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## Тщательно подготовленная внезапность (в последней главе романа И. А. Гончарова «Обыкновенная история»)

В статье анализируется развязка романа И.А. Гончарова «Обыкновенная история». Утверждается, что неожиданность эпилога «Обыкновенной истории» обусловлена развитием сюжета в главе VI второй части романа.

Александр Адуев не может рассматриваться как герой-идеолог. Роман заговора позволяет увидеть, что у героя есть духовный потенциал, чтобы стать «странником», человеком, стремящимся к метафизическим духовным ценностям. Автор явно стремится к тому, чтобы горизонт читательских ожиданий не совпадал с исходом сюжета о главном герое.

**Ключевые слова:** И.А. Гончаров, роман «Обыкновенная история», эпилог, притча, роль, память, «блудный сын», странник.

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The German researcher V. Dibelius wrote in his work of 1912 that in the end of the novel “we often find a particularly striking motive, for example, a strong surprise” [2, pp. 120–121]. A vivid confirmation of this idea is the epilogue of I.A. Goncharov’s novel «An Ordinary Story». As you know, V.G. Belinsky assessed this epilogue as “spoiled”. The critic stated categorically: “We will not recognize the hero of the novel in the epilogue” [1, pp. 397–398].

The proposed work is about the VI chapter of the second part of the novel, in which, it seems, Goncharov is clearly striving to ensure that the horizon of the reader's expectations does not sharply coincide with the outcome of the plot about the protagonist.

At the end of the previous chapter, Alexander Aduiev finds himself in a plot-thematic situation, which had many literary interpretations and which is traditionally referred to as "returning to his homeland". The hero knows how to behave in these moments and what to feel: "He tried his best to tune himself to a sad tone and finally mentally resolved with a monologue: «Farewell, magnificent tomb of the deep, strong, gentle and warm movements of the soul»" [4, p. 425]. This episode, of course, rhymes with the story of what he felt 8 years ago, when he first appeared on the famous square in front of the Bronze Horseman. Then he preferred to join the pathos "truth" of Peter, imagined himself a "citizen of the new world". Now Alexander is closer to "poor" Eugene. If we talk about genre switching, then this is a transition from the odic, if not to the idyllic, then to the elegiac genre close to it.

Alexander's behavior in this episode is marked by some theatricality, although he himself is in the forefront and he is also in the role of a spectator. It cannot be said that the hero only plays a role, the tears in his eyes are caused by sincere experience. But this behavior, if we recall the classification of G.O. Vinokur, is not "style", but "stylization": "Any, even the slightest reflection on one's behavior is already certainly a stylization. It obviously takes place whenever one's own behavior becomes an event in one's personal life and is experienced as an event" [3, p. 56]. While still in a "role-playing" state, Aduiev read Pushkin's poem "Renaissance" with its final stanza:

This is how delusions disappear.  
From my tortured soul  
And visions arise in her  
The original, pure days.

After this episode, Chapter VI begins, in which two letters from the hero to Petersburg are given to Lizaveta Alexandrovna

and Pyotr Ivanovich. They will be written by another Alexander, as it were. In the context of this chapter.

In research practice, the plot of this novel is usually read as the deployment of a dialogic conflict. But there is also something in this chapter that partly erodes, partly enriches, the rationalistic construction of the great dispute. Sometimes these are quick, even swift touches to some elements of life, sometimes – the acquisition of special meanings that concern not people in general, but this particular person. Freed from the need to strictly follow the logic of dialogic conflict, the narrative becomes more natural, it seems to reflect the spontaneous course of life itself. In the dialogues between Alexander and his uncle, the author does not just quote the words of one or another character, he emphatically demonstrates these statements. They, as the researcher noted, are somewhat “poster”: “Two contrasting compositions of vocabulary, two different voices, two melodies that go against each other” [14, p. 163].

In the chapter under consideration, Alexander’s speech is completely devoid of this posterity. There is no doubt that it is on these pages that the hero is shown at moments of significant spiritual impulses and experiences. The experience of self-consciousness is revealed as brief episodes, but this does not prevent us from realizing their significance. Of course, there are reasons to consider Alexander as a person largely shaped by the patriarchal landlord world. But when reading these pages, it becomes clear that Alexander in this world, where he spent his childhood and youth, did not take something, so to speak, did not perceive. That is why the return to his native estate turned out to be so significant. In this chapter, it is especially evident that the hero is shown in the «Pechorinsky» perspective, his spiritual and intellectual life, in the words of B. M. Eikhenbaum, “taken from within, like a process” [15, p. 251].

