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## ULTERIOR LEXICAL MARKERS OF SACREDNESS IN BORIS GREBENSCHIKOV'S SONG LYRICS (A LINGUOCONCEPTUAL ANALYSIS)

**ABSTRACT:** The study presented in this article is based on a corpus of 200 songs by a Russian poet and singer Boris Grebenschikov. The cognitive space of sacredness is one of the key spaces in the artistic discourse worldview of Boris Grebenschikov. The authors emphasize that the sacredness in the interpretation of the Russian poet does not relate to any specific religion. It is universal and mystical but, at the same time, it is emphasized anthropocentrically. The authors demonstrate the specifics of the poet's artistic depiction of sacred phenomena, physical objects and substances through explicit and implicit lexical nominations and descriptions. Descriptions of impossible or unknown spatial-temporal phenomena, events, and hidden knowledge are referred to as markers of the implicit representation of the sacred. The same goes with the names of especially important substances, e.g., salt, water, dust and unnatural phenomena. The linguoconceptual analysis of Grebenschikov's idiostyle aimed at uncovering the cross-cutting motives and characteristics of the poet's entire work is of a functional and pragmatic nature.

**KEYWORDS:** Boris Grebenschikov, idiostyle, sacredness, lexical markers, hidden semantics, song lyrics, linguoconceptual analysis

### 1. Introduction

Boris Grebenschikov (transcribed also as Grebenshikov or Grebenshchikov) is one of the few cult figures of modern Russian culture, recognized in the public sphere by the abbreviation BG. In the British and American mass media, he is also called "Boris Purushottama Grebenshikov", "the Russian rock legend", "the Bob Dylan of Russia", "the founding father of Russian rock" or "the grandfather of Russian rock". Nevertheless, almost every encyclopedic article contains the phrase "known simply as BG". These two letters hide a multi-faceted personality: a rock musician, a long-time leader of the *Aquarium* rock band, a songwriter, a bard, a poet, a novelist, a philosopher, and a translator of philosophical texts.

M. Bowden (1998, 36) writes about Grebenschikov and his songs: “the quiet, intense artist and his subtle, often mystical lyrics”. One of the predominant features of BG’s work is the richness of the lyrics of his songs with markers of sacredness, transcendence, and metaphysics; but, at the same time, the sphere of sacredness in BG’s texts is deeply anthropocentric. It seems that the mystical, divine, metaphysical entities do not exist in some sort of a transcendent space, but in the soul (consciousness) of the person themselves. Talking about divine or sacred rock stars very often arouses suspicion or apprehension of insincerity. However, this is not the case with BG. D. Schabner (2006) put it very accurately: “There is a lightness in Grebenschikov’s tone, a playfulness in his voice that makes what could be just more unbearable pompousness from yet another deluded pop star seem like, well, common sense”.

The article is devoted to two most interesting components of BG’s authorial style – the sacralization of the world, and the implications of sacred content both in the semantics of his poetic texts and in the linguistic means of his idiostyle.

## 2. Material and methods

We do not limit ourselves to the traditional linguistic analysis of individual BG’s texts, because we are primarily interested in his style, and therefore not only the invariant system of linguistic means of artistic expression but, above all, the invariant system of precedent units of a cognitive nature as a collection of concepts, motifs, images and judgments characteristic of his artistic thinking. For this purpose, we used the method of non-selective collection of examples (i.e., all the lyrics of BG’s songs that have been made public so far have been analyzed), and then a conceptual analysis of their semantics was carried out to establish concepts and judgments of a sacred nature. The most interesting research material is the ways of covert explication of sacred contents, because they are quite often interpreted by the audience, but also by many researchers, as explications of profane meaning. In the material of over 200 texts, we have distinguished and described the most important conceptual and linguistic units of the implicit expression of the sacralization of the world by the Russian rock-poet.

When analyzing the image of the sacred sphere in BG’s compositions, first of all, special attention should be drawn to many markers of sacredness that appear in the titles of his works. In total, in 50 of his texts, the titles directly indicate sacred beings and phenomena. This is both a direct reference to divine persons and entities (e.g., “The Lord knows best”, “Silver of My Lord”, “God of Zimogors”, “St. Herman”, “Angel”, “Ivan Bodhidharma”, “Black brahmana”, “The Hierophant”, “Anthem to Anchorite”, etc.), and a reference to mystical, fairy-tale, or mythical

phenomena (e.g., “Hunting for unicorns”, “Sirin, Alkonost, Gamayun”, “Immortal Sister Ho”, “Little Fairy”, “Faun”, etc.).

