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GERMAN INTELLECTUAL  
DIALOGUE**

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## **THE PHILOSOPHY OF YAKOV GOLOSOVKER AS A PHENOMENON OF RUSSIAN-GERMAN INTELLECTUAL DIALOGUE<sup>2</sup>**

This research studies the German influence on “the Imaginative Absolute” of Yakov Golosovker, whose philosophical legacy has not yet been reflected in the history of Russian thought. His legacy and its diverse intellectual themes is investigated using archival materials. The article is divided into three parts: a dialogue with the “eternal companion” Hölderlin, a struggle with Kant, and a dialogue with the “eternal companion” Nietzsche. Such a structure allows the author to identify, link, and problematize the fundamental philosophical foundations of Golosovker's system and embed his legacy into the Russian-German intellectual dialogue. The research is carried out as part of an ongoing study.

Keywords: Golosovker, imagination, Hölderlin, Kant, ratio, Nietzsche, mythmaking, romanticism

JEL Classification: Z

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## Introduction

The work of Yakov Emmanuilovich Golosovker (1890–1967) has not yet taken its place in the history of Russian philosophy. His intellectual activity was diverse—he was a classical philologist, translator of Greek and German poetry, and the author of an original philosophical concept called “the Imaginative Absolute”. He understood himself as a systematist philosopher. The fate of Golosovker was intertwined with the history of the 20th century. A few facts worth mentioning are his exile to Vorkuta in the 1930s, two manuscripts lost to fire, and his inability to publish philosophical works in the USSR. As a result, his legacy was rediscovered only 20 years after his death. Golosovker’s “Logic of Myth” was published for the first time in 1987 by the joint efforts of Braginskaya, Leonov, and Meletinsky (Golosovker 1987). Exactly 30 years later a collection dedicated to Golosovker was published in the series “The Philosophy of Russia of the first half of the 20th century”. The collection is valuable for this study as it contains almost all the key research articles on Golosovker’s work. Several important publications are devoted to Golosovker’s biography (Zelinsky 2017; Schmidt 2017). The studies of Braginskaya (2017) and Rashkovsky (2017) that address philosophical problems are of the greatest interest. There are also two important German-language publications (Debüser 1992; Fleischhauer 1979). Most of Golosovker’s philosophical works are published in the 2010 collection (Golosovker 2010). The present research is carried out as part of a larger study on the reconstruction and understanding of Golosovker’s philosophical project called “the Imaginative Absolute”.

Golosovker did not leave behind any students, but quite a bit is known about his teachers. While studying at the Imperial University of St. Vladimir in Kiev, he wrote theses in two specialties. His philosophical work was associated with the Baden school of neo-Kantianism: “The subject of knowledge in the philosophy of Rickert”. His philological work was devoted to Sappho’s poetry. Thus, Ancient Hellas and German philosophy were sources of inspiration throughout his life. Unfortunately, the texts of the theses have not been preserved. Rashkovsky, pointing to the philosophical premises of Golosovker’s thought, emphasizes the importance of the pre-Socratic legacy and German romantic philosophy and poetry (Rashkovsky 2017, p. 10). In the mid-1920s Golosovker traveled to Germany and studied German philosophy and philology for two years under the guidance of Willamowitz-Mellendorf (Schmidt 2017, p.42) before returning to the USSR. It should be assumed that Hellas was perceived by Golosovker through German authors. He was engaged in translations of Hölderlin (“The Death of Empedocles”, “Hyperion”) and Nietzsche (“Thus Spoke Zarathustra”). The history of these translations into Russian is a separate intellectual topic worth returning to.

The influence of the German intellectual tradition on the formation of the Imaginative Absolute is the central focus of this research. This influence is complicated and multifactorial. Zelinsky, borrowing the formula of Merezhkovsky, speaks about three “eternal companions” of Golosovker (Zelinsky 2017, p.148). Two companions have already been mentioned—Hölderlin and Nietzsche. The third companion (Chiron centaur) is outside the scope of this work. Golosovker had a complex attitude to the Kantian heritage in the Russian intellectual tradition. Nietzsche’s influence also reveals a number of problematic themes. The general German influence and the special interpretation proposed by Golosovker are a tangle. The purpose of this study is to compile a coherent view of Golosovker’s philosophy in the context of its German influence. This research will become a new page in the Russian-German intellectual dialogue.

No special studies have been conducted about the German influence on the theory of the Imaginative Absolute. Archival materials obtained from the Russian State Archives of Literature and Art are used for this research. The work also uses the author's previous studies, "Two views on the poetry of Hölderlin: M. Heidegger and Y.E. Golosovker" (Morozov 2020) and "The author's book: reflections of Y. E. Golosovker on Dostoevsky and Kant" (Morozov 2021). The results obtained during the preparation for conference reports and while writing my master's thesis (scientific supervisor A. L. Dobrokhotov) are also developed. The article is divided into three parts: 1) a dialogue with the eternal companion Hölderlin, 2) a dispute with Kant and 3) a dialogue with the eternal companion Nietzsche. This structure unveils a new perspective on the concept of the Imaginative Absolute and identifies its philosophical foundations.

