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**THE EPITHALAMIC METATEXT IN THE ODIC POETRY OF  
M.V. LOMONOSOV'S SUCCESSORS**

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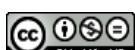
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**Abstract**

The development the odic genre in the mid-eighteenth century was in the direction of its fusion with a love theme and issues of national importance, with those external and internal political tasks that confronted the Russian Empire. Along with the usual political resolution of public issues (war, coalition, etc.) ode offers mythological and political ways as well. For example, the nature and the elements obey Russian autocrats voluntarily, amazed by their beauty and exhausted with love to them. Scheduled by Lomonosov dual – erotico-political – ideological complex and the corresponding "common places" of epithalamic odes will be crucial for poets until the end of the XVIII century. In this century in Russian culture a special "epithalamic text", including a description of the wedding (especially members of the Imperial family) and "celebrations" happened on this occasion; speeches of secular and ecclesiastical people; engravings; depictions of the fireworks and inscriptions to them; wishes for happiness; poems was formed. We will focus only on epithalamic verses (mostly odes) dedicated to the first dynastic marriage in Russia after 1745, and only on those sides of their form and content, which are directly related to the topic of this section. But at first, following the chronology, we will say a few words about the "shadow" line of the development of love and marriage poetry declared itself by the beginning of the 1750th and enjoyed continued popularity until the era of romanticism.

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*Keywords:* Eighteenth century, epithalamic verse, Lomonosov, metatexts



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## 1. Introduction

For a long time there was an opinion that there were no epitalamic poems in Russian poetry (Artemyeva, 1996; Panchenko, 1970). But studies of the early 21st century have proven otherwise (Pashkurov, 2015; Petrov, 2015a; Petrov & Skvortsova, 2017).

In essence, the dynastic marriage reconciled hardly combined love and politics – the intimate feelings of two young people and state interests (Artemyeva, 1996, 2018, 2019; Petrov, Dubskikh et al., 2018; Solovyev, 2017). At the same time it is unknown which of these two "substances" had longer historical existence.

Only one ode of 1745 is enough to realize that historical realities and the written poetic text devoted to them – absolutely different things, nearly opposite in nature. Epithalamium, and here we can recall Trediakovsky's definition (Trediakovskij, 1963), describes the *perfect, desired* solution to the unnatural and even utopian situation that was designed for the children by majestic parents. Of course, such a context demanded the image of love as a *spiritual* sense, thus the political agenda drawn by the author, with the apparent hyperbolicity and utopianism, could be very *real*.

## 2. Problem Statement

"Love is the eminence grise of history", – once one of the greats of the past said. Few doubt that history is driven by human, more or less conscious interests – economic, political, religious, moral and ethical (the search for happiness), etc. (Abramzon, 2015; Abramzon & Petrov, 2017; Artemyeva, 2018, 2019; Porus, 2019; Smetanina, 2015). The historiosophy and literature of the XVIII century is aware of another, competing philosophical tradition – *socio-historical idealism*. Within this paradigm the love is understood as a spiritual feeling (*ideal* – in the philosophical sense) as well as a form of public opinion, and, therefore, it is both a subjective and socio-historical feeling. It is remarkable that the conflict of *love vs. politics/history* was the basis not only for the central genre of the French and Russian classicism - the historical (in essence, love-psychological) tragedy, but also for epitalam, including parody, as we will show. The historiosophical content of early Russian odes as a form of panegyric poetry (Klein, 2015) was largely determined by two ideas. They were both involved with traditional Russian and later European historiosophy representation of Russia in the "female" image of the Mother (Rjabov, 2000), but their content was not typical, and characterized the socio-cultural situation of the XVIII century. Odic genre rather quickly, in the mid-eighteenth century, responded to real – dynastic – marriage of the rulers, and by the end of the century in the Russian poetry there had already existed a stable tradition of the genre, developed by the authors of epithalamic ode. Thus their vector was a continuation and development of mythological and political establishment of the genre.