Most of the titles have evident sacral orientation, as indicated by the lexemes used in them from the appropriate thematic group (“On the road to Damascus”, “The shadow of your wing”, “The Son of the Carpenter”, “Eagle, Taurus, and Lion”). Some of these titles contain cultural allusions and metaphors that indicate their transcendent meaning. However, some of the mentioned names may raise doubts, as they contain lexical units whose sacred meaning emerges only after analyzing the text of the song (“Secret Uzbek”, “The rider between heaven and earth”, “Nikita Ryazansky”, “Word of Paisius the Apiarist”, “Ficus religiosa”) or even after examining the entirety of Grebenschikov’s work (“Dead sailors don’t sleep”, “Ice Ax Sutra”, “From a shining void”). Similar markers appear in the very album titles of Aquarium, throughout BG’s work: “The Temptation of the Holy Aquarium” (1973) “Our Life from the Viewpoint of Trees” (1987/2011), “Hyperborea” (1997), “Bardo” (1997), “Lilith” (1997), “Refuge” (1998), “Prayer and Fasting” (1998) and “Oracle of the Divine Bottle” (1998/2010).

These are the only explicit allusions to the world of a transcendent being. In many cases, the sacred or mystical meaning of song titles and album titles becomes apparent only after listening to them or reading the lyrics. If we take into account the meaning of Grebenschikov’s song texts, it is easier to name those in which the sacred and spiritual moment is completely absent than those in which it is manifested to one degree or another. After a prior analysis of the corpus consisting of over 450 song lyrics, we have selected 200 for this article. All the examples from the lyrics are given according to the book of BG’s songs (Grebenschikov 2007), while all newer texts are cited according to the information portal about the Aquarium band (Aquarium. Handbook).

In these songs, the semantics of the sacral has a sufficiently transparent representation. It does not imply that other songs do not have it, but the disclosure to reveal it would require extensive descriptions. The main substantive limitation of the material for this article is that we purposefully did not consider lingual sacred concepts and mystical persons (entities), focusing only on the sole sacred reality (space-time, events, occurrences, knowledge) as well as sacred phenomena (substances and things).

### **3. Results and discussion**

#### **3.1. Theoretical reflections**

Many researchers pay attention to the cognitive structure of the poet’s work, connected with the phenomena of sacredness. However, for some reason, most of them focus only on religious (or even only on Christian or Orthodox) themes

in his works (see: Logacheva 1996; Smirnov 1999; Shogentsukova 2000). It is quite true that “religious issues are, one might say, a constant of BG’s creativity and his songs are literally ‘stitched’ with biblicism, which are fragments of the main religious text in European culture – the Bible” (Eremin 2011, 12-13), and that “if we set a goal and prescribe Grebenschikov for the ‘Taoist’ or ‘Buddhist’ departments, more precisely, for the department of the so-called ‘new religious movements’ (NRM), we will not lack evidence” (ibidem, 20).

Grebenschikov did repeatedly emphasize his commitment to Christianity (and specifically to Orthodoxy), Buddhism, Taoism, Neo-Hinduism, Rastafarianism, and showed interest in Celtic Druidism, Siberian Shamanism, as well as other mystical teachings and magical practices. Moreover, the poet does it almost at the same time, emphasizing his transcendent universalism and pointing out that all these spiritual teachings are just different forms of understanding the transcendent. In the song “Sycamore” we hear: *I drink to loyalty to all the gods without names*. The transcendent position of Grebenschikov, and to an even greater extent the position of the poet BG (we tend to distinguish between these two personalities functionally), is much broader than any religious stance; and it is not inductively dialogical, but deductively universal, generalizing. He calls this worldview mystical. However, as always, one should carefully read the meaning of the used terms, without relying on their encyclopedic meanings: “There are no restrictions in the life of a mystic person; everything in him is balance, reason, love, and harmony. The mystic person accepts any religion, and yet he is above what people call religion”.<sup>1</sup> The concepts of the mystical and the sacred entities in Boris Grebenschikov’s artistic worldview are much broader than those used in individual religious teachings.

