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The Colours Composition in *The Diamond Arm* by Leonid Gaidai



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Цветовая гамма в «Бриллиантовой руке» Леонида Гайдая

Abstract. The main motives of the colour composition of the film *The Diamond Arm* are discussed in the article. The variations of the blue and the semantics of the cold range of colours associated with the world of the main character, Senya Gorbunkov, his unconscious and his fears are analyzed. The development of the motif of pale, light colour shades that appear at moments of dramatic uncertainty, extreme tension and preparation for the upcoming climaxes is traced. Silver and metallic tones are assigned to the secret world of smugglers. The author notes that throughout the film a certain dialogue of cold colours and warm ochre-scarlet colour shades unfolds. At first separate “warm” details inside blue landscapes and “pale” interiors appear, then their spatial presence and energy are enhanced. Ochre and red shades accompany the phenomenon of “dark forces”, whether it is a Soviet house manager Varvara Sergeevna or smugglers. The main red scene of the film is the scene of failed seduction of an honest hero. Thus, the main colour of the revolution is recoded into the colour of eroticism, deception, violence, unfortune. The white colour in the film plays the part of a trickster, revealing ambivalent properties and constantly showing that the whole reality and the person in it are not like what they seem. The colour concept forms a kind of visual melody of the film, adding much more semantic overtones.

Аннотация. В статье рассматриваются основные мотивы цветовой композиции фильма «Бриллиантовая рука». Анализируются вариации синего цвета и семантика холодной гаммы, связанной с миром главного героя, Сени Горбункова, его бессознательным и его страхами. Прослеживается развитие мотива бледных, светлых цветовых оттенков, появляющихся в моменты драматической неопределенности, крайнего напряжения и приготовления к предстоящим кульминациям действия. Серебристые и металлические оттенки закреплены за тайным миром контрабандистов. Автор отмечает, что на протяжении всего фильма разворачивается некий диалог холодной гаммы и теплых охристо-алых цветовых оттенков. Сначала они появляются как отдельные детали внутри голубых ландшафтов и бледных интерьеров, потом их пространственное присутствие и энергетика усиливаются. Охристые и красные оттенки сопровождают явление «темных сил», будь то управдом или контрабандисты. Главная красная сцена фильма — это сцена неудавшегося соблазнения Анной Сергеевной честного героя. Тем самым «главный цвет революции» перекодируется в цвет эротики, обмана, насилия, неудачи. Белый цвет в фильме выполняет роль трикстера, обнаруживая амбивалентные свойства и постоянно показывая, что вся реальность и человек в ней не похожи на то, чем кажутся. Цветовая гамма образует своего рода визуальную мелодию фильма, придавая ей дополнительные смысловые обертоны.

Introduction

The study of colour in cinema and the interaction between colour, light and sound are of great interest to modern science. Both serious individual monographs [1; 9] and collective works [3], as well as some articles [6; 8] deal with various aspects of the topic. Taking into account that valuable research experience, we nevertheless believe that any colour or colour scheme is initially polysemantic, and each colour is capable of translating a specific content born in the process of its development in a certain work of art. That principle of absolute colour solutions freedom applies particularly to contemporary auteur art. Colour expresses the moods and shades of meaning that the director and the creative team of the filmmakers consciously or unconsciously put into it. Film concept of colour composition is connected with the psychology and Lucere interpretation of some colours [5], but it's not an absolute rule.

Many of the interpretations of colour that appear to be quite convincing in certain works are not in fact the only possible ones. For example, in the book by J. Baleka, blue is referred to as the "colour of life and death". [1, p. 102], although it is quite obvious that the same is also true for red. The natural, organic associations related to colours are the most objective. In some cases, social and cultural associations relevant to certain historical periods and cultural halos may play a significant role. But, again, the life of colour in a particular work needs to be examined in detail from within the aesthetics of the work itself, its semantic field and its interaction with other elements of film language. Therefore, our article aims at a holistic analysis of the colour compositions in *The Diamond Arm* (1968) comedy by Leonid Gaidai in the context of the development of the plot, characters' images and the film action. As far as we know, that type of work has not been carried out in relation to Gaidai's comedies so far, which suggests novelty and relevance of the subject.

From the blue abyss to the silver metal barriers

The colour composition in *The Diamond Arm* is amazingly consistent. The work of Igor Chernykh, the cameraman, and Felix Yasyukevich, the film designer, is unique in many ways. Without being deliberate or conspicuous, it gives additional shades of meaning to the entire atmosphere of action.

