

## UNDERSTANDING CHRISTOPHER MARLOWE IN RUSSIA OF THE 1820 – 1830-S

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**Abstract:** The article comprehends the circumstances of the appearance of the first responses to Christopher Marlowe's creative work in Russia of the 1820 – 1830-s, notes the earliest evidence of acquaintance with one of his works – “The Tragical Story of Doctor Faustus” – in A.I. Turgenev's diary entry of July 14, 1825. The significant role in acquaintance of the Russian readers with Marlowe's creative work belongs to the publication of the tale “The Poet's Life” by the German writer L. Tieck in the literary and scientific journal “Ateney” in October – November, 1829. It presented the English playwright as a rough genius, person with huge life power and energy. In spite of many leading writers' skeptical attitude to the journal “Ateney” and its publisher M.G. Pavlov the publication of “The Poet's Life” caused live responses, in particular, in “A Review of the Russian Literature for 1829” by I.V. Kireyevsky, became one of the sources of early acquaintance with Shakespearean contemporaries' creative activity in Russia. Disputes concerning possible Marlowe's traditions in A.S. Pushkin's creative work are comprehended as a debatable question (“<Sketches to the Plot about Faustus>”, “The Covetous Knight”).

**Keywords:** Christopher Marlowe, dramaturgic art, tradition, comparative study, literary criticism, reception, literary translation, cross-cultural communication, Russian-English historical, cultural and literary communications.

### INTRODUCTION

Numerous works of the outstanding Russian philologists and art critics are devoted to the study of Shakespeare's creative work and theatre of his era. The layer of the materials comprehending the activity of Shakespeare's contemporaries and direct predecessors, whose names are mentioned, in most cases, in the context of their great compatriot's creative work, is much poorer. At the same time, without understanding peculiarities of art perception of the world in Christopher Marlowe's, Robert Greene's, Thomas Kyd's, Ben Johnson's works it is impossible to comprehend properly neither dramaturgic art of the Elizabethan time as the unique phenomenon in the history of the world literature and theatre, nor heritage of Shakespeare as of the most considerable playwright of the era.

### LITERATURE REVIEW

Many Russian literature researchers and literary critics, in particular, S.F. Uvarov, V.P. Botkin, A.M. Skabichevsky, P.I. Veinberg, N.V. Gerbel, Alexander N. Veselovsky, Alexey N. Veselovsky, F.G. de La Bart, V.V. Chuiko, P.I. Zhitetsky, F.F. Zelinsky, N.P. Dashkevich, P.O. Morozov, L.Yu. Shepelevich, F.A. Brown, E.V. Anichkov, S.A. Vengerov, N.K. Bokadorov, V.K. Muller, S.S. Dinamov,

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K.N. Derzhavin, A.A. Anikst, L.E. Pinsky, R.M. Samarin, Yu.F. Shvedov, etc. referred to Christopher Marlowe's creative work in the XIXth – at the beginning of the XXIst century. Nevertheless, N.I. Storozhenko's and A.T. Parfyonov's works were the most significant, crucial researches, which allowed to reconsider cardinaly the attitude to Marlowe in Russia having predetermined it for many years.

A Shakespearean scholar N.I. Storozhenko having completely comprehended the process of evolution of Marlowe's creative work in his monographs "Shakespeare's Predecessors. An Episode from the History of the English Drama during the Elizabethan Era. Lilly and Marlowe" (1872) (Storozhenko, 1872) and "Robert Greene, his Life and Works" (1878) pointed to the significance of the English playwright as a reformer of the national school of dramaturgic art, noted his aspiration to cause events with internal motives put in the forefront by characters' psychological features. Having for the first time formulated the complete concept of perception of Marlowe's dramaturgic heritage N.I. Storozhenko presented Marlowe both the age-mate and the direct predecessor of Shakespeare, who caused the subsequent searches and findings of the outstanding playwright; rehabilitation of the moral image of Marlowe, who had traditionally been exposed to condemnation of critics and researchers, was N.I. Storozhenko's merit too.

A.T. Parfyonov offered another concept of evolution of Marlowe's creative work in a number of his works (an introductory article and comments to a one-volume edition of Marlowe's works (1961) (Parfyonov, 1961), monograph "Christopher Marlowe" (1964) (Parfyonov, 1964), thesis for a degree of Candidate of Philology "Christopher Marlowe's Tragedies" (1965) (Parfyonov, 1965), articles "Marlowe, Shakespeare, Johnson as Contemporaries" (1975) (Parfyonov, 1975), "Christopher Marlowe and Legends of the East and West" (1981) (Parfyonov, 1980), "A Legend of Faustus and Humanists of the Northern Renaissance" (1981) (Parfyonov, 1981), "Ben Johnson and his Comedy "Volpone" (1982) (Parfyonov, 1982), etc.). He emphasized the emergence of a humanistic ideal of free development of the harmonious personality, humanistic pathos of finding of new knowledge, skepticism in relation to dogmas; the researcher saw the connection of archaic features of medieval theatre with crisis Renaissance ones in Marlowe's creative work, conditionality of motives and images with the playwright's interest to the English plebs' state, his sympathy for declassed sectors of society.