D. Rumyantsev (2008) quite accurately captured this feature of the poet’s worldview, calling it the “concept of love”:

BG does not adhere to a specific creed, as he, himself has repeatedly said in interviews. He is interested in all the ‘non-everyday manifestations of life’. Hence, such a religious eclecticism. [...] That is, the rock musician has long gone beyond confessional limits and developed a universal concept for himself, which is especially vividly implemented in the latest albums of ‘Aquarium’. This idea is the key to Grebenschikov’s special [...] worldview. I would call it the ‘concept of love’ (Rumyantsev 2008).

The sacred entities in BG’s texts are not only divine, as we have already noted above, but also any otherworldly, mystical, magical, fairy-tale, i.e., transcendent as such. At the same time, the phenomena and entities of different religions or transcendent images of the world in these texts quite organically coexist in a single sacred space, and the latter are closely connected with the natural world and often penetrates the ordinary world of the profane, i.e., in the public sphere.

<sup>1</sup> <http://aquarium.ru/misc/aerostat/aerostat62.html> (accessed 18.12.2020).

This last circumstance complicates the recognition of BG's artistic image of sacredness. The semantic representation of the sacred sphere, in contrast to the analogous representation of all the other cognitive spaces, also presents the complexity that, when it comes to nature, human feelings and thoughts, or about social relations, the subject of artistic representation in BG's works operates with more or less explicit markers in the form of lexical nominates of natural facts, artifacts, or info-facts indicating the anthropic character of the depicted. In the case of the sacred-spiritual sphere, there are relatively few such markers. These are, first of all, nominees of sacred and mythical entities (the God, the Lord, an angel, an archangel, a cherub, a devil, a demon, a mermaid, a faun, a unicorn, a sirin, etc.), as well as nominees of various religious persons, mystical objects and phenomena (saints, Buddha, Bodhisattva, Mahasiddha, Bodhidharma, Moses, Seraphim, Brahman, a hermit, a priest, a patriarch, a pope, a lama, a guru, heaven, Eden, Hell, a church, an altar, a cross, Mahamudra, Kagyu, nirvana, samsara, etc.).

Still, much more often and more profusely, BG uses ordinary vocabulary or descriptive techniques to depict transcendental phenomena. Many such presentations have the character of implicit explications and require an appeal to the subtext meaning, and, in some cases, also a special interpretation. In general, it should be emphasized that the peculiarity of Russian rock is that it is not so much music as poetry, requiring a close attention paid to the text. S. McGrane in a BBC Culture article noted: "Tending towards the literary, rock in Russia is an art form practiced by intellectuals" (McGrane 2014).

The last thing one can say about BG's texts or Grebenschikov's work is that it is "firstly, Orthodoxy and only secondly, art" (Solovyov 1990), even if you use "religious" instead of the word "Orthodoxy". Religious and confessional differences in BG's vision or understanding of the divine become unimportant, cf. in his song: "Buddha wanders round Golgotha and exclaims 'Allahu Akbar'" ("The Great Railway Symphony"). At the same time, God and transcendent being, in the works of the poet, appear precisely as proper human values, characteristics, and essential properties of the spiritual sphere of experience. Life ceases to revolve around God. There is an opportunity to fully focus on human happiness – on the human soul because "It is known that the soul has the power of a nuclear bomb, but around it dance the Lama, priest, and Rabbi of the hopeless steppes" ("Zoom Zoom Zoom"). To the question "is the Soul for God or is God for the soul?", BG's answer is clearly in favor of the second solution. This is anthropocentrism, but one of the believers. All Boris Grebenschikov's public activities consist of his artistic work (as a poet, composer, musician, singer, showman, novelist and artist), translation activities in the field of Eastern philosophical teachings, and economic activities in the field of show business. What Grebenschikov has not been noted for was the creation of religious cults, the organization of religious meetings and rites, as well as the creation of religious teachings or doctrines, and the writing of religious texts. BG's

song lyrics are not suitable for performing during worship services in churches or pagodas. This is art in its purest form, intended for aesthetic perception.