A dark blue colour covers the entire frame in the opening credits. With that blue in the background, there come long screams. The "eruption of emotion" sweeps off scale, remaining unintelligible and emotionally indeterminate. It could be a strong laughter, sexual pleasure or cries of horror and anguish. Because both laughter and sexual pleasure, as well as horror and torment, can reach ecstasy, a kind of high point, some energy climax.

Blue is seen as a bottomless emotional inner world, a kind of strange, wild and mysterious "spiritual universe" within an individual. It largely corresponds with the definition Y.V. Miheeva gives to the range of meanings of blue in her recent article: "Blue, in its many shades, is used to express a very wide range of sensual and emotional experiences, as well as mental states of a movie character — from melancholic introspection to trance ecstasy. In addition, the technique of using 'blue' colorization is quite common in the movies where the plot involves contrasting the real world with another realm" [7, p. 314—315].

Gaidai incorporates a blue depth and abyss into the frame. It can have external dimensions as a wide sea or a twilight sky. Yet the blue can also be found within the hero's spiritual self⁽¹⁾. Senya's song about hares begins with a quite symbolic colour solution:

In a dark blue forest land... where aspens are trembling...

The colour gets more blurring in the everyday space and "flows" into a "double" nightmare — it begins in Senya's apartment and continues in Gesha's one [11, p. 470].

A saturated blue, similar to the background of the credits, hangs over Gesha wearing a white suit on the fashion house catwalk. A beautiful combination, echoing the white steamer in the blue sea and the blonde beauty against the seascape and the white roof. As long as that combination serves to create a purely picturesque effect, everything is fine: it embodies aesthetic harmony. But as soon as the sound appears (screaming in the

(1) While the isle of bad luck materializes literally, the forest glade and the hares remain within Senya's "inner landscape". Even though in the final part of the movie, there is a forest, its atmosphere does not directly correlate with the night "dark blue forest" and the "grass" mentioned in the song. Nevertheless, it is fundamentally important for Gaidai to intervene in the real world and verbalize/musicalize imaginary spaces, as in the case of the song about polar bears in the middle of a southern resort in *Kidnapping, Caucasian Style*. (One of the latest articles about the semantic of landscapes in post-Soviet comedy films: [2]).

credits), as soon as the action (fishing) starts, and the “metamorphosis” begins (transformation of trousers into shorts), the blue comes to act as a companion to the loss of control, the destruction of beauty, harmony and basic order, which also creates comic effects.

The blue and green gamut would reveal its ambivalence time and again.

In the prologue, some bluish-grey houses of the oriental city appear against the pale blue sky; the wet black sidewalk occupies a considerable “frame area”; there appear some leaden grey reflections. The shimmering blackness will be repeated in miniature, first in the black sunglasses of the strangers. The reflections will move into Gesha’s sparkling silver suit with a metallic sheen. The apotheosis of silver metallic smoothness and shine will be the door of the mysterious Chief, the owner of a ring with a large sparkling and very dark, as if it were wet and black, sapphire. Thus, the blackness of the wet sidewalk and the foreign smugglers’ car gets gradually compressed and concentrated into the dark gem on the hand of an invisible character in the territory of local smugglers. That is a kind of energy center embodying the mystery / shadowy hierarchy / possession of treasures.

The silvery smoothness and shine come together in the image of an inaccessible door with many locks, which symbolizes not only the closed world of smuggling scams, but also its thorough protection, and the suffering of those who cannot fit this world perfectly. It is no coincidence that Gesha’s passing through the silver door is always, except for the first time, associated with comic stress — either he is poked by Lyolik (Anatoly Papanov), pushing him through, or Gesha (Andrey Mironov) stands against the door with a swollen ear, or he is beating in hysterics... The silver door is the door to a special forbidden world; moving in and out comes with convulsions.

Silver shades correlate with a cohort of consonant light colours — grayish, snow-white, whitish, creamy, and vaguely light, with neither warm nor cold tone. Silver colours are related not only to genre effect and tension-building, but also to stylization. They are associated with excessive professional adventurousness, which helps to reduce the seriousness of what is happening and harmonize the atmosphere.



