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## Surprise as a Chronotopic Feature of the World in the Poem by F.I. Tyutchev *Exists in the Autumnal Growing...*

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**Abstract.** To date, the work of F.I. Tyutchev *Exists in the Autumnal Growing*, despite its textbookness, is devoid of a hermeneutical attitude towards it and is mainly used as a material for training schoolchildren in the search for metaphors, epithets, personifications, etc. The attitude of the reader from the standpoint of participatory thinking suggests something else – clarification of the artistic patterns of the depicted world. The article discusses the image of time and space through the prism of the surprise of the persona. Note that the world of the piece emphasizes wonder before things existent, as well as the fragmentation of time in order to slow down the process of showing (seeing). In the piece, the wonder of the persona contributes to the detail of the landscape. The proximity of the images of a spike and a web, a sickle and an idle trench serves as a representation of two aspects of human existence, where one symbolizes the material-bodied plane and hard work, and the other – the spiritual plane of existence, time, cyclicity, destiny. Comparison of the thread of the web with a human hair in the metaphor of “thinning and unbending, a web string” fits the image of a person into a detailed world order, introduces him to the unity of all that exists. The cyclicity of life is expressed by the harvest scene, which is not just the memories of the persona, but an indication of the upcoming transformation.

**Key words:** chronotope, lyrics, landscape, metaphor, artistic time

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## Удивление как хронотопическая особенность мира в стихотворении Ф.И. Тютчева «Есть в осени первоначальной...»

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**Аннотация.** Сегодня произведение Ф.И. Тютчева «Есть в осени первоначальной...» лишено герменевтического отношения, несмотря на свою хрестоматийность. В основном оно используется как материал для тренировки школьников в поиске метафор, эпитетов, олицетворений и т.д. Отношение читателя с позиций участного мышления предполагает нечто другое – прояснение художественных закономерностей изображенного мира. Цель исследования – выяснение функциональной роли удивления как особой мыслительно-эмоциональной «операции» в работе автора с материалом. Показано, что благодаря ему происходит дробление художественного времени и одновременно его замедление. В результате изображаемый пейзаж приобретает более детальный характер, автор приходит к выводу об особом антиномическом способе мышления поэта, благодаря которому тонко выписанные детали картины природы становятся воплощением философской идеи о единстве двух аспектов человеческого существования – духовного и материального. Сравнение нити паутины с человеческим волосом в метафоре «паутины тонкий волос» вписывает образ человека в детализированный миропорядок, приобщает его к единству всего сущего. Цикличность жизни выражается сценой жатвы, которая представляет собой не просто воспоминания лирического героя, а указание на грядущую трансформацию.

**Ключевые слова:** хронотоп, лирика, пейзаж, метафора, художественное время

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### Introduction

F.I. Tyutchev's lyrics regularly attract the attention of researchers. This is evidenced by the publication of a well-known book by V.V. Kozhinov (Kozhinov, 1978), a dissertation by V.P. Okeansky (Okeansky, 2002). The chronotopic aspect of his lyrics becomes the subject of study in the 2000s. For example, N.Yu. Abuzova notes the characteristic of Tyutchev's poetry the opportunity to consider the present from the standpoint of eternity and vice versa (Abuzova, 2019, p. 144). I.V. Gorobets comes to the observation that from the standpoint of physical perception, the chronotope of Tyutchev's lyrics

is clearly set and defined. “The Tyutchev’s narrator is distinguished by the most pronounced ability to see the transcendent, and not so much to see, as to behold, to peer through visible boundaries” (Gorobets, 2019, p. 62).

L.G. Shakirova considers *time* in the lyrics of F.I. Tyutchev as an association with change and movement, which are characteristic of the bottom, the world of everyday life. *Eternity* in his poems, according to the researcher, is presented as a state of immutability, characteristic of the top, for infinite space. The theme of time is recognized as dominant in the poet’s work: “All the lyrics of Tyutchev’s nature are, figuratively speaking, the desire to endlessly talk about time” (Shakirova, 2021, p. 93).

