

ABOUT THE POSSIBLE REASONS FOR THE PROTAGONIST EVOLUTION AT THE END OF THE NOVEL "MRS. GOLOVLEVY'S" BY M. E. SALTYKOV-SHCHEDRIN

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Abstract

Purpose: According to the author of the article the end of the novel “Mrs. Golovlevy's” was the first attempt by M.E. Saltykov-Shchedrin to show the destructive power of spiritual devastation and to prove the possibility of saving the human soul for Eternal Life according to the Christian tradition. The motives of Repentance and spiritual Resurrection appear, which are new to Saltykov’s creativity. This becomes possible both due to “external” factors (Shchedrin’s life events not directly connected with the work) and “internal” factors (expressed in the embodiment of the author's personal traits in Porphyry Golovlev). The article is devoted to the determination of the reasons that influenced the evolution of the protagonist in the final novel.

Methodology: The methodology has been used in the article are the questionnaire filled scrutinizing different articles in the field. All chapters, one by one has been studied thoroughly and analyzed through the investigation.

Results: In this study, it has been attempted to identify the most significant characteristics of the ideological and spiritual foundations of M.E. Saltykov-Shchedrin's creativity, which led to the evolution of the protagonist in the finale of the novel "Mrs. Golovlevs".

Implications/Applications: the application of this study is introducing the novel to its reader and also the further study of its characterization.

Novelty/Originality: The novelty of this study is in the method implemented to prepare the questions in the survey to stimulate the audiences to answer.

Keywords: *Saltykov-Shchedrin, “Mrs. Golovlevy's”, Poetics, The Evolution of the Protagonist Image, Christianity, Repentance.*

INTRODUCTION

Relying both on the artistic works of the writer the purpose of this work is to identify, the epistolary, and on the literary-critical works devoted to his creativity, those worldview and spiritual foundations of M.E. Saltykov-Shchedrin's creation, which led to the evolution of the main character at the end of the novel "Mrs. Golovlevy's".

The main task was to determine the main components of the “external” and “internal” groups of causes that influenced the evolution of Judas' image.

During this problem solution, the historical-literary and comparative methods of scientific research were used.

In his work, the author relied on fundamental research by S.A. Makashin, A.S. Bushmin, E.I. Pokusaev, as well as the works by D.P. Nikolaev, V.V. Prozorov, V.Ya. Kirpotin, Z.T. Prokopenko, K.I. Tyunkin and other Saltykov’s experts.

OVERVIEW OF MATERIAL SECURITY

In December 1876, the chapter “Family Joys” appeared, after which a nearly four-year break occurred in the publication of "Mrs. Golovlevy's": the final chapter of the chronicle was published only in 1880. However, there is no doubt that throughout all this time the writer's thought continued to work, looking for possible options concerning Judas' end. Back in 1876, Saltykov had A.M. Zhemchuzhnikov's and I.A. Goncharov's opinions, who made him think about the outcome of the Golovlevs' tragedy. On September 28th-1876, Zhemchuzhnikov wrote to him: “I am delighted with your Judas. He is, in my opinion, one of your very best creations. This face is completely alive. It is conceived very subtly and expressed profoundly. The personality is unusually typical <...> It has a remarkable but artistic mix of an almost ridiculous comedy with deep tragedy. And these two, apparently opposite, elements are non-separate in him. I would like to continue to laugh, but no, it is impossible; it becomes even terrible: he is terrible. It is also impossible to regard him with constant indignation and anger, because he is indisputably comical, especially when he creates the most moral matter, in his opinion: when he talks about God or prays to Him with the raising of hands”. In response to Goncharov, in the letter dated on December 30, 1876, it is reported that the last of the Golovlevs could "get worse and worse: lose all gains, go to the chicken hut, experience all humiliations and die in the manure pit like a discarded old galosh, but it was impossible for him to perform an inward revolt! The catastrophe can end him, but he can't commit suicide! Is it possible that he will die from alcohol, purely Russian way out of the loop” [Saltykov-Shchedrin, M. E.](#)

But, according to the authors of the introductory article to the "Mrs. Golovlevy's" E.I. Pokusaev and V.V. Prozorov: "By the end of 1876 or the beginning of 1877, that is, by the time of correspondence with Goncharov and Zhemchuzhnikov about Judah, there was an unfinished essay "At the Dock", developing the theme of Judah. Its content and title give an idea of the planned "variant" of Judah's outcome painted in derogatory-comic, humorous tones. From such an end Saltykov refuses.

