumstance of death, is peculiar to Oblomovtsy. Hence the

notion that wealth and happiness depend not so much on a person's efforts and labor as on God, fate, and destiny. In Slavic mythology "share" is the embodiment of happiness, luck, given to people by the deity.

Originally, the common Slavic word "god" had the meaning "share" and was associated with the concept of good, wealth; with a person who endows with good, wealth. *"With the designation of a share, luck, happiness, is connected with the common Slavic 'god': rich (having a god, share) – poor (not having a share, god)"* (ИВАНОВ, ТОПОРОВ/Ivanov, Toporov, 1991, p. 391).

Along with the good portion as a personification of happiness in mythological and later folklore texts are evil (unclean, bad) portion, misfortune, woe, trouble, need, grief, and beggary as an embodiment of the absence of a portion, a bad portion.

Wealth – the abundance of earthly goods, associated with the notion of a share, destiny, good luck, favor of God, ancestors, and other forces. Achievement of wealth, abundance, fertility, prosperity is the main objective of numerous rituals within the calendar and family ceremonies associated with the magic of the first day, the beginning of the cosmic or life cycle (New Year, Christmas, homeland, wedding), as well as fortune-telling (about fate, marriage). The Oblomovites are more convinced that luck, happiness, and richness do not depend on a person's hard daily work or effort, but on whether God grants a person a share or not. Pagan rites and superstitions are combined in the minds of Oblomovites with Christian, Orthodox rites and beliefs. Paganism and Christianity in their perception do not contradict but naturally complement each other. At the same time, in the minds of the Slavs, excessive wealth is associated with unclean forces. Great wealth is owned by the devil (evil spirit), the serpent (snake). The devil is devilishly rich. He buys souls for riches. Cf. the proverb: "If you don't put your soul in hell, you won't be rich!"

Oblomov's parents wished that Ilyusha (Oblomov) would not have to work too hard and would have achieved everything thanks to fate, his share, God, and not through hard work. Oblomov's "way" was obvious to them: *"They saw that it was only education that made it possible for people to make a career, that is, to acquire rank, decorations, and money... A gulf opened up between the higher and the lower grades of civil servants which could be bridged only by something called a diploma... They dreamed of a gold-embroidered uniform for him; they imagined him as a Councillor at Court, and his mother even imagined him as a Governor of a province. But they wanted to obtain all this as cheaply as possible, by all sorts of tricks, by secretly dodging the rocks and obstacles scattered on the path of learning and honours, without bothering to jump over them – that is, for instance, by working a little, not by physical exhaustion or the loss of the blessed plumpness acquired in childhood. All they wanted was that their son should merely comply with the prescribed rules and regulations and obtain in some way or other a certificate which said that their darling Ilya had*

mastered all the arts and sciences” (144–145). Making up various excuses not to send Oblomov to the German to study led to the fact that Oblomov both studied and later served feebly, believing that not hard work brings happiness, but “avos” and “miracle.” *“He somehow or other managed to stay in the service for two years”* (58).

Ilya’s parents resort to tricks to circumvent difficulties, trying to keep their son from studying and working too hard. And this also reveals one of the traits of the Russian cultural archetype. *“From ancient times, the Russian man has adhered to the principle that ‘you can’t beat a wall with your forehead’ and ‘only crows fly straight’. Nature and fate, writes V. O. Klyuchevsky, led the Great Russian so that he accustomed to go out on the road by roundabout ways”* (Чернева/Cherneva, 1998, p. 9). What Stoltz’s mother dislikes about the Germans is that they always go straight to the goal and do not know how to circumvent the law and rules. *“She could not discover any softness, delicacy, or true understanding in the German character, nothing that makes life so agreeable in good society, which makes it possible to infringe some rule, violate some generally accepted custom, or refuse to obey some regulation. No, those boorish fellows insisted on carrying out whatever had been assigned to them or what they happened to take into their heads – they were determined to act according to the rules if they had to knock through a wall with their heads. ...men who were capable only of hard work, of earning a living by the sweat of their brows, of keeping commonplace order, living dull lives and fulfilling their duties in a pedantic manner”* (161).

Oblomov is deceived by his countrymen, finding roundabout ways to achieve wealth and well-being. The very name of the headman, Vytyagushkin, and his brother-in-law, Krivoj, who writes a letter to the landlord at the headman’s dictation, show that they are not clean in their hands. Deceiving Oblomov, they use all the same constants of Russian existence, referring to God and “avos” and the fact that they are not to blame for the crop failure, but “drought,” “worm,” “frost.” Sunny Oblomovka gives the world not only the honest Oblomov but also the swindler Taranteyev, who in some ways, along with Zakhar, is Oblomov’s double. Taranteyev points out to Oblomov that the headman is lying. Ilya Ilyich asks Taranteyev to help him, again shifting the responsibility from himself to the other: *“...think of something so that I need not leave this flat or go to the country and so that everything should be settled satisfactorily”* (50). And it does not matter that he appeals to the same crook as his headman, the main thing is to shift responsibility to the other, to escape from anxiety. Taranteyev is just as eager to circumvent the law for personal gain as the headman Vytyagushkin is not to work.

Wealth and prosperity, obtained by long, hard work, not by miracle or deceit, raise doubts and distrust in Oblomov. Oblomov believes that only Stoltz can settle all his affairs, again relying on someone. And in the eyes of Taranteyev, Stoltz is a “damned German, a scoundrel,” because Taranteyev does not believe that one can earn

an honest living, that it is not the position (“the court counselor”) that gives prosperity but study and work: “...*That German of yours robs you of your last penny what it means to give up a neighbour of yours, a true Russian, for some tramp... A nice fellow! All of a sudden he makes three hundred thousand out of his father’s forty and then becomes a Court Councillor, a man of learning – and now he is away travelling! The rogue has a finger in every pie! Would a good Russian, a real Russian, do all that? A Russian would choose one thing, and that, too, without rush or hurry, in his own good time, and carry on somehow or other – but this one – Good Lord! If he’d become a Government contractor, then at least one could understand how he had grown rich, but he did nothing of the kind – just got rich by some knavery! There’s certainly something wrong there! ...What does he go knocking about in foreign parts for? – He wants to study, to see everything, to know! – To study! Hasn’t he been taught enough? What does he want to learn? Can you think of any decent man who is studying?*” (52–53). Taranteyev, like Ilya Ilyich, embodies Oblomovka, and it turns out that the “way,” destined to such heroes, can lead not only to moral purity and family traditions but also to laziness, deceit, meanness.

The symbolism of “way” in “Oblomov’s Dream” is connected not only with the hero’s future path in life, not only with the fact that “*Meanwhile poor Oblomov had still to go for his lessons to Stoltz. As soon as he woke up on Monday morning, he felt terribly depressed*” (142), but also because everything in little Ilya resists statics and is directed toward motion. Only the atmosphere of Oblomovka does not allow the “forces seeking manifestation” to develop in the child. The author, describing little Ilyusha’s day, uses such combinations as “ran from the nanny,” “ran up the gallery,” “ran around,” “climbed the dovecote,” “climbed into the back of the garden,” “rushed” “climbed the steep stairs,” “ran out,” “days and nights filled with turmoil, running around,” “rushing around.” The unrecognizable Oblomov is presented here: climbing, jumping, running, jumping, rushing. However, Ilya is forbidden, constantly being taken care of, and at the same time, “*Not a single detail, however trifling, escaped the child’s inquisitive attention; the picture of his homelife was indelibly engraved on his memory; his malleable mind absorbed the living examples before him and unconsciously drew up the programme of life in accordance with the life around him*” (113). Constant prohibition eventually leads to a sad future program of the hero’s life.

The longing to find the lost paradise is not only a desire to return to peace, family, and stability, it is also a longing for the unfulfilled in the life of the hero, for the not brought to completion. Oblomov’s monologue through the symbolism of “path” and “light” expresses the pain of losing something important in life and unrealized. The wide road of human existence becomes “a narrow and pathetic overgrowing path” and the hero’s bright beginning is “locked” in the grave. “*He felt sad and sorry at the thought of his own lack of education, at the arrested development of his spiritual*

powers, at the feeling of heaviness which interfered with everything he planned to do; and was overcome by envy of those whose lives were rich and full, while a huge rock seemed to have been thrown across the narrow and pitiful path of his own existence. ... he was painfully aware that something good and fine lay buried in him as in a grave, that it was perhaps already dead... Something prevented him from launching out into the ocean of life and devoting all the powers of his mind and will to flying across it under full sail. Some secret enemy seemed to have laid a heavy hand upon him at the very start of his journey and cast him a long way off from the direct purpose of human existence. And it seemed that he would never find his way to the straight path from the wild and impenetrable jungle. The forest grew thicker and darker in his soul and around him; the path was getting more and more overgrown; clear consciousness awakened more and more seldom, and roused the slumbering powers only for a moment” (100).

In all his “misfortunes,” Oblomov primarily sees not his fault, but the fate that made him this way, and, consequently, he cannot correct or change anything in his life himself. Reflecting on why his life was not successful, especially since everything was given to him by nature and the light was burning inside, the hero concludes that it is not fate. *“After seeking in vain for the hostile source that prevented him from living as he should, as the ‘others’ lived, he sighed, closed his eyes, and a few minutes later drowsiness began once again to benumb his senses. ‘I, too, would have liked – liked’, he murmured, blinking with difficulty. ‘Something like that – has nature treated me so badly – no, thank God – I’ve nothing to complain of... It’s fate, I suppose – can’t do anything about it?’” (101).* The hero shifts the responsibility for his unsuccessful life onto fate and concludes that nothing depends on his participation. And when Stoltz asks what prevents Oblomov from going to the countryside and getting married, he replies: *“Well, it can’t be helped. ...I’m too poor to marry” (182).* As we can see, in Oblomov’s mind “fortune” does not depend in any way on deeds, on labor, it is either given or not given by fate.

3.3. The polysemy of symbols in the novel structure

The author also uses the symbols “house,” “path” and “light” when describing the characters of the novel, when creating a figurative system, using lexemes included in the semantic fields of these names.

Stoltz’s father mentally paved a rut for Andrei, a “path,” but the son should not follow exactly the path that his father intended for him. According to Goncharov, the Russian university will make Stoltz the son not a philistine, but a doer: *“Since olden times, doers have been cast in five, six stereotypical forms, lazily, half-eyed looking around, put their hand to the public machine and moved it along the usual rut drowsily, putting their foot in the trail left by their predecessor. But the eyes woke up from*

drowsiness, brisk wide steps, lively voices were heard... How many Stoltz should appear under Russian names!" (171). As we can see, Stoltz's path, his life purpose is the antithesis of Oblomov's life path.

The father treats Andrey in the same way as his father, Andrey's grandfather, did to him, "letting go to all four sides": "*...The lamp burns brightly, and there is a lot of oil in it. You are well educated: all the careers are open to you... Well, if you don't have the skill, if you can't suddenly find your own way, if you need to consult, ask – go to Reingold: he will teach you. ...He has a four-story house. I'll tell you the address... 'Don't tell me,' Andrey objected. 'I'll go to him when I have a four-story house, and now I'll do without it...'*" (165). Stoltz wants to go his own way, he is confident that he can build a house. Stoltz's father compared his life to the burning of an icon-lamp, which burns brightly, and there is plenty of oil in it. It is no longer the image of Oblomov's sun, which is part of nature and which shines regardless of people. The lamp burns brightly because it contains oil. As I. Pyrkov noted, "*one of the light images of the novel concerning Stoltz the son bears, as we would say, a generic, family seal. This is an image of a burning lamp*" (Пырко́в/Pyrkov, 2000). Stoltz prefers "the slow burning of fire."

The dominant in the symbolism of Stoltz's "path" is movement, running, and he is compared to a horse. The horse is a symbol of strength, speed, indefatigability. Stoltz manages both transactional and heart duties with dexterity, he knows how to notice the "curvature" in his path in order not to stumble and go properly Oblomov, on the other hand, thought that there was a stone on his way that prevented him from realizing in life. Stoltz does not have such stones, he does not doubt the correctness of his path. "*He went firmly, vivacity... It seems that he controlled both sorrows and joys... as with the steps of his feet... A simple, that is, direct, real outlook on life, that was his constant task, and, gradually reaching its solution, he understood the whole its difficulty and he was internally proud and happy whenever he happened to notice a curvature in his path and take a straight step... He felt the ground under his feet even among enthusiasm*" (167–169).

Despite the fact that in the description of Stoltz's life path, the verb "to leap" is frequent: "*...he said that 'the normal purpose of a person is to live four seasons, that is, four ages, without leaps and carry the vessel of life to the last day, without spilling any one drop in vain, and that an even and slow burning of fire is better than a fierce blaze, no matter what poetry burns in them.' ...And he kept going and going stubbornly along the chosen path*" (170). Stoltz, unlike Oblomov, is able to follow the chosen path stubbornly, not relying on "chance" and "fate," hence the different perception of the "abyss" by Oblomov and Stoltz. The abyss is impassable, irresistible for Oblomov. But any obstacle, any barrier is surmountable for Stoltz. "*There is no need to add that he went towards his goal, bravely going through all obstacles, and unless he gave up the*

task when a wall arose in his path or an impenetrable abyss opened. But he was not able to arm himself with the courage that, closing his eyes, would leap over the abyss or rush to the wall at random. He will measure an abyss or a wall, and if there is no sure means to overcome, he will go away, no matter what someone say about him” (171).

When Stoltz says that they want to build a pier and build a highway in Verkhlyov, “*so Oblomovka will be not far from the main road,*” Oblomov is horrified by this news, because the long road violates the holistic, closed world of solar eden of Oblomovka. Stoltz thinks that at last “the rays of the sun have fallen” on Oblomovka, that the “dawn of new happiness” is rising over her. This is in that Oblomovka, which, in the view of Ilya Ilyich, is “all in shine, in the rays of sun...”

