

## Portrait Image in Pushkin's Prose of the Thirties in the 19<sup>th</sup> Century

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### Abstract

The article explores the specifics of Pushkin's portrait as a media image based on *The Shot*, *The Queen of Spades*, and *The Captain's Daughter* stories. The external portrait of his characters is concise and consists of several expressive details. The author delegates it to other characters. At first glance, the portrait is created according to romantic patterns: an unusual name, an intriguing appearance, a mysterious past, strange habits. Meanwhile, all the images are realistic. The writer creates an intriguing portrait – a false external portrait of a character hiding the image's idea. The author reveals the essence of the character through its "internal portrait," which can be seen on the ontological level, comprehending the genesis of its name and the life secret, the character's real world and personal space, the character's place in the plot of the work and the situation of choice. Pushkin's prose is like a detective film, where the image of the character will still have to be unraveled by the reader.

Keywords: External portrait, image, intrigue portrait, name genesis, text, physical world

### Introduction

Traditionally, a character's portrait in a literary work incorporates a description of its appearance: face, figure, and clothes and the transfer of a psychological picture of the character's state – voice timbre, gestures, facial expressions, gait, and personal style. It is known that the place and role of a portrait and the methods of its creation depend on the type and genre of literature. The portrait description hides the image's idea, enshrined in the character's aesthetic, social, cultural, and intellectual characteristics. M. Yu. Lotman once noted that a portrait is "a double mirror, in which art is reflected in the life and life is reflected in art" (Lotman, 2002, p. 352). The literary text fixed in the word, as you know, has a certain length, which cannot be said about the character image presented in it. The author presents it fractionally, in various versions and angles. The literary world is not fully embodied in the text, and the poetics of recreating the image of a person includes many techniques picked up by masters of the art of writing (Abulhanova et al., 2020; Nureeva et al., 2019). What matters is how the character is entered into the text, the secondary nominations of the character, the features of transmitting the internal speech, and the circumstances of the reader's parting with the character.

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The purpose of the article is to identify the artistic features of Pushkin's realistic portrait in prose of the thirties of the 19<sup>th</sup> century based on *The Shot*, *The Queen of Spades*, and *The Captain's Daughter* stories. These works' main characters are the most mysterious and debatable ones out of all Pushkin's characters, whose hidden meaning lies in portraiture's poetics and aesthetics.

## Theoretical Background

The portrait is characterized by variability. A static portrait reflects stable, unchanging external characteristics of the character, while a dynamic portrait reflects a behavioral pattern of a personality, facial expressions, and gestures. A portrait with a combination of exteriorization in the character's description includes everyday life, an objective world, and inanimate nature patterns. A portrait of an intense type is deepening into the inner life of the character's human ego. A portrait is presented in the author's perception of characters, mutual perception, self-perception, rapprochement and opposition, analogy, and identification.

In the portrait description, the role of details and speech figures, especially comparisons and metaphors, are dominant. They provide a new perspective on the reader's perception of individual character traits. In the portrait descriptions, various kinds of metamorphoses are emphasized, in which a person draws close to an object, animal, bird, or fish. In a portrait, the emphasis is often placed on the poetics of physicality. The portrait includes a description of clothes (indicating gender, age, profession, social status, hints of changes in the character's mental state, symbolization elements, and cultural overtones). The image's idea is fixed in the character's aesthetic, social, cultural, and intellectual characteristics.

According to the definition by the Polish literary critic Jerzy Faryno, the appearance of a person, "being one of the most intense semiotic phenomena, at the same time can hardly lend itself to reading" (Farino, 2004, p. 282). However, the semiotics of the literary portrait is far from being exhausted and needs further study. The problems of portrait description were dealt with by many researchers, including M.M. Bakhtin, L.V. Chernets, V.E. Khalizev, and A.B. Yesin. However, there is no single scheme for analyzing a portrait description or a phased plan to reconstruct the author's concept of a work based on a portrait text's semiotics.

In the realistic prose of the 19th century, literary scholars distinguish three types of exposition portraits: a static and an expanded one. The latter dominated in the middle of the century. In parallel, there was a type of realistic portrait, "wherein the individually unique features of the character prevailed over the socially typical ones. A detailed listing of the exterior features gave way to a brief expressive detail" (Chernetz, 2004, p. 304). This type of portrait was organic for F.M. Dostoevsky, L.N. Tolstoy, and A.P. Chekhov. However, the pioneer in using this type of portrait is still A.S. Pushkin.

Pushkin's contribution to the system of visual and expressive means of Russian classical literature is immeasurable. As accurately observed by V.S. Nepomnyashchiy, from 1823 to 1830, being in search of his style and theme, Pushkin "begins to move from the field of literary and ideological tasks to the field of "mysteries of existence," from the sphere of empirical practice to the sphere of essences and meanings" (Nepomnyashchy, 1983, p. 256). The structure of the external portrait of Pushkin's character of that time is also changing. The character becomes concise and consists of several expressive details. As a rule, the writer delegates the protagonist's external portrait to other characters and presents it through their impressions or appraisals.

The external simplicity of Pushkin's prose style is deceptive. Deep ontological meanings lie behind it. Referring to Igor Smirnov, Grigory Amelin wrote that "one dives into

the transparent Pushkin's prose as into bottomless depths so that never rise from there in future. Pushkin seems understandable the same as at an infinite depth of crystal-clear water, and the bottom seems to be very close" (Amelin, 2005, p. 174). The external portrait of Pushkin, the prose writer, does not reflect the essence of the character. It is no accident that the writer, as was said above, delegates it to other characters. Still, the author's vision of the character, its essence, and the image's pith and marrow are manifested in other details and approaches.

In Pushkin's prose of the thirties, in addition to the external portrait, there is a multifaceted "internal portrait" of the character-revealing its true face, which can be seen at the existential level of Pushkin's text analysis. It makes it possible to remove the accumulated stereotypes in assessing the central characters, to understand a lot in their characters and motives of behavior, comprehending the genesis of the protagonist's name and the mystery of its life, the surrounding real world, the symbolism of the color of clothes, personal space, to consider its place within the plot of the work and in the situation of choice.

## Methodology

When analyzing The Shot story, which is part of The Tales of Belkin series, the epicenter of the dispute between interpreters was the search for the reasons for Silvio's unusual duel with the young Count. Some thought that the reason was in the characters' social inequality (a poor and a rich). Others looked for the reason in the religious consciousness (a Catholic and an Orthodox). Others tried to find the reason for the romantic consciousness of the character. Such one-sided approaches do not clarify either the beingness of the character or the nature or motives of his behavior. As for the third version, it should be said that Pushkin is hiding a realistic character behind the romantic mask.