## I. The dialogue with the eternal companion Hölderlin

Before proceeding to Golosovker's dialogue with Hölderlin it is necessary to briefly outline the basic philosophical premises of the concept of the Imaginative Absolute. This is also the title of his main philosophical treatise. The concept goes back to the Latin word *imaginatio*, although Golosovker did not substantiate the etymology in detail. In the treatise, Golosovker proposes a project according to which the "highest instinct of culture" lives in people's imagination. Referring to Pavlov's theory of instinct, Golosovker says that instinct is not only a reaction to an irritant but also an incentive to action. He creates a hierarchy of instincts, dividing them into lower and higher ones. The lower are vegetative and sexual, while the highest is the Imaginative Absolute. Lower instincts embody the transience and variability that permeates the natural reality; the Imaginative Absolute gives people something "for the sake of which" they are willing even to die to continue living in the incarnations of culture: "Imagination is stronger than the sense of self-preservation" (Golosovker 2010, p. 38). A creator wants to fix the moment of flourishing, the peak of a certain temporary phenomenon. Truth, good, beauty are symbols of the absolute. Golosovker invents the concept of "culturimaginations": his important philosophical axiom is that culture always relates to the moral sphere. The longing for immortality, eternity, and perfection is realized by the highest instinct—the *creator* of human culture, or the Imaginative Absolute.

Golosovker proposes the original doctrine of imaginative realism: Shakespeare's Brutus is more real than historical Brutus (Golosovker 2010, p. 54). Time does not have sense in this reality: the vase is always being broken by Dostoevsky's Myshkin, and Shakespeare's hero keeps dying. Golosovker repeatedly calls it *realiora*, "the most real", contrasting it with temporary reality, driven by lower instincts. Dostoevsky and Shakespeare, as the brightest bearers of the Imaginative Absolute, create a reality of culture, perpetuating the temporary. This instinct is developed unevenly in individuals. Thus, a special logic of the "gift" appears. The concept of the Imaginative absolute is overloaded. Golosovker calls it the highest instinct, intuition, the mind of imagination, and the very spirit of culture. The powers of the highest instinct are extremely great. We can talk about a threefold Imaginative Absolute: the incentive to creativity, the process of creation, and the result (an artifact of culture). Zelinsky reasonably problematizes the three facets of the Imaginative Absolute: "Does the Absolute of imagination become a kind of hypostatic super subject, even if it dissolved in the world culture?" (Zelinsky 2017, p. 138). The eternal companion Hölderlin in the interpretation of Golosovker is one of the brightest bearers of Imaginative Absolute. This

interpretation not only sheds light on these philosophical premises but also highlights the worldview of Golosovker himself.

Hölderlin's poetry remained forgotten in Germany for almost a century. The renewed interest in his legacy at the beginning of the 20th century is associated with the activities of Norbert von Hellingrath and George's circle. Golosovker began to engage with Hölderlin's legacy in the 1920s. His work is mainly connected with the publishing house "Academia". In 1931, in a letter to Anatoly Lunacharsky, Golosovker claims that real harassment was going on at "Academia". His publication of "Hyperion", which received good reviews, was postponed to 1934. Golosovker also claims that he was "unceremoniously" suspended from working on a collection dedicated to German Romanticism (Pis'ma Ya. P. Koshkina i Ya. E. Golosovkera [...], coll. 279 aids. 1 fol. 53). He was afraid that the editors of the publishing house would prevent his translation of Zarathustra, a "piece of his life" (ibid.), from being published. Later Golosovker was imprisoned in Vorkuta because of the links with "Academia". During his lifetime the translation of "The Death of Empedocles" was published but the full translation of "Hyperion" is still kept in the Russian State Archives of Literature and Art. The interpretation of Hölderlin's work is reflected in the commentary on "The Death of Empedocles" and the 1961 article "The Poetics and Aesthetics of Hölderlin". Clarifying his principle of commenting, Golosovker says that it is different from a writer or a philologist. Only the philosopher comments on himself-in-the-author: "He proceeds from a certain premise, a first principle, from which he puts meaning into the subject" (Hölderlin 1931, p. 113). The interpretation is built around the idea of harmony, with which the German poet was obsessed, according to Golosovker. His thesis is that all of Hölderlin's work is autobiographical, and in his Greeks, we can see his fellow Germans.

The philosophical worldview of Hölderlin is characterized by Golosovker as aesthetic panpsychism: "A sense of the living unity of nature and man, his thoughts and actions" (Golosovker 2010, p. 393). It assumes Hölderlin's belief in the rebirth of burgher Germany and the creation of a "New Germany", a Republic of geniuses and creators—a romantic ideal. Several studies are devoted to this topic. For instance, Ernst Mögel in the book "Natur als Revolution" emphasizes Hölderlin's desire to solve the crisis of modernity. Hölderlin's main diagnosis of his contemporaries is that they lust for purpose and benefit, becoming blind to the perfection and magnificence of things and essences ("der Dinge und Wesen") (Mögel 1994, p. 155). Golosovker's interpretation is consonant with this understanding, but he offers several original lines of thought. Aesthetic panpsychism appears as a program for creating a new harmony between nature and human culture. It is based on the premise that the harmony of the poetic verbal period repeats the harmony of a living organism ("poetry is a living art") (Golosovker 2010, p. 397). The harmony of society should mirror the harmony of art. Based on "Hyperion" and "The Death of Empedocles", Golosovker introduces three dialectics: healing, sacrifice, and transformation.

The plot of "Hyperion" assumes that the romantic cult of the genius Republic has been defeated. As a result, Hölderlin's hero Hyperion plunges into a contemplation of nature, which heals him. This is the dialectic of healing. Golosovker notes that Hyperion's ideals of such a republic match with what the Jena Romantics preached: Novalis, Schleiermacher, and Fr. Schlegel et al. (Hölderlin 1931, p. 123). Hölderlin attempts to save the harmony between nature and culture. The metempsychosis of the image of Hyperion occurs. The divine Empedocles appears. He is an aesthetic panpsychist, who lives in harmony with the elements of nature and is even able to heal death. His fellow countrymen, on the contrary, are in a state of hostility to nature and believe they

can subjugate it. Foti writes about the drama of opposition and reconciliation in connection with Empedocles (Foti 2006, pp. 44-45). As a result of conflict and disharmony, Empedocles makes his leap into Etna. The dialectic of sacrifice consists in the idea of the hero's death (individuation) for the revival of the community (universality). This theme is widely covered in the literature in connection with three versions of the tragedy (Benn 1967). Golosovker is focused on the third, final version. Burton Pike reveals Empedocles' motivations in detail (Pike 1957, pp. 184–185) and calls his sacrifice a “final synthesis between Nature and spirit (or *Kunst* as Hölderlin puts it), a moral example to his fellow men” (Pike 1957, p. 180). The concepts of nature and spirit are extremely important in this context. Golosovker proceeds from an autobiographical thesis. He is pessimistic about the sacrifice, as it does not bring harmony.

