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THE AUTOBIOGRAPHY  
OF THE ARCHPRIEST AVVAKUM  
STRUCTURE AND FUNCTION

## THE AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF THE ARCHPRIEST AVYAKUM STRUCTURE AND FUNCTION

The autobiography of the Archpriest Avvakum has long been recognized as a unique phenomenon in the history of Russian literature, a work that points both backward and forward, at once traditional and innovative. It has attracted the attention of scholars because it incarnates the tensions and contradictions of the 17th century as a whole, when Russia was undergoing a transformation from the medieval to the modern age, marked by the gradual detachment of the westernizing elite from the traditional religious culture. The literary and other cultural production of the 17th century reflect its demand for a force to synthesize tradition with the new reality of Russia in intimate and often violent contact with the West. Scholars <sup>(1)</sup> such as D. S. Lichačev and Svetlana Mathauserova have pointed out that the literature of the 17th century is distinguished by its revelation of the potency of the individual, who, broken loose from the disintegrating objective structure in terms of which he was interpreted in the past, influences and transforms his environment through his subjective consciousness. A new interest in poetics accompanied the revelation of the trans-

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<sup>(1)</sup> See D. S. LICAČEV, *Semnadcatyj vek v Russkoj literature in XVII vek v mirovom literaturnom razviii*, Moskva, Nauka, 1969, pp. 299-328; and S. MATHAUZEROVA, *Baroko v ruské literaturé XVII století in Československé přednášky pro VI mezinárodní sjezd slavistu v Praze*, Praha, 1968, pp. 255-258. Lichačev notes that the 'pre-renaissance' trends of the end of the 14th century and the first half of the 15th century, which did not develop into a full renaissance at that time, come to a late flowering in the 17th century mixed with influences from the European baroque. The crucial role of Dionysius the Areopagite in the formation of Avvakum's worldview is just one indication that what Svetlana Mathauserova calls Avvakum's 'negative humanism' finds its ideological roots in the same sources that gave birth to the 'pre-humanism' of the 14th-15th centuries.

forming potential of the subjective consciousness, a concentration on the role of the artist and the function of art in recreating reality and thus contributing to the synthesis which would heal the rended fabric of the age.

Paradoxically, Avvakum, who devoted his life and literary production to attempting to restore to Russia its lost cultural wholeness <sup>(1)</sup>, was in both life and works a vehicle of its destruction and transfiguration. Like his ideological and poetic enemies, the syllabists, Avvakum consciously referred to and justified his poetic practice. However, in opposition to the latter, who interpreted their own peculiarly Russian productions in terms of European, and particularly Jesuit baroque poetics <sup>(2)</sup>, Avvakum's attitude towards himself as artist and towards his work was derived from the Russian Orthodox tradition <sup>(3)</sup>. This paper will

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<sup>(1)</sup> G. FLOROVSKY in *Protivorečija XVII-go veka, Puti russkago bogoslovija*, Paris, 1937, pp. 57-81, P. PASCAL in *Avvakum et les débuts du Raskol*, Centre d'études Russes "Istina", 1938 and S. ZENKOVSKY in *Russkoe Staroobryadčestvo*, Munchen, Wilhelm Fink Verlag, 1970 all see the reform movement culminating in the Schism as a reaction to the cultural trauma of the Time of Troubles. The intensity of this crisis explains the radical nature of Avvakum's search for the imagined lost paradise, a search which caused him to look at an ideological tradition which in the past had sanctioned the status quo with new eyes focusing on its revolutionary or transformational implications.

<sup>(2)</sup> See A. M. PANČENKO, *Filosofija i estetika poezii barokko, Russkaja stixotvornaja kul'tura XVII veka*, Leningrad, Nauka, 1973, pp. 167-209.

<sup>(3)</sup> A. N. ROBINSON in his article, *Zaroždenie koncepciji avtorskogo stilja v ukrainskoj i russkoj literaturach konca XVI-XVII veka*, in *Russkaja literatura na rubeže dvuch epoch (XVII-načalo XVIII v.)*, 1971, pp. 33-82 notes the continuity of the ideology and poetics of Russian Old Believer writers of the mid and late 17th century with that of the West Russian polemicists such as Ivan Vysenskij at the beginning of the century, as well as their mutual indebtedness to the Greek-Slavonic Christian patristic tradition. He notes that they call on John Chrysostom's 4th century defense of Christian ethics and poetics against hellenistic tradition, and on the writings of his 16th century Russian disciple, Maxim the Greek in their own defense of their use of language as an expression of Orthodox ideology against the Jesuits (in the case of Vyšenskij) and against the White Russian and Ukrainian monk-scholars who received a Jesuit style education and made themselves useful to the Moscovite throne by providing a western derived ideology and poetic tradition to sanction the development of a secular absolutist state (in the case of Avvakum). Robinson draws attention to the vital connection between religious ideo-

be devoted to examining Avvakum's idea of the nature and function of art, and then to elucidating the structure of his *Žitie* <sup>(1)</sup> as a reflection of his poetics.

Avvakum did not separate art from life as creative activity; he referred to and justified both as works of God. Avvakum contrasted his own life and writing to that of his ideological and poetic enemies. Turning the orthodox polemic against hellenism to his own uses, he branded the Nikonians as rhetors and philosophers, meaning by this that they lived and wrote only for the sake of self affirmation through formal display, and were thus idolators who had lost sight of the transcendent God. Avvakum is interested in form only as a vehicle of something other than itself. True to Orthodox tradition he valued the written word as an instrument of revelation of God <sup>(2)</sup> and a means of transformation of the world. He devoted his life as a priest and father con-

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logy, and attitudes towards the national language, and questions of national destiny and the nature of the state. Avvakum's struggle to realize in his own life and culture the paradise of the Third Rome is intimately connected with his use of his own spoken Russian language on a par with Slavonic as vehicles of the eternal truths he wants to see manifest in the concrete present.

<sup>(1)</sup> All citations from the works of Avvakum including his autobiography (except the earliest Prjanišnikov redaction) are from *Pamjatniki istorii starobryjadčestva XVII v.*, kn. I, vyp. 1, *Russkaja istoričeskaja biblioteka*, t. XXXIX, Leningrad, 1924 (*RIB*).

<sup>(2)</sup> In the introduction to redaction V of his autobiography, Avvakum writes: «... viršami filsofskimi ne obyč reči krasit', poneže ne sloves krasnych Bog slušaet, no del našich choščet; I Pavel pišet: ašče jazyki čelovečeskimi glagolju i angel'skimi, ljubvi že ne imam, — ničto že esm'. Vot čto mnogo razsuždat': ne latinskim jazykom, ni grečeskim, ni evreiskim, niže inym koim iščet ot nas govory Gospod', no ljubvi s pročimi dobrodetel'mi choščet; togo radi ja ne bregu o krasnorečii, i ne uničižaju svoego jazyka russkago... » (*RIB*, col. 153).

