Exotic Moscow

under Western Eyes

Irene
Masing-Delic

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Cultural Revolutions: Russia in the Twentieth Century

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For Yuri

Acknowledgments

I greatly appreciate the opportunity that Dr. Igor Nemirovsky and his publishing house have given me to collect some of the articles I have written since the 1990s and up till now, and to bring them together in book form. Rereading my previous works for the purpose of making a selection has of course brought the realization that they have many flaws. I have nevertheless taken the opportunity to reprint selected items from my publications, believing that some interpretations offered here retain validity and offer new perspectives on well known texts of Russian literature.

The slightly revised articles included in this collection appeared first in the following publications: *Scandoslavica*, tomus 50, 2005 ("The Music of Ecstasy and the Picture of Harmony: Nietzsche's Dionysus and Apollo in Turgenev's 'Pesn' torzhestvuiushchei liubvi'," pp. 5–22); *Rossiia i SSHA: formy literaturnogo dialoga*, Doklady mezhdunarodnykh nauchnykh konferentsii: noiabr' 1998 (OSU), aprel' 1999 (RGGU), Moskva 2000 ("A Change of Gender Roles: the Pygmalion Motif in Jane Austen's *Emma* and Ivan Goncharov's *Oblomov*," in Russian: "Peremena rolei: pigmalionovskie motivy v "Emme" Dzhein Osten i "Oblomove" Ivana Goncharova," pp. 96–116); "Kul'tural'nye issledovaniia. Sbornik nauchnykh rabot," pod redaktsiei Aleksandra Etkinda, Pavla Lysakova, Evropeiskii universitet v Sankt-Peterburge, Letnii sad, Sankt-Peterburg-Moskva, 2006 ("Rescuing Culture from Civilization: Gorky, Gogol, Sologub and the Mediterrean Model," in Russian: "Kak spasti kul'turu ot tsivilizatsii: Sredizemnomorskaia model' Maksima Gor'kogo," pp. 267–289); *Dostoevsky Studies*, New Series, Volume X, 2006 ("The 'Castrator' Rogozhin and the 'Castrate' Smerdiakov: Incarnations of Dostoevsky's 'Devil-Bearing' People?," pp. 88–114); *Poetica*, vol. 35, nrs. 1–2, 2003 ("Who Are the Tatars in Alexander Blok's *The Homeland*'? The East in the Literary-Ideological Discourse of the Russian Symbolists," pp. 123–155); *Die Welt der Slaven*, vol. XLVII, 2002 ("Gothic Historiosophy: The Pani Katerina Myth in Pasternak's *Doctor*

Zhivago," pp. 359–380); *Eternity's Hostage, Selected Papers from the Stanford International Conference on Boris Pasternak*, Part II, ed. by Lazar Fleishman, Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2006 ("Larissa — Lolita, or Catharsis and Dolor in the Artist-Novels *Doctor Zhivago* and *Lolita*," pp. 396–424); *Gedaechtnis und Phantasma, Festschrift fuer Renate Lachmann, Die Welt der Slaven Sammelbaende*, Band 13, Munich: Verlag Otto Sagner, 2001 ("Survival of the Superfluous: Doubling and Mimicry in Nabokov's *Podvig-Glory*," pp. 563–573); *Slavonica*, 4/1, 1997–1998 ("Moscow in the Tropics: Exotica in Valerii Briusov's Early Urban Poetry," pp. 7–28). The article "Clairvoyant Mothers and Erring Sons: Dostoevsky's *Crime and Punishment* and *Conrad's Under Western Eyes*" has not been published previously. I appreciate the willingness of journal and book editors to let me reprint articles and chapters published relatively recently.

The transliteration system used here is that of the Library of Congress for all quotes in Russian. Names in the English text are given their traditional spellings (Dostoevsky, Herzen, Alexander) and simplified (for example, without soft signs: Raskolnikov, Gogol).

Introduction

This selection of ten articles comprises publications from the 1990s to the present. It deals with a broad range of writers and a wide variety of literary works from late realism to the end of modernism, but there is also an underlying unity. It may be found in two themes: the opposition of "culture versus civilization" and the constellation "civilization, barbarism, culture." These constitute major concerns in the literary works dealt with.

The first unifying theme, namely the opposition "culture versus civilization," immediately suggests a pitting of Russia against the Western world, with Russia as the carrier of a (future) genuine culture and the West as the wielder of a mere surface culture, or "civilization," one that is in "decline" and bound to "fall." This, of course, is a traditional perception of Russia in relation to Western Europe, at least in Russia. It derives from slavophile thought as well as thinkers and writers relating to this ideology's predominating notion of Russia's uniquely spiritual nature and, hence, equally unique cultural mission in world history. Thus N. Danilevsky, "anticipating Spengler" (Städtke, 30), in his influential *Russia and Europe* (1871), develops the concept of a Slavic ethnic-cultural type that is bound to synthesize religious, artistic, political, scientific and economic activities, eventually bringing about the "highest type of culture" the world is destined to know (Städtke, 31).* Dostoevsky in his "Pushkin Speech" (1881) famously presented Russia's historical mission as the reconciliation of all cultures in a universal all-embracing world culture, led and inspired by Russian spiritual ideals. The link to Pushkin is found in the

* Klaus Städtke's "Kultur und Zivilisation. Zur Geschichte des Kulturbegriffs in Rußland" offers a clear and concise overview of the semantics of the term. His article is found in: *Kulturauffassungen in der literarischen Welt Rußlands. Kontinuitäten und Wandlungen* im 20. *Jahrhundert*, ed. Christa Ebert, Berlin: Berlin Verlag, Arno Spitz GmbH, 1995 (pp. 18–46).

notion that he, so Russian and yet drawing on a broad range of geographical settings and characters from many nations, guarantees that "all-reconciling all-understanding" is the dominating trait of the Russian national character, one that is missing in other nations.

The present collection of selected articles deals with Westernizing—Slavophile and Eurasian themes then. It does so in a broader historiosophic perspective, however, which is related to concerns about how to keep the "body" of a culture alive and how to hinder it from turning into its own "mummy," i.e. into civilization (Felken, 68).* Not always is the viewpoint patriotic-nationalistic. The overriding concern is the inquiry into what conditions give rise to a new culture and, conversely, what laws cause the decline into civilization, not to mention the final "fall" into cultural non-existence. This is an inquiry that unites writers from the most varied camps in a shared quest for Russia's "true path to a genuine and lasting culture." Naturally, "Slavophile" patriotism may enter into this quest. Notably this is the case with the socialist Gorky in his "god-building" period.

Turning to the second uniting theme in the present volume, the triangular constellation civilization-barbarism-culture, it is, of course, closely related to the civilization-culture opposition. In this constellation, barbarism is closer to culture than to civilization since the elemental forces (*stikhiinost'*) released by the popular masses in, for example, revolutionary uprisings, guarantee that civilizations are swept away, leaving room for culture. Blok put this notion forward in very strong terms in his essay "The End of Humanism" ("Krushenie gumanizma," 1919), being of the opinion that "during epochs when a wingless, non-musical und decomposing civilization hinders the further development of culture, . . . the barbaric and non-propertied masses of necessity become carriers of culture" (quoted in Städtke, 34). This is not to say that barbarism always is exalted as a purifying force. Culture and barbarism may also engage in a struggle enacted between the intelligentsia and the "people" (*narod*). In this case, it is a struggle fought by the cultured intelligentsia for the sake of the uneducated, "dark" people's potential to create future cultural values. Then it is a struggle with the people for the people, even when resistance by the people is strong. The third party in this conflict is the stagnant Establishment with its contempt for the "dark people," i.e. those "civilized" layers of society whose treatment of the folk often demonstrates more barbarism than the *narod* is shown to be capable of. In this constellation it is perceived as tragic that the dark folk sometimes resist culture while yielding to the seduction of civilization.

* See Detlef Felken, *Oswald Spengler. Konservativer Denker zwischen Kaiserreich und Diktatur*, Munich: Verlag C.H. Beck, 1988.

The thematic linkages outlined above have determined the structure of this tripartite collection of articles. The first section entitled *Dialogue*, discusses literary works engaged in conversation with other, often non-Russian, literary works and cultures. One item in this section is written by non-Russian author Joseph Conrad; the Russian connection is found in his response to Dostoevskian ethical and ideological positions.

The second section under the rubric of *Inner Divisions* examines a productive Russian literary mythology (based on the "Pani Katerina material") about Russia as a woman wooed by suitors representing different alternatives for "her" future fate, and vacillating between them until she makes the wrong choice (for example, for establishment civilization). Section Three *Preserving the Heritage* may be seen as one that cancels the civilization-culture opposition, while also devaluating "barbarism" as a source of vitality. It interprets two novels by Nabokov as the émigré-protagonist's reminiscence-dialogue with an unreachable and irrevocable past that yet must be preserved. A small article, dealing with Briusov's early poetry, serves as an epilogue-*vignette* to the volume with its mini-encomium to civilization. The sequencing of the articles does not follow chronological order, neither by the publication dates of the articles, nor by that of the works dealt with. It follows a thematic inner logic elucidated below.

The first article in Section One, *Dialogue*, offers a prologue both to the "dialogic works" themselves and the entire book. Dealing with Turgenev's late novella "The Song of Triumphant Love," set in Renaissance Italy, it seems at first glance irrelevant to the themes outlined above. It presents the rivalry between the conventional painter Fabio and the mysterious musician Mucio for the love of Valeria and it has largely been read as a supernatural tale based on a triangle love drama. It could, however, be interpreted more symbolically as a struggle between a western culture, "stiffening" into civilization, and crude, but revitalizing, eastern forces ushering in a renaissance of culture. I argue that Turgenev was familiar with Nietzsche's *Birth of Tragedy from the Spirit of Music* with its famous notions of Apollo as the god of order and form and Dionysus as the god of "fluidity" and chaos, and of the complementarities and hostilities between the two deities that guarantee continued culture. Since, in my reading, Turgenev's Italian tale is a meta-aesthetic work that deals with a general opposition of a culture slipping into conventionality (civilization), and the revitalization of civilization "back into real culture," the article "The Music of Ecstasy and the Picture of Harmony: Nietzsche's Dionysus and Apollo in Turgenev's 'Pesn' torhzestvuiushchei liubvi'" opens the *Dialogue* section of the book.

The "dialogic imagination" is seen as a sine qua non for the continued vitality of culture in the three articles that follow. Thus Goncharov, in his *Oblomov*, as is well known, devotes his lengthy mid-nineteenth-century novel

to a Western-Russian exchange of opinions on the virtues and drawbacks of a strictly structured "civilized" life and one devoted to passive-contemplative dreaming of an Ideal Way of Life (preferably set in the countryside). A harmonious synthesis of the alternatives is presumably offered as the desirable outcome. Part of this debate is the proper gender-role for men and women in the creation of a harmonious culture. My article "Exchanged Roles: The Pygmalion Motif in Jane Austen's *Emma* and Ivan Goncharov's *Oblomov*," argues that Goncharov's Olga misunderstands her role when she tries to mould Oblomov into her vision of what a civilized man should be, as Emma did before her when she tried to force her friend Harriet, made for the agri-*cultural* life, into a grand lady role she was not meant to play. In the context of this unobserved inter-textual link, Shtolts functions as a German Mr. Knightley, the suitor-educator in Austen's *Emma*. Thus the debate on what paths Russia should follow and what models the country should emulate when creating a genuine culture includes gender harmony as an important factor.

Conrad's novel *Under Western Eyes* clearly evokes Dostoevsky's *Crime and Punishment* in its treatment of contemporary political-social issues, such as assassination and terrorism as a means to bring about change. This time it is "Western eyes" that scrutinize the validity of Russian claims to genuine culture, and this perspective presents the Czarist Empire as a civilization in decline. Nor does the novel accept the Russian model for "revitalizing" culture by the introduction of political assassinations, however idealistic the young "revitalizers" may be. In this reversed scrutiny of Russian civilization (the czarist establishment) fighting "barbarism" (revolutionary forces) by an English writer (of Polish origins), Conrad and Dostoevsky are "in agreement" on what constitutes the ethical foundations of a valid culture, contrary to the established view that Conrad invariably rejected this "excessively Russian" writer. In *Under Western Eyes* at least, Conrad examines the pre-text of *Crime and Punishment* most carefully and has no "quarrel" with its ethics, in my reading of their English-Polish — Russian dialogue, presented in "Mothers and Sons: Conrad's *Under Western Eyes* and Dostoevsky's *Crime and Punishment*." What Conrad cannot accept however is the obfuscation of valid ethics by nationalist mythologies that Dostoevsky could not resist in his desire to see Russia as God's favored nation. Conrad's simultaneous rejection of Polish nationalism forms an undercurrent in this dialogue.

Maxim Gorky, who fervently rejected Dostoevsky, nevertheless is the twentieth-century writer in this section who comes closest to a "slavophile" position in the conflict between civilization and culture. Replacing Dostoevsky's Orthodoxy as the uniting bond of a future world culture with the religion of Omnipotent-Omniscient Humanity, i.e. god-building Socialism, he basically follows the Dostoevskian model of Russia's reconciliatory mission in

world history. Interestingly, Gorky's model of the western civilization-Russian culture opposition exempts Italy from it, celebrating an Italian-Russian axis of cultural affinity instead. The god-builder Gorky believed Italy to possess the key to eternal cultural youth and very determinedly set out to study the one European culture he found to be valid and which he came to know at close quarters during his first long exile on Capri (1906–1913). More precisely, he set out to learn the secret of how "eternal Rome" kept itself "eternal" through a series of "renaissances" that was still continuing (in the *Risorgimento*, for example).

In his *Italian Fairytales*, the writer therefore explores the south-eastern axis of perceived Italian-Russian mental affinities and the resulting possibility of arranging a harmonious "marriage" of Italian cultural sensitivity and Russian untapped strength. Both these positive qualities are found largely in the "folk" of each country. Decrepit monarchs and their retinues of civil servants, the propertied classes and their servants form the "civilized" layers in both nations, while *il popolo* and *narod* offer the soil for a never-ending cultural Renaissance under the aegis of an eternally valid Socialism. Europeans from north-western Europe traveling or living in Italy are also shown as representatives of sterile civilizations in these "fairytales," and it may be assumed that in their homelands the creative spontaneity of the folk is given very little leeway. In Gorky's model of how to "rescue culture from civilization," the culture-civilization division is thus found on two fronts: the geographical opposition of south-east (Italy and Russia) versus north-west (western Europe and North America) and within the class structure of a nation, as shown in "Rescuing Culture from Civilization: Gorky, Gogol, Sologub and the Mediterranean Model," the last article in this section.

Section Two, "Inner Divisions," presents writers who also treat the theme of inner social and cultural divisions within one nation, developing the "Slavophile" notion of the co-existence of "two cultures within one nation." The articles within this section explore the struggle of the creative intelligentsia — not against the folk — but against its "darkness," as well as against the "civilized" establishment that wants to keep it there. In this culture-civilization-barbarism syndrome a complex triangle of love and hate emerges, one that is put into images taken from the literary "Pani-Katerina mythology." This mythology was created by Dostoevsky, Blok, and Pasternak on the foundation of Gogol's "The Terrible Vengeance," as well as by other writers not dealt with in the present work. Its heroine is the lovely, but undecided, Katerina from Gogol's source-story (under the same, or new, names), providing the feminine proto-Image of an ambivalent and torn Russia, both sinning and sinned-against. "She" must choose between comfortable stagnation, i.e. civilization, continued barbarism ("marriage beneath her station") and a break-through to genuine spiritual-emotional values, a truly liberating culture.

The article "The 'Castrator' Rogozhin and the 'Castrate' Smerdiakov: Incarnations of Dostoevsky's 'Devil-Bearing' People?," opening this section demonstrates that the struggle between Rogozhin and Myshkin for Nastasya Filippovna's love (soul) offers a variation of the Pani Katerina story that Dostoevsky first attempted to give shape to in his early story "The Landlady." Within the framework of this story-myth, the Orthodox (genuine) *intelligent* Prince Myshkin tries to save Russia, Nastasya Filippovna, from the "dark world" of the sectarians, represented by the both destructive and self-destructive Rogozhin, a merchant close to the sectarian culture of the folk. She, of course, was initially seduced by the civilized, i.e. depraved, Totsky. Myshkin at the same time as he is wooing Nastasya Filippovna also tries to illumine Rogozhin with the light of a humane religion that does not see the "knife" as a solution to all problems. In doing this, the article argues, Dostoevsky lets Myshkin follow in the footsteps of Pushkin's young hero Grinev from *The Captain's Daughter* who tries to reason with the Old Believer rebel Pugachev, talking with him without the pomposity of "civilized" enlighteners. Grinev fails to save Pugachev and Myshkin fails to save Rogozhin (and Nastasya Filippovna), but the path to the people's and Russia's valid future clearly lies in the transfer of genuine, Orthodoxy-inspired intelligentsia culture to the dark realm of folk superstition, literalism and spiritual confusion. Smerdiakov in *The Brothers Karamazov*, is from the same sectarian world as Rogozhin, and rather than being a "Judas" who betrays his brother and murders his father, he is a victim of civilized society that abandoned the people to its spiritual confusion, even exploiting it, as Ivan Karamazov does.

The subsequent article "Who Are the Tatars in Alexander Blok's *The Homeland*? The East in the Literary-Ideological Discourse of the Russian Symbolists," attempts to offer an identification of the Tatar "horde" in Blok's cycle of poems *On Kulikovo Field*. This task is not as easy as the mention of the Tatar khan Mamai and the famous Kulikovo battle in that cycle seem to indicate. "Na pole Kulikovom" offers not only a historical reconstruction of past events but also a prophecy of future ones — a "last and decisive" battle with the forces of Evil. Who are the current Tatars then, i.e. the enemies of a *Rus'* that has been blessed by the Madonna (Sophia, The Beautiful Lady) herself, as the cycle makes clear? Are they the dark forces of Reaction, those "inner Turks" that Dobroliubov spoke of in his article "When Will the Real Day Come"? Or are they the "dark people" filled with the energetic restlessness of nomadic barbarians and therefore able to bring about a great revolution? Or, will the future apocalyptic battle between the two camps designated as "Russians" and "Tatars" perhaps at last bring the only valid victory? This victory would be the creative cooperation between an artistic Russian intelligentsia and a "Tatar" dark people yearning to transform destruction and barbarism into creation and culture. This is what

Blok hoped for as he demonstrates in the famous *The Twelve* of 1918 where the sudden appearance of Christ confirms that the sacred Revolution is bound to lead to a world that values Culture and Beauty above all else and therefore strives to create "diamonds" out of coal, a superior people made out of what now seems to be but dark "raw material."

"Gothic Historiosophy: The Pani Katerina Myth in Pasternak's *Doctor Zhivago*," the third and last article in this section, presents Pasternak's novel as a later summary and highly individualized synthesis of the myths constituting the "Pani Katerina" mythology. Katerina's, in this case, Lara's, number of rival suitors is again three, as in *The Idiot*, one of this novel's numerous pre-texts. In Pasternak's novel, the distribution of the values the suitors represent differs from that in Dostoevsky's, however. In *Doctor Zhivago*, it is civilization that has two faces. One is the love for comfort, weakness for self-indulgence and egotistic sterility that the privileged upper-class member of society Komarovsky represents. The other is the fanaticism, abstract rationalism, and inhumanity that the proletarian Antipov, taking revenge on that society, incarnates. Zhivago is the defender of a genuine religious culture under attack from all sides, especially the new civilization that calls itself a genuine people's culture, but is far removed from it. Prepared to embrace the most difficult task of all, i.e. that of going against the current, he, like Christ, triumphs through defeat.

The last section, *Preserving the Heritage*, restores the meaning of the term "civilization" that is given to it in English and French, as opposed to German and Russian, usage: that of spiritual *and* material contributions to human development. It is mainly devoted to Nabokov and his main theme: what a Russian émigré artist's life should and, should not, be. Thus it is argued in "Larissa, Lolita, Or Catharsis and Dolor, in the Artist-Novels *Doktor Zhivago* and *Lolita*" that Nabokov's famous American novel continues — from a very new angle to be sure — the Pani Katerina mythology discussed above. Humbert Humbert, the "wicked sorcerer" of the Pani Katerina mythology, is ostensibly not a Russian émigré, but he "belongs" to his Russian creator's cultural heritage, the fundamental issue of which is: how best to retain a beloved legacy. Is it by clinging to a lost dream of genuine beauty while despising the "shallow civilization" around you? This is what Humbert does, imprisoning his American "Katerina," while becoming blind to all consequences of doing so. Clearly there are more re-creative ways of preserving the past than imprisoning it in patterns that apply no longer — a conclusion that Humbert himself eventually arrives at.

The following article "Survival of the Superfluous: Doubling and Mimicry in Nabokov's *Podvig-Glory*" suggests that Martin Edelweiss makes a wiser choice than Humbert does in *Lolita* in regard to recapturing an irreversible past. He makes that better decision, not by returning to his beloved Russia, however, as is usually assumed. He never crosses the border to the Soviet Union, it is argued

in the article, but just eliminates one aspect of himself: the self-pitying Russian hypostasis of a privileged member of the upper classes, longing for a culture gone forever. Crossing the boundary back to the past and disappearing there as "Martin Edelweiss," he reemerges as "Darwin" — his own western double who knows the art of survival, as well as the reason why he must survive: in order to preserve what has been lost, not by restoring it as "it was then," but in new creative refractions.

The small article on Briusov's early poetry "Moscow in the Tropics: Exotica in Valerii Briusov's Early Urban Poetry" is the last item of the last section, forming a concluding *vignette* to the book. Like the introductory article on Turgenev's "Song of Triumphant Love," it seems to have little connection to the main themes of the collection and none to the section it has been placed in. Nevertheless, it may serve as a concluding piece for these reasons: it deals with poetic texts that reflect a time (the Silver Age) when Russian writers did not have to transfer their cultural heritage to the "civilized" West in order to preserve it, as post-revolutionary émigrés had to. Instead, they were free to transfer a "decadent western civilization" to the sacred capital of Russian culture, i.e. Moscow itself; by "exoticizing" archetypal Russian Moscow, following similar poetic procedures as those practiced in decadent Paris. Briusov's early urban poetry demonstrates the subjectivity of all value oppositions of the culture-civilization-barbarism type. If cultures are indeed succeeded by civilizations as the organic model of birth-maturity-decline posits, then there is also a counter-model that demonstrates that "decaying civilizations" are revitalized when genuine art transforms them into works of culture.

Hopefully then, the articles form a thematically unified collection interacting with and complementing each other. In view of the fact that cultural identity issues continue to play an important role in the current Russian discourse, the materials brought together here may even offer a valid comment on these.

1.
Dialogue

The Music of Ecstasy and the Picture of Harmony: Nietzsche's *Dionysus and Apollo* in Turgenev's "Song of Triumphant Love"

Often regarded as a fantastic tale where Ivan Turgenev "gave free reign to his imagination" (Kagan-Kans 1969, 558), or sometimes as a story dealing with the psychology of a belated sexual awakening (PSSP 1982:10, 418–20),[1] "Pesn torzhestvuiushchei liubvi" ("Song of Triumphant Love," 1881) may well go beyond fantasy, however, and have additional strata of meaning. It is my contention that this artful pastiche of an Italian renaissance novella is not only a stylistic masterpiece, as has often been stated, but that it also thematically deals with aesthetic issues. Its overall theme is the nature of artistic creativity. In fact, it embraces the daring new concept of the double source of Attic tragedy — and any valid art — proclaimed a few years before the appearance of Turgenev's tale by the German philosopher Friedrich Nietzsche in his *Die Geburt der Tragödie aus dem Geist der Musik* (*The Birth of Tragedy from the Spirit of Music,* 1872, *Birth* from now on).

This double source of tragedy, it will be remembered, is the Dionysian "spirit of music" marked by frenzy (*Rausch*) and the Apollonian "dream" (*Traum*), or sequence of images.[2] "Pesn torzhestvuiushchei liubvi" (from now on "Pesn") is a philosophical *Künstlernovelle* that pits the Apollonian image-maker (*Traumkünstler*) against the Dionysian musician of excess (*Rauschkünstler*; Nietzsche 1964, 53).[3] It does so in order to demonstrate that genuine art is produced by their cooperation in a "metaphysical act of wondrous copulation" (p. 47). Beneath the story of the rivalry between the musician Mutsii and the painter Fabii for the chaste beauty Valeria, we discern the notion that Dionysian "music" — and all that it means in terms of tempestuous self-abandonment — challenges Apollonian plasticity, or the desire to cast the illusory veil of discreteness and order over the terrifying chaos of existence. Postulating that Dionysian frenzy, passion, obsession, the will to create in spite of all limitations, such as individuation, convention and morality, stand at the beginning of the creative process, Turgenev also shows that these simultaneously vitalizing and

potentially destructive forces subsequently must be tamed, halted, and shaped into forms of Apollonian harmony. The philosopher, then still officially a Greek philologist at Basel University, invariably speaks of the two gods as irreconcilably opposed, yet united in a "mysterious marriage bond" in which they, again and again, challenge each other to "give birth" to the "glorious child" of art (Nietzsche 1964, 65). Turgenev's "Pesn" likewise demonstrates that Apollonian surface perfection, here represented by Fabii[4] is by itself empty and meaningless. The Dionysian ruthless will to create, represented by the taciturn musician Mutsii,[5] on the other hand, remains outside the realm of art, if it is not tamed into the limitation of form. Only the lasting struggle and momentary fusion of the two gods yield aesthetic validity — that aesthetic *value*, which *Valeria* embodies.[6] To sum up: Turgenev's "Pesn" integrates recent Nietzschean ideas on "Apollo's inability to live without Dionysus" (*Birth*, p. 34). Apollo is needed to transform nature into culture, but culture, in its turn, can only be valid if it remembers its matrix — nature. In Turgenev's tale, the last word, or, in this case, the last chord belongs to Dionysus, since closure would mark the end of the creative process. Here too Turgenev and Nietzsche agree (see Nietzsche 1964, 172–3). In fact, "Pesn" includes virtually every concept proposed by Nietzsche in his *Birth of Tragedy from the Spirit of Music*.

"Pesn" forms part of the writer's late prose, generally seen as a departure from his previous oeuvre and as a text belonging to the "other Turgenev."[7] In his late works, it is often claimed, the writer fully expressed his lasting philosophical commitment to Schopenhauerian pessimism and the message of renunciation. Sigrid McLaughlin, for example, who has made a thorough investigation of the role Schopenhauer played in forming Turgenev's philosophical-literary stance of self-renunciation is inclined to see this philosopher's impact in "Pesn" also (1984, 132). She takes note of the German epigraph to the story though, which exalts the readiness "to dream and to err,"[8] stating that it contradicts "the conscious morality of renunciation" and creates a certain "ambivalence" (1984, 142). This ambivalence may be resolved if one accepts the notion that Turgenev in his later works parted ways with Schopenhauer's renunciation philosophy in favour of Nietzsche's affirmation of life in all its tragic contradictions. Nietzsche himself had dismissed — however respectfully —Schopenhauer's pessimism in his *Birth*, discovering in Greek art "a bulwark" against it (Kaufmann 1968, 131). The Turgenev scholar, Elizabeth Cheresh Allen, has applied Nietzschean criteria from *Birth* to Turgenev's oeuvre as a whole, using these for a general characterization of the writer. She states that Turgenev is "to speak with Nietzsche, not a Dionysian but Apollonian writer" (Allen 1992, 40) adding that "Apollonian" does not mean "classicist," but rather implies a more general commitment to the act of shaping chaos, to "storytelling" as an image "of the individual exercising control over experience"

(p. 48). In contrast to Allen's view of the writer as a disciple of Apollo, this article presents him as a writer who thematically focuses on the Dionysian "experience" rather than the Apollonian "control" that follows it, at least the "other Turgenev" of the late fantastic tales. It is true though that Dionysian content is couched in Apollonian form also in these late tales.

Nietzschean "praise of Dionysian folly" as a subtext in "Pesn" has, to my knowledge, not previously been perceived, and there is a very good reason why no critic has brought Turgenev's later prose works in general, and "Pesn" specifically, into the context of Nietzsche's *Birth*. Nowhere does the writer mention this, or any other, work by Nietzsche.[9] Yet it seems unlikely that he would not have known about *Birth*. For one thing, Nietzsche's hypothesis about the double origin of Greek art was immediately hotly debated and quickly rejected by the philologists and, as a result, surrounded by an aura of scandalous revolt against well-established academe. Published in 1872, it preceded "Pesn" by nine years in terms of publication. There was thus plenty of time for Turgenev to acquaint himself with this "scandalous" work and its reception history and, of course, with his excellent mastery of German, he was not obliged to wait for any translations of *Birth* into either Russian or French to acquaint himself with it. Part of its "scandalous" aura, furthermore, was its fervent "encomium" (Köhler 1998, 76) to Richard Wagner, which could not but have been discussed in the music-obsessed Viardot household of which Turgenev formed such an integral part.[10] The world-famous singer Madame Viardot and Wagner were even personally acquainted and she was a confirmed Wagnerite.[11]

Unlike Wagner, Friedrich Nietzsche was not personally known in the Viardot household, but there were shared acquaintances. Thus Nietzsche befriended Malwida von Meysenbug in the 1870s, a former member of the Herzen household, a Wagnerite and Wagner family friend. Nietzsche and his close friend Paul Rée stayed at her "Sorrento colony" in the late 1870s.[12] It is Paul Rée who seems the most likely person to have told Turgenev about Nietzsche, since he was personally acquainted with him and paid him several visits in Paris in 1875.[13] Even though Rée may have discussed his own psychological-philosophical interests and publications most of the time, some mention of Nietzsche's *Birth* and the philosopher himself seems very likely. In short, Turgenev must have heard of Nietzsche from either Rée, some (anti-)Wagnerite, or the public debate on *Birth*, and his knowledge of the work is highly probable even if it cannot be proven. The remainder of this article is therefore devoted to the textual evidence offered by *Birth* and "Pesn" bespeaking Turgenev's acquaintance with Nietzschean thought on the Dionysian element in any valid creative process.

Let us begin with the Schiller epigraph in German, containing the verb *irren*, which more clearly than the English "err" is related to madness. It thus brings the story into the Dionysian realm of transgressing the boundaries of

the rational and conventionally permissible. Not only *should* the artist and the lover "err," the epigraph states, — s/he is even obliged to immerse him/herself into the depths of chaotic emotions, to be (self-) destructive, going "beyond good and evil."[14] Having "erred," s/he may proceed to "dream," i.e., to structure the experience. It may be noted in this context that Nietzsche speaks of Schiller as a poet who described his own process of creativity as beginning in "a musical mood" followed by the "poetic idea" only later (Nietzsche 1964, 67). In short, Schiller's line used by Turgenev for his epigraph, encompasses Nietzsche's aesthetics of creativity *en miniature*: daring to "err and dream," the artist transits from "musical mood," or the "imageless, primeval pain" of the Dionysian state (1964, 68), to the "poetic idea" of the Apollonian realm of "dreams," where chaotic emotions are shaped into the "dream sequences" of narrative. To speak in Nietzschean terminology: "melody" is the "matrix" (*die Gebärende*) that bears the "sparks of imagery" (*Bilderfunken*) as frenzy passes into dream (1964, 73). These "sparks" may also owe something to Schillers "Ode to Joy" where joy is characterized as a "divine spark" (*Götterfunken*). Its message to overcome individuation in the "orgiastic" joy of "intertwined millions" exchanging a "universal kiss" also has a distinctly Dionysian message. This *Jubellied* (song of triumphant joy) by Beethoven was a favourite of both Wagner and Nietzsche and may have contributed to the title of Turgenev's "Pesn" (see Nietzsche 1964, 52).[15]

A few more reminders of Nietzsche's main concepts and images as presented in *Birth* and relevant to "Pesn" may be useful at this stage. To begin with the "concepts," in *Birth* Nietzsche subjects Schopenhauer's metaphysics of music to a dialectic shift, making it carry the idea of affirmation rather than the idea of renunciation. Retaining Schopenhauer's notion of music as the direct representation of the Will, as the "language of the Will" that moves the world (Nietzsche 1964, 137), Nietzsche replaces renunciation of individual desires with the joyful affirmation of the tragic essence of being. There is "the overflowing fertility of the World-Will," ready to impregnate Being with ever new phenomena (138–9), and when we merge with this "siring instinct" (*Zeugungslust*) that proclaims the All-unity of Being, we no longer experience the sadness of individual renunciation, but only the "primeval joy" (*Urlust*) of being part of that Oneness (139). There is no need for a "Buddhist" (read Schopenhauerian) "repudiation of willing" (81).[16]

To turn now to some recurring imagery in Nietzsche's *Birth*, it has rightly been stated that although the metaphoric use of "giving birth" in relation to creating art has become absorbed by the language to the point of cliché, Nietzsche's use of the "syntagmatic series" of "siring, impregnating, conceiving, being pregnant with and giving birth to" is insistent indeed. *Birth* is in fact the work that "gave birth" to Friedrich Nietzsche in an act of self-birthing" (Kohlenbach 1994, 352). Almost every section of the treatise speaks of "melting

mergers," "highest and most joyful fulfilment," "siring," "conceptions" and "births."[17] Linked to this series is the preponderance of "penetrating motifs," such as the effort "to break into the Hellenic magic mountain" and the "irate sting" of pain (Nietzsche 1964, 163 and 139). "Pesn" is replete with penetration imagery (cf. footnote 1).

Most relevant to our purposes, however, is the mythologeme of the two gods, Apollo and Dionysus, as engaged in a "fertile love-struggle" with each other (Kohlenbach 1994, 359), as engaged in a double paternity of sorts that yields the birth of "centaurs," i.e. to the "glorious" work of art that is sired by music but formed by Apollonian artful shaping.[18] Art, Nietzsche states right away in his *Birth*, owes its continuous evolution to the Apollonian-Dionysian duality, even as the "propagation of the species" relies on the duality of the sexes, their constant "conflicts and periodic acts of reconciliation" (Nietzsche 1964, 47). The love story told in "Pesn" demonstrates this very Nietzschean duality in the rivalry between the musician Mutsii and the painter Fabii for Valeria's love; her eventual pregnancy seems to be the result of their combined efforts, their dual impregnation of her womb.

Let us now turn to Turgenev's story itself for closer textual analysis and more traces of Nietzsche's aesthetics of creativity. Set in 16th-century Ferrara, i.e., in the late Italian Renaissance, it tells the story of how Fabii, the skilful painter who constantly perfects his techniques,[19] marries the beautiful Valeria. She has — upon her mother's advice — chosen him over his rival, the musician Mutsii, whom she is slightly timid with, although she herself is an accomplished lute-player and, like him, on the taciturn side. The two young men — blond, blue-eyed and amiable Fabii and dark-skinned, dark-eyed and verbally reserved Mutsii — were united by a close friendship in spite of their contrasting artistic occupations, temperaments and looks.[20] After Valeria's choice of Fabii, or, more correctly, her mother's choice of him, it can, of course, not continue. Mutsii departs for exotic foreign lands in the East, the original home of Dionysus; he goes to Persia, Arabia, India and China and in the Himalayas he visits the "living god" (PSSP 1982:10, 52), the Dalai Lama who, according to Buddhist beliefs, was immortal.[21] Five years later — claiming he has overcome his passion for Valeria — he returns to Italy and is invited by Fabii to stay with him and Valeria.[22]

Their marriage has been a very happy one. Surrounded by the beautiful forms of their art-filled estate and gardens, they have scarcely registered the passage of time and it has imperceptibly flown by like a golden dream dreamt under the aegis of harmonious Apollo. There have been few ripples to stir the veil of illusion, the *maya* of deceptive visions, the surface existence of happiness. They were reminded of the mortality of all human beings when Valeria's mother died, but the only lasting sorrow of their married existence is its continuing childlessness.

Mutsii returns from his Eastern journeys laden with exotic items ranging from jewels and wines to tiger skins and living snakes; his treasures include incense and musical instruments, in short all the classical paraphernalia of Dionysus. He is also accompanied by a mute Malayan servant who sacrificed his tongue to gain — undisclosed —"other" powers (see PSSP 1982:10, 57). Mutsii invites his friends to the pavilion they have offered him to live in, and, having served them a strange, apparently narcotic-magic, wine, plays a Ceylonese love song to them on his Indian three-stringed violin, the bow of which is crowned by a sparkling, sharp-edged diamond. The beautiful jewel "brosal na khodu luchistye iskry, kak by [. . .] zazzhennyi ognem toi divnoi pesni" ("moving about threw luminous sparks . . . that seemed [. . .] ignited by the fire of that marvellous song," PSSP 1982:10, 53). One is reminded of the "image-sparks born out of melody" in Nietzsche's *Birth* (the *Bilderfunken* mentioned above), as well as the "fiery magic of music" (*Feuerzauber*) he also mentions (Nietzsche 1964, 63).[23] There is a transitional realm apparently where primal frenzy takes the form of musical melody, as it does here. The song's melody renders the fullness of triumphant sexual passion and satisfied yearnings, the triumph of fluid life over rigid form. To speak with Nietzsche, it sings of Dionysus's power, which is based on "the sexual omnipotence of nature" (83), but it also contains the "sparks" of future artistic images. It later resounds again in the night as Mutsii plays it again in his pavilion.

The evening has a disturbing effect on Valeria. During the night she has a dream, apparently inspired by Mutsii's nocturnal playing. In this dream, Mutsii appears to her in a strange low-ceilinged room filled with a rosy glow and with incense emanating from burners in the shape of "chudovishchnykh zverei" ("monstrous animals," PSSP 1982:10, 54).[24] Still in her dream, Mutsii emerges from a door that reveals a vast darkness; he embraces her forcefully and passionately and lays her down on the oriental brocade cushions on the floor. When Valeria wakes up from her dream — which may have been a descent to the depths of true reality and an awakening from Apollonian illusions — she sees her husband lying next to her, his face "bledno kak u mertvetsa" ("pale as a dead man's"), and "pechal'nee mertvogo litsa" ("more sad than a dead face," PSSP 1982:10, 54). The triumph of one rival is clearly the defeat of the other at this stage of the conflict between music and image. Fabii too wakes as the Ceylonese song of triumphant love is heard emanating from Mutsii's pavilion. Replaying the song, his friend and rival confirms his victory. The dream that Mutsii has been able to conjure up emanates from the innermost recesses of being and is "deeper than the day thought," to quote Zarathustra; they are not the Apollonian dreams of illusionary surface life, but reveal the "depths" of being.

The following morning Mutsii tells his hosts of a dream he had the previous night — it replicates Valeria's, but he does not mention her name. Valeria's peace of mind is now gone for good — like Gretchen's after her meeting with Faust in Goethe's *Faust*. Instead of posing as Saint Cecilia, the chaste patron saint of music, for her painter husband, she strolls in the garden of their beautiful and comfortable villa where they until recently led such a harmonious life. Fabii finds her there sitting under the statue of a marble satyr leering down at her behind her back "s iskazhennym zloradnoi usmeshkoi litsom" ("his face distorted by a triumphant, wicked smile," 10:56) and pressing a reed pipe (*svirel'*) to his pointed lips.[25] In Nietzsche's *Birth*, the satyr is seen as the Greeks' symbol of nature's "strongest drives" and this wild, yet wise "forest man" (*Waldmensch*) is contrasted to the effeminate modern notion of the "shepherd" — as the falsification to the genuine article (Nietzsche 1964, 88). It is an interesting detail that the Malay servant, like the satyr, constantly seems to be mocking Fabii's ordered household, displaying an ironical smile (*usmeshka*, PSSP 1982:10, 59) on his bronze face.

The spouses go to Fabii's studio and he resumes his painting of her as Saint Cecilia, but he is unable to find the expression of purity on his wife's face, which he had wanted to convey on his canvas. Dissatisfied both with her and his impotent brush, he throws it down. The technical mastery he has is good enough to capture surface phenomena, but it cannot penetrate to the depths of "real reality." Phallic symbolism clearly permeates this section of the tale, affirming Dionysian potency and opposing it to the impotence of civilized mores. To represent the latter we have Fabii's powerless paintbrush (his *kist'* is mentioned twice), to represent the former — the reed pipe that the satyr presses to his pointed lips and Mutsii's sharp dagger, which is yet to appear and play a vital role. Incidentally, Mutsii knows how to play the flute (*fleita*) as well, as he demonstrates when he makes the snakes he has brought with him move to its music.

The following brightly moonlit night Fabii witnesses how Valeria returns from a nightly walk with an expression of secret horror on her face. Apparently, she has again dwelt in Mutsii's magic vault of passion and there experienced that mix of "terror" and "ecstatic bliss" that is the hallmark of the Dionysian experience.[26] Valeriia is during Mutsii's stay constantly enveloped in the semantic field of horror ("stenia ot uzhasa," "groaning with horror," 10:54; "strashnye sny," "terrifying dreams," 59, and so forth), yet she cannot withdraw from the bliss of her terrifying experience. Moving like a *somnambula*, she falls exhausted onto her bed. Going to Mutsii's pavilion, Fabii finds him in the same strange somnambulist state and beyond any verbal communication. All he can get out of him is rambling verse containing the sinister line: "Iastreb kurochku kogtit..." ("the hawk claws the little hen"). Perhaps Mutsii's verse lines could be seen as "dithyrambic."

Pursued by a deep sense of terror induced by her nocturnal visions of the true *Urgrund* of being, Valeria goes to a monastery the next day to speak with her confessor Father Lorenzo. A very common sense man, he does not reproach Valeria for her nightly "fantasies," but accompanies her home and advises Fabii to ask his friend to leave. He points out that Mutsii may have turned into an infidel and magician "pobyvav v stranakh, ne ozarennykh svetom khristianstva" ("having spent time in lands that have not been illumined by the light of Christianity," PSSP 1982:10, 60). Although dispensing sensible advice and having a soothing effect on Valeria, the monk's admonitions clearly are ineffectual, since they do not prevent Valeria from paying a third visit to Mutsii's pavilion. Christianity is powerless in regard to the forces that really move life. In *Birth*, Nietzsche speaks of "pale and tired religions" which have degenerated into "learnedness," having lost their myth-making creativity (Nietzsche 1964, 148). Clearly Christianity is one of these "tired" religions that have little to offer beyond facile common sense. Father Lorenzo, incidentally, does not forget to collect gifts for his monastery.

The following — again brightly moonlit night — Fabii wakes up as a "nazoilivoe strastnoe sheptanie" ("insistent passionate whisper") seems to enter their bedchamber with a waft of air (10:60–1). The language of passion, as Nietzsche points out, knows all shades from the whisper of tenderness to the ire of madness (Nietzsche 1964, 73). He sees Valeria stir and rise from her bed, as if following some secret command. Pursuing her to Fabii's pavilion, he witnesses how Valeria stretches out her arms as if extending them to the approaching Mutsii, whose arms likewise are extended toward her. His face is immobile, but it "smeetsia pri svete luny, kak u malaitsa" ("laughs in the moonlight, like the Malayan's," 10:61). At the sight of this scene of open mutual desire, gentle Fabii is suddenly uncontrollably enraged. Rushing toward Mutsii, groping for his throat with one hand, he takes hold of the dagger that is hanging — apparently unsheathed — from Mutsii's belt, with the other. He has not brought one of his own. He then stabs his rival in the side (*v bok*, 10:61), pressing the blade of his foe's dagger deep into his innards, down to the very hilt of the handle. Mutsii lets out a piercing scream ("pronzitel'no zakrichal," 10:61), as does Valeria at the very same moment, as if she herself had been stabbed.[27] It would seem that it is at this very moment that the childless Valeria is impregnated by both her "Apollonian" husband who "halts Dionysian excess" by stabbing his rival, and by her Dionysian lover, since it is Mutsii's own weapon that seemingly penetrates Valeria at the same moment as he is penetrated by Fabii. Here we seem to have the crucial moment of that "mysterious marital union" of Dionysus and Apollo that sires and bears glorious art — the two gods being represented by Mutsii and Fabii. It would seem to be Fabii's and Mutsii's "mysterious marriage" that enables Valeria to be finally penetrated by

a husband who — seized by his rival's Dionysian ire — at last can replace his skilled, yet impotent, paintbrush with the cruel dagger of a lethal, yet "siring," power. Her womb was opened so to speak by the "song of triumphant love" that included all nuances of seduction, from insidious whispering to forceful persuasion, then impregnated simultaneously by the Dionysian force of passion, as well as the final Apollonian form-giving thrust — by fluid life and shaping art. In any case, Valeria's childlessness is over, as we learn in the last section of the tale, when she, totally against her will, plays the "song of triumphant love" on the organ, sacred instrument of Saint Cecilia, while feeling the stirrings of a new life in her womb.

Although the "Italian manuscript" recounting the tale ends abruptly without spelling out any conclusions, least of all of a philosophical kind, one may speculate that Valeria's future child will not only be wearing the "glorious" (*herrlich*) imprint of Apollonian harmony, but also harboring Dionysian depths, thus being the truly glorious co-creation of hostile, yet fraternal forces. But will there be only one child or a twin, or hybrid, birth of sorts? After all, the portrait of Valeria as St. Cecilia that Fabii is completing is only a few brushstrokes away from its, now apparently successful, completion. One may again conjecture that this second "child," the portrait, like the biological one in her womb, is the product of both fathers as well — the one who gave the model a depth of experience she did not suspect existed and the one who masters all the secrets of his painting craft. Surely now the portrait will not only display an empty surface prettiness and a superficial mastery of technique that reflects "civilized" emotions and artistry, but also convey greater complexities than the mere innocence Fabii initially wanted to present in the image of his immaculate wife. Perhaps the purity captured now in the portrait is the distillation of lust-filled horror resolved in harmony rather than the never ruffled surface clarity that has no substance. Thus, to say it once more, surely both "children" have been sired and formed by the two gods together out of the spirit of music and the craft of form. Valeria is forever wedded to both Mutsii's Dionysian passion and Fabii's cultured craft. Even though she may deny it, she surely would do so against her suppressed, but better, knowledge. We are told that Valeria did not come to bid Mutsii farewell when he departed from her home, but that, quite possibly, she watched his departure from behind the curtains of her window.

How could Valeria watch Mutsii depart, however, since Fabii had killed his rival? Mutsii did indeed die, but his death was followed by a resurrection performed by his mute Malayan servant. The latter departs together with his master who is yet only half alive but apparently destined for a full resurrection.

The Malay servant is a mysterious figure. It is said that he sacrificed his tongue and hence all verbal skills in order to gain powers beyond the capacity of words (PSSP 1982:10, 57). What powers did he acquire at this price though —

is it the power of resurrecting? Some commentators wishing to see "realism" in the story have speculated that Mutsii perhaps was not really dead when Fabii left him, or, alternatively, that he never was resurrected being propped up in his saddle in the manner of the corpse in *Le Cid* (in some transpositions). In my view, a series of indicators in the story point to a genuine death and a genuine resurrection. The mention of the living god, the immortal Dalai Lama, forever reincarnated, the somnambulistic state between waking and sleep, as well Valeria's momentary "death," when she screams as if she herself had been penetrated by Fabii's dagger — all these indicators point to the fluidity and reversibility of life and death and prepare us for Mutsii's return to life. One further detail pointing to a genuine death and resurrection is that the Malay caresses Mutsii's bloody dagger — the one with which Fabii stabbed him — with a healing plant of some kind. In short, he restores Mutsii's phallic powers so as to enable him to sire new glorious "children" (of art) as he has done numerous times in the past. Another specific detail in support of a genuine "rebirth" is that there is the movement of Mutsii's eyes which he turns on Fabii when, stiff and erect and propped up by the Malay, he rides away. This glance is not so much one of threat, or revenge, but rather a challenge to his kinsman in the style of Nietzsche's two creator deities, who constantly stimulate each other to doubly sired "new vigorous births." Apollo and Dionysus, whatever new guises they may assume, will have many more hostile-friendly encounters yet. They will meet as long as genuine art exists.

Mutsii's rebirth is not really surprising, if Turgenev's Italian tale indeed was impacted by the Dionysus-Apollo myth in its Nietzschean variant. Dionysus belongs to the gods who suffer, die and are resurrected in a variety of Greek myths and Nietzsche mentions "dismemberment" (*Zerstückelung*, Nietzsche 1964, 98) as Dionysus's special form of suffering.[28] Dismemberment is an important motif in "Pesn," beginning with the mention of the Malay servant's cut out tongue. Mutsii himself may well be but a cut off part of a larger whole — sloughed off skin, the kernel of which is the Malay servant. This servant often seems to be the master in their relationship, a fact that disconcerts Fabii. Perchance Dionysian Mutsii began the rites of dismemberment by sacrificing first his tongue and then his outer western form, separating it from his inner eastern essence. Retaining his previous form only as an outer garb, he perhaps acquired the capacity for eternal regenerations, as a result of his "self-partition." Dionysus is able to reappear in ever new forms only thanks to his undergoing continual dismemberments, divisions and dispersions. One critic has spoken of the Malay servant as Mutsii's "alter ego" (see footnote 5) and there is a moment when Fabii thinks that Mutsii and the Malayan strangely resemble each other. It is also worth noting that it seems to Fabii that the Malay fully understands Italian (PSSP 1982:10, 57). In short, Mutsii may indeed have sacrificed his Western

Apollonian culture of the closed body for which he now has but ironic contempt and replaced it with the mysteries of life-giving mutilations and metamorphoses found in the East. There — in the East — he became the disciple of the god, who was torn apart by the Titans and then reappeared in many new myths of dismemberment, the point of all of them being that dismemberment is the precondition of endless reappearances in new combinations and variants. Perhaps Mutsii went to the East to find a language more powerful than the languages of Western verbal communication and imagery, namely the language of verbal muteness and powerful musical expression. There is a moment in the Malay servant's resuscitation of Mutsii when he emits a "protiazhnyi voi" ("a long-drawn-out howl") eliciting the response of a "slabyi ston" ("a weak groan") from the dead man being brought back to life (10:65). It is in this language of pre-verbal sound that the mysteries of life and death are found perhaps, and those who master them are rightly filled "gordym torzhestvom" ("with proud triumph," 65), as the Malayan is at the moment Mutsii begins to show signs of life. From the howling *Urschrei* of primal pain to passionate sparkling melos, from melos to image — these are the stages of triumphant biological and artistic creativity.

Most likely, Valeria and Fabii will never see Mutsii again. But he has already changed them forever, cutting his indelible pattern on the surface of their smooth, pure and comfortable life, which had almost reached the point that Nietzsche calls "Egyptian stiffness" and "chilliness" (Nietzsche 1964, 96). Mutsii saved his friend Fabii from rigidity and conventionality, the next phase of which is "Socratic stupidity," or the desire to explain everything and believe everything to be correctible. Mutsii saved Fabii and Valeria from what Nietzsche called "Socratism" by his non-verbal language of "mad" willing and boundless desire expressed in the sounds of the song of triumphant love. Perhaps it is not by chance that the time of the tale is the late renaissance when impetuous creativity was yielding to rationalistic tendencies, when the great culture of the renaissance was stiffening into civilization and, hence, in need of revitalization. Mutsii and his mute servant in their turn may have undertaken their journey westward to reestablish contact with the Western art of image making. Apollo must forever relearn that he cannot exist without Dionysus, but Dionysus too knows that for his eternal rebirths he continually needs new masks and forms.

There are quite concrete and specific links then between the two texts just compared. For example, the statue of the satyr leering over tormented Valeria in her well-ordered garden seems similar enough to Nietzsche's "fantastic and seemingly improper creature of the wise and ecstatic satyr" (Nietzsche 1964, 88) and his reed pipe presumably serves the transmission of those "orgiastic flute tunes of the Olympus" that, according to Nietzsche, are at the root of lyric poetry. There are also other shared motifs and mini-motifs — even the

title of the story may owe something to the "mystical jubilant cry" (*mystischer Jubelruf*) that Dionysus emits in Nietzsche's *Birth* when he breaks the fetters of individuation (132). Nevertheless, it is not these details that link the two texts as much as the close parallels on the ideational level: in both texts, the philosophical and the literary, do we have two male artists — two gods and two artists serving these deities — "wedded" to each other forever in eternal conflict and momentary cooperation and co-creativity and together siring valid works of art that make up the great cultures of Hellas, Renaissance Italy and — in Nietzsche's view at the time — Wagner's Bayreuth. It is not only the detail of Valeria's "piercing scream" that links Turgenev's text to Nietzsche's phrase of the "durchdringender Schrei" (Nietzsche 1964, 64) in which Dionysian "overflow" reaches its apogee, as the idea behind the shared phrase: the need to experience the Dionysian state of frenzied madness and the dissolving of individuation in order to be able to create the valid forms of beauty that rely on discreteness and separateness. In short, in Turgenev's tale Valeria cannot realize her full beauty without both her husbands, Dionysian Mutsii and Apollonian Fabii. From the former she will take her emotional depths and the latter will paint her as a St. Cecilia who has gained full knowledge of ecstasy but who also has learnt how to control it.

Many intertexts in addition to *Birth* are involved in Turgenev's Italian pastiche, the pastiche being a mode of writing that not only implies refined imitation but also, especially when transferred to musical composition, a "hotch-potch" of pieces (Schultz 1995, 148). An intertextual approach to "Pesn" is therefore well motivated and there have been many suggestions for pre-texts. Michail Gershenzon (1919/1970) saw parallels between E. G. Bulwer-Lytton's *A Strange Story* and "Song," Schulz (1995) suggests Goethe's *Selective Affinities* and E. T. A. Hoffmann's "The Singing Contest." Richard Gregg has pointed to Nathaniel Hawthorne's *The Marble Faun* as having "striking similarities" with the "nucleus of Turgenev's tale" (2003, 192). Flaubert to whom Turgenev dedicated the tale is regularly mentioned, especially his "The Temptation of St. Anthony." Most of the scholars that explore pretexts focus on similarities in order to emphasize differences. For example, Gregg perceives Hawthorne as expressing a "Hebraic" sense of guilt and Turgenev a more "Hellenistic" stance in their similar plot narratives (2003, 197). Nietzsche's *Die Geburt der Tragödie aus dem Geist der Musik*, it is hoped, adds yet another valid intertext to the long list of likely candidates, even though Turgenev never explicitly expressed any interest in the iconoclastic philosopher. In any case, their views on music and the visual arts, as laid out in Nietzsche's treatise and as presented in Turgenev's pastiche, show a remarkably similar aesthetic stance. If the literary pre-texts emphasize difference in similarity, the philosophical one points to a shared aesthetic platform.

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Notes

1 Woodward speaks more generally of "surrender to the pulsating rhythms of nature" (1973, 385), stylistically marked in snake and fire imagery, as well as the tempi of the tale (1973, 368–85). He also mentions the "*motif of penetration*, which pervades the entire work" (1973, 373).

2 Nietzsche's ideas on the creative process were anticipated by German romanticism. In Russia, the Silver Age cult of Pushkin made him a forerunner of Nietzsche's in this sphere. Thus D. Merezhkovsky was of the opion that Pushkin's incomplete poem "V nachale zhizni pomniu ia" (1830) introduced the Dionysus-Apollo dichotomy before Nietzsche did. It describes two statues in a park. One of these is "zhenoobraznyi, sladostrastnyi i lzhivyi ideal" (the effeminate, sensual, dubious and mendacious ideal, and the other "the Delphic idol," i.e., Dionysus and Apollo). For details, see Ivanov 2001.

3 As Ledkovskaia-Astman puts it (borrowing a term from L. V. Pumpiansky), "'philosophical orchestration' forms the very texture of Turgenev's later tales" (1973, 102). Like most Turgenev scholars, she sees Schopenhauer as the main source of philosophical motifs in the later prose.

4 Dolny defines the meaning of the name Fabii as "artist/artisan," or as "masterful, skilful" (1994, 176, footnote 2).

5 Dolny gives the (perceived) meaning of the Latin name Mucius (variant: Mutius), from which the Italian "Mucio" derives, as "mute" (1994, 276). He also points out that Mucio-Mutsii's muteness is reinforced by the doubling of the motif, since Mutsii's "nameless Malay servant" and kind of "*alter ego*" is "physically mute."

6 Dolny suggests that her name indicates that she is "the value fought over" (1994, 275).

[7] I am quoting the title of Marina Ledkovskaia-Astman's book *The Other Turgenev*, which deals with the writer's fantastic tales.

[8] "Wage du zu irren und zu träumen" is a line from Friedrich Schiller's "Thekla." The title of Turgenev's story evokes two other Schiller poems, namely, "Der Triumph der Liebe" (1772) and "Die Macht des Gesanges" (1795). See Schulz 1995, 149.

[9] But then Turgenev never mentioned Baudelaire's *Petits poemes en prose* either, although he knew them for sure and they undoubtedly were one of the main inspirations for his own late work in that genre (his *Stickhotvoreniia v proze*). See PSSP 1982:10, 474.

[10] Pauline Viardot's Paris salon was frequented by composers such as Saint-Saëns, Sarasate and Forêt. It seems unlikely that none of them would have heard about or discussed Nietzsche's homage to Wagner. See *Vospominaniia*: 2, 177.

[11] She was a Wagnerite "to her fingertips" (Lowe 1989, 31).

[12] See Müller-Buck 1994 for this Sorrento establishment.

[13] He wrote an unfinished letter (from probably October, 1875) to his mother about these visits; see Pfeiffer 1970, 421.

[14] Nietzsche embraces the notion of art being beyond ethical validation, representing a value by and in itself, already in this early work. See, Nietzsche 1964, 57.

[15] Schulz suggests that Schiller's "Lied an die Freude" impacted the title of Turgenev's tale (1995, 149) in addition to other Schiller poems (cf. footnote 8). For Nietzsche's views on Beethoven as Wagner's forerunner, see Nietzsche 1964, 74 and 159. See also Nietzsche 1964, 155, in regard to Schiller and Greek antiquity. One of Wagner's best-known essays is "Beethoven," and in Bayreuth the Ninth was regularly performed. The word *Freude* (joy) is important to the discussion, since it is opposed to *Heiterkeit* (jolliness) in Nietzsche's semantics, the former meaning something like "ecstatic overflow of emotions" and the latter "shallow cheerfulness." It was against the notion that the Greeks were "cheerful" that Nietzsche pitted his view of Greek culture as tragic, yet life-affirming.

[16] In Turgenev's oeuvre we can see a similar shift in the conception of the metaphysics of music when we compare the composer Lemm's love song in the early novel "Dvorianskoe gnezdo" (*A Nest of Gentlefolk*) and the late "Pesn" under discussion here. The former is permeated with the notion that only self-sacrifice truly liberates the human personality — Lemm's "triumph" is his final renunciation of Liza. "Pesn" states the opposite in a Nietzschean spirit of affirmation. In "Nakanune" (*On the Eve*), music again helps the individual (Insarov) to renounce himself in an act of sublime self-sacrifice whereas the later prose sees the fullest experience of human existence in the joy of merging with the greater pattern of existence in its elemental manifestations. Not self-renunciation, but self-realization forms the peak of life, even when this peak is accompanied by destruction. Arvatov, in "Klara Milich" finds fullness of being in an "orgiastic" act of self-surrender to Klara and to death, seen not as renunciation of individual existence but as a merger with the fullness of Being. On music, love and renunciation in these two novels, see Masing-Delic 1986 and 1987.

[17] Kohlenbach (1994) gives a complete list of images in *Geburt* from the "syntagmatic series" under discussion — it is a very long one.

[18] The term "Centaurengeburten" was coined by Nietzsche in a letter to his friend Erwin Rohde from 1870 and refers to his inability to sever art from philosophy and science in his thinking and writing. See "Preface" (p. V) to Borsche et al. 1994.

[19] Nietzsche emphasizes that the plastic artist pays attention to the smallest details of his craft (Nietzsche 1964, 68).

[20] Fabii's eyes shine and sparkle, Mutsii's dark eyes lack luster — even on this level of minute detail, the two rivals represent their deities, the "sparkling" Apollo and the "dark" Dionysus.

[21] Turgenev consulted the orientalist James Long for details on the Eastern elements in his story (PSSP 1967:13, 574).

[22] Asked about his plans for the future, he tells Fabii that he wants to go to Rome to "have a look at the new pope" (PSSP 1967:13, 64). This detail links Mutsii with Wagner's *Tannhäuser*. Nietzsche speaks of the "Dionysian festive procession from India to Greece" (Nietzsche 1964, 164) and of Greece as placed between "India and Rome" (166). Mutsii may be seeking to poise himself between "India and Rome."

[23] The imagery may also be inspired by Afanasii Fet's frequent use of synaesthesia, especially in poems dedicated to music, where sound and light together sometimes "materialize" in a jewel.

[24] Nietzsche mentions "the wildest beasts of nature" being released in the primitive Dionysus cult where cruelty and lust mingled in one "witches' brew" — beasts that were later tamed by Apollo's influence (Nietzsche 1964, 54). Turgenev's burners shaped as beasts may owe something to Nietzsche.

[25] The same epithet "zaostrennyi" (pointed) is used both for the shape of the diamond on Mutsii's Indian violin and for the lips of the satyr.

[26] *Grausen* (dread); *wonnevolle Verzückung* (lust-filled enchantment); (Nietzsche 1964, 50–1) are Nietzsche's terms.

[27] McLaughlin (1984) points out that Schopenhauer's notions of somnambulism may well have impacted this motif in the story. For another discussion of the occult in this story and Turgenev's late oeuvre in general, see Dessaix 1980.

[28] For details of the actual Greek myths of the tearing, division and dismemberment of Dionysus, as well as his rebirth, see von Reibnitz 1992, 260–88.

A Change of Gender Roles: The Pygmalion Motif in Jane Austen's *Emma* and Ivan Goncharov's *Oblomov*

Introduction

The linkage between Jane Austen's *Emma* (1815/1816)[1] and Ivan Goncharov's *Oblomov* (1859)[2] implied in the title above is not demonstrable beyond textual indices. Austen's novels were virtually unknown in Russia as late as the 1850s,[3] when *Oblomov* was taking shape in Goncharov's mind, and even in England the author was not widely read until the end of the nineteenth century. Ivan Goncharov knew English quite well,[4] but, to my knowledge, there exists no direct evidence that he read Austen's novels, or specifically, was acquainted with *Emma*. Anne Radcliffe's novels are mentioned in Goncharov scholarship as English novels he knew,[5] but Jane Austen's are not.

There are nevertheless some striking parallels between the novels *Emma* and *Oblomov*. To begin with general similarities, both novels are *Bildungsromane* that see the right balance between "sense and sensibility" as crucial for the formation of a valid personality. The Russian novel of course adds the notion of "national character" to this issue with the half-German Andrei Shtolts being largely "sensible" and the Russian Oblomov being entirely "sensitive," whereas in Austen's *Sense and Sensibility* (1811) the opposition is played out between two equally English sisters and thus presented as individual character differences, as well as a study of psychological types. Nor do notions of national characteristics play any role in *Emma*, where "sense" is a masculine virtue and "sensibility" a feminine "folly," at least if too freely indulged in. Returning to similarities, both novels have been linked to the "idyll," and both could specifically be seen as idylls threatened, for better or for worse, by the social and cultural change that comes with "civilization" taking over.[6]

These similarities, it could be argued, are so general as to be unimportant. The issue of sense versus sensibility, or a soberly rational attitude to life acquired through experience of the world and a "non-sentimental education," versus a sentimental-romantic one that indulges the inborn instinctual-emotional sphere, goes through Goncharov's entire oeuvre. Thus it already forms the main

theme of his first novel *An Ordinary Story* ("Obyknovennaia istoriia," 1849), long before he was as "anglophile" as he would become later. The collision "between 'nature' and 'nurture'," as has often been argued, is one that "determines the concept of the personality" in this novel and "in Goncharov's entire work."[7]

Favoring the genre of the *Bildungsroman* and the theme of "sentimental versus rational education," Goncharov furthermore had a rich tradition to respond to: Rousseau, Goethe and Schiller, Karamzin, Herzen and Tolstoy are all pertinent predecessors.[8] To single out the then obscure Jane Austen and her *Emma* as a novel evoking a Russian response in *Oblomov* may therefore, to say it again, seem far-fetched. It would have to be borne out on the level of specific detail.

On this, more specific, level, both novels include not only the "Pygmalion-motif," which was not unusual in novels of education (and other educational genres), but also a travestied version of it that raises the specific issue of women's vocation and education. It is in this sphere that I posit valid reasons for comparing the heroines of the respective novels: Emma and Olga. Both young women shoulder educational roles that prove beyond their competence since they choose to be Pygmalions rather than Galateas, i.e. active shapers of "form" when they themselves still badly need to be "formed." Both are naïve girls who should be pupils relying on wise male mentors, but instead both "insist[] on acting as teacher[s]."[9] Before I turn to a textual comparison of the two novels focusing on the travestied Pygmalion motif, I would like to raise the question how Goncharov *could* have come across Austen's novels. Obviously it is desirable to establish at least plausible circumstances under which he may have learnt about their existence.

Such circumstances may be found in the fact that Goncharov for many years was a family friend of the Putiatin family. Admiral Evfimii Putiatin headed the Russian trade mission to Japan on the frigate "Pallada" in 1852–55 and Goncharov was employed as his greatly valued secretary during this long voyage (the writer's employment ended in 1854). His experiences, reports and letters to friends (whom he asked to keep his letters) were the material for his subsequent travel account "Frigat 'Pallada'" (1858). After the completion of the Japanese trade mission, friendly relations between the Admiral and Goncharov continued.[10] According to Goncharov's long-time friend N. I. Barsov, it was in the "wonderful home" of the "*aristokrat-angloman*" Count Putiatin and his English wife Mary (nee Knowles) that the writer's "anglophile" sympathies were born and cultivated.[11] It is possible that Countess Putiatina read Austen's novels, which in England at the time were considered "genteel" reading, especially suited for ladies. Barsov who also knew the Putiatins considered the Countess a "highly educated woman." Perhaps she was a discerning reader as well who understood that Austen's "ladies' novels" were of the highest quality, or liked

them for some other reason.[12] Perhaps she directed Goncharov's attention to *Emma* in view of the fact that it dealt with the development of a young woman and discussed proper gender roles and gender relations, as well as the issue of what principles a good marriage should be based on. The "woman question" was hotly debated in Russia at the time when *Oblomov* was being written and it is of course an important issue in Goncharov's novel. Perhaps Goncharov who, at the time, was seriously in love for the first and last time in his life and possibly considering marriage, discussed the character of Olga Ilinskaia with Mary Putiatina, as well as his own personal plans.[13] If so, this may have led to her remembering Emma as a character in the eponymous novel dealing with a similarly imperious heroine as Olga would become in Goncharov's novel. Although, naturally, Countess Putiatina's and Goncharov's conversations cannot be reconstructed, a recommendation on her part to read Jane Austen in English (perhaps also as a means to maintain his language skills) is feasible.

In view of the fact that the Pygmalion motif is seen as the link between the two novels, it will be remembered that in Greek mythology and Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, Pygmalion was a sculptor who created a statue out of ivory that represented his ideal of womanhood — he despised the real women he saw around him. Having completed his statue, he fell in love with his own work of art, Galatea, who naturally could not reciprocate. Venus took pity on the love-stricken sculptor however and endowed the statue with life. Having created her ideal outer form and now presented with the gift of the animated statue, Pygmalion presumably was free to begin the formation of her mind and soul. Thus he found himself in the rare position of having a lover who fully corresponded to his vision of the feminine Ideal, body and soul — a female mirror image of himself, if one assumes that he imbued her with his own values and beliefs. There are however also some versions of the Pygmalion story in which Galatea has some surprises in store for her creator, including disobedience to his wishes and downright rebelliousness. The Pygmalion of myth and literature dedicated to the myth is also often far from the ideal educator. The two feminine Pygmalions discussed in the present work certainly are not.

The Pygmalion myth, in its more narcissistic version, has its obvious appeal to educators who dream of imprinting their own vision of the ideal personality onto some willing "raw material." Often, of course, this "ideal personality" strikingly resembles the educator's own. Emma is such an "educator" in Austen's novel,[14] and in *Oblomov* it is ambitious Olga who, similarly, shoulders the sculptor's-educator's role in order to promote herself. In both cases then it is a young woman, and furthermore a naïve young woman, who assumes the role of shaping artist and creative educator. Engaged in the experiment of creating an, in their view, valid personality, they are both rather creating extensions of their own selves, however. In the case of Emma, the "raw material" is another woman,

in the case of Olga it is a man. This actively shaping role is not "appropriate" for the feminine sex in either novel. Particularly when it involves a total reversal of traditional gender behavior, as is the case in *Oblomov*, it is an experiment bound to end badly. Such a *travesty* cannot be taken seriously, but even comedies have their sad aspect; especially in *Oblomov* there is a good deal of tragedy in the "farce" of a man being educated by a woman. Let us now turn to *Emma* to find out how Austen's rejection of the female Pygmalion is demonstrated there and what grounds are given for the failure. In her novel, the Pygmalion motif is not explicitly mentioned, although clearly implied. Perhaps the "lowering" of the motif from Greek sculptor to rural society girl prevented the explicit mention of the classical myth.[15]

Emma

In Austen's novel, the heroine aspiring to being the shaper of a beautiful "living form" is a young woman of independent means, occupying a privileged social status in her community. She grew up virtually without parental guidanceand, thus, without gender role models. Her mother died long ago and her father is a complete child, an infantile hypochondriac, fearful of the slightest intimation of change; even chilly drafts are evil harbingers of ill health and fateful change. He is in fact a kind of dotard English Oblomov before the emergence of the "real" Russian one. Oblomov, it is true, dies before reaching old age, but it could be argued that he was in a state resembling "senility" when regressing ever deeper into his second childhood in the last part of the novel. On the "Vyborg Side," pampered by the maternal Pshenitsyna, Oblomov becomes a kind of corpulent and gluttonous version of lean and dieting Mr. Woodhouse — both are totally dependent on being cared for, fixated on their comfort and a rhythm in daily life in which not even the minutest detail may be changed.

To return to Emma Woodhouse, she did have a governess, a Miss Taylor, who left Emma much leeway to develop according to her own inclinations. In the beginning of the novel Miss Taylor is leaving the Woodhouse household though to marry the comfortably well-off Mr. Weston who looked more for good character qualities in a wife than for chances to add to his wealth. Possibly there also was some matchmaking on Emma's part, as she herself claims. The young woman clearly yearns to be considered a mature adult wherefore she may be exaggerating her own importance in the match. However, she, certainly, feels that now that Miss Taylor is leaving her, the moment has come when she should exchange the role of pupil for that of educator, stepping into her former educator's shoes.

Emma does not contemplate marriage for her own part, seeing no point in giving up her independence, but rather considers continued match-making and "education" of suitable pupils as more befitting occupations. She quite forgets that her own education in all respects has been a flawed one where whim replaced discipline and adoration was the invariable response to any "accomplishment," however childish. Emma therefore begins to look out for a proper "object" for her pedagogy, the "wax" on which to leave her own imprint. Seized by the dream of becoming a role model for someone else, already seeing herself reflected in a grateful recipient of her instructional gifts and quite unaware of her narcissistic egotism, she believes that what she wants is to "do good," whereas it is the "interesting . . . undertaking" (38) that attracts her. In short, she is keen on conducting an experiment, possessing, as she does, a mind "delighted with its own ideas" (38). Unfortunately, her social and psychological experimenting is but a continuation of games played in childhood. In a parody on Pygmalion, Emma seems to be looking — not for a statue to animate — but for a living doll to replace the toy dolls she presumably relinquished not so very long ago. Of course she already has a "doll" in the house, or a puppet, i.e. her will-less father who is easily manipulated once the simple mechanisms of his infantile psyche have been grasped.

Her search for a new "doll" leads to the desired result. Emma finds the living doll she can use in the more complex games ("experiments") she now wishes to engage in on a larger scale than before. It is seventeen-years-old, pretty, and not overly intelligent Miss Harriet Smith who is the perfect *tabula rasa* on which to leave the inscription of a "superior" mind, i.e. Emma's. Blue-eyed and plump Miss Harriet is the perfect live porcelain doll for Emma to play with: she has no opinions of her own and is therefore the willing recipient of all of Emma's views. The fact that she is an illegitimate child, adds to her charm in Emma's eyes, since it both adds to her "unformed state" and allows Emma to indulge in fanciful speculation: that Harriet may have aristocratic origins, for example; after all there are many novels in which the heroine of unknown parentage suddenly proves to have been lost by her aristocratic family and eventually is reunited with them. Unfortunately, as has already been indicated, Emma herself is, if not exactly an "unwritten leaf," then a leaf on which very little has been written. Above all, she has very little self-knowledge. An educator who does not know her/him-self is inevitably a failure in Austen's philosophy of education which has self-knowledge as the cornerstone of its structure. Delusions about oneself inevitably lead to delusions about the surrounding world — to seeing what is not there, to distorting facts, to misconstructions of information.

This principle also holds true when the educator pursues fairly moderate goals. Thus Emma is not out to create "something . . . lofty, almost unheard-of" (455), as Andrei Shtolts will try in his education of Olga Ilinskaia in *Oblomov*,

once they are married and she has reversed to her "proper" Galatea role. She only wants to create a more refined and elegant version of plump and provincial Miss Smith, to make her read at times, and to marry her off "above" her current station. Even these modest goals are full of pitfalls however and more complex than is immediately apparent, for one, because Emma in the process begins to treat not only Harriet but also everyone else as "dolls" to be moved around according to her wishes. This tendency to treat reality as a puppet play where she is the director, playwright and costume designer becomes particularly apparent when Emma tries herself in the role of artist in the most literal sense, i.e. when she attempts a portrait of Miss Harriet.

Obeying the insistent pleas of the Reverend Elton whom she has cast in the role of Harriet's suitor, Emma begins a whole-length water-color portrait of her friend and protégée Harriet. She does not suspect that she herself is the object of the Reverend's tender passion, as well as social aspirations. She believes that her portrait of Harriet will open Elton's eyes to Harriet's charms, while, in fact, Elton wants to admire only the portrayer herself, as well as the social position she could give him. Emma's blindness to everything except her own scenarios points to her defects as an artist. Not caring to study "nature" and "reality," she cannot overcome these in her dilettante artistic efforts by an act of genuine aesthetic transformation. She cannot capture the "soul" of her subject, but only present the pretty fashion doll she is out to create and already "sees" before her inner eye. Emma therefore noticeably elongates her friend's plump figure into a more elegant shape. Also endowing Harriet with fine eyebrows and long eyelashes — not to be found on the model's face (as Mrs. Weston observes; 55) — she attempts to make her eyes more expressive than they are in real life. Emma deforms reality although she thinks she is improving on it, since what she presents is her own naïve concept of what "should be." Emma's notions of "what should be" do however not exceed a young spoiled society girl's notions of what is "pretty" and "fashionable."