In the lyrics of F.I. Tyutchev, N.Yu. Abuzova emphasizes *spectacularity* as a distinctive principle that expresses the wonder of the narrator and at the same time draws attention to a certain striking (‘phenomenological’, according to L. Pumpyansky) natural event involves a careful peering into the details of the described phenomenon of the world (Abuzova, 2021, p. 71). Another important aspect of spacetime organization is the *sounding* world. The thesis of N.V. Atamanova puts forward the point that the semantics of sound in poetic contexts of F.I. Tyutchev is not isolated from other semantic components and acts in combination with the semantics of color, light, smell (Atamanova, 2006, p. 8).

The poem by F. I. Tyutchev *Exists in the Autumnal Growing...* is considered to date only in two articles:

- 1) as a material for the school lesson by I.G. Apalkova (Alpakova, 2011);
- 2) from the point of view of the biographical approach, in the article by M.S. Akimova, a conclusion is formed that the birth of the epithet ‘crystal’ could be influenced by a certain temple with a crystal interior, familiar to the poet (Akimova, 2022).

Such results do not explain the meaning of the piece and the features of the artistic space in the world of a poem that needs detailed clarification, a coherent system of observations of the interpreter.

Exists in the autumnal growing  
A brief, but an enchanting phase:  
The day – as if in crystal glowing,  
The dusk – in the resplendent glaze.

Where ears fell to zesty sickle’s rending,  
It’s bare around; through a widespread range  
Glow only, thinning and unbending,  
A web string on an idle trench.

The air’s depleting, quiet – birds have pealed,  
Of nascent wintry storms there isn’t a clue,  
And pours the warm and the transparent blue  
Onto a resting field... (Tyutchev, 1987, pp. 195–196)<sup>1</sup>.

<sup>1</sup> Translated by Boris Leyvi. <https://www.tania-soleil.com/tiutchev-est-v-oseni-pervonachalnoi/>

## Results and Discussion

The beginning of the poem opens with the word ‘exists’ and this sets the direction of interpretation: we understand that the subject has some non-obvious experience that will be presented now. The statement ‘exists’ assumes further development of the conclusion; indicates the reflection of the persona on the observation already made, sets the dynamics of the image.

This ‘exists’ is an unobvious fact, the presence of something so significant in the subject of the image, but still hidden from the addressee, which requires attention both from the persona and from the reader. This is how intrigue is created – attracting the attention of the addressee, the promise of an event, a revelation. We consider such an emphasis on surprise to be something familiar, everyday characteristic of the lyrics of F.I. Tyutchev. One can find similar in intent in the poet’s works, which are organized according to the principle of appeal to vision – ‘Look...’ (‘Look, as a living cloud on high’, ‘Look like a grove greens’, ‘Look like a river expanse’, ‘Look, how the West turned red’).

In lyrics, concentration at a certain point in time is often projected onto the image of the whole world. Here we see a gradual increase in the detail of the time plan: from the entire annual cycle, the persona distinguishes one season. Autumn is the penultimate stage of the natural cycle, but the proximity of the images of the *growing* and *autumn* increases the fragmentation of time. Within this season, there is also a division into stages, with an emphasis on its very beginning. There is a switching of the ‘scale’ of time reckoning from a large to a smaller, more localized fragment of it.

Another meaning of the word “growing” actualizes its philosophical subtext: the growing was the subject of reflection of early Greek philosophers who believed that primordial elements are present in all objects of the material world. Parmenides, expressing the idea of being, claims that *there is* being, and there is no non-being. The first word of F.I. Tyutchev’s work concentrates on this statement of being. Thus, the phrase *autumnal growing* is more than just a period of time. It is on a par with the material substance that makes up the cause and the beginning, to which all things return – this is the Greek *αρχή*. In the Greek text of the Bible, the word *arche* appears in the first verse of Genesis: ἐν ἀρχῇ ἐποίησεν ὁ θεὸς τὸν οὐρανὸν καὶ τὴν γῆν (In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth).

We believe that the main intension of the first stanza is the wonder at being. M.K. Mamardashvili aptly spoke about this wonder that the world ‘exists’: “The philosopher wonders that *there is* anything at all <...> It’s a wonder that there is something rather than chaos” (Mamardashvili, 2000, p. 50). Compositionally, the beginning of the piece with this surprise at being sets the addressee up for staring-admiration and delayed gazing. The well-known method of ‘slow reading’ characterizes the receptive side of the meeting of the reader and the

work, but also the technique of ‘slow presentation’, characteristic of the poem in question, is a special attitude of the creator in relation to the image method.