Not without internal controversy with Goncharov, the satirist chooses a different path.

METHODS

Why does Shchedrin change the completely "natural" and regular final of his hero? Is it only because of the desire to go "his own way", not to follow the scenario proposed by someone else, even by such a great writer as Goncharov? When the last chapter of "Mrs. Golovlevs" was published, the "unexpected" finale surprised many who were accustomed to "usual" Shchedrin. E.I. Pokusaev wrote that "the end of Mrs. Golovlevs" is not actually in Shchedrin style. It dissonates somehow with the general consistently satirical trend of the writer's creativity". ([Pokusaev, E.I., 1963](#)) The possibility of the evolution of Judah was too unexpected. But it was precisely at the end of the 70-ies of the 19th century when Saltykov was finally able to see the way of saving his hero.

This becomes possible for a number of reasons: an important role is played as "external" Shchedrin's life events, not directly related to the work, including the social situation of the time, the writer's illness and his family relationships, and "internal" ones, expressed in the embodiment of the writer of his personal traits in the main character of the novel.

"External" circumstances of M.E. Saltykov-Shchedrin's life, contributing to the emergence of a new finale of the novel

The year 1879, which preceded the creation of the last chapter of "Mrs. Golovlevs," is a very difficult year for the writer. He wrote the following in "The Circle of the Year": "The year comes to an end, the terrible year". ([Saltykov-Shchedrin, M. E.](#)) The sweeping wave of terror (on February 9, the governor prince Kropotkin was killed in Kharkov; Agent Reinstein was killed on February 26; the assassination of gendarme chief General Drenteln on March 13; Emperor Alexander II was shot in the Summer Garden), agitated the whole society and Saltykov was also terrified. In March 1879, he wrote to A.N. Engelhardt the following: "Impossible things are happening here now about these senseless murders and assassinations," ([Saltykov-Shchedrin, M. E.](#)) After the obsession with revolutionary-democratic ideas, having lost his "dreams", by the end of his life Shchedrin becomes a person who perceives violent acts and terror, like something unnatural.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The writer's illness aggravated his perception of reality. S.P. Botkin answered the following about Saltykov's illness: "it is necessary to ask differently: what illness he is not ill with? All his internal organs were in terrible condition, and the doctors wondered how he could still live. ([Saltykov-Shchedrin, M. E., 1957](#)) The same is confirmed by Belogolovy's diagnosis, who observed Shchedrin's health for many years: "There was not a single normal organ in this distended body, and truly they had to be surprised at its survivability: a complex heart defect, age-old bronchitis, which make think about the expansion of the respiratory branches, chronic liver damage and kidneys <...>. The forefront was represented by a number of phenomena testified to the defeat of brain matter, namely - a noticeable weakening of memory regarding what has been done around it in recent days, an absolute impossibility to focus on creative work and write something, a strong jerking of hands and facial muscles, irritability, the former, however, but now its state is beyond all boundaries, etc.". ([Saltykov-Shchedrin, M. E., 1957](#)) The "hell of family life" complicated the emotional imbalance of satirists. The relationship between the aged Saltykov and his younger wife is well known - a strange mixture of hatred, contempt and, oddly enough, a tiny but still bit of love. These "abnormal" relationships poisoned Shchedrin's last years. According to the testimony by S.P. Botkin, "he often talks about death and claims that it's time that no one needs him anymore. Sometimes <...> Elizabeth Apollonna reminds, that it's time to die, Michel" ([Makashin, S.A., 1951](#)). More accurate timeframe for the commencement of such conversations can be established from I.V. Taneev's memories: "ten years before his death (1889 - 10 = the same 1879 - A.K.) her patience was exhausted, and she said to him in a tone of irritation and contempt: "At least you would die soon!" ([Saltykov-Shchedrin, M. E., 1957](#)). And this "family life" gives the writer a terrible feeling: "Marriage is the ulcer and horror of modern life, and if I grumble at my illness, it is only because it does not allow me to work and portray in detail this ulcer, all stages of which I experienced. Marriage is death for people and children, and only one benefit can be brought - to acquaint a person with the highest torture that you can experience. All diseases, all irritations, all failures, all nonsense, all betrayals and vulgarities are because of marriage. If I ever get along with myself, I will write a picture in front of which all atlases with the pictures of venereal diseases will be just nonsense". ([Belogolovy, N., 1897](#))

Autobiographical features of the writer as Judas Golovlev.