Emma's artistic flaws are aggravated by the fact that she is impervious to criticism. She is deaf to the acute observations of discrepancies between model and portrait made by her former governess Mrs. Weston and to the blunt critique from her old friend, Mr. Knightley: "You have made her too tall, Emma" (56). Having shouldered the role of educator, Emma believes the time for instruction is over, at least where she herself is concerned. She "knows everything" better than anyone else, and in regard to her "creation" of Harriet she reaches a point where she could repeat the words from Jean Jacques Rousseau's short lyrical drama "Pigmalion, ou la statue animée" (1775): "I adore myself in my creation."

In short, Emma prefers to create poor copies of herself (such as Miss Harriet) to the more difficult arts of furthering another individual's self-realization, or of perfecting oneself. She likes to rule over others, but lacks self-discipline.

Here we find the main reason why she shuns the company of the beautiful and accomplished Miss Fairfax: she is "the blurred threat to Emma's complacency."[16] This young woman, unlike Emma, does not waste her time on empty small talk, nor on witty, but malicious, jokes at the expense of others, which, in a way, like bad art deforms reality without transcending it. Miss Fairfax, like Emma, cultivates an art form as behooves a well educated young woman, in her case music: she is an accomplished piano player. In contrast to Emma, she is constantly practicing and perfecting her art, not letting it degrade to mere social entertainment. Mr. Knightley who loves Emma and therefore not only "sees through her" but also "sees" her inner essence and true potential, rightly points out that Miss Fairfax is "the truly accomplished young woman" she herself would like to be and could be, if self-infatuation did not prevent her form becoming so. Emma of course does not believe her true knight, Mr. Knightley, refusing for a long time to recognize that he is a much more accomplished educator than herself and one she should trust. Therefore she must learn a lesson from life itself, having to swallow a few "bitter pills" and be "humiliated" (see ref. 16).

Thus she learns that playing with living dolls is more complex than playing with the porcelain variety. Miss Harriet, for example, does indeed change under the impact of Emma's education, but her development takes unexpected turns (as Galatea's does in some versions of the myth). Instead of turning into the grateful recipient of Emma's beneficial efforts on her behalf, Harriet becomes — "less humble" (328), even presumptuous enough to aspire to Mr. Knightley himself, becoming Emma's rival, or so she thinks. In fact, everyone around Emma rejects the roles she has assigned to them in her dollhouse games: Elton does not fall in love with Harriet, Lord Churchill is not in love with Emma (as she for a while considered letting him be), but acknowledges his love for Miss Fairfax and Harriet aspires to Mr. Knightley himself. All the dolls are running amok and Emma is at a loss what to do, when she sees her long series of blunders.

Another bitter pill that Emma has to swallow is the encounter with a parody of herself: the woman whom the Reverend Elton marries after his rejection by Emma. As has been pointed out, Mrs. Elton is not only "Emma's nemesis" with her desire to dethrone Emma in society, but also "a sign of what Emma — if unrepentant — could become." Mrs. Elton's version of being a "patroness" who is actually a "bully" (in regard to Jane Fairfax) is certainly more ignoble than Emma's (in regard to Harriet), but still bears an uncomfortable likeness to her inconsiderate meddling in the girl's life.[17]

Emma is fortunate to have a genuine educator in Mr. Knightley who is superior to herself in maturity, "sense" and "vision," while deeply concerned for her. He comes to her rescue simply by making Emma understand herself and her own motives better, thus enabling her to make amends to people she has

wronged and to correct situations she has engineered. Both as a man and as a more mature person than Emma — he is sixteen years older — Mr. Knightley has broader perspectives on life than she can possibly have. Above all, he has the more valid philosophy of education which makes him a better Pygmalion than the narcissistic Emma, or perhaps even Pygmalion himself. He knows that wise guidance combined with freedom for the individual to develop according to her or his own nature is the best path to self-understanding and that self-understanding is the cornerstone of wisdom.

We have several opportunities to see Mr. Knightley's pedagogic principles in action in the novel. When, for example, he learns that Emma tried to marry Harriet off to Mr. Elton, he tells her: "I shall not scold you. I leave you to your own reflections." (265) Whenever it becomes necessary, however, he does remonstrate openly and sharply, for example, pointing out to Emma that her cutting remark to "silly" Miss Bates was an act beneath her dignity (299). Another positive aspect of his educational philosophy is that he does not exempt himself from being capable of forming false judgments, misapprehend situations and see what you want to see rather than what "is." He likes Cowper's line: "Myself creating what I saw" (275) and understands that he too could be doing that at times. This is why he avoids "Emma's errors of imagination" (275) and "sees" so well, i.e. beyond the surface and beneath the obvious.

George Knightley, like Emma, thus engages in "sculpting," but his efforts rely more on a patient "chipping away" than drastic meddling. The "statue" he wants to slowly "chisel" into near-perfection is his beloved Emma. He has in fact patiently observed Emma from her earliest childhood onwards with a clear goal in mind: to help her make the best of herself. In spite of her constant rebellion against his authority, he has pursued his program of forming her personality, without hindering her from making mistakes and learning for herself. George Knightley is a Pygmalion who does not seek to create mirror images reflecting his own visage, but one who champions liberation from the self. Possibly, therefore, he also bears some resemblance to St. George, as his first name implies. At any rate, he frees his captive princess Emma from the dragon of self-infatuation. In full possession of the "manly" virtues of patience, truthfulness and justice, he is able to cure Emma of her "feminine" flaws (largely "errors of imagination") while being open to what she may yet teach him. His sober guidance leads Emma to correcting her immature self-indulgent fantasies of making the world around her the dolls' house of her childhood games. The notion that Austen embraced "the Platonic idea that the giving and receiving of knowledge, the active formation of another's character, or the more passive growth under another's guidance, is the truest and strongest foundation of love" seems entirely applicable to the eventual union of Emma and Knightley.[18]

The role of valid "former of personality" in *Emma* is predominantly a masculine one, apparently, which does not mean that all men are good guides in the formation of character, male or female, in Austen's world. Emma's father, for example, would not qualify as a "good sculptor," nor would the Reverend Elton, nor Frank Churchill. In my understanding of Austen's novels there is no question of either sex being inferior to the other, but there are different gender roles that members of either sex are more or less successful in realizing. In *Emma*, it is Mr. Knightley who most successfully embodies the "masculine" qualities of objective reasoning, patient observation of "facts" and truthfulness ("good sense") that together lead to the correct solutions of problems. Emma, initially, embodies the "feminine" flaws of self-infatuation and "imagining things" that are not there ("deceptive sensibility," or "womanly follies," 365). She will, however, learn to put "feminine sensibility" to more constructive use than indulging in self-adoration and self-deception. It is after all the right balance between sense and sensibility that the two sexes are called upon to realize when they play their gender roles properly and to the mutual benefit of each other.

To restate this notion once more: naturally, not all virtues belong to the male sex and all flaws to the female sex in Austen's world, where a balance between "masculine" sense and "feminine" sensibility is sought and where furthermore good sense may well be found in women and narcissistic vanity in men. If Emma, at least initially, belongs to the realm of self-indulgent sensibility, she nevertheless possesses not only negative qualities, but also admirable ones, such as love for beauty and genuine pity for other people's plights, at least when she forgets about herself in the role of "benefactress." Above all, Emma has the ability to regret her errors. Mr. Knightley, in his turn, is not perfect. He is at times too self-assured and too rarely questioning his values, admirable as these may be. He is not incapable of wounded self-esteem and not immune to jealousy. Both Emma and Mr. Knightley, however, learn to "know themselves," as well as each other. Their marriage is therefore likely to be based on the precarious — and therefore always to be carefully watched — balance between uncompromising common sense and softening and refining sensibility. It will be based on interactive educational exchange leading to the perfect blend of masculine and feminine perceptions of existence. Borrowing the medieval term of "specula speculorum," their marriage may well become one of mutual corrective, inter-active, mirroring, as opposed to two isolated individuals each staring into the mirror of isolating self-reflection. The mutual positive influencing of each other in the name of self-knowledge and knowledge of each other, as well as others — this is the "school of marriage" advocated in Jane Austen's *Emma*. Theirs is a "perfectly happy union" and will remain so, also because it is a union of continued educational interaction.[19]

Oblomov

In Goncharov's *Oblomov*, Olga Ilinskaia, like Emma Woodhouse, is a self-appointed Pygmalion of the female sex who will learn that her true role is that of Galatea, i.e. the work of art to be created under the wise guidance of a worthy man, and not that of the creator who accomplishes metamorphoses and shapes new forms. Like Emma, Olga chooses the wrong role at a transitional moment of her young life — when she, by her old friend Andrei Shtolts, is left with the charge of taking care of the lethargic Oblomov while he himself is on business in England (187). This charge rouses her ambitions — her self-esteem has often suffered from the fact that she feels herself "too much of a child" (189) next to the older Shtolts — and she is determined to surprise her "friend" by her success as the educator of an adult man, which would prove her own adulthood. She has in fact often heard him say that self-love (*samoliubie*) is "almost the sole mover controlling will" (200) and she may therefore not worry about the fact that ambition and vainglory, to a large extent, drive her. The experiment will benefit Oblomov — this is the time when notions of "rational egoism" are in the air. In any case, she is determined to "awaken" her ward, transforming his character and activating his life, in short, to "animate" the male Galatea, called Oblomov. This myth is brought into the Olga — Oblomov story from the outset, as the narrator presents us with a heroine who resembles a graceful and harmonious "statue" (1998: 192, 202). Shtolts confirms the notion that Olga is a "statue" awaiting her awakening, as he often tells her that she "has not yet begun to live" and that her "organism" yet has to wake up to "the music of nerves" — presumably he means erotic love (236). Olga who in her innocence is unaware of what kind of "awakenings' she is still destined for, therefore opts for the role of Pygmalion vis-à-vis Oblomov without misgivings, even though she sees the comicality of him being cast in the role of "some sort of Galatea" (235).

More daring than Emma, Olga not only attempts to shoulder a masculine creative role, but she even chooses a man for her "raw material." To be sure, she was encouraged by Shtolts, but he did not envision the determinedness with which she would tackle her educational task, nor the scope of her endeavors. Her choice of "wax" to be molded is furthermore not a youth but an intelligent man of mature years, albeit a pathologically weak-willed one. She even is prepared to correct this flaw in the "material" to be molded, a flaw that is not a social one like Miss Harriet's "blot" of illegitimacy, but a more complex spiritual ailment: his neurotic fear of life's responsibilities and a permanent "performance anxiety." If Oblomov is indeed the "Galatea" in relation to Olga's Pygmalion, as Olga has decided he is (235), he is one who fears stepping out of "her" block of marble to become the perfectly propor-

tioned statue of someone else's vision. He fears being cajoled into life, scrutinized and chiseled out of his "hiding" in the "marble block" of his "unformedness." In his well known poem "The Sculptor" ("Skul'ptor," 1841), the poet Evgenii Baratynsky envisions the process of the statue's formation-animation ("Skul'ptor," 1841) as a long process of constant, deliberate removal of ballast, by an artist fully in control of his own passionate temperament and, hence, the artistic act. At the end of this process of finding the form hidden in the block of marble, Galatea rewards her sculptor Pygmalion with tempestuous love, having been "chiseled" caressingly, and she is herself rewarded by an equally passionate response. Oblomov, however, would rather just be loved without being scrutinized, examined and "pulled" out of hiding. Ultimately, he can even do without erotic love, if he is just left alone with his beautiful dreams until the time comes for sinking back into and being reunited with formless matter forever. Interpreted within a Freudian context, he is indeed a "neurotic slumberer" who, "much like a baby in the womb only feels at home when he is in a comfortable, warm, and confined place."[20]

Olga's aspirations, albeit maternal to some extent (204), are however mainly those of Baratynsky's male Sculptor, i.e. she too wants to remove "layer after layer" (stanza 2) from the formless "block" that Oblomov is to her, in order to reveal his hidden inner and "true" form and potential in both the physical and intellectual spheres. Evoking another myth, Olga may also be seen as the "Eve" who forces a reluctant Adam to enter into active life, while he much rather would slumber and dream forever in Lilith's non-demanding realm of "not-Becoming"—just Being.

Before discussing Olga's technique of "sculpting" and "removing layers" in greater detail, an examination of her outer circumstances is in order. What induces Olga to embark on such an audacious project as the transformation of a "superfluous" man (a *barin*, who even is unable to put his socks on himself), steeped in dreams of an idyllic irretrievable past and an idyllic unrealizable future (180), into a "useful" and pragmatic member of the civilized and entrepreneurial society of the present? The reasons are several and they all come together at a time when Shtolts is temporarily absent and Oblomov is "handed over to her," as already mentioned. Clearly chance and circumstance are not the only factors in Olga's decision, but her biographical circumstances, her ambitious character and predisposition for experimentation (her "curiosity," 191), as well as the spiritual climate of the time also contribute. Not least there is the as yet subconscious love for Shtolts. All these factors bring her close to Austen's Emma.

Like Emma, Olga grew up without a mother (or father). Although her educator is an aunt, feelings of kinship hardly enter into their relationship. Rather, like Miss Taylor, the aunt leaves her charge considerable freedom to follow her own

inclinations. Olga is also financially independent and, again like Emma, she has the leisure to write herself into scenarios that are flattering to her self-image. In her case, the scenarios may well have been tinged by the debate on the "woman question." Living in the time she does, i.e. during the preparation for the great reforms of the 1860s, and being an assiduous reader, Olga must at least be aware of the discussion of new gender relations emerging in society. It seems likely that she at least has read Turgenev's *Rudin* with its constellation of a "weak man" and a "demanding" woman. Reading it may have intensified her desire to succeed where Natalia (in *Rudin*) failed. Certainly Oblomov, in spite of reading very little at the time we meet him, is aware of George Sand and her attempts to regulate "the relations of the sexes," while, unfortunately, in his view, "going astray" in these attempts (203). George Sand may have been too daring a reading material for Olga to be acquainted with, even though her aunt does not censor her, but she must be aware of the "woman question." In any case, the issue of gender relations was in the air and soon would find very radical solutions that were unacceptable to the author of *Oblomov*.

Olga's notion of new relations between the sexes does not extend to accepting "free liaisons." She insists on "propriety" in gender relations, even though she has taken the "lead" in the romance between her and Oblomov, this "unprepossessing Galatea."[21]

Taking the "lead," like Emma, Olga is unfortunately too young and naïve to be able to distinguish between her own immature ambitions and valid new concepts about new roles for women in future social life, between her wish to help Oblomov and impress Shtolts, and between her yearning to get to know love and making an educational experiment at the expense of another's sensibility. She therefore, in many ways, repeats Emma's errors. Thus she too is a "naively self-assured young girl,"[22] who more than anything else yearns to make her creation into a reflection of herself.[23] Narcissistically-romantically, she dreams of becoming Oblomov's "guiding star" illuminating his "dark life," as well as the "ray of light" reflected in the "stagnant waters" (232) of his existence. And yet, as already repeatedly stated, she paradoxically does not choose the role of inspiring Muse, as her traditional images of "star" and "ray of light" point to, but that of the masculine Creator. Judging by the importance of the motif of "penetrating glances" that is introduced as soon as their acquaintance begins, Olga does remember Baratynsky's poem "The Sculptor" well, and makes it into a "do-it-yourself-guide" of her own endeavors. Like the sculptor of the eponymous poem who "directs his penetrating glance at the block of stone" (stanza 1) before him, discerning the "shape of the nymph" in it even before he begins his sculpting, so Olga begins her task by intensely scrutinizing Oblomov, hardly ever letting him out of sight in fact. But "penetration" is a strategy that does not behoove women in any sense of the word.

"Penetration" is however the strategy Olga follows from the very beginning of her and Oblomov's romance. Conversing with Shtolts about Oblomov, she "fixes her eyes" on him and her "glances" convey intense curiosity, functioning as a "chisel" of sorts. A few moments later, Oblomov "meets her glance, which is full of curiosity," and directed "straight at him" (190). Hiding away and already believing himself safe, he does not perceive that she has taken up a position where she can focus her "sharp glance" on him, but before he leaves the gathering they both are at, he sees her leaning against the pedestal of a bust and "observing" him. Coming home he remembers her "focused glance" (191). And although this glance is "torture," it also stimulates: "it burns him, upsets him, and stirs his nerves and blood" (193). This vocabulary of seeing, glancing, observing and so forth continues for page after page. True, Oblomov too is "penetrating" Olga with his glances; at one point, he is even looking at her like a "hypnotizer" (*magnetizer*, 198), but the difference between his and her "glances" is this: he looks "involuntarily," unable "not to look" (198) — passively, in other words, but she looks in order to actively "examine."

So is Olga, like Baratynsky's sculptor, already seeing the shape of the "nymph," or more correctly, of the "future Oblomov" (370), in the "block of stone," or in this case, "chunk of dough" (169) before her? It would seem so, since one of the first tasks Olga sets herself is literally to remove "layer after layer" from the solid mass of fat she suspects hides her "nymph's" true body. Keeping the potential intertextual links in mind, Oblomov becomes Olga's plump Miss Harriet Smith who likewise is in need of "elongation." Olga too wants to improve on her "Galatea's" shape by thinning him out — not on a drawing, but in "real" life — removing the superfluous layers of fat that hide his "form." She therefore forbids him to have supper, forces him to take lengthy walks and to climb hills. She also wants to sharpen his intellect, and therefore Oblomov is forced to read and continue his education in a broad range of fields. In her case, she has a pupil who has the intellectual capacity to follow his mentor's challenges, as well as to surpass them, without difficulty. He is also a more than willing student. Yet, the educational program and the entire experiment, as is well known, fail. Why does Oblomov-Galatea sink back into formlessness and chaos, into "womb and tomb"? In what ways does this more than compliant student thwart his teacher's expectations? It would seem to come about because he does not rise to her challenge to become "superior" to her — to become the dominating male she set out to create, in other words, the second Shtolts. Olga does in fact after some time of playing Pygmalion come to doubt the appropriateness of this male role for herself and she tells Oblomov that, in the future, "he must surpass her" ("stat' vysshe menia," 351).

Thus Olga, like Emma, discovers that "playing real-life games" is not the same as "playing with dolls" (412). It is not as easy to switch gender roles

in real life as in a comedy, or when playing with dolls devoid of sexuality. In her case, the Oblomov "doll" surprises her not only by his inability to become a "man," but also, ironically, because he both proves to be too much of a "doll," or "automaton" that runs out of steam when she is not providing it, and at the same time the source of that "music of nerves" that Shtolts told her about. To begin with the first surprise, Olga realizes from the outset that Oblomov's forte is impressionability, not decisiveness, that she can expect "passionate lassitude and submissiveness ... but no stirring of will, no active thought" (231). It is therefore she who must provide the energy and vitality which he is so devoid of, to the point of being a "machine" that stops functioning without her "fire and fuel" (351). He then becomes a "dead soul," albeit one that, unlike Gogol's, is capable of multiple — short-lived — resurrections. When she feeds him vital emotional currents he is able to live, when she does not, he "dissolves" into a state of complete automatism ("I walk and do things and don't know what I'm doing," 351). Here is a typical "resurrection" following a reassurance by Olga that she will continue to provide "energy" (love): "He suddenly returned to life. And she ... did not recognize Oblomov: the sleepy face with its vague expression was instantly transfigured; his eyes opened wide, color returned to his cheeks, thoughts were stirring" (234–235).

Turning to the second surprise — that of Oblomov's erotic power — there is the paradox that the same man who is an "automaton" when his emotional batteries are depleted, also is able to be erotically stimulating when they are charged. In such "charged" moments, Oblomov is quite capable of providing that "music of the nerves" that Shtolts spoke of as awaiting Olga in the future. There are moments when he is not "a man waking up to life through her" (246) but is able to cast glances at her that are like an "igniting lens" (239). It is the cumulative effect of such glances that, apparently, lead to Olga's famous "lunacy of love" (269) or, more bluntly, solitary "orgasm in the garden."[24] Oblomov is not actively involved in the sensations besetting Olga, however; beyond having "ignited" her in the sense indicated above, he makes no romantic advances. Olga *is* "ignited" however by his "magnetic" glances and her "symptoms" are: fast breathing, frequent sighs, a violent heartbeat and, eventually, tears that help her "make the fire flow out" (270). This "autoerotic" scene points to all that is wrong in their reversed Pygmalion-Galatea relationship: there is no "real insidious chisel" that caresses Galatea into falling into the embraces of her triumphant creator and that makes her "blush with desire," and "entice" her wise creator (*mudrets*) to share the "victory of delight" ("K pobede negi," stanza 4), as is the case in Baratynsky's poem. The erotic "shafts" dispatched by "igniting" male eyes hit their target (Olga's "nerves"), but they do not manifest themselves in erotic action, not only because of Victorian prohibitions, but also because Oblomov believes more in "being in love" than in "loving." It is the first

poetic phase of budding love more than its "crude" physical manifestations that stir him and endow him with the short-lived erotic energy that he can muster for some fresh lovely summer mornings, but not at a time when demands on his masculinity become "cruder" and more demanding.

There are nevertheless some moments in their "love" when a kind of "coitus" does occur. It is the "elixir of love," music, that enables a "union" between them when they do share certain "ecstasies," albeit on a "higher" level than the "primitively" sexual one. Thus, it happens during an evening at an early stage of their acquaintance, when Olga sings and plays the piano for Oblomov, that time stops for both of them and they unite spiritually and "physiologically": "Neither stirred outwardly, but both were seared by an inward fire, and they trembled together in simultaneous tremors; their eyes filled with tears, called forth by the same mood" (201). Had there been an opportunity to hear a beautiful performance of "Casta Diva" in the park that "lunar" night when Olga experienced her strange "lunacy of love," there could possibly have been shared ecstasies once more — but probably again only on the level of aesthetic tremors.

It is in this division of existence into "mere" life and "celestial" art that the contradiction between the "automaton" Oblomov and the "poet" Oblomov (as Shtolts calls him) may find an explanation. The "chunk of dough" and the aesthete, the corporeal glutton and the lyrical poet Oblomov are one person, but divided into two hypostases: a pampered and mortal body that is completely separated from its "lyrical" soul, dwelling in other regions and "visiting" only at intervals. During one of his "resurrections" Oblomov tells Olga: — "Life is again opening up for me, life . . . I see it in your eyes, in your smile . . . in "Casta Diva" . . . in everything . . ." (235). She retorts that aesthetics and emotions are only "half" of life to which he replies that they are the "better half" (235). She agrees, but points out that the "better" part of life cannot exist without its prosaic foundation. This then is the source for Oblomov's invincible lethargy: the inability to poeticize the prose of life and to make it "acceptable" to himself. Oblomov cannot reconcile himself to the fact that the endless potential of the "dream" must be narrowed down to the "real dimensions" of life, nor is he able to understand that the two spheres of existence — that which belongs to the body and that which belongs to the soul — must interpenetrate, with the soul ennobling the body and the body "anchoring" the soul in reality. This separation of body and soul may be a typical romantic syndrome, but Oblomov's division of reality and dream is so severe that he completely abandons his body to prosaic, even gross, materialism while allowing his spirit to roam in purely celestial spheres where there is no "soil" in which the "flowers of dreams" can grow and manifest their beauty physically. The result is a "grotesque romantic" — not a haggard lovelorn lover who writes poems to the Moon, but a fat admirer of "Casta Diva" who devours a five course meal after having "trembled" and wept

over the sounds of that aria. Incidentally, his love for the aria "Casta Diva" from Bellini's *Norma* may be his tribute to an (unconscious) awareness of this very dichotomy that he is cursed by: after all the priestess who sings this aria to the chaste moon goddess is herself not chaste (as Oblomov knows, p. 179), but has betrayed her temple vows of purity to prosaic seduction by a Roman legionnaire. She perishes as a result between the irreconcilable Ideal and her earthly appetites. Oblomov's ironic fate is to become the "dead soul" of gluttony and self-indulgence, when Olga, his "resurrector," is gone, because he loved beauty too much to "soil" it by reality. Having no more recourse to recharged batteries, he becomes an "empty" but solid "shell," a rotund body in which the life force slowly is smothered by flesh ("ia gasnu" is a favorite expression of Oblomov's, 352). Oblomov is the "dualist" par excellence and his ironic tragedy is that he must dwell entirely in the world of unrelieved prose because he wanted to live only in the world of poetry and music.

It could be argued that Oblomov cannot be seen as belonging to the realm of "dead souls," since he is the one who severely criticizes them (in Part One); it could also be argued that Oblomov's dreams about his ideal life as outlined to Shtolts (in Part Two) are both sensuous and poetic, combining the delights of the body with tender emotions, the erotic dilly-dallying with a peasant girl with love for an — educated and pure — mother-wife in his "idyllic-utopian" vision of the future estate Oblomovka. It is however the fatal contact with Eros and Beauty in the encounter with the forever challenging Olga that reveals his inability to step out of the "wrong" role of "consumer" of music that he wants to never end, bringing about the final — irreparable — division of body and soul. After the failure with Olga, Oblomov's body goes one way — that of gluttony and unromantic reproduction — and his spirit abandons him.

Emma does not encounter complexities of this sort, since in her — far from idyllic or simplistic world — the harmonious synthesis of "sense and sensibility" usually is achieved with relative ease. Common sense would seem to be more prevalent in Highbury and London than in Oblomovka and Petersburg. Miss Harriet and Oblomov are not comparable except in their function of plump experimental objects (249). Oblomov is in many ways more like Emma's father than Harriet since he too is "much older man in ways than in years" (Emma, 25). Mr. Woodhouse's fixation on his body is presented as entirely comical and endearing, however, whereas Oblomov's refusal to accept that life is change — is tragic-comic in its "anti-Faustian" desire to arrest time and make the "beautiful moment" last forever. Nevertheless, the constellation of "female Pygmalion" and the "creation of a living work of art" closely links the two novels, as does the motif of the even-tempered, but deeply committed, marriage that results from establishing proper gender roles. Shtolts and Olga create as solid, yet poetic, a household as do Emma and Mr. Knightley before them.

Shtolts is a half-German and it is his German father's very German upbringing of Andrei in the spirit of "no-nonsense" and constant self-discipline and work that is usually the focus in discussions of national oppositions between the "West" and Russia, often perceived to be a dominant theme in the novel. But his father's "sense" was counter-balanced by his Russian mother's "sensibility" and Andrei Shtolts is a blend of both. Furthermore, other than German "national characteristics" are involved in his cultural make-up as well. Shtolts is frequently linked to England and what this country stood for at the time. In fact he is in many ways a German-Russian-English Mr. Knightley.

Both men carry names that evoke lofty concepts of proud masculinity (the German *Stolz* means "pride") ; both are "self-made" men who have earned what they have by hard work, wherefore their self-assurance is legitimate. Neither Knightley, nor Shtolts are aristocrats by birth, but they are "aristocrats" by merit. Both are very lean: Knightley "sticks" out amongst a group of well rounded gentlemen and Shtolts looks like an "English thorough-bred" (161) — all muscles and no fat. Both are skeptical of the imagination because of the tricks it plays on sober assessment, but neither is lacking in feeling: Shtolts knows the borderline between the world of genuine emotions and the world "of falsehood and sentimentality" (163) and — not least therefore — does not suffer from a "castration of the heart" (163), as many critics have claimed he does. Mr. Knightley too has an unerring sense of the difference between the fake (Mrs. Elton) and the genuine underneath the fake (Emma) and is fully capable of deep and constant feeling. To round off the picture of Shtolts's "English" features: he knows why the "English have sent a ship to the East," obviously following the news of their trade missions to the Orient closely (186); he shocks Oblomov by suggesting that one can go to both Africa and America, just like the English do (166) and it is to London that he goes when he entrusts Oblomov into Olga's care. He also knows the difference between an English "gentleman" and a Russian "barin" — the former knows how to put on his boots without the help of a servant (177), the Russian *barin* does not cope with pulling on his stockings.

Like Mr. Knightley, Shtolts has known Olga since she was a child, and although he has taken less interest in her than Mr. Knightley did in Emma, he always did see in her "a child that inspired great hopes" (189), very possibly hopes that had something to do with "forming" her into a "new woman," when the time would come. It is, however, only when they meet in Paris after Olga has already parted from Oblomov that he fully realizes what she means to him and that he sees she has "developed" (401). By this time, Olga has no Pygmalion aspirations any more and has "reversed" to being a "statue" (367), a quite "lifeless" one at this stage and one that therefore is in need of "animation." The stimuli she needs to "reawaken" have to be strong and therefore the shallow

social pleasantries Shtolts initially offers her are ineffective. He realizes this and attempts to rise to her challenge. Successfully doing so, he eventually learns all about her "blunders" (to borrow a term from *Emma*) in the relation with Oblomov (except for the "lunacy" in the garden). Like Mr. Knightley, Shtolts is able to make the young woman see what really happened and he is, again like him, quite blunt about destroying her illusions. To her remark that she must have loved Oblomov since after all the "heart cannot deceive," he retorts: "Yes, it can: and sometimes fatally so! In your case your heart was not involved however... it was just your imagination and self-love..." [that deceived you] (419). Olga is gradually convinced by Shtolts's analysis of the past—that it was but a "dream" (421) and that "true reality" (*istina*) is unfolding before her now. Shtolts's appeal to Olga's self-knowledge and sober assessment of the past go hand in hand with sympathetic love and his eventual victory is marked by her leaning on his chest "as if he were her mother" (422). It would seem that Shtolts is "masculine" enough to include "maternal tenderness" in the role of husband that he now has embraced. Nor is erotic love entirely forgotten in their union, judging by the fact that Olga often behaves like a "Bacchante" in their marriage and poetry too has its place in it since even the common sense, yet tender, Shtolts has a feeling for the poetic side of life. After his successful proposal to Olga, it seems that he can hear her "singing" on his way home. And while Shtolts acquires a greater appreciation of the poetic aspects of life and love, Olga becomes a Galatea gradually returning to life, warmed by the "sparks of an unheard-of friendship" (421). This "unheard-of friendship" could be called "love," but it is one that is based on greater equality between the sexes than the "romance." It is a love that is able to see woman as a both earthly and spiritual being; in her marriage to Shtolts, Olga can sing "Casta Diva" without having to be a chaste temple priestess.

Emma ends with the report of Emma's and Mr. Knightley's wedding, as well as their domestic arrangements (that include Mr. Woodhouse), and we may assume that they will now live happily ever after. Being each others' "correcting mirrors" and therefore able to maintain a blend of sense and sensibility that does justice to mind, heart and body, their future existence is bound to be a harmonious blend of sobriety and imaginative undertakings, mercantile-farming enterprise and emotional commitment. There is no need to go into details about their harmonious existence, since the extrapolations we can make seem very likely and need not be spelled out. In Olga's and Shtolts's case we get a glimpse of their married life when already quite a few years of conjugal life have passed and it seems that possibly their happiness may be waning.

The question whether their "unheard-of friendship" has been a success, or not, has received different answers. Opinions vary widely with many critics seeing Olga as regretting her choice of the "foreign" Shtolts and hankering after

the lost "poetry" of her romance with Oblomov. Her emotional life has withered, the anti-Shtoltsian critics claim; she has realized that living merely for the accumulation of wealth is meaningless.

There is no denying that we meet the couple at a moment of crisis when Olga is in existential despair. She has everything she ever wished for and cannot see what else there is to strive for. The "pro-Oblomovian" critics therefore imply that what she has acquired was not worth striving for. She now seems to agree, it is also argued, with Oblomov's doubts that life has any meaning beyond the "beautiful moment," since ultimately all striving is futile and the "ominous shadow" of the inevitable end in the "abyss" invariably — sooner or later — falls on existence. In short, she has lost her "soul," having sacrificed it to routine and restless movement in "no direction." She has sacrificed poetic culture ("Casta Diva" and parks full of lilac) to civilization" (newspaper reading, correspondence, gardening) and passion has yielded to partnership. She has chosen that "getting used to things" and "following routines" (*privychka*) that, as Pushkin said, "replaces happiness."

And even clever Shtolts does not seem to have a "good" answer to her doubts and queries, merely telling her that hers is an experience shared by many who reach her stage of life, at least by the more intelligent people among humankind. Having checked up on her health (he does believe "nerves" can cause many ailments), he admits that he has no "solutions," and even holds out the prospect that many sorrows may well still lie ahead of both of them. The reality of the "shadow" that will fall over their life together cannot be denied, he concedes. There just is no Oblomovka where time can be arrested and the "abyss" on the periphery of the estate ignored. His only suggestion is to see life as it "is," to patiently encounter the tests of fate and to find comfort in mutual love even in the very face of death.

It is this "trivial pessimism" that has led many critics and scholars to "condemn" the capitalist Shtolts and to see his and Olga's marriage as a failure. One cannot but agree with Vsevolod Setschkarev however that Shtolts's refusal to construct sunny utopias rather demonstrates the opposite — his trust in Olga's maturity and his confidence that their marriage can stand the tests of doubt.[25] Olga and Shtolts are partners in a dialogue where Olga, as she is wont, challenges her husband to forever rethink his positions and to grapple with the most difficult existential problems. Shtolts is still the "Pygmalion" of the union, but he is not "superior" to Olga, since they are interdependent in their development — each others' *specula speculorum*. It is true that Shtolts no longer believes that Olga will ever reach his "former ideal of woman and wife" (463), but he also sees that she not only continues to grow spiritually, but also continues to make demands on him that force him to develop further. He is not an impeccable ideal himself and is fully aware of this fact. Thus it would

seem that, as mutually "correcting mirrors" to each others' "visages," they will be able to share an existence which will pursue ever new both practical and spiritual goals. Olga may nostalgically remember the "lunacy of love" she once experienced in a beautiful park full of lilac bushes, but she also knows that it would not be the remedy for the "illness" (461) that has now befallen her. That remedy is found in the "friendship" she has found with a husband in which they both are of equal value, but in which they each have their distinct role to play: Shtolts that of leader and Olga that of challenger who tests her leader, constantly checking up on whether he still is worthy of that position. When we leave Olga and Shtolts, the latter still seems to be as worthy of leadership as Mr. Knightley is in relation to Emma. Olga in her turn has retained the capacity to learn that also Emma demonstrates. No doubt one of her hardest and most rewarding lessons was the realization that magic moments — however magic — cannot last beyond the moment. Magic, by definition, is opposed to duration, and can only be reexperienced — for a while.

Conclusions

Granted that Goncharov's *Oblomov* does enter into dialogue with Austen's *Emma* — to what extent does it do so and to what purpose? Certainly Oblomov is not only a "response" to Austen's novel and nothing else. Goncharov's novel deals with problems that are more all-encompassing than Austen's — it transcends gender issues and the genre of the happy-end "comedy of morals." The ambiguous character of Oblomov himself transcends the issue of by which criteria "compatible couples" find each other.[26] The compatibility of couples presented in Austen's world certainly forms part of Goncharov's also, but his novel poses questions about the meaning of life that not even the happiest (most educative) marriage offers an answer to. It poses value questions on a national and universal scale.

Within the specific sector of marriage and women's education, however, Goncharov, I would argue, expresses a fundamental agreement with the English writer's gender and marriage philosophy. Both reject the radical changes in gender roles that were looming on the horizon of Austen's times and were part of the current debate in Goncharov's, but at the same time they see new partnership possibilities and new spheres of action for women in the future. Both are "feminists" in the sense that they do not wish to see women "limited and devalued within a culture,"[27] but neither do they advocate the "George Sand" vision of "free liaisons," or the "Chernyshevskian" vision of marriage based on purely rational love that "profits" both partners in various ways. Both view the "good" marriage as the best space for proper gender relations — one

in which husband and wife are engaged in a process of mutual mentorship and "forming" of each other, and where therefore their lives are a continuous learning process serving the perfecting of personality in both genders. Goncharov's novel ends less "happily" than Austen's, by including a marriage that does not serve spiritual development (however "tender" it is) — Oblomov's eventual marriage to Madame Pshenitsyn — and by extending its vision to the downward slope that must follow any peak of bliss (in Olga's and Shtolts's marriage). Even then, however, it reaffirms the validity of the notion that sense and sensibility must be kept in harmonious balance at all stages of life. Facing problems — even insoluble ones — with sense and sobriety, while also paying tribute to the demands of sensibility and the need to escape — at times — into the magic of art — is in both works seen as the best guarantee for a slow, but sure, progress toward a better community of men and women. Goncharov makes plainer than Austen that the perfect marriage is a constant effort and therefore not accessible to all and that creating the perfect harmony of body and soul in a marriage based on "cocreative" friendship may elude some of the most refined and delicate representatives of humankind. Oblomov did not err in positing the idyllic life as an ideal, but he over-emphasized the sensibility aspect of his envisioned mode of life, and he under-estimated the effort it takes to create even an approximation of the ideal. To be able to effectively counter a "civilization" that in the pursuit of material goods has lost the ideal of the harmonious personality, the "culture" of the poetic life must arm itself with "sense," not indulge itself in escapist dreams. If Goncharov read Austen, he is likely to have felt a deep sympathy for her stance that only the balance of sense and sensibility can lead to the creation of a good marriage and — beyond that — to the construction of a valid society in which both industry and the arts, material and spiritual values, are able to flourish together. The creation of a "beautiful world" that does not "disappear" (Schiller) at the slightest threat to it, depends on the interaction of imagination and realization, of word and deed, and, not least, of woman and man, provided Galatea and Pygmalion do not switch roles.

Notes

1 The edition quoted in the present article is: *Jane Austen, Emma, Complete, Authoratative Text with Biographical, Historical, and Cultural Contexts, Critical History, and Essays from Contemporary Critical Perspectives*, edited by Alistair M. Duckworth, Boston, New York: Bedford/St. Martin's, 2002. Page references are given in brackets in the text.

[2] The edition referred to in this article is: *Polnoe sobranie sochinenii i pisem*, v dvadtsati tomakh, tom chetvertyi, "Oblomov," Sankt-Peterburg: "Nauka," 1998. Page references are given in brackets in the text.

[3] *Pride and Prejudice* was translated into Russian for the first time as late as 1967.

[4] The two months he spent in Portsmouth in 1852, and visiting London, were not spent in museums but in observing English life. This immersion into English society (it is true, largely, as an observer) should have benefited his language competence.

[5] See Daniel Schümann, *Oblomov-Fiktionen: Zur produktiven Rezeption von I. A. Goncarovs Roman Oblomov im deutschsprachigen Raum*, Würzburg: Ergon Verlag, 2005, p. 43.

[6] According to Lionel Trilling, Jane Austen in *Emma* "contrives an idyllic world, or the closest approximation of an idyllic world that the genre of the novel will permit, and brings into contrast with it the actualities of the social world, of the modern self." See his "*Emma* and the Legend of Jane Austen," in *Jane Austen. Emma, a Casebook*, edited by David Lodge, Glasgow: MACMILLAN, 1968, p. 165. "Oblomov's Dream" is an "ambivalent idyll," in Richard Peace 's view. See his "Oblomov" in: *A Critical Examination of Goncharov's Novel*, Birmingham, p. 6.

[7] E. Krasnoshchekova, *Ivan Aleksandrovich Goncharov. Mir tvorchestva*, Sankt-Peterburg: "Pushkinskii fond," 1997, p. 47.

[8] On this issue see Krasnoshchekova.

[9] See R. E. Hughes, "The Education of Emma Woodhouse," in *Jane Austen. Emma, a Casebook*, edited by David Lodge, Glasgow: MACMILLAN, 1968, p. 189.

[10] Goncharov frequented the Putiatin home after the completion of the voyage to Japan, i.e. after 1855. See I. A. Goncharov, *Polnoe sobranie sochinenii i pisem*, v dvadtsati tomakh, tom tretii, Sankt-Peterburg: "Nauka," 2000, p. 417.

[11] See N. I. Barsov, "Vospominaniia o I. A. Goncharove," in *I. A. Goncharov. Ocherki. Stat'i. Pis'ma*, Moscow: Izd. "Pravda," 1986, p. 507. The expression "aristocrat-angloman" is taken from volume 3 of *Polnoe sobranie sochinenii i pisem*, *op. cit.*, p. 417.

[12] A personal reason could be found in the fact that Mary Knowles was from a family of English admirals and married to a Russian admiral. It will be remembered that naval officers and their families make up the backbone of the cast of characters in *Persuasion*. Two of Jane Austen's brothers made a career in the British Navy, a fact that may have been known to Mary Knowles. Goncharov had his own connection to the naval world. His godfather Nikolai Tregubov who played an important role in his upbringing had a naval education and served in the Black Sea Fleet (*Polnoe sobranie sochinenii i pisem*, *op. cit.*, vol. 3, p. 402). The fact that Tregubov "acquainted Goncharov with the map of the stars and with naval instruments" and plied him with literature about sea voyages, influenced the writer's decision to join Putiatin's expedition (402).

[13] His love for E. V. Tolstaia was a "classical case of unrequited love" (Iurii Loshchits, "Goncharov," Moskva: Molodaia gvardiia, (Zizn' zamechatel'nykh liudei), 1977, p. 145).

[14] "From a psychological point of view, *Emma* is the story of a young woman with both narcissistic and perfectionist trends." See Bernard J. Paris, *Character and Conflict in Jane Austen's Novels*, Detroit, 1978, p. 73.

[15] After Austen, it would be George Bernard Shaw who, in English literature (in 1913), most famously turned to the Pygmalion myth, making the sculptor into the English linguist, Professor Higgins, and Galatea clearly into a London flower seller, speaking "dreadful" Cockney English. Higgins's Galatea clearly belongs to the rebellious ones.

[16] Mark Schorer, "The Humiliation of Emma Woodhouse," in Lodge (ed.), 1968, p. 182.

[17] See Devoney Looser, "'The Duty of Woman by Woman': Reforming Feminism in Emma," *Emma* (2002), pp. 588, 589.

[18] This view belongs to Richard Simpson. See the chapter "A Critical History of Emma," in Lodge, pp. 52–57.

[19] I agree with Edgar F. Shannon who disputes that there is anything "satirical" in the author's attitude toward Emma's and Knightley's marriage and that we should doubt the author's "assurance of the 'perfect happiness of the union," as has been claimed. The "union" is indeed "an unequivocal statement of fact, to which a close reading of the novel completely assents." See his "*Emma*: character and construction," in Lodge (1968), p. 145.

[20] See John Givens, "Wombs, Tombs, and Mother Love. A Freudian Reading of Goncharov's *Oblomov*," in *Goncharov's Oblomov: A Critical Companion*, ed. by Galya Diment, Evanston, Illinois: Northwestern University Press, 1998, pp. 91, 93.

[21] The expression is Beth Holmgren's, who also notes that Olga "reverses and revises male-female roles." See her article "Questions of Heroism in Goncharov's *Oblomov*," in *Goncharov's Oblomov: A Critical Companion* (ed. Galya Diment), p. 85.

[22] Krasnoshchekova, p. 311.

[23] Many critics agree that Olga is not entirely altruistic in her attempts to reshape Oblomov. For example, Karl Kramer sees her as so naïve as not to realize the fact that she has "another, less laudatory, aim (than doing Oblomov good) — to remake him into the sort of man she can admire." See his "Mistaken Identities and Compatible Couples in Goncharov's Oblomov" in *Goncharov's Oblomov: A Critical Companion*, *op. cit.*, pp. 68–76.

[24] John Givens, *op. cit.*, p. 97.

[25] See his "Andrej Stol'c in Goncarov's *Oblomov*: An Attempted Reinterpretation," in *To Honor Roman Jakobson, Essays on the Occasion of His Seventieth Birthday*, The Hague, 1967 (vol. III).

[26] The expression is taken from Karl D. Kramer's article title "Mistaken Identities and Compatible Couples in Goncharov's *Oblomov*," in *Goncharov's Oblomov: A Critical Companion* (1998).

[27] Devoney Looser (*Emma*, 2002), p. 577.

Clairvoyant Mothers and Erring Sons: Dostoevsky's *Crime and Punishment* and Conrad's *Under Western Eyes*

Introduction

To examine the links between Joseph Conrad's *Under Western Eyes* (1911)[1] and Fedor Dostoevsky's *Crime and Punishment* (1866)[2] does not mark a new critical initiative. It is "generally recognized" that the former is "in many ways an answer to," and "a rewriting of" the latter, wherefore the "mimetic/ dialectical relationship [of the two novels to each other] needs no belaboring."[3] Conrad scholars see "obvious analogies" between the two novels, analogies that Conrad clearly wanted to have perceived; an "identification" of these analogies "makes the semantic texture of *Under Western Eyes* richer.[4]

The question of how this semantic enrichment manifests itself usually receives answers that posit rivalry and polemics between the writers. Conrad attempted the "contradictory task of besting Dostoevsky at his own game" — the "novel of ideas,"[5] is one such answer that assumes a sweeping antagonism on the part of Conrad in relation to Dostoevsky in general and *Crime and Punishment* in particular. The same critic argues that Conrad uses Dostoevskian "setting, plot, character, dialogue, tone and imagery" solely in order to "refute the view of human experience, the depiction of Russia, and the religious beliefs set forth in *Crime and Punishment*."[6] Another critic argues that Conrad is engaged in a "polemic" with Dostoevsky, above all in regard to his notion of Russia's special historical mission of worldwide salvation, in Conrad's view a classical example of suspect political mysticism.[7]

Yet another eminent Conrad critic complicates the picture of Conrad's "assault" on Dostoevskian values in *Under Western Eyes* (without denying the assault) by pointing out that there were "inescapable similarities" between Dostoevsky's vision of his nation and that of Conrad's father on his. A minor poet and playwright, Apollo Korzeniowski, Conrad's father, was a prominent Polish patriot who was active on behalf of his "dismembered" country, which Russia, Prussia and Austria had divided up between themselves at the end of the eighteenth century, with Russia the least popular "landowner" among

them. Conrad's father, very much like Dostoevsky, mixed "Christianity [and] messianism," only in his case the two were combined with "insurrectionism" against the Russian empire and in Dostoevsky's case, with subjugation of the Polish nation.[8] In addition, of course, the "Christianity" each country embraced was different: Catholicism, in the case of Poland and Orthodoxy in the case of Russia. The Russian writer, as is well known, perceived Catholicism as a "socialist perversion" of genuine Christianity (read: Orthodoxy), bound to produce many real Grand Inquisitors in addition to the fictitious one he presented in his famous "Legend of the Grand Inquisitor," this central chapter of *The Brothers Karamazov*. In addition, Conrad's family paid dearly for their Polish "populism"[9] — both parents were exiled to Vologda in northern Russia and both died young, partly because of the strain of exile and persecution that negatively affected their already precarious health. The orphan of "martyrs" in a noble cause who himself opted out of this kind of martyrdom by "abandoning" Poland, Conrad cannot but have had complex feelings about a writer he saw as an epitome of all he disliked most about official Russia: its political and religious-messianistic mythmaking, "cynically" used to maintain autocratic power and enslave the Russian nation, as well as those lands incorporated by it. This aversion toward especially political myth-making included a skeptical attitude toward the Polish populist variant as well, even when it arguably served nobler causes than autocracy and imperialism. The refusal to embrace the Polish cause was combined with the guilty awareness that perhaps he "should" have endorsed the Polish insurrection myth after all, even though it served entirely unrealistic goals that involved "useless" sacrifices. The Polish nation's and his immediate family's most sacred values were embedded in it.[10]

In short, the dialogue between the two writers has largely been characterized in terms of Polish-Russian ideological, political and national conflict. Indisputably there is a wide-ranging critique of Russian political myth-making in *Under Western Eyes*. In regard to the mission of the "God-sanctioned" Russian autocracy to save the world for the Orthodox God, Dostoevsky endorsed it and added to it by including the cult of the "God-bearing" Russian peasantry in it. Conrad showed that this myth was used to justify state tyranny and that it victimized its own Russian citizens, not to mention those of other ethnic backgrounds. Conrad's critique is also aimed at Russian underground revolutionary activities, even though these quite often included the liberation of Poland in their program. As has been said already, he had mixed feelings about Polish insurrectionism, as well. This skepticism toward both Polish and Russian populist revolutionary myth-making and insurrectionist activities of all kinds has been less noticed and will be discussed below in the analysis of the character of Haldin. Revolutionary activities are parodied and ridiculed in Conrad's novel in his depiction of the Russian political émigrés in Geneva — quite

possibly Conrad in these sections supports his favorite Russian writer, Turgenev, agreeing with his similar presentation of such circles in *Smoke* ("Dym," 1867). Thus, the novel does not only focus on ideological clashes on the grand scale of age-old Polish-Russian conflict, clashes that are aggravated and complicated by a personal stance which wholeheartedly opposes both Russian autocracy and Russian revolutionary-socialist populism and which only half-heartedly, if at all, endorses Polish insurrection and revolutionary-socialist populism of any kind. It is also devoted to the issue of how an individual may salvage his self-respect and "honor" (to use this fundamental concept of the Polish *szlachta)*[11] by courageously confronting his own guilt. Whatever animosities inevitably were bound to arise between Dostoevsky's political mysticism and Conrad's distrust of it (as well as his own father's), the Russian and the Polish writer agreed on one fundamental issue: that a transgressor of hallowed moral laws could redeem his crime only by acknowledging it as such, by admitting it to have been an act perpetrated by one's own volition and, hence, choice. There is, in other words, in both works the philosophical and ethical premise that man has a free will that enables her/him to choose between good and evil, hence makes him/her responsible for her/his actions. Dostoevsky may have promised his transgressor Raskolnikov celestial rewards for freely chosen atonement and Conrad nothing more than peace of mind, but the two writers shared the notion that guilt is only undone by facing up to it and by rejecting ideological excuses and grand myths in the process of acknowledging one's wrongdoing. Killing another, betraying another, this is the same as killing oneself and betraying oneself,[12] regardless of the fact that powerful ideologies and national myths persuade many to think that there are excusable murders and justifiable betrayals. Here is the sphere where Conrad acknowledges his predecessor's abilities and values fully and positively: in the demonstration of the "un-deception" of oneself and of acquiring the self-knowledge that sweeps away the veils of insidious and exculpatory excuses and rationales — however persuasive — Dostoevsky is a master whom Conrad does not disclaim, but agrees with. His own treatment of the theme of salvaging self-respect in *Under Western Eyes* is, however, indeed more "pessimistic" than Dostoevsky's in *Crime and Punishment*. Neither of his protagonists embarks on a "new life" after achieving full self-knowledge whereas Dostoevsky's reformed murderer does, with God's and Sonya's (his "angel's") help — beyond the novel's textual frame at any rate.

This interpretative focus on moral self-discovery in *Under Western Eyes* leads me to see two "Raskolnikovs" in Conrad's novel, plus one (English) "Razumikhin."[13] I also attempt to introduce Svidrigailov into Conrad's novel, a figure, to my knowledge, usually dropped from discussions of *Under Western Eyes* as a response to *Crime and Punishment*. Finally, I explore the motif of sham and genuine "clairvoyance," linked to more or less exalted emanations of the *Feminine*

in its maternal "Madonna-hypostasis." In this category, a "mythological" character may be found even in Conrad's anti-mythic novel, namely the Mother Who Sees the Invisible, because she identifies with the suffering of her son. Both novels, however indirectly, celebrate the Mother of God by portraying mothers who, however flawed in their passionate and indiscriminate love for their sons, partake of a Stabat Mater dolorosa aura, showing them being "co-crucified" with their guilty, but repentant, sons.

Ideological Crimes in Crime and Punishment and Under Western Eyes

Both Conrad's Victor Victorovich Haldin (the first Raskolnikov in Conrad's novel) and Dostoevsky's Rodion Romanovich Raskolnikov are "idealistic murderers" who believe that they have received a special exemption from traditional morality in order to promote the welfare of humankind by eliminating "harmful" people. Raskolnikov kills a "louse" (i.e. an old woman pawnbroker) — and her innocent sister who happens to surprise the murderer. Haldin blows up the reactionary czarist minister of the Interior de P(lehve), throwing a second bomb after the first flung by his collaborator, had failed to hit the target, i.e. the minister, and lethally wounded his driver instead. Haldin's bomb kills de P, as well as several innocent bystanders and his fellow terrorist.[14] Both murderers live in "mythic" worlds where some people are absolutely evil (czars, czarist officials and pawnbrokers, "bloodsuckers" of all kinds) and others absolutely good (students who love the folk and the "soil," *intelligenty* who use their reason, *razum,* for the creation of the perfect society, discarding the common sense, *rassudok*, approach to life which, it was assumed, only served feathering one's own nest). Logically, therefore, the "good" must eliminate the evil, so as to leave more room for the good, this elimination serving Progress. Both killers believe that they will be able to continue their lives without remorse after their murders of "obstructionist" people who have rightly been eliminated (the "collateral damage" was unavoidable) and both find out that they are unable to do so. Raskolnikov's path of self-punishment toward expiation, as is well known, is long and tortuous; Haldin's *self*-punishment follows immediately upon his crime, since he voluntarily walks into the police trap set for him, as is argued here. Both doubt the validity of their action from the outset. While Raskolnikov has his famous horse-dream that reveals his misgivings even before the crime, Haldin expresses his doubts about his "mission" to Razumov virtually from the moment he appears, as will be further discussed below.

Two things are usually assumed about Haldin: that he is a "hero" (a "Held" plus the Russian ending for names *-in*) in the context of the novel (whatever

one may think about terrorism)[15] and that he leaves Razumov's apartment, not suspecting his betrayal by Razumov. This would mean that he understands the truth only after his arrest (he is told about Razumov's part in it), which makes his refusal "to implicate [Razumov] in the assassination" a truly remarkable gesture of loyalty toward a man who is the cause of his arrest and imminent execution.[16] It is true that Haldin had promised Razumov never to betray him: "I'll know how to keep silent — no matter what they may be pleased to do to me," he tells his assumed sympathizer (16). It could be argued that he deemed it beneath his dignity to sink to a betrayer's low level himself by not keeping his own promise. A hero cannot, after all, act dishonorably, even, or perhaps especially, toward a dishonorable man.

Alternatively,[17] he may have accepted his arrest and execution as a valid punishment for his own crime. After all, as a believer — and, like Raskolnikov, he states that he is — he has all the time tried to see himself as an instrument of God's will. Once his conviction that he is "God's warrior" falters, he is bound to see himself as wicked and deserving of punishment. He may have chosen not to betray Razumov because he accepted the "verdict" on himself that it seems to him the "noble" Razumov pronounced on his action. Haldin, as is evident in the scenes where he seeks shelter with Razumov, is himself far from convinced that killing bad people is a good thing, not to mention the "collateral damage." When Razumov (in Haldin's interpretation of his demeanor and statements) agrees that it is not, also implying that Haldin is about to add yet another victim to his list, i.e. himself, by implicating him, the terrorist immediately leaves his fellow-student's lodgings. Arguably he knows that he will walk straight into a police trap.

Indications of his decision to give himself up to the police may be itemized as follows: first, he leaves Razumov's room well before the assigned time for his planned *rendez-vous* with the Russian peasant driver Ziemianich (whose Polish-sounding name would seem to make him a representative of both the Polish and Russian folk) who is supposed to take him to safety;[18] second, his last words to Razumov are "so be it." They are cried out "sadly," in "a low, distinct tone" (48). Third, just before his fatalistic outcry, he asked Razumov whether he is "loathsome" to him (47) and interpreted Razumov's ensuing silence as a confirmation of his "loathsomeness."

Haldin has in fact spent his whole time in Razumov's room trying to keep his doubts about his action at bay and to justify himself — without much success. Presenting himself as a soldier in the "war" against "all falsehood" (18), telling Razumov of his "removal" of "de P," he initially speaks of his act in a "curt, self-confident voice" (14), but he then adds, in a "dull" tone, that to kill is "weary work" (14). Similarly, somewhat later, Haldin speaks of the "Russian soul" that he feels himself to be part of and whose lofty mission in world history he has

contributed to by killing de P(lehve) and bystanders, but again he suddenly shifts mood. He tells Razumov: "It [the Russian soul] has a mission I tell you, or else why should I have been moved to do this — reckless — like a butcher — in the middle of all these innocent people — scattering death — I! I! . . . I wouldn't hurt a fly!" (18). He then bursts into tears.

His name, deriving, as has, convincingly, been shown, from the Russian (originally Greek) words *khaldei* or *khalda*, both "connoting insolence, meanness and deception," and, less likely, from German *Held(in)*,[19] intimates that he is a "deceiver" (the word means *Schwindler*, according to Vasmer), who fools others and most of all himself with his ideological rhetoric and abstract myths about a sacred Russian folk untainted by all evil. Had his name been ***Na***-*haldin* rather than just Haldin, this would have been (too) obvious, the Russian word *nakhal* meaning "insolent fellow," and the Polish adjective *nachalny* meaning "importune," "insistent," "impudent." The "insolence" that Haldin is guilty of is not found in his behavior or character, but in a kind of "democratic despotism." He comes to Razumov, not having even once asked himself, or him, whether the latter shares his political views, imposing his own as one that all "honest" people must be sharing. He imputes to him that he must approve of his assassination, even though killing traditionally is seen as a misdeed. When Razumov intimates that he does not share Haldin's myth of noble warfare against black evil, his defenses crumble, since, unlike many of his fellow terrorists, he has had his doubts about this himself. It is this self-doubting quality rather than his political "idealism," and certainly not his successful blowing up of people that makes him, in spite of everything, a positive character in Conrad's novel, and even a "hero." At least he becomes one after he gives himself up to the *Okhrana*, the Secret Police, fully knowing all the consequences of his decision.[20]

Razumov's characterization in criticism on the novel has largely been that of "betrayer of trust," but he has not acted entirely deceptively in regard to Haldin. For example, he has, in an impassioned speech after his return from the police authorities, virtually revealed to Haldin what he has done. Certainly he has let slip remarks such as there being "violent enthusiasts" who create "shambles" while, illogically, assuming that they are martyrs because they scatter "a few drops of blood on the snow." These "drops" furthermore not being their own, but that of their victims, their laying claim to being martyrs would appear to be somewhat illogical (47), in Razumov's view. Presumably it is in the "weariness" of killing where their suffering is found, but Razumov does not accept this argument and is unmoved by Haldin's tears. The latter has just declared that he wants to escape, partly in order to blow up more officials, partly to scare the authorities by his mysterious "elusiveness," and partly in order to just "live."[21] He therefore cannot but perceive Razumov's remarks as a critique of either his deed, or his planned further assassinations or

his desire to escape without "paying" for his bloodshed. As already indicated (see also note 14), the description of de P's death shows this "reactionary monster" as concerned about his driver and tending to him when Haldin threw his second bomb (which killed him), while he himself ran for safety. It is a detail which Haldin's memory most likely has retained and that has added to his moral discomfort.

Even after Razumov's implied disapproval of his deed, Haldin, still calls him "brother" and "magnanimous soul" (47), apparently interpreting his violent verbal reaction as one of moral condemnation — if not of his deed, then of his flight. He therefore comes to believe that Razumov "demands" that he pay for the lives he has taken by giving up his own, that he gives him the option of doing so by intimating to him what he has done, and leaving the choice up to him: trying to escape via some hiding place, or leaving through the door and letting himself be arrested. It is not excluded that in this bitter farce of misunderstandings and mistaking each other for someone else ideologically, Haldin thinks that Razumov wants to be clear of all suspicion in order to continue the Cause on his own. If so, he is presumably convinced that Razumov would not flee after an assassination and that he, therefore, wants him to act as heroically as he would himself. Whatever the case, there seems to be a strong yearning for punishment and atonement on Haldin's part that needed only Razumov's implicit "recommendations" to emerge fully, leading him to self-punishment and a "well-earned" martyrdom. Haldin is, as already stated, a "religious" young man.

He agrees with Razumov's perceived verdict, apparently not suspecting his "brother" of either cowardice or egotism, instead thinking that Razumov is pronouncing the exalted demand that some populist terrorists adhered to — that of paying with one's own life for the lives taken. He accepts the notion that he has done a terrible — albeit inescapable — thing, for which he must atone, possibly like the character Vanya in Boris *Viktorovich* Savinkov's Dostoevsky-inspired novel *Pale Rider* ("Kon' blednyi," 1909). Haldin's name *Victor* could feasibly have been inspired by the patronymic of this famous Russian Socialist Revolutionary and terrorist, as well as minor prose writer, who planned the assassination of Plehve and Grand Duke Sergei Romanov. Savinkov was born in Poland and apparently sympathetic to the Polish cause of national independence, which may have been known and of interest to Conrad. His novel character Vanya was modeled on Ivan Kaliaev (also born in Poland) who wrote religious poetry about Christ's Kingdom needing martyrs if it was to be established on earth, and who was involved in the Plehve assassination.[22] He was also the man who killed Grand Duke Sergei after repeated attempts, having passed up one earlier opportunity to do so, because he saw children in the carriage he was on the point of hurling his bomb into.

He was "arrested immediately" after his successful attempt, "sentenced to death and hanged on May 23, 1905," having refused to ask for clemency. Albert Camus made him the hero of his play *Les Justes*.[23]

Moving on to further textual evidence supporting the notion that Haldin leaves in order to atone, there is a Dostoevskian discussion between Haldin and Razumov — the unhappy killer and the soon equally unhappy "executioner" — that may have contributed to Haldin's decision. It includes a "Svidrigailovian" comment that Razumov makes about Eternity as a place that is "quiet and dull" (45), which evokes Dostoevsky's "bath-house full of spiders" (6: 221). It would seem that Haldin feels that he already is in that space of dull apathy — he has been lying motionless and almost "invisible" (19, 42) on Razumov's bed for hours, obviously tortured by moral doubt. Understanding what Razumov has done, he decides to take the final steps from his earthly (non-) existence into some metaphysical space that either is equally "dull" as his current place on earth, but wich will be "eternally" so, or possibly into some place "entirely different,"[24] depending on God's judgment. In other words, he may intend to atone for his crime in the dungeons of the *Okhrana* in order to reap the celestial reward he may still be hoping for — if he pays for his transgression. "I understand it all now," he suddenly exclaims, "with awestruck dismay." "I understand — at last." (47). In other words, he understands what Razumov has done and interprets it as an act, helping him to do the "right" thing. Since Haldin believes in God, he may see his own voluntary ("Christ-like") death as the only rescue from the "quiet and dull place" in Eternity that he fears may become his niche in it, if he arrives there as an unpunished killer. He sees his voluntary death as the only chance for everlasting escape from earthly evil to God's Kingdom. Having declared his new "understanding," he departs "tall and straight as an arrow with his pale face and a hand raised attentively," looking like "the statue of a daring youth listening to an *inner* voice" (48; the italics are mine). He goes to face judgment — not from human law courts but from God's. At this moment he ceases to be an impostor and becomes a hero.

Razumov-Razumikhin

Having been forced to become a police agent after "helping" the cause of law and order, and having been "persuaded" to keep track of political exiles in Geneva,[25] Razumov goes there in order to establish contact with the resident revolutionaries. On the surface plot level, at this point in the novel, he actually shoulders the role of Razumikhin, Raskolnikov's truly sensible friend who uses his reason not in order to create myths that justify murder, but to be useful to society and helpful to friends, however hard his own situation may be. It

is a role that Haldin himself "assigned" to Razumov, believing him to be as "sensible" as his name intimates. Not unlike Raskolnikov who shuns his sister Dunya and his mother Pulkheria Aleksandrovna after having committed his crime, Haldin too has sought separation from his mother and sister, sending them to Geneva before committing his "elimination." Ostensibly he persuaded them to go there because they would be safer there, but an additional reason may have been that he did not want to see "the most trustful eyes of any human being that ever walked this earth" (19), i.e. his sister's, change their expression. Even if theoretically in complete agreement with her brother, Natalia's direct contact with his terrorist activities may well have extinguished that "trust," or at least, shaken her faith in a future world of bliss that has cost "drops of blood on the snow" (and perhaps a child's "little tears" as well).[26] As her brother too discovers, there is a difference between verbally advocating "elimination" in the name of Progress and the People, and blowing up real individuals. Natalia, by the way, resembles Raskolnikov's sister Dunya. She has inherited her predecessor's beauty, her pale, but fresh, complexion, for example, and her energetic movements, as well as her extreme devotion to her mother and physical likeness to and spiritual closeness with her brother. As is the case with Dunya, she uses her spiritual strength for constructive purposes however.

In fact, one additional reason for Haldin's turning up in Razumov's and no other lodging may have been that he wanted him to marry his sister and live with her in that happy future that he himself was "working" for, but was excluded from. As is well known both from Nikolai Chernyshevsky's immensely popular nihilist novel *What's to Be Done*? (1863) and from Sergei Nechaev's radical pamphlet *The Revolutionary Catechism*, possibly written in collaboration with Mikhail Bakunin in Geneva (in 1869), and from many other literary works and political tracts as well, a revolutionary may never fall in love and is barred from raising a family. He has to dedicate his entire life to nothing but the Cause (like a monk to God).[27] Haldin, therefore, would not be able to raise children himself, but only be able to continue his family tree through his sister's marriage. A marriage between the apparently calm and collected Razumov, so "English" (18) in his total self-control (as Haldin thinks), and his sister Natalia would compensate for his own dropping out of all such connections and relations. In a similar vein, Raskolnikov wants the positively sensible and reliable Razumikhin to take care of his mother and sister, having cut himself off from all communication with them and others.

Secret agents also "work" better, if single, but Razumov's marriage to Natalia would have been ideal for collecting information about the émigré revolutionists, since the Haldins would be trusted recipients of information about various illegal activities and émigré political life. Had Razumov been a good spy, he would have used this opportunity to further his career, but he is

not a good secret agent.[28] He also discovers that "Razumikhin's" place is already taken. The protector's role has been filled by a genuine Englishman.[29] To the extent permissible to an elderly bachelor brought up on Victorian principles (although he spent his childhood in Russia) who is more an observer of life than a participant in it, he has become *l'ami* (131) of the family and a secret admirer of Natalia. Limited, and even ridiculous, as he may be with his constant concern about "western eyes" and "occidental perspectives" not being able to confront "oriental" ideas and revolutionary actions without suffering severe shock,[30] he does protect Natalia and her mother more reliably than anyone else. The squeamish Englishman who, nevertheless, tells us the entire story of Razumov's and Haldin's terrible dilemmas with full understanding of their complexities, specifically protects Natalia from the "burly feminist" Peter Ivanovitch and his *Egeria*, the vampiric and ghoulish Madame de S (163).

More a "wooden or plaster figure of a repulsive kind" (168) than a human being, Madame de S may be the grotesque incarnation of the spirit of "mystical revolutions" and moribund, yet dangerous, revolutionary adventures, in which fake "clairvoyance" plays a certain role. Acting as the "Seer" of future upheavals, Madame de S is not so much a prophetess, as a creature "galvanized" by outbursts of vindictiveness, but constantly on the verge of disintegrating into a heap of dust in the style of Edgar Allan Poe's M. Voldemar. Not even bagfuls of *gateaux* are sufficient to keep her alive and she soon dies, leaving the "burly feminist" no money for future ventures into Utopia — and self-enrichment.

Peter Ivanovitch's prototypes have been traced to various historical figures. One of these is the anarchist exile and burly Geneva resident Mikhail Bakunin whose involvement in "women's emancipation"... continued to inform his ideas all his life."[31] Another is "the charismatic Russian political refugee" Felix Volkhovsky who "arrived in London in 1890" and "served as a crucial social intermediary among displaced Russian revolutionists," also moving "within Conrad's circle of friends."[32] Perhaps he has literary prototypes as well, such as the radical émigré windbag Stepan Nikolaevich Gubarev [33] in Ivan Turgenev's *Smoke* and Dostoevsky's own perverted villain Svidrigailov in *Crime and Punishment*. Like the latter, Peter Ivanovitch is, when we meet him, financially dependent on an unattractive elderly woman (Madame de S) with whom he seems to have some sort of "contract" of a financial-sexual nature (Svidrigailov is married to the wealthy Marfa Petrovna whom he helps to "exit" into the next world, but who sometimes visits him as a chatty ghost). Like Svidrigailov, he at the same time appears to be looking for "redemption" with the help of a beautiful and innocent young woman. Whereas Svidrigailov stalks Raskolnikov's sister Dunya, Peter Ivanovitch may have selected Natalia Haldin for helping him to a "moral rebirth." Of course the paths of Svidrigailov and Peter Ivanovitch eventually diverge as the former commits suicide and the latter "unite[s] himself to

a peasant girl" (282), presumably in order to revitalize himself through the folk, after Madame de S, his "inspired visionary," has died.

In any case, the "great feminist" is forever attempting to lure Natalia into the dilapidated and somber Villa Borel for purposes that seem to involve more than taking dictation for yet another of his acclaimed books about his colorful past in the service of the People's Revolution. In this past miraculous escapes, facilitated by saintly women from the folk play a major role — hence his cult of womanhood. Possibly, however, Peter Ivanovitch is not only seeking "purification" by means of debauching a virginal girl, but also wants to involve Natalia in the battle for feminism and world revolution, making her part of Madame de S's mystical circle. This lady is something like the priestess of the "burly feminist's" vision of world revolution in which Woman will be exalted (164).[34] Perhaps the "mystery" needs a beautiful vestal to compensate for the priestess's, Madame de S's, ungainly appearance. Also Tekla, the feminist's maltreated secretary and Madame de S's maltreated *dame de compagnie*, is clearly not young and beautiful enough to give the Cause she embraces the necessary sex appeal.

However mystically conceived, the plans hatched in the Villa Borel are also quite concrete. Madame de S "was not always in a mystical state of mind" (164) but also had specific plans for how to set the Balkans "ablaze." It would involve a "cry of abandoned brotherhood" that would necessitate Russian intervention. The intervention would lead to war, war to revolution and the deposing of the Romanovs, Madame de S's personal enemies (164). The transition from war to revolution would demand the "spiritualization" of the popular masses, however. Presumably Madame de S is speaking of the mystical unity of the people that transcends mundane Western political institutions, such as parliamentarism and a free press. As Madame de S puts it, she is a "supernaturalist" in politics (166), and she can already "see" that mystical all-unity which the folk of Eastern nations will bring to the world. One may assume that as a reward for this visionary-prophetic inspiration of the Sibyl of the Villa Borel, the Romanov crown jewels might be offered to her "from a "grateful people." As already mentioned, she "disintegrates" before this can happen, however.

In short, Madame de S, this painted "corpse galvanized into harsh speech" (166–167), and the "burly feminist," Peter Ivanovitch, are political charlatans of the most dubious sort and they do not fool Razumov with the lure of their "mystic revolutionary salon" (99). And yet, there is a moment when Madame de S inspires Razumov with the unpleasant feeling that she is able to see "phantoms" behind his back (168). He falls for her "dilettante spiritualist" (169) tactics because he is a man haunted by the phantom of the man he betrayed. A guilty conscience "makes cowards" of all and Razumov will not regain full power over his reason before he relinquishes it in an irrational and self-destructive, but also redemptive, gesture that has a distinctly Dostoevskian flavor.

Razumov, the second Raskolnikov

Razumov's function in the novel is to demonstrate how easily the intellect can be manipulated into justifying unethical decisions that are dictated by basic instincts or unacknowledged desires, such as self-preservation and the ambition to succeed. In Razumov's case, his aspirations to "belong to his nation" and to work for its greatness were to compensate for his status as an illegitimate child.[35] Caught unawares by Haldin just as he saw himself getting nearer to his goal, suddenly seeing himself as deprived of his (moderately) ambitious dreams, Razumov, after a first hesitation, decides to give up the revolutionary to the Autocratic State of the Orthodox Russian Empire. In order to rationalize his decision, he begins to paint this repressive autocracy as a safe and sane harbor against revolutionary madness. He comes to see it as such because he wants it to be what he needs for his emotional and physical security. The intellect is just as obedient a "servant" for deeper layers of the personality, as is the "heart," if not more so, since the heart does not need pseudo-logical motivations for dubious actions. It is easily convinced of the absolute validity of populist myths for example, and emotional fervor is the only "proof" needed for faith. The intellectual needs logical proof, however, and, infallibly, finds it. Moderately liberal Razumov aspires to possessing reason and sees people like Haldin as destroyers of his country. His own "conversion" to the official doctrines of the Russian State — autocracy, orthodoxy and nationalism — covers a falsehood "deep in the necessities of existence," however. With the help of reason he is able to put a veil over his true motivation found "in secret fears and half-formed ambitions" (27). As in Dostoevsky's *Crime and Punishment*, so in Conrad's *Under Western Eyes*, reason severed from conscience is able to "prove" anything. In *Crime and Punishment*, as is well known, it proves that pawn brokers are harmful to students and therefore may be eliminated, as should all other "parasitic" elements of society. In Conrad's novel, Razumov is able to prove to himself that it is best to give up Haldin, because "Haldin means disruption" (27) and disruption hinders genuine progress. His rational reasoning can irrefutably state that "absolute power should be preserved" because "the logic of history" makes it "unavoidable" that the "great autocrat of the future" who would set matters right, is bound to appear. Not too unlike Raskolnikov, he hopes that some Napoleon will set matters right, even though he does not see himself as a member of the "Napoleonic race."

Both writers demonstrate that such delusions do not last forever in persons who have a conscience, however deeply "pushed down" into the subconscious it may be. Raskolnikov's rational constructs are first undermined by his body and its purely physiological reactions to the "transgression" against nature and its Creator that he has committed. His body cannot suppress the revulsion,

self-loathing, remorse and fear that he feels and that manifest themselves as swoons, delirium, hallucinations, fever and sheer exhaustion. These reactions contribute to undermining his illusions about belonging to a rare breed of superior people by humiliating him. They help him see the limitations of "superhuman reason" trapped in a human body and they are channels through which conscience may send its messages to the heart. They support the "need for self-betrayal" that will culminate in Raskolnikov's confession and, later, become genuine expiation and moral rebirth.