Stoltz is trying to bring Oblomov onto the “high road,” where there is progress, civilization, movement. He constantly calls him abroad with him. Arriving at Oblomov, he does not listen to his objections, but demands “physical and mental gymnastic.” Stoltz’s life path is conveyed through the metaphor “on the move,” that is, without stopping. He says to the distraught Oblomov: “*We will have lunch somewhere on the move, then we will go home at two, three, and... On the way you will shave: I’ll take you*” (177). “*Well, Ilya, hurry, hurry!*” (179).

Under the influence of his friend’s speeches, youthful dreams and desires light up in Oblomov, he asks Stoltz to lead him wherever he wants. “*Give me your will and mind and lead me wherever you want. Perhaps I will follow you, but I will not move alone*” (190). Stoltz vows that he will take Oblomov first abroad, then to the village and help find a case for a friend, he says that he will not lag behind, everything will be decided now or never. Under the influence of Andrey’s speeches, Oblomov is full of decisiveness. The question of the “path” for Oblomov becomes a Hamlet question. “*What should he do now? Go forward or stay? This Oblomov’s question was deeper than Hamlet’s for him. Going forward means suddenly throwing off a wide robe not only from your shoulders, but also from your soul, from your mind... What’s the first thing to do?? ...To go abroad for six months, ...to go where everyone goes, by railroads, by steamers, ...to go to the fields, to go to elections, to a factory, to a mill, to a wharf. ...It means going forward... And so the whole life! Farewell to the poetic ideal of life! This is not life, but some kind of forge; there is eternal flame, chatter, heat, noise... when to live? Wouldn’t it be better to stay? To stay means ...to grow old peacefully in the apartment of Taranteyev’s godmother... ‘Now or never!’ ‘To be or not to be!’ Oblomov got up from the chair, but he was not immediately able to put on a shoe and sat down again*” (193–194). Hamlet’s suffering turns into a comic situation. Oblomov’s path does not run where there are railways and steamships, where there is flame, chatter, heat, noise – all this is in the antithesis of the peace and sun of Oblomovka. The character’s feet do not have time to get out on the Stoltz road, because

they do not fall into the shoes. Oblomov's preparations for the journey proposed by Stoltz are also comical. The combination of "Oblomov and the Sea" sounds like an oxymoron, it does not fit into the mind of the reader, just as a travel coat and a travel bag are incompatible. The only thing that is associated with the image of Oblomov is a bag for provisions, but this already sounds like an oxymoron for Stoltz's "path."

Stoltz still managed to influence his friend to some extent and try to change his life path. He introduced him to Olga. Olga's image is also revealed through the symbolism of "path" and "light." *"...She, although unconsciously, went a simple, natural path of life and by a happy character, by a sound, not outwitted upbringing, did not avoid the natural manifestation of thought, feeling, will, even to the slightest, barely noticeable movement of eyes, lips, hands. Is it because, perhaps, she went so confidently along this path, that from time to time she heard nearby other, even more confident steps of the 'friend' whom she believed, and measured her step with them"* (197). *"Olga went with her head bent slightly forward, so slender, nobly resting on her thin, proud neck; she moved with her whole body evenly, striding lightly, almost imperceptibly"* (200). Olga strides confidently in the same way as Stoltz, especially since he, like a loyal friend, tries to direct Olga's movements. And at the same time, her step is light, almost elusive. It is noteworthy that Olga, just like the main character, believes in fate, despite all her determination, intelligence and desire to build and change not only her life path, but also Oblomov's "path." *"I am waiting, looking only for happiness, and I believe that I have found it. If I am mistaken, if it is true that I will cry over my mistake, at least I feel here (she put her hand to her heart) that I am not to blame for it; it means that fate didn't want it, God didn't give it"* (270).

The name Olga means "saint," "torch," her surname comes from the name Ilya, the name of the god of thunder. Olga's planet is the Moon, a source of light, one of the celestial luminaries deified by the Slavs (Ермолаева/ Ermolaeva, 2006, p. 21).

When the reader gets to know Olga, her "light" portrait is imperturbably calm, she was very glad when she met Stoltz: *"...although her eyes did not sparkle, her cheeks did not glow with a blush, but an even, calm light spread over her whole face and a smile appeared"* (196). *"Olga was not a beauty in the strict sense, that is, she had neither whiteness, nor bright colors of her cheeks and lips, and her eyes did not shine with rays of inner fire..."* but at the same time the author points out that thin and compressed lips are *"...a sign of a thought continuously directed at something, the same presence of a speaking thought shone in the sharp-sighted, always vigorous, never letting through the gaze of dark, gray-blue eyes"* (200). Sharp light fluctuations (from burst to fading) form the basis of Olga's "light" portrait.

Driving around the houses of Petersburg with Stoltz, Oblomov feels: *"...how unhappy he is, how all good things perish from lack of participation, activity, how faintly life flickers..."* (200). But Oblomov transforms, begins to "burn," having come

to Olga, his beloved sun appears. *“During lunch, Oblomov experienced the same torture as the day before, he chewed under her gaze, spoke, knowing, feeling that above him, like the sun, this gaze was standing, burning him, disturbing him, stirring his nerves, blood”* (201). Something lit up inside Olga with the appearance of Oblomov, too: *“...a smile crawls over her face, then it lights up her eyes, then it spills over her cheeks, only her lips are compressed, as always”* (202).

For Oblomov, Olga’s singing is like lightning, from which he “flashes,” which destroys him. *“His heart was beating, his nerves were trembling, his eyes sparkled and flooded with tears from words, from sounds, from this pure, strong girlish voice. ...Oblomov flared up, exhausted, holding back tears with difficulty, and it was even more difficult for him to stifle a joyful cry, ready to escape from his soul ...At that moment he would have gone even abroad, if he had only had to sit down and go. In conclusion, she sang Casta diva: all the delights, thoughts in the head, rushing by lightning, trembling like needles running through the body – all this destroyed Oblomov: he was exhausted”* (204). The author’s irony in the words that Oblomov would even go abroad emphasizes the power of the influence of Olga’s singing on the character. Oblomov sees only light and burning in Olga, she “flashes” from his words when he compliments her, as Oblomov “flashes” from her singing. *“My God, how pretty she is! There are such in the world! ...This whiteness, these eyes, where, as in the abyss, it is dark and at the same time something shines... it must be the soul! ...At the heart, right here, it seems to begin to boil and beat...”* (207). *“‘Sing it!’ he said. ‘This is the compliment I’ve been waiting for!’ she interrupted him, flashing joyfully”* (208). *“‘Don’t ask me to sing, I won’t sing like that anymore... Wait, I’ll sing one more...’ she said, and immediately her face flushed, her eyes lit up, she sat down on a chair, took two or three chords strongly and began to sing”* (209).

The experience of Olga’s future love and passion and the experience of Oblomov’s true love-passion are described in parallel, “light” lexemes reveal the reciprocity of feelings and the unity of experiences here: to glow, to sparkle, lightning, to flash, ray, fire, flash, to shine, dawn, brilliance. *“Her cheeks and ears were red with excitement; sometimes the play of lightning of the heart flashed on her fresh face, a ray of such ripe passion flashed, as if she was experiencing a distant future time of life in her heart, and suddenly, this instantaneous ray extinguished again, again the voice sounded fresh and silvery. And the same life played in Oblomov; it seemed to him that he was living and feeling all this – not an hour, not two, but for years... Both of them, motionless from the outside, were bursting with inner fire, trembling with the same trepidation; there were tears in their eyes, caused by the same mood. All these were symptoms of those passions that must, apparently, once play in her young soul, now still subject only to temporary, flying hints and outbursts of dormant forces of life. She ended with a long melodious chord, and her voice was lost in him. ...The dawn of the*

awakened, from the bottom of the soul of rebellious happiness shone on his face; a look filled with tears was fixed on her... His eyes shine, my God, there are tears in them! ...This look was motionless, almost insane; it was not Oblomov who looked at them, but passion” (210).

Ilya Ilyich and Olga’s explanations and conversations take place on the move, they walk in the park, walk along the paths, Olga tries to bring Oblomov onto the road of life, where there is no sleep and peace, she wants to be a “guiding star” for Oblomov. *“She instantly weighed her power over him, and she liked this role of a guiding star, a ray of light that she would pour over a stagnant lake and she would be reflected in it” (241). “...But more and more often she pushed him forward, further, knowing that he would not take a single step himself and he would remain motionless where she left him” (242).*

The metaphor “guiding star” emphasizes the symbolism of “path” and “light” in Olga’s image. Emotional and mental experiences, mood swings and inner excitement of the character are described using “light” metaphors. *“Her eyes suddenly opened wide and flashed with amazement” (218). “She changed in her face: two pink spots disappeared, and her eyes dim” (218). “...Her affectionate and curious look began to burn him again” (219). “...Then suddenly her face lit up with a ray of a smile...” (220).* At the same time, there was a “ray of thought,” “sparks of the mind” in her gaze. Her face “lit up with consciousness.” Goncharov uses a detailed simile to show the maturation of Olga Ilyinskaya, comparing the soulful vigilance that came to her with the sun that illuminated the earth. *“Then her face was gradually filled with consciousness: a ray of thought, guesswork made its way into every feature, and suddenly the whole face was illuminated with consciousness ...The sun also sometimes, coming out from behind a cloud, gradually illuminates one bush, another, the roof and suddenly floods the whole landscape with light” (228).*

Stoltz wanted the cheerful Olga Ilyinskaya to shake apathy and drowsiness from his friend. *“Stoltz thought that if the presence of a young, pretty, intelligent, lively and partly derisive woman was introduced into Oblomov’s sleepy life, it would be like bringing a lamp into a gloomy room, from which an even light, a few degrees of heat, would spread in all dark corners, and the room will become more cheerful. That was the whole result that he achieved by introducing his friend to Olga. He did not foresee that he would bring in fireworks, and Olga and Oblomov did not anticipate that, even more so” (233).* But there is no place for fireworks in Oblomov’s dreams, he is afraid of insane passions leading to explosions, and expects a “quietly flickering ray of sympathy” from his chosen one. *“...And in twenty, thirty years he would have met in her eyes the same meek, quietly flickering ray of sympathy on his warm gaze. And so on to the grave!” (212). “He would run away from a woman in horror if she suddenly burns him with her eyes or moans herself, falls on his shoulder with her eyes closed,*

then wakes up and wraps her arms around his neck until he suffocates... This is a firework, an explosion of a barrel of gunpowder; and what's next? Stunned, blinded, and scorched hair!" (213).

In Oblomov's dream, the "path," the "river" should be calm, without fireworks, as well as feelings. *"But isn't this the secret goal of everyone: to find the unchanging physiognomy of peace, the eternal and even flow of feeling in your friend? After all, this is the norm of love... ...To give passions a legal outcome, to indicate the order of the flow, like a river, for the good of the whole region"* (212). Oblomov thinks that with the angel Olga, his dream of quiet and bright love will come true. But Olga's "river," her life and feeling, her "road" are not like the "quiet stream" in Oblomov's dream: *"This voice will sound someday, but it will sound so strong, it will burst out with such a chord that the whole world will stir up! Both the aunt and the baron will recognize, and there will be a rumble from this voice far away! That feeling will not make its way as quietly as a stream, hiding in the grass, with a barely audible murmur"* (259).

Oblomov and Olga's love is combustion, fire, light. All their experiences, thoughts, doubts, joy, pain are conveyed by "light" metaphors and epithets, from bright glow to extinction. *"Happy, radiant, as if 'with a month in the forehead', in the words of the nanny, he came home, sat down in the corner of the sofa and quickly drew the name 'Olga' across the dust in large letters on the table"* (221). *"The pride played in him, the life began to shine, its magic range, all the colors and rays that did not exist until recently"* (225). *"Suddenly his face darkened"* (226). *"He's having fun, easy. It's so clear in nature. All People are kind, everyone enjoys; everyone has happiness on their faces"* (226). *"From the previous mistake he was only scared and ashamed, but now it is hard, awkward, cold, sad at heart, as in wet, rainy weather"* (234). *"Perhaps that spark of participation, which he so carelessly extinguished at the very beginning, will completely disappear. It was necessary to inflate it again, quietly and carefully, but he definitely did not know how"* (241). *"...Sometimes a glimpse of feeling erupts from her, like lightning, like an unexpected whim, and then, suddenly, she concentrates again, withdraws into herself..."* (242). *"...The colors started to play on the cheeks; thoughts moved; desires and will flashed in her eyes"* (245). *"She... read the book, and there were certainly lines with sparks of her mind in the book, here and there the fire of her feelings flashed..."* (246). *"Now both day and night, every hour of morning and evening took its own image and was either full of rainbow radiance, or colorless and gloomy, depending on whether this hour was filled with Olga's presence or passed without her..."* (247). *"He looked at her like a burning glass, and could not look away"* (249). *"Oblomov's face was blooming, his eyes were filled with rays"* (255).

The light and the sound, the light and the melody in various variations reflect the love of the characters. *"This is how the same motive played out between them in various*

variations. The Meetings, the conversations, it was all one song, sounds, one light that burned brightly, and only its rays were refracted and split into pink, green, yellow and trembled in the atmosphere surrounding them. Every day and hour brought new sounds and rays, but the light burned the same, the tune sounded the same. Both he and she listened to these sounds, caught them and rushed to sing, which everyone heard in front of each other, not suspecting that other sounds would sound tomorrow, other rays would appear, and forgetting the next day that there was another singing yesterday. She dressed the outpourings of her heart in those colors that burned her imagination at the moment, and she believed that they were true to nature, and hurried in innocent and unconscious coquetry to appear in a beautiful headdress before the eyes of her friend. He believed even more in these magical sounds, in a charming light and hurried to appear before her fully armed with passion, to show her all the brilliance and all the power of the fire that devoured his soul” (256–257).