It is necessary to focus on solving a block of key issues related to comprehending the character's beingness – what objectives does the Russian officer from a hussar regiment pursue when changing his original name to a foreign one? Why did the narrator name his protagonist Silvio? Why does the protagonist, thinking of revenge for six years, depicts his opponent with light colors while speaking sternly and condemnally of himself? Why, having received the right to shoot, the protagonist did not let fly at his opponent? What had led the mad self-lover to the ranks of heroes who rebelled against the Ottoman yoke? What is the author's attitude towards the protagonist, and how does it differ from the narrator's assessment?

In the light of the monotonous army life, the hussar Silvio is perceived by the young ensign, who, at the same time, is the narrator of this story, in the halo of a romantic character. Over time, he becomes disillusioned with his idol because "his honor had been stained and had remained uncleansed through his fault." The regiment understood that Silvio was to blame for the duel with the young Count. The true face of Silvio will be revealed to the narrator later.

The protagonist's *raison d'être* is the psychological revenge on the offender. He "kills" the young Count not with a bullet but with the humiliation of his dignity and honor. The protagonist revealed in his fear of the gun's barrel, and for this, he took a long time for an imaginary shot. The reason for revenge was insignificant, but the passion of the championship haunted the protagonist.

Hermann's image in The Queen of Spade's story is also shrouded in romantic motives, but he is also a realistic character. "The fantastic in this story," as noted Yu.M. Lotman, "is not a thing (evidence of the author's naive belief in the direct intervention of supernatural forces in reality) but a sign – any force can turn out to be its meaning – historical, economic, psychological or mystical – irrational in terms of "convenience, moderation and hard

work.” (Lotman, 1992, p. 407). The protagonist of the story is the embodiment of the contemporary spirit. He is a poor military engineer – a man of the new age of technology, working, and useful.

Germann concentrated his forces on one goal – to become rich fast. He longs to have everything and use everything without paying for that. The protagonist wants to break the game’s card order, having learned the secret of three cards from the old countess as it seemed to him. His crazy passion for enrichment leads the protagonist to tragic madness. The title of the story – *The Queen of Spades* – is ambiguous. This is a playing card, the old countess, and a symbol of fate, which led the protagonist to madness and death. The reader feels the tragedy of one little Napoleon.

As G. Amelin nailed down, the *Captain’s Daughter’s* story is “a riddle with a complete clarity of the horizon” (Amelin, 2005, p. 174). The protagonist of the story, the impostor Pugatchov, who, according to Pushkin, “shook the state from Siberia to Moscow and from the Kuban to the Murom forests,” is also a mystery (Lotman, 1992, p. 80). The area of the Russian territories captured by the Pugatchov uprising was colossal. Catherine II was afraid that Pugatchov could deprive her of the throne because he had already taken away a third of her state, and she feared for the remaining two-thirds.

Pugatchov is gifted and talented as a military leader. Pushkin knew that Suvorov himself talked with interest with the arrested Pugatchov about his military orders. The author managed to capture the world of the 18th century with its tragic upheavals through the fate of fictional characters acting alongside historical heroes.

The imposture in Russia is meta-national, and it does not appear on its own but as a reaction to a violation of the law of succession. This is a Russian cultural and historical phenomenon. In the 17th century, thanks to the First False Dmitry’s good graces, Russia’s imposture became a chronic disease until the 18th century. Peter III was on the Russian throne for just 186 days. The fact that the emperor had quickly disappeared from the throne gave rise to a rumor among the people that the nobles overthrew him for his will to enfranchise the people.

The epigraph to the story, as you know, is the Russian proverb presented only with its first part: “Watch over your honor while you are young.” However, Pushkin does not forget about the second part of the proverb as well. A curious theatrical wardrobe from dresses of various styles is used in the story. Researcher S. Davydov noted that “everyone pretends to be someone and something” in the story (Davydov, 1999, p. 18). Indeed, all the characters do not dress up in their dresses and frequently change clothes.

The commandant of the fortress, Captain Mironov, is dressed in a Chinese robe instead of military ammunition. The Belogorsky fortress is similar to a provincial village where twenty disabled older people represent the sovereign army. A runaway prisoner pretends to be Emperor Peter III. To pass for a Cossack, officer Shvabrin grows a beard and has a mushroom shape cut. The *Captain’s Daughter* dresses up in a peasant dress. The Empress is no exception when walking in the *Tsarskoye Selo* Park in simple clothes, in which she hardly looks like a crowned person.

## **The Genesis of the Protagonist’s Name and Life**

The protagonist of *The Shot* story is a former hussar with an unusual Russian name – Silvio. Interestingly, the author makes all the other characters of the story nameless. Therefore, this is a symbolic name that will help readers understand the protagonist, whose motto was “I’m accustomed to taking first place in everything” (Pushkin, 1987, p. 52). This passion, as the protagonist himself admits, was typical of him from his youth.

For all, some kind of mystery surrounded Silvio's life. No one can confirm or deny that his name is real. The mystery of the protagonist's name is, in our opinion, connected with his passion. There are three versions of the protagonist's name interpretation.

The first version suggests that the protagonist's real name was not aristocratic, as evidenced by his poor life after resignation from his commission "in a miserable clay walled cottage" (Pushkin, 1987, p. 49). To win the championship among hussar aristocrats, a young man of a noble family must possess excellent military skills. In the regiment, Silvio enjoyed the well-deserved fame of a rare shooter. "The skill he had acquired was simply incredible, and had he offered to shoot a pear from anyone's forage cap, not a man in our regiment would have hesitated to offer his head," said the storyteller, a fellow officer (Pushkin, 1987, p. 48).

The protagonist may have rewarded himself with a resounding foreign name to distract others' attention from his ignoble roots. Silvio is of Italian origin and goes back to the Latin word "silva" – forest (Superanskaya, 2005, p. 341). Consequently, Silvio is a "man of the forest," and this word absorbs a synonymous series of other words such as "wild, animal, ferocious" (Alektorova, 1975, p. 170). Such a name can indicate, on the one hand, the romantic mood of the narrator himself. On the other hand, his desire to emphasize Silvio's external portrait the prominent feature of the romantic character.

Version two supposes that the name Silvio is consonant with the name given to him by his parents. Pushkin admitted in his note to the Count Nulin poem that he has the habit of writing the dates when his works were created (Eikhenbaum, 1969). In the Shot story, the date of writing the second part states the 14th of October. This is the day of remembrance of Saint Silvano, Bishop of Gaza, the distributor of Christ's faith. Silvano is "one of the names of Faunus, the Roman deity of forests and fields (the Greek version – Pan)" (Superanskaya, 2005, p. 267).