Having left St. Petersburg, Alexander immediately found himself out of the zone of the comic, acquired some other measure of naturalness, a willingness to peer into life and, above all, into himself. The stages of accumulation of spiritual experience are presented as if after returning to the estate, the accumulation of this experience proceeded at a double speed.

Leaving St. Petersburg, Alexander hopefully turns to “villages and pastures” of his homeland: “Take me into your bosom, so that I may come to life and resurrect in soul” [4, p. 425]. Thus, the motif of the parable of the prodigal son returns to the plot of the novel [13, pp. 152–158]. It was stated at the beginning of the story in connection with the Aduевs’ neighbor Anton Ivanych, who in one of his incarnations is presented as the “Eternal Jew”, who “ate, of course, the well-fed calf, slaughtered by the happy father on the occasion of the return of the prodigal son” [4, p. 185].

If, following Olga Sedakova, we admit that “something similar to a parable” may lie in the depths of the novel, then, obviously, one should take into account that in such a work some part may have “double reality, parable and novel” [12, pp. 363, 367]. Goncharov, of course, is not the kind of writer who would sharply designate this “double reality”. But still.

The plot of the prodigal son in this chapter of the novel “An Ordinary Story” is revealed, so to speak, incorrectly. And this, I think, has a special meaning. Alexander’s father is no longer alive, and his mother, when her son appears in the room, does not recognize him, And when she finds out, seeing how he has lost weight and grown ugly, she begins to lament loudly, as noted in the comments to the novel, her lamentations “are built according to the scheme of traditional folk lamentation for the deceased” [4, p. 432]. A dream on the eve of her son’s arrival revealed to her that he would appear “from the pool <...> from the water ones” and leave “towards the lake and will not come again” [4, p. 430]. The fact that Anna Pavlovna did not recognize her son who returned from St. Petersburg can be interpreted not only in everyday terms: with all her questions about her son and sadness about him, he remains unrecognized. The spiritual world of Alexander will remain strange and incomprehensible to her.

The gospel subtext of the sixth chapter is not directly indicated by the author. And the hero of the novel himself does not interpret his situation in the estate as a case of the return of the prodigal son. But his actions and thoughts correspond to this plot. And the second, non-domestic plan of his story is clearly present. It can be seen, in particular, in the fact

that Alexander in St. Petersburg, according to Yevsey's servant, "one can almost say that they didn't go to church" [4, p. 437], returning to his home, accepts his mother's offer to go to church, spring service. The novel text is not harsh, but leads the reader to the sacred meaning of the parable plot: this should be the return of the prodigal son to the Heavenly Father. Standing in the church, Alexander admits to himself: it is difficult for a person of his spiritual experience and for a modern person in general to take this step. He understands the severity of the «Pechorinsky» state of mind, "when the warmth of faith does not warm the heart" [4, p. 444]. As it is said, "the wreath is over, Alexander came home even more boring than he went" [4, p. 444]. Arriving in Grachi, Alexander has a desire to retire, listen to himself, look back at life in St. Petersburg, realize what connects him with the world of the estate. There are elegiac motifs in the hero's experiences and reflections: the loss of youth, the fragility of human feelings, the inability to ingenuously believe in a miracle.

Elegism is not characteristic of Goncharov's works. This is especially noticeable against the background of Turgenev's prose [10]. But the appearance of an elegiac mode in the author of the novel *Oblomov* can provide a psychological breakthrough into the inner world of the "closed" hero. The most striking example is Agafya Matveevna in the final part of the novel *Oblomov*. The heroine's retrospective rethinking of life with Ilya Ilyich, who is no longer alive, an elegiac experience in its essence – these details allow the reader to understand something very significant in the heroine [11, p. 166].

In Goncharov's first novel, the elegiac experience caused by recollection is given either in the first person or as evidence of the narrator, in terms of vocabulary, intonation, and emotional structure close to the hero.