## 3. Research Questions

The article presents a view on the history of epitalamic poetry that continues the traditions of Lomonosov's odious lyrics and develops the ideas of Russian historiosophy of the 18th century.

#### **4. Purpose of the Study**

The main objective of the study was to study the epitalamic poetry of M.V. Lomonosov's successors, the main task is to study the artistic forms that are used by writers to represent history. Revealing interaction of love and history, love and mythology within the limits of epitalamic lyrics, revealing of influence of Lomonosov on poets of the second half of 18 centuries. The material of this work is literary and poetic texts, first of all epitalms of Lomonosov's followers, and the main task is to study the artistic forms that are used by writers to represent history. Revealing interaction of love and history, love and mythology within the limits of epitalamic lyrics, revealing of influence of Lomonosov on poets of the second half of 18 centuries. Both parodies on Lomonosov's epitalamic odes and works by "official" successors of Lomonosov's poetic tradition will be studied.

#### **5. Research Methods**

The study is based on an integrated approach that combines elements of hermeneutic, comparative and narrative methods, also historical approach and synergetic approach. The historical approach that allows to examine the issue in its development in the frame of general historical and cultural space, detect the complex of cause-and-effect relations in the process of the development of epitalamic poetry, where issues of history, politics, love, mythology were reflected. The synergetic approach is used to analyze cultural development and evolution issues as well as those of their interaction. The hermeneutic method, which presupposes the scientific interpretation of subjectively colored author's statements. The narrative method allows us to consider a work of art as a result of aesthetic communication between the narrator (narrator) and the recipient (reader), which reveals the underlying structures of the work.

#### **6. Findings**

##### **6.1. Parodies on Lomonosov's epitalamic odes**

The artistic language of emblems and allegories (it was used in odes) (Abramzon & Petrov, 2017; Kistanova, 2015; Petrov et al., 2019) which did not need the existence of real, material content was remarkably suitable for the image of the ideal and the utopia. But it was enough to allow even small a ambiguity (such as "pure laurels"), an awkward expression, having been fond not of "spirit", but "flesh", and not only "the high passion", but also "big politics" was exposed to discredit. M. V. Lomonosov's pupil I. S. Barkov used it. He, however, avoided ambiguities and even in high and spiritual preferred to see low and carnal (physiological). Barkov devoted special odes to marriage and deities of love for example "The day Desired Came to Us ..." (Nastal nam nyne den' zhelannyj) (in the lists the ode is known also under the name "Turov's day" (Turovu dnju) ) and "To Finish All the Ceremonies of Marriage ..." (Okonchit' vse obrjadny braka) (Barkov, 2005).

The ode "The day Desired Came to Us ..." represents the parody to the solemn ode in general; the phenomenon of an official holiday per se seems to be the object of reducing parody. The element of laughter sometimes with a blasphemy connotation, extends at Barkov both to civil celebrations ("imperial days" and "victorianne days"), and to religious holidays (Easter).

It is difficult to say which exact day of the church calendar is meant by "Turov's day". The speech in Barkov's ode is about the termination of the Lent, about Easter week and the beginning of funeral (St. Thomas) week. If the holiday of Easter, the day of reminiscence of life, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ, is turned to the living, then the funeral week and its ceremonialism are devoted to the dead (but alive in Christ).

All games and entertainments forbidden for the period of the Lent were renewed from the day of Easter. The last day of Easter week, or the St. Thomas' Sunday, was directly associated with marriage and love ceremonies (deals as well as weddings were made) and it was considered as a maiden's feast.

So, thus the historiosophical implication of the celebration of Easter and the rituals of Thomas' week reveals in the fact that the believer is literally in contact with the indissoluble unity of sadness and joy, earthly and heavenly life, historical time and eternity.

Barkov ignores both Christian symbolism, and pagan mysticism, opposing to eternity the present ("the chosen day"), and nullifying the triumph of life to the flesh celebration. As for an odic component of the work, it has an effect on compositional development of the theme of the celebration, on pathetics and on recognizable "high" formulas (Kistanova, 2015; Matveev, 2018; Solovyev, 2017).