In a fit of feelings, Olga and Oblomov do not think about the difference in their life positions, about the different paths they have to go, believing in the power of their love and in the opportunity to become happy. Oblomov wants the rays of Olga’s light to live in him forever, and Olga dreams that from her “ray” Ilya Ilyich would be revived to life. *“Oblomov, in essence, did not care whether Olga was Cordelia and whether she would have remained true to this image or she would have gone a new path and transformed into another vision, if only she would appear in the same colors and rays in which she lived in his heart, if only he was happy. And Olga did not ask if her passionate friend would lift her glove if she threw it into the lion’s mouth, whether he would throw himself into the abyss for her, if only she saw the symptoms of this passion, if only he remained faithful to the ideal of a man, and, moreover, a man waking up through her to life, if only from the ray of her gaze, from her smile, the fire of cheerfulness burned in him and he would not cease to see in her the purpose of life. And therefore, in the flashed image of Cordelia, in the fire of Oblomov’s passion, only one moment, one ephemeral breath of love, one morning, one whimsical pattern was reflected. And tomorrow, tomorrow something else will shine, maybe just as beautiful, but still different...” (257).*

The image of Olga is always in front of Oblomov in the morning, day and night, but he would like to experience only the “warmth of love” and not feel anxious. *“...No, life touches, wherever you go, it burns! How many new movements and activities have suddenly been pushed into her! Love is a very difficult school of life!” (248).* Oblomov does not imagine how it is possible to part with Olga, to leave to solve matters on his estate, he wants to be with her always. But one day he doubted whether Olga really loved him, whether it was a deception, how she could generally fall in love with him, for what. The author, with the help of “light” metaphors, conveys the inner state of the character. After Olga’s confession of love, Oblomov returned home, watched the

setting summer sun with his eyes, without taking his eyes off the dawn, recalled Olga's "ray of gaze," thought only that the warmth and light would return tomorrow. But: *"Tomorrow morning Oblomov got up pale and gloomy; there were traces of insomnia on the face; the whole forehead was wrinkled; there was no fire in the eyes, no desires. ...The image of Olga was in front of him, but he was hovering as if in the distance, in a fog; without rays, as a stranger to him; he looked at her with a painful gaze and sighed"* (258). *"...And, it seems, yesterday he looked into Olga's soul and saw a bright world and a bright fate there, read his and her horoscope. What happened? ...It often happens to fall asleep in the summer on a quiet, cloudless evening, with twinkling stars, and think how good the field will be tomorrow with morning light colors! How fun it is to go deep into the thicket of the forest and hide from the heat! ...And suddenly you wake up from the sound of rain, from gray sad clouds; cold, damp..."* (259). *"'Isn't this a mistake?' suddenly flashed through his mind like lightning, and this lightning struck his heart and broke it. He groaned"* (259).

Oblomov thinks that in Olga's life there should appear a young happy man with a "fluttering spark" in his eyes, like Olga's, with a "bouncy gait" and with a "sonorous voice." Then Olga will "flare up," according to Oblomov. He believes that Olga's love burns with a "false light" due to the absence of "fire" (true love). Ilya Ilyich writes a letter to Olga, in which his love with Olga is presented in dark colors, in the form of an abyss on their path of life. *"...I realized how quickly my feet slide only tonight: only yesterday I managed to look deeper into the abyss where I am falling, and I decided to stop. I talk only about myself – not out of selfishness, but because when I lie at the bottom of this abyss, you will all fly high, like a pure angel, and I don't know if you want to look into it. Listen, without any hint, I will tell you straight and simple: you do not and cannot love me"* (261). *"...Your present love is not true love, but future love; it is only an unconscious need to love, which, due to the lack of real food, in the absence of fire, burns with a false, non-heating light"* (262).

When Oblomov "with animation" writes a letter, his eyes shine, his cheeks burn. He wants happiness for Olga and he is afraid to be a burden on her path, full of storms and movement. Oblomov awaits with trepidation Olga's reaction to the letter. Her tears, which he did not expect, *"seemed to burn him, but in such a way that it made him feel warm, not hot"* (267). Olga reproaches Oblomov for seeing only gloomy in the future, for not enjoying today's happiness and burning, for selfishness, for the fact that in words he rushes into the abyss, is ready to give his life, but he is afraid to live and to love in reality. *"'Go,' she said quietly. 'Where you wanted to go... Lie on your back again,' she added later. 'You won't be mistaken, you won't fall into the abyss ...Farewell, Ilya Ilyich, and be... at peace; because your happiness lies in this.'"* (270). Oblomov begs for forgiveness, says that now he is not afraid of anything and wants everything to return and be as before. He asks her for a branch of lilacs as a sign of

reconciliation. To which Olga replies, “*Lilacs... moved away, disappeared! ...Look, what are left: faded! Moved away, faded!*” he repeated, looking at the lilacs. ‘*And the letter moved away!*’ he suddenly said.” (272). The symbols “path” and “light” coincided in one phrase: everything passed, moved away, faded. Oblomov wants everything to freeze and not change, but this is impossible. The predestination of their path is also expressed through the symbolism of flowers. N. F. Zolotnitsky writes about lilacs, “*In the east, where, as we know, lilacs originate, it serves as an emblem of sad parting, and therefore a person in love usually gives it to his beloved there only when they disperse or part forever.*” (Золотницкий/Zolotnitsky, 1994, p. 252). Choosing lilacs as an emblem, a symbol of love, the characters are unaware of it. Oblomov, who says: “...I do not like mignonette or roses,” and he does not assume that he refuses those flowers that are symbols of love and love attraction, and he, together with Olga, prefers lilacs to them, which at the very beginning their relationship prophesies separation (see Грачева/Gracheva, 1997).

Olga saw not only selfishness in Oblomov’s letter, but “tenderness,” “caution,” “care for her,” “fear for her happiness,” “clear conscience,” everything for which she loves Oblomov. “*She seemed to Oblomov in brilliance, in radiance, when she said this. Her eyes shone with such a triumph of love, a consciousness of her strength; there were two pink spots on her cheeks. And he, he was the reason for it! With the movement of his honest heart, he threw this fire, this game, this brilliance into her soul*” (275).

A “hot summer reigns” after Olga and Oblomov’s explanation, only sometimes “clouds come and go.” If Oblomov has difficult dreams and doubts knock at his heart, “*Olga, like an angel, stands guard; she looks into his face with her bright eyes, finds out what is in his heart, and everything is quiet again, and the feeling flows smoothly again, like a river, with the reflection of new patterns in the sky.*” The power of Olga’s love is conveyed through a detailed metaphor: “*‘It burns here...’ she pointed to her chest... ‘Don’t bother me, let me cry... the fire will come out in tears, it will be easier for me...’*” (282).

And constantly in Oblomov’s dreams there is a house full of light and love. “*He rushed to write, to think, he even went to the architect. Soon the plan of the house and garden was located on a small table. It was a spacious family home with two balconies. ‘Here I am, here Olga is, here is a bedroom, a nursery...’ smiling, he thought*” (278). “*...Oblomovka, bright as a holiday, all in shine, in the sun’s rays, with green hills, with a silver river swung open before him; he walks with Olga thoughtfully along a long alley, holding her by the waist, sits in the gazebo, on the terrace...*” (288). The symbols of “home,” “path” and “light” are always intertwined in the descriptions of the main characters, revealing the essence of artistic images.

Oblomov is worried about what other people will say about his relationship with Olga, he is afraid that they will not be able to fight the passion, which is like an abyss.

“Olga, you are young and do not know all the dangers. Sometimes a person is not in control of himself; some infernal power infiltrates him, darkness falls on his heart, and lightning flashes in his eyes. The clarity of the mind fades: respect for purity, for innocence, all this is carried away by the whirlwind; the person does not remember himself; passion breathes on him; he ceases to control himself, and then an abyss opens under his feet” (293). Olga is not afraid of the abyss, she says: “Let it open!” Moreover, Olga does not see any lightning in Oblomov’s eyes. Oblomov has a fever inside, he decides to make Olga a marriage proposal, but *“what seemed so simple to him at home, naturally, necessary, smiled at him so much, which was his happiness, suddenly became some kind of abyss. He was afraid to step over it. He had to take a decisive, bold step”* (296). Moreover, Olga teases him, *“The abyss opens up, the lightning flashes... be careful!”* (298).

Oblomov, having made a marriage proposal, expects from Olga not pride and firmness, but tears and passion, he would like Olga to follow him along his “path” and could sacrifice herself for him: *“‘Sometimes love doesn’t wait, it doesn’t endure, it doesn’t expect... I don’t know which path it is. The path where a woman sacrifices everything: calmness, rumor, respect and she finds a reward in love... it replaces everything for her. Do we need this path?... No... Would you like to seek happiness in this path at the expense of my calmness, loss of respect? ...Would you like to know if I would sacrifice my peace of mind to you, if I would go with you along this path? ...Never, no way!’ she said firmly. He thought about it, then sighed. ‘Yes, that is a terrible path, and it takes a lot of love for a woman to follow a man on it, to perish and still love... Why would you not follow it...’ ‘Because... later people always... part on it...’”* (299–300). This dialogue shows that Olga, for all her love for Oblomov, is not able to follow him always and to the end, she has her own “path” on which she hopes to lead Oblomov. And for another woman, Pshenitsina, the “path” of the character is not important, Oblomov is the main thing for her, so she is ready to sacrifice everything in her life “path.”

After Olga’s confession, *“Oblomov was shining when he went home. His blood was boiling, his eyes were sparkling. It seemed to him that even his hair was on fire. So, he went into his room and suddenly the radiance disappeared and his eyes stopped motionless in unpleasant amazement in one place: Taranteyev was sitting in his chair... He forgot that gloomy sphere, where he had lived for a long time, and he lost the habit of its suffocating air. In an instant, Taranteyev pulled him down as if from heaven again into the swamp”* (301). The third part of the novel tells that the “rays of love” are gradually extinguished, “the poem passes.” Oblomov needs to work, build a house, build roads, “duty, serious life begins.” He thinks what step to take first: ask the aunt for Olga’s hand or go to the ward “to write some paper,” he needs to look for an apartment, and this is “the second step.” Olga says “You first take two steps, and

then...” But it is difficult for Oblomov to follow the “path” proposed by Olga and Stoltz. He suffers on these trips to the town, trying to solve the difficult questions of the way of life for him, there is not enough money for anything.

The end of August is coming, it rains, the summer cottages are emptying and Oblomov moves to the Vyborg side of town. “...*Autumn evenings in the city were not like long, bright days and evenings in the park and grove. ...And this summer, blooming love poem seemed to stop, went more lazily, as if there was not enough content in it*” (316). Olga “sadly” sees off Oblomov with her eyes, “her heart cries,” “she wants to sing, but she cannot.” She demands from Oblomov that he move more, and he gets more and more tired of this and he admires Agafia Pshenitsina more and more, who does not rush him anywhere, cooks deliciously and has “strong, like a sofa cushion, never worried chest.” Oblomov comes up with an illness in order to postpone the meeting with Olga, she cries, urges him not to be lazy in letters. “*He lay down with loud sighs, got up, even went out into the street and kept looking for the norms of life, such an existence that would be full of content and flow quietly, day by day, drop by drop, in silent contemplation of nature and quiet, barely creeping the phenomena of family, peaceful and busy life. He did not want to imagine it as a wide, noisily rushing river, with seething waves, as Stoltz had imagined it. ‘This is a disease,’ Oblomov said. ‘A fever, a jumping with rapids, with dam breaks, with floods’*” (353). Oblomov returns to his ideal – walking in a circle of life’s “path,” like a quiet river, which he finds in Pshenitsina.

Olga refuses to believe that the unbuilt bridges across the Neva and Ilya’s illness prevent them from meeting, she worries, goes to Oblomov on the Vyborg side, and this has a stunning effect on him. Olga sees that Oblomov deceived her, that he goes down again. The character admits that passions and worries take away his strength, that he will die if Olga is not around. “*‘Now I breathe, look, think and feel you. Why are you surprised that in those days when I don’t see you, I fall asleep and fall down? Everything is disgusting to me, everything is boring; I am a machine: I walk, do and do not notice what I do. You are the fire and power of this machine,’ he said, kneeling down and straightening up. His eyes sparkled as they used to in the park. The pride and the willpower shone in them again. ‘Now I am ready to go where you tell me to, to do whatever you want. I feel that I live when you look at me, speak, sing...’*” (367). Olga is the “fire” that makes Oblomov live. But is he able to go for the sake of Olga to hardship and sacrifice? Olga says: “*‘I am your goal, you say and go to it so timidly, slowly; and you still have a long way to go; you have to get higher than me. I expect this from you! I met happy people, I saw how they love,’ – she added with a sigh. Everything boils with them, and their peace is not like yours; they do not lower their heads; their eyes are open; they hardly sleep, they act! And you... no, it doesn’t seem like love, that I am your goal...’*” (367).

For all their attraction to each other, they speak different languages. For Olga, love is movement, burning, boiling, for Oblomov it is sunny peace of Oblomovka. Neither Olga is able to follow Oblomov to the end, nor he is able to give up the peace for her sake. This is the tragedy of the character, because he gradually “go out,” dies even with all his positive qualities. *“Look, look at me: am I not resurrected, am I not living at this moment? ...Let me live today with this feeling... Oh, if the same fire burns me, which burns now, and tomorrow and always! After all, if you are not there, I go out, I fall! Now I revived, resurrected...”* (368). *“How easy it is to breathe in this life, in Olga’s sphere, in the rays of her virgin brilliance, vigorous strength, young, but subtle and deep sanity! ...How she clearly sees life! How she reads her path in this overwise book and guesses his path by instinct! Both lives must merge like two rivers: he is her head, leader!”* (369).

But the two lives never merge into one “path.” Olga’s “fire” and “angelic light” could not change Oblomov; in the end, she despaired of fighting the character’s laziness and apathy. *“You would fall asleep deeper every day, wouldn’t you? And I? Do you see what I am? I will not grow old, I will never get tired of living. And with you we would begin to live from day to day, wait for Christmas, then Shrovetide, go to visit, dance and not think about anything; we would go to bed and thank God that the day is soon over, and wake up in the morning wishing that today would be like yesterday... this is our future, am I right? Is this life? I will pine, I will die... for what, Ilya? Will you be happy...”* (386). But Oblomov had just such an ideal of life from the beginning: “the path of the circle,” “the path of the sun,” all-repetition, family stability, as in Oblomovka. Olga did not understand Oblomov’s ideal from the beginning, for her this is not life.

