

ALEKSANDR PUSHKIN



EUGENE  
ONEGIN

*A Novel in Verse*



Translated by  
VLADIMIR NABOKOV

VOLUME III  
Commentary and Index

# *Eugene Onegin*

A NOVEL IN VERSE BY Aleksandr Pushkin  
TRANSLATED FROM THE RUSSIAN, WITH  
A COMMENTARY, BY Vladimir Nabokov

IN FOUR VOLUMES

3

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Commentary on Chapters Six to Eight,  
“Onegin’s Journey,” and “Chapter Ten”

Appendixes

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*For the index, see vol. 4.*

## Method of Transliteration

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Except when otherwise stated, I have followed in all my transcriptions of Russian texts the new spelling adopted in Russia after the Revolution. The reform did not affect, or at least was not supposed to affect, anything in the pronunciation. Its main object was to get rid of certain superfluous ornamental letters. Thus (to mention a few of the changes), it retained only one of the vowels, identically pronounced but differently spelled, corresponding to the English *e* in "yes"; abolished the so-called "hard sign" that used to follow all nonpalatalized consonants at the end of words; and substituted for the nonaccented *a* in the *ago* of genitive endings (pronounced like the *a* in the *ava* of *Cavalleria*) an *o*, which, being unaccented, is pronounced, or should be pronounced, exactly like the *a* it replaces. Below is a table of the transliterations used in the present work.

Russian Character Transliterated		PRONOUNCED
A а	a	Like the Italian <i>a</i> . Resembles the <i>a</i> of "art" (never pronounced as in "man" or "male").
Б б	b	As in "Byron." Exceptions: medial <i>b</i> before a voiceless consonant and final <i>b</i> tending to <i>p</i> . Thus <i>próbká</i> , "cork," rhymes with <i>knópka</i> , "tack,"

## Method of Transliteration

Russian Character Transliterated		PRONOUNCED
		and <i>lob</i> , "forehead," rhymes with <i>pop</i> , "priest" (but <i>volshébnó</i> , "magically," and <i>velikolépno</i> , "splendidly," do not rhyme).
В в	v	As in "Victoria." Exceptions: medial <i>v</i> before a voiceless consonant and final <i>v</i> tending to <i>f</i> . Thus <i>bulávka</i> , "pin," rhymes with "Kafka," and <i>nрав</i> , "temper," rhymes with <i>telegráf</i> (but <i>svoenrávnĭy</i> , "capricious," and <i>telegráfnĭy</i> , "telegraphic," do not rhyme).
Г г	g	As the hard <i>g</i> of "go" (never as in "gentle" and never mute before <i>n</i> ). Exceptions: medial <i>g</i> before a voiceless consonant and, in a few words, final <i>g</i> tending to aspirated <i>h</i> as in <i>myágkiy</i> , "soft," and <i>bog</i> , "god." Otherwise, final <i>g</i> tends to <i>k</i> . Thus <i>rog</i> , "horn," rhymes with <i>urók</i> , "lesson." In terminations of adjectives and pronouns in the genitive singular, <i>g</i> is pronounced <i>v</i> . Thus <i>nemógo</i> , "of the mute," rhymes with <i>slóvo</i> , "word."
Д д	d	As in "Dante." Exceptions: medial <i>d</i> before a voiceless consonant and final <i>d</i> tending to <i>t</i> . Thus <i>vódka</i> rhymes with <i>glótka</i> , "throat," and <i>sled</i> , "trace," with <i>let</i> , "of years" (but <i>ládno</i> , "all right," does not rhyme with <i>besplátno</i> , "gratis").
Е е	e	As <i>ye</i> in "yellow."
Ё ё	yo	As <i>yo</i> in "yonder" (never as in "yoke").
Ж ж	zh	As <i>s</i> in "measure" or <i>z</i> in "azure" (never as in "zeal") and as the French <i>i</i> in "Jacques" or the second <i>g</i> in

## Method of Transliteration

Russian  
Character Transliterated

PRONOUNCED

			“garage.” Exceptions: medial <i>zh</i> before a voiceless consonant and final <i>zh</i> tending to <i>sh</i> . Thus <i>lózshka</i> , “spoon,” rhymes with <i>kóshka</i> , “cat,” and <i>krazh</i> , “of thefts,” rhymes with <i>karandásh</i> , “pencil” (but <i>lózhnĭy</i> , “false,” does not rhyme with <i>ros-kóshnĭy</i> , “luxurious”).
З з	z		As in “zebra” (never as in “mezzo-soprano” or “azure”). Exceptions: medial <i>z</i> before a voiceless consonant and final <i>z</i> tending to <i>s</i> . Thus <i>skázka</i> , “fairy tale,” rhymes with <i>láska</i> , “caress,” and <i>glaz</i> , “eye,” with <i>nas</i> , “us” (but <i>rázniĭy</i> , “different,” does not rhyme with <i>prekrásniĭy</i> , “beautiful”).
И и			As the first <i>e</i> in “scene” (never as <i>i</i> in “mine”), but as <i>ĭ</i> (see p. xxi) after the three letters <i>zh</i> , <i>ts</i> , and <i>sh</i> .*
Й й	-y		A semivowel existing only in diphthongs: thus <i>táyna</i> , “mystery,” in which <i>ay</i> is like an English long <i>i</i> or, more exactly, the French <i>aille</i> ; <i>ey</i> , “to her,” which sounds like the end of a long-drawn English “away!” in the mist and the distance; very close to the French <i>eille</i> ; <i>kĭy</i> , “billiard cue,” in which <i>iĭy</i> is like the French <i>ille</i> in <i>quille</i> ;

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\*In Pushkin’s time, and generally before the new orthography was introduced (in 1918), И, when preceding a vowel, was replaced by the identically pronounced *ĭ*. There were also other differences: thus *e* was written as *ѣ* in a number of words (this letter, although pronounced exactly as *e*, I have transliterated by *ye* whenever the necessity to mention it arose, for the sake of differentiation), and words terminating in consonants had the useless “hard sign,” Ъ, affixed at the end. When medial, it acts as a medial Ь (see further) and is marked thus, ’.

## Method of Transliteration

### Russian

#### Character Transliterated

#### PRONOUNCED

*boy*, "battle," in which *oy* sounds like the *oy* in the English "boy" (in which, however, the *o* has greater duration and the *y* is not so strident);

*duy*, "blow" (imperative), in which *uy* sounds like the French *ouille* as in *andouille*; and

-*ïy*, the ending of adjectives (masc. sing.), which sounds like the French *œil*.

К к	k	As in English, but never mute before <i>n</i> .
-----	---	---

Л л	l	} As in English.
М м	m	
Н н	n	

О о	o	Like the Italian <i>o</i> ; close to the first <i>o</i> in "cosmos" when accented and close to the second <i>o</i> when not (never as in "go"). In Moscow speech the unaccented <i>o</i> (as, for example, in <i>Moskva</i> ) is pronounced in a manner about as "ah"-like as the accented <i>o</i> in New York English ("jahb," "stahp"). In ordinary good Russian the unaccented <i>o</i> (as, for example, in <i>koróva</i> , "cow") is pronounced like the final <i>a</i> , which sounds like the ultima of "Eva."
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П п	p	As in English, but never mute before <i>n</i> or <i>s</i> .
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Р р	r	A clean, clear vibration that is closer to the Italian than to the English (never amplifying the preceding vowel as it does sometimes in English). When burred (by old-fashioned Peterburgians), it is undistinguishable from a French <i>r</i> and then very annoying to the Moscow ear.
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## Method of Transliteration

<i>Russian</i>			
<i>Character</i>	<i>Transliterated</i>	PRONOUNCED	
С с	s	Like the first <i>c</i> in "cicada" (never like the second).	
Т т	t	As in "Tom" (but never as in "ritual" or "nation").	
У у	u	As <i>oo</i> in "boom." Similar to the French <i>ou</i> (never as the <i>u</i> of "buff" or of "flute").	
Ф ф	f	As in English.	
Х х	h or kh	Close to <i>ch</i> in the German <i>ach</i> or the Scottish "loch." There is no <i>k</i> sound about it, as the usual <i>kh</i> transliteration unfortunately suggests to the English eye. I have used <i>kh</i> only in one or two cases when <i>s</i> precedes it (for example, <i>skhodil</i> , "descended"), to avoid confusion with <i>sh</i> .	
Ц ц	ts	As <i>ts</i> in "tsetse" or the German <i>z</i> in <i>Zermatt</i> . It should be observed, however, that in many words such as <i>otsyúda</i> , "from here," in which <i>ot</i> is a prefix, <i>kázhetsya</i> , "it seems," in which <i>sya</i> is the suffix, and <i>détskiy</i> , "childish," in which <i>ski</i> is the suffix, the transcription <i>ts</i> corresponds to these two separate letters in Russian.	
Ч ч	ch	As in English.	
Ш ш	sh	As in English.	
Щ щ	shch	A fusion of sibilants that can be imitated in English by such combinations as "fish chowder," "cash check," "hush child," "plush chair," and so forth.	
Ы ы	ï	A medial or final nonpalatal vowel pronounced as a very blunt, short <i>i</i> by trying to say <i>ee</i> while keeping the tensed tongue back so as not to touch	

## Method of Transliteration

### Russian

#### Character Transliterated

#### PRONOUNCED

			the inner side of the lower teeth, as it would do in a palatal vowel. The result is a kind of cross between a dull short <i>i</i> and a grunt. (The character chosen to represent this difficult letter should not be mistaken for the sharp French <i>î</i> bearing the same diacritical sign, as in <i>naïf</i> .)
Ә ә	e		As in "Edinburgh." Apart from foreign words and geographical names, it is found only in <i>étot</i> , "this," and its derivations and in a few interjections such as <i>e</i> , <i>ey</i> , <i>eh</i> , and so forth.
Ю ю	yu		As <i>u</i> in "use" but of less duration.
Я я	ya		As in the German <i>ya</i> .
Ь ь	'		A palatal sign modifying (softening) the preceding consonant, so that <i>t'</i> sounds somewhat like <i>ts</i> , <i>d'</i> like <i>tz</i> , and so on. A usual termination of infinitives ( <i>govorit'</i> , "to speak"; <i>pet'</i> , "to sing"; <i>pisát'</i> , "to write"). When placed after a medial letter it indicates not only palatization but also a very slight pause. Thus the <i>n'e</i> of <i>pen'e</i> is like the <i>niè</i> of the French <i>dernièrement</i> . Consequently <i>Il'ya</i> , "Elijah," sounds very like the French <i>il y a</i> pronounced rapidly.

Although rigid consistency would require that in transliteration all Russian names ending in *нѣ* should end in *iy* (such as surnames—e.g., Vyazemskiy—and first names—e.g., Grigoriy—as well as the names of avenues, lanes, and boulevards, all of which are masculine in Russian), I have had to make certain concessions to accepted spellings as given in works of reference.

All surnames lose the *y* after the *i* in transliteration (e.g., Vyazemski). All first names retain the *y* (e.g.,

## *Method of Transliteration*

Grigoriy), except in the case of one or two Russian names that have lost it in English usage (e.g., Dmitri instead of Dmitriy). The same goes for the names of boulevards, avenues, and lanes, except in the case of the Nevski, or Nevski Avenue (instead of Nevskiy). The word "street," *ulitsa*, is feminine in Russian, and the feminine ending of the adjective to it is completely transliterated in English (e.g., Morskaya Street). All names ending in *oï* (Shahovskoy, Bolshoy) retain the *y* in transliteration.

Except for the surnames of female performers, such as dancers, singers, actresses, and so on, which traditionally retain these feminine endings (Istomina, Pavlova), all feminine surnames, although ending in *a* in Russian, take a masculine ending in transliteration (Anna Sidorov, Anna Karenin, Princess Vyazemski).

I omit the soft sign in Russian names (Bolshoy instead of Bol'shoy, Olga instead of Ol'ga, Gogol instead of Gogol'), unless such names appear in lines of Russian or in other phrases that require exact transliteration in my Commentary.

Not a few Russians have German surnames, and there occur borderline cases in which a transliteration is preferred to the German original. But, generally speaking, I use the simple German spelling of such names whenever this does not clash with tradition (thus, Küchelbecker instead of Kyuhel'beker).

No accents are used in Russian, but I use them to indicate the correct stress whenever it might help the reader in scanning a verse.

In capitalizing the first word of each line when quoting verse, given that it is capitalized in the original, I have adhered to the following principles: it is capitalized in translations when the lines render exactly the form of the original, including rhymes and rhyme pattern; it is also capitalized in lines that are metrically faithful translations of blank verse or rhymeless dactylic hexameters.