In the ode "To Finish All the Ceremonies of Marriage ..." (Okonchit' vse obrjady braka) the signs of epithalamic and battle odes – a combination quite natural for Lomonosov, and then for his followers are combined. The central character of Barkov's ode deserved a name of the Hero by means of the feats – on a quite concrete field which in official odes was omitted or was metaphorically stated in terms of the future merits of the same, for example, heir to the throne.

Barkov widely attracts the images and motives of antique mythology (Abramzon, Zaitseva et al., 2016; Abramzon, Rudakova et al., 2016). Barkov parodies the motives of beauty and the capacity of love of a monarch and also the myth about hierogamy (Abramzon, Zaitseva et al., 2016; Fica & Ďoubalová, 2014). Claims of one of the parts of the male body for the divine functions and prerogatives are amusing, of course, and, certainly, are blasphemous, however Barkov only develops mythological and political installations of an odic genre which central characters – the Russian monarchs – applied for the same functions, and hardly with the greater reasons. Blasphemy of their claims, however, was supported by the law and the committed art.

But let's move from "shameless" to the "official" successors of the Lomonosov poetic tradition.

## 6.2. "Official" successors of Lomonosov's poetic tradition

The following after 1745 dynastic marriage the loyal Russians had to wait for nearly thirty years (Artemyeva, 1996; Semenov, 2013; Wortman, 2002): another wedding celebrations of the House of Romanovs happened in August-October of 1773. Princess Wilhelmina of Hesse-Darmstadt with her mother and two sisters arrived in Russia on 6 June 1773, in August 15 she was called the name Natalia, the next day there was her engagement with the crown Prince Paul Petrovich, on 29 September 1773 – their marriage. To the marriage of Crown Prince Paul Petrovich and Princess Wilhelmina of Hesse-Darmstadt at least ten poets responded with odes. The political background of this marriage is now well known (Aronova, 2018; Neverov, 2017, 2019; Peskov, 2017; Petrov et al., 2017; Shilder, 2016), however, the authors of epithalamium of 1773 hardly had an idea about the intricacies of matrimonial strategic plans of Catherine

II (Petrov, Dubskikh et al., 2018; Petrov, Soldatchenko et al., 2018). Nevertheless, they were keenly interested in not only the relationship of the two topical events of the political life of the country (war and marriage), but also the possible consequences of the marriage for the future destinies of Russia, and even for superhistorical life. Underlined attention to the future, in fact, the presence of *prophecies and predictions* is an important feature of historiosophical content of the epithalamic odes. Odes, dedicated to the other days of the secular holiday calendar (ascension to the throne, military victory, etc.), usually relied in its ideology on the precedents happened in the *past* (Petrov, 2015b; Petrov et al., 2019; Zaitseva et al., 2018).

At that time the Russian-Turkish war was coming to the end, and though in 1773 military operations took place with variable success, in odes the Russian troops were invariably triumphed. Just a few days were not enough for odic authors in order to have time to respond to absolutely fantastic mythological and political plot: immediately after the wedding festivities on October the 14<sup>th</sup> in St. Petersburg the first news of appearance of the impostor – "the resurrected father" of Pavel Petrovich was received.

Despite the window of opportunity to offer their own version of the genre, poets of the new generation just renewed or developed the planned by Lomonosov in 1745 historiosophical, mythological and political motives: 1) war which must be stopped in the period of the wedding, 2) glorifications by the muses of a porphyrogenetos couple and giving it imperious functions and responsibilities, 3) the ascension of the ancestors and descendants of newlyweds, but especially the organizers of their happiness, first of all Catherine II.