The elegiac mode is the ability to identify life values that fall out of the semantic field of the dialogic conflict. Mother tells Alexander: "These lindens <...> were planted by your father. I was pregnant with you. I used to sit here on the balcony and look at him. He will work, work, and look at me. And the sweat is pouring down from him like a hail. «BUT! You're here? – he says, – it's so fun for me to work!» – And it will be accepted

again" [4, p. 466]. Alexander got the opportunity, as it were, to get in touch with the bygone idyllic world. This page confirms an old observation: an idyllic picture of the world is organically combined with an elegiac memory. Alexander mentally supplements this story of his mother: "There on this bench, under a tree <...> I was sitting with Sophia and was happy. And over there, between two lilac bushes, I received her first kiss from her ..." [4, p. 466].

Experiences associated with youth and youth, family memories of his mother plunge Alexander into the past. This allows the hero to understand or otherwise experience what he rejected or underestimated in the past. In particular, he began to think differently about the "traitor" Nadia. Memories allowed Alexander to take an unbiased look at his past and then express it in a word without looking back at someone else, even if it was a vivid example. Experiences associated with youth and youth, family memories of his mother plunge Alexander into the past. This allows the hero to understand or otherwise experience what he rejected or underestimated in the past. In particular, he began to think differently about the "traitor" Nadia. Memories allowed Alexander to take an unbiased look at his past and then express it in a word without looking back at someone else, even if it was a vivid example.

A change in the internal situation of the hero can be regarded as a mental event. One can even say that now the "prodigal son" has come as close as possible to the world of the "fathers", to the world of the "old times". But he just got closer.

Alexander soon realizes that he can no longer coincide with this "simple, uncomplicated, uncomplicated life". Just as the attraction to this world arose from within, so too does the repulsion from it come from within. The gap between the past and the present for the novel hero turns out to be insurmountable. As it is said, he "was already looking indifferently at his father's lindens" [4, p. 488].

If one stays in this world, which is alien to historical dynamics, then one is in danger of sinking into boredom. This state of mind for Goncharov has not an everyday, but an existential meaning: it is a spiritual deadness, a mechanical, uncreative existence. It threatens the heroes of Goncharov's novels both in

provincial and metropolitan life. That is why Goncharov's "prodigal son" is doomed to a new departure from his parental home.

Alexander's two letters given at the end of the sixth chapter stylistically stand out sharply against the background of the hero's verbal part given in the St. Petersburg part of the novel. There is not the slightest deviation in the direction of "role" verbal behavior. He writes about himself: "not a madcap: not a dreamer, not a disappointed one, not a provincial, but just a man" [4, p. 449]. As often with Goncharov, a look at what has been experienced, at oneself from a tangible time distance, has a special degree of persuasiveness. Alexander, who tensely perceived his relationships with people, delusions and mistakes, now speaks of the past as if he had been convinced by his own experience of the correctness and wisdom of Pushkin's lines:

And I bitterly complain and bitterly shed tears,  
But I do not wash off the sad lines.

Speaking about Alexander, who had just arrived in St. Petersburg, V.M. Markovich noted: "The possibility of two opposite points of view opens up in the very mind of the hero" [9, p. 90]. In the sixth chapter, Aduiev Jr. appears before the reader as a person who seeks to find a way to combine the hearty simplicity of the estate world with the sober vitality of St. Petersburg. The opportunity to reconcile two life philosophies so that they coexist on the principle of complementarity is attractive in that it was prepared by the very course of the years lived by the hero, and did not take shape in an atmosphere of clash of rational arguments. This determines the optimistic intonation of Alexander's letters.

In a letter to Lizaveta Alexandrovna, Aduiev Jr. calls himself "a lonely wanderer". If Alexander called himself that in a tense argument with his uncle, then this could be perceived as another quote or pretentious phrase. And in the letter of a person who has experienced immersion in his past, this self-determination is taken seriously. The word "wanderer" in Russian literature of the mid-19th century gradually acquired symbolic ambiguity. Alexander cannot be regarded as a hero-ideologist. But the novel plot makes it possible to notice that the hero has the spiritual

potential to become a wanderer, as this type will appear in Russian literature a little later. A wanderer is not a romantic fugitive, a wanderer is one who consciously chooses to wander. This is not about physical movement in space, but, so to speak, metaphysical, vertical ascent. Let us recall the lonely "homeless wanderer" Lavretsky.

