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Semantic Metamorphoses of The Scarlet Sails Festival



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Семантические метаморфозы праздника «Алые паруса»

Abstract. The USSR staging practices, which passed into and later took roots in the post-Soviet Russian performance culture, accelerated the processes of mass culture sovietization and paved the way for the development of the utopian motives inherent in the official performative practices. This research is relevant, since the study of the properties of semantic lability of the Soviet performance forms makes it possible to clarify the functionality and cultural significance of contemporary mass performances. The Scarlet Sails Festival was chosen as a study material, since it is a sample of the Soviet performance that has been successfully integrated into the post-Soviet calendar of festivals. This paper is focused on the issue of semantic distortion of the plot and character schemes of A. Grin's (1880–1932) fairy tale *The Scarlet Sails* (1922) in the context of the Soviet mass theatrical performance of the same name: *The Scarlet Sails Festival* (1970, directed by A. Orleansky; 1972, directed by I. Rakhlin). This research aims to analyze the semantic shifts in *The Scarlet Sails* theatrical performances (1970, 1972) in its dialogic connection with the literary original. The scientific problem of the paper is to reveal the mechanisms and forms of integrating the Soviet indoctrinal discourse into the texture of the theatrical performance. The reconstruction based on the archive materials shows a steady deviation from A. Grin's original narrative towards the dominating Soviet myth. The author concludes that the principles of duplication and montage underlying the performance resulted in semantic distortion of the priority character, events, and motives. The analysis of the artistic structures of the performance reveals that the original was converted by means of generating analogous artistic forms and artificial semantic convergence that is characterized by forced superimposition of acoustic and visual quotations and ideologemes of the Soviet mass culture on A. Grin's story. This research reveals heterogeneous elements of the performance (e.g. vows, ancestor worship, narrative of threats), which articulated the relevant axiological agenda. This research is based on the methods of reconstruction and description of the phenomena of the Soviet official performance culture within Herrmann and Gvozdev's (Leningrad, St. Petersburg) school of theatre studies.

Аннотация. Инсценирующие практики СССР, перешедшие и позднее укоренившиеся в постсоветской зрелищной культуре России, ускорили процессы советизации массовой культуры и подготовили почву для формирования утопических мотивов, присущих официальной перформатике. Актуальность настоящей работы заключается в том, что изучение свойств содержательной лабильности советских зрелищных форм позволяет прояснить функциональность и культурное значение современных массовых представлений. Материалом для работы выбран праздник «Алые паруса» как образчик советского зрелища, успешно встроившегося в постсоветский праздничный календарь. В фокусе внимания автора находится проблема семантической деформации сюжетно-героических схем повести-феерии А. Грина (1880–1932) «Алые паруса» (1922) в контексте одноименного советского массового театрального представления. Целью работы является анализ семантических сдвигов театрального представления «Алые паруса» (1970, 1972) в его диалогической связи с литературным первоисточником. Научная проблема работы заключается в выявлении механики и форм интеграции советского индоктринального дискурса в ткань театрального представления. Реконструкция, осуществленная на архивных источниках, демонстрирует устойчивую динамику отхода от нарратива А. Грина в сторону доминирующего советского мифа, сформировавшегося под воздействием официальной культуры. Автор приходит к выводу, что лежащие в основе представления принципы дубликации и монтажа приводили к семантическому искажению приоритетного героя, событий и мотивов. Анализ художественных структур представления показывает, что перекодировка первоисточника осуществлялась с помощью генерации аналоговых художественных форм и искусственного семантического сближения, характеризующегося насильственным наложением на фабулу Грина акустико-визуальных цитат и идеологем советской массовой культуры. В результате данного исследования выявлены гетерогенные элементы в зрелище (клятвенная практика, культ предков, нарратив угроз), артикулирующие актуальную аксиологическую повестку. Методологической платформой является реконструкция и описание феноменов официальной советской зрелищной культуры в рамках германовско-гвоздевской (ленинградской, петербургской) театроведческой школы.