His tragic story can shed light on the comprehension of the last days in the protagonist's life. After passing through severe tortures, Silvano remained faithful to Christ and suffered martyrdom in Palestine's copper mines. He was beheaded together with forty Christian soldiers (Orthodox calendar. (2006). Silvio's life ended tragically as well. He died in Moldova, leading a liberation detachment against the Ottoman yoke at a critical time when the organizers of the movement abandoned the rebels in front of the decisive battle, leaving them to perish.

The third version tells that some interpreters associate the name of the protagonist with the Latin proverb "*in in silvam ligna ferre*" ("bring firewood to the forest"). In our opinion, this contradicts the patterns of Pushkin's character behavior. It is known that in all European languages, this proverb is built in the same way, except for Russian and English. In these languages, it is compiled using other verbal materials: in Russian – "to carry water in a sieve"; in English – "to bring owls to Athens." The last proverb sounds poetic and original as it comes from the ancient Greek language. However, in all languages of the world, all variants of this proverb characterize empty idleness and idlers. However, Pushkin's protagonist cannot be called an idler since he has been honing military shooting technique since hussar times.

Silvio was 35 years old when his first duel with the young Count B. took place. The author did not indicate a single date in the text. One date can be found in historical guides – the Battle of Skulyani took place on June 17, 1821. Researchers have calculated that the first duel between Silvio and Count B. falls in 1810, and the second took place no later than 1816. It is impossible not to notice that between the beginning and the end of this duel, the Patriotic War of 1812 took place. Kachurin M.G. once noted that possessing the gift of a shooter, "the main character could build a brilliant military career and glorify his name or heroically fall the death of the brave" (Kachurin, 1987, p. 54).

The protagonist of The Queen of Spades story is a German with Russian roots named Hermann after the ancient Germanic origin, which goes back to the German "Hermann" – the modified two-base name "Harimann/Herimann" formed by the addition of the components "heri/hari" – "army" and "mann" – "man" (Superanskaya, 2005, p. 77). This German name "should not be confused with the Russian name German of Latin origin – from Latin "Germanus" – "uterine," "native" (Superanskaya, 2005, p. 77). For a long time, all interpreters believed that the protagonist bears a German name. Professor V. V. Korovin clarifies that this is not the name but the surname of the protagonist. However, its semantics remains unchanged. However, Pushkin's protagonist is a warrior, not on the battlefield but on the card game field. He never played but watched the game of others with passion. He remained a player in his sole until he once wanted to know the three cards' story.

Tomsky's grandmother was called the "Venus from Moscow." This name symbolizes not only love but also hope. They choose the Clock of Venus for big magical activities. The real name of the Countess is Anna Fedotovna. From Hebrew, Anna is translated as "grace" (Superanskaya, 2005). She "was not a wicked person," but "was tight-fisted and drowning in frigid egoism" (Pushkin, 1987, "The Queen of Spades").

The proposal of Count Saint-Germain to the young players out of Venus from Moscow was significant. The man insisted that "money is not required." Saint-Germain is a historical character. This is the famous alchemist and adventurer of the 18th century, a participant of Europe and Russia's palace intrigues. He was called the Wandering Jew, Ahasuerus. In the story, he has demonic power. It was Saint-Germain who revealed the secret to the three cards to the Countess.

Of all the characters presented in The Captain's Daughter, the impostor Pugatchov is the most tragic character in Pushkin's story. A Don Cossack Emelyan Pugatchov is an outstanding person. He participated in the seven years war. Already during the first battle of the Russo-Turkish War, he receives the rank of the cornet, and in 1772 he declares himself to have been saved from the persecution of his wife by Emperor Peter III. Pushkin, a historian and an artist considers the hierarchy of Russian imposture in the story. The Empress impostor is above the law; the Don Cossack impostor is outside the law. A riot from above and a riot from below gave rise to the All-Russian Time of Troubles.

His name's voluntary replacement with a self-proclaimed one becomes fatal for Pugatchov, and the character understands this. It is no accident that in the opaque whirlwind of snow he looked like a black thing, "not a wagon and not a tree, and it seems to be moving. It must be a wolf or a man" (Pushkin, 1987, "Captain's Daughter," p. 240). Grinyov was surprised when a man and a road appeared out of blackness and impassability. Pugatchov is interesting for him not as an imposter, a villain, and a murderer but as a mystery to be cracked.

Pugatchov appears in the story in different guises – a Don Cossack and a peasant revolt leader, a state villain, and a man. This is a person gifted with the talent of a skilled organizer who manages a vast motley and multilingual mass of people who daily entered his army. It is interesting that in The History of Pugatchov, Pushkin found a judgment that allowed him to express the popular idea of rebellion in the words of a peasant leader, "God was pleased to punish Russia through my sinfulness" (Skvoznikov, 1999, p. 77). Historian Karamzin also called the 17th century Time of Troubles God's punishment for the state for its lawlessness.

## **The Portrait Characteristic**

The narrator conveys the dominant features of Silvio's external portrait: "habitual sullenness, gruff disposition, and spiteful tongue" (Pushkin, 1987, "Shot," p.48). Curiously,

none of the fellow officers can cite a single fact about his “gruff disposition” or “devil incarnate.” He has never killed anyone. “Besides, it never even occurred to us to suspect him of anything like cowardice. There are those whose mere appearance is enough to remove any such suspicion,” the narrator notes (Pushkin, 1987, “Shot,” p. 48).

After his resignation, the character changed his luxurious hussar uniform for a black frock-coat. The black color in Silvio’s clothes became permanent – “he invariably went about on foot, in a shabby black frock-coat...” (Pushkin, 1987, “Shot,” p. 49). In this description, the black color takes on a negative connotation. It is always the opposite of white being “the color of the unknown, the end, and, in general, of the physical death in the future” (Serov, 2004, p. 154).

The external portrait of Germann is given by the grandson of the Countess – Tomsy – “is a truly Romantic figure. He has the profile of Napoleon and the soul of Mephistopheles. It’s my belief that he has at least three crimes on his conscience” (Pushkin, 1987, “The Queen of Spades,” p. 244). Thus, the same as in The Shot story, the protagonist is surrounded by rumors and myths. The core of the protagonist’s personality is obscured. The narrator himself calls the impression of Tomsy “nothing more than mazurka chit-chat” as if urging the reader not to trust the words of a secular prodigal (Pushkin, 1987, “The Queen of Spades,” p. 244).