In Razumov's case, he is somewhat better able to control his body, although he too is not entirely in charge of it: he "totters" during his walk with the English narrator (136), cannot control his voice (136) nor his twitching lips (141). A glass of beer, instantaneously drained, revives him for a moment (138), as it did Raskolnikov in somewhat similar circumstances (6: 10). Almost ready to abandon his plan to murder the pawnbroker, a glass of beer revives him and confirms him in his murderous intentions. This detail is trivial and therefore makes clear that it is not "iron will" or "clear reasoning" that helps either of the two protagonists to control themselves under stress, but something as mundane as a glass of beer that for a moment soothes their agitated nerves. At this point neither character understands that such a physiological reaction works both ways and in any case demeans their vision of themselves as men of reason.

Razumov, also like Raskolnikov, is not very good at controlling his emotions. Too often, at least for a good spy, he is overwhelmed by his desire to tell the people he is supposed to inform on that they are charlatans; sometimes he is ironical when he knows he should not be. He knows himself that he is constantly "saying the wrong things" (188), but cannot stop himself from saying them. He has almost irresistible murderous impulses — he toys with the idea of murdering the "burly feminist," for example. With him he certainly plays his cards wrong most of the time. Razumov may consciously be playing the role of "Nechaev," i.e. the "merciless" revolutionary who is to provoke "talkers" into "action," as the real Nechaev, bamboozling Bakunin and Ogarev did, but his demeanor is too bitterly aggressive not to evoke suspicion.[36] Also with Nikita Necator, the "executioner of revolutionary verdicts" (198), he is unwisely "angry" (200). Sophia Antonovna, the white-haired "veteran" of the revolutionary movement,[37] correctly discerns that Razumov seems to be "flinging himself at something that does not exist," possibly moved by "self-reproach," as she rightly surmises (200). In short, like Raskolnikov, Razumov does everything to draw attention to himself, apparently in order to provoke an unmasking. Both subconsciously desire to be found out, while consciously being terrified by the prospect.

Both have a stroke of good luck that should liberate them from all fear, as well as self-reproach, if they were men of truly logical reasoning and adherents of "rational egotism." The sectarian Mikolka takes Raskolnikov's crime upon

himself wishing to atone for a "spree" his conscience now rebukes him for; the drunkard Ziemianitch hangs himself thus apparently confessing to having betrayed Haldin.[38] At this point both protagonists could resort to theories of rational egoism and argue that they, as valuable members of society, now are free to realize their goals, benefiting society and themselves. As is well known, both Raskolnikov and Razumov give themselves up instead, Raskolnikov with some prompting from Sonya and the investigator Porfirii Petrovich, Razumov without anyone "pushing" him. As Sophia Antonovna will put it later speaking of Razumov, he "deliver[ed] [him]self up deliberately to perdition . . . rather than go on living, secretly debased in [his] own eyes" (280).

It is not the aim of the present article to trace the torturous path of the two protagonists to the final confession and atonement in detail. One shared thematic strand deserves some examination, however, since, to my knowledge, it has not been observed before: the impact of the Mother on the path to regaining self-respect and "honor." Let us begin with Raskolnikov.

It has already been said that Raskolnikov separates himself from his sister and mother after having committed his crime, to the point of cutting himself completely off from them and entrusting them to Razumikhin instead. This attitude changes after his confession. He asks Dunya and Razumikhin "many questions about his mother" and he is "even very anxious about her" (6: 413). He predicts her imminent demise (6: 414), probably fully aware of his own role in hastening it. She, in her turn, is extremely anxious about him, and seeks comfort in delusions about his imagined greatness and importance, hysterically proclaiming it to all and sundry, including total strangers. She is obviously "insane." Suddenly she also becomes convinced of "Rodia's" imminent return, claiming that he himself had said he would come back "in nine months' time" (6: 414). After feverish preparations for a worthy reception, she falls ill and dies. Delirious, she reveals that she knew "considerably more about the terrible fate of her son than had been assumed" (6: 415). Although Raskolnikov learns of her death only later, his mother's vision of a return-rebirth "in nine months' time" possibly has some kind of mysterious impact on his moral rebirth that is soon to follow in his Siberian imprisonment. Even if many other factors contribute to his final redemption, it is as if the reestablished contact, at a great distance, between mother and son set the chain of events leading to the ultimate conversion in motion. The physical "umbilical cord" linking mother and son was severed at birth, the spiritual bond was severed after his crime, but the spiritual "umbilical cord," conveying a mother's forgiveness and love was mysteriously restored across time and space. The son "knows" his mother has forgiven, the mother "knows" her son will return to the world of interpersonal relations and ethical validity. Insane as she may be (or, perhaps, *because* she is insane), Mrs. Raskolnikov "sees the truth," i.e. that her criminal son will

become a "hero-saint" serving God in the future. In her ravings about her heroic son that she forces upon all who do not refuse to listen, she anticipates her son's future and prophesies it.

Razumov has no family bonds. It is made clear in the novel that it was his orphanhood and illegitimate status that contributed to his betrayal of Haldin who was threatening to endanger the only communal bond Razumov knew — that with the Establishment (including his high-ranking inofficial father). Razumov seems to have envied Haldin his close family relations. Haldin does indeed have a close relationship with his mother and sister, but he has, as already stated, sent them away to Geneva; his father is dead. When the news about his execution reaches his family, his mother begins to brood over the mystery of his capture and arrest. She is haunted by the notion that he "perhaps did not try to save himself" (87). Unlike Mrs. Raskolnikov who is very restless during the last phase of her life, Mrs. Haldin begins increasingly to withdraw into stony immobility, "possessed" as she is by one thought only, namely, "that her son must have perished because he did not want to be saved" (88). The implications of this assumption may to Mrs. Haldin have been that her son lost faith in his cause and therefore came to regard himself as an ordinary criminal. Mrs. Haldin does not seem to have shared her children's mystical political vision of Russia's glorious future — at least, she is not as "religious" as they are. Like Mrs. Raskolnikova — with whom, incidentally, she shares a strikingly handsome appearance in spite of her advanced age — she suddenly begins to believe in her son's "return." She "seemed to think now that her son was living, and she perhaps awaited his arrival" (151). When Razumov at last comes to see her in order to give her the established version of her son's arrest — Ziemianitch betrayed him as proven by his hanging himself — she does not utter a word. She either dismisses his entire story, or simply is not interested in it, since she "knows" the deeper realities: that he was betrayed by his false ideals and possibly also by the young man before her, but that he has found peace through remorse. As Razumov realizes, the "phantom" of Haldin has caught up with him in the shape of the mother "consumed with grief and white as a ghost" (252), clinging to notions of a reunion that obviously will not take place in this, but "other," worlds which she seems to be glimpsing already. She does indeed die soon afterwards.

It is after his interview with her that Razumov fully understands the implications of his betrayal: "It's myself whom I have given up to destruction," thought Razumov (253). Shortly afterwards he goes to confess to the émigré revolutionary circle, is hit by Nikita Necator (an Azef-figure) in such a way as to become deaf and then crushed by a tramcar he could not hear approaching. Physically destroyed, he regains his honor, however, as even some of the émigré revolutionaries acknowledge. In short, also in Conrad's novel, a mother who has

some kind of mysterious intuitive links with a son loved above all else (to the point where even the devoted daughter becomes irrelevant), is instrumental in bringing about a moral rebirth. It is likely that confronting Mrs. Haldin, Razumov for the first time fully understands what Haldin was planning to do when he left him, namely to perish voluntarily. Seeing Mrs. Haldin, Razumov realizes that Mothers possess genuine clairvoyance and that they can convey their insights to others, even their sons' betrayers. Mrs. Haldin sees a "phantom" behind Razumov's back who tells her the truth about her son's death and why he chose to die. This "seeing" is quite unlike the fake "supernaturalism" of Madame de S that once frightened Razumov. The umbilical cord of spiritual kinship with her son and endless maternal love make the transmission of the "truth" possible, political charlatanism does not convey genuine insights. It is only the power of love which can perceive the invisible and which indeed is a special gift of *das Ewig Weibliche*, but the "burly feminist" will never understand this, in spite of all his eulogies to the spiritual superiority of women.

Conclusions

The motivation for creating two Raskolnikovs in *Under Western Eyes*, "splitting" Dostoevsky's main character into Haldin and Razumov is arguably this: to refute all types of myth-creation, be it the myth-creation of the intellect, or of the "ardent heart." Both novels show that "reason" can be used to justify any ideology and any despicable action, be it the theory of "rational egoism" that requires the elimination of "useless individuals," or the "need" to betray a fellow human being in order to be useful to Russia. Irrational myth-making is equally absurd in Conrad's novel, however, even when it does not spring from the charlatans Peter Ivanovitch and Madame de S, but is believed in and acted upon by appealing young idealists. The populist visions of Russia "finding a better way" than the "practical forms of political liberty" found in the West (80), even though that "better way" implies "violence and blood" (81) are quite as false as state-sponsored myths about divine autocrats realizing Russia's sacred mission in the world. Haldin and Razumov are both equally deluded until they see the truth which is that the individual may not be used for supra-individual purposes, however exalted or "justified." The mythologies of the self-justifying intellect crumble together with those of the imagination gone astray, when their adherents encounter the demands of conscience, the need for maintaining self-respect and the sufferings of those that have staked all on love. The mothers who have staked their entire existence on love may not be entirely positive in either novel, since their love is so blind and so exclusive of all others. Nevertheless, their kind of love does produce a "clairvoyance" that transcends ordinary insights. Amidst

the charlatans and the self-deluded, among the political intrigue weavers and the sham patriots of all hues, the mothers guarantee that genuine mysteries still impart genuine insights about human nature. In both novels, the mothers partake of the sacred Motherhood-aura of both Catholicism and Orthodoxy, even when shown as flawed human beings. They are still the "intercessors" for sinful humanity, at least for their own sinful children.

It was stated above that Conrad dismissed the myths of the heart and imagination together with those of the self-deluding intellect. Dostoevsky did not. Indeed, while both writers advocate a reason warmed by love and pity and a heart illumined by thought, Dostoevsky did leave loopholes for the patriotic myths he himself increasingly adhered to and that he believed were a product of both heart and mind. Believing in the "Russian Idea" of a universal culture — under the moral guidance of "humble Russia," Dostoevsky was prepared to denigrate all western alternative notions, dismissing them as pedestrian compromise. It was the West that produced the falsehoods of heartless rationalism, whereas the myth about Russia destined to save the world was entirely "true," since it expressed the will of God — the author of World History.

Conrad was naturally aware of this patriotic fervor clothed in religious terms, espoused by Dostoevsky, one that would find justification for Russian subjugation of other nations both in the heart and mind of its author. He himself obviously rejected this myth even in its Polish variant, as has been demonstrated by the critics mentioned above and others. His novel is set in 1904, i.e. at a peak time of terrorism when young Socialist Revolutionaries like Ivan Kaliaev and Egor Sazonov, took lives feeling it to be their moral duty toward Russia and all of Humanity. Creating his Haldin and Razumov, Conrad therefore perhaps implied that the neo-slavophile legacy that Dostoevsky and his predecessors created, had its fatal consequences, not least for Russia itself. For one, the cult of the "single will" (28) ultimately came to inspire both the terrorists and the monarchists. Both Haldin and Razumov make themselves believe in the blessings of a "single will," only in Haldin's case it is the single will of a mystically united people acting like one, and in Razumov's case, it is the single will of the "great autocrat" who "knows" what his people needs and wants. In both official and revolutionary camps, the intellect and the heart, merge to justify the products of the imagination through myths in which the individual is reduced to being the means for allegedly noble, but actually dubious, goals. Savinkov, Kaliaev, Azef, Sazonov and numerous others relied on Dostoevskian ideas in the creation of their mythologies of Russia's unique mission, be it as theocracy, monarchy, (collective) dictatorship or yet some other non-parliamentary form of "inspired' governing. In his *Under Western Eyes*, in the characters of Haldin and Razumov, Conrad points to the need of abolishing all political charlatanism and to pursue the only thing that matters: personal integrity.

Notes

1 The edition quoted here is Joseph Conrad, *Under Western Eyes*, New York: The Modern Library, 2001. Page references are given in the text in brackets.

2 The edition quoted here is: Fedor Dostoevsky, *Polnoe sobranie sochinenii* v tridtsati tomakh, vol. 6, *Prestuplenie i nakazanie*, Leningrad: Nauka, 1973. Page references are given in the text in brackets. Other works by Dostoevsky quoted in this article are from the same *Collected Works*.

3 For the first three quotes, see Eloise Knapp Hay, "*Under Western Eyes* and the Missing Center," in *Joseph Conrad's Under Western Eyes, Beginnings, Revisions, Final Forms, Five Essays*, ed. by David R. Smith, Hamden, Connecticut: Archon Books, p. 127. This collection of articles is referred to as *Five Essays* below. For the last quote, see Paul Kirschner, "The French Face of Dostoyevsky in Conrad's *Under Western Eyes*: Some Consequences for Criticism," *Conradiana,* vol. 30, no. 1, 1998 (24–43), p. 24. Kirschner brings in a novel rarely mentioned in the Dostoevsky-Conrad discussion, i.e. Dostoevsky's *The Adolescent* (*A Raw Youth*).

4 See Zdzislaw Najder, *Conrad in Perspective. Essays on Art and Fidelity*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997, pp. 119, 129.

5 Carola M. Kaplan, "Conrad's Narrative Occupation of/by Russia in *Under Western Eyes*," *Conradiana*, vol. 27, no. 2, 1995, p. 97.

6 Kaplan, p. 99.

7 Najder, p. 133. This critic also points out, however, that, in spite of his alleged animosity toward Russian culture, Conrad was able to appreciate the artistic value of Russian writers, notably Ivan Turgenev, his favorite among these. According to Najder, he also paid tribute to Dostoevsky, in spite of ideological disagreements.

8 For the quotes, see Keith Carabine, "Conrad, Apollo Korzeniowski, and Dostoevsky," *Conradiana*, vol. 29, no. 1, 1996, pp. 8, 7.

9 Carabine points out that Korzeniowski "anticipated the Russian populists and 'penitent gentry' of the 1870s in his fervent, democratic faith in the spiritual purity and insurrectionary potential of the peasantry" (*op. cit.*, p. 5).

10 For the ideological divisions within the family, see Najder, Carabine.

11 It was a concept Dostoevsky ridiculed in the Polish scenes of *The Brothers Karamazov*, where Grushenka's Polish seducer constantly is concerned about his *gonor* (14 (1976): 388), but is unmasked as a cardsharper. Even after this humiliation, he "thinks highly of himself" (389), and is still proud of being a "knight, a shliakhtich," i.e. a Polish nobleman (14: 388).

12 As Kaplan points out, Conrad insistently quotes this key pronouncement of Raskolnikov in *Crime and Punishment*. See Kaplan, *op. cit.*, p. 100.

13 Kaplan speaks of a reversal of roles, seeing Razumov as "akin" to Razumikhin, Raskolnikov's friend, and Haldin as "akin" to Raskolnikov. I agree with her that Haldin is a Raskolnikov figure (which not many critics have perceived), but disagree with her notion that Razumov is akin to Razumikhin, since the latter uses his reason as one "should," i.e. for constructive purposes, whereas Razumov does the opposite. See Kaplan, *op. cit.*, p. 101.

[14] Actually, the description of the assassination (see p. 9 of the novel) resembles that of Czar Alexander II more than Plehve's. Plehve was blown up at once by Egor Sazonov who "ran towards [Plehve's] carriage. Through the glass window he saw Plehve start back as the latter caught sight of him — and then a twelve-pound bomb struck against that very glass. There was the heavy shattering sound of an explosion. Plehve had settled his accounts on this earth" (see Boris Nikolaejewsky, *Aseff, the Spy, Russian Terrorist and Police Stool*, Hattiesburg: Academic International/ orbis academicus, reprint of the 1934 edition, 1969, p. 88). Czar Alexander, like de P in Conrad's novel, survived the first bomb and stepped out of his carriage to help his coachman. He was then blown up by a second bomb, hurled by the Pole Hryniewecki. Conrad presumably made this transfer of one assassination to another to emphasize the "human" aspect of the victim. It is usually argued that Conrad particularly disliked Alexander II because of his Polish policies that denied Poles all national independence (the czar told them not to "harbor illusions" in that regard and quelled the 1863 rebellion), but in this case at least his death seems to be used for "pro-victim" purposes. Perhaps Conrad emphasizes that whoever the victim may be, a "czar-liberator" who does not want to liberate Poles, or an arch-reactionary, like Plehve, or a coachman of peasant origins, or an "idealistic bomb-thrower," a victim is always a victim.

[15] Najder states that "Haldin remains a hero and a selfless martyr," "whatever the reader may think about the general sense of terrorism" (*op. cit.*, p. 130).

[16] Keith Carabine, *Five Essays*, p. 18.

[17] What "really" happens between Haldin and Razumov belongs to those narrative "gaps" that Conrad was a master of creating. I do not claim to have illuminated this gap with the true answer, but merely argue for yet another possibility among others. For Conrad's "gaps," see Knapp Hay, *Five Essays*, p. 121.

[18] Ziemianitch was exalted by Haldin as a "bright spirit," but proved to prefer spirits to the spirit of rebellion, assumed to be characteristic of the folk. He was dead drunk when Razumov found him. His "being rooted" in the "soil" (Polish *ziemia,* Russian *zemlia*) proved to consist of lying in the dirt, rather than having the sacred potential for saving Russia/Poland/the world and all humanity. Or so Razumov initially perceives him.

[19] For an interesting discussion of Haldin's name, see Debra Romanick, "Victorious wretch?; The Puzzle of Haldin's name in *Under Western Eyes*" (pp. 44–52), *Conradiana*: Vol. 30, no. 1, 1998. To me the translation "wretch" of *khalda, khaldei* , to which words Romanick traces Haldin's name, does not seem entirely adequate — I see "impudent" fellow as the better translation, since I see Haldin as an "ideological impostor." It could be argued that the only truly heroic figure in Conrad's novel is Natalia Haldin (who is a true *Heldin*), who, like Elena in Turgenev's *On the Eve*, sees her contribution to change as working for the dispossessed and ailing rather than in terrorist activities.

[20] As Romanick says, why not accept both potential etymologies: deceiver and hero, impostor and heroic penitent.

21 *Neulovimyi* was a pseudonym that Boris Savinkov, the man who planned the assassination of von Plehve liked to use.

22 He wrote this poem, for example: Khristos, Khristos! Slepit nas zhizni mgla./ Ty nam otkryl vse nebo, noch' rasseiav,/ No khram opiat' vo vlasti fariseev./ Messii net — Iudam net chisla . . ./ My zhit' khotim! Nad nami noch' visit./ O, neuzhel' vnov' nuzhno iskuplen'e,/ I tol'ko krest nam vosvestit spasen'e,?/ Khristos, Khristos!../ No vse krugom molchit.

23 Quoted from www.powerset.com/explore/semhtml/Ivan_Kalyaev?query.

24 I am quoting Zinaida Gippius's line: "Vse budet inache."

25 Geneva was a city where both Conrad and Dostoevsky, spent some time, and which Dostoevsky evaluated in terms not too different from those used by Razumov.

26 I am referring to the famous children's "slezki" mentioned by Ivan Karamazov (6: 224). He does not want to see "little tears" as the price for even total and everlasting bliss and harmony.

27 The revolutionary is "to live in the most extreme alienation and isolation," Abbott Gleason sums up his discussion of the *Catechism*. He quotes these passages from it: "[The revolutionary] has no interests of his own, no affairs, no feelings, no attachments, no property, not even a name. Everything in him is absorbed by a single exclusive interest, a single thought, a single passion — the revolution." See his *Young Russia, The Genesis of Russian Radicalism in the 1860s*, New York: The Viking Press, 1980, pp.358, 359. In Chernyshevsky's novel, Rakhmetov spurns the love of a worthy woman, who shares his ideals and whom he would have loved in normal circumstances, for one reason only: to dedicate himself totally to the Cause.

28 In an earlier draft of the novel, Razumov was to marry Natalia Haldin.

29 This may be a reminiscence from Dostoevsky's *The Gambler* (1866), where the English Mr. Astley, takes the heroine Polina under his wings, when her Russian admirer, the "gambler," miserably fails her.

30 But then Natalia, in her turn, tells him repeatedly that he cannot possibly fathom the Russian mentality and soul. These combined statements seem to parody Slavophile-Westernizing debates that Conrad certainly would have been aware of, if from no other source than Ivan Turgenev's novels that he admired so much.

31 See Mark Leier, *Bakunin, The Creative Passion*, New York: St. Martin's Press, 2006, p. 54.

32 For Bakunin's activities in Geneva, see Abbott Gleason, *op. cit.* For the quotes on Volkhovsky, see *Under Western Eyes*, "Notes," p. 288.

33 Gubarev, in his turn, is modeled on Nikolai Pavlovich Ogarev who was a minor poet and who is best known as Alexander Herzen's fellow-exile and collaborator on *The Bell* and other publications. He too lived in Geneva for some time. Gubarev in Turgenev's novel is not particularly "burly" but he has a "crude" appearance, being endowed with a "broad brow, big eyes, thick lips, a fat neck and a shifty downward directed gaze." See I. S. Turgenev, *Polnoe sobranie sochinenii i pisem*, v tridtsati tomakh, *Sochineniia*, v dvenadtsati tomakh, vol. 7, Moscow: Nauka, 1981. The quote is found on 7: 260. Like Conrad's Peter Ivanovitch, Gubarev is in the Epilogue shown to be an ordinary charlatan who exchanges his fake revolutionary fervor for a bullying landowner conservatism, as political winds blow in a new direction.

[34] In the last chapters of Chernyshevsky's *What's To Be Done?*, the future superior, even "divine" status of women is assumed to ensue after the successful Revolution that will free them from all bonds.

[35] As Najder points out, Turgenev's revolutionary Nezhdanov in the novel *Virgin Soil* ("Nov'") is also the child of an illegitimate liaison and thus in a similar situation as Razumov.

[36] At one stage he sounds like Bazarov in his discussions with Pavel Kirsanov, for example when proving to Peter Ivanovitch that he can say what he likes about the folk, because he — unlike Peter Ivanovitch — is of the folk. He may therefore call them primitives and brutes, if he likes, and not use the polite "children" that Peter Ivanovitch prefers.

[37] Could this white-haired revolutionary have a prototype in the white-haired "grandmother of the revolution, E. K. Breshko-Breshkovskaia, who also lived in Geneva (in 1903)? She was betrayed to the *Okhrana* by E.F. Azef.

[38] His suicide "corrects" Razumov's opinion of him as a "brute," who fully deserves the flogging he gave him. Ziemianitch is capable of feelings such as guilt and self-reproach for having failed Haldin. Mikolka in *Crime and Punishment* is of course a very positive representative of the folk, a loveable "child" who carries God in his heart.

Rescuing Culture from Civilization: Gorky, Gogol, Sologub and the Mediterranean Model

Introduction: Real Fairytales and Absurd Reality

In the period 1906–1913, i.e. during his first Italian exile spent largely on the island of Capri, Maxim Gorky was particularly attracted to the genre of "fairytales" (*skazki*), writing both his "Skazki ob Italii" (*Italian Fairytales*, 1912) and his "Russkie skazki" (*Russian Fairytales*, 1912) during that time.[1] Although both the Russian and the Italian collections of fairytales, judging by their titles, represent the same genre (*skazki*), they are quite different in regard to narrative manner and tonality. Whereas the Russian fairytales are satiric grotesques in the tradition of Mikhail Saltykov-Shchedrin, i.e. not "realistic," the Italian ones, with the exception of one (IX), do not introduce any fantastic elements. They do, however, often present larger than life characters ruled by stark passions. Italy emerges as a picturesque land with a unique culture, ruled by the Sun and the Sea — as a land, where colorful people with strong personalities engage in dramatic and passionate relationships. Nevertheless, it is also an Italy where strikes occur, tourists inundate the famous sights and Italian workers remember how they built the Simplon tunnel.[2] In fact, the *Italian Fairytales* (*IF* from now on) were often referred to as *ocherki* by the author (12: 550). The *Russian Fairytales*, targeting the "politics, ideology, literature and way of life" in Czarist Russia (12: 580), in marked contrast, present an absurd world of exploitation, imbecility and fraud — in short a world of Gogolian "dead souls," in which anything inane may happen, as in the "town of N," or Saltykov-Shchedrin's *Glupovo* (Silly Town).

In other words, Gorky, as usual, was exploring how to make the "elevating lie" come true and how to declare "base" reality "unreal."[3] A special circumstance at the time was that he, in Italy, encountered a culture that, in his view, approximated a blend of life as it "is" and as it "should" be that he could accept, at least for the world of the present. As is well known, the Future to Gorky was to be a Fairytale come true, and present-day Italy obviously was not yet there. Italian culture, however, contained many seeds that could grow to full splendor

in the Fairytale Future that was bound to come, the writer believed. Whereas the grotesque world of the *Russian Fairytales* (*RF* from now on) presented an "unacceptable" world that should not exist and, therefore, was not "really real," the "realistic fairytales-sketches" of beautiful Italy, especially magic, yet fully real, Capri, demonstrated that beauty could be part of reality, even now. The epigraph to *IF*, inspired by Hans Christian Andersen, confirms this notion upheld throughout the cycle, stating: "the best fairytales are those created by life itself." The "worst fairytales," by implication, were created by forces that are inimical to life, such as those that prevailed in the Czarist Empire. In their absurdity they belonged to the realm of that which ought not to be and therefore — soon — would be swept away and forgotten.

Does the juxtaposition-opposition, marked by the diptych of the two cycles — one darkly grotesque, the other joyfully bright — imply a "westernizing position" on Gorky's part at the time then?[4] Was the writer rejecting "backward" Russia in favor of Europe and specifically the ancient heritage and vibrant culture of the Mediterranean world that he was encountering for the first time? This is not the case. Rather, the opposition marks a total negation of "grotesque" Czarist Russia combined with admiration for *one* part of Europe, namely the Mediterranean South, and especially Italy. Gorky came to see the land where he spent his two exiles as magically beautiful, culturally valid and worthy of a broad and systematic study.[5] More "civilized" and, hence, "soulless" northern and western Europe, not to mention the technologically advanced, but "empty" civilization of the United States of America did not occupy such a privileged position in Gorky's assessment of various national cultures. It will be remembered that he came to Italy after a highly unsuccessful tour of the New World of the "yellow devil,"[6] i.e. the dollar, where his sexual morals had been questioned[7] and his socialist message did not receive the kind of success he may have anticipated. The civilized European countries to the North and West of Italy just mentioned were either losing their cultures[8] or never had acquired one, and they had therefore little to offer, in Gorky's view. Italy deserved a far-ranging study, however, as well as its predecessors — the Roman Empire and Renaissance Italy. Gorky therefore embarked on a series of educational trips to the country's major cities, acquainting himself with Roman and Italian history, as reflected in its archeological monuments and art treasures. He also read a great many works on Roman and Italian history, at the same time actively participating in the life of the simple folk on Capri, for example joining in fishing expeditions and participating in various folk festivals, including religious holidays.

This study program and the writing of *IF*, it is argued in the present article, were, however, not undertaken for their own sake only but, above all, because it would benefit a new post-czarist Russia and the mighty cultural Renaissance it was bound to develop under socialist rule. The exiled Gorky who hosted Lenin,

Bogdanov, Lunacharsky and other leading socialist theoreticians and political underground activists in his Capri home, did not doubt that the glorious future would come to Russia in the form of triumphant Socialism.[9] Italy, famous for its Renaissance, as well as its ability to create ever new renaissances in an old, but eternally youthful, culture could enrich the development of the New Russia that loomed on the horizon of the Future, one that eventually would bring the Ultimate Renaissance of Socialism to all of Europe. In Italy, as will be demonstrated below, Gorky thought it would merge seamlessly with the native culture of eternal cultural rebirths.[10] The *IF* celebrate not only the beauty of present-day Italy then, but also the "marriage" of eternally youthful Italian-Roman culture with the culture of a still underdeveloped, but endlessly promising, future Russia that — finally free of czarist autocracy — would be ready for not just great, but hitherto unheard-of, creative undertakings. Fairy-tales would become everyday reality there.

As already indicated, this post-revolutionary socialist Renaissance would be created without the help of the glitzy, but sterile, civilizations of North-Western Europe. In the choice of models for future Russia it would mainly be the *culture* of the Mediterranean South that should be considered, in Gorky's view, and not the *civilizations* of western and northern Europe. The terms "civilization" and "culture" are in the present article used roughly in the same way as Alexander Blok used them when he, in his 1919 article "The Decline of Humanism," wrote that European Humanism had been a mighty stream of "world *culture*," but that it turned into a multiplicity of European civilizations when it disintegrated into many minor currents. Instead of the "harmony" of an integrated culture, there appeared narrow specialization in the arts and sciences, individualism, alienation from nature, politicking, mercantilism, and the power of "calendar time," as opposed to "musical time."[11] This kind of distinction between valid cultures and insubstantial civilizations was made long before Blok, however, for example by the German scholar I. Honegger whose book on the topic was translated into Russian in 1867 (and whom Blok acknowledges as having correctly diagnosed this 19th century dichotomy before him). It was also recorded in Dal's famous dictionary (1863–1866), where "culture" was defined as "intellectual and moral education" and "civilization" as "communality, civic-mindedness, the awareness of rights and obligations of a person and citizen."

The gist of this opposition can be found even earlier than the middle of the nineteenth century though, for example, in the opposition between an image-oriented "Russian Enlightenment" that promoted culture and a word-oriented and print-oriented[12] "'western' model based on a complex and differentiated civilization," inspired by the French Enlightenment. This "Russian Enlightenment denigrated the 'Western' model of a complex and differentiated

civilization, founded on conventionality and conventions, on the Word. And it looked for alternatives to the West in the utopias of a patriarchal and simple, integrated, true and beautiful life of the folk . . . that relied on direct communication," such as the Image.[13] Gogol certainly upheld this opposition, when making Paris the center of a shallow civilization of "words, words, words," and Rome the heart of an ancient culture, immediately *visible* to the mind and heart in numerous architectural monuments and works of art, in his romantic prose fragment "Rome." With his cult of Italy, especially of the eternal city of Rome, Gogol also distinctly contributed to Italy being seen by Russian eyes as an exceptional culture in a "merely" civilized Europe. Nor was he the first to contribute to making Italy into "a unique space in the geography of Russian culture."[14]

Gorky was thus following a venerable tradition when, in his *IF*, he presented Italy as a land that belonged to the few in Europe that had preserved a genuine culture and when he contrasted it to the "civilized" countries of Europe's North and West.[15] The present article argues that Gorky, in his study of Italian cultural rebirths from Antiquity to the Renaissance and from the Renaissance to the *Risorgimento* and in his praise of the vibrant Italian folk culture of his day, not only expressed a personal stance but also looked for support in and integrated ideas from his Russian predecessor Nikolai Gogol′ s oeuvre when creating his image of Italy. As Gorky of course well knew, his predecessor, while living in voluntary exile in Rome, had studied Italian culture in depth, as well as the "civilizations" of northern Europe during various journeys. His anti-western "Russian Enlightenment" perspective harmonized with Gorky's own views — at least in this sphere of aesthetics. Specifically the fragment "Rome," with its full paradigm of distinctions between culture and civilization that throughout the nineteenth century would be seen as axiomatic "truths" in Russian history of ideas, impacted Gorky's views on the issue and left distinct traces in *IF*, it is argued in the present article.

Italy as a Land of Faith

One aspect about Italian culture that intrigued Gorky, was the fact that it was still a land of faith, unlike most others in the West. Gorky too was a man of faith, believing in Socialism and God-building (with capital letters, as regards the awe its adherent harbored for it). The years of his first Italian exile saw the peak of the god-building ideology that, arguably, continued to be Gorky's, in some form or other, even after he had been induced by Lenin to repudiate it. At that time, however, he did openly "confess" his faith, notably in the novel *Confession* ("Ispoved′") written on Capri (1908). Having coined the terms

bogostroitel'stvo and *bogostroitel* in "deliberate contrast to the terms and concepts . . . of *bogoiskatel'stvo* and *bogoiskatel'* . . . of the Decadent writers,[16] the socialist Gorky repudiated the notion of any deity that was above humanity, but granted divine status to the Humanity that was to be "constructed" by a socialist-collective mankind bent on transcending itself. That collective humankind enthusiastically laboring together eventually would first equal and then outdo "mythic" divinities, becoming omnipotent and omniscient and, therefore, capable of making this imperfect world into a "Temple" of Beauty,[17] was an axiom and constant of Gorky's thinking from the turn of the century onward. Since Humankind was bound to become divine (i.e. equal to the God of Christianity mankind had projected into the skies as a kind of "role-model"), it could be referred to in religious imagery. Such imagery does indeed permeate the writer's "god-building" works, including *IF* that is saturated with it.[18] This cycle displays many of this "secular pseudo-religion's"[19] ideological features, here taking on a specifically — not "Catholic" — but "Mediterranean" flavor (for the "syncretic" meaning of the word, see the discussion below). Gorky did obviously not convert to Catholicism, or any other established religion, his own being god-building socialism, but, judging by *IF*, he saw in Catholic Italy a faith that could be, and already partly was, "diverted" to the new faith of socialism.[20] Before socialism's final triumph in his own country, Gorky was, as it were, exploring ideas that could be useful for Russia in the future in the context of what Roman-Catholicism had to offer as part of the culture of "eternal Rome." Gorky in *IF* was specifically interested in the ability of the Catholic Church of contemporary Italy to integrate previous cultures, establishing organic links to a still vital past that — once both transcended and integrated in Hegelian fashion — could lead to further cultural enrichment. One question that clearly intrigued Gorky during the years of his first Italian exile was: why had Italy remained an "eternal companion" (Dmitrii Merezhkovsky) of world culture? What was the secret of its eternal youth and what could a post-revolutionary new Russia learn from its ability to synthesize the past with the present in order to, in Russia's case, create a glorious Future? As already indicated, Gogol was "consulted" for an answer to that question.

Gogol's "Rome" (1842)

Written in Rome during Gogol's self-imposed exile there, the fragment (*otryvok*) "Rome" does not belong to the writer's best known works, unlike the short story "The Overcoat" (1842) of the same year, set in a gloomy wintry Russia and offering a stark contrast to gloriously Mediterranean "Rome."[21] Since its first publication in the Slavophile journal *The Muscovite*, "Rome" has met with

an often negative critical reception, with "the great canon-maker" Vissarion Belinsky setting the tone.[22] Castigating it for its "pretentious" high-flown romanticism, hyperbolic descriptions of Annuntsiata's, its heroine's, beauty and the complete lack of psychological depth in all characterizations, negative critics usually also point to the fact that there is no story in "Rome" and that it is incomplete.[23] The more positive critics tend to see it as a "complete fragment" and juxtapose Rome's open ending with others in Gogol's oeuvre, for example, *The Government Inspector* and *Dead Souls*, Part I.[24] Rather than an incomplete story which cannot resolve itself, it is a prologue to a story deliberately not told, because it transcends what can be told. Therefore a *Silentium* charged with infinite meaning (as recommended in Fedor Tiutchev's famous eponymous poem) is the only appropriate response to an inexpressible vision. The positive critics also link the hyperbolic lyricism of the passages devoted to Rome's and Annuntsiata's beauty to Gogol's over-riding concern with aesthetics in this fragment, thus at least partly justifying its high-flown romantic rhetoric. So, what figments of events do occur in "Rome" and what kind of aesthetics can be discerned in it?

"Rome" tells the story of a young Italian prince who, after a lengthy sojourn in Paris, the capital of contemporary European civilization,[25] returns to his native city after his father's death. Finding that he has inherited a palace, as lapidated as most of Rome itself, he quickly dismisses most of its servants, rejecting any attempt at playing a role in the social life of Rome's high society. Here he differs from his father who had aspired to shine in this false Paris-inspired upper-class world "roused by the ambitions of an old coquette" that, unfortunately, had been his throughout his life (3: 145). With leisure to roam his native city for days and weeks on end, the Prince takes in all its beauty with active senses, especially visually. This city, which when he left it did not seem remarkable to him, he now perceives with new eyes. Its beauty stimulates not only his senses but also his intellect and he engages in a careful study of its history — one that leads him to ponder its past, present and future and Italian culture in general. When he returned to Rome, he was already deeply disillusioned with civilized Paris, the "market-place and fairground of Europe" (3: 136), as brittle as the glass palaces of commerce that fill it, as well as with the artificial intellectual-artistic institutions it has created. He came increasingly to view the city as the site of superficial intellectual inquiry, as a mere toying with ideas that never was crowned by mature creative accomplishments. He perceived that one explanation for this state of affairs was to be found in its narcissistic and socially isolated intellectuals who were more concerned with being fashionable and attracting attention to themselves than with creating a genuine national culture in cooperation with all layers of the population. The "vaudeville" (3: 139) was the only genre Parisian art mastered to perfection —

the negative implications for "culture" are obvious. "Fragmentation," life for the moment, time frittered away — this is the hallmark of a civilized Paris that has abandoned its national culture, as has the Western world in general. Rome, on the contrary, the Prince comes to see as the cradle of a genuine culture of the past that has left its visible and lasting traces in the present, still impacting it and helping it to develop a diverse, but harmonious, culture now. Favoring the Renaissance himself, he discovers that Rome is able to encompass many cultures, being a diachronic and synchronic cultural *oikumene* of sorts, which can encompass everything from pagan antiquity to religious medieval culture, from aristocratic renaissance art to the people's carnival festivities.[26] In this "household" all social layers, men and women, young and old, as well as the great figures of the past and present coexist, creating new cultural values together. No one is excluded: gossipy Italian house-wives, fat prelates, picturesquely dressed painters from different countries and their beautiful models, merry beggars, happy loafers, festive crowds — all participate in the continuation of the living total work of art that is Rome. Presumably the only sector of society that is excluded from this festival of culture is the one that deems itself its most important contributor, but, in reality, is not: the socialites of the type that the Prince's father, the old "coquette," represents.

At the same time as the nameless Prince delights in Rome's beauty, he also laments the political insignificance of "poor Italy" that prevents it from having any impact on the rest of the world. He wonders whether its "fame will ever be resurrected" (3: 153) and regretfully remembers the "man from Genoa" (Columbus) who single-handedly "killed his own fatherland by showing the world the route to an unknown new land" and "other vast thoroughfares" that set in motion "powerful forces in the North" (3: 154), pushing Italy to the periphery of Europe. He becomes convinced however that "Italy has not died" (3: 154); he remembers that the waves of its cultural impact on Europe still manifest themselves, for example, in the [operatic] music that is now performed "on the shores of the Seine, the Neva, the Thames, the Moskva river, the Mediterranean and the Black Sea," even in Algiers (3: 155). The main reason for his high hopes that Italy will reach a new peak of cultural world dominion is not the fact that Italy still produces individuals of genius (now in music), however. It is his discovery of the "Roman people" (3: 155) that up till now remained "unnoticed" in the history of the land. This as yet "unspent force" (material, eshche nepochatyi, 155) offers the guarantee for a new mighty wave of Italian cultural impact on the rest of the world. As has been pointed out, in "civilized" Paris, there is no trace of popular culture playing any role on its crowded streets — there is no "folk" to be seen there, no *narod*.[27] Rome, on the contrary, has its carnivals, religious processions and other manifestations of folk art that well could constitute the soil for the flowering of a new Renaissance.

The appearance, amidst Carnival festivities, of the wondrously beautiful, yet simple and "ordinary" woman of the people, Annuntsiata, confirms the Prince's hope for his country's future. She ultimately leads the Prince — not by enticing him, but by eluding and thus challenging him — to his ultimate revelation, the one on which "Rome" ends: the superb panorama of the *urbs sacra et eterna* as an ensemble of architecture, brilliant colors, harmonious sounds, flowering gardens and framing mountains in the distance, or the total work of art. Here, before the perfect harmony of the arts and fragrant "multi-voiced" nature, he forgets his search for Annuntsiata, since now, in a sense, he has found her, or — to be more specific — the mystical vision of the timeless city of which she was the "annunciation." He is where she, in a mystical sense, "told" him to go, her appearance being the "annunciation" of the revelation that "eternal Rome" is indeed eternal as long as it continues to be receptive to new — valid — cultural influx, now also from the folk.

The reason why Rome will continue to "live forever" may not only be found in its own receptivity to valid novelty, however, but also in the prospect of culture transfers to other lands. It will continue to be the inspirer of cultural flowerings in other countries all over the world, continuing the universalizing mission it has traditionally fulfilled, for example, when spreading the Christian message to the world and when giving it the fruits of Renaissance culture. Whether Christianizing, or "paganizing," the world, Rome has always been a "universalizing" and "harmonizing" culture. Judging by the rivers and seas, the Prince has singled out on the banks and shores of which Italian opera is listened to it is France, England and Russia that are the main recipients of Rome's eternal legacy. Russia and its two capitals (Petersburg and Moscow) occupy privileged positions claiming two of the four rivers enumerated: the Neva and the Moskva; Russia also claims large parts of one of the two seas: the Black Sea. Also keeping in mind that Moscow was considered the "third Rome" in Slavophile circles, it would be possible to see the Italian Prince's intuitions of a future grand flowering of Italian culture at home and in foreign lands as focusing on Russia. Italy's role, in his vision of its future is to be the vital impetus for Russian cultural development.

It is a widely accepted notion that the young prince is "Gogol's mouth-piece"[28] and that his musings on the future of Italy in "Rome," "indirectly reflect his musings on Russia and her fate." "'Rome' contains prophecies about the fate of Italy, and, indirectly, musings on Russia and her fate as well," since "Gogol hopes that Russia will be able to benefit from the fruits of those aesthetic and artistic quests that permeate the Italic 'genius', that it will be reborn, like the author himself was, upon feeding on the source of art and beauty," Italian culture.[29] A new Renaissance could become reality in a union of Rome and Moscow and a defeat of Paris and Petersburg, Russia's Paris.

Or, alternatively, the Roman Empire could be "resurrected' in a new universal culture, that would integrate the North-West (Paris-Petersburg) and the South-East (Moscow, as third Rome together with "first Rome") axes, the present (modern European civilization) and the vital past (the eternally inspiring culture of Latin Rome) that would bode well for a rich cultural synthesis of modernity and tradition. Possibly the Prince, being Gogol's "mouthpiece," was thinking solely of Russia: its current sad state and its future splendor. Its future splendor was bound to include a European presence, however. Therefore, the famous Gogolian troika rushing toward its glorious future is bound to "sweep up" the beautiful Annuntsiata and all she stands for and placing her firmly within that fast vehicle, transforming her into the Russian-Ukrainian beauty Ulinka (in part II of *Dead Souls*). In short, the endless potential of the Prince's vision at the open ending of the fragment could well be filled by a variety of positive utopian visions with Italy's special mission as an inspirer of future Russia at their core. In this vision, Russia may well end up vastly "superior" to its Italian source, eventually, but Italy, clearly, has a vital function as an inspiring model.

To restate, what the Italian Prince, by the name of Gogol, may have discerned beyond the visible panorama of enchanting, but dilapidated, Rome was the as yet invisible fulfillment of Rome's destiny in the distant realm of Russia. Written at the same time as "The Overcoat," "Rome" was both its stark opposite (panegyric versus grotesque) and the Prologue to *Dead Souls*, Part II, where the Dantean *Divine Comedy* of Russian progress from inferno to paradise had reached the purgatory of a transitory phase on Russian-Ukrainian soil. Writing his "Rome," the Roman-Russian-Ukrainian Prince Gogol may have envisioned a marriage[30] of enchanting but feeble Roman culture and barbaric, but potentially creative Russia — with Ukraine participating in the wedding feast as well.[31]

Gorky's view of Italy as a Cultural Model for Russia

It could be argued that no such "marriages" are dealt with in "Rome" and that the blank space of the open ending should not be filled with too specific a content. The present article does, however, not pursue the goal of offering an interpretation of "Rome" commensurate with Gogolian "prophecies and messages," but rather aims at presenting a possible Gorkian reading of it as manifested in *IF*. Writing about contemporary Russia in dark colors (in *RF*), while living in bright Italy and writing the "sun-drenched" *IF*, remembering his unsuccessful stay in the US where civilization — but not culture — was developing rapidly, Gorky, like his predecessor Gogol, was pondering various

oppositions. Like him, he not only juxtaposed the land of *Dead Souls* with the civilized West, but also the only remaining valid culture of Europe, i.e. Mediterranean Italy, with civilized Europe. Of all the possible cultural alliances that future Russia should claim, it was lovely Italy and its glorious past, still so valid and culturally active in the present that clearly offered the most congenial union, is one message that *IF* arguably conveys. Like Gogol's "Rome," so Gorky's *IF*, intimate the possibility of a fruitful bond between "Italic" culture and that of the future "Russian Socialist Renaissance."

Italian Fairytales

The cycle of *IF* consists of 27 *skazki*. These do not take place in Rome, but (most of them) on Capri. During his stay on Capri Gorky did however take several trips to Rome where he took to repeating the routes of Gogol's favorite walks, while exploring the city and its surroundings, also reenacting the Prince's habit of long exploratory strolls around the entire city.[32] In addition he studied Roman history (notably Gibbon's *The Rise and Decline of the Roman Empire*), once more like the Prince, adding knowledge to impressions and sensations.

Unlike "Rome," Gorky's cycle cannot be considered a "fragment." There is, however, an "unfinished" quality to many of its individual textual units which, not infrequently, have open endings, notably the last "sketch-fairytale." In fact, it has a similar visionary quality as the scene where the Prince, from a height, looks at the panorama before him in "Rome," offering a perspective that not only points to the "future," but to something beyond time, perhaps to no less a perspective than "eternity." The last sketch of *IF*, which describes the celebration of the Night before Easter Sunday (*noch' strastnoi subboty*) and thus the expected and then "actual," resurrection of Christ ends on this note:

> . . . voskres Khristos, bog vesny . . . Ploshad' pusteet; tri svetlye figury, vziav pod ruki drug druga, zapeli chto-to, druzhno i krasivo, i poshli v ulitsu; muzykanty dvinulis' za nimi, i tolpa vsled im; begut deti, v sianii krasivykh ognei oni — tochno rassypannye busy korallov, a golubi uzhe uselis' na kryshakh, na karnizakh i — vorkuiut.
> I snova vspominaetsia khoroshaia pesnia: "Khristos voskrese. . ." I vse my voskresnem iz mertvykh, smertiiu smert' poprav (12: 166).
> Christ, the god of spring, is arisen . . . the city square is emptying of people; three brightly clad figures, walking arm in arm, move toward the street, singing together beautifully and harmoniously; the musicians follow them; children are running about, illuminated by the beautiful lights [of fireworks] they look like scattered coral beads, and the doves have already settled on the roofs and gables — cooing. And again, a good song comes to mind: "Christ is arisen . . ." And all of us will rise from the dead, trampling death by death.

This open ending does not, of course, convey a faith in either Christ's or man's resurrection in any traditional Christian sense (God-building denies any God but Humanity), but a vision of the eternal rebirth of human endeavors — endeavors that may lead to the most miraculous results yet too early to speak of in detail, but *bound* to come true. Thus the grand finale of this sketch is more down-to-earth than the Prince's ecstatic, and by Gorkian criteria, undoubtedly too passive, merging with everlasting Beauty in "Rome." The "trampling down of death" in Gorky's vision is not religious in any traditional sense, but going to be accomplished by the popular masses in active labor processes that will guarantee that culture will last forever. In spite of its lack of "mysticism," Gorky's final fairytale is quite "ecstatic" too, however. Even if Gogol's Prince merges with "another world" and *IF*'s narrator does not, there is still a certain parallelism between "Rome" and tale XXVII, in *IF*, in this blank space of endless "promise and potential." There are also other traces of "Rome" in *IF*. Let us stay with tale XXVII for a while.

Just as in Gogol's fragment, so in fairytale XXVII of *IF* we encounter an "Italic" culture that functions as a diverse, yet unified, "cultural household" in which all epochs and all social layers of the population harmoniously co-exist. We observe a culture that means something to, and is celebrated by, the entire community. Previous generations are "present" in the traces they have left on present-day culture. Thus *skazka* XXVII describes a nightly religious procession in which pagan, Christian and folk elements blend, showing an Italy that is indeed *sacra et aeterna*, because it is endlessly varied and entirely open to all genuine manifestations of renewal. It always opens up to new cultural influx, seeing it as enrichment, and finding use for everything in its "household." It is not saving up and "fossilizing" things (as Pliushkin does in his dead household in *Dead Souls*), but using objects, ideas, works of art, for ever new purposes and in ever new combinations. Therefore, the "last night of Christ's suffering" (12: 163) is far from purely Christian-Catholic. The celebration begins with the mighty figure of a woman draped in black who wanders through the streets of the island's main town, occasionally resting on little market squares that look like "holes ground through the stone clothes of the city by time" (163). She seems to be desperately looking for someone or something and it is not strictly speaking the Christ of the Gospels; in fact she "is" Isis looking for her brother-husband torn to pieces by the god Seth. Eventually she encounters another procession led by the resurrected Christ himself (who is "Osiris" as well, we may assume) and his most beloved disciple, John. Syncretism continues, as we are told that the latter is beautiful like "Dionysus," while Christ later is called "the god of spring." Gorky seems to want to make sure we are reminded of all the religions of the "suffering god" that ever existed, possibly wishing to demonstrate that, like Viacheslav Ivanov, he was a "champion of spiritual

continuity." He shared — at this time at least — Ivanov's notion of Memory as the "'supreme ruler' of culture," and since relations between them were harmonious when Gorky left Russia, the passage quoted above may be a mini-homage to the scholar and bard of Dionysian religions.[33] As will be seen below relations with many other symbolists were less friendly.

To return to the procession, both young men who also look very much like angels laugh merrily at this stage, having forgotten all their enacted suffering, even the "mythic" crucifixion itself. When meeting the two beautiful youths, the darkly clad woman suddenly lets her cloak fall, revealing that beneath the garb of Isis she is the Madonna as well; her golden hair surrounds her face like a halo. Out of the pockets of her dropped cloak white doves, the birds of Venus, flutter up towards the sky and children who resemble birds chant "gloria, Madonna, gloria." The word "Madonna" is used also in the Russian text, not "Mater' Bozh'ia," ("Slava, madonna, slava!," 165) possibly intimating the translatability and compatibility of Italian and Russian culture (cf. note 30).

The beauty of this "syncretic-religious" holiday intensifies as it develops all its magic and delights. Lights are lit in the windows, torches flame up and the sounds of bells, laughter and merry shouts mingle. "Burning and melting" (165) in the moonlight reflected in her silver dress, the Isis-Madonna and the two youths — Christ-Dionysus and the evangelist John, surrounding her in a quasi-Christian deesis icon" — seem to belong to "another world." Nevertheless, they do not loose touch with the "ground" of reality, but remain recognizably the seamstress Annita Bragalia and the carpenter and clock repair men of the village. Highbrow culture and folk culture do not oppose each other, nor is the folk too "simple" to grasp complex mysteries. They enact them with all the finesse of genuine artists. Perhaps Catholicism's readiness to combine religion and art, its inclusion of paganism into the most sacred mysteries of the Church and its encouragement of the people's active participation are lessons that "God-building Socialism" could profit from. Departing, the group sings in a beautiful harmony of sound and feeling ("druzhno i krasivo," 166) and the children following them "in the light of beautiful fireworks" are beautiful too (166). All this beauty (*krasivost'*), it seems, offers the pledge that a culture of hybrid beauty "will save the world." It also demonstrates that beauty increases with the richness that synthesized heterogeneity offers.[34]

Not only the last tale (XXVII), but the entire *IF* cycle is permeated with "faith" of the kind outlined above. To state it again, however, it is not the faith of Roman Catholicism, or Orthodoxy that Gorky preaches. It is a new faith in eternal human creativity that will burst forth after a socialist revolution of workers in Russia and, in due course, Italy. It is a faith that the author makes the statue of Columbus in the port of Genoa share with him (in tale II). Unlike Gogol's "man from Genoa," who ruined Italy by showing pathways to the New

World, Columbus here is presented as a man who enriched humanity. In *skazka* II, the statue of the daring discoverer of new continents and vistas "tells" the narrator that only "those who have faith conquer" (12: 13). In Gorky's Italy, the time for a new faith has come to be added to all the old ones and, clearly, this new faith has many features in common with Gorky's "god-building" version of socialism. This new faith can only gain from integrating the beauty of the rituals of the past, including Catholic ones. Perhaps this kind of religious syncretism is natural to Italy, Gorky intimates, since possibly the only religion the inhabitants of Capri and the land truly embrace is a cult of the Sun. Certainly all that lives on the island "silently sings a prayer to the Sun-god" (12: 49) and the island itself "resembles a sacrificial altar dedicated to the divine sun" (121). This sun-worship does not disqualify Russia with its often gloomy climate, since the most important aspect of "sun-worship" is having "sun in one's blood" (Gorky's favorite line from Shchepkina-Kupernik's translation of E. Rostand's *Cyrano de Bergerac*), which the revolutionaries do have.

The coexistence of diverse cultural strands, inherited from many epochs and from diverse peoples and harmonized into a palimpsest of beauty, is not only found in the last fairytale but throughout the cycle. Following the traditions of its glorious past, Italy is once more demonstrating its receptivity to new ideological-cultural impulses while not renouncing its past; it is manifested in its readiness to embrace revitalizing Socialist ideals without giving up what constituted previous ways of life. In Gorky's first *skazka*, for example, the city of Naples is shown as ready to embrace yet another — this time popular and democratic — renaissance that is created by the Folk. Not "organizing," but "celebrating" a grand strike of tramcar drivers, the workers of Naples, demonstrate their new version of the Easter holiday, which is a political carnival and glorification of the rebelling people, the Gogolian Prince's *il popolo*, perhaps. It is a holiday that does not lack its religious dimension, as the workers show they are ready to "lay down their lives for their friends": striking workers and their sympathizers lie down on the tram tracks to hinder the tramcars from being driven, apparently ready to be maimed and even killed, if it should come to the worst. These same workers will not repudiate the ancient spring-festival of Easter, glorifying the resurrection of Jesus Christ and Nature, but gladly join a religious procession perhaps right after their strike, or after some party meeting, or political rally. Perhaps their faith will be secularized in due course, losing ever more of its specifically Christian content, but the Italian cult of beauty will never cease, the *Fairytales* seem to say.

Gorky's cycle is thus circular, as its overall theme of rebirth demands, and the last sketch brings us back to the first, while the first points to the last, enclosing between beginning and end many versions of the invariant that life is beautiful when it is based on the kind of "friendship" that is prepared for Christ's ultimate

sacrifice — to lay down one's life for one's friends. In this circular structure, *IF* echoes Gogol's "Rome," where the vision of the incomprehensible beauty of Annuntsiata, likewise, is presented at the very beginning of the fragment and reintroduced at the end, melting into the beautiful panorama of eternal Rome. Both texts not only project us into the realm of endless potential but also anchor us in the "reality" that must be the point of departure for future discoveries.

Another fairytale about the possibility of opposed faiths coexisting in a valid culture, may be found in tale VIII. Here a very anti-clerical socialist falls in love with a devoutly Catholic girl. She refuses him and even allows illness and death to overcome her rather than betray that "cult of the Madonna" that is so "beautiful" and "clever" (*umnyi*) that it can inspire loyalty unto death. The Catholic church, we may deduce, knew what it did when it created a cult that for so many centuries has been appealing to a "woman's heart" (36). In spite of her fervent love for the Madonna, the young woman gradually comes to see the validity of the new faith of Socialism. Before she dies, she confesses that her own "faith was only fear of that which [she] could not understand, in spite of her desire to do so and [her lover's] efforts" to make her see the new truth (12: 41). Intellectually she could largely agree with him, but her heart "could not share" his ideas. The conclusion is fairly obvious: if socialism absorbs the beauty of the Madonna-cult in an intelligent way, it may well conquer hearts and minds, women and men, beauty being the link that unites all human faculties and all human beings. The *skazka* ends on an optimistic note. Not only does the socialist marry the deceased's best friend, a girl who understands socialism, but the couple together pay homage to his dead beloved for her principled steadfastness in frequent "pilgrimages" to her grave. We are also left with an optimistic mini-vision of the future, anticipating the grand one of tale XXVII, and conveyed by the narrator himself: "... we are all of us moving toward freedom, toward freedom! And the more we become friends — the faster we'll get there!" (12: 41) Catholicism and socialism may not be destined to merge ideologically (contrary to Dostoevsky's suspicions that they would, or already had), but the beauty of Catholic cults may well be integrated by the new political ideology emerging in the land of eternal cultural rebirths, benefiting its vitality. After all the Madonna-cult and the socialist respect for Woman are, or could be made, compatible, the narrator implies in many a tale of the cycle.[35]

Woman

In "Rome," Annuntsiata's beauty is presented in hyperbolic terms, and the Prince's admiration of it presents us with a Madonna cult of sorts (he is always viewing her from below, as if she were on a pedestal).[36] Do Gorky's *IF* "hyper-

bolize" Woman to the same extent, and, if so, is it the Virgin, or the maternal Madonna, or yet another Hypostasis that is being glorified?

The Madonna cult is paid tribute to in some instances (see the discussion below), but, on the whole, the cycle celebrates strong and passionate women, some of them straight out of Italian (and French) opera (*Carmen*, *Cavalleria rusticana*). There is, for example, the faithful wife Emilia Bracco who, slandered by her mother-in-law, kills her. Emilia's mother, in her turn, tries to kill a suitor of Emilia's — in church. Another passionate woman is the beautiful and highly attractive Carmen-like Nuncha, the queen of the town's vegetable market-place and lover of many (single) men, whose emerging rival proves to be her own daughter. Nuncha engages in a race with her, outrunning her; she then dances the tarantella and dies while dancing. We are to understand that knowing she has a weak heart, this ageing Carmen sought to kill herself and that she succeeded in taking her fate in her own hands rather than submitting to a degrading rivalry.

In fairytales IX–XI that form a kind of mini-cycle within the larger cycle, Woman is glorified in the most high-flown stylistic terms, but it is Motherhood rather than Beauty that is the focus there. Tale IX, the only "fantastic" tale of the cycle, is set in Samarkand, at Tamerlane's splendid court, and it "glorifies the woman who is a Mother, the source of all-victorious life that never dries up" (12: 42). Presented in a style that recalls Gorky's own early romanticism, as well as what he might have seen as aesthetically impressive in Gogol's "Rome," Gorky here offers a fairytale mini-variant of his novel *Mother*. At any rate we have a mother who is prepared for any sacrifice to rescue her young son from captivity and death in Tamerlane's cruel realm. Crossing seas and traversing forests, walking across mountain passes and wading through rivers on her journey from her native Italy to the Asian East, she is never attacked by wild animals — these respect motherly love. When she finally confronts the merciless Emperor, she already knows his weak spot: it was love for his dead son and the grief over the loss of him that made him cruel. Reminding him of his grief, the heroic Mother overcomes the Emperor of Death (somewhat like the Girl, confronting Death, in Gorky's early narrative poem "The Maiden and Death") and secures the release of her son. Tamerlane's court poet, the fearless Kermani (who resembles "Gorky" in his demonstrative disrespect for authority), glorifies her and all mothers exclaiming that "without the Mother — there would be no poets and no heroes" (46) and encouraging all to bow down to woman, since she has "born Moses, Mohammed and the great prophet Jesus" (12: 46). Even Tamerlane is impressed with the Mother (and god-building) acknowledging that "love helped her recognize that her child was a spark of life that could ignite a fire that might burn for centuries" (47).

Devoting the core of the cycle to the topic of maternal love and what it entails, Gorky, like Gogol, demonstrates that Woman is a cornerstone of Italian

culture, but he adds a "god-building" perspective. His heroic Italian women are therefore made of sterner stuff than Annuntsiata. For example, Motherhood does not only entail endless love for the Son, at least, not endless forgiveness. In the tradition of Roman matrons from the republican period of Rome's history, Italian mothers not only know how to save their sons, but also when to kill them. The Catholic Madonna and the patriotic Roman Matron merge in *IF*.

A mother who has born a greedy "monster" of a child is at first deaf to all injunctions to hand over the physically deformed and retarded boy with an insatiable appetite for food to an institution. When however one day she hears some foreigners from "civilized" Europe who have caught sight of her child, say that "Italy is leading in the degeneration of all the Roman races" (12: 53), her son mysteriously dies. Another story also deals with a patriotic mother who kills her son, a physically handsome, but morally deformed man. She kills him before he has the opportunity to become a traitor to his motherland. Gorky's Socialist "Madonna-Matron-cult" thus has its severe aspects, imbued as it is with Nietzschean elements about "god-bearing" super-women, i.e. women who dream of bearing the New Man of the future and therefore have high expectations of their children and strict demands on themselves.[37] In spite of their civic sternness, the Mothers in Gorky's *skazki* are also a kind of Annuntsiatas, i.e. they too "announce" in various ways that the Future is full of rebirth potential. Like the Madonna of Christianity, they may well bear a "god" who will change the world (under the banner of pride rather than humility, however) and, if they are mocked by Nature, or see their Son go astray, they remove the source of mockery and the "stain" on their honor. They fully understand the responsibility of Woman before the Future.

Skazka XXIV reintroduces a more traditional Madonna-version of Woman. It tells the tale of a Mother who reluctantly, her heart filled with fear and sorrow, lets her socialist son go to the city, although she knows that imprisonment often befalls political agitators. Nevertheless, she accepts his assertion that "there is no force in the world and never will be that could kill the young heart of the world" (12: 148) and sacrifices her personal happiness for the sake of Italy's future. She also accepts his "imitation of Christ" when he gives her another son to replace himself. He tells her that his friend Paolo will take his place ("Paolo takoi zhe syn tebe, kak ia!," 12: 149), just as Christ gave his Mother his beloved disciple John to replace him as her son after his death. This story once more demonstrates that self-sacrifice, filial love that transcends biological family ties and love for one's "friends" are the building stones of a pattern that could unite the old and the new faiths and enrich both, yielding a rich culture. Possibly this son who believes in "the young heart of the world" could become one of its "divine" liberators, someone like Moses or Christ, or at least someone who prepares the path for "divine people" like them.

If in the theme of Woman, Gorky follows largely different routes from those taken by Gogol in his glorification of Woman's Beauty, he does follow him closely in his division of Europe into cultural "zones" that oppose each other in terms of validity versus insubstantiality. *Skazki* XV–XVI, for example, contrast a both grotesque and rapacious civilization from the North of Europe with the living culture of Capri. In general, the "proud glance of the foreigner" ("gordyi vzor inoplemennyi," Tiutchev)[38] from non-Slavic realms, tends to devalue Italian culture, while having nothing more valid to offer instead. Among the unpleasant and narrow-minded *forestiere* who visit Capri we meet a wealthy, but grotesque, brother-sister couple from Holland who have devoted their lives to ruining each others' happiness (tale XV). While the hunchback brother once staged a lethal accident that eliminated his sister's fiancé, she retaliated by transforming a home for hunchbacks that he was building, into a madhouse to which she confined him for many years. Now, both on the edge of the grave, they joylessly roam the world together, seeing nothing "except themselves" (12: 92). One reason for their both physical and moral ugliness appears to be traceable to the fact that their father, a rich Dutch banker, imbued them with all the false values of capitalist civilization: narrow egotism, blind individualism, the inability to transcend grotesque reality in creative dreams.

In addition to the Dutch, the Germans also are carriers of the ills of capitalist civilization in their inability to be beautiful in any way. The Italian child Pepe (who may be intertextually related to Gogol's adult, but child-like and carefree, character Pepe in "Rome") is an "instinctive" socialist, wherefore unerringly, he discerns the flaws of the Germans, the French and English. The Germans are, above all, pompous and ugly people with fat faces, scarred by dueling; the French are "as noisy as toy-rattles"; the English with their long thin legs are both comical and dull, and the Americans, unsuccessfully, try to be like the English — a typology basically in agreement with Gogol's (12: 157–158), even if cruder. Pepe, the offspring of the folk, steals a pair of trousers from his sister's American employer (Gogol's Pepe is also in dire need of new trousers) and he does so without any compunction, feeling that it is excessive for the American to own ten pairs of trousers while he himself has only rags to wear. The American actually takes the theft with good humor, unlike his wife.

Russians — some of them at least — also belong to the negative *forestiere* types. Russia is in the unfortunate position that, harboring an endless potential for culture in its "prodigiously talented folk" (see note 4), it is ruled by "civilized" people who are grotesque copies of Western Europeans, and, as such, even worse than their role models. In tale XVI, for example, we meet a group of Russians on an Italian tourist steamer who are formless and fat, devoid of all grace and charm, and accompanied by women who are equally lacking in these qualities. These ugly people lack all appreciation of beauty and can see nothing appealing

in the magic sights that surround them. One of the men, for example, thinks that "dolphins resemble pigs" (12: 95), one of the women opines that Italians "look like Yids" (95) and another woman thinks they behave "like monkeys" (97). They are of course upper-class people, one of them even a governor, called "funny Jean" (zabavnyi Zhan) by his friends. Funny Jean's politics are fully revealed when he suggests that one should serve the Russian peasants endless quantities of vodka at state expense at fairs and public holidays so that they may kill each other when blind drunk, saving the police the trouble of beating them to death. They are the representatives of that alien western civilization that dwells inside Russia not only in Petersburg (Russia's Paris), but in all places where the higher administrative echelons lead their parasitic lives, including the capitals of the provinces.

It is tragic that an Italian who respectfully observes these Russians, not understanding their remarks, should be full of admiration for them. He refers to Russians as "the best of the Slavs" (12: 96) and sees them as valid representatives of this "great nation"; he regrets that his countrymen know "so little of these large people with blue eyes" (98). While he envisions trade between Italy and Russia, how Italy could buy grain, wood and coal from Russia while reciprocating culturally, the upper-class Russians, continue to devalue all things Italian. Demonstrating racism, anti-Semitism and snobbishness with varying degrees of stupidity, they treat the Italian's attempts to be polite with contempt. Needless to say, it is not these Russians who are alienated from their own nation that are going to become the allies of those Italians who are preparing to create a new renaissance in the history of their nation — the Socialist one — with Russian help.

Italians who are hoping for yet another rebirth of their country, who are striking for their rights, holding socialist rallies and building the Simplon tunnel, do look to the Slavic East and Russia's revolutionary socialists for comradely help and inspiration. Workers such as the metal craftsman Giovanni know that it is thanks to the "grandiose accomplishments" of the Russians (in 1905) that "the entire East has been stirred into new life" ("vspykhnul k zhizni ves' vostok," 74). His friend, the house-painter Vincenzo, speaks of Russia as "the land of heroes" (74). Giovanni believes that the wonderful Italian climate has made their own nation "too lazy, too soft" (79) to accomplish similar deeds of valor, which is the reason why Italy needs the help of Slavic "heroes." Vincenzo, the painter, then recites a poem he wrote the night before and both friends (who somewhat resemble Turgenev's Khor' and Kalinych) agree that "to speak beautifully" is also very important. It would thus seem that a "marriage" between "femininely soft" Italy and "heroically masculine" Russia would profit both partners. Good Italians, like Giovanni and Vincenzo, fully realize that the Balkan Slavs are much closer to them than the Germans who are luring them

into dubious militaristic ventures, such as the conquest of Ethiopia (157). In short the Italians of the folk understand that a south-east axis is much to be preferred to a south-north, or south-west, one, if their vital culture is to continue to thrive in their beautiful land. Unfortunately, they have their upper classes too — people who guard their property against the poor and despise those they employ to guard them and who think a nation's worth is decided by military exploits rather than cultural glory.

To recapitulate: Gorky, like Gogol, found in Italy that European country that had not yielded to the superficiality and insubstantiality of Western civilizations with their rigid hierarchies and class and wealth distinctions, but continued and developed the traditions of a culture that involved *il populo*. Both observers and lovers of Italian culture also immersed themselves in it and studied it, never forgetting that there was another country, to which they owed even greater allegiance than to sunlit Italy: the gray and oppressed land of Russia that they had been called upon to help guide to its destiny. The Italian capacity for cultural self-renewal throughout millennia of history was the secret both lovers of Italy and sons of Russia must carry across to their own land, as well as an advocacy for their close relations and interaction. Naturally, Gorky, the constantly optimistic socialist god-builder, has little in common with the spiritually tortured Gogol; nor is his art, so devoid of any real attempt to express the inexpressible, comparable to Gogol's. As Gorky's *RF* also amply demonstrate, humor and irony do not belong to the strengths of his art, even though they are in the tradition of "Gogolian satires." "Rome" and *IF* do not champion the same, or even similar, causes. Arguably, however, Gorky saw his own vision of future world-wide socialist renewal and Russia's guiding role in it strengthened by his reading of "Rome"; he, apparently, agreed with its plea for a reinforcement of "peripheral" cultures that had so much more to offer the world than the civilized countries that dominated the globe with the help of the "yellow devil" and shallow intellectual fads (French decadence, for example), while losing all touch with genuine creativity.

Sologub

At the same time as Gorky was exploring the theme of Italy and Russia in the work of Gogol and, apparently, finding much of value in it for his own thoughts on the matter, he was also distancing himself from a Russian contemporary writer who likewise believed that a Mediterranean cultural model held valuable lessons for future Russia: the "decadent" Fedor Sologub. In his trilogy "Tvorimaia legenda" (*A Legend in the Making*, serialized 1907–1913, under the title of "Nav'i chary"), Sologub contrasts the drab town of Skorodozh (read: Russia)

in the first volume, *Drops of Blood*, to Queen Ortruda's beautiful island world, situated somewhere in southern Europe, in the second volume of the trilogy *Queen Ortruda*.[39] Thus the first two parts of the trilogy form a contrasting diptych that precedes Gorky's diptych, consisting of *IF* and *RF*. Both diptychs are similar on the general level of contrasting two worlds: one grotesquely drab as may be expected from the land of "dead souls," the other exotically beautiful as well as culturally heterogeneous, one native-Russian, the other Mediterranean-southern. A uniting theme of Sologub's entire trilogy is the repudiation of both age-old Russian barbarism and modern European civilization, combined with the advocacy of a genuine, eternally young, culture that realizes the dreams of all creative "renaissance" people, being always ready to integrate valid novelty. Like Gogol and Gorky, Sologub puts "civilized Europe" in northern climes and cultured Europe in southern regions. In spite of these thematic parallels between *A Legend in the Making* (referred to as *Legend* from now on)[40] and *IF-RF*, Sologub's series of novels literally infuriated Gorky. In his correspondence, he regularly referred to them in the most abusive terms, such as "Sologubian vomit" (*Pis'ma*, 6: 156),[41] and Sologub himself is clearly the target of the Russian fairytale "Mr. Deathlove" ("Gospodin Smertiashkin)."[42] "Outraged,"[43] Gorky reacted to Sologub's "retching" (*Pis'ma*, 6: 167) by creating his own "valid" Mediterranean *legends*, or *fairytales* that he believed were ethically superior to the Decadent's "sadistic" (6: 87, 461) novel trilogy.[44] *IF* and *RF*, it is argued in the present article, were — among other things, such as the advocacy of socialist God-building — his answer to the "bald-headed bastard (6: 128),[45] whose "mug" he wanted to slap (6: 128).[46] Gogol, as read by Gorky, served as an additional support for his own "true" vision of Mediterranean culture and its significance for the Russian socialist culture of the Future. Sologub, as read by Gorky, offered a total denial of that "true" vision of his. It is an interesting detail that in one of his letters, Gorky referred to Sologub as an "old coquette" (*staryi koket*, *Pis'ma*, 6: 69) i.e. used Gogol's description of the Prince's father in "Rome," who used to dress up "using all the devices of an old coquette" (*staroi koketki*, 145). Gorky used Gogol to invalidate Sologub, this detail intimates. His gender change of *koketka* to the neologism *koket* presumably increases the abuse. Whether impacted by Gogol or not, Gorky clearly felt the need to counteract what he perceived as the moral dangers of Sologubian decadence by himself presenting works that showed both the Italian and the Russian folk as "spiritually sound" and as having "a historical fate full of promising perspective" (*Pis'ma,* 6: 294). He was concerned with "degeneration" (6: 307) as a threat to both Italy and Russia. Gorky's main concern about *Legend*, as he himself made plain, was the fact that eroticism and politics were intertwined in it; it was specifically the character of Alkina, a social democrat and party propagandist who strips and then offers herself to Trirodov, also asking for some whipping

to be added, that upset him. In his view "fantasy and eroticism were incompatible with politics."[47] Probably it was not only the "unfeeling" and "perverted" eroticism of this and other scenes that upset Gorky, however, but also the fact that *Legend*, in his view, was a glorification of death. Sologub was by the "progressive" camp cast in the role of "singer of death," and Gorky was unable to perceive him in any other way. He saw himself as the "singer of life" and, as we have seen, as the glorifier of "never drying up cultural vitality." Somewhat ironically, it was the atheist socialist Gorky who in *IF* "defended" Jesus Christ (the god of spring and deity of eternal "resurrections") against the symbolist-gnostic Sologub who denigrated him as an impotent hypocrite in *Legend* (for example in the figure of Prince Davidov). In short, there were numerous reasons why Gorky was bound to see *Legend* as a glorification of the decline of culture and his own work as conducive to a great cultural renaissance.