Introduction

Over the past decade, the nostalgic Soviet discourse and the resentment syndrome have become deeply ingrained in the modern Russian cultural space [3]. The persistent Soviet myth results in current artistic practices seeking to replicate the already tried precedential forms in the USSR. These and other processes concerned with the convergence of politics and culture make discussions about the Soviet mass culture among Russian and foreign researchers relevant and explain the increased attention to it. Additionally, such a growing scientific interest is the result of the interdisciplinary approaches characteristic of the modern humanities, which discovers both new methods of studying the Soviet phenomena and those bringing the pieces of culture that were previously considered marginal into the modern scientific field. Alongside with a comprehensive scientific attention to the Soviet everyday culture (works by I. Orlov [13] and A. Yurchak [24] are significant), the Soviet phenomena are especially relevant in the research concerned with the festive culture, in particular, by M. Rolf, who has analyzed extensive archival sources and studied the “festive methodology” and the role of the institution of “experts” in the development of the canons of the Soviet mass performances [18, p. 79]. Kazan researchers S. Malysheva [10] and A. Salnikova [19] have significantly contributed to the modern research into the Soviet festive culture. The former focused on the mass performances in the Kazan Governorate in the first decade of the Soviet period (1917–1927) and studied the influence of regional and national and religious aspects on the semantics of the festivals. The latter’s work is a convincing example illustrating the application of the anthropological approach to studying the Soviet festive context. The research is centred around the New Year objects, namely, ornaments. The historical and cultural forms of their existence identified by the author provided a wider context for understanding the idea of the Soviet myth and its dual heroic spirit.

The recent works by foreign authors demonstrate a subdisciplinary spectrum spreading in studying the phenomenology of the Soviet. Regarding English-language scientific research, the recently published papers concerned with the analysis and functioning of the festive forms of the Soviet propaganda should be noted. Thus, B. Gajos has analyzed the staging practices of the Soviet anniversary celebration culture and

underlined its importance in realizing the principle of *primus inter pares* (first among equals) [26, p. 176]. The evolution of festive forms is another important issue, which the scientific community devotes special attention to. In her article having a somewhat Shakespearean title: “Celebrating (or Not) the Russian Revolution”, Sh. Fitzpatrick has raised a question of the importance of choosing a mode of celebrations in the modern Russian socio-cultural space. An allusion to the famous Shakespeare’s play is quite reasonable: in the same way that Hamlet, torn apart by titanic contradictions, relies on the authority of his father’s instructions to find the source of legitimacy of his actions, the modern authorities, tormented by the choice between a vague modern formation of celebrations and the tried one, opt for the latter and say the confident “to be” to the Soviet festivity [25]. In I. Torbakov’s work concerned with the anniversaries of the October Revolution, he states that the space of celebration is opposed to the space of historical knowledge and plays a significant role in the modern development of the Soviet myth [31]. T. Shaw and D. Youngblood [28] have studied the mechanisms of propaganda and their performance forms in the era of the Cold War. The Finnish researcher Pia Koivunen has described the constructive role of youth institutions and festivals in developing the Soviet cultural agenda [27]. These “mega events”, as she names them, employed the tactics of cultural expansion aimed at external audience [27, p. 1617], and the mass performances replicated demonstrations of the best local achievements [27, p. 1618].

The current publications demonstrate a continued need for studying the official Soviet performance culture and the young Soviet audience among the scientific community. However, it should be noted that there have been no Russian or foreign research concerned with studying the semantics and functioning of one of the largest mass festivals for the Soviet youth, The Scarlet Sails Festival, in terms of its plot and composition, which determines the relevance and scientific novelty of this study.

