



## ANTHROPOLOGY OF THE MASQUERADE IN THE CONCEPT OF FYODOR STEPUN

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В статье рассматривается проблематика маскарада в антропологической перспективе. Основываясь на письме Ф. Степуна к жене («Из писем прапорщика артиллериста», 1916), в котором дается характеристика Нового года как праздника, неотъемлемыми атрибутами которого являются маска и маскарад (как форма трансгрессии индивидуального «Я» в сфере культуры), автор различает два типа этого явления: развлекательный и философский, или трансцендентный (термины Степуна). Объясняя, что означают эти термины по отношению к театральному явлению, автор проводит различие между светскими (Новый год) и религиозными (Рождество, Святая Троица) праздниками. Затем в контексте анализа работы «Основные проблемы театра» (1923) ставится вопрос об условиях возможности маскарада философского типа. Степун, вводя понятия «единодушие» и «многодушие», выделяет три антропологических типа: мещанин, мистик и артист; только один из них отвечает условиям философского маскарада. Через сопоставление двух вышеупомянутых текстов раскрывается антропологическая основа театральных явлений, включая маскарад. Рассматривается также проблематика трагического в контексте антропологии и культуры; автор указывает на сходство между концепциями трагедии Степуна и В.И. Иванова. В основе обеих концепций трагедии лежит отношение человека, действующего в мире, к метафизическому идеалу. Последней отправной точкой рассуждений является утверждение, относящее понятие театральности в первую очередь к антропологическим категориям и лишь во вторую – к культурным феноменам. В тексте показана необходимая антропологическая подоплека феномена маскарада.

*Ключевые слова:* Ф.А. Степун, маскарад, антропология театра, трагедия, В.И. Иванов.

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The article takes up the issue of the masquerade in an anthropological perspective. On the basis of F. Stepun's letter to his wife (included in his work *From the Letters of an Ensign Artilleryman*, 1916), in which the philosopher gives a characterization of the New Year as a holiday which inseparable attribute is the mask and masquerade (as a form of transgressing the individual self in the sphere of a culture), the author distinguishes the two types of this phenomenon – pure entertainment and philosophical or transcendental masquerade (these are Stepun's terms). The paper explains what these terms mean in relation to the theatrical phenomenon and also draws a distinction between the mentioned secular holiday and religious holidays, for example Christmas Day and Feast of Holy Trinity. Then, in the light of the text *The Main Problems of the Theater* (1923), the question about the conditions of the possibility of a philosophical masquerade is posed. Stepun, introducing the concepts of *единодушие* and *многодушие*, distinguishes three anthropological types – the city dweller, the mystic, and the artist; only one of them meets the conditions of philosophical masquerade. Thanks to the juxtaposition of these two mentioned above texts, the anthropological basis of the theatrical phenomena, including the masquerade, emerges. The article also raises the question of the tragic principle in the context of anthropology as well as culture. The similarity of the concepts of tragedy introduced by Fyodor Stepun and Vyacheslav Ivanov is shown. The final point of the considerations is the statement that refers the notion of theatricality first and foremost to an anthropological category, and only secondarily to cultural phenomena. The paper shows the necessary anthropological background for the phenomenon of masquerade.

*Keywords:* Fyodor Stepun, masquerade, anthropology of theatre, tragedy, Vyacheslav Ivanov.

In 1915, Fyodor Stepun, fighting on the Russian-German battlefield, wrote a letter to his wife in which he shared his impressions about the upcoming holiday: the New Year. According to the Russian philosopher, the New Year's time is radically different from all other holidays, including the religious ones, such as Christmas or the Holy Trinity. What distinguishes the New Year is the lack of reference to any specific event taking place in the archaic past. "*In illo tempore*" principle, known from the philosophy of religion [3, p. 409] – the axis of myth and ritual – does not apply in the case of the New Year. It is, as the Russian philosopher claims, a celebration that has a void content – this means that the act of celebration does not refer to any "what"; there is no narrative associated with this holiday. However, despite the lack of empirical, content reference, the New Year's time has a powerful – metaphysical – power. What is it about? Let us quote a longer fragment of Stepun's letter, reflecting both the atmosphere of the holiday and containing the conceptuality basic for the Russian philosopher's understanding of it.

