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**THE STRANGE IN LEO N. TOLSTOY'S ARTISTIC WORLD
(CASE STUDY OF THE SHORT STORY "WHY"?)**

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Abstract

It has been known for a long time that Leo Tolstoy could comprehend the strange worlds – a person of other social standing, a person of a different sex (a woman during her childbirth), animals, people of different ethnic groups, religions, civilizations. But his ability to comprehend a person of a different culture, of a strange ethnic group that is even hostile for your people, assumed quite a new dimension in the last decades. This ability of Leo Tolstoy is scarce and in great demand in the modern world. From the end of the 1980-s to the present day, such research practices as mythopoetics (in the context of the binary opposition “friendly – strange”), imagology, the post-colonial theories, which are used in this article to one degree or another, were on the foreground of the literary science. That's why this paper is important today. This research is aimed at detecting peculiarities of comprehending the strange in Leo Tolstoy's artistic world, namely in his short story “Why?”.

Keywords

“Friendly-strange” – Artistic world – Leo Tolstoy – Comprehension – The Polish world

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Introduction

One of the key and excellent peculiarities of Leo Tolstoy's artistic gift is his ability to comprehend the strange world, the strange soul.

"He can move to a villager's soul¹, - so Nickolay G. Chernyshevsky wrote a little surprisingly about the artist's comprehension in "The landowner's morning" of the soul of a man of different social standing – a peasant. After describing Anna Karenina's childbirth, many contemporary-women of Leo Tolstoy were surprised how a man can convey feelings of a confined woman so correctly and delicately. In "the Kholstomer" the artist could have a look at the people's world by the horse's eyes. Maybe, it was the most difficult for the artist to comprehend the soul dialectics" of a man of the strange culture². But he coped with this task too. It was displayed best of all in a narrative, about which V.B. Shklovsky wrote: "Among Leo Tolstoy's great things there is the greatest one. This is Khadji-Murat"³. Here, a world of "the Tatar", a centuries-old enemy of the Russian man, was presented in the image of a mountain dweller Khadzhi-Murat. Probably, for the Russian person of the XIXth century, the Polish world was the second in terms of the relations seriousness after the Caucasus. Leo Tolstoy responded to this challenge artistically by means of writing the short story "Why?".

In the literature study, the Polish topic in Leo Tolstoy's works has quite a long history. It comes natural that Poland itself always gave attention to this topic⁴. And, quite obviously, the short story "Why?" was paid a special attention to⁵. This work was published in Poland in some translations in the same year as in Russia. The Polish readers were delighted with the work and they expressed that directly in their letters to Leo Tolstoy. On the whole, the fact that Warsaw even now has Leo Tolstoy street, which was named after him as early as in 1973, is indicative about the modern Poland's attitude towards the author of "Why?".

Russia became highly interested in this topic in the 1990s, although it was always in the researchers' limelight in one form or another⁶.

As regards the research that appeared in the XXIth century, let's note an article by N.D. Tamarchenko, where he considers "themes of the governance and life opposition"⁷ in comparison of three works by L.N. Tolstoy: "Why?", "Khadzhi-Murat", "After the ball". Yu.A. Rykunina, when departing from N.D. Tamarchenko's article in many respects, lays emphasis on an analysis of the main characters' images, while considering them, chiefly, in the Christian paradigm: as we could see, "the Polishness" relates with the holiness and

¹ N. G. Chernyshevsky, "News stories about journals". Chernyshevsky, N. G. Complete works: In 15 volumes (Moscow: State publishing house of the fiction, 1948.) Volume 4: 681–805.

² I. Sh. Yunusov, The national things and the things belonging to another nation in the Russian prose of the second half of the XIXth century (I.S. Turgenev, I.A. Goncharov, L.N. Tolstoy) (St. Petersburg: the Herzen State Pedagogical University of Russia, 2002).

³ I. Sh. Yunusov, The national things and the things belonging...

⁴ E. Białystok, "Myśl filozoficzno-etyczna Lwa Tolstoja w recepcji polskiej", *Studia Wschodniooslowianskie*, Vol: 12 (2012): 341 – 352.

⁵ B. Bialokozowicz, "Opowiadanie •Za co?• w swietle jubileuszowego wydania dzieł Lwa Tolstoja i materialów archiwalnych", *Slawia orientalis*. Vol: IX num 4 (1960): 555-580.

⁶ V. N. Baskakov, "L. Tolstoy and Poland", *Russian literature*, num 2 (1967):193-198.

⁷ N. D. Tamarchenko, The Polish theme in the artistry of L. Tolstoy of the 1900s. The Polish and the Russians: Common understanding and common misunderstanding. Compiled by A. V. Lipatov, I. O. Shaitanov. (2000): 147 – 154.

even with Christ's sacrifice, which makes the narrative, if not the only, then the best case of a "positive" image of the Poles in the Russian literature⁸.

Z. Zinnatullina and U. Truyanovskaya, in an article they wrote in 2018, are researching adoption of the short story "Why?" by Leo Tolstoy in the Polish cinematography. These are, mainly, screen versions made by a famous Polish film director Ezhi Kavalorovich in 1995. "However, when I started to read carefully a story of this family, – Kavalorovich said, – the way the great writer found this fantastic story to change, under its influence, his attitude towards the Poles radically, fascinated me as well as Leo Tolstoy". Apart from a flight of unhappy heroes via a large space of the hostile country, the director was interested in a question what the Old man from Yasnaya Polyana saw in Gehenna of the Migurskys, that he devoted his story to their life. He was attached to the short story very much, and he, in a letter to his daughter in Switzerland, wrote that he wanted to live to see its publication in Polish translation⁹.

