

# **Friedrich Nietzsche and Mikhail Bulgakov in the Context of the Philosophical Ideas of the Silver Age**

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## **ABSTRACT**

We judge the past calmly and take it for granted. It was allowed to contemporaries to create history. We should only understand it. As a work of art. Against this background, it is psychologically clear why Nietzsche's ideas, which are especially understandable not only to the German but also to the Russian reader, spread so rapidly in Russian society over a hundred years ago. In Western, primarily American and German literature, a lot of special work has been devoted to the problem of understanding Nietzsche's ideological heritage in Russia. There are a number of studies devoted to the influence of Nietzsche's teaching on the spiritual tradition not only of Western and Eastern Europe, but also of America, and even of Asia. The article contains a comparison of worldviews, poetics and creative manners of outstanding writers of the early 20th century — L. Andreev, M. Bulgakov, M. Zoshchenko, M. Gorky, etc. The author states the uniqueness of their artistic tasks and artistic techniques in the context of the philosophical ideas of the "silver age". This era created the future of Russia, simultaneously and in passing broke its traditions.

**Keywords:** "Silver age", symbolism, "panpsychism", myth-making, F. Nietzsche, M. Bulgakov

## **1. INTRODUCTION**

Russian symbolism is close to the work of the philosopher Friedrich Nietzsche. Symbolists discover stylistic and ideological similarities with him [1]. Bulgakov, of course, also could not write, not taking into account these phenomena of the era of the turn of the XIX-XX centuries. But the writer was not carried away by Nietzsche, although, through some symbolists — for example, V. Solovyov, V. Bryusov, Vyach. Ivanov, K. Balmont, A. Blok, — in his own way, he accepted the ideas of the philosopher. On the other hand, he resisted his powerful influence. In this he was morally supported by S. Bulgakov [2] and E. Trubetskoy [3], who considered Nietzsche to be an outstanding but erring thinker.

Therefore, we are inclined to compare the image of Nietzsche with Ivan Bezdomny, who for his denial of the purpose of life and God is devoid of reason. Here the philosopher's idea of the forerunner of the superman is played out. Madness is a confirmation of the insignificance of modern man. So, in fact, in the novel the good-natured Ivanushka appears.

Understanding the philosophy of Immanuel Kant allowed Bulgakov to turn more directly to the search for the nature of morality and the mystery of creativity. The concept of high art, which is fundamentally moral, as well as the "self-awareness of a great writer" is mentioned in the last novel of M. Bulgakov [4]. In analyzing the philosophical

line of Bulgakov's last novel, researchers, in addition to Kant, also name other philosophers, most often Sergiy Bulgakov [2], his ideas about the pre-existence of the world in an ideal plane, about eternal femininity. True, the inconsistency of S. Bulgakov, who believed that Christianity does not need the person of Christ, even avoiding Christ in his writings, hardly attracted such an integral nature as M. Bulgakov. However, the writer's appeal to philosophical problems did not mean, of course, the corresponding equipping of artistic images with philosophical symbols.

## **2. METHODOLOGY**

The goal can be achieved only by aesthetic analysis of the text, because the text is aesthetic. The conceptual analysis of the poetics of Bulgakov's largest work as an independent artistic phenomenon, which was in weak contact with the literary process of the 1920s and 1930s, was chosen to achieve the goal. Achieving this goal involves identifying features of the key scene of the work, namely the meeting of the Procurator of Judea and the High Priest in the garden. The definition of artistic and aesthetic techniques of plot — compositional organization as modeling, and not reflecting, should be apriority. The main goal of the research is to identify the specificity of the creative heritage of M.A. Bulgakov as an artistic unity. Achieving this goal involves the following tasks:

1. To reveal the role of various integral-forming elements in the specifics of the functioning of Bulgakov's works and to show that Bulgakov's novel *Master and Margarita*, showing cyclical signs, is a high-order artistic and aesthetic unity.
2. To determine the forms and patterns of the formation of the author's consciousness as an aesthetically organizing center of the work. To reveal the nature of the interaction of the subjective forms of the expression of the author's consciousness in the works of one major genre (novel) of Bulgakov in the 1920s and 1930s; to identify the specifics of the relationship "the author-creator-the hero is the ideal reader" in the prose of the period under study.
3. To establish the patterns of the phenomenon of the "Master's novel" in the framework of the menippean novel "The Master and Margarita" as a special artistic form and a special one.
4. To determine the type of Bulgakov hero as a hero-ideologue who builds his life in accordance with the knowledge of the world.
5. To investigate the artistic forms of the manifestation of the aesthetic sense of history, that is, the poetics of the artistic nature of Bulgakov, and on the basis of this, to reveal the features and diversity of artistic synthesis methods as the basis for modifications of the classical novel form.

Works related to one or another period are distinguished by corresponding genre and pathos-aesthetic features. Therefore, the personality traits and worldview of the writer in the period of biographical time in which a large work is created can be reconstructed as a result of the analysis of the work. We believe that the menippean novel "The Master and Margarita" is a travesty narrative in the genre of tragedy.

The theoretical value of the work lies in the development of the methodological foundations of the analysis of the writer's artistic world. The artist, having created the author-creator as the spokesman for the concept of the work, goes to the periphery of attention; the narrator (the protagonist of the author-creator), the main conductor of the artistic idea of the work, and the hero (the active aesthetic figure of the plot), the bearer of the idea of the work, come to the fore [5].

Practical significance.

The material and conclusions of the study can be used both for reading the basic lecture courses on the history of Russian literature of the 20th century, and for reading special courses, conducting special seminars on Russian prose of the past century, on the works of Bulgakov. Certain provisions on the author's problem, on the poetics of Bulgakov's works, can be taken into account when reading such methodologically important disciplines as "Introduction to Literary Studies", "Theory of Literature". The methodological basis is the basic ideas of the theory of the author of a work of art (M.M. Bakhtin, V.V. Vinogradov, B.O. Korman, Y.M. Lotman, A.P. Chudakov, V.V. Kozhinov, M.M. Hirschman), according to which not the real author, but the author-creator and his

protagonist-narrator are spokesmen for the concept of the entire work, the ideas of the theory of art (I. Kant, Z. Freud, R. Barth, etc.), as well as the works of Bulgakov. A comprehensive study of poetics is carried out on the basis of system-typological and historical-functional approaches [6].

### 3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The philosophy in the novel is reflected in the characters, in the relationship between the characters. Therefore, Bulgakov's heroes are ideological: both Alexei Turbin, who was tormented by the question "how to live?", and Maksudov, who was most afraid of "spots" on his conscience. But already Turbin Sr. in his ideological and moral searches revised past views on religion, on the church; he seemed to have fallen to the ground from "sentimental" heights. In the "sunset romance", the new, which has even become part of life experience, is shown by the heroes of religious dogmas and, in general, Christian teachings in more detail.

The question "how to live" in "The Master and Margarita" expands and deepens into the whole philosophical problem formulated by Woland: "if there is no God, then the question is, who controls the human life and all the routines on earth?" Homeless's angry response: "Man himself rules," Woland rejected, not only in words but in deeds: Berlioz, who knew exactly what he was doing that evening, suddenly fell under the tram, as predicted "foreigner."

And Woland's attempt to convert Berlioz and Ivan is at least suspicious [7].