Fig. 1. The possibilities of the cold gamma. *The Diamond Arm*, directed by L. Gaidai, 1968

Ил. 1. Возможности холодной гаммы. Кадры из фильма «Бриллиантовая рука», режиссер Л. Гайдай, 1968



Fig. 2. Silver and metallic shades of the smugglers' world. *The Diamond Arm*, directed by L. Gaidai, 1968

Ил. 2. Серебристые и металлические оттенки мира контрабандистов. Кадры из фильма «Бриллиантовая рука», режиссер Л. Гайдай, 1968

Pale uncertainty

Meanwhile, “simple” or shiny and glossy light tones are associated with unresolvable tension, with a kind of nervous uncertainty and understatement: they dominate in the scene of nightly conversation between Semyon Semyonovich (Yuri Nikulin) and his wife (Nina Grebeshkova) in the kitchen, against the background of white tiles and cupboards. There is a crystal high glass (every Soviet family, including that of the article author’s, had exactly such glasses); Senya is wearing light pants and a white t-shirt, and Nadya is dressed in a light-colored, shiny housecoat.

The same whitish and pale range of colours reigns in the scene in the fashion house — glass walls, bright modern “atom” lamps, and a crookedly mounted plaster replica of the Venus de Milo resembling the Leaning Tower of Pisa, which ironically proclaims the crash of classical cuts and ideas about clothing, as well as about the harmony of body and spirit (the scene once again features the mysterious blonde in white, who later turns out to be the hero’s unlucky temptress). The white catwalk, on which the blond Gesha appears wearing a matte white suit... All that is followed by the scene where a zipper in Gesha’s trousers gets stuck, and he has to experience public stress. A little later, there are adjustments to the fishing plan.

The next wave of pale and light colours comes in the scene at the car wash. It takes place against the background of some light tiled walls, in front of a whitish map, when Lyolik is planning the “Game Bird” operation (which parodies the scene from *Chapaev*, 1934). Something is brewing, something is being prepared, something is being planned... Another such influx of “pale turbidity” occurs when Semyon Semyonovich meets Mikhail Ivanovich on the embankment, in some “industrial zone”, and during the first meeting with the mysterious blonde against the background of the glittering window of the local thrift store. The apotheosis of that pale turbidity is the scene of washing Lyolik and Gesha at the car wash, in powerful jets of water covering everything around.



Fig. 3. Shades of agonizing uncertainty. *The Diamond Arm*, directed by L. Gaidai, 1968

Ил. 3. Оттенки томительной неопределенности. Кадры из фильма «Бриллиантовая рука», режиссер Л. Гайдай, 1968



Fig. 4. *The Diamond Arm*, directed by L. Gaidai, 1968

Ил. 4. Кадры из фильма «Бриллиантовая рука», режиссер Л. Гайдай, 1968

A new coding of the “Revolution colour”

Every now and then warm tones emerge in the overall colour scheme: ochre, orange, scarlet, burgundy. They first appear as small local spots and lines. At the beginning of the prologue, the red cross on the pharmacy building together with the scarlet and burgundy text on the signs penetrate into the cold colour scheme. On the ship, Gesha's performance takes place not just against the background of blue and white space, but also between two bright orange lifelines, as if holding back the boundless expanse and plastic liberation of the dance.

Dark ochre colours appears in the captain's cabin — a bottle of cognac, and, most importantly, a statuette of a laughing oriental jester musician. Semyon Semyonovich presses it as if to signal the start of a comedy intrigue and to announce his comic musical variety performance.

On their return, the crowd at the customs control is gray and blue again, as if still breathing the sea and the warm air of the dusk. That calm and cold composition is used to create the pre-sunset sea view. On the left, the scarlet sun is about to set, and on the right, burgundy letters flaunt on the poster for *Good Luck Zigzag* movie. Gaidai here plays on the very title, foreshadowing the unexpected luck for both the smugglers and Semyon Semyonovich. The colour of the letters plays as well, contrasting with the blue of the dusk.

In the kitchen scene, the dark bottle of cognac disturbs the light whitish scheme of colours. In the scene at the car wash, the red scribbles on the map and Lyolik's dark brown jacket do the same thing.

At this point, ochre shades turning into bright orange and burgundy clearly remain on the sidelines in the overall range of colours; they do not dominate, but occasionally make themselves known. They work as rhythmic emotional accents and disruptors of colour tranquility promising bursts of the dynamics of the plot. However, soon warm tones come to assert their special rights. The bearers of those tones are exclusively “dark forces”, both personified and impersonal.

A dark red murk overwhelms Gesha in his nightmare.