This article emphasizes only Leo Tolstoy's comprehension of "the strange" in the short story "Why?", in which the research novelty consists.

Methods

V. Lysenko writes about a phenomenon of *the strange*: "The irony is that we can realize our cultural "ego" via "non-ego", but this "non-ego" will continue to be a structure of our "ego", since we will sort out in it what has something in common with our "ego" one way or another. We note the strange things when it differs from our things, contrasts with our things or, against the general background of the strange things, coincides with out things. Reaction to the strange is a reaction of the irrecognition, the impossibility to automatically include it in one's world. In other words, certain parameters of our "ego-image", which we do not recognize, have already been built into a model of the strange. In other words, the strange is deflection of our own "ego-image" at different levels of our own identity – individual, patrimonial (family), group ("we", with which we identify ourselves, our habit to speak for "we" – for a party, a team, etc), cultural and even civilizational identity¹⁰.

Comprehension of *the strange* in the short story "Why?" by Leo Tolstoy is considered within a tranditinal hermeneutic analysis. In light of the fact that the main subject of the research is a notion "the strange", the research practices, which operate with this concept: the imagology, the mythopoetics ("friendly-strange" opposition), the post-colonial theories, are attracted additionally.

The imagology studies the images of *the strange* (*the other, the different*) that are imprinted chiefly in the literary fictional and non-fictional texts. *The strange (the other, the different)* usually imply images of the whole peoples or their individual representatives. Higo Diserink, one of the most authoritative comparativists, declared: "Comparative imagology tends, in the first instance, to research and to comprehend certain forms of the display of images [cultures, peoples, countries, their individual representatives. - I.Y.], as well as a

⁸ Yu. A. Rykunina, "The Poles and the Russians in the short story "Why?" by Leo N. Tolstoi", *The New Philological Bulletin*, num 6 (1) (2008): 176–180.

⁹ Z. Zinnatullina, and U. Troyanovskaya, "The short story "Why?" by L.N. Tolstoy: Adoption in Poland". *Philology and Culture*. *Philology and Culture*, num 4 (54) (2018): 153 – 159.

¹⁰ V. Lysenko, *Orientalism and a problem of the strange: xenologic approach. Orientalism / occidentalism: languages of cultures and languages of their description*, (2012): 34 – 42.

moment of their origin and their existence. Apart from that, it tends to favor the covering of a role, which such literary images play when some cultures meet with each other"¹¹. The modern researcher M. Shviderska believes that the literary imagology is "a hermeneutic method of interpretation ("explanation") of "the deep semantics" (Paul Rueker) of a phenomenon of the cultural, national or ethnic "strange" that is displayed in the world of artistic texts"¹².

A specification of the French scientist D.A. Pazho is of importance, who urged not to absolutize the literary images of *the other people*. "D.-A. Pazho believed that an issue of truthfulness of the discourse about the foreign country is not correct and it must not be a goal of the literary research. This must be the laws of building this discourse, the principles and devices of designing an image of "the strange", a role of stereotypes in this process"¹³. The Russian scientists support this position too. M.Ya Gefter insisted that "features of the peoples and the nations are a tricky topic, many arbitrary things are introduced into discussion of that, but these features themselves are not fiction"¹⁴. L.Z. Kopelev, the leader of a well-known "Wuppertal project on studying concepts of the Germans and Russians about each other", also conceded the possible restriction of a sphere of studying the problem of *the strange*: "...The notion "national character" can be used only in the cases when this is the culture and civilization, the philosophy, the mythology, the art and the literature", since "...when this notion is used, characterizing the temper of a person or the whole people, it is inevitable removed from the reality and gives rise only to vague objective judgements"¹⁵.

This statement seems to be well-founded and convincing.

"The binary thinking is peculiar to the human mentality"¹⁶.

Yu.S. Stepanov said the "friendly – strange" binary "penetrates the whole culture and is one of the main concepts of any collective, mass, peoples, national perception of the world"¹⁷.

Quite different humanities scholars turn to the controversy "*friendly-strange*". But this controversy is in the greatest demand in the mythopoetics. So, E.M. Meletinsky determines a place of the binary "friendly-strange" in the mythological model of the world in the following way: "The mythological thought operates with the semantic oppositions: high-low, left-right, near-far, internal-external, light-colored – dark; and special oppositions, which correspond to the simplest, space-time relations: the sky-the earth, the earth-the underworld, the sun – the moon; in the social world: friendly-strange, male-female, older-younger; on the boundary of the nature and the culture: the water-the fire, the house-the forest, and the main mythological opposition – sacral-secular"¹⁸. As is obvious, in the human relations "friendly-

¹¹ H. Dyserinck, *Komparatistik. Eine Einführung* (Bonn: Bouvier, 1977).

¹² M. Schwiderska, *Das literarische Werk F. M. Dostoevskijs aus imagologischer Sicht mit besonderer Berücksichtigung der Darstellung Polens* (Muenchen: Sagner, 2001).

¹³ A. R. Oschepkov, "Imagology", *Knowledge. Understanding. Ability*, num 1 (2010): 251 – 253.

¹⁴ M. Ya. Gefter, "Stalin died yesterday", *The working class and the modern world*, num 1 (1988): 113 - 129.