“Ты знаешь, я люблю Новый год, но люблю этот праздник чем-то совсем другим в себе и совершенно иначе, чем праздники Рождества, Святой или Троицы. Елка, крестный ход вокруг кондровской церкви, а на следующий день в большом белом зале торжественный пасхальный стол, Христос Воскресе, батюшка, певчие и всеобщее христосование; кудрявые в пестрых лентах березы и звонкий девичий хор у балкона – все это помнится с самого раннего детства, все это вспомнится и по-новому озарится перед смертью. Совсем в стороне от всего этого живет чувство Нового года. Я не помню, когда полюбил эту ночь: музыку, вино, мечту, маску, но я знаю, что с чувством Нового года в душе нельзя стареть и невозможно умирать. Им опозорится старость и обесмыслится смерть. Сейчас здесь я понимаю это гораздо глубже и отчетливее, чем понимал раньше. И это постижение полно для меня глубокой скорби и резиньяции. Новый год – единственный совсем не религиозный, а если хочешь, чисто философский праздник. В нем нет прославления какого-либо метафизического события. Новый год трансцендентален: в нем утверждается всего только касание формы времени с бесформенной вечностью. Мне очень трудно передать тебе в той суматохе, в которой я сейчас пишу, то скорбное и пронзительное, что я знаю в себе как чувство Нового года” [21, p. 49].

The quoted passage testifies to the fact that Stepun did not reveal to his wife the theses of a well-thought-out, consistent system of thought, something deductively closed, but shared with her an intense inner experience, caused – and not for the first time, as the quoted passage allows to conclude – by a special time in the year. The artillery cadet (the position he held during World War I), giving in to the mood of the holiday, traced within himself, like a true phenomenologist, the reality his own experience made him aware of.

Let us note that the religious holidays mentioned in the passage are also remembered by the philosopher with great sentiment, however it is the New Year that stands out from the festive days known to him since his child-

hood. The thinker speaks directly about the philosophical character of the holiday. What this means, we read in the quoted fragment: “В нем нет прославления какого-либо метафизического события. Новый год трансцендентален: в нем утверждается всего только касание формы времени с бесформенной вечностью”. Developing his thesis about the philosophy of the New Year as a content void, the thinker *expressis verbis* continues the transcendental tradition of Kant [20]. It was the philosopher from Königsberg who emphasised that “transcendental” means “not disturbed by empiricism, not entangled in causal dependence” [16, p. 234–236]. It is therefore necessary to ask what this holiday refers to, or – in the spirit of semiotics – what it is a sign of. In other words: what are we celebrating at this time? What Stepun discovers is summed up in this statement: the meaning of the New Year, as a holiday of void content, is reduced to, as was said, its transcendentality, and this – within the framework of this letter – means “the moment of the meeting of time and eternity”. It should be added at once that time is assigned the category of form, and eternity the category of formlessness. In this context, Aristotle’s theory of prime matter and individual objects emerging, thanks to form, from it, is imposed. Stepun, therefore, sees the relationship between time and eternity in the spirit of Aristotle: time shapes and simultaneously – by giving form – limits endless eternity.

This moment of transcendentality is closely related to the mask that is the subject of our considerations. After all, the New Year is the period in which masquerades are customarily organised. According to Stepun, a person, experiencing the transcendental moment, reflexively puts on a mask – not only as a garish attribute, an ornament of the New Year’s period, but – potentially – as a sign of metaphysical experience. It is this experience that makes a person greedily enter into a masquerade in search of something that is transcending one-ness, not limited by a single identity, a specific fate. The mask, an inalienable attribute of the masquerade, symbolises the desire to come out of the finite, the individual. Knowing what a man is escaping from by putting on a mask, one should ask: where is this man going? The answer can be twofold: to what – and this is the key difference – is “beyond” or “above” individuality. It is in this alternative that there are two possible types of participation in the masquerade – both are aspirations to break out of the deaf prison of individuality, but one is lost in the horizontal multiplicity, while the intention of the other reveals its metaphysical, or vertical, nature.