Moreover, it is not just art, but verbal art, literature, poetry, in which playing with language (Russian) is the dominant technique. BG attempted to write in English (he even released two English-language records), but his adventure with the English language, as well as with Western show business, ended in a complete failure. His poems primarily focus on the Russian word. Schabner remarked this BG's feature:

When he was lured to the United States in the late 1980s to record an album with Dave Stewart and was touted across the country as the next megastar, the experience left him disillusioned with the American music business and confirmed for him that the Russian language is central to his art (Schabner 2006).

J. R. Barton expressed the contrast between the linguistic nature of BG's rock songs and the American style of presenting rock as follows: "Able to express everything from sarcasm to hope to despair in a single word of his native tongue, Grebenshikov's voice was now lost in a din of synthesizers" (Barton 1998). This is also noticed by an Australian researcher of BG's creativity H. Vyhnal:

In Russia, Grebenshikov's popularity was due not only to his great musicianship, inexhaustible creativity, and personal charisma but especially for his pioneering work in the use of the Russian language as a rock voice. Asking Grebenshikov to sing his songs in English was like asking Bob Dylan to sing his in Russian (Vyhnal 2018).

However, that is not all. It is not the Russian language itself and not the words themselves that are important in BG's texts, but precisely the game the poet plays, the sense of what is behind these words, what he does not say with these words. Barton caught it pretty accurately: "Grebenshikov's voice has a beauty and intensity that transcends language" (Burton 1998)

### **3.2. Lingual concepts of sacral entities in BG's artistic worldview**

The sphere of sacredness (containing, *inter alia*, transcendental lexical concepts, conceptual motives and images, as well as conceptual judgments about the transcendent) is, in our opinion, one of the key components of the BG's artistic image of the world, both from the semantic and pragmatic side. Most of the linguoconceptual units that make up BG's cognitive sphere of sacredness are expressed in his texts implicitly – through lexical units with the meaning of natural phenomena and various kinds of substances.

The sacred realities depicted in BG's works can be divided into two groups: on the one hand, they are various kinds of transcendent circumstances, on the other

hand, divine and mythologized beings and objects. To the first-order transcendental entities, we refer the description of everything impossible in the profane world – the existence of non-existent, miracles, mystical places, and events, as well as the image of secrets, secret knowledge, and signs.

### **3.2.1. Lingual concepts of impossible reality (space and time)**

BG's texts often mention the presence or possibility of the impossible (here and below we provide only some examples from the general data corpus including over 200 texts with hidden semantics of sacredness):

- (1) Нарисуй на стене моей то, чего нет (Сталь), Ты видишь то, чего нет (Король подсознания), Я слышу плеск волн, которых здесь нет (Электричество), Мы продолжаем петь, не заметив, что нас уже нет (Пока не начался джаз), Ветер качает над ним ветви, хотя ветра сегодня нет (Наблюдатель), Научи оправданиям твоим, которых нет (Пыль), С одной стороны свет; а другой стороны нет (Ласточка), А там сумрак и бесконечный путь, который никуда не ведет (Красная река), etc.

On the contrary, the idea can also be represented in the absence or illusory nature of the real:

- (2) Действительность по-прежнему недостижима (Ветка), Я правда стою, но непонятно на чем (Слегка пьян), Я стою пред пейзажем, где всё как всегда, но на ощупь непрочно, как дым (Прикуривать от пустоты), [...] всё как всегда, но на ощупь непрочно, как дым (Прикуривать от пустоты), Останусь то ли быть, то ли небыль. Фрагментом между тенью и светом (Фавн) etc.

One of the markers of inexistent (or unreal) reality is the motive of the presence in things, phenomena, and events of something more than just what we think:

- (3) Благодарю тебя за этот дар, уметь спать и видеть сны, сны о чем-то большем (Сны о чем-то большем), Спойте мне что-нибудь, что больше, чем слава, что-нибудь, что больше, чем смерть (Парусный флот), Иногда это странно, иногда это больше, чем я (Двигаться дальше), Их корабль разобрала на части охрана, но они уплывут, королева, есть вещи сильнее (Рождественская песня) etc.

The concepts of impossible/mystical time (curved, stopped, reversed, or forming a so-called “time loop”) are also significant in this sense:

- (4) Завтра не придет, у нас опять идет вчера (Дуй), [...] и полдень длился почти что тринадцатый час (День первый), Который день подряд в моем дворе

стоит вторник (Голубой дворник), И день, наступающий завтра, две тысячи лет как прожит (Рождественская песня), Так и живем, не пропустив ни дня, но каждый день проходит как бы дважды (Орел, телец и лев), И время идет; но, по-моему, то туда, то сюда (Письмо в захолустье), etc.