¹⁵ L. Z. Kopelev, "The strange", *Odysseus. The man in the history*, (1993 – 1994): 8 – 18.

¹⁶ E. V. Khlysheva, "Problem of tolerance in the dialogue of cultures", *Philosophical sciences*, num 4 (2008): 46-57.

¹⁷ Yu.S. Stepanov, *Constants: Dictionary of the Russian literature* (Moscow: Academic project, 2004).

¹⁸ E. M. Meletinsky, *From the myth to the literature. Lecture course "Theory of the myth and historical poetics"* (Moscow: Russian State University for the Humanities, 2000).

strange" opposition is the most important, in any event, in the case of E.M. Meletinsky it is before the binaries "the man-the woman", "elder-younger".

In the religion the "friendly-strange" binary acquires new qualities: "...the sheer fact of availability of faith/religious beliefs is the basis for division into the believers and the nonbelievers. Attitude to the faith divides the people into the believers and the atheists. But even in the believers space the people continue to be divided into "friendly" and "strange", looking, in the religious culture", for new and new grounds for marking/changing/moving the frontiers"¹⁹.

T. Chumakova was right when she wrote: "Views about "friendly" and "strange" did not change very much for the last thousand years, as in the Middle Ages, the representatives of their culture are endowed mainly with positive characteristics and the strange person is endowed with negative characteristics. As a result, a typical representative of the "friendly" culture is endowed with a standard set of virtues, while a stranger is endowed with the same set of vices"²⁰. This thesis is of importance since one of the unique peculiarities of Leo Tolstoy's artistic world consists in the fact that in his works, on the contrary, the "stranger" can be more attractive than "the friend".

Along with the terms "hegemony", "hybridism", "identity", "mimicry", "aesthetics of border zone", "subaltern" and others, the "strange ("other")" concept are included in the notion-terminological apparatus of *post-colonial* discourse. In the post-colonial discourse the "friendly-strange" controversy is the next important after the "center-periphery" binary opposition.

The post-colonial research was formed at the end of the 1980-s – the beginning of the 1990-s as a theoretical reflection of the decolonization processes and the problems they posed. The book "Orientalism" by E. Said, which was published in 1978 and had a bombshell effect, started the formation of various post-colonial theories and practices. The orientalism concept of E. Said contains the opposition "friendly (the West) – strange (the East)": "Orientalism is a style of the thinking based on the ontological and epistemological differentiation of "the East" and (almost always) "the West". So, a considerable part of the authors, which include the poets, the writers, the philosophers, the theorists-political scientists, the economists and the imperial administrators, learned this basic differentiation of the East and the West as a starting point of their theories, verses, novels, social descriptions and political considerations in relation to the East, its peoples, customs, "intellects", destiny etc."²¹.

One of the key concepts of post-colonial theories is a cultural identity. "The post-colonial theorists are focusing on the subject-object problems, the cultural mimicry and assimilation, and the double "split" consciousness of the (post-)colonial subject. It is based on the non-overcomable cultural inter-spatiality, intermediacy... »²².

¹⁹ V. G. Felde, "Boundaries of the opposition "the stranger-the friend" in the Christianity", Electronic scientific-methodological journal of Omsk State Agricultural University, num 5 (2018). Retrieved 29.04.2019 from: <http://e-journal.omgau.ru/images/issues/2018/S05/00554.pdf>

²⁰ T. Chumakova, "The friends" and "the strangers" in the domestic culture of the XI–XVIIth centuries: a problem of communication". The man yesterday and today: interdisciplinary research, num 5 (2011): 184 – 196.

²¹ E. Said, *Orientalism*. Western concepts of the East (St. Petersburg: Russian world, 2006).

²² M. V. Tlostanova, "Post-colonial research", *Western literature studies of the XXth century: Encyclopedia*, (2004): 320 – 323.

E. Said wrote, first of all, about the colonial East: "The East is not only a neighbor of Europe, but also a place of location of its largest, richest and oldest colonies, it is a source of the European languages and civilizations, the East is Europe's cultural rival, and one of the deepest and persistent images of the Other"²³. But, firstly, in the XIXth century Poland was the Western area of the Russian empire, and not the Eastern one. Secondly, the Poles themselves were convinced of their own cultural superiority. Here the most initial situation was far from the standard opposition "mother country – colony" within the post-colonial discourse. Although the imperial government could establish its "hegemony" for many years, but it failed to suppress the Polish "will to self-determination" completely.

It is clear that Leo Tolstoy's personality, views and works do not fit into the traditional colonial and post-colonial practices, but they make it possible to display the originality of Leo Tolstoy's comprehension of *the strange* in a greater degree.

Results and discussion

In "Dmitry Impostor" by A.S. Khomyakov the Polish prince Vishevetsky, whom the author liked for his military honor and nobility, was astonished, with some artlessness, that the Muscovites do not like the Poles: "Why? I don't know"²⁴. In Leo Tolstoy's work, a wife of the Polish convict Migursky, Albina, asked this question after another living blow – the simultaneous deaths of both their children. "Why? Why? – she thought. – Yoza and me – we want nothing from anybody, we want only him to live the way he was born and his grandparents and ancestors lived, I only want to live with him, to love him, to love my babies and to bring up them. And they torture and exile him, and they take away from me what I hold dearest of all. Why? Why?"²⁵.