## *Calendar*

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The Julian calendar (Old Style), introduced by Julius Caesar in 46 B.C. and adopted by the First Council of Nicaea in A.D. 325, was used in Russia up to the Revolution of 1917. The Gregorian calendar (New Style), now in general use, was introduced by Pope Gregory XIII in 1582. The date October 5, 1582, was called October 15, 1582; thus ten days were dropped. In Great Britain, however, the Old Style lasted till 1752, when, in September, eleven days were dropped.

The years 1700 and 1800 were not leap years by the Gregorian rules (whereas 1600, being divisible by 400, was); therefore, the difference between the two calendars was increased in each of those years by one day, bringing it to eleven days from 1700 to 1800, twelve from 1800 to 1900, and thirteen from 1900 to 1917. Thus the middle of July in Russia would be the end of July elsewhere, while January 12, 1799, and January 13, 1800, in the world at large would both be New Year's Day in Russia.

In the present work all dates pertaining to events in Russia are Old Style unless stated otherwise. Dates pertaining to events in the rest of the world are New Style. When there exists a possibility of confusion, both styles are given thus: 1/13 January.

## *Abbreviations and Symbols*

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Acad 1937	A. S. Pushkin. <i>Polnoe sobranie sochineniy</i> (Complete Collected Works), vol. VI, ed. B. Tomashevski. Akademiya nauk SSSR (U.S.S.R. Academy of Sciences), Leningrad, 1937. (The so-called "akademicheskoe izdanie," or academic edition.)
Acad 1938	A. S. Pushkin. <i>Polnoe sobranie sochineniy</i> (Complete Collected Works), vol. XIII, ed. M. A. Tsyavlovski. Akademiya nauk SSSR (U.S.S.R. Academy of Sciences), Leningrad, 1938. (The so-called "akademicheskoe izdanie," or academic edition.)
Acad 1948	A. S. Pushkin. <i>Polnoe sobranie sochineniy</i> (Complete Collected Works), vol. V, ed. S. M. Bondi. Akademiya nauk SSSR (U.S.S.R. Academy of Sciences), Moscow and Leningrad, 1948. (The so-called "akademicheskoe izdanie," or academic edition.)
EO	<i>Eugene Onegin.</i>
Lit. nasl.	<i>Literaturnoe nasledstvo</i> (Literary Heritage), nos. 16–18. Moscow, 1934.
MA	Moscow Central Archives.
MB	Lenin Public Library, Moscow.
PB	St. Petersburg, later Leningrad, Public Library.
PD	Pushkinskiy Dom (Pushkin House), Leningrad.

## Abbreviations and Symbols

- P. i ego sovr.*    *Pushkin i ego sovremenniki* (Pushkin and His Contemporaries), nos. 1-39. St. Petersburg, 1903-30.
- Vremennik*      *Vremennik Pushkinskoy komissii* (Annals of the Pushkin Commission), vols. I-VI. Moscow, 1936-41.
- Works 1936*      A. S. Pushkin. *Polnoe sobranie sochineniy* (Complete Collected Works), ed. Yu. G. Oksman, M. A. Tsyavlovski, and G. O. Vinokur. Akademiya nauk SSSR (U.S.S.R. Academy of Sciences), Moscow and Leningrad, 1936. 6 vols.
- Works 1949*      A. S. Pushkin. *Polnoe sobranie sochineniy* (Complete Collected Works), vol. V, ed. B. Tomashevski. Akademiya nauk SSSR (U.S.S.R. Academy of Sciences), Moscow and Leningrad, 1949.
- Works 1957*      A. S. Pushkin. *Polnoe sobranie sochineniy* (Complete Collected Works), vol. V, ed. B. Tomashevski. Akademiya nauk SSSR (U.S.S.R. Academy of Sciences), Moscow, 1957.
- [   ]              Translator's interpolations.
- <   >            Canceled readings.

COMMENTARY TO *EUGENE ONEGIN*

(*concluded*)



## Chapter Six

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### MOTTO

This is a fragmentary quotation (ll. 49 and 51) from Petrarch's *In vita di Laura*, Canzone xxviii, beginning "O aspettata in ciel beata e bella." With l. 50, which Pushkin omitted, the passage reads:

Là sotto i giorni nubilosi e brevi,  
Nemica naturalmente di pace,  
Nasce una gente, a cui 'l morir non dole.

There, beneath days misty and brief,  
inimical to peace by nature,  
a race is born t'whom dying is not painful.

### I

| 1 *Zamétiv, chto Vladimir skrîlsya*: "Having noticed that Vladimir had withdrawn." But this does not retain the "disappearance" in *skrîlsya*.

10-12 Cf. Robert Lyall, *The Character of the Russians, and a Detailed History of Moscow* (London, 1823), pp. liii-liv, lvii:

A *fête* was to be given by Madame [Poltoratski], the mother of the gentleman whom I accompanied . . . on

## Commentary

the Sunday subsequent to our arrival at that estate [Gruzino, near Torzhok]. Throughout the Saturday, carriages filled with nobles continued to arrive from time to time. . . . Although the house of Madame [Poltoratski] was of considerable size, it was matter of astonishment to me, where the whole party, amounting to nearly fifty individuals, were to find rooms for their accommodation in the night. . . . Conversation and cards were the evening amusements, and at 11 o'clock an elegant supper was served up, and at its conclusion, a scene of bustle and confusion followed which riveted my attention. The dining-room, the drawing-room, the hall, the whole suit of apartments, in which we had passed the evening, were converted into bed-rooms. . . . The number of bed-steads . . . [being] insufficient . . . a number of beds were immediately arranged on the floor, some upon chairs. . . .

I made a *morning visit about eleven o'clock* on the following day, to one of the houses, in which were lodged some of my male acquaintances. . . . The hall and the drawing-room were literally a barracks;—sofas, divans, and chairs put together, covered with beds, and their fatigued or lazy tenants . . . half a dozen noblemen . . . [in one such den] wrapped up in splendid silk night-gowns, some lying down, some sitting up in bed, some drinking coffee and tea, and smoking tobacco, amidst mephitic air, and surrounded by chamber utensils, and other disagreeable trumpery, formed a curious motley association.

## II

1–3 The inimitable Elton has:

All quiet! In the parlour snorting  
Was heard the ponderous Pustyakov,  
With ponderous better-half consorting . . .

3 / better half / *polovínoy* [instr.]: A Gallicism, *moitié*. French poets of the *sublime*, or *cheville*, school have used the term *moitié* in perfectly serious verse. Voltaire has somewhere in the *Henriade*: “Et leurs tristes moitiés, compagnes de leurs pas” (“and their sad halves, companions of their steps”).

8 / underwaistcoat: The term used by Pushkin is *fufayka*, which comes, I suppose, from the German *Futterhemd*. It corresponds to the French *camisole de laine* or *gilet de flanelle*. The eighteenth-century English word I have chosen is the *gilet de dessous* of c. 1800. In my time, *fufayka* was used mainly in the sense of “jersey” or “sweater,” but with the epithet *natel’naya* (“next the skin”) it might stand for “undershirt” or “T shirt.” I see Triquet as remaining in his flannel vest for the night.

11 / *Odná pechál’no*: I suspect that this should be *Odna, pechal’na*, “alone, sad.”

14 “Field,” *póle*, is used in the sense of “open country.” The same intonation occurs in Pushkin’s earlier long poem *The Gypsies (Tsigani)*, ll. 26–29:

In one tent an old man sleeps not:  
before the coals he sits  
· · · · ·  
and into the far field he looks . . .

### III

8–9 In a Russian version of can. XXIII, octaves C–CXII, of Ariosto’s *Orlando furioso* (or, rather, of the French version, *Roland furieux*), composed by Pushkin in 1826 (see my n. to One : LIV : 4), our poet rendered a passage from the French (“son cœur se glace: il lui semble qu’une main froide le lui presse”) by the tetrametric lines:

it is as if a chilly hand  
compressed his heart in awful fashion . . .

Strange migrations and transmigrations!

The Italian text reads (can. XXIII, octave CXI, 6):

Stringersi il cor sentia con fredda mano . . .

Lodovico Ariosto (1474–1533) began this story of knightly amours in 1505 and worked on it for eleven

## Commentary

years. The first edition (1516) contains forty and the 1532 edn. forty-six cantos (4842 octaves). A French gentleman of parts, Louis Elisabeth de La Vergne, Comte de Tressan (1705–83), took three months to paraphrase in easy French prose the elaborate melodies of the divine Lodovico. Although it was preceded by several much more faithful versions, it was Tressan's *Roland furieux*, "poème héroïque de l'Arioste" (1780), that went through a multitude of more or less revised editions (e.g., Pannelier, 1823) throughout the nineteenth century.

### IV

- 3 / Five versts from Krasnogórie: *Anglice*, "Three miles from Fairhill." In Slavic place names the idea of *krasnŭy*, "beautiful," "festive," is sometimes allied to the idea of *krasnŭy* as expressing anciently the live magic of fire, springtime, and so on; and from *krasnŭy*, "flamelike," there always has been an easy step to *krasnŭy*, "red," its usual meaning today. Whether Pushkin desired it or not, the not-uncommon name of Lenski's countryseat has more links with myths and enchantments than matter-of-fact "Fairhill" would have. Such combinations as Krasnaya Gorka ("Bright Hillock") are associated not only with the idea of vivid natural beauty (or, specifically, with the color of red stone, red sand, red pine bark), but also with some of those enthusiastic but repetitious May-Day pagan rites and Floralian games that are so dull to read about in anthropological works.
- 6 / *V filosoficheskoy pustŭne*: *Pustŭnya* is the *désert* of French pseudoclassicism. It is also *retraite*. Cf. Marmontel, "La Leçon du Malheur," in *Contes moraux*: "Tout le monde connaît la retraite philosophique qu'il s'était faite au bord de la Seine."

- 7 / Zarétski: Some amateurs of prototype wrongly see in this character a skit on Fyodor Tolstoy (see nn. to Four : XIX : 5 and Six : VI : 5-8).

10 / Cf. Two : XXXVI : 9.

- 13 A note in Lerner\* sent me to a sentence of Voltaire's *Candide* (1759), ch. 30: "Il n'y eut pas jusqu'à frère Giroflée qui ne rendît service; il fut un très bon menuisier, et même devint honnête homme . . ."

(Incidentally, another good example of what I mean by sloppy "translation" is John Butt's rendering of this passage in the Penguin Books execrable English paraphrase (1947) of *Candide*: "No one refused to work, not even Brother Giroflée, who was [instead of "who turned out to be"] a good carpenter [instead of "worker in wood"], and thus [instead of "even"] became an honest [instead of "honorable"] man.")

Chizhevski (p. 267) draws here a completely erroneous analogy with Gogol's use of "even" (*dazhe*) in "The Carrick" (*Shinel'*).

- 14 / *Tak ispravlydetsya nash vek*: I take *vek* to mean here "epoch" rather than "lifespan" (as, for instance, in Eight : X : 13); neither, however, makes more than trivial sense. The line, in fact, is a clumsy Gallicism. Cf. Voltaire, footnote of 1768 to *La Guerre civile de Genève*, beginning of can. IV: "Observez, cher lecteur, combien le siècle se perfectionne."

# V

- 4 / *V pyati sazhéniah*: "At five sagues." A sagene is seven feet, 2.134 meters, 2.33 yards. A yard in measuring distances is one pace, and twelve paces was a popular range

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\**Zven'ya*, no. 5 (1935), p. 77.

## Commentary

in pistol duels. Byron (according to his *Life* by Moore, p. 319) could snuff out a candle with a pistol-shot at the distance of twenty paces.

- 9 / swine drunk / *Kak zyúzya p'yánïy*: "Soused as a swine." In Russian, *zyuzya* has several meanings besides "pig," one of which is exactly a "soused" or "drunk" person, and another a "blubbery" person. The English noun "souse" also means a pickled pig and may have come from L. *sal*, "salt," while the verb may have been influenced by the Fr. *saoûl*, which comes from L. *satietas*. *Zyuzya* sounds as if it came directly from *sus*, Latin for "pig," but is probably a product of suctorial onomatopoeia (cf. *susurrus*). Cf. "as drunk as David's sow" (Ray's *Proverbs*, 1670).

Denis Davidov uses a similar locution (*kak zyuzya natyanusya*, "I shall suck up my fill," "I shall get as tight as a sow") in his brilliant poem *The Decisive Evening* (three Alexandrine quatrains, c. 1818).

- 11 The allusion is to the Roman general Marcus Atilius Regulus (d. c. 250 B.C.), hero of the first Punic War. After his defeat by the Carthaginians he was dispatched by his captors to Rome with harsh terms of peace. There he insisted instead that the war be continued. Although he knew that he would pay for this with his life, he returned into captivity as he had promised to do.
- 13 / Véry's: Café Véry, an old café-restaurant in Paris, originally (1805–17) on the Terrasse des Feuillants, in the Jardin des Tuileries, and famous, especially among military men, for its exceptionally fine cuisine. I cannot understand why Captain Jesse, in his *Brummell*, writes "Vérey," and why Spalding (followed by Elton) writes "Verrey." Anthelme Brillat-Savarin's *Physiologie du goût* (1825) mentions the wonderful *entrées truffées*

served by the brothers Véry. In her journal (1818), *Passages from my Autobiography* (London, 1859), Sydney, Lady Morgan, who flaunts some fluent but also atrocious French (full of mistakes and of idioms completely out of idiomatic focus), mentions (p. 52) being taken “to dine at Vérey’s, aux jardins des Tuileries.”

