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PETRUSHA GRINYOVS "GEOGRAPHY EXERCISES": CORRECTION WORK

Abstract: The article focuses on one of the material world's items in "The Captain's daughter" novel by A. S. Pushkin: such as a geographical map, acting as a might-have-been "kite", serving as a marker of an only coordinate — the Cape of Good Hope. Desire to explain the presence of this particular geographical name associated with Piotr Grinyov's unusual approach towards "exercises in geography" in a novel by Pushkin determines the purpose of the study. As the paper proves the kite, which the main character makes out of a map, has a single-plane structure, where obligatory fastening of the tail to the edge of the plane ensures the flight of the "snake" and its maneuvering in the air flow. In the event, it appears that Grinyov attaches "barks tail" to the middle of the geographical sheeting, since all maps, common in Russia of the second half 18th – early 19th centuries, have the Cape of Good Hope located in the center. This very fact is not seen as an involuntary author's mistake, but his conscious artistic arrangement. The analysis of historical sources shows that the southernmost point of the African continent, according to the will of its discoverer, the Portuguese Navigator Bartolomeu Dias, was initially called "the Cape of Storms" and only eventually was called the Cape of Good Hope. In the cartography of Pushkin's times both names are saved. Perhaps Pushkin could have learned the story of the double name of the African from the Portuguese poet Camoens, author of the national epic poem "The Lusians", whose work he highly valued. The author of "The captain's daughter", through a conscious and inconspicuous error, makes play with the geographical coordinates' double name in the novel, leading his characters through *Storms* to *Hope*, which is emphasized through the system of artistic meanings formed by the words "hope" and "storm".

Keywords: Pushkin, "The Captain's Daughter" novel, geographical map, kite, the Cape of Good Hope, the Cape of Storms.

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**«УПРАЖНЕНИЯ В ГЕОГРАФИИ» ПЕТРУШИ ГРИНЕВА:
РАБОТА НАД ОШИБКАМИ**

Аннотация: В центре внимания статьи один из предметов вещного мира романа А. С. Пушкина «Капитанская дочка» — географическая карта, которая в повествовании выступает в качестве несостоявшегося воздушного змея героя и служит маркером единственной координаты — Мыса Доброй Надежды. Стремление объяснить присутствие в пушкинском произведении именно этого географического названия, связанного с необычным подходом Петруши Гринева к «упражнениям в географии», определяет цель исследования. В статье доказывается, что воздушный змей, которого мастерит из карты герой Пушкина, имеет одноплоскостную конструкцию, где обязательное крепление хвоста к краю плоскости обеспечивает полет змея и его маневрирование в потоках воздуха. На деле же получается, что Петруша Гринева крепит «мочальный хвост» к середине географического полотна, поскольку на всех распространенных в России во второй половине XVIII – начале XIX вв. картах Мыс Доброй Надежды располагается практически в центре. И этот факт видится не невольной ошибкой автора, а его осмысленной художественной установкой. Анализ исторических источников показывает, что самая южная точка африканского континента по воле его первооткрывателя, португальского мореплавателя Бартоломеу Диаша, поначалу именовалась Мысом Бурь и лишь потом получила название Мыс Доброй Надежды. В картографии пушкинского времени сохраняются оба эти именованья. Возможно, историю двойного названия африканского мыса Пушкин мог почерпнуть у португальского поэта Камозанса, автора национальной эпической поэмы «Лузиады», творчество которого высоко ценил. Автор «Капитанской дочки» посредством сознательной и неприметной ошибки обыгрывает в романе двойное название географической координаты, ведя своих героев через Бури к Надежде, что подчеркивается в тексте системой художественных значений, образующейся с помощью слов «надежда» и «буря».

Ключевые слова: Пушкин, роман «Капитанская дочка», географическая карта, воздушный змей, Мыс Доброй Надежды, Мыс Бурь.