In Pshenitsina’s house, life moves from day to day in a circle, and the character is happy with such a life. The characters living in the solar circle incline towards roundness: Oblomov is full and round, Agafia Matveyevna has grown plumper, even the objects in this house are round: there are pot-bellied and miniature teapots, cups, jars, pans in the kitchen, a round table in the dining room, sugar loaves, tubs, pots, baskets in the pantry. There are objects that have a certain color around Oblomov: “a curtain with a red festoon, which is the work of Agafia Matveyevna’s hands,” teapots “with flaming hearts,” geranium. There are bunch of the rowan above the fence. In the folk worldview, red symbolizes the sun. *“A joyful ray of sun beat through the windows from morning to evening.”*

The room on the Vyborg side, where Oblomov lives now, is “bright, clean and fresh.” Agafia Matveyevna is “very white.” She is “at the zenith of her life.” Her chest and shoulders shone with “contentment and fullness, her eyes shone with meekness and only housewifely solicitude.” Oblomov “approached her like a warm fire, and once approached very close, almost to the blaze, ...to the outbreak.” *“He approached Agafia*

Matveyevna, as if he was approaching a fire, from which it becomes warmer and warmer...” (401). However, in this case, we are not talking about the fire of passion, the fire of love, but about the fire of the hearth, the focus of the house, family. The hearth is the beginning that unites people into a family. Oblomov, brought up at his home in Oblomovka, “among the meek and warm manners and customs of his homeland, passing for twenty years from the embrace to the embrace of relatives, friends and acquaintances,” was deeply “imbued with the family element” and always yearned for him. The image of a hearth around which his whole life would be built, the life of his friends, relatives, lives in his dreams. Goncharov compares worshipping the fire of the hearth in the Oblomovs’ house with Vesta’s worshipping the fire. The inhabitants of Oblomovka did not know another fire and did not want to know. Vesta in Roman mythology is the goddess of the hearth, “eternal fire” was maintained in her temple.

The dream and the life largely coincided on the Vyborg side. Everything is calm and quiet here. The fire of the hearth burns in the house of Agafia Matveyevna, who appears to the character as “kind” (Agafia from the Greek is “good,” “kind”), “God’s gift” (this is how the name Matthew is read), and she plays the role of a keeper hearth, its mistress. The service to the home and the service to Oblomov merge into one for her. God the Thunderer Ilya the Prophet is understood by the Slavs as a deity creating harvests, he is praised as the patron saint of harvest and fertility, a sower, a reaper. The fact that the character bakes pies, cheesecakes, bread is important in the context of the novel. She bears the “bread” surname Pshenitsina. As Olga is intended for Oblomov, because she is Ilyinskaya, so Agafia is intended for him, because she is Pshenitsina. Olga, in the fate of Oblomov, symbolizes the divine, angelic light to which the character is attracted, dreaming of a solar paradise, and Agafia is the light of the earth, domestic, home, associated with tradition and family. Ilya Ilyich is the sun that shone in the life of both Olga and Agafia. For them Oblomov “radiate,” “shines.” They themselves “shine” in the rays of the sun-Oblomov, they revere him.

The symbolism of the “home” is also revealed through the theme of food, associated with the image of Pshenitsina. The plot center of the novel is the everyday and spiritual life of the protagonist – Ilya Ilyich Oblomov. For Oblomov, the kitchen was the basis of life, most of the time was allocated to food. In the text of the novel, the attitude towards food acts as a measure of attitude towards the world, life, and also becomes a kind of “language” that allows one to express one’s own view of the world. Therefore, the food, as well as sleep, is not only a satisfaction of physical needs, people eat and sleep as much as the “soul” wants, as much as the “soul” asks for. Hence, in Goncharov’s novel, the characters eat often and tasty. Nothing “occupied the minds” to such an extent as care for food in Oblomovka. The characters liked to eat here: “*The kitchen and the dinner were the main concern. The whole house discussed the*

dinner...” (114). According to the life philosophy of the inhabitants of Oblomovka, “*a decent person must first of all take care of his table.*” They do not just eat and drink: their appetite imperceptibly turns into true gourmandise, cooking, into virtuoso skill, and the kitchen appears in a kind of temple (See Краснова/Krasnova, 2000, 2003).

The apotheosis and symbol of Oblomov’s satiety and general contentment is the gigantic pie, which was baked on Sundays and holidays. This cake required twice the usual amount of flour and eggs. Hence, as a result, “*there were more groans and bloodshed in the poultry yard*” (115). The pies were baked with chickens and fresh mushrooms in Oblomovka. This pie “*the gentlemen ate the next day; the remains fell into in the maiden room on the third and fourth day; the pie survived until Friday, so that one completely stale end of the pie, without any filling, was given in the form of a special favor to Antip, who, crossing himself, fearlessly destroyed this curious fossil with a crash*” (115). The feast continued until it was time to bake a new pie. As noted by Yu. M. Loshits, a real cult of pie reigns in Oblomovka. In the folk worldview, a pie is one of the most graphic symbols of a happy, abundant, blessed life. Pie is a “feast of the mountain,” a cornucopia, the pinnacle of universal fun and contentment. Feasting, celebrating people gather around the pie. The warmth and the fragrance emanate from the pie. Thus, a kind of mythologeme “pie,” containing the meaning of being, appears in the novel. “*The ‘Sleepy kingdom’ of Oblomovka revolves around its pie as around a hot luminary*” (Лощиц/Loshits, 1977, pp. 172–173). It is these pies that Agafia Pshenitsina prepares, it is no coincidence that Zakhar says that they are no worse than Oblomov’s pies.

Sharing food in this world is not an everyday detail, but a symbol of unity. From time immemorial, food, both in one’s family and in the world, has been a sacred act, a rite among the Russian people. It began and ended with a prayer of thanks. Cheerful and informal communication, friendly family conversation, discussion of upcoming affairs happened at the table. The table was the rallying of family brotherhood, a symbol of unity. In the dream-world of Ilya Ilyich Oblomov, “food” must certainly be shared with spiritually close people, with a “colony of friends” living in the neighborhood, it is then that it acquires its true, social content. When Stoltz visits Oblomov during his birthday for the first time on the Vyborg side, he shares a table with a friend. There is a commonality of topics, openness, trust, correctness, sensitivity in their dialogue. The dialogue ends with a toast to Olga. Both characters eat and drink the same things, which stimulates rapport in conversation. Stoltz urges Oblomov not to “extinguish the fire,” not to “remain in the dark” again, he says that he promised Olga “to dig him out of the grave.” During Stoltz’s second visit to Oblomov, the conversation testifies to the spiritual disunity of the characters. Oblomov alone talks about food at the table. “*Stoltz winced as he sat down at the table... Stoltz did not eat any lamb or dumplings, he put down his fork and watched with what appetite Oblomov*

was eating it all” (456). Upon learning that Olga was married to Stoltz, Oblomov says: “No, tell her, remind her that I met her in order to put her on the path, and that I bless this meeting, bless her on a new path!” (453).

At first glance, it seems that Oblomov’s dream-world is manifested in the life of Ilya Ilyich on the Vyborg side. Indeed, Oblomov is trying to realize his idea of an ideal life arrangement, his life norm here, on the Vyborg side: “Life is like poetry;” he tries to build an ideal, idyllic world, like the world living in his dreams. Everything flows according to a long-established, unchanging routine in the life of the character on the Vyborg side, breakfast, lunch and dinner are also the main events of the day, and “taking care of food” becomes the main concern of the inhabitants of the house of Agafia Matveyevna Pshenitsina. Their “menu” is striking in its variety and abundance and is mainly represented by dishes of traditional Russian cuisine: soups, cereals, pies, and a variety of pickles.

The world of Oblomovka and the Vyborg side is the apotheosis of the material principle, which is greatly facilitated by Goncharov’s pictorial narrative style. “Spirit” is not here. There is nothing that in Oblomov’s dream world constituted “spiritual harmony”: there is no “colony of friends,” no “pensive silence,” no arguments with his wife about what they read, no “joy,” “pleasure” from exercise (Ilya Ilyich walks out of necessity: so, the doctor prescribed) and, finally, there is no desired peace, to which Oblomov has been striving all his life. There is no that “fun,” that “sweetness,” that fullness of human existence, which consisted in the harmony of the bodily and spiritual principles.

Stoltz urges on Oblomov: “Get out of this pit, out of the swamp, into the light, into the open space, where there is a healthy, normal life!” To this Oblomov replies, “I am fused to this pit with a sore spot: try to tear it off – there will be death... Oh, Andrei, I feel everything, I understand everything: I am ashamed to live in the world for a long time! But I can’t go your way with you, even if I wanted to...” (506). Before Stoltz “...suddenly ‘an abyss opened’, a ‘stone wall’ was erected, and Oblomov seemed to have disappeared...” (507). So, the character remained faithful to his life “path” and “sun.” Shortly before his death, he thoughtfully observes how “the evening sun is drowning in the fire of the dawn.”

CONCLUSION

The monograph shows the unity and interdependence of the elements (type, character) of Oblomov's artistic image on the basis of the actual textual material, and demonstrates that focusing only on one of them destroys the image and thereby distorts the author's position and leads to the extreme impoverishment of the artistic meaning and the idea of the work as a whole. The merits and drawbacks of Ilya Ilyich should be considered only as a whole: the human drama, on the one hand, is predetermined by the social status of the hero, his upbringing and the behavior of the landlord, and on the other hand, by Oblomov's moral and philosophical search for the answer to eternal questions about the meaning of life. The depth of the author's portrayal lies in the fact that positive and negative evaluation of his thoughts and feelings overflow one into the other, with humanity and "high thoughts" dissolving into mockery and irony. Oblomov himself is exalted and beautiful and at the same time ridiculous and pathetic. And each of these characteristics does not exclude each other, but complements each other, creating the unity of type and character in the image of Oblomov. The character is not unilinear. There is a lack of wholeness in him, expressed in the unrealized way of life, in Oblomovism, and at the same time – the integrity of a man who lives in a closed cycle, a dream of family and home, not squandering the vanity of society, who believes in the moral values of the good old days. The dominant artistic method of comparison and contrast (multi-stage antithesis) is used by the author to reveal the essence of the main character, his ambiguity, complexity and contradiction. The peculiarity of the antithesis in I. Goncharov is that it conveys not a total disconnection and mismatch, but paradoxically expresses the synthesis, the unity of irony and lyricism in the image. The name of the hero, the portrait characterization, the description of clothes, house, interior, high world society, the representation of the thoughts, dreams, behavior, actions of the hero – everything is built on the technique of contrast and unity. The antithesis of the external (type) and internal (character) in the structure of Oblomov's image expresses the unity of the image, since without any of the sides of the opposition the image of Oblomov itself disappears.

The antithesis "life/paradise" is the semantic dominant of Oblomov's image. Peace, stability, nature, home, quiet love, family, friends, food, traditions – the idyllic constants of Oblomov's happiness (the dream of paradise) are contrasted in the novel with the life realities of vanity and labor. All components of the dream are closely intertwined and related to each other. Without an idyllic landscape, there is no family happiness, and family happiness, in turn, according to Oblomov, is possible only in unity with nature. Without home there is no family, and without family there can be no home; without family there is no joy of food or friends. But this happiness is elusive. The hero's tragedy is that all aspirations and impulses end not in exploits, but in a

dream, which is like death, and also that the harmony of idyllic patriarchal Oblomovka, which the hero dreams of, is not attainable, the world cannot stop and sink into quietness. The antithesis “life/paradise” becomes the semantic dominant of Oblomov’s image.

In the fiction of the 19th century “laziness” and “peace” were designations of free creativity in contrast to their everyday understanding. This is evident in the poems of A. Pushkin, where “laziness” is on a par with “love” and “friendship.” The poet united “laziness” and “creativity,” returning the concept of “laziness” to its original meaning: slow, quiet, calm, soft, gentle, that is, not vain, dreaming. In I. A. Goncharov’s portrayal of Oblomov, in addition to dreaminess and withdrawal from vanity, “laziness” becomes a serious illness – the hero has become lazy to live. If for the lyrical hero of A. Pushkin “peace” meant an opportunity to create (“distant abode of labor”), Goncharov’s hero runs away from labor, unable to realize his potential, “dies out.” This is his tragedy. The word “rest” in the novel is polysemantic: it is also silence, rest, inactivity, absence of movement, restlessness; it is also sickness (an adopted rest in a hospital); it is also death (eternal rest, the deceased). Thus, the figure of Oblomov symbolizes, on the one hand, a connection with eternity, silence, a departure from vanity, and on the other hand, a non-vital, painful, mortal state. The conceptual part of the concepts “laziness” and “peace,” which form the basis of the lexical meaning of the words, plus the cultural background that forms the connotation of these names, become important in the creation and comprehension of the content of the novel by I. Goncharov. The method of conceptual analysis of “laziness” and “peace” brings us closer to the essence of Oblomov’s image and helps to reveal its multidimensional character: cultural, historical, artistic and linguistic peculiarities.