A roll call with another work by F.I. Tyutchev: “In the brightness of autumn evenings / here *is* a touching, *mysterious* charm” (italics be the author – A.A.) (Tyutchev, 2002, p. 126) is expressed in the fact that the poem also begins with the surprise that something ‘is’. It is no accident that here the position of emotion is accompanied by a situation of ignorance, that is, a feeling of *mystery*. The presence of the mysterious, as well as the work in question *Exists in the autumnal growing*, creates the effect of deceleration – it forces the viewer to retreat and slowly peer. The surprise of the persona in both cases is caused not by the diversity or strangeness of the phenomena, but by the depth of comprehension of the familiar and simple.

Such a close look at a small area of space or, as in this case, in a short period of time leads to a slowdown, retardation. This attitude is consistent with the intention declared by the first word of the poem to attract the attention of the addressee. The chronotopic characteristic of the world of the work is the reason for the surprise of the persona, and the slow peering and listening allows this surprise to take place. As A. Schopenhauer once noted: “With the exception of man, no being wonders at its own existence; but it is to them all so much a matter of course that they do not observe it” (Schopenhauer, 2001, p. 132).

The contrast in the second line of such characteristics as “A brief, but an enchanting” emphasizes that it is short moments that are often ignored in the rapid and large-scale dimension of life, but it is from them that all life consists. The correlation of “brief” and at the same time “enchanting” as characteristics of time emphasizes the value dispute with the view of short moments as insignificant, not worthy of wonder. It is the *miracle* discovered by the persona that acts in this work as a catalyst for peering and slowing down. A close connection between surprise and slowdown was noted in the works of R. Descartes, who stated that a person who is surprised or amazed *freezes, stops*, and is speechless.

Detailing space and time with the help of the persona’s surprise opens up the possibility of showing the game of light: dusk – in the resplendent glaze, day – as if in crystal glowing. Comparison of the day with crystal refers primarily to transparency, which contributes to the play of light, the permeability of rays. Crystal is associated with transparency and *coolness*, as well as autumn air. The word ‘crystal’ comes from the Greek κρύσταλλος – ice. The crystal magic ball as an attribute of clairvoyants and soothsayers refers to the famous place from the work of A.S. Pushkin *Eugene Onegin*: “And my romance’s open theme / Glittered in a perspective long, / And I discerned through Fancy’s prism / Distinctly not its mechanism” (Pushkin, 1960, p. 178). Similarly, in the poem by F.I. Tyutchev, the crystal day opens spatial scenes from the past and the future to the persona.

The second stanza reveals the contrast between the active harvest season and an idle, calm period of time. The released space, which goes into the “standby mode”, at the same time refers us to the previous phase – ploughing, sowing and



harvesting. The persona is endowed with a retrospective vision of how “ears fell to zesty sickle’s rending” (Tyutchev, 1987). A speculative scene from the past is spread out in front of him, indicating how this past influences the perception of the present: the earth is personified as *resting* after work.

The experience of the persona unfolds from the time point of the present, but the visual images of the harvest arising in his imagination become a link between different time layers. The peculiarity of the images of this stanza is that the sickle and ears, the harvest scene itself are not just memories, but an indication of transformation. The harvest becomes a metaphor for the completed cycle of life, which no longer exists in the present, but will be repeated in the future.

The contrast between the “zesty” sickle and the “idle” trench emphasizes the change in the states of active work (liveliness) and rest (tranquility), which indirectly introduces an implied image of a person into the picture of life. The “zesty” sickle personifies the human desire for creation, its vital activity and energy. But the space after harvest (the “idle” trench) is not just emptiness, but the fullness of potential, the place on which a new picture of life should arise.

Ears are literally future bread, and the glowing web is an object of contemplation, a spectacle. Even in Juvenal’s satire, it is the phrase *panem et circenses* that marks the most basic vital needs of the population, but in Juvenal’s mouth this phrase is accusatory, mocking, then in the work of F. I. Tyutchev, the ear and the web quite seriously reveal two aspects of human existence, where one symbolizes the material-bodied plane, as well as hard work, and the other – the spiritual plane of existence, time, cyclicity and destiny.