In his 'First Petition to Tsar' Aleksej Michajlovič Avvakum again stresses that formal considerations do not determine the structure of his writings, but rather form is a function of content and intent: «Ne čelobit'em tebe, gosudarju, niže pochvaloju glagolju, da ne budu bezumen istinnu bo, po Apostolu, reku » (*RIB*, col. 726).

These statements of Avvakum's represent a convention of Orthodox Christian literary tradition. They do not mean that Avvakum's writing (or the literary tradition of 'Slavia Orthodoxa') is not highly structured.

fessor <sup>(1)</sup> to a realization of the written word, that is, of the scriptures, by the spoken word. When he could no longer preach and receive confession, his literary production assumed the full responsibility of fulfilling his final goal, the restoration in Russia not only of the wholeness of the third Rome, but of the paradise lost by Adam.

Avvakum's autobiography is thus a substitute for his life as a means of realizing God's kingdom on earth. His focusing on himself as a vehicle of the manifestation of God or wholeness reflects the general preoccupation of the 17th century with the problem of individual creativity and its justification, and derives from the Christian premise that God created man in his image as creator, and as the culmination of created nature. Avvakum produced the four known editions of his autobiography over the first six years of his final exile in the Far North, approximately between 1669 and 1675 <sup>(2)</sup>. During that time he escalates his claims as to the meaning of his self image. What in the first edition is

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<sup>(1)</sup> S. SMIRNOV in his study, *Drevne-russkij duchovnik*, Moscow, 1914, reprinted by Gregg International Publishers Limited, England, 1970, notes that Avvakum's relationship with his spiritual flock as a father confessor was in no way out of the ordinary (p. 220). The father confessor took on himself the sins of his repentant children by receiving their confession in order to intercede with them before God: «... na moej vyj sgrešeniya tvoja, čado, i da ne istjažet tebe o sich Christos Bog, egda priidet vo slave svoej na sud strašnyj (p. 42)». He was expected to be a teacher of the word as well, meant to «sluzit' voždem ej [sem'e] v vyšnij Ierusalim', otkryt' 'božie carstvo', priversti ee k prestolu Božiju i skazat': 'se az i deti, jaže mi esi dal' (p. 42)». Father confessors are known to have written epistles (poslaniya) and testaments (poučeniya) to their spiritual children, and even to have received the confession of a 'child' in a letter when geographically separated from him. The corpus of Avvakum's writings can be interpreted as an aspect of his role as a spiritual father exhorting his children, and as a spiritual son, confessing his and their sins to Christ.

<sup>(2)</sup> My discussion of the autobiography takes into consideration the data of all four redactions according to the hypothesis that they represent stages in the perfection of his self image in accordance with his own idea of man in the image of God. However, it draws principally on what N. S. Demkova considers to be the last two redactions, that is redaction A (1673) and redaction V (1674-5). See N. S. DEMKOVA, *Žitie Protopopa Avvakuma (tvorčeskaja istorija proizvedeniya)*, Leningrad, 1974. I will deal with the variations between the four redactions and their motivation in my doctoral dissertation now in progress.

merely a 'Book of Being' or 'Book of Genesis' (*kniga bytiija*) <sup>(1)</sup> is explicitly a 'Book of Eternal Life' (*kniga života večnago*) <sup>(2)</sup> by the fourth edition. The question of how Avvakum manifests eternal being in the structure of his autobiography can be answered by first examining his idea of wholeness as expressed in his concept of God.

Avvakum envisioned God primarily as motion or process, as the manifestation of His own inner relationship with Himself. Since God preceded his creation, this interrelationship existed primally between the three Persons and the one Essence. The goal of the inner motion of God is the realization of the identity of the Essence (which represents the principle of unity or simplicity), with the Persons (who represent the principle of multiplicity or spatial distinction). For Avvakum, the motion which was the source of their identity is the essential attribute of God. Avvakum referred to an interpretation of the circle as a symbol of God's essence which was appended to the works of Dionysius the Areopagite in the *Velikie četi Minei* and attributed to kir Peditasim <sup>(3)</sup>. The circle manifests infinity as the incessant movement or interrelationship of oppositions resulting in a unity or synthesis which transcends any distinctions, boundaries or definitions:

« I prdivnoe, i blažennoe estestvo oglagoluetsja: svet bo bog, no i ne svet, pače bo sveta, život, i ne život, poneže bo pače života, premudrost' // pače premudrosti bo i, sovokup'l'se rešči, syj i ne syj, ovo ubo jako vseh vinoven, ovo že jako vseh neizrečenne izjat ».

In a polemic with his fellow old believer and spiritual son Fedor, Avvakum stresses that Christ the Word is distinguished

<sup>(1)</sup> *Žitie Protopopa Avvakuma (Prjanišnikovskij spisok)*, in N. K. GUDZIJ (ed.), *Žitie Protopopa Avvakuma im samim napisannoe i drugije ego sočinenija*, Moskva, Izd. chudožestvennoj literatury, 1960, p. 305.

<sup>(2)</sup> *RIB*, col. 154.

<sup>(3)</sup> See I. M. KUDRJAVCEV, *Sbornik XVII v. s podpisjami Protopopa Avvakuma i drugih Pustozerskich uznikov, vypisi, černouye nabroski i zamečki Protopopa Avvakuma*, No. 106, in *Zapiski otdela rukopisej GPL*, vyp. 33, Moskva, 1972, p. 200. Avvakum introduces his entry with the following reference to his source: « Izjaščnago v filosofech kir Feodora Peditasima o eže koeja radi viny o glavach svjatyh vency včineny byša pisatisja. — Slovo naposledi knigi, lis[t] 337 ». The total context can be found in *Velikie Minei četi, sobrannye vserossijskim mitropolitom Makariem*. Oktjabr., Dni 1-4, SPb., 1870, p. 787.

from God His Father in the act of being eternally born from Him <sup>(12)</sup>. Avvakum thereby characterizes Christ the Word as primarily a dynamic activity of manifestation of the divine essence within his own personal spatial distinctions. Avvakum devotes a special treatise to the Mother of Christ, insisting that she should be worshipped equally to Christ and the Holy Spirit since she is the means of the birth of the Word into the world, of his taking on a human body <sup>(13)</sup>. Avvakum motivates the creation of man in God's image by a dialogue of God with Himself — between God the Father, the source of all, and God the Son — the activity by which God manifests himself <sup>(14)</sup>. God's image is present in man when he like Christ manifests the incessant activity of mediating by his person between God's transcendent essence and the spatial distinctions which comprise the world of being.