The peculiarity of the artistic embodiment of female characters in the novel is created on the I. Goncharov’s basic technique of comparison and contraposition. The unity in the hero’s dream of culture and life, music and food is not feasible in reality. In order to achieve such harmony two women who love Oblomov – Olga Ilyinskaya and Agafia Pshenitsina – should be united in one person. In the image of Oblomov’s dream of a woman we see the synthesis he is looking for: the harmony of intellect and heart, pride and peace, independence (emancipation) and obedience (traditionalism). The image of the woman created by Oblomov’s dream combines features of romance, poetry and a restful family idyll. On the one hand, she is a lover, tall, slender, proud look, thoughtful expression, on the other hand, she is a wife, a mother, embodying a quiet family life. There is no place in Oblomov’s dreams for Olga, for she is the indefatigable movement, he is the embodiment of peace. Oblomov never sees an earthly woman in Olga. She appears to him as a “deity,” as an “angel.” Olga will forever be Oblomov’s “soul.” However, the ideal of Olga is unattainable for Oblomov. The hero discovers in Pshenytsyna his ideal of unsophisticated harmony and peaceful

coziness, which lived in his memories of Oblomovka. Pshenitsina has warmth, comfort, food, but no poetry, dreams, music, no communication with friends. The dream is only half realized. The female characters in the novel highlight the image of the main character. The typical and characteristic is vividly revealed in the descriptions of Oblomov's relationships with the women he loves. On the one hand, laziness, bourgeoisness, Oblomovism, on the other hand – poetry, peace, kindness, conscience, love.

Oblomov and Stoltz are two images, two types of consciousness, two understandings of life, on the comparison and opposition of which the novel is based: poetic-spiritual and analytical-rational. For Oblomov life is poetry, for Stoltz life is work. Everything in Stoltz, from his name and appearance to his way of life, is the antithesis of Oblomov. The author arranges the logic of the novel in such a way that it becomes obvious: the achievement of harmony is in the organic combination of opposites (fantasy/reality, movement/rest). The antithesis Oblomov/Stoltz, expressed through the opposition of poetic/practical, soul/rational, heart/mind, dream/reality, statics/movement, rest/vanity, laziness/labor, becomes fundamental in the novel and in the author's concept. Harmony is presented to the author not in the choice of one side of the opposition, but in the unity of opposites, which is demonstrated in the novel: none of the characters acquires the long-awaited happiness, each remains closed in his paradigm of values.

Repeated words with identical meanings, used in a variety of contexts, create the symbolic space of the novel. Goncharov is a master of variety of contexts with the use of names-symbols. When considering the artistic images in the novel "Oblomov," it is necessary to take into account the symbolism of the concepts of "home," "way" and "light" as complementary and revealing the aesthetic system of the novel. In the novel "Oblomov" they complement each other and exactly in their unity reveal the essence of the images. The symbolism of "Oblomov's house" is linked to the symbolism of "light" (sun, fire, hearth) and to the symbolism of "way" (cyclicality, return). The symbolism of "light," in turn, does not appear without a connection with "home" (without fire there is no hearth, table, food) and without a connection with "road" (wheel, circle), which forms the basis of the hero's life journey and the motives of "burning" and "dying out." The name of the hero, Ilya, refers us to the symbolism of the sun and light, the sun symbolizes the wheel of the chariot of Elijah the prophet. The circle is a complex symbol that connects the idea of perfection and eternity. Oblomov throughout his life's "journey" reaches for the light: whether it is the light of the angel-Olga, or the light of the home of Agafia, or the light of the sun, but gradually goes out. The characteristics of the main characters in the novel "Oblomov" are in one way or another always connected with the designated symbols. Oblomov's "days go by," the "rays of his eyes" are replaced by "dim dots," and he stands at the threshold without

advancing an inch. Streams of light are only in Oblomov's dreams and in his reveries. The tragedy of his life is symbolically expressed by the verb "to go out." The symbolism of "way" is related to the belief in "fate" and "luck"; it expresses the pain of losing something important in life. Stoltz's life "way" is conveyed through the metaphor of "in motion," that is, without stopping. The goal of the path of the characters is different: one seeks peace, the other – to work. The love of Oblomov and Olga is burning, fire, light. All their experiences, thoughts, doubts, joy, pain are conveyed by light metaphors and epithets, from bright glow to extinguishing. The symbolism of the novel contributes to a deeper perception of the complexity, ambiguity of the character and the fate of the protagonist of the novel by I. Goncharov.

The materials of the monograph can be used when examining the themes and motifs of the novel "Oblomov" in Russian and foreign literature. In particular, references, allusions, reminiscences of I. A. Goncharov's novel can be found in the works of A. N. Ostrovsky, F. M. Dostoevsky, M. E. Saltykov-Shchedrin, N. S. Leskov, and especially brightly in I. Bunin's novel "Life of Arsenyev," which began with the story "In the Wheat" (1904), later called "Oblomov Grandson's Dream" (1915), and even later "Eight Years" (1937), with the author's note: "The Life of Arsenyev. A variant of the first draft." (See Гончаров/Goncharov, 2004, pp. 405–410). World literature also absorbed many of the images of the novel "Oblomov." As the researchers note: *"In the late 19th – early 20th century, when the reputation of 'Oblomov' as one of the most significant and representative works of the Golden Age of Russian literature was established, characteristic variations on the motifs of the novel appeared in the works of European artists, and in the reviews of the Western critics a great place was taken by the theme: 'Goncharov's novel and its hero in the context of world literature'."* (Гончаров/Goncharov, 2004, p. 412). For example, Augusto Perez, the main character of the existentialist novel "The Fog" (1914) by M. de Unamuno, was compared to Oblomov. Oblomov is remembered as the antipode of Hamlet and Horacio Oliveira, a character in J. Cortázar's novel "The Classics Game" (1963). Researcher J. Blaeu compares Oblomov not only with Hamlet and Don Quixote, but also with Svan from "In Search of Lost Time" (1913–1927) by M. Proust and with Bloom from "Ulysses" (1922) by J. Joyce. S. Beckett also admired the novel by I. A. Goncharov, which was reflected in his work and personal life, not coincidentally the article of the Irish writer and critic W.S. Pritchett about S. Beckett is called "The Irish Oblomov." (Гончаров/Goncharov, 2004, pp. 414–415). The greatest interest in the novel of I. Goncharov was aroused in Germany, Austria, Switzerland, which was reflected in the works of S. Zweig, H. Hesse, T. Mann, H. Böll, and others. P. Nison wrote the novel "Stolz"; W. Gruning – "On the Vyborg side;" H. Rücker – "Otto Blomov: The Story of One Tenant;" B. Wagner – "The Oblomov Club." (Гончаров/Goncharov, 2004, pp. 415–423).

SUPPLEMENT

The reflective hero in Russian literature and Soviet cinema (from Onegin and Oblomov to Zilov)

Russian literature of the 19th and 20th centuries, which created a complex image of Man and the World, paid special attention to people with contradictory and suffering consciousness; people who were “superfluous,” “unnecessary” in the society that worships money, career, entertainment, mundane success. Hence a special type of hero in Russian literature, who is ascribed the definition of an “unnecessary person.” Usually this term is used in Russian literary criticism in relation to the heroes of the 19th century, although *“there was not and could not be any special period of ‘superfluous people’ in history. The ‘superfluous man’ is a tragic figure, and his tragedy, on the one hand, is in his break with the vulgar environment, and, on the other, in his inability to enter into active struggle with it”* (Бурсов/Bursov, 1960, p. 107).

Many readers and some critics highlight in the “superfluous man” such traits as bourgeoisness, laziness, idleness. In our opinion, this is only one aspect of this literary type. We will try to show that the dissenting hero is destined to remain all his life in a state of spiritual loneliness, which is caused by his “woe from the mind,” his suffering heart, his reflective consciousness and his position of an active “non-doer.”

The following words may also be synonymous with the established definition of “superfluous man” in Russian literary criticism: reflective, contradictory, dissenting.

The first vivid embodiment of the “superfluous man” was Onegin (“Eugene Onegin” by Alexander Pushkin, 1823–1831); he was succeeded by Pechorin (“A Hero of Our Time” by Mikhail Lermontov, 1839–1840), then by Beltoz (“Who is to blame?” by Alexander Herzen, 1841–1846); Ivan Turgenev’s heroes: Chulkaturin (“Diary of an Extra Man,” 1850), Rudin (“Rudin,” 1856), and Lavretsky (“Gentlemen’s Nest,” 1859); and, finally, Oblomov (“Oblomov” by Ivan Goncharov, 1849–1859). In our opinion, the list might be continued, but the 19th century revolutionary-democratic critics still maintain that the gallery of “superfluous people” is supposed to be opened by Onegin and closed by Oblomov. Here it is possible to agree only with one thing: it is true that the portrayal of this type in Russian literature begins with Onegin, which does not, however, speak of the impossibility of the existence of “the superfluous man” in pre-19th century culture (the type of man with a reflective sense of consciousness has been known since antiquity). However, we cannot agree with the statement that everything ends with Oblomov, since we find enough examples of literary heroes who think differently than everyone else and are opposed to society. In other words, the heroes of the 20th century also exhibit features that are characteristic of the 19th century “superfluous man.”

The term “superfluous man” only became widespread after I. S. Turgenev’s “Diary of a Superfluous Man” (1850), but the formation of this type in Russian literature, as we noted above, begins with Onegin, followed by Pechorin, Belto, Rudin, Oblomov. Researcher Yuri Mann singles out the following features peculiar to this literary type: “*alienation from the official life of Russia, from his native social environment (usually noble), in relation to which the hero is aware of his intellectual and moral superiority and at the same time – mental weariness, deep skepticism, discord between word and deed and, as a rule, social passivity*” (МАНН/Mann, 1967, p. 400).

Each of the above-mentioned heroes of 19th century Russian literature overcame boredom, blues, melancholy in his own way, only their departure from society was common (they are “superfluous” because there is no place for them in the society that surrounds them, since in it one must play by the rules of accepted norms, while the “superfluous hero” thinks and feels differently, not like everyone; this phenomenon is designated in philosophical ethics as nonconformism). Some chose the solitude of the countryside or long journeys as a “cure” for boredom and melancholy; others sought a bullet in the Caucasus, Persia, the revolutionary barricades of France; some “treated” themselves with a soft couch, wrapped in a large bathrobe. But the relief did not come, the longing did not recede.

Researcher V. A. Koshelev in his article “Onegin’s airy bulk” writes: “*Pushkin’s hero (Onegin) is by no means devoid of laziness and idleness – but Pushkin always accompanies these concepts with meaningful epithets: ‘yearning laziness’, ‘brooding laziness’, ‘idleness of leisure’, etc.*” (КОШЕЛЕВ/Koshelev, 1999, p. 7). That is, these metaphorical epithets show the constant inner work of the mind and heart by external inactivity, it is not just thinking and experiencing, it is always a painful reflexive introspection.

Further, V. Koshelev notes that confessions of boredom, melancholy, moping are found in Pushkin’s letters: “*Boredom is one of the belongings of a thinking being.*” Moping and boredom were inherent to many of Pushkin’s contemporaries – precisely those contemporaries who did not look like ordinary mediocre people. Poet K. N. Batiushkov in the essays “Walks around Moscow” depicted himself as some of his “good buddy” who “everywhere yawned smoothly,” that is, behaved quite “in the manner of Onegin.” In his village K. Batiushkov also lived in a state of “brooding laziness,” which he described in detail in his letters to N. I. Gnedich. The diary of the Decembrist N. I. Turgenev, well known to Pushkin, was titled “My Boredom.” The same feelings were expressed in their intimate notebooks by other Pushkin’s friends: M. P. Scherbinin, V. F. Odoevsky, P. A. Vyazemsky, A. S. Griboyedov (КОШЕЛЕВ/Koshelev, 1999, p. 10).

The loneliness of Russian cultural and freedom-loving people of the first half of the 19th century was extraordinary. The image of Chatsky in “Woe from Wit” illustrates the loneliness of the best intelligent and finely sensitive people of the time, and he is also the forerunner of a whole string of dissenters in Russian literature. Such people, as we know, were often called insane by the society and authorities for the reason that they thought differently, otherwise, i. e. they were the only ones who really thought (woe to the mind), and also because a dissident always undermines established social norms and rules and encroaches upon the stability of state institutions by his denial. P.Y. Chaadayev was once called insane for his “Philosophical Letters.” O. Kuchkina’s article about him is entitled: “A Dissenter,” that is, a person who thinks differently, and suffers from it. *“The culturally refined Chaadayev could not reconcile himself to the fact that he was doomed to live in an uncultured society, in a despotic state”* (Кучкина/Кuckina, 1989, p. 4). Society and state, confirming their uncultured and despotic nature, declared Chaadayev insane and subjected him to a medical examination. Chaadayev was depressed by this and became silent for a long time. Later, he would write “The Apology of a Madman,” but would never finish it. Note the iconic nature of the title of Chaadayev’s work.

Naturally, the Russian romantic idealists of the 40s fled from social reality, from the uncultured society, from the oppressive state into the world of thought, fantasy, literature, into the reflected world of ideas. *“They suffered from the ugliness and untruth of reality, but were powerless to remake it. The discord with reality made Russian people inactive, developed the type of ‘superfluous people’”* (Бердяев/Berdaev, 1990, p. 23).

At first, the revolutionary-democratic critics of the nineteenth century took a benevolent view of the type of “superfluous man.” They sympathized with the “superfluous people” and attributed their inactivity to external circumstances – upbringing and environment. V. G. Belinsky was the first to say that Onegin was a suffering egoist, and of Pechorin, that *“...he bitterly accuses himself of his errors. His inner questions are continually ringing out in him, disturbing him, tormenting him, and he seeks their resolution in reflection: he peeks at every movement of his heart, examines every thought of his own. He has made himself the most curious subject of his observations”* (Белинский/Belinsky, 1954, p. 266).

But in the second half of the 40s Belinsky’s criticism of the romantic view of the world merges with a resolute condemnation of “superfluous people,” who were included by him among the “romantics of life” who were not capable of socially useful activity. He sees the cause of the passivity of “superfluous people” in their very nature, weakened by their romantic and bourgeois upbringing, that is, even later the critic did not deny the dependence of character on the environment and “social life.” But he no longer justified the inertness of “superfluous people” by the circumstances of Russian

life, under which the forces of personality remain unused. Belinsky explained the idleness of “superfluous people” by their belonging to the nobility class.

Belinsky’s ideas were supported and developed in their works by N. G. Chernyshevsky and N. A. Dobrolyubov.

