

論文の英文要旨

論文題目

Luxuriantly Thriving Revolution
—Andrei Platonov's Worldview in Works of the 1920's and 1930's—

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This thesis examines the worldview of Andrei Platonov (1899-1951), a Soviet writer, analyzing works of his from the 1920's and 1930's. In order to explain continuities and changes in his take on the world during this period, I have presupposed a model image that can be found in many of his works: an image of a drifting object (or multiple objects) in a vast space. Objects have clear shapes, while the space doesn't, and thus the understanding of this image requires both physical perception and conceptual imagination. Herein, I refer to this model image as "the image of wafting pollen."

In the first chapter, after reviewing the writer's biography in relation to his creative activities, I show that the "image of wafting pollen" can be found in many of his main works. Although the image appears in different forms in different works, it has four common characteristics: 1) the contrast between an extremely small object and an extremely vast space; 2) the passiveness of the small object, which is moved by some outside force, rather than moving freely by itself; 3) the plant-like characteristics of this object as related to its passiveness (the small object always has plant-like characteristics, although in some works it appears more as a "seed" rather than as a grain of "pollen", showing its power of regeneration, as the "electron" does in *Efirny trakt* 4) the

association between the small object and revolution (the small object has the potential power to change the whole world, not only society but also nature, and such transformation of the world is strongly related to the idea of revolution as presented by such thinkers as Nikolai Fyodorov, whose influence on Platonov is well known).

In the second and third chapters, in order to show the gradual changes in the writer's worldview from the 1920's to the 1930's, I discuss in detail how the "image of wafting pollen" appears in each of five works written in the period from 1926 to 1935: *Efirny trakt*, *Chevengur*, *Kotlovan*, *Vprok* and *Dzhan*. A close analysis of them reveals that the "image of wafting pollen" changes gradually as time goes by. The changes are especially evident when we look at the relationship between nature and the main character in each work, who always appears as an inquirer or a wanderer.

Efirny trakt (1926) is a story of three physicists trying to find a way to multiply substances freely, as they would like. In this work, the "image of wafting pollen" is represented by the "electron" that the physicists try to manipulate. The electron is here described as a life form and as a minimum unit of all substances, in other words, the essential element of nature. Thus, the relationship between human-being and nature is, in this work, nonreciprocal. Man modifies nature without being affected by nature: man is active while nature is passive.

Chevengur (1929) is a story of wanderers looking for a place in which real communism exists. The surrounding nature as described in this work is full of vitality. Aleksandr, one of the wanderers and the main character, considers thoughts on communism as "seeds" that should take strong roots throughout the vast territory of Russia. This image of seeds spreading their roots resembles the "image of wafting pollen." Although the theme of *Chevengur* differs from that of *Efirny trakt*, the relationship between the main character and the surrounding world in each of these two works is similar: detached relationships without interaction. Like the physicists in *Efirny trakt*, Aleksandr in *Chevengur* observes the surrounding world without being affected by it. However, Aleksandr is different from the physicists in his passivity: he only observes the surrounding world (events and people) without involving himself in it.

Kotlovan (1930) is a story about agricultural collectivization and the construction of a huge apartment complex, which well reflects the historical context of the time when the work was written. Here, the "image of wafting pollen" resides in the description of a tuft of grass observed by

Voshchev, the wandering main character. The relationship between man and surrounding nature in this work significantly differs from that in previous works: while animals such as horses and bears take part in agricultural collectivization, of their own free will, liberating themselves from a previous dependence, people (not only the wanderers) are passive, easily affected by nature, and often lack the initiative to create social change.

Vprok (1931) is also a story about collectivization, and we can find here again the figure of a wanderer affected by surrounding nature that we saw in *Kotlovan*. The self-description provided by the narrator-protagonist in this work makes it clear that his self image resembles the “image of wafting pollen.” While in previous works the “image of wafting pollen” was represented by something in surrounding nature that protagonists observe, here it is represented by the narrator-protagonist himself.

Dzhan (1935) is a story of a man who wanders around a desert in Central Asia to fulfill a mission assigned by the USSR: a mission to find and rescue people of an ethnic minority whose tracks are lost in the desert. Although the main character, Chagataev, is not a narrator, he resembles, in his passivity, the narrator-protagonist in *Vprok*. The relationship between man and nature is symbolically described in one episode: two eagles find him sleeping in the desert and injure him in trying to eat parts of his dead-looking body. His relationship with the eagles is exactly the reverse of what we saw in *Efirny trakt* between the physicists and the electron. While in *Efirny trakt* the physicist represents an active and independent figure who manipulates nature, in *Dzhan* the main character represents a passive and vulnerable figure who belongs to nature. It is important that in this episode, Chagataev, defending himself from the eagles with a revolver, also sympathizes with them for their struggle to survive in a severe environment. Here, the relationship between man and animals is reciprocal.

Thus, the gradual changes in Platonov’s worldview in works from the 1920’s to the 1930’s can be explained as a passage from a “unilateral” to a “reciprocal” relationship between man and nature: from “active man who controls nature” to “passive man who only interacts with nature, to which he belongs”. On the basis of this idea, in the fourth chapter I conduct a further analysis of the characteristics of the protagonists in *Kotlovan* and *Vprok* and explain the continuities and changes of Platonov’s take on the world in relation to the historical context of the time.