According to Avvakum, and his source Chrysostom, Adam or man lost God's image because of blindness to his own boundaries. Adam extended likeness into measurelessness (*protjag podobie v bezmerie*). He ceased to activate the function of his boundaries as

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<sup>(1)</sup> See «Polemika po voprosu o Sv. Troice protiv d. Feodora Ivanova i starca Efrema Potemkina i po nekotorym drugim voprosam», *Kniga obličenij ili Evangelie Večnoe*, RIB, col. 577-636. He accuses Fedor of maintaining that Christ is subordinate to the Father and not equal to Him, that He exists primarily within the Father, not in the act of being eternally born from Him. Avvakum answers: «Otec est' ne Slovo, Slovo est' Syn, a ne Otec, ne Duch, Duch est' Duch, a ne Otec, ni Syn. Est' ubo v nas: um, slovo, duch, tože troe nerazlučno. Um roždaet slovo bez strasti, slovo že bez ducha ot uma proiti ne možet, im že i v nas tri sostavy. Edin že celovek v um imat' slovo i duch; tako est' Otec, i Syn, i Svjatyj Duch vo trech sostavech, nerazdelnyj edin že Bog. I roždaet Otec Syna bez strasti, Syn že nest' bez Svjatago Ducha [...] Slovo soipostasno, suščnyj, soveršennyj, i prisno be so Otcem, i v Nem prisno rožen svoeju voleju» (RIB, col. 621-622).

<sup>(2)</sup> *O Presvjatoj Bogorodice*, RIB, col. 685-688.

<sup>(3)</sup> See Avvakum's exegesis of the Book of Genesis, *O sotvorenii mira, grechopadenii pervago čeloveka i o potope*, RIB, col. 667-8: «I vide Bog, jako dobro: [...] I reče Otec Synovi: sotvorim čeloveka po obrazu Našemu i po podobiju. I otvešča drugij: sotvorim, Otče, i prestupit bo. I reče, o edinorodnyj Moj! o Syn i Slove! o, Svete moj! o Sijanie slavy Moeja. Ašče promyšljaši sozdaniem Svoim, podobaet Ti, obleščisja v tlimago čeloveka, podobaet Ti po zemli choditi, Apostoly vosprijati, postradati, voskresnuti, i vsja soveršiti. I otvešča drugij: budi, Otče, volja Tvoja' Posem i šestyi den' snide Bog na zemlju na Vostoce v Edeme, perst' vzem ot zemlja, i sotvori čeloveka...».

mediators between spatial oppositions and therefore to manifest the essential unity of the world <sup>(1)</sup>. However, God found a new way to reveal this unity through man when he created time, which gives birth to new Adams who might become mediators. The outer perimeters of space as a function of time were the first Adam who initiated time and the second Adam, Christ, who ended it and incarnated in his person the unity of the world.

« A egda budet vtoroe prišestvie Ego, togda vsju perenovit siju vidimuju tvar', sireč perepološčet negasimym ognem, i budet nebo novo, i zemlja nova, i ljudej-tech že perenovit, voskresnut vsi i komuždo po dostojaniju protivu del i mesto ukažet Bog vo veki vekom. Togda raj Edemskij rasprostranitsja po vsej zemli, i grad svjatyj Sion na vozduse, [...] nošči že ne budet tam. I ne presečetsja svet tmoju, jakože dnem; svetilnik v nem budet agnec Božij svetiti Christoš, Syn Božii, Nadeža naša, Svet » <sup>(2)</sup>.

Avvakum refers to this end boundary between time and non-time

<sup>(1)</sup> « Vnemli i uslyši svjatago Ioanna Zlatoustu — *Slovo o vočelovečeni*, list 469: Sotvori Bog nebo i zemlju i sozdanie vse, na koncy že sozdanija čeloveka sodela po obrazu svoemu i po podobiju; obraz tomu darova, — ne načertanie telesno, no vlastnyi san, razsuditelnu silu, eže dobrodetel'mi upodobljatisja Sotvoršemu. Byst' ubo po obrazu i podobiju Božiju celovek, protjag-že podobie v bezmerie » (*RIB*, col. 581-2).

Avvakum stresses that man's likeness to God consists in an activity, that is in the performance of good deeds. That this activity consists in becoming a mediator between opposites will become clear in reference to Avvakum's citation of Abba Dorotheus' description of how man takes on the image of God. See p. 164 of this article. Man's function of unifying opposites and creating the wholeness of the world is implicit in the following passage where the human life is signified by ships and the wholeness of the world by the sea. The activity of the ships crossing the sea (thus unifying opposite points of its circumference) is the force activating the unity of the world which is otherwise just unmanifested potential: « Korabli bo po morju preplavajut iz carstva v carstvo, stroja našu čelovečeskiju žizn'. Prevozjat bo vešči iz zemli v zemlju, ide že čevo nest', otinude prevozjat. More bo sovokupljaet voedino vsech nas, da ljubim drug druga i chvalim činotvorca, chitreca-boga. My že nest' tacy sut', ne choščem bo obšče stjažanija imet', no vsja chošču mne sobrat', jako nesytij vsejadec. Ašče by mi vozmožno, vsja by vešči morskija i zemskija vo utrobu svoju vmestil ».

See *Poslanie Simeonu, Ksenii Ivanovne i Aleksandre Grigor'evne, Žitie Protopopa Avvakuma im samim napisannoe i drugie ego socinenija*, op. cit., p. 273.

<sup>(2)</sup> *RIB*, col. 663-4.



as process itself — the act of renewal. It is a realization of the identity of the oppositions structuring the world as a whole both temporally and spatially: the oppositions between Adam and Christ, beginning and end, paradise and heaven represent the outer boundaries of a hierarchy of microcosms ordered to the degree that they transcend oppositions and manifest the divine essence <sup>(1)</sup>.

The goal of Avvakum's self portrait is to show that he like the Godhead and Christ is an incarnation of the whole in the perma-

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<sup>(1)</sup> It is interesting to note that in his exegesis of Genesis Avvakum juxtaposes beginning and end: His discussion of the creation of Adam is given in the context of his fall and redemption by Christ. The evocation of the Last Judgement is part of his exegesis of a passage on the creation of the world: « *I položil solnce v oblast' dni, lunu že v oblast' noči* ». In another place he explicitly evokes man's overcoming of the oppositions between Adam and Christ, life and death, beginning and end as a circular motion: « ... jakože kolovratjaščusja solncu, i lune, i zvezdam, na taže vozvraščajutsja; tako i my, krugom šedše, na tajaž-de znamenija, paki priemše, obretaem: jako kolovertjaščusja čelovečju žitiju, i paki na tožde znamenie sušče vospjaščajuščesja, rekše, v zemlju, i ot nejaže vzjaty esmy i sotvoreni na tuže vozvraščajuščesja. I tako k svoemu Tvorcu priidem [...] Solnce Pravednoe vidim licem že k licu[...]aže razumy sut' i nikoli že ne ugašajutsja, menju že svjataja vsja i žizn' nestarejuščusja i blažennuju priimem » (*RIB*, col. 586). Whereas Adam partakes of the portion of the earth of which he is made, Adam become Christ transcends his particularity and at the time of his death is the incarnation of the whole earth and of God the transcendent third term. Avvakum represents his progress through his own life as the increasing manifestation within himself (the part) of the whole (God): the autobiography is a revelation in a particular time and space of what will be only fully manifest at the end of time. His essential nature as the embodiment of the whole earth is explicit in his vision of the expansion of his body given in his 'Fifth Petition' to Tsar Aleksej Michajlovič, *RIB*, col. 764, and alluded to in the autobiography. It climaxes in his becoming « ... ves' širok i prostranen [...] po vsej zemli razprostranilsja, a potom Bog vmestil v menja nebo i zemlju i vsju tvar' ». In the passage quoted in footnote 1. p. 161, Avvakum sees his desire to absorb the world into himself as a manifestation of the sin of Adam who strives to be an end rather than a mediator. The inversion of this sin of self-affirmation into the good of self-transcendence is the result of a dialectic in which B (sin.) is not in opposition to A (goodness) but becomes a part of it in a third term C. This inversion is the result of the activization of his boundaries in their function of mediation, so that they represent process itself, and is achieved through suffering. Suffering is the dominant motif of the autobiography, realized in an increasing degree as he progresses in his journey through life to death and self transcendence and incarnates the circle.