It can also be an impossible/mystical place:

- (5) [...] есть две земли, и у них никогда не бывало общих границ (Сельские леди и джентльмены), В еще не открытой земле [...] идет мальчик (Мальчик), Подо мной нет дна, наверху надо мной стекло (Луна, успокой меня), Небесный град Иерусалим горит сквозь холод и лед, и вот он стоит вокруг нас, и ждет нас, и ждет нас (Дубровский), Подо мной нет дна, наверху надо мной стекло (Луна, успокой меня), etc.

These places in BG's texts also include the Paradise | Eden, Hell, Tír na nÓg, Red river, streets of dreams, dungeons of green shadows, a delta nest, a rain house, a real sky, black water, a different world, a field in the morning, Golden blue or a place where gold is on blue, the place behind the doors of grass, behind a wall of ice, or behind the grasses and trees, the place in the hands of the wind, on the other side of the glass, or the other side of the mirror, and similar. The 1976 album by Aquarium is called "From the other side of the mirror glass". A special case of such a sacred place can also be the border of spaces, interpreted by the poet as the border of worlds: a wall (often glass), a door, a window, a threshold, a bank, a river, that side, etc.

In turn, the concept of illusory reality, which is opposed to the transcendent world as "this side", is often verbalized in BG's images of scenery, cardboard/paper, plywood, plastic, smoke, or toys as fragile or artificial materials and surrogate objects that create the appearance of reality:

- (6) Весь мир – это декорация (Козлы), Мы долго плыли в декорациях моря, но вот они – фанера и клей (Тень), Эта комната сделана из картона (Терапевт), В небесах из картона летят огни (Юрьев день), Наши руки привыкли к пластмассе, наши руки боятся держать серебро (Я прошу воду), Сквозь пластмассу и жезл Иван Бодхидхарма склонен видеть деревья (Иван Бодхидхарма), Непрístupные стены, в которых я бился, оказались дешевой игрушкой ума (Прикуривать от пустоты), Каменный пол, бумажные стены (Дикий мед), В пальцах его вода превращалась в дым (Почему не падает небо), etc.



### 3.2.2. Lingual concepts of miracle and esoteric knowledge

One of the most frequent precedents in the “sacred sphere” cognitive space, in BG’s artistic world, is the concept of an impossible/mystical event (act). In a highly simplified form, this kind of magical, fairy-tale or magical events could be summed up under the concept of a miracle:

- (7) Когда Восток станет Севером, и янтарь станет медь, когда немые на улицах начнут учить тебя петь (Там, где взойдет Луна), Трамвай уже шел там, где не было рельсов, выходя напрямую к кольцу (Трамвай), Он вышел в окно. И он сделал три шага – и упал не на землю, а в небо. (На ее стороне), Море расступилось передо мной, не выдержав жара огня [...] Я помню, как учился ходить, чтобы не слишком касаться земли (Я не могу оторвать глаз от тебя), Я был сияющим ветром, я был полетом стрелы, я шел по следу оленя среди высоких деревьев (Кад Годдо), etc.

The next cognitive precedent characteristic of BG’s sacred sphere is the concept of secret / esoteric knowledge. Usually, it is either something unknown or incomprehensible:

- (8) Мы шли далеко, шли за прекрасными тайнами, шли потому, что иначе нельзя (Небо цвета дождя), Как мы здесь живем – великая тайна (Время N), Иногда это странно, иногда это больше, чем я (Двигаться дальше), Меня бы не было здесь, когда бы не тайная милость Луны (Сердце из песка), etc.

Also, it is portrayed as something incomprehensible, preferentially secret, hidden from outsiders (the uninitiated):

- (9) Мне сказали, что к этим винам подмешан таинственный яд (Песня для нового быта), Вот путь, который я оставлю тайной (Сны о чем-то большем), я знаю много, о чем я хотел бы сказать, но есть то, чего никогда не доверить словам (Любовь – это все, что мы есть), Как жаль, что те, кто знал – молчат про свой секрет (Пионерская 38), А те, кто знают, в чём дело, знают и будут молчать (Тайный Узбек), Те, кто знает, о чем идет речь, похожи на тех, кто спит (Как движется лед), etc.