Let us say that Stepun was a conscientious disciple of Solovyov, in whose works we find a distinction between false (“бесконечность стремления и одновременно невозможность удовлетворить его”) and right infinity (“бесконечность человеческой души, способной вместить всю бесконечность божества”)<sup>1</sup>. Let us quote a longer fragment of Solovev’s *Lectures on Godman-*

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<sup>1</sup> It is worth mentioning that even during his stay in Germany, where neo-Kantianism was the dominant philosophical system, Stepun identified himself with Solovyov’s thought: “В Германии же он выступал адептом философии Соловьева, отрицающая

*hood* that influenced Stepun's thought: "Безусловность, так же как и другие сходные понятия: бесконечность, абсолютность, имеет два значения: отрицательное и положительное. Отрицательная безусловность, несомненно принадлежащая человеческой личности, состоит в способности переступить за всякое конечное, ограниченное содержание, в способности не останавливаться на нем, не удовлетворяться им, а требовать большего... Начало истины есть убеждение, что человеческая личность не только отрицательно безусловна (что есть факт), то есть что она не хочет и не может удовлетвориться никаким условным ограниченным содержанием, но что человеческая личность может достигнуть и положительной безусловности, то есть что она может обладать всецелым содержанием, полнотой бытия, и что, следовательно, это безусловное содержание, эта полнота бытия не есть только фантазия, субъективный призрак, а настоящая, полная сил действительность" [19, p. 19–25].

In other words, returning to Stepun's division: non-finiteness, which man seeks through the cultural form of masquerade, can be of two kinds: either endless multiplicity, a parade of masks, multiplication of individual identities (the so-called empty, stupid infinity), or a qualitative, non-quantitative denial of finiteness, an entry into another – metaphysical – level (proper infinity).

However, it is necessary – within Stepun's concept – to strongly emphasise one source of the two types of masquerade. Throwing oneself into a procession of masks, in the exchange of roles, in the act of turning the world upside down, accompanied with unbridled laughter – although sometimes it remains at the level of a simple tendency to playfulness and re-winding – always grows out of, even if it sounds like pathos, metaphysical desire – the desire for eternity.

Let us deal with the first type of masquerade. Let us note, however, that the second type – at the level of "matter" – reproduces the same but gives it a different "direction".

The multiplicity of masks, the multiplicity of experiences, the multiplicity of love – an attempt to satiate the insatiable metaphysical hunger with all this – these are the experiences that a man who covers his face with a mask is craving. Playing behind the veil of a mask, first this one, then a

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свою принадлежность к неокантианству" [14, p. 349]. But, on the other hand, it must be stressed that Stepun was aware of the importance of German thought for Russian culture: "Young publishers fully understood the significance of contemporary German thought for the Russian philosophy of that time. In fact, they were conductors of neo-Kantianism in Russia" [4, p. 71]. This apparent inconsistency is linked by the following statement: "В России Степун выступал активным пропагандистом западноевропейской культуры, прежде всего немецкой философии... Важно понимать, что проповедь Степуном западноевропейской мысли диктовалась его любовью к России, желанием дать ей все лучшее в мировой культуре, петровской жаждой научить, чтобы потом русские могли творить сами" [19].

completely different one, is a frenzy of not being oneself, a state of liberation and intoxication with this liberation, when all the basic limitations of the individual are exceeded: belonging to a given era, one's origin, age, one's own previous choices, irreversibly narrowing the range of possibilities present on the further path of life. The masquerade meets the aforementioned desire for another life (the life of someone else); it goes against the current of its irreversible course. The mask gives a lightness of detachment from one's own fate, from always the same facial features. With the help of a mask, a man seems to shed the burden of being only himself, gaining the power to be everyone else, and thus, it seems, everything.