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The “funny title” of our work seems to promise an extraordinary literary hypothesis related to the little-visible and global in its consequences geographical miscalculation of the main character of the novel. Therefore, we will immediately indicate the fact that it will be only about one simple subject from the material world of Pushkin’s work. And it is not going to be Grinyov’s *hareskin tulupchik* (Russian for “coat”) constantly used by philologists, but

quite a normal geographical map; an attempt to turn it into a kite abruptly changed the fate of the hero. The same kind of formulation of the topic is a kind of creative task in the formation of the interrogated, almost student-oriented discourse of the proposed study, contributing to the solution of not the most difficult problems. First of all, let us quote the place of interest in the novel:

My father went to my room. At that time Beaupre was sleeping the sleep of innocence on the bed. I was usefully employed. I ought to mention that a map of the world had been ordered for me from Moscow. It hung on the wall; no use was made of it, and I had long felt tempted by its width and thickness. I decided to make a snake ["air snake" — "воздушный змей" is Russian for "kite"] of it and, taking advantage of Beaupre's slumbers, set to work upon it. My father came in just at the moment when I was fixing a tail of tow to the Cape of Good Hope. Seeing my exercises in geography, my father pulled me by the ear, then ran up to Beaupre, roused him none too gently, and overwhelmed him with reproaches [8, vol. 8, book 1, p. 280].

This episode of the novel is memorable to everyone as the way of life of Petrusha Grinyov before his entry into adulthood is also remembered: "I grew up without any tuition, and spent my time chasing pigeons and playing leap-frog with the boys on the estate" [8, vol. 8, book 1, p. 280].

It should be noted that these "exercises in geography" have quite a clear connection with one of the fragments of the tragedy "Boris Godunov", where the king, like Andrey Petrovich Grinyov, witnesses the activities of his son with a geographical map. But if in the tragedy Theodore devotes himself to the present and important exercise, making a "drawing of the land of Moscow", while Petrusha turns the "exercises" into a child's fun. And, in fact, paraphrases Godunov-father's high words of instruction in the form of a pun:

How nice! here's the sweet fruit of learning!
How can you see from the clouds
The whole Kingdom suddenly: the border, castles, rivers.
Study, my son... [8, vol. 7, p. 43].

It seems that in the "Captain's Daughter" Pushkin, consciously traversing the scene from "Boris Godunov", tries to mark in the theme of "people's troubles" the path of the hero, who, not having any "tuition and knowledge", no wisdom, "comprehends the experiences of fast-flowing life" in the practice of living reality, which is constantly experiencing the forming personality on moral integrity.

It is possible that in the life of the *nedorosl* (having no knowledge or tuition) childhood experiences and events in the life of Pushkin are reflected. The nephew of the poet, Lev Pavlishchev, left, according to his mother's words, such a testimony: «this family [the Pushkins] was visited by a "legion" of foreign tutors and governesses; out of which I choose the obnoxious, capricious petty tyrant Ruslo and the worthy successor Schedel. Out of them <...> Ruslo offended the young pet Alexander Sergeevich, laughing him at the child when the latter wrote a joke-poem in imitation of "Henriade". Depicting the battle between male and female dwarves, Pushkin read the initial quatrain to the tutor; Ruslo made Pushkin cry, ridiculing ruthlessly every word of this quatrain ... the Successor, Shadel, spent the free time in the front, playing cards with mongrel, for which, in the end, was dismissed» [cit. ex 3, p. 43].

It is likely that more biased than strict criticism of the Ruslo echoed in the episode of the novel where Shvabrin “unmercifully deciphered every verse and every word” of love songs by Petrusha Grinyov, while a simpleton, Schedel became one of the prototypes of “a good fellow” Monsieur Beaupré. In the memoir sources, telling about the visit of the young Pushkin in the village of Zakharovo, his participation in the games and amusements of peasant children is repeatedly referred to. And among these amusements, perhaps, was the “flying” kite. Of course, all these are only hypotheses and no more, which are only of indirect importance for our topic. Now it is more important to focus on what kind of “snake” Petrusha makes, while Monsieur Beaupré “was sleeping the sleep of innocence”, and, accordingly, with what kind of “snake” (kite), perhaps, Pushkin himself had to deal.

Kite is the most ancient flying object. The birthplace of kites is China, where they were the main characters of masquerades and carnivals. From China, they spread to other countries in Asia and Europe. In ancient times, kites were launched to drive away evil spirits, to transmit messages from one castle to another, to conduct meteorological research and aerial survey of the area. The first mention of kites occurred two centuries before our chronology. Snakes were made in the form of fish, birds, butterflies, beetles and painted in bright colors. The most common was a dragon snake, similar to a half-crocodile-half-snake. Perhaps the Russian name «snake» is associated with this way.