The novel "Mrs. Golovlevs" can be called a confession, long kept in the soul, and, finally, spilled on paper. As soon as the last "deterrent" (mother's death) was eliminated, Shchedrin began writing the story about the Golovlev's family.

6 chapters were written for two years (1875–1876). Now they make a separate novel “from the history of one family”. Work is in full swing, no more than three months are spent on each chapter. The final is already close, a little bit is left, only one part that would sum up the whole novel.

And suddenly, instead of it, there was a break for four long years.

Apparently, the author simply does not know what to do next with his main character, because this “doll” became too “humanized”.

The issue about the presence of many features of Saltykov’s father and his older brother Dmitriy in Iudushka's image has been thoroughly analyzed in scholar studies. ([Makashin, S.A., 1951](#)) But this is not what makes the hero close to the writer so that there is a possibility of Judas' image evolution. After all, Arina Petrovna embodies some of the features of the satirist's mother, and Stepka-dunce is the prototype of a talented, deceased Nikolai Saltykov (1821-1856), another brother of the writer. The fact is that Judas also received the biographical features of Shchedrin.

The birth of Mikhail Yevgrafovich Saltykov was certified by the following record in the register book: “In 1826, under No. 2, in the village of Spassky, the Kollezhsky adviser and gentleman Yevgraf Vasilyev Saltykov and his wife Olga Mikhaylovna gave birth to his son Michael on January 15, whom he prayed and baptized on the 17th day of the same month by the priest Ivan Yakovlev with servers; his successor was the Moscow tradesman Dmitry Mikhailov”. ([Zhuravlev N., 1939](#))

In 1887, Shchedrin reproduced this event in the birthday invitation for A.N. Unkovsky: “On January 15, 1826, the collegiate adviser Evgraf Vasilyevich and his wife Olga Mikhailovna Saltykova had a son, Mikhail. The birth was assisted by the grandmother Ulyana Ivanova, Kalyazinsk burgher. The priest from Spas-Ugol village Ivan Yakovlev Novoselov baptized the child; The receivers were the following ones: Uglichny burgher Dmitry Mikhailov Kurbatov and the girl Marya Vasilyevna Saltykova. When he was baptized, Kurbatov prophesied: “This baby will be a female spreader. ([Saltykov-Shchedrin, M. E., 1965](#))

“Remembering later about his (Kurbatov's - A.K.) "prophecy" for the future satirist, Olga Mikhailovna wrote to his son Dmitry:” After performing the baptism, Kurbatov said that Saltykov would be a warrior.” <...> All these data, with a partial change of names, are included in the “Poshekhonsky Antiquity”, into the story about the circumstances of Nikanor Zatrepnzy's birth. Dmitry Mikhailovich Kurbatov, whom the devout Evgraf Vasilievich considered to be a “divine man”, possessing the gift of “divination,” his old acquaintance, interlocutor and correspondent on spiritual themes, was presented here under the name of Dmitry Nikonych Barkhatov. ([Makashin, S.A., 1951](#))

“Reporting to Saltykov’s eldest son, Dmitriy, to enlist in the militia in order to free himself from the captivity of the Vyatka exile, mother Olga Mikhailovna wrote the following in the letter on September 3, 1855: “Perhaps the prediction of the godfather will come true. When the son was baptized, he said that Saltykov would be a warrior.” In this regard, it is possible to clarify, perhaps, the reason for choosing a name for the narrator <in “Poshekhonskaya antiquity”>. Nikanor means “seeing victory” in Greek. ([Saltykov-Shchedrin, M. E., 1965](#))

Shchedrin writes the following about Nikanor Zatrepnzy's birth: “At that time, a burgher, a pietist Dmitry Nikonych Barkhatov was our guest, who was considered to be a shrewd one in the county.

By the way, in my case, the question about a son or a daughter birth was answered by roosters like singing and the following: “Cockerel, cockerel, clawed!”. And when he was asked if the birth would take place soon, he began scooping up honey with a spoon - he was drinking his tea with honey because the sugar was forbidden — and, after the seventh spoon, he said: “Now is the time!” “And so it happened: the mother gave birth on the seventh day,” Uliana Ivanovna later told me. Besides, he predicted my future destiny, that I would conquer many adversaries and be the girlfriend spreader. Thus, when my mother was angry with me, she always said giving a slap: “But I'll lash you, foes conqueror!”