ment process of transcending the oppositions which comprise its structure (1). In the introduction to the latest edition, he provides a key to his own self portrait. He quotes Abba Dorotheus' evocation of man in the process of attaining union with God as his merging with the circle. To the degree that the saint moves along a line from the periphery to the center of the circle, he overcomes the oppositions between himself and his brother and merges with the divine essence to become identical with the circle.

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(1) It should be noted here that scholars such as A. N. Robinson, N. S. Demkova and V. V. Vinogradov have observed the significance of oppositions as a basic structuring principle of the autobiography. While ROBINSON in his article *Ispoved'-Propoved'* (o chudožestvennosti žitija Avvakuma), in *Istoriko-filologičeskie issledovanija: Sbornik statei k semi-desjati pjatiletiju akademika N. I. Konrada*, Moskva, 1967, pp. 358-371 intimates that Avvakum is on the verge of overcoming the 'dvojnaja suščnost' of the authorial image (p. 365), he nonetheless stresses its basic dualism which he sees is a reflection of Avvakum's dualistic manichean worldview. N. S. DEMKOVA, in her book *Žitie Protopopa Avvakuma...*, op. cit., notes that the general principle of opposition and contrast is what gives the *Žitie* its basic structural unity (*celostnost'*); that structural units are marked by the completion of a cycle of rebellion and repentance (p. 143). In her article, *Izučenie chudožestvennoj struktury 'Žitija' Avvakuma. Princip kontrastnosti izobraženija*, in *Puti izučenija drevnerusskoj literatury i pis'mennosti*, Leningrad, Izd. Nauka, 1970, pp. 100-108 she goes so far as to say (p. 104), «... počti polnost'ju na principe kontrasta osnovan sjužet 'Žitija'». She lists various types of oppositions and contrasts present in the compositional structure of the autobiography. While alluding to the fact that somehow duality is overcome within the structure of the work, she falls short of identifying how: «Odnako eto čeredovanie kontrastirujuščich epizodov v 'Žitii' — ne tol'ko kompozicionyi priem, svoeobraznyi otsvet christianskoj idei 'neispovedimosti sudeb božičich', no i otraženie opredelennogo, 'avvakumova' principa obobščeniya dejstvitel'nosti [...] kontrastirujuščee povestvovanie takogo roda imeet 'zadanie', iduščee ot idej Avvakuma» (p. 105). V. V. VINOGRADOV in his brilliant article, *O zadačach stilistiki. Nabljudenija nad stilem Žitija Protopopa Avvakuma*, in *Russkaja reč, Sborniki statej pod redakciej L. V. Ščerby*, Petrograd, Izd. fonetičeskogo instituta praktičeskogo izučeniya jazykov, 1923, pp. 195-285, notes that the linguistic fabric of the *Žitie* is structured not only on the presence but on the interaction of two contrasting parallel lexical and stylistic planes, the effectiveness of which is dependent on their remaining identifiable. The manifestation of Avvakum's transcendent third term is synonymous with the existence of the oppositions which it overcomes. Avvakum likely found an ideological motivation for this in Chapter 8 of Dionysius the Areopagite's treatise,

«... eliko bo soedinevaetsja kto iskrennemu, toliko soedinjaetsja Bogovi, i reku vam priklad ot otec, da poznaete silu slova.

Položi mi krug byti na zemli, jako že načertanie nekoe oblo, ot prechoždenija ostna, glagolet že sja svojstvenne osten, eže posrednee kruga, daže do ostna; položite ubo um vas vo glagolemoe; sej krug razumejte mi byti mir; samoe že, eže posrede kruga, — Boga: stezja že, jaže ot kruga iduščaja i do sredy putija, sireč' žitija čelovečeskaja, poeliku ubo vchodjat svjatii k srede, želajušče približitisja Bogu, po raven'stvu vchoda bliz byvajut i Boga, i drug drugu; i eliko približajutsja Bogu, približajutsja i drug drugu, i eliko približajutsja drug drugu, približajutsja i Bogovi... Bog ljuby est' i prebyvajaj v ljubvi v Boze prebyvaet, i Bog v nem prebyvaet... Bog vseljaetsja v ljubovnova čeloveka čjuvstvom nebesnym, i takovoe telo dom Božii byvaet » (1).

Dorotheus also describes the process of falling away from God by the refusal to recognize identity with one's brother, and thus being outside of the divine circle. Avvakum accompanied Dorotheus' evocation of man's relation to God with a graphic depiction of himself and his coexiles at Pustozersk within the circle and his enemies outside of it (2). Thus Avvakum prepares us for his own self representation as the manifestation of the process of merging with God by reconciling oppositions and transcending himself while casting away what is not a part of himself, and therefore is not a part of God. In overcoming the distance between himself

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*On the Divine Names*, « O sile, o pravde, o spasenii, o izbavlenii, v nemže i o neravenstve » to which he refers in his notes on reading published by I. M. KUDR'JAVCEV, *Sbornik XVII v. s podpisjami Protopopa Avvakuma...*, op. cit., p. 199. In the section on inequality Dionysius the Areopagite and his interpreter, Maximus the Confessor write: « ... neraven'stvo bo ašče kto razumeet, jaže vsjač'skych vsech k vsem razn'stvija, i sego pravda s' bljudatelna, ne popuščajušči s'mešena vsja v vsech byvšaja smutitisja, s'čhranjajušči že suščaja vsja po vidu koeždo, v nemže koeždo byti est'stvo imat.' Tolkovanie [...] sice razumej, jako s'stavi protivni prebyvajut drug drugu, rekše toploe i studenoe i mokroe i suchoe, i koeždo ich v svoem otnuđ'stve ostaet, i ne prestupaet v suprotivnoe, nikoli že bo ogn' voda byvaet, niže voda ogn'. Ašče ubo i s'nidošasja po s'deteleve povenii i prebyvaet koeždo ich, spasaja svojstvo » (*Velikie Minei cet'i*, op. cit., pp. 569-70).

(1) *RIB*, col. 152-3.

(2) The autograph of redaction V of the *Žitie* including Avvakum's drawing, donated to the Drevnechranilišče of Puškinskij dom by I. N. Zavoloko, has been published by V. I. MALYŠEV, N. S. DEMKOVA and L. A. DMITRIEV: *Pustozerskij sbornik*, Leningrad, izd. "Nauka", 1975.

and other, he overcomes the distance between Adam and Christ and encompasses within his own person all time and all space and the energies giving birth to them.