It is on a red motorbike that Gesha takes Senya fishing.

Lyolik proves to be the most committed wearer of warm colours, especially chocolate and dark brown. A brown beret, a light “milk chocolate” suit, and later a dark brown leather jacket. His blue shirt sets off the suit



Fig. 5. The “warm” colours come into action. *The Diamond Arm*, directed by L. Gaidai, 1968
Ил. 5. В действие вступают «теплые» детали. Кадры из фильма «Бриллиантовая рука», режиссер Л. Гайдай, 1968



Fig. 6. The color scheme of the “dark forces”. *The Diamond Arm*, directed by L. Gaidai, 1968
Ил. 6. Цветовая гамма «темных сил». Кадры из фильма «Бриллиантовая рука», режиссер Л. Гайдай, 1968



Fig. 7. In the “red cube”. *The Diamond Arm*, directed by L. Gaidai, 1968
Ил. 7. В «красном кубе». Кадр из фильма «Бриллиантовая рука», режиссер Л. Гайдай, 1968

and rhymes with Gesha’s blue turtleneck on the boat. There’s a feeling that the partners in crime get clothes in the same fashion house. Each of them, though, chooses their own basic colours. While Gesha goes for elegant, light and cool tones, Lyolik prefers brutal, heavy and hot ones.

When at home, the Chief wears a men’s dressing gown of dark chocolate colour (the sleeve of which is caught in the frame). It is, so to speak, a shade of the smuggler’s true nature. Lyolik follows that “fashion” in terms of his choice of colours. Gesha, with his obvious preference for the cold range of colours, tries very hard, though, to turn himself mentally toward hot and heavy tones. When meeting Senya’s family at the cafe, he is wearing a burgundy top, showing a contrast to the soft blue background of the sea and the sky, as well as to the Gorbunkovs’ light-coloured clothing. Gesha has a red and black checkered blanket at home. We see him shrouded under it during his nightmare. At the moment of meeting the irresistible blonde in the apartment, Gesha is wearing a dark men’s dressing gown, imitating that of the Chief’s. Gaidai in every detail emphasizes the integral specific nature of each of the characters, Gesha in particular. The latter deals with perfecting his cheating skills as a “model boy” — he goes from the outside to the inside, from his clothes to his gut.

Every aggravation of the situation is accompanied by the emergency of a maroon, burgundy, scarlet and finally a piercing purple background.

It first appears when the house manager Varvara Sergeevna invades the Gorbunkovs’ apartment. The corridor wall has a dull maroon hue. Red is the colour of the box that Varvara Sergeevna takes curiously in her hands and of the little devil that jumps out of it.

The same colour of the wall enters the frame again after the militia bring home Semyon Semyonovich, drunk and unconscious after the brawl at The Weeping Willow restaurant.

But before that, we see Gesha’s dressing room in the fashion house. It is where his conversation with Lyolik takes place against a burgundy and crimson wall, in front of a big mirror. The mirrored surface creates the effect of an endless multiplication of Gesha and Lyolik, going somewhere far beyond the looking-glass. Framed by the burgundy wall, the light-pale looking-glass appears as an image of foolish infinity (presented in the story as a series of failed attempts to take possession of the gypsum). And it is the same brutal burgundy wall that foreshadows the most important “red scene” of the movie.

Scarlet and crimson, very bright hues emerge when Anna Sergeevna comes to visit Gesha and Lyolik. The corridor is of the same dull burgundy colour as Senya’s hallway. Svetlana Svetlichnaya’s heroine is wearing a crimson blouse and a light trouser suit. While negotiating the impending seduction of Semyon Semyonovich, Lyolik and Anna Sergeevna are sitting on Gesha’s bed, on a scarlet blanket.

When Gesha uses a pay phone in the restaurant, there is a “collage”: the gray metal “frame” of the phone booth and Gesha’s gray suit echoing the silver metal Chief’s doors — with a bright scarlet wall right next to it.

Before going up to the Atlantic Hotel room, Semyon Semyonovich looks longingly at its scarlet neon sign, against which a second later Varvara Sergeevna — with a scarlet armband on her sleeve! — picks up the note dropped by the hero with a stranger’s address on it.

Finally, the hero finds himself in Anna Sergeevna’s red hotel room. It is a kind of “red cube”. The famous red room scenes in David Lynch’s *Twin Peaks* will be filmed in the very early 1990s. In the meantime, another red room is born, Gaidai’s red room, saturated with its own symbolic meanings. According to the story, it is an absolute reality — the interiors of a Soviet hotel room⁽²⁾.