The most consecutive than other creators of odes, G. R. Derzhavin in the ode "On a Wedding of the Grand Duke Pavel Petrovich with Natalia Alexeyevna" (Na brakosochetanie Velikogo Knjazja Pavla Petrovicha s Natalieju Alekseevnoju) in a student's way followed Lomonosov's concept of monarchical marriage (Derzhavin, 1866; Petrov, 2015a). V. I. Maykov slightly moved ahead on the beaten path in "The Ode on the Day of the Marriage of the Crown Prince, Grand Duke Pavel Petrovich and Grand Duchess Natalia Alekseevna" (Oda na den' brachnago sochetaniya Cesarevicha Velikogo Knjazja Pavla Petrovicha i Velikija Knjagini Natalii Alekseevny) (Majkov, 1966). Responding to the topical political moment, Maykov develops militaristic pathos of Lomonosov's battle odes and his contemporaries: he connects the future glory of Paul mainly with his military victories. The odic imagination of the author portreys the pervasive and omnipresent brave Ross, "punishing" saracens. The pathetic description of the sufferings and death of the enemies coexists without any conflicts at Maykov with enthusiasm about a fait accompli marriage and the beauty of the newlyweds.

The combination of themes and modalities, so strange at contemporary view, can be explained, for example, in the context of courtly and political cultures of the XVIII century: the military victory and the marriage – events equally solemn and joyful for the subjects of the Russian Empire. In addition, as it appears from the "predictions" of Russia, the marriage in "the house of Peter" and the peace will contribute to its prosperity.

Predictions for the future, guidance and best wishes to the young couple says the Creator of the Universe as well as. He encourages Paul and Natalia to respect and comfort the "Mother of Russia"; promises Paul glory; demands from Natalia to "give birth to Peter". Peter I and Catherine II actually are the main characters in the hierarchy of the rulers of the past and the present at Maykov.

The other two very different authors – I. F. Bogdanovich (Bogdanovich, 1810) and Hierodeacon Eugenios Boulgar (Boulgaris) (Boulgar, 1773) – offered in some way very close variants of the relationship of the love of rulers and the Good of the country.

Although the "Poems on the Occasion of the Marriage Celebrations of Their Imperial Highnesses the Sovereign Prince, Grand Duke Pavel Petrovich and Grand Duchess Natalia Alexeevna, in 1773" Stihi na sluchaj brachnago torzhestva Ih Imperatorskikh Vysochestv Gosudarja Cesarevicha, Velikago Knjazja Pavla Petrovicha i Gosudaryni Velikoj Knjagini Natalii Alekseevny v 1773 godu (Shilder, 2016) by Bogdanovich are written in anacreontic spirit, they begin politically correct – with compliments to the monarchess-winner and glorification of the world. And only after that to the poet god of love (Eros or Apollon) appears. This God is responsible for the renewal of life. However, this God is a warrior. The fear of the author backs off when he sees on two golden arrows "holly words":

*Ljubov' dva serdca zazhigaet,  
Ognem, priyatnym Nebesam:  
Natal'ju s Pavlom soprijagaet,  
V zalog blazhenstva sim stranam* (Italic of Bogdanovich).

So, the angellike god is a divine messenger, and the marriage, sent from above, will make Russia prosperous.

It is not so surprising for the XVIII century that the 57-year-old scholar monk was well-versed in ancient mythology and refined in compliments than the 30-year-old professional translator and the future author of "Dushenka". Remembering the glory of Russian troops, "winners over the proud moon", Eugenios Boulgaris through Pallas Athena asks the muses not to touch neither the palm nor "laurels", but to decorate with "beautiful marriage wreaths":

*Zdes' brachnuju chetu porfirorodnyh lic  
Cvetushhi krasotoj i duha lepotoju* (Boulgar, 1773).

Almost the only one of the authors of epithalamium of 1773 Eugenios Boulgaris speaks of the bride's mother – "wise Western Eurynome" – and that the elected by the "young Russian Eagle", the middle of the three Charites, virtuous Thalia, left for the sake of love "her people / her home and all dear kind." As Trediakovsky the hieromonk-poet mixes the pagan (ancient) and Christian ideas of love, emphasizing, of course, spiritual in nature of "love of the purest passion".