However, without hesitation and suspicion, Tomsy creates a portrait phantom. Later, foster daughter Lizaveta will thank fate for the meeting that failed. She will call him a “vulgar commonplace,” a type of person affected by “modern novels.” For her, he is a typical villain seducer. Finally, the author himself confirms the character’s Napoleonic resemblance, “He was sitting on the window sill with his arms folded and a grim scowl on his face. In this position, he did look remarkably like a picture of Napoleon.” “The similarity certainly struck Lizaveta Ivanovna” (Pushkin, 1987, “The Queen of Spades,” 245).

The motive of seduction and fall is seen in the development of the inner portrait of Hermann. A protagonist is an ambitious person committed to passions. Everyone perceives the story of Tomsy’s grandmother as an anecdote. However, Hermann is a temptation that can be compared with an internal fire that keeps the hop’s character. As a result, he puts himself at stake and leads the game with fate.

The author notes his resemblance to the historical figure Saint-Germain – the famous alchemist and adventurer of the 18th century, a participant in palace intrigues in Europe and Russia. This external detail reveals a feature of the protagonist’s internal portrait. Demanding from the Countess the mystery of the three cards, he asks, “Maybe it is linked somehow to a terrible sin, the loss of eternal bliss, a pact with the devil... Think about it. You are old; you haven’t long to live. I am ready to take your sins onto my soul” (Pushkin, 1987, “The Queen of Spades,” 204). There is a willingness to sell his soul in the name of the golden calf.

The old Countess is described in more detail than other characters of the story. There are several portraits of her in the text. It is no coincidence that in Paris, she was nicknamed the “Venus from Moscow.” She was a young, cold, sculptural beauty-loving only herself. In her bedroom, there was a portrait depicting “a young beauty with an aquiline nose, her powdered hair combed back and set off with a rose” (Pushkin, 1987, “The Queen of Spades,” 202). Of course, this is a portrait of the young Countess painted in France. It was difficult to recognize the face of the current Countess.

One cannot but notice that her portraits described in the second and third parts of the story differ significantly. In the second part, she is a talkative and quarrelsome older woman. Noteworthy is the prevalence of yellow color in the Countess’s clothes.

Her second portrait resembles a dumb idol, "The Countess sat there, all yellow, her flabby lips champing, rocking right and left. Her dull eyes marked the absence of all thought..." (Pushkin, 1987, "The Queen of Spades," p. 203). She said one single phrase, "That was a joke ... I swear it was a joke!" He went down on his knees and continued to beg her. Her silence infuriated him, and he took a pistol out of his pocket. The death of the Countess is the destruction of the dumb idol, "she fell on her back... and lay there without moving." (Pushkin, 1987, "The Queen of Spades," p. 205).

There are no direct author's assessments of persons and events in *The Captain's Daughter* story. However, the author's attitude is traced in the location of the episodes in the cluster of epigraphs and the emotional and aesthetic dominant of the plot development. This dominant is associated with the image of Pugatchov. It is his image that is covered with a romantic halo. This is the character of a fearless man, always ready for risk, of a broad nature. In which nobility and kindness, the ability to mercy and cruelty, which is caused by centuries of oppression, are combined. He wants freedom and power. "I am cramped; I cannot do as I like," Pugatchov confesses (Pushkin, 1987, "Captain's Daughter," p. 235).

The author depicts the portrait of Pugatchov and the story of his life through the eyes of the minor Grinyov. "His coolness gave me courage," "his quickness and keenness of smell astonished me," "his big, lively eyes were never still," "his face had a pleasant but crafty expression," that is how Grinyov perceived the portrait of the guide (Pushkin, 1987, "Captain's Daughter," p. 236). In his work, Kachurin M.G. cites a portrait of Pugatchov through the eyes of the court historian V. Bronevsky, who saw a monster bloodsucker in him, "Emelyan was selfish like a senseless robber, fierce like a tiger, he robbed and drank human blood without a purpose, killed unnecessarily, tortured only to kill and see the blood pouring at his feet" (Kachurin, 1987, p. 154). The author, on the other hand, puts into Grinyov's mouth words that were opposed to the official concepts of Pugatchov, "His features, regular and rather pleasant, had nothing ferocious about them" (Pushkin, 1987, "Captain's Daughter," p. 236). The impostor appears in different story images – mysterious and merry, kind and domineering, gloomy, and mocking.

The author described the accidental meeting in the impostor's historical snowstorm and the minor Grinyov not by chance. The Minor is the brainchild of the 18th century. For the first time in Russian literature, the Minor was addressed by Fonvizin. However, Fonvizin's Mitrofan is depicted in a somewhat comic perspective. In historical reality, the minor is "not a caricature or anecdote but the simplest and most everyday occurrence, which is, moreover, not devoid of rather venerable qualities" (Klyuchevsky, 1880, p. 152).

Peter Grinyov had already been registered as a sergeant in the army before even being born. This was by no means the eccentricity of his father but a historical necessity. Starting from Elizabeth's reign, the nobility's service life was reduced to twenty-five years, and the opportunity appeared to enlist future minors to the army before their actual birth. This step was forced. To manage the household, a nobleman should return home not too old but, at the same time, having served out a decent rank.

Historian Klyuchevsky O.V. took under protection the Russian minor and pointed to his significant contribution to Russia's history, noting that "the higher nobility found a shelter in the guards. The fate of our Mitrofans was more modest. They always studied little by little, through tears during Peter's times, with boredom under Catherine II, but resolutely made our military history of the 18th century. These are infantry army officers; they carried the laurels of the Rumyantsevs and Suvorovs on their shoulders together with Russian soldiers" (Klyuchevsky, 1880, p. 154). The *Captain's Daughter* fell in love with the good-natured and brave army officer Grinyov. She refused the witty, well-read, and cunning guardsman Shvabrin, who liked to emphasize his knowledge of French literature.



## The Material World of the Character and its Personal Space

Let's pay attention to the character's things that convey the facets of its "inner portrait." Thus, a lot of Silvio's features can be revealed by the books that he had and read, "chiefly on military subjects, and some novels" (Pushkin, 1987, "Shot," p. 49). The character was often lost in reading about military and historical events. He mastered the courage and firmness of spirit. He was also conscious of the stories of romance novels. In his books, the character found different models of life and military superiority.

Even being already a civilian, Silvio always carries a weapon – a pistol. The narrator notes that "his rich collection of pistols was the sole luxury in that miserable clay walled cottage where he lived. The walls of his room were riddled with bullet holes so that they resembled a honeycomb" (Pushkin, 1987, "Shot," p. 49). He practiced pistol-shooting daily, and the main confirmation of this training is the used of bullets lying on the floor. In the ontology of weapons, the key opposition is life-death, which is closely related to the category of choice.