The consciousness of Hölderlin, who dreamed of fame as a poet-thinker, could not bear the thought that Germany would never revive, and the harmonic man would never arise. Golosovker insists on the fact that the poet did not even have time to expand the dialectic of transformation (the third turn of the harmony theme): “He was spiritually killed by society” (Hölderlin 1931, p. 127). In the 2020 article, I revealed that the fundamental difference between Golosovker's and Heidegger's approaches to the legacy of Hölderlin lies in the source of the poet's madness. Madness is an important topic in the intellectual history of Germany. In one letter, Hölderlin indicates that he was defeated by Apollo. Paradoxically, both thinkers turn to this letter. Heidegger sees the source of madness in the “sacred” Nature, in Being, which was revealed to Hölderlin, while Golosovker in his commentary on the citation about Apollo says: “He should have written: I was killed by the stupidity of my fellow citizens” (ibid.). Golosovker repeatedly accuses “honest burghers”; in one of the fragments, he writes with empathy about the terrible effect of the hypnosis of the burgher opinion (Hölderlin, “Hyperion”, coll. 613 aids. 9 fol. 1301, pp. 19-20). Perhaps he was drawing autobiographical parallels with Hölderlin, in whose madness he blamed “honest burghers”. For example, his conflict with the editors of “Academia”. Golosovker himself was defeated by Apollo in the last years of his life.

For Golosovker, Hölderlin is an example of how the bearer of the Imaginative Absolute, misunderstood during life, becomes the “pride of humanity” posthumously. In a previous study, I assessed Golosovker's interpretation as pessimistic (Morozov 2020, pp. 108–109). It does not offer hope for the future, unlike Heidegger's view with his faith in future Germans, who will hear the “poet of poets” and the “thinker of thinkers” (Heidegger 1976, p. 213). In the Hölderlin-Handbuch a special section is devoted to Heidegger's interpretation (Kreuzer 2011, pp. 432-438). Golosovker notes that only the philosopher comments on himself-in-the-author. In this regard, I have a renewed understanding of his interpretation. I hypothesize that the project of imaginative philosophy continues the unfinished work of Hölderlin, who did not have time to formulate the dialectic of transformation, and Golosovker offers his version. The key problem that Golosovker solved in his philosophy is the disharmony between nature and culture. His interpretation of Hölderlin's poetry is built around this theme. In Golosovker's opinion, the lowest instincts (vegetative and sexual) were unnecessarily exposed, because of which the very word “spirit” became incomprehensible. The foundation of his philosophical system is based on the position that the spirit is the highest instinct of culture (i.e., the Imaginative Absolute). This should be understood as a variant of philosophical anthropology. Culture is not alien to nature, because it is “embryonic”—laid down by nature itself. The illusory gap between culture and nature is removed

since spirit is an innate higher instinct in the human body. Golosovker calls for this realization, although he stands for imaginative reality and becomes a defender of culture.

Braginskaya notes that Golosovker's position looks archaic to some extent—"he adheres to a romantic, not a neo-romantic understanding of culture and ancient culture" (Braginskaya 2017, pp. 92). He showed great interest in the German romanticism of the Jena period. The problem of the disharmony between nature and culture, and the sense of a cultural crisis intellectually unites them. The logic of the gift and the orientation towards the bearers of the Imaginative Absolute connects Golosovker with the German Romantics. His focus on dialectical philosophy makes Golosovker a thinker of the 19th century, who lived in the 20th. The confrontation of the poet and the crowd is an important characteristic of romanticism. However, this case is not so obvious. In the treatise, Golosovker responds to a potential accusation of archaism: "Some people will think that my statement about the absolute of imagination reproduces the credo of the German Romantics. This is a misconception" (Golosovker 2010, p. 84). According to his argument, the Romantics were metaphysicians, that is, they admitted the existence of a transcendent reality. In this respect, the project of Golosovker is anti-metaphysical. If we recall the dialectic of healing, Golosovker notes that the ideals of Hyperion and the Jena Romantics have been defeated. In the same fragment, he rejects any pantheism, answering Zelinsky's future question about the super subject: "My philosophy is only human".

Golosovker's attitude to German Romanticism of the early 19th century is complicated. Despite consonant topics and problems, the Russian thinker maintains a distance between his and their philosophy. Golosovker writes about Hölderlin's aesthetic pantheism, but his project cannot be described by this formula. Perhaps Golosovker drew biographical parallels with his eternal companion and considered his thought in some way a continuation of Hölderlin's. Nevertheless, his project is not limited to aesthetics and does not assume a living unity of the nature and humanity. The romantic problem of disharmony is solved originally, but the tension between nature and culture remains. Golosovker argues that culture is embryonically laid down by nature but puts the eternal imaginative reality (*realiora*) above the natural-temporal reality of lower instincts. The cultural and natural origins in humans are not equal because there is a hierarchy. Braginskaya, emphasizing the role of culture for Golosovker, even writes about its irreligious deification (Braginskaya 2017, p. 114). On the contrary, in Golosovker's proposed interpretation of Hölderlin, the harmony of nature, poetry, and society should equally mirror each other. There is no explicit domination of culture. This is a fundamental difference between Golosovker and Hölderlin. A new direction of the German influence is connected with the paradoxical attitude of Golosovker to the Kantian heritage.