N. A. Dobrolyubov’s article “What is Oblomovism?” (1859) is an important stage in the critical understanding of I. Goncharov’s novel “Oblomov.” During the nineteenth and twentieth centuries readers perceived and continue to perceive the novel according to N. A. Dobrolyubov, who saw in the novel a depiction of the collapse of serfdom in Russia, and in the main character – “*our indigenous people’s type*” (Добролюбов/Dobrolyubov, 1984, p. 41), who personifies laziness, inaction and stagnation of the serfdom system. N.A. Dobrolyubov is primarily interested in “Oblomovism,” so the critic focuses not on the individual, but on the typical features of the hero; the social is more important here than the personal. Oblomov is first of all a “gentleman,” and it is precisely this “gentlemanliness,” that is, the life at the expense of others, which leads the hero to the existence of weak will, inactivity, helplessness, and apathy. This brings Oblomov closer to the “superfluous” characters of Russian literature: Onegin, Pechorin, Belto, Rudin, who “*see no purpose in life and find no fitting activity*” (*idem*, p. 47). “Oblomovism,” i. e. barbaric inactivity and dreaminess, according to N.A. Dobrolyubov, “*puts an indelible stamp of idleness, freeloading and perfect uselessness in the world*” (*idem*, p. 61) on Onegin, Pechorin, Belto, Rudin, Oblomov. Therefore, the critic calls for a “merciless judgment,” for the removal of the “halo of exclusiveness” from the “superfluous people” and for the establishment of the “active hero type” as an ideal.

N. A. Dobrolyubov, who brings together all the “Oblomovs” by their external features – laziness, idleness, apathy – does not speak about the inner world of the hero, which distinguishes Oblomov from others and makes him one of the few. This is what the critic A. V. Druzhinin, who sharply disagreed with N.A. Dobrolyubov and wrote in the same 1859 article “Oblomov, a novel by I. A. Goncharov,” points out, where, in particular, he pointed out that “*it is impossible to know Oblomov and not to love him deeply*” (Дружинин/Druzhinin, 1991, p. 112). A. V. Druzhinin saw the “bad” Oblomov, “almost ugly,” lying on the sofa, arguing with Zakhar – in the first part of the novel, and the “good” Oblomov, “touching,” “deep,” “sympathetic,” “in love,” crying “over the ruins of his happiness” – in the second part. It is not the social essence of Oblomovism that is important to A. V. Druzhinin, but rather the true living poetry and the life of the people connected together in the novel. In Oblomovism the critic singles out both the negative and the poetic, the comic and the sad. N. A. Dobrolyubov categorically refused to notice anything in Oblomov except his “resolute trashiness;” for Dobrolyubov Ilya Ilyich is “*repulsive in his nothingness*” (Добролюбов/Dobrolyubov, 1984, p. 58). A. V. Druzhinin holds Oblomov dear as a

“weirdo” and a “child” unprepared for practical adult life: “...*It is not good in a land where there are no good and incapable of evil weirdos like Oblomov! Such people are sometimes harmful, but very often sympathetic and even reasonable...*” (Дружинин/Druzhinin, 1991, p. 122). Oblomov “...*is dear to us as a man of his land and his time, as a kind and gentle child, ...he is dear to us as a crank, who in our era of self-love, subterfuge and untruth peacefully ended his life without offending any man, without deceiving any man, without teaching any man anything untoward*” (*idem*, p. 125). A. V. Druzhinin’s point of view on the novel and the protagonist was not as popular in the 19th century as N. A. Dobrolyubov’s interpretation of the novel.

Alexander Herzen, who was deeply sympathetic to the “superfluous people,” was somewhat puzzled when N. Chernyshevsky and N. Dobrolyubov criticized the “superfluous man.” His critical remarks on this subject are well known.

Ivan Turgenev, who recognized the importance of the environment in the development of personality, unlike V. Belinsky, N. Chernyshevsky, and N. Dobrolyubov, focused not on the social conditions of Russian reality, but on the psychological nature of man (“Rudin,” “The Noble’s Nest”), for which he was criticized by revolutionary democrats.

Due to revolutionary-democratic criticism (Dobrolyubov, Chernyshevsky, Pisarev), the image of the “superfluous man” was fixed only for the characters of the 19th century, since it was believed that the cause of moping and melancholy was serfdom, “Oblomovism.”

In the theme of the “superfluous man” it is important to highlight the affirmation of the value of the individual person, the personality, the disclosure of the inner world of the hero, his psychology, the interest in the “history of the human soul,” which creates the ground for a fruitful psychological analysis. This is why the hero with a reflective consciousness remains an interesting topic for research today, despite the changed social conditions of life.

* * *

The type of the “unnecessary man,” the dissenting hero did not degenerate, did not end with Oblomov, did not disappear after the abolition of serfdom and the ruin of the nobility’s nest. The Onegin-type hero became a significant social and artistic phenomenon in Russian culture. The traits typical of the dissenting hero of the 19th century (mental fatigue, deep skepticism, discord between word and deed, social passivity), can be found in the hero of the 20th century as well. In the works of A. Chekhov, A. Bitov, Yu. Trifonov; in the plays of A. Vampilov, A. Volodin; in the films of directors O. Iosseliani, R. Balayan, G. Daneliya, N. Mikhalkov, I. Heifits, A. Efros, V. Melnikov. The man who is not like the rest, looking, thinking, suffering, checking whether the modern world is habitable, whether it is possible to find one’s

place in it – this man, and thus the hero with a reflective consciousness, remains a subject of research in Russian culture of the twentieth century.

Let's turn to Vampilov's play "Duck Hunting" and its protagonist V. Zilov. If the critics of the seventies paid attention to the social problems of the play, the critics of the nineties (E. Gushanskaya, B. Sushkov and others) say that "...it is time to look at Zilov through the prism of classical tradition. Without this, the author's thought might get lost in shallow topical analysis" (СУШКОВ/Sushkov, 1989, p. 25). Paradoxically, Zilov is on a par with Onegin, Pechorin, Oblomov. He is characterized by the same inability to find himself in the world around him.

"The collision taken by the playwright is as old as the world – it touches on the problems of the social and moral existence of man. Each time has interpreted it in its own way, bringing to the forefront its own set of moral tasks and hero type. This is the kind of collision in which Zilov appears. [...] We are faced with a dramatic collision in which he represents a hero of exactly this type – a reflective hero. [...] The roots of this image go back to the Russian literature of the 19th century. [...] Behind all these heroes there is a compromise and a moral right of superfluous people." (Гушанская/Gushanskaya, 1990, p. 229, p. 234).

"Duck Hunting" is a play of a special genre, a play-remembrance, so the past tense occupies the main place in the play, the memories of the events of the last two months. The present tense in the play is not rich in events and is a framing of Zilov's memories. The dramatic nature of the memories is one of the reasons why the character tries to end his life by suicide.

Researcher E. M. Gushanskaya notes: *"'Duck Hunting' is first of all a playconfession, based not on dramatic, but on lyrical conflict, not on dramatic clashes, but on a plot of lyrical self-awareness, [...] the conflict here is not external, but internal – lyrical, moral. Drama offers judgment from the outside, lyricism offers awareness from within. It is a strange and complex play, in which the main drama falls on what, in fact, cannot be played, – on the process of self-consciousness"* (Гушанская/Gushanskaya, 1990, p. 206).

Victor Zilov's inner tragedy arises from the absence of friends, from the discord with his conscience, from the unfulfilled son's duty, from the impossibility to love, from unrealized desires, from the fact that the hero is mired with everyone in vulgar and impure reality, that he is thirty, and life passes somehow meaninglessly, and there are no answers to the questions posed to himself, and only the dream of a clean and honest life on the other side remains.

Why do Onegin, Pechorin, and Oblomov flee from society? Because everything that surrounds them is not real, but false or played out: everyone around them is playing love, friendship, being busy with business, socializing. In Zilov's case the same is even more complicated: life turns into a kind of mundane ritual, with half-love, half-

friendship, half-doing, in this formula the prefix “SEMI” easily turns into the prefix “NOT.”

“Duck Hunting” is a play that is built on the principle of “substitution,” in which the living turns into the inanimate, is replaced by it. Phenomena, people, things, concepts are substituted. Thus, the substitution function becomes plot-forming.

As a result, the image of Home (a symbol of warmth, coziness, and family) is replaced by the image of a typical apartment. Moreover, such a house is not some exception to the rule, it is the way many people live: Vampilov emphasizes that the hero receives an apartment in a new typical house, from the windows of which the roof of another typical house is visible. The house itself contains nothing domestic: the furniture is replaced by a garden bench, a live cat, which newcomers take into the house by a custom, is replaced by a plush cat. Then, however, a table and telephone appear – and, moreover, the telephone is not installed as usual, but “arranged”: *“And we will arrange the telephone here”* (Вампилов/Vampilov, 1984, p. 142. Hereinafter quotations from the play are given according to this edition, with the pages in parentheses), – and a couch, and other furniture. The author’s remark will emphasize: “ordinary furniture,” i. e. the house is typical, the apartments are the same, the furniture is ordinary – this is an image of a Dormitory rather than a House; there are no domestic, personal features that distinguish the Vampilov hero’s dwelling from other dwellings. And the one who does not yet have a home dreams of just such an apartment: *“SAYAPIN. Here will be a TV set, here a couch, next to a refrigerator”* (143) – in all this there is an indication of the impersonal, standard character of the dwelling. The characters assess this as the norm. Valeria remarks: *“Now you will have a normal life”* (144). The normality of life is determined not by the fullness of life, but by the absence of life in life, by the predominance of things, and the more lifeless, the “more normal life” is. Beauty is when there is elementary domesticity: *“Cold? Hot? Beauty! Gas? Beauty! Eighteen squares? Beautiful! Balcony? Beautiful!”*

The man is depersonalized in the world of things, which is depicted by Vampilov in this detail: Vera uses the same name for all men, “alik.” The name “Alik” in the play is spelled with a small letter, it becomes a nickname. When asked by Sayapin why Vera calls everyone “alik”: *“Maybe it’s your first love, Alik?”* She replies: *“You guessed it. The first one is alik. And the second alik. And the third. All aliks”* (137). As the play nears its end, the name “alik” becomes common, addressing each other, the characters use the impersonal word “alik” rather than their own names. The stuffed cat, the thing, is also given the name “alik.” In this way, Vampilov not only gives the absurdity of the substitution function, but also raises it to the square degree: the living turns into the inanimate, the human being is replaced by the thing.

At the end of the housewarming party, Zilov ironically says: *“That’s fine. Everyone is well, everyone is happy. A pleasant evening”* (151). But all the

pleasantness lies in the fact that they drank and ate. Nobody knows how to celebrate a housewarming party. Customs, traditions are forgotten. People have been turned into things, replaced by things, and people have forgotten how to speak. This is how their toasts sound: “*Salute! Well, well! Let’s go! Let’s go!*” (150). There is no sense of a celebration of communication, an ordinary ritual in a series of the same rituals.

For Zilov, work is a boring pastime with absolutely no creativity or satisfaction. When the bosses demanded the results of the work, Zilov, without thinking twice, handed in a fake report: “*Nonsense. It will pass. No one will pay attention. Who needs it?*” (154). Thus, work is replaced by a game of work, deceit, lies.

The culmination of the substitutionary function in the world of things, “aliks,” lies and masks, in the impersonal and dead world, is the absence of sanctuaries and God. This is why the planetarium takes the place of the church, and the place of God is taken by the bosses, on whom it depends whether the new apartment will or will not be given. The bosses are prayed to, they are stronger than God in the world of things:

“*VALERIYA (theatrically). Oh, Vadim Andreyevich! I'm ready...*

ZILOV. What for?

VALERIYA. I'm ready to pray for you. Honestly!

ZILOV. Pray, my daughter... ” (145).

If there were any occasions to go to church, it was only once, and that was because he was drunk. Zilov tries to remind his wife of their first meeting. That time he came to her with snowdrops. Now instead of snowdrops there is a copper ashtray:

“*GALINA. Stop it, for God’s sake.*

ZILOV. No, there was no God, but there was a church across the street, remember, remember? Yes, the planetarium. Inside it was the planetarium, but outside it was a church... ” (164).

“*GALINA. Vitya, have you ever been to church?*

ZILOV. Yeah. I went in with the guys once. On a drinking binge ” (185).

The world of hunting, the world of living nature, where everything is natural and where the hero strives, is opposed to the everyday, mundane, dead life of things in the play. To go hunting for Zilov is like returning home from the war, in other words, one must stay alive, resist, be able to endure the surrounding vulgarity that kills everything alive in man!

“*ZILOV (with despair). Another month and a half! Just think...*

WAITER (grinned). Will you live?

ZILOV. I don’t know, Dima. How to live – I have no idea ” (135).

For Zilov, hunting is “*a world of transcendent freedom and spirituality, inconceivable, incomprehensible poetry, existential solitude, divine purity, it is ecstasy, rapture, moral purification, a form of existence and manifestation of higher*

spirituality, which the hero lacks in everyday life so much... It is a moment of truth" (Гушанская/Gushanskaya, 1990, p. 224).

When the guests ask Zilov, "*Guess what we're getting you?*" he replies: "*I don't know. Give me an island. If you don't mind*" (147). The island for the hero is a symbol of seclusion from the living reality. It is similar to Oblomov's dream of a lost paradise, of Oblomovka, far away from civilization, in the world of nature and naturalness.

The two word-images constantly repeated in the play, rain and window, are not coincidental. The rain outside the window is the only hint of life in the inanimate world, a symbol of nature. The window is the boundary between that, natural, life and this, artificial life. Zilov is constantly drawn to the window. The window and the window sill are polysemantic for the hero.