It is known that many writings of Nietzsche were read in the Bulgakov family. But more than that, the colleagues of the associate professor of the Kiev Theological Academy A.I. Bulgakov, the father of the writer, were engaged in their comprehension, which probably could not pass by the high school student Mikhail. The Kiev researcher [8] names two important books in this vein on this subject, apparently, which were available in the theologian's library: [9-10]; also mentions N.K. Makkaveysky, who, like A.I. Bulgakov, taught at the Academy and whose work "Archeology of the history of the suffering of the Lord Jesus Christ", first published in the Proceedings of the KLA for 1890-1891, was in his personal the writer's library and subsequently served as one of the theological sources of the novel "The Master and Margarita" [1]. And the young writer, of course, did not ignore those exciting young romantic thinkers of issues that in adolescence seem to be the most important. Light is holiness, life in the highlands. Peace is death, eternal redemption.

Although the novel contains another, deeper development of this topic. Recently, an understanding of the division of God's world into "departments" — "light" and "peace" was widespread in Russia. For example, "light" is a life subordinate to God. And the kingdom of the dead, "peace" — in the hands of Woland. In the novel, a

different alliance appears: Woland is responsible for the whole world here, as well as for death; Yeshua represents the bright sides of reality; he preserves their sprouts. God the Father sees and knows everything, he is even ready to fully support the Son. However, human life does not proceed in paradise, but in the struggle of various principles that prove their right to exist.

In this regard, already at the turn of the 20th century, the question arose about the place of the Russian intelligentsia, and here the name V.I. Solovyova [11]. "It is in his writings that the image of a spiritual ascetic, experienced in clever deeds, first appears," notes A. Grubin [12]. And the conclusion of the art critic is sad: "The course of history has shown that the majority of the Russian intelligentsia find themselves with the Grand Inquisitor" [11]. It seems to us that only Nietzsche's philosophy can explain this circumstance. Moreover, only a German philosopher can show why "the time of mediocrity is coming" [13]. Great interest in the topic of Russian intelligentsia at the beginning of the twentieth century is shown in the book by Edith Klyus [14].

We judge the past calmly and take for granted. It was allowed to contemporaries to make history. We should only understand it. Like a work. Against this background, it is psychologically clear why Nietzsche's ideas, especially understandable not only to German but also to Russian readers, spread so quickly in Russian society over a hundred years ago. Among the adherents of the social myth known as "God-building" are revolutionary romantic Maxim Gorky and two literary critics of the Marxist sense: unknown to the current reader Andreevich (Evgeny Andreyevich Soloviev, 1867-1905) and A.V. Lunacharsky.

The rise of the Gorky star was accompanied by a hype around Nietzscheanism in the 1900s, and critics immediately noted the similarity of the worldview of the Russian writer and the German philosopher. The central characters of many of Gorky's trashy stories, such as "Malva", "Tramp", "Chelkash", are "noble" criminals. All of them act as involuntary robbers who prefer this inheritance to slavery [14]. Crime in Gorky's stories is a protest against oppressive socio-economic conditions and moral distortions generated by these conditions [15].

Gorky's inherent attraction to the strong, bright, willful sides of human nature remained unchanged throughout his creative life. Gradually, these qualities were synthesized into a comprehensive utopian idea of a free, fair and productive society. Criminal impulses, outbursts of violence from his "dreamers" (Falcon from "Song of the Falcon" (1895) and Thomas Gordeev in "Thomas Gordeev" (1899) turned inward.

The "dreamer", like a man outside the law, bears the features of a rebel: he protests against falsity, generally accepted morality. In Gorky's three works "Error" (1896), "Reader" (1898) and "Man" (1904), ideas about changes in social life, the "pioneer", the "pioneer" of which becomes a free "creator", come to the forefront for the first time independent of patrons.

Gorky found a more impressive literary program in the Leninist article of 1905, "Party Organization and Party Literature." Lenin urged writers to sing the heroic working class and raise its political consciousness. He proclaimed: "Down with the non-partisan writers! Down with the writers of the superman." Only by teaming up with the collective and the Party will the artist be able to participate in forging the future.