The Scarlet Sails Festival holds a valuable place in the Soviet and post-Soviet performance culture and still attracts keen interest of the youth, tourists and the media⁽¹⁾. Having been established in the USSR as an event

(1) The Scarlet Sails Festival 2020 won the Global Eventex Award in four nominations: Art Event, Celebration Event, Cultural Event and Music Event.

for high school graduates, the festival has been successfully integrated into the modern Russian festival calendar and maintained its position as the largest mass theatrical performance attracting thousands of people. Despite its seemingly monotonous plot, the lively dynamics of its artistic structure is largely attributable to the complex integration of the relevant cultural and ideological contexts into its texture. Mediating the youth agenda over the years, the content and formal aspects of the festival were subject to semantic shifts, which resulted in deviations from the original storyline by Alexander Grin (1880–1932). This research aims to analyze these semantic shifts in *The Scarlet Sails* theatrical performances (1970, 1972) in its dialogic connection with the literary original.

On the threshold of the upcoming jubilee celebrations on the occasion of the 50th anniversary of the October Revolution (1967) [11], the Council for Mass Theatrical Performances⁽²⁾ requested the Soviet cultural institutions to develop a series of festivals and celebrations for young people. The Council Laboratory directions just increased the number of festivals and celebrations, and numerous methodological guidelines on the practices of indoctrinal initiation of the youth were published [2].

In 1968, the Leningrad Zhdanov Palace of Young Pioneers propounded to arrange a centralized festival for high school graduates. The first performance took place in summer of the same year in the Neva waters and in the city streets. The Aurora Festival Fairy Play directed by S.V. Yakobson, which was shown a year earlier on the occasion of the October Revolution anniversary [30], greatly influenced the image and compositional solutions of the first water performances in the waters. The Soviet period confirmed The Scarlet Sails Festival as the generator of the Soviet myth, fostering the necessary values in high school graduates. It was arranged and held not only by involvement of renowned cultural figures (e.g. composers, artists, directors, etc.), but also the army and the navy. Considerable attention was paid to special attributes of the festival (e.g. flag, anthem, etc.). The concept and the script were discussed and approved over and over again. Such a special status of the festival determined its complex,

(2) The Council for Mass Theatrical Performances substituted the Russian Theatrical Society, which developed the artistic and ideological platform for performance culture in the USSR. The directors, scriptwriters and artists belonging to it set trends for mass forms of theatre arts.

ideologically elaborated narrative and concentrated semantics of the performance texture. The storyline of the festival was based on the neo-romantic literary work by A. Grin, which was affected by the predominance of the conventional codes of the Soviet reality. The author's biographical connection with the city turned the archetypal story of the eternal return [29] into a "Leningrad Odyssey".

The analysis of semantic transformations in the performance requires a reference to the plot and characters of A. Grin's fairy tale *The Scarlet Sails* (1922). The main characters are a duet of young people, Grey and Assol, who represent the character level, and the plot represents a series of challenges they have to face. The general motive that determines the main characters' actions is the desire to find each other. The old narrator Egl and Poldishok act as messengers and senders, who prepare the main characters for their journey mission. The pivot on which the central and main event is built is an encounter that brings renewal and the discovery of a new world. The central images that constitute the general narrative are the *Secret* frigate and its scarlet sails. The galliot signifies a materialized dream, a reward for being loyal to the idea, while the scarlet sails are a symbol of the heroic and a sign by which Assol recognizes Grey. Semantically, the sails manifest the character's axiological worldview that justifies his movement towards the goal. The dominant images and semantic points of the original plot formed the basis for subsequent stage interpretations.

The research is based on the performances *The Scarlet Sails 1970* and *The Scarlet Sails 1972*, which most significantly demonstrate the distortion of the original semantic links. Staged by different directors and implemented in different spaces, they illustrate the distinct semantic shift away from the original plot, which proves the predominance of the Soviet agenda over the literary original.