## **II. Struggle against the monstrous Kant-devil**

Interpreting the "Death of Empedocles", Golosovker connects Hermocrates, one of Empedocles' opponents, with rationality. *Ratio* is the main enemy of the imaginative absolute and culture. The products of the Imaginative Absolute are not only specific cultural artifacts (paintings, sculptures, treatises, etc.) but also the ideals in pursuit of which they were created. The neologism "culturimagination" has already been mentioned. Freedom, beauty, and truth are the "absolute criteria of cultural values" (Golosovker 2010, p. 39). Golosovker's dissertation, which has not been preserved, was devoted to Rickert's philosophy. The question of value was a key one for Baden neo-Kantianism. Names of neo-Kantians are not mentioned in the Imaginative Absolute, but the

hypothesis about their influence is productive. According to Golosovker, there are two logics: formal, abstract (*ratio*), and dialectical, concrete (*imaginatio*). His treatise is largely devoted to the development of the latter. The dynamic logic of processes is a characteristic of the post-Kantian tradition. Fichte and Hegel apply “dialectical logic” in a similar way. Dialectical logic is opposed to formal, discursive logic.

According to Golosovker, the products of *ratio* are abstract ideas and “the result of the generalization of ideas produced by the mechanism of reason” (Golosovker 2010, p. 175). The genesis of *ratio* is not fully clarified. The lack of a clear correlation with human abilities leads to an overload of his main concept. Golosovker repeats that a human being has a mind of imagination and a formal *ratio*. For the products of the imaginative absolute Golosovker invents another new concept: the “meaning-image”, which is not a static and abstract concept, but a concrete image of the absolute that lives dynamically in culture. For example, Judas is a concrete symbol of absolute betrayal, while Hercules is a symbol of strength. The meaning-images of culture always live in the moral sphere. It is worth noting that the creation of neologisms is an important characteristic of Golosovker's philosophy. Such word formations as culturimagination or meaning-image refer to the German intellectual tradition. Sometimes he uses hyphens to formulate dialectical laws: “variability-in-constancy”, “constancy-in-variability”.

In a recent article, I turned to the book “Dostoevsky and Kant”, which was published during Golosovker's lifetime (Morozov 2021). The decoding of the “Dostoevsky and Kant” made it possible to see how Golosovker builds the philosophical foundations of the imaginative project, referring only to the text of “The Brothers Karamazov” and “Critique of Pure Reason”. He did not explicitly write anything about the confrontation between *ratio* and *imaginatio* but managed to quietly introduce readers to his philosophical system. Such a level of encryption requires intellectual skill. Golosovker develops a personalized philosophy, demonstrating his ideas using specific characters of Dostoevsky. Thus, Ivan Karamazov, a dialectical hero, seeks a theoretical solution in the clash of Thesis and Antithesis. Here Golosovker refers to Kant's antinomies. He translates them into the language of morality and religion. As a result, the Thesis means dogmatism—the existence of God and immortality—whereas the Antithesis means empiricism—the absence of God and immortality. The confrontation of dogmatism and empiricism in connection with antinomies is present in Kant's treatise (Kant 1998, pp. 498-499). Golosovker reproduces “Critique of Pure Reason” schematically. Kant becomes a symbol of abstract theorizing, a “cold formal-logical” approach.

The central idea of Golosovker's interpretation is a realized contradiction, the state of antinomism as a constant struggle. The religious context does not play a central role. Ivan Karamazov, like Kant, was looking for a theoretical solution (*ratio*), which led him to madness. It should be assumed that Golosovker was not even interested in the very possibility of an epistemological resolution, so he does not consider the resolution proposed in Kant's Critique. Zosima and Dmitry Karamazov (heroes of Dostoevsky) are capable of a realized contradiction. It is the confession of a “hot heart”, salvation in beauty (Dmitry's speech about the combination of the ideal of Madonna and Sodom), not the statement of a “cold mind”. According to Golosovker, only the imaginative mind is capable of the dialectical acceptance of contradictions. Dostoevsky, like Hölderlin, is the bearer of the Imaginative Absolute. Rejecting the formal-logical solution of antinomies in “Critique of Pure Reason”, Golosovker completely denies Kant's moral philosophy with its “chilling living soul” categorical imperative: “This is the conscience of the charter,



subordination and order, but not a life feeling” (Golosovker 2010, p. 379). “Kant” (a symbol of abstract philosophy and *ratio*) becomes an opponent of “Dostoevsky” (a symbol of imaginative philosophy). The devil, who appears to Ivan Karamazov, is the personification of all theoretical philosophy: “This is a complete caricature of philosophy—Descartes, Kant, Fichte, Hegel. Their names are obscured” (Golosovker 2010, p. 371). Here lies the doctrine of two streams in philosophy.

Based on the struggle between *ratio* and *imaginatio*, Golosovker distinguishes two streams in the history of philosophy. In his philosophical system, “existence” is associated with temporal, natural, and lower instincts, while “being” relates to eternity, culture, and higher instincts. The greatest threat to “being” is not the lower instincts, but *ratio*. The fate of being depends on the struggle of the two streams. The first stream is called “philosophy-as-art”. Such philosophers are driven by the Imaginative Absolute. This list includes Heraclitus, Plato, Schelling, Nietzsche, Bergson, and Schopenhauer. The second group is obsessed with *ratio* and science. Golosovker is not an anti-scientist, because the absolute truth is one of the culturimaginations. For the sake of truth, the scientist can even sacrifice himself. The negative side of science for him is that it claims to take precedence over culture. The stream “philosophy-as-science” replaces the moralized concepts of culture using abstract and formal concepts. The second group is mostly connected with New European philosophy. It includes Spinoza, Hume, Descartes, Hobbes, Fichte, and Leibniz. Golosovker links the crisis of modern culture with the dominance of *ratio*.