The same question is asked in different living and political paradigms. It is easy to see Khomyakov's irony. Because the Poles themselves came to Moscow by means of violence and deception and they pose a threat to the spiritual foundations of the Russian life. In Leo Tolstoy's works the pain is felt in this issue. Because the Poles were torn away from their native world by means of violence and injustice and exiled to the Siberia.

Here the both artists turned to the most typical, according to their concepts, pages from a long history of the Russian-Polish relations.

Probably, as regards all the Western peoples, the Russians had so difficult, contradictory and dramatic relations with the Poles.

This is excellently shown in the Russian historical songs.

So, in a version of the song "Russian girl in the Tatar captivity" we read: "The Poles and the Tatars taunted the girl, taunted the beautiful / Russian captive"²⁶. The Tatar and the Pole, two historical enemies of the Russians, were ranked together as offenders of the Russian girl. In the song "Defense of Pskov against Stephan Batoriy", the Poles and the

²³ E. Said, *Orientalism. Western concepts of the East* (St. Petersburg: Russian world, 2006).

²⁴ A.S. Khomyakov, *Poems and dramas* (Leningrad: Soviet writer, 1969).

²⁵ L. N. Tolstoy, *Complete works in 90 volumes. Volume 42* (Moscow: Fiction, 1957).

²⁶ *Historical songs of the XIII – XVIth centuries* (Moscow - Leningrad: Publishing House of the Academy of Sciences of the USSR, 1960).

Tatars are shown together again, as military allies: "To Obskoi city there was sent (by Batoriy. – I.Yu., A.A., A.K., R.H., F.Yu.), / the most dangerous Tatar... " ²⁷. It is known that the "friendly-strange" opposition is clearly displayed also in the color perception of the ethnic view of the world: "...a friend has blond (yellow) hair, white hands, legs, breast, face; a stranger has black everything, respectively, even his marquee and other things are black. The friend is often compared or identified with the sun (the gold), the moon (the silver), the stars. The friends have white yards, white cities (a synonym is a new city), light-colored weapons, etc. These marks in the form of set phrases mean the native world in the folklore, they cultivate its bright and joyful perception as opposed to the dark strange world"²⁸. That's why we read in this song: "Lead cannon ball returned / to the black breast of Stepan-king"²⁹. A descriptive word "dog", which is often used in the Russian historical songs in regard to the Tatars, is also applied in relation to the Poles too: "He (Batoriy. - I.Yu., A.A., A.K., R.H., F.Yu.) came to Opskov-city. / he, the dog, stopped in the green meadows, / he, the dog, sat down on the golden chair"³⁰.

In the XVIIth century the Polish topics are used more frequently in connection with events of the Time of Trouble. The song "Lyapunov and Guzhmund" sings: "It was war time, troublous time, / The evil Lithuanians captivated Moscow, / The Lithuanians, the damned Poles"³¹.

The same motif is in "Minin and Pozharsky": "The damned peoples, the evil Poles captivated Moscow"³². During the Time of Trouble the Russian man could see the Poles better, at the mundane level, who held key posts in the Court of Lzhedmitry 1. There appeared a real danger of the Catholic faith establishment in Russia, there was an obvious disdain to the Orthodox faith and customs. The song "Grishka Otrepiev" reflects a perplexity feeling of the Russian man because of behavior of his tsar and awareness of his role in what is going on: "As soon as the thief-dog ascended the throne, / the thief-dog wanted to get married - / not in Russia, in stone Moscow, / not in stone Moscow – in Lithuania, / At Yuriy Serdobolsky's, / to his youngest daughter, / To sweetheart Marina Yurievna. / They celebrated their wedding in the Christmas fast, / they got married in church on the day of Nicholas the Wonderworker, / the day of Nicholas the Wonderworker was on Friday"³³. That's why the descriptive word "thief-dog", which is usually used in the Russian folklore in relation to the foreign ethnic groups, is used in respect to Grishka Otrepiev, declaring him strange to the Russian people too.

The same picture is also seen in the ancient Russian literature. Even "Tale of Bygone Years" fixes numerous battles with the Poles. A.S. Dyomin emphasizes that "the foreigners, as the chroniclers see them, had various departures from the Russian living standards and they caused the chronicles' secret skeptical and condemnatory feelings"³⁴. So, the same researcher cited the examples, how in the chronicles the Poles are shown as

²⁷ Historical songs of the XIII – XVIth centuries...

²⁸ Yu. I. Smirnov, Opposition "the friend-the stranger" and plurality forms of self-consciousness. Ethnic and linguistic self-consciousness: materials of the conference in December 13-15. Moscow: Institute of Peoples of Russia. 1995.

²⁹ Historical songs of the XIII – XVIth centuries...

³⁰ Historical songs of the XIII – XVIth centuries...

³¹ Historical songs of the XVIIth century (Moscow - Leningrad: Science, 1966).

³² Historical songs of the XVIIth century...

³³ Historical songs of the XVIIth century...

³⁴ A. S. Dyomin, "Tale of Bygone Years", Ancient Russian literature. perception of the West in the XI-XIVth centuries (1996): 100-156.

deceivers, their Catholic faith is not accepted, a devilish principle is seen in their stylish dresses, their king Boleslav I was said to be so monstrously thick that he could not climb up a horse, etc.³⁵.