(2) According to Lyudmila Ivanovna Saraskina, that is the way a bridal suite might have looked like in those days.



Fig. 8. Plasticity and facial expressions of public fiasco. *The Diamond Arm*, directed by L. Gaidai, 1968

Ил. 8. Пластика и мимика публичных фиаско. Кадры из фильма «Бриллиантовая рука», режиссер Л. Гайдай, 1968

However, combined with Svetlana Svetlichnaya's character, her gaze, her manners, and her job, the red cube feels more like a room in a fantasy brothel. At the same time, the fierce red walls, the bitter red carpet, and the frantic yellow bedspread shape the space of Semyon Semyonovich's inner terror. He needs neither that room nor the woman. Here Gaidai radically transforms red from the colour of revolution and proletarian blood into the colour of eroticism, seduction, imitation of passion and intimacy, as well as the colour of mutual deception, psychological discomfort, and emotional violence. In fact, all the warm colours with aggressive red are "usurped" by the smugglers, by the shadow world, contrary to the tradition of associating it with official/festive Soviet culture. (Yet, the woman from the shadow world prefers to dress up like a "white sheep". Varvara Sergeevna also has a light suit).

Eroticism plays with the red wallpaper, the carpet, the armchair and some elements of the standard lamp and curtains in the "red room" as if being dissolved in it. The eroticism of the space, however, fails to get a truly sensual response from the characters.

The funny and at the same time sad thing about the situation is that in the scene, there is absolutely no true passion and eroticism, which is fundamental impossible on both sides. Neither is the beautiful Anna Sergeevna able to be truly seductive, nor can Semyon Semyonovich be the least bit frivolous. Therefore, the structure of the scene reflects the lack of spirit of adventure in the main characters; the inability to live in the adventurous environment and to "enjoy the genre" is what the privileged prostitute and the honest, decent Gorbunkov have in common. The behavior of Svetlichnaya's heroine is a complete failure of the job, absolute incompetence of a professional fraudster, unable to find the "key" to the "client". That is why her striptease serves, in fact, not to seduce but to pass the time while waiting for the pill to take effect.

It is neither the events in the hotel room nor the flow of emotions and relationships between Anna Sergeevna and Semyon Semyonovich that create the series of twists and turns, the situation of recognition and the conflict explosion. Outer forces are there to intervene. They are social forces — vigilantes led by the superintendent, who took the time to bring Semyon Semyonovich's wife to the "crime scene".

It is not only the horror on the face of the true family man that accentuates the absurdity of Anna Sergeevna's abrupt stripping, but it is also the fact that in the red room, underneath the light pink robe she turns out to be wearing a green swimsuit. That unexpected switch to a cold tone works as an outwardly emotional shock and a fiasco of eroticism. Green is the most "anti-erotic" colour. The swimsuit could have been black, pale pink, navy blue, purple — all of which would have been better. Green works as a cold shower.

A hook popping off the swimsuit bra (another failure of the Soviet light industry or the evidence of poor quality of illegally imported goods) symbolizes the impersonal "Soviet man's horror" because of the very prospect of seeing a naked body. Here Gaidai shows the entire space reaction. The script is very logical and prosaic: "...the ill-fated bra hook, ricocheting off the Chinese vase and whistling like a bullet, hits the light bulb. There is a sound resembling a shot, and the room goes dark..." [4, p. 175]. However, the impetuous diegetic dynamics creates a slightly mystical effect — it seems that the very fact of the woman exposing her back on camera leads to thunder and darkness, to the cataclysm in the interior and the landing of social activists, the police and the wife. In the



Fig. 9. White as trickster. *The Diamond Arm*, directed by L. Gaidai, 1968

Ил. 9. Трикстерство белого цвета. Кадры из фильма «Бриллиантовая рука», режиссер Л. Гайдай, 1968

eyes of the fainting Semyon Semyonovich, they come together as a picture of the crowd from the rampant hell. He seems to pass out not because of the pill, but rather being unable to stand what is happening.