Recently we have published a number of works devoted to understanding the Russian literary, critical and translation reception of Christopher Marlowe's creative work; in particular, we have introduced earlier unknown M.M. Morozov's and A.K. Dzhivelegov's articles, I.A. Kashkin's, G.A. Shengeli's, T.L. Shchepkina-Kupernik's translations, materials connected with preparation and publication of Marlowe's books in the publishing house "Khudozhestvennaya literatura" (Zhatkin & Ryabova, 2014; Zhatkin & Ryabova, 2015; Zhatkin & Ryabova, 2016).

## MATERIALS AND METHODS

Responses to Christopher Marlowe's creative work in the Russian literary criticism, journalism, and also the Russian writers' original works, diaries and correspondence became the material for the analysis. The material chosen has chronological restriction – the 1820 – 1830-s; the subsequent time facts are used only in the comparative purposes.

Methodologically, the research is based on fundamental works of classics of the Russian literature and art study Alexander N. Veselovsky, Alexey N. Veselovsky, V.M. Zhirmunsky, A.K. Dzhivelegov, M.P. Alekseyev, N.I. Balashov, M.L. Gasparov, A.A. Anikst, Yu.D. Levin, V.E. Bagno, A.V. Bartoshevich, researches in the field of the theory and history of the Russian literary translation and translated fiction (A.V. Fedorov, E.G. Etkind, F.G. Ovchinnikova, A.N. Girivenko, L.L. Nelyubin, G.T. Khukhuni, etc.), the Russian-English literary, historical and cultural communications (G.N. Boyadzhiyev, L.E. Pinsky, D.N. Zhatkin, A.A. Ryabova (Zhatkin & Ryabova, 2015; Zhatkin & Ryabova, 2016), etc.), the history of the English literature (N.I. Storozhenko, M.M. Morozov, A.A. Smirnov, R.M. Samarin, Yu.F. Shvedov, G.V. Anikin, N.P. Mikhalskaya, A.T. Parfyonov, A.N. Gorbunov, N.E. Mikeladze, etc.). In the course of the analysis cultural and historical, comparative and historical, historical and typological, historical and genetic approaches, as well as methods of the problem, comparative analysis of works of art were used.

## RESULT

The first evidence of acquaintance with Christopher Marlowe's creative work, in particular, "The Tragical Story of Doctor Faustus") in Russia can be considered the diary entry of "the Russian European" A.I. Turgenev made on July 14, 1825: "Wittenberg – once the first central point of the German education. – "Would I had never seen Wittenberg, never read book" (Marlowe's Faustus?)" (Turgenev, 1964).

A more wide range of the Russian readers were able to learn about Christopher Marlowe from the German writer Ludwig Tieck's tale "The Poet's Life" ("Dichterleben", 1825) published in Przhevalsky's translation in the literary and scientific journal "Ateney" in October – November, 1829 (Tieck, 1829; Tieck, 1835); in this story Marlowe acted as one of main characters along with Shakespeare and Robert Greene. In the chapter of the fundamental "History of the German Literature" devoted to Ludwig Tieck N.I. Balashov characterized the tale "The Poet's Life", which became the result of long Shakespearean occupations of the German author, as a story written with enthusiasm and confirming "the ability, new for the Romantic writer, to collect and reproduce many positive facts of the history". At the same time, Tieck, who achieved formal truthfulness of descriptions, "didn't understand specifics

of Renaissance and unwillingly transferred his idea of the German Romanticism onto this era". Having brought Marlowe (along with Greene) as Shakespeare's predecessor to the forefront, Tieck presented "rebelliousness of the Stürmer, or Jena Romantic" in his image considering "that the person proclaiming himself a poet towers over the world; concepts "virtue", "vice" become empty words for him". Being disappointed in Romanticism Tieck represented Marlowe's creative and life tragedy as something natural having opposed him Shakespeare – a simple national copyist with features of Philistine "prudence", preacher of a compromise with the strong of the world.