The Russian literature of the XIXth century also expressed the contradictory adoption of a figure of the Poles. V.A. Khorev, who researched the imagological views of the Russian and the Poles, emphasized that in the Russian literature there prevails "...a negative type of the Pole, not only in numerous works by the secondary writers, such as Zagoskin, Kukolnik or Polotsky, but also by such world-famous writers, such as Gogol, Leskov, Tolstoy (in the first half of his creation), Dostoevsky, Gorky and Mayakovsky... The Russian literature also created very likeable images of the Poles, who are usually convicts, victims to prosecution, people of high morality and self-respect, who are self-sacrificing and heedful of somebody's misfortune. Such types of the Poles were described by, for instance, Vladimir Korolenko and Leo Tolstoy (in the late period of his creation)"³⁶.

The short story "Why?" shows the events connected with the 1830-1831 Polish rebellion, when the Poles made a new and eventually unsuccessful attempt to become independent. A.I. Kuprianov, on the basis of impressions of A.Ya. Bulgakov, D.V. Davydov, A.V. Woolf and other witnesses of the events of 1830-1831, comes to the following conclusion: "the year of 1831 formed in the Russian nobility an extremely negative image of the Pole in many respects: pride, presumptuous, lofty, boastful, insolent, light-minded, quick-tempered, self-opinioned, patriotic ("would-be patriotic"), artful and ungrateful"³⁷. Let's recollect that that even Aleksander Pushkin, in his poem "To the Slanderers of Russia", which he wrote in 1831, opposes "a haughty Pole" to "a faithful Russian".

Of course, the Russian literature had a period when "the stranger" was more attractive than "the friend". This was the period, when, following Russo, Byron, the Russian romanticists preferred a "natural" man to a "civilized" man. In the case of the Poles the situation was different. A famous critic N.N. Strakhov, in the nativistic journal "Time", published his article "Fatal issue", where he tried to see a problem of the Russian-Polish relations from the Polish perspective. According to Strakhov, the basis of the Polish view of things is realization by the Poles of their own civilized superiority over the Russians: "The Poles are agitated against us in the same way as an educated people is agitated against a less educated or uneducated people"³⁸.

In the context of this research N.N. Strakhov's article is important in the sense that the critic tries to understand the Polish view of the Russia-Polish relations. In spite of a negative reaction to this article, it played a certain positive role in trying to comprehend the "fatal issue" more deeply. For all that, this was political journalism. The Slavophiles' dramaturgy also specified the Polish truth. But this was a political position rather than expression of a Pole's internal world. The dramatic class and the gift nature did not allow the Slavophiles to take the next step.

³⁵ A. S. Dyomin, "Tale of Bygone Years", Ancient Russian literature. perception of the West in the XI-XIVth centuries (1996): 100-156.

³⁶ V. A. Khorev, "About the stereotype and conviction in the literature (a case study of the Polish and Russian literature)". "He made a romantic way...", (1996): 150-167.

³⁷ A. I. Kuprianov, "The poles in the minds of the Russians (the 1760-1860s.)", Russia and external world: dialogue of cultures, (1997): 31 - 40.

³⁸ "The Russian Strakhov N. N. Fatal issue", Time, num 4 Modern review (1863): 152-163..

At the beginning of the 1850s Leo Tolstoy tried to look at the Caucasian war with the eyes of a mountain dweller in the short story "Incursion". To be more exact, he tried to do that in one of the draft versions: "Let's take two private persons. Who has a sense of self-preservation and, therefore, who is in the right: a ragamuffin, for example, Jamie, who, ...seeing that the Russians go forward, make headway to his sown field, which they will trample over, to his hut, which they will burn, and to the ravine, in which, shaking with fear, his mother, wife, children hid, will think that everything, in which his happiness may consist in, will be taken away from him, - in impotent rage, with a howl of despair, he will tear off his ragged homespun coat, throw his rifle down and, drawing his tall astrakhan hat over his eyes, will sing a dying song, and with only a dagger in his hand, without thinking, will throw himself on the Russians' bayonets? Is he in the right, or is this military officer in the right, who is a member of the retinue of the general, who... has in Russia the family, relatives, friends, peasants and commitments towards them, who has neither reason nor desire to be at war with the mountain dwellers, and who came to the Caucasus... just to show his bravery"³⁹. Later on, Leo Tolstoy demonstrated his ability to "move to a soul" of *another man* several times, but up to the 1890-1900s the writer did not tackle a task to express the internal world of a man of the foreign ethnic groups as the main character.

It is known that Leo Tolstoy himself has an uneasy attitude to the Poles. What is important is a record of Leo Tolstoy's wife about her husband's desire to fight against the Poles in 1863: "...I do not believe in this love of the country, in this entousiasme when you are 35 years old. Of course, the children are the same country and the same Russian people too". Later on, Leo Tolstoy confessed that in him «...since I was a child, a hatred of the Poles was cultivated, and now I treat them with particular tenderness, I pay back to them for my former hatred"⁴⁰.

The short story "Why?" was based on actual events that S.V. Maksimov had described in the book "Siberia and penal servitude". Apart from that, Leo Tolstoy preserved not only the main outline of events, but even names of the main characters – the exiled Pole Joseph Migursky and his wife Albina. During the work on the short story "Why?" narrating about the Polish rebellion in 1830-1831, the artist tried to express the Polish view of this event. This was of crucial importance for them. So, he strongly asked his friends to send him a history of the Polish rebellion written from the Polish perspective. Leo Tolstoy was unhappy with Lamb Book that thoroughly describes the Polish events of the beginning of the 1830s, because "its author was in the Russian troops headquarters"⁴¹. And only having worked over hundreds of sources, seized "characteristic details", the writer managed to achieve his desired goal.