The Symbol of the Great Joy Colour (1970)

One of the first directors and scriptwriters involved in the production of *The Scarlet Sails* water fairy play was A. Orleansky [9]⁽³⁾, an experienced

(3) A. Orleansky (Anshel B. Kleinman-Orleansky) (1918–2001) is a film critic and a scriptwriter. A. Orleansky graduated from the Leningrad Theatre Institute (currently the Russian State Institute of Performing Arts) in 1949. The Soviet cinema was his main scientific interest. He

scriptwriter and director of Soviet mass performances. Together with other directors and artists (A. Gustavson, S. Kantarovich, G. Nikulin, A. Pasternak, B. Sapegin, B. Yanik) he provided an aesthetic direction for developing the festive canons of *The Scarlet Sails* as a synthetic form of performance.

The allegory of A. Orleansky's poetic language was already evident in the title of the script proposed by him: "The Symbol of the Great Joy Colour" [12, p. 85]. He begins his preface to the script as if enveloping the reader in A. Grin's veil of colour: "Pink shadows were riding the whiteness; everything was white, except for the outstretched swimming sails of the great joy colour" [12, p. 85]. Without proceeding to the composition of the performance, he starts with a detailed representation of the Author's world. However, he is mostly interested in the artificial nature of a dream rather than A. Grin's neo-romantic poetic style. Bearing in mind the article by K. Paustovsky [8], in which he encouraged young readers of *The Scarlet Sails* to lead a rational and interesting life, A. Orleansky came up with the idea of "creating a new man" [12, p. 85] who dreams "in a pragmatic way" [12, p. 85]. According to him, the fairy tale tells about "the spiritual youth and the faith that everyone can work miracles with their own hands" [12, p. 85], and its plot should take place in the context of the recognizable reality. The neo-romantic pathos of A. Grin's story gave way to the Soviet dialectics, which constitutes the first deviation from the author's narrative that returns to earth his characters. As A. Orleansky explained it, the image of the scarlet sails was taking on a "broader meaning" [12, p. 85]. The sails did remain a representation of the heroic aspirations driving the main character towards the goal; however, the very goal changed, the goal is "a place in life" now. This is how A. Orleansky explained the radical change of the main character's path (in A. Grin's narrative, the frigate was sailing from the mundane (the coast of Kaperna) to the boundless paradise).

The Soviet imperative "turned" the plot towards "close happiness" inspired by communist eschatology. The landscape of the characters' actions was limited to the heroic everyday life, and labour was proclaimed the means of achieving the dream. The new motivations of the characters altered the geography of their journey: while in the original story they

sacrificed what they had for the faraway, in A. Orleansky's interpretation, the characters had to sail to the close shore of the Soviet. In the preface to the script, A. Orleansky de facto defined the most important task of the festival, which is confined to the following idea: "Everyone should find their 'Scarlet Sails'. / It does not take years of wandering, and there is no need to go far. Our scarlet sails are close to us. We just need to love labour and learn to labour" [12, p. 86]. These starting points determined the first semantic shifts related to the essential idea of a journey. The characters' journey to the goal turned into moving towards a "place" in the production system, and the very concept of a dream was specified and placed into a recognizable social field materialized in occupation. The initiation mechanism included into the performance plot was considered by A. Orleansky as the "compatriot" character's transition to working life [12, p. 86], which resulted in the substitution of priority characters, their actions and attributes. While the director declared labour in industries to be a means of achieving the Soviet dream, with replacing courage and commitment to the lyrical ideals in the original story, "Soviet Grey and Assol" were justifiably represented by heroes of labour: a welder, milker, or cosmonaut who entered the space of the festival. A. Orleansky explained this substitution saying that "the dream should not be remote from reality" [12, p. 85].