Some of the "Nietzschean" works of Gorky continued to live as popular revolutionary literature, despite Korolenko and other critics of the liberal-populist orientation disapproving of them. Both the Song of the Falcon and the Man were often read at meetings and rallies. In 1919, the Red Army went into battle under the banner with the slogan "We sing a song to the foolishness of the brave." Gorky tried to inculcate his revolutionary-romantic position with a number of literary groups. For some time he kept in touch with modernist writers from the Northern Herald circle. A little longer — with L.N. Andreev, I.A. Bunin, A.I. Kuprin and other writers from the Moscow literary circle "Wednesday", but he failed to convert them to his faith.

Gorky's idea of an artist-leader aroused the greatest sympathy among such Marxist literary critics as Andreevich and Lunacharsky. But the main thing — Gorky managed to lead a number of young writers who identified themselves as students — M.M. Zoshchenko, I.E. Babel, Yu.K. Olesha, A.P. Platonov. Zoshchenko could read Nietzsche's books with enthusiasm: according to the testimony of V.V. Zoshchenko, the winter of 1918 passed with him "under the sign of Nietzsche". And later, in March 1920, Zoshchenko called the books of Blok and the German philosopher his favorite books. The names of Zoshchenko and Nietzsche are matched by Yu. Olesha in his memoirs: "This is a sad person, a person who most often repeats Nietzsche's phrase about "miserable life, miserable pleasures" [16].

Nietzsche's discussions about a reflective but "unhealthy" civilization and a healthy but immoral "barbarism", about the "will to live" influenced his work and determined the writer's path. This separation of characters appears in the story "The Neighbor," written in 1917. Then in the stories "Love", "Scoundrel", "Goat", "People", and later in the story "Returned Youth". Already in the "prepress", "handwritten" [17] period, the realization of the motive of the beast is planned, with which the idea of violence is associated (the novel "The Fish Female", the philosophical tale "The King's Caprice", the feuilleton "Miraculous Insolence" and "Miraculous Abomination", the novel "Gray fog").

By the mid-1920s, Zoshchenko's world was a world of the all-conquering "animal", that is, an anti-cultural, beginning. The youthful philosophical ideas of the writer were manifested in "Sentimental Tales", in "Returned Youth" and especially in the story "Before Sunrise", which openly talks about the "screaming beast" in man. Zoshchenko's tale "The Talisman", a parody narrative in

the style of Pushkin's "Belkin's Tales", can be read as "ridicule of suffering" — Gorky's old covenant [18].

Zoshchenko is obsessed with deep psychoanalysis and character re-education. This is his mature story, and in this he is a follower of Gorky and Nietzsche. Attention to the disease and its overcoming — from Nietzsche. In "Returned Youth" he sets the task: to carry out "overhaul" of the whole organism. There is a novel by L. Sobolev with the same name, where we are talking about a thorough restructuring of the navy as part of society. True, N.V. Gogol also advocated for "healing the body", but the scope was not the same. There is a personal problem, here — a social one.

Zoshchenko addresses all readers at once, he intended to help them all at once. The difference in the attitude of both writers is clearly visible: Gogol's disease was the source of his creativity and talent, Zoshchenko's illness and cure served the social mission of literature. Nietzsche creates a typology of morality, expressing the belief that the world of idealists no longer exists. But, perhaps, the most essential in the Nietzsche reassessment of values is his concept of asceticism, which distinguishes between the "philosophical asceticism" and the "ascetic ideal" of the priest. The priest wants to assert his inferiority at the cost of destroying life itself.

Thus, the love he preaches turns into vengeance. All this can be directly attributed to the hero of Bulgakov, the "blind" "slave" Levy Matvey. Why, after all, does the Master not finish the novel during the course of his earthly existence?

The writer is not free in his work. He cannot say that which he does not know. And while the "Master" has not crossed the line of his earthly experience, he does not know if there is anything somewhere that will "resolve" the "dissonances" of human existence. He knows this only on the other side of the boundaries of earthly experience.