A Legend in the Making

Fedor Sologub's trilogy *Legend* may be seen as the realization of the "Dantean" one that Gogol planned but did not complete, leaving us with only the *Inferno* part of *Dead Souls,* some fragments of the *Purgatorio* part, and no *Paradiso*. Like his predecessor, Sologub begins with *Inferno* under the title *Drops of Blood*, which is set in a Russia of souls so dead that even the 1905 revolution cannot awaken them. He adds the *Purgatorio* drama of the *United Islands*, or "Europe," in *Queen Ortruda*, which ends with the purifying devastation of her island realm in volcanic eruptions that bury it in *Smoke and Ashes* (the title of Part III), but also mark a funeral pyre out which the Phoenix of a new culture may rise. And he ends with a vision of *Paradiso* that merges barbaric Russia with the remnants of a refined European culture soon to be freed from the deathly grip of civilization by its Russian King Georgii I, the poet-alchemist Trirodov. His task, it may be inferred, is again the "Gogolian" one of creating a fusion of East and South, of tradition and strength, of aristocratic "festivity" and the untapped and unformed, but creative, "raw material" of the folk. As in Gorky's and Gogol's cultural geography, the negative West is in *Legend* represented by northern Europe which threatens the positive South, while Russia is both the realm of grotesque barbarism, as well as the land of new creative forces stirring beneath the crude surface.[48]

It is above all, the second part of the Trilogy, *Queen Ortruda*, which tells how civilization began to threaten the realm of culture on the *Islands*, a culture in which the folk had no mean part to play. It is only since Ortruda's marriage to the German Prince Tankred that the Islands have been increasingly beset by various problems, not least of a spiritual kind. This aggressively masculine

and very handsome prince, whose energetic activities, however, usually lead nowhere, does not appreciate the natural beauty of the Islands, nor their culture; he is equally incapable of appreciating their queen, the feminine incarnation of this realm's blend of natural and cultural beauty. Privately indulging in a *belle-epoque* type of Parisian operetta gaiety, he publicly supports risky and dishonest financial deals, clothing them in the necessary patriotic-religious rhetoric, of course. He thus allows himself to be manipulated by rich bankers and engages in risky colonial conquests for the "glory of God." Under his influence, as well as that of the land's numerous politicians, the culture of the Islands begins to fall victim to an irreversible decline. Religion is becoming mere lip-service; the Greek cult of the harmonious body inherited from an ancient past is turning into rituals of depravity; wise monarchical rule is being replaced by the politics of party squabbles and even a hitherto benevolent nature refuses to cooperate with humankind, threatening the Islands with destruction — the eruption of the volcano *Dragon-era*. Ortruda, the beautiful, but weak, queen of the Islands is beginning to neglect a most important and vital source of rejuvenation: popular culture. Engaging in a dubious pursuit of ever new erotic experiences, driving her lovers to suicide and seducing the innocent of both sexes, she is destroying the very foundations of genuine culture. Civilization, and its constant corollary, depravity, make increasingly fateful inroads on the once harmonious culture of the Islands. The realm that once was the cradle of Europe's great cultures is irrevocably in decline, becoming a modern, i.e. "soulless," European colonial-industrial state. Queen Ortruda herself, once, but no longer, the incarnation of all Europe's legends, fairytales and poems about the power of feminine beauty to inspire great deeds and great art, appropriately dies in the ashes of the volcanic cataclysm, since she betrayed that role. Gorky apparently was incapable of seeing her death as an act of retribution on the part of nature for her betrayal of culture. Also all the other representatives of "civilization" are duly punished — but again this is a plot element that Sologub's detractors did not perceive, least of all Gorky.[49]

It is in this situation then that the need for a leader — not a dull parliamentarian, but a King — arises. This King must not be an ordinary "monarch," however, but a wielder of cultural riches. The Islands need to be united once more by a genuine culture that is able to counteract the disintegrative tendencies of modern civilization. They need a Leader who is able to revitalize the ancient European cultures that turned to dust, or were drowned like Atlantis, and to create a new one on the foundations of the old. The choice falls upon Trirodov, the main protagonist of the trilogy, who is a Russian poet and man of broad interests — a renaissance man of the twentieth century. He is also a Don Quixote figure and hence outwardly not impressive, unlike the "festively handsome" Tankred. How to resurrect that, which is dead, belongs to his manifold cultural

and scientific activities — in Russia he lives near a cemetery where he conducts resurrection experiments — and it is one that makes him the appropriate choice for the Islands, currently a "beloved cemetery" (Dostoevsky) buried under ashes. Hampered in his homeland where his free and bold activities are met with skepticism (even by the revolutionaries) and his estate is destroyed by his barbaric countrymen, Trirodov accepts the offer to become the King of the Islands. There he apparently plans to make life as beautiful as art while not neglecting the sciences that enable mankind to take control of nature. He is accompanied by his queen Elisaveta (sic) who strives to realize the Ideal of the Woman of the Future and who, undoubtedly, will be a worthier queen than Ortruda.

Gorky, as already discussed, obviously disliked the erotic scenes in the entire trilogy and, particularly, in its second part, which include Ortruda's liaison with her youthful page Astolf, as well as her infatuation with her companion Afra. Ortruda's plans to establish a school in which both pupils and teachers would wear no clothes (in order to overcome temptation) is also likely to have struck him as immoral, just as it does the Cardinal of the Islands. Gorky seems to have read *Queen Ortruda* quite carefully, however, as the opening scenes of tale X with their description of a "narrow path" winding its way through exotic vegetation toward the sea evoke a similar description in the introductory scenes of Sologub's novel (the second one of the trilogy, *Queen Ortruda*). If Gorky's nature description is meant to evoke Sologub's, it would be in order to engage in polemics with it, since the woman who walks toward the sea in his story is not following a path of seduction as Ortruda does, but that of stern duty (she is the Mother who will feel duty-bound to eliminate her "monster child").

There clearly were many other elements that upset Gorky in Sologub's trilogy, such as its glorification of the "Monarch." Although himself no friend of parliamentarianism — in *Legend* shown to be no better than petty squabbles — he may have discerned a critique of socialism in the figure of the uncompromising and devious Meccio (Lenin?).[50] In addition, King Trirodov takes the "wrong" direction in the synthesis of Russian-Mediterranean cultures. He leaves a Russia that is still in revolutionary turmoil, and "escapes" (in his spaceship) to a world with already existing cultural traditions, apparently in order to dwell in a realm where the foundations of beauty have been laid and where life is not so risky as in riotous Russia. He even seems to think that his native realm Skorodozh is beyond cultural redemption. Did Gorky possibly see a critique of his own flight from Russia in 1905 that brought him to exile in Italy in 1906 in Trirodov's escape from Skorodozh in part III of the trilogy?

Is Trirodov planning to abandon Russia, however? Or is he going to be a King in exile only as long as it takes to reconstruct the Islands, converting them to new ideologies, as well as to learn the lessons of why it once was a valid

culture and why that culture nevertheless ended in "smoke and ashes"? The trilogy does not answer this question, but possibly, Trirodov is planning to return to his gray land of dull plains in order to plant the seeds of beauty, gathered in exotic climes, on those very plains, forging a union of the beautiful Islands and the vast continent so open to enchanting vistas on the horizon. If this is his intention, his movement from Russia to Europe could be seen as repeating Gogol's journey to Rome in order to see the land of *Dead Souls* from the perspective of distance and then, having positively assessed its potential, lead it to its dynamic troika flight into the future of endless renewals. Was Gorky — if he ever read Trirodov as a parody on himself — wrong in seeing it as critique of his exile on Capri? Or was Trirodov possibly a positive response to news about Gorky's enthusiastic reception in Italy and an approval of his move southward that did so much to popularize Russia's revolutionary cause that both writers then believed in?

When Gorky took up residence in Italy, he and his beautiful "queen," the actress Maria Andreeva were in Naples met like a royal couple. Invited to a mass rally, Gorky's open, festively decorated, carriage was greeted and later accompanied through the streets by a huge crowd. To the shouts of "long live Gorky!" and "long live the great writer!," as well as "long live the Russian revolution" and "down with the czar" he made a triumphal entry into the city."[51] The enthusiasm of the crowd reached such proportions that the militia was called in, which led to further turmoil and enthusiasm. Nor did the enthusiasm about "King Gorky" abate over time. For example, Gorky could not visit the opera in Naples without being noticed and feted. Typical manifestations of the "people's love for their king" were: interrupting the overture to Aida and playing the Marseillaise instead; showering him with the already quoted exclamations of "long live" and "down with" — that made plain who the true king of Russia was in the view of the Italian folk. Once settled on Capri, Gorky was considered "something like a Russian Garibaldi" on the Island (12: 543) and treated like a king, or better, since he was a king of revolution. It could be argued that this "king of a festive cultural revolution" could have served as a (positive) model for king Trirodov, assuming that reports of these enthusiastic reactions reached Russia, which seems likely in view of the diversity of informational channels, including unofficial ones. Although Sologub had written a "vicious parody" of Gorky as the writer "Sharik" in initially unpublished fragments of *The Petty Demon*,[52] and therefore should have been disinclined to evoke him in any positive "royal" context, he may still have seen the plot potential of a Russian feted as a king on a Mediterranean island. He was furthermore, up to the publication of the Russian fairytale "Gospodin Smertiashkin," ambivalent about Gorky who, after all, incarnated the Russian dream of a genius sprung from the folk. He may, alternatively,

have wanted to cast himself in the role of "true" island king and to show that Trirodov-Sologub suited that role better than "Sharik." In any case, thoughts of himself as "king of Capri" were not entirely alien to Gorky himself. In a jocular letter to Lunacharsky (from 1908) he wrote: "we'll buy this island from the Italian Lilliputian king (*korolishko*), so deservedly booed, and after that we'll do our own thing on it, the island that is" (*Pis'ma*, 6:148). Naturally, Sologub could not be aware of this letter. Some sort of reports on Gorky's enthusiastic reception on Capri and his possibly "royal" demeanor there, as well as his "renaissance court" must have reached Russia, however.[53]

If Gorky, the exiled king of revolution "ruling" the island of Capri, indeed offered any raw materials for the creation of the plot of *Queen Ortruda*, it would obviously have displeased him greatly, even if the portrayal was meant to be positive. Gorky, as already indicated, read Sologub's trilogy as it was read by most contemporaries: as a glorification of sadism, eroticism and death. Even the discerning critic Kornei Chukovsky saw Trirodov as "Mr. Death in a bowler hat and with a necktie," whose sole ambition in studying the "spells of death" is to "liberate" as many people as possible from life.[54] And Gorky's view of Sologub emerges clearly in his already mentioned Russian fairytale (III) about the poet Smertiashkin whom he has marry his beloved Nimfodora in a cemetery church and rock his children to sleep in miniature coffins instead of cradles and, of course, write many poems about the Inevitable Destination of All. Eventually Smertiashkin, abandoned by his "Nimfochka" for a better lover, learns how to write ads in verse for a funeral parlor. After all, he has to pay for the three children he and Nimfochka produced in spite of their awareness of the futility of life when faced with the "Inevitable."

Gorky's Trilogy

Finally, I would like to suggest that Gorky too created a trilogy about the historical fates of Russia and Mediterranean lands like his rival advocate of Mediterranean cultures, Sologub. He did so by adding another cycle of "fairytale sketches" to *IF* and *RF*. I have in mind Gorky's cycle of travel sketches "Po soiuzu Sovetov" (*In the Union of Soviets*, published in 1929 in Gorky's journal *Our Accomplishments* ("Nashi dostozheniia"), by which he marked his return to his "reborn" homeland the Soviet Union of Stalin's five-year-plans. These sketches present "factual" descriptions of the material and social progress made by the Soviet Union, and also offer the conviction that the socialist renaissance dreamed of in Italy has begun and that its development cannot be halted. Thus the cycle continues the genre of "true fairytales." Although the narrative tonality on the whole is low-key (the "miracles" witnessed need

no embellishment), the cycle nevertheless celebrates the culture that he saw emerging on the horizons of the Future while in exile on Capri. This Soviet Renaissance represents a "genuine culture" in Gorky's view, one in which technology ennobles nature and labor has merged with creativity. It fulfills above all the main criterion of Gorky's "validity test": the folk, and not only the Russian *narod* but all the working populations of all nationalities of the Soviet Union, are engaged in the creative labor of liberating man from nature's bonds, freeing him for other endeavors in the realm of the mind.

The journey starts in the Caucasus, perhaps because this southern realm is the one where Prometheus was both bound and unbound. Naturally, it is the unbound Titan of the creative working class that the sketches celebrate. Certainly Promethean daring is everywhere to be seen in Baku, where the "hell" of oil production processes that he witnessed during previous visits (in 1892 and 1897) has been replaced by a picture of considerably greater harmony. The harmony is not only found in more rational and coordinated labor efforts, however, but, above all, in the ever increasing harmonious class cooperation, made possible by collective and meaningful labor. Thus Gorky's guide, the top manager comrade Rumiantsev, first tells him a string of stories about atrocities committed by the Whites, only to add that he now works well together with a "personal enemy of his" (20: 113) who once tortured him. He summarizes: "It is marvelous how labor unites people, — honest people of course, people who believe in our cause and its victory. I am speaking of work for the future, for our state. That kind of labor draws everyone in and gives great strength. The main thing is it unites the inner man of all, that's how it is . . ." (20: 113). It is clear even from just this quote that the "third part" of Gorky's "trilogy" follows the canons of propaganda, a genre close to "fairytales" and "prophecies come true." Thus the Caucasian sections of the cycle *In the Land of the Soviets* presents Azerbadzhan, Georgia and Armenia as a South that is superior to the Italian one he once deemed to mark the aesthetic peak in currently existing cultures, i.e. the desired realized fairytales.

Having spent also his second exile in Italy (Sorrento, 1922–1928), and still visiting this country (until 1932), it is natural that it would often come to his mind and invite comparisons with the ancient cultures of the Caucasian South. It was perhaps not only biographical factors that motivated the comparisons, however, but also image considerations, specifically the role of "prophet." Gorky had in Italy predicted that socialist Russia would become the home of a superior culture outdoing all previously existing ones. Looking at oil-producing Baku on the Caspian Sea at night, he sees a panorama that fulfills his prophecy. It seems more beautiful to Gorky than the Gulf of Naples that he previously had been convinced was the most "beautiful picture" that the world had to offer when seen from his beloved Mount Vomero (20: 125). Standing on the mountain

of Bibi-Eibate, however he saw a city "more richly illuminated" than Naples (20: 125) and hence even more attractive. In a similar vein, Georgia seems equal to, or better than, Italy: it is inhabited by "a sympathetic people of romantics, in love with the beauty of their land, with its sunlit wine and wondrous songs" (20: 128). Unlike the Italians, the Georgians have real prospects for the future though — a mighty power station is to supply it with lights that, it may be assumed, will also make it more beautiful than the Gulf of Naples.[55] In other words, Gorky equals urban beauty with the amount of illumination a city can produce; possibly he does so in order to emphasize that industrial capacity and beauty, the "material base" and aesthetic accomplishments go hand in hand.

Gorky is reminded once more of Naples when he is in Armenia. This country has exceptionally rich deposits of *tufa*, the same material as most building in Naples are made of. The tufa produced by the volcanic Ararat mountain is firmer however than the one produced by Vesuvius, while also being more easily cut and formed. He rejoices that this marvelous building material will be used all over the south, including Soviet Ukraine. One has the distinct impression that Gorky was seeing a new and better urban Italy arise there in the Soviet south, one that was built of better tufa, and glimmering and shimmering with more electro-watt magic than old-world Italy.

The travel and assessment report continues northwards and includes the infamous positive evaluations of the Solovki Monastery turned into a concentration and labor camp. This theme lies beyond the scope of the present article. It may be briefly mentioned, however, that visiting numerous "correctional facilities," often placed in former monasteries, the writer seems to imply that there has been a positive shift in the usage of these buildings. From serving hypocritical religion with its complete indifference to both the physical and moral well-being of mankind, they have now been dedicated to a positive reeducation of even the most "wretched," with positive results. Soviet power is liberating criminals from their past and restoring them to a creative life in the land of the Soviets. Together with their souls, their bodies are saved too.

Concluding remarks

The present article does not attempt to assess whether Gorky "believed" in the "reforging" of mankind through labor (if necessary, forced labor), or only pretended to do so; nor does it attempt to decide whether, returning to the Soviet Union and writing his "travel impressions," he sought justifications for a cause that demanded human sacrifice but would triumph thereby justifying "collateral damage." It does not answer the question whether he was trying to salvage the remnants of the Humanism he had claimed to champion

throughout his career by seeing progress and harmony everywhere, or simply thinking of preserving his image as prophet of the Socialist Cultural Renaissance. The discussion in the present article concerns only the development of his cultural philosophy as emerging from some of his texts and here the conclusions seem inevitable. Gorky's views in this sphere changed markedly: from a certain pluralism and cultural receptivity (in *IF*) it changed to an increasingly narrow vision of culture, as exemplified by his total rejection of any alternatives, such as Sologub's aesthetic utopia, until finally embracing the collective labor culture exalted in *In the Land of the Soviets*. Culture and collective labor had merged into one concept from which even the last remnant of "individualistic decadence" was removed. Ironically, therefore, the prophet of culture became a spokesman of civilization, still calling it Culture though. Gorky's attempts to "save culture from civilization," in the end, demonstrated most of all how not do it, as he, more and more, identified "culture" with the industrial might of the Five-Year-Plans.

Notes

1 All works by Maxim Gorky are quoted from *M. Gor'kii: Polnoe sobranie sochinenii, Khudozhestvennye proizvedeniia, v dvadtsati piati tomakh*, Moskva: "Nauka," 1968–1976. The *Skazki ob Italii* are found in vol. 12 (1971), as are the *Russkie skazki* that follow the Italian tales in the same volume (vol. 12). The cycle "Po Soiuzu Sovetov," which also is discussed in the present article is found in vol. 20 (1974, pp. 107–236). Page references to quotes from Gorky's works are given in the text with volume number preceding page number.

2 For a listing of "real events" behind the stories and other markers of "reality," see L. Bykovtseva, "Gor'kii v Italii," Moskva: Sovetskii pisatel', 1975, pp. 252–273.

3 It has often been said that Gorky was a realist writer when depicting current reality, but one who nurtured a highly "romantic" (utopian) vision of the future world. In his own way, he shared some ontological notions of his symbolist contemporaries, namely, that given reality, in its absurdity, was ephemeral ("mere" reality, or *realia)* and that the only true reality (*realiora*) was "beyond" current conditions. The difference of course was that the symbolist dualist notion of mystical-spiritual "other worlds," or *realiora*, beyond the world of *realia*, in Gorky's case, was replaced by the notion of the "wondrous but real-material" world of the Future, created by socialist Over-Mankind that would replace the current absurd world. "Monism" remained Gorky's position at all times.

4 Gorky is usually seen as more of a "Westernizer" than a "Slavophile" (in the broader sense of these terms). His famous distrust of the Russian peasantry, his dislike of "Slavophile" writers, such as Dostoevsky, his fervent support of the exact sciences and many other factors seem to place Gorky firmly in a "westernizing camp." Gorky was a patriot, however, in the sense that he saw Russia as the country that would

become "the first socialist country of the world"; thus while Russia had much to learn from the West, it was also bound to overtake its "teachers." Perhaps Gorky's portrait of Lenin as "patriot" comes close to his own positions: "Quite frequently I noticed this pride of Russia in him, his being proud of Russians and of Russian art. Sometimes this trait seemed to me alien to Lenin's character, and even naïve, but in due course I learnt to discern in it an echo of a deeply hidden, but joyful, love for his own people" (20: 29). On this topic he also wrote, again quite possibly, defining his own positions: "He correctly assessed [Russia's] potential strength — the quite unique giftedness of its people, which had not yet had the opportunity of manifesting itself because of its unfortunate and dreary history. [He did] see the giftedness everywhere however — as golden stars glimmering against the background of the darkly fantastical Russian life" (20: 47). See his memoir: "V. I. Lenin," in *Polnoe sobranie sochinenii*, in 25 volumes, vol. 20, Moscow: "Nauka," 1974. The memoir printed there is the reworked second edition from 1930–1931. Thus the views presented in this version very likely have been adjusted to the situation Gorky was in at the time, i.e. on the verge of permanently returning to the Soviet Union of Stalin. "Patriotism" of the kind described above could well have been a motivating force in this return.

5 For details of Gorky's systematic study of Italian culture, see L. Bykovtseva (chapter 5 of her "Gor'kii v Italii").

6 Gorky's "Gorod zheltogo d'iavola," published in 1906, is found in *Polnoe sobranie sochinenii*, volume 6 (1970), pp. 237–273. The city referred to in the title is New York.

7 He had come to the US together with the actress Maria F. Andreeva, the marriage to whom was not officially legalized, since his first (church) marriage had not been dissolved.

8 This, for example, was the case with "prekrasnaia Frantsiia" (beautiful France), which no longer was "prekrasnaia." See "Moi interv'iu" (1906) in volume 6 of *Polnoe sobranie sochinenii* (1970), pp. 166–236. Later too Gorky would everywhere in Europe see the signs of moral decay, diminishing spirituality and increasing tedium. In Germany even the leading socialists were philistines who "elegantly" covered their canary cages with embroidered covers," as in August Bebel's Berlin home (20: 10). Italy remained largely exempted from censure even during the writer's second exile, even though the country then already was ruled by the fascists.

9 It is true that it was on Capri that Gorky and Lenin had their fallout about including god-building elements in socialism — i.e. the "divinization" of the folk. Lunacharsky's, Bogdanov's and Gorky's championing of "god-building" met with no sympathy on Lenin's part. Gorky acquiesced to Lenin's demands, at least on the surface, as did Lunacharsky.

10 The "cemetery" of culturally dead northern Europe (see *The Brothers Karamazov*), to borrow a term from Gorky's ideological enemy Dostoevsky, would be harder to "resurrect" and to convert to socialism.

11 For this article, see Alexander Blok, *Sobranie sochinenii*, v vos'mi tomakh, volume 6, Proza 1918–1921, Moskva-Leningrad: Gos. Isd. Khud. Literatury, 1962, pp. 93–115.

The quotes are found on p. 101. The metaphor of culture's musicality and civilization's non-musicality recurs throughout the essay. See, for example, "muzyku etogo ognia" [of the revolution] (96), "bezmuzykal'noi tsivilizatsii" (96), "muzykal'nye prizyvy" (106) and many other instances.

12 In her *Thin Culture, High Art, Gogol, Hawthorne and Authorship in Nineteenth-Century Russia and America,* Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2007, Anne Lounsberry, points to the importance of the rapid development of mass printing in furthering "thin culture," i.e. what Slavophiles and other Romantics would call "civilization."

13 For these quotes, see Vladimir Papernyi, "Povest' 'Rim', gorod Rim i messianizm pozdnego Gogolia," in *Gogol' i Italiia* (*Gogol' e Italia*), *Materialy Mezhdunarodnoi konferentsii 'Nikolai Vasil'evich Gogol' mezhdu Italiei i Rossiei*, Jerusalem — Moscow: Gesharim, Mosty kul'tury, 2004, p. 115.

14 For this quote, see the "Foreword" to *Gogol' i Italiia* by M. Vaiskopf, *op. cit.*, p. 8. For a list of Russian cultural personalities enthusiastic about Italy, see, for example, Bykovtseva, *op. cit.*, pp. 7–9.

15 There were some cultural personalities who did not uncritically share the Russian cult of Italy. Thus Alexander Blok was not inclined to exempt Italy from the general European decline into civilization, in his *Ital'ianskie stikhi* of 1909. At least Florence receives the invective "Judas," because the city has yielded to modernity (see poem VI, "Florentsiia" in the cycle). According to Gerald Pirog, this cycle ultimately denies the possibility of merging myth and reality in modern times, even in Italy. See his *Aleksandr Blok's Ital'ianskie stikhi: Confrontation and Disillusionment*, Columbus, OH: Slavica, 1983.

16 George Kline, *Religious and Anti-Religious Thought in Russia*, Chicago & London: 1968, p. 110.

17 See Kline, p. 103, for a discussion of why Bazarov wants to see nature not as a Temple, but as a workshop. Kline states that this was done in order to make nature into a *man-made* Temple that would accommodate man and be free of the flaws of the natural ("god-given") one. The "dialectics" could be envisioned as : do not accept nature as it is, make it into an arena of transformation (workshop) — the end result will be the perfectly-constructed Temple built by divine Mankind.

18 To give but a few examples, the third (III) of the *IF*, describes Naples as "bright and many-colored," just like "priestly vestments"; it is "like every city," a "cathedral-temple" (*khram*) and all forms of labor are "prayers to the Future" (12: 17). An old laborer (he builds bridges — into the future, it may be assumed) has an "apostolic head" (12: 18) and the wine he drinks with his fellow-workers for lunch seems a kind of holy grail potion, particularly when a little girl drops flowers into it and the old man says: the gift of a child is a gift from god" (19).

19 Kline, p. 103.

20 Unlike Dostoevsky and possibly in protest against his views, Gorky, to some extent, welcomed the (aesthetic) union of Socialism and Catholicism, provided Socialism would be the content and Catholicism provide some inspiration for the "form" of that union. In other words, he believed Dostoevsky's assertions that Catholicism

was prone to embrace socialist values ("stones turned to bread"), but, unlike him, he welcomed this perceived trend, repudiating his constant ideological foe, Dostoevsky, who would argue that "man lives not by bread alone" and that Orthodoxy was the sole religion that still lived by this statement of Christ's.

21 The edition quoted here is in *Sochineniia N. V. Gogolia*, vol. 3, Sankt Peterburg: Izd. A. F. Marksa, 1900 (131–171).

22 Robert A. Maguire, *Exploring Gogol*, Stanford, California: Stanford University Press, 1994, p. 121.

23 Vsevolod Setchkarev, for example, speaks of the "exaggeratedly empty description of an improbably beautiful Italian girl." See his *Gogol: His Life and Work*, New York: New York University Press, 1965, p. 227. Indeed, Annuntsiata has eyes that are "black flashes of lightening," an alabaster brow, pitch-black hair and a perfect bosom. She is also said to be the owner of "classical, breathing legs" (*op. cit.*, p. 131) that at the same time are described as solid and heavy, unlike the "spindly legs" of Parisian beauties (136). "Heavy legs that breathe" do present an incongruous image, but it should be remembered that Gogol does not speak of a real woman, but rather of the simultaneous stateliness and gracefulness of Doric, or Ionic, columns and the entire culture of the beautiful *gravitas* that Rome conveyed to him and that Annuntsiata personifies. Interest in this "poem in prose," as the fragment has also been called has recently reawakened. See, for example, the collection of articles *Gogol' i Italiia*, *op. cit.*, p. 11 (the last quote is from Rita Giuliani's "Siuzhetnye i zhanrovye osobennosti 'Rima'"in that collection (pp. 11–37).

24 See Louis Pedrotti, "The Architecture of Love in Gogol's 'Rome'," *California Slavic Studies*, 1971, VI, p. 26.

25 The borderline between Italy and the "'real Europe' lies 'on the other side' of a well-defined boundary, in this case the Alps," the Prince — and Gogol — feels. See Maguire, *op. cit.*, p. 132.

26 As Maguire (*op. cit.*) points out, Gogol while in Rome was "especially fascinated by the Carnival festivities and by religious processions" (124).

27 Lounsberry points out that the Parisians are never "dignified with the word *narod*" (*op. cit.*, p. 222) in Gogol's "Rim." Erlich speaks of the "*popolo romano*" that is "uncorrupted by the 'cold perfection' of the European Enlightenment" that is found in Paris. See Victor Erlich, *Gogol*, New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1969, p. 165.

28 Maguire, *op. cit.*, p. 122.

29 See Rita Giuliani (Dzhuliani), "Siuzhetnye i zhanrovye osobennosti 'Rima'," in *Gogol' i Italiia, op. cit.*, p. 30.

30 Rita Giuliani (Dzhuliani), in her insightful article (see the note above) points out that Gogol creates the Russian name *Rimskie polia* for the Italian toponym *Campagna romana* in his "Rome" (p. 13). She sees it as a "priem ostraneniia" (p. 13), but it could also be seen as an indicator of future cultural fusion.

31 S. Shambinago in his "Trilogiia romantizma: N. V. Gogol'" (Moskva: [s.n.], 1911, points out that the carnival in "Rome" and the one found in "Sorochinskaia iarmarka" in the *Dikanka Tales*, have several features in common (p. 130). Setchkarev thinks

that the carnival scenes in "Rome" lack "an Italian flavor," rather recalling "the amusements of the Ukrainian peasant boys from Dikanka. *Op. cit.*, p. 229.

32 Bykovtseva, *op. cit.*, pp. 139, 142.

33 See I. V. Koretskaia, "Gor'kii i Viacheslav Ivanov," in *Gor'kii i ego epokha, Issledovaniia i materialy*, Moskva: Nauka, 1989; the quotes are on p. 169.

34 There are similar motifs of cultural syncretism and cultural accretion in Ivan Bunin's famous story "The Gentleman from San Francsico" (1915), as well as a similar critique of American civilization, which likewise is denied having any genuine culture. The story is largely set in Capri. Bunin was a guest of Gorky's on Capri on several occasions. This is not to suggest that Bunin, in any way, shared Gorky's "god-building" notions. The Capri-visits both marked the peak and the decline of the two writers' association.

35 Yet another example about "two faiths" being able to coexist on the level of aesthetics is the tale that the intra-textual addressee (a "passer-by" in tale IV) hears from a man who worked on the Italian team of workers digging the Simplon tunnel. He remembers how his father told him that such an undertaking was "against God" and the Madonna (12: 21), and how he was proven wrong, yet retained his son's respect. The father, in his turn, is converted to the new faith in man's potential; on his deathbed, he confesses that he believes the two teams will meet up and that the Madonna will not object to this: "we will meet each other in the mountain" are his last words that seem to carry a vague resurrection symbolism. The son certainly describes this meeting, darkly envisioned by his father and soon to take place, in "religious" terms: "Oh, when we heard — under the earth's crust, in the darkness, the noise of work from the other side, the sounds of people coming toward us underground… shouts of victory and rejoicing resounded." He adds: "And when we emerged from out of the ground and saw the sunlight, then many of us, lying down with our breasts pressed against earth, kissed it and cried — it was so good, like a fairytale" (12: 23). The narrator-worker's final conviction is that when "man, small as he is, really wants to work, he is an invincible force" (21). In short, the faith in "socialism" (the cult of collective labor) is compatible with the religious faith in the "resurrection," when seen as Man's constant progress toward total control over nature. God-building ideas offer the best model for how to combine religious sentiment (faith) with unstoppable scientific progress in *IF*.

36 For this observation, see Rita Giuliani, *op. cit.*, p. 23.

37 For a discussion of the Nietzschean "Over-Woman" and "God-bearer" in Gorky's works of the time, see my discussion of *Confession*, in *Abolishing Death*. For Nietzsche and Gorky, see Hans Günther, *Der sozialistische Übermensch. M. Gor'kij und der sowjetische Heldenmythos*, Stuttgart, Weimar: Verlag J.B. Metzler, 1993.

38 In Gorky's version: "the calm glance of the foreigner's faded eyes" (12: 158).

39 The Balearic Islands have been suggested as a geographical prototype for Queen Ortruda's United Islands Kingdom. This would, strictly speaking, disqualify Sologub's setting as "Mediterranean," but the culture depicted in the trilogy seems very much to belong to a loosely defined "Mediterranean" realm. Since Ortruda's kingdom is an island kingdom, it is also possible to see it as representing a "European" realm,

since Europe, in comparison with continental Russia, is a conglomeration of islands and peninsulas.

40 The edition quoted here is "Tvorimaia legenda," Munich: Fink Verlag, 1972. For details of the novel's serial publication under the title of "Nav'i chary," see the Introduction to the English translation, entitled *The Created Legend*, vol. I, by Samuel D. Cioran. The three volumes have the titles: *Drops of Blood*, *Queen Ortruda*, *Smoke and Ashes* (Ann Arbor: Ardis, 1979).

41 See *Polnoe sobranie sochinenii*, *Pis'ma*, v dvadtsati tomakh, tom shestoi, *Pis'ma 1907* — avgust — 1908, Moskva: Iszdatel'stvo "Nauka," 2000. Page references to *Pis'ma*, vol. 6, are given in the text, in brackets.

42 Although Gorky claimed that he presented only a "synthesized" image of decadent poets (6: 524), it includes enough specific detail to point to Sologub as a quite specific and concrete target. I. A. Nikitina who has traced the relationship between the two writers in detail states that "it is impossible not to recognize [Sologub] in the hero of the fairytale." See her "M. Gor'kii i F. Sologub," in "Gor'kii i ego epokha," *op. cit.*, 190.

43 See Samuel D. Cioran's Introduction to the trilogy that he translated as *Created Legend*, Ann Arbor, Michigan: Ardis, 1979, p. 18.

44 Gorky "perceived F. Sologub's novel as a manifestation of the 'ethical decline', typical of contemporary literature." (Commentary, 6: 412).

45 This translation of "lysaia svoloch'" is taken from Cioran, *op. cit.*, p. 18.

46 Gorky's anger may also have been provoked by a parody on himself as the writer "Sharik" that Sologub had published in 1912, although his negative reactions to *Legend* precede that publication. Sologub's parody in turn was perhaps partly triggered by Gorky's refusal to publish "Melkii bes" in his *Znanie* publishing house. For details of the writers' relationship, see Nikitina, *op. cit*.

47 Cioran, p. 18. Gorky wrote about the Alkina episode in a letter to A. Lunacharsky (from 1907): "In the novel, the main character is a sadist without doubt — and then there is some woman, a social democrat and propagandist; she comes to him, strips stark naked and then first asks to be photographed and after that gives herself to that bovine character, like a piece of cold meat" (6: 128).

48 For a detailed discussion of the trilogy, see my *Abolishing Death: A Salvation Myth of Russian Twentieth-Century Literature*, Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1992, chapter Seven.

49 Nor did they see that Trirodov turns into a model husband who fully supports the notion of the New Woman who will be free of Eve's weaknesses.

50 For this identification and the "etymology" of "Meccio" from the Russian for sword, *mech*, see Andrew Field, "The Created Legend: Sologub's Symbolic Universe," *Slavic and East European Journal*, 5. 19, 1961, p. 343.

51 For a detailed description of Gorky's triumphal entry, see N. E. Burenin, "Pamiatnye gody," Leningrad: Lenizdat, 1967, p. 158–171.

52 See Stanley Rabinowitz's account of the Sharik-Smertiashkin affair in: Fyodor Sologub, *The Petty Demon*, translated by S. D. Cioran with an Appendix of Critical Articles, edited by Murl Barker, Ann Arbor: Ardis, 1983, "Introduction to the 'Sergei

Turgenev and Sharik' Fragments from *The Petty Demon*," pp. 292–292. Sologub published those fragments only in 1912.

53 For a discussion of Gorky's "court," see my "Purges and Patronage: Gor'kii's Promotion of Socialist Culture," in *Personality Cults in Stalinism — Personenkulte im Stalinismus*, eds. Jan Plamper and Klaus Heller, Goettingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2004.

54 See Kornei Chukovsky, "Putevoditel' po Sologubu," in *Sobranie sochinenii*, v shesti tomakh, volume 6, "Stat'i 1906–1968 godov," Moskva: Izd. "Khudozhestvennaia literatura," 1969, pp. 125–26. The quote is on p. 360.

55 A young Georgian writer who listened to Gorky's enthusiastic speeches about Georgia having to join in progressive collective labor and its writers' duty to write for the journal *Our Accomplishments* remarked sadly that "Gorky wants to transfer us to a lethal voltage" (20: 131). Gorky could only explain this manifestation of distrust "and, possibly, enmity" (131) with the sad experiences the Georgians had had under Czarist rule. He was nevertheless surprised to hear this "echo of olden times" at a moment of history when "national cultures" were developing so swiftly and even "Volga tribes " (131), such as the Kirgiz, were publishing their folksongs, which their future Mozarts, Beethovens, Chopins, Mussorgskiis and Griegs would soon be using as material for wonderful compositions.

2.
Inner Divisions

The "Castrator" Rogozhin and the "Castrate" Smerdiakov: Incarnations of Dostoevsky's 'Devil-Bearing' People?

Sectarianism and Orthodoxy's Universalizing Mission

It is often claimed that Fedor Dostoevsky saw the Russian people (*narod*) as "devoutly religious, gifted with a deep spirituality, and inclined to respect authority,"[1] but his depiction of it is actually more complex. Closer to the truth is the view that Dostoevsky "cannot be accused of idealizing the Russian people" and that he fully demonstrated the capacity for evil he saw in it.[2] He did of course also claim that the Russian People with its divinely inspired gift for empathy with all and sundry would save mankind by introducing "worldwide harmony" in the form of Orthodox *sobornost'*, but, as I argue in this article, he also feared that serious obstacles might blight, possibly even thwart, this salvation scenario. Dostoevsky, at least indirectly, in his art, admitted that the *narod* still had not made its final choice for the orthodox Christ and that it therefore still was capable of "throwing itself — while straying and seeking for its [historical destiny] — into the most monstrous deviations and experimentations" ("v chudovishchnye ukloneniia i eksperimenty").[3] Some of the "deviations" that the Russian folk was prone to be tempted by constitute the very opposite of meekness, namely rebellion against authority and unmitigated vengefulness against its Europeanized and, hence "alien," elite.[4] In this sphere there was an old tradition going back to Stenka Razin and Emelyan Pugachev, who led uprisings that were "senseless and without mercy," as Alexander Pushkin, Dostoevsky's idol put it.[5] These uprisings were not unfounded by any means, but inevitably degenerated into senseless violence and (self-) destruction in both Pushkin's and Dostoevsky's view on the matter.

Another "deviation" that the narod, in Dostoevsky's opinion, was prone to, was the creation of and devotion to, the most extraordinary sects, pursuing the realization of fantastic goals of a utopian nature. The restoration of paradise, for example, could be realized by such extraordinary means as self-castration. Both "khlystovshchin[a]" ("flagellants," actually "Christ-people") and "skopchestvo" (sect of self-castrators) testified to a high degree of divergence from the norm and to a dangerous literalism in the Russian popular mind.[6] When rebellion

and sectarianism in the *narod* went hand in hand, dangerous combinations ensued that seriously threatened Russia's noble mission of revitalizing European civilization and saving the world as a whole. The Russian narod may have preserved the true image of Christ, lost by the Catholic and Protestant nations of the West, but the image of the devil was by no means defeated on the "battlefield of good evil" in the popular heart and mind. Thus, my article argues that the novels *The Idiot* ("Idiot," 1867), *The Possessed* ("Besy," 1869) and *The Brothers Karamazov* ("Brat'ia Karamazovy," 1880) — among many other things — explore ways and means of averting the dangers Dostoevsky saw in the national syndrome of sectarianism and rebellion reinforcing each other, especially when joined to the newfangled ideology of socialism. My focus will be on *The Idiot*, where this syndrome, to my knowledge, has not yet been seen, although both Parfen Rogozhin and Nastasya Filippovna rightly have been relegated to "the dark side of the Russian religious temperament."[7] Within this focus I concentrate on the figure of Parfen Rogozhin, whose links to both a fanatic form of the Old Belief and to sectarianism and whose propensity for violence embody the dangers Dostoevsky perceived in the "dark people." Myshkin's goal, it is claimed here, is to revitalize *pravoslavie* and to undermine the sectarianism of the merchant class that Rogozhin represents.[8] Myshkin whose perspicacity is acute beneath the layer of "idiocy" (he is of course a holy fool, a *iurodivyi*) has perceived a new dangerous player entering into the national syndrome of sectarian utopianism and popular rebellion — socialism's infiltration of first (western) religion and now Russian orthodoxy.[9] Obviously, orthodoxy was socialism's next goal on its list of spiritual values to pervert, and schismatics and sectarians might well support this effort. Socialism was also a sect of sorts — a modern imported intelligentsia sect that was trying to exploit the utopian mentality of the people, making it believe that they had a common goal with the socialists (earthly paradise) and a common enemy in the ruling classes and the official church (this specific motif is presented in detail in *The Devils*). This Western "sect" could well join forces with homebred sectarianism and lead to a revolution that would far exceed in scope and violence the rebellions of the past.[10] Orthodoxy is Myshkin's weapon against this unholy triple alliance of socialism, sectarianism and political revolt, since this religion "alone has preserved the divine image of Christ in all its purity."[11] And since it is the lofty task of the Russian People "within the destiny of humanity as a whole" to "preserve within itself this divine image of Christ" and "when the time comes, to reveal this image to a world that has lost its way," it follows that sectarianism poses a genuine threat to this mission.[12] Sectarian belief not only does not have the true image of Christ, but it is also specific to a certain group, as opposed to being shared by an entire nation; it is marked by the *obosoblenie* (standing apart) that Dostoevsky feared as a threat to universality

and *sobornost'*.[13] Since the Russian mission in world history is to introduce genuine Christian brotherhood, as opposed to socialism's false *égalité*, it again follows that the sectarian mentality in its potential union with socialism poses a real threat to the realization of Russia's historic mission which is to create a world-wide Theocracy that is Orthodox in spirit.

Somewhat unexpectedly perhaps, Myshkin also relies on another weapon in his struggle against the dangers threatening the Russian people, and, hence, the world to be saved by it: the education of the *narod*. Since there is a widespread notion that Dostoevsky thought the elite should learn from the people and not the people from the elite, education, emanating from the elite, may be seen as a surprising remedy for popular ignorance when coming from him. The ideology of the soil, or *pochvennichestvo*, i.e. Dostoevsky's and his *Vremia* circle's synthesis of Westernism and Slavophilism created in the 1860s,[14] however — unlike "classical" Slavophilism — claimed that enlightenment and *narodnost'* were not at all at opposite poles. As Dostoevsky put it in his bi-partite article "Bookishness and Literacy" (Knizhnost' i gramotnost'): "National specifics hardly disappear with the development of the people," but, on the contrary, its "natural gifts" and "spirit" become even more pronounced."[15] Literacy certainly was something the elite could teach the narod. In fact, the journal *Vremia* saw "literacy and education" as a sine qua non in the process of bridging the gap between the people and the elite; it was "the foremost task of our times," at least when it was properly done, i.e. without condescension.[16] Although it could be argued that in 1861 when his impassioned article for literacy and popular education was published, Dostoevsky was not as yet as conservative as he would become later, there can be no doubt that he continued to champion a thorough education of the narod. He saw a smattering of education as more dangerous than ignorance, and strongly advocated a valid education of the people — one that would not bore them by its bookishness, but stimulate their own desire to learn.[17] A close reading of *The Idiot* demonstrates that Myshkin sets himself the task to educate Rogozhin by reading Pushkin with him, in order to make him see life through an enlightened and poetic mind. Even if Myshkin is not the author's spokesman in all areas, the validity of his efforts to educate Rogozhin (even though they fail) is "backed up" by Alexander Pushkin's authority; as Perlina has shown,[18] it is infallible in any later Dostoevsky text. It has been argued (by Bograd) that Myshkin himself is a Pushkin figure, not only because of the poem "The Poor Knight" ("Bednyi rytsar'") that Aglaia reads with the Prince as her main addressee, but also because of his being so receptive to all and sundry. Just like the Poet of Pushkin's "Echo," he responds to all, but himself finds no response to his own "call."[19] In addition, during the mysterious gap of six months between Myshkin's first and second Petersburg visit, while he was in Moscow, he and Rogozhin "read all of Pushkin" together, a fact as "important" as the

exchange of crosses later, the critic Fokin has argued.[20] Indeed, it could be said that Myshkin was trying to "drive the devil" out of Rogozhin by developing his aesthetic sensibility with the help of Pushkin's — in Dostoevsky's view — almost miracle-working art. He also, arguably, wanted to further his self-cognition by holding up the "mirror" of his true "Pugachevian" self to him. Fokin poses the question what Pushkin text is likely to have made the strongest impression on Rogozhin and he suggests "The Fairytale of the Golden Cockerel" ("Skazka o zolotom petushke") as the most plausible candidate. In it we find two brothers who pierced each other with their swords, having been rivals for a fatally enticing tsaritsa.[21] It is possible that Rogozhin was impressed by this tale, but perhaps not only because of the femme fatale that he of course would connect Nastasya Filippovna with, but also because of the *skopets* who ill advises and fools czar Dadon. As A. Etkind hypothesizes, Pushkin wrote this fairytale to parody his own attraction to Pugachev, this "popular hero" and the "folk mysticism" he represents, part of which are Old Believer projects for how to create a paradise for the folk on earth.[22] Possibly Myshkin perceived the parody on religious-political utopias sub-textually contained in this verse tale, but Rogozhin is less likely to have done so. He may have approved of the Castrate fooling Dadon, but he probably saw more parallels between himself and Pugachev, as did Myshkin. The Pushkin texts Myshkin, in my conjecture, made Rogozhin study with particular care must have been *The History of Pugachev* ("Istoriia Pugacheva," 1834) and *The Captain's Daughter* ("Kapitanskaia dochka," 1836). Here Rogozhin could see patterns of behavior close to his own and, ideally, learn the lessons Pugachev failed to absorb — but, of course, he does not either. Nevertheless, he is a Pugachev figure, as presented by Pushkin in Dostoevsky's interpretation, and it is through a comparison between Dostoevsky's Rogozhin and Pushkin's historical and fictitious Pugachev that we see Nastasya Filippovna's violent lover and the dangers he presents to her and Russia more clearly. My approach then follows the tradition of allegorical-symbolic readings of *The Idiot* (and those earlier texts where its themes first appear), combined with the tracing of inter-textual links to the two Pushkinian pre-texts I believe offer some quite important keys to a fuller understanding of the novel.[23]

Rogozhin as Razin-Pugachev in the context of Pushkin's History of Pugachev and The Captain's Daughter

Rogozhin is the archetypal Russian "man of elemental passions" (but not necessarily erotic ones) with no capacity for reasoning when these take over, a combination that results in disastrous actions. He is from the outset of the novel identified as a potential *katorzhnik* — as one destined to have the "ace

of diamonds" sown on his back, to use Blok's characterization of his Red Guards in *The Twelve* (*Dvenadtsat'*, 1918). As discussions about Rogozhin's brother who cut the valuable gold tassels off his father's coffin-cover develop between Lebedev and Rogozhin in the introductory train scenes of the novel, specifically what the punishment for this kind of blasphemy might be, the word "Siberia" is mentioned over and over again.[24] Fifteen years in Siberia are of course Rogozhin's ultimate fate, and not his brother's. Murderer that he will soon become, he is however in some sense also "guiltlessly guilty" of his eventual crime, because he "does not know" what he is doing in the Gospel sense. It could even be argued that, in spite of being a criminal, he has himself been wronged — wronged in the sense that the entire Russian narod has been wronged for centuries. They have been "left in the dark" since Peter's reforms did not touch them, wherefore they sometimes followed "wrong paths."[25] In the case of the merchant Rogozhin, it is the "dark kingdom" of the merchant world (*temnoe tsarstvo*, as Dobroliubov referred to it) that marked him. This world may not coincide with the reality in which the "dark people" (*temnyi narod*) live, but it shares with it the features of superstition and ritualism.[26] Rogozhin tells Myshkin and Nastasya Filippovna that he "never was taught/learnt anything" (8: 9; 8: 176) at all, and he does indeed live in a grotesque world where sombre sectarian doctrines mingle with the latest discussions of the omnipotence of the "laws of nature." This is one reason why the Holbein picture of the decomposing Christ in the grave makes such an impression on him — if Christ, who according to some sectarian doctrine never died, had died after all — and died "for good" — as the picture seems to intimate, murder might well be not only "permitted," but even "in keeping" with a world ruled by Death. Consumptive Ippolit Terentev, who, in his emaciated state and with his pallor and blue lips, looks like he has come straight out of the Holbein picture, and whose would-be suicide is his impotent protest against the all-victorious "tarantula" of death,[27] also reinforces Rogozhin's sombre visions of all-powerful death with his rejection of God's creation in a socialist-atheist spirit. It is out of such mixtures of ideas in a dark and confused mind that ruthless pretenders (*samozvantsy*) a la Pugachev (in a contemporary version) and ritual murderers are made. As Comer has pointed out in his important article on Rogozhin and the sect of self-castrators, this "virginal" man's (Parfen means virginal) wedding night in his gloomy house where self-castrators have gathered for many decades turns into a ritual murder with the almost bloodless stabbing wound inflicted on Nastasya Filippovna's left breast, reminiscent of the *skoptsy*'s "malaia pechat'" (the "smaller" operation that cut part of the female breasts, usually including the nipple).[28] Let us now turn to Pushkin's portrayal of Pugachev.

Pushkin's Pugachev

In his *The History of Pugachev* ("Istoriia Pugacheva"), Pushkin characterizes Pugachev as an illiterate Don Cossack and as an Old Believer, who promised the Cossacks "the [Old Believer] cross and beard," while laying claims to being the true Emperor of Russia.[29] He is certainly not linked to either khlysty or skoptsy (which would be historically inaccurate), but he is clearly linked to the *raskol* and, as Dostoevsky would see it, its *obosoblenie* (striving to keep apart from the national collective unity). Pushkin stresses that Pugachev never went to church, even though as "Peter III" he should have. He had no qualms about desecrating orthodox sacred space and religious symbols. His men would destroy orthodox icons, and allow their horses to defecate in orthodox churches. They even defecated in these themselves. Orthodox priests were murdered by Pugachev's men, not only by those of non-Christian persuasions (*inovertsy*), but also by his Russian peasant followers. A Protestant pastor who once had given Pugachev alms (when the latter was a prisoner and beggar) was however promoted to colonel by him.[30] Nevertheless, according to the account of his execution that Pushkin incorporated in his *History*, Pugachev in his last moments asked the "orthodox people" for forgiveness in a "broken voice."[31] Full of contradictions, he emerges as a criminal and merciless killer, yet also as an essentially child-like character, however wicked. For example, Pugachev could sincerely cry when listening to the tale of a father's loss of his son, although it was he himself who had murdered him.[32] Pushkin also shows Pugachev as susceptible to feminine beauty. Having flayed and skinned her father, hacked her mother to pieces and killed her husband, the officer Kharlov, he took Kharlova as his mistress, "struck by her beauty."[33] She gained considerable (positive) influence over him, which caused his Cossack comrades to resent her. Naturally, therefore, her fate was to repeat that of the Persian princess in the Stenka Razin tales and songs. She was not drowned, but shot together with her brother, a seven-year old child.[34]

Rogozhin, clearly fits into this repeated historical pattern of the elemental man of the people vacillating between chaos and beauty, between hacking to pieces and adoring harmonious wholeness (the Slavophile *tsel'nost'*), not knowing what to opt for: restoring Nastasya Filippovna's "defiled beauty" ("porugannaia krasota"), or to profane it further. That beauty has a powerful impact on him is clear, however,—it is Nastasya Filippovna's beauty that fetters him to her and that opened his eyes to other aspects of life than money, raising him above his stingy and "dark" merchant self.[35] Rogozhin is a character straight out of Pugachev's *razboinichii narod* (robber band) that, time and again, began "senseless and cruel," but not unmotivated, revolts, going overboard in monstrous vengefulness and eventually achieving nothing, least of all for the narod it was championing. It is true that the Rogozhin family

exchanged robbery for *skoplenie* (for the double meaning of the word, hoarding and castration, see Comer), but as Dostoevsky's novel demonstrates, fanaticism and money constitute a volatile mixture in any combination of hoarding or squandering. This is significant, I believe, since Rogozhin's obsession with, and eventual murder of, Nastasya Filippovna transcends an individual idiosyncrasy, but rather is symbolic of what the "dark people" may do to Russia "herself" in due course. Nastasya Filippovna is of course an individual character in the novel, but she is also — unlike Aglaia[36] — symbolic of the Russian soul. A "wedding" between "Russia" and her People is the desired outcome of their future relations in both slavophile and *pochvennik* visions of the future — but will it be a union of harmonious love or a disastrously destructive encounter? This is the question Dostoevsky asks in *The Idiot*, as he already did in some of his pre-Siberian texts, as well as in the post-Siberian novels. Obsessed with its wrongs and insulted by unrequited love for "her," the narod may well attack the "body" of Russia herself some day, led by someone like the morally confused and ill educated Rogozhin. As the ending of *The Idiot* indicates, the people and the intelligentsia may yet some day keep vigil together beside Russia's corpse.

In the novel *The Captain's Daughter*, Pushkin also presents a raskolnik Pugachev who is a mixture of beastly cruelty and noble impulses, even though the horror of his killings is toned down. Still, the oxymoronic image of total indifference to human life and a delicate sense of obligation, of a "monster" (*izverg*) and a man who knows that "debt is redeemed by its payment" (dolg platezhom krasen), emerges clearly.[37] A feature that accompanies Pugachev throughout Pushkin's novel are his "glittering eyes"; they are referred to as "dva sverkaiushchie glaza"[38] and "sverkaiushchie glaza,"[39] and they can turn "fiery:" his reaction to hearing complaints about his men is that his "glittering eyes turn fiery"[40] and his eyes are also "fiery" when he hears about Masha Mironova's plight and Shvabrin's vile plans in regard to her.[41] The Pugachev of the *History* likewise has fiery eyes; Pushkin reports that "many women fainted when encountering his fiery glance."[42] Both the *History* and the novel also report his regularly sporting red clothing.[43] This leitmotif of glittering eyes, fire and flaming red links Pugachev to Old Believer fanaticism, to their self-immolation in fire, which in his case is "reversed" to burning others trapped in fortresses, or in the city of Kazan and elsewhere. In the novel, Pugachev's fiery anger is also linked to noble indignation for the sufferings of wronged people, however, thus again creating an aura of ambiguity around its central character. In the novel, it is specifically the plight of a defenceless girl (whose parents he had murdered) that "ignites" Pugachev's wrath.

This type of imagery points to the moral ambivalence, or more correctly perhaps, the moral *insecurity*, of the narod, at least, in Dostoevsky's reading of the Pushkin texts. The conclusion drawn by the *pochvennik* reader of Pushkin

and author of *The Idiot* is that the educated Orthodox elite should turn this moral insecurity into ontological and ethical security. Pugachev is both in *The History of Pugachev* and *The Captain's Daughter* capable of immense empathy (crying with the father, sympathizing with Masha), while also committing acts of beastly cruelty, when passion takes hold of him. The task of the Orthodox intelligentsia elite is therefore clearly to develop the "talent" for empathy in the narod (universality being a hallmark of the Russian character) and to create a society in which it does not feel that deep *obida* (sense of having been wronged) which turns first into revolt and, subsequently, into beastly inhumanity. This is what the Russian non-socialist intelligentsia needs to fully grasp: that the narod has the capacity to understand everything and is able to be truly open to all cultures — to be the universal mediator — but that it must first be cleansed of its dark religious and intellectual misconceptions in order to realize its full potential. A large sector of the narod is plagued and beset by the "demons" and "devils" that were bred by the ignorance that, in its turn, was the result of the ruling elite's betrayal of the people. The answer to the question whether the narod *is* evil or just "dark," essentially "devilish" or merely misled and gone astray, would seem to be: it was abandoned to its own devices for too long, becoming "guiltlessly guilty" of brutality and barbarism in the process. Yet, the issue is not easily redeemable, especially in view of recent developments. Will the socialists tip the balance between one sector of the narod that carries the true image of an all-forgiving Christ and another sector of it that believes in a vengeful sectarian Christ who "burns everything" to ashes,[44] by adding their atheist cynicism to sectarian gullibility? The non-socialist, orthodox, intelligentsia should find out — this is Dostoevsky's response to that question through Christ-like Myshkin who is attempting to bring light to both Rogozhin's fanatic sectarian mind and atheistic Ippolit Terentev's nightmarish fears of death.

Ippolit, in his "My Essential Explanation" ("Moe neobkhodimoe ob'iasnenie") tells of his visit to Rogozhin's house where he too — like Myshkin before him — was fascinated by the copy of the Holbein picture of Christ in the tomb. It seems likely that his reaction to it is very similar to that of its owner, Rogozhin, and that he formulates what inarticulate Rogozhin cannot say: "The notion involuntarily comes of itself that if death is so awful and the laws of nature so mighty, how can they be overcome? How can they be overcome when they were not vanquished now even by the one who had vanquished nature in His lifetime... Looking at such a picture, nature appears to one in the shape of an immense, implacable and dumb beast, or to speak correctly, much more correctly, ... — in the form of a huge machine of the most modern construction, which deaf and insensible, has senselessly clutched, crushed and swallowed up a great priceless Being...[45] He also tells of a visit that Rogozhin paid him afterwards while he was trying to fall asleep. Entering late at night, he sits

down and begins examining Ippolit in complete silence. The silence continues throughout the visit but is also accompanied by an ironic smile (*usmeshka*) until, eventually, Rogozhin rises and silently leaves the room.[46] Naturally, as Ippolit admits, the Rogozhin who visited him was a "ghost" (*prividenie*). It is after this visit that the young man decides to commit his public suicide (which he fails to perform). In view of this decision, it seems likely that the force that draws the young rebel, doomed to die within the next few weeks, and the "castrating" murderer-sectarian together is their lack of faith in the Resurrection, the central dogma of orthodoxy. In their symbolic function, they are forces measuring and evaluating each other, deciding whether they can unite in a common cause or not. Ippolit's *bogoborchestvo* (rebellion against God) and Rogozhin's image of either a *Khristos-skopets* (Castrate Christ) or a *Khlyst-Khristos* (Flagellant Christ) do share a vector in their "materialist" vision of death, which attributes too much importance to the death and disintegration of the body. In this novel, intelligentsia critique of God a la Belinsky[47] and folk sectarianism do not find a common cause — Rogozhin is contemptuous of Ippolit. In *The Devils* ("Besy") they are already closer to a union, however, as Peter Verkhovensky draws up plans to entice the local *skoptsy* to his cause casting Stavrogin in the role of pretender-hero (part 2, chapter 1, section III). In *The Idiot*, Rogozhin seems to despise Ippolit, mainly for his lack of manliness, so manifest in his failed suicide attempt. Rogozhin is the better killer of course — the intelligentsia can neither kill nor self-destruct, just talk, as Ippolit does in his endless, wordy confession, which irritates everyone, especially Rogozhin. Unlike Ippolit, Rogozhin is not afraid of death — in symbolic terms, the narod, which loses its faith in the Resurrection becomes "worker[s] for death" (rabotnik[i] smerti).[48] Let us now turn to Pushkin again.

Grinev — Myshkin

In his attempts to communicate with the people, in this case, Rogozhin, Myshkin has a Pushkinian predecessor: the naïve and youthful hero of *The Captain's Daughter*. Grinev finds a way to Pugachev's nobler feelings, and is even able to establish a bond. He has intuitively understood how to reach out to the narod, namely by appealing to its inherent generosity and by speaking with it in the right "tone," i.e. without condescension.[49] Following his motto of "if it is to be execution, then execution it is, if it is to be mercy, mercy it will be,"[50] Pugachev invariably rewards Grinev for his generous gift of a fur-coat (*tulup*) during their first meeting, sparing his life, even accepting his point of view as valid at times. Grinev's *tulup* incidentally is too small for Pugachev's broad shoulders, which detail may have inspired notions such as the Russian folk being unable to wear

clothes not "sown according to [their own] measurements" in the *Vremia* manifesto already quoted above. It is true that Grinev's *tulup*, although worn by a westernized aristocrat, presumably is a Russian piece of clothing and therefore should "fit" Pugachev, but, generally, any aristocratic western-inspired dress would be "too small" and constricting for the people. The essence of the "exchange" between Grinev and Pugachev is not in the swapping of clothes and services, however, but in the fact that Grinev is able to establish contact with Pugachev because he speaks with him as an equal, without aristocratic condescension. Grinev's approach to Pugachev, this Russian archetype of the elemental folk in Dostoevsky's reading of Pushkin's novel, offers the embryonic contact of what should become a full-fledged relationship between the Russian elite and the people. There should be a frank exchange of opinion, such as takes place between Grinev and Pugachev, where each side is honest with the other. Grinev is able to see beneath the surface of terrible evil in Pugachev and he — unlike anyone else of his class that we meet in the novel — is therefore able to state that "he was strongly drawn" to Pugachev, wishing to "save his head before it was too late."[51] As Sarah Hudspith has emphasized, "Dostoevsky came to believe that the common people did not desire a radical reconstruction of society, but instead a parity of simple humane treatment between the classes, as they stood."[52] This is exactly the policy Myshkin pursues in his relations with Rogozhin.

A radical reconstruction of society was, in Dostoevsky's view, not really necessary, since essentially Russia was free of class conflict and, in fact, was on its way to a classless society! The division between elite and folk would disappear after the education gap had been filled.[53] At least Dostoevsky wanted to believe in the essential lack of class antagonism in Russian society and perhaps he did so in the 1860s in the wake of the reforms. Presumably he found his notions of class conflict in Europe and over-arching national unity in Russia reinforced during this travels in Western Europe. Certainly Prince Myshkin does not even notice class barriers or distinctions, treating all individuals he meets, not as representatives of a class, but as unique individuals. In Europe, his behaviour, it may be assumed, would be completely unacceptable and even impossible, but in Russia it is shown to be feasible even in European St. Petersburg.

Rogozhin — Myshkin

Not everyone might agree that Pushkin's novel advocates this type of contact to resolve the issue of the culture gap between elite and people, but this is the reading of *The Captain's Daughter* that I impute to Dostoevsky. I believe he read it as a commentary on the psychology of the *narod*, on its capacity for total selflessness and devotion (Savelev) and its equally great capacity for

total destruction and self-destruction (Pugachev), yet, in both manifestations, containing the receptive "soil" in which the seeds of religious enlightenment could grow. Dostoevsky believed that Pushkin was the first to see both the fatal gap between the Europeanized gentry and the people and to suggest a solution to it: loving mentorship of dark minds, religious education without the aberrations of fanaticism and sectarianism, a great deal of reading of Pushkin (for aesthetics), and the guided development of the capacity to be open to all varieties of world culture. As Dostoevsky made plain in many contexts, this was the quality typical of the Russian mind and this was the quality that in due course would be able not only to resonate to world culture, but also help deepen it, bringing out the best in each national facet of it. Such loving guidance of the narod by the aristocracy was *possible*, as the near-friendship of Grinev with Pugachev demonstrates. It will be remembered that Grinev even remained loyal "unto death" to his friend and foe of the people, witnessing his execution. Exchanging glances with him, he did not abandon Pugachev even in his last hour, just as Myshkin will abide by Rogozhin's side even after his fatal crime. Unfortunately then, the example has been set, but it has not been followed beyond single instances, since Pushkin's times. Many more examples of such behaviour are needed.

It could be argued then that Dostoevsky created Prince Myshkin, in his relationship to Rogozhin, partly, as a much more developed variant of Grinev, as a man who is not just innocent and upright as Grinev is, but who, being a devout orthodox and Russian patriot-intelligent, has a complex vision of his and his social class's duty versus the dark narod and its universal mission. The friendship between Myshkin and Rogozhin is a partial replay of the Grinev-Pugachev relationship, but on a much more complex and sophisticated level. It is not for nothing that Rogozhin offers Myshkin a fur coat (a "kun'ia shuba," together with other items of clothing) at their very first meeting.[54] Incidentally Rogozhin too, like Pugachev, has markedly broad shoulders. The coat swapping, or dialogue, between the Elite and the People go on, or at least this is what should be happening.[55] As Rogozhin's repeated attempts at murdering Myshkin demonstrate, however, this dialogue has its problems.

Like Pushkin's Pugachev in *The Captain's Daughter*, Rogozhin — who in Stenka Razin like fashion is surrounded by a drunken and noisy following (*khmel'naia* and *shumnaia vataga*) throughout Part I of the novel — has "fiery" eyes.[56] They glitter particularly ominously when he is pursuing Myshkin, hiding in the crowd, intent on murdering him. Leaving the train on a St. Petersburg railway station, Myshkin perceives a "strange, *fiery* glance of someone's two eyes" (strannyi, *goriachii* vzgliad ch'ikh-to dvukh glaz;" cf. the "dva sverkaiu-shchie glaza" in the Pushkin text).[57] Myshkin and Rogozhin then meet in Rogozhin's dark and sinister house, a kind of "house of the dead" (*mertvyi dom*),

as well as the epitome of the "temnoe tsarstvo" of the sectarian merchant class, and Myshkin is struck by the fact that Rogozhin's "strange and sombre glance" duplicates the one he thought he saw before. Rogozhin's eyes again glitter ominously (sil'nee blesnuli) while they talk.[58] They again glitter (sverkaia glazami) when Rogozhin tells how he beat Nastasya Filippovna "black and blue" (do siniakov).[59] She seems to realize that he is a *Pugach*ev-figure when she tells him that he cannot scare her (uzh ne *pugat'* li ty menia vzdumal?, vot is*pugal*-to!).[60] Myshkin is not afraid of Rogozhin either, but unlike Nastasya Filippovna, he does not taunt and torture him. Instead, he tries to enlighten him, as, to some extent, Grinev tried to do with his "friend." Telling him the stories about simple people and their strength of faith, he tries to tell Rogozhin that the "laws of nature," as depicted on Holbein's picture, do not invalidate faith, if faith is taken less literally than he does. Ending his string of sad stories about faith gone wrong, with the contrasting "Madonna tale" of the mother who joyously makes the sign of the cross when her baby smiles for the first time, he is trying to bring the "Light of Orthodoxy" to him, the illumination of a faith that is not linked to the castrating knife. He is trying to cure him of his literalism, of his dark sectarian religiosity that he, nevertheless, will finally act on, performing the "purification" of Nastasya Filippovna by the ritualistic use of his knife. He also purifies himself by not consummating his wedding night, thus remaining a "virginal man" (Parfen).

The Prince's words in Rogozhin's house have some effect for a time, since the scene of the exchange of crosses follows upon the religious anecdotes the Prince told Rogozhin.[61] Dark Rogozhin has the capacity to see the light, even if he cannot act upon his insights. Therefore, of course, Rogozhin, with his glittering eyes and glittering knife, will attempt to murder his "brother" very soon again. This is what Rogozhin looks like at the moment of raising his knife: "His eyes glittered (*zasverkali*), and a demonic (*beshenaia*) smile distorted his face. He raised his right hand and something in it *gleamed*."[62] Here Rogozhin is clearly possessed by the devil (as his demonic smile, his *beshenaia* ulybka, demonstrates) — and blinded by the glitter of a false inspiration. Will this possession ever be replaced by liberation? Rogozhin's case is particularly interesting because he is the vacillating man of the people par excellence. He is neither callously indifferent to his guilt, as so many of the merciless and unrepentant murderers of *The House of the Dead,* for example, nor "good" like the peasant Marei or the naïve sectarian Nikolka (in *Crime and Punishment*). He wavers back and forth between good and evil and the latter is so often winning because his sectarianism is of the dark and destructive type that just needs the strand of western socialism to become an explosive mixture. The sectarian-socialist Rogozhins of the future might let loose destructive forces of hitherto unheard-of strength; this is, I believe, Dostoevsky's not explicitly stated, but effectively intimated fear.

Myshkin does not lose faith in the "Russian soul" even after Rogozhin's attempt to murder him, but he admits that his mood is "dark."[63] He believes that Rogozhin, this carrier of the darkness of the Russian People, can be transferred from darkness to light ("Is Rogozhin really not able to perceive the light?," he asks).[64] His strange unwavering friendship for his rival is founded on his conviction that the latter will wander through darkness to light, from crime and katorga to orthodox enlightenment, because he cannot be "reduced" to just passion (*strastnost'*).[65] It is but a step from his merciless passion for Nastasya Filippovna, to the passion of suffering (*stradanie*) and, therefore, the Prince believes, ultimately, to co-suffering (*sostradanie*),[66] to the ability to empathize with all. Like Grinev he stays with his friend and foe, not even abandoning Rogozhin after his deed, stroking Rogozhin's "hair and cheeks,"[67] thus soothing the delirium of terror Rogozhin is in. The Prince knows that a new form of suffering awaits Rogozhin now, the kind of suffering that might purify Parfen, the dark man of the People, leading him to the light of pity, making him as pure as his name indicates, but in a sense that differs from the self-castrators' literalist perception of purity. The bond of suffering and terror that Rogozhin and Myshkin develop as they watch over Nastasya Filippovna's corpse should tell the elite — not to turn away from a deeply unhappy, misguided and unenlightened people, assailed by demonic forces, but to save it from its "terrible, yet guiltless, crimes" perpetrated by passions that could be redirected and sublimated. The problem is that the narod has few mentors of Myshkin's type, but many tor*mentors* of Nastasya Filippovna's sort. If Rogozhin represents the wronged "dark people" gone astray, she represents the wronged "Russian soul" that enjoys the feeling of "having been wronged," i.e. an aspect of Russia's national *oblik* that Dostoevsky already earlier warned against.

Nastasya Filippovna

Nastasya Filippovna,[68] Rogozhin's victim, is, like him — who is a traditional merchant and not a modern capitalist — not at home in the modern world of sale and purchase. It is in this world that she has become a luxury commodity, as opposed to carrier of redeeming beauty. It is a world that does not understand the kind of action she demonstrates when flinging 100.000 roubles into the fire, a gesture that Rogozhin does understand however. Both are creatures of "fire" ever ready to destroy a shabby and dirty world, but also ready to burn all bridges to harmony and equilibrium in the process. Nastasya Filippovna has the same glittering and burning eyes as her ardent (but not sensual) lover — with the verb "sverkat'" repeatedly being used to describe them.[69] Like Rogozhin, she is also linked to the "knife" — she contemplates killing him with a knife

at one point, but her preference is for "being knifed," her aggression usually being limited to scornful laughter.[70] As a symbolic figure, she represents a once innocent Russia that was seduced and depraved by outside, West-inspired, influences, to lead a demimonde life — a life she now hates, but spiritually cannot liberate herself from. Demonstratively challenging the hypocritical conventions of a hated capitalist society, keeping "bon ton," while mired in vice and corruption, a society that robbed her of her innocence, purity and faith, she is not capable of turning to the narod either, but treats Rogozhin as a "muzhik."[71] Constantly challenging him to murder her, she in fact uses him as her servant — as an instrument of her self-destructive efforts at expiation. In doing this, she demonstrates a sectarian mentality where self-flagellation plays a major role. Self-flagellation is, in Dostoevsky's world, a dangerous Russian national trait that could play a fatal role in a potential revolution. Being someone who is prepared "to cut herself into pieces," committing a Russian version of hara-kiri, because she feels she has been "defiled," she represents the need for irrational self-punishment in the Russian mentality that invites catastrophe. Nastasya Filippovna would have used her energies better in seriously educating Rogozhin than in constant self-laceration. One of the few "human" moments the couple share is when she encourages Rogozhin to read Sergei Solovev's *Russian History* and promises to take his education in hand.[72] Christ-like Myshkin is the helpless would-be liberator of both these tormented representatives of dangerous Russian mentalities, each trapped in his/her version of dark "Russian" passions. He is trying to convince them that there is a true alternative, no less Russian, namely the light and enlightenment of Orthodoxy. This religion does not consider beauty defiled when it has been victimized, seeing the spirit as more important than the flesh, the image of God in man and woman as more important than "mortal coils." A *khlystovka* by temperament, Nastasya Filippovna is a literalist in her own way — in fact both Rogozhin and she are far too fixated on the purity of the body, as well as on what can be done to it, while thinking too little of the indestructible spirit. Nastasya Filippovna's temperamental affinities with the *khlysty* are clearly revealed in the scene where she hits Prince Radomsky's friend across the face with a stick, after he has said that a "khlyst" (whip) should be used to keep her in check.[73] It was a popular misconception of the times that the *khlysty* were flagellants and it is therefore in "flagellant" terms that Dostoevsky presents his passionately self-destructive heroine with her self-tormenting *khlystovka* soul.[74] The "castrator" Rogozhin appreciates Nastasya Filippovna's propensity for flagellation — after his murder of her, he approvingly and laughingly remembers how she "hit" (*khlestnula*) the officer across his face and was ready to do the same to a young cadet.[75] One sectarian is able to appreciate another — excess, pain and delusion unite them in their "blood wedding." In

short, the triangle drama of Rogozhin, Nastasya Filippovna and Prince Myshkin offers a new variation of the national myth Dostoevsky already presented in his early story "The Landlady" — with some variations and complications, to be sure.[76] The invariants are there however: a beautiful woman, emblematic of the tormented Russian soul, seeking punishment for real and invented sins, a fanatic and violent "protector," whose violent love is a constant threat and a (seemingly) impotent liberator who meets his ruin.

The Landlady

In "The Landlady" (1847), Murin, the vicious protector of the Russian Beauty in his company, is a (robber) merchant and a fanatic Old Believer, like Rogozhin, who is linked to both the schismatics and sectarians. Murin is an old man, however, and in his symbolic function linked to the Russian autocracy, which young Dostoevsky, then still in his rebellious days, saw as a threat to Russia's welfare, harmony and beauty. Murin, an Ivan the Terrible figure (he is often "groznyi"), represents stagnation and the status quo, in this early Dostoevsky story. Rogozhin is linked not to autocracy and the status quo, but to rebellion and social resentment, marked in the novel as inferiority complexes (he refers to himself as a "lackey" (kholui).[77] In both texts, the Russian Beauty yearns to be freed from her jealous protector, but, after some hesitation, ultimately opts for him again rather than her would-be liberator. Myshkin's pity-love for Nastasya Filippovna is therefore constantly and, increasingly so, accompanied by "terror"[78] — as he realizes that she (Russia) believes only in catastrophe and never in salvation, because she needs to feel guilt, remorse and terror, wants perdition and shuns salvation. This is where the "landlady" fails too. Declaring her yearning for a free life, she returns to her cage voluntarily. Nastasya Filippovna too dooms herself, rejecting her orthodox Bridegroom, Christ-like Myshkin,[79] and sadistically tormenting Rogozhin, in the end offering him hardly any alternatives other than murder. The negative complementariness of *khlystovshchina* and *skopchestvo,* of hysteria and aggression, is clearly a dangerous one: a threatening obstacle on Russia's path to the fulfilment of her historic destiny (of reconciling all with all).

