

Title: The "I" Lost and Found: Poetic Meaning of Pronouns in the Poems "She" and "You" by Zinaida Gippius

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This paper will examine the function of pronouns in two Zinaida Gippius' poems and the ways in which they bring gender ambiguity on both grammatical and biological levels. In the close reading of the poems "She" and "You", I will consider pronouns as a kind of "empty" or open units: they can be specific and the same time can have multiple meanings. Thus, in the poem "She", the "she" refers to a feminine soul of a masculine lyrical "I"; in "You" the 'genderlessness' of this pronoun (as by itself it is neither feminine nor masculine, unlike "he" or "she") will consist of two "I"s - a masculine and a feminine one. In both cases, the "I" inevitably consists and depends on the interaction of the masculine and the feminine within it. Accordingly, this paper will discover how the poetic "I" in Gippius' texts, constantly shifting between the masculine and the feminine, transcends the human and reaches the decadent ideal of androgyny as a symbolist ideal alter-reality.