A shot is never accidental. It depends on the person's choice. Steel and lead are the metals from which weapons and bullets are made. These are fire-resistant and durable metals but potentially bring death to all living things. A metamorphosis often occurs with a person holding a weapon. He as if transfers the metal properties to himself, and then his heart becomes steel, which means adamant and unforgiving. However, such a metamorphosis did not happen with Silvio. An analysis of the ontology of the character's personal belongings leads to the understanding that the character becomes a prisoner of his choice, which is not made in his favor. However, six years of training and hermitism are not in the name of murder but in the name of calming one's pride.

There are three cross-cutting ontological motives in the story, reflecting the realities of everyday life and a household of the hussar regiment – the motive of drunkenness and the motive of playing cards and playing with one's own life. The character admits that in the regiment of his youth, everyone "drank a lot," "would boast of our drinking-bouts." The character once outdrank the famous hussar Burtsev, a friend of Denis Davydov. Everyone played cards, so "in our regiment duels were a regular occurrence" (Pushkin, 1987, "Shot," p. 54). The main value was recognized only as courage, as the "top of human dignity" (Pushkin, 1987, "Shot," p. 94), forgiving and writing off all the vices that a hussar has.

The character himself was a witness or a participant of all duels." Playing with fate, the regiment officers, including the protagonist himself, equated life with a card game and exchanged it for waste and drunkenness. Both motives have a direct connection with the world of darkness. They don't joke with the card symbols. A drunk man is super-accessible for dark forces that seek to penetrate the human soul.

In the *Queen of Spades*, the reader is faced with the first in Russian prose character of the Napoleonic type, one of the most prominent characters of that time, which attracted close attention to Russian classical literature for a long time. Hermann is the prototype of Saint Petersburg's Napoleon. Fyodor Dostoevsky saw this image's novelty and created an entire Petersburg types gallery pretending to be a superman.

Such a character could have never appeared in Moscow; this is the brainchild of St. Petersburg. He was "reserved and ambitious," "a man of strong passions," and "vivid imagination" (Pushkin, 1987, 205). With irony, the author describes the character's dwelling as a "modest little room" since, in this cramped space, gloomy ideas are born, perverse obsessions, and Napoleonic desires take hold over the character (Pushkin, 1987, p. 199).

Entering the Countess's bedroom, he saw the interior scene, furniture, and things of the 18th century – "all the corners were noticeably adorned with porcelain shepherdesses,

table clocks done by the famous Leroy, little boxes, fans and ladies' toys invented at the end of the last century along with the Montgolfiers' balloon and Mesmer's animal magnetism" (Pushkin, 1987, p. 202). This rich antiquity excites him, and he is petrified.

A. Slonimsky once wrote the following thought about this episode, "The feeling of "antiquity" accompanies Hermann. The "antiquity" seems to be closer to him than the modernity. By the power of imagination, he seemed to shift both time planes. The expectation of a miracle is closely connected in Hermann with a subtle sense of antiquity. The description of antiques and furniture is in the best possible harmony with Hermann's dive into the fantastic world" (Slonimsky, 1963, pp. 524–525). Of course, a military engineer's cultural outlook cannot be aware of the last century's material world. It can only see this world while the author introduces the reader to it. The character is blinded by the appearance of antique objects and things.

Let us pay attention to Hermann's speech portrait's contrasts in front of the Countess during that unfortunate night. It is interesting in its stylistic context. The reader feels a passionate plea and humility in the monologue, but persuasion soon becomes a threat. The character's dialogue with the Countess is interrupted, or rather, his monologue ends with angry remarks of an avid player. Hermann did not play himself, but he was virtually and emotionally experiencing the game staying near the green table.

The character's speech system consists of "high" and "low" styles. This combination only enhances the drama of this scene but allows readers to see Hermann's various nominations. He appears as a rude thief and an ardent lover, as a son and a mystery successor. The Countess image doubles between the character's everyday life and his fantasy. The Countess's speech is vulgar and aristocratic – "What's wrong with you, child? Have you lost your voice?" This is the way she talks to Lizaveta. The true nature of the Countess appears in this phrase.

Let us pay attention to the Countess's speech; when Hermann appears to her, she is speechless. The only phrase she utters is devoid of the color of her century. A white woman, who will visit him at night to reveal the mystery, also does not speak the former Countess's colorful language. Bakhtin M.M. argued that "the more objective the character is, the sharper his speech physiognomy appears" (Bakhtin, 1979, p. 243).

With many prejudices, Hermann believed that the dead Countess could harm his life. Therefore, on the day of the funeral, he came to the monastery to ask her forgiveness. His sacrilegious worship of the Countess's tomb also amazes. For several minutes, he was lying on the cold floor strewn with spruce. The character seemed to see the dead winking and smiling at him. The cold and spruce are symbols of contact with the world of the dead. In the morning, his sick mind draws the arrival of the Countess in a white robe to his room with her restrictions. She will name him three numbers but not of her own free will.

The character seems to have fantastic wealth in his modest little room – "Piles of notes and heaps of gold coins. He bet on the card after card, bent the corners with a firm hand, doubling his stake, and he went on winning and winning, raking in the gold and stuffing notes into his pockets" (Pushkin, 1987, p. 206). This psychological drawing outlines the outcome of his future insanity, physical fever, and blonde moments.

The "peasant king" material world helps the reader see the Cossack origin in character. Already in the episode at the inn, Grinyov handed the "guide" a cup of tea. He "tasted it and made a grimace. Be so kind, your honor... tell them to give me a glass of vodka; tea is not a Cossack drink" (Pushkin, 1987, "Captain's Daughter," p. 243).

Describing Pugatchov sitting in an armchair on the steps of the Commandant's house, the author pays special attention to his clothes – he was wearing an “a red Cossack coat trimmed with gold braid,” “a tall sable cap with golden tassels” (Pushkin, 1987, “Captain's Daughter,” p. 252). This is how peasants understand royal appearance and clothes. The armchair serves as a throne to him, and the cottage papered with gold paper is his palace. The author recreated a reliable Cossack picture of the world in the story paying particular attention to the originality of the Yaitsky (Ural) Cossacks. The Cossack environment's worldview and outlook, key symbols, and the value scale of their virtues and vices are intensely conveyed.

Three times Pugatchov appears in the text on a white horse, but each time he has an entirely new role. As a sovereign, he first appeared before the people in a red coat, on a white horse, with a naked saber in his hand. The second time, they brought him a white horse, decorated with a rich harness, when the neighborhood inhabitants swore allegiance to the impostor. For the third time, he “quickly jumped into the saddle of a beautiful white Kirghis horse without waiting for the Cossacks to help him” (Pushkin, 1987, “Captain's Daughter,” p. 247). In this episode, he is already in the role of the commander in chief. Grinyov perceives everything that happens as dramatic action, but the most tragic actor in this scene is the impostor himself. He knows his fate and understands that he must pay for the blood and evil he brought to this world.