## VI

- 5–8 These lines may well be a faint echo of what our poet had intended to say, but did not, about Fyodor Tolstoy, against whom he had fumed for six years on account of the rumors he accused that commonplace babbler and rake of spreading about him (see nn. to Four : XIX : 5).

## VII

- 4 / with prate / *vran'yóm*: For a discussion of the word *vrat'* in the rakish cant of the time, see my n. to Four : XIX : 5.
- 5 “Autres temps, autres mœurs”—French proverb.

- 9 Among some fifty college students whom I once happened to ask (in planned illustration of the incredible ignorance concerning natural objects that characterizes young Americans of today) the name of the tree, an American elm, that they could see through the classroom windows, none was able to identify it: some hesitantly suggested it might be an oak, others were silent; one, a girl, said she guessed it was just a shade tree. The translator, when tackling botanical names in his author, should try to be more precise.

In *EO*, Six : VII, Pushkin describes his reformed rake, Zaretski, as having retired to the country and found refuge or shelter (*ukrívshis'*) under certain plants. The line to be analyzed goes thus:

*Pod sén' cheryómuh i akátsiy . . .*

## Commentary

The translation of *pod* ("beneath," "under") *sen'* (the overhead shelter provided by anything in the way of covert, roof, pend, arch, eaves, "leafy ceil," "sylvan shed," screen, canopy, bower, metaphorical wing, and so forth) presents only a minor difficulty; true, it is an irritating one, because *pod sen'* (acc. sing.), *pod sen'yu* (instr. sing.), and other formulas founded on *sen'* (fem. sing.) and *seni* (pl.; not to be confused with the well-known word for "hall" or "vestibule") are metrically very tractable and therefore too much favored by Russian poets for their translator's comfort. *Sen'* cannot always be rendered in English by any one word. The specious "shade" does not lure the incorruptible literalist, for the important reason that its exact Russian equivalent, *ten'*, in phrases similar to those given above is not quite synonymous with *sen'*, and in fact may occur with it in the same passage as a sheepish rhyme. However, the sensuous meaning of *sen'* is so evanescent that in many instances—of which this is one—none should deem it a crime if "beneath" or "under" be used instead of "beneath the shed" (see Collins, *Ode to Evening*, l. 49, in Dodsley's *Collection* of 1748) or "in the shelter." But let us return to the passage under consideration:

*Pod sén' cheryómuh i akátsiy . . .*

The bower alluded to in the line under discussion is formed by two kinds of shrubs or trees. Do their mere names suggest anything to the Russian reader? We all know that the popular name of a plant may strike the imagination differently in different languages; its stress may be on color in one country and on structure in another; it may have beautiful classical connotations; it may be redolent of unbelievable Floridas; it may contain a honeydrop as a residue of the cumulative romantic sense bestowed upon it by generations of elegiasts; it may be, in floral disguise, a plaque commemorating (like the

dahlia) the name of an old botanist or (like the camellia) that of a roving Jesuit back from Luzon. The words *cheryomuh* and *akatsiy* (both fem. gen. pl.) convey to the Russian mind two flowery masses and what may be termed a stylized blend of aromas, one part of which, as will presently be shown, is artificial. I do not think that it is the translator's duty to trouble much about the rendering of associations in his text, but he should explain them in his notes. It is certainly a pity that the euphonious French name of some plant, say, *l'alidore* (to invent one), with its evocations of love philters and auroral mists, should become in England hog's wart (because of the singular form of its flowers), or cotton bud (because of the texture of its young leaves), or parson's button (allusion untraceable). But unless a name of that kind might puzzle or mislead the reader by referring to a dozen different plants (and then the Latin specific name should be given), the translator is entitled to use any available term as long as it is exact.

Dictionaries usually translate *cheryomuha* as "bird cherry," which is so vague as to be practically meaningless. Specifically, *cheryomuha* is the "racemose old-world bird cherry," Fr. *putier racémeux*, *Padus racemosa* Schneider. The Russian word, with its fluffy and dreamy syllables, admirably suits this beautiful tree, distinguished by its long racemes of flowers, giving the whole of it, when in bloom, a gentle pendulous appearance. A common and popular woodland plant in Russia, it is equally at home among the riverside alders and on the pine barren; its creamy-white, musky, Maytime bloom is associated in Russian hearts with the poetical emotions of youth. This racemose bird cherry lacks such a specific English designation (it has a few generic ones, all of them either uncouth or homonymous, or both) as would be neither as pedantic nor as irresponsible as the nonsense names that harmful drudges carefully trans-

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port from one Russian-English dictionary to another. At one time I followed the usually reliable Dahl's *Dictionary* in calling the tree "mahaleb," which proves to be, however, another plant altogether. Later I coined the term "musk cherry," which renders rather well the sound of *cheryomuha* and the fragrance of its bloom, but unfortunately evokes a taste that is not characteristic of its small, grainy, black fruit. I now formally introduce the simple and euphonious "racemosa" used as a noun and rhyming with "mimosa."

We now turn to its companion, *akatsiya*, and the question is: should the translator take the name of a plant at its face value (sticking to his dictionary, which says that *akatsiya* is "acacia") or should he find out what the word really means, in its contextual habitat, within the terms of a certain imagined place and in the light of a certain literary device? I advocate following the second course.

While racemosas grow wild throughout the habitat of our novel (northwestern and central Russia), the true acacia does not. The latter is a beautiful and useful genus of tropical mimosaceous tree, of which one, the Australian *A. dealbata* F.v.M., the silver wattle of nurserymen, is acclimatized in coastal Caucasia: it used to be sold—after Pushkin's time—as a *mimoza* by St. Petersburg florists. Neither is the *akatsiya* of our text the "locust" of one translator, although it is true that to southern Russians *belaya akatsiya* ("white acacia") means only one thing, the sweetly perfumed American *Robinia pseudoacacia* Linn., cultivated in the Ukraine and sung by hundreds of Odessa rhymesters. It is neither silver wattle nor the false acacia. What, then, is the *akatsiya* of our text? It is quite certainly a yellow-flowering *Caragana* species, namely *C. arborescens* Lam., imported from Asia and cultivated in gentlemen's bowers and along garden alleys in northern Russia. French

tutors called it "l'acacia de Sibérie"; little boys would slit open its dark beanlet in a certain way and produce a nasty blare by blowing into it between their cupped hands. But what really settles the identity of the plant with absolute certainty is the following consideration. Pushkin's line is a parody of two passages in a poem entitled *Bower of Muses* (*Besedka Muz*, 1817), by Batyushkov, minor poet and literary pioneer, to whose idiom Pushkin owed at least as much as he did to the style of Karamzin and Zhukovski. The poem, which is written in free, or fable, iambics—i.e., iambics of varied length—begins:

In the shade of milky racemosas  
and golden-glistening pea trees [*akátsiy*] . . .

and closes with:

carefree as is the child of ever carefree Graces,  
someday he'll come to sigh in the dense shelter  
of his racemosas and pea trees.

The epithet in the second line of the poem suits the bright flower of *Caragana* well and does not suit the white blossoms of the false acacia at all. Consequently, the correct way to translate *EO*, Six : VII : 9, is:

beneath the racemosas and the pea trees  
—leaving other trees to those noble paraphrasts whom  
Sir John Denham praised three centuries ago, in his address to another worthy, Sir Richard Fanshawe (see Dryden's Preface to *Ovid's Epistles*, 1680):

That servile path thou nobly do'st decline,  
Of tracing word by word and Line by Line . . .

\*

The first edition of Batyushkov's works, in two consecutive volumes, came out in St. Petersburg, 1817, under the title *Essays* [*Opiti*] in *Verse and Prose*. Konstantin

## Commentary

Batyushkov was born in 1787. His first published poem, *Mechta*, was composed in 1802, his last, a little masterpiece, in 1821 (or early in 1824, during a lucid interval, after reading the latest edition of Zhukovski's poems—according to Aleksandr Turgenev):

Do you recall the cry  
Of gray Melchizedek when he prepared to die?  
Man, he exclaimed, is born a slave; a slave  
He must descend into the grave,  
And Death will hardly tell him why  
He haunts the magic vale of tears,  
Suffers and weeps, endures and disappears.

In 1822, Batyushkov attempted to take his own life. He died in 1855, after thirty-three years of insanity.

In his brief heyday of creative endeavor, Batyushkov had translated Gresset, Parny, Boileau, and Tasso and written in the style of his favorite poets. He and Zhukovski were the predecessors of Pushkin, and in our poet's youth, Batyushkov was his best-loved Russian master. Harmony and precision—these were the literary virtues Pushkin learned from both, although even his boyish verses were more vivid and vigorous than those of his teachers. Later he was critical of Batyushkov, and left some interesting notes in the margin of the *Essays*; but in *Eugene Onegin* there still echoes something of Batyushkov's new-found fluency, certain predilections of idiom and various improved characteristics of his style.

I notice that his name was given four syllables (Bá-ty-úsh-kov) by the only English poet (a very minor one) who mentions him, namely Bernard Barton, in some stanzas (1824) addressed to John Bowring, who translated Batyushkov for his Russian anthology (st. III):

Derzhavin's noble numbers, soaring high,  
Replete with inspiration's genuine force,  
And Batiushkov's milder melody,  
Warm from domestic pleasure's sweetest source.

12 / plants cabbages like Horace: Chizhevski at this point wonders why Horace is made to plant cabbages. Actually, this is a common Gallicism: *planter des (ses) choux*, "to grow cabbages," meaning "to rusticate." But quite apart from this, Horace did have a green thumb. The generalized plain garden vegetable *olus* or *holus*, which may include *brassica*, cabbage, is mentioned in *Satires*, bk. II, no. I, 74, and bk. II, no. VI, 64 (see n. to motto of *EO*, Two); and *Epistles*, bk. I, no. XVII, 13. And there is a specific reference to *caule* in *Satires*, bk. II, no. IV, 15, cabbages or cabbage stalks (or "coleworts," as David Watson has it) "growing sweeter on parched soil than in suburban gardens."

A similar, and possibly prototypical, locution in French, *planter* (or *cultiver*) *ses laitues* (*à Salone*), alludes to a letter that the retired Roman emperor Diocletian wrote from Salona (in Dalmatia) to his colleague, Maximian, wherein he rates the pleasure of raising vegetables with his own hands higher than any delights of political power.

## VIII

2 / heart in him / *sérdtsa* [gen.] *v nyóm*: "Heart" is taken here as meaning the seat of moral virtues such as generosity, sensibility, and integrity, all of which Zaretski lacked. Cf. "man of heart," *homme de cœur*. A little further, "heart" (*serdtse*) is employed in the Russian sense of "ire" (Lenski's *mladóe sérdtse*, XI : 4). The position of the chess pieces now arrived at by Pushkin is inconsistent with the plan behind the first moves of the game. We could make ourselves believe that the moody beau might strike up a friendship with poetical Lenski (replacing, as it were, the narrator in *Onegin's* affections), but Zaretski, who after all is but another edition of Buyanov, while displaying all the traits of the

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rural “scum” criticized by Onegin, seems hardly suitable for him as a crony. On the other hand, Onegin’s intimate knowledge and exaggerated fears of the man’s libelous wit are absolutely necessary to the plot.

- 11 / with eyes atwinkle / *osklábya vzór*: The verb *osklábit’sya*, seldom used today, would be more suggestive of a fleering, or smirking, or grinning, or *goguenard* look than of the kind of smile Pushkin has, I think, in view here.

## IX

- 4 / *Zval . . . na duél’*: Challenged his friend to a duel, called upon his friend for a hostile meeting. The *zval* is a Gallicism, *appeler en duel*, *appeler en combat singulier*.

In modern Russia, where little remains of the idea of honor—pure personal honor (I am not speaking of Stahanovets competition, political touchiness, or nationalistic *gonor*)—readers, if not accepting passively the Lenski-Onegin duel in terms of some curious “feodal” legend or operatic libretto, are puzzled by its cause and baffled by its details. Actually, not only was a gentleman of 1820, anywhere in the civilized world, perfectly justified in challenging to a duel another gentleman who had behaved in regard to him and his fiancée as Onegin had in regard to Lenski at the Larin ball, but it is indeed a wonder that young Lenski had had enough self-control not to send Onegin a cartel of defiance (*lettre d’appel*) immediately after the latter’s vulgar remarks about mediocre Madonnas and round moons half a year earlier. Lenski’s course of action, far from being a temperamental extravaganza, is the only logical course an honorable man could have taken in that set in those times; it is Onegin who behaves oddly (i.e., out of tune with the mentality given him by his maker in previous chapters),

when he not only accepts the challenge but fires first and shoots to kill. It should be remembered that a gentleman's honor was purified not so much by his own fire as by his coolly enduring that of his adversary (see nn. to XXVIII : 7 and 14).