Such a generalization is aimed at forming a special history of thought, but there is no clear criterion for being put in one or another group. Would Plato, Nietzsche, and Heraclitus agree to be included in the same group—“philosophy-as-art”? Golosovker uses the following premises. He was the first philosopher to realize the Imaginative Absolute. All previous thinkers either did not reach this point or fell victims to illusory, abstract ideas. For instance, Feuerbach was close to understanding the absolute of imagination, but he confused fantasy with imagination—just like other thinkers who understood the imagination as a source of delusions (Golosovker 2010, p. 69). Moreover, it was Golosovker who completed the imaginative stream in philosophy. He finally realized the essence of the Imaginative Absolute and its role in culture. In the understanding of culture, Golosovker reflects not only German Romanticism but also the European intellectual trends of the beginning of the 20th century. Thus, Rashkovsky emphasizes a clear contrast between a living-creating culture and rational civilization, pointing to the influences of Spengler and Berdyaev (Rashkovsky 2017, p.12).

Kant falls into the group “philosophy-as-science”. Golosovker even notes that “the monstrous Kant stands alone” (Golosovker 2010, p. 94). Kant's inclusion in the list of rationalists is surprising. In “Critique of Judgement,” he made a decisive contribution to the philosophical and aesthetic understanding of imagination. Such concepts as “genius”, “free play”, and “sublime” are directly related to imagination. Schiller, Schopenhauer, early Schelling, and the German Romantics largely adopted Kant's aesthetics. Braginskaya points out that after Kant, imagination began to occupy a key position in aesthetic theories (Braginskaya 2017, p. 100). In the third “Critique” combinatorics of abilities is proposed. Each ability has its clear function. Imagination ceases to be only an intermediary between contemplation and reason, as it was in the first “Critique”. In the phenomenon of beauty, there is a “free play” of imagination and reason (*Verstand*). In the creation of aesthetic ideas mind (*Vernunft*) and imagination begin to interact productively (Kant 2007, pp. 142-143). Golosovker might have given to imagination the greatest

powers in the history of philosophy, but Kant and the post-Kantian tradition prepared the grounds for this.

Golosovker does not set the task of creating the architectonics of abilities, which is a major difference from Kant. In his system, the Imaginative Absolute is the highest instinct of culture, intuition, and at the same time the mind of imagination as opposed to the abstract mind (*ratio*). The schematized Kant is the personification of such a mind. Surprisingly, Golosovker does not address the third “Critique” in any of his works. His attitude to the post-Kantian tradition, or so-called “German idealism”, is contradictory. He refers to the praising of imagination by Schelling and Schopenhauer in a positive way, while Fichte with his “science teaching” and Hegel falls into the “philosophy-as-science” group. Golosovker calls Fichte's concept of “science teaching” (*Wissenschaftslehre*) suicidal and the most terrible word spoken in philosophy (Golosovker 2010, p. 49). It should be remembered that the eternal companion Hölderlin studied together with Hegel and Fichte at the University of Tübingen. Among the three, only Hölderlin was a genuine bearer of the Imaginative Absolute. Despite Golosovker's contradictory attitude to German idealism, he took over the aspiration for dialectical thinking. The owner of dynamic imaginative thinking can accept the contradictions between the thesis and the antithesis. Golosovker uses the novel “The Brothers Karamazov” as proof.

How to explain such an unfair attitude towards Kant? Ugolnikov calls “Dostoevsky and Kant” “the most included work in the Russian intellectual tradition” (Filosofiya mifa Yakova Golosovkera [...] 2017, p. 251). The struggle against the dead and abstract *ratio*, which has invaded philosophy, is the leitmotif of many Russian thinkers of the first half of the 20th century. Remarkably, Golosovker claims that Russian philosophy is special. It is driven by *imaginatio* and not the abstract *ratio* of “Kant-devil”, whose “boredom is fatal for us” (Golosovker 2010, p. 244). For instance, Vladimir Ern's polemic against the authors of Logos magazine is understood by him as a confrontation between the genuine *logos* and the scientific *ratio* (Zhukova 2016, pp. 81-82). The authors of the journal were influenced by neo-Kantians, and Ern defended the independent source of Russian philosophy. Golosovker does not draw parallels with Krupp's “meonic” guns, as Ern does, but Kant appears as a scholastic supporter of formal *ratio* with its “chilling living soul” theoretical reason and the categorical imperative. It is worth emphasizing that Golosovker is not so radical about the special status of Russian philosophy. He states the idea of its status only once. Notably, Golosovker does not refer to those thinkers who are now acceptable to study within the history of Russian philosophy (Berdyayev, Frank, Bulgakov, Florensky). He is more interested in such bearers of the Imaginative Absolute as Dostoevsky, Tolstoy, Leonid Andreev (philosophy-as-art). In this sense, Golosovker is in the modern Western trend of understanding Russian philosophy.

In the work “Sophia and Devil (Kant in the Face of Russian Religious Metaphysics)” Akhutin writes about the “strange idiosyncrasy” of the Kantian heritage that occurred in Russia. Kant is often interpreted as the “great deceiver”, the “enemy”, the “devil”. In conclusion, Akhutin returns to Golosovker's book and calls it “the best introduction to the essence of our problem” (Akhutin 2005, p. 480). Akhutin does not note that Golosovker's book was written within the framework of an original philosophical theory. In a recent article, I showed the difference between Golosovker and Russian religious metaphysics, using a comparison with Florensky's legacy (Morozov 2021, pp. 189-190). Florensky refers to Kant in the antinomy question but also becomes his intellectual opponent. He writes about Kant that his antinomies are unsuccessful, but the

experience of antinomism itself is more important. Such experience is not peculiar to the new European philosophy (Florensky 1990, p. 159). Moore wrote a detailed article is devoted to the phenomenon of antinomism in Russian philosophy using the example of Florensky (Moore 2021). A negative attitude towards the new European philosophy unites two Russian thinkers. Both philosophers are consonant with each other in the experience of antinomism, in the struggle against *ratio*, but they have different grounds.