In V.G. Zusman's research "L. Tieck's Novelette "The Poet's Life" (To a Question of the Shakespearean Tradition)" published in 1987 it is noted that Marlowe and Shakespeare are represented as absolute antipodes by L. Tieck. Marlowe is presented as a rough genius, artist-titan, person with majestic appearance, sharp gestures and a hasty tread; all details of his portrait "transfer the feeling of huge life force, energy bursting forth" (Zusman, 1987). Noting that L. Tieck puts "the Stürmer's concept of art into Marlowe's mouth <...>," (Zusman, 1987) V.G. Zusman especially emphasizes Marlowe's perception of creativity as noble madness, sensuality awakening. In L. Tieck's novelette Marlowe appears "a superman bringing poetry flame to people" (Zusman, 1987), he found an opportunity to talk to antique gods, rose from the national to the universal. Recognizing that Marlowe's image in the German writer's work was far-fetched in many respects V.G. Zusman, at the same time, couldn't but see also "some historical features" (Zusman, 1987), among which there is rejection of Puritan morals, Puritans' aspiration to "clarification" of poetry.

"Ateney" published bimonthly in 1828 – 1830 in Moscow by M.G. Pavlov and having, starting with 1829, a subtitle "The journal of sciences, arts and belles-lettres with a supplement "Notes for farm, factory and plant owners" printed original and translated popular scientific articles, including researches in the Old Russian folklore and Eastern literature; verses, prose, dramaturgic compositions, works on the theory of literature of writers from S.T. Aksakov's circle – A.A. Shakhovskoy, M.N. Zagoskin, A.I. Pisarev, M.A. Dmitriyev; translated fiction of writers of the "Romantic school" W. Irving, J.F. Cooper, L. Tieck. From the very beginning "Ateney" had the reputation, to a certain extent, of a conservative edition, which referred critically to Modern Romantics' creative work, but, at the same time, did not explicitly defend any ideological principles, aspired (starting with 1829) to reconciliation of Classicism and Romanticism (Zamotin, 1911), occupied "its own niche of the "professorial" journal in the Russian journalism" (Shchemelyova, 1999).

In his article "Ludwig Tieck and the Russian Romanticism" (Danilevsky, 1975) R.Yu. Danilevsky emphasized the systematic nature of interest of "Ateney" in L. Tieck's creative work shown in its publication of the translations of the novelette

“A Scientist” (“Der Gelehrte”) made by unidentified translators (Tieck, 1828), a part of the biographic tale “A Holiday in Kenelworth, or Shakespeare’s Childhood” (“Das Fest zu Kenelworth”) (Tieck, 1829), and also the fragments from the play fairy tale “Fortunat” translated by A.A. Shishkov (Tieck, 1829), and a full text of the fairy tale “Elves” (“Die Elfen”) (Tieck, 1830). Concerning the work about Shakespeare R. Yu. Danilevsky specifically noted that it was different, in comparison with one translated by A.A. Shishkov, “late” Tieck, “more interesting to readers, according to the publisher of the journal”, especially taking into account that in it “the interest in a subject of the narration definitely overshadowed the interest in the author” in full accordance with a genre of the fictionalized biographies (Danilevsky, 1975).

E.V. Sokolova, S.V. Turayev and I.V. Kartashova, the authors of the article “A Novel “Vittoria Accorombona” and its Author” published in the supplement to the edition of Ludwig Tieck’s well-known novel in the academic series “Literary Monuments” emphasized the significance of the late post-Romantic period in the German writer’s creative work owing to his enthusiasm for the English theatre, Shakespeare and his contemporaries (Sokolova, et. al., 2002). At that time he translated Christopher Marlowe, Robert Greene, John Webster, etc., studied the history and literature of England, got acquainted with the English theatrical tradition, comprehended great Shakespeare’s creative work in the context of his era considering an Elizabethan scene to be the ideal theatre of all times and peoples. Ludwig Tieck not only took noticeable part in the translation of Shakespeare’s creative heritage into German (what is in detail comprehended by V.G. Zusman, who came to a conclusion that Tieck’s translations of “The Tempest” and “Pericles, Prince of Tyre” are the “remakes”, which are made “in the way set by the sense of the original” (Zusman, 1993; Zusman, 1988), but also he published the collection of translations of “Elizabethans” “The Old English Theatre” in 1811.