It is difficult not to notice here the value tension of labor (in the form of a sickle) and destruction, abandonment and desolation (in the form of a web). Note that the ability to see the fine hair of the web on the trench is an indicator of a certain angle of the viewer’s vision. Slowing down and focusing on a special (highlighted) moment in the first stanza is now complemented by an approximate, close-up view of small details. And the *spectacle* reduced in value in Tyutchev’s piece acts as a sublime *admiration*, a wise contemplation. Thus, work and contemplation are not opposed in value terms, but represent two most important phenomena of human existence.

The web, as a trace of the existence of a spider that does not know about the life of plowmen, sowers, reapers, who spread the web *here and now* within its short life of an insect, testifies to natural life, which proceeds on its own, parallel to human life. The most important moment is the transition from action to contemplation, from movement to immobility, because the formation of a web is a sign that space is at *rest*. The web that appears on the trench reflects the mystery of the transition from one state to another, and the “idle” trench is not just a place of rest, but also a place of rebirth. The future is hidden in it. The web, like the trenches, creates a kind of illusion of peace, immobility, but thin threads of fate (past harvest and the future – winter storms, upcoming sowing), invisible to the naked eye, are woven into it. The phrase “isn’t a clue”, having pushed the

storms into the future, connects the theme of the resulting emptiness with the upcoming winter, suffering, death, which creates a contrast to the radiant present.

The glitter of the web from the dew echoes the transparency of the crystal mentioned in the first stanza, which is related to the theme of light. The surprise of being, indicated in the first stanza, is further revealed (detailed) in the second stanza as a *process of contemplation* and the surprise of the beholder. There is a transition from a wide, panoramic vision to a more detailed one, due to the concentration on a specific element of the landscape – the web. Its sparkle in the rays of the sun turns a simple web into a symbol of the impenetrable mystery of the world, thereby bringing together the concepts of *truth* and *beauty*. Comparison of the thread of the web with a human hair, which is heard in the metaphor of “thinning and unbending, a web string” fits the image of a person into a detailed world order, introduces him to the unity of all that exists.

In the third stanza, the focus of attention shifts to the acoustic component of the depicted space and time. There comes a moment when the beholder, listening to the surrounding silence, discovers that the birds are not heard. As in the previous stanzas, the persona not only sets out this fact, but for the very artistic integrity of the world it is important to hear their absence, the silence itself as a phase of transition and a harbinger of winter cold.

Of course, the human organs of perception act simultaneously, that is, in parallel with the contemplation of the field in the second stanza, the persona hears silence. However, *in the manifestation event*, these processes unfold as sequential phases. Such a sequence serves to detail the image: in compositional terms, the image of silence requires a separate stanza. The empty field affects the eyes the empty air affects the ears. Acoustic silence, like the visible image of an empty field, becomes a full-fledged element of the landscape and part of its atmosphere.

## Conclusion

All aspects of the depicted chronotope in the work are presented through the prism of the special point of view of the narrator – the position of wonder. It is this position that allows for a slow showing, emphasizing the value of the moment, in its direct contemplation. The word “exists” concentrates on the affirmation of being, representing something more than just a period of time. Contemplative wonder is divided into three phases, compositionally indicated by the division into stanzas. The emphasis is on the familiar, which is characteristic of Tyutchev’s lyrics: the word ‘enchanted’ combines the characteristics of wonder and admiration. The contrast between the active season and the calm one opens up a retrospective vision of the persona. The sickle becomes a metaphor for the completed cycle, and the expanse after the harvest represents the potential for rebirth. Attention to the acoustic component of the landscape – silence, emphasizes the onset of autumn. The absence of sounds symbolizes change, the transition from life to death, from fullness to emptiness, from activity to

rest. The persona reflects, tries to understand the meaning of what he sees, “recalls” the future. In the situation of cyclical seasons, a seemingly paradoxical situation arises – a person does not plan or guess, but *recalls* the future, looking back at his past experience.

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