This Dmitry Nikonych was invited to be my recipient”. ([Saltykov-Shchedrin, M. E., 1965](#))

Finally, let us give the story about Iudushka Golovlev's birth: “And she (Arina Petrovna - A.K.) remembered significant details of the time when she was still pregnant by Porphisha. Then a certain pious and shrewd old man lived in their house, whom they called Porphisha the blessed one and whom she always turned to when she wanted to see something in the future. And this very old man, when she asked him if the birth would follow soon and if God would give her a son or a daughter, he did not answer directly, but he shouted like a rooster three times and then muttered:

- Cock, cock! Sharp clawed! The rooster cries threaten the hen; hen - kudah-tah-tah, but it will be late!

And that's it. But after three days (here it is - he shouted three times!), she gave birth to her son (here it is - rooster cockerel!), who was named Porfisha, in honor of the old seer”. ([Saltykov-Shchedrin, M. E., 1965](#))

The comparison of these texts suggests that they are TOO MUCH LIKE so not to be just variations on the same theme - the real birth of Mikhail Yevgrafovich Saltykov. From the prophecy about the future of the child to the image of the seer himself, the situations are almost identical. Therefore, it can be said that the birth of the writer himself and the events connected with this served, in a certain way, as the basis for a story about the birth of Judah Golovlev and Nikanor

Zatrapesny. The parallel between the author and Judah is obvious in this respect. It is also worth noting the possible “nominal” similarities between real and literary characters. The real godfather of Saltykov is called Dmitry MIKHAILOVICH. The future satirist is called MIKHAIL. In the "Poshekhonsky antiquity" the godfather's name is Dmitry NIKONYCH. The godson is called the very consonant name NIKANOR (NIKON). And Judah Golovlev was called "Porphyry", in honor of the old visionary.”

Of course, the parallels between the author and Juda are not exhausted by this.

For Shchedrin, the “highest abnormality” in his family was the mother-established system of separating children into “favorites” and “hateful ones”: “The children in our family (however, I mean, mainly, mother, who gave tone to the whole family) were divided into two categories: loved and hateful”. ([Saltykov-Shchedrin, M. E., 1965](#)) According to S.A. Makashin, “Olga Mikhailovna treated her children far from the same. And the imperiousness and despotism of her nature, combined with all the selfishly low level of acquisitive interests with which the family lived, gave the unevenness of maternal feelings the severe form of family favoritism, which had a corrupting effect on the psychology of children and on their relations to each other”. ([Makashin, S.A., 1951](#))

The inequality of attitudes towards children was also expressed in the inequality of their subsequent material support, in “those immoral handouts, according to Shchedrin’s expression, that was thrown to her pets and hated envied them,” which was considered as the manifestation of parental caress. It went through the whole life of the Saltykov family. “Yes, even now it becomes embarrassing for me,” Shchedrin wrote in “Poshekhonskaya antiquity”, “when I recall these distributions, especially since the division into loved ones and repentants did not stop at the turn of childhood, but passed later, throughout my life, and was reflected in very significant injustices”. ([Saltykov-Shchedrin, M. E., 1965](#))

In “Mrs. Golovlev's” we see the same principle of children separation into “favorites” and “hateful ones”. Here, only Judas is “favorite” among four children. How did he manage to “earn honor”? “From infancy, he loved to cuddle with his dear friend, mother, and sneak a kiss on her shoulder”. Efforts are not wasted, and “in view of such helplessness, her heart could not stand it. And involuntarily her hand was looking for a better piece on a dish in order to give it to a tender son”. ([Saltykov-Shchedrin, M. E., 1965](#))

The notion of Misha Saltykov’s place in the family “hierarchy” somewhere around the “hateful” has taken root in the minds of readers and researchers. This most conveniently fit into the familiar scheme: young Shchedrin is the future satirist, mortally hating all his surroundings and just as much hated by this very environment since early childhood. “All those who wrote about satirist's childhood years, including the contemporaries who personally knew him - Pypin, Mikhailovsky, Skabichevsky, Krivenko, and later researchers of his life and work — right up to Soviet literary critics — built the initial stage of Saltykov’s biography solely on "Poshekhonskaya Antiquity" materials. Thus, the well-known pictures of “home hell” during the satirist childhood years and the figures of his parents full of darkness were created and firmly entered into literary use: cruel whip-cracking mother, a pettifogger and miser who made their own children starve, and spiritually wretched, insignificant, almost weak-minded father”. ([Makashin, S.A., 1951](#))

But the reality, to put it mildly, was somewhat different. Letters, the stories of contemporaries and close people of the writer, recorded from the words of Shchedrin himself, clearly show the position of the young Misha among other children.