It is no coincidence that his favorite song, “Don't Make a Noise, Mother Green Oak-Grove,” became his destiny (Pasternak, 1999, p. 80). Grinyov was impressed by the song he heard. His attitude towards Pugatchov is reflected in his inner speech, where he ardently wanted to save his life. The character mentally addresses him knowing about the upcoming punishment – “Why didn't he fall on a bayonet? or get hit with a cannon-ball? I thought with vexation” (Pushkin, 1987, “Captain's Daughter,” p. 312). The not only annoyance is heard in the lamentation of the character but also pain. Once in the historical environment, Yesterday's minor matures fast and sees a person in the impostor.

Pushkin distinguished Pugatchov's Cossack eloquence – “Pugatchov's first outrageous appeal to the Yaitsky (Ural) Cossacks is an amazing example of folk eloquence, albeit illiterate” (Vatsuro, 1994). His order is made in the form of a direct appeal relying on the psychology of the Cossacks. The reaction of the Belgorod Cossacks to his request was immediate – at night, they left the fortress. Even in his last word, being already captivated but not surrendered, he proudly said to Count P.I. Panin, “...I'm not a raven. I am a raven's chick, and the raven himself is still flying.”

This reveals the impostor's inner portrait through his attitude towards his confidants, to whom the author paid close attention. Pushkin gives the most expressive artistic description of Khlopusha's appearance not in this story but *The History of Pugachev* – “The brigand Khlopusha, flogged and branded by the hand of the executioner, with his nostrils torn down to the cartilage, was one of Pugachev's favorites. Ashamed of his disfigurement, he wore gauze over his face, or would cover it with his sleeve, as though protecting himself from the cold” (Vatsuro, 1994).

Not only his appearance made an indelible impression on Grinyov but also his clothes – “a red shirt, a Kirghis gown and Cossack trousers” (Pushkin, 1987, “Captain's Daughter,” p. 299). Details of clothing emphasize his proximity to the Cossacks army, which was replenished with other nationalities' representatives. The runaway corporal Beloborodov has nothing remarkable in his portrait, “except a blue ribbon worn across the shoulder over a grey peasant coat” (Pushkin, 1987, p. 299), which is an attribute of military power. Knowing this, Pugatchov sometimes called him “field-marshal.”

The image of Khlopusha being closer to Robin Hood is portrayed in romantic elation and possesses inner beauty. The second image turns off with its suspicion and cruelty. In the ataman king, these two opposite principles coexist – kindness and cruelty. Pugatchov despises his associates and is afraid of them – “They are thieves. I have to keep a sharp lookout: at the first defeat, they will ransom their necks with my head” (Pushkin, 1987, “Captain’s Daughter,” p. 302). Pugatchov threatened Russia with the new Time of Troubles.

## The Character as Part of the Plot and in a Situation of Choice

Silvio mastered the psychology and philosophy of the hussar regiment. Only its inner essence remains unknown to others. By nature, he is a kind and strong man with nobility and the ability to forgive. However, these qualities were unpopular among the officers. The character tries to overcome these virtues by cultivating the mysterious and demonic principles in his external portrait, hiding his real virtues from prying eyes.

Success accompanied him until “a young man from a rich and noble family joined the regiment” having everything “youth, intelligence, good looks, the most unbridled gaiety, the most reckless courage, a distinguished name, more money than he could count and of which he was never short” (Pushkin, 1987, p. 52). All this led to a duel, which served as the reason for his resignation, putting an end to his hussar career. As it seemed to him, the young count sidelined his primacy and aroused envy, despair, and hatred in him. The duel of frenzied passion and fierce courage ended only a few years later.

Six years of waiting did not harden Silvio’s heart. This is evidenced by the second duel with Count B. He arrives at the estate at a time-sensitive to the Count, namely, during his honeymoon. Silvio thinks, obsessed with the thirst for a meeting, “We shall see if he accepts death now, on his wedding eve, just as nonchalantly as he once waited for it while eating cherries!” (Pushkin, 1987, p. 54). The character did not come to kill the count but to receive psychological revenge. In the scene of the second duel, the noble qualities of the character are revealed. As before, Silvio suggests casting lots – the count was the first to shoot again. The character saw the opponent being scared, broken, and humiliated when standing at gunpoint. The most important thing for the character was that he managed to force the count to let flay at him again. It was a noble departure and moral victory over himself and the count.

During the last meeting, new detail in the portrait of Silvio strikes the count. “In the darkness,” he “could see a man covered in dust and with a thick growth of beard.” Beard in Russian culture occupies an important place. It has a sacred meaning – brings a person closer to God, is a symbol of piety and strength (Kolesov, 2014, p. 60). However, it often carries a negative connotation. The beard appears in the count’s story about his last meeting with Silvio, who came to exercise his right to shoot. His unexpected appearance makes the count experience inner fear. Therefore, the perception of the character’s portrait is presented in a demonic halo, making him even more “gloomy and pensive” in comparison with his bright characteristics that the narrator expressed in his conversation with the count. His appearance from the darkness is perceived by the count as the appearance of a demon who came for his life.

Six years after the first duel, when he pronounces his confession to the narrator, one cannot help but feel that this is in many ways another person who admires the young count. The inertia of life is entirely devoted to vengeance persists. The character’s eyes sparkle when he reads a letter announcing that the time has come for a shot. He rushes about the room like a tiger. The character’s behavior in the estate shows that he has experienced a mental change.

The right to a shot, which seemed undeniable, is now perceived by him as the right to kill. Conscience did not allow the character to shoot. "The fact that his own life was cut short for the liberation of the Greeks, of course, casts extra heroic light on his personality. However, he no longer needs his life. He realized his manic idea of revenge and exhausted himself with this desire," the researcher V.E. Vatsuro justly noted (Vatsuro, 1994, p. 52). The character locked himself in on his idea and broke off all contacts with real life. A voluntary retreat in the outback where "there was not one open house, nor a single, marriageable girl" (Pushkin, 1987. Shot, 48). This is a punishment for refusing all human traits. It is a payment for the desire to excel.

Historical information about the battle near Skulyani shows that 700 rebels stood up to the end against 15 thousand Turkish cavalymen. On the eve of the tragic battle, the detachment was left without a leader. That's when Silvio led the doomed heroes and died along with them.