In "The Landlady," young Ordynov fails to liberate the Russian Beauty, partly because he — a utopian young liberal — is at a loss about what to offer her instead of Murin's powerful protection; in *The Idiot,* Myshkin's weakness is only apparent. Unlike the naïve Ordynov, Myshkin has a powerful idea: Russian Orthodoxy. He has furthermore proven its power by making a whole Swiss village — not convert to Orthodoxy — but to see things the "Russian way." In miniature, this is what Russia's future mission vis-à-vis Europe is all

about — to make it see matters the "Russian way." Myshkin's own people does however offer a greater challenge to the "Russian Idea" than the Swiss villagers; and this is so, because it is so "broad" that it can encompass both the light of Orthodoxy and the darkness of sectarianism and the lie of socialism as well. His mission is perhaps not a total failure however, in spite of the seemingly hopeless situation on which the novel ends. The future could see the synthesis of disparate elements yet. Prince Radomsky's and Vera Lebedeva's hinted at marital union could be seen as the continuation of the Prince's vision: the creation of a Russia that has left its unbridled passions (*dikie strasti*) and even voluptuous enjoyment of suffering (*sladostrastnoe stradanie*) behind to cultivate the beautiful empathy (*sostradanie*) that will save the world.[80] It should be noted that this union of an aristocrat with a girl from the lower classes could be the beginning of the classless society, the *pochvenniki* dreamt of. Even though it may be true that, as Carpi states, Dostoevsky became disillusioned with the Russian aristocracy after *The Idiot*, a reformed aristocracy that goes to the people in the proper way and forms a loving union with it may still be part of a valid elite.[81]

The other novels

Pushkin, in his *History of Pugachev* emphasized that even when Pugachev was technically defeated by the Russian army and in flight, he was everywhere victorious, since it was enough for him and a couple of "villains" (*zlodei*) to appear for "rebellion over entire districts" to immediately follow. [82] Never before did the "uprising play itself out so cruelly" (*bunt . . . svirepstvoval*), passing "from one village to the next, from one province to the other," as during the last phase of the rebellion.[83] Bands of rebels and robbers formed everywhere and each had their "own Pugachev."[84] Perhaps Petr Verkhovensky in *The Devils* was not all that wrong in assuming that not much effort would be needed to set the Russian provinces into rebellious motion; his plans to revive the Stenka Razin myth with Stavrogin as the central figure and spread the message to the sectarians in the district that they and the socialists must make common cause might well work, if not "now" then later. As Engelstein points out, the "charismatic Pugachev" appears in the "story of origins" of the *skoptsy*, and they might also accept a "Razin" as a leader.[85] Dostoevsky may well have wished to warn his countrymen that a union of socialists and sectarians was a real threat and not just a hare-brained scheme. Verkhovensky was wrong only in choosing the wrong leader, since the depraved aristocrat Stavrogin is no Razin and no Pugachev. He does not even have the strength to kill his Russian Beauty himself — she has to seek her own death and destroy herself on her own

initiative. Liza Tushina, is a Nastasya Filippovna type of Russian beauty and also a *khlystovka* by temperament, and, like her, in search of her own destruction. She begins her life on a positive and constructive note (the creation of a chronicle of events devoted to things Russian, past and present), but is deflected by her misplaced passion for the perverted aristocrat Stavrogin, possibly seeking that *obida* that to the "sectarian temperament" is dearer than self-fulfilment.[86] He may indeed mark the ultimate decline of the aristocracy (see note 82), since, beyond being a child molestor, he is also the archetypal snob who cannot merge with the narod because of class prejudice.

In *The Brothers Karamazov*, the constellation "Myshkin-Rogozhin" (based on the Grinev-Pugachev constellation) has a *potential* parallel in the pairing of "Alesha Karamazov — Smerdiakov." Alesha fails to approach Smerdiakov, however, and therefore also fails to fulfil an Orthodox enlightenment mission in regard to him (it may well be one of his major sins of omission). Instead Smerdiakov, the sectarian, comes under the influence of the socialist Ivan Karamazov with all the ensuing unfortunate consequences. Ganna Bograd has demonstrated, in convincing detail, that Smerdiakov, as conceived by Dostoevsky, was "linked to "folk elements," i.e. to sectarianism.[87] He was, for example, in Dostoevsky's mind linked to I. N. Kramskoi's picture "The Contemplative" (*Sozertsatel'*), in which an uneducated peasant seems to be pondering alternatives such as either going on a pilgrimage to Jerusalem or "setting fire to his village," or both.[88] She then shows that Smerdiakov grew up in a sectarian household, the servant Grigiorii becoming involved in the *khlyst* sect, after the death of his six-fingered child. Its "deformity" shook him to the depths of his soul. (Perhaps Smerdiakov's famous propensity for hanging cats may have something to do with the superstitious and sectarian atmosphere of Grigorii's household.) Smerdiakov himself opts not for the *khlysty* however, but for the *skoptsy*, as Bograd demonstrates, also mentioning the interesting detail that Grigorii referred to finding the infant Smerdiakov soon after his own infant's death, as "the mark" (*pechat'*).[89] Smerdiakov is not a positive character, but, like Rogozhin, he is also a betrayed one. Left to Grigiorii's odd care and later to sectarian influences in Moscow, he returns to the provinces and the "enlightenment" that Ivan Karamazov (like Ippolit, a Belinsky figure) offers him. As already stated, Alesha neglects to offer true illumination to him, although he witnesses Smerdiakov's absurd reasoning of a literalist kind in the chapters "The Controversy" and "Over a Glass of Cognac." Rogozhin, the "castrator" and Smerdiakov, the "castrate," however different they may be, share in "ontological and ethical insecurity." One is the owner of a "dark," the other of a "blank" mind that can be filled with any "impressions" whatsoever, from which, in turn, the most contradictory "conclusions" may be drawn (go on a pilgrimage, burn down the village, or both). Growing up with the servant Grigorii, who believes his own newborn

child to be of the devil because it is born with a deformity and who believes "the little deceased one" (*pokoinichek*) sent Smerdiakov, son of a devil and a saint (*besov syn* and *syn pravednitsy*) to him,[90] Smerdiakov could have used some orthodox enlightenment, but had to make do with socialist doctrine. In "true" skopets fashion, he dreams of saving money (the double meaning of *skopit'*) and opening a restaurant in Paris, the city of *égalité*. As is well known, he also eagerly listens to Ivan Karamazov's "atheist sermons" on "all being permitted," if there is no God and no Resurrection. Is Smerdiakov "to be blamed" however? Did not Grigorii and Ivan Karamazov, one a narrow-minded literalist (and a victim of the people's "darkness" himself) and the other a socialist far too keen on experimenting with the popular mind, create the fatal combination that led to Smerdiakov's sad murder and sad suicide? The dangerous alliance of western materialist sects and home-grown ones thus continued to occupy Dostoevsky, whose bright vision of an illuminated Orthodox narod seems to have been seriously threatened by the "demonic" strain of literalist sectarian utopianism, as well as subversive socialism. The first was an enemy coming from the innermost depths of the people itself and therefore perhaps even more dangerous than easily recognized western socialism.

Conclusions

So is the Russian *narod* the carrier of the true image of Christ or is it, at least a part of it, displaying demonic features that could undermine, if not, ruin, the mission of world salvation that Russia, in Dostoevsky's vision, was meant for? Are we perchance even to see Christ-like Myshkin's final destruction through Rogozhin and his "band," with the help of Ippolit and his radical friends, as a sign that the Russian nation is quite capable of extinguishing the image of the true Christ entrusted to its care? Certainly Prince Myshkin seems to be pushed back into a kind of "Holbeinesque" tomb by the joined efforts of his closest Russian friends, his beauty as disfigured as the painter's Christ. Perhaps the diagnosis that the Russian people, in spite of its numerous shortcomings, fully acknowledged by Dostoevsky, is essentially good (Hudspith) and therefore able to carry out its mission in Dostoevsky's world is correct. Most Dostoevsky scholars assume an optimistic stance on this article of the author's *pochvennichestvo* faith. But, it seems to me that this picture changed considerably toward a darker mood ever since Dostoevsky began to seriously consider the impact of socialism on the sectarian popular psyche. Although the final victory on this battlefield of Orthodoxy versus Sectarianism and Socialism presumably will be on the side of Orthodoxy, Dostoevsky clearly had his grave concerns that the volatile tri-partite syndrome of a) the legacy of a wronged people, leading to

rebellion (*bunt*), of b) fundamentalist sectarianism and c) insidious socialism would be harder to overcome than the bi-partite one of just *narodnaia obida* and sectarianism that Pushkin dealt with. The Rogozhins, Dostoevsky feared, would prove more dangerous than the Pugachevs, when paired with the Ippolits, Petr Verkhovenskys and Ivan Karamazovs.

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Notes

1. Terras, p. 3.
2. Vysheslavtsev, p. 125. All translations from Russian in this paper are mine, unless otherwise indicated.
3. Dostoevsky as quoted in Vysheslavtsev, *op. cit.*, p. 119.
4. It was after his Siberian years that Dostoevsky came to fully appreciate the "immensity of the gulf between the gentry and the narod." Hudspith, p. 26.
5. "Kapitanskaia dochka," 6: p. 349. The epithets in regard to "russkii bunt" are "bessmyslennyi i besposhchadnyi." This judgment can be fairly attributed to the author himself and not just his hero. On this issue, see, e.g. Gillel'son and Mushina, pp. 155–156.
6. Vysheslavtsev points out that these two sects were particularly unacceptable to Dostoevsky (see p. 118). In the program declaration of the journal *Vremia*, "Ob"iavlenie o podpiske na zhurnal 'Vremia' na 1861 god," the ideological platform of which Dostoevsky naturally shared, there is mention of "tainstvennye urodlivye sekty" among the people. Even though sectarianism also is seen as a manifestation of the people's spiritual independence and creativity, some sects are characterized as "chudovishchny" and "bezobrazny." Also later, for example, in *Diary of a Writer* (for January, 1877), the epithets Dostoevsky uses for these sects are invariably negative. Speaking of a non-Russian sect, the "shtunda," he states that it might mix with "dark sects of the Russian people, with some form of khlystovshchina" and that the result would be negative in the extreme.

7 See the discussion of *The Idiot* by Richard Peace, in his: *Dostoyevsky. An Examination of the Major Novels*; the quote is on p. 91. I strongly agree with Peace that the notion that Rogozhin represents "sensual passion" in the novel, is "to say the least, bizarre," in view of his strong links to the *skoptsy*, his "virginal" first name and other evidence, making him the very opposite of a sensualist. *If* he is a sensualist, he certainly is one who greatly complicates his enjoyment of sensual pleasures (p. 85).

8 Vysheslavtsev points out that Prince Myshkin is amazed by the appeal that *khlystovshchina* has even to the educated elite (*op. cit.*, p. 120). The passage he clearly has in mind can be found on p. 453 (of vol. 8), where Myshkin states that "khlystovshchina" is negative, but that it may represent a "deeper" train of thought than nihilism, Jesuitism and atheism. Nevertheless, it is not a desirable phenomenon and Prince Myshkin fervently wishes that someone might illuminate the Russian nation with "Russian Light," by which undoubtedly he means the Light of Orthodoxy.

9 In Myshkin's view, socialism is in fact the natural outcome (*porozhdenie*) of catholicism (p. 451). It should also be remembered that Dostoevsky was involved in writing an article on Belinsky concurrently with the novel and that in 1867 socialism in general was on his mind — he attended the heavily socialist Congress of Peace and Liberty in Geneva, which he found irritating and quite silly, but perhaps dangerous after all.

10 Perhaps Myshkin's fears are not based on intuition only, but also on reading. Etkind points out that sectarianism and politics went hand in hand already at the end of the 18th and beginning of the 19th century, finding their verbal expression in the self-castrator Aleksei Elensky's — this possibly "first Russian revolutionary's" (p. 158) — manifesto (entitled *Blagovest*) about the need for a popular uprising that would introduce a true "new tsar" (159), who would realize utopia. Already the well known scholar August Haxthausen whose works on Russian sectarianism possibly were partly incorrect, but nevertheless ground-breaking, warned Russia of the political dangers of sectarianism (see Etkind, p. 35).

11 Lantz, I, p. 193. It has sometimes been argued that Dostoevsky's *pravoslavie* is quite unorthodox and that he has a great deal of sympathy with sectarianism and certainly Old Believers. Hudspith rightly points out, however, that although the *raskol*, on the whole, was seen as an acceptable popular form of orthodoxy by Dostoevsky, as were some pagan beliefs, he did associate "specific organized sects" with "characters in turmoil," clearly rejecting "extreme sects with their connotations of violence and distortion" (p. 140). (Cf. also notes 6 and 7 above.)

12 Lantz, *ibid*.

13 About the dangers of *obosoblenie*, see Hudspith, p. 65.

14 For a new and fresh account of the history of *pochvennichestvo* and the personalities developing its main ideas, see de Lazari (2004).

15 "Razve s razvitiem naroda ischezaet ego narodnost'?"; "s razvitiem naroda... krepnut vse dary ego prirody... i dukh naroda eshche iarche vystupaet naruzhu." (19: 14).

16 "Ob'iavlenie o podpiske na zhurnal 'Vremia' na 1861 god." Lantz emphasizes this feature in *pochvennichestvo,* stating: "Insofar as *pochvennichestvo* included any practical, social program, it focused on the increase of literacy and the spread of education. This was the most pressing need and the primary means for overcoming the chasm between the educated classes and the peasantry." (2204, p. 325).

17 See 19: 19. He also strongly advocated education for women. See, for example, Levina, 1994.

18 As Perlina has demonstrated, "all quotations from Pushkin represent authoritative truth in Dostoevsky's novels" (p. 165).

19 See Ganna Bograd, pp. 328–329. As she shows, Dostoevsky is here developing ideas found in Gogol's "Neskol'ko slov o Pushkine."

20 See Fokin, p. 165, p. 166.

21 Fokin, pp. 166–167.

22 See Etkind's discussion of the fairytale, pp. 164–174.

23 Like Peace, I believe it is important to "examine the allegorical skeleton" in Dostoevsky's works, "in order to see why its living flesh takes the form it does" (p. 101). I would even go further and state that in Dostoevsky's world (where it is acknowledged that characters embody ideas and concepts), it is absolutely necessary to do this. As Rudolf Neuhauser has demonstrated in his reading of "The Landlady," tracing the symbolic-allegorical patterns formed by the characters, explains a great deal in their relationships, as well as what the story is "about." (See chapter 20, "*Die Wirtin*: eine gesellschaftspolitische Allegorie," in his *Das Fruhwerk Dostoewskijs*.) The all-pervasiveness of Dostoevsky's dialogue with Pushkin in building his thematics, as Perlina has shown, is beyond doubt.

24 8: 10.

25 19: 16. These "nevernye puti," very likely, included its sectarian ways.

26 One feature that distinguished *pochvennichestvo* from slavophilism, in addition to its championing of (true) enlightenment, is its inclusion of "meshchanstvo" and "kupechestvo" in the category of "narod." See de Lazari, p. 30.

27 He dreams of a scorpion-tarantula-like creature, which clearly symbolizes death. See 8: 323–324.

28 See Comer, pp. 90–95. Possibly Lebedev's remark to Rogozhin that he would accept being whipped by him alludes to his family's known connections to the skoptsy and/or khlysty. He says: "Seki. Vysek, i tem samym za*pechat*lel" (8: 13).

29 Pushkin, 8: 116, 8: 133, 8: 120.

30 Pushkin, 8: 131, 8: 130, 8: 179, 8: 178.

31 8: 191.

32 "Govoria o svoem syne, Rychkov ne mog uderzhat'sia ot slez; Pugachev, gliadia na nego, sam zaplakal." (8: 189.)

33 "Pugachev porazhen byl ee krasotoiu." (8: 123).

34 8: 132.

35 The importance of aesthetics serving a higher truth was important in pochvennichestvo where "art was elevated above all other manifestations of human activity" and where the artist was "assigned a special cognitive role." Aesthetics

was also defined in national terms, "by national categories." See de Lazari, p. 190. Rogozhin thus shares with the Russian people he represents, the receptivity to beauty, but is also fully capable of destroying it in his "possessed" moments.

[36] Peace sees Aglaia (whose name is that of one of the three graces) as belonging to a "non-Christian" (p. 81) realm and representing the intelligentsia embracing West-European enlightenment, including socialism. She too is very interested in education (see Peace, p. 81), but clearly the enlightenment she would spread to the people would be non-Orthodox and thus ultimately harmful (from Dostoevsky's perspective). It is noteworthy that Aglaia, although she knows her Pushkin, uses his poem "The Poor Knight" to ridicule Myshkin (however lovingly), thus showing a certain lack of reverence for his art.

[37] 6: 343, 6: 334.

[38] 6: 270.

[39] Pp. 307, 332.

[40] "Sverknuv ognennymi glazami," 6: 319; another mention of his glittering and fiery eyes is to be found on 6: 341.

[41] P. 341.

[42] 8: 190.

[43] 8: 141; 6: 306.

[44] The expression is taken from Blok's poem "Zadebrennye lesom kruchi," 1907, 1914, where we find the lines: "Nesut ispugannoi Rossii/ Vest' o szhigaiushchem Khriste." The epithet "is*puga*nnaia" seems to allude to a Russia, frightened by new revolutionary leaders who are like *Puga*chev.

[45] "Tut nevol'no prikhodit poniatie, chto esli tak uzhasna smert' i tak sil'ny zakony priody, to kak zhe odolet' ikh? Kak odolet' ikh, kogda ne pobedil ikh teper' dazhe tot, kotoryi pobezhdal i priodu pri zhizni svoei . . . Priroda mereshchitsia pri vzgliade na etu kartinu v vide kakogo-to ogromnogo, neumolimogo i nemogo zveria ili, vernee, . . . v vide kakoi-nibud' ogromnoi mashiny noveishego ustroistva, kotoraia bessmyslenno zakhvatila, razdrobila i poglotila v sebia . . . velikoe i bestsennoe sushchestvo." (8: 339.) The English translation quoted in the main text is by Anna Brailovsky (based on Constance Garnett's translation), The Modern Library, New York (p. 443).

[46] Pp. 340–341.

[47] Onasch has convincingly shown that Ippolit is a Belinsky figure in his excitability, volubility, ill health (TB) and of course his "rebellion" against the creator. See particularly pp. 84–87 of his work.

[48] The phrase is taken from Kurganov, p. 22. Kurganov points out that in *The Captain's Daughter*, the corpse of kapitansha Mironova is covered by a bast mat termed *rogozha*. The link of the family name Rogozhin to the Old Believers' cemetery *Rogozhskoe kladbishche* has also been pointed out (Comer, 91). Kurganov's book suggests that Dostoevsky exalted voluntary blood sacrifice for the foundation of a new world. I disagree with his notion that, in Dostoevsky's world, it is "schast'e stat' zhertvoi — toi, chto kladetsia v osnovu zdaniia i iavliaetsia zalogom ego budushchei sokhrannosti" (p. 16) and that this is the fate Nastasya Filippovna is seeking.

[49] In his already quoted article "Knizhnost' i gramotnost'," Dostoevsky points out that it is the "tone" of any act of communication that decides how it is perceived. This is so, especially with the folk who immediately pick up on the false notes of condescension, fake well-meaning, and a sense of superiority, however well hidden. See 19: 28.

[50] "Kaznit' tak kaznit', zhalovat' tak zhalovat'." (6: 342.)

[51] See 6: 343–344.

[52] Hudspith, p. 28.

[53] There would soon be "sliianie soslovii." (19: 19.)

[54] 8: 13.

[55] The coat-motif seems important in the novel. Rogozhin later specifically remembers that Myshkin wore only a "plashch'" when he came from Europe and probably therefore also remembers offering him a *shuba* (8: 172). In fact the novel abounds in every conceivable word for coat, including *shinel'* (and *shinelishka*). Even the family name Epanchin derives from a word for coat—*epancha*. The item of clothing so often mentioned in the novel and now offered in reverse order (from the folk to the elite) might indicate that the time has come for the elite to accept the people's warm protection, to return from the West to Russia and its folk, as the Prince has done. The narod would gladly offer protection and warmth, if only the elite would treat it right. If it will not do that, the *rogozha* of death and destruction may well be offered instead. (Cf. note 49.)

[56] 8: 5. The Prince too is surrounded by a *vataga*, but his consists of innocent children, not unruly men.

[57] 8: 158.

[58] 8: 171.

[59] 8: 175.

[60] 8:176. In *The Captain's Daughter*, Pugachev is called *Pugach* (6: 305) where the meanings of both scarecrow and a scary person who frightens everyone are bared.

[61] As Peace points out, the cross Rogozhin takes from Myshkin is the one, the latter was given by a "'seller of Christ'" (p. 91), i.e. the soldier who sold his cross to buy drink.

[62] "Glaza ego *zasverkali* i *beshenaia* ulybka iskazila ego litso. Pravaia ruka ego podnialas' i chto-to *blesnulo* v nei. (8: 195); the italics are mine.

[63] 8: 190.

[64] "Razve ne sposoben k svetu Rogozhin?" (8: 191).

[65] *Ibid*.

[66] *Ibid*.

[67] 8: 507.

[68] As both Peace and Neuhäuser have pointed out, her patronymic links her to the founder of the sect of the *Khlysty*, Filippov.

[69] ". . . v sverkaiushchikh glazakh ee" (8: 38); Glaza ee sverknuli" (8: 86); Glaza ee sverknuli (290); bol'shie chernye glaza ee sverkali na tolpu kak raskalennye ugli (8: 493). Her beauty is blinding (oslepliaiushchaia, 8: 68; oslepila, 8: 100), she is often in a fever.

[70] 8: 175.

71 8: 97; later she admits that he is not as much of a "lackey" (177) as she thought, but her treatment of him continues to be contemptuous to say the least. Lebedev states that she values her would-be bridegroom as much as "an orange rind" (167).

72 8: 179.

73 8: 290.

74 De Lazari quotes M. Altman's opinion that Nastasya Filippovna, Katerina (in "The Landlady"), Natalya Vassilevna Trusotskaia (in *The Eternal Husband*) and Polina Aleksandrovna (in *The Gambler*) all belong to the type of "khlystovskie bogo-roditsy" (pp. 120–121). They do, but their khlystovshchina is perhaps not as attractive as de Lazari believes.

75 8: 506.

76 For a discussion of "The Landlady" within the context of the "Pani-Katerina-myth," see my article "Gothic Historiosophy: The Pani Katerina Myth in Pasternak's *Doctor Zhivago*," the next article in this section. The first to point to the allegorical dimensions of this critically not well received early tale was Rudolf Neuhäuser. He sees the "Landlady" of the title as Russia herself and believes that she "embodies the Russian folk, equally ready to harbor the Ordynovs as the Murins" (i.e. the liberal reformers and the (sectarian) traditionalists. See his *Das Frühwerk Dostoewkijs*, pp. 176–189.

77 8: 12.

78 "Uzhasnoe," 8: 289.

79 As Knapp rightly emphasizes, Myshkin is only "like" Christ and not to be equated with some reincarnation of him (p. 191), nor does he see himself as such. He is, after all, not a *khlyst*, i.e. a believer in reincarnations of Christ.

80 The potential union of the "graceful" aristocrat Radomsky (he does not knock over vases like Myshkin), who learns a great deal about Russia's true essence from Myshkin, with the "Sistine Madonna" Vera Lebedeva, has been noted by Peace and other Dostoevsky scholars.

81 Carpi, p. 504.

82 Pushkin, 8: 179.

83 Ibid.

84 Ibid.

85 Engelstein, p. 22; see also pp. 39, 59.

86 For a more detailed analysis of the Liza Tushina — Stavrogin relationship, see my article "The Impotent Demon and Prurient Tamara: Parodies on Lermontov's 'Demon' in Dostoevsky's 'The Devils'."

87 See Ganna Bograd, "Predpolozheniia o Smerdiakove (K voprosu ob otnoshenii Dostoevskogo k raskolu)," "Materialy i issledovaniia," vol. 19.

88 Ganna Bograd points to the passage in which Dostoevsky discusses this painting — it is 14: 116–117.

89 "Predpolozheniia o Smerdiakove (K voprosu ob otnoshenii Dostoevskogo k raskolu)," "Materialy i issledovaniia," vol. 19.

90 Dostoevsky, 14: 93–94.

Who Are the Tatars in Alexander Blok's *The Homeland*? The East in the Literary-Ideological Discourse of the Russian Symbolists

The present article examines some aspects of the imagery of the "East" in Russian symbolist discourse up to the October Revolution for the specific purpose of answering some questions posed by Alexander Blok's verse cycle *The Homeland* ("Rodina," 1907–1916), including the one in the above title.[1] The examination of this imagery also illuminates some facets of Russian "Orientalism" (in Edward Said's well-known meaning of the term) at the turn of the century. There is also a brief discussion of the non-literary sources of this discourse.

As is well known, Russian Orientalism has its own specifics due to the fact that Russia did not just face the Orient as an Other, but itself was part of a triad consisting of Russia between Europe and the East. The resulting ambivalence of cultural allegiance and desire for demarcation against both Europe and the East created a special situation in which Russia was "not only the subject of orientalist discourse, but also its object."[2] Russian Orientalism is unique in that it includes a good portion of "self-orientalization."[3] While prone to such self-orientalization, symbolist discourse also holds out the prospect that the oriental component in the Russian psyche and culture will be transcended in a future transformation of the national essence. Self-orientalization thus proves to be a complex form of orientalism.

Russian perceptions of the Orient, especially Russia's own gradually acquired and colonized oriental territories, do not constitute a new topic of scholarly investigation.[4] Over the last decade a series of pioneering works has attached new meanings to the literary texts that resulted from Russia's contact with its own Orient in the South.[5] The present article examines Russian literary reactions in symbolist texts towards, on the one hand, the Far East (China, Japan) beyond the Russian border and, on the other hand, towards the Tatar presence inside Russia (excluding the Caucasian South). In regard to both these categories, history, national(istic) myths, personal traumas, geography, aesthetics and politics are inextricably intertwined in the imagery used to present them. In

regard to the Asia inside Russia, the mix is particularly remote from any verifiable external reality or objective frame of reference. In most symbolist texts of the turn of the century, the mention of Tatars, Huns and Scythians does not refer to any concrete ethnic groups of the past or present. They are rather symbolic stand-ins for the Russians themselves, specifically the Russian folk (*narod*) and/or those true artists (read: symbolists) who understand the Russian nation and its destiny, i.e. her historical mission in the world. "Eastern" and "Asian" prove to be terms of national and personal mythologies and historical-cultural philosophies rather than ethnic or geopolitical realities. To put it succinctly: the discourse examined below is neither about the Far East nor the Turkic peoples in the Russian Empire. It is about various sectors in Russian society which are labeled "Asian," with the Far East usually representing something negative and doomed and the "Inner East" usually representing something potentially positive. Some of the texts dealt with here, bearing this out are: Blok's cycle *On Kulikovo Field* ("Na pole Kulikovom," 1908), the poem "New America" ("Novaia Amerika," 1913), and the poem "The Scythians" ("Skify," 1918), the last forming a kind of epilogue to *The Homeland*.[6] Let us now turn to two reactions to the Revolution of 1905 mentioned above, since they will illustrate the existence of two Asias in the Russian discourse — the non-Russian Far East and the Russian East within the land.

In his controversial essay "The Coming Boor" ("Griadushchii kham," 1906), the writer and philosopher of culture Dmitrii Merezhkovsky (1866–1941) warns his readers that now that the Japanese have learnt how to make good cannons and the Chinese can learn this "art" from them, China "will conquer Europe," as "Japan conquered Russia" in the recent Russo-Japanese War.[7] His real concerns prove not to be geopolitical but cultural, however, since he suddenly states that "the yellow peril" is not so much an external threat as an inner one.[8] In fact, Merezhkovsky is most concerned about Western Europe being spiritually "Chinese." Borrowing "evidence" from Alexander Herzen's cycle of eight "Letters" entitled *Ends and Beginnings* ("Kontsy i nachala," 1863), as well as from Vladimir Solovev's apocalyptic visions in *Three Conversations* ("Tri razgovora," 1900),[9] Merezhkovsky warns that Europe's growing "Chinesefication" (*китаизация)* is paving the way for its eventual military and political takeover by the Far East.[10]

"Becoming Chinese," in Merezhkovsky's terminology, means embracing cultural mediocrity and positivism. "The Chinese are perfect yellow-faced positivists," he asserts, whereas "the Europeans are still imperfect white-faced Chinese."[11] A permanent spiritual malaise of the Far East, "positivism," only recently developed in the West, with the rise of the bourgeoisie, and in both cases grew out of a shallow religiosity. Lao-tse and Confucius offered their followers a religion without a transcendent dimension (a "безнебесная религия,"[12])

and in the West materialist philosophies ushered in cultural mediocrity. The "coming boor from the East," therefore, is the one-dimensional focus on this life, the denial of metaphysical intuitions about the next and a life without miracles of the spirit, plus the de-individualization of mass cultures. Was Russia, too, threatened by positivism? Since Russia did not have a large bourgeoisie like Western Europe, it should be safe. Only the largely atheist and materialist intelligentsia could, in Merezhkovsky's view, constitute a danger.

Believing the intelligentsia to be too maximalistic to fit into any "golden dream" of mediocrity adorned by "tasteless golden Chinese decorations," Merezhkovsky exempts it from "positivism."[13] In fact, the Russian intelligentsia was deeply religious. To those who might doubt this, Merezhkovsky offered the Dostoevskian answer that Russian atheism, in its violent denial of God, was closer to religiosity than the lukewarm, noncommittal religiosity of the West. In Russia the danger of "becoming Chinese" came not so much from intelligentsia radicalism as from the lack of commitment to aesthetics found in several quarters. Aesthetic-cultural indifference and other forms of "boorishness," for example, marked the autocracy and its bureaucratic apparatus, parading the "Chinese wall of the table of ranks" that separated the Russian people from the intelligentsia.[14] Another group was the unreformed church, which was so eager to give its "due to Caesar."[15] And then there were certain anarchic sectors among those "below," such as tramps and hooligans (*босячество*) and also the fanatic, reactionary vigilante groups of the "black hundreds."[16] These small groups threatened the nation and the people, the living church and the spiritually creative intelligentsia with their "Asian boorishness" and nihilism so clearly manifested by the events of 1905. In fact, the danger from these groups was not negligible. "We still have white faces," Merezhkovsky warns his countrymen, but beneath "our white skin there no longer flows the previous thick, red, Aryan blood" of yore, but an increasingly thin, "yellow" blood — the blood of boorish *khamstvo*.[17]

Merezhkovsky's article was a response to another reaction to the 1905 revolution expressed in Valerii Briusov's (1873–1924) well-known poem "The Coming Huns" ("Griadushchie gunny," 1905).[18] Viewing history as a recurring pattern of destruction and creation, Briusov welcomed — not the "stagnant" Chinese — but the barbaric and dynamic Huns, clearly implying that the latter were stand-ins for the Russian revolutionary masses. One of the first Russian poets to introduce the motif of justified "social retribution,"[19] Briusov deals not with the distant historical past of migratory barbarians but with the future invasion of the Russian state by its revolutionary masses and the destruction of the elite's material culture: the defilement of its cathedrals, the ransacking of its palaces the bonfires of books. Nor does he flinch at the prospect; he accepts the destruction of his own social class and its old and tired civilization

as a guarantee of cultural revitalization (an injection of "flaming blood" into a "decrepit body," stanza 2).[20] It is inevitable in any shift of historical and cultural paradigms, he implies. Anticipating that not much, if anything, of his own culture will survive, he yet believes culture itself will be reborn and thrive again — in new forms. In fact, the poem intimates that the "Huns" may well produce a superior culture.[21] Preserving the past too well may even hamper the future. As the epigraph to the poem — "Trample down their paradise, Attila" ("Топчи их рай, Аттила"), taken from Viacheslav Ivanov's "The Nomads of Beauty" ("Kochevniki Krasoty," 1904) — makes plain, Briusov's poem was not the first to welcome the barbarians as a rejuvenating cultural force.[22] Ivanov, as well as Konstantin Balmont and other symbolists, identify "the carriers of stagnation" (read: the bourgeois establishment) as the real enemies of culture, while seeing the "destroyers" of culture as a cultural force, probably inspired by Bakunin who saw creative potential in destruction. In their view, beauty and the folk, artists and revolutionaries, poets and the populace always find themselves on the same side of historical barricades, at least eventually. Even though the barbarians initially destroy culture, they — by erasing the past — at the same time lay the foundations for a rebirth of culture. This pattern of thought will remain something of a symbolist dogma, at least in its "Scythian," populist-messianic, pro-revolutionary branch and phase (about which, more below). In Blok's *The Twelve* ("Dvenadtsat'," 1918) Christ blesses revolutionary destruction since it is the beginning of a cultural rebirth, and Russia's crucifixion in revolutionary terror is the pledge of her resurrection in Belyi's *Christ is Risen* ("Khristos Voskres," 1918). Artists in touch with the "rhythm" of history know that culture per se can never be destroyed.[23]

The texts discussed so far show that symbolist discourse posits a negative, insidious and "decrepit" Far East, reduplicated by a stagnant and complacent Far West, which is living out the last phases of its long cultural heritage. Far East and Far West compose the frame for a vital and promising "Slavic East" represented by the uncouth and "dark," but vital, people of Russia. There is a yellow and a black East, so to speak, the former spelling decline and death, the latter potential and life, constituting the soil out of which a new culture will grow. In Alexander Blok's mythology of the East, there is a clear-cut distinction between the Far East that once had invaded Russia and then infiltrated its cultural institutions in the bourgeois, bureaucratic and monarchic sectors of society and another, contemporary vital, inner Asia, consisting of the real Russia of the people (the *narod*). Like Merezhkovsky, Blok feared that "China already was amongst us" and that "bright red Aryan blood was turning into yellow liquid." This thinning of the blood was so prevalent, in fact, that in regard to the West, the actual "seizure of Europe" by "the dexterous Japanese doll" would be a purely formal confirmation of far worse inner corruption.[24] At the

same time, as we shall see in greater detail below, Blok also believed in the vitality of the Russian people, who were "of Scythian descent" and resembled Asian nomads in their restless energy.[25] Thus, symbolist discourse develops a dichotomy between an evil and insidious Far East that has already infiltrated the West and, to some extent, threatens Russia, and a positive interior East that is barbaric, primitive and healthy, and with whose help decrepit Asia may yet be overcome. In other words, the "Asia of the People" would be called upon by history to topple the "Asia of the Imperial Establishment," the legacy that oriental despots left to Russia. Russia was a land where "there still was a struggle between vital forces and lethal principles," whereas the "bourgeois mindset had already won its decisive victory in Europe." It was in Russia that "the fundamental tendencies of the historical world process had united," and it was there, Andrei Belyi believed, that a solution eventually would be found.[26]

Andrei Bely's vision of the East is too complex and his use of Eastern motifs too frequent to be dealt with here in any detail. In this article the author of the novels *The Silver Dove* ("Серебряный голубь," 1909) and *Petersburg* ("Петербург," 1913–14 / 1922) is only briefly presented as a symbolist who evolved from a Merezhkovskian position of fear of the fatal legacy of the Far East, reduplicated by its twin, the Far West, to a Blokian emphasis on the full-blooded East that was Scythian Russia. The two novels just mentioned establish an essential sameness between the dying civilization of the (Far) West and the (Far) East, however opposed these civilizations may appear to be on the surface. They vie for spiritual power within Russia but are equally incapable of constructive leadership. The aristocratic family Todrabe-Graaben in *The Silver Dove* together with its funereal name (alluding to death and grave) obviously represents the extreme West, and the Western civilization they represent faces no future but the grave. The powerful family of the Ableukhovs in *Petersburg*, on the surface, seems entirely Europeanized, but it proves to have Asian ancestors, and their name derives from the Mongol Ab-lai Ukh.[27] Heirs to a Far Eastern heritage, which infiltrated Russia after the Mongol invasion and yoke, this family is as doomed as its Germanic counterpart. The Revolution of 1905, ushered in by the events of 1904 (the Russo-Japanese War), fatally undermines the position of power the Ableukhovs have within the Russian autocratic bureaucracy, as another Asia — the people's — comes to the fore. Regardless of geographical origins, then, — Germany or Mongolia, Europe or the Far East — there is the same lack of cultural dynamism, and the blood of both the Ableukhovs and the Todrabe-Graabens, it may be safely assumed, is equally "yellow" and "thin." It does not take a bomb to kill Senator Ableukhov (the attempt on his life fails) — he is already on the brink of the grave when the novel begins and he has but to fall into it (as the Old World representatives fall into their "snow graves" in Blok's *The Twelve*).

Like Merezhkovsky, Bely feared that some sectors of the Russian nation might be infected by the Eastern "disease" of boorishness. At this stage of his ideological development, Belyi does not share the "Scythian" faith in the potential of the people. At least, he does not have faith in the fanatical sectarians presented in his *Silver Dove* nor in the Western nihilist revolutionaries found in his *Petersburg*. Daryalsky in *The Silver Dove* and Nikolai Ableukhov in *Petersburg* have become disillusioned with the dying civilizations of the West and seek cultural renewal and dynamism in the "Asian" sector of its people — the sectarians' simple folk and the champions of the folk, the revolutionaries — but they both find the same emptiness. The only hope for escaping West and East seems to rest with those who are neither Westerners nor Asians but people able both to embrace and transcend cultural extremes. The half-German, half-Russian mystic Schmidt in *The Silver Dove* and the reformed son of Senator Ableukhov, Nikolai Ableukhov, in *Petersburg* — a Russian with Mongol ancestors who has absorbed Western abstract philosophy but seeks faith — both arrive at a synthesis of East and West that promises salvation from the double bind of Asian and Western philistinism. Synthesis here is not to be equated with compromise or other forms of Far Eastern and/or Far Western mediocrity, but is perhaps related to the allegedly "Russian" idea of reconciling opposites in the spirit of a religious universality. Certainly Bely envisioned a positive resolution to the West-East conflict to which he devoted his first novels. In a planned third part that would complete the West-East trilogy and that would offer "nothing but 'yes'" to the two previous negations, "genuine life" was to be shown.[28] If the first part of the trilogy (*The Silver Dove*) presented a pure "East without the West" and the second part (*Petersburg*) "the West in Russia," then the envisioned third part was to show "the East in the West, or the West in the East and the birth of the Christian Impulse in the soul."[29] A new intelligentsia, conscious of its intellectual European roots, but also committed to Orthodox spiritual values, could then offer a solution to the "Sinefication" of Europe and European Russia (and perchance Asia itself). From these positions that resemble Merezhkovsky's, Bely would move toward the "Scythianism" of Ivanov-Razumnik and his socialist-revolutionary group "The Scythians" during the years 1918–1921.

Several Russian symbolists, notably Blok and Bely, joined the maximalist Scythians, whose ideological leader was the intelligentsia historian and literary critic Ivanov-Razumnik (Razumnik V. Ivanov, 1878–1946). It was in 1905 that Russian symbolism and Russian populist socialism established mutual contact. They discovered in the aftermath of the revolution that symbolism was "socially illiterate" and populism "aesthetically illiterate." Between 1905 and 1917 the two groups therefore worked on trying "to understand each other," as Ivanov-Razumnik put it.[30] The result of this rapprochement was that the "Scythians"

came to include Blok and Bely.[31] As a close friendship developed between Ivanov-Razumnik and Bely,[32] the former successfully made the latter ever more a part of the Scythian ethos, convincing him to retain faith in the creativity of the Russian people against all current evidence. When Bely admitted to being depressed because of the excesses of revolutionary destruction in 1917, Ivanov-Razumnik wrote to him, "For the first time our people steps onto the world arena of history [...] in its forward movement it sweeps away art, science, everything. It has no time for these things. Does this mean that art itself ceases to exist, though?"[33] And Bely responded by stating that he felt encouraged and was convinced that Ivanov-Razumnik was right. He now believed that "all European peoples would be drawn into the maelstrom [of revolution]" and that in Russia, the "Voice, not of parties, but of the Popular Soul" would be heard.[34] He now believed that Russia was bearing "the child" (the Messiah, the Revolution), or at least that the child "was moving in the womb."[35] He was also convinced that, should the "child die," the world once again would face "Neo-China, or Neo-Atlantis."[36] The specter of Chinese "philistinism," reduplicated in Western positivism (Neo-Atlantis), thus was still alive in Bely's thought during the heyday of his faith in the Scythian celebration of the barbaric (inner-Asiatic) Russian people that Ivanov-Razumnik "permitted" to destroy art, albeit "with a heavy heart."[37]

Alexander Blok's reaction to the events of 1904/05 manifested itself in an intense interest in Russia's historical encounters with Asia, especially the Kulikovo battle in 1380, when Prince Dmitrii Donskoy defeated the Tatars. In 1909 he published a controversial article entitled "The People and the Intelligentsia" ("Narod i intelligentsia") in which he strongly relies on the imagery of this historical battle. Apparently departing from all his colleagues in the debate on Asiatic aspects of Russian culture, he attributes Asian features to the intelligentsia and actually identifies them with the Tatar invaders of yore. The *intelligenty* had become so ideologically split and unstable, as well as verbose, he argued, that Russian cities seemed to be covered by the constant "din" (*gul*) of endless debates, a "din" reminiscent of the noise heard above the Tatar camp on the eve of the Kulikovo battle. In a letter to Konstantin Stanislavsky written at the same time, Blok also spoke of the "accursed 'Tatar yoke' of doubts, contradictions and despair" emanating from the intelligentsia.[38] He soon followed up on this article with his famous lyrical cycle *On Kulikovo Field* ("Na Pole Kulikovom," published in 1909). Dealing with the historical battle of Kulikovo, the cycle naturally speaks of the Tatar camp. Is this camp here once again symbolically linked to the Russian intelligentsia — as seems to be the case in Blok's article?

On Kulikovo Field is a small cycle of five poems within the collection entitled *The Homeland* ("Родина," 1909). Evoking a variety of medieval texts,[39] the

cycle deals with Russia's victory over its Mongol-Tatar invaders, while also prophesying that new battles are yet to come. The cycle begins with an evocation of eternal Russia (*Rus'*, feminine gender) and her historical destiny (poem 1); then we overhear a conversation between two warriors from the Russian camp of Dmitrii Donskoy (poem 2). They speak of their readiness to sacrifice themselves for the liberation of Russia. The middle of the cycle (poem 3) introduces the miraculous descent of the Mother of God (or perhaps the Lady Beautiful of Blok's early verse, or the feminine essence of the homeland), who blesses the Russian warriors from poem 2, leaving the imprint of her radiant form on the shield of one. In the fourth poem the poetic persona is suspended between the past and the future and his location is not fixed. Registering both "the trumpet-like battle-cries of the Tatars" ("И трубные крики татар"), i.e., the sounds of the past battle of Kulikovo, as well as "the wide silent conflagration" ("широкий и тихий пожар") of future battles, he is perhaps the eternal voice of his nation, whose task it is to verbalize Russia's entire history and destiny.[40] The fifth and last poem is the only one to be introduced by an epigraph; it is taken from from Vladimir Solovev's poem "The Dragon. To Sigfried" ("Drakon. Zigfridu"), which praises Kaiser Wilhelm II's contribution to the quelling of the Chinese Boxer Rebellion (in 1898–1900). It focuses on a future battle that is still hidden behind a "stern cloud" ("словно облаком суровым"), but imminent and terrifying. Predicting the final Kulikovo battle that presumably will be the last and decisive one, Blok's poet makes plain that it will not take place on a limited space like the Kulikovo field. Nor is the peripheral space of the Far East to be involved as it was in the Russo-Japanese War; the purely urban space of the 1905 Revolution is not evoked either. Instead, the battlefield envisioned encompasses all of Russia ("Я вижу над *Русью* далече,"[41] poem 4). The future encounter, furthermore, will not be between Russia and external enemies (as in the Kulikovo battle, or the Russo-Japanese War), but between two Russian camps (as in 1905). At least no contemporary foreign enemy is in any way identified in this future and grander replay of 1380 (and 1904/05). Although there was a Tatar movement of cultural revival and political autonomy at the turn of the century, Blok is clearly not apprehensive of any ethnic minorities in Russia.[42] In view of the principle of recurrence manifest in the cycle, and Blok's own statement that the Kulikovo battle belonged to those "symbolic events that were destined to return,"[43] it is clear that, like Briusov's *The Coming Huns*, Blok's cycle clothes its topicality in the garb of historical parallels. Unlike Briusov, who identified the Russian revolutionary masses with the "coming Huns," Blok apparently singles out the intelligentsia for "Asian-hood," at least if the article "The People and the Intelligentsia" offers a direct comment on the cycle, something which has often been assumed to be the case. But does the article predetermine the imagery and symbolism of the cycle? What exactly does it say?

Its main point, well known from Slavophile discourse, and Dostoevsky's and populist versions of it (*pochvennichestvo, narodnichestvo*), is that the Russian people (*narod*) and the Russian intelligentsia have become alienated from each other. In the wake of Peter the Great's westernizing reforms, the *narod* and *intelligenty* formed two increasingly hostile camps with as little potential for mutual understanding as two alien and hostile races. Blok also states his faith in the enormous potential of the people (*narod*), while being critical of the intelligentsia for engaging in futile verbal arguments as "noisy" as the din over the Tatar camp in 1380. Using this evidence, many critics drew the conclusion that the Tatar enemy in the poetic cycle represented the doomed Russian intelligentsia. The future victors of the new Kulikovo battle (the Revolution), therefore, were the simple Russian people. The leading Blok scholar of Soviet times, Vladimir Orlov, for example, stated that "Dmitrii Donskoy's camp of warriors offers a poetic image of the Russian people" as it prepares itself for the revolutionary battle, while Khan Mamai's Tatar camp may be seen as an "analogue to the intelligentsia that has torn itself away from the people, immersing itself into a lifeless 'Apollonian' dream."[44] Another Soviet critic was certain that "all the sympathies of the poet were on the side of the people" and that they therefore were the ones found "in the camp of Dmitrii Donskoy."[45] Yet another assumed that Blok was alarmed at the prospect that "the consciousness of the masses might include the intelligentsia in that which should be destroyed and annihilated," thus also equating this group with the Tatars of the cycle.[46] A Western Blok critic writing in the 1970s likewise believed that the "clamorous and disorderly camp of the Tatars" represents the talkative Russian intelligentsia, whereas the "great mass of the Russian people" is found in "the broodingly silent camp of Dmitrij Donskoj."[47]

The equation of the intelligentsia with Tatars and the popular masses with the Russian camp is not convincing artistically, and not all critics are comfortable with this symbolism even while elucidating it. For example, one such critic thinks that Blok is "willful" when he identifies the intelligentsia with "Tatar rabble" (*tatarva*).[48] The commentary to the new scholarly edition of Blok's *Collected Works* now being published distances itself from these clear-cut identifications, stating that one should not "directly and concretely" identify the Tatar camp with the Russian intelligentsia; there is rather an appeal to both camps to "counter and oppose destructive elements together."[49] The commentator rightly points to the ambiguity and openness of the Asian imagery of the cycle while also emphasizing that the Tatars should not be seen in ethnographic-national terms, but as a historiosophic and ethical-psychological category. While agreeing with these views, I also intend to specify what, specifically, is "Tatar" in the cycle. Believing that both "Asias" are involved, I see the distinction between the "foreign" and the "inner Asia" as essential to

the full understanding of the cycle. For one, this distinction brings in sectors of Russian society that have not been mentioned in previous discussions.

As already stated, equating the weak and minuscule Russian intelligentsia with Tatars as threatening as a "black cloud" ("тучей черной") is not convincing artistically. Could an *intelligent* really be imagined swinging "the steel of a khan's saber" ("ханской сабли сталь," poem 1), or the famous debating society *Religiozno-filosofskoe sobranie* (the Religious-Philosophical Society) resemble a Tatar horde, however mercilessly intellectual opponents may have cut each other off in hostile debates? Surely Blok did not intend to write a mock-heroic cycle of poems satirizing the intelligentsia. The imagery would make more sense if fierce Tatars were to be identified with the Tsarist establishment, specifically its powerful administrative and military apparatus. After all, it was "common knowledge" that Russia was led by an "oriental despot" (i.e., the Tsar) and it was his troops that had crushed the 1905 Revolution, as Tatars were wont to crush Russian uprisings before the "yoke" was broken at Kulikovo. In a letter to Stanislavsky, Blok wrote that no amount of "bayonets" raised against the 150 000 000 Russians would be able to avert the people's eventual victory. Nor would Peter Struve's vision of "Great Russia" help in any way against future rebellions and revolutions, presumably because a much greater (and bigger) Russia was moving against the old world of the tsarist establishment. Although wielding the tools of power, the Establishment would eventually be defeated by the people. In this context, it should be remembered that the collection of articles critical of the intelligentsia's "monomaniac" support of the people,[50] *Landmarks* ("Vekhi"), would soon be published (in March, 1909). This anthology of articles by Nikolai Berdiaev, Peter Struve, Semen Frank and others who had moved to the right included an essay by Mikhail Gershenzon containing the famous remark that the intelligentsia "must fear them [the people] and [...] must bless this government which alone, with its bayonets and prisons, still protects us [the intelligentsia] from the people's wrath."[51] Although published later than Blok's article and cycle were written, *Landmarks* summarized previous discussions, of which Blok clearly was aware, judging by his 1908 letter to Stanislavsky quoted above. Already before *Landmarks*, Blok certainly was convinced that "bayonets" were not the answer to the problem of popular discontent. The *intelligenty* who were joining the "Tatars" — i.e. those who still were in charge of the crumbling tsarist empire — were making a mistake. He was not going to thank the government for protecting him against the people's wrath, and he would maintain his "monomaniac" pro-people stance. The vast majority of the creative Russian intelligentsia, including many visual artists, thought like Blok. Their drawing and paintings of the 1905 events often presented police officers and Cossacks with drawn sabers, commanding bayoneted soldiers, ready to attack vast crowds. If dressed in different garb, these Cossacks could easily be

seen as fierce commanders of a Khan, ordering their mounted "hordes" to attack the "Russian people."[52] In fact, against the background of the events of 1905, as well as Blok's political poems from the 1905 cycle *The City* ("Gorod"), the lines from poem 1 in the Kulikovo-cycle — "In the mist of the steppe, the sacred banner will unfurl / And the steel of the Khan's saber glisten" ("В степном дыму блеснет святое знамя / И ханской сабли сталь") — could be interpreted as follows: "In the smoke of the street battles of 1905, the red flag unfurled and the gendarmes' steel sabers glistened, as we all witnessed just some time ago. In the final Kulikovo battle, however, these Tatar sabers of the Russian army will be overcome by the people fighting under the sacred banners of the Revolution." Thus, in my view, Blok did not see the creative intelligentsia as part of the Tatar camp, but identified it with the establishment and its military might (those in charge of sabers and bayonets), adding, perhaps, those among the intelligentsia who supported the doomed *ancien regime* and believed in its power to protect them.[53] Perhaps their debates, voicing fears of the future, might qualify as contributing to the "din" of the Tatar camp mentioned in Blok's article. It could be argued that the poet does not make enough of a distinction in the article between the ruling class and its "vociferous" and fearful supporters among the intelligentsia. In the poetic cycle, however, he does link the Tatars with powerful, despotic rulers (such as the Tatar Khan Mamai, poem 3), who are doomed to defeat by those they once conquered and still suppress. In short, the analogy "Tatar rulers of yore doomed to defeat in 1380" and "current oriental despots (of Western origins) doomed to defeat in the near future" seems to make sense. Once more, Alexander Herzen could have been a source of inspiration for Blok's attitudes to the "Western-Asiatic Tsar." His *Ends and Beginnings*, so frequently evoked by Merezhkovsky, presents Nicholas I and his policies as a mixture of a "German military figure and the petty, mean figure of a German bureaucrat, which in our realms long ago merged with broad Mongol cheekbones and the beastly, unrepentant cruelty of an Eastern slave and Byzantine eunuch."[54] To transfer this image from the first to the second Nicholas was not a difficult task. Such a transfer was made in Balmont's poem "The Little Sultan" ("Malen'kii sultan," 1902). Ostensibly describing the situation "in Turkey" where the ruler is a "stupid short sultan," the poem actually referred to the quelled student demonstration before Kazan' Cathedral in 1901 and to Russia's rather short ruler Nicholas II. Blok may have had this poem in mind when he prophesied the advent of new revolutions, since Balmont's poem created a sensation in its time and was remembered in 1905, when he enjoyed the reputation of being a flaming revolutionary, almost belonging to Maxim Gorky's camp. The Ottoman Empire, although part of the Far South rather than Far East, could easily be added to the paradigm of "decrepit Asia," just as its sultan could be added to the series of "despot, autocrat, and tyrant."

There are literary precedents for this type of imagery where the autocratic Establishment is presented in oriental terms. Ivan Turgenev's novel *On the Eve* ("Nakanune," 1859) and Nikolai Dobroliubov's response to that novel, his famous article "When Will the Real Day Come?" ("Kogda zhe pridet nastoiashchii den'?, 1860), may well be part of Blok's polygenetic Tatar imagery. For example, the cycle never deals with the actual battle of Kulikovo, but focuses on the "eve" of the event, when everything still was undecided in the "eternal struggle" ("вечный бой," poem 1) between the Russian people and their despotic rulers. Turgenev's novel deals with Russian revolutionary stirrings, at least according to Dobroliubov's notorious review-article, in spite of its ostensible focus on the Turkish-Bulgarian conflict. Thus it may well anticipate Blok's symbolism of Tatar-Russian clashes. Going beyond Turgenev's subtle hints, the radical critic Dobroliubov exhorted the Russian reading public not to worry about the Turks in Turkey and Bulgaria, but encourages the country's opposition to fight the "inner Turks" of the Russian Empire, the autocracy and its military might and administrative establishment.[55] Although Turgenev disapproved of this radical interpretation, his novel clearly can be read in such terms.

As already mentioned, Blok feared the Far East, which was conquering "Indo-European man" from inside, "yellowing his blood."[56] His Tatar camp in the Kulikovo cycle could therefore well symbolize the Mongol legacy of the Far East insofar as the Tatars, though being conquered in 1380, left behind the institution of the oriental despot and bureaucrats of the Ableukhov type. Blok's Tatars include the bourgeoisie, whom Blok hated with a "kind of physical revulsion."[57] They had established the "Chinese wall of the table of ranks" (Merezhkovsky); they, or their petty bourgeois variety, made up the "crowd on Nevsky Prospect," always swarming with faceless people seemingly asking the poet: "why are you so tense, why do you keep thinking, acting, creating something, why?"[58] These questions are typical of those who do not understand dreams and hopes, including the hope that Russia might yet rise to fulfill its historic mission of leading the world to a new cultural renaissance based on the potential of the people. To sum up: on the Tatar side in the current phase of the "eternal battle" between the forces of stagnation and creation, we find the tsarist establishment, apparently mighty and powerful thanks to its "bayonets," but backed only by the "dregs" of society, the "yellow" bourgeoisie, fearful *intelligenty* of the *Landmarks* type and perhaps also some elements of the *Lumpenproletariat*, or some other anarchic group.

The problem of identifying the Tatar camp, then, would seem to be solved, but the issue is complicated by the fact that the Tatar imagery of the cycle is not entirely negative. How, for example, should we interpret the lines "Our destined path has pierced our breasts like a Tatar arrow, / Like this emissary of ancient freedom and will" ("Наш путь — стрелой татарской древней воли /

Пронзил нам грудь," poem 1)? Should we interpret them in the negative sense of Sergei Bulgakov (one of the contributors to *Landmarks*), who considered the people "deeply poisoned [...] by the affliction of Tatar barbarism and the instincts of [its] nomadic conquerors"?[59] Blok's image of the Tatar arrow (unlike the Khan's saber) seems to be positive. It offers a teleological impetus that positively contrasts with the pointless movement of eternal recurrence. Having been pierced by a Tatar arrow here means having a longing for freedom (*volia*) and having the willpower (*volia*) to attain it, as well as being destined to do so. It would seem, then, that the Russians (of Dmitrii Donskoy's camp) have integrated the "wild freedom" of those nomadic Tatar hordes, which the Far Eastern invaders of yore picked up en route westwards and relied on to conquer Russian lands, and which have shared Russian space ever since. Possessing the "Western" capacity for giving meaning to history, the Russians transformed elemental Tatar strength into goal-directed action. Perhaps the goal is not yet entirely clear to them either. But the intense longing for a goal (*toska*), for a historical mission ("Our path lies across the steppe / In endless yearning lies our destiny"; "Наш путь — степной, наш путь — в тоске безбрежной," poem 1), seems to guarantee that a glorious task (*podvig*) will be found. The image of the "steppe mare" (степная кобылица) flying across the endless spaces (poem 1) points in the same direction. In fact, the steppe mare offers a both feminized and "Asianized" (nomadic) version of two other equestrian images of Russia and her people: Peter's "fiery steed" in Pushkin's *The Bronze Rider* (1833) and Gogol's swift troika flying across the wide expanses of endless Russia (at the end of Part I in *Dead Souls*, 1842),[60] both of them images of Russia's historical progress through space and time toward a marvelous, albeit yet un-divined, future. Blok's mysterious mare, as unstoppable as a Tatar arrow, is a harbinger of popular revolutions, it seems, and so are the herds of mares mentioned later. These mares sometimes emerge, only to disappear without a trace, and are currently (i.e., in post-1905 Russia) not to be seen at all (poem 4). Undoubtedly they will reemerge when the time is ripe for "trampling down the paradise" (Ivanov) of the bourgeoisie and all the other pillars of bourgeois society that prop up the fake status quo.

There seem, then, to be two kinds of Asianness in the cycle: a negative Far Eastern despotism, wielded by "inner Turks from the Far East with yellow blood" and emanating from "nocturnal and foreign darkness" ("мглы [...] ночной и зарубежной," poem 1), and a positive "Tatar" strength and vitality (удаль),[61] belonging to the Russian people (*narod*). If this is correct, the second category of the "full-blooded" East also includes the "relatives" of Balmont's and Ivanov's barbaric nomads who despise all that is stagnant, namely the creative artists. Proclaiming that "we will reach our goal in swift flight" (*домчимся*, poem 1), the poet clearly sees himself on the side of the "vigorous Tatars," or

rebellious Russian people, intent on casting off their yoke and becoming true Russians, free of despotism and other aspects of their negative Asian heritage. He is of course not one of them in regard to class, but belongs to the "princely army" ("княжеская рать," poem 3) of the (historical) Russian camp. In modern terms, he is a gentry-*intelligent*. Living by the chivalric code, he is the one to be graced with a vision of Her whose faithful knight he is. In fact, this paladin of the Lady Beautiful may only now — on the battlefield of social clashes — have found the true heroic feat (*podvig*) She once destined him for, wishing him to be worthy of Her. Carrying a sword and wearing a knight's armor, just as he does in his earlier poems from the chivalric cycle *The Lady Beautiful*, he is here, on the eve of battle, finally ready for the deed of valor that may demand the ultimate sacrifice. In short, the best of the Russian creative intelligentsia are in the camp of the rebellious Russian people, as their defenders, leaders and enlighteners. It is the creative artists who want to help their Russian people rid itself of its Asian barbarism while they themselves draw strength from its vital energies. They are the ones who identify with renewal and want to break the "Mongol-Tatar" yoke of stagnation, ideologically and physically, spiritually and materially. Perhaps the sector of the intelligentsia that unhesitatingly fights on the side of the Donskoi camp against the Mamai camp is the smaller one (in poem 2, the poet is alone with just one friend), but it exists. In fact, part of the intelligentsia would soon rally to the cause of the "Scythians" in Ivanov-Razumnik's literary group including Bely, who was once again close to Blok after several ideological and aesthetic partings of ways.

In a few years' time (in 1918) Blok would call the Russian people, which had just triumphed over its despots, "Scythians" and attribute Asian slant-eyes to it. Before turning to the eponymous poem *Skify*, however, let us examine another link in Blok's evolving vision of the Orient inside Russia. I have in mind the poem "New America" in *The Homeland*, where the Russian people is depicted in the positive imagery of a "dark treasure" and shown as "Orientals" who are overcoming their Eastern heritage.

A few introductory remarks are in order before discussing the text of the poem in detail. An important image found in "New America" is "coal," which, somewhat surprisingly, is given the redemptory function of an "underground Messiah." The reason for attributing coal such an exalted position may be the following: under certain conditions, such as immense pressure, coal may turn into diamonds, as Blok may have learnt from his famous chemist father-in-law Dmitrii Mendeleev (creator of the Periodic Table of Elements). "New America" is generally considered to have been inspired by Mendeleev's vision of Russia as an industrial rival of the New World.[62] Blok may also have remembered the philosopher Vladimir Solovev who had clothed his visions of nature's evolution toward ever-greater beauty and man's ultimate metamorphosis into a perfect

being in the imagery of coal transforming into diamond.[63] Coal was not beautiful, because it was impermeable to light, the philosopher stated in section I of his essay where he defined beauty. The diamond, though, possesses beauty in rich measure because of its ability to refract light.[64] Whatever the exact sources of Blok's imagery, he did believe that "coal may metamorphose into a diamond."[65] The coal in "New America" is the dark Russian people destined to become a diamond. It is true that Blok does not mention diamonds, focusing instead on the current "carbon phase" of the people. Even though he presents it in its current state, as a people no better than "black coal" ("Tatars"), he firmly believes that it will become a precious diamond in the future, when, with the help of a pro-revolutionary intelligentsia, receptiveness to enlightenment will develop. The Russian people, in other words, is a hidden treasure in the Slavophil and Neo-Slavophil traditions[66] — a Messiah who would emerge from the underground of debasement and servitude and rise to the light of the cultural renaissance it is bound to develop. So what are the conditions under which a dark, "black-boned," "Tatar" people may become a diamond nation destined to have a vital say in world history?[67] In this most Gorkian, even "socialist-realist," of all of Blok's poems, these conditions prove to be industrialization and labor on a grand scale. In the poet's mythology these conditions may well stand for the contemporary alchemistic *magnum opus*, one conducted on a scale grander than anything anyone had ever dreamed of before.

"New America" describes a journey through the Russian lands and through Russian history, through space and time. The poet begins his tour in the north, in a bleak pre-Petrine "Finnish" Russia ("убогая финская Русь," stanza 3) covered in snow and frightening in its endlessness and emptiness. This Russia recalls the one found in the prologue to Pushkin's *The Bronze Horseman*, where the water and marshes Peter gazes at fulfill the same function of creating an undifferentiated pre-creative space. The two landscapes also share the Finnish element, and the adjective "bleak" (*ubogii*) is used in both texts. The opening of Blok's poem functions as a prologue as well — a prologue to the creation of a "new America" evidently seen as a continuation of the creative act Peter performed when founding his capital.[68] His northwestern creation, the capital city of St. Petersburg on the empty marshes of the Finnish north, is to be complemented by a southeastern constructive enterprise of similar magnitude and impact.

From pre-Petrine and Finnish lands, the journey in time and space moves eastwards, into a Russia that was what the Russian autocracy wanted her to be: a "humble Rus'" of pious submission to God's and the Tsar's eternal laws, a Russia whose unofficial capital still was the Moscow of "forty times forty [churches]." This Russia is, historically, the Muscovite Tsardom of women's

quarters and absolute patriarchal authority, of Ivan the Terrible and other oriental-Byzantine despots. This Russia is forced to behave like an old and subservient woman, although she is young and has a will and mind of her own. It is a Russia that still exists, but she no longer wants to be either servile or pious. Using prayer chants, church bells, crosses and incense as a cautious disguise, she "pretends to be an old and pious woman" (Там прикинешься ты богомольной, / Там старушкой прикинешься ты," stanza 4), but the face beneath her "Muscovite headscarf" is neither "aged nor ascetic" (Нет, не старческий лик и не постный / Под московским платочком цветным!, stanza 5). Real Russia is not humble and submissive, but young and longing to be unfaithful to her Tsar-spouse. She wants to marry another suitor, as the poem makes plain, using some of the parameters of the pani-Katerina myth discussed in the next chapter.

The next stage of the journey brings us not only eastwards but also southwards — into those very steppes where the Kulikovo battle and other important battles with eastern invaders once were fought. The land is the same, yet not the same (stanza 13). Beneath the mask of "Asian immobility," Russia's true face is beginning to emerge. As imposed stagnation is yielding to dynamic movement, the "smell of burning," the sound of "whistles" and the sight of a conflagration in the sky are replacing the smell of incense and the sound of chants and bells. So drastic is the change from (fake and imposed) stillness to intense activity that the poet wonders if all this unrest heralds yet another nomadic invasion of Russia:

Иль опять это — стан половецкий	Is this again a camp of Polovtsian warriors
И татарская буйная крепь?	And a fierce Tatar stronghold?
Не пожаром ли фески турецкой	Could it be that the fire of the Turkish fez
Забуянила дикая степь?	Has set the wild steppe astir?[69]

The answer to these queries is "no" — this is not another Tatar assault on Russia, nor is it a Polovtsian or Turkish act of aggression. It is Russian industrialization that is wreaking the changes, and the agent of change is the Russian working people:

Там чернеют фабричные трубы,	Here factory chimneys *loom black* against the sky,
Там заводские стонут гудки.	Here factory whistles resound. [70]

The chimneys that *loom black* (my italics) against a flaming sky (the fiery Turkish fez) seem to be in direct contact with equally black, but deeper layers of the landscape, namely the subterranean coal deposits that on the symbolic level represent the workers-saviors. Now black with soot and coal dust, physically uncouth and primitive, as well as spiritually dark, the workers are nevertheless the saviors of Russia and perchance the Messiah of the world:

Черный уголь — подземный мессия,	*Black coal* is our underground messiah,
Черный уголь — здесь царь и жених	*Black coal* is here tsar and bridegroom[71]

Surely it is not only the "black coal" that is Russia's "tsar and bridegroom," but also those who bring it to the surface. The poet himself stated as much in a later diary entry (from December 1915), in which he brought together the "as yet barely explored strength of the people" and "subterranean riches."[72] Almost indistinguishable from the earth and its mineral deposits, these grimy people are learning to transform the raw material into energy. Coal miners and factory workers — the "Tatars" of the poet's day — are the noble bridegroom for whom Russia is waiting. As they transform the environment, they change their own uncouth substance into a nobler one. No wonder that Russia, the "bride" (невеста, stanza 14), is rejecting her former suitor, the despotic Tsar, making the coming revolution her wedding date with the working people. This marriage, unlike the previous one to the Tsar, will be based on mutual love. In stanza 10 the poet assures us that no "fair granddaughter of the Varangians" ("прекрасная внучка варяга") is bemoaning her unhappy lot as a captive of wild Polovtsians. In other words, Russia will not be carried off into captivity by wild hordes but find the passionate fulfillment of her destiny in her true marriage to the people.

Thus, the workers presented in "New America" are not Briusov's wild Huns, or if they are, they will not remain so for long. They already resemble Gorky's creative laborers who, in the process of making wealth for Russia, also are transforming themselves into something higher on the ladder of cultural evolution. A transformation is taking place that is making an "Asiatic" elemental people into disciplined Russian workers, into a true "princely army" (княжеская рать, poem 3 of the Kulikovo cycle) that will transcend any elite of the past. As Velimir Khlebnikov would point out later in his poem "Ladomir," all creators (***t****voriane*) surpass princes (***d****voriane*). The time has come, the poem states, not to despise the people as an Asiatic threat to European Russia, but to welcome it as the Messiah of its nation and the world. With the help of the working people, Russia will become a nation that will show an always critical Europe that Russia is not "just another Asian country," but one that has all the potential for transcending both Europe and America, beating both at their own game of industrial progress while adding something beyond mere technological accomplishments. Blok stressed that the title "Novaia Amerika" did not refer to Russia as a copycat America, but that it implied a totally new world, such as had not yet been seen in either East or West.

When the Kulikovo battle did reoccur in the form of October 1917, Blok accepted this event as inevitable and justified, however severe it might have been on his own class and himself personally. Like Briusov in 1905, he greeted

those who had the potential to destroy him with a "welcoming hymn": *The Twelve* ("Dvenadtsat'," 1918). Believing that the Messiah had been born in the pangs of the Revolution, he admonished the intelligentsia more intensely than ever to commit themselves to the cause of the people. Himself part of the "Scythian" camp, confirmed in *The Twelve* his vision of the people as "coal destined to become a jewel" under the pressure of historical events, when showing a pearl-studded Christ leading a dark people out of the night and the earth's depths to "a bright future" of endless potential. In other words, Christ is the diamond they eventually will become in this mystery of revolutionary transformation. Blok's last statement on this issue is his poem "The Scythians."

"The Scythians" ("Skify," 1918), a poem written at the time of the peace negotiations at Brest-Litovsk, which inflicted heavy territorial losses on Russia, warns Europe that an Asian invasion of its lands is imminent if Russian peace proposals are not heeded. Which of the two Asias, Blok asks, will be casting its eyes on the West and threaten it: the Far East, as Solovev had prophesied, or the Russian East that Western Europeans liked to call "Asian" in a derogatory sense? It is, as the epigraph from Solovev's poem "Pan-Mongolizm" (1894) implies, the Far East of Solovev's apocalyptic visions. The same lines had formed the epigraph to Solovev's own apocalyptic *Three Conversations*, or, more specifically, its last section, "a Short Tale of the Anti-Christ" (1900). The East depicted in Blok's "The Scythians" is also the Far East of Merezhkovsky's essay and Blok's own fears of the "yellow peril." Russia is neither part of that threat to Europe, nor is it itself threatened by it. Russia is Asian enough not to fear the Far Eastern threat and also Asian enough to instill fear in a West that cannot see the difference between Russia and the "real" Asia. Therefore, the Russian Scythians-Bolsheviks will be passive bystanders in the future invasion of the West by the Far East. They will simply step aside and watch "how the lethal battle is seething" ("мы поглядим, как смертный бой кипит," stanza 17). Russia will refuse its traditional "shielding" of Europe from "real" Asia and allow Europe to be destroyed by the Far East. If Russia is not to be identified with "real" Asia, however, what function does the emphatic identification of Russians with Asians fulfill? Why is the poet so keen on stating, "Yes, we are Asians" ("Да, азиаты — мы," stanza 1), even claiming twice that "slit eyes" are typical of Russians (stanzas 1, 17)?

One reason is undoubtedly that the poet ironically quotes the European assessment of his "Scythian" people as "Asian," even though he himself does not accept this label. Another reason is that concrete ethnic characteristics are irrelevant to the poet's symbol-laden message to the West. Thus, in his diary entry for January 11, 1918, the poet gives vent to the same anger towards the West as in his poem, promising that Russia would "open wide the gates to the East," if peace negotiations failed. He adds, "We looked at you with the eyes of Aryans, while you had a human face. Now that you have shown us your snout we

look at you with our *slanted*, cunning, swift glance; we *will pretend to be Asians* and the East will flood you."[73] Yet another reason for the Asiatic eyes is that, in some sense, the Russians *are* Asians at this particular point in time of their history. The poet speaks for a Russia and a revolution that brought to the surface the "black coal" of the working people. They even have "black blood" (stanza 7), not the "red" blood that "Aryans" claim for themselves. The poet thus emphasizes the distance that separates proletarian-Scythian Russia from Europe, while also distinguishing Russians from the "yellow-blooded" Asians of the Far East. The historical Scythians, as Bely once explained (in 1921), "were situated between the Hellenes in the West and the barbarians in the East," and "contemporary Russia was [also] situated between West and East."[74] Blok emphasizes the same neither-nor status of the Russians, while also identifying with their "blood" on the personal level. He had, in his cycle *Black Blood* ("Chernaia krov'," 1914), spoken of his own persona as having blood of that color. As in the Kulikovo battle, the poet and the people are, or will be, in the same camp and they share a common destiny, however different their situation. The poet's blood may be "black" for reasons different from those making his people have black blood, but their shared "blood group" points to one common feature: both are in need of redemption and capable of it. Like his people, the poet is a carrier of "filth" (in his case, "decadence"), but his innermost essence, like that of his people, is pure like a child's. The fact that the poet, contrary to appearances, is a "child of goodness and light" ("дитя добра и света") is something that links him to his apparently brutal, but essentially good and child-like, people.[75]

Scythian black blood is noble blood because of its compatibility with a broad range of Aryan blood. Its hallmark is the universality that Dostoevsky discerned in the receptive Russian people in his famous 1880 "Pushkin speech." The Russian-Scythian masses have the potential for embracing all the cultures of Europe. European nations have each their own clearly defined cultural competence, since they lack the spiritual and physical strength to embrace totality. In contrast, the spiritual potential of those who have brought the entire world the promise of "a feast in the name of fraternal labor and peace" ("На братский путь труда и мира," "The Scythians," stanza 19) is matched by their physical vitality. The Scythians are not spent and tired as the Europeans; therefore they can offer them a blood transfusion, as it were, adding thickness and potency to their thinning and yellowing blood. Blok writes in his diary that whatever Europe may do in response to the October Revolution, it will be unable to withstand the "Russian infection," which is an infection of humanity with "health."[76] The Scythian Russians are so strong in fact that, almost unintentionally, they "break the heavy backbones" of fiery steeds ("Ломать коням тяжелые крестцы," stanza 12). It is for them that the poet raises his oxymoronic "barbarian lyre" ("варварская лира," stanza 19), shouldering the

role of their bard, who in due course will acquaint them with the European cultural legacy — one that will become their inheritance, helping the black coal of nations to metamorphose into the diamond of universal mankind. If there is any creative potential left in Europe at all, if not all of Europe has been "sinefied" beyond redemption, this surviving remnant is welcome to join the Scythian bards in their immense task of creating a genuine world culture. Ultimately, the poet is offering Europe salvation from its own mediocrity and sterility, both the Europe that is geographically west of Russia and the European sector inside the Russian intelligentsia, which so far has identified itself with Europe and the West, despising its own land as Asiatic (while supporting an oriental despot). It is interesting to note that Blok, unlike Briusov (in 1905–1906), seems to have hoped that those members of the cultural elite most attuned to the rhythm of history would come to an understanding with the people. This was perhaps not so much a hope for the intelligentsia's survival as much as a suggestion to the new rulers to rely on "specialists" for dealing with Europe, so that the Old World would not make the Russian people its "dupe" once more.

As to the sources of the symbolism and mythologies discussed above, Herzen's ideas have already emerged as influential for Merezhkovsky's vision of the "Chinese West." Herzen's notions of the stagnant East (soon to be reduplicated by the smug West) were not, however, exceptional for his time; they go back to well-established "facts" already formulated by Hegel. The German philosopher had stated that China and India (actually more or less all of Asia) were "fundamentally static societies," and that although they had begun "human history," they were no longer a real part of it "because they do not change in any important particulars."[77] This Hegelian vision of an East devoid of the dynamic of dialectics was widely seen as formulating self-evident truths about the Far East, which was incapable of a linear progressive history. "Becoming Chinese" was widely understood to mean a loss of vitality. Herzen's authority on "Sinefaction," John Stuart Mill, whom he quotes in his *Ends and Beginnings*, was one among many who saw England as becoming another China. Dostoevsky, too, saw powerful and industrialized England heading in that direction. Stating in his *Winter Notes on Summer Impressions* (1863) that England's working masses were becoming as passive as the Chinese, Dostoevsky saw England yielding to *kitaishchina*.[78] The commentary to *Winter Notes* states that such terms as "Chinesefication" were widely accepted at the time as denoting the passivity of the masses, political reaction and stagnation.[79]

Another name that cropped up in the above discussion is that of Vladimir Solovev. His fear of an Eastern threat in the form of "Pan-Mongolism" is generally assumed to have impacted the symbolists' alarmed vision of the Far East.[80] The philosopher added a new dimension to the traditional view of the Far East as a stagnant and decrepit realm: its military threat to Russia and the

West, a threat that would repeat — now that Japan was mastering new technologies — the traditional nomadic incursions of the past. Spiritually already "sinefied," Europe would collapse without resistance, with England and France even welcoming the Far Eastern conquest. Half a century of the Pan-Mongol Yoke would follow before "the European United States" would wake up and make a concerted effort to break away from this yoke. Clearly the "invading Far East," now supplied with modern weapons, was an important Solovevian legacy to symbolist discourse.