That abundance of semantic twists is crowned by Anna Sergeevna's cry, "It's not my fault! He came of his own free will!" The cry is a parody quotation from the film adaptation of Leo Tolstoy's novel *Resurrection* (directed by M. Schweitzer, 1960, 1962), which was highly praised by Soviet critics. It was Katusha Maslova's desperate cry, "It's not my fault!" that was popularized in magazine articles and became the hallmark of the screen version of Tolstoy's heroine, a former prostitute unjustly accused by the obviously bankrupt court. The postmodern irony of the same cry in the mouth of a Soviet prostitute who has no intention of spiritual rebirth and regeneration is that hypothetically she could have watched the movie *Resurrection* and applied the "tested" formula at a critical point.

Although Anna Sergeevna displayed a profound contempt for Gesha, she turned out to be no better at her responsible job. They "rhymed" even in their failures with clothes and the tilt of the head.

After the total collapse of the "red cube", the shades of scarlet will be there to accompany the smugglers' fiasco. The dim red dress of the "mother" holding her "baby", as well as the bright red motorcycle at the end crown Gesha's useless disguise. The Chief's Moskvich is also red. Having failed to get the cast in the "red cube", the crooks finally find themselves trapped in a red car. Aleksandr Prokhorov had written about the era of Gaidai and Ryazanov comedies: «the Soviet Union also underwent a timid liberalization of cultural mores» [12, p. 456]. But we think the cinema art liberalization was quite deep.

The white colour trickery

White colour transformations make a separate story. Just the way the energy of mysterious smuggling schemes is concentrated in the Chief's black jewel, the energy of permitted adventure and travel, stated in the outline of the white "Mikhail Svetlov" "handsome liner", is concentrated in the white cast on Semyon Semyonovich's arm. The ship brought the hero to having his arm plastered, which caused a multitude of tricks and shams. Whereas the Chief's ring embodies exactly what can be associated with the jewel, the cast implies a variety of indirect symbolic nuances. Cheating for the benefit of shady business goes along with the deception aiming to restore the rule of law. Moreover, everyone is deceived, including the audience, but with the exception of "patsy" Senya. It is at the very end of the movie that we learn that the jewels have long since been taken out of the cast. The film does not show when it happened, nor does it hint in any way at such a twist. Thus, throughout the film we treat the cast as the carrier of the jewels, which remains diegetically invisible, but still present in the frame. In fact, the cast is the "carrier" of Semyon Semyonovich, who is a mere live bait.

Whereas Gesha's performance on board the ship and the disguise with the swaddled baby involve the plastered arm (which Gesha tenderly embraces after his friend is back on the ship) in a series of child imitations, Gesha's nightmare with the flying plastered arm leads to Semyon Semyonovich's "horror" in the hotel room. While the blond beauty is doing a striptease dance, the hero is trying to play along making ridiculous dancing "maneuvers" with his plastered arm, as if exposing his arm to interact with the persistent beauty instead of the rest of himself. That is when

Freudian connotations of the image of the arm as a phallic simulacrum involuntarily arise.

In general, Senya's behavior shows signs of repressed and blocked but indirectly manifested desires, slips in the form of "symptomatic and random actions"⁽³⁾ as Sigmund Freud would say [11], which is similar to verbal slips of the tongue and forgetting certain words. The plastered arm refers to the sexual sphere. The highly raised cap stuffed with a large stack of banknotes and the gun, always a kind of phallic symbol, placed in a bag where it could be easily spotted, are also given a certain sexual connotation. The new secret life, with its privileges and dangers, and therefore with a touch of erotic "almightiness" is involuntarily flaunted by Senya, although in other ways he remains modest and clumsy.

Nadia refers to the plastered arm as to something scary and almost indecent, in need of concealment or annihilation, as something that should not ever be there. It resembles the missing nose of Gogol's official. Actually, it illustrates the degree of misunderstanding of Senya and his situation. After all, from the perspective of both the smugglers and the police, it is the plastered arm that is seen as the most valuable, functional and needed thing in that man. The pragmatic perception of the individual, which we have already discussed regarding the interaction between the Coward, the Fool and the Pro [10, p. 337], permeates all of the characters' social relationships in *The Diamond Arm*. The reason why Semyon Semyonovich is interesting to both of the opposing camps is that he has a gypsum on his arm. Otherwise, all of his human qualities would have remained unclaimed. He would have never learned "what he was capable of", as Mikhail Ivanovich said.