To allow him to do this, the autobiography, like God, is structured by inner oppositions in a hierarchical relationship to one another. The unifying movement of the autobiography is the interrelationship of these oppositions and Avvakum's ascent through and beyond the hierarchy as he transcends himself. Each level of the hierarchy is a greater microcosm of Christ mediating the oppositions between temporal space and God's spirit.

The peak of the hierarchy, which provides a model for the structure of the world itself as a dialog between opposites, is the Word of God as revealed in the Scriptures and the sacred writings which interpret them. Avvakum's text could be said to be structured as a dialogue with the Scriptures. In the process it incarnates them in its own context thus transcending itself to become a Book of Life. The Scripture and its interpreters function as a subtext, a transcendent level of meaning outside of Avvakum's text which provides a key to the structure of Avvakum's work which is a microcosm of it<sup>(1)</sup>. In incarnating the Scriptures, Avvakum overcomes the oppositions between man and God, Adam and

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(1) V. V. VINOGRADOV in *O zadachach stilistiki. Nabljudeniia nad stilem Žitiia Protopopa Avvakuma, op. cit.*, notes how the Bible is present in the autobiography as direct citation in the narrative, and as the source of a system of imagery within Avvakum's own linguistic texture used to describe concrete Russian reality as the manifestation of Biblical truth. RICCARDO PICCHIO has devoted a lengthy article to *The function of Biblical Thematic Clues in the Literary Code of 'Slavia Orthodoxa'* due to appear in «Scripta Slavica Hierosolymitana». He shows how biblical clues occur in marked positions and can provide the key to the semantic system of the whole work, bridging the gap between its literal sense explicit in the context of the given work, and the spiritual sense fully understood only in the broader context indicated by the clue, the 'higher' verbal structure outside the text. Citations of, or allusions to the Bible, the works of the Fathers of the Church, and other authoritative writings in Avvakum's autobiography act as semantic touchstones in the function described by Picchio. They also function as subtexts as defined by K. Taranovsky and O. Ronen on the basis of their studies of Acmeist Poetics. Similarities in the function of subtextual recurrences in Osip Mandel'shtam and Avvakum are underlied by a shared conception of the Logos as simultaneous essence (smysl') and being (form). (See O. RONEN, *Osip Mandel'shtam: The Ode and the Elegy*, Doctoral Dissertation, Harvard

Christ, Old and New Testament, and becomes equal to the transcendent third term, the Book of Revelations.

The lowest level of the hierarchy of microcosms of the whole is Avvakum as the protagonist of his autobiography, since he represents the least accumulation within himself of time and space. As protagonist of the autobiography, he interrelates with himself as narrator of the autobiography who incarnates more of

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University, p. 46). Both Mandel'stam's and Avvakum's text are structured in terms of reiterations occurring on the formal and the semantic level. Both see the text as a reiteration of all of human history (as conveyed by the Word), a means of resurrection and renewal of the past in the present (since the present transcends the past, adding its own elements while taking into account the fullness of the latter), and of creating the future. The subtext as an act of reiteration, of the «осушествление двусторонней (прошлой-будущей) диachrónicockой направленности» (see O. RONEN, *Leksičeskij povtor, podtest i smysl v poetike Osipa Mandel'stama*, in *Slavic Poetics: Essays in honor of Kiril Taranovsky*, The Hague, Mouton, 1973, p. 374), is a functional part of the structure of the text itself which provides a new level of motivation for the elements comprising its fabric. The interrelation between text and subtext, requiring the activity of the reader as well as the author, is yet another way that Avvakum actualizes his idea of the Word as the process of interrelationship itself. O. Ronen's attribution to Mandel'stam's poetry of Bachtin's category of the 'dvugolosoe slovo' of the active type can be applied to Avvakum as well. See O. RONEN, *Ibid.*, p. 384. Dionysius the Areopagite in his treatise *On the Celestial Hierarchies* (to which Avvakum refers in his autobiography, *RIB*, col. 5-6) provides a model for the structure of reality as a whole as a series of microcosms (Words), simultaneously in a hierarchical and reciprocal relation to one another according to the degree of intensity of manifestation of the ineffable simplicity of the essence within the spatial framework of being. The hierarchy represents God's self revelation as knowledge (chudožestvo-ἐπιστήμη) and activity (dejstvo-ἐνέργεια). See *Velikie Minei cel'i*, op. cit., p. 587. Each level of the hierarchy is in an active functional relationship with the next highest and lowest level, the hierarchy being a vehicle of the downward movement of God to man and the upward movement of man to God. Each level is equal to the next highest and lowest level through functionally participating in them and manifesting in terms of its own spatial differentiation the energies common to them all. Transcendence—ascend up the hierarchy does not imply inequality, but simply an increase in the degree of the manifestation of the image of God. Likeness, that is one's function as revelation, as a vehicle of knowledge (ἐπιστήμη), is a function of activity (ἐνέργεια). Avvakum's autobiography is an icon of God, yet another level in the hierarchy. To the degree that it is an activity, a manifestation of interrelationships, it is also a source of revelation of the wholeness of the world of which it is a part.

the whole because he exists at a later moment of time and space. The narrator in his turn interrelates with all of time and space outside his personal boundaries, and the boundaries of his autobiography as incarnate in the Monk Epifanij and the reader.

Avvakum explicitly refers to Epifanij, his father confessor, as a microcosm of Christ the final judge at the end of time. He writes:

« Sudite že tak, čtob nas Christos ne stal sudit' na strašnom sude sego dela » (1).

We will see that he refers to the reader as a representative of the future time and space after his physical death. As the outer boundaries of the autobiography, Epifanij and the reader serve the function of motivating Avvakum's creation of the structure of oppositions through which he interrelates with himself in the autobiography. Epifanij in fact initiates the text by writing in it with his own hand:

« Avvakum protopop ponužen byst' žitie svoe napisati inokom Epifaniem, — ponež otec emu duchovnyj inok, — da ne zabveniju predano budet delo božie » (2).

Epifanij and the reader are also the means of overcoming the oppositions created by the autobiography, because of their ability to symbolically internalize both its narrator and protagonist. They can do this in their role of receiving the confession (3) of the

(1) RIB, col. 40.

(2) RIB, col. 1. Epifanij encloses his words which open the text within three concentric circles. See the photographic reproduction of the first page of the autograph of redaction A in A. N. ROBINSON, *Žizneopisanija Avvakuma i Epifanija*, Moskva, Izd. Akademii nauk SSSR, 1963, p. 141.