First of all, the Polish color is reproduced from the very beginning of the short story. The author, by means of his traditional device, used the words-signs of the ethnic world that he depicts: Pan (Sir, Mr.), Yachevsky, Rozhanka, Migursky, Poland, Kostyushka, Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth, Kingdom of Poland, Seim, Warsaw, Vanda. These are words of the Polish world, which are used only in the first paragraph. The author also introduces the Polish speech with the Polish script into the text. M.V. Oreshkina writes fairly that "foreign vocabulary reflecting the material and spiritual culture of the people, represents in the Russian language a "naive" world picture of this people, which, via the linguistic mediation, "speaks" about itself, its life, nature, customs, traditions, peculiarities of the way

³⁹ L. N. Tolstoy, Complete works in 90 volumes. Volume 3 (Moscow: Fiction, 1935).

⁴⁰ N. N. Gusev, Two years with L. N. Tolstoy (Moscow: Tolstoy museum, 1928).

⁴¹ L. N. Tolstoy, Complete works in 90 volumes. Volume 42 (Moscow: Fiction, 1957).

of life and the economic management. The strange world together with the strange vocabulary "break" into the native language"⁴².

The attitude of Leo Tolstoy in his late works towards the patriotism is well known. At that time Leo Tolstoy did not accept a struggle for national independence. At any event, in the "Answer to the Polish woman" in 1909 we read: "Liberation of the enthralled people, estates, peoples including the Poles, did does not consist in the fight against the hateful Russians, the Austrian governments and in freeing oneself from them using the force, but in just the reverse: in stopping to see one's exclusive, beloved, dejected brothers in the Poles, in recognition of all the people, the friendly Poles as well as the strange and hostile Russians, Germans, as equally close people, the brothers, with whom, whoever they are, only friendly relations are admissible, which exclude a possibility to commit any violence against anybody. The liberation consists in acknowledgement of the love law in its whole meaning, in other words, in acknowledgement of the nonresistance law that is intimately connected with the love law"⁴³. However, in the artistic work (as was also the case with "Khadzhi-Murat") Leo Tolstoy, recognizing the human weakness, refuses from his some maximalist positions for a while.

In the short story "Why?", the artist likes the Poles who fight for independence. The word "patriot" itself is used without any negative connotation. Mr. Yanchevsky, in spite of his "patriotic soul", was endowed, of course, with positive epithets: "having a broad forehead, broad-shouldered, broad-chested"⁴⁴. He "believed in revival of Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth, like he believed at night, that the sun will rise in the morning again"⁴⁵. In the artistic paradigm of the short story "Why?", the Poles' participation in the Napoleon campaign and their enthusiastic adoration of Napoleon seems to be justified, like the author's irony in the artistic paradigm of "War and Peace" in relation to the same feelings. The pages devoted to the Poles' rebellion are written in a high, romantic tone.

Apart from doubtless liking for the Poles (according to Leo Tolstoy, an artist must love an object of his depiction), the Polish truth, the Polish "view of things" are present here. Sometimes it seems that the author consciously forgot about his ethnic belonging, or to be more exact, he overcame it artistically: "Only the people, who experienced what the Poles experienced after Poland's partition and subordination of its one part to the government of the hateful Germans, and the other part to the government of still more hateful Russkis, can understand the delight that the Poles experienced in 1830 and 1831 when after previous unsuccessful efforts of liberation, it seems that a new hope of liberation may be translated into reality. But this hope vanished quickly. The forces were unequal, and the revolution was suppressed again. Again tens of thousands of meaninglessly obeying Russian people were taken to Poland and...they themselves did not know why they did that, permeating the earth with their blood and the blood of their brothers Poles, they repressed them and gave them to weak and worthless people again..."⁴⁶. As a result, thousands of the people were punished "...with the exile to Siberia because they wanted to be whom they were born – the

⁴² M. V. Oreshkina, "Foreign components of the vocabulary and formation of a "different" world picture". Ethnic and language self-consciousness: Materials of conference (Moscow, December 13-15, 1995). Executive editor is V.P. Neroznak. (Moscow: Institute of Peoples of Russia).

⁴³ L. N. Tolstoy, Complete works in 90 volumes. Volume 38 (Moscow: Fiction, 1935).

⁴⁴ L. N. Tolstoy, Complete works in 90 volumes...

⁴⁵ L. N. Tolstoy, Complete works in 90 volumes...

⁴⁶ L. N. Tolstoy, Complete works in 90 volumes...

Poles...⁴⁷. He calls the Poles, who betrayed their national interests, "worthless people"⁴⁸. The writer, in a letter (1851) to his brother, Sergei, specifying his attitude to defecting of Khadzhi-Murat to the Russians as to a scurvy action, in this case defines those people with still more negative-pejorative words. However, not only the Poles-betrayers are endowed with a negative connotation. So, in Siberia Migursky avoids his fellow countryman, "the exiled Pole, who was uneducated and crafty, an unpleasant man, who traded the fish here"⁴⁹.

As is seen, a primacy of the universal values to any national values is obvious here.

Not only Migursky in his letter calls the Russians the Russkis. In the author's experienced speech, this pejorative lexeme or a similar formula – "barbarous Moscocia" is also used⁵⁰. However, this does not make the author less Russian.