In other instances, secret knowledge about how things “really” are:

- (10) В книгах написано, что всё было зря. Но нет ни слова про то, что на самом деле (Темный, как ночь), Но мы знаем, что о главном не пишут в газетах и о главном молчит телеграф (Капитан Воронин), [...] есть неизвестный тебе язык, на котором сказано все, что ты хочешь знать (Терапевт) etc.

### 3.2.3. Lingual concepts of sacred substances

The last group of objects that should be considered is sacred objects and substances, i.e., various kinds of substances (water, air, fire, earth, stones, metals, etc.), which traditionally or by BG himself are assigned certain transcendental properties and potencies, including magical things depicted during the presentation of the sacred sphere.

First of all, we should recall the four elements (earth, water, fire and air) that the poet uses most actively, including them in his repertoire of cognitive precedents as artistic concepts. The use of the elements as sacred markers is one of the most characteristic methods of depicting the transcendent world in BG's texts:

- (11) Но ты ребенок воды и земли, а я, я сын огня (Дерево), [...] и пламя сожжет мне сердце (Иван-чай), Не было сил отделять огонь от воды (Как нам вернуться домой), Там, где мы шли, там лишь небо да земля, но ветер придет, и нас уже не жаль (Шары из хрусталя), etc.

In some cases, the concepts of traditional elements are introduced into the text through the related concepts of a star (associated with fire) and wind (associated with air):

- (12) Если падают звезды, подставит ли кто-то ладонь? (Древняя кровь), Я клянусь на упавшей звезде (Музыка серебряных спиц), Зарывший в землю ветер в итоге пожнет ураган (Рухнул), Это северный ветер. Мы у него в ладонях (Аделаида) etc.

There are a vast number of such examples in the corpus. It makes no sense to cite all the examples of sacred pragmatism concepts assigned to natural facts in the worldview of BG, for in his works, one can barely find a normal description of nature, it becomes rather mystical. However, even in those cases where the text content seems to be descriptions of natural phenomena, which means that they are more likely to be the image of some transcendental entity or event:

- (13) Там, где была вода, – пыль, там, где была земля, – пыль (Мы никогда не станем старше), А над полем стоит звезда – звезда без причины (Ты нужна мне), И в его ладонях был лед, а в ее ладонях вода (Возвращение домой), Отражения звезд на воде указывали путь (Ножи Бодхисаттвы) etc.

All kinds of stones are marked in the sacred relation of objects in the idiostyle worldview of BG. They contain secret knowledge, feelings and powers, as well as they can serve as mystical signs or magical tools:

- (14) [...] держали камни в ладонях (Искусство быть смирным), Говорят, что камни рыдали, когда рвалась животворная нить (На ее стороне), Камни делают вид, что спят. Небезопасно иметь дело с ними или со мной (Народная песня из Паламоса), [...] камни в моих руках, камни, держащие мир, – это не одно и то же (Танцы на грани весны), etc.

While most of the material manifestations of the “classical” elements are positively connoted in the works of BG, the macro-concept of ice usually serves as a sign, or even an embodiment, of metaphysical (or moral) evil. Ice walls, floors, and ceilings are usually associated with the inability to escape from a closed profane space, but, at the same time, going under the ice is a clear sign of death:

- (15) И в оправе их глаз только лед и туман (Сталь), И в его ладонях был лед, а в ее ладонях вода (Возвращение домой), под юбкой ледяная броня (Царь сна), Когда воздух затмит чёрная пыль и кровь окажется схвачена льдом (Перед тем, как опять пойдет снег), Возьми в ладонь пепел, возьми в ладонь лед (Лебединая сталь), etc.

Nonetheless, the ice drift, the melting of ice, or the deliberate breaking of ice barriers is a sign of spiritual liberation and rebirth:

- (16) А чтобы пробиться к воде, нужно сердцем растопить этот лед (Красная река), (...) время учиться смотреть, как движется лед (Как движется лед), И я не знаю, что будет со мной, когда в реках двинется лед (В этом городе снег), И лед на реке, текущей снаружи, тает в точности так, как лед, что внутри (Песнь весеннего восстановления), etc.