However, many topics that are unlikely to be encountered in life are mysterious in this regard. In the play by I. Svevo (Zvevo), there is a moment of similarity with Bulgakov's novel: this is the same constantly repeating comedy motif as the leitmotif in the novel "The Master and Margarita". It is a motive of a severed head crushed in the play of Svevo under the wheels of a car. In the comedy, the image of a severed head reappears in a metaphorical expression: "Trieste thieves are so clever that they could tear off the most cautious head from their shoulders, so much so that its owner would not have noticed." "This is a random, but curious anticipation of the motive of the severed head, which is found in "The Master and Margarita" [19]. Can this be called "panpsychism"? In the "ancient" chapters it is unlikely — there are quite recognizable signs of Russian realism here. In the chapters on "modern Moscow," the techniques of Andreev's panpsychism are found at every turn — such is the era and such is its exponent Bulgakov's "author-creator". He also has a philosophical forerunner, pointed out by A. Zerkalov: the apocalyptic mood of the late

1910-1920s was reflected in the philosophical work of Oswald Spengler's "Sunset of Europe" [20].

In the "silver age" of Russian literature there are many topics, events, destinies, similar to modernity. The era was creating the future of Russia, while at the same time breaking its traditions. No wonder the term itself was repelled from another — the "Golden Age". And it is not in vain that the "silver" in comparison with the "golden" was a reduced, devilish, glorifying the dead moonlight. And this is also the age of individualism. Recall: "But when we say that a person is responsible, this does not mean that he is only responsible for his personality. He is responsible for all people. The word "subjectivism" has two meanings, and our opponents take advantage of this ambiguity. Subjectivism means, on the one hand, that the individual subject chooses himself, and on the other hand, that a person cannot go beyond the limits of human subjectivity" [21].

What, for example, is not the Bulgakov problem? The main issue of moral philosophy — the relationship between good and evil — is solved by Bulgakov openly, in the reproduction of the biblical myth, and is associated with the figures of Yeshua and Pilate, and implicitly — in the light of modern times — with the real figure of the Master and with the symbolic image of Woland [22]. However, an in-depth philosophical approach to the disclosure of life problems is generally characteristic of Russian literature. The names of various philosophers are increasingly mentioned now in connection with the "sunset romance", especially those who give rise to at least two associations: the "devil" and "Faust." These are, for example, "key concepts" in the "Sunset of Europe" by O. Spengler, who saw in Goethe's Faust a "portrait of a whole culture" [23].

However, another topic has been raised that directly relates the philosophical content of the novel to the ancient teachings of the Manichaeans and Bogomils [2]. However, we see a different approach more relevant and more revealed in the work. According to Leonid Andreev, human thought becomes the hero of the new theater, and the writer calls this aesthetic phenomenon "panpsychism". Andreev's psychologism ("Life of a Man", "Thought", "One who receives a slap in the face", "Requiem", "Dog Waltz", etc.) does not fit into the framework of a realistic "dialectic of the soul". This is probably why Leo Tolstoy repeatedly reproached him for insincerity in interpreting the psychology of heroes [8]. But the "panpsychism" of Leonid Andreev has the medical aspect that Bulgakov knew well [24].

In addition, there is a modern scientific apparatus for him, with which you can explain some of the events of Bulgakov's "sunset romance". So, the psychiatrist and psychotherapist Karl Gustav Jung possessed such a sense of imagination that he assured that the spirits with which he came in contact tangibly materialized before him. He even communicated with a horned creature with a lame leg ... Comprehension of consciousness and religion, Jung suggested, is possible only by overcoming archetypes

[12]. Space and time, justified by Isaac Newton as constant values, were considered extremely whimsical by the efforts of Albert Einstein and his followers in the 20th century [25]. Einstein showed that time does not exist. Time is what we subjectively imagine. Yes, this is Bulgakov's favorite thought: there was no Petlyura, there was no civil war, there was no execution ...