"In Leo Tolstoy's works, probably, in a greater degree than in other writers' works, there is not only tolerance in relation to the characters of other nations (the Western and Eastern characters), not only a feeling of respect and a desire to comprehend their world as deep as possible, but also, to a certain degree, aspiration to inspire his readers with love for them. (First of all, this is true of the representatives of the ethnic groups, with which, in different historical periods, the Russian people's relations were very tense, and sometimes, frankly hostile, for example, with the Poles and the Caucasian mountain dwellers)"⁵¹.

D. Merezhkovsky sees a peculiarity of the Russian national nature in the writer's ability to move to the ethnic souls: "This capacity for reincarnations, transmigration of a soul from one national body to another is not only an ideal possibility, but also a current reality itself,- a kind of the phenomenon of that "new creation", about which the Apostle Paul speaks,- a new birth, the entering into the other flesh and blood. When Solovyov (VI.- I.Yu., A.A., A.K., R.H., F.Yu.) protects the Jews or the Poles, it seems that he himself becomes the Pole or the Jew ("became the Jew", "became the Pole" – misunderstanding people are scolding him); For then he is native, "blood kin", and for us he continues to be the Russian, - he is still more Russian than before. And Leo Tolstoy is also the blood kin for the farthest, foreign peoples... This is a miracle of reincarnation, a miracle of universality, there is a Russian miracle in the main, a special gift of God, which is great and terrible. One can say that Russia's national vocation consists in continuation of nationality, in achievement of the panhumanism. Irrespective of our desires, we cannot get rid of it"⁵².

It is significant that when calling dozens of thousands Russian soldiers "obedient", the author also expressed his reproach towards them. In a famous article "The end of the century" Leo Tolstoy explains the fundamental difference between "subordination" and "obedience": "It is true that, like in other states, the same deceitful suggestions, by means of which the Christian people were forced unnoticeably to submit as well as to obey to it in business, which are contrary to the Christianity, were made in respect to the Russian people too. ...The true Christian can subordinate, even he must subordinate to any violence without

⁴⁷ L. N. Tolstoy, Complete works in 90 volumes...

⁴⁸ L. N. Tolstoy, Complete works in 90 volumes...

⁴⁹ L. N. Tolstoy, Complete works in 90 volumes...

⁵⁰ L. N. Tolstoy, Complete works in 90 volumes...

⁵¹ I. Sh. Yunusov, The national things and the things belonging to another nation in the Russian prose of the second half of the XIXth century (I.S. Turgenyev, I.A. Goncharov, L.N. Tolstoy). (St. Petersburg: the Herzen State Pedagogical University of Russia, 2002).

⁵² D. S. Merezhkovsky, From the war to the revolution. Diary of 1914-1917. (Petrograd, 1917).

fight, but he cannot obey it, in other words, to recognize its lawfulness"⁵³. Dozens of hundreds of Russian men, "when obeying", spill their blood and the blood of the Brothers-Slavs only to give the power to the worthless people, "who desire neither freedom, nor suppression of the Poles, they desire only one thing: to satisfy their mercenariness and childish vanity"⁵⁴.

But the same Russian men "obey" as well as sympathize with, compassionate, feel sorry for and, with risk for themselves, help foreigners, who came to grief: "Nikolay Pavlovich demanded the disranked Poles to bear the brunt of the severe soldier life as well as to suffer all those humiliations which the private soldiers underwent at that time, but the majority of the common people, who must execute his orders, understood the whole gravity of situation of those disranked people and, in spite of danger to fail to fulfill his will, they did not fulfill it when they could do that. The commander of the battalion, to which Migursky was enrolled, was a former soldier, semiliterate, and he understood the position of the former rich, educated young man, who lost everything, took pity on him, respected him and he eased up on him"⁵⁵. Of course, there is a deep kinship of people even here, irrespective of their ethnic and religious identity, a celebration of universal values.

In the final part of the short story there appears a "Poles-Cossacks" opposition having a long-standing tradition in the Russian literature and culture. The Cossack Danila accompanies two Polish women. The author stresses two principles in him: the kindness and the industriousness. In a sentence, in respect to Cossack Danila, the definitions with a word "kind" are used three times: "kind-hearted brave Cossack", "kind blue eyes", "kind-hearted affectionateness". Below its exclusive industriousness and implicit subordination to his leadership's orders are emphasized. In accordance with a formula of an attitude to the people of the foreign world, who came to grief, which is typical for the Russian man, according to Dostoevsky, "he is a man, even if he is not a Christian"⁵⁶, Cossack Danila perceived the women, whom he accompanied, as "meek, affectionate women, even if they are the Poles"⁵⁷. The Polish world is really strange for the Cossack. The Cossack communicates with the Turkic world representatives more willingly. So, he "uses the Tatar words fluently"⁵⁸ communicating with the horse Baskirs. But his very kind soul attracted two Polish women, who "liked him particularly"⁵⁹. But this good-natured man, by virtue of his official disciplined approach, dooms the two Polish women and Migursky to unhappiness, reporting to his leadership, that the alive husband, and not the dead children, is carried in the coffin. Dal wrote about an Ural Cossack Proklyatov, who is as kind-hearted and who adheres to the old faith, as the Cossack Danila. He is too pitiful to kill an old dog, but, without thinking, he throws two naked Kyrgyz children to the snow, dooming them to the death. Dal's Cossack answers with smile that "they will sleep", in other words, he is not conscience-stricken. Unlike him, Leo Tolstoy's Cossack, after realizing his scurvy action, "tore off his cap, threw it down with all his might, kicked Trezorka away and went to the eating house. In the eating-house he demanded vodka and drank it day and night, he swapped everything that he had for drink, and only the next night, waking up in a ditch, he stopped thinking about his bothering question: if he was right when he informed on the Polish woman's husband in

⁵³ L. N. Tolstoy, Complete works in 90 volumes. Volume 36. (Moscow: Fiction, 1936).