The replica of the Venus de Milo in the fashion house and even Gesha wearing a "plaster" colored suit on the white catwalk ironically resonate with the white cast. All of them are plastic forms accompanying certain shams. The cast flaunts on the arm with no closed or open fracture. The statue symbolizing the ideal of beauty represents a nude female figure rather than a beautifully dressed person, and is therefore not quite appropriate in a fashion house. The Venus is standing next to Gesha, who

(3) Freud S. *Psikhopatologiya obydennoi zhizni* [The Psychopathology of Everyday Life]. St. Petersburg, Aleteya Publ., 1997. (In Russian)

fails to manage the fashion novelty during the show and has to walk away, thus breaking the classical rules of beauty — proportionality, symmetry and completeness of form.

Conclusion

While each of the indicated colour schemes accompanies a specific spectrum of events and moods, the white scheme develops a series of variations on the theme of "not quite what it seems" — the white colour acts a part of impersonal trickster. Even the white ice cream which Senya's son shoots at Gesha is no longer a dessert. It becomes a projectile, which not only symbolically kills Gesha, but also unites him with Gorbunkov Sr. with a white mark. Daddy has a white cast, and his new friend has a white ice cream on his face. Thus, Gorbunkov's son, the least involved in communication during the meeting of the whole family with Gesha in the cafe, silently defends his role as the continuer of his demure father's behaviour style with occasional explosive escapades.

The dark nature of Svetlichnaya's heroine is disguised behind her blond hair, light-coloured headband and suits. It seems that the film reality itself tends to present the beauty against a light and blue background, protecting her from the "red cube" and maintaining her status not as an adventurous vamp, but as a "woman in white" — fresh, coldly erotic (a bit of the Hitchcock style), mysterious and slightly victimized. Her embarrassing failure in the end, however, confirms the fact that she does not fit within the stated social and psychological role.

The beginning and the end of the white adventures are marked with the adventures of Senya's piece of clothing — his white summer cap, which resembles his good and friendly nature exposed to external influence. At the beginning, having seated his daughter on a cart with someone else's suitcases, Semyon Semyonovich puts his cap on her head while searching for documents in his pockets. Meanwhile, the cart starts moving with the child on, so he has to run to get both the daughter and the cap back. At the end of the movie, while enjoying a ride on a motorboat, Semyon Semyonovich again loses the cap, which is blown away by a gust of wind. Katya is there to catch the cap and give it back to her dad. The lightweight white cap acts as the hero's nature and as a metaphysical substitute for the hare the hero sang about (or a magician's white rabbit) and which

occasionally finds itself lost, missing, in danger, but still never fails to keep its ground.

Whereas the adventures of the cap make the image of Semyon Semyonovich more lyrical, the white cast on his leg serves to strengthen eccentricity and signify the infinity of adventures. Everything started with a cast on his arm and ends with an even larger cast on his leg to enhance the sense of adventure, its playful connotation with folklore and fabulousness.

It is Baba Yaga who may have a “bony leg”, not a valiant participant in a special operation. Here the director is obviously ironical towards Soviet heroism. In the epilogue, the signs of Semyon Semyonovich’s bravery are his disability, immobility, anti-aestheticism, and a reference to the opposite gender nature (Baba Yaga is an old woman), implying a loss of male identity and aging, rather than heroic courage and immortalization. At the same time, together with the “bony leg”, Senya acquires an inner connection with some chthonic, supra-gender, superhuman element, to the magical space. Baba Yaga is old and ugly, but after all, she is a magical creature. Thus his total ambivalence is ultimately fixed in the hero — terrifying misfortune and exceptional good luck, ignorance and competence, helplessness and almost magical omnipotence, the existence in the space of unfreedom and freedom. Yu. V. Miheeva analyzed the typical situation of Soviet comedy in 1960s as the “diving” of a character out of “ordinary self” in the “unexpected space of freedom” [6, p. 291].

Felix Yasyukevich and Igor Chernykh skillfully manage the interaction between the colour lines of the film, bringing the red line to its most obvious — catastrophic — ending. Gaidai visually soothes the initially dominant blue by transforming it into the blue-and-white gamut at the end of the movie. What really matters is not the colour as such, but rather the flexibility of forms and their connotation with folklore motifs. He avoids straightforward symbolization, but creates a kind of playful range of semantic and atmospheric tones of each of the colour accents, merged with the objective and subjective world. The colours of the plastic forms in the frame create a kind of ongoing “visual melody”. It opens up the everyday living environment, giving it symbolic multidimensionality and meaningful ambiguity. In a sense, Gaidai in many ways psychologizes his eccentricity and the eccentricity of the characters through colour solutions.

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