So, according to O.I. Zubova, he was "mother's favorite." Olga Mikhailovna "idolized Michael for his mind and abilities and was terribly proud of him." N.A. Belogolovy does not lag behind in this respect. He writes that Olga Mikhailovna “considered Mikhail Evgrafovich her favorite son. ([Belogolovy, N., 1897](#))

The earliest mentions of Misha Saltykov in family correspondence between mother and father create the same image - the most beloved son: “My dear friend of my soul, dear Evgraf Vasilyevich! Misha is so sweet that it's a miracle. He speaks well. he is with me all the time and does not move away, calms me apart from you ... I confess, my friend, I have more peace with him and give him all my kisses.” “<...> the children are all nice, and Misha is so nice that I cannot describe. Imagine, he talks every time, he is constantly with me, and in the morning, when he wakes up, he goes to the dining room to look for me, and asks: “where is mama, I want tea” - and goes to your office (we drink tea there), then comes back to my bedroom where all the joys of dating and kisses <...> he consoles me so much that I forget a little our separation” ([Makashin, S.A., 1951](#)).

According to S.A. Makashin, “among the “favorites” included the elder brother Dmitry and <...> the younger Ilya. And the future satirist belonged to favorites <...> during his childhood”. ([Makashin, S.A., 1951](#))

We see a certain similarity between Judah and his author: both of them have grown up as "pets" - one in real life, the other one in the novel. In the family-like Saltykovskaya, this is not an empty name, it is a label, a significant name. Bearing in mind the character of Olga Mikhailovna, her requirements and the “criteria” of conformity to the image of a “good son”, it can be understood that hypocrisy and bigotry became the “most necessary” character traits of children in this family. Dmitry Evgrafovich and, thus, Iudushka Golovlev can serve as an example of this.

Of course, it cannot be said that Shchedrin also grew from a “pet” into Judah. The refutation to this can be at least the fact that later the creator of the “History of one city”, due to his inflexibility concerning the decision to live his own life,

is “moved” by his mother from “favorites” to the category of “hateful”. When he began to engage in literary activity, Olga Mikhailovna “became disillusioned” in him, and he moved into the category of the most “unkind” of her sons. She called him “a wolf, eager to break the bonds of kinship” in her letters. (Another version of the break was proposed by N. A. Belogolov: Mikhail Yevgrafovich was a favorite son “until his marriage”. ([Belogolovy, N., 1897](#))

But, undoubtedly, the personal impressions of childhood from the state of “pet” left their mark on the soul of the satirist and subsequently merged into the image of the “bloodthirsty and frank boy” from “Mrs. Golovlevs”.

One of the most characteristic features of Judah is the love of “epistolary”. His letters to the “dear friend mother” serve as an excellent indicator of the character's spiritual tissue damage by the “virus” of meanness and chaldeanism. These letters express hypocritical humility, humiliated servility, the desire to show himself as a “kind” and “humble” son for his parents. These letters are also full of respectfully affectionate addresses, a set of pompous words, the ability of the author to pour out the feelings of filial love and devotion with exceptional verbosity and in a pathetic tone, which reveals the character of this “tender” son - an early developed hypocrisy, the ability to flatter, wear the mask of reverence, covering purely practical purposes. The very means of correspondence between parents and children, which Shchedrin resorts to in the “Golovlevs”, has been transferred from the Saltykov's family practice. So the researcher E.M. Makarov cites the parallels between the letters by Iudushka and Dmitry Evgrafovich. ([Makarova, E.M., 1960](#)) The letters by Porfishka the bloodsucker are a vivid example of his ability to “squander poison” and “throw loops”. There are the declarations of love for “dear friend mother”, and ranting about filial debt, and other hypocritical maxims. Undoubtedly, through this character trait of the hero, so brilliantly shown, Shchedrin reveals his attitude to the “frank boy”, namely, the deepest condemnation and disgust.