It is also interesting that when asked by the waiter where Zilov got his new apartment, the hero answers that near the bridge and only afterwards adds: "*Mayakovsky thirty-seven, apartment twenty*" (136) (Mayakovsky died at the age of 37, and here the street name and house number are symbolic). The bridge divides one bank from the other and separates one life from another. Telling about the hunt, Zilov tells his wife: "*I'll take you to the other side, do you want to?*" (184). On this side of the bridge, where Zilov lives, on this shore there are typical houses, planetarium churches, peoplethings, homelessness, "godlessness" and sacrilege, death. On the other side of the bridge "*there is nothing, was not and will not be,*" there is only God and the primordial nature: "*ZILOV. But be warned, we're going up early, before dawn. You'll see what fog there is – we'll float, as in a dream, unknown where. And when the sun comes up? Oh! It's like a church and even cleaner than a church... And the night? My God! Do you know what silence is like? You're not there, do you understand? No! You haven't been born yet. And there's nothing. And there wasn't. And there won't be... And you'll see the ducks. I will. Of course, I'm not a very good shot, but is that the point?*" (184).

In the society of people-beings, where there is no God, people are acrimonious, and one can allow oneself to joke maliciously, to be cruel to an ex or a new beloved, to forget about parents (filial feeling is replaced by cynicism and mockery), to do nothing, to turn into a dead man, into a thing, into an "alik." In the hunt, the opposite process takes place: the spiritual dead man comes to life and becomes a man.

Hunting is an ambivalent image. On the one hand, hunting is the initiation into nature, it is something sacred, pristine, pure. On the other hand, hunting is a symbol of murder. Zilov cannot kill living beings. For him, hunting is purification, above all, and people around him do not understand this. They laugh at him, at the fact that he has never killed even a small bird. Zilov replies to the laughter: "*What do you know about it?*" (148). For Zilov the flying ducks are alive, so he cannot kill them. However, he is not sure that the people around him are alive in the true, spiritual sense of the word,

and so Zilov allows himself to be cruel to them: *“Go to hell! I do not want to know you anymore! Bastards! Aliks! I want to be alone... I don’t believe you, do you hear?”* (195).

The second most important image of the play is that of the Waiter. The Waiter is Zilov’s double, an antipodean double. They are both 30 years old. They go hunting together. Zilov on the phone says to the Waiter: *“You are the closest person to me,”* but in fact – the Waiter is the exact opposite of Zilov, it is the most lifeless phenomenon, born of the world of things, the world where there is no God: *“Dima (the Waiter) is a genius of the spiritless environment, its offspring and its idol”* (Сушков/Sushkov, 1989, p. 33). At school, he was “a shy kid,” but he set himself a goal: to break through, to assert himself, to look decent – and he succeeds. The waiter is a good worker, he is always collected, accurate, businesslike, punctual, he does not drink at the job, he is calm, confident, he knows how to hold himself with others. He knows and can do absolutely everything, but he is like a robot, a machine, which is inaccessible to the human perception of the world, emotional and spiritual: *“The waiter is absolutely flawless and just as absolutely inhuman”* (Гушанская/Gushanskaya, 1990, p. 246). Ducks are a target for him and nothing more, so he teaches Zilov to be calm and to kill neatly:

“ZILOV. I have a feeling that this time I will be lucky.

WAITER. Forefeeling doesn’t matter. If you can’t shoot, a hunch won’t help. You’ll always miss.

ZILOV. Dima, how many times can I miss? Could it be this time, too?

WAITER. Vitya, I’ve explained it to you a hundred times: you will miss until you calm down. After all, how do you do it all? Calmly, smoothly, gently, slowly... complete indifference... How can I say... Well, it’s not like they’re flying in nature, but in a picture.

ZILOV. But they’re not in the picture. They are, after all, alive.

WAITER. They are alive for those who miss. And for those who hit, they’re dead. Do you understand?” (189).

When Zilov fails in his suicide attempt, the waiter, examining the shotgun cartridge, says: *“And your cartridges are unreliable. Replace them with simple ones, they are reliable”* (202). In other words, to be sure next time.

Zilov envies the waiter, wants to learn not to suffer, to be calm and balanced, understanding that life is simpler and easier for such people. But at the same time, Zilov has no doubt that the waiter is a scoundrel. He says so: *“You’re a beastly guy, Dima,”* and in the cafe, during a drinking binge he gives him the exact definition: *“The lackey,”* for which he gets a punch in the jaw from Dima. That Dima is a lackey is also the author’s point of view, since when listing the characters, each of the characters has the

first or last name, only the waiter is named *waiter*, which also emphasizes the typicality of such people, their multiplicity.

The most tragic thing in the play is that the Waiter is Zilov's companion and guide to the world of the hunt, that is, to the world of the dream, ideal, uncompromised by anything. It turns out that Zilov's dream is utopia. In hunting one must kill, one must know how to shoot a living thing, and in hunting there is the waiter, Dima, who does this flawlessly. Zilov understands perfectly well that it is difficult to find a place on the Earth which is not defiled by human banality. That is why he says: "*Give me an island.*" That is why the main thing for him is the "gatherings and conversations" preceding the hunt, that is a dream, not reality, a dream utopia of the world, where you can break away from everyday life, vanity, lies, laziness, where you can be different, better and cleaner.

Zilov's reflective consciousness makes him particularly defenseless and vulnerable, which is why he needs spiritual intellectual apologetics. There are many things about Zilov that are repulsive: lies, deceit, drunkenness, and his relationships with women and his parents. But Zilov is tormented by the fact that he does not live as he would like to, whereas the other characters in the play are not at all bothered by their lifeless, material state. Zilov is able to suffer, and this attracts to the character:

"ZILOV (to his wife). I want to talk to you frankly. We haven't spoken frankly for a long time – that's the trouble. (Sincerely and passionately) I am to blame myself, I know. I brought you to this... I've tormented you, but I swear to you, I'm disgusted with my own life... You're right, I don't care about anything, about anything. What's happening to me, I don't know... I don't know... Don't I have a heart? Yes, yes, I have nothing but you, today I understand it, do you hear? What have I got but you? Friends? I have no friends. Women? Yes, I had them, but what for? I don't need them, believe me... What else? My job! My God! You should understand me, how can you take it all to heart! I'm alone, alone, I have nothing in my life but you. Help me! Without you I'm dead... Let's go away somewhere! Let's start all over again, we're not so old" (134).

Even when Zilov is cruel to those around him, it can hardly be called cruelty. Is it possible to speak of cruelty to a carpet that is being dusted off? Zilov is surrounded by people-things who are used to the fact that "*Vitya is joking,*" the main thing for them is that in the cafe, in the "public place" where Zilov made a scandal, decency should be kept. And the next day, everyone forgets everything, no one is offended by Zilov for his taunts to them, they decide that Vitya made a joke and, therefore, you can joke with him and send him a funeral wreath, not even suspecting that a jolly guy Vitya Zilov can shoot himself. They do not understand how a man who has everything can have no desire to live:

“KUZAKOV. What’s the matter? What’s the matter...? What are you dissatisfied with? What do you lack? You’re young, healthy, you have a job, an apartment, women love you. Live and be happy. What more do you want?”

ZILOV. I want you to leave” (200).

But they won’t leave, they have nowhere to go, they live in this world common to them and to Zilov, in the world of things, and Vampilov’s character won’t go anywhere from this world, because there simply is no other, there is no island on which a new, clean and honest life could be built, all this is just a dream, and in reality if there were such an island, sooner or later Dima the waiter would appear there and begin to kill ducks.

The tragedy is that the hero does not kill himself. The gun that appeared in the first act, and which by all the rules of the genre should have fired, does not fire at all. If the hero had killed himself after he had seen the filthiness he was living in; or after the suicide attempt had failed, everyone had gone, and he had been left alone, flinging himself onto his bed, the curtain would have closed – both of these endings would have meant a way out of the situation, it would have been a victory for Viktor Zilov, his protest against the world of things. But being the bearer of the name Victor, which means victory, winning, Zilov did not become the victor. The hero is crowned not with laurels, but with a mournful wreath. The play ends where it began: with Zilov’s call to Dima the waiter. The circle has closed, there is no way out. Everything has returned to its normal course. This finale, above all, reads tragic, the impossibility of escaping from the world of things, and also emphasizes the timelessness of the theme of the “superfluous man.”

* * *

The reflexive, dissenting, redundant man from literature comes to the theater and cinematography of the twentieth century: “Once Upon a Time There Was a Singing Blackbird” (directed by O. Iosseliani), “Flights in Dreams and in Reality” (directed by R. Balayan), “Autumn Marathon” (directed by G. Daneliya), “A Few Days from the Life of I. I. Oblomov” (directed by N. Mikhalkov), “The The Bad Good Man” (directed by M. Heifits), “On On Thursday and Never Again” (directed by A. Efros), “Vacation in September” (directed by V. Melnikov).

Nikita Mikhalkov presented a sentimental interpretation of the central image of I. A. Goncharov’s novel in the 1970s in the film “A Few Days from the Life of I. I. Oblomov.” Already in the very title of the movie, specifying the initials of the hero, the director focuses on the fact that Oblomov has the name, that he is a personality, thereby destroying the established perception: “Oblomov – Oblomovism.” And we are surprised to recall that Oblomov’s name is Ilya Ilyich. The name and patronymic sound so musical and poetic, so unusual for our ears, gradually accustomed to the dry critical

word “Oblomovism,” that the film irresistibly attracts us from the very first shots and sounds. The viewer has the desire to know who Ilya Ilyich Oblomov is and why only a few days of his life turned out to be so important in his fate.

There are no scenes of guests coming to Oblomov’s house, nor is the hero’s line of life with Agafia Pshenitsyna. For N. S. Mikhalkov it was important to show the pure, honest, kind soul of the Russian man, whose breadth corresponds to the vast expanses of patriarchal Russia, which does not keep up with the world of fashion, progress, civilization, but which preserves the moral laws of life in the traditions and culture of the people.

Oblomov played by O. Tabakov is charming, gentle, cordial, kind, pleasant, he attracts sympathy, the viewer forgets that he is a serf-master. Tabakov-Oblomov merged so successfully that it is difficult to imagine Oblomov as someone else.

When in the bath scene the hero speaks important words about society, about the essence of human life, about the helplessness to change anything in himself and cries at the same time, the soul opens before us, and we see how thin and sensitive it is. At the moment of Oblomov’s monologue, the camera focuses on the butterfly in the glass, symbolically emphasizing, on the one hand, the hidden spiritual beauty of the hero, but, on the other hand, the butterfly is still dried in the glass, and this is a hint by director and cameraman to Oblomov’s tragic end, a detail telling us that with his wings spread open it is impossible to escape from the glass, from the circle of fate that the hero is destined for.

Eduard Artemyev’s amazing music, blending with the music of nature, soothes and bewitches the viewer who, enchanted by it, sees the rays of sunlight streaming through the trees into the open windows of Oblomov’s house, sees little Ilyusha waking up and being told that his mother has arrived, and he, forgetting everything in the world, runs away from home, running through the vast green expanses towards the sun and shouting “Mama’s here...!” – there is so much love in his voice for his mother, for the world around him, for the fairy tale. At the end of the film Oblomov’s son will be running among the vast fields with the same cry: “Mother has come...!”

In the hero’s dreams, the viewer sees a patriarchal, fairy-tale world of the Russian village, where everyone lives happily and comfortably, we see Oblomov’s kind and affectionate parents and other inhabitants of Oblomovka, who from morning discuss with the Master how to fix the creaking, old stairs on the porch ready to collapse; after a hearty dinner everything sinks into slumber, and only the little Oblomov and his friend Shtoltz walk through the rooms and around the yard and explore the world of sleep and peace; and in the evening all dwellers gather in the house and tell fairy tales and fable and people joke to each other, until it’s time for dinner and night’s sleep.

The film's portrayal of Oblomov's love leaves a strong impression. The skillful editing of several close-up shots in which, as in a painting, the viewer sees Olga's thin neck, strands of her blond hair ruffling in the light breeze, and shots of Oblomov's enchanted face give a visual sense of how pure his love is. The episode of a night rendezvous in the garden house, when Olga kisses his hands and confesses her love, and Oblomov's state of mind is utterly tense, is accompanied by images of disturbed nature: lightning, thunder, rain.

The proponents of N. A. Dobrolyubov's point of view accused N. S. Mikhalkov of poetizing the serf-master Oblomov and noted that the film is dominated by an unmotivated admiration for the hero, decorative and untrue, embellishment that opposes real beauty. The Soviet ideological critics also rejected the film because Oblomov's monologues about society and man were not from the 19th century, but from the 20th century, the modern life, in which the individual was forgotten behind slogans and posters, only vanity, "*perpetual running around, knocking each other down, gossiping and chitchatting and snapping at each other*" remained. An "unnecessary person" cannot live where there are lies (and there were plenty of lies in the Soviet times), it is difficult for him to adapt, to become like everyone else and not notice the falsity, but at the same time it is necessary to adapt – hence the tragedy of double life and life unfulfilled.

After the romantic sixties came the sobering seventies and eighties, the theme of the dissident becomes a major theme in literature, theater, and cinema. We have already given a list of the films that were released during these years, although some of them were to be seen only in the nineties because they were forbidden by the censorship authorities at the time. It is interesting that films based on classic works and referring to the theme of an "unnecessary person" in one way or another were censored. Among them were "A Few Days from the Life of I. I. Oblomov," "The The Bad Good Man" (based on Chekhov's story "The Duel"), and "By the Pages of Pechorin's Journal." Apparently, the censors thought it was about the past and did not notice the subtext of modernity. Films with a dissident character from the '70s-'80s would be shelved, and the arguments would be that "this is not about us" or "we don't have this kind of stuff."

In the Soviet "luminous" society of developed socialism, a tormented hero cannot exist. And if N. Mikhalkov was accused of "poetizing a serf master," A. Vampilov was declared a gloomy, heroless playwright who promoted pessimism. They used to say about Zilov that we do not have such types, it's all the author's fantasy. But today it is already obvious that everything turned out to be true: "*We'll go back to this nextdoor retro, we'll go right back to understanding not history, but ourselves today,*" A. Bitov noted and specified, "*And then there will be no writer more expressive of the tragedy of the lack of faith than Vampilov*" (Гушанская/Gushanskaya, 1990, p. 187).