⁵⁴ L. N. Tolstoy, Complete works in 90 volumes...

⁵⁵ L. N. Tolstoy, Complete works in 90 volumes...

⁵⁶ F. M. Dostoevsky, Complete works: In 30 volumes. (Leningrad: Science. Leningrad branch, 1983). Volume 25.

⁵⁷ L. N. Tolstoy, Complete works in 90 volumes...

⁵⁸ L. N. Tolstoy, Complete works in 90 volumes...

⁵⁹ L. N. Tolstoy, Complete works in 90 volumes...

the box to the leadership?"⁶⁰. In the collision "state and government", "government and private man", which was typical of Leo Tolstoy's late works, a discrepancy of the state laws and God's laws is emphasized again. Cossack Danila Lifanov "obeys" like "dozens of thousands of Russian people". This is a certain difference from Tolstoy's views of the Cossacks in the 1850-60s, when the Cossacks were perceived as an ideal scenario of development of the Russian national character.

This short story has much in common with other works of the Russian literature, which also express the universal nature of the people of different ethnic origins. Like the girls in Ivan Turgenev's works, Albina fell in love with a man who was the most necessary for her Homeland at that moment. Like Elena Stakhova in "The previous day", Albina leaves her paternal house and has her lot with a fighter for independence of the Slavic country Joseph Migursky. Like the Russian women – the princesses Trubetskaya and Volkonskaya in the poem "Russian women" by Nikolay Nekrasov, Albina goes to the far foreign country, to the Siberia, to her bellowed husband, who, like the Decembrists, endures the punishment there. The best Russian and Polish women of the XIXth century have much in common. Here Leo Tolstoy's female character, like his numerous Russian and non-Russian characters, "as is the case in the dying and other crucial minutes of life, has done deep thinking and feeling a lot of feelings and thoughts very quickly"⁶¹.

Of course, the common things that the Russian and the Poles have, are predetermined in Leo Tolstoy's works by the universal nature, by the common belonging to the Christian, European culture, by similar historical situations, and by the belonging to the common state at that time. However, in the short story "Why?" the Polish view of things, expression of the Polish truth, the author's liking for the Poles, in a word, comprehension of *the strange* – the Polish world are much more important. It is important "...that for Leo Tolstoy comprehension of the world of a man of the strange ethnic-religious culture was an artistic task as well as a task of great social importance. It is quite possible to say that this was a deliberate and important task for the writer during his whole creative career"⁶².

That's why a local historian L. Bolshakov, who familiarized himself with case No. 11604 in the archives of the Orenburg area, where all the documents were collected, which were connected with the Migurskys, and with which the author of the short story "Why?" could not be familiarized, stated unintentionally: "When reading the archive pages, comparing the things, which are written there, with the things that are known from the short story by Leo Tolstoy, you cannot divest yourself of the idea: the writer knew the historical material in full detail. He penetrated into the past events, into the human souls very deeply. He recovered, "guessed" the unknown things very exactly!"⁶³.

Conclusion

So, Leo Tolstoy showed a fundamental possibility of the artistic comprehension of *the strange*, and with account taken of Leo Tolstoy's world outlook in his late works – also the necessity of such comprehension.

⁶⁰ L. N. Tolstoy, Complete works in 90 volumes...

⁶¹ L. N. Tolstoy, Complete works in 90 volumes. Volume 42. (Moscow: Fiction, 1957).

⁶² I. Sh. Yunusov, The national things and the things belonging to another...

⁶³ L. Bolshakov, Leo Tolstoy (Searches and findings). Retrieved 16.05.2019 from: <http://artlib.osu.ru/web/books/bolshakov/book0021.pdf>

Leo Tolstoy's short story is a very important constituent part in the imagological views of the Russians and the Poles about each other, first of all, because it stands out from the rest Russian "collective views" about the Polish character.

In the mythopoetic world picture, the "friendly-strange" opposition implies an unambiguously negative adoption of the strange, which does not concede any reflections in this connection. The religious paradigm also strictly confirms the rightness of only *its own* faith and the inadmissibility, the devilish nature of *other* religious preferences. In perception of the Russian people of the XIXth century about the Poles, these mythological and religious views, which were exempted from evident extremities, preserved their strength in many respects. Of course, there were some efforts to understand the "Polish truth" in the articles by N.N. Strakhov and V. Solovyov, in the Slavophiles' dramaturgy. But they could not have the strength of impression, public uproar, and an impact for many decades, which the short story by Leo Tolstoy had, which was driven by the writer's artistic genius and authority. In this work the artist manages to break out from the mythical and religious views about the strange, which prevailed for several centuries.

The short story "Why?" by Leo Tolstoy do not fit into the colonial and post-colonial discourses too, according to which he, as a writer of the hegemonic culture, must have suggested the lawfulness and usefulness of the prevailing of "center" over the "periphery". Instead of that Leo Tolstoy does the contrary: he speaks in the "subalterns" voice and shows a moral superiority of the "periphery" over the "center".

All of that indicates an extraordinary nature of the short story "Why?" by Leo N. Tolstoy.

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