The exact opposite of ice is pragmatically silver and salt. Moreover, if the concept of silver is a direct attribute of God, allusively referring to the Bible, then salt in the conceptual space of the studied artistic worldview is understood as the center of spiritual power:

- (17) Нам опять не хватает тебя, Серебро Господа Моего (Серебро Господа Моего), И когда наступит день серебра (Каменный уголь), Мы танцуем удивительные танцы, превращая серебро в медь (Нами торгуют), Возьми меня в пламя и выжги пустую породу, и оставь серебро (Охота на единорогов), etc.
- (18) Соленая вода разрешила мне молчать. Соленая вода знает меня наизусть (Мертвые матросы не спят), Ты можешь называть меня «соль» (Соль), Когда соль теряет силу – она становится яд (Пришел пить воду), etc.

The title of the eighth album by Aquarium released in 1984 also refers to the sacred concept of silver: “Day of Silver” and the album of 2014 is called “Salt”.

A somewhat more complex sacred substance in the idiostyle picture of the artistic world of BG is ashes. The macro-concept of ashes, on the one hand, contains the semantics of destruction, the state “after the end”, but, on the other, it is a substance of pure spiritual existence (a trace of purifying fire), devoid of any connection with the life and vanity of the “worldly”. As noted by O. Sushchinskaya,

Lao Tzu wrote that a perfect heart is burnt like coal. Like in Road 21, your eyes are like ash. You only see what’s there. You can’t see the good or the bad anymore. You’re all burned up like a tree. Before the ashes. There is no judgment in the ashes. It has no substance. So you see things as they are again. But you went this way (Sushchinskaya 1998).

Ashes (especially in the heart, eyes, or hands) in BG’s texts become a symbol of the attainment of mystical knowledge (beyond good and evil, life and death) or the attainment of a transcendent:

(19) Сердце, как старый пепел (Ткачиха), Твои глаза – словно пепел, ты видишь только то, что есть (Дорога 21), Но греет меня пепел в чужой руке (Всем, кого я люблю), И мне снится пепел (Пепел), Дай руки – я покажу тебе, как живое дерево станет пеплом (Я – змея, [...]) и порою твой взгляд нестерпим для глаз, а порою он как зола (Пески Петербурга) etc.

### 3.2.4. Conceptualization of electricity

Directly adjacent to the sacred substances is another phenomenon conceptualized in BG’s work, which is electricity. Being not a visible substance, but energy associated with light, motion, and various transformations, electricity is the best suited for the role of a proper divine or spiritual quasi-substance. The concept of electricity (realized also through adjacent images of current, wire and cable) is one of the most characteristic features of Grebenschikov’s songwriting:

(20) Мы знаем электричество в лицо (Капитан Африка), Но электричество смотрит мне в лицо (Электричество), Но кто мог знать, что он провод, пока не включили ток (Дело мастера Бо), Положите меня между двух контактов, чтобы в сердце шел ток (Рухнул, [...]) чтобы здесь был свет, ток должен идти по нам (Тень, [...]) я под током, пять тысяч вольт (Цветы Йошивары), etc.

Special attention should be given to the passage of one of the most iconic songs by BG named “2-12-85-06”, which many interpret simply as absurdist banter. If we analyze it, taking into account the fact that “electricity” is one of the key macro-concepts of the cognitive space of the sacred domain, we can see several quite logical and regular meanings for BG’s creativity.

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| (21) Если бы я знал, что такое электричество, я [...] зашел бы в телефон, набрал бы твой номер и услышал твой голос. Но я не знаю, как идет сигнал, я не знаю принципа связи и я не знаю, кто клал кабель [...] есть люди типа жив и люди типа помер, но нет никого, кто знал бы твой номер. | If I knew what electricity is, I would [...] go to the phone box, dial your number, and hear your voice. But I don't know how the signal goes, I don't know the principle of communication and I don't know who placed the cable [...] there are people like alive and people like dead, but there's no one who would know your number. |
|--|---|

The significance of the concept of electricity for the poet's creativity is also emphasized by the titles of the third album by Aquarium – “Electricity. The history of the Aquarium –Volume 2” (1981), and the live album “Electroshock” (1982).