## X

- 8 / At eighteen: See Two : x : 14, "not quite eighteen." How old was Lenski? Surely, not seventeen to eighteen, as suggested in Six, when his fiery recklessness in calling out Onegin is pronounced excusable in the case of an eighteen-year-old dreamer; but the age datum sounds as theoretical as the reference in Four to a thirteen-year-old girl, in the generalities leading to Onegin's attitude toward Tatiana (who is seventeen). Although it was not uncommon for gifted boys to be sent to foreign universities at fourteen or fifteen (on the other hand, we have Adolphe, in Constant's novel, opening it with the words: "Je venais de finir à vingt-deux ans mes études à l'université de Göttingue"), it sounds highly unlikely that Lenski at eighteen would have been on the point of marrying Olga (who was sixteen); our wealthy young landowner seems definitely to have reached or to be about to reach his majority; I do not think he could be more than five or six years younger than Onegin (who would be twenty-six in the spring of 1821).

## XI

- 12 / *I vót—obshchéstvennoe mnén'e*: The first of three references in *EO* (see Seven : third motto and Eight : XIII : 14) to *Woe from Wit* (*Gore ot uma*), a four-act comedy in fable iambics—i.e., freely rhymed iambic lines of varying length (from one syllable to thirteen)—by Aleksandr Griboedov (1795–1829). The quoted line is Chatski's speech (IV, x, 286):

## Commentary

Fools have believed it, they tell others,  
old dames at once sound the alarm,  
and here it is—public opinion!

This was unpublished at the time of Pushkin's inserting it in this stanza (end of 1826). Only scenes vii–x of Act I and the whole of Act III had come out—in Bulgarin's collection *The Russian Thalia* ("a present for the amatoris and amatricis of the patrial theater"), mid-December, 1824 (and were reviewed at the same time as *EO*, Chapter One). The publication of the complete play was for a long time deferred by whimsical censorship. Planned by its author as early as 1818, actually begun in 1822, and finished in 1824, this work of genius, strikingly superior to the author's first theatrical pieces, was familiar to Pushkin from one of the many manuscript copies in circulation, owing to the clerical activities of Griboedov's friend, the playwright Zhander (Gendre), and the latter's copyists. One of the few friends who visited the Mihaylovskoe exile was his former schoolmate, Ivan Pushchin. He arrived on Jan. 11, 1825, on the eve of Tatiana's (and Euphraxia's) day, bringing Pushkin one of these transcripts of Griboedov's comedy, and left after midnight. By that date our poet had reached at least *EO*, Four : xxvii. A year later, in Six : xi : 12, he quoted the line from *Gore ot uma*.

The first edition of the whole play, with cuts, came out in Moscow posthumously in 1833; but parts of Act I had been staged in Petersburg in 1829, and there had been other fragmentary performances before the first more or less complete one given Jan. 26, 1831. The fate of Russian letters seems to have timed things in such a way as to have the two greatest verse masterpieces in Russian appear in print simultaneously.

13 / Honor's mainspring: And see xxviii : 14, "false shame" (*fausse honte*). A literary commonplace of the time. Cf.

Steele, *The Spectator*, no. 84 (June 6, 1711):

. . . by the Force of a Tyrant Custom, which is mis-named a Point of Honour, the Duellist kills his Friend whom he loves. . . . Shame is the greatest of all Evils . . .

and Cowper, *Conversation* (in *Poems*, 1782), ll. 181–82:

The fear of tyrant custom, and the fear  
Lest fops should censure us, and fools should sneer.

(*Conversation* is a didactic piece 908 ll. long, with a section, ll. 163–202, devoted to dueling, in which Cowper suggests that matters of honor be settled by fist fights.)

## XII

- 4 / grandiloquent neighbor / *soséd velerechtivŷy*: I notice that Zaretski was linked up in Pushkin's mind with the hero of Vasiliy Pushkin's *The Dangerous Neighbor* (see n. to Five : xxvi : 9), Buyanov making a speech at the bordello (l. 58):

*Ni s mésta—prodolzhál soséd velerechtivŷy . . .*  
“Stir not,” went on the grandiloquent neighbor . . .

- 10 A curious echo of Tatiana's Letter (l. 60) and her consultation of the dream book (Five : xxiv : 9–10).
- 13 / *Vzvestí drug ná druga kurók*: Note the shift of accent onto the *na* (“on,” “at”).

## XIII

- 5 / gave it up / *Mahnúl rukóyu*: There is one obvious case in which literalism has to yield (and settle for an exhaustive gloss): when the phrase concerns national gestures or facial movements, which become meaningless in accurate English; the Russian gesture of relinquishment that *mahnul rukoy* (or *rukoyu*) conveys is a

## Commentary

one-hand downward flip of weary or hasty dismissal and renouncement. If analyzed in slow motion by the performer, he will see that his right hand, with fingers held rather loose, sketches a half turn from left to right, while at the same time his head makes a slight half turn from right to left. In other words, the gesture really consists of two simultaneous little movements: the hand abandons what it held, or hoped to hold, and the head turns away from the scene of defeat or condemnation.

Now, there is no way to translate *mahnul rukoy* by means of a verb and of the word "hand" or "with hand" so as to render both the loose shake itself and the associations of relinquishment that it has. Of my predecessors, only Miss Radin caught at least the spirit of the thing.

Spalding (1881):

His watch, the sun in turn he views—  
Finally tost his arms in air  
And lo! he is already there!

Miss Deutsch (1936):

He marked the time, and presently  
He waved his hand, as one who'd rue it  
And was at Olga's ere he knew it!

Elton (1937):

Scanned watch, observed the sun; and yet  
Waved hand at last, and soon was quitting,  
And there, amidst his neighbours, sitting!

Miss Radin (1937):

Takes out his watch, surveys the sun,  
Is tempted, and capitulates—  
And here he's at his neighbors' gates.

8 / by his coming / *Svoim priézdnom*: "By his driving over."  
As is usual in Russian, the not-on-foot character of coming is specified.

10 / to welcome / *Na vstrechu*: Fr. *à la rencontre*.

12 / *Podóbna vétrenoy nadézhde*: Cf. One : xxv : 12, *Podóbnyy vétrenoy Venére*, and the attributes of "hope" in Five : VII : 6–14.

XIV

9 / *On smótrit v sládkom umilén'e*: "Il regarde avec un doux attendrissement." See n. to Seven : II : 5.

XV—XVI

These two stanzas (and xxxviii) are known only from their publication by Ya. Grot in *Pushkin i ego litseyskie tovarishchi i nastavniki* (Pushkin and His Lyceum Schoolmates and Teachers; St. Petersburg, 1887), pp. 211–13 (see Tomashevski, Acad 1937), from a transcript (now lost) made by Prince V. Odoevski.

XV

Yes, yes, the fits of jealousy  
are just as much a sickness as the plague,  
as black spleen, as the agues,  
4 as the derangement of the mind.  
It flames like a pyrexia,  
it has its fever, its delirium,  
evil dreams, phantoms of its own.  
8 The Lord be merciful, my friends!  
There is no punishment on earth  
more painful than its fatal throes.  
Believe me: he who has endured them  
12 will—that is certain—without fear  
ascend the flaming stake  
or bend his neck under the ax.

3 / black spleen: See nn. to One : xxxvii : 6–10 and xxxviii : 3–4.

XVI

- With a futile reproach I do not wish  
to trouble the tomb's peace;  
you are no more, O you to whom  
4 in tempests of young life  
I owed awesome experience  
and a voluptuous glimpse of paradise.  
As one who teaches a weak child  
8 you taught the tender soul, while clouding it,  
deep sorrow.  
With sensuous bliss you stirred the blood,  
in it you kindled  
12 love and the flame of cruel jealousy.  
But it is gone, that grievous day.  
Sleep ye, tormenting shade!

XVIII

- 1-2 In 1819 Marceline Desbordes-Valmore (see Comm. to  
Three, between xxxi and xxxii, n. to Tatiana's Letter, ll.  
35-46) published a *Romance* beginning "S'il avait su  
quelle âme il a blessée . . ."

- 7-8 / her love might have united the two friends again:  
She would have recalled, moreover, that Rousseau's  
Julie d'Etange (whose father, the grim Baron, had killed  
a friend in the field and was forever haunted by that  
recollection) manages to prevent a duel between her  
lover and his best friend in Part I of the novel.

XIX

- 4 / with knitted brow / *nahmúrya bróv'*: The literal sense  
is "having knitted the eyebrow," a curious solecism: the  
plural (*brovi*, "eyebrows," "brows") would be the cor-  
rect form. "To frown" is *nahmuritsya*.

- 14 / Nothing / *Tak*: A kind of vocal shrug.

## XX

12-14 Baron Anton Delvig (Aug. 6, 1798-Jan. 14, 1831), one of Pushkin's dearest friends, a minor poet, author of pleasant idyls, folk songs, well-made sonnets, and some excellent dactylic hexameters, curiously combined the classical strain and the folksy one, the amphora and the samovar. A very expressive drawing (c. 1820) representing him, full of mirth and wine, bespectacled and disheveled, is reproduced from a contemporaneous album, in I. Medvedev's paper, "Pavel Yakovlev i ego al'bom" (Pavel Yakovlev and His Album). \*

By a marvelous coincidence, Delvig died on the anniversary of the death of the fictional Lenski (who is compared to him here on the eve of a fatal duel); and the wake commemorating Delvig's death was held by his friends (Pushkin, Vyazemski, Baratinski, and Yazikov) in a Moscow restaurant, on Jan. 27, 1831, exactly six years before Pushkin's fatal duel.

It was Delvig who quipped that the nearer to heaven, the colder one's verses get (as reported by Pushkin in a MS note), and it was Delvig who intended to kiss Derzhavin's hand when the latter visited the Lyceum (see n. to Eight : II : 3).

Delvig's best poem is the one he dedicated to Pushkin, his schoolmate, in January, 1815 (published the same year in *Russian Museum*, *Rossiyskiy muzeum*, no. 9). A boy of sixteen, prophesying in exact detail literary immortality to a boy of fifteen, and doing it in a poem that is itself immortal—this is a combination of intuitive genius and actual destiny to which I can find no parallel in the history of world poetry:

He—a swan born in blooming Ausonia—  
who is crowned with the myrtle and laurel;

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\*In *Zven'ya*, no. 6 (1936), p. 127.

## Commentary

who one May night, 'mid hovering choruses,  
in sweet dreams from his mother was weaned,

does not quibble in councils; he does not  
on his walls hang the flags of the fallen,  
or in front of the temple of Ares  
deck with enemy rostrums a column.

Fleets with treasures untold from America,  
weighty gold that with blood has been purchased  
—not for him do those ships in their wanderings  
twice disturb the equator;

but since infancy he has been learning  
how to sing subcelestial beauty,  
and his cheeks are aflame from the greetings  
of the wondering crowd.

And the nebulous cloud from his vision  
is by Pallas dispelled, and already  
as a youth sacred truth he distinguishes,  
and the lowering glances of vice.

Pushkin! Even the woods cannot hide him!  
With loud singing his lyre will expose him,  
and from mortals Apollo will carry  
the immortal to cheering Olympus.

## XXI

1 / chanced / *na sluchay* [= *sluchayno*]: “The verses are by chance preserved.” Pushkin did not preserve them as “religiously” (*svyato*) as he did Tatiana’s letter (see Three : xxxi : 1–4).

3 / Whither, ah! whither, are ye fled / *Kudd, kuddá vī udalilis’*: Quite literally, “Whither, whither have you receded,” but I have preferred to echo the cry so often heard in English seventeenth- and eighteenth-century poetry:

John Collop, *Spirit, Flesh* (1656):

Whither? ah, whither flies my soul . . .

Thomas Fletcher (1692):

Whither fond soul, ah, whither wouldst thou fly?

Pope, adaptation of the emperor Hadrian's *Animula vagula blandula*, l. 5:

Whither, ah whither art thou flying!

(In 1713, Pope sent John Caryl two versions of Hadrian's piece; it is in the second of these, beginning "Ah, fleeting spirit!," entitled "The same by another hand"—Pope's other hand, presumably—that the "whithers" occur.)

James Beattie, *Ode to Hope* (c. 1760), l. 78:

Whither, ah whither are ye fled?

Anna Laetitia Barbauld, *Life* (c. 1811):

O whither, whither dost thou fly . . .