This first type of masquerade based, according to Stepun, on a certain internal indisposition stops at the mere level of sole multiplication. The intoxication of not being oneself and, in this experience, negative freedom, does not allow a person to take up that metaphysical intention that lies at the bottom of the New Year's play. A man is too attached to his "I"; for a moment having desired something more, he finally confirms the existence only at the individual level: "Вечность во мне хочет освободиться от формы моего я. Но я маловерен. Тоскуя по вечности, я одновременно люблю себя, боюсь уничтожиться в ней, и в этой любви и боязни подменяю вечность дурной бесконечностью – хочу не смерти в безликом, а жизни в другом облике. Хочу другого себя, другой любви, другой судьбы" [21, p. 52].

Stepun explains this interpretation of indisposition with the temptation of multiplicity ("соблазн множественности"). He writes: "Уступать этому соблазну в плане своей подлинной, настоящей жизни не мудро, ибо нет более призрачной связи с вечностью, чем связь через мечту и случайную множественность" [21, p. 53]. It can be said that the masquerade experienced in this way is an experience of quasi-eternity – a careless intoxication with it.

However, the masquerade can be an expression not only (because it always has this element) of a silly search for infinity (or silly infinity, consisting only in infinite multiplicity), but a search for another ontological level – the fullness in which all multiplicity and individuality find their end. The proper intention of the masquerade is the search for the absolute level. This is how Stepun describes it: "В душе каждого человека неизбежен и иной план, тот план мечты, в котором как бы по праву скитаются призраки. В этом втором, ирреальном плане я только и утверждаю мой новогодний маскарад, где в условной атмосфере эстетического иллюзионизма моя певучая и острая тоска по вечности так странно преломляется в пленительных соблазнах многоликости" [21, p. 53].

It is clear that in the second type, this sweeping gesture of masquerade is in fact a metaphysical gesture: splitting from one's "I" is the reverse of something much more fundamental than the tendency to play. Refusal to be only oneself is a refusal to be enclosed in a time-separated "me". It is a disagreement with metaphysical separation. In our opinion, this issue – the role of the mask – was most accurately expressed by R. Goldt: "Маска как свидетельство многократного отелеснения человека имеет экзистенциальное значение" [10, p. 183].

At this point, an obvious question arises: how is it that this playful tone, which is always present in the masquerade, does not lose the metaphysical sounds that are so essential to it? In other words, the question we pose to Stepun here is this: What are the conditions for the possibility of a second type of a masquerade? What must necessarily be accomplished so that the masquerade is not just frivolous fun, that it does not move from the dimension of metaphysical intention to the level of idle entertainment, but that it “rolls on” the fuel of metaphysical yearning? Or maybe: Who should participate in it to guarantee the characteristic described by Stepun? The above questions approach the phenomenon of culture, which is the masquerade from the side of a person participating in it. The purpose of such a perspective setting is the anthropological justification of this phenomenon of culture – masquerade in its transcendental version (the second type).

To achieve the above goal, it is worth comparing here the two texts by Stepun – that from which the quoted letter comes: *Из писем прапорщика артиллериста* (1916) and the second: *Основные проблемы театра* (1923). The first, as was already said, comes from the front and is a spontaneous, letter-wing sentence of the matter to the wife of experiencing the New Year in wartime circumstances. The second text – already purely theoretical – published in Berlin (Stepun emigrated from Russia in 1922), seemingly has nothing to do with the first one. And yet, when one carefully reads the anthropological classifications contained in the second text, it is clear that it can be an interpretation of the reflections contained in the first text.

In the work *Основные проблемы театра* Stepun distinguishes three anthropological types – depending on what “way of being” prevails in them. One of them seems to guarantee the masquerade what is desirable for its seriousness – metaphysical shaking. In this text Stepun presents three types of people: a townsman, a mystic and an artist. It should be mentioned immediately, following Stepun, that these types do not coincide with social divisions [14, p. 347]: the criterion of typology is their internal orientation. It is therefore not so much a typology of human characters or personalities themselves, but rather “ways of being”. This term was introduced by Martin Heidegger [15, p. 179–185]; we use it in a simplified form – as denoting the basic reference of man to the world, expressed in the constant directing of man to a certain type of values. This means that man, by registering and recognising various values (of various types and levels), subordinates his life – his worldview and actions – to one type of them. It is a basic axiological reference.