The younger symbolists Blok and Bely accepted Solovev's view of the Far East as a cultural and military peril, but complemented it with a positive myth of Russia as a kind of dynamic Asia. With the help of Herzen, they revitalized Slavophil mythologies of a "young" Russia punishing the "decrepit" West by refusing it protection against an equally decrepit, yet apparently powerful, Far East. To refer to Herzen's *Ends and Beginnings* once more, it states that contemporary Russians resemble the Germanic barbarians facing Rome. As these "forest animals" full of "untapped strength" had faced an erudite and cultured, but decrepit, world power, so now the "young" Russians were facing an old Europe.[81] And as the Germanic barbarians of yore eventually had created a new culture in the form of Humanism and Renaissance art on the ruins of Rome, so the triumph of the new barbarians (the revolutionary Russian people) would lead to the creation of a Russian renaissance vastly superior to anything as yet conceived. Herzen's hopes for his young Russia, combined with Dostoevsky's prophecies of the role Russia was destined to play as the reconciler of all European cultures, are two sources that safely may be seen as having inspired Blok's "The Scythians."

Dostoevsky's impact on Blok's thinking is quite specific, as is illustrated by the poem "New America." In the last issue of his serially published *Diary of a Writer* ("Dnevnik pisatelia") in 1881, Dostoevsky reused the motif of the younger brother who triumphs over his older siblings and applied it to contemporary history, namely to Russia's position vis-à-vis Europe.[82] He rejoiced in Russia's recent conquest of Turkmen territories because it was clear that Russians never would be accepted as a European nation by Western Europe, whereas in Asia they would pass for Europeans. The Europeans were possibly right in calling the Russians "Tatars," Dostoevsky conceded, since the Russians had "never ceased [to be Asians]." Their very copying of Europe, instead of developing their own culture, was an obvious sign of their "Asiatic" idleness ("we have become windbags and idlers").[83] The remedy for all this, Dostoevsky believed, lay in making Asia Russia's "America." A "push to Asia" would offer an outlet for aimless Russian minds and diminish Russian laziness. If they Europeanized Turkmen territories and industrialized Central Asia, Russians would themselves change, becoming more European while, presumably, not losing their own

cultural characteristics, such as their pan-humanism. Blok's "Novaia Amerika" is a poetic transposition of this diary entry while also anticipating Maxim Gorky's notion that labor on a vast scale would de-Asianize Russians. Gorky expressed this notion in his controversial article "Two Souls" ("Dve dushi," 1915) that dealt with the "Asian" and the "Russian" aspects of the Russian nation. Writing at different times and from different ideological positions, all three writers believe that the industrialization of Russia is a stepping-stone in the country's real historical mission, which is to transcend Asia and Europe by creating a unique new culture. Blok's "The Scythians" intimates as much, presenting the "Scythian Russians" as a new cultural race that will rule both Europe and the Far East, playing these two regions out against one another if necessary, making peace with Europe if possible, but controlling both in any case.

Is there a Russian Orientalism in Symbolism then? If Orientalism means making the Orient into the raw material for one's own cultural mythologies and national identity quests, there was a very pronounced Orientalism, or, more precisely a self-orientalization, in the Russian symbolist movement, especially among those who, creating their myths of Russians as Scythians, would create the "literary prologue" to the political Eurasian movement among the first wave émigrés. The specific feature of Russian Orientalism is the division of Asia into an old and stagnant component (China) that can only introduce superficial innovations (Japan) and that ultimately is but a another name for Europe and the Europeanized sector of Russia, and a young and vigorous Asia that is a legacy from Huns, Tatars, Polovtsians, and other historical nomad nations, but above all from the Scythians with their restless spirit, the energy source of creativity. Their spiritual descendants, the Russians, were called upon to combine vitality with refinement, creating a universal culture that would be the crowning achievement of history. In these dreams of transcending Russia's "oriental heritage," the addressee is clearly felt: it is Europe. Certainly Blok's "The Scythians" speaks only to the Europe outside and inside Russia (the intelligentsia). As has been stated in a different context, "all Russian discourse about Asia has rather little to do with Asia, and everything to do with Russia's awkward, often unrequited relationship with Europe."[84]

The "racial fantasies"[85] delineated above were shaped into fluid and ambivalent, if not confused, mythologies at the turn of the century. These seem to combine the "noble savage" myth, with the man of nature cast as Scythian nomad, with historiosophical myths of an essentially Slavophil-populist nature. The Revolutions of 1905 and 1917 added notions of purification through suffering, rendering the country worthy of the grand historical mission of salvaging the (European) world from the Far Eastern peril by transcending the inner Asian heritage found within Russia. Unfortunately, in this discourse, however artistically effective, other races and nations became but the clichéd

raw material of inflated mythmaking presented as higher truth. In this regard, Russian discourse is probably no better and no worse than the one maintained by Western European nations and their fatal myths of their Aryan origins.[86] It differs from Western discourse in its paradoxical combination of laying claim to being saviors of the world with marked self-stigmatization. Dreams of saving the world are linked to the notion of self-transcendence.

Notes

1 The edition quoted here used is Alexander Blok, *Polnoe sobranie sochinenii i pisem v 20-i tomakh*, Moscow 1997ff (*The Homeland*: vol. 3, p. 169–188, with commentary by Aleksandr Lavrov, p. 906–968); for works that have not yet appeared in this new scholarly edition, preceding editions are used as indicated.

2 The quotes are from Nathanael Knight's article "Grigor'ev in Orenburg, 1851–1862: Russian Orientalism in the Service of Empire," *Slavic Review* 59/2000, p. 74–100, here p. 77.

3 Cf. Adeeb Khalid, "Russian History and the Debate over Orientalism," *Kritika. Explorations in Russian and Eurasian History* 1/2000, p. 691–699, here p. 698.

4 For a concise survey of Russian attitudes towards Asia throughout its history, see Nicholas V. Riasanovsky, "Asia Through Russian Eyes," in: Wayne S. Vucinich (ed.), *Russia and Asia. Essays on the Influence of Russia on the Asian Peoples*, Stanford 1972, p. 3–29.

5 To mention but two of a whole string of works dealing with Russian southern orientalism as reflected in the works of Pushkin, Lermontov, Tolstoy and others, see Susan Layton, *Russian Literature and Empire, Conquest of the Caucasus from Pushkin to Tolstoy*, Cambridge 1994; Monika Greenleaf, *Pushkin and Romantic Fashion, Fragment, Elegy, Orient, Irony*, Stanford 1994.

6 A. Al'tshuler points out that the line "Вот срок настал" ("Lo, the time has come") in "The Scythians" directly continues the line "Теперь твой час настал. — Молись!" ("Now your time has come. — Pray!") in poem 5 of the Kulikovo cycle; see his article "Nenavidiashshaia liubov' (Zametki o 'Skifakh' A. Bloka)," "Voprosy literatury," 1972, No. 2, p. 68–78, here p. 74.

7 "Япония победила Россию. Китай победит Европу" ("Griadushchii kham," in: Dmitrii Merezhkovsky, "Bol'naia Rossiia. Izbrannoe," Leningrad 1991, p. 13–45, here p. 18).

8 "Вот где главная 'желтая опасность' — не извне, а внутри [...]" (ibid. p. 18).

9 This latter work is not specifically mentioned in the essay, but undoubtedly forms a subtext, however reinterpreted (cf. below note 74).

10 "Griadushchii kham," p. 15 (see note 7).

11 "Китайцы — совершенные желтолицые позитивисты; европейцы — пока еще несовершенные белолицые китайцы." (p. 17).

12 P. 16.

13 "Источник всякого мещанства — идиллическое благополучие, хотя бы и дурного вкуса, 'сон золотой,' хотя бы и сусального китайского золота" (p. 33).

14 "Первое, настоящее, — над нами, лицо самодержавия, мертвый позитивизм казенщины, китайская стена табели о рангах, отделяющая русский народ от русской интеллигенции [...]." (p. 43).

15 "Второе лицо, прошлое, — рядом с нами, лицо православия, воздающего Кесарю Божье [...]." (ibid.)

16 "Третье лицо, будущее, — под нами, лицо хамства, идущего снизу — хулиганства, босячества, черной сотни [...]." (ibid.).

17 "Лица у нас еще белые; но под белою кожей уже течет не прежняя густая, алая, арийская, а все более жидкая, 'желтая ' кровь, похожая на монгольскую сукровицу [...]." (p. 18).

18 For a detailed and insightful discussion of the genesis and evolution of this poem, cf. I. V. Koretskaia, "K istorii 'Griadushchikh gunnov' Briusova," in: Z. S. Papernyi and E. A. Polotskaia (ed.), "Dinamicheskaia poetika. Ot zamysla k voploshcheniiu," Moscow 1990, p. 177–191. In another highly informative article by the same author, Merezhkovsky's essay is discussed as a response to Briusov's poem; see I. V. Koretskaia, "'Griadushchii kham' D. S. Merezhkovskogo. Tekst i kontekst," in: Vsevolod A. Keldysh (ed.), "Dmitrii Merezhkovskii. Mysl' i slovo," Moscow 1999, p. 136–149.

19 Cf. Koretskaia, "K istorii 'Griadushchikh gunnov'" (cf. note 18), p. 178.

20 "На нас ордой опъянелой / Рухните с темных становий — / Оживить одряхлевшее тело / Волной пылающей крови." (Valerii Briusov, *Sobranie sochinenii v 7-i tomakh*, Moscow 1973, vol. 1, p. 433).

21 In his somewhat later story "The Last Martyrs" ("Poslednie muchenniki," 1906), Briusov makes the same historiosophic statements; these are here presented by a leader of the victorious revolutionary masses who tells the doomed elite that only those who no longer are able to create fear losing their cultural heritage. The masses are full of creative power however, and, hence, do not fear such losses. And what they eventually will accomplish will be superior to anything as yet even dreamed of.

22 Ivanov's nomad theme was inspired by Andre Gide's "Nomadism," and it was his wife Lidiia Zinov'eva-Annibal who drew his attention to it. For this information and an overview of the Scythian theme in symbolist poetry, see Koretskaia, "K istorii 'Griadushchikh gunnov'" (cf. note 18).

23 Both Blok and Bely strongly emphasized the musical-rhythmical patterns of history in which civilization marked the unmusical intervals between waves of rhythmic cultures saturated by "music." As Efim Kurganov puts it, "being a writer, according to Blok, did not so much mean writing books, as being able to listen to the subterranean din of time." ("По Блоку ведь быть писателем прежде всего означало не столько писать книги, сколько уметь вслушиваться в подземные гулы времени." — E. Kurganov, "Aleksandr Blok kak stoik," *Wiener Slawistischer Almanach* 42/1998, p. 53–73, here p. 56).

24 "Так и мы: позевываем над желтой опасностью, а *Китай уже среди нас*. Неудержимо и стремительно пурпуровая кровь арийцев становиться желтой

кровью. [...] Остается маленький последний акт: внешний захват Европы. [...] Ловкая куколка-японец положит дружелюбную крепкую ручку на плечо арийца [...]." (A. Blok, *Dnevnik,* ed. by A. L. Grishunin, Moscow 1989, p. 80. The entry is for November 14, 1911).

25 Blok most likely saw the Scythians as a tribe coming from the West, but mingling with Eastern nomads and therefore assuming a partly Asian appearance, at least in European eyes. Cf. the commentary to the poem, vol. 5, p. 477–478.

26 "Но если в Европе буржуазный мир уже победил окончательно, то в России еще борются начала новые с началами мертвыми, именно в ней соединились основные тенденции мирового исторического процесса." This quote is from N. Utekhin, "Predvozvestnik budushchego," introduction to Andrei Bely, *Serebrianyi golub'*, Moscow 1990, p. 12.

27 The theoretician of Scythianism Ivanov-Razumnik saw both Ableukhovs, father and son, as "carriers of the 'Mongol' idea" of "world-wide nihilism." "Оба они, Аблеуховы, потомки далекого монгольского предка, Аб-Лай-Ухова, — носители 'монгольской' идеи, а идея эта — мировой нигилизм [...]"; both have had their blood 'contaminated' by that of the "Ancient Dragon" ("Старинный Дракон"; see his "Pylaiushchii" in "Aleksandr Blok. Andrei Belyi," Petersburg 1919, repr. Letchworth 1971, p. 100).

28 Andrei Bely i Ivanov-Razumnik: "Perepiska," ed. by A. V. Lavrov and J. Malmstad, St. Petersburg 1998, p. 35, 43.

29 "[...] Восток в Западе или Запад в Востоке и рождение Христова Импульса в душе." (p. 57).

30 Quoted in Peter J. S. Duncan, "Ivanov-Razumnik and the Russian Revolution: From Scythianism to Suffocation," *Canadian Slavonic Papers* 21, 1, 1979, p. 19.

31 The peasant poets Kliuev and Esenin, the painter Petrov-Vodkin, and the theater director Meyerkhold were other members of the group.

32 A close relationship likewise developed between Ivanov-Razumnik and Blok somewhat later. 1918 was the year of their closest interaction. For the history of the Blok-Ivanov-Razumnik relationship, see Aleksandr Lavrov, "Blok i Ivanov-Razumnik," in: A. Lavrov (ed.), *Etiudy o Bloke*, St. Petersburg 2000, p. 80–135.

33 "На арену мира впервые выходит народ [...] он смывает с лица страны искусство, науку, все. Ему не до того. Но разве искусство перестает жить?" (*Perepiska* [see note 28], p.103).

34 "[...] завертяться втянутые в нашу воронку Мальстрема все народы Европы [...]." — "внутри России мы услышим Голос — не партий, а Самой Народной Души [...]." (p. 107).

35 "'Взыгрался младенец во чреве'... России" (p. 111).

36 "Нео-Китай, Нео-Атлантида" (ibid.).

37 "Я же настолько верю в душу человеческую, что готов даже (со смертью в сердце) принять гибель старых ценностей — ибо верю в творчество новых" (p. 104).

38 "проклятое 'татарское' иго сомнений, противоречий, отчаянья" (letter 201, dated December 9, 1908; Blok, *Sobranie sochinenii v 8-i tomakh*, vol. 8, p. 265).

39 Commentary, vol. 3, p. 916.

40 In the play *Song of Fate* ("Pesnia sud'by"), set in contemporary Russia, the protagonist is a visionary who "lives in all times." He knows he participated in "the terrible day of the Kulikovo battle" as a "warrior in the reserve." He now impatiently awaits the messenger who will tell him that "it is time" to enter the fray of (the future) battle where, at last, he will be a full participant ("Все, что было, все, что будет, — обступило меня: точно эти дни живу я жизнью всех времен [...]. Помню страшный день Куликовой битвы. [...] Пробил твой час! Пора! [...] как воин в засаде"; cf. Scene Five. A. Blok, *Sobr. soch. v 8-i tomakh*, vol. 4, 1961, pp. 148, 149). As I. P. Smirnov points out, the symbolists liked to indulge in "pankhroniia." Cf. his article "Tsitirovanie kak istoriko-literaturnaia problema: printsipy usvoeniia drevnerusskogo teksta poeticheskimi shkolami kontsa XIX — nachala XX vv (na materiale 'Slova o Polku Igoreve')," in: *Blokovskii sbornik* IV: *Nasledie A. Bloka i aktual'nye problemy poetiki,* Tartu 1981, p. 246–276.

41 Italics mine.

42 See Serge A. Zenkovsky, *Pan-Turkism and Islam in Russia*, Cambridge/MA. 1960. If Blok was not worried about this possibility, others were. Thus Merezhkovsky mentions the Petersburg bishop, Antonii, who believed that the intelligentsia's support for the 1905 revolution would lead to the Tatars becoming strong. The country's Western enemies would seize the opportunity to back the Tatars and the end result would be that Russia would become a vast colony of the West. Cf. Merezhkovsky's "Strashnyi sud nad russkoi intelligentsiei," in his "Bol'naia Rossiia" (cf. note 7), p. 74. The author does not share Antonii's views.

43 "Таким событиям суждено возвращение." See the commentary to the poem, vol. 3, p. 911. For the role played by Nietzsche's concept of "eternal recurrence" in the cycle, see Ronald Vroon, "Cycle and History: The Case of Aleksandr Blok's 'Rodina'," *Slavic and East European Journal* 28/1984, p. 340–357.

44 "...воинский стан Дмитрия Донского — это поэтический образ русского народа, находящегося в состоянии революционного брожения и готовности к наступающей битве, а 'вражий стан' Мамая — это аналог оторвавшейся от народа и погруженной в мертвый 'аполлинический' сон интеллигенции." See Vladimir N. Orlov, "Aleksandr Blok. Ocherk tvorchestva," Moscow 1956, p. 168.

45 "Все симпатии поэта на стороне народа (исторический аналог — стан Дмитрия Донского)." (Ivan T. Kruk, "Poeziia Aleksandra Bloka," Moscow 1970, p. 161).

46 "[...] в сознании масс народа интеллигенция может оказаться причисленной ко всему тому, что подлежит слому и уничтожению." See Andrei M. Turkov, "Aleksandr Blok," Moscow 1969, p. 150.

47 Robert Abernathy, "The Lonely Vision of Aleksandr Blok (Blok's Vowel Fugue Revisited)," in: Walter N. Vickery (ed.), *Aleksandr Blok Centennial Conference*, Columbus/Ohio 1984, p. 25–43, here note 5 on p. 37.

48 Boris Solov'ev, "Poet i ego podvig. Tvorcheskii put' Aleksandra Bloka," Moscow 1971, p. 472.

49 "При этом неправомерно было бы считать, что Блок прямо и конкретно уподобляет современные 'станы' народ и интеллигенцию — русским и татарам на Куликовом поле [...]."; "в их совместном противостоянии разрушительным началам [...]." (Commentary, pp. 912, 913).

[50] Sergei Bulgakov, ″Heroism and Asceticism: Reflections on the Religious Nature of the Russian Intelligentsia,″ in: *Vekhi. Landmarks*, transl. and ed. by Marshall S. Shatz and Judith E. Zimmerman, Armonk/NY, London 1994, p. 17–49, here p. 28.

[51] Mikhail Gershenzon, "Creative Self-Consciousness," in: *Vekhi* (cf. note 50), p. 64. This remark was pounced upon by the left wing intelligentsia, and in the second edition Gershenzon had to clarify what he had meant by it, stating that by "must" he did not mean "ought to" but rather "had no choice but." It had to rely on the protection of those it had struggled *against* as long as it had existed. The intelligentsia and the Old World were willy-nilly in the same camp against the people.

[52] Valentin Serov's 1905 picture "Our Soldiers, Our Brave Lads" offers a good example of this kind of motif.

[53] The "mystical anarchist" Georgii Chulkov asked Blok in a response to *The People and the Intelligentsia*, which sector of the latter he had in mind when writing his article. The question seems justified in view of Blok's apparently wholesale condemnation of the intelligentsia. (Quoted in Ivan T. Kruk, ″Sokrytyi dvigatel′ ego. Problemy evoliutsii tvorchestva A. Bloka," Kiev 1980, p. 154).

[54] "Бесчеловечное узкое безобразие немецкого рейтера и мелкая, подлая фигура немецкого бюралиста давно срослись у нас с широкими, монгольскими скулами, с звериной безраскаянной жестокостью восточного раба и византийского евнуха." (″Kontsy i nachala," in: Aleksandr Gertsen, *Sobranie sochinenii v 30-i tomakh*, vol. 16, Moscow 1959, p. 129–199, p. 130).

[55] S. B. Sholomova states that many of [Blok's] opinions in 1908 reflect ideas found in Dobroliubov and that this particularly was the case in regard to the fatal mutual alienation of the people and the intelligentsia. See her article "Blok — chitatel′ N. A. Dobroliubova," *Literaturnoe nasledstvo* 92/1987, vol. 4, pages 34–46, here p. 39.

[56] ″[...] Китая и Японии, которые завоевывают 'индоевропейского' человека изнутри, желтят его кровь [...]." See A. L. Grishunin, "Ispoved′ pravdivoi dushi," in: Blok, *Dnevnik*, p. 5–20, here p. 9).

[57] "...следы ненависти Блока — исступленной, какой-то физической [...]." (p. 12).

[58] "Зачем ты напряжен, думаешь, делаешь, строишь, зачем?" (Blok, *Dnevnik* [cf. note 24], p. 79); the entry is for November 14, 1911. Bely, in his novel *Petersburg*, invariably makes the crowds on Nevsky Prospect into "faceless," hence "Asian," masses.

[59] Bulgakov, ″Heroism" (cf. note 51), p. 46.

[60] The commentary to the cycle discusses the steppe mares and the allusions to Gogol′ (vol. 3, p. 919).

[61] Trubetskoy saw the quality of *udal′* as a "Turanian" feature that Slavs and Turkic nomadic peoples shared. See Riasanovsky, "Asia Through Russian Eyes" (cf. note 5), p. 22. Although it probably is true that neither ″Bely, nor Blok, nor any other poet created Eurasianism" (ibid., 28), it is also quite possible that the future Eurasians were more impacted by reading symbolist literature than historians are prepared to grant.

[62] Commentary, vol. 3, p. 950, *Dnevnik* (cf. note 24), p. 402.

63 In his 1889 article "Beauty in Nature" ("Krasota v prirode").

64 About this type of Solovevian imagery in *The Twelve*, see Irene Masing-Delic, *Abolishing Death. A Salvation Myth of Russian Twentieth-Century Literature*, Stanford 1992. In this poem, Christ appears as a "Diamond shining from afar" (to quote Blok's poem *Retribution*).

65 "Уголь превращается в алмаз." For a discussion of Blok's coal-diamond imagery in the third volume of his verse and its polygenetic sources, see Zara G. Mints, "Poetika Aleksandra Bloka," St. Petersburg 1999, p. 542–544. Dina M. Magomedova suggests Vladimir Solovev's *Beauty in Nature* as the most likely pre-text of Blok's coal-diamond imagery in Blok's poem *Retribution* (1911–1919), in spite of superficial similarities with Nietzschean imagery in *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*. Cf. her essay "'Ugol' prevrashchaetsia v almaz (Blok i Nietzsche)" in: "Avtobiograficheskii mif v tvorchestve A. Bloka," Moscow 1997, p. 173–181.

66 In Dostoevsky's "Dnevnik pisatelia" from January 1876 ("O liubvi k narodu"), the writer speaks of the "surface filth" that covers the Russian people and the "diamonds" hidden beneath that filth. I am grateful to Dr. Tim Sergay for pointing this out to me.

67 I am referring to the expression "chernaia kost'" often applied to the folk, while the upper classes were seen as having "white bones" ("belaia kost'"). For a use of these expressions in the context of *The Scythians*, see Al'tshuler, "Nenavidiashshaia liubov'," *op. cit.*, p. 74.

68 For mythologies of Russia as the Northern power par excellence in the 18th century, and for national stereotypes of Northern peoples preceding them in the region, cf. Otto Boele, *The North in Russian Romantic Literature*, Amsterdam, Atlanta/GA 1996. According to these stereotypes, the Finns lived "in a more or less timeless, prehistorical world, where 'nothing really happens'," and consequently, "history" was brought to this Asian North by the Russians (p. 225).

69 *Novaia Amerika*, lines 33–36.

70 Lines 43–44.

71 Lines 53–54; translations by the author.

72 "[...] будущее России лежит в еле еще тронутых силах народных масс и подземных богатств." Quoted from the commentary, vol.3, p. 950. L. I. Timofeev has pointed out that "coal retrieved from the depths, to Blok, was an idiosyncratic symbol of some kind of hidden shifts, taking place in Russia [...] linked to the movement of popular masses." (L. I. Timofeev, "Aleksandr Blok," Moscow 1957, p. 114).

73 "И мы широко откроем ворота на Восток. Мы на вас смотрели глазами арийцев, пока у вас было лицо. А на морду вашу мы взглянули нашим *косящим*, лукавым, быстрым взглядом; мы *скинемся азиатами*, и на вас прольется Восток." See *Dnevnik, op. cit.*, p. 260).

74 Quoted in Duncan, "Ivanov-Razumnik," *op. cit.*, p. 16.

75 The quotes are from the introductory poem to the cycle *Iambs* of 1915 (vol. 3, p. 57).

76 "Трудно бороться против ‚русской заразы', потому что — *Россия заразила уже здоровьем человечество*." ("Dnevnik" [cf. note 24], p. 267).

[77] Cf. W. H. Walsh, “Principle and prejudice in Hegel’s philosophy of history,” in: Z. A. Pelczynski (ed.), *Hegel’s Political Philosophy: Problems and Perspectives*, Cambridge 1971. The quotes are on p. 185.

[78] Cf. Dostoevsky, *Sobranie sochinenii v 30-i tomakh*, vol. 5, Leningrad 1973, p. 70.

[79] Commentary, ibid., p. 369.

[80] Cf. note 8, however.

[81] ”Все мы больше или меньше, знаем встречу и столкновение двух исторических миров в первые века: одного — классического, образованного, но растленного и отжившего, другого — дикого, как зверь лесной, но полного непочатых сил и хаотических стремлений [...].” (Herzen, “Kontsy i nachala” [cf. note 55], p.167.

[82] This concept belongs to M. Bezrodnyi. Personal communication. Cf. note 8.

[83] ”... этот ошибочный наш взгляд на себя единственно как только на европейцев, а не азиатов (каковыми мы никогла не переставали пребывать”; ”и стали говорунами и лентяями” (Fedor Dostoevskii, “Dnevnik pisatelia,” *Polnoe sobranie sochinenii v 30-i tomakh*, vol. 27, Leningrad 1984, pp. 33, 36).

[84] Khalid, ”Russian History” (cf. note 4), p. 697.

[85] Cf. note 8.

[86] On these myths of origin, see, for example, Leon Poliakov, *The Aryan Myth. A History of Racist and National Ideas in Europe*, New York 1974, repr. 1996.

Gothic Historiosophy: The Pani Katerina Story in Pasternak's *Doctor Zhivago*

This article pursues three aims: first, to demonstrate the inter-textual linkage between Boris Pasternak's novel *Doctor Zhivago* ("Doktor Zhivago," 1957) and Nikolai Gogol's gothic tale "The Terrible Vengeance" ("Strashnaia mest'," 1832); second, to demonstrate the same type of linkage between the novel and Fedor Dostoevsky's still gothic, but also more realistic, version of the Gogolian story, entitled "The Landlady" ("Khozaika," 1847); and third, to discuss the functions of these inter-textual linkages in Pasternak's novel. In regard to the third aim, the main hypothesis of the article is that the Gogolian story of pani Katerina and the evil sorcerer, via Dostoevsky's "The Landlady," is developed into a myth of Russian history and future historical potential in Pasternak's novel. It is in these two tales of the nineteenth-century that some of the main parameters for the twentieth-century writer's historiosophic myth of Russian history as a relentless "tale of horror" are given — a tale that could end in liberation and redemption, if the country were to make the choice for a (broadly perceived) neo-Christian culture to replace Bolshevik retributive destruction, communist pre-determinism and atheist materialism.

I agree with Igor Smirnov's assessment of *Doctor Zhivago* as a "roman tain" (novel of mysteries), since it is indeed based on "indirect statement, hidden meanings, and hermetic closure" (1996, 8). When reading such a novel, the decoding of ciphers is essential. A "hacker," as Smirnov warns us (1996, 8), can only get through to some of *Doctor Zhivago*'s multiple codes, however. In this article, I postulate that the "pani-Katerina code" is just one amidst numerous others (with which it is often inextricably intertwined), but an important and pervasive one. Furthermore, I limit myself to the early, nineteenth-century, "pani-Katerina" code, specifically as developed by Gogol and Dostoevsky, merely mentioning Alexander Ostrovsky's contribution to it (in his drama *The Thunderstorm* ("Groza," 1860). There is also a late nineteenth-century pani Katerina code; taking Gogol's, Dostoevsky's and Ostrovsky's texts as their point of departure, Alexander Blok, Andrei Bely and other symbolists created

an elaborate continuation of the code in works such as Blok's lyrical drama *The Song of Fate* ("Pesnia sud'by," 1909, 1919), his (incomplete) narrative poem *Retribution* ("Vozmezdie," 1911–1919) and Bely's novel *The Silver Dove* ("Serebrianyi golub'," 1909), as well as his essay "The Green Meadow" ("Lug zelenyi," 1905). Naturally, Pasternak was aware of these later works and also incorporated them into his novel. Space considerations do not permit considering the rich symbolist continuation of the "pani-Katerina" myth and its complex codes here, however, wherefore I merely give occasional references to it.

In Pasternak's novel *Doctor Zhivago* (DZh from now on), Gogolian motifs from "The Terrible Vengeance" permeate the Lara — Komarovsky plot. In Gogol's story, as will be remembered, pani Katerina, the wife of the brave Cossack Danilo and the mother of an infant son, is subjected to the incestuous passion of her own father, a wicked sorcerer (*koldun*). Unable to take physical possession of her, he lulls her into a lethargic sleep and conjures up her soul in the castle tower where he practices his black arts. Perched on a tree outside, Danilo observes the encounter between Katerina's soul and the sorcerer. He hears Katerina's soul ask him, why he killed ("zarezal," Gogol, 1, 258) his wife, Katerina's mother. The old man angrily refuses to answer this question, telling his daughter that she will yet come to love him as a husband. Katerina's soul answers that it lies in his power to torture her, but not to make her love him. Yet, on one occasion, she secretly sets her imprisoned father free, knowing that she acts against her husband's express wishes.

Once freed, the sorcerer kills Danilo and murders his and Katerina's little son Ivan. Insane with grief, Katerina takes to wandering in a dark forest, carrying a dagger with which she intends to kill her father when he comes for her, which she does not doubt he will. One day a stranger arrives and proposes marriage to her. Katerina recognizes her father and attempts to kill him. In the ensuing struggle, he kills her. However, the "terrible vengeance" catches up with the sorcerer eventually. It takes the form of the mysterious giant horseman in full armor, called Ivan, who dwells in the Carpathian Mountains and who kills the sorcerer in an instant. The "terrible vengeance" that he has in store for him is nothing as simple as death by murder, however. Instead, Ivan throws the sorcerer's dead, and yet not "totally dead," body into a chasm "without exits" (1, 278, 282), where he is tortured for all eternity by having his bones "gnawed" by other undead corpses ("v bezdonnom provale gryzut mertvetsy mertvetsa," 1, 282 , in the bottomless chasm, the dead gnaw the dead), while not being able to retaliate by the same action.[1] This horrendous torture is aggravated by the fact that those who gnaw the sorcerer's corpse are his own ancestors. In the epilogue to the tale we learn that all its terrible events form part of a chain of revenge and punishment actions that began long ago in the times of King Stefan Batory and his Turkish war. It was then that the Cossack Petro treacherously killed his friend Ivan (with whom he had lived like a brother), as well as his in-

fant son, because of envy of his fame and rich rewards for capturing the Turkish pasha. The corpses in the abyss are all victims of the terrible curse that God allowed the murdered Ivan, craving vengeance, to pronounce on Petro (after his death) and his entire clan. It entailed that Petro's descendents be pursued by misfortune until the "last link" (which presumably is Katerina's infant son, named Ivan like the avenger) and that its last active male (the sorcerer) should be such an evildoer that he would qualify as "cursed Antichrist" (1, 271). In the "bottomless pit" in which the sorcerer lands, his unfortunate ancestors are doomed to avenge Ivan and his little son on their own last descendent, the "Antichrist" by gnawing his bones forever.

It could be argued that "The Terrible Vengeance" paints no less than a miniature world history from a religious perspective, beginning with an event that resembles Cain's murder of Abel and ending with something like the Last Judgment — involving the extermination of an entire clan as it does — and containing an endless series of crimes and misfortunes in between that, taken together, may be called "history." The term for the Last Judgment in Russian is the "terrible" judgment (Strashnyi sud), thus resembling the title of Gogol's story.[2] Let us now turn to Pasternak's novel, which decidedly interacts with the Gogolian horror tale.

Thus Lara's relations with Komarovsky in DZh are in fact almost as "unnatural" as those of pani Katerina and her sorcerer-father. Lara is of course not married when she meets the dissipated lawyer and she has no child, being herself virtually a child. Nor is it stated that Komarovsky is her father. He *could* be her father, however, since he was a family friend of the Guichards, i.e. Lara's family (originally Belgian on her father's side and French on her mother's). Madame Guichard, we are told, so feared men that she never dared refuse them, which apparently led to her having a number of affairs out of sheer fright (DZh, 22). Komarovsky is therefore likely to have had an affair with Madame Guichard long before she was widowed and he could thus be Lara's father. It seems suspicious that Komarovsky financially supports the children of a widow whose favors he could easily obtain without major expenses, just by "frightening" her, unless there were some special reason for his acting thus (DZh, 410). Perhaps he is Rodion's father and not Lara's, which would explain the young man's unattractive personality.

Biological father or not, Komarovsky is old enough to be Lara's father, as the narrator points out ("godivshiisia ei v *ottsy* [...] mushchina," 47, emphasis added). Certainly, Lara's mother is Komarovsky's mistress when we meet her. Lara is aware of the fact that it is unnatural that her mother's lover should be pursuing her, the daughter (DZh, 24). The words "mother," "daughter" and "father" are thus brought into close proximity, endowing the relationship between the three with a distinctly incestuous quality. Komarovsky, furthermore, in the tradition

of Gogol's sorcerer, almost kills Lara's mother, since he drives her to attempt suicide. Very likely, he has dropped hints of the relationship between himself and Lara, so as to get rid of his aging and tiresome mistress. In fact, Komarovsky will later in the novel once more repeat the pattern just outlined here when he will display a great concern for Lara's little daughter *Katenka* (Pasternak 1959, 431), although he is not very fond of children. Although it is not likely — on the level of fabula events — that he is seriously planning a repeat performance of the "wicked sorcerer-scenario," this time on the pedophile level, Komarovsky's behavior evokes timeless patterns of the eternal exploitation of purity by banal and self-serving people. Somewhat like Fedor Sologub's Peredonov, Komarovsky is "immortal" as the representative of ineradicable "poshlost'."[3]

As for driving people to suicide, as he does Lara's mother, Komarovsky is a master of that activity, as already demonstrated in his behavior towards Zhivago senior whom he made jump out of the fast moving train in which they were riding, by his apparently solicitous, but actually destructive admonitions (DZh, 15). Whether manipulated into her suicide attempt, or not, Madame Guichard is soon "eliminated" anyway. Although she seems to recover from her failed attempt to kill herself, she disappears from the world of the novel.

Gogol's Katerina, unlike Lara, apparently does not yield to physical seduction, but emotionally — and sensually — she was perhaps not uninvolved in the triangle drama forming the dark prehistory of "The Terrible Vengeance."[4] At any rate, Danilo tells Katerina — having witnessed her soul's visit to the sorcerer — that she does not know "even a tenth part of that which her soul knows" (Gogol, 1, 260). Her soul, or in more modern terms, her subconscious, apparently knows that her mother was killed by the sorcerer and, perhaps, also, why she was killed, but she "herself" does not know that. In other words, her ignorance of her past resembles conscious oblivion, or suppression, and her ambiguous state of mind may possibly be traced to subconscious complicity and an unacknowledged erotic attraction to her white-haired, but powerful, father. Just before the sorcerer called her soul to him, Katerina had a dream in which she recalls how happy she was with her mother in her childhood on a "green meadow" (258). She was happy there for fifteen years, she remembers. Then, apparently, the sorcerer murdered Katerina's mother. What exactly happened to Katerina afterwards, she does not tell, since, perhaps, she does not "know." The time before she met Danilo thus remains a mystery to the reader. It is however not excluded that she became the sorcerer's teenage mistress in an incestuous union and that it is to reclaim old "family rights" that he suddenly appears to destroy his daughter's and Danilo's marital bliss. If so, or if Pasternak read Gogol's story thus, then the parallels to Lara's situation are even more marked than is immediately apparent. Dostoevsky, as we shall see, in fact read such a possibility into the Gogolian text and developed it more fully in his own variant of the story.

Katerina's twentieth-century successor Lara is quite clearly part of the plan to deceive her mother, and her erotic attraction to her silver-haired seducer is beyond doubt. The situation is nevertheless ambiguous. Like Katerina, Lara both knows and does not know what is taking place. She knows that "should Mummy find out, she'd kill her. Kill her and herself" (DZh, 45), but she is also being subjected to Komarovsky's evil (sexual) spells that induce a state of oblivion. Appealing to the imp in her (*besenok*, 47) and exploiting her inexperience, as well as sensuality, Komarovsky keeps Lara in a spiritual limbo, in a kind of trance during which the truth is submerged in "sleepiness" (48) caused by physical exhaustion. Lara is constantly "sleepy" during her liaison with Komarovsky, since she is forced to lead a both diurnal and nocturnal existence. In the daytime, she is an exploited and anguished teenager taxed beyond endurance,[5] and at night, a "little devil" (besenok, 47), gladly obeying the demonic hypnotist Komarovsky. Young Zhivago observes this ambiguous situation when he, like Danilo, watches the encounter between the "sorcerer" Komarovsky and his victim-accomplice in the hotel Chernogoria (Montenegro) where Lara's mother is being treated after her attempt at poisoning herself. Hidden in the dark, he sees how Komarovsky encloses himself and Lara within a magic circle of erotic high tension ("osveshchennyi lampoi *krug*," emphasis added; circle, formed by the light of a lamp), symbolized by the magic circle of light he has created by bringing a lamp into the dark room where Lara was awaiting the outcome of her mother's desperate act. Light effects formed an essential part of the scene also when the Gogolian sorcerer called forth Katerina's soul. Lara's puts up less resistance to seduction and suggestion than Gogol's heroine, however. Young Zhivago observes how the *black* magician of *Cherno*goria easily persuades the entranced girl to completely follow his instructions and her "moral enslavement" (DZh, 62) is obvious even to the chance witness and youthful innocent that Zhivago is on this occasion and at this time of his life. Lara will in fact never quite liberate herself from the spells her seducer once cast on her.

Komarovsky's continued power over Lara is partly due to the fact that she refuses to fully acknowledge what happened between them, pushing the memory of these events deep down into her subconscious. The disappearance of Lara's mother from textual space is quite possibly an iconic marker of the "blank space" of oblivion that Lara tries to induce in herself in regard to her guilt before her mother (cf. footnote 7). Many years later, Zhivago has to remind Lara (a second time) that Komarovsky was in the hotel Chernogoria at the time of her mother's suicide attempt, a fact she claims to have forgotten (DZh, 410). Her deep blush when Zhivago mentions Komarovsky indicates however that her soul (subconscious) "knows more than she herself does," to quote Danilo, and that her oblivion resembles repression.

Lara is not always the submissive victim, however. Like Gogol's Katerina, she on one occasion attempts to murder her oppressor, rebelling against her

bondage to an evil father figure. Although her affair with Komarovsky is already over, she decides to kill him — it is in the revolutionary year of 1905 when "tyranny" in all forms was being challenged that she makes her attempt. Spending much time that year in the forests of the Kologrivov estate where she has found shelter, Lara does not carry a dagger with her, as Katerina did during her forest walks, but she practices shooting (possibly imitating Ibsen's Hedda Gabler).[6] Her purpose is the same as Katerina's though, namely to kill her "paternal" former suitor. At the Sventitsky Christmas party, she fires at Komarovsky, but misses her target, in spite of all her practice, possibly because of a continuing erotic attraction to the "magician," as well as an instinctive disinclination to kill. In the ensuing struggle, she is vanquished and subsequently almost dies from a serious nervous illness.[7]

The factor that awakened Lara to her "shame" was a dream, in which she saw herself being "gnawed," if not by fellow skeletons, then by the "tooth of time" that has left her with only one hip, one shoulder and one heel out of her entire frame (DZh, 49). Above ground someone is singing "Black Eyes, White Breasts" ("Chernye ochi da belaia grud'") and "Masha Is Told not to Go beyond the River" ("Ne veliat Mashe za rechen'ku khodit'"). This dream tells Lara that evil *strasti* have *strashnye* consequences, i.e. that sensuality and voluptuousness leave nothing but bones and ashes in the end, since they destroy the soul that alone has potential for immortality. The body, as is well known, does not escape disintegration. Here again, Lara resembles pani Katerina who felt she "was dying" during her dream encounter with the sorcerer and who, after her terrible mistake of releasing him, thought she would "dig a grave and bury herself alive" (Gogol, 1, 263), or else kill the father who aspired to being her husband, or possibly even was in the unknown prehistory of their relationship.

After her recovery, Lara chooses the young proletarian Pavel Antipov for her protector; he is a brother and comrade figure who becomes her husband. One may note that Lara again yields to "incestuous" relations, this time in a fraternal mode. It will only be with her true lover Zhivago that Lara will break off all ties of "familial" kinship, including that of class. Lara is from a "different world" than Zhivago's,[8] and this fact emphasizes the genuine freedom of their union, the fact that they choose to be together, as opposed to following tradition, class loyalty and other imposed patterns. It may be noted in this context that, prior to his union with Lara, Zhivago too was married to a sister figure. His wife Antonina (Tonya) was brought up together with him, the adopted orphan, as his sister. Lara's and Zhivago's free union, across class and ideological barriers, lasts only for a brief time, however. Komarovsky returns to destroy his pani's life, as surely as Gogol's *koldun* did his. Reappearing, he drives a wedge between Lara and Zhivago, just as the sorcerer did, separating Katerina and Danilo,[9] and he almost destroys their child Tanya. Certainly he is the one to be ultimately

blamed for the "terrible story" ("*strashnuiu* istoriiu," DZh, 524, italics added) Tanya has to tell.

Tanya's birth was kept secret from the child-hater Komarovsky and the infant was handed over to uncaring foster-parents — peasants in the Siberian Far East. One day when Tanya, her foster-mother and her invalid son, Petenka, are alone at home a black-bearded man appears who says that he knows there is money hidden in the house. Told that it is in the cellar, he does not believe the lie and takes Petenka hostage, going down into the cellar with him. The foster-mother who already has learnt that the robber killed her husband and who is frightened to death, decides to lock the intruder in the cellar in spite of Petenka being with him and Tanya's attempts to make her desist from her demented plan.[10] Tanya tells that the boy after a long wait was heard to "wail from under the earth" ("iz-pod zemli," 528) where he was "gnawed to death" (528) by the robber. The use of the expression "zagryst'... na smert'" in Tanya's *terrible* story, found in the Epilogue to DZh (i.e. in a similar textual space as the gnawing scene in Gogol's story) does not seem fortuitous. In spite of the transposition of some elements, her tale evokes the epilogue of Gogol's story where corpses gnaw the sorcerer's bones in a "pit without exit," acting out the terrible vengeance implemented by the Carpathian horseman Ivan for a terrible crime committed by *Petro*, one that also involved the murder of a little boy, this time *Petenka's*). Tanya's and Petenka*'s* sufferings are part of a latter-day somber vengeance drama, where the children become the victims, as well as involuntary instruments of retribution — Petenka's murderer will meet with a terrible death. This Gogolian aspect of Tanya's vengeance story is emphasized by the fact that the "cannibal" who "gnawed" Petenka to death, in all likelihood, is the Bolshevik *Kostoyed*-Amursky (i.e. "Bone-Eater"), whom her father, Iurii Zhivago, once met on the Trans-Siberian railway when he made his eastward journey together with his wife Tonya, his son and father-in-law, to escape the horrors of Civil War.

Coincidences permeate Pasternak's novel and have often been criticized as structural deficiency. Some critics have however seen them, not as the ineptitude of a poet writing his first novel, but as part of a very conscious design.[11] It does seem more than likely that the author was fully aware of using them and that he pursued specific goals introducing them again and again. In the present context, the function of coincidence would seem to be that of revealing the fatality of Darwinist struggle for existence philosophies, especially the presumptions that human existence is based on the law of "eat, or be eaten." Those who embrace this philosophy in DZh themselves fall victim to this "iron law." It is not only that, having caused many "terrible" events (having "eaten"), they themselves meet with "terrible" destruction ("are eaten"), but also that their materialist philosophy, based on the determinist assumption that the individual cannot make a free choice, makes them lose control over their actions. They commit

increasingly horrifying crimes, as if under some evil compulsion. Kostoyed's life illustrates this well.

We meet Kostoyed-Amursky, a supporter of co-operatives, as already mentioned, for the first time when he is traveling with the Zhivago family on the Trans-Siberian. Tonya Zhivago treats him kindly, unaware as she is of his disturbing tendency to form close ties with "jail-keepers of both the czarist and current regime" (DZh, 227). She offers him food — the shoulder blade of a hare, sharing her family's meager food rations with a complete stranger. *Kostoyed* gnaws the bone carefully ("doglodal," 227) until no meat is left on it, but although he absorbs every scrap of food, he fails to suck in the "milk of human kindness" offered with it, i.e. the example of humane behavior. Joining the Reds later and acquiring the party name of Comrade Lidochka, the former co-operatives organizer and socialist-revolutionary, increasingly adopts the notion that he is entitled to satisfy all his needs at any cost.[12] Some years later, Petenka became the "hare" (children are often called *zaichik*) he felt free to "gnaw to death" as retribution for his entrapment in the cellar. Probably he acted on the assumption that an experienced revolutionary was too valuable to be thwarted and that he was entitled to his "terrible vengeance." It is in line with Kostoyed's development from food distributor to "cannibal" that he is executed by a *samosud* tribunal of railroad workers who tie him to the tracks of a local goods-train, then run the train over him. Undoubtedly Kostoyed's bones were crushed in the process. The sound of bones breaking would be a logical finale for a life increasingly lived under the motto of "gnaw, or be gnawed." Of course, the fact that we see him for the first and last time in a train/on railway tracks, emphasizes the fatality of pre-determinist philosophies based on "iron laws" — in an ironical way.

In sum, there is enough evidence to link DZh to Gogol's "The Terrible Vengeance" with its frightening vision of retribution as the moving force of human existence. In both texts, the heroines, hypnotized by evil magic, unwittingly destroy the man who would protect them and whom they love (Danilo, Zhivago), their children and themselves, by yielding to fear of a tyrant who confused them emotionally by appearing in the unnatural double role of father and lover, protector and exploiter. Both women attempt to break the spells of an evil fate, but, for a variety of reasons, are unable to do so. In Lara's case, fear is certainly one of the reasons. Komarovsky "frightened [her] forever" (430) and made her life "terrible" (*strashno, strashno*, 510, italics added). Recapitulating her past, Lara calls him who was responsible for the horrors of her life a "terrible monster of vulgarity" ("*strashilishche* poshlosti," 511, italics added), as well as just a "monster" ("chudovishche" — she is repeating pani Katerina's "O, ty chudovishche," Gogol, 1, 259). Like the unhappy Katerina of Gogol's tale, Lara, was ruined by a man who could not make her love him, yet had the power to "torture" and "frighten" her because of his "monstrosity."

The pani Katerina code in DZh is however not only used to illuminate the patterns of individual lives, but also to represent broader issues of historiosophy. These issues focus on what forces move (Russian) history and what constitutes the essence of "Russianness." Here Lara's symbolic function of representing Russia and Komarovsky's of symbolizing the "sorcery of wielding power" come into play. Their relationship demonstrates Russia's dependence on paternalistic autocracy and "her" fear of leaving the realm of familiar-familial ("incestuous") values. It is because of Russia's fear of freedom that the fatal sequence of crime and punishment, guilt and retribution, evil deed and "terrible vengeance," as well as the "eat-or-be-eaten" philosophy of the Kostoyeds, is repeated throughout its history. Perhaps this historical vengeance and retribution drama that was an inevitable part of Bolshevik doctrines about historical inevitability and that derailed into the realm of nightmares, is eventually broken in the novel. With the deaths of the carriers of death, such as Kostoyed, Liverii (Liberius) and Antipov, some chains of "terrible" events seem to come to an end and there is hope that other forms of "inevitable retribution" may too.[13] The novel does not explicitly deal with the Stalinist reign of terror, but the Epilogue intimates that even this sorcerer's spells may be broken by the end of the Second World War, when it seems that the "inevitability" and "necessity" of class struggle and historical retribution could be supplanted, if not with freedom, then at least with a new focus on the individual, especially the creative individual and his legacy (in this case, the poetry of Zhivago).

Is it, however, not to overcharge the pani Katerina code in DZh with meanings by attributing such heavy historical symbolism to it? Probably not, since by the time Pasternak cast his heroine Lara in the pani Katerina mode (among others), Gogol's tale had transcended its genre framework of gothic tale from the author's romantic phase and become the source of an elaborate literary myth of Russia's history and destiny. As already mentioned earlier, the Silver Age charged the code with complex meanings, including historical (and ecological) ones. In Blok's lyrical drama *The Song of Fate* ("Pesnia sud'by"), for example, the heroine Faina quite clearly represents Russia's true face and essence (as opposed to the "European" Elena) and her elderly companion is a representative of czarist power. Although not a sorcerer, he keeps her in gloomy captivity, warding off other suitors.[14] Bely's *The Silver Dove* ("Serebrianyi golub'")—conceived of as part I of a trilogy with the overall title *West-East*—has a similar plot, including a hero torn between two women (one "European" and the other a "woman of the people") who is ultimately defeated by a "sorcerer," this time cast as a sectarian. (The structure thus remains essentially the same, but its components offer "variations on the theme.") An important link in the development of the "Katerina code" into a full-fledged historical-political myth, or set of myths, is Dostoevsky's variant of the story of Katerina in his "The Landlady" ("Khozaika").[15]

In "The Landlady," its main male personage, the elderly Murin, appears to be an Old Believer merchant (who attends Orthodox services though). In the past, however, he seems to have been a Volga robber chieftain in the tradition of Stenka Razin. He also has a reputation for possessing "mysterious occult powers" (Frank, 337) and, as Katerina, his daughter, or wife, or both, remembers, he was considered a "sorcerer" (*koldun*, 1, 307) by the people of the Volga region where they once lived. When we meet them, they are temporarily residing in St. Petersburg. "The Landlady" is labeled a *povest'* by its author; it is a "Petersburg tale," to be specific. This genre specification would seem to indicate that the tale should be read as realistic in spite of its substantial gothic content. In fact, the extraordinary events related in it may well entirely belong to the realm of the fantasies and dreams the protagonists, especially the "landlady" herself, are experiencing. Thus Murin probably does not wield the supernatural powers she attributes to him. Instead, he has other talents, such as considerable psychological insight. His understanding of the human, especially feminine, psyche gives him as much — if not more — power over his victims as any "real" magic would. The story is told from the perspective of young Ordynov, a solitary philosopher and "dreamer," whose fantasies merge with reality, distorting it without him noticing this.[16] Having led a very secluded life, devoted to studies and the creation of a utopian social system that would radically improve conditions in Russia,[17] he one day ventures out into the streets of the metropolis. There he has a glimpse of a reality that may be harder to fit into his "system" than is apparent when one works in a secluded study chamber and avoids reality checks. All the disturbing impressions of the day are forgotten, however, when he sees a strange young woman (Katerina) and her companion (Murin) in a church he happens to enter. At that moment his chance encounter with "unsystematic" reality takes a fatal turn. He closely observes the young woman — wondrously beautiful, but agonized, praying fervently, but apparently without much hope for redemption — and her companion, a powerfully built, but gaunt and apparently ailing man. Attracted by their mystery and her enchanting beauty, he later insists on taking up lodgings with them.

Installed in their cramped flat where "it was clear that three people could not live together" (1, 272),[18] he spends much time there in a semi-conscious state, swooning, dreaming,[19] vaguely remembering events from a distant past and delving into the deeper layers of the psyche — his and Katerina's. Ordynov is abandoning his abstract reasoning under the impact of new emotions and powerful impressions. Katerina is quite possibly mad — driven to insanity by the jealous Murin, who fears she may abandon him and who, therefore, emotionally terrorizes her. These factors do not invalidate the insights of Ordynov's imagination and dreams, nor of Katerina's madness. In this Petersburg tale, in the tradition of Pushkin's *The Bronze Horseman* ("Mednyi vsadnik," 1833), it

is irrationality and not shallow logics that convey (a higher) truth. Another way of putting it may be that the fantastic level of (inner) events represents a symbolic truth about the Russian soul as personified by Katerina, as well as about those who compete for wielding power over her, i.e. the tyrant Murin and the would-be liberator Ordynov. Let us examine some of the fantasies in the story and begin with those of the young philosopher Ordynov.

In one of his dream states, Ordynov sees himself as a child playing on a "luxurious green meadow" ("na tuchnom zelenom lugu," 1, 278) near a lovely lake, watched over by his mother,[20] but an evil old man disrupts this state of innocent bliss. He does something terrible to his mother that makes her "disappear," inspiring the child with "un-childlike horror" ("nedetskii uzhas," 1, 278). Even when the evil old man no longer plays an active role in Ordynov's continued dream, he still seems to be present in a long series of somber visions of futile events extending over centuries. Ordynov sees how "whole cities were built and destroyed before his eyes and how whole graveyards [kept] spewing out their corpses, which then regained life and how — before his eyes — there appeared, were born and declined entire tribes and peoples" ("kak slagalis' i razrushalis' v glazakh ego tselye goroda, kak tselye kladbishcha vysylali emu svoikh mertvetsov, kotorye nachinali zhit' syznova, kak prikhodili, rozhdalis' i otzhivali v glazakh ego tselye plemena i narody," Dostoevsky, 1, 279). In this endless chain of pointless non-events, history itself loses all meaning and thus Murin's continued (invisible) presence in these dream visions would seem to represent the spirit of cynicism and destruction that makes idealism seem vain and hope for change unjustified. In other words, history based on retribution, destruction, and other "iron laws" is no history, since it undoes all that has been done, not even preserving the memory of past accomplishments. Nevertheless, it is this pointless history of eternally recurrent "terrible vengeance" that, in Ordynov's dreams, is the prevailing one. Clearly this type of history is linked to someone having absolute power and using it for evil ends.

Waking up from his oppressive dream, Ordynov goes up to the wall separating him from his landlords, apparently sensing a link between his dream visions and the mysterious couple with which he is living. Imitating Danilo's "voyeurism," he observes old Murin and beautiful Katerina through a chink in the wall. Lying on a couch, next to the bed on which Murin is reclining, Katerina listens attentively to something both terrible and exhilarating he is reading out to her. Murin, in his turn, is obviously reveling in his power to inspire her with horror and joy, tears and laughter, in short in his ability to manipulate her psyche. At one stage Katerina "pales from terror" ("ot strakha," 1, 280), as she listens to Murin's accounts of the terrible punishments that befall sinners, who have committed "'the unpardonable sin" of incest (Frank 1976, 338.)." This is a sin Katerina believes she has committed.

Katerina soon confesses to Ordynov that she has given herself "soul and body" to her own father who, with her connivance, eliminated her mother's husband (who was not Katerina's biological father) and psychologically destroyed her mother, his mistress. When she found out that she was being replaced by her own daughter in Murin's affections, she died.[21] Possibly all the terrible events Katerina relates are sheer fantasy, instilled in her by Murin (but, if not, Ordynov could be Katerina's brother, judging by the dream recollections of his childhood, in which case Katerina would not escape incest even with Ordynov).[22] True or not, "Katerina *believes* [them] to be true" (Frank 1976, 338) which makes her at least partly morally guilty of the crimes she recounts. In her account of events, Katerina alternates between self-reproach — saying that it was she herself who buried her own mother in "moist earth" ("v syruiu zemliu zaryla," 1, 294) — and accusing Murin ("— *on,* pogubitel' moi," 1, 293). She is horrified that she has "sold her soul" to Murin ("dushu emu prodala," 293), and she looks like a "live corpse" at one stage of her tale (like the *pannochka* in Gogol's gothic tale "Vii"), but she also "loves her shame" and feels "no anger" for having been wronged ("pozor . . . moi . . . mne liub"; "net gneva za obidu svoiu," 299). She knows she is a "slave," but this knowledge does not only terrify her, but also evoke her exultation. In Bely's words, she is a "pani Katerina who has given her consent to the marriage with her father."[23]

It is in her better moments of shame and regret that Katerina earnestly begins to yearn for freedom and the purity that her name, Katerina, stands for. One such moment has occurred now due to her meeting the idealistic Ordynov — or does Katerina merely want an affair with the young man to spice up her life with an ailing old husband? Whatever the case, she turns to Ordynov, pleading with him to help her free herself from her bondage to Murin. He is enchanted by the prospect of becoming Katerina's liberator and lover, not heeding her tale of how she once was infatuated with the young merchant Alesha and wanted to flee with him, but then did nothing to prevent Murin from murdering him.[24]

Although intent upon freeing his tortured Katerina, Ordynov proves incapable of doing so, since he belongs to those "whose hand will not raise a knife" at the crucial moment.[25] Unable to kill Murin, Ordynov has to suffer Katerina's contempt and he leaves her, once more a slave at her tormentor's feet. She too, in the pani Katerina tradition, more than once raised a knife against Murin in the past, but, as the old man mockingly tells Ordynov, she would drop her weapon when he bared his chest to her thrust. The cunning old man knows how to play on pity (his ailments), sense of honor (respect for his "defenseless" old age, gratitude for his protection and "love") and other noble, as well as ignoble, sentiments. Before fleeing from the scene of his failed liberation attempt, Ordynov catches a glimpse of the old man's triumphant face and reads in it "deception, calculation and the cold jealousy of a tyrant" ("obman, raschet,

kholodnoe, revnivoe tiranstvo," 1, 311). He also perceives "horror at the sufferings of a poor heart torn asunder" ("uzhas nad bednym, razorvannym serdtsem," 311) — thus the tyrant apparently pities his victim.

Applied to Russian history — which Ordynov perceived in such joyless terms in his dream visions — the triangle drama related above would seem to represent the microcosm of a longstanding relationship between Russia, her autocratic rulers and her would-be liberators. It is generally recognized that Dostoevsky, after his first socio-psychological novel *Poor Folk* ("Bednye liudi," 1846), turned to the historiosophic theme of Russia and her fate, specifically in "The Landlady," where Katerina is a "symbol of national specifics, of the soul of the people, suffering from the sinister power of the past, incarnated in the figure of the 'sorcerer'."[26] What has not been noticed, to my knowledge, is that the religious fanatic and (apparently) criminal Murin most likely is modeled on Ivan the Terrible, Ivan Grozny, the classical tyrant of Russian history. Certainly the semantics of threat are ever present around Murin. His Old Believer visions of hell are so threatening ("groznye"), for example, that Katerina feels as if a thunderstorm ("groza") were descending upon her, when he speaks of them. These and other details (such as Murin's habit of wrinkling his brows threateningly — "khmurit brovi") link him to the wrathful Russian czar,[27] as does his ethics that combines horrendous crimes (if Katerina's tale is true) with a ritualistic religiosity. Like Ivan the Terrible, Murin also has a powerful, but gaunt body and both the czar and Murin are epileptics. Murin does not represent this specific monarch only, however, but rather all of Russia's autocratic rulers. Their and Russia's shared "life" is a tale of tyranny and terror, called Russian history. In this literary-historical myth created by Dostoevsky with the help of Gogol's gothic story, Ordynov represents the nineteenth-century Russian intelligentsia, attempting Russia's liberation in a half-hearted and abstract way. His encounter with Russia — Katerina — makes him understand that his "system" (the new order he wants to introduce) will be of little use in her liberation. Unfortunately he does not find another solution either, unless his eventual return to the church at the end of the story marks the beginning of new insights.[28]

The situation between Komarovsky and Lara is quite similar to that of Katerina and Murin. Lara's seducer uses the same tactics of intimidation, terror, black mail and self-pity as Murin does. What Lara learns from her relationship with Komarovsky is that the "cunning cad" ("podlyi i slabyi," DZh, 48) invariably triumphs over the nobly courageous person, at least when courage stems from impulse rather than resolve and when resolve has been weakened by long bondage and the ensuing fear of change. Lara's courage is of the impulsive rather than determined kind and she does seem to need guidance and fear independence. Lara, as will be recalled, failed to shoot Komarovsky, but also prior to that attempt on his life, she failed to sever their relationship,

when her seducer would throw himself on his knees and plead with her to stay, or threaten to reveal all to Lara's family. Given these parallels, is there also an Ordynov opposing the tyrant in Lara's life?

Lara's would-be liberator is Antipov. Certainly he never fails to "raise a knife" (or gun, in his case), especially since the time that he becomes known as "Rasstrelnikov" (the Executioner) and rides in his armored train — like Trotsky — through the Siberian plains, destroying recalcitrant villages that have not accepted Soviet power. Unlike Ordynov, Antipov is a proletarian, unburdened by "intelligentsia scruples." It is doubtful however that Lara finds true liberation with him. Although her marriage seems happy on the surface, it is in actual fact, strained and false. On the symbolic level, the intimation is that Russia's marriage to Bolshevism is tyranny in the disguise of "fraternity." The poet Zhivago, Lara's true lover, is another Ordynov-figure. He claims to be prepared to avenge her by "killing Komarovsky" (430), should Lara demand it, but since he is not put to that test, we do not find out whether he would be better at "raising a knife" than Dostovsky's Ordynov. Most likely he is as incapable of doing so as his predecessor was. Perhaps he could raise a scalpel instead of a knife, since he is a medical doctor? Immediately after the October revolution he is enthusiastic about the Revolution's readiness to amputate "rotting" parts off the body of Russia (in the Bazarov tradition), but this enthusiasm soon wanes, yielding to a stance of "non-resistance to evil." Knife, gun, or scalpel — none seems to offer the solution to Lara's problems, or Russia's, which may be one reason why Zhivago refuses to take recourse to these.

One important reason why the liberation of Russia, pani Katerina, the Landlady and Lara fails is not only to be sought in the flaws of their liberators. The continued bondage of the beloved country's female symbolic representatives is also due to the fact they themselves suffer from a "weak-heart syndrome" — "a syndrome" that both the threatening Old Believer merchant Murin and the suave lawyer Komarovsky, as well as all the autocrats of Russia, know how to exploit. They all know that their caged birds most likely will not fly out of their cages even if they left the door open, because their captives — even while asking for liberation — really are afraid of independence. It is thus the theme of freedom that predominates the historiosophic discourse in "The Landlady" and DZh, especially the question, if mankind in general, and Russians in particular, do not prefer habitual enslavement to taxing freedom. "The Landlady" is one of the earliest texts in which Dostoevsky develops the "weak heart" syndrome, later to be developed into the key concept of the "Legend of the Grand Inquisitor" in *The Brothers Karamazov* ("Brat'ia Karamazovy"). What exactly is this syndrome?

Katerina, in "The Landlady," has a "weak heart" ("slaboe serdtse," 1, 319), in the sense that she fears genuine freedom and radical change (1, 317) since these entail decision-making and responsibility. The "weak heart" therefore

substitutes caprice and whim for freedom. As Murin well knows, Katerina's periodical acts of impulsive rebellion are appeased by satisfying some passing fancy of hers. He therefore gives Katerina the "bird's milk" ("ptich'e moloko") she craves when "straining at her leash," so to speak, for example, a temporary young lover-liberator. But he does not let go of her. He has perceived her innermost inclination to leave all final decisions to an authority figure and he also consciously prevents her spiritual maturation by giving her the role of daughter, rather than wife. Motivated as he is by sinister reasons, there is however also a perverse sort of love at play here. He fears losing his ward, since he, in his turn, is slavishly dependent on her, while, to complicate matters further, his victim also harbors a filial love of sorts for her oppressor, needing both his protection and punishment. The victim-accomplice and tyrant-protector are linked by elusive, but strong, bonds, where hatred and pity, habit and fear are often indistinguishable from one another.

Lara too has a "weak heart" in the sense outlined above, however energetic and decisive she appears to be. She calls herself a "weak woman" ("*slabaia* zhenshchina," 413, emphasis added), when faced with the need to make a clear-cut choice between Komarovsky and Zhivago. Her favorite speech mannerism is the phrase "isn't that so" ("ne pravda li," DZh, 469, 509–511), which implies a reluctance to have an opinion of her own. Her very search for independence is often merely the search for a new authority figure. All slaves occasionally rebel, displaying the "madness of the brave" ("bezumstvo khrabrykh," Gorky), but in the very act of rebellion, they often already are harnessing themselves with the yoke of a new authority, unless they return to the fold of the past; Lara does both. She marries Antipov, an authoritarian, and, like her Dostoevskian predecessor, she is also ultimately unable to free herself from the burden of her "sinful" past, incarnated in Komarovsky. After a brief interlude of freedom with Zhivago (at Varykino during the Civil War), she returns to her old oppressor. Evgraf Zhivago, Iurii Zhivago's half-brother, closely observing Lara during Iurii's funeral, rightly perceives that there is one "sin" to which Lara is prone: to love her sorrow (510). Self-laceration has its advantages, since it allows escape from burdensome responsibility and taxing challenges, while also easing the burden of guilt. Dostoevsky's Katerina too could be said to love her sorrow, especially during her long prayer sessions when her tears flow so abundantly and so voluptiously.

Applied to the Russia these women characters represent, "she" too is unable to break with her past of enslavement to autocratic and dictatorial rulers. Russia's brief "love stories" with freedom, such as the revolution of 1905 or the February revolution of 1917, do not lead to firm and lasting relations with this concept. Both Russia and her female incarnations of the pani Katerina type cling to models of past existence, not only fearing the might of their tyrants

and enslavers, but also preferring known miseries to the dangerous unknown, even though it could bring the "unexpected joy" of salvation.[29] Instead, they all look for their next "unnatural" union with absolute power. Lara hysterically seeks help from either her "father" Komarovsky, or her "brother" Antipov, while distrusting her true lover Zhivago. Russia recoils from the spring of the February revolution and yields to stern October instead. Russia's autocrats, like Ivan the Terrible, or powerful ministers like Pobedonostsev, or Count Witte, to include the Silver Age code (cf. footnote 14), likewise distrust their nation's ability to cope on its own and therefore do not loosen their grip on the reins of rule, fearing that "she" might come to harm. And the country, in its turn, respects the "firm hand" that guides it, while also at times attempting to break the bonds that bind it. In this context it should be stated that Komarovsky does not represent czarist power but rather pre-revolutionary Capitalism taking over much of the power of an autocracy growing distinctly weaker, allying itself with it in order to appropriate the spells of power magic, as it were. And although he leaves Russia to go to Mongolia, Komarovsky's legacy of paternalistic autocracy cum capitalism remains intact. As Ordynov saw in his dreams, Russian history is doomed to the futility of eternal recurrence. In short, Russia loves its Grand Inquisitors, however severe, as well as its "sorcerers," however depraved; she shuns liberation with its disturbing message of individual freedom entailing personal responsibility — while certainly also wanting it and yearning for it.

One more aspect of the "weak heart syndrome" should be mentioned. An important source of fear for the heroines of the Katerina-code is also this: they are pursued by the vision of the last "Terrible Judgment," since they do not believe in grace and forgiveness. They doubt that their "horrendous" sins ever can be annulled and they, also therefore, feel safer together with their equally doomed and damned protectors at the prospect of divine retribution than with their pure-hearted liberators. They feel that their would-be liberators who offer the challenge of accepting genuine freedom are too good to be used as a "shield" against the "terrible judgment."[30] In some sense, as already pointed out they love their suffering too much to part with it and they perhaps also are too proud to ask for real forgiveness — the kind that would require a changed course of action. It is easier to weep and pray. In Lara's case, there is however a move in the right direction from doubt to faith and hope; this is perhaps one reason why she does not have the name of her predecessors (one of her daughters has it). She both continues and breaks with the Katerina-code.

Joining the Katerina of "The Landlady," as well as the Katerina of Alexander Ostrovsky's play *The Thunderstorm* ("Groza," 1860), which also is part of the Katerina-code of Russian literature, Lara attends church services.[31] Unlike them, she does find solace in them. In her church, she hears no terrifying sermons on the Last Judgment, which will crush, above all, those who were meant to be

pure but consented to their own defilement. Instead, she hears the Sermon on the Mount and is given the promise that those who have been "downtrodden" ("zatoptannye," 50) shall rise, as opposed to sink into earth and have their bones gnawed forever. Lara believes in the promise of grace and is soothed by the beauty of the liturgy, at least momentarily. The experience of grace does not save her from grave mistakes, but still gives her a guiding thread through the labyrinth of life, a thread she often loses, but sometimes finds again. In historiosophic terms, DZh suggests that Russia should and might entrust herself to spiritual freedom and liberate herself from the laws of endless retribution. Russia does not need a leap into materialist utopia where the "useless" are "eaten" in the Kostoyed tradition, but rather a radical transition into a new form of Christianity that is closely linked to Poetry. The Christ-like poet Zhivago who forces no one to do anything, not even the good, could have been Lara's savior. It does not turn out that way in their story, but a new aesthetics and ethics of grace and forgiveness, beauty and creativity could be Russia's in due course. The love between Lara and Zhivago, Russia and her Savior, has after all been made a part of the national heritage through Zhivago's poetry and this poetry will continue to exist even when Lara and Zhivago are gone. There may yet come a time when Poetry and Russian History will wed, invalidating the evil sorcery of tyrannical power.

In sum, weak will, coupled with pride, fearfulness and rashness, a lack of inner independence and "love for despair" is an ailment of the Russian soul. It leads her literary incarnations to ever new twists of an endless gothic tale of terrible crimes and horrendous retribution, accompanied by agonized suffering. The heroines of these tales — and these include Russia herself — have an excuse for developing this spiritual malaise. It consists of the fact that they are so very beautiful. To be beautiful in a fallen world is dangerous, since, in such a world, beauty easily becomes a "terrible thing" ("*strashnaia* veshch'," as Dmitrii Karamazov puts it; italics added), although it was meant to be the exact opposite, namely a salvatory force (as Prince Myshkin hoped). With his great empathy for the feminine psyche and refined susceptibility to feminine beauty, Zhivago knows that it is a "great step to be a woman and a heroic deed to cause madness in others" (DZh, 539). He pities Lara because he understands how dangerous it is to "charge someone with electricity" (DZh, 437). Naturally, feminine beauty does not always evoke illegitimate feelings and unnatural desires, leading to criminal acts, but arousing intense emotions, as it almost invariably does, it is a risk to its bearer. "Electricity" is a dangerous force when it is not directed into the right channels. In a world that does not know how to deal with electrifying beauty, not understanding that the "meaning of love" (Vladimir Solovev) is the sublimation of sexual energies into artistic creativity (including the creation of a beautiful life), it takes great courage to be beautiful. Still, it is the only force that can counter-act the fatal impact of the law of

"terrible vengeance." It is only in a world where beauty inspires creativity and love, as opposed to craving and desire, despotism and vanity, that the historical law of retribution could be invalidated. On the macrocosm level — Russia's rulers would be wise not to confuse love with possession, but "sublimate" their passion for the beautiful land they rule into a genuine concern for making its history a meaningful tale, as opposed to a gothic horror story, "full of sound and fury, signifying nothing." Such points are made in Sima (Serafima) Tuntseva's apparently digressive, but actually highly relevant, discourse on the nature of miracles in the Old and New Testament in DZh.

Sima's cameo appearance and "sermon" (somewhat in the style of Ilarion's eleventh-century sermon on "Law and Grace") presents the Old Testament miracle of the parting of the Red Sea. Sima contrasts this "multitudinous" event involving "a whole nation, crossing over a sea-bed" where the sea is held back "by divine intervention," with the New Testament miracle of the "quiet birth of a provincial baby" (Livingstone 1989, 81). In both cases a "womb" is involved — in the first case, the womb of the sea that closes again after the people of Israel have traversed the seabed, and, in the second case, Mary's womb that remains virginal even after she has given birth. The difference between the two miracles is that in one case we witness the birth of a nation, in the other, the birth of an individual. The time of "nations" (*narody*, 423) is over, Sima claims — the concept died with the decline of Rome. With the advent of Christianity, Roman empire-building and rule over vast populations was replaced by the notion that the might attributed to numbers and popular masses is power misunderstood; instead, each individual's life may become a "divine tale" (423), quality superseding mere quantity. In huge pagan empires, the individual is irrelevant and dispensable — a minute particle in a depersonalized collective. In the Christian world of culture and values, the endless potential of each individual came to the forefront when a young girl gave birth to a divine being "by inspiration" (423). With this event, not only individual value changed, but also the perception of woman, Sima emphasizes.

Sima's message is not an attack on Old Testament "collectivism" (but very possibly on its Soviet variant), nor (only) a eulogy to New Testament "personalism." Rather it presents a kind of Silver Age Third Testament vision of the future in the tradition of Dmitrii Merezhkovsky and others. According to Merezhkovsky, "Christianity separated the past eternity of the Father from the future eternity of the Son," wherefore they need to be united "by what comes after Christianity" which is "the revelation of the Spirit-Eternal Womanhood, Eternal Motherhood" (quoted from Bedford 1975, 112). In other words, the Testament of the Father and the subsequent Testament of the Son are to be followed by the Testament of the Holy Spirit, in which Woman and, hence, Beauty, would play the dominant role. Sima puts strong emphasis on the role of

woman in her discourse, one that she addresses to Lara, another woman — not to Zhivago who is also present. That she is discoursing on Woman's role in history is emphasized by the fact that she specifically mentions the Gospel figure of the fallen and redeemed Mary Magdalene. Quoting Mary's plea to Christ to "forgive her sins, as she loosens her hair," mentioning Magdalene's sexual enslavement and difficulty with breaking "old habits," Sima nevertheless envisions a future when there will be "equality between God and life, God and the individual, God and woman" (425). Mary Magdalene emerges in her discourse as yet another pani Katerina enslaved to evil outer forces and constrained by inner weakness, yet so beautiful and desirous of liberation as to evoke pity for her plight. "Woman" (*zhenshchina*) is the final word of Sima's "sermon," in which she also says that she only is reminding Lara of what she, Lara, already knows. Thus Lara would seem to be one of many reincarnations of unhappy Katerinas, Magdalenes and all other enslaved women of world history. According to the woman preacher Sima, they will all eventually find redemption in a future world of Beauty, where men are "saved" by it in the Dostoevskian sense, and where women will be able to live "by inspiration" rather than fear, by love, rather than the exploitation of male lust (above all, lust for power)[32].