Barry Cornwall, *Song* (c. 1820):

Whither, ah! whither is my lost love straying . . .

Keats, *Endymion* (1818), bk. I, ll. 970–71:

. . . Ah! where

Are those swift moments? Whither are they fled?

4 / my springtime's . . . days / *Vesní moý . . . dní*: A well-worn Gallicism. I can mention only a few examples, jotted down in the course of casual reading:

Clément Marot, *De soy mesme* (1537):

Plus ne suis ce que j'ay esté,  
Et ne le scaurois jamais estre;  
Mon beau printemps et mon esté  
Ont fait le saut par la fenestre.

Guillaume de Chaulieu, *Sur la première attaque de goutte* (1695), ll. 12–13:

Et déjà de mon printemps  
Toutes les fleurs sont fanées.

Commentary

Voltaire, *Epître* xv (1719), ll. 8–10:

Tu vis la calomnie . . .  
Des plus beaux jours de mon printemps  
Obscurcir la naissante aurore.

André Chénier, *Elégies*, I (*Œuvres*, ed. Walter; no. xvi in *Œuvres posthumes*, 1826), ll. 1–2:

O jours de mon printemps, jours couronnés de rose,  
A votre fuite en vain un long regret s'oppose.

\*

Cf. Mihail Milonov (1792–1821), *The Unfortunate Poet*, a very liberal translation of *Le Poète malheureux*, by Laurent Gilbert. The second hemistich of Gilbert's l. 23 reads: "ô printemps de mes jours!" The rest is rendered by Milonov in limp paraphrase (ll. 1, 12–14):

O springtime of my days! Whither have vanished you?  
. . . . .  
. . . your radiance,  
still charmed, imagination tries to capture [*lôvit*].  
Who knows what fate for me in future holds [*gotôvit*] . . .

See also Charles Hubert Millevoeye (1782–1816), *Elégies*, bk. I, *La Chute des feuilles* (*première version*):

Et je meurs! de leur froide haleine  
M'ont touché les sombres autans;  
Et j'ai vu, comme une ombre vaine,  
S'évanouir mon beau printemps.

And his *Priez pour moi*, "composé . . . huit jours avant sa mort":

Je meurs au printemps de mon âge,  
Mais du sort je subis la loi . . .

Russian commentators (referred to by Brodski, in his commentary to *EO*, p. 241) have drawn attention to prototypes of Lenski's verses in various Russian elegies of the time, among which we find Vasiliy Tumanski's

*Werther and Charlotte* (1819), in iambic pentameters (“... when with tremulous beams the moon will guilt my simple monument, O come to dream of me and with your bitter tears asperge that urn where your friend’s dust is hidden”); Küchelbecker’s *Awakening* (1820), in trochaic tetrameters (“What will bring the coming day? Withered are my flowers . . .”); and especially an anonymous *Morning* (attributed by V. Gippius to V. Perevoshchikov), in an anthology of 1808 (“First days of love! . . . Whither, ah, whither are ye fled . . .”).

Young Pushkin himself had foreshadowed young Lenski: *Again I’m yours* . . . (1817): “Days of my gladness, ye have fled” (*umchalis*’); *To M. Shcherbinin* (1819): “. . . but young days shall fly by”; (1820): “I’ve no regret for you, years of my spring”; *Extinguished is the orb of day* . . . (1820): “. . . the secret sweethearts of my golden [*zlatiya*, arch., gen. sing. fem.] spring.”

In English poetry an obvious example of the locution is Peacock’s “The bright and happy springtime of our days” (*The Visions of Love*, in *Palmyra and Other Poems*, 1806).

\*

In commenting on similar terms used by Catullus in *Ad Manlium*, an amusing Frenchman, François Noël, who is under the impression that he has translated that poet, *Poésies de Catulle* (Paris, 1803), II, 439—a book Pushkin possessed—has this to say of l. 16:

*Ver . . . florida.* Ces expressions riantes: “la fleur de l’âge, le printemps de la vie,” supposent beaucoup d’imagination dans les premiers écrivains qui s’en sont servis. Dans Pétrarque, par exemple, qui a dit fort heureusement:

Ch’era dell’ anno, e di mia etate aprile;  
mais fort peu dans ceux qui les imitent. C’est ce qui rend la langue poétique si difficile. Commun ou bizarre, ces deux écueils ne sont séparés que par un sentier étroit et glissant.

## Commentary

These were the times when *traduction* meant an elegant paraphrase, when *la langue poétique* was synonymous with *le bon goût*, when people of *goût* were shocked by “les bizarreries de Sakhespear” (sic; Noël, II, 453), and when Jean Baptiste Rousseau was deemed a poet.

The curious paradox is that, though eighteenth-century translations into French from modern and ancient poets are the worst in existence, the French translations of a later era are the best in the world, one reason being that the French use their marvelously precise and omnipotent prose for the rendering of foreign verse instead of shackling themselves with trivial and treacherous rhyme.

Théophile Gautier, as early as 1836,\* wrote:

Une traduction, pour être bonne, doit être en quelque sorte un lexique interlinéaire. . . . Un traducteur doit être une contre-épreuve de son auteur; il doit en reproduire jusqu'au moindre petit signe particulier.

- 4 / golden days: If the “springtime” comes from France, the “golden days” come from Germany.

Zhukovski, in 1812, made a Russian version of Schiller's *Die Ideale* (see n. to XXIII : 8), calling it *Mechti* (*Fantasies*, a word that occurs in l. 2 of the original).

O! meines Lebens goldne Zeit?

is rendered as:

*O dnéy moth vesná zlatáya . . .*  
O golden springtime of my days . . .

Cf. Milonov, *The Fall of the Leaves: an Elegy* (1819; an imitation of Millevoye's *La Chute des feuilles*; see previous note), ll. 21–24:

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\*In a review of a translation of E. T. A. Hoffmann's *Erzählungen*; reprinted in *Souvenirs de théâtre, d'art et de critique* (Paris, 1883), p. 49.

*Osénni vétři vozshuméli  
I dťshut hládom sred' poléy,  
Kak prízrak lyógkiy uletéli  
Zlatě dni vesní moéy!*

Autumnal winds have started wailing  
and breathe their chill amid the fields;  
away have flown like a light phantom  
the golden days of my springtime.

Millevoye's *Chute des feuilles* was also imitated by Baratiński (1823-7), ll. 21-22:

You've flown away, O golden dreams  
of my brief youth . . .

8 / *Net núzhdi; práv sud'bí zakón*: I was tempted to render the intonation of *Net nuzhdi* by "let be," but it did not seem literal enough.

It should be noted that Pushkin repeated the end of Lenski's melancholy line ten years later—in l. 22 of his (not completed) poem dedicated to the twenty-fifth anniversary of the Lyceum and recited by him at the reunion of Oct. 19, 1836, which was to be his last. The poem consists of eight stanzas of eight iambic pentameters each. The last line of st. VIII is not finished. The strophic rhyme scheme is baabec (ll. 19-22):

The years have fled . . .  
. . . how they have changed us!  
.  
.  
.  
Do not complain. Such is the law of fate.  
[takóv sud'bí zakón]

The combination *sud'bí zakon*, "of fate the law," is not only in sense but also in sound close to a line in Millevoye's *Priez pour moi*:

. . . du sort je subis la loi . . .

10 I have been influenced in my choice of rendering *Vsyó blágo* (*blago* meaning "the good," "the beneficial," all

## Commentary

that contributes to human felicity) by Pope's Leibnitzian "all is right," known to Pushkin through Voltaire's ironical refrain "tout est bon, tout est bien" in his pamphlet-novel *Candide, ou l'Optimisme* (Geneva, 1759); see, for instance, chs. 10, 19, 23. Pope's line (*An Essay on Man*, ep. 1, l. 294) goes:

One truth is clear, "Whatever IS, is RIGHT."

(See also *Essay*, ep. IV, the first hemistich of 145 and the second of 394.) The tone of Lenski's elegy seems definitely to contain this current echo of Optimism, the original name of the doctrine propounded by Gottfried Wilhelm von Leibnitz or Leibniz, German philosopher and mathematician of genius (1646–1716). Voltaire as a thinker was infinitely inferior to him, whereas Pope's thematic imitativeness is at least saved from ridicule (which Voltaire's criticism is not) by that poet's exceptional talent for placing the best words possible in the best possible order.

In a poem, *L'Homme*, addressed to Byron and published in *Méditations poétiques* (Paris, 1820), Lamartine explains in l. 56:

Tout est bien, tout est bon, tout est grand à sa place . . .

## XXII

8 / maid of beauty / *déva krasot'*: *Fille de la beauté*, a pseudoclassic Gallicism; e.g., in the beginning of "an imitation of Horace," *Odes*, bk. I, no. XVI, by Etienne Augustin de Wailly (1770–1821), in *Almanach des Muses* (1808), p. 117, and separate edition, *Odes de Horace* (1817).

14 / spouse / *suprüg*: Another Gallicism on Lenski's part, a literal translation of *époux*, which, in the French sentimental literature of the time, meant not only "spouse"

in the modern sense, but also “fiancé,” “betrothed mate,” “bridegroom.” There is a similar obsolete sense of “spouse” in English literature. The *Pridi, pridi* (“viens, viens”) is presumably an invitation to visit his urn. See the quotation in my n. to XL : 14.

## XXIII

1–2 / “obscurely and limply” / *temnó i vyálo*: For years I had sought in vain an illustration of this obvious Gallicism, when I hit upon the following in Chateaubriand’s “Remarques” to his *Le Paradis perdu* (1836), a marvelous prose translation of Milton’s poem:

Souvent, en relisant mes pages, j’ai cru les trouver obscures ou traînantes, j’ai essayé de faire mieux: lorsque la période a été debout *élégante* ou *claire*, au lieu de *Milton*, je n’ai rencontré que *Bitaubé*; ma prose lucide n’étoit plus qu’une prose commune ou artificielle, telle qu’on en trouve dans tous les écrits communs du genre classique. Je suis revenu à ma première traduction.

Some idea of what Pushkin meant by *temno* and *vyalo* may be gathered from a marginal note in his copy of Batyushkov’s *Essays in Verse and Prose*, II, 166, *Epistle to I. Muravyov-Apostol* (1815). Ll. 77–80 refer to the author of *To the Volga* and *Ermak*:

How often Dmitriev, disclaiming worldly dues,  
Would lead us in the wake of his fortunate Muse  
As pure as are the streams of the bright waters’ queen  
Whereon for the first time the sunrise he had seen . . .

Our poet marked ll. 79–80 *vyalo*; he marked the last two lines of the same poem (99–100) *temno*. Ll. 98–100:

Feels strongly everything, with eye, with ear all captures,  
Delights in everything, and, in fine, everywhere  
Tribute his coming priest for Phoebus doth prepare.

Pushkin italicized “obscurely and limply,” perhaps

## Commentary

quoting some reviewer's definition of the romantic style. The two epithets to a certain degree do describe Lenski's poem. The "coming day" lurking "in deep gloom"; the formidable inversion in the original: "I of the tomb shall descend into the mysterious shelter"; the Ossianic "maiden of beauty," and the dedication to her of the doleful dawn, all this is no doubt both obscure and flabby, *vers trainants et obscurs, style languissant et flasque*, nebulous and feeble.

- 2 / romanticism: As happens in zoological nomenclature when a string of obsolete, synonymous, or misapplied names keeps following the correct designation of a creature throughout the years, and not only cannot be shaken off, or ignored, or obliterated within brackets, but actually grows on with time, so in literary history the vague terms "classicism," "sentimentalism" "romanticism," "realism," and the like straggle on and on, from textbook to textbook. There are teachers and students with square minds who are by nature meant to undergo the fascination of categories. For them, "schools" and "movements" are everything; by painting a group symbol on the brow of mediocrity, they condone their own incomprehension of true genius.

I cannot think of any masterpiece the appreciation of which would be enhanced in any degree or manner by the knowledge that it belonged to this or that school; and, conversely, I could name any number of third-rate works that are kept artificially alive for centuries through their being assigned by the schoolman to this or that "movement" in the past.

These concepts are harmful chiefly because they distract the student from direct contact with, and direct delight in, the quiddity of individual artistic achievement (which, after all, alone matters and alone survives); but, moreover, each of them is subject to such a variety of

interpretation as to become meaningless in its own field, that of the classification of knowledge. Since, however, these terms exist and keep banging against every cobble over which their tagged victims keep trying to escape the gross identification, we are forced to reckon with them. For the needs of the present comments, I am prepared to accept the following practical definitions:

"Classical" in regard to a literary work of our era suggests the imitation of ancient models, in traditional matter and manner. Russians use the term "pseudoclassical" for anachronistic imitations in which the Roman or Greek wears a powdered wig.

"Sentimental" implies little beyond the shedding of conventional tears over the misadventure of conventional virtue in verse or prose.