But when they compare the letters of Iudushka and Saltykov himself to his mother, it is possible to find another similarity between the author and his hero. S.A. Makashin remarked: “Already in the seventies, a stern satirist, whom many were afraid of, even eminent writers, even the most formidable head (civilian general) at major bureaucratic posts, wrote the letters to his mother with the same formulas of unquestioned filial piety, like in childhood. “Dear mama, sorry that I didn’t answer you now, as you demanded...”; “Farewell, dear mamma, I kiss your hands and, wishing you all the best, remain your devoted son” - these are the usual “beginnings and ends” <...> of satirist's correspondence with his mother”. Shchedrin writes about his hero in the following way: “Iudushka <...> assured (his mother - A.K.) in the most exquisite expressions of disinterested filial loyalty: “<...> I kiss your hands with unfellant filial loyalty” “He writes so nicely! Look at his expressions! - she exclaimed, - it was not for nothing that Stepka-dunce called him Iudushka! After all, there is no true word! He is lying! And “dear friend, mamma, and about my problems, and about my cross ... he doesn’t feel anything about it!”. And the phrase like: “I hasten to reply to you, dear kind mother, to your letter”, with such a characteristic appeal to the addressee, can be completely confused with Iudushka's utterance. ([Saltykov-Shchedrin, M. E., 1965](#))

Thus, we see that some features of the hero, Porfiry Golovlev, are also inherent in the author himself. Of course, these are incomparable “figures”, of course, one cannot speak of “interchangeability”. The moments to which attention was drawn indicate that the satirist understands and tries to show the entire harmful force of his family. The spiritual usury of the mother, the unequal division of the estate, all this could not pass for the writer. Maybe that's why the image of Iudushka is so filled with bile, who turned away from the children and betrayed all his close people. Using the example of his family, his brothers, Shchedrin became acquainted with “idleness, unfitness to any business and vainness”, which he derived as characteristic features of the Golovlevs. And the fact that the satirist found the strength to depict honestly the “Golovlevs' chronicle” helped him not only “rise” above himself, but also present the example of his family as the warning to others.

But having passed through the atmosphere of Saltykov's nest, a man could not remain unaffected by his influence. And Shchedrin, as a sensitive person, as a profound psychologist and as a genius writer, having created a terrible image of Iudushka on the pages of the first six chapters of the novel, felt that this character is not only his Father Yevgraf Vasilyevich, his Brother Dmitry, this hero is also the part of his own image. The first impetus caused by the death of the mother and a sense of relative freedom has passed. Now it is time for a sober assessment.

It took Shchedrin four years to see the ways of salvation for his hero, and through this, in part, for himself.

In our opinion, the ending of the novel “Golovlevs” became the first attempt by M.E. Saltykov-Shchedrin not only showing the destructive power of spiritual devastation but also proving the need for repentance for the living human soul according to the Christian tradition. Designating his own path to each of the heroes, the writer, nevertheless, relates it to the Gospel canon. At the same time, he does not so much compare the heroes with the personality of Christ, but rather focuses them on him, considering Christ as the moral “beacon”, and a kind of “starting point” of the value system.

Therefore, new motifs appear for all Saltykov's works: the motive of Repentance, the motive of Sacrifice and Spiritual Resurrection. This becomes possible due to the attempt to change the author's ideal.

There is a change in the predicted final. According to the previously established “relationship” between the author and the characters, Judas, as the carrier of vice, expects, like all Golovlevs, the only destruction after the final development of the “three characteristic features of this family”. But the embodiment gets a completely different approach - Porfiry

Vladimirovich realizes the need for Sacrifice, joins the sacrament of spiritual Repentance and takes physical death for the sake of Eternal Life.

CONCLUSION

In this paper, we tried to identify the most significant characteristics of the ideological and spiritual foundations of M.E. Saltykov-Shchedrin's creativity, which led to the evolution of the protagonist in the finale of the novel "Mrs. Golovlevs".

In the first six chapters of the work Saltykov-Shchedrin follows a "common" relationship with the heroes, all the heroes go through the same scheme of actions, the final point of which is death. The vice, rooted in the heroes, must be destroyed, even though the extermination of the heroes themselves.

In the final chapter of the novel, the evolution of the protagonist image becomes possible for several reasons: they play an important role as "external" events, not directly related to the work of Shchedrin's life; and "internal", "contextual." The search for the new author's ideal makes Saltykov look for new ways to develop the whole plot structure. During that period the New Testament motifs appear in the novel "Lord Golovlevs": the death of Judah and the possibility of the spiritual resurrection for Porfiry Vladimirovich serve as confirmation of this.

In this paper, the tasks are set, the solution of which was conditioned by limited volume to a certain extent. Therefore, much of the great creative M.E. Saltykov-Shchedrin's heritage still requires further study. In our opinion, the study of Saltykov-Shchedrin's poetics from the point of view of his involvement in Orthodox ethics and the presence of explicit and hidden biblical motifs in his work is most interesting for subsequent developments.

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