Was A.S. Pushkin able to get acquainted with the publication of the translation of “The Poet’s Life” in “Ateney”? Undoubtedly, M.G. Pavlov’s journal was well-known for both A.S. Pushkin, and poets of his circle. Starting with its first edition (1828) “Ateney” designated a clear anti-Pushkin position expressed in the article of M.A. Dmitriyev, who carrying out the analysis of the fourth and fifth chapters of “Eugene Onegin” came to the conclusion that in this work “there were neither characters, nor action” [34, p. 89]; subsequently (in 1829), this position was significantly softened in M.A. Maksimovich’s essay “About Pushkin’s Poem “Poltava” in the Historical Relation” aimed to reconciliation of different literary directions, which had to be promoted by people “skilled in criticism of the graceful” [35, p. 502]. The attitude of poets of Pushkin’s circle to “Ateney” was corresponding; it was distinctly transferred in N.M. Yazykov’s message to “A.N.V.<ulf>” dated by the end of May – the beginning of June, 1828: “<...> What Atheney? / A sophisticated and philosophical journal, / Pushkin’s renegade, villain, / “Good-minded” Muscovite” (Yazykov, 1988).

At the same time, partly due to the publications of “Ateney”, Shakespeare was understood by a part of the Russian poets through a prism of Ludwig Tieck’s perception of the world; I.V. Kireyevsky, in particular, paid attention to it in “A Review of the Russian Literature for 1829”, for the first time published in the almanac “Dennitsa” in 1830, while characterizing the mystery “Izhorsky” written by Pushkin’s lyceum friend V.K. Kukhelbecker and fragmentarily (three scenes) printed unsigned in A.A. Delvig’s almanac “Podsnezhnik” in 1829: “We consider this work to belong to the German school, in spite of some imitation of Shakespeare, because Shakespeare here is more Tieck’s Shakespeare, German, than real Shakespeare, English Shakespeare” (Kireyevsky, 2006). Subsequently, Yu.D. Levin noted the “insight” of I.V. Kireyevsky, who saw the connection “with the German interpretation of Shakespeare” (Levin, 1965) in “Izhorsky”.

Among the translations of Tieck’s works, for the first time printed in “Ateney”, A.S. Pushkin was unambiguously familiar only with the translation of the play fairy tale “Fortunat” made by A.A. Shishkov; this acquaintance took place due to receiving A.A. Shishkov’s gift – a four-volume book “The Selected German Theatre” issued by him in the University printing house in Moscow; the third volume contained “Fortunat”. It is known that the first volume with the letter was sent to A.S. Pushkin by A.A. Shishkov on October 6, 1831, the subsequent ones, probably, were brought in a similar way and also preserved in the poet’s library (Modzalevsky, 1910). A.S. Pushkin’s response to “The Selected German Theatre” and, specifically, to “Fortunat” remained in his letter to M.P. Pogodin of July 11, 1832: “I didn’t answer Shishkov and didn’t thank him. Hug him for me. God grant him health for Fortunat!” (Pushkin, 1996). The history of A.S. Pushkin’s acquaintance with L. Tieck’s “Fortunat”, being in detail considered in V.G. Zusman and S.V. Sapozhkov’s article (Zusman, & Sapozhkov, 1989), gives a reason for assumptions of a little earlier acquaintance of the Russian poet with his German contemporary’s creative work. For example, in August, 1830 on pages of A.A. Delvig’s “Literaturnaya Gazeta” he could read the anonymous translation of Tieck’s novelette “A Stranger” (“Der Fremde”), which kept characteristic psychologism of the original and showed undoubted easing of “terrible” fantasy features.

Anyway, a four-volume book “*Œuvres complètes de L. Tieck. Contes d’Artiste. Première livraison. Shakespeare et ses contemporains*” (Paris, 1832) cut, but without any notes, was preserved in A.S. Pushkin’s library; it represents the full translation of the German text of “The Poet’s Life” into French (Modzalevsky, 1910). And it means that if A.S. Pushkin didn’t read about Christopher Marlowe on pages of “Ateney” in 1829, he did it a bit later having referred to the French edition of L. Tieck’s work. In his article “A.S. Pushkin and the Last Edition of his Compositions” (1855) A.V. Druzhinin named other sources, due to which the great Russian poet probably “got familiar with the works of playwrights of the Elizabethan era,



Shakespeare's predecessors" – Charles Lamb's extracts, William Hazlitt's lectures, materials of influential journals "Quarterly Review" and "Edinburgh Review", to which A.S. Pushkin regularly referred (Druzhinin, 1865).

## DISCUSSION

The subject of possible Marlowe's traditions in A.S. Pushkin's works is the most debatable one within the period of literary development in Russia considered.