A "realistic" work of fiction is one wherein the author is ready to name or describe without fear of traditional restriction any physical or moral detail pertaining to the world he perceives. (In this sense *EO* is neither sentimental nor realistic, while containing elements of both; it parodies the classical and leans toward the romantic.)

The fourth term in this series, "romanticism," requires a closer discussion of its main varieties as known in Pushkin's time. We can distinguish at least eleven forms or phases of the thing:

(1) The primitive, popular sense: Johnson's *Dictionary* defines a "romance" as "a military fable of the middle ages." But the "military fable" has an Arcadian sequel, and in the seventeenth century, in England, "romantic" is definitely suggestive of the delightful lives of shepherds and retired knights living on honey and cheese. Both the "military" and "pastoral" parts fall under our first definition of "romantic" as characterizing the flights of fancy in popular literature during a period of time between the fall of Rome and the revival of letters.

(2) "The addition of strangeness to beauty" (Walter

Pater, *Appreciations*: "Postscript"). An intensive pre-occupation with the passionate and the fantastic. The retired knight is a necromancer; the moon rises over Arcadia in a new part of the ruined sky. As early as 1665-66, Pepys describes a site (Windsor Castle) as "the most romantique castle that is in the world." In 1799, Campbell notes that "'Tis distance lends enchantment to the view."

(3) The Highland subspecies and the eerie note. To paraphrase Beattie, *The Minstrel* (1772), "The grotesque and ghostly appearance of a landscape, especially by the light of the moon, diffuses an habitual gloom over the fancy and gives it that romantic cast that disposes to invention and that melancholy which inclines one to the fear of unseen things."

(4) The romanesque: a "romanesque" person feels as "romantic" such landscapes, lakescapes, and seascapes as recall either direct emotion (love, friendship, old ambitions and longings) or the description of similar places in popular novels and poems of the sentimental or fantastic kind. "Il [Fonsalbe] a rendu à mes déserts quelque chose de leur beauté heureuse, et du *romantisme* de leur sites *alpestres*" (Senancour, *Oberman*, Letter LXXXVII).

(5) The German subspecies (a hybrid, with a strong strain of sentimentalism). Reveries, visions, apparitions, tombstones, moonshine. The pictorial grading into the metaphysical. Lofty sentiments couched in a flaccid and nebulous idiom. The expression in poetry of the soul's endless approach to a dimly perceived perfection.

(6) The textbook synthetic conception of c. 1810: a combination of "melancholy" as the essence of Northern (Germanic, "Ossianic") poetry and of Renaissance vividness and vigor (e.g., Shakespeare). Romantic as implying "modern and picturesque" and as opposed to "classical" (the latter standing for "antique and sculptural"): this seems to be the end product of cogita-

tions on the matter by the well-meaning but hardly readable cofounder (with his brother, Friedrich, the philosopher, 1772–1829) of the romantic school of German literature, August Wilhelm von Schlegel (1767–1845), tutor of Mme de Staël's children (c. 1805–15); he assisted her in her work *De l'Allemagne*; was ennobled and invested with many decorations, and delivered his lectures on dramatic art and literature in Vienna, 1808.\*

(7) A romantic epic is one in which the tragic and the comic, the lofty and the lowly, the sacred and the profane, the metaphysical generalization and the physical detail, and so forth are pleasingly mingled (cf. the program of *EO* as set down in the Prefatory Piece).

(8) "Romantic" as applied to a style abounding in vivid specific details (local color, exotic landscapes, national peculiarities, realistic popular traits, new shades of perception, emotion, and meaning, etc.) as opposed, in such writings as those by Chateaubriand or Victor Hugo, to the generalized mist of sentimentalism; e.g., the waters of Lamartine (it will be noticed that, on the other hand, the mist plus the melancholy is somehow also "romantic," although directly opposed to the specific brightness and this is why the same Lamartine figures among the romantics).

(9) A new style in poetry, free of classic rigidity and conventionalism, permitting enjambments, mobile caesuras, and other liberties.

(10) Literary genres not known to the ancients.

(11) "Modern" as opposed to "ancient" in any literary form.

There is a good deal of overlapping in these concepts,

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\*His *Über dramatische Kunst und Literatur* (1809–11) was translated into French (*Cours de littérature dramatique*, Paris, 1814, 3 vols.) by Albertine Adrienne Necker de Saussure, Mme de Staël's cousin; and this translation Pushkin had carefully read.

and no wonder some muddle existed in Pushkin's mind as to what should be termed "romantic" in the strict sense, a question that interested him and his fellow writers more acutely than it does us.

In a note entitled "On Poetry Classical and Romantic" (1825), our poet accuses French critics of confusing the issue by referring to romanticism all such poetry as is characterized either by "the stamp of dreaminess and Germanic ideology" or is founded upon "the prejudices and traditions of the common people." He maintains that the distinction between classicism and romanticism can be drawn only in terms of form and not of subject matter. His definition of romantic poetry reads: "All such genres of poetical composition as were not known to the ancients or have since changed in form." According to our poet, western European poetry in the Dark Ages was at best an elegant bauble, a troubadour's triolet. Two circumstances, however, had a vigorous influence on its eventual course: the invasion of the Moors, "who inspired it with frenzy and tenderness, a leaning toward the marvelous and rich Oriental eloquence," and the Crusades, which imbued it "with piety and naïveté, a new code of heroism, and the loose morals of camp life." This was, according to Pushkin, the origin of romanticism.

In the same note, and elsewhere, Pushkin is hard on French "pseudoclassicism" as personified by Boileau: "It originated belowstairs and never went further than the salon. . . . It dressed the maudlin conceits of medieval romanticism in the severe garb of classicism." In a postscriptum, however, to this 1825 note he praises La Fontaine's *Contes* and Voltaire's *Pucelle* as masterpieces of pure romantic poetry. We should not forget that "pure French classicists," such as Corneille, Racine, and Molière, were among Pushkin's favorite writers.

In another MS note (1830), Pushkin continues:

The French critics have their own notions of romanticism. They either assign to it all works bearing the stamp of melancholy and reverie or apply the term to neologisms and bad grammar. Thus André Chénier, a poet permeated with the spirit of antiquity, a poet whose very defects are owing to his desire to give the French language the forms of Greek versification [this is a singular error on Pushkin's part], becomes a romanticist for them.

8 / "ideal": Schiller's *Die Ideale* (Ideals; from the *Musen-almanach* for 1796), an elegy of eighty-eight iambic tetrameters in eleven strophes, begins:

So willst du treulos von mir scheiden,  
Mit deinen holden Phantasien,  
Mit deinen Schmerzen, deinen Freuden,  
Mit allen unerbittlich fliehn?  
Kann nichts dich, Fliehende! verweilen,  
O! meines Lebens goldne Zeit?

. . . . .  
Erloschen sind die heitern Sonnen,  
Die meiner Jugend Pfad erhellt,  
Die Ideale sind zerronnen . . .

Mme de Staël, *De l'Allemagne*, pt. II, ch. 13, observes:

Il seroit intéressant de comparer les stances de Schiller sur la perte de la jeunesse, intitulées *l'Idéal*, avec celles de Voltaire:

Si vous voulez que j'aime encore,  
Rendez-moi l'âge des amours, etc.

I have acted upon her suggestion, but it is not *intéressant* at all; in fact, her observation is completely irrelevant.

Lamartine (on the night he wrote the piece mentioned in the n. to XXI : 10), in the autumn of 1818, read *Childe Harold*, in the incomplete French version of the Bibliothèque Universelle de Genève, all night and finally "[s'endormit] de lassitude, la tête sur le volume comme sur le sein d'un ami" (Lamartine, *Vie de Byron*, 1865).

## Commentary

- 10–14 / *uzh soséd* (“already the neighbor”) . . . *sed’móy uzh chás* (“seventh already hour”) . . . *zhdyót uzh nás* (“is awaiting already us”). I have kept only one of these “adders” (see n. to Eight : LI : 3–4).

## XXIV

- 4 / *Vesper*: By a strange oversight, Pushkin calls the morning star “Vesper” or Hesperus (which is the evening star), instead of the correct Lucifer or Phosphor. All these names were given by the ancients to the planet Venus. In certain districts of Russia the word *zornitsa* or *zarnitsa* (which otherwise means “summer lightning,” “sheet lightning”) is used for the morning star and evening star. (See *vechérníya zarnitsä*, “of the evening star,” in Milonov’s elegy quoted in n. to XLI : 1–4, and *utrennyuyu zarnitzu*, “the morning star,” in Tolstoy’s *Anna Karenin*, pt. VI, ch. 12.)

- 7 / shifting flurries / *perelyótnaya myatél’*: The epithet means “flying from one place to another,” and *myatél’* or *metel’* is not “snowstorm” or “blizzard” (as it would be in a general sense of “driving snow”), but what is more specifically termed in Russian *zamet’*, namely, spinners of powdery surface snow caused by gusts of wind on a morning of bright sun and keen frost.

- 12 / *póli závesa*: The two parts, or “skirts,” of a bed curtain.

## XXV

- 2 / Guillot: This is, technically, a French comedy name. It is mentioned as a typically humble name, among other lowly ones (“Pierre, Guillot et Michel”), in Montaigne’s essay “Des Noms,” written c. 1573 (*Essais*, bk. I, ch. 46). As that of a shepherd, the same first name occurs twice in La Fontaine’s *Fables* (1668–79), bk. III, no. III, “Le

Loup devenu Berger,” and bk. IX, no. XIX, “Le Berger et son Troupeau.” Pushkin, I think, uses the name as a surname (cf. “Picard,” in *Count Nulin*, 1825). Griboedov, in *Woe from Wit* (known since 1825), has Chatski mention a volatile French dance master in Moscow whom he calls “Guillaumet” (Act I, ll. 405–11). The French translator of Shakespeare (in 20 vols., 1776–83), Pierre Letourneur (1736–88), was baptized by Bernardin Félix Guillot, vicar of Valognes (Basse Normandie); and there are other Guillots in the margin of history.

- 11–14 The text is clumsy: Onegin “bids his valet to carry” the pistol case and (bids) “the horses” (including sleigh and coachman) “to drive off” into a field.

- 12 / Lepage’s / *Lepázha*: The reference is to Jean Le Page or Lepage (1779–1822), Parisian gunsmith.

I happen to notice that in the Rudolph J. Nunne-macher Collection of projectile arms\* there is only one Lepage pistol, and that its make has been misread by the author of the description of the collection as “Lgiage” (the looptail of the *p* in “Lepage” having been assigned by the transcriber to the preceding *e*, to form a *g*).

- 12 / fell tubes / *stvol'i rokov'ie*: I find in a spirited paragraph of Leigh Hunt’s *Table-Talk* (London, 1851), “Sporting,” pp. 158–63, the application of “death-tubes” to the weapon of sportsmen who “crack the legs of partridges” and “strew the brakes with agonies of feathered wounds.”

## XXVI

- 9 / *iz ch'uvstva*: I am not sure that “out of feeling” renders

\*See John Metschl’s paper in *Bulletin of the Public Museum of Milwaukee*, IX (1928), 446.

as well as the Russian equivalent does Zaretski's professional fondness for order and thoroughness in the conduct of these affairs.

XXVII

- 9 / if you are willing / *pozhdaluy*: A fading word that from an initial sense of "please," "if you please," Fr. *s'il vous plaît*, shaded subsequently into an expression of bland deference to another's desire (as here) and soon dwindled to a casual locution expressing merely the acceptance of a suggestion or possibility ("I think one might . . ." and so forth).

Hodasevich, *O Pushkine* (Berlin, 1937), p. 79, sagaciously observes that the long-drawn and dejected tone of the musical phrase *Nachnyom pozhaluy* ("Yes, if you like, let's start"), given to the tenor in Chaykovski's opera *Eugene Onegin*, makes a whining weakling of Pushkin's virile Lenski.

XXVIII

- 7 To the oneirologist, Onegin's behavior throughout that morning has an uncanny dreamlike quality, as if he had been infected by Tatiana's recent nightmare. We all know that dream sensation of "lateness," those casual "substitutions" (as here—the valet turned second), those "omissions," that odd discomfort followed by its carefree dismissal. Onegin behaves as he never would have behaved in a normal state of moral awareness. He deals Lenski a gratuitous insult by grossly oversleeping, in result of which the fuming youth has to wait a couple of hours or more in an icy wind. He omits somehow to secure a witness, and while knowing as well as Zaretski does that in an encounter between gentlemen the seconds must be of equal rank in society with the principals

they attend, he turns up with a servant, thus dealing Lenski yet another silly insult. He fires first and shoots to kill, which is quite out of character. Lenski, no doubt, has murderous intentions, but Onegin, a fearless and scornful marksman, would, if in his right mind, have certainly reserved his fire, and not even returned it but, if still alive, thrown it away, i.e., discharged his pistol into the air. When Lenski falls, one almost expects Onegin to wake (as Tatiana does) and realize that it has all been a dream.