(3) S. SMIRNOV, in his appendix to *Drevne-russkij duchovnik, op. cit.*, pp. 202-205 includes a writing attributed to John Chrysostom on the role of the Father Confessor which was part of the *Zlataja čep'* collection. It explicitly refers to the Father Confessor's internalization of his spiritual children (whereby he becomes a microcosm of them, transcending their multiplicity in his simplicity): « ... ašče bo by lze srdce moe razdravše, ti pokajaniija pokazati vam. to videli sja byste vsi vy. v''nutr' sedjašče v mne i s ženami i s det'mi. tako bo sila est' ljubovnaja nbs'' širšju tvorit'. Dšju i utrobu vmestit'sja v ny. reče apostol[...]ne stužite si v nas bo ves' srad korinfskvi imiaše v srdce svoem. ti reče ne stužite si. raširites i vy

narrator for the sins of the protagonist. In a long digression in the autobiography <sup>(1)</sup>, Avvakum insists on the necessity of confession for communion with the body of Christ. As father confessors, receiving the repentance of Avvakum, Epifanij and the reader are the means of internalizing him into Christ's body. However, Avvakum's confession to them is at the same time a form of exhortation of them because to the degree that he is internalized by them as their confessee, he becomes equal to them in their role of confessor. By the end of the text his self transcendence and identity with Christ is fully realized, as is his function of father confessor to the world as a whole incarnate in Epifanij and the reader. The conclusion of the autobiography is a reversal of the initial situation: It is Avvakum's turn to motivate Epifanij to confess to him <sup>(2)</sup>.

« Nu, starec, moevo vjakan'ja mnogo vet' ty slyšal: o imeni Gospodni povelevaju ti, napiši i ty rabu tomu Christovu, [...] Slušaj že, čto govorju: ne staněš' pisat', ja pet' oseržus'. Ljubil slušat' u menja: čevo soromitca, — skaži chotja nemnoško! [...] Skazyvaj, nebos', liše sovest' krepku derži ... » <sup>(3)</sup>.

His last words of the autobiography are an assertion of his identity with the reader. Each is a mediator for the other:

« Puskaj rab-ot Christov veselitsja, čtuči! Kak umrem, tak on počtet, da pomjanet pred Bogom nas. A my za čtuščich i poslušajuščich stanem Boga molit'; naši one ljudi budut tam u Christa, a my ich vo veki vekom. Amin' » <sup>(4)</sup>.

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no az'' togo ne mogu rešči. Dobre bo vede jako i vy ljubite by i v''mešcaete v ny. da na koju polzu est' vam ili moja ljuby est' k vam ili vaša k nam. egda bžija dela ne vmeščajutsja v ny ». Here is a key to Avvakum's system of imagery as well as to the possible source of the idea of the broadness of the Russian soul.

<sup>(1)</sup> *RIB*, col. 28-30.

<sup>(2)</sup> According to S. SMIRNOV, *op. cit.*, p. 45, the reciprocal confession of one priest to another was uncanonical. It would represent a violation of the hierarchical relation of spiritual father to spiritual son. However, it is characteristic of Avvakum as a 17th century man that he would activate the reciprocity and identity of the microcosms comprising the cosmic hierarchy, thereby embodying pure interrelationship in the act of continually manifesting the transcendent third term, the essence of God.

<sup>(3)</sup> *RIB*, col. 81-82.

<sup>(4)</sup> *RIB*, col. 82.

The identity of the narrator with Epifanij and the reader is a function of the identity of Avvakum the protagonist of the autobiography with Avvakum as its narrator and creator. In the final analysis, all depends on Avvakum as the protagonist of his life. The introduction focuses on the interrelation of Epifanij and the narrator because the protagonist is internalized within the narrator, yet to be born. The main narrative section begins with his natural birth and shows him in the process of giving symbolic birth to himself on increasingly transcendent levels according to the degree of his overcoming the oppositions between himself and his brother. Finally, at the midpoint of the autobiography, he merges with the narrator, who in his turn merges with Epifanij and the reader. In redaction A this moment is marked by Epifanij's reentrance into the text to write in forgiveness for the protagonist's actions at the request of the narrator, whereby the transcendent level of the alien word is juxtaposed with Avvakum's own word as a sign of their identity<sup>(1)</sup>. At the conclusion of the autobiography, the protagonist is reinternalized within the narrator and as we have seen, it again focuses on the narrator's identity with Epifanij and the reader. Thus we see that the structure of the autobiography is symmetrical: its beginning, middle and end are all points of Avvakum's identity with himself as a hierarchy of microcosms of the whole extending from Avvakum as protagonist of his life to Avvakum as narrator of his life, to Epifanij and the reader, with the Scripture unifying all levels.

However, these three critical moments of self-identity represent not only the culmination of Avvakum's ascent through the hierarchy of microcosms to totally merge with God. They are also the culmination of his rejection of his enemies. In merging with the circle, he acquires the power to expell his enemies from the circle. The introduction, midpoint and conclusion are the climax of his confessional and exhortative functions determined by his relation to Epifanij and the reader, and of the polemical function determined by his relation to the Nikonians.

The introduction presents aspects of his world view and the subtexts ideologically crucial to the structure of the narrative, not only as a confession of faith, but in the form of an attack on

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(1) *RIB*, col. 40. See A. N. ROBINSON, *op. cit.*, p. 161 for a photographic reproduction of Epifanij's writing in Avvakum's text.



specific Nikonian heresies. Immediately after its midpoint, the narrator bursts again into a polemic with the Nikonians:

« A čto zapreščenie to odstupničeskoe i to ja o Christe pod nogi kladu, a kljatvoju toju, — durno molyt'! — guzno tru » (1).

This is a response to his loss of status as a priest, which is fully realized only later in the plotline of the life of the protagonist when the Nikonians anathematize him. The narrator concludes the exposition of the protagonist's life with his own lengthy monologue which is a direct address to his enemies and to his followers. It combines polemic with exhortation and confession. It culminates with his words separating the lambs from the wolves as he assumes the majesty of the eschatological Christ-judge.

« Bud'te one prokljaty okajannye so svem lukavym zamyslom svoim, a stražuščim ot nich večnaja pamjat' triždy! » (2).

The following discussion of how the protagonist achieves the self-transcendence which climaxes at the midpoint of the autobiography indicates only the skeleton of an elaborate structure. The plotline of his life is presented as the alternation between journey (put') and arrival at a town (gorod). Each stage of his journey is a stage of his merging with the circle by transcending an increasing degree of opposition to himself either by expulsion or internalization (3). In the process he transcends the oppositions between

(1) *RIB*, col. 40.

(2) *RIB*, col. 66.