If we interpret “electricity” as a spirit (a spiritual or divine force), “you” – as a deity (God or Goddess), and a “phone call” as a spiritual connection with a deity, about which most people do not know, “the principle of communication,” “how the signal goes”, “who placed the cable”, or, especially, “your number”, everything in the song will fall into place. In addition to this, there are many hints about the sacred sphere in its text, for instance, “This body will not live long on the earth. Ask about this rider of the white horse”, where the first part is borrowed from the “Dhammapada” 3.41 (“Ere long, alas! This body will lie upon the earth”), and the second one is associated with a horseman from the Apocalypse (an angel of death). The phrase “In the world, there are seven and, in the world, there are three” also has a mythosymbolic meaning.

### **3.2.5. Lingual concepts of sacred things**

Occasionally, certain objects (for example, images of a key, a candle, or an apple) are given sacred meanings in BG's texts. However, their sacralization is of a general cultural nature, sometimes only reinforced by the author's considerations:

- (21) [...] ключ к северу ждет между биениями сердца (Северный Цвет), [...] он даст вам ключи от завтрашних дней (Граф Диффузор), Его чело светло, но ключ дрожит в кармане плаща (Выстрелы с той стороны), Долго мы жили впотьмах, и там был потерян ключ (Крестовый поход птиц), etc.
- (22) В моем окне стоит свеча; свеча любви, свеча безнадежной страсти (Голубой дворник), Скоро Юрьев день, и все больше свечей у заброшенных царских врат (Юрьев день), Неси меня, как свечку, в горсти (Перед тем, как опять пойдет снег), etc.
- (23) Я – мальчик золотое кольцо, пришел вернуть ваши яблоки в сад (Мальчик золотое кольцо), Отцу яблоч слышно движение корней во сне, зимы к весне (Отец яблоч), Я ожидаю наступления яблочных дней (Наступление яблочных дней), etc.

It is worth emphasizing that the concepts of artifacts are rarely conceptualized by BG. In addition to the already mentioned key and candle, such sacralized pre-nuns can also have a glass wall/mirror, door, train/tram, ship, arrow, clock, oar, and knife. Any appearance of the names of these things in the texts should be seen as an allusion to the transcendental and mystical world.

#### 4. Conclusion

The cognitive space of sacredness is one of the key elements in the artistic worldview of Boris Grebenschikov. It is emphasized that the sacredness in the interpretation of the Russian poet does not relate to any specific religion. It is universal and mystical, but, at the same time, it is emphasized anthropocentrically. As we can see, the texts by BG are filled with sacred entities and phenomena, persons and objects, events, and circumstances. They are found in almost every other text by the poet. Often, their sacred nature becomes apparent only after a semantic and pragmatic analysis of the text or several texts (this sometimes requires an analysis of dozens of texts or even the entire work by the poet). Outwardly, such examples may seem like images of nature, interpersonal relationships, everyday descriptions, or events in public life. What is certain is that the sacred sphere is one of the main conceptual spaces in the work of the Russian poet and musician, represented in almost each of his works in an explicit or implicit way.

Among the most widely represented concepts in the poet's work are the concepts of a sacred place and time, a miraculous event, the possibility of the impossible, the unreality of the real, as well as the concepts of transcendent entities (persons and objects), among which there are the concepts of primary elements (earth, air, fire, and water), stone, ice, salt, silver, electricity, key, candle, and apple. The transcendent semantisation of all these sacred entities is not subject to any philosophical or religious system. On the contrary, Grebenschikov creates his own syncretic and deductive system of anthropocentrically significant transcendent, drawing equally from a wide variety of mystical and mythological traditions.

The linguoconceptual analysis of BG's lyrics has demonstrated a quite frequent usage of a focused profanity of sacred concepts, combined with sacralization of things and daily events, utilizing the sacred lexis to depict profane occurrences and events, as well as the other way round – through the description of transcendental entities, employing the lexis of lowered stylistics, often bad-mannered. We can quite agree with Schabner, who remarked:

One of the beauties of Grebenschikov's songs is his ability to move lightly between the transcendent and the mundane details of life on earth, as in 'Heaven Comes Closer' when he sings, 'All paths begin from our front door | but we only came out to bum cigarettes' (Schabner 2006).

We believe this also to be a consequence of BG's basic ideological attitude, thus, the anthropocentric knowledge of the sacred as transcendence is located in the very human soul.

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