- 10–11 / laughing while their hand is not yet crimsoned /  
*poká | Ne obagrilas' ih ruká* [their hand]: Cf. dawn's  
 “crimson hand,” n. to Five : XXV : 1–4.

One wonders if Lomonosov's shade is not laughing, too.

- 13–14 “Le faux point d'honneur, leur [aux gens du monde]  
 inspire une crainte farouche, et les arrête” (Turgenev-  
 Viardot translation).

- 14 / false shame: *Lózhnĭy stíd; fausse honte, mauvaise honte*. It seems clear to me that this very trite couplet reflects a reminiscence of Boileau's *Epistres*, III (1674), ll. 28, 37–38:

Des jugemens d'autrui nous tremblons follement,  
 . . . . .  
 Quelle fausse pudeur à feindre vous oblige?  
 “Qu'avez-vous?”—“Je n'ai rien.”. . .

(Cf. Lenski's exit.)

See also n. to Six : IX : 4.

## XXIX

- 2 / The balls go / *uhódyat púli*: Each of the two balls goes

## Commentary

into its respective pistol barrel, which is polyhedral (hence "cut," *granyonīy*) in cross section.

- 4 Cf. Byron, *Don Juan*, IV, XLI, 1–2:

It has a strange quick jar upon the ear,  
That cocking of a pistol . . .

Pichot (1823): "C'est une étrange sensation que produit sur l'oreille le bruit qu'on fait en armant un pistolet . . ."

- 5–6 / The powder . . . pours / *póroh* . . . *s'pletsya*: "The early arms of Lepage of Paris," says Major H. B. C. Pollard in *A History of Firearms* (London, 1926), p. 113, "show attempts to use loose powder evolved by Pulat of Paris, 1818."

- 9 / Guillot behind a near stump: In Ilya Repin's most famous and most execrable picture of the Lenski-Onegin duel, in which everything, including the attitudes and positions of the combatants, is ludicrously wrong, Guillot, whom a puny sliver does not screen, is in the line of Onegin's fire and in danger of sharing the fate of a second who was shot in a bungled duel, on a Wednesday morning in November, on Bagshot Heath (as recorded by the *Morning Chronicle*, Nov. 26, 1821). It is doubtful that the "great" Russian painter had read Pushkin's novel (although he certainly had seen the opera by the "great" composer) when he painted his *Duel of Onegin and Lenski* (1899). As in the opera, everything in the picture insults Pushkin's masterpiece. The two duelists, two stolid dummies, stand stockstill, one foot thrust forward, *la taille cambrée*, pointing their dummy pistols at each other. Lenski is in the same pose as young Pushkin reading his verses to Derzhavin, in another ridiculous picture (1911) by the same painter. These ignoble daubs are lovingly reproduced in all illustrated editions of Pushkin's works.

The society (Obshchestvo Imeni A. I. Kuindzhi) that accorded Repin a prize of three thousand rubles and a golden medal for the “Lyceum examination” picture declared that it was rewarding him not so much for the picture itself as because of his being abused by the *dekadentī* (*avant-garde* painters).

- 12 / his friends / *Druzéy*: Russian construction allows an ambiguity here: the meaning may be “the two friends” just as well as “his friends”; but the opening ejaculation of XXVIII seems to preclude the former interpretation.

## XXIX—XXX

The hostile meeting described here is the classical duel *à volonté* of the French code, partly derived from the Irish and English pistol duel, for which the basic code duello was adopted in Tipperary about 1775. According to this Clonmel Code and to an additional rule adopted in Galway, firing was regulated by signal, or word of command, or at pleasure, and in the last case, either party might advance “even to touch muzzle.” In the favorite Continental variation, however, a stretch of ground at mid-distance could not be trespassed upon, and this was called the *barrière* (a term stemming from the oldest form of any pistol duel, the French one, which was fought on horseback, with the combatants divided by posts placed some ten yards asunder to represent the nearest range from which they were permitted to fire). The affair was conducted as follows.

The adjustment of the preliminary ceremonies would comprise not only the actual “calling out” or, in English parlance of the time, “calling upon,” with the dispatch of a written challenge or “message,” technically termed “cartel of defiance” (Six : IX), but also a conference between the seconds; we shall note that the latter formality

## Commentary

is omitted in the present case, nor are the conditions of combat set down in writing by the witnesses, as formal usage would demand. It is not necessary to assume that suicide notes, at least, have been deposited, with a view to exempt the survivor from prosecution; officially, duels were forbidden, which did not affect, however, their frequency; the participants remained unpunished when no death followed, but even in case of a fatal result influence in high places helped to mitigate, or eliminate altogether, such penalties as imprisonment or banishment.

The parties repair to the selected spot. The seconds mark the ground at a certain number of paces (yards); for instance, in the present case, thirty-two yards are measured off, and the combatants, after a given signal, are allowed to reduce the distance by walking toward each other (otherwise, twelve paces or less would do). The limits of this progression are fixed by a number of paces being told off between the extreme marks, leaving a space of, say, twelve paces in the center of the ground: this is *la barrière*, the boundary, a kind of no man's land beyond the inner limits of which neither man can advance; its boundaries would be generally marked by the coats, carricks, or pelisses doffed by the combatants.

The pistols are loaded or "charged" by the seconds, and the duel begins. The principals take their positions at the extreme points of the ground, facing each other and keeping the muzzles of their pistols pointing down. At a given signal (*Marchez! Skhodites'!*, meaning "March toward each other"), they advance upon each other and may fire whenever they think proper. Onegin starts gently leveling his pistol when both have advanced four paces; they walk another five, and Lenski is killed on the first fire. If Onegin, while taking aim, had discharged his pistol without effect, or if it had snapped, or even if a severe hit had not utterly disabled Lenski,

the latter might have made him come up to the *barrière* limit and at twelve paces taken a long cool aim at him. This was one of the reasons why serious duelists preferred to have the other fellow fire first. If after the exchange the adversaries still felt bloodthirsty, they might have the pistols reloaded (or use a fresh brace) and begin all over again. This type of duel, with variations (for example, the *barrière* idea seems to have been less clearly defined in the Irish and English duels), was popular in France, Russia, Great Britain, and the Southern states of America from the end of the eighteenth century to about 1840 and was still fought in Latin and Slav countries in our time. The reader should not imagine, when reading this chapter, anything resembling the “back-to-back-march-face-about-fire” affair popularized in modern times by movies and cartoons. This was a variant invented in France in the 1830’s and popular with Parisian journalists later on.

The description of the Lenski-Onegin duel is, on our poet’s part, a personal recollection in regard to various details, and, in regard to its issue, a personal prediction.

Pushkin had been out at least three times before his fatal meeting with d’Anthès. His first, with Rileev, occurred presumably between May 6 and 9, 1820, in the district of Tsarskoe Selo (see my n. to Four : XIX : 5). In his next affair (1822, first week of January, 9 A.M., at a mile and a half from Kishinev), with Colonel Starov, commander of the Chasseur Regiment, for adversary, accurate aim was impaired by a raging snowstorm; the boundary was set at sixteen paces for the first exchange and narrowed to twelve for the second. In the spring of the same year, in a vineyard near Kishinev, he fought with another military man named Zubov. In these three duels no blood was shed; very few details are known about them, but it would seem that in the first and third Pushkin discharged his pistol into the air.

## *Commentary*

In his fourth and last encounter, with Baron Georges Charles d'Anthès, also known as Baron Georges de Heeckeren, on January 27, at 4:30 P.M., near St. Petersburg (on the north side of the Neva, some 1500 feet north of the Black River, in a pine grove a little way off the Kolomyaki road), the parties took their ground at a distance of twenty paces, and Pushkin was mortally wounded at the first fire. Here are the conditions of the duel.

1. Les deux adversaires seront placés à vingt pas de distance, à cinq pas chacun des deux barrières qui seront distantes de dix pas entre elles.

2. Armés chacun d'un pistolet, à un signal donné, ils pourront en s'avancant l'un sur l'autre, sans cependant dans aucun cas dépasser la barrière, faire usage de leurs armes.

3. Il reste convenu en outre qu'un coup de feu parti, il ne sera plus permis à chacun des deux adversaires de changer de place pour que celui des deux qui aura tiré le premier essuie dans tous les cas le feu de son adversaire à la même distance.

4. Les deux parties ayant tiré, s'il n'y a point de résultat on recommencerait l'affaire . . . en remettant les adversaires à la même distance de vingt pas. . . .

The six clauses, of which I quote four, were signed on Jan. 27, 1837, at 2:30 P.M., in St. Petersburg. Two hours later Pushkin received a wound in the lower abdomen and died of traumatic peritonitis at 2:45 P.M., January 29.

The circumstances that led to Pushkin's tragic death can be briefly summarized as follows.

In 1833 the Dutch minister, Baron Jacob Theodore van Heeckeren (Jacques Thierry Borchard Anne van Heeckeren-Beverwaert, 1791-1884), who after a leave of absence was returning to his post in St. Petersburg, at an inn befriended a young Alsatian gentleman going the same way. This was Georges Charles d'Anthès (1812-95), a native of Colmar and onetime student at Saint-

Cyr. According to Louis Metman, the official (and not always reliable) biographer of the family, the d'Anthès had originated on Gottland Island and had been established since the seventeenth century in Alsace, where a Jean Henri Anthès, *manufacteur d'armes blanches*, was ennobled in 1731. The father of Georges d'Anthès had been baronized by Napoleon I. Our hero's military studies in France had been interrupted by the July Revolution, which ended the reign of Charles X (1824–30) and hoisted Louis Philippe upon the throne. D'Anthès remained faithful to Charles and went to seek his fortune at the court of Tsar Nicholas I, who liked legitimists.

Georges d'Anthès and his protector arrived by steamer on Oct. 8, 1833. Pushkin, who happened to be keeping a journal at the time, jotted down on Jan. 26, 1834, almost exactly three years before his fatal duel, that a foreigner, Baron d'Anthès, had been received into the Chevalier Guards. He met d'Anthès in St. Petersburg at the end of July, 1834. Natalia Pushkin and the two children, Maria and Aleksandr, were spending the summer on her mother's estate in the province of Kaluga, after a miscarriage she had suffered in March of that year. She returned to St. Petersburg in the autumn and bore a third child (Grigoriy) in May, 1835, and a fourth (Natalia) a year later. There is no proof that her relations with d'Anthès, who fell in love with her at the close of 1834, ever went further than flirtatious conversations and snatched kisses; this was bad enough, but it is also true that her husband had affairs with other women, among whom was her sister Alexandra. Her other (elder) sister, Ekaterina, was madly enamored of d'Anthès.

In the summer of 1836, the Pushkins rented a villa in the suburbs, near the Black River (I have read somewhere that the name Black River, known as early as 1710, came from its peculiar dusky tint, owing to the fact that the dense alder shrubs growing along its banks

and dipping their roots in the water produced a dark, tawny suffusion of alnein in it), and both Natalia and Ekaterina saw a good deal of d'Anthès. July passed in an atmosphere full of billets-doux, *petits jeux*, rides, and picnics, and somehow, in the course of that month, Ekaterina Goncharov became pregnant (a circumstance carefully camouflaged in the annals of the Heeckeren-d'Anthès family, but conclusively proved by Grossman in *Krasnaya niva*, XXIV, 1929). It is certain that by the early fall of 1836 rumors were circulating about a possible marriage between her and d'Anthès (by now Baron de Heeckeren—his father having officially ceded him in April of that year to the Dutch minister). It is also certain that d'Anthès' courtship of Natalia Pushkin, a source of passionate interest to the *grand monde*, went on just as before.

Vienna society a few years earlier had found great fun in conferring on people various absurd certificates. A coterie of effeminate young men decided to renew the fad in St. Petersburg. A member of this giggling clique, Prince Pyotr Dolgoruki (nicknamed in society *le bancal*, "bowlegs"), cooked up an anonymous letter that Pushkin and his friends received by the (recently inaugurated) city mail on Nov. 4, 1836:

Les Grands-Croix, Commandeurs et Chevaliers du Sérénissime Ordre des *Cocus*, réunis en grand Chapitre sous la présidence du vénérable grand-Maître de l'Ordre, S. E. D. L. Narychkine, ont nommé à l'unanimité Mr. *Alexandre Pouchkine* coadjuteur du grand Maître de l'Ordre des *Cocus* et historiographe de l'Ordre.

*Le secrétaire perpétuel: C<sup>te</sup> J. Borch*

I have preserved the orthography. The secretary is Count Joseph Borch: him and his wife, Lyubov, the *monde* dubbed a model couple because "she lived with the coachman, and he with the postilion." The vener-

able Grand Master is His Excellency Dmitri Lvovich Narishkin, whose wife, Maria, had been the mistress of Tsar Alexander I for many years. It is surmised that this "certificate" should be construed in the sense that Pushkin had been cocufied by the tsar. This was not so. Although the potentate had had his eye on Natalia Pushkin even before she married, she is thought to have become his mistress for a brief spell only after our poet's death.