(3) The stages of Avvakum's journey climax on his arrival at a town, but are structured as a series of episodes each of which is a complete entity defined by the interaction and transcendence of oppositions. As such Avvakum combines in his protagonist two types of character as defined by JU. LOTMAN in his article *Problema chudožestvennogo prostranstva v proze Gogolja*, « Učenie zapiski Tartuskogo gosudarstvennogo universiteta », vyp. 209, Trudy po russkoj i slavjanskoj filologii XI, Literaturovedenie, Tartu, 1968; the « geroj puti » for whom « prebyvanie v každoj točke prostranstva (i ekvivalentnoe emu moral'noe sostojanie) myslitsja kak perechod v drugoe, za nim posledujuščee », who is responsible for realizing the horizontal axis associated with consecutiveness or temporality, and the « geroj stepi », who can move in all directions and for whom « peremešenie v moral'nom prostranstve svjazano ne s tem, čto on izmenjaetsja, a s realizaciej vnutrennyh potencij ego ličnosti . . . ». He realizes the vertical axis which exists outside of time and change and is ascended

Adam and Christ, death and life to become the full revelation of the Word. He internalizes his opposite through receiving his confession in the form of repentance for a sin against himself. He expells his opposite if the latter is unrepentant through the power of his word in prayer. This pattern is implicit in the period of Avvakum's confrontation with small village authorities (<sup>1</sup>). It is

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to the degree one reveals one's essential nature. LOTMAN, in his article, *O ponjatii geografičeskogo prostranstva v russkikh srednevekovykh tekstach. Trudy po znakovym sistemam*, II, «Učenie zapiski Tartuskogo gosudarstvennogo universiteta», vyp. 181, Tartu, 1965, pp. 210-216 points out that this simultaneous horizontal and vertical movement is characteristic of the Russian medieval conception of space in general: «... dvizhenie v geografičeskom prostranstve stanovitsja peremeščeniem po vertikal'noj škale religioznonravstvennykh cennostej...». He notes that, «geografija vystupaet kak raznovidnost' etičeskogo znanija», that, «nравstvennym ponjatijam prisušče lokal'nyj priznak, a lokal'nym - nравstvennyj[...] zemnaja žizn protivostoit nebesnoj kak vremennaja večnoj a ne protivostoit v smysle prostranstvennoj protjažennosti». Characteristic of sacred objects (which have realized to the full extent the horizontal and vertical axes) is that they, within their own boundaries, equal all of space and time (eternity); that is, in them the part is equal to the whole. In underlining the concreteness of the Russian medieval conception of heaven, Lotman notes that there bread «vpolne podobn zemnomu poskol'ku takže prednaznačen dlja pitanija, ego mogut est' ljudi. Otličaetsja ot zemnogo on liš osobojo pročnost'ju: neznačitel'nogo kusočka ego dostatočno dlja pišči mnogim ljudjam na dolgoe vremja». The progress of Avvakum's life in time along the horizontal axis is also the progress of his vertical ascent as he become a microcosm of the whole to an increasing degree of intensity. N. S. DEMKOVA notes in her *Žitie Protopopa Avvakuma*, op. cit., p. 147 that the autobiography is structured in episodes which represent stages in the moral formation of his personality. A. N. ROBINSON in the introduction to his *Žizneopisanija Avvakuma i Epifanija*, op. cit., p. 66, notes that «každyj sozdavaemyi imi epizod vystupaet kak illjustracija k obščej idee avtobiografii v vide častnogo slučaja ee projavlenija». Absent here is the idea of progress or intensification in Avvakum's self revelation as inherent in the structure. V. VINOGRADOV was not unaware that intensification was a structural feature of the autobiography: «...sintaksičeskie gruppy inogda raspolagajutsja kak by stupeňkami s rastuščej siloj smyslovogo i emocional'nogo naprjaženija, pri etom takoe stupeňčatoe postroenie inogda podčerkivaetsja povtorjajuščimsja refrenom, zamykajuščim každyju iz sostavnykh častej». Op. cit., p. 280.

(<sup>1</sup>) Avvakum's first confrontation of the autobiography ends in stasis: his word in prayer is juxtaposed to the violent action of his antagonist with no resolution: «... bil, voločil menja za nogi po zemle v rizach,

fully revealed in the Siberian period where his former antagonists are replaced by Pashkov who, according to Avvakum, is a delegate of his archenemy Nikon.

In the initial Siberian episode Avvakum is portrayed as Adam; in the final Siberian episode as Adam justified in the image of the Old Testament prophet Elijah, who is also a prototype of Christ in his function as judge-redeemer. The initial episode at the Shaman Rapids shows how Avvakum commits Adam's sin of excessive self affirmation and therefore subjects himself to Adam's death. He refuses to mediate between himself and Pashkov and thus provokes Pashkov into beating him. This is portrayed as his dying. The ensuing Siberian episodes pick up on this primary motif of Avvakum's symbolic death through suffering. The final episode reveals that the realization of the gradual symbolic death has also been simultaneously a rebirth — that is, a means of activating Avvakum's function as a mediator whereby the first Adam is transformed into the second by internalizing his opposite. In a digression within the final episode which refers back to the plot time of the Shaman Rapids the narrator shows that

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a ja molitvu govorju v to vremena » (*RIB*, col. 10). In the ensuing episode his word to God results in a miracle safeguarding him from death through the aggressive action of his antagonist: « ...I egda šel putem, naskočil na menja on že[...]zapalil is pistoli, i, Božuju voleju, na polke poroch pychnul a, piščal ne strelila[...] Az že priležno, iduči, moljus' Bogu... » (*RIB*, col. 12-13). The next 'načalnik' who fires at him with a pistol is not only made impotent through the power of Avvakum's word but is brought to a state of near death (a sudden illness) only to be cured by Avvakum upon his repentance. However, it is significant, that he is not cured on Avvakum's first try but only after confession and the application of holy oil. «prosti, gosudar', soglešil pred Bogom i pred toboju'. [...]I ja emu soprotivo: 'choščesi li vpred tsel byti? [...] vostani! Bog prostit tja'! On že nakazan gorazdo, ne mog sam vostat. I ja podnjaj, i položil evo na postelju i ispovedal, i maslom svjaščennym pomazal, i byst' zdrav. Tak Christos izvolil » (*RIB*, col. 13). The immediate cure occurs further along in the narrative when he heals two possessed widows (*RIB*, col. 28-30). This healing is followed by the two widows' confessing to Avvakum who in turn engages in a confession of faith to the reader; so that while he is internalizing the widows, he is being internalized by the reader into the next highest level of microcosm of the whole. Avvakum's using the power of his word to expell rather than internalize his antagonist is implicit in the Struna-Beketev episode (*RIB*, col. 18-20) and explicit in the Jeremy episode (*RIB*, col. 34-38).

Pashkov's beating Avvakum the protagonist was followed by Pashkov's repentance of this act. Therefore, Avvakum's symbolic death at Pashkov's hands was a necessary cause of his internalization of Pashkov. Avvakum's self affirmation was the means of his self-transcendence as a third term unifying oppositions. His sin was justified as the cause of its own overcoming, of the revelation of the essential reality of Avvakum's existence as an incarnation of the world as a whole <sup>(1)</sup>.

This digression within the final Siberian episode which refers to the beginning of the Siberian period at the Shaman Rapids reveals the significance of the action in the intervening period where Avvakum's dying is simultaneously his being reborn through suffering as the means of his overcoming oppositions. Now at the endpoint of the Siberian period the results of this process are manifest in Avvakum's assumption of the power of life and death. Like the Prophet Elijah, he subjects the enemies of God and of himself, Pashkov's expeditionary force, to death <sup>(2)</sup> through the symbolic fire of his word while at the same time redeeming Eremai, Pashkov's son, who is the leader of the expedition, portrayed as a reincarnation of Avvakum (His relation to Avvakum is analogous to the relation of Elisha to Elijah). In the digression to the Shaman Rapids episode, Avvakum reveals that Jeremy is a substitute for himself in his function of mediator between oppositions.