In short, Sima is envisioning a future where the Spirit of forgiveness and real equality (as opposed to shared inequality), including that of God and woman, will replace a history of crime and vengeance, guilt and retribution. For Russia, Sima's sermon may prophesy a radical break with "incestuous" tyranny and cultural isolation in all forms, a complete break with "old habits" in de-automatizing and open creativity "across the barriers" of claustrophobic cultural values.[33] Such a break could make Russia into a "green meadow" once more and banish all those abysses without exits, where corpses gnaw other corpses in eternal agony. In short, Necessity could be replaced by a break-through to Grace — synonym for Freedom — where the laws of eternal retribution would be invalidated.

Sima's vision does not come true in the sense that a genuine liberation for Russia follows in the wake of war, as the novel's survivors hope for a brief moment (in the Epilogue). Nevertheless, a "premonition of freedom can be sensed in the air" (530), perhaps something similar to the premonition of change we find in the Zhivago poem "Fairy Tale" ("Skazka"). In this poem we find a "tsarevna" (Lara-Russia) and her knight (Zhivago-warrior for Christ), alternating between wakefulness and sleep, return to life and regression to oblivion, during many swoons when contact with reality is broken. A dead dragon lies next to them, but the union of the valiant knight and his princess has not yet ensued because of the "sleepiness" they cannot discard, however much they desire to awaken. It could be argued that Pasternak here "bares" Dostoevsky's device of "multiple swoons" in "Khozaika," revealing its symbolic function (cf. footnote 19), namely the alternation between insights into (deeper) reality and returns to

old illusions. Some day this pattern may be broken, however. Perhaps this is the prospect that is held out in Zhivago's very last poem also, where it is said that the "march of the centuries [...] may burst into flame while moving" (565). If Russia does not call in new sorcerers who would revive the slain dragon of evil, the flames of an inspired history may well burst forth. In Zhivago's vision, Russia may indeed well become the land of a new future where dragons and sorcerers wield no power, but Beauty and free Creativity are at last fully awakened by a fiery spirituality that will illuminate Russian and world history.

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Notes

[1] When he attempts to "gnaw back," he ends up gnawing himself. The avenger Ivan has arranged it thus, since the worst torture that can befall a human being, according to him, is to "want to retaliate, but be unable to do so" ("khotet' otmstit', i ne moch' otmstit'," 1973, 1, 282).

[2] The bottomless "abyss" without exits presumably, is hell where, as the Gospels tell us, there is a great deal of "gnashing of teeth." Christopher Putney points out that Gogol seems to have borrowed images from Dante's "Inferno" for his depiction of hell in this story, especially in the presentation of that monster in the abyss "whose enormous size makes him unique among the others" and whose "colossal density" prevents him rising out of earth, but whose "slightest movement causes terrible earthquakes" (1999, 194). This monster does not belong to Petro's relatives, but seems modeled on Lucifer himself.

[3] Komarovsky's "immortality" is also emphasized by the fact that he shoulders several intertextual roles, for example, that of Count Totsky in Dostoevsky's *The Idiot* ("Idiot") who seems very concerned about the education, health and well-being of his little ward Nastasya, while actually just grooming her for the role of his future mistress. The seduction episode in DZh may owe something to Ivan Bunin's "Light Breathing" ("Legkoe dykhanie") as well and also to Zinaida Pasternak's (Pasternak's second wife's) biography. See N. Pasternak, Feinberg (eds.). Zinaida Pasternak was of partly Italian origins, which emphasizes the similarity between her and the half-French, half-Belgian Lara (if her Belgian father really was her father).

[4] There are details linking the devilish father with his apparently innocent daughter, such as Katerina's boots having "silver hooves" (*podkovy*) rather than silver heels. For a discussion of these and other almost imperceptible ties between Katerina and the sorcerer, see Langer 1990, 334–360.

[5] In this respect Lara somewhat resembles the exploited young girl in Chekhov's miniature story "Sleepy" ("Spat' khochetsia") who is driven to her terrible crime of murdering an infant from sheer exhaustion, forced to keep awake both day and night as she is.

[6] In *Hedda Gabler*, the heroine hones her shooting skills in order to kill the man she loves, should he fail to live up to her vision of him — in the end she kills herself. Lara is also acting as many (women) terrorists of the times who plotted to kill odious public figures.

[7] To demonstrate how intertwined the many inter-textual codes of DZh are, one could mention Lara's stay with Rufina, an old friend (or jealous old flame?) of Komarovsky's. Rufina was to take care of Lara during her illness after the shooting incident, but, instead, she relentlessly pursued, her accusing her of hypocrisy. Rufina, for example, claimed that Lara was posing as Goethe's Gretchen so as to appear mysterious and exciting. At first, Rufina's parallel seems far-fetched, but it does have some validity. Thus Gretchen, sexually enslaved to her seducer, was morally guilty of her mother's death, as is Lara of her mother's suicide attempt. If Rufina has prophetic powers, she may also have pre-envisioned Lara's near infanticide. Lara will hand her daughter Tanya (by Zhivago) over to strangers in whose "care" the child almost dies. If Lara is a Gretchen-figure, this makes Komarovsky into a Faust. The lawyer does have a friend called "Satanidi" and a dog (Jack) who resembles a hellhound of the "black poodle" type. According to Zhivago, we are all born Fausts (293). If so, Komarovsky is a Faust who betrayed the Faustian "striving" for the ever-elusive goal that alone redeems man (even when he errs), yielding to sensual pleasure and stagnating spiritually instead.

[8] Chapter two of DZh, which deals with Lara's family and background, has the title "A Girl from a Different World" ("Devochka iz drugogo kruga," 21).

9 The Cossack Danilo of course greatly differs from the *intelligent* Dr. Zhivago. However, he is less of a male chauvinist warrior than he sometimes is made out to be. In spite of a great deal of verbal abuse of his wife, he does not act like his Cossack predecessor Stenka Razin who hurled his captive mistress over board when his men demanded it. Even though he does quote their famous saying that by spending too much time with women, a man becomes a woman (*baba*) himself, he does not take the opportunity to throw Katerina into the water (during their Dnepr crossing) to regain his sense of masculinity. Throughout the tale Danilo has a strong premonition that "the old days" of Cossack male bonding, ceaseless fighting and clear-cut divisions between friend and foe, as well as male and female roles, are irrevocably gone and although he deplores this development, he already acts differently from a "classical" Cossack.

10 The black-bearded man who used an axe to kill his victim ("toporom zarubil," 528) evokes *Emelyan* Pugachev, as is also brought out by the fact that the foster-mother sings the following ditty, while sitting on the chest she has moved over the cellar lid: "Meli, mol, Emel'ia, tvoia nedelia, a ia na sunduke, i kliuchi u menia v kulake," (528). The key in her "fist" (*kulak*) apparently links the foster mother to the class of the "kulaks" — certainly greed is part of her undoing.

11 To these belongs Iurii Shcheglov. He argues that the novel's "coincidences" (which never are camouflaged, but, on the contrary, always emphasized) and "masked identities" (likewise always made transparent, as in the case of Antipov being the same person as Strelnikov) derive from Western literary conventions. Pasternak parodies (or creates pastiches on) Western adventure literature and melodrama, for his own purposes. These are complex, but are perhaps "manifestations of a lofty organizational principle operating in a world in which all events, forming the personages' fates, are predetermined, calculated and coordinated by some centralized reason" (1991, 192, 196). I am not in disagreement with Shcheglov, although I believe the characters have free will in Pasternak's novel. There is a "centralized reason" (God) that "arranges" meaningful patterns in those lives that are based on free decisions for the good. The belief in negative pre-determinism, which denies responsibility and posits "inevitability" instead, is something that takes control over those who adhere to it, however, and these people fall victim to compulsive patterns of behavior, develop obsessive ideas and substitute the observation of reality with blind fanaticism. The "inevitabilists" are trapped in negative chance patterns, whereas believers in free decisions are "rewarded" by meaningfully structured lives , where positive coincidence is meaningful.

12 Kostoyed-Amursky displays an exceptional sensitivity to his own well being already in the Trans-Siberian train. Fearing the slightest draft and every- and any-thing "harmful," he even surpasses Chekhov's "Man in a Shell" ("Chelovek v futliare"). Thus he belongs to the category of "encased" revolutionaries in the novel, who shut themselves off from the real world, increasingly confusing their own perceptions and needs with the objective reality they purportedly believe in. Other personages in this category are the opium-addicted partisan Liverii -Liberius (whom Kostoyed joins at one stage of his career) and the deaf-mute anarchist Klintsov-Pogorevshikh.

13 Lara's husband Antipov-Strelnikov (nicknamed Rasstrelnikov, the Executioner) belongs to a nobler line of revolutionaries than Kostoyed-Amursky, or Liverii. His

fanaticism is based on sincere convictions and bitter life experiences and in his confession to Zhivago, before his suicide, he admits to having been deluded.

[14] Wörn, in his detailed study of the drama states that Faina is the incarnation of the Russian ideal and her companion of the "evil power of czarism" that has cast its spells over her. He also states that the companion resembles Count Witte, then the dominating personality in Russian politics (1974, 145, 151).

[15] The fact that "The Landlady" is closely linked to "The Terrible Vengeance" is an accepted fact in literary criticism at least since Andrei Bely's famous study "Masterstvo Gogolia." See also, for example, Frank 1976, 334.

[16] For a discussion of the dreamer type as emerging in this tale and as inspired by Gogol's "Nevsky Prospect" ("Nevskii prospekt") among other texts, see Frank 1976, pp. 332–342.

[17] Frank does not believe that Ordynov is a utopian Socialist of the type found in the Petrashevsky circle to which Dostoevsky belonged at the time of writing this story (1976, 335). It seems to me that Ordynov is exactly such a utopian and that one of the points that the story makes is that utopias and reality — especially Russian reality — are farther apart than the Ordynovs can imagine. It is this inability of theirs to assess Russian reality realistically that makes them so ineffectual.

[18] An old hag of a servant woman actually makes up a fourth member of the household, at least during daytime. Of course, the cramped space is more allegorical than real. As Rudolf Neuhäuser was the first to point out, the "landlady" of the title is Russia herself and, as such, she "embodies the Russian folk, equally ready to harbor the Ordynovs as the Murins" (i.e. the liberal reformers of the land and the [sectarian] traditionalists). See his *Das Frühwerk Dostoewskijs*, Heidelberg: Carl Winter, 1978; pp. 176–189.

[19] Vissarion Belinskij, as is well known, did not like the story; he was especially sarcastic about its "pathetic" aspect: "What they said to one another, why they waved their arms, grimaced, attitudinized, swooned, sank into comas, and recovered consciousness we have no idea, because we did not understand a single word in all these long, pathetic monologues." Quoted from Seduro (1957, 8).

[20] The "green meadow" image thus appears in both Gogol's and Dostoevsky's tales. Bely used it for his essay "Lug zelenyi" where he develops one of his versions of the pani Katerina myth — an anti-industrial and pro-ecological one.

[21] As in DZh, there is an intertwining of codes in Dostoevsky's tale where Murin, like Komarovsky, is linked to Faust-texts (in the prehistory of the tale). Thus he brings Katerina a box of jewels, imitating Mephisto's seduction of Gretchen with the help of precious stones. Katerina introduces her own twist though by going to her mother and pretending she thinks the jewels are for her, taunting her mother into stating that she, the mother, very well knows who they are meant for. Katerina here acts like a true *besenok*, a more wicked one than Lara.

[22] On one occasion, Murin addresses Katerina and Ordynov as "edinoutrobnye" (1972, 1, 304), which is a strange epithet to use, even allowing for folksy speech. Murin also says that Katerina and Ordynov have become like "siblings" ("pobratalisia") while adding that they "sliubilis', slovno liubovniki." The incest syndrome is further intensified when Katerina insists that she wants to be like a "sister" to Ordynov ("spoznai sestritsu," 1, 291) while not refusing the role of "liuba."

[23] Andrej Bely strongly denies that Gogol's pani Katerina is in any way — consciously or subconsciously — involved with her father's crimes or that she secretly shares his desires. He therefore strongly criticizes "freidisty" for such interpretations (Belyi, 1934, 61, 288).

[24] That there was such an event in Murin's life seems corroborated by the statements of the police agent Iaroslav Il'ich; he tells Ordynov that Murin once attacked a young merchant without any apparent cause. Apparently this attack did not end in the merchant's death, however, or the merchant never had any designs on Katerina and was attacked for other reasons. Katerina's "ravings" could thus be a mixture of fact and fiction.

[25] The line "ch'ia ruka ne podnimet nozha" is found in Blok's poem "Guardian Angel" ("Angel-khranitel'," 1906) where the motif of incest is included. Thus the poet calls his beloved "sestra, i nevesta, i doch'" (sister, and bride, and daughter) and later on "zhena" (wife). Since the poem, among other themes, also deals with an unsuccessful revolt (the 1905 revolution) and Blok's Beloved often fullfils the function of incarnating Russia, this poem may be seen as part of the "Katerina-code." Blok's wife (to whom the poem is dedicated) was specifically assigned the role of pani Katerina in his Russia mythology.

[26] See the Commentary to "Khozaika" (Dostoevsky, 1, 508). The folkloric style of Dostoevsky's characterization of Katerina supports the view that its heroine represents the "popular soul"; to take but one example, she cries "v tri ruch'ia" when she tells her "terrible story" to Ordynov. So does "Princess" Lara in Zhivago's poem "Fairytale" ("Skazka"), when waking up from nightmares of the past.

[27] Murin's "fiery glance" darts out "from under his bushy, somber brows ("iz-pod navisshikh, khmurykh brovei," 268); when reading to Katerina, the old man wrinkles his brow ("on khmuril brovi," 280).

[28] If so, then "The Landlady" indicates that Dostoevsky was losing faith in his utopian socialist dreams and considering a religious solution for Russia's problems even before the routing of the Petrashevsky circle.

[29] "Nechaiannaia radost'" is not only a well known icon-type but also the title of one of Alexander Blok's early collections of poetry (later dissolved into the second volume of the trilogy Blok's poetry eventually formed). Themes from the 1905 revolution dominate in this collection. The "Blok-code" is strong in DZh. See Irene Masing-Delic (1982).

[30] As Bely points out (in "Masterstvo Gogolia"), the heroines of Gogol's and Dostoevsky's early prose develop into the Nastasya Filippovna type in the works of the later Dostoevsky, i.e. into women who cannot accept forgiveness and insist on their "sinfulness," even though nobody else does.

[31] Ostrovsky's play was perceived as a direct and polemical response to Dostoevsky's "The Landlady." Whereas Dostoevsky's Katerina returns to her oppressor, Ostrovsky's refuses to rejoin the "dark kingdom" of oppression, even at the cost of her life. See Jakubovich, 1997, 108–116.

[32] In some ways, Sima's discourse offers a religious version of Vera Pavlovna's "Dreams" in Chernyshevsky's utopian socialist novel *What Is to Be Done?* ("Chto delat'?").

[33] "Poverkh bar'erov" was the title of Pasternak's first collection of poetry.

3.
Saving the Heritage

Larissa — Lolita, or Catharsis and Dolor, in the *Artist-Novels* *Doktor Zhivago* and *Lolita*

> Vchera, kak boga statuetka,
> Nagoi rebenok byl razbit.
>
> Pasternak

Vladimir Nabokov's dislike of Boris Pasternak's novel *Doctor Zhivago*[1] is well documented and analyzed.[2] To him it was a "Docteur Mertvago" that only "romantically inclined chambermaids" could conceivably be "agog over"[3] and that, like Carthage, should be "destroyed."[4] Already the "burning-candle scene" in Pasternak's novel in which Lara, a "fallen woman" confesses her sins to Antipov, a (future) murderer, would have been enough to set his aesthetic defense system on alarm, since he thought the following sentence from Dostoevsky's *Crime and Punishment* to be one hard to beat for "sheer stupidity": "The candle was flickering out, dimly lighting up in the poverty-stricken room the murderer and the harlot who had been reading together the eternal book."[5] Encountering a novel (*Doctor Zhivago*), drawing upon a by this time firmly rejected pre-text (*Crime and Punishment*), Nabokov's reaction to Pasternak's work apparently was one of multiple rejections.[6] No wonder, he apparently did not finish it.

Nor is it likely that Pasternak would have appreciated *Lolita*, had he read it (it appears not to be known if he did), not because of its "indecency" perhaps, but — to speculate — because of its perceived lack of a redeeming perspective and its privileging of "sterile individualism." He is known not to have wanted the poems of his novel translated by Nabokov (in 1956), because he believed the latter to be "too jealous of [his] wretched position [in Russia] to do it properly."[7] Nabokov's biographer Brian Boyd thinks this a "curious remark," since there was not much in Pasternak's position "to envy."[8] Perhaps Pasternak's perception is not as bizarre as it sounds, since he probably meant that Nabokov was envious of him as a writer who, although persecuted by his own nation, *had* a nation to refer to, a framework to rely on that was broader than his individual fate, in short that he, Pasternak, might be a dissident, an inner émigré even, but that he was not an outer émigré turned into a foreigner.[9] As is well known, Russian writers have tended to think a martyr's lot an enviable one, as long as it was linked with service to Russia and its People (*narod*). Pasternak, like

Anna Akhmatova, may have thought that those who "had left their native soil,[10] and, especially, those who had relinquished their language and apparently accepted Western values in their exiled existence, had to renounce any claims on being a "Russian" writer in any, but a purely ethnic, sense. Hence, they must envy those who were also culturally and spiritually Russian writers. Nabokov, the archetypal displaced person, must have felt some form of "envy" of those who had decided to stay at any personal cost is a line of thought Pasternak may have pursued when making his statement about Nabokov's "envy."[11] Certainly Martyn Edelweiss of Nabokov's "Podvig" (1932) has moments when he forgets the changes Soviet rule has wrought in his country and does envy those who live in his homeland and hear their own language, thus reversing the perspective of Iurii Olesha's hero Kavalerov in the novel *Envy* ("Zavist'," 1927); the latter dreams of being a successful individual in the West, with all the "glory" coming to him alone, as opposed to being a member of a Soviet collective where individual accomplishments are not recognized. "Envy" of this kind was explored fictionally on both sides of the divide then and may have contributed to Pasternak's remark.

Regardless of whether Nabokov was "envious," or not, this article is not out to speculate on the specifics of mutual artistic and personal rejection, or to discuss its possible causes in contrasting poetics, aesthetics, ideologies, and biographical, social, or other circumstances. Rather, it aims at pointing to certain surface similarities between the two works on the level of plot construction and character constellation and to hypothesize on the reasons why there would be such parallels in view of no apparent direct linkages, such as shared prototypes, knowledge of each others' novels at the time of writing, personal contacts, correspondence, and so forth. For this discussion, the introductory statements above are relevant, insofar as *Doctor Zhivago* is not only a *Kuenstlerroman* (artist-novel), but also a national epic, at least in the sense that it deals with historical events that changed the fate of Russia. In contrast, *Lolita* seems to present "nothing but" the obsessions and sufferings of an alienated and perverse individual, an émigré, who seems devoid of any national identity and who is quite incapable of breaking out of the confines of his idiosyncratic ego, as well as, of course, letting go of his tormented child-victim. Let us now turn to the similarities between these two very dissimilar novels, to determine their extent and possible shared sources.

Already early on in the narrative of *Doctor Zhivago* (1957; DZh from now on)[12] we learn of the seduction of the schoolgirl Lara by the fashionable liberal-libertine defense lawyer and *bon vivant* of mature years, Viktor Ippolitovich Komarovsky. Lara is perhaps not young enough to qualify for "nymphet" in Humbert Humbert's eyes in *Lolita* (1955)[13] and being well-developed for her age presumably disqualifies her further. Nevertheless, she too is a defenseless

child (16 years of age) who is abused by a ruthless adult who thinks of himself as being exempt from conventional morality, just as Lolita (12 years of age) is. Actually, Zhivago later recalls young Lara in fairly "nymphetic" terms, namely as a "puny and thin little girl" ("shchuplen'kaia, khuden'kaia devochka") in a school uniform who exuded the "electric charges" of that stunning beauty that either "kills on the spot" or fills the beholder with a searing love forever (DZh, 437). Lara is intertextually linked to the heroine of Bunin's brief lyrical prose piece "Light Breathing" "Legkoe dykhanie" 1916)[14] and Bunin's young Olya — who also is seduced by a bon vivant lawyer well beyond middle age — does impart to Larissa something of her "lightness" — of an indefinable gracefulness, a magic that cannot be captured in words and is irresistible to those who perceive it. Lara will develop into a mature woman, which Lilith-like Lolita will not (dying in childbirth as she must, since procreation is not the existential function of Lilith-figures),[15] but the "nymphet prelude" to her adult life marks her forever.

Unlike DZh, *Lolita* (L from now on)[16] is in its entirety focused on the sexual exploitation of a child, the fey-like Lolita whose "lolly-pop" name — so erotically and "phonetically-linguistically" savored by Humbert in the famous opening of the novel — is a sugar-coating over her real name: *Dolores*. This name reveals the true reality of her, as well as her tormentor's, torments (see, for example, pp. 39, 117). To return to similarities: both Komarovsky and Humbert are men educated in a humanist tradition, but they both use their experience and power as respectable professionals and apparently successful members of society (less so in Humbert's case) to keep their, at first enchanted, but soon disillusioned, girl-victims trapped. Both, likewise, employ every means at their disposal to do so, from bribery to threats, from emotional blackmail and intimidation to crude violence. In the process of trapping their victims, they themselves become increasingly trapped, until Humbert frees himself of his obsessions in the process of writing, thus distancing himself from himself. Komarovsky, however, is beyond redemption, remaining a "monster" (*chudovishche*) unable to break out of his primitive sub-humanity.[17] Lacking the smug self-satisfaction of Komarovsky, the vile "ape" Humbert succeeds in breaking out of his cage in the end, becoming human in the process.[18] Perhaps he is able to undergo a metamorphosis, because as a — finally — genuine artist he knows that breaking the patterns of automatization is the sine qua non of artistry. Komarovsky does not have an ounce of artistic talent and is, consequently, trapped by the laws of nature, or perhaps the laws of vulgarity (*poshlost'*), but in any case laws that include the notions that egotism is beneficial, that getting maximum enjoyment out of life is recommendable and that survival of the fittest is best for everyone in the long run.

In both cases, the girls' mothers are involved as jealous rivals of their own daughters and incestuous triangles arise. In both novels also, the mothers

are incurably silly, quite vulgar, on the lookout for erotic adventure, and on problematic terms with their daughters. Both girl-children have the same assessment of the situation they are finding themselves in. Lolita tells Humbert that her mother will "divorce [him] and strangle [her]," if she finds out about his true desires, and Lara puts it this way: "If mother finds out, she will kill me. Kill her, Lara, and then herself" (45). Both mothers are violently eliminated early on in the novels after they find out that their lovers have affairs with, or lust for, their daughters. Lara's mother makes a suicide attempt and apparently recovers after it, but she disappears from the textual space of the novel and is never seen again. But was it suicide or attempted murder? Komarovsky is an expert at inducing suicides by offering tidbits of "appropriate" information to his victims — as he did when he drove Zhivago senior to throwing himself out of the train they were riding in. Whatever the case, Lara's mother disappears from the plot and even seems totally forgotten by all, including her own daughter. Lolita's mother, Charlotte Haze — having escaped Humbert's contemplated murder in Hourglass Lake — dies in a car accident, indirectly caused by Humbert (or McFate, as Humbert sees it). Lolita too seems to forget her mother, but in both cases, this may be more a repression of memories than actual oblivion. In both novels, the mothers are indeed silly and banal creatures, but the fact that also they once were young and desirable and that — however "silly" now — they too are to be pitied, no less than their silly daughters, does emerge in various ways.

In both novels, the situation is further complicated by the fact that the "little girls" actively add to the evil of the triangular situation, at least initially when it still seems to them that it is a matter of being just a bit "naughty," and before they realize the consequences of their "consenting" to sexual relations. At the early stage of their respective affairs, they are their elderly lovers' accomplices — one a *besenok* (DZh, 47) who for a while greatly enjoys her premature sexual pleasures (Lara), the other an already "corrupted" child who even takes the sexual initiative (Lolita) when her still inhibited lover is planning to limit sexual contact to solipsistic satisfaction in the style of the ballet "Afternoon of a Faun."[19] It will be remembered that the most scandalous scene of this ballet is the final one when the "Faun" — danced by Nijinski — appears to have an orgasm, pressing a lost garment of his elusive nymph to his lower body. Both sexually experienced girls remain "innocent" however — children in mind and heart — regardless of what happens to their bodies,[20] and the loss of their childhood marks them beyond any possible erasure. They are not demonic seductresses, as their seducers would like to see them, but pubescent children. Thus their captors' guilt is undiminished, as they conflate the roles of lover and father in their wards' minds, in the well-known Dostoevskian tradition.[21] Both victims of premature initiation into

tainted adulthood try to escape from their tormentors by seeking refuge with other men (Quilty, Antipov-Strelnikov) without finding a safe harbor, however, rather exchanging one entrapment for another. Their liaisons with "good" men (Schiller, Zhivago) are of short duration. Both die tragically (Lolita at a very young age, in childbirth, Lara before her time in a concentration camp), but are immortalized in art. Ironically, in Lolita's case, it is not by her "good husband" that she is transformed into a literary heroine, although (or because?) his name is Richard F. (Friedrich?) Schiller (Skiller), but by her former tormentor turned true writer, i.e. into someone, who is able to separate life from art instead of conflating the two in the tradition of *fin-de-siecle* Decadence. In Lara's case, she is transformed into poetry by her savior Zhivago who seems to offer her, not only an artistic, but also mystical, immortality, linked to the immortality of her nation and land and eventually even world history, as he casts her in the role of a repentant Mary Magdalene and envisions some apocalyptic jolt to world history in the last poems of the novel.[22] Also, both Zhivago's and Humbert's last romantic attachments (while both continue to remember their "eternal loves") are to similarly "narrowed down" women: Zhivago's Marina is mainly a "voice," and Humbert's Rita — is invariably in a state of alcoholic intoxication. There is no attempt to present them as fully rounded personalities in either novel.

There are parallels on the level of detail as well. Humbert Humbert, for example, has a fleeting fantasy that he might impregnate Lolita and have her "produce eventually a nymphet with [his] blood in her exquisite veins, a Lolita the Second" (162) and he even contemplates a "Lolita the Third" on whom he could practice "the art of being a granddad" (163). Komarovsky who hates children, nevertheless displays great concern for Lara's daughter Katenka, apparently having similar plans in mind (DZh, 431), and, if so, his scenario is as grotesque as Humbert's, since it involves a "prehistoric monster" as Lara calls him (see note 19) and a small child. One of Humbert's acquaintances at *Beardsley* College is the universally liked and socially accepted, vapid (chess) bungler and homosexual Gaston *God*in, who functions as a "good herald" (169) in his life. He is indeed not a threat to Humbert since his designs are set on small boys, not little girls.[23] One of Komarovsky's acquaintances is *Satan*idi who encourages his lascivious affair with Lara, acting in some kind of Mephistophelean capacity in relation to Komarovsky's "Faust" in pursuit of Gretchen-Lara. So both God and the Devil (Satan) seem to make fleeting appearances in the novels, not without the impact of Dostoevsky (who of course would not take to the image of God presented by Nabokov), but who lets devils, demons and angels visit our planet in earthly form.[24] Both novels describe an intimately physiological love — in spite of the fact that love also has the most exalted functions in both novels — in the tradition of Dante's and Petrarch's cult of their Beatrice and Laura, of romantic and symbolist *Prekrasnaia Dama* and *Eternal Feminine* cults.[25]

In Pasternak's novel, it is, in fact, not the beastly and monstrous Komarovsky, but the noble and spiritual Zhivago, who suffers from some kind of metaphysical-physiological sense of rivalry with his earthy and sensualist competitor when he declares that, in regard to Komarovsky, he is "insanely jealous," even "of the drops of sweat" on Lara's skin, or the microbes of "infectious diseases" carried by the air (DZh, 411).[26] Humbert, although in total control of Lolita's "exterior" body, also wants to turn her "inside out," savoring "her young matrix, her unknown heart, her nacreous liver, the sea-grapes of her lungs" and "comely twin kidneys" (154). He does of course also know all about her menstrual cycle and this physiological motif is one that Pasternak introduced before Nabokov in what may be seen as a prologue to *Doktor Zhivago*, *Zhenya Luvers' Childhood* (*Detstvo Liuvers*, 1922).[27] In both novels, physiological detail may be seen as a comment on the existential situation of womanhood — on woman's bondage to matter of which she yet is the most beautiful and spiritual manifestation, of her vulnerability and flawed state, of her moral and physical fragility and victimization by the "freer" sex. On the level of general parallels, both novels belong to the genre of the *Kuenstlerroman* even though one artist becomes a valid one only in the purifying process of writing the confession of his past when he frees himself of the lust and terror that has tortured him (Humbert) and his victim, and the other is an artist-healer from the outset, who redeems — not inflicts — his Beloved's sufferings (Zhivago), trying to protect her from those who violate beauty (Komarovsky). Both artists whose whole existence is dominated by their cult of the "Feminine," however different the aspects they emphasize in it, ultimately emerge as lovers wrenched by "an agonizing and terrifying pity for women,"[28] for the female form that evokes such violent passions and criminal impulses, instead of the vision of the eternally Feminine Form of Perfect Beauty. Both are tortured by their intense co-suffering with their lovers when they see their beauty violated and trampled upon, again and again, in the best traditions of Dostovskian *porugannaia krasota*. The fact that it may be they themselves who inflict the suffering does not diminish — but perhaps intensify — that "co-suffering." Humbert, most certainly, is the one who does Lolita wrong; nevertheless, he states, in unmistakably Ivan Karamazovian fashion, that he would never forgive the sufferings of one single child, even if it could be "proven" that "in the infinite run" her sufferings did not matter" (266).[29] Both novels are therefore ultimately an apotheosis to the "heroism" it takes to be a beautiful feminine creature — fey, girl, or woman — evoking the vampire in man.[30] As Zhivago puts it "It is a daring feat to be a woman, / To inspire passion demands heroism."[31] Ultimately, both the noble lover Zhivago and the ape Humbert dream of a loftier love than raw sexuality, a "sublimation of erotic passion" in one case (Zhivago),[32] and a metamorphosis into immortal fiction in the other (Humbert), a love that would free woman from her constant

abuse, most often perpetrated by those who claim to worship her. Lust "is always gloomy," Humbert states (117) and far from glorifying it, he deems it to be "but the ancilla of art" (144). In fact, the reason why both novels contain a clear condemnation of Roman culture is that in those times "B. C." one could with a good conscience "casually" pluck "little slave flowers... between business and bath" (L, 116) — which is very much what Humbert does, but at least not "casually" and not with a "good conscience." The character Vedeniapin speaks of the "sanguine swinishness" (DZh, 10) that was deemed completely acceptable in Roman times, at least when performed by "pockmarked Caligulas."[33] In view of these and other similarities of situations, motifs and ideologemes between the novels, is there perchance some direct link?

However "tempting" it might be "to suggest a direct causal link between *Lolita* and *Doctor Zhivago*," as essayist Z. Zinik has tentatively done, it would indeed be "stretching speculation too far," as he concluded.[34] The explanation for the shared motifs in the two novels, as already indicated by the referrals to Dostoevsky above,[35] should rather be sought in a shared literary tradition, a shared cultural heritage, in, as Zinik states, shared myths. Even if Humbert himself is not of Russian extraction (but he may be, see the discussion below), he is made part of Russian culture by his author. For example, he lives by the scenario of the ballet "Afternoon of a Faun" choreographed and initially danced by *Ballets Russes* star Nijinski in Paris in invariably scandalous performances — the Faun proves to be a fetishist and masturbator in the famous last scene. Humbert's enchanted Greek pastures may not be the green meadows of antiquity, but the Paris metro trains full of children, and later on the Haze davenport, but the similarity of sexual preferences is there. He also knows Russian literature well enough to speak of Pushkin's Zemfira from "The Gypsies" (229), and of Turgenev's *A Nest of Gentlefolk* (271). Above all, he is one of the main participants of the Pani-Katerina myth of Russian classical and Silver Age literature and culture, as it was developed by Gogol, Dostoevsky, Bely, Blok and others. He is not only an ape, hound, vampire, and would-be faun(let), but also the "wicked sorcerer" of the Pani-Katerina literary myth.

As I have shown in the previous article, Pasternak's novel is permeated by the literary myth that originated in Gogol's "The Terrible Vengeance," was further developed in Dostoevsky's "The Landlady," and *The Idiot*, also migrating — via Ostrovsky's *The Thunderstorm* ("Groza") — into Blok's *Song of Fate* ("Pesnia sud'by") and Bely's *The Silver Dove* ("Serebrianyi golub'"), as well as his collection of essays *The Green Meadow* ("Lug zelenyi"). This very dynamic myth's stable features usually include: an elderly wicked "sorcerer," who harbors an incestuous passion for his own daughter; his main crime, which is the murder of his wife or mistress; it also usually includes his daughter's support of her much older seducer, even to the point of condoning the elimination of her own

mother. In spite of her crimes, the heroine, furthermore, is most often seen as a pure creature in this literary myth, as her most common name, Katerina, indicates — more sinned against than sinning, a victim of powerful masculine forces, which she is too weak to resist. Specifically, she is often hypnotized, or lulled into sleep, and thus deprived of her will. Thus Katerina is Beauty coveted, exploited, seduced and deformed, but not entirely a victim, since, at least, part of her is on the side of evil. One aspect of the literary *mifotvorchestvo* developing the Pani Katerina material into ever new variations transformed the Gogolian-Dostoevskian gothic-romantic story of taboo-breaking sinful passion into a mythology of Russia herself. It became the story of her fateful past in bondage to cruel tyrants who refused to let her develop her wondrous potential, because they were so obsessed with her beauty that they wanted to be the sole possessors of it. As already mentioned, their most common tactic is to lull their beloved Pani Katerina — Russia — into sleep, depriving her of her willpower and consciousness, making her into their half-willing accomplice and tool. No crime is too terrible for Katerina's captors to ensure their omnipotence over her soul, and their autocratic rule of Russia, whether it is the elimination of rivals, seduction of a minor, or murder and incest. These tactics prevent a sullied, but essentially pure, Russia from stepping out into the realm of freedom and regained purity. Already in Dostoevsky's story, "The Landlady," Katerina's paternal-tyrannical captor seems to be an Ivan the Terrible figure,[36] whereas she herself is a Russia, yearning for catharsis and liberation, but too weak and fearful to escape tyranny. Afraid of facing a freedom she has never before known, she betrays her would-be liberator (in symbolic terms, the intelligentsia) and returns to her autocratic "protector." This, of course, is exactly what Lara does too, when she abandons her savior Zhivago and returns to her "monstrous" seducer Komarovsky. In allegorical-symbolic terms, she represents that aspect of Russia that fears freedom. Both Dostoevsky's Katerina and Pasternak's Lara have what Dostoevsky, in "The Landlady" calls, a "weak heart." A weak heart is one that substitutes the fulfillment of whims and caprices for genuine freedom, which takes tokens instead of the "real thing" and which is easily bribed by a new toy, a new gift, or a false promise. It is this aspect of the myth that Pasternak (via Blok) develops in his *Doctor Zhivago*, a novel that, beyond individual fates, is concerned with the role that the Tyrant and the Artist play in Russia's national destiny. On this level there is an allegorical-symbolic level in Pasternak's novel that attempts to capture the essence of Russian history as a Gothic tale of horror, in which Russia is a "blind beauty" forever making the wrong choice, but also learning from her experiences and increasingly yearning for illumination.[37] The novel's Epilogue intimates that Russia is ready for a taste of freedom in post WWII times, and that she is "waking up" from her hypnotic sleep, wherefore expectations that the dark shadow of her latest tyrant may be fading away

are voiced. Zhivago's last poem that presents Russia as the repentant sinner Mary Magdalene and History as "bursting into flame" seems to point to a new Revolution being "around the corner," one in which not political, but spiritual, goals will finally be at the forefront, redeeming previous misguided efforts at materialistic liberation.[38] Perhaps Nabokov actually perceived this mythic-symbolic-allegorical level in Pasterak's novel (even though he apparently did not finish reading it), and, if so, it may have added to his dislike of it, since this type of allegory had become alien to his aesthetics. In his early poetry he did allegorize-symbolize-mythologize Russia as a woman however, in a Blokian vein, and therefore he may have perceived the *Rodina*-myth in Pasternak's novel also.[39] Let us now briefly turn to some specific aspects of Pasternak's individual contribution to the Gothic myth of Russia as developed by Gogol and Dostoevsky and later by the symbolists, notably Blok and Bely.

Larissa, although not bearing the name Katerina (her daughter does), is the innocent and naïve, but also impish (*besenok*) and "weak-hearted" beauty and representative of Russia that the evil sorcerer Komarovsky casts his sexual spells over. These spells are the lure of pre-revolutionary hedonistic *belle epoque* culture, the gaiety of which hid social iniquity and exploitation of Woman. Komarovsky is very clearly cast in the role of a magician and demonic puppeteer who knows the art of converting the living girl Lara into an automaton and marionette, a Coppelia, or perhaps, black swan Odile dancing to his, Rothbart's, tune (*Swan Lake*). In the well known episode where the "boys" (*mal'chiki* in the Dostoevskian sense of young people in quest of "Truth," 59) Iurii Zhivago and Misha Gordon watch the "silent scene" between the "puppeteer" Komarovsky and his "marionette," Lara, Iurii perceives "a frightening magic" at work (61). It is at this moment that Iurii understands that male erotic power is "pitilessly destructive" (62), while the feminine principle, however much in league with her evil destroyer, needs help and is sincere in her pleas for redemption, however often she herself will betray her own cause. Lara finally breaks free from the sorcerer's evils spells (including a dramatic shooting scene) only to find another captivity in Antipov's Marxist "ice-palace of reason" — this fairytale motif from H.C. Andersen's tale "The Snow Queen" is clearly evoked in the Antipov story in several ways.[40] When Lara meets her true liberator, Zhivago, she tastes the true freedom of the creative spirit but it frightens her in its unheard-of novelty — facing novelty has always frightened mankind and especially womankind — and she returns voluntarily to her captivity with Komarovsky, proving to have a "weak heart" of the Dostoevskian type — one that prefers a "Grand Inquisitor," or "Puppeteer" to a True Bridegroom (in the biblical sense). Although, Zhivago offers her liberation from the exploitation of sensuality (Komarovsky is the tyrant of her body), as well as from ideological tyranny (Antipov-Strelnikov

is the tyrant of her mind), Lara rejects the prospect of dangerous freedom, refusing to "take flight" and becoming the Seagull her name implies she is.[41] Perhaps her daughter Katerina will have another chance to break out of the cage of ancient reflex responses.[42] The echoes of Dostoevsky's *The Idiot* with Zhivago as a Prince Myshkin figure and Lara as Nastasya Filippovna, enamored with her own sinfulness, and preferring death under Rogozhin's knife to a new life with her true Bridegroom, are there in the novel too, of course, together with many others from the myth of an enchanting and enchanted Russia that fears waking up from the "sleep" the sorcerer has the power to immerse her in.[43]

Nabokov's *L* obviously does not contribute to the development of this national variant of the Pani Katerina myth, where the heroine is linked to the feminine essence of Russia, representing her soul, or some such concept. There is no need to demonstrate that Lolita in no way represents Russia or Russian national issues. Nevertheless, there are elements, which Nabokov takes from the Pani Katerina myth and develops in his own way, for example, the mythologeme of the magician who casts his defiling spells on a young, female whom he holds captive. While appropriating the classical Gogol and Dostoevsky stories in his plot construction as outlined above for his own purposes, he, specifically, adds another evil sorcerer to the series already discussed — Andrei Bely's carpenter Mitrii Mironych Kudeiarov in *The Silver Dove* (1909).[44]

In this novel Bely develops the national Pani Katerina myth, but splits the image of Russia, as Blok had done before in his lyrical play *Song of Fate*, into two: the refined Katerina (the Western aspect of Russia) and the peasant woman Matrena (her Eastern hypostasis). Bely retains a unified wicked sorcerer mastering magic spells, but making his Kudeiarov into a peculiarly "double-faced" character, both physically (his face seems to point in two directions) and mentally; he is a sectarian — both "pious" and vicious, practicing and preaching some extraordinary rituals.[45] Kudeiarov has no interest in little girls, but, as an impotent, he has strange ways of gaining erotic satisfaction, one of which includes lulling his female victim, Matrena, into sleep, as the literary myth posits, and taking "possession" of her in his own special way. Particularly interesting is the technique he uses when making Matrena into a kind of *somnambula* and turning her into a "cocoon," as will be seen below. This is the negative magic power he has, as opposed to impregnating, life-giving energies. As his "crooked fingers weave a golden thread" (232), he imperceptibly captures the coveted Matrena in a "net of light" (233) as well as in a net of incomprehensible, but effective, spells that induce drowsiness. He "is" in fact a spider spinning "thousands of glistening threads" out of his own body, pulling them out of his fingers, his breast and abdomen. Sitting in a corner, "he moves his arms rapidly, just like a spider quickly moving his legs, weaving his threads," and eventually he seems suspended in the air, "hanging in his own

net" (233). Matrena herself sees and hears nothing wrapped as she is in a net of glittering rays that have turned into fine threads, forming a "golden, terrible metal network" and lulled as she is into sleep by powerful incantations.

It is this spider-sorcerer that Humbert tries to emulate while living in the Haze household, perhaps because he has read Bely's novel, well-read in Russian literature as he is, and sympathizes with Kudeiarov's attempt to impregnate Matrena, while not "really" doing so (leaving the crude aspect of the job to Daryalsky). All the weaving of glittering cocoons around Matrena just described is after all impotent Kudeiarov's "intercourse" with Matrena, an outpouring of energies from him into her that will make a miraculous virgin birth of sorts possible (with young Daryalsky's help). As readers of this novel know, the young man proves incapable of siring a child with Matrena, being but a weak *intelligent* and another impotent liberator of imprisoned folk Russia.

Humbert too has dreams of an intercourse that transcends the ordinary kind, involving a great deal of magic. He tries to be the spider weaving his web around the Haze household, just like Kudeiarov who wraps his hut into a net of rays and light-beams and gossamer threads. He too wants to control in secret and to enchant, not realizing that he is too enchanted by his "dolorous and hazy darling" (48) with her "strange smoky eyes" (112) to be in full charge, as a true sorcerer should. Dazed,[46] he nevertheless tries his best: "Sitting in my luminous web and giving little jerks to this or that strand. *My* web is spread all over the house as I listen from my chair where I sit like a wily wizard. Is Lo in her room? Gently I tug on the silk. She is not. Just heard the toilet paper cylinder make its staccato sound as it turned; and no footfalls has my outflung filament traced from the bathroom back to her room . . . Let us have a strand of silk descend the stairs . . . Ray-like, I glide in thought to the parlor and find the radio silent (. . .). So my nymphet is not in the house at all! Gone! What I thought was a prismatic weave turns out to be but an old gray cobweb, the house is empty, is dead" (45).

This magic "weaving exercise" proves to be not a complete failure, however, since Lolita still was in the house after all and occasionally Humbert has his real triumphs. One of these is the notorious scene (it could be termed the "Afternoon of an Ageing Faun scene") when he manages to have an orgasm with Lolita spread over him on the couch, but without any more direct contact: "I felt proud of myself. I had stolen the honey of a spasm without impairing the morals of a minor. Absolutely no harm done. The *conjuror* had poured milk, molasses, foaming champagne into a young lady's new white purse; and lo, the purse was intact" (57). Here Humbert has succeeded in continuing Kudeiarov's tradition of "creative intercourse" that transcends the "norm" through "magic." Possibly yet another echo of the *Silver Dove* is to be found in the fact that Humbert in his moment of ecstatic bliss does not see the real Lolita, but "his own creation,

another, fanciful Lolita — perhaps, more real than Lolita; overlapping, encasing her; floating between me and her, and having no will, no consciousness — indeed, no life of her own" (57).[47] This vision of "another Lolita" recalls the creation of the "white body woven out of shimmerings (*blistanii*)" (258) that the rites of the Silver Doves produce (in the cozy home setting of Kudeiarov's hut). This vision of a wondrous form (*divno iunesheskii lik*) includes the detail of a current of "golden foaming wine" entwining the "dove-child's" (*golubinoe ditiatko*) head and "flowing" down to his shoulders in ringlets. Certainly, in both cases, this creation of a wondrous vision, better than empirical reality can produce, has its origins in a "birth by ecstasy" ("vostorgom rozhdennoe," Bely, 258). Possibly Lolita's "little doves," i.e. her adolescent breasts (45), point to Bely's novel about the sect of the Silver Doves as well. After all, *L* parodies the pani Katerina myth and the texts devoted to it.

This is not to say that Bely's Kudeiarov is the sole source of the magician Humbert' behavior. Klingsor could well be an operatic source — however little Nabokov may have cared for opera or Wagner. Lolita flanked by her "bodyguard of roses" (48), including Mary Rose and Rosaline could be part of *Parsifal's* magic garden scene. Rothbart, flapping his wings when casting his spells over his girl-swans may have left a trace as well. Humbert does speak of growing a "pair of gray wings" (*L*, 161), apparently envisioning himself as a sorcerer who would keep his "fair demon child" (161) within his realm, controlling her metamorphoses from daughter to mistress at night and mistress to daughter (during the day), by the movement of his "gray wings." Sorcerers are furthermore not Humbert's only role models. As has often been pointed out, he models himself on his idol Edgar Allan Poe and his biography and behavior share components with both Poe's biography and his characters'. Like Poe, whose last days apparently were spent in an alcoholic daze and which no one has been able to retrace in detail,[48] so gin-drinking Humbert spends unaccounted-for days after the loss of Lolita, and in his quest for Quilty. There is also the name Humbert Humbert, which Humbert has fabricated for himself on the model of Poe's "William Wilson," clearly marking his inner division. Among the sorcerers Kudeiarov is certainly there, however, as the wielder of webs of rays and threads and verbal strands of text(ure), superimposing his will on matter, quite like an artist who creates realities that are "better" than the ones given. In both cases too — Kudeiarov's and Humbert's — the sorcery is clearly evil (as it is in the Pani Katerina myth in general), pursuing narrowly personal goals, as opposed to the true magic of intensely passionate, yet disinterested, art. A sinister detail in the Humbert-Lolita story is, for example, the doll that Lolita plays with in the Haze garden. It is a "ballerina of wool and gauze," which she keeps "sticking" into his lap repeatedly (41). It is emblematic of the role "Dolly" will soon play — that of a tortured rag doll, made to jerk to the instructions of an evil ballet-master

Lara too had to obey her marionette master Komarovsky. Or, as Nabokov's "Enchanter" puts it, there was: "the noxious nexus between the puppet in her hands and the puppet-master's panting."[49]

Humbert, unlike the other sorcerers of the Pani Katerina story, is distinctly a "flop" as a magician, however. In spite of a broad range of paraphernalia, consisting of classical magicians' tools, such as a "little black book" in which he records his tricks in his "most satanic hand" (37), he is really the one to be regularly tricked in the end. Charlotte Haze, his wife, will discover this book, decipher his "satanic" script, and upset his plans. Lolita will deceive him and rebel against him; his first wife did deceive him and made this known to him. Ultimately, he is not the Spider, but the "Wounded Spider" (50), forever tricked, by "portable witches" (226) or by Quilty, or Vivian Darkbloom, or — above all — himself. Humbert is at best a parody of a wicked sorcerer even though he practices "pedophile incest," contributes (morally) to the elimination of his step-daughter's mother and holds a nymphet captive — all this while trying to overcome the irreversibility of time. Undoubtedly this quest for the recapture of lost time is the main reason why he cuts such a ridiculous figure, since a mature man acting the "faunlet" he once was, cannot but be ridiculous, a faunlet by the definition of its diminutive not being a faun, let alone a mature human male. Humbert who is so very knowledgeable about Russian literature, perhaps trusted the scenario of Pushkin's poem "I remember a Marvellous Moment" ("Ia pomniu chudnoe mgnoven'e") too much, believing that he too, like Pushkin's graced Poet, could recapture the past in all its magic — and now even greater — glory. For Humbert, however, there is no recapturing of the "wonderful moment" when he first met his Annabel Leigh on the shores of the Riviera. Lolita may be the miraculously returned Annabel Leigh, but Humbert has long ago shed his faunlet image and become an "ape."

In this context, it is necessary to raise one more question: is Humbert really a Swiss-French-Austrian-English cosmopolitan of purely West European extraction, or is there, as in the case of Martin Edelweiss (in Nabokov's *Glory*), also a Russian component in his ethnic and cultural make-up? Did he perhaps not spend all his time on the Riviera in his father's fabulous hotel, but also in a country no longer visible or accessible, since hidden by an "iron curtain"? The reason for raising this question is that, according to Humbert himself, it is the haunting power of the *coitus interruptus* with Annabel Leigh in his early teens, on the beaches of the Riviera, which has caused his mad obsession with nymphets. Never consummated, this love arrested Humbert's erotic development, instilling disgust in him for fully developed mature women. But was it solely love that never was given a full run in Humbert's case?

Perhaps Annabel Leigh was a Dutch-English girl and perhaps Humbert met her in coastal Southern France, but undoubtedly, as is emphatically

demonstrated throughout Humbert's pre-history, she was also Annabel Lee and came from Poe's "kingdom by the sea" — in other words from literature. As a creature of words, she must have been not only first love, but also the Muse of first intimations of the mysteries of artistic creation, of first ecstatic inspirations and of first blissful enjoyments inherent in wielding power over the "body" of the native tongue making it the means of expression of one's inner world. If she was such a Muse of First Creations, or the Ruler of the first phases of a poet's vita, a *coitus interruptus* could be fateful indeed, especially if the "interruption" included a sudden, ominous, irreparable and irreversible separation from a native language and culture, however cosmopolitan the admixtures to this culture had been. A political-geographical iron curtain would be impossible to penetrate for even the most ardent poet — as impossible as for the most ardent lover to ever repossess a dead child-mistress. Humbert — if he is a Russian-cosmopolitan émigré barred from his homeland and language forever — became possessed by nymphets, or, in other words, the thought of returning to beginnings and to complete what had been initiated and halted. Humber's pathology could feasibly be not so much a sexual as an artistic-cultural one, expressed in sexual imagery, and — as befits a displaced person in an alien environment — in the language of "perversion," i.e. of counterfeit, dissimulation, furtiveness and role-playing. Humbert might in fact very well be a "repressed undinist" (235), as he claims Quilty would be diagnosed by psychoanalysts, namely a writer who has lost touch with the native kingdom by the sea, or that vast potential of inspiration, of the stirrings of creativity, of feeling the magic of words that belong to their speaker, because they are his own. If Humbert is a Russian, severed from his magic childhood realms by iron curtains clamped down as unmercifully as the "doors of bliss" were barred to him in Annabel's lovely body (to speak in a Humbertian vein), then the impossibility of returning to a realm closed for ever, as impossible to return to as Annabel's nymphet womb, could explain some of his obsessiveness. Needless to say, I am not claiming that Humbert is a self-portrait of Lolita's émigré author — merely that Nabokov's statement that this novel of his was not so much "the record of [his] love affair with the romantic novel" as with the "'English language'" (*L*, 298) deserves serious attention as a key to the interpretation of the novel.[50] Certainly Humbert and Nabokov have very little in common in biographical terms, but perhaps both the author and his protagonist had to "abandon [their] natural idiom," their "infinitely docile Russian tongue" to use a "second-rate brand of English, devoid of any of those apparatuses — the baffling mirror, the black velvet backdrop, the implied associations and traditions — which the native illusionist, frac-tails flying, can magically use to transcend the heritage in his own way" (298). If this is Humbert's problem at all, namely the realization that his sorcery must forever be flawed, then, he arguably — after simulating

an assimilation of European ways — suddenly saw the chance to resurrect the past in new beginnings that seemingly replicated the past. If this is so, then Humbert's daily rape of Lolita — the image of American-English language and culture — teasing him, spurning him — however young, already used before him by others and always loved by him without return, makes sense. Then his phonetic "tasting" of her name in the first paragraph of the novel, her mockery of his language, his helpless clinging to outmoded American literary models (such as Poe),[51] his hatred of her mother's banal language and the need to escape from absorbing it against his will, also make good linguistic-cultural sense. Humbert's three times daily assaults on Lolita's youthful body, including the desire to taste her very innards (master the phonetics and penetrate to the deep layers of English semantics?), may be the story of an aging writer's dream to return to the intoxicating days of youthful creativity and to retrieve his lost artistic homeland with the help of a Muse imagined to be a reincarnation of the one left behind. The experienced prostitutes of tired Old Europe, even when they seemed young, could not evoke similar hopes in him, nor could his "almost-Russian" wife and fake-nymphet Valeria. Only the seemingly virginal Lolita, child of youthful America could stir illusions of rebirth.

Of course, one objection to this theory of *L* as a metamorphosis of a classic literary myth (the Pani Katerina myth) of Russia's national destiny into a myth of artistic exile and the search for a verbally mastered future that would merge with a resurrected past, is — once more — that Humbert is not Russian. English-Austrian-Swiss Humbert could have returned to bourgeois Switzerland, or bohemian Paris, or any other European country at any moment without fearing any clamped-down curtains over an inaccessible space. So let us examine the question of his nationality once more.

Humbert tells us that he was born in Paris by an English mother who soon afterwards was struck by lightening and died, and that he had been sired by a Swiss citizen who owned the hotel Mirana (a *mirage* and *fata morgana*?) — a man of mixed Austrian and French descent. But does Humbert tell the truth for once? Apart from the oddity of his mother's death, for example, there is also the travesty of it in Clare Quilty's play *The Lady Who Loved Lightening* (28). Charlotte also asks Humbert if his family does not have "a certain strange strain" (69) — she may be worried that he is Jewish, as would be characteristic of Charlotte. If so, she perhaps thinks so because he does not have a French name, but a name like "Edelweiss." Like Martin, Humbert may have had a Russian mother whose sudden death at a picnic could have symbolic overtones (sudden collapse of the seemingly idyllic and secure?). Add to this his excellent knowledge of Russian literature and culture mentioned above and there may be, enough hints to solve the mystery of Humbert's ethnic and cultural origins: he is Russian, however cosmopolitan in culture.

Of course, Humbert eventually realizes that time cannot be retrieved even when there are no spatial barriers to a return to the past, that everyone is a refugee from a lost past, which is barred by the iron curtains of temporal irretrievability to everyone. He learns that one may not "seek to reimpose a vanished past on a changed present."[52] It is as long as he tries to compensate for inaccessibility of space by retrieving time that he flounders, practicing pathetic tricks to restore his youthful creativity, hoping, as it were for a second "marvelous moment" that would not only duplicate, but even intensify, the first (as in Pushkin's poem, mentioned above). It was spatial separation, the closed doors, the lowered curtain, the forever barred entry, or, rather, the memory of that spatial separation that led Humbert to thinking that if only he could reenter the "doors" that were prematurely shut, he would recapture the native fount of youthful poetry. As already stated above, he does eventually understand that he must accept the passage of time as well the "right" of space to remain independent of him. It is then that he learns to retrieve the past in memory and art, becoming a valid writer of his own story of delusions. Learning that America does not have to become a new "kingdom by the sea," even though it was Poe who created the image of such a realm, that his raped Muse has a right not to replicate Annabel Leigh-Lee but to be herself, he succeeds in freeing himself from the need to let *L*olit*a* begin where *A*nnabe*l* ended (*La-Al*).[53] He ceased to be Humbert the Ape and became Humbert the Writer. Freedom is the hallmark of true art. Perhaps these issues concerning true art become even clearer when Quilty is juxtaposed to Humbert in terms of artistry.

Quilty's English is native of course, but he certainly does not eschew the cliché-ridden language of the facile and mediocre writer. Might he therefore not be the easily imitated fake that an émigré writer would feel tempted to emulate? To glide over the surface instead of taking the trouble to go through the "hell" of creation, instead of turning the muse inside out (as Humbert wants to turn Lolita inside out), of forcing her to yield what she does not want to give is surely the more difficult alternative for a writer in Humbert's position. Is Quilty, the Hollywood writer, who replaces the Muse with a porno-starlet and is popular with all (including Lolita), perhaps the option Humbert considered and eventually killed?

The Humbert who writes his (both truthful and untruthful) confession is a writer who has freed himself from the demonic spells of an obsessive retrieving of the irretrievable, of chasing nymphets, of forcing his new country and language to be what it is not. He is an artist who has accepted the Mrs. Skiller (Schiller) that Lolita has turned out to be and whom he finds he loves more than the Lolita he forced to bridge his interrupted dreams. At one stage of their unhappy union, Humbert gave Lolita a "ring with a real topaz" (133). If Humbert is indeed a Russian émigré (originally), knowing his Pushkin well, he may have

tried to reenact not only the scenario of marvelous moments but also the one of "Talisman," when offering Lolita this ring. In this Pushkin poem a ring is given by a woman to her poet-lover as a talisman that is to protect him from false love and false inspirations. Lolita did not heed the gift lost amidst "four books of comics, a box of candy, a box of sanitary pads, two cokes" and many other necessities and bribes, and rightly so. She knew that Humbert was again trying to fool her forcing her to be something she was not (i.e. make his fooled and raped American Muse into the direct continuation of his Russian Muse and Complete Love), forgetting that the very poem he apparently was reenacting warned against deceit. Humbert's true gift to her is instead the story of his and her gradual liberation, of his letting her be what she is and of him acquiring full verbal mastery in a new — her — tongue. Of course the novel ends with death and destruction as both Humbert and Lolita (and her child) die, as did Valeria (and her child) and Charlotte Haze and Jean Farlow and of course Clare Quilty, but their deaths leave room for another émigré writer to unfold his talents to the full in new works, as he puts them all back into the magic box containing the tools of his sorcery which is where he took them from in the first place in the manner of Thackeray who shuts his "box," having put his "puppets" inside, when the "play is played out."

Are we to read *L* as not "really" dealing with madness, pedophilia and murder and are we to believe that Humbert "really" rapes only the American-English language and culture and not a little girl? Does this bombastic narrator truly believe that "poets do not kill" (82) and, if so, considering himself a true poet, he is saying that he is not a murderer and perhaps not a rapist either? Is Humbert not a rapist in any ordinary sense, but just the rapist of language? The Pushkinian notion that "evil and art are incompatible" is evoked in the novel as a major definition of art.

Is there, however, not a "danger" in "approaching every Nabokov novel as an exposition of the problems of art," as one of his most perspicacious critics has put it?[54] A reading of the novel as dealing with the specifics of the creative process of a writer, who, on the metaphorical level, has been torn out of his linguistic and cultural contexts rather than a nymphet's womb, is a possibility that need not deprive the novel of other readings, naturally. Nor is the reading offered here, necessarily an abstract meta-aesthetic tract. Humbert's story may be seen as a vast realized metaphor telling the story of an émigré writer who fears he has lost the inspirational source of creativity forever, but seeks new beginnings, rather than fall into émigré despair. Therefore he is out to capture a new muse-nymphet in the web of words, ready for any dissimulation in the process of doing so. In this process he gains numerous new and valid insights, insights that lead him ultimately to a dismissal of dissimulation. It is generally acknowledged that there "exist close links between creativity, language and

eroticism" and that there is a "verbal *ars amatoria*."[55] Hence a harmonious linkage of the three may be rendered in Pushkin's paradigm of "inspiration, (ecstatic) tears and love" (in "Ia pomniu chudnoe mgnoven'e") and a disharmonious one in terms of rape and *coitus interruptus* and publicly spilt semen. The last two images are taken from Nabokov's poem "Lilith," which deals with her cruel treatment of a poet expecting complete bliss with her. She disappoints him deeply, however, withdrawing from final bliss and forcing him "to spill his seed before all in torment," whereupon he understands he is "in hell."[56] In other words, Humbert offers us his vision of an unfortunate conjunction of "creativity, language and eroticism," where Lolita may be an actual victim of daily sexual assaults that she eventually evades by an escape that seems as well-planned, minute by minute, as a bank robber escape in a movie, but where she also may be the image of the Muse that the writer desperately struggles with, less with "tears and love," and more in terms of deceit and "spilt attempts" at union and even rape as fake consummation — until love wins. It is true that Nabokov himself, in a commentary to the poem "Lilith," states that he wrote it "to amuse a friend" long ago. He also hopes that the "perspicacious reader will abstain from linking its abstract fantasy to his later prose."[57] Clearly, this is exactly what I have done, at the obvious risk of labeling myself an obtuse reader, who cannot heed a clear warning. One reason for my persisting is that the motif of suddenly being torn away from a matrix, such as one's *Rodina* and a resulting trauma does recur so very often in Nabokov's oeuvre, to give but one example, in the novel *The Luzhin Defense* ("Zashchita Luzhina"). Might not the "Humbert attack" offer a version of the "Luzhin defense?

Juxtaposing the two novels dealt with here once more, it is clear that "sorcery" is an important component in both, a component, which underscores difference of values. In *Doctor Zhivago*, sorcery is linked to a self-gratifying and soulless, but seductive, hedonism and the demonism of power struggles and politics conducted in the arena of a reconstituted "Rome." In Pasternak's novel this theme becomes woven into a grand, national myth, in which the Artist who imitates Christ is the only one to withstand the demonic temptations of this kind of sorcery, wherefore he is able to redeem his Muse and his Land (some time) through his prophetic art. That art is not based on sorcery, but on the ethics of simplicity and transparency. In *Lolita* sorcery is the wellspring of all valid art, specifically the "weaving" together of strands that create an aesthetically satisfying texture. This sorcery works also when it is an isolated and "peripheral" individual, who creates art; this, however, is the case only when it does indeed serve aesthetic, i.e. non-egocentric purposes. It dries up when it serves the artist's traumas and obsessions. Then the Muse rebels and tries to escape the magic net he weaves around her, and rightly so.[58] True art can never be evil, when its sorcery serves true beauty. It can never glorify the rapist of a violated

Muse, for example. Pasternak's novel reflects the situation of the dissident artist inside the country, courageously defending values it has forgotten and reminding it of the need for purifying itself from crime and falsehood. Nabokov's novel reflects the situation of the émigré writer who wants to protect art from all forms of falsification, such as didacticism, self-indulgence and cliché; he does so by creating artistic "texture" rather than message-filled "text."[59] When Nabokov wrote the well-known parody on Pasternak's poem "The Nobel Prize" that by many was seen as a vicious attack on a dead rival,[60] he was perhaps not decrying a writer who had had made art convey a message that he did not agree with, but merely asserting that different as his own art was, it would some day be acknowledged as having no less *national* significance than literature serving Russia in a more direct sense. A novel about an obsessed individual who never "served" any of the countries he lived in or claimed to belong to, written furthermore in a foreign tongue, but pursuing the purity of art and artistry, could serve Russia as much as a national epic written by someone who had stayed "inside."

Notes

1. The edition quoted in this article is: Boris Pasternak, *Doktor Zhivago*, Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan Press, 1959. Quotes translated by IMD.
2. See Robert Hughes, "Nabokov Reading Pasternak," in *Boris Pasternak and His Times*, ed. by Lazar Fleishman, Berkeley: Berkeley Slavic Specialties, 1989 (pp. 153–170).
3. See Brian Boyd, *Vladimir Nabokov, The American Years*, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1991, p. 381.
4. As *Doctor Zhivago* was reaching *Lolita* on the bestseller list, Nabokov "joked, echoing Cato's call for the destruction of Carthage: '*Delenda est Zhivago!*'" See Boyd, *op. cit*., p 372. As Boyd comments on the fact that *Doctor Zhivago* climbed to the top, displacing *Lolita*, "[c]hance had contrived it that the two most successful representatives of the two streams of modern Russian literature, the Soviet and the émigré, should fight it out in the American marketplace" (p. 370).
5. Quoted from Julian Connolly, "Nabokov's (Re)visions of Dostoevsky," in *Nabokov and His Fiction. New Perspectives*, ed. by Julian W. Connolly, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999, p. 150.
6. His *Lolita* was a partial response to *Crime and Punishment* and other works by Dostoevsky where the "harlot" is presented as a sinner, whereas "sensitive murderers," such as Raskolnikov are "understood" and "excused." It should rather be the other way round. Connolly, ibid.
7. Boyd, *op. cit*., p. 371.
8. Boyd, p. 371.

[9] Nabokov's alleged "non-Russianness" was a cliché of émigré criticism, as Pasternak probably was aware. The "envy" therefore would refer to the fact that Nabokov had lost touch with "Russianness" and envied those who had not.

[10] Pasternak could, like Akhmatova, state that he was not among those who had abandoned the Russian land. ("Ne s temi ia, kto brosil zemliu," Anna Akhmatova, *Anno Domini*, 1922).

[11] As is well known, Pasternak did not follow his parents and sisters into emigration.

[12] For the complex publication history of the novel, see, for example, Christopher Barnes, *Boris Pasternak. A Literary Biography*, vol. 2 (1928–1960), Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998.

[13] For the complex publication history of this novel, see, for example, Lance Olsen, *Lolita. A Janus Text*, New York: Twayne Publishers, 1995, or, of course, Boyd, vol. 2, *op. cit*.

[14] For this connection, see Marietta Chudakova "Pasternak und Bulgakov. An der Scheidelinie zweier literarischer Zyklen," in *Mikhail A. Bulgakov (1891–1991), Text und Kontext*, Berlin, Bern etc.: Peter Lang, 1992, p. 75.

[15] To just mention one case that confirms this rule, Trirodov's Lilith-like first wife, in Sologub's *Legend in the Making,* dies in childbirth. It is true that also very un-Lilith — like Valeria in *Lolita* (Humbert's first wife), dies in childbirth, so the same fate befalls both real and fake Liliths — Valeria had faked nymphet status.

[16] The edition quoted in this article is: Vladimir Nabokov, *Novels 1955–1962*, New York: Literary Classics of the United States, The Library of America, 1996.

[17] See DZh, 511. He is even a "prehistoric" monster [of banality], since he dwells in "mythological corners of Asia" (ibid.); as such, he is also the "dragon" of Zhivago's poem "a Fairytale" ("Skazka," DZh, pp. 545–548).

[18] Humbert's self-characterizations almost invariably include ape-like features. One source of this imagery — in view of Humbert's predilection for Poe — is the story "The Murders on the Rue Morgue," where two women, a mother and her daughter, are brutally murdered and torn to pieces by an escaped orangutan. The daughter's dead body especially bears marks of his claws. Humbert speaks of his hands as having "strong talons" (92) and "long agate claws" (257), "agate" making the reference to a Poe text unmistakable. Of course, Humbert never kills, either mother or daughter, "merely" contemplating the murder of one and raping and "clawing" the other. He kills only Clare Quilty, but then he has "seen that he is clearly guilty." Quilty is his own double however, so Humbert executes only "the offending part of himself." The quote is from Robert T. Levine's "'My Ultraviolet Darling': The Loss of Lolita's Childhood," as presented (in abbreviated form) in *Lolita* (series: *Major Literary Characters*), Edited and with an introduction by Harold Bloom, New York: Chelsea Publishers, 1993, p. 41.

[19] Susan Elizabeth Sweeney, in her article, "Ballet Attitudes, Nabokov's Lolita and Petipa's The Sleeping Beauty" (in *Vladimir Nabokov's Lolita*, ed. by Ellen Pifer, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003) states that Nabokov "may have had in mind Nijinsky's performance as the Faun in *L'Apres-Midi d'un Faune*" (134) when describing the murder of Quilty by Humbert as a "kind of dance." Quilty "rises in the air 'higher and higher, like old, gray, mad Nijinski' " (123).

[20] Robert T. Levine, in *Lolita*, op. cit, p. 42, points out that those critics who exonerate Humbert Humbert "confuse virginity with innocence."

[21] The part in Stavrogin's "Confession" (*The Devils*) where the child (Matresha) accepts his caresses because she has been yearning for paternal-parental affection has its clear parallels in Nabokov. Stavrogin, e.g. says that "the little girl embraced me by the neck and suddenly began to kiss me passionately herself... seeing this in a such a minute (*kroshechnom*) child was utterly unpleasant to me — because of the pity [I experienced]. This passage offers an intimation of Stavrogin's complex feelings which are not unlike Humbert's. [See: F. M. Dostoevsky, *Sobranie sochinenii*, vol. 11, Leningrad: "Nauka," 1974, p. 16. Both rapists take their victims' "willingness" as an excuse to act the innocent party, but also feel pity for their own victims. Nabokov may have rejected Dostoevsky by the time of writing *Lolita* (cf. Connolly), but he still "used" him in various ways.

[22] "Ia v grob soidu i v tretii den' vosstanu, / I, kak splavliaiut po reke ploty, / Ko mne na sud, kak barzhi karavana, / Stolet'ia poplyvut iz temnoty" (I will descend into the grave and rise on the third day, / And, like rafted timber, floating downstream, / The centuries will emerge out of the darkness / And, gliding like barges of a caravan, come to me to be judged) (DZh, p. 566).

[23] The fact that Godin is associated with chess reinforces his "transcendental" quality, the world very much being "God's chessboard" in Nabokov's oeuvre. God is a bad chess-player, however.

[24] In Dostoevky's novels this happens not only in characters' hallucinations but also in the form of "incarnations." Sonya (in *Crime and Punishment*) and Mavrikii (in *The Devils*) are incarnated angels, which explains why Sonya is so unmarked by her profession, and Mavrikii so willing to be martyred by Liza. Nabokov clearly did not see the transcendental quality of the "harlot" Sonya, who is not a "sinner" in any ordinary sense, but rather an "angel" voluntarily sharing in the world's fallen state.

[25] Humbert will, for example, "forever" adore "the eternal Lolita."

[26] E. Pasternak writes that in drafts of the scenes where Lara departs from Varykino together with Komarovsky, there were monologues by Zhivago that were "soaked with the blood of jealousy's pangs" (see his *Boris Pasternak. Materialy dlia biografii*, Moscow: Sovetskii pisatel', 1989, p. 621. In "Gnostic" terms one may see a rivalry between the Demiurge (Komarovsky) and "good" Lucifer (the bringer of Light, Zhivago) for Mary Magdalene, fallen mankind yearning for redemption (Lara). This rivalry is fought out on the "battleground of Lara's heart."

[27] Written in 1918 and published in 1922, it is "recognizably fragments of a larger whole" that did not materialize and later became an "independent work." The quotes are from Christopher Barnes, *Boris Pasternak. A Literary Biography*, Volume 1 (1890–1928), Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989, p. 270.

[28] The quote is from: Boris Pasternak, *People and Propositions. The Voice of Prose*, Volume Two, edited by Christopher Barnes, Edinburgh: Polygon, 1990, p. 27.

[29] Vladimir E. Alexandrov has seen this Ivan Karamazov argument; he believes that, unlike Ivan, Humbert "stops short of rejecting God or this world." See Alexandrov's "Lolita" in *Lolita*, edited by Harold Bloom, *op. cit.*, p. 189.

[30] Komarovsky's name already points to his vampiric nature. Humbert's paradigm of himself (ape, faun, monster, wounded spider, conjuror etc.) includes the vampire: the "fairytale vampire" (130), i.e. he himself — "sucked her spicy blood" (145); also elsewhere.

[31] Byt' zhenshchinoi — velikii shag,/ Svodit' s uma — geroistvo" (Ob'iasnenie, DZh, p. 539).

[32] The quote is from Michel Aucouturier, *op. cit.*, p. 74.

[33] As both novels show, "Roman swinishness" still exists.

[34] See Zinovy Zinik's essay "The Double Exile of Vladimir Nabokov," in *Nabokov's World*, volume 1: *The Shape of Nabokov's World*, ed. by Jane Grayson, Arnold McMillin and Priscilla Meyer, Houndmills, Basingstoke, Hampshire and New York: palgrave, 2002, p. 213. Although Zinik does wonder if Nabokov knew about "Pasternak's tempestuous extra-marital affairs and the story of Zina Neigauz," he ultimately opts for the notion of "recurrent, nearly mythological themes" (213) shared "by two contemporaries" (213) as the linking factor. Indeed, there may have been no need for Nabokov to look for "real life stories" outside his own family history. Aleksei Zverev, in his Nabokov biography, points out that Nabokov's grandmother, the baroness von Korff was married to his grandfather Dmitrii Nikolaevich Nabokov, when she was only fifteen years old, while he was having an affair with her mother. Admitting that Nabokov may not have been aware of this family affair (his own information is from N. D. Nabokov's, the composer's, memoirs), Zverev nevertheless thinks that "Nabokov's lasting hatred of Freudian theories somehow is linked to this affair, which any psychoanalyst would try to grab with both hands." See his "Nabokov," Moscow: Molodaia gvardiia (series: *Zhizn' zamechatel'nykh liudei*), 2004, pp. 21–22.

[35] There are many clear allusions to Dostoevsky throughout *Lolita*, as has been frequently observed. Here are some more details. Like Smerdiakov, who knows how to bring on a real fit of epilepsy, so Humbert knows how "to take advantage of the spell of insanity when it does come" (215). Humbert loves the music of organ grinders (while still living in Paris, p. 19), like several Dostoevsky characters. He also freely bestows money on his former victim before he quits the scene, as Svidrigailov does, showering money on those young girls he was contemplating to marry, shortly before his suicide (as well as on Sonya). When Humbert is not "the Terrible," but rather "the Small," he scurries like a "mouse" (161) into *his* Underground, clearly vacillating between self-abasement and self-exaltation in a way highly reminiscent of the Underground Man. For further examples, see Connolly. Pasternak's novel is of course permeated with allusions to Dostoevky's novels. On this topic, see, for example, the preceding article in this volume.