That the hand is a Russian's is clear from the very attempts to disguise it (for example, by forming the French *u* as a Russian *i*, which in block-letter script is the mirror image of *N*); but Pushkin, for some reason never explained, decided it had been written by Heeckeren. Soviet graphologists proved (in 1927) that it was Dolgoruki's work; his subsequent forgeries lend strong psychological support to his authorship. He belonged to the Heeckeren set, but it was Heeckeren and d'Anthès whom Pushkin immediately saw as the main villains. On November 7 he called out Lieutenant d'Anthès; a hectic period of *pourparlers* ensued, with Pushkin's friend Zhukovski doing his best to patch up matters. On November 17 Pushkin took back his challenge on the grounds that d'Anthès had proposed to Ekaterina Goncharov—which it was high time he did, since she was now five months with child. He married her on Jan. 10, 1837. On January 24 Pushkin had a mysterious interview with the tsar. During the fortnight following his wedding d'Anthès continued to pay court to Natalia Pushkin on every possible occasion.

On January 26 Pushkin sent an insulting letter to the Dutch minister, accusing him of being "the pimp of his bastard." This last epithet was a perfectly gratuitous insult since Heeckeren was a confirmed homosexual, a fact well known to our poet. For reasons of protocol, Heeckeren abstained from challenging Pushkin, and it was d'Anthès who immediately called him out.

### Commentary

Pushkin's second was his old schoolmate, Lieutenant Colonel Konstantin Danzas, and that of d'Anthès was Viscount Laurent d'Archiac, a secretary of the French embassy. The duel took place on Wednesday, January 27. Both sleighs arrived in the vicinity of the so-called Commandant's Villa about 4 P.M., with dusk already dulling the frosty air. While the two seconds and d'Anthès were engaged in trampling out a twenty-yard-long path in the snow, Pushkin, enveloped in a bearskin pelisse, sat waiting on a snowdrift. The seconds marked the ten-yard boundary with their shed carricks, and the duel began. Pushkin at once walked up his five paces to the boundary. D'Anthès made four paces and fired. Pushkin fell on Danzas' military carrick, but after a pause of a few seconds raised himself on one arm and declared he had enough strength to fire. His pistol had stuck barrel down in the snow; another was given him, and Pushkin took slow careful aim at his adversary, whom he had ordered to come up to the boundary. The shock of the ball, which hit d'Anthès in the forearm, bowled him over, and Pushkin, thinking he had killed him, exclaimed, "Bravo!" and threw his pistol up into the air. He was carried to the livery coupe that had conveyed the passionately anxious Dutch minister to the vicinity of the ground (Heeckeren then quietly transferred himself to one of the hack sleighs).

D'Anthès later had a distinguished career in France. In *Les Châtiments*, bk. iv, no. vi, a fine diatribe of thirty resounding Alexandrines "Écrit le 17 Juillet 1851, en descendant de la tribune," Victor Hugo qualified the members of Napoleon III's senate, including d'Anthès, as follows (ll. 1-2, 7):

Ces hommes qui mourront, foule abjecte et grossière,  
Sont de la boue avant d'être de la poussière.

Ils mordent les talons de qui marche en avant.

It is extremely curious to discover—as I have from a work by Baron Ludovic de Vaux, *Les Tireurs de pistolet* (Paris, 1883), pp. 149–50—that the son of Georges and Catherine Heeckeren d’Anthès, Louis Joseph Maurice Charles Georges (1843–1902), was one of the most celebrated duelists of his day. “Baron Georges de Heeckeren . . . grand, gros et fort, yeux clairs et barbe blonde,” while heading in the sixties a counterguerrilla action in Mexico, “se prit de querelle,” at a hotel in Monterey, “avec un Américain qui mettait les pieds sur la table avant le dessert” and fought a duel with him “à l’américaine au revolver et lui brisa le bras. . . . Rentré en France il eut un duel à l’épée avec Albert Roge. . . . Tout le monde se rappelle son duel avec le Prince Dolgorouki dans lequel il fracassa l’épaule de son adversaire après avoir subi son feu à dix pas. . . . C’est un charmant viveur . . . qui compte beaucoup d’amis à Paris et qui le mérite bien.”

## XXX

- 3 / *Pohódkoy tvyórdoy, tìho, róvno*: The rhythm of the duelist’s grim advance, stressed by these thudding epithets, is curiously anticipated at the end of pt. 1 of Pushkin’s earlier poem, *The Caucasian Captive* (1820–27), in which the protagonist recalls his former encounters (ll. 349–52):

A thrall of honor, merciless [honor],  
 he at close range had seen his end  
 when in a duel he, firm, cold [*tvýórdīy, hládnīy*],  
 would face the fateful lead.

The “thrall of honor,” *nevól’nik chésti*, was to be borrowed in 1837 by Lermontov for a famous poem on Pushkin’s death.

## Commentary

- 12 / clock / *Chas't*: This also means "hours." The hours of his life come to an end as the last one strikes.

### XXXI

- 6 / lump of snow / *gl'iba negov'dya*: A *gl'iba* conveys the idea of larger bulk than "lump," midway between it and "mass."

When, in Pushkin's *EO*, Six : xxxi : 4-6, Lenski's falling in the fatal duel is illustrated by the comparison "Thus, slowly, down the slope of hills, shining with sparkles in the sun, a lump of snow descends," we visualize, with the Russian author, a Russian bright winter day, but cannot help recalling that when in Macpherson's *Fingal*, bk. III, Agandecca is slain by Starno, she falls "like a wreath of snow, which slides from the rocks of Ronan." When Lermontov, in *A Hero of Our Time* (pt. II, "Princess Mary"), compares Mt. Mashuk in the northern Caucasus (elev. 3258 ft.) to a shaggy (*moh-nataya*) Persian fur cap, or defines other, low, timbered mountains as *kudryavie gori*, we remember the many "shaggy mountains" in *The Poems of Ossian* (e.g., in the beginning of *Darthula*). And when Tolstoy begins and ends his marvelous story "Haji-Murad" (1896-98; 1901-04) with an elaborate comparison involving the crushing of a vigorous thistle and the death of a Caucasian chieftain, we note the faint but indubitable prompting of "they fell like the thistle's head," a recurrent phrase in *Ossian* (e.g., in *Sul-malla of Lumon*).

- 10-14; xxxii : 9-14 The torrent of unrelated images with which xxxi closes—young bard, untimely end, the storm has blown, the bloom has withered, the flame upon the altar has gone out—is a deliberate accumulation of conventional poetical formulas by means of which Pushkin mimics poor Lenski's own style (cf. xxi-xxii, Lenski's

last elegy); but the rich and original metaphor of the deserted house, closed inner shutters, whitened window-panes, departed female owner (the soul being feminine in Russian), with which XXXII ends, is Pushkin's own contribution, a sample as it were of what *he* can do.

In the 1820's neither Shelley nor Keats was yet famous enough to be widely read in French versions as were the more grossly grained and more easily paraphrased Macpherson, Byron, and Moore. When Pushkin was writing Chapter Six of *EO*, he certainly did not know *Adonais*, Shelley's poem on the death of Keats, written in June, 1821, and published the same year. As with so many other parallelisms mentioned in my notes, the similarity between the metaphors accumulated around Lenski's death and the images in *Adonais*, VI, 7-9—

The bloom, whose petals, nipped before they blew,  
Died . . .

The broken lily lies—the storm is overpast

—is readily explained by the logic of literary evolution working on the same fund of immemorial formulas. Pushkin's image of the abandoned house is, however, more original in specific detail than the metaphor of the "angel soul" who was the "earthly guest" of the "innocent breast" in *Adonais*, XVII.

#### XXXII

1-2 Cf. Browning's *After* (1855), the soliloquy of a duelist who has killed his adversary:

How he lies in his rights of a man!  
Death has done all death can.  
And, absorbed in the new life he leads,  
He recks not, he heeds  
Nor his wrong nor my vengeance; both strike  
On his senses alike,  
And are lost in the solemn and strange  
Surprise of the change.

8 / *Igrála zhízn', kípéla króv'*: Even a professed literalist is stopped by "played life, boiled blood."

9-14 See n. to Six : XXXI : 10-14.

12-14 By Jan. 6, 1827, Vyazemski had read Six (brought by Pushkin to Moscow) and, for the nonce, was enthusiastic. He admired, with great acumen, the metaphor of the abandoned house (see letter of that date to Aleksandr Turgenev and Zhukovski, who were abroad).

The "window boards," *stávni*, are folding shutters on the inside of the casement panes.

XXXIII

12 / at a gentlemanly distance / *Na blagoródnom rastoyán'i*: Cf. Byron, *Don Juan*, IV, XLI, 4-6:

. . . twelve yards off, or so;  
A gentlemanly distance, not too near,  
If you have got a former friend for foe.

Twelve yards is twelve paces (thirty-six feet), three eighths of the distance in the Onegin-Lenski duel. Actually, they were at a distance of fourteen yards from each other when Onegin fired. In duels where family honor was involved the distance might be considerably less. Thus Ríleev and Prince Konstantin Shahovskoy fought at *three* paces (Feb. 22, 1824)—with their bullets colliding in mid-air.

Pichot (1823): "C'est une distance honorable . . ."

The formula was not Byron's invention, either. See Sheridan's silly *The Rivals*, v, iii, where Sir Lucius O'Trigger, the second of the comedy coward Acres, measures paces and remarks: "There now, that is a very pretty distance—a pretty gentleman's distance." (Acres thinks "forty, or eight and thirty yards" is "a good dis-

tance,” with the duelists *not* walking toward each other as the Franco-Russian code allowed.)

XXXIV

VARIANTS

Drafted continuations, in the Maykov collection (PD 155):

XXXIVa

- It is praiseworthy to be <brave> in battle,  
 but who's not brave in our courageous age?  
 One and all boldly fight, lie brazenly.
- 4 Hero, be first a human being!  
 At one time sensibility  
 was current even in our Northern nature.  
 When burning grapeshot
- 8 tears off the head from a friend's shoulders,  
 weep, warrior, do not be ashamed, weep freely!  
 Caesar, too, shed tears <when he learned>  
 of a friend's <death>
- 12 and very painfully himself was wounded  
 (I don't remember where, I don't remember how);  
 he was, of course, <no> fool.

10–14 Here, Pushkin vaguely recollects a passage from Plutarch's *Lives* (read in Jacques Amyot's French), in which Caesar in Alexandria, on being presented with Pompey's head, “ne put retenir ses larmes” (*Vies des hommes illustres*: “César,” LIII). It was near the statue of Pompey that, at the meeting of the Senate, Caesar received a first gash in the neck (dealt by Casca) before being killed (ibid. LXXI)—hence the mention here of his being wounded.

*Works* 1949, p. 612, adds a draft where Cassius and Brutus replace Caesar and his friend (ll. 10–11):

*I Kássiy slyózī prolivál,  
 Kogdá on Brúta smért' uznál . . .*

Commentary

And Cassius also tears did shed  
When he found out that Brut was dead . . .

It was the other way round. This vagueness of classical knowledge is curious.

xxxivb

But one can also weep without a wound  
over a friend if he was dear,  
did not tease us imprudently,  
4 and served our whims.  
But if the fatal Reaper,  
bloody and blind,  
'mid fire and smoke, before a father's eyes,  
8 smites his stray youngling—  
O dread! O bitter moment!  
O St[roganov]—when your son fell,  
smitten, and you were left alone,  
12 <glory> and battle <you forgot>  
and you abandoned to another's glory  
success encouraged by yourself.

10 / St[roganov]; 13 / another's: Count Pavel Stroganov, who commanded a division in the battle of Craonne, near Laon, France, Mar. 7, 1814, N.S., left the field upon learning that his son Aleksandr, aged nineteen, had been decapitated by a cannon ball.

The "another" is (according to Tŭnyanov, *Lit. nasl.*, nos. 16–18 [1934], pp. 369–70) Pushkin's *bête noire*, Count Vorontsov, to whom contemporaries assigned the final success of the battle at Laon on March 9.

xxxivc

1 Like a lugubrious groan, like the grave's cold . . .

xxxv

4 / neighbor / *soséd*: This seems incongruous here—unless we realize that, besides connoting fellow landowner and

country neighbor, the term echoes here XII : 4 (to which see note).

- 10 / lading / *klad*: Apparently a mistake for *klad'*. *Klad* means “treasure,” especially “hidden treasure.”
- 12 / jib / *b'yútsya*: It will be noticed by the bilingual reader that Pushkin employs the same verb he did for the “fidgeting” horses in One : XXII : 9 (*b'yútsya