The romantic plot of *The Queen of Spades* tells the story of Hermann and Lizaveta Ivanovna. The characters have much in common – both experience loneliness in public settings; he never plays cards. She never dances at balls. The character drew attention to her black eyes, which sparkled from under the hat. She is needy but selfish, the same as he is. The seducer takes his first message from Goethe's novel *Werther*. Lizaveta, who reads romantic novels, responds with stereotyped long and gentle answers trying to escape the Countess's custody quickly.

In subsequent messages, the character is led not by the passion of love but by the passion of an idea that will change his life. The night meeting "at twelve o'clock" was appointed by the young lady herself. The symbolism of this timeline lies within the boundaries between good and evil. The author focuses the reader's attention on the fact that the infernal begins to accompany the character everywhere from this moment.

The character goes to the Countess's house when "the weather was foul" – "with a howling wind and snow falling in wet flakes" (Pushkin, 1987, p. 239). He finds himself "in the dark, empty house, where there is no one except for a sleeping servant" (Pushkin, 1987, p. 240). While moving forward, he finds Lizaveta's room "to the left" (Pushkin, 1987, p. 240). It is essential to draw attention to the fact that the left side will constantly accompany Hermann from this moment on.

From this moment, Hermann becomes the guardian of the infernal. This indicates that the character died ultimately spiritually. Hermann did not fulfill the restrictions set by the Countess's ghost. By her will, he could reveal the mystery only after his marriage with Lizaveta. This is the only way for him to atone for his guilt and earn forgiveness. The thoughts about fantastic wealth blinded the poor engineer so that he forgets about the ghost's requirements. His selfishness will never remember those to whom he owes.

Pugatchov, the state villain, appears in the storyline as the savior of lovers and their proxy. The harsh soul of Pugatchov was touched by the fearlessness of the minor and the purity of the soul of the Captain's Daughter. Therefore, he demonstrated his generosity. In his conversation with Grinyov, he says, "You see, I am not so bloodthirsty as your people make me out."

Immediately after the first meeting with the guide, Peter Grinyov sees a dream, in which the "black-bearded man" (Pushkin, 1987, "Captain's Daughter," p. 241) self-proclaimed takes the place of his legal father in bed, and then, swinging his ax, fills the room with corpses. The dream turned out to be prophetic. Pugatchov became his spiritual father and guided around the terrible infernal space of the Russian rebellion. What is the root of the strange friendship between the minor Grinyov and the impostor Pugatchov? The proverb "watch over your honor while you are young" is taken by the epigraph to the whole

story and defines the existence of not only Grinyov, since the category of honor is not an estates virtue and not a pedigree trait of the nobility. The nobleman Shvabrin has no honor since he took the position of self-preservation at all costs. Honor is not a feeling but an ontological property of a person's world order.

In the Russian language, there are many proverbs and expressions about mercy – “God has a lot of mercy for a fool,” “abandon oneself to the conqueror's mercy,” “mercy also needs a reason,” “mercy is beautiful in truth.” Researcher Kozhinov V.V. notes that mercy is a Russian mental value, and it is “almost not inherent in the people of Western Europe” (Pushkin, A. S. (1998); Complete Works, 454). In the Russian mentality, the category of mercy is unique – it is “the gift of favor to the lower (*mercy to the fallen*) and the highest reward for the latter as an ability and sign of a condescendingly kind or loving person” (Lotman, 2003, p. 445). Therefore, mercy is not a psychological state of a person but a gift of the soul.

In the text of the story, there is a portrait of Catherine II, which remains controversial. The author refused the empress's ceremonial portrait and gave preference to the portrait of her everyday life. The Russian artist V. Borovikovskiy once painted a portrait of the empress when she walked in the TsarskoyeSelo Park and presented everyday nature. The appearance and clothes of the older woman violated the traditional formality of the royal portrait. She was in a woman's coat and a poke bonnet. The image of the empress created by the artist resembles an episode from the Pushkin story.

In several works by well-known literary critics, school teachers continue to assert that the image of Catherine II is given with negative connotation and is deliberately humiliated by the author. They also recall Pushkin's phrase once said to the empress, “Tartuffe wearing a skirt and a crown.” Her assessment given by Pushkin – “Catherine canceled tortures, but secret chancery flourished under her patriarchal rule; Catherine loved enlightenment, but Novikov ended up in prison. Radishchev was exiled to Siberia, Kniazhnin died under the rods – and Fonvizin, whom she was afraid of, should have met the same fate, if not his extreme fame” (Pushkin, 1987, “Angelo,” p. 97).

Yu. M. Lotman once urged to abandon such a simplified approach to the image of Catherine II. “It is impossible to agree that every day, “human” and not conditionally odic image of Catherine is connected with the desire to reduce her image or even “expose” her as a ruler unworthy of her state mission,” wrote the famous researcher (Lotman, 2003, p. 204).

In the text, her portrait is given through the eyes of Masha Mironova. She saw a middle-aged lady walking in the park with a dog – “she was wearing a white morning dress, a night-cap, and a Russian jacket. She seemed to be about forty. Her plump and rosy face wore an expression of calm and dignity. Her blue eyes and slight smile had an indescribable charm. The lady was the first to break the silence” (Pushkin, 1987, “Captain's Daughter,” p. 319). Listening to the Captain's Daughter and interrupting her with the words – “How it isn't true?” the lady repeated, flushing crimson” (Pushkin, 1987, “Captain's Daughter,” p. 319). Finally sounds the voice of the Empress, but it is the feminine beginning of a middle-aged lady that wins in this scene and not the Empress.

The Age of Catherine has its face in the history of Russia. Her activity was multifaceted. She founded the academy and public banks in the capital and Siberia. Russia owes her the introduction of factories and steel products, tanneries, and manufacturers. When vaccination against smallpox was introduced in Russia, she was the first to undergo this procedure, showing her subjects an example of fearlessness.

A German by birth, a Frenchwoman according to her favorite language and upbringing, she occupies a prominent place in the works of Russian writers of the 18th century. She had two passions, which with the years, became a daily need – to read and to write. Literacy awakened a literary spirit in her. The writings of Catherine reflected the

diverse interests of her creative thoughts. She wrote in various genres – children’s moralizing tales, pedagogical instructions, political pamphlets, dramatic plays, autobiographical notes, collaborated with magazines. She compiled *The Life of Venerable Father Amongst the Saints St. Sergius of Radonezh*. She was in correspondence with Voltaire and Diderot.

In the thirties in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, Pushkin appreciated the ability of a historical person to show human mercy. By this time, the historian Pushkin had developed a deep understanding that human simplicity is based on greatness. This story is closely related to the poem ‘Angelo.’ Pushkin considers it his best work. In the poem, readers meet the same situation as in *The Captain’s Daughter* – an appeal to the ruler for mercy.

