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**“DIE LEHRLINGE ZU SAIS” BY NOVALIS: THE ORIENTAL
TEMPLE MOTIF**

Annotation: In the article being studied the image of the temple of Isis in the philosophical novel “Die Lehrlinge zu Sais” by Novalis, which has accumulated various oriental motives: the proto-language, the ancient sacred place, the lost secrets of true life, etc. The refraction of romantic aesthetics in the appeal to the East is revealed.

Keywords: Novalis, orientalism, German romanticism, “Die Lehrlinge zu Sais”, image of the temple.

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**«УЧЕНИКИ В САЙСЕ» НОВАЛИСА: МОТИВ ВОСТОЧНОГО
ХРАМА**

Аннотация: В статье рассматривается образ храма Исиды в философской повести «Ученики в Саисе» Новалиса, который вобрал в себя различные восточные мотивы: праязык, древнее сакральное место, утраченные тайны истинного бытия и т.д. Выявляется преломление романтической эстетики в обращении к Востоку.

Ключевые слова: Новалис, ориентализм, немецкий романтизм, «Ученики в Саисе», образ храма.

At the turn of the 18th and 19th centuries the literature and art of romanticism became interested with the culture, philosophy and religion of the East, which was perceived by romantics mostly as something exotic, unique and opposed to everyday modernity. In Eastern culture some romantics sought to find a certain starting point, an impulse that gave rise to the development of culture and civilization. It is symptomatic that precisely in this period an active study of not only European antiquity, but also ancient Eastern civilizations began. In this regard, it is noteworthy that in the XIX century various theories about the “cradle of civilization” were spreading in relation to Ancient Egypt or the Sumerian-Akkadian civilization. All these ideas and theories are reflected in the works of art and theoretical research and manifests of romantics, even though they often appeared in a much-generalized form.

The motive of the search for the root of human civilization, the proto-language and some mystical mystery hidden in antiquity, is revealed in the “Die Lehrlinge zu Sais” (1800), written by Novalis (1772-1801), the philosopher and poet of the group of Jena Romantics. In this unfinished novel there are relatively not much “Eastern” elements. The most significant of them are: 1. The title of the work, referring to the ancient Egyptian cult city in the west of the Nile Delta. 2. Mentioning a certain sacred proto-language. 3. Mentioning the goddess Isis and her veil. Nevertheless, in spite of the fact that “Die Lehrlinge zu Sais” is mainly devoted to romantic philosophy of nature, the motive of the eastern temple, the temple of Isis, turns out to be quite important for understanding many of the ideas and concepts of this work.

As already noted, the title of Novalis' work refers to the cult city of Ancient Egypt, in which at the time of the city's highest prosperity, the syncretic cult of Isis and Osiris was the most popular and widespread religion. Here the

night sacraments, dedicated to Osiris, were performed, in view of the fact that the Egyptians believed, according to Herodotus, that Osiris was buried here, in Sais. In this city there were temples dedicated to different gods. About the temples of the heyday of the cult of Osiris and Isis L. S. Vasiliev states: “The temples of modern times were usually rectangular, surrounded by a massive wall with gates towards the Nile, from where a wide road ran, lined with stone statues of sphinxes. The entrance gate is a colorful structure with obelisks and flag masts, as well as a statue of the reigning pharaoh. Inside there is a colonnaded courtyard with a portico, behind which there were several columned halls with statues of gods and prayer houses, as well as auxiliary rooms, including a library, storage of ritual products. These halls and rooms were usually illuminated by windows under the roof” [1, pp. 180-181]. A similar arrangement of the temple, where the students and their master gathered, emerges from the details and descriptions in “Die Lehrlinge zu Sais” and “Das verschleierte Bild zu Sais” (1793) by F. Schiller, which Novalis relied on.

The theme of the sacred proto-language, the language of nature itself, called by Novalis “true Sanskrit” [2, S. 100] is directly connected with the temple in Sais. According to Novalis, this language exists for itself and reflects the essence of things, in other words, it acts as a true language that has almost magical properties. Wishing to reveal the secret of this language, in some miraculous way connected with the temple of Isis, disciples come to Sais. Commenting on the specifics of this image, V. B. Mikushevich writes: “Forster translated the word «Sanskrit» as «perfect» (language), since, according to legend, it was bestowed by the Divine himself. Forster found in Sanskrit the highest philosophical refinement and refinement, comparing it with Greek and Latin. Romantics considered Sanskrit to be the proto-language of humanity. Novalis' thoughts about a language that does not know itself and does not want to own, anticipate the philosophy of language developed by Heidegger, and most importantly, the very attitude of this philosopher to language” [3, p. 243].

In this way, the theme of sacred knowledge gained in the temple of Isis directly intersects with the philosophical reasoning about nature by the novices.

In conclusion, the semantic core of the narrative is the image of Isis herself and her veil, behind which truth is found. This theme is revealed in the set-in tale of Hyacinth and the Rose, which is the culmination of “Die Lehrlinge zu Sais”. At the end of this tale, Hyacinth gets the opportunity to open the veil of Isis, having joined the mystical revelation. In this regard, it is noteworthy that Novalis relies here not so much on the ancient Egyptian tradition as on the already mentioned poem by F. Schiller. However, if F. Schiller's secret remains a secret, then in the fairytale of Novalis, behind the veil of the goddess, the Rose hides, which Hyacinth once left long ago. It is obvious that Rose here is the embodiment of love and a kind of face of Isis herself, which is hinted at by the name of her beloved Hyacinth, since roses were the sacred flowers of Isis. V. B. Mikushevich points out that in the early edition of the novel, Hyacinth, instead of Rose, found himself behind a veil [3, p. 240]., which is a consequence of Novalis' fascination with the subjective idealism of Johann Fichte (1762–1814), but also a rather clear allusion to the sanctuary of Apollo in Delphi, where the famous “Γνῶθι σεαυτόν” (“Know thyself”) was uttered. Here the theme of the absolute “I” and love, which is significant for early romanticism in Germany, arises, which are associated with the image of Isis and her veil, about which V. B. Mikushevich states: “The key to this problem is the image of Isis under the veil in Sais, inspired by the reading of the Rosicrucian’s... Sais is mentioned by Schiller, who describes initiation into the cult of Isis, when the following words were read under the ancient statue of Isis: «I am what I am»” [3, p. 241].

From the sketches for the continuation of the novel, entitled “The Transfiguration of the Temple at Sais”, it becomes obvious that Isis herself should have appeared to the disciples too, and they should have been initiated into her secrets through some mysteries that would bring them closer to the

absolute truth. In this point, the motif of the ancient Egyptian temple of Isis acts as the plot-forming core of the “Die Lehrlinge zu Sais”, associated not only with the plot and chronotope of the work, but also with extensive philosophical reflections about nature. Ancient Egyptian imagery and “oriental flavor” were used by Novalis for the visual embodiment of his philosophical and artistic searches.

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