So, a townsman is satisfied with the values of his existence, he feels “at home” among them, there is no need to give the world meaning from a higher level (“connecting” the diversity of world life into one meaning). All the variety of “worldly life” doesn’t even particularly appeal to him, since it’s his dumb belief – that there is no other dimension; with all unreflectiveness he adapts to this world, without needing any justification or “keystone”. Therefore, by emphasising this consent to the “scattered” reality that has no centre, Stepun expresses the essence of a townsman: *многоду-*

*шие* takes precedence over *единодушие*<sup>1</sup>. If we recall Heidegger's idea that man is a being asking about his own being, we can state that the townsman escapes this definition. He does not ask, he does not pursue; he takes what he found on earth at face value.

The opposing "direction of being" is adopted by a mystic – he subordinates all aspects of life to religious values. While the townsman feels perfectly in the element of everyday life, the mystic, by necessity functioning in earthly realities, at the final level deprives them of all weight; they are important insofar as they are "illuminated" by the divine design and meaning. The townsman loves the variety of life, does not look for meaning for it in the "monochromaticity" of a higher level, while the mystic does not so much combine all the colours and voices of this world into one hymn of praise to the Creator (in such a situation he would affirm them), but at the final level he denies them a voice and "discolours the world" – deprives earthly life of colours ("Для мистического душевного строя вся жизнь – глухое умирание" [22, p. 34]). This is why the true religiosity and culture (creativity) – Stepun knew this already in 1910, when he wrote the work *Трагедия творчества* – never go hand in hand: "Возможна только жизнь в Боге, но навеки трагически неосуществима мысль о религиозной культуре. Бессмысленна потому, что культура есть творчество, а всякий творческий акт есть неминуемо разрушение синтетической целостности души, т.е. ее религиозной природы. Если есть вообще религиозное дело, то это дело не от мира сего, и если есть религиозность как предметная ценность, то она мыслима только за пределами мира, нам данного" [20, p. 195]. In this world, however, the tension between religiosity and creativity in human life takes on the tragic quality: "Человек... пребывает в состоянии трагической, противоречивой полярной напряженности, разрываясь единением с Богом и выполнением своей творческой мысли" [8, p. 340]. It's clear now that the mystic follows Spinoza's thought: only God is the true substance, other beings lose their inherent substantiality in his light. Applying the categories mentioned above, it must be said that in mysticism completely prevails *единодушие*.

Only the third type – the artist (let us remember that this is not about the psychological or social profile, but the artistic way of being) exceeds this binary (*единодушие* vs. *многодушие*), not caring about the principle of the excluded middle. The artistic way of being contains a multitude of possibilities – the artist hears and identifies with the multiplicity of voices (*многодушие*) and at the same time, being after all the subject (of thoughts and actions), he somehow chooses one of them (*единодушие*). On the one

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<sup>1</sup> Stepun doesn't explain these terms; he just introduces them: "Предельного, трагического углубления борьба человека с самим собой за себя самого достигает... не там, где человек борется против зла, но там, где он борется против своей <широты>, которую надо бы <сузить>, т.е. там, где *положительное богатство человеческого многодушия катастрофически сталкивается с требованием строгого ограничивающего единодушия*" [22, p. 18–19].

hand, his inner disposition is so broad that it predisposes him to participate in the experience of people of different values, acting within different axiologies, internally passing through various life paths. On the other hand, however, what should always be emphasised when talking about the category called by Stepun *многодушие* is that man is always not a supra-individual, but an individual whole – as a thinking and acting individual – he puts certain values in the foreground. R. Goldt writes about this way: “В своем только на первый взгляд посвященном исключительно вопросам сценического искусства сочинении ‘Природа актерской души’ (1923) Степун зарисовывает схему человеческого сознания как поле порой трагической битвы между ‘положительным богатством человеческого многодушия’ и ‘строго ограничивающим единодушием’” [22, p. 113].