<sup>(1)</sup> The dialogue between Paškov and Avvakum at the Shaman Rapids goes as follows: « On so špagoju stoit i drožit; načal mne govorit'; 'pop li ty, ili rospop'? I az otveščal: 'az'' esm' Avvakum protopop; govori: čto tebe delo do menja'? On že ryknul, jako divij zver', . . . » (*RIB*, col. 22). Avvakum affirms his status as 'protopop' as a resolution of the oppositions of 'pop-rospop'. His explicit identification of himself as a third term is an act of pride causing his fall, because the third term is ineffable, without definition, the movement of life itself. However, his words are at the same time an act of revelation of an essential reality and as such they not only cause his fall but also his resurrection.

<sup>(2)</sup> In his 'Petition to Tsar Theodor Alekseevič' (*RIB*, col. 768), Avvakum suggests that he would treat his real enemies in a similar way if given the opportunity: « . . . kak by ty mne dal volju, ja by ich, čto Ilija prorok, vseh pereplastal vo edin' den'. Ne oskvernil by ruk svoich, no i osvjalil, čaju ». In the preceding paragraph he reveals that the reason he would be committing a sacred act and not a sin is that he would simply be manifesting on the level of being an essential reality: « Stolpi pokolebašasja navetom satany, patriarchi iznemogoša, svjtiteli padoša i vse svjaščennstvo ele živo- Bog vest'! — esli ne umroša ».

Through Eremai, Avvakum receives Pashkov's repentance for beating him. In the act of mediating between his spiritual father Avvakum, and his carnal father, Pashkov, Eremai is portrayed in the same terms as Avvakum depicted himself in his earlier period when he mediated between himself and lesser secular authorities. The digression shows why Eremai's miraculous return unharmed from the disastrous raid is simultaneous with Avvakum's deliverance from bondage and death at the hands of Pashkov. Avvakum's act of destruction of what was other than himself is simultaneously a resurrection of himself in his function as mediator of oppositions in both the present as Elijah (an Old Testament prototype of Christ-Judge who casts away his opposite) and in the past through the redemption of Eremai (who recapitulates himself as Christ-sufferer who merges oppositions). His symbolic resurrection from death is expressed 1) as the release of the protagonist from bondage to Pashkov which is the result of his internalization of Pashkov into his own self-transcendent body. This is represented by his separation from Pashkov's army and return to Moscow on his own; 2) by the internalization of the protagonist and the narrator into the transcendent level of the body of Christ incarnate in Epifanij. This is the midpoint of the autobiography, marked by Epifanij's entrance into the text to affirm that what seemed like sin in Avvakum is actually an expression of essential, transcendent reality, of God with whom Avvakum is identical.

During his progress through the autobiography, Avvakum arrives at Moscow 7 times, each at a higher level of self-transcendence. Now on his third arrival to Moscow, his symbolic resurrection is signalled by his being received «iako angel božii»<sup>(1)</sup>. It is also implicit in the fact that the narrator chooses this moment to engage in a long digression devoted to recounting miracles the protagonist had performed in the preceding period. Structurally, this digression serves as a substitute for the eulogy to a saint which follows the description of his death in a conventional Saint's Life. Avvakum's stay in Moscow climaxes at the Council of 1667 when he responds to his exclusion from the official Church by assuming the posture of full self-revelation assumed by the narrator at the introduction, midpoint and conclusion of the autobiography: He engages in a face to confrontation with his enemies

(1) *RIB*, col. 44.

in the act of confessing his faith and is fully manifest as Christ:

« Bog otverz grešnye moe usta i posramil ich Christos! »<sup>(1)</sup>.

In the middle of his monologue, he falls down, enacting thereby the symbolic death necessary to resurrection. His taking on transcendent reality as the Word of God is also indicated by the fact that now Avvakum's own writing, not just the Scripture, is a subtext for the autobiography. After the moment of the protagonist's exclusion from the Church, the narrator refers us to a vision he received at the identical moment of his real life as described in his 'Fifth Petition to Tsar' Aleksei Mikhailovich' <sup>(2)</sup>. In it Avvakum shows himself in the process of merging with Christ, the Mother of God and divine energies, the forces giving eternal birth to themselves as the world. He thereby indicates that in rejecting him, the Tsar' is rejecting the true Church, God and eternal life. The narrator goes on to give a martyrology of those who had suffered and died in order to reincarnate Avvakum's spirit in the world. He describes the protagonist's final exile to Pustozersk as a last symbolic death and resurrection outside of temporal-space. It is marked by another reference to the transcendent level of the 'Fifth Petition to the Tsar', specifically to its evocation of his merging with heaven and earth; this is reincarnate on the level of the protagonist of the autobiography who receives a vision of God incarnate in the Church synonymous with his symbolic burial in the earthen prison of Pustozersk.

The narrator ends his description of the protagonist's self-transcendence with an appeal to his witnesses outside of the text to reincarnate his spirit as the apostles had reincarnated the spirit of the resurrected Christ.

« ... šedše v mir ves' propovedite Evangelie vsej tvari. Iže veru imet i krestitsja, spasen budet, a iže ne imet very, osužden budet » (Mark XVI, 15,16) <sup>(3)</sup>.

This section is followed by a second recounting of the miracles that witnessed to Avvakum's spirit in the world, given in the form of a digression to former periods of his life. The autobiography finally comes to an end with a direct appeal to Epifanii and the

<sup>(1)</sup> *RIB*, col. 58.

<sup>(2)</sup> *RIB*, col. 757-766.

<sup>(3)</sup> *RIB*, col. 65.

reader to be a new beginning, a continuation of the revelation of Avvakum-Christ as all time and space.

Avvakum's autobiography is thus an act of mediation between himself and the outside world. It is a response to and a solution of a crisis of separation. It is a means of his overcoming his act of separation of himself from the official Church because it expresses the process of his becoming the true Church. It is a means of his overcoming his separation from God as the first Adam because it is the process of his becoming the second Adam in his full eschatological self revelation. Its own hierarchical structure intersects with and reproduces the hierarchical nature of the world outside. Avvakum's symbolic ascent through and beyond the inner hierarchy of his text is also his ascent of the outer hierarchy of the world. The autobiography is both a substitute for and a continuation of his life; it incarnates within its own symbolic body the creative force which unites Avvakum's real body with the body of the world as a whole, and of Christ. As a dialectic of oppositions and their synthesis in a transcendent third term, it expresses the identity of Avvakum's essence with the essence of God which is the motion underlying the unity of the world. It is a revelation of Avvakum's creative power as Christ the Word who in the eternal act of giving birth to himself and casting away what is other than himself, transforms and renews his creation.

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