In terms of composition, the fairy play consisted of three parts all divided into scenes. The Neva River waters were both the stage and the auditorium. The auditoriums were announced in the first minutes of the performance, "The festival in the Neva River is starting! The auditorium is the entire Palace Embankment from the Kirovsky Bridge to the Palace Bridge. / Stand anywhere in the embankment. / The ships will be sailing in front of you" [12, p. 88]. The event was hosted by two narrative channels ("first host", "second host"), who had different functions and objectives: the first host created the elevated festive mood, while the second one acted as a "commentator" [12, p. 87]. Different degrees of their involvement in the plot maintained different distance from the audience. The first host acted as an internal narrator, revealing collisions and evaluating them. Being a bearer of the Soviet discourse, he aimed at incorporating the Soviet myth into A. Grin's plot. The second host connected the narration with the visual image. He directed the audience's gaze, giving instructions on which way and how to look. Thus, one of the hosts "directed ear", whereas

was a lecturer at the directing courses at the Lenfilm film studio, later – the head of studies (1964–1965). In 1966, A. Orleansky joined the scriptwriting and editorial board of the First Creative Association in Leningrad.

the other one “directed gaze”. “He draws the audience’s attention to the most important part,” the director explained the second narrator’s tasks. “The need for such a commentary is due to the exceptional size of the water stage and the audience distributed over a distance of almost three kilometres” [12, p. 87].

The festival began with a “starting scene on the water” [12, p. 87]. Shortly before midnight, radio calls and searchlights preset the location of the future fairy play in the Neva River waters between the Kirovsky Bridge (currently the Trinity Bridge) and the Palace Bridge. A helicopter unit appeared in the sky from the direction of the Peter and Paul Fortress, unfurling the glowing symbol of the festival in front of the audience. Circling, it flew past the Kirovsky Bridge over the Palace Embankment and, skirting the audience, was going away and disappeared behind the Peter and Paul Fortress like the credits in a film. The first part of the performance “Torches of Youth” consisted of a series of “tableaux” illustrating a variety of manifestations of the heroic. The first scene represented a standard-bearer holding the standard of the festival and two characters, a young man and a young woman, illuminating the raised symbol of The Scarlet Sails festival with their torches. The skyward lights and the heroic verticalism of their sculptural postures expressed the desire of the Leningrad youth for the dream. Four tableaux that followed demonstrated other modes of the heroic.

The scene “A worker of the Putilov Plant and the revolution” [12, p. 89] represented a duet of a worker and a soldier wearing uniform and holding their implements. Then the “Tableau group of the 1930s” sailed [12, p. 89], in which the characters were a worker involved in the first five-year plan and a kolkhoz woman. Then followed the tableau “The Great Patriotic War” representing a sailor and a soldier wearing a waterproof cape, and “the Soviet people of our time” was the last tableau of the first part [12, p. 89]. The director paid special attention to the characters’ costumes. They illustrated not only the sign of the times, but also the industry affiliation, which allowed to decode the idea of the heroic according to the characteristics and attributes of a job. The composition of all the tableaux of the first part was similar and employed several characters, their attributes and the choir (drummers, trumpeters, and escort) located on shipboard. Like an outline, the choir contoured the sailing tableaux, visually introducing the Soviet history

fragments into the youth ring. The group of ships demonstrating the Soviet modes of the heroic to the schoolchildren was heading for the Spit of Vasilievsky Island, where the heroes of the revolutionary pantheon were to light a beacon. While the first host was informing the audience about the sacral meaning of the torches lit “by our fathers as far back as the fiery days of the revolution” [12, p. 90], the second one was directing the audience’s gaze, “The opening boats, sailing along the Palace Bridge, are approaching the granite slope of the Spit of Vasilievsky Island, / they are approaching the Spit of Vasilievsky Island, where the Rostral Columns tower. Look at the Spit of Vasilievsky Island!” [12, p. 90]. The narrator was gradually approaching to the initiatory handover of torch from the adult world to the world of young Soviet high school graduates (“each young generation has continued the Party’s course” [12, p. 90]). The standard-bearer holding the standard stepped onto the bank, climbed the steps and raised the standard of The Scarlet Sails festival. Alongside with the rising standard, the young man and the young woman brought “fire of the revolution torches” to the bank [12, p. 91]. The parallelism between the movements of the standard and the fire semantically intertwined the images of scarlet sails and the flame of the revolution. A text of transition was introduced, “It is time for you to raise the torches of the Motherland high! Your parents, your siblings, your teachers, and the whole city hand over them to you” [12, p. 90].