In 1933 in "Zvenya" G.I. Glebov, the author of the article "Pushkin and Goethe", tried to correlate Pushkin's "<Sketches to the Plot about Faustus>" of 1825 (Pushkin, 1994) with contents of Christopher Marlowe's tragedy "The Tragical Story of Doctor Faustus" (1589): "It is possible that an idea to describe Faustus's visit to hell was born in his <Pushkin's> mind due to that fragment of Marlowe's tragedy, where Faustus expresses his desire to see hell and then return on the earth, and Lucifer promises it to him. There is no such scene in Goethe's "Faust". There is no Faustus's visit to hell in Marlowe's tragedy – Lucifer's promise remained unfulfilled. Then this episode could be of more interest to Pushkin" (Glebov, 1933). G.I. Glebov's conclusion, like one deprived of logic, was estimated in M.P. Alekseyev's article "An Unnoticed Folklore Motive in Pushkin's Draft Sketch", for the first time printed in 1979 (Alekseyev, 1979), and then, in 1987, included into the scientist's collection of the selected works (Alekseyev, 1987). M.P. Alekseyev separately noted the circumstance that "Pushkin's acquaintance with the text of Marlowe's scene mentioned was unbelievable and impossible to be proved by anybody" (Alekseyev, 1987). Analyzing Pushkin's plan of "The Papess Joanne" Yu.G. Oksman expanded the circle of comparison to Faustian problems and images, having suggested to consider not only J.W. Goethe's drama work, but also "The Tragical Story of Doctor Faustus" of Marlowe and the national book "The Story of Doctor Johann Faustus, Famous Sorcerer and Practitioner of Black Magic" of J. Spiess known to A.S. Pushkin in the shortened French alteration of 1776 (Oksman, 1935).

According to D.P. Yakubovich, subsequently supported by N.M. Kopyttseva, while writing "The Covetous Knight" A.S. Pushkin could pay attention to an image of the Jew usurer offering poison in "The Jew of Malta" (1589) by Christopher Marlowe (act III, scene 4), who had made an attempt to give the tragic lines and national shape to the miserly before Shakespeare (Yakubovich, 1935; Kopyttseva, 1988). In the book "Pushkin's Poetry, or a Versatile Palimpsest" O.A. Proskurin pointed to the adjective "covetous" ("greedy, avaricious, self-interested, miserly, stingy, pathologically thrifty") used in a self-exposing monologue of the villain Barabbas, the character of Christopher Marlowe's play "The Jew of Malta" who called himself "a covetous wretch", and assumed acquaintance of A.S. Pushkin with Christopher Marlowe's work, because he used the name of the mythical English original of "Shenstone's tragicomedy "The Covetous Knight" in a subtitle of "the

little tragedy” “The Covetous Knight” (Proskurin, 1999). In his article “About a Subtitle of “The Covetous Knight” A.A. Dolinin criticizes O.A. Proskurin’s opinion noting that “such pejorative phrases, where “covetous” means “greedy, avaricious”, were common in the English literature of the XVIth – XVIIth centuries”; the very peculiarity of Pushkin’s word usage is that “covetous” gets double meaning “miserly/greedy” and is a part of an occasional oxymoron” (Dolinin, 2007). The word “covetous” was used in the same meaning in W. Scott’s essay “Chivalry” that, according to J.Th. Shaw’s assumption, is correlated to Shakespeare and Marlowe’s tradition (Shaw, 2002).

According to A.A. Dolinin, “the probability of Pushkin’s acquaintance with “The Jew of Malta” before 1830 is insignificantly small”, as this tragedy, remaining unknown behind the borders of Britain, hadn’t been translated by then neither into the Russian language, nor into the French one, “Pushkin could hardly read it in the original without an intermediary translation, because of numerous lexical, grammatical and spelling deviations from the modern norm in the text of the XVIth century and an extremely complicated baroque style of Marlowe” (Dolinin, 2007).

## CONCLUSION

Initial interest in Christopher Marlowe’s creative work in Russia arose at the end of the 1820-s and was caused by the publication of the translation of the German Romantic L. Tieck’s tale “The Poet’s Life” (“Dichterleben”), which presented Shakespeare and writers of his time. This tale, as well as other works of the German author devoted to the Elizabethan era, Shakespeare, his predecessors and contemporaries, actively printed on pages of the Russian periodical press in the 1820 – 1830-s, influenced greatly some representatives of the native Romantic literature, in particular, V.K. Kukhelbecker while he was creating a mystery “Izhorsky”. The four-volume full translation of the German text of “The Poet’s Life” into French cut and preserved in A.S. Pushkin’s library isn’t a direct evidence of the great Russian poet’s acquaintance with Christopher Marlowe’s biography and creative work; in this connection, hypotheses of some researchers, who saw Marlowe’s traditions in Pushkin’s works – “<Sketches to the Plot about Faustus>” and “The Covetous Knight”, are doubtful.

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