[36] See my "Gothic Historiosophy: The Pani Katerina Myth in Pasternak's *Doctor Zhivago*." Humbert refers to himself as "Humbert, the Terrible" (259) — possibly claiming his place in the series of tyrannical father-figures of the Pani-Katerina-myth.

[37] *The Blind Beauty* is the title of the drama that Pasternak worked on at the time of his death. Its title "denoted a composite image of Russia derived from Blok's

poem *Retribution* (. . .) and from Bely's readings of Gogol's "The Terrible Vengeance," in which an evil sorcerer captures the soul of the sleeping heroine Katerina." In other words, Pasternak was continuing the Pani Katerina myth, begun already in the novel. For the quote, see Christopher Barnes, *Boris Pasternak. A Literary Biography*, vol. 2 (1928–1960), Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998, p. 362.

38 In *People and Prepositions* (*op. cit.*), Pasternak speaks of the desirability of a "jolt" or "elemental disaster," when a society has yielded to "subservience to falsehood." It is then that "hidden moral deposits miraculously burst forth" (pp. 75–76).

39 See, for example, his "Rus'."

40 Antipov is a Kai figure with a splinter of the devil's mirror in his heart. Kai, it will be remembered, is mimicking and teasing everyone, not loving anybody. Young Antipov also mimics everyone, having a keen eye for others' flaws, but not realizing his own lack of personality and originality. Kai yields to the seduction of the "The Snow Queen," who offers him the ice puzzle of reason to brood on. Before Antipov goes to war (there to join the Reds eventually), he steps on a frozen puddle, which cracks, forming a neat pattern, thus assuming the appearance of the "ice puzzle" of reason, to which Antipov foolishly pledges himself in his pursuit of a rational and merciless world, ruled by "mathematical" retribution.

41 The name Larissa may be derived from the (ancient) Greek word for "seagull."

42 Little Katia's many talents include imitation and mimicking others, as was the case with her father Antipov (and Andersen's Kai). Perhaps, in her case, this talent will lead her to an acting career, however, i.e. be transformed into creativity.

43 Here the Pani Katerina myth nicely tallies with the "Sleeping Beauty" ballet text, analyzed by Sweeney.

44 The edition quoted here is: Andrei Belyi, *Serebrianyi golub'*, Moscow: Sovremennik, 1990.

45 The sorcerer of the Pani Katerina myth is often either an Old Believer or sectarian.

46 As we are told in Dr. Ray's Preface, the name "Haze" is not necessarily Lolita's true surname, only a name rhyming with it, which invites speculation that it may have been Maze or Daze — variants that would indicate that the would-be-sorcerer himself is trapped.

47 Sweeney sees this as a reference to the scene where Prince Charming falls in love with the vision of Sleeping Beauty.

48 "Then, for five days, he vanished as completely as if the earth had engulfed him," writes Frances Winwar, in *The Haunted Palace. A Life of Edgar Allan Poe* (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1959, p. 374).

49 See Vladimir Nabokov, "The Enchanter" (translated by Dmitri Nabokov), New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1986, p. 73. The Enchanter of this story (and proto-story of *Lolita*) incidentally behaves very much like the hunchback Rigoletto in the Verdi opera by the same name, particularly when he plans for him and his victim to live in a "mini-villa in a blind garden" (73).

50 See, "Vladimir Nabokov on a Book Entitled *Lolita*" (pp. 293–298) in Vladimir Nabokov, *Novels 1955–1962*, New York: Literary Classics of the United States, The Library of America, 1996, p. 298.

[51] Part of the émigré syndrome is to discover that the foreign culture one thought one knew from one's native education is hopelessly passé in the actual culture one confronts in reality. This is a theme also in Nabokov's "Glory."

[52] Brian Boyd, *Vladimir Nabokov, The Russian Years*, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1990, p. 250.

[53] Carl R. Proffer pointed to this pattern in his *Keys to Lolita* (Bloomington-London: Indiana University Press, 1968), p. 34.

[54] See Ellen Pifer, *Nabokov and the Novel*, Cambridge, Massachusetts and London, England: Harvard University Press, 1980, p. 3.

[55] These statements have been taken from A. K. Zholkovsky, "Grammatika liubvi (shest' etiudov)," in *Pasternakovskie chteniia*, *op. cit.*, p. 132.

[56] "I pered vsemi / muchitel'no ia prolil semia / I ponial vdrug, chto ia v adu."

[57] See his *Primechaniia* to his poems, in Vladimir Nabokov, *Stikhi*, Ann Arbor: Ardis, 1979, p. 319.

[58] The weaving and spinning imagery used by Humbert for his sorcery seems very much derived from symbolist poetry and prose — not only *The Silver Dove*, but also Blok poems, such as "Snezhnaia viaz'" and "Ee pesni" and other poems from *Snezhnaia Maska* (1907).

[59] These terms are borrowed from Nabokov's John Shade as well as Brian Boyd's discussion of them. Cf. Boyd, *Vladimir Nabokov, The Russian Years*, *op. cit.*, p. 308.

[60] Cf. the following two stanzas by Pasternak and Nabokov: "Chto zhe sdelal ia za pakost',/ Ia ubiitsa i zlodei?/ Ia ves' mir zastavil plakat'/ Nad krasoi zemli moei." (Pasternak) "Kakoe sdelal ia durnoe delo,/ I ia li razvratitel i zlodei,/ ia zastavliaiushchii mechtat' mir tselyi / o bednoi devochke moei? (Nabokov) In retrospect, Nabokov seems to have seen the parallels between his novel and Pasternak's with their shared focus on a "poor little girl."

Survival of the Superfluous: Doubling and Mimicry in Nabokov's *Podvig-Glory*

"Podvig" (1932) — to become *Glory* (in 1970) — is usually read as a realistic novel about a nostalgic young émigré whose non-political decision to illegally cross the border to the Soviet Union a few years after the Civil War lends "glory" to an otherwise senseless life.[1] Martin (Martyn in "Podvig") Edelweiss, a "superfluous man" in the classical Russian tradition, eventually replaces dreams and "talk" with "action."[2] He crosses the border to his former home land, having failed, as superfluous men are wont to do, to win the affection of his Beloved, in this case, the fellow émigré Sonya Zilanov(a) who seems to toy with Martin's feelings.[3]

There are additional dimensions to the novel, however, and its apparent character of "straightforwardly realistic tale" is deceptive.[4] Specifically I would like to suggest that the novel includes one of the "hallmarks of Nabokov's fiction," namely the doppelgänger motif. Apparently Nabokov considered this motif "a frightful bore,"[5] but I argue, nevertheless, that Martin Edelweiss never crossed the geographical and political boundary into his former homeland disappearing there without a trace. Instead, he decided to overcome his self-destructive nostalgia for the past, mimicking an adaptation to British culture in the guise of Darwin, his doppelgänger. Engaged in a futile search for his *enfance perdue* ever since living in Western Europe, he constantly attempts to penetrate "beyond the border-line of bygone years."[6] Finally realizing that he will never reach the Promised Land of his past and weep the "sweet tears" of homecoming, at least not before he dies and finds himself in the land of "the other side" (*potustoronnost'*), he decides to "bury" Edelweiss in Darwin. In a last, self-indulgent, escapist scenario he paints the kind of adventure he loved to read about as a boy — full of mystification, secrets and daring — before assuming the surface identity of the perfect Englishman, or at least, an "acceptable" Westerner. The borderline crossed in the novel is not the "real" one from Latvia to the USSR, but the spiritual border between the outer and the inner émigré

(in foreign lands), between Edelweiss and Darwin. Martin Edelweiss' friend Darwin is his surviving Western double, his new cultural guise and the "mutation" that enables him to survive by letting him mimic an alien form.

I thus see the novel's two male protagonists as doubles whose initial struggle for coexistence eventually ends with the (apparent) elimination of Edelweiss and the ostensive survival of the "fitter" Darwin. The latter is repeatedly shown as the bigger and stronger of the two, although Martin too is a robust and vigorous fellow. Why is Darwin never explicitly given a first name? Because he has one: it is Martin. The two names — Darwin and Martin (Darvin-Martyn in *Podvig*) — are similar in their phonetic structure. They, iconically, demonstrate the doppelganger relation between the two protagonists.

Martin may also owe his name to Jack London's Martin Eden, another internal émigré — in his case, within a socially alien class. If so, Darwin ensures that Martin Edelweiss is not going to perish like Martin Eden in London's eponymous novel. He will not commit suicide out of despair at having to live in a world of bourgeois Western values, but survive with the help of a strategy that nature mercifully has devised for the "exiled and cunning": mimicry. The cunning Greek Ulysses came to appreciate its value during his peregrinations, as did his later literary reincarnations.[7]

What other indications of doubling are there in the novel beyond Darwin never being given a full name? Let us begin from the beginning, in Martin's childhood. In the author's "Foreword" to the English edition of the novel, Nabokov tells us that the divorce of Martin's parents in his early youth should not be seen as causing any kind of Freudian split in him and an ensuing yearning for restored wholeness. There was no such motivation behind Martin's obsessive desire to return to the land of his father. Nor was there any oedipal strain in his choice of a beloved named Sonya, which also is his mother's name (she is Sofya Dmitrievna).[8] Denying Freudian splits in Martin, Nabokov intimates the importance of another kind of division perhaps, namely the *culturally* multiple existence of young Martin from his very first years. In someone growing up in a country agonizing about the question whether it belongs to the West, East or neither of the two, this issue was bound to be important in any regular identity quest and crucial in the situation of émigré existence. Martin's manifold cultural allegiances and his ambivalences are of course already indicated by his non-Russian name Martin Edelweiss.

Young Edelweiss certainly has a choice of cultural allegiances. His (half) Swiss father Sergei Robertovich Edelweiss stands for a bourgeois Western type of culture marked by lachrymose sentimentality and bourgeois stability. This heritage is countered by his mother's aristocratic Russian anglomania — not by Russian "soulfulness" — but an anglomania that bears the stamp of the Russian upper-class intelligentsia's striving for liberal democratic values.

Martin does not grow up with Russian fairytales, peasant nurses and folkloric customs, since his mother despises all these signs of fake *narodnost'* and all other manifestations of pseudo-Russianness. He does not even get to know Pushkin's "Ruslan" (in "Ruslan i Liudmila"), but only his "occidental brother" (G, 4), Sir Tristram from King Arthur's court (G, 6).[9] When Mr. Edelweiss, after his parents' divorce, disappears from Martin's life, somewhat like an irritating skin disease (he was a famed dermatologist), and especially when he dies in 1918, his legacy of Germanic "kitsch" would seem to have been overcome for good. Little does Martin suspect at that time that his mother will betray good taste, so assiduously championed by her, once more, namely when marrying an even more lachrymose and kind-hearted Edelweiss than her first husband, his cousin Henry Edelweiss. Rarely was the English name Henry bestowed on a less British European. German and French moralistic sentimentality are concentrated in Henry Edelweiss in an — at least for Martin — unbearably large Swiss dose. Is it his mother's example of capitulation to Western values for the sake of survival that he himself follows, however, when deciding to "hide in" Darwin, while opting for an Anglo-Saxon, rather than continental, identity?[10] At least the English did not sing songs about the beauty of the alpine edelweiss, he may have argued.

There are other splits to record in Martin's make-up. Thus Martin looks very Russian, but strangely enough his Russian appearance is usually "classified as something British" (G, 29). Also the description of his mother's looks presents a kind of Russian beauty that is considered "English" — i.e. rosy skin and freckles. The irony of these perceptions will hit Martin when he comes to Cambridge, this cultural concentrate of Englishness, where he is not accepted as a valid member of English culture, in spite of his "British" looks and "British" upbringing. Martin himself finds that the culture he encounters in Cambridge only vaguely resembles the one he imbibed in his anglophile childhood. Is it the lack of British self-irony in Martin's mental make-up that makes him an outsider in spite of apparently good "credentials" of surface tokens of "Britishness"? Darwin, the true Englishman, is a great success when he pokes fun at himself, appearing at a masked ball, dressed "as an Englishman out of a Continental novel" (G, 99). Darwin is English and secure in his identity because he belongs to a contemporary Britain, not one constructed in Victorian novels. Martin knows only an England conjured up by English classical literature. Arthurian, Dickensian, or some other literary England is not post-world war England, however, nor any "real" England of any times. There never was such a land as the one young Martin heard about from his mother, not even in the past. Martin must everywhere perceive that his Englishness is really of "a haphazard nature," "filtered through his motherland's quiddity and suffused with peculiar Russian tints" (G, 55). If he wants to survive in the real England, he must become a contemporary and accept England as it "is." He must abandon his multiple

cultural dream worlds, not just the English one, but also the most sacred one, the Russian one, or at any rate, keep them under control. If not, he runs the risk of becoming increasingly unreal, non-existent even.

Once Martin leaves Russia, he cannot but register that he, Martin Edelweiss, is peculiarly transparent to other people. It is almost as if he did not exist. He notices this for the first time in Constantinople, the second stop on his journey of exile. Right after a consummated sexual encounter between himself and his married mistress Alla from which they have had barely time to recover, her husband bursts into the room in search of a lost business letter. Husband and wife begin to discuss the letter and in doing so, they literally cease to see Martin. Both the recently enraptured mistress and her frequently deceived husband just do not *see* Martin since he is not part of their "real" life: "they had really quite forgotten that he was present" (G, 40). He has another sensation of being transparent when, during a Swiss summer holiday, the good-looking maid Marie whom he contemplates for an erotic adventure, literally never sees him. This is a Marie who simply does not notice Russian "idiots" and prefers Swiss shepherds to "positively beautiful people" from Russia. She has obviously never read Dostoevsky's *The Idiot* with its "touching" encounter between the Swiss girl Marie and Prince Myshkin and she remains entirely immune to Martin's charms.[11] Walking by with her Swiss peasant sweetheart, neither of the pair bestows even a glance on Martin, "as if he were incorporeal, and he watched them for a long time" (G, 46). He watched their not seeing him.

These experiences of being incorporeal, deprived of a substantial and substantive identity, are reinforced by his encounter with Professor Archibald Moon, the acknowledged expert on Russian letters and culture at Cambridge. Initially enchanted by the don's erudition and subtle appreciation of Russian literature, he gradually comes to realize that Moon has buried Russia, that he was "carrying away to his rooms a sarcophagus with Russia's mummy" (G, 98). This burial of Russia, to Martin implies a burial of himself as carrier of a Russian culture that Moon deems dead and beyond resurrection. The sense of having been reduced to a particle of a "mummified" culture replaced for good by Soviet barbarism is reinforced by other impressions. Revisiting Berlin, a city he knew as a child, he finds it changed beyond recognition with cherished "fun-places" gone, elegance faded, the atmosphere remembered, replaced with another, alien, one. He realizes that he is looking at "a stranger, looking smug after having devoured his own young and fragile double" (G, 134). There is nothing for Martin in this Berlin to "hang on to," especially since it is flooded by Russians whom he does not recognize as his fellow countrymen, so different are they from what he once had thought his compatriots to be. The quest for cultural identity, childhood memories, erotic experience — all tell him that he is not "real" and that he belongs to a time forever *perdu*. Since he virtually lives

in the past, a largely imagined one furthermore, he does not exist in the present and "real" world wherefore, logically, he cannot be "seen" in it.

In fact, he is increasingly pushed into a realm of unreality, marked by "negativity," for example, "whiteness." It is almost as if his rejected Edel*weiss* ancestors are making some kind of unwelcome comeback. Martin remembers that his grandfather as an old man always was completely dressed in white (G, 1) and that his father too used to wear a white jacket, at least during their holidays in a white villa in Biarritz. His mother too used to wear a white hat then (G, 23). Not feeling any closer kinship with his "pallid parents" (G, xi), he is nevertheless becoming part of their white realm of dim memory snapshots. It is perhaps not by chance that the author also tells us that Martin, his hair bleached and his skin darkened as a result of outdoor work as tennis instructor, "seems like a negative of himself" (G, 137). "Photography" with its magic "light-writ" is somehow emblematic of the inverted two-dimensional reality that Martin is increasingly entering ever since noting that he is so bafflingly invisible in the three-dimensional world.

Even when he is "seen," as in those moments when Sonya subjects him to close scrutiny made unbearable by the "impenetrable" quality of her gaze (G, 80), he is "over-exposed." Her inscrutable glance makes him feel as if he were projected against a black background that makes every flaw of his appearance stand out in sharp relief (G, 79). As soon as Darwin appears, however, Sonia turns off her "floodlight," apparently becoming oblivious of Martin. The larger Darwin looms over him and Martin is "swallowed up" by him, like the "fun" Berlin of his childhood was swallowed by a bulkier and duller adult city. Thus Sonya and Darwin disappear from the soccer game in which Martin had hoped to impress them, especially her of course. Although his team wins thanks to his almost Makarovian skills as goalkeeper (in Olesha's *Envy*), neither Darwin, nor Sonia, care to watch him.[12] It is perhaps only when they play "Zoorland" (Zoorlandiia, P, 170) together, conjuring up a vision of a country in the grip of absurdity, a country that swallowed another, previous, one that was called Russia, that Sonya acknowledges Martin's existence. This may be so because they are playing a game and dwelling in the realm of the imagination which is one where Martin can be acknowledged as existing. Yet Sonia will hand over their collaborative creation of Zoorland, the grotesque distortion of Russia called the Soviet Union, to another suitor, the poet Bubnov, who will claim it as his own. It is as if she had forgotten that "Zoorland" was Martin's brainchild.

Or does Sonya herself fear the land of the imagination since she too, like Martin, cannot find her bearings in the "real" West? Sonya too faces the choice of assimilation or futile loyalty, of wanting to be happy where she is — without quite being able to — or clinging to "sacred Russia" like her fanatic father, forever plotting the downfall of the Soviet Union. In her daily life Sonya

constantly has to confront her cousin Irina, indelibly marked by "Zoorland." A half-wit, Irina became what she is after having been "fondled" by hooligans in a train, during the Civil War. She also had to watch how some war deserters slowly squeezed her corpulent father through the window of the moving train. Typhoid fever did the rest. The grotesque Irina who has lost the power of speech and only can make "mooing sounds with different intonations" (G, 150), outwardly manifests Sonya's inner state of being, is her "double." Nabokov's characterization of Sonya as "obviously a moody and ruthless flirt" (G, xi) is not one to be taken quite at face value, perhaps. The ironic "obviously" intimates as much. Sonya seems moody and ruthless, but is in fact a victim of Zoorland, as much as Irina and Martin and all their family members, each in his, or her, own way.

Let us now turn to Darwin. He is Martin's solicitous downstairs neighbor (G, 56) who teaches him how to better adapt to the Cambridge way of life. All British reticence and understatement, he does not reveal to Martin that he went to fight in WWI at the age of eighteen and spent three years in the trenches at the French front. Nor does he reveal that he has written an acclaimed book. He is clearly in most ways what Martin is not, namely, a man of action who is not scarred by what must have been a harrowing war experience and he is a successful writer as well. Martin did not join the Civil War in Russia, but is irreparably scarred "even" by exile, and he does not write in spite of his constantly active imagination. In fact, soccer seems to be the only "art" in which he excels. Darwin cultivates boxing, but it is for practical reasons, such as self-defense. So marked is Martin's lack of writing talent that it is quite possible that Sonya gave Martin's Zoorland-fantasies to Bubnov, because she knew he would never write them up himself. Rather than having it remain an idle game, she let Bubnov give it some shape, however inadequate. In short, Darwin seems to be all common sense and immune to the imagination, whereas Martin is all imagination and dreams his "superfluous" life away. Martin lives his "real life" in memory realm, whereas Darwin claims that his "memory does not stretch from one lecture to the next" and that "mnemonics" is something he hardly could relate to (G, 68). A talent for burying the past in oblivion may indeed be the reason why he survived three years in the trenches and was able to resume a normal post-war life. Even Darwin's literary work is not pure fiction, nor war reminiscences, nor poetry, but a series of documentary sketches about objects and creatures (such as corkscrews and parrots). His book is not a novel, demanding detail to be subordinated to an over-arching whole, but a series of descriptive-empirical sketches. Martin lives in myth and fiction, creating an imagined and remembered life, as well as the grotesque distortion of lost harmony he calls Zoorland.

One bond unites the opposites though — their fascination with trains. Among Darwin's published "tractates" (G, 60) is a eulogy to riding in trains

which seems to come entirely out of Martin's childhood as well as his continuing enchantment with train-rides as an adult. Darwin, like Martin, travels a great deal, mostly on business though. For the grown-up Martin, train trips are an adequate translation of his sense of dislocation into the language of reality. They are also means of escape and vehicles of quest. Thus also in this detail Darwin emerges as anchored in three-dimensional reality, whereas Martin constantly drifts into a two-dimensional memory land, captured in snapshots, fragments of tales from the past and the cherished childhood picture of a path disappearing into a forest (to be discussed in greater detail below). Or does Darwin also understand the ambiguities of existence? It is noteworthy that one of his tractates deals with "reflections in water" (G, 60). In any case, Martin seems to be increasingly feeling their symbiotic bonds. When listening to Darwin speak about his book, he falls in with his "indolent but swingy step" (G, 61), a follower seeking shelter from a world Darwin understands and Martin fears.

Although so different in everything except their shared love for train rides and reflections in water, Martin and Darwin repeatedly seek out the same woman to love, or to have "fun" with. They both love Sonya and they both have an adventure with Rose, the "goddess" (G, 102) of a Cambridge pastry shop. The experienced and worldly wise Darwin rescues naïve Martin from Rose's claims to having been a virgin before having been impregnated by him at their very first encounter, wherefore a marriage should ensue. Presumably, he has knowledge of the "truth" by sleeping with her himself, thus proving her "sluttish" nature. Proving so deft with Rose, Darwin is ultimately rejected by Sonya, however. She refuses him because he is a "dummy" (i.e. both stupid and not really alive and human) and because his writing is too "superficial," too "comfortable" (G, 113). At the same time, she does not opt for Martin either, perhaps because she herself is in the throes of selecting an identity, as already indicated. Thus it is emphasized once more that Darwin is the "body" and Martin the "soul," or "imagination," or "memory," of the one personality that they together, potentially, form. It is to Martin that Sonya turns when she needs to be comforted about grievous events linked to Russia, whereas she chooses Darwin for dancing and "fun." Part of the comedy of errors that they all together enact is Sonya's apparent unawareness that both her suitors are apt to cross these borderlines. After all Martin has very physical longings for her and Darwin has feelings, however deeply buried in his massive frame, feelings of wounded self-esteem if nothing else. It is interesting that, in spite of his intense jealousy, Martin empathizes with his friend when Sonya disappoints him. I do not believe this is so because there is a subconscious homosexual bond between them, as has been suggested. Rather, there is the blurring of borderlines between "doubles" who, because opposed, complement each other.

Their doppelgänger status is marked indeed in their courtship of Sonia. They seem to appear to her in accordance with her needs, as if one person turned on this or that aspect of his personality for her sake. For example, we are told that soon after Sonya tells Martin that he is a Swiss "cretin" (G, 95) and mentions Darwin, the latter "made his appearance with comedy precision — immediately in the wake of Sonya's remark, as if he had been waiting in the wings (G, 96)." When Sonya tells Martin that she has rejected Darwin's proposal and he kisses her in a rush of ecstasy, assuming to be the chosen one, which is not the case, Darwin again appears with "comedy precision." He enters the room a split second after the kiss. It is because he first pushes the door open with his foot, then enters "laden with goodies" (G, 113) that he just misses the kiss and (perhaps) can believe that Sonya is so breathless because Martin threw cushions at her. Martin's, Sonya's and Darwin's life of "triangular desires" is turning into a vaudeville comedy of split personalities.[13]

Also noteworthy is an encounter Darwin and Martin have on the river Cam. Drifting along the river on one occasion, Martin is fascinated by how "the transparent green water reflected now chestnut trees, now brambles in milk-white bloom" (G, 120). He is particularly interested by the occasional petal falling into the water and how its reflection hurries "up to meet it out of the watery depths," and how, then, petal and reflection would "converge" (G, 120). It is at this point that he discovers Darwin who, as we know, also is fond of "reflections in water" (G, 60). His friend is in another boat on the river. Thus it does seem as if all the classical ingredients of the doppelgänger motif are found here: mirroring waters, mergers and two personalities mysteriously drawn to each other by invisible bonds.

This encounter on the river is followed by the doubles' struggle for supremacy that replaces their initial coexistence. The two friends have a fierce boxing-match on the shores of the river right after the "mirroring scene." Ostensibly the row is over Rose, but it is really about Sonya, as well as other "real" issues. Although the outcome is not exactly pre-determined, Martin being a well-trained soccer player and Darwin a bulky and apparently indolent man, it comes as no surprise that the supreme boxer Darwin proves the winner. Martin's Russian friend Vadim even predicts that Darwin — whom he somewhat surprisingly calls "Mamka," (G, 70, P, 122) — will "kill" Martin. This of course does not come true in a physical sense, but perhaps in a spiritual one. Darwin certainly knocks out his Russian friend in this fight fought in accordance with all the rules of English fairness and sportsmanship. Defeating Martin, he helps him, however, by "folding" him into himself, lending him his imperturbable English indolence, hiding Martin's vulnerability with "maternal" protectiveness, proving to be indeed a true "mamka" (i.e., wet-nurse).

It does seem that young Martin, during this fierce struggle, comes to realize that there is no point in constantly being beaten into a secondary position and pushed into invisibility, while remaining loyal to a land that has buried Russia beneath its cruel and absurd double, icy Zoorland. There is a moment during their fight when Martin feels that his head "was flying off, slipped, and remained hanging on Darwin in a humid clinch" (G, 125). Did the powerful blow he received in some sense really "dislocate" his head and point it in another direction? There is a poem from 1927 by Nikolai Zabolotsky entitled "Soccer." It deals with a young idealistic soccer player whose head "flies off" as he is hounded to his death by a hostile collective. It is not excluded that the author of *Glory* made his idealistic soccer player Martin feel "decapitated" like Zabolotsky's soccer player, but did not let him be carried off to the waters of Lethe as happens in the poem.[14] "Mamka" does not "kill" Martin, nor does any hostile English collective hound him to his death, since England cultivates the individual and obeys the rules of the game. Darwin and Martin embrace, and when Darwin forms "his bloodied mouth" into a grin, "tenderly" putting his arm "around Martin's shoulders" and both freeze into one motionless form in this position, a new bond of mutual assistance seems to be forming. Darwin will help Martin survive by enveloping him within his bigger bulk, while filling his own vegetative existence with that capacity for remembrance without which no true writing can be accomplished. After all, he too has things to remember from the trenches — perhaps it is time to write about the war and to forget the "corkscrews" and "parrots" he is wont to write about. Once inside Darwin, Martin will juggle his sluggish memory, while the "scientist" Darwin, "from outside," will make Martin a better observer of empirical reality. Their symbiosis based on mutual mimicry will encourage Martin to "cast off the ballast of superfluous feelings" (G, 170), while Darwin may find something else but trifles to write about.

Whatever the full implications, Martin's and Darwin's final embrace of mutual support parodically replays the final scenes of *The Idiot* in which Myshkin tenderly comforts Rogozhin at the bedside of a woman murdered by the latter, because she was unable to choose between them. Rogozhin's name is mentioned in the novel in a displaced context. A man who has illegally crossed the border to the Soviet Union several times (Gruzinov), mentions the dense "Rogozhin" wood (G, 177) to Martin as a place he would have to traverse, if he made his "excursion." This does not seem to be a fortuitous detail. The parodic allusion to Dostoevsky's novel presents a bonding that reverses the mutual destruction of the doubles and rivals in *The Idiot;* it offers one that serves survival and sanity instead. Unlike Myshkin, Martin will not have to spend the rest of his life in a Swiss mental asylum and Darwin, unlike Rogozhin, never ever entertain the thought of "killing" anyone, neither his friend and rival, nor the "fickle flirt" Sonya.

Martin's act of mimicry is not yet complete, however. Still unable to rid himself of his obsession with Sonya, her "nebulous spells" threatening to turn him into a "shadow" forever haunting "Berlin's sidewalks" (G, 152), he, for a time, tries the Rousseauan "return to nature" as a cure for his restless melancholia, precarious ontological status and unrequited love. He is a quarter Swiss after all and, as such, prone to seek solutions in the idyllic. A summer of agricultural labor in the South of France proves an illusory remedy. Martin then proceeds to his final encounter with Zoorland, the polar opposite to any European idyll. He decides to let Martyn Edelweiss die, by letting him disappear into the Zoorlandian snows, as well as into a picture of his childhood, the memory of which still enchants him. *Martin* Darwin will survive his disappearance, however.

The picture in question is a simple watercolor done by Martin's grandmother and, once upon a time, it hung above his bed at home, in childhood Russia. It showed a "dense forest with a winding path disappearing into its depths" (G, 4; "gustoi les i ukhodiaschaia vglub' vitaia tropinka," P, 11). This cherished picture blended with a story that Martin heard his mother read, in English, about a little boy who disappeared into just such a picture. Later in life, Martin came to think that he actually once had jumped into the picture and that this "experience" might have been "the beginning of the journey, full of joy and anguish, into which his whole life had turned" (G, 5). It is a second such "crossing into" that Martin plans to enact by crossing the border to Russia, which, although now being Zoorland, still has its Russian dense forests and winding paths. Zoorland and childhood realms blend in an inextricable mixture in which each element causes a pain strong enough to "kill," unless confronted and transformed. The only person to be told about this plan is Darwin, naturally.

Their final encounter in Berlin, as so many of their encounters in the past, is marked by "comedic" exits and entrances, the precision of which clearly delineates the sphere each double rules while they are separate. While Martin is preparing his journey into the "dense forest" and paying visits to various Berlin "stations" of his past (including one to Bubnov, his Russian rival), Darwin is strangely absent, apparently caught up in mundane matters. In spite of many attempts to reach him, including a phone call by Sonya, he cannot be contacted at his hotel facing the Zoological Gardens (G, 186) all day.[15] When the two friends finally meet shortly before Martin is due to depart, they have little to say to each other. Darwin is furthermore so inordinately sleepy that he seems not to register anything of what Martin tells him. Instead of responding to his plans, he begins to speak about his own mundane affairs "as soon as [Martin] fell silent" (G, 198). Darwin even seems to have forgotten their shared past; to Martin it seems that his "recollections had died, or were absent, and the only thing that remained was a discolored signboard" (G, 198). It is true that Darwin tries to dissuade Martin from crossing the border, but not very energetically.

In fact, he falls asleep while Martin bids him farewell. When coming to again, he cannot believe that his old friend could have left "so noiselessly" (G, 201) and begins, somewhat childishly, to look for him behind the furniture to see if Martin is hiding there. First he looks for Martin "between the wardrobe and the door" (G, 201), obviously remembering *The Devils*. Not finding a crazed and suicidal Martin "Kirillov" there, he looks into the corridor and sees it "empty" (G, 201). Dressing for dinner, he receives a phone call from Martin whose voice he does not immediately recognize, either because the "connection was bad," or he did not remember "Martin's telephone tone" (G, 202). In short, Darwin is beset by an indolence that is unusual even for him and during this almost lethargic state, his friend vanishes; subsequently, he discovers with growing dismay that all traces of Martin are lost. His friend has "dissolved in the air" (G, 202). He seems to have taken the plunge into the abyss on the "edge" of which he has for so long lingered without experiencing any "ecstasy" however (as in Pushkin's *Feast during the Plague*).

This growing separation of the two friends is counterbalanced by the motif of "unity in doubling." During Martin's visit with Sonya and her family just before the final encounter with Darwin, it is noteworthy how often "oneness" is played out against "doubling" and "doubling" against "oneness." There is, for example, Martin's game with dumb Irina who seems to be the only one in the household who is truly attached to him. During dinner, Martin teaches Irina a little game where one has "to cross the second and third fingers so that you could touch a single small pellet of bread and feel two" (G, 189). Irina is enraptured by this "magic" (P, 217) and cannot get enough of the game. This may of course just be a detail demonstrating Martin's delicate kindness toward the unfortunate. The game is described at some length, however, as is Irina's rapt attention to it. Almost the last we see of this girl, so indelibly marked by the "liberating" revolution and therefore close to Martin with his "eternal wound" called "Russia," is when she crawls under the table "in search of her bread pellet that had rolled out of sight" (G, 190). Irina seems to be preempting Darwin's equally infantile behavior when looking for the vanished Martin under and behind an assortment of furniture.[16] Other details include the two ladies of the Zilanov household saying "do not forget us" simultaneously to Martin (G, 191). Also, Sonya's remark to Martin that he is the same old "boor" as ever (G, 191) when he does not want to include Darwin in their current encounter, points to Martin's "one-sidedness" at this point in time. Sonya would have liked all along that Darwin and Martin merged into one, Darwin ceasing to be a "dummy" and Martin a "boor." Her final reaction to the news of Martin's disappearance — one of violent grief — marks her own farewell to a "useless" dream about return to Russia. Yet, her reaction may be precipitous, since Martin is not gone.

It certainly can be argued that Martin did not disappear from physical reality when he "hopped" into his beloved picture for the first time as a little boy, but that it was his soul or his "longing" that went into the forest while the "real" little Martin stayed in bed. Therefore big Martin too could "hop" into the picture of his vision a second time without being physically destroyed. Hiding is not the same as "dissolving," although it too means disappearing. Remaining in the physical world in the guise of a well-adapted émigré, Martin does of course not give up his remembered "other world on the other side" (a kind of *potustoronnost'*).[17] Rather, mimicking Darwin and hiding Edelweiss, Martin can at last secure the cherished picture and its promise for good.

Disappearing into the "picture," i. e. into an imagined journey that takes place on another level of reality than the empirical one, Martin is finally free to hide in and merge with Darwin who during his lethargic sleep "vacated space" for him. He can now bid farewell to the childish aspects of his dream — the infantile desire to "go away forever" so as to worry all those who "should" have loved him better, including disappointing Westerners — and embrace its essential, metaphysical core. Love for "eternal Russia" can now be separated from émigré desolation and alienation. The external doubling of two friends from different worlds may at last be replaced by internal co-existence. Martin is free to live in the West while preserving the past and, at last, venturing into that realm where memory is transformed into the written word.

The suggestion that Martin learns to mimic Darwin and that Darwin integrates Martin has textual support. One may note, for example, that Darwin experiences "the most appalling thing a man of his race and set can feel: the urge to break into tears" (G, 203) when he has to bring the bad news of Martin's disappearance to the Zilanov household. There are other signs that Darwin, even during the peak of his complacency when he seems to have forgotten Martin, never entirely loses his interest in Russia. Thus, he has apparently chosen a very English girl for his future wife, yet Sonya does not seem to be entirely right when she envisions her as being "tall" and having "eyes like saucers" (G, 188). The portrait of Evelyn that Darwin shows Martin does not present a "doll," but a woman with brows meeting over "unusually light eyes" and with a "long graceful neck" (G, 197). Since she also wears a diadem, the image that is conjured up is that of Vrubel's famous picture "Swan Princess." Or is it the portrait of "Vera Nabokov" that Darwin shows Martin, i.e. of a woman who helped Nabokov "survive" for many decades, never allowing him to fall into the pitfalls of Russian émigré impracticality and Russian self-destructiveness? Does "Evelyn" also offer an indication that sensitivity and practicality can form a fruitful union? Perhaps it should also be remembered that it is Sonya's neck that always enthralled Martin. Martin and Darwin merge once more, this time in a shared "fetishistic" love for long-necked girls that again points to their symbiosis and synthesis.

Most important, however is this: the last the reader sees of Darwin is when he walks down a path that has a great deal in common with the path of Martin's picture and vision of disappearing into a forest. This path too displays "mysterious windings" through a forest (G, 205); or as it is put in "Podvig" (P, 235): "tropa vilas' mezhdu stvolov, zhivopisno i tainstvenno"; "the path wound its way among the trees, picturesquely and mysteriously." It is not a Russian path of no return, meaningless undertakings and noble, but pointless Quixotism, however, that Darwin is walking along. It is a Swiss path winding its way through a Swiss forest and it leads to a railway station that will bring Darwin *back* to his ordinary life, reversing the direction of the picture path that leads away from life. Walking along its windings, Darwin says "something under his breath" (G, 205). This barely audible statement, I would like to think, is a pledge to write a book about Martin Edelweiss and his dream of Russia.

The ultimate reason why the Russian "stranger" Martin (Martyn) Edelweiss has to disappear in the Western "resident" Darwin is twofold then: to avoid profanation of the sacred memory of Russia and to learn the art of transforming memory into written texts.[18] Martin, or at least his author, probably well knew what happened to the edelweiss. This unique flower was hailed in schmaltzy tunes about shepherds climbing steep mountains to get their sweethearts the coveted flower, sometimes even falling into the "abyss" in the process. It was made into tourist souvenirs and cheapened. Exile, devoted to worshipping "eternal Russia," could be turned into schmaltz also, or else become futile obsession with hopeless political causes. It could become dementia, as in Irina, or eternal dissatisfaction as in Sonya. If emigration became self-pity, smug patriotism or sterile dreams about an impossible return, "sacred Russia" could also become a souvenir "edelweiss." The alternative is non-assimilation in the innermost corners of one's being — where memory is located — but a non-assimilation accompanied by the mimicry of external adaptation. This sort of mimicry offers a survival that could preserve a lost Russia in the form of a great novel about a young émigré's final renunciation of his most cherished dream: to return home. Martin Edelweiss must "die" to the world to salvage his Russian heritage while adapting to an environment that will allow him to do so. He must stay alive and *here* in order to speak of return and to revive the past by verbal retrieval. "Oblomovka" would have been lost to Russia forever, if its verbal recreation had been left to Oblomov. It was the Shtolts within Goncharov that turned dreams into text. The dreamer Edelweiss must merge with the stylist Darwin, the mythmaker with the observer, the poet with the scientist (read, entomologist) in order to create the great writer "Nabokov," writing about Darwin and Edelweiss. Edelweiss must die to be preserved and sent along the "winding path" into the "dense forest," so as to have that metaphysical journey recorded by Darwin, returning from that forest of the mind. In a sense,

therefore, *Glory* is also about the universal conditions of creativity in general and verbal creativity specifically. It is about the need to give a precise, laconic and elegant form to shapeless yearnings, longings and memories, about making Apollo cooperate with Dionysus.

In addition perhaps, *Podvig-Glory* is a scenario for action. A fellow student in Cambridge at one stage tells Martin he thought the name Edelweiss was "American" (G, 73), possibly also intimating that he detected a Jewish flavor in it. Martin often thought about that remark. Perhaps his author in *Glory* already was considering a new stage of mimicry, substituting a narrowly national identity for a broader, "melting-pot" cultural heritage. Martin is after all often taken for a Frenchman, Swiss, or Englishman, sometimes in the course of one day. America might well be the truly international and cosmopolitan, country in which Martin Edelweiss-Darwin finally will fully unfold the broad scope of his remarkable talent and present the theme of emigration as faithfulness achieved through apparent betrayal. The covers of Brian Boyd's two volume Nabokov biography present, one — a photograph of a nervous, sensitive, young Russian, i.e. someone like "Edelweiss" (volume 1), the other — a picture of a self-assured, rather bulky, middle-aged American-English writer, i.e. "Darwin" (volume 2). These two photographs encapsulate the "exploit" that brings true "glory": survival through mimicry for the sake of letting art triumph in mnemonic and verbal retrieval.

Notes

1 The editions quoted in this article are: Vladimir Nabokov (V. Sirin), "Podvig," Ardis, Ann Arbor, McGraw-Hill, New York, Toronto, 1974 and Vladimir Nabokov, *Glory*, McGraw-Hill, New York, Toronto, 1971. I usually quote *Glory*, translated by Nabokov and his son Dmitrii Nabokov and refer to *Podvig* only in those cases where the Russian original contains a nuance not rendered in the English second "original." The quotes are marked G for *Glory* and P for *Podvig*.

2 Andrew Field sees Glory's protagonist as "émigré literature's most vivid contribution to the century-old theme (...) of the 'superfluous man'," in his *Nabokov, His Life in Art*, Little, Brown and Company, Boston, Toronto, 1967, p. 119.

3 Sonya somewhat resembles Zinaida in Turgenev's *First Love* in her ruthless flirting with a set of young men, encouraging all, rewarding none.

4 Brian Boyd emphasizes that the novel is "straightforwardly realistic" only "at first glance." He sees its non-realistic elements mainly in the open ending that creates the effect of the story "simply fading away — into Corot colors, into one of Chekhov's great grisailles." See his *Vladimir Nabokov, The Russian Years*, Princeton University Press, Princeton, 1990, pp. 357–58.

[5] Stacy Schiff, *Vera (Mrs. Vladimir Nabokov)*, Random House, New York, 1999, pp. 223, 186.

[6] I am quoting Afanasii Fet's poem "Kogda moi mechty za gran'iu proshlykh dnei" (1844). Its first stanza is as follows: Kogda moi mechty za gran'iu proshlykh dnei/ Naidut tebia opiat' za dymkoiu tumannoi,/ Ia plachu sladostno, kak pervyi iudei/ Na rubezhe zemli obetovannoi."

[7] Speaking of "exile" and "cunning," I refer to Joyce's *Ulysses*.

[8] At the same time, Nabokov makes sure there are some hints at "Freudianism" nevertheless, such as Sofya Dmitrievna's "jealous," "violent" and "intense" love for her son (G, 7).

[9] Martin feels at times that he might be the "nephew" (G, 6) of Sir Tristram. Although he focuses on the moments when his "uncle" rides out "to his first single combat" (6) donning a shining armor, it is probably not by chance that it is Tristram, the sad knight, he is related to. Martin's eventual fate of restless wandering and never-healing yearning for Russia is foreshadowed by this choice of literary "ancestor."

[10] Many critics have spoken of the close bond between Martin and his mother without noting that it grows considerably weaker, or at least more distant and critical, after her second marriage. Martin does in this regard, to some extent, play the role of young Hamlet, astonished at his mother's ignoble second marriage. The difference is that, unlike Hamlet, Martin never revered his real father either. Nor does he ever in words formulate his disappointment with his mother, indicating disillusionment only by distancing himself ever more from her, maintaining largely formal filial bonds in the end.

[11] As is well known, Nabokov rarely misses an opportunity to parody Dostoevsky and it seems he is doing it here. The parody is less noticeable in the Russian *Podvig* where "Marie" is "Mariia." *Glory* does alert one to the allusion however since the combination of "Marie" and Switzerland immediately conjures up the image of another Russian "lost" in a foreign land, Prince Myshkin.

[12] Martin's almost superhuman efforts and his success in keeping his goal "virgin" (G, 111) seem to draw on Iurii Olesha's novel *Envy* (1927) in which the Soviet youth Makarov defends the goal of his Soviet team against a superb German star-player whose team seems bound to lose because of its lack of team-spirit and Makarov's total defiance of the law of gravity. There is an ironic dimension to Martin's repeating the Soviet hero's exploits, since, unlike Makarov, the émigré Martin is not part of a collective. Martin is a goalkeeper very much because of his non-team player personality.

[13] Sonya seems to be referring to this quality when she asks Martin if he has to behave "like a madman" (G, 114) just because he helped his team to win a soccer game (the one she did not watch). Her question evokes the Mayor's in Gogol's *The Government Inspector* when he asks why one has to "break chairs" when talking about great military leaders, as the town's schoolteacher does when speaking of Alexander the Great. There are other allusions to Gogol' in the novel, as there are to innumerable other Russian classics. Thus Martin's famous (illegal) burning of newspapers in his cold Cambridge "digs" evokes "Christmas Eve" and other early Gogol' stories. Once

the newspaper sheet would be aflame and sucked upwards through the chimney, it would appear outside "through the gloom of the gothic night, a fiery-haired witch [rising] . . . into the starry sky" (G, 56).

[14] Shortly before being knocked out, Martin "pochuvstvoval vdrug, chto u nego samogo otletaet golova, i, poskol'znuvshis', povis na Darvine" (P, 145). In Zabolotsky's poem "Futbol" the imagery is complex and plays on parallels between the soccer-ball flying through the air and the decapitated player's head flying off into space as well. In the end we learn that "Uvy!/ Zdes' forvard spit/ bez golovy." The "melancholy goalkeeper," Death, then takes care of the "poor forward."

[15] I take it that the name of the hotel is not only referring to the Zoo district in Berlin where most Russian emigres lived, but also is a detail in Darwin's constant "scientific" observations of the "zoology" of the human species. Likewise, it seems not fortuitous that the first thing Martin sees when he lands on the platform of the French station where he decided to interrupt his train journey in quest of a childhood memory is a box labeled "Museum of Natural Science" (G, 158). He takes a strange interest in it. Does he suspect Darwin is nearby, knowing that the latter, like him, travels a great deal? One more reason the two must merge is that science (Darwin) must blend with "poetry" (Martin) in order to yield a truly creative personality, one that is equally powerfully attracted to the wonders of nature and their representation in the realm of art. Of course the "real" Nabokov was both a scientist and a writer.

[16] Irina and Martin are linked in several important ways. She belongs to the "white realm" of Martin's two-dimensional "other — worldly" realm of the remembered past. When he is leaving Berlin for France, Martin does not find Sonya at home, but he sees Irina, "all in white . . . seeming to float in the dusk like a ghostly turtle" (G, 152). Naturally the turtle simile breaks any nostalgic-lyric effect induced by the first words and perhaps it is Irina who by her deformed appearance warns Martin not to sentimentalize the past and not to join its "lost cause." She offers him the challenge to give shape to the past and to give it the speech she herself has lost.

[17] It is interesting that Doctor Zhivago in Pasternak's eponymous novel, so despised by Nabokov, also resorts to "mimicry" as a survival technique. Observing a butterfly which changes its coloring when it settles on a tree in order to merge with its surface texture, he begins to think "about mimicry, about imitative and protective coloring" ("o mimikrii, o podrazhatel'noi i predokhranitel'noi okraske.") He himself in the meantime also "dissolves" into invisibility sitting under the tree and becoming part of the light-shadow pattern created by its branches. See Boris Pasternak, "Doktor Zhivago," Ardis, Ann Arbor, 1958, p. 356.

[18] I use the terms in Richard F. Gustafson's book *Leo Tolstoy: Resident and Stranger*, Princeton University Press, Princeton, 1986.

Moscow in the Tropics: Exotica in Valerii Briusov's Early Urban Poetry

In his 1924 memoir essay on Valerii Briusov, V. F. Khodasevich stated that he found the poet's early works (up to and including *Tertia vigilia)* his "best, all things considered" (1976: 26–27).[1] He thought them "the most striking" *(ostrye)* in his *oeuvre* and explained their effectiveness by their "combination of decadent exoticism with a completely naive Moscow philistinism" (1976: 26). This was a "very piquant combination, creating sharp fractures and screeching dissonances," and whatever else could be said about them, "these tropical fantasies on the shores of the *Iauza*, the revaluation of all values in the *Sretenka* quarters of Moscow," were, to his mind, more intriguing and genuine than the recognized Briusov of official fame. Another émigré scholar, K. Mochulsky, would later similarly discern considerable originality in the combination of Parisian sophistication, including the use of *exotica,* with Muscovite ebullience. He approvingly noted the fact that in Briusov's *Chefs d'oeuvre* the Baudelairean "flowers of evil" blossomed forth with entirely "Muscovite luxuriousness" (1962: 37).[2] Khodasevich's and Mochulsky's positive evaluation of Briusov's version of the "blend of French with Nizhnii Novgorodian,"[3] i.e. his Parisian-Muscovite urban-exotic poetry, is indeed justified. The aim of the present article is to present some of the poems of this early period in greater detail than the two quoted critics do[4] and to try to pinpoint some specific features that contribute to their appeal and even charm. "Charm" is a quality that Briusov's poetry arguably later lacked, whatever other virtues it may have acquired to compensate for this loss. Perhaps the main reason why his early poetry, particularly the "exotic" Moscow poems, did have this quality would seem to be this: they expressed without too many side-long glances to other aspirations (such as literary leadership, or artistic respectability, or the need to prove erudition and depth of thought), his conviction that the true poet had the power to transform even the most mundane reality into realms of momentary magic. He could make anything "exotic," by juxtaposing the seemingly non-combinable and by transforming the real

into the surreal; he strongly believed that this kind of art — one that made the familiar strange — had the power to "infect" readers in the Tolstoyan sense of the word. The "magician" Briusov was perhaps never as magic as in his *Juvenilia*, *Chefs d'oeuvre*, *Me eum esse* and *Tertia vigilia*, where "exotica" covers a broad field of the "unfamiliar," often coinciding with the playfully surreal.

The "delightful" and frequently discussed poem "Creativity" ("Tvorchestvo," 1895) offers a prime example of this transformational magic.[5] Here a potted palm-tree and a tiled stove in the poet's parental, typical Moscow merchant home are transformed into "laminae of palm fronds" and a "wall of enamel" and the reflections of the first on the second into "violet hands."[6] "Parisian decadence" comes to the fore when the "nude crescent moon" arises in the presence of the "azure full moon" ("Vskhodit mesiats obnazhennyi/ Pri lazorevoi lune," 35).[7] Vladimir Solovev, in his review, joked that this behavior on the part of the masculine crescent moon (*mesiats*) was "indecent" (Commentary, 1: 568), since he appeared nude before a lady (the feminine *luna*), adding that the young poet also should have known that *mesiats* and *luna* were two words for the same object. Briusov appreciated the joke, but dismissed the criticism. There was nothing wrong with speaking of even four sunrises, if one "saw" them in the mind. In the creative process, obviously his main theme in the poem "Creativity," even more fantastic images than two coexisting moons might well arise (568). Yet, the fantastic poem was firmly grounded in reality. As the poet's wife pointed out later, the "lazorevaia luna" in this poem was "a tall streetlamp" located "straight across" from the Briusov house" (see Commentary, 1: 568). Khodasevich deciphered most of the other realia in this poem, confirming by this identification that "creativity" to Briusov at this point was transformation of the mundane into the surreal, often with the help of exotica.

Urban poetry was therefore the given genre for him at the time: a non-poetic subject — the modern metropolis, especially its drab and ugly aspects — challenged the poet to make it into a surreal, or "over-real," fantasy realm. Obviously he was following French models in this modernist aesthetics of his. One poem that Briusov translated from the French in 1898 was Paul Verlaine's "Croquis Parisien." In his translation, the moon splashes a house-wall with shadows at an "obtuse angle," black smoke rises above a steep roof assuming the shape of "the number five, bent backwards," while gaslight twinkles in "blue tremors." What must have appealed to the Russian poet and the translator of Verlaine's poem was the "conquest" of art over a challenging raw material, the creation of a surreal vision, a phantasmagoria, out of an "ugly," non-poetic cityscape.[8] The Poet ruled ugly reality by touching it with his magic wand — this is perhaps one of the reasons why Briusov at that time disliked beautiful landscapes, such as the Crimean mountain scenery. The transformation of a beautiful original into the language of aesthetics was less challenging. The

artificial cityscapes created by man facilitated the artistic process by challenging the artist to transform the utilitarian (city illumination, for example) into something disconnected from reality ("blue tremors").

Briusov accomplishes a similar conquest over drab reality as Verlaine, in his poem "Noch'iu" ("At Night," 1895), which contains the "extravagant" line: "Moscow slumbers like the female of a sleeping ostrich" ("Dremlet Moskva, slovno samka spiashchego strausa," 1: 82–83, from the cycle "Budni": Moscow lies asleep, resembling a slumbering ostrich's female). His Moscow resembling a sleepy female ostrich offers a heterogeneous blend of elements, especially since the Moscow river *Iauza* is specifically mentioned later on, but located in a Moscow of "African deserts." What is the motivation behind the unusual combination? One motivation, in the *epatage* tradition, is, of course, the lack of motivation; the poet exploits the discrepancy effect created by bringing together the exotic realm of Africa and a northern Moscow, linking them only by alliterations on "s." Possibly, aware of French notions about Moscow being an "Asiatic" city (Napoleon expected to find "pagodas" in it, according to Tolstoy), he is intimating that Moscow from a West-European perspective might seem an "exotic" place, Asiatic or African, even though to its own inhabitants it was the epitome of northern "normality." Exoticism is a relative quality.

There were also technical challenges in making the Moscow river *Iauza* into the long "neck" of a female ostrich: the decadent-modernist poet was clearly intrigued by the task of creating a tension-filled, entirely novel, yet functional rhyme, out of : "strausa — Iauza" (1:1–1:4), where the exotic African animal, the ostrich, is phonetically linked to the chilly Moscow tributary *Iauza*. The poet himself wrote about his fascination with non-Russian words in rhyme positions in a letter: "How strange and marvelous is the sound of foreign words, especially in the rhyme position! Surely you must have experienced the pleasure of enjoying verse as verse — regardless of content — as nothing but sound, image and rhyme ... Just finding a rhyme for the word 'strausa' made me experience a mystical tremor" (1: 578).

Beyond the enjoyment of pure sound and imagery magic, there apparently also was an intellectual rationale for linking Moscow and Africa in "At Night," however. This rationale was provided by the industrialization of Moscow, which, by the time the poet likened the city to a female ostrich, to a significant degree, had lost "its pristine old-world quality" (*starozavetnost'*, Maksimov 1969: 9). Industrialization may seem a strange reason for Africanizing Moscow, since Africa hardly had a more developed industry than Russia at the turn of the century. Russia was a developed and industrialized country, the African continent, largely, was not. To be sure, the "female ostrich" that Moscow is in this poem, has spread "dirty wings" over "dark soil" and her "heavy, round eyelids" are devoid of life, indicating that however African-exotic, this is

a polluted city. This assumption is confirmed by the *Iauza* being presented as "silent and black." This tributary to the Moscow river was by the end of the nineteenth century already completely polluted, since there were textile and fabric dying factories on its banks. Receptacle of all the outlets from these industrial establishments, the Iauza was indeed "silent and black," saturated with chemicals. In other words, we have before us a Moscow made exotic by industrial pollution that has caused disfiguration and putrefaction. Although a northern cold city where disintegration usually is "arrested," it is now, as if transferred, to a hot tropical realm and in a state of visible corruption. The unceasing defilement of nature and of pristine cultural milieus that modern civilization entails, in fact, has transformed Moscow into a slowly rotting huge cadaver, exuding the odor of putrefaction in the Baudelairean tradition. Following this tradition,[9] Briusov sees Moskva, the capital of mercantile activities, as a fallen feminine entity, as the "whore of Babylon," doomed to ignominy in death. As Mochulsky points out, the whole city is a "whore" (bludnitsa, 1962: 40), a contaminated, diseased and infected body doomed to shameful and apocalyptically terrifying putrefaction in public.

Since Briusov's use of exotica here in this poem does not serve traditional romantic functions, he makes sure that no associations to lush gardens or handsome sheiks riding fiery horses may arise in the reader's imagination. When a noise is heard in the distance, he immediately rejects the conjecture that it is "Arab horsemen" that are approaching, and gives the correct answer right away: it is vultures approaching on "heavy wings," attracted to the odors of the rotting cadaver of Moscow. This city is clearly doomed, and although the vultures still only slowly circle above it, not yet descending, they are the agents of inescapable retribution. And yet, the last glimpse of the picture of the rotting corpse of the modern mercantile metropolis, cancels out the ugliness presented so far. Above the city there is a "tropical sky" studded with bright constellations of stars. One strongly suspects that these "constellations of stars" do not consist of celestial bodies (could one see them through the polluted air?) but have as their source the electric illumination of the city. In the last line then "exotica" are returned to their traditional function — to suggest an unfamiliar sort of beauty. The artificial city lights create a "tropical," i.e. "magic" sky, just as the streetlamp creates an "azure moon" in the poem "Creativity."

One may still wonder why a female "ostrich" was chosen to represent Moscow. Perhaps this exotic bird was brought in because its plumes adorned fashionable hats and "boas," which were worn not only by society ladies but also the "neznakomki" (or "geishas of streetlamps' circular lights," geishi fonarnykh svechenii, I. Annensky) roaming the nocturnal streets of the metropolis. The poem arguably conveys the notion that African pristine nature and Muscovite ancient culture were being despoiled so that bourgeois civilization with all

its "sores"—industrial pollution and sexual depravity—should flourish. Nature and culture, Africa and Moscow, were being despoiled for the sake of a civilization that was slowly poisoning itself. Yet, even this reprehensible civilization is able to offer a new sort of beauty—a "tropical-electric sky" and an intriguing decadent poem by Russia's leading urban poet, Valerii Briusov.

The decay of culture, the deterioration of health, the erosion of morality—this is the price modern man pays for comfort, for example, the comfort of sitting at home and, with the help of a book of French poetry, fresh from the publisher, immerse himself into the world of exotica without having to visit Africa or India or other distant realms. The cycle "Kriptomerii" (from *Chefs d'oeuvre*) continues the theme of the state of creativity reached in blissful states of daydreaming while sitting in an excellently furnished house already encountered in "Creativity." Again we find ourselves in apparently exotic settings such as "forests of cryptomeres" (1: 65) only to begin to suspect that these "forests" more likely are a row of potted plants. They have in fact been identified as plants that Briusov's mother grew (1: 575), just like the "laminae of palm fronds" (lopasti latanii) in "Creativity." We have the same state of "half waking, half dreaming" as in that poem, in the cycle "Kriptomerii." In the poem "V nochnoi polumgle" (1895, "In Nocturnal Semi-Darkness") we acquaint ourselves with an important locus of that daydreaming: a "blue alcove," the poet's "dreaming space," or bed. Given both the epithets *sinii* and *goluboi* it apparently is the piece of furniture in which the flowers of romantic dreams spring up—it will be remembered that romanticism's emblem is the "blue flower." It is also permeated with the fragrances of "inebriating and languid perfumes" (1: 65), very likely emanating from a "co-creative" bedmate. Here the poet is able to pursue erotic and exotic dreams in the safety of his Moscow quarters, together with his current *podruga*: "I vot—ia lezhu v polusne/ Na mkhu pervobytnogo bora;/ S mertsan'em prikrytogo vzora/ Podruga pril'nula ko mne" (Lo—I am lying in a state of half-slumber/ On the moss of a primeval forest;/ With eyes glittering through half-closed lids/ My lover snuggled up to me.) Lying on a comfortable bed ("alcove"), the poet, in his "cryptomeric-chimaeric" dreams, is hunting a "many-colored thrush" (the bird of phantasmagoria?) together with his partner. After a rest, she seems to be offering the poet a lover's passionate embrace ("pril'nula"), but in the visions of his half-dreaming, half-waking state she is metamorphosing into an exotic animal of prey stalking her victim—the poet—with "half-closed, glittering eyes." The poet feels intently watched by this pair of attentive and gleaming eyes. Are they those of a vau-vau monkey, he asks himself, or those of another, more dangerous, creature? Dwelling in a region between sleep and wakefulness, dreaming vividly, the poet comes to believe that the gleaming eyes belong to a beast of prey that he must kill. He appeals for his bow and arrows and

apparently gets very restless, since his lover begins to feel alarmed and even terrified: "Vstrevozhennyi shopot: 'Valerii!/ Ty bredish'. Skazhi chto s toboi? / Mne strashno!" — Al'kov goluboi/ Smeniaet khvoiu kriptomerii" (An agitated whisper is heard: "Valerii!/ You are delirious. What is the matter with you?/ I am scared!" — The blue alcove/ Replaces the coniferous cryptomeres).[10] This ending — the ironic waking up to a non-exotic reality — points to the dangers of merging art and life, even though it does so in a humorous vein. Had the poet not been awakened by his worried lover in time, a possibly fatal transition from dream to reality could have taken place. Clearly, the poem is not to be taken too seriously however, even though it introduces the art nouveau motif of "woman as dangerous animal," and the Poet as potential criminal. The poet's "co-creative" lover introduces the common sense element however, proving to be no "tigress"; she even reduces the poet to an almost school-boyish figure who has read more exotica and erotica than is good for him.

In the sonnet "Presentiment" ("Predchuvstvie," 1894, from the cycle "Noon on Java," "Polden' Iavy") the transition from one state to the other, from exotic dream to situational reality, seems to be made, however, apparently leading to moral transgression. It is relegated to an envisioned future though. The poet's love is [as] "the flaming noon of Java" (1: 57) and he invites his Beloved into the "implacable garden" of poisonous passions where their bodies will intertwine like "two rapacious snakes." In the end, the poet envisions how her eyes will "close" and how she will die ("to budet smert'"); he will then bury her body in a "shroud of lianas." Does she die, however? Or just depart into the land of ecstasies? If the poet's lover dies, what will she die of — from a murderous assault on his part, or just from the exhaustion of the "implacable passions" he plans to inflict on her? Does he once again mistake his beloved for a wild and beautiful beast and kill her in his dreams or will it be the sheer force of his "Javanese" flaming love that will cause her death? Or was he reading some exciting novel, or poem, over which he fell asleep, identifying with its hero, but only in his imagination? In the poem "To a Nun" (In the Middle Ages) a murder is again envisioned, but it is again set in the future and narrated as a scenario. Even though not occurring on Java, the poem deals with a passion as hot as any "Javanese" one, in which the lovers — a nun and her blasphemous admirer — will "intertwine like snakes" (1: 73) — in the lover's projection of a future union. The unknown medieval narrator of events (a "bard"?) strangles the nun in the end — but, again, perhaps only in his imagination, since his plea for her to come out of the monastery does not receive an answer within the text of the poem. Perhaps this admirer of nuns is composing a ballad? Certainly, Briusov's persona already in his early poetry identifies with many possible hypostases, including female ones, taken from all times and realms. In a poem highly valued by Briusov himself, i.e. "On the Banks of the Murmuring Godaveri"

("Na zhurchashchei Godaveri," 1894, 1: 67–68), he identifies with a young Indian girl who invokes the god of love Kama, but is also prepared to turn to the goddess of death Kali, should her prayers to Kama prove unpropitious. Here we do not see a merger of the Moscow river Iauza and the Indian river Godaveri, but is the Indian maiden engaged in divinations all that different from Tatyana (in *Eugene Onegin*) trying to peer into the future and trying to guess whether her love for her hero will be answered or not? Nor did we see traces of Moscow in "To a Nun," unless we see the poet once more settled in a comfortable armchair, or lying in his blue alcove, surrounded by pot-plants, reading, fantasizing in the light of a streetlamp, creating "exotic" works of art for his Muscovite compatriots which they, in turn, will consume in similar settings.

Civilization does, in the view of its critics, not produce culture, but it undeniably facilitates its "consumption," be it in the form of books or opera performances or art exhibitions, all easily available in a limited space and easily reached by efficient means of transport. This multiplicity of easily accessible cultural offerings may lead to confusion about the sources of poetic visions. Thus as the poem "Dreams within Dreams" ("Opiat' son," 1895, p. 66) intimates, its persona has problems deciding which exotic realm he is in and what tales it is exactly that inspire his entangled visions. To begin with he is certainly in Africa. As a "yellow lion" is creeping up to a zebra, the heavy step of a hippopotamus trampling down "entangled vegetation" resounds in the distance. "Safe on a rock," the poet — apparently a hunter — is "all sight and hearing," but his "weak spirit" is confused by too much cultural information. "Ancient fables" surround him in the African landscape and these heterogeneous texts begin to merge. A "tribe of gnomes" (plemia karlikov) seem to emerge from the grey rock and apparently also from the world of the Niebelungs; these, in their turn may be creatures of the German epic, or Wagner's *Ring cycle*. The vision of gnomes then merges with that of a forest ablaze perhaps inspired by Wagner's fire-music, or Russian *byliny* and fairytales. In any case, the African animals begin to feel out of place. The lion, clearly disgruntled, gives up its hunt for the zebra and "goes down to the river to have a drink." The hippo has disappeared in the distance long ago. The "dusky and empty distances" fill with "spirits," perhaps the spirits of African ancestors? Even if that is the case, the field is now left open to several "extra-systemic" creatures. In the final line, the "czar of caves," the bear, noisily enters the foreground which leads to the suspicion that the bear really is the hippo having undergone a metamorphosis, as is wont in dreams. With the appearance of this "czar of caves" the poem breaks off. Is the poet afraid that he may repeat the fate of Pushkin's Tatyana, who in her famous dream (in *Eugene Onegin*) is carried off by a huge bear? Or, since the poet is not a delicate Tatyana, we may surmise that a "co-creative" lover may be endangered by czar Bear, or, he might stand

for the "implacable passions" of her "Javanese" lover? Where are the lovers in such a case — in Africa or Java, in Moscow, or in the land of the Niebelungs?

The answer to this question may be found in a much later poem. Entitled "In the Manner of F. Sologub" (1923), it pursues the goal of satirizing this decadent writer's "demonstrative avoidance of contemporary themes" (SiP: 833), but, if so, it could well also serve as a parody on Briusov's own early style. In any case, this jocular poem deals with both a bear and a hippo. Here is its last stanza:

> Pover′ na medvede dvuspal′nom
> Moim mechtam!
> I pust′ bredet v peske opal′nom
> Gippopotam . . . (SiP: 564)
>
> Believe in my dreams
> On a double-bed bear skin!
> And let the hippo roam about freely
> In the sands of disgrace.
>
> (My translation)

In other words, the "czar-bear" of "Dreams within a Dream" may well be a luxurious bearskin rug (with room for two) on which the poet has been dreaming his African and folkloric dreams, only to return to Russian realities eventually. The hippo's noisy disappearance presumably marks the poet's awakening in his own bedroom with its blue alcove and bearskin rug and possibly a "co-creator" right next to him.

Sleeping, dreaming, daydreaming — these are clearly states that are conducive to "creativity." Another state that may be furthering it may be something as "naïve and Muscovite" as a feverish cold, the cure of which is enjoyed in comfort at home. Judging by his diary entry for 20 August, 1898, Briusov liked the phase of recuperating from colds while still feverish and therefore receptive to impressions of a reality distorted by the feverish vision. He noted down on that day that he willingly "gave himself up to a feverish delirium" caused by a cold, since this was "one of his most beloved states of self-indulgence" ("iz liubimeiskhikh neg," Diaries: 48).[11] This is how the delirium is described: "Slezhu ochertaniia besstrastnykh tenei i slushaiu, slushaiu govor — kak pen′e. Dali miagkogo sveta; istoma napeva bez rezkikh zvukov. Vse glubzhe i glubzhe po tverdym plitam, kak v znakomye volny, na dno. Otdokhnut′ v zmeiakh pereputannykh steblei, gde steklo i zyb′, i blizost′ prostranstva. Ne nado inoi strany, razdumii ili tainy! Dalekie i ne nuzhnye prizraki nedavnikh muchenii. O pustynnye obrazy, mir sozvuchnykh slov! Otdaius′ nabezhavshemu bredu — odnoi iz liubimeishikh neg." (I closely follow the outlines of dispassionate shadows and listen intensely to murmurs

that are like song. Vistas of soft light open up before me; the pleasant fatigue of melodies without sharp dissonances. [I move] ever deeper, stepping on firm tiles, as if into familiar waves, down to the bottom. I take a rest amidst the snakes of intertwined stems, where there is [the transparency of] glass and moving wavelets and the proximity of space. There is no need of another land, of thoughts or mysteries. The ghosts of recent sufferings are far away. O pure images, world of sonorous words! I yield to the oncoming delirium — it is one of my favorite pleasures.) In this diary passage, which ostensively, describes actual feverish states, the impact of Lermontov's poetry is palpable, specifically the passage from *Mtsyri* (The Novice, 1840) where the magic underwater fairytale kingdom is presented:

Ia umiral. Menia tomil
Predsmertnyi bred,
Kazalos' mne,
Chto ia lezhu na vlazhnom dne
Glubokoi rechki — i byla
Krugom tainstvennaia mgla.
I zhazhdu vechnuiu poia,
Kak led kholodnaia struia,
Zhurcha vlivalasia mne v grud' ...
A nado mnoiu v vyshine
Volna tesnililasia k volne,
I solntse skvoz' khrustal' volny
Siialo sladostnei luny ...[12]

[English translation by Charles Johnston]

I seemed to die. Herald of death,
a madness crushed me, squeezed my breath.
And then it seemed to me that I
on the moist bed had come to lie
of a deep river — there I found
mysterious darkness all around.
And quenching my eternal thirst
the ice-cold stream, in bubbling burst,
into my chest came flowing deep . . .
My only fear to fall asleep,
so sweet, so blissful was my plight . . .
And there above me in the height
wave thronged on wave, and through the bright
crystal of water the sun beamed,
with a moon's graciousness it gleamed . . .

In short, Briusov's exotic transformations of mercantile Moscow took place in the shelter of a banal, but cozy, *byt* that allowed a budding young poet to "experience" beloved classic texts as well as exciting French decadents in wakeful dreams and "dream-realities" that would become delightful *epatage* poetry that salvaged civilization for culture.

Total receptivity implies passivity. Dwelling in dream states harbors the risk of losing self-control, or misjudging a situation, or making a wrong decision. As Briusov's oeuvre develops and changes, there is a growing rejection of these dangers, even if strangling your mistress mistakenly believing she was a tigress, perhaps was not a real threat. A confession such as [the poet's] "weak spirit becoming confused" (made in "Dream within Dreams") becomes increasingly inadmissible, however, as the mature Briusov shapes the persona of the Leader who knows what he is doing every moment in time. In *Tertia vigilia* the theme of total self-control in all situations begins to emerge frequently, for example in the well known poem "I" ("Ia," 1899). Here the poet proudly announces that "his spirit did not grow weak in the haze of contradictions." And he announces that he has come to "strangely love the haze of contradictions" (1: 142), because he knows he will not lose his way in them. He can dedicate his verse to "all gods" because he has found his "I" — that of the Master-Poet. His philosophical stance could be defined as "pluralism," but it is not so much a pluralism that tolerates others' creeds, as one that embraces "all dreams, all discourses, all gods" (1: 42) within the self. A poem that captures this transition from the poet who passively absorbs impressions, lets them merge and then creates his phantasmagorias to the poet who controls the elements around him is "Circe" ("Tsirtseia," 1899).

Although the poetic persona here assumes a female mask, the enchantress Circe speaks for the poet himself, when she announces that in "the half-waking state of sensual passions [her] magic spells grow weaker." She is a powerful "tsaritsa" who, in her wakeful state, controls the elements: "I am the ruler of spirits, water and fire" (1: 148), she tells us. Sometimes however she allows the elemental forces of nature to grow stronger, allowing them to "weaken" her (obessilit', 148). This happens when she is "in the half-wakeful state of sensual passion" (v polusne sladostrast'ia); as a result, as she allows herself to drift into passivity the surrounding elements grow proportionally stronger. Water turns into roaring waterfalls, fire into conflagrations. In this power reversal, the enchantress and sorceress feels excruciating pain; she suffers deeply. She therefore draws the conclusion that it is her duty to "Maintain [her] willpower on the pre-marked borderline/ And to keep the forceful elements under control." This Nietzschean Circe with her "will to power" knows the exact borderline between surrender and control then, just as Briusov's later persona will, as expressed in the famous "To the Poet." In this poem, the state of poetic

inspiration emerges as one of "being a distanced observer of all around" and as being "dispassionate even during love's embraces" (1: 417). The impetuous self-selected leader of Moscow Decadence, in "Circe" evolves into a magician in control of all his techniques and devices, and in "Poetu" emerges as the Master who has measured the exact distance between actual suffering and writing about it, recalling it. The theme of total control of oneself while also seeking out those dangers that may cause loss of control, this constant awareness of being able to walk the tightrope between the two, marks a departure from youthful impressionism with its surrender to irrational moods, borderline states and transgressions. In the later phase, Moscow is no longer in the "tropics," but has been transferred to other realms, such as the stately realm of "Rome," be it the first of antiquity, or the third of the Russian Empire, or even the fourth Rome of the Soviet state. Out of the rich assortment of "garbs" that the poet clothes his city in, the tropical Moscow is certainly the most amusing one. Playfulness may preserve the cultural heritage (in this case modernist urban poetry) equally well, if not better, as more conscious efforts to preserve a dignified past and respectable persona.

Notes

1. V. S. Khodasevich, "Nekropol'," Paris: YMCA-Press, 1976.
2. K. Mochulsky, "Valerii Briusov," Paris: YMCA-Press, 1962.
3. See A. S. Griboedov's *Gore ot uma* (Woe from Wit), Act. 1, Scene 7.
4. Briusov specialist Joan Delany Grossman gives detailed analyses of many of these poems, but her discussion is not focused on "exotica," rather covering broader developmental aspects of the poet's early oeuvre. See Joan Grossman's *Valery Bryusov and the Riddle of Russian Decadence*, Berkeley, Los Angeles, London: University of California Press, 1985.
5. K. Mochulsky, *op. cit.*, p. 32.
6. See Valerii Briusov, *Sobranie sochinenii*, v semi tomakh, volume 1, *Stikhotvoreniia. Poemy, 1892–1909*, Moskva: "Khudozhestvennaia literatura, 1973, pp. 35–36.
7. The translated phrases are Joan Delaney Grossman's. For a full translation of the poem and a detailed discussion of it, see her *Valery Bryusov and the Riddle of Russian Decadence*, pp. 43–46. Grossman shares Khodasevich's high estimate of this poem. She writes: "Creation" is the best example of the poetry of suggestion in Bryusov's early work. It shows the poet in the process of distancing himself from the empirical world by creating, in the best Decadent manner, a synthetic world, employing images and methods associated with the new poetry" (p. 46).
8. Valerii Briusov, "Stikhtvoreniia i poemy," Leningrad: Sovetskii pisatel', 1961, p. 601.
9. Briusov "stylizes patriarchal Moscow a la Baudelaire's Paris" (Mochulsky, p. 40).

[10] Using his actual first name "Valerii," Briusov introduced the inclusion of personal "passport data" (such as actual name, street address etc.) before Maiakovsky famously did in his *Cloud in Trousers*.

[11] Valerii Briusov, "Dnevniki" 1891–1900, Letchworth, Herts.: Rarity Reprints, nr. 28, 1972.

[12] Lermontov's "Vykhozhu odin ia na dorogu" would also seem to be a relevant source for describing "in between states," especially the fourth and fifth stanzas. In these, the poet describes ideal existence as one forever to melodies of infinite beauty, accompanied by the rustling of a forever green oak. The translation by Charles Johnston is found in: Narrative Poems by Alexander Pushkin and by Mikhail Lermontov, New York: Vintage Books, 1983, p. 103.

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