The images of fire and heat (“Torches of youth! The fire in our hearts! It should burn brightly! It should bring happiness!” [12, p. 90]) gained a symbolic meaning of purification or neophyte rebirth [23]. Young men were standing in ranks on the steps of the embankment (from the berth of the Spit of Vasilievsky Island to the Rostral Columns) [14, p. 3] and holding still unlit torches. Gradually, the chain of lights was lighting up like “fiery waves” [12, p. 91] connecting the embankment and nearby objects [5], which created the effect of a spreading flame. “Torches! Glorious torches! You are growing in number, and so are our good deeds,” said the first host. “Look! The lights are rising higher and higher,” [12, p. 91] continued the second one (Fig. 1).

The scene of passing the flag and flame to the contemporaries performed as a “relay race of generations of the Soviet people” [12, p. 92] represented symbolic initiation. The symbol of the festival brought by the Soviet workers and illuminated by the revolution torch lost meaning of an

individual dream but embodied the collective one gained by the ancestors and delivered by ship of revolution.

The second part of the performance, “Ships of Dreams”, included eight scenes (“Hammer”, “Sickle”, “Construction”, “Consumer Services”, “Atom”, “Art”, “Sport”, and “Warriors of the Motherland”) and represented an illustration of ample opportunities for future achievements rather than a retrospective of the exploits performed. The scene of Assol running on the waves and encountering the snow-white three-masted galliot *Secret* was a prologue to the second part. After the detailed immersion into the world of A. Grin’s characters, the Soviet narrative integrated into the story and incorporated the plot and characters both acoustically and visually. The wave-like and rushing overture to the film *The Children of Captain Grant* composed by I. Dunaevsky [11, p. 76] added new relevant contexts to the scene of meeting of A. Grin’s characters and continued the already stated motive of heroic deeds performed by the youth in the name of their parents. Then the lyrical register gave way to the “*Merry wind*” song [11, p. 76]. The quotes from the pieces of Soviet music were introduced into the musical settings of the scene of meeting, setting aside A. Grin’s fantasy chronotope and replacing it with the modern major motives. Having transformed into the children of Captain Grant, A. Grin’s characters entered a different field. “Dream is the first step towards setting a practical goal. Life gives us so many opportunities, our times offer us so many paths! They are nearby, they are around us!” [12, p. 95].

A. Grin’s galliot was followed by “ships of labour” [12, p. 95]. The floating scenes, developing at a tempo-rhythm exponential rate, represented the modern spaces of the heroic (a factory in the “Hammer” scene, a village in the “Sickle” scene, a scientific laboratory in the “Atom” scene, etc.). The acts were based on the interaction between the characters and dynamic structures that allegorically represented the tools or result of everyday heroic deeds (“hammer”, “scene from the play *Boris Godunov*”, “grocery scales”, “gear piece”, “brickwork”, etc.) [12, pp. 96–98]. The representation of topoi of the Soviet heroic corresponded to the life-creating pathos of the oratorio *The Song of the Forests* by D. Shostakovich. The image of a garden ship mentioned in the story was represented by the image of a forest planted by young Soviet saviours. “Warriors of the Motherland” scene with a banner rocket on deck was the last scene of the second part. As with the first part, all the scenes were accompanied with the choir, but

in this part, the choir consisted of young kolkhoz workers, students and Nakhimov naval cadets. In this part, “young voices of recent high school graduates” [12, p. 95] acted as guides and mentors. Embodying the idea of eternal repetition, which is characteristic of initiation rites, the voice reminded the audience that the ships that came were “the ships of those who have already been on the Neva River on such an occasion. A year, two, or three separate them [the characters on deck] from him/her [the high school graduates]” [12, p. 95]. Two guiding voices (a young man and a young woman) invited their contemporaries to join them and complete the transition to adult life: “A young woman: We are waiting for you! Follow us ... / A young man: ... to workshops where the might of the Motherland is forged / A young woman: ... to fields to make our land bloom and thrive / A young man: ... to construction sites of new bright residential areas / A young woman: ... to consumer services, to the world of work that makes people’s life easier” [12, p. 95] (Fig. 2).