The famous duality formula of matter  $E = m \times c^2$  gave many people who are fond of supernatural phenomena, a logical explanation of many events and sensations [26]. Inspired by this theory of the "cylindrical world" (world space is finite, and time is endless [27]), the hippie psychologist and ideologist Timothy Leary has rediscovered the right, "silent hemisphere" of the human brain. True, the psychologist believed that for this, a person should free himself from social institutions by activating the "sleeping" parts of the brain; for example, using psychedelic drugs such as psilocybin [28] ...

The hippie movement in the 60s of the last century was largely based on this view of the world. The topic of "panpsychism" is all the more interesting because the American ambassador and writer William Bullitt, who maintained relations with Bulgakov, must have discussed with him, the physician, the ideas of Z. Freud, popular in Europe. Both of them, moreover, enthusiastically took a course of psychoanalysis — the first at Freud himself, in Vienna, the second at a follower of a psychiatrist in Moscow [29]. The author of the book holds the idea that the American ambassador served as a prototype of Woland. And everything that deeply affects the consciousness of a creative person cannot pass without a trace for his creativity.

Could not shake the writer's consciousness, the thoughts of P. Florensky about overcoming earthly gravity and gaining a qualitatively new being. On this occasion, Bulgakov made notes in the book "Imaginations in Geometry", where he was close to the idea expressed by the philosopher that "the area of celestial movements and celestial phenomena" begins, "the world is brand new," on the border of which "space breaks", and "the body loses its length, goes into eternity" [30]. Also, creative consciousness reacts to the supernatural, about which there is noteworthy philological literature [31].

Many researchers have only forgotten to use the concept of "artistic device", because the supernatural in Bulgakov's works appears as an artistic phenomenon [32]. Another thing is the religion of the ancient Persians, which left their mark on the world explanatory reactions of the late ancient world, Central and West Asia, Christianity.

The Zoroastrian conception, which consists in the initial equivalence of the god of light Ahura Mazda and the evil spirit Anhra Mainyu, has been repeatedly noted in The Master and Margarita. The reason for this is the appearance of Anhra Mainyu (in the Indo-European vocalization of Ahriman) on the pages of the novel, and the motive of the omnipotence of the prince of darkness — Woland. Woland develops the idea of dualism of good

and evil, light and shadow before Levi Matvey "Will you kindly consider the question: what would your good do if there were no evil in the world, and what would the earth look like if the shadows disappeared from it?... Don't you want to strip the entire globe of all trees and all life from it because of your fantasy of enjoying the naked light?" [33].

The influence of the teachings of Zarathustra can also be found in the religion of mani, which has absorbed almost all of the then religious beliefs. The same with dualism. Pythagoras also derived a maxim that expressed the basic principle of the world — dualism, in the form of the Unit — the manifestation of the Monad — ruling all things [34].

Symbolist artists, under the direct influence of the ideas of V.S. Solovyov, dreamed of transforming a person and the whole society. They also brought, with the aim of influencing the life of the individual, to the artistic creation and philosophy of the mystical and occult ideas of the era. Fortunately, Nietzsche opoethized philosophy, thereby influencing Russian symbolism — symbolist poets called Nietzsche a "poet", that is, included them in their ranks. The prose of the Symbolists is stylistically close to the early, and especially romantic, Nietzsche, his programmatic composition, "So Said Zarathustra."

And, by the way, Bulgakov could no longer write, not taking into account Nietzsche's upbeat stylistics of the Symbolists, no matter how he related to her. After all, even when challenging someone else's idea, one can learn something. It is important to recall the circle of interests of the young Bulgakovs, which included the Symbolists, the women's issue, and philosophy, and Nietzsche, reported by the sister of the writer N. A. Bulgakova-Zemsky in a letter to K. G. Paustovsky in 1962 [35].