What is the philosophy of mercy, according to Pushkin? Maiden Isabella will help with the answer to this question. In the scene, when she asks Angelo to help her brother, she says to him, “Think, – I said, – / think, if the, whose righteous force / Forgive and Celite, I would judge us sinners / without mercy; tell: It has been used with us? / Think about it – and love to hear the voice of the heart, / And the mercy of the tender mouth, / And the new person you will” (Pushkin, 1987, p. 241).

The Russian mentality dictionary defines the category of mercy as “spiritual compassion causing the desire to help, protect, save, and thus leading to moral self-purification” (Kolesov, 2014, p. 444). This moral feeling “enriches a person with compassion (*tenderheartedness*) for another person, is not limited just to self-forgetfulness (*benefaction*) or abstract philanthropy (*mercy*)” (Kolesov, 2014, p. 444).

The meaning of her words is as follows – the ruler, having shown mercy to the sinful, will himself receive mercy from God and become a new person, i.e., a virtuous person. This is how Pushkin understands mercy. The poem ends according to the laws of mercy and universal forgiveness.

A third name appears in the finale of the story. Alexander Ypsilanti is a participant in the war of 1812, a major general of the Russian army who led a rebellion against the Ottoman enslavement of Moldova’s Principality. He is the leader of the FilikiEtería organization, which raised a national liberation uprising in Greece. The mention of his name in words about the death of Silvio in the Battle of Skulyani is the desire of the narrator to show his character in the light of those events that were perceived by the progressive people of that time as a feat of courage and freedom.

In the finale of the story, it is reported that “rumor has it that Silvio was killed at the Battle of Skulyani, during the uprising under Alexander Ypsilanti, while commanding a detachment of Hetairists” (Pushkin, 1987, “Shot,” p. 59). However, the narrator claims that he does not have any information about the death of Silvio. Surprisingly, the character came to the hussars from nowhere; no one knew what his origin was. In the finale of the story, he went into nowhere as well. The question then is: “Did Silvio participate in that battle or not?”

Let us turn to Pushkin’s story “Kirdzhali,” which describes the battle near Skulyani, where the Turks were opposed by “Arnouts, Albanians, Greeks, Bulgarians and all manner of riff-raff with no idea of the art of war retreating at the sight of fifteen thousand Turkish cavalries” (Vinogradov, 1980, p. 215). The main character is a historical person originating from the Bulgars. His nickname Kirdzhali is translated from the Turkish language as a knight and a heart of oak. Nobody knew his real name. The personality is two-valued. On the one hand, he is a national hero, on the other hand – a robber, brave and resourceful, glorified in folk legends.

The essence of this character is focused on his portrait – “He seemed about thirty years of age. The features of his swarthy face were regular and severe. He was tall, broad-shouldered, and gave the impression of remarkable physical strength. A brightly colored Turban, worn slantwise, covered the side of his head; a wide sash girded his slim waist; a dolman of thick blue cloth, a loose-fitting knee-length shirt, and fine soft shoes completed his costume. His expression was calm and proud” (Vinogradov, 1980, p. 217). He dies in one of the battles. However, in his story, Pushkin leaves the hero beloved by the people alive – “These days Kirdzhali is carrying on his plundering near Jassy” (Vinogradov, 1980, p. 219). This character is praised by the writer, while his attitude towards Silvio is entirely different.

Pushkin worked with historical documents on this battle and knew that not a single shot had been fired then. Therefore, Silvio could not use his amazing art as a shooter in this battle. There was a terrible massacre, and the former hussar may have been brutally slaughtered. In this historical fact, the death of Silvio cannot be perceived in the light of glory.

The character in the second duel was forty-one years old. Only one military path remained for him, which he knew and understood, where he could easily lose his life tired of being alone. Life became a burden for him. “Pushkin intentionally deprived Silvio’s death of heroic halo. The romantic literary character was described as an ordinary avenger loser with a low and evil soul,” stated A.N. Arkhangelskiy (Arkhangelsky, 1999, p. 123).

The future promised something different for the proud Germann. The fate of the character is predetermined by the measure of his humanity features. Having passed the threshold situation of moral testing, the character suffers from a fever that overshadows his mind. Three treasured cards cause the character to have strange associations – a three for him is a beautiful woman (“Isn’t she lovely? A real three of hearts”), a seven determines the relationship with time – “five to the seven,” and an ace reminds him of a spider.

The character does not know absolutely the symbolism of the cards. The spider is a symbol of involvement in the dark world. He weaves a net in which the character is caught. Having learned the mystery of three cards from the world not real but irrational, Germann finally became convinced that he could not lose. The character began to think about retirement and traveling. He dreamed to “wrest riches from the magical grasp of Fortune” in Paris (Pushkin, 1987, 211). He perceives the arrival in Saint Petersburg of the famous Cherkalinsky, a man who spent his whole life playing cards and having made millions, as a sign of fate. V.V. Vinogradov once noted that “in *The Queen of Spades*, the episode of the faro game turns into a symbol of life driven by fate and chance. The Queen of Spades designates in this respect the “mysterious ill-will” of the fate” (Vinogradov, 1980, p. 202).

Pushkin, the artist, managed to penetrate deeply into the soul of Pugatchov to understand from within his psychology and way of thinking.

During a historical snowstorm, a chance meeting developed into a dialogue based on the values of magnanimity, conscience, and honor. Grinyov owes Pugatchov a second birth. This meeting opened up a lot for the young aristocrat and helped him understand Russia and himself. According to Pushkin, the Russian rebellion is terrible because its victim elevates itself to an executioner’s rank. Grinyov was struck by the appearance of a tongueless Bashkir who passed through the dungeons of royal tortures, as evidenced by the absence of his ears, tongue, and nose.

## Conclusion

Thus, considering the specifics of Pushkin’s portrait in prose of the 30-ies in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the following conclusions could be made. Portraits of his characters are often



created according to romantic patterns – an unusual name, an intriguing appearance, a mysterious past, strange habits. Information about the character comes not from the author but from witnesses who do not possess facts. This information, as a rule, is like rumors and myths. The author creates an intriguing portrait – a false external painting of a character hiding the image's idea.

The intriguing portrait should be considered a way to engross the reader to effectively expose or prove the inner essence of the character, the “core” of the image, and the real portrait of his soul. The way out of the intrigue can be double-natured – the character either gets rid of mystery and demonism or is wholly absorbed in demonic passion, which leads him to madness. There is a romantic halo or an ideological mask in all three portraits of these stories' protagonists. However, all the images are realistic.

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