The combination of the spiritual and the eternal with earthly and corruptible: "brilliant" and "pure light" of love fire will light up the whole Russia, warm the earth and become a "joy to countless hearts" is so natural in an official congratulation. The main thing is that "other NATALIA" will give birth to "other PETER", brighten "with this branch PETROV house". Though in the final verse of the epithalamium also appears "Auguste" (Catherine II), the "expectations" of Russia are not associated with her, but with Peter I and his procreation.

Epithalamium of 1773, considered as a single text indicate the change of emphasis in the hierarchy of great personalities that had developed by that time in the historical consciousness of Russian writers. Peter continues to remain the top in that Pantheon, but the vacant "female" position next to him, which was consistently occupied by the wife, the niece and the daughter, was almost seized by Catherine the Great, "grandson" (the way Lomonosov called her in the ode "1764" after some hesitation) (Rjabov, 2000;

Wortman, 2002). Not all creators of odes as we have seen it, put Ekaterina and Peter on one level because this level – superhistorical: to reach it, it is necessary to become the personification of the myth, "a cultural hero" in the entity.

For example, Knjazhnin (1961) in the "Ode at the Wedding Ceremony of their Imperial Highnesses the Sovereign Prince, Grand Duke Paul Petrovich and Grand Duchess Natalia Alexeevna, 1773, September 29 day" (Bulgar, 1773) although Catherine is called "the great", but two other monarchs are elevated to heaven and referred to the ranks of "mortal demigods" – Peter the Great and Charles the Great. Having become related in heaven, they pray to the Creator that He would teach the young couple to be worthy of their forefathers and their dignity.

About love and about its good impact on the society writes and Kheraskov (2009) in his two epithalamic odes – "on Engagement" (na obruchenie) (Kheraskov, 1961; Kheraskov, 2009) and "on Marriage" (na brakosochetanie) (Kheraskov, 2009) of Paul and Natalia. Like other authors of epithalamium of 1773, he develops the metaphor (in essence, myth) of a live-creative fire (Abramzon, Zaitseva et al., 2016; Semenov, 2013; Wortman, 2002).

Kheraskov showed the main political wisdom better than all his contemporaries to what the odic poet could rise – to admire first of all the reigning monarch and only then – other people and objects. In his epithalamium Kheraskov develops the historiosopHEME "Catherine's House". This new political body for Russia could become a reality only with the advent of the grandchildren of Catherine II and which is ready to replace "the house/kind of Peter".

Sumarokov (1774) took a special position among the authors of epithalamium praising or just interested to glorify Catherine II. In the second half of 1773 he writes two odes dedicated to the great Duchess. In contrast to Lomonosov, the creator of the ode of 1745, and from the authors of epithalamium of 1773 Sumarokov has little interest in love-marriage themes: there is no "Kingdom of love", no nature, enchanted by the bride and groom, no elegant mythological images in his work. The poet is driven by clear moral and political goals, and the main point of his ode is to set out the requirements to an ideal monarch. As well as Kheraskov, Sumarokov uses the motif of coincidence of the names of the bride of the Grand Duke and mother of Peter I, but does it not in order to glorify "the House of Catherine," but once again to oppose the "progressor" of Russia and the ruling monarch. In general, her only merit in fact is the election of the spouse to Paul Petrovich is behind all the compliments to Catherine II.

Contrary to the already established genre (epithalamium), Sumarokov continues to claim (and it is his favourite thought as a political writer) that the benefit of the state depends not on love at all and the accompanying it harmony, but only on the degree of ideality and rationality of the personality that is in charge of the country. And this personality, in turn, it is possible to teach to be reasonable. It is necessary to constantly say how to behave and what to do only. This imperative was also followed by Sumarokov in his work and even the theme of love and marriage he subordinated to these utopian ideas.

## 7. Conclusion

The whole complex of ideas demanded by the epithalamic verses was in many ways reduced 1) to the assertion of special - love-mystical - relations between subjects and rulers; 2) to the recognition of some

life-creating, and on a space almost scale, forces possessed by the rulers of Russia, capable of "fertilizing" it, giving the people endless benefits.

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