That is why in the artist his *многодушие* always finds limits in what Stepun puts in the category of *единодушие*, but also vice versa: unity is always “broken” by a multitude of voices (equivalent in the artist’s perception). The Russian philosopher expresses it in the following words: “В противоположность как мистицизму, так и мещанству артистизм всецело покоится на равномерном утверждении в душе человека обоих полюсов, на утверждении человека и как рассыпающегося богатства, и как строящегося единства” [22, p. 26].

The artist, as one who understands many ways of being, is doomed to experience eternal tension between them. A multitude of equally attractive voices, a multitude of almost equivalent possibilities – this is his “daily bread”. A person of an artistic nature does not want and cannot definitively decide on one of the ways; he cannot seduce the voice of various proposals of existing in the name of its superiority among others. This tension is perceivable in the following words: “Принципиальный отказ от несправедливости всякого последнего выбора” [22, p. 26]. And further – as a sign of the indelible, fundamental tension between the different ways of being in the soul of the artist: “Артистизм представляет собой своеобразнейший душевный строй патетического утверждения в груди человека всех взрывающих ее противоречий... гордиевский узел всемирных противоречий... во всякой подлинно артистической груди” [22, p. 26–27].

The word “contradiction” is significant in this context. The artistic way of being is the one that contains contradictory answers to the most important questions; it can be said that artistic existence is a correlate of “cultural polyphony” – a concept introduced by M. Bakhtin. If, according to the Russian philosopher of a dialogue, culture is an eternal dialogue around fundamental questions, then the artist is in a way a great cultural subject, containing various, very often contradictory, answers. There is only one difference – culture as a subject does not experience sadness, does not suffer, whereas the artist is condemned to an individual life, which entails making choices (“this, not that”), so he experiences all the mentioned above. That is so because one life, with choices that narrow the perspective (each choice limits the spectrum of future possibilities), is not able to realise all



possibilities, to live all “lives”, to experience all loves; an individual life is therefore doomed to lose (or give up) what one loves, and thus to suffer.

“Артистическая любовь всегда звучит скорбью и тревогой, в ней иступленный восторг всегда сопровождается отчаянием... В ее сладости всегда горечь. На конце ее жала – мед. Но все же – надо всем боль, боль избытка своего богатства, боль невмещаемости безмерного многодушия во всегда слишком скупо отмеренных формах судьбы” [22, p. 36]. Above all, however, the artist (understood as a way of being) carries within himself the lofty idea of love which cannot, in principle, be realised: “Доопытное предчувствие любви всегда исполнено в артистической душе такого пафоса безмерности и вечности, что всякий опыт неизбежно звучит предательством и изменой” [22, p. 36].

In this context, Don Juan appears to Stepun not as a constant betrayer, but, quite the contrary, as one who is betrayed by reality that cannot reach the ideal. Stepun writes: “Проблема Дон Жуана, как проблема артистической души, потому отнюдь не только проблема неверности, но и верности: верности искомому образу любви, – неверности его недостойным, недостаточным воплощениям. Подлинный Дон Жуан только в эмпирическом плане – жестокий властелин и ветренный повеса; в метафизическом он верный раб и светлый рыцарь” [22, p. 36].

The key to understanding Stepun’s words about Don Juan (as an exemplification of the artistic way of being) is the category of metaphysical desire. The ideal reality manifested in the desire – as its correlate – forever remains distant from concrete experiences and realisations; ideas are always “betrayed” by reality. There is no chance of obtaining the subject of metaphysical desire<sup>1</sup> – the positive divine unity of all<sup>2</sup>. This thought coincides with the intuitions of Vyacheslav Ivanov, the mentor of Stepun. Ivanov wrote: “Сотворить <возможное> значит изменить единственно желанному и святому <невозможному>, иначе говоря: безусловному” [17, p. 159].