The third part of the fairy play was the denouement, which represented already former schoolchildren either as waltzing couples in full dress, or characters wearing masks. The carnival aesthetics of the last scene is quite justified: smoothing away the traits of schoolchildren in characters, carnivalization was represented as a metaphor of getting rid of the past. It is this scene that completed the final transformation into an adult. A hundred masqueraded girls and boys changed “in reflected light streamers” [12, p. 101]. A. Orleansky concealed the silhouettes of schoolchildren with “carnival masks and lanterns” [12, p. 101], turning them into circus artists holding sparklers and illuminated hoops. The director considered this riot of colours to be a metaphor of turning the teenage schoolchildren into “professional circus artists” [12, p. 101]. These words should not be understood ambiguously; however, the very idea (albeit expressed unconsciously) that starting an adult life, a former schoolchild becomes a professional circus artist, looks quite ironic in terms of the year 1970.

The performance directed by A. Orleansky was concluded with a scene of the final triumph of the elements. The reviving water surface set in motion by floating fountains synchronized with the fiery figures in the sky [6] and provided an opportunity for seventy thousand Leningrad citizens to enjoy city festivities [12, p. 99] (Fig. 3).

Conclusion

The spectacular texture of the festival lay in two paradigms, the literary and the ideological ones. The Soviet myth integrated and attached new connotations [1, pp. 72–130] by means of the images of the original narrative by A. Grin (the *Secret* frigate, the sails) and its plot (watery journeys) through the techniques of *duplication and montage*. The mechanism of duplication consisted in creating parallel, duplicating structures on the basis of A. Grin's artistic texture. Various "ships of labour" and other its analogues duplicated the galliot *Secret*, the revolution torches and standards duplicated the image of sails. The original characters' duet (Grey and Assol) was replaced by analogous Soviet duets: a young man and a young woman, their voices, and young members of the Komsomol. The semantics of the original was converted not only by means of generating analogous artistic forms, but also by the forced superimposition of acoustic and visual quotations and ideologemes of the Soviet mass culture on A. Grin's story. This artificial convergence of contexts allowed to make deliberate correlations, which forced to establish the determined connections between events and circumstances of A. Grin's story and the Soviet heroic discourse. The narrators, who acted as the doctrinal commentators or the "dominant signifier" [24, p. 154], provided a strong connection between the Soviet and A. Grin's narratives in the montage.

At the level of characters, the obvious deviations from A. Grin's characters are observed in genealogy, motives, objects and means of the heroic. Representing a part of the Soviet world, the external features of the characters related to various industries by means of costume, attributes and products of labour. The concept of a dream that defined the characters' attitudes was focused on everyday life. Moreover, the cult of effective labour, becoming a means of the heroic, shifted the goal and the dream from A. Grin's individual and lyrical space to the area of the collective, common "place" in the state. The heroic deed performed by the characters in the name of someone was replaced by that done in the name of something in the Soviet festive discourse. In this regard, the loci of the heroic took realistic forms, and the viability of the heroic deed was ensured by introducing the documentary texture into the performance, which proved the legitimation of the Soviet. The increasing narrative of threats expressed through an anti-space or an anti-hero exploited the

military events of the past, drawing a veil of sacredness over militarism. The axiological view of the world formed this way (by contradiction) generated the spirit of heroic deeds, relating it to the motive of death. In general, the examples of the heroic that were represented to the audience in the performance declared the primacy of the state over the individual and appealed to the idea of self-sacrifice. The vows that completed the festival based upon the ancestor worship, which burdened Soviet high school graduates with new responsibilities and made them accountable to the Soviet past.

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