For Golosovker, the central role is played not by “living religious experience”, but by “living” *imaginatio*, capable of a dialectical acceptance of contradictions. Florensky shows the antinomism of faith by the example of the Epistle to the Romans, whose contradictory doctrines he calls “an explosive bomb against *ratio*” (Florensky 1990, p. 164). In Dostoevsky's antinomism, the antinomism itself and philosophy-as-art are important to Golosovker, while the experience of religious truth or “the antinomic unity of being” are not affected. In the context of the dialogue with Hölderlin, it was said that the philosophy of Golosovker is anti-metaphysical, not presupposing a transcendent or “heavenly world”. The “God” of monotheism becomes the embodiment of the Imaginative Absolute, in which the synthesis of all absolute cultural values (culturimaginatio) takes place. Rashkovsky calls Golosovker's perception of religion a “sensitive issue” (Rashkovsky 2017, p. 21-26). Finally, his unfair attitude to the schematized “Kant-devil” and *ratio* can be in many ways explained by his embeddedness in the Russian intellectual tradition. The philosophical foundations for his struggle against *ratio* are original. A distinctive feature of Golosovker is that he cannot be a representative of “Russian religious philosophy”. Perhaps the rejection of metaphysics is due to the second “eternal companion”. A new turn of the German influence on the imaginative philosophy takes place within a dialogue with Nietzsche, the brightest representative of philosophy-as-art. Dialogue with him will allow the discovery of new intellectual themes and clarify the ideas of Golosovker already mentioned.

### **III. The lost dialogue with “eternal companion” Nietzsche**

Regrettably, during his lifetime Golosovker failed to publish any work about Nietzsche's philosophy. His translation of “Thus Spoke Zarathustra”, which Golosovker considered as “a piece of his life”, also was not published by “Academia”. The meaningful interpretation of Hölderlin's poetry and criticism of Kant can be traced through Golosovker's texts, while in the case of Nietzsche, there is no such opportunity. Golosovker prepared two commentaries on the translation of Zarathustra: “Nietzsche's *System* of Philosophy” and “Interpretation of the Symbols of the poem”. Both texts were lost in a fire, which both limits and gives research potential. It is noteworthy that Golosovker uses the concept of “system” relative to Nietzsche. In “Thus spoke Zarathustra” and other texts, it is difficult to find a system. Golosovker considered himself a systematist philosopher, although he treated negatively such large-scale systems as the philosophy of “monstrous” Kant or even “Babylonian” Hegel. The systematicity of Nietzsche and Golosovker does not consist in a discursive narrative, but in an attempt to consider a certain idea from various unexpected perspectives. According to Braginskaya, this is the endless “deepening into the truth”—the poetics of understatement (Braginskaya 2017, p. 90). However, it should be assumed that Golosovker's system is not focused on infinity, unlike the style of Novalis' unfinished hints. Golosovker specifically contrasts the harmonic poetical period of Hölderlin with the constructions of Novalis and his poetics of an unfinished fragment (Hölderlin, “Hyperion”, coll. 613 aids. 9 fol. 1301, pp. 24). The harmonic principle of construction is laid down in the Imaginative Absolute, “each part is an independent whole intimately connected with a larger whole”. If Hölderlin's

harmony of a feasible living organism is transferred to poetry and society, then Golosovker transfers it to a philosophical system. Nietzsche's poetic systematicity is understood similarly.

Golosovker's translation of "Zarathustra" was published only in 1994, thanks mostly to Mikhailov. His preface to the translation and a short article by Oznobkina is a valuable source in the context of the Nietzsche-Golosovker dialogue. Oznobkina formulates an important idea: "Nietzsche was a chosen figure for Golosovker—he is also 'one thinker' (as Golosovker called himself)" (Oznobkina 2017, p. 230). The attempts to publish "Zarathustra" are reflected in several documents stored in the RGALI. Earlier a letter to the chief editor, dated August 8, 1931, Lunacharsky was mentioned. Golosovker writes about "real persecution" and fears for his translation of Nietzsche. In early 1931, his translation of "The Death of Empedocles" had already been published. On August 13, 1931, Golosovker writes an even more emotional letter to Lunacharsky, directly pointing out his poor financial situation. Golosovker was not ready to entrust the translation manuscript to the editors Yarkho and Efros (Pis'mo Golosovkera Jakoba Emmanuilovicha, coll. 279. aids. 2. fol. 347). His concerns correspond with Oznobkina's thesis: "Golosovker's translation does not need an editor. And I even dare to say that he (in some sense) does not need the original..." (Oznobkina 2017, p. 228). This thesis is also partly relevant for the book about Kant and Dostoevsky. Schematized "Kant" opposes "Dostoevsky" (the bearer of imaginative thinking). Oznobkina also notes that the translation is congenial to the original and receives independent status.