The masquerade is the cultural embodiment of this desire, and – resulting from the tragedy of existence – the inherent failure of every attempt to realize it. Stepun’s idea of the tragedy of human life also coincides with the discoveries of Ivanov<sup>3</sup>: “Вина мятежных первенцев Земли... и их алчность к действию и действительность из алчности, при бессилии к творчеству, родящемуся из полноты” [17, p. 158] and “<Что здесь не грех? Все – грех!>... так, по крайней мере, философствует Трагедия” [17, p. 156].

Stepun took these thoughts extremely seriously and consistently; the formula of his authorship is, in our opinion, the formula of tragedy brought to its (we mean the logic of tragedy) most distant consequences: “Не как носитель *злой* воли виновен человек перед Идеей, но как носитель *вся*

<sup>1</sup> This metaphysical desire (desire for unity) permeates entire Ivanov’s work [7, p. 148].

<sup>2</sup> About human creativity – in Stepun’s concept – never being able to achieve unity see [1, p. 772–773].

<sup>3</sup> About the close intellectual-spiritual relationships between F. Stepun and V. Ivanov see [10, p. 178–186].

кой воли... Учение высокой трагедии – учение о том, что человек должен быть разрушен не только как сосуд зла, но и как сосуд добра, ибо лица добра и зла в последнем счете – одинаково позорные клейма на безликой сущности идеи” [22, p. 111–112].

The shocking truth about the necessity of destroying the human subject as the centre of both good and bad deeds undoubtedly is consistent with Ivanov’s conception of man<sup>1</sup>. Recall that Prometheus, the hero of Ivanov’s drama, loses all the more miserably, the more capable he is of the purest intentions and the actions that flow from them [18, p. 112]<sup>2</sup>.

What is the most interesting in the above context, in Stepun’s thinking we are dealing with the derivation of cultural forms from anthropological assumptions. The sharp contradictions of human existence mentioned above, the “electric discharges” of the artistic soul resulting from its basic condition, which Stepun calls *многодушие*, constitute the anthropological basis of theatre as a field of culture (“...блаженство художественного творчества заключается... в обретении внежизненной территории для реализации своего многодушия” [22, p. 45]) and acting as a profession: “Актерство не как специальное мастерство... но как внутреннее мастерство перевоплощения, как мастерство переселения своей души в самые разнообразные души своего многодушия” [22, p. 53]. It is worth adding that Stepun equalises the two types of acting – anthropological and professional: “Между мастерством сценического переживания настоящего, не случайного на сцене актера и жизненным актерством творчески артистической души нет потому никакого принципиального различия” [22, p. 53].

In the light of the above, it is clear that masquerade, as one of the theatrical forms, is also based on the phenomenon of internal acting; the *sine qua non* condition for the existence of a philosophical variant of it is the artistic way of being, with its great clashes within one existence (*многодушие*).

Therefore, answering the question asked above about the conditions of the possibility of a philosophical masquerade characteristic of the New Year, we repeat that it is made possible only by the artistic way of being, organically gravitating towards the mask<sup>3</sup>. Forms of a culture are, within the framework of the discussed concept, the objectification of anthropology, and the basic function of a culture – in this case theatre and one of its forms, masquerade – is therefore to provide man with space for playing individual roles of internal drama. We should add, that Stepun is one of the few thinkers to give masquerade such a deep cultural significance: “Федор Степун... находится среди немногих интеллектуалов своего времени, признавших за человеческим стремлением к экзистенциальному маскараду право на существование” [10, p. 186].

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<sup>1</sup> Anti-individualism (as well as anti-positivism) in Ivanov’s concept of culture is emphasized by the Polish author Andrzej Dudek [2, p. 216].

<sup>2</sup> About the problem of tragedy in Ivanov’s conception see [5, p. 155–171, 203–217].

<sup>3</sup> On the political context of this anthropological type see [11, p. 228–229].

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