Later kites began to be made in the form of a flat frame, covered with paper or cloth. They had no resemblance to the fairy dragon or a snake, but the name (Russian “flying snake”) has survived to the present day. Up to a certain point, only two types of kites were known: single — plane (with a mandatory tail) and compound, like Chinese, connected to a flexible system.

The ancient records of how in 906 the Kiev Prince Oleg used kites when taking Tsargrad are curious. The chronicle says that over the enemy in the air appeared “horses and people are paper, armed and gilded”.

Launching kites into the air, M. V. Lomonosov studied the upper atmosphere and the nature of lightning. On June 26, 1753 Lomonosov “with the help of a kite pulled the lightning from the clouds”. He launched a kite in a thunderstorm and extracted a statistical electricity discharge from its twine used as a conductor [7].

What kind of kite makes parsley?

Definitely a single-plane one. Firstly, to create a composite kite Petrusha had neither materials nor skills. Secondly, in another Pushkin’s work “the History of the village of Goryukhino” there is an episode with a kite, from which it follows that this serpent is single-plane and Pushkin is well familiar with the design:

This interesting manuscript I found at my priest’s place, married to the daughter of the chronicler. The first sheets were torn out and used by the priest’s children as the so-called snakes. One of those fell in the middle of my yard. I picked it up and wanted to give it back to the children, as I noticed it was scribbled. From the first lines I saw that the serpent was compiled from the chronicles, [and] was thankfully in time to save the rest [8, vol. 8, book 1, p. 134].

Planar, as the only version of the design of the kite, is fixed in the dictionary of V. I. Dal: “Kites are toys, sheets of paper used by archers, flying in the wind on vozice (rope) attached to its tail” [4, p. 686].

Let us give a more detailed description of such a “snake”.

Flat kite is the simplest in the manufacture of the design, which explains its popularity. Consists of three slats bonded to each other (two on the diagonals of the «snake» and one on

the upper side), glued to a sheet of heavy paper. The bridle of such a kite consists of three strands; two of them are attached to the ends of the upper plank, the third — to the center of the snake. The length of the upper part of the bridle is such that its threads are exactly placed on the diagonal bars, the length of the third thread is half the height of the “snake”. To ensure stability, the top bar should be slightly tightened with a thread, giving it the shape of an arc. Flat kites necessarily need a tail that is attached to the edge of the plane. The tail, properly attached to a sheet of paper, is one of the main conditions for a snake to rise into the sky and be able to maneuver in the air flow [7]. Now let’s turn to the maps.

The most widespread in Russia in the second half of the 18th – early 19th centuries were maps published in the Civil printing house of V. O. Kipriyanov; as for foreign maps — a Monseigneur Mgr. Messire Luis Phelippeaux de Pontchartrin, A Paris 1742; A Monseigneur le Comte de Maurepass Ministry et Secretaire d’etat, a Paris 1744 [1; 2].

On all these maps, including, by the way, modern ones, the Cape of Good Hope, located in the South of the African continent, is located almost in the middle of the geographical canvas, not the edge.

There can be no question that Petrusha Grinyov cut the card, because it was its size that led the hero to think of using it for other purposes. It is unlikely that Petrusha, practicing the manufacture of a snake and tail straightening to its middle for the first time, dooms future fun to failure. It is important for the author of the novel together along with the main character to select this particular one, with deliberate mistakes, from hundreds of geographical coordinates; and yet projecting handle attaching barks tail and being the symbol of spontaneity and youthful frivolity of the ignoramus Grinyov.

What do we actually know about this geographical coordinate?

The Cape of Good Hope is located on the southern tip of Africa and is a rocky Peninsula protruding into the sea, at the beginning of which there is a large African port of Cape Town.

The Cape of Good Hope was discovered in 1488 by the Portuguese Navigator Bartolomeu Dias. Going in search of new lands, the Portuguese several times tried to go around this Cape, but they were stopped by a strong storm. With great difficulty the ships passed this lost place. On the way back to their native shores, the Portuguese named this harsh land the Cape of Storms in the memory of the storm.

After some time, the Portuguese king Juan II renamed it the Cape of Good Hope, as this discovery gave the Portuguese hope to reach India by sea. If the name had not been changed, it would have been one of the most dangerous areas for navigation on the globe. Storms at this Cape are not an accidental phenomenon. The West coast of South Africa is subject to the strong winds of the Atlantic Ocean, often turning into long and severe storms. In the area of the warm Agulhas current meets the cold Cross-over, with the result that here, as well as the island of Newfoundland, the fogs are formed that hide in the veil threat to Maritime rocky shore of the southern tip of Africa.