Golosovker is ready to entrust the translation only to Lunacharsky personally because he accuses the editors of being ignorant of Nietzsche. Golosovker's claim to have a genuine knowledge of Nietzsche's philosophy and an almost existential need for publication are revealed in another document—a small undated note (Zametka o Nicshe [...] coll. 1303 aids. 1 fol. 626). It should be assumed that it was also written in the early 1930s and is associated with "Academia". In the note, Golosovker calls the current idea of Nietzsche's philosophy "a complete misunderstanding", "an anecdote about Nietzsche" (ibid.). He writes that it is urgently necessary to republish the Russian translations of Nietzsche, the legacy of whom Golosovker had been working on for more than 10 years. This work must begin with "Zarathustra". In his opinion, the Western European literature on Nietzsche had increased to such a size, that "it takes almost a lifetime to study it" (ibid.). If we turn to the bibliography in the "Nietzsche-Handbuch", published in 2011, it becomes clear that today such a task would require several lifetimes (Ottmann 2011). Golosovker's works on Nietzsche have not been preserved, but several intellectual themes should be discussed.

The first theme is connected with mythmaking. Golosovker returned from Vorkuta and found that his manuscripts had been burned. In 1940, he wrote a small work "The Myth of my Life". "The Myth of my Life" becomes an analogue of Nietzsche's work "Ecce Homo". Mikhailov understands mythmaking as the creation of "a living figurative scheme, which is itself invented by this person" (Mikhailov 1994, p. 5). The peculiarity of such a living scheme is its applicability only to a specific person. After the loss of the manuscripts, Golosovker writes about three stages of a single myth of his life, each of them is associated with a specific work. The works of the first two stages are lost, the third final stage is associated with the Imaginative Absolute (Golosovker 2010, p. 444). The theme of the myth is central to Golosovker's thought. The second part of the large-scale treatise the Imaginative Absolute is called "The Logic of Myth". The theme of myth was extremely important for the German romantics. Sometimes in the research literature,

Golosovker is mistakenly perceived only as a researcher of myth. Future studies will prove that “The Logic of Myth” and “The Tales of the Titans” are the realization of Golosovker's philosophical project.

Golosovker in “The Myth of my Life” largely repeats the strategy of the German thinker in “Ecce Homo”. The repeated losses in 1943 only dramatized Golosovker's mythmaking. There were no such losses in the fate of Nietzsche. An important difference is that Nietzsche in “Ecce Homo” writes about works that have already been published, whereas for Golosovker none of the stages of his work were known to his readers. Feeling himself to be a genuine bearer of the Imaginative Absolute, the losses were painful. The question about the extent of the lost manuscripts remains open. Mikhailov notes that Nietzsche was the origin of the trend towards mythmaking, the creation of a “living figurative scheme”, while Golosovker was in the rearguard of this movement; and he “lagged behind” (Mikhailov 1994, p. 5). However, Mikhailov perceives this delay positively, because Golosovker in his translation of “Zarathustra” managed to be congenial, possessed by the same spirit as Nietzsche. In this position, his assessment agrees with the opinion of Oznobkina. Perhaps Russian readers have yet to discover Golosovker's translation.

The second theme relates to the enormous influence of Nietzsche on the Russian “Silver Age”. Bonetskaya writes in detail about the phenomenon of “Russian Nietzsche” and the perception of Nietzsche's philosophy by the best representatives of the Silver Age (Bonetskaya 2016, pp. 9-42). Probably, due to his age, Golosovker did not actively participate in the life of this special era of Russian culture, but its symbolism had a serious effect on him. This is evidenced by his letter to Andrei Bely, written around 1920 (Golosovker 2017, p. 281). It is worth mentioning Vyacheslav Ivanov, a great admirer of Nietzsche's philosophy and the inspirer of the Silver Age. Ivanov's influence on Golosovker's philosophy can be traced in some respects. Ivanov also actively practiced mythmaking. He is one of the few Russian thinkers that Golosovker refers to.

Speaking about the genesis of the Imaginative Absolute, Golosovker pronounces the well-known formula of symbolism: “Man proclaimed *ab realiis ad realiora* and for this *realiora* was ready to give his life, as for immortality” (Golosovker 2010, p. 23). Yearning for immortality human prefers the *realiora* (imaginative-eternal) to the real (natural-temporal). Ivanov has a similar formula in meaning—“*a realibus ad realiora*”. His philosophical constructions presuppose something transcendent beyond the limits of natural-temporal reality. For both thinkers, the figure of the artist-creator plays a crucial role. According to Ivanov, the artist breaks through into a higher sphere (*realiora*), and then in the process of creativity returns to the lower levels of reality again (Ivanov 1974, p. 638). The images of Apollo and Dionysus play an important role in Ivanov's symbolism, which reveals the influence of Nietzsche's philosophy. The theory of the Imaginative Absolute does not imply something beyond reality or different levels of reality. In this respect, Golosovker is much closer to Nietzsche than Ivanov. The difference between Russian thinkers lies in the fact that a bearer of high instinct does not break through to *realiora* but creates it himself. There is also no detailed elaboration of the concept “symbol”, through which the higher reality is revealed. The closest word in the philosophical dictionary of Golosovker is already mentioned concept of “meaning-image”, a specific living embodiment of the Imaginative Absolute in culture. Golosovker's deification of culture is irreligious, while Ivanov has a religious, even mystical-ecstatic element.

The third intellectual theme is connected with the political context of the Imaginative Absolute. In an archival note, Golosovker insists that Nietzsche is a philosopher of the 20th century, not the 19th: “He will be read in 50 years” (Zametka o Nicshe [...] coll. 1303 aids. 1 fol. 626). Zelinsky recalls that Golosovker considered the accusations of Nietzsche's links with Nazism “the greatest injustice”: “Similarly, it is possible to prove the dependence of sea robbery on Byron's poetry” (Zelinsky 2017, p. 140). Mikhailov wonders how, in various interpretations, Nietzsche turned into a supporter of the Nazi party (Mikhailov 1994, p. 18). Such objections are consonant with Golosovker's thesis about the transformation of Nietzsche's image into an anecdote about him. In his treatise, Golosovker does not appeal to the historical events and processes of the 20th century. He is more interested in questions of philosophy-as-art, the essence of imaginative thinking. However, not only philosophers, artists, and genuine scientists are obsessed with the Imaginative Absolute, but also supporters of revolutionary ideas. Without faith in the revolutionary ideal, they could not be revolutionaries (Golosovker 2010, p. 26).