And although today there is already a good and detailed work by E. M. Gushanskaya about A. Vampilov with a competent and provable analysis of his plays, still in school textbooks and in some articles there are such interpretations of Zilov's image with which it is difficult to agree. Thus, in the 11th-grade textbook "Russian Literature of the 20th Century" in his review of contemporary prose V. Chalmaev writes about Zilov that he is a man "without a moral core, a cynic hero who burns his life like a candle at both ends" (Чалмаев/Calmaev, 1994, p. 354).

For literary scholar L. Kolobaeva, Zilov is a "phenomenon of uncertainty of personality," that is, it is impossible to define his personality, because "*In the image of Zilov we see a man-plasma, flowing, malleable, taking the properties and color of everything he touches*" (Колобаева/Kolobaeva, 1999, p. 7). A logical question arises: if Zilov is a plasma, adapting to everything, then who is the Waiter? The tragedy of Zilov is precisely in the fact that he cannot adapt and be like everyone else. Behind Zilov's outwardly flamboyant behavior one does not see his inner tragedy.

We have already quoted E. Gushanskaya's view that the main drama in the play falls on what is impossible to act: on the process of comprehending what is happening, on the process of self-awareness. The reader or spectator must feel the inner conflict of the hero. But precisely because the external, tangible, visible is always faster perceived and comprehended than the inner, hidden, that is why Zilov is called either plasma or a cynic hero.

It can be assumed that this was the reason why the play could not be produced on stage. "*A certain stamp of producing of 'Duck Hunting' has already been developed, A. Efros wrote. It could be called 'conditional naturalism.' Some untidy young men with faces as if they were the same as in 'Duck Hunting' play the roles. They are talking something quickly, naturally, hugging, drinking, fighting... To get to real naturalism in such a play, you have to break your heart, and here everything is easily and superficially portrayed. Everything is similar and everyone is alike. Where the viewer should have cried out in horror, he/she at best becomes only slightly more serious. And he/she leaves with a certain squeamishness toward the world of drunks and idlers, but not with the shock of realizing what this world is like and that it is not a joke*" (Эфрос/Efros, 1983, p. 212). Another great director, G. Tovstonogov, as if continuing A. Efros's thought, noted: "*There is certain mystery in 'Duck Hunting,' a certain secret that has not yet been solved. Neither have I. If you stage a play about alcoholics, the theme disappears. A dead end – that's what has to be played*" (Сушков/Sushkov, 1989, p. 44).

It is a pity that neither A. Efros nor G. Tovstonogov, for all their understanding of the essence of the play, ever staged "Duck Hunting." The play had no luck in theatrical productions, but there were exceptions. Thus, in 1979 at the Moscow Art Theater, Oleg Efremov staged the play and acted the role of Zilov. He did with the play

what no theater dared: he deprived the play of temporal biplane, that is, there were no memories, it was a direct course of events: drunkenness was followed by hangover, hangover – by desperation, desperation pulled its hand to the gun. *“Oleg Efremov translated Zilov’s drama into some powerful, but abstract inner tragedy, unrelated to the course of action, almost not conditioned by events, which carried within them the sound of love, the sound of discord with friends; the sound of discord with conscience, the sound of unfulfilled son’s duty. It became obvious that Zilov is not only vice, but also suffering, that a part of Zilov belongs to every man, if he is a man”* (Гушанская/Gushanskaya, 1990, 259).

“Duck Hunting,” written in 1967; first appeared on the professional stage in 1976; the film, “Vacation in September,” based on the play in 1979, was shelved; it appeared on the screens eight years after it was filmed, that is, in 1987. As M.I. Gromova writes: *“The prohibitors, apparently, intuitively felt in the dramaturgical material the tragedy of ‘a hero of our time’, the lost life of a man gifted, but not seeing a purpose in the world of legalized moral falsities”* (Громова/Gromova, 1994, p. 78).

Even before “Vacation in September” appeared, in 1979, Chekhov’s “The Duel” directed by I. Heifits (1973) was not just well-timed, it was a paraphrase of the tormenting theme of the decade. It was no coincidence that “On Thursday and Never Again” (1978), “Vacation in September” (1979) and the cult film of the end of the Soviet era “Flights in Dreams and Reality” (1980) appeared later. The protagonists of these motion pictures have their roots in the Russian literature and culture of the nineteenth century, all of them dissenters and therefore superfluous.

“All these characters are created by a small portion of lies, clownery, compromises, laziness, blended, if not with giftedness, then at least with the ability to feel subtly, to be dissatisfied with themselves, to be ashamed and despise themselves – all the things so well played by Oleg Dal, who created cardinal images for the seventies in the films of A. Efros and A. Bitov ‘On Thursday and Never Again,’ I. Heifits: ‘The Bad Good Man’ (‘The Duel’), V. Melnikov: ‘Vacation in September’” (Гушанская/Gushanskaya, 1990, p. 103).

Oleg Dal’s play is always the subject of special analytical examination. He like no one else managed to portray on the screen the dissenting man, probably because in real life he was just such a person. A. Efros said about him that it is a “separate” person. Dal avoided noise, all the fuss of fellow actors. Friends and acquaintances were few. Feeling falsehoods where it was not yet assumed by others, he became angry, cruel, uncontrollable. He wanted *“to protect himself and his art from extraneous interferences, not to succumb to the general flow”* (Галаджева/Galadzhewa, 1989, p. 14). He refused many film roles, moved from theater to theater, was constantly dissatisfied with himself. People around him said: “it is megalomania,” “what does he need – theaters invite him, give him roles, and he is still dissatisfied.” And it was

important for him to protect himself. Here is a note from the diary of O. Dal: “*Fight with these bastards will be TERRIBLE. Can he be alone? Maybe. But oneself! Keep ONESELF! It is IMPORTANT. Not to adapt. Not to depersonalize. To turn inside – there is my power, my promised land*” (*idem*, p. 23). He was able both on stage and on screen to turn inside himself and convey the inner tragedy of the “superfluous people.” It is not by chance that Dal said about himself: “*I, in every role, am me.*”

There were only five of them, these heroes who made up a peculiar portrait of the “unnecessary man” of the seventies, and more broadly, the heroes of our time. They formed the author’s cinematography of Oleg Dal. These are: “Horn Blow” (1969) – was twice shown on TV and then wiped off videotape; “The Bad Good Man” (1973); TV play “By the Pages of Pechorin’s Journal” (1974); “On Thursday and Never Again” (1978) – the film wasn’t at the box office, in Moscow it was shown only two days: to the irritation of critics Dal replied that such films make the world more talented, that they are rare and that he did not care about the opinions of mudslingers. Finally, the film “September Vacation” (1979) – was shown eight years after its production and six years after the artist’s death, O. Dal received the award for “Best Actor” for this film posthumously.

In the 70s, Dal’s heroes were referred to in the same way: the anti-hero. The superficial and habitual perception of the literary image sometimes dictates a certain cliché, consisting in the fact that the hero is an honest, decent, courageous, and so on person, that is, a positive one. Then the antihero should be negative. However, it is impossible to call Dal’s heroes “negative.” His hero was strong in his weakness. Playing Pechorin in the duel scene, Dal shot with his left hand. He was told that this was wrong. To which Dal replied that Lermontov did not say which hand Pechorin shot with. He killed, but he didn’t want to kill; that’s why Pechorin-Dal’s eyes are moist in the episode of Grushnitsky’s murder. “*The encounter with death – one’s own or someone else’s – is important to Dal as one of the possible revivals of his characters. The feeling of the finality of existence makes one sum up, look back at one’s life – whether one wants it or not*” (*idem*, p. 32). That is why Sergei-Dal’s stopped gaze at the dying animal in “On On Thursday and Never Again,” and the hoarse moan when his mother dies, and the lonely wail on the shore, and the lonely figure of the pensive Sergei.

Dal’s characters were often called “reflective intellectuals, whiners.” And just as with Dal’s life, his characters were asked what they lacked, to live like everyone else. And if it is not possible to live like everyone else? And if one can’t live like everyone else?

“*Restlessness is the basic state of Dal’s characters. Trouble of soul. The inability to find oneself in the world around, and most importantly, to find oneself in oneself. Dal’s hero image is a suffering one. Suffering from the fact that he does not feel his*

necessity in this life, in this society. He is unfulfilled. He turned out to be superfluous, unnecessary with all his qualities and talents. Yes – all of them, Laevsky, Pechorin, Sergei, and Zilov are potentially talented. They are individuals. The actor gave them his own personality...” (*idem*, p. 28).

When Vitaly Melnikov was preparing to shoot the film “Vacation in September” based on Vampilov’s play “Duck Hunting,” Dal knew about it and was waiting for an invitation to play the main role, Zilov. But he was not invited for a long time, as the director later explained, he was afraid to go to Oleg, because he (Oleg) hit the role so accurately that it became scary.

Today it is difficult to imagine another actor in the role of Zilov. It is Dal who succeeded in revealing that inner world of Zilov, without which the play loses its significance. Dal, like a mirror, reflects his time and the tragedy of a thinking man’s personal unfulfillment in this time. Thanks to Dal, the film lives on to this day. We would like to dwell on some significant and successful moments of the film.

The problems raised by Vampilov in “Duck Hunting,” particularly keenly manifested and came to light in the early 80’s, which is why the director V. Melnikov sharpens and reveals some points that are felt in the play only at the level of subtext.

Thus, in the scene where Zilov, Sayapin, Kushak and Vera are sitting in a cafe, Kushak slightly turns to the side and immediately the waiter’s head from above, it is unclear where he appeared from, but apparently watching everything alertly and ready to serve the boss at any time.

A live kitten appears in the film instead of a plush cat, but it is thrown like a thing from hand to hand, especially by Zilov from the chair to the couch.

Whereas in the play Zilov simply says, “*Give me an island,*” in the film Zilov-Dal says, “*Give me a desert island.*”

In the play, Valeria, talking to Kushak, says flatteringly that she is willing to pray to him for an apartment. In the film, however, Valeria openly declares: “*I pray to you as to God.*” After which, to the music of a “gypsy dance,” Kushak takes off his jacket and dances, and Zilov’s guests, as well as he and his wife themselves, stand around the boss, clapping him like a little god. This is not included in the play.

Another well found detail is in the episode with the coin, it is tossed to lots, deciding whether or not to sign the fake report. The point is that Sayapin keeps the coin in a box with velvet inside. Such detail indicates that the coin is always needed here, that with the help of the coin people “make” their job. It becomes clear what this “work” is: no one needs it and it is of no use.

In the film, apparently for reasons of censorship, a very important line about planetary churches is absent. Godlessness, the loss of faith is also one of the reasons for Zilov’s metamorphosis, so the absence of this episode, in our view, breaks the ideological integrity of Zilov’s image.

Trying to remind his wife of their first date, in the play, Zilov holds an ashtray instead of snowdrops, but in the film he grabs the alarm clock, as if going back in time, trying to turn back time, to change something, to put it right, but he fails, it is impossible to return time, life is lost.

Zilov's house stands among the same newly built houses. On the side where the boxes-houses are put up, there are no trees, everything seems empty, bare. On the other side, Zilov sees it through the window, next to the new house under construction you can see the forest and a strip of sky. Zilov's gaze is fixed on there, on the other side, but he's here. The excavator is working below: people, equipment and new houses are encroaching on the forest, destroying it, the mechanical is killing the living, it is frightening to realize that soon there will be no forest at all, the entire space will be occupied by the same type of houses. When the titers at the end of the first episode and the entire movie are running, there is no music, only the sound of rain and the sound of the tractor moving: the real, natural on the one hand and the mechanical, artificial on the other hand sound independently of each other. The tractor is not hindered by the rain in destroying the forest. Farther and farther away from Zilov is the natural, pristine, real, pure and honest.

The particular interest of the cinema of the 70s–80s to the theme of “the superfluous man” indicates that even in this period thinking people were close to the type of “clever needlessness,” they felt and thought like Zilov, Dal, the heroes of “Autumn Marathon,” “Flights in Dream and Reality” and so on, they tried to encourage the audience to make sense of their lives, they passionately wanted to change something in the false world around them and in themselves.

To understand the character we are investigating, such a feature as his/her duality is important. Duality is the combination in one character of such opposite principles as evil and good, sincerity and falsehood, sarcasm and sympathy, vice and suffering (shame), laughter and tears, life and death, inaction (laziness) and, simultaneously, giftedness. This duality is indicative of all nineteenth- and twentieth-century heroes who are referred to the type of “superfluous man.” This duality is particularly evident in the character of Vampilov's hero Zilov. At the end of the play the author explains in a remark: “*He (Zilov) cried or laughed – we will never understand from his face,*” – in this final remark the entire Zilov is embodied, and even more in general the type of “superfluous man.” These are two facets of the same character. The critic M. Turovskaya sees in Zilov gifted, uncommon, human charm, while K. Rudnitsky notes that he is a man without a son's sense, father's pride, respect for women, and friendly affection. These two opinions are valid. Zilov is shown in the play as both bad and good at the same time. Hence the constant change of melodies in the play, emphasizing the dual state and behavior of the hero, the mournful melody alternates with its frivolous and vulgar version. As E. Gushanskaya notes, Vampilov makes the

antithesis and the duality of the hero a subject of research, *“the writer offers the character of a man, in whose behavior enthusiasm and cynicism, sincerity and falsehood, highness of impulse and baseness of action are merged together”* (Гушанская/Gushanskaya, 1990, p. 22).

The collision of antithetical character traits leads a thinking person to reflection, to self-digestion, to self-torture, to brooding; such a person becomes a bearer of reflective consciousness. Reflexion in the philosophical dictionary has several meanings. Among them is “thinking, full of doubts and hesitations.” It is the reflexive consciousness, the eternal doubt in the rightness of life, that is the main, basic feature of the type of the literary hero we study.

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