From the time of Dias until the appearance of steam ships, the Cape of Good Hope was considered extremely dangerous for navigation. For almost five centuries, the majestic rocky Cape of Storms has repeatedly been a silent witness to the terrible human tragedies at sea.

Until the middle of the 19th century there were two names on the maps – Cape of Good Hope and Cape of Storms. The latter, as a rule, was designated in brackets, because it was not the main naming [9; 10].

Pushkin in the novel refers only to the Cape of Good Hope, but as we think, its other name is assumed — the Cape of Storms. It is unlikely that this assumption should be attributed

to the category of bold and unexpected, and also requiring actual confirmation. Just one look at the map is enough, where, again, there are both names of the Cape. And for such a view, probably, quite a “small diligence with very good success” in geography, which Pushkin found in the Lyceum for the certification of associate Professor Ivan Kuzmich Kaydanov. Besides, it is well known that Pushkin appreciated the work of the Portuguese poet Camoens, author of a national epic poem “The Lusiads” [5]. In this universally recognized masterpiece of world literature there is an episode where the mariners are going to circumnavigate the African continent, meet on their way the evil of the giant Adamastor, who acts as the personification of the Cape of Storms:

I am that mighty hidden cape,
called by you Portuguese the Cape of Storms,
that neither Ptolemy, Pomponius, Strabo, Pliny nor any other of past times ever had knowledge of.
This promontory of mine, jutting out toward the South Pole, marks the southern extremity of Africa.
Until now it has remained unknown: Your daring offends it deeply. Adamastor is my name [6, p. 382].

It is likely that Pushkin could have learned the history of the double name of the southernmost point of the African continent from this literary monument.

The author of the novel leads its characters through a *Storm*, a terrible ordeal; there is a war, “Russian revolt, senseless and merciless”. But on this way neither the author nor his characters lose *Hope*. Such a simple conclusion to the banality is gradually connected in the text of the novel with the system of artistic meanings formed by the words “hope” and “storm”.

Petrusha Grinyov, having learned that instead of St. Petersburg the road to the Orenburg steppes is prepared for him, bitterly exclaims: “All my brilliant hopes are ruined”; the reader knows perfectly well what hopes of the hero are not destined to come true. And here the meaning of this word is directly correlated with the recent “exercise in geography” of Petrusha, actualizing the fact that this hope, as well as a harmonious tail to the Cape of Good Hope — is just fun!

The word “hope” then disappears from Grinyov’s life. It will appear again only in the last two chapters. But the word “storm” will surely let itself felt. Moreover, almost all cases of its use along with the word “Buran” (blizzard) related to it in meaning and sound are connected with the image of the natural element in the Chapter “Leader”. The element that will connect the fate of Peter Grinyov and Yemelyan Pugachev and serve as a symbolic omen of those events that will be a test for the spiritual fortress of yesterday’s ignoramus.

The word “hope” comes up again at the time (Chapters “Arrest” and “Court”) when the characters themselves, seemed to be caught in the trap of the evil fate, almost nothing depends on them, and they need to hope for the Highest grace and Providence of God. It is the meaning of these Christian concepts and respond in the word “hope” and in the speech of Peter Grinyov (“I did not, however, lose either hope or courage. I had recourse to the comfort of all the sorrowful and, having tasted for the first time the sweetness of prayer poured out from a pure but bleeding heart, dropped calmly asleep without caring what would happen to me” [8, vol. 8, book 1, p. 366], and in the speech of Masha Mironova, who came to St. Petersburg “to ask for mercy” for her fiancé (“Marya Ivanovna returned..., filled with joyful hope”).

It is noteworthy that such a semantic discourse of the word “hope” is given by the epigraph to the Chapter “Arrest”, which was composed by Pushkin in the style of the Comedy of Knyazhnin and attributed by the author to Knyazhnin:

Do not be angry, sire; my duty bids me
To send you off to gaol this very day.
— By all means, I am ready; but I trust
You will first allow me to have my say [8, vol. 8, book 1, p. 360].

Actually, this is the highest meaning of finding the good Hope by the main character of the novel, the path to which opened his “exercise in geography”, while the correction work concerning the mistakes made in it gave pleasure to the reader.

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