In another fragment, Golosovker writes that in the course of history the Imaginative Absolute was “knee-deep in the blood” of those who were obsessed with it. Thus, the heyday of culture in history is associated not only with the flourishing of philosophy and art. The epochs of imaginative flourishing, on which Golosovker focuses, are marked by constant military clashes: The Ancient Greece of Plato's time was in an almost constant state of war, and the growth of German Romanticism takes place against the background of the French revolution and the Napoleonic wars. Nevertheless, Golosovker evaluates modernity (he witnessed a clash of “great” ideas) as a cultural disaster and dominance of *ratio*. To resolve the contradiction, it should be suggested that specific political ideas are secondary to Golosovker in comparison with his “protecting culture”, understood primarily as philosophy and art. According to Golosovker, the “philosopher-without-boredom”—Nietzsche—was completely misunderstood.

The fourth and final theme relates to the fact that Golosovker does not pay attention to Nietzsche's criticism of morality. The ethicized symbols of the absolute (culturimagination) are created by the Imaginative Absolute in the course of history. This is difficult to correlate with Nietzsche's reflections on the morality of slavery and resentment, which in the course of history began to create its values (Nietzsche 2006, p.20). For instance, Nietzsche connects the good-evil opposition with resentment. According to Golosovker, the whole culture is permeated with ethically polarized culturimagination: good-evil, beauty-ugliness, loyalty-betrayal, etc. In this respect, a meaningful comparison with Nietzsche's philosophy and his “revaluation of values” is almost impossible. Golosovker in his project seems to ignore the critical potential of Nietzsche's “On the Genealogy of Morality” concerning ethical values. On the question of values, the hypothesis about the influence of neo-Kantianism on Golosovker's philosophy seems to be more productive. Nevertheless, the rejection of the transcendent world unites Golosovker and Nietzsche. Perhaps the non-preserved works would have helped not only understand the “genuine knowledge” of Nietzsche but also better decipher the doctrine of the Imaginative Absolute. Like another “eternal companion” of Golosovker, Nietzsche was also defeated by Apollo at the end of his life. Ironically, in Greek mythology, Apollo is a symbol of culture. The highest instinct of culture turns against its brightest bearers.

## Conclusion

In this study, a coherent view of Golosovker's philosophy in the context of the German influence was proposed for the first time. The appeal to specific intellectual plots made it possible to holistically reveal not only the fundamental premises of his theory but also a few biographical aspects. Some internal contradictions within his philosophical system were shown. The appeal to the eternal companion Hölderlin shows the important issue of the collision between nature and culture (spirit). Golosovker insists that all Hölderlin's work is autobiographical. Golosovker's interpretation is also autobiographical, which is emphasized by archival materials. The hypothesis that Golosovker's project is, to some extent, a continuation of the unfinished dialectic of transformation was proposed. Hölderlin, killed by the "stupidity" of his fellow citizens could not resolve the conflict between nature and spirit. The concept of the Imaginative Absolute, however, resolves the conflict due to the hierarchy of lower and higher instincts. The logic of the gift appears in the constructions of Golosovker. In some, the threefold higher instinct of culture is more developed. The German influence is manifested in his neologisms and dialectical thinking. Special attention was paid to the complicated question of the influence of German Romanticism. Despite many coincidences, Golosovker maintains a research distance and denies the identification of his philosophy with Romanticism.

A consideration of the struggle against "monstrous Kant" showed the main opponent of culture and the Imaginative Absolute—*ratio*. Golosovker's teaching about two streams in the history of thought relates to this topic: philosophy-as-art and philosophy-as-science. The schematized Kant becomes the embodiment of formal logic and abstract ideas, which Golosovker opposes to imaginative logic and "meaning-images". The criterion for belonging to the streams is not formulated, so the groups of thinkers look somewhat arbitrary. In his attitude to Kant, Golosovker is embedded in the Russian intellectual tradition. This influence is also manifested in the ideas of antinomism and the struggle against the "dead" *ratio*. Nevertheless, his philosophical foundations and arguments are original. The special status of Russian philosophy is due to it being philosophy-as-art. The philosophy of Golosovker is anti-metaphysical and does not presuppose a transcendent world, therefore it cannot be attributed to the "Russian religious philosophy". Despite his criticism of Kant, in the matter of culturimaginations (cultural values), the hypothesis about the influence of Baden neo-Kantianism seems productive.

Golosovker's works on his eternal companion Nietzsche have not been preserved, but some intellectual themes were touched upon. Particular attention was paid to the philosophical systematicity of Golosovker, in which he follows Hölderlin, not Novalis. Golosovker claims to have "genuine knowledge" of Nietzsche. Mythmaking unites him and Nietzsche, although the circumstances of "The Myth of my Life" and "Ecce Homo" differ. Nietzsche's influence in Russia was enormous. A further comparison of Ivanov and Golosovker will be productive for future research. In the understanding of *realiora*, Golosovker does not accept a transcendent world, in contrast to Ivanov. The internally contradictory political context of the Imaginative Absolute is revealed in connection with Nietzsche. Golosovker and his eternal companions were defeated by Apollo. Madness becomes a "meaning-image" that unites them. The themes show the diversity of Golosovker's philosophy, which should be called a phenomenon of Russian-German intellectual dialogue. The research of his philosophical legacy will continue.

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