#### 4. CONCLUSIONS

By the time of the publication of Bulgakov's novel, a group of political scientists and philosophers (A. Goldthorp, J. Guzfield, J. Nettle, R. Robertson, N. Smelser) put forward a new theory of world history — not as evolution, but as a combination of the most severe disasters [36]. This view strikingly echoes the theory of Efrosimov, who does not separate the "world unity" of the West from the countries east of Europe. Efrosimov, like the Master, wants peace, because the Communists, led by the Secretary General, won the world. And he "does not understand those who organize humanity" — in the person of Daragan [37]. After all, it's not a human thing to dispose of the fate of others. He "needs one thing — to stop throwing bombs" [5].

So, in our opinion, "peace" for Bulgakov is a departure from active creativity and the expectation of world harmony, or at least a stable order of things. This is a protest against dictatorship and aggression. And at the same time — disagreement with the doctrine of the superman.

And yet, the advent of the superman, as Nietzsche imagines it, becomes apparent from the Christian tradition. It can be regarded as the antipode of the Christian saint. Nietzsche's answer to the Hegelian construction is this: nothing ends, for there is no end at all [12]. The exclamations of the Bulgakov narrators: There was no Petliura, he was a myth, "there was no execution", finally, the statement of Yeshua's student Levi Matvey, supported by the narrator: "There is no death," all this is only a confirmation of Nietzsche's thought of endless return. The philosopher is the same artist who creates not images, but ideas. But what unites them is the creation of myths. It is not surprising that they were mutually enriched by their own myth-making. Neopositivists especially liked to collaborate with writers.

And, what's even more important for us now is to express the belief that the presence of philosophical motives in the work encourages the reader to tune in to a wave of serious pathos, "memories of the future" (There is a von Deniken film with that name about mysterious phenomena of our planet that allow believe in a visit to the Earth by alien aliens), as well as thoughts about the fatefulness of history. One of the researchers noted that Bulgakov's Don Quixote, personifying "absolute spirituality" [10], purity from everyday worries, embodies the outgoing beginning. But back to the idea of the dualism of good and evil, light and shadow, which Woland develops before Lev Matthew: "Would you be kind enough to think about the question ... Would you like to strip the whole globe, having carried all the trees and all living things away from him because of your imagination to enjoy the naked light?"

In any case, Bulgakov used philosophical ideas in his works to "illustrate" with them their attitude to the depicted events. D. Merezhkovsky, M. Gorky, L. Andreev, M. Zoshchenko, A. Platonov and others turned to the same philosophical ideas to the same extent, not to mention G. Hess, R. Musil, A. Camus, S. de Beauvoir, J.-P. Sartre. All of them, one way or another, reflected in their plots and images the philosophical ideas of Nietzsche.

Of course, the work of the philosopher is closely connected with Russian symbolism. Symbolists discover many stylistic and ideological similarities with Nietzsche. Bulgakov, of course, also could not write, not taking into account these phenomena of the era. But the writer was not carried away by Nietzsche, although, through some symbolists — for example, V. Solovyov, V. Bryusov, Vyach. Ivanov, K. Balmont, A. Blok, — in his own way, he accepted the ideas of the philosopher. "It is curious ... to take a closer look at that spiritual image," says V. Solovyov, "who represents Nietzsche in the first era of his life. He is a mystic of the purest type. Art for him is the same religion: it gives knowledge of the absolute, i.e. deities [11] ... His absolute is a creator-artist; demiurge, only without the task of doing good in creation ..." [38]. Behind these words, Bulgakov's Master is guessed, though he overcomes atheism, or rather, the familiar

understanding of God and morality, which, according to Nietzsche, is perverted. Bulgakov, however, represents his protagonist as a model artist.

It remains to add here that Nietzsche's divination fills his existence with a transcendental meaning [39]. Apparently, therefore, K. Jaspers noted that "Nietzsche's thinking is actually determined by Christian interests, although their content has been lost" [40].

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