The noted recognition of the hero does not close the motif of the "prodigal son" in the plot, but translates it into a symbolic plane: "wanderer" does not mean the horizontal movement of the "prodigal son", but the spiritual path, ultimately returning to the Heavenly Father. Recall that Alexander, who had just returned to Grachi after the wreath service, was overcome by boredom. And now, reflecting on human destinies, on the inevitable sufferings that "purify the soul," he writes that he sees in this the "hand of Providence." Yes, one can say that Goncharov's hero only approached metaphysical problems, the ultimate mysteries. But still, he got closer. The reader has no reason to see in these words of the hero some kind of drawing or pose. Not without reason, in the epilogue of the novel, Lizaveta Aleksandrovna will say about this letter: "How good you were there!"

The reader of «An Ordinary Story» gets acquainted with the dull elegies of Alexander. Their obvious difference is "the lack of a personal lyrical beginning" [6, p. 113]. The author tells about the stories and essays of the hero in such a way that there is no doubt: as a prose writer, Alexander is absolutely secondary. Aduiev Jr., so to speak, "lags behind in phase" from real creativity, from the literary process. But now, talking about his experiences caused by experiences, he acquires the ability in his own way, without looking back at models, to convey his vision of the world and very clearly tell about himself. To some extent, his letter to Lizaveta Alexandrovna can be brought closer to a literary confession. This is a view of the "past" self, already to some extent a view of the "other". This is the confession of the soul. This is the highest point of knowledge of the "inner man" (E.G. Etkind) in this novel. The author does not consider it necessary to clarify or comment on the hero's confession. V.M. Markovich remarked about these letters: "The author's voice is heard and the author's idea of life emerges, which for the reader is equal to the truth" [9, p. 83].



If we keep in mind the spiritual world of the hero, then we can say that not the same Alexander with whom Pyotr Ivanovich argued and who was instructed will return to St. Petersburg.

Goncharov admitted that all his life he strove to portray in his novels a hero of one type – “an extremely idealist” [5, p. 318]. For the author of «An Ordinary Story», an “idealist” is a hero whose romanticism is not reduced to either age or any influence – province, culture. Alexander Aduiev from this series.

In his «Theory of the Novel» in the chapter «Romanticism of Disappointment», György Lukács wrote that “a novel filled with a romantic feeling for life is a novel of lost illusions”. Such a novel presents “a type of inevitably inadequate relationship between the soul and reality: the soul is wider, more extensive than the destinies that life opens up before it”. On such a hero, life “imposes battles, and with them inevitable defeats” [7, pp. 57, 61].

“The idea of the all-dominating power of the century is the main color in the “literature of the 40s”, – wrote Yu.V. Mann in a well-known work [8, p. 256].

The aesthetic effect of the epilogue is due to the fact that the reader “suddenly” learns about the “transformation” of the hero, which took four years: he had just read Alexander’s letters. The author’s intentions formed completely different expectations in the reader: the hero’s spiritual path will lead not to career success and profitable marriage, but to some higher beginnings. The admiring exclamation of Aduiev Sr., addressed to the “prodigal son”: “«And a career, and fortune! <...> And what a fortune! and suddenly! all! all! Alexander <...> you are my blood, you are Aduiev!» – suggests that Pyotr Ivanovich’s path to success in St. Petersburg also once began with an inevitable compromise, similar to defeat” [4, p. 469].

The knowledge of life, the artist’s intuition suggested to the author of «An Ordinary Story» that the Aduievs’ compromises were due to both external and internal reasons. He will deal with the problem of “inadequate relations between the soul and reality” in the following novels.

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## Thoroughly Prepared Suddenness (on the Last Chapter in I. A. Goncharov's Novel "An Ordinary Story")

The article analyzes the denouement of the novel by I.A. Goncharov "An Ordinary Story". The unexpectedness of the epilogue of "An Ordinary Story" is due to the development of the plot in Chapter VI of the second part of the novel. Alexander Aduiev cannot be regarded as a hero-ideologist. The novel plot makes it possible to see that the hero has a spiritual potential to become a "wanderer", a person striving for metaphysical spiritual values. The author clearly strives to ensure that the reader's expectations associated with the main character are not confirmed.

**Key words:** I.A. Goncharov, novel "An Ordinary Story", epilogue, parable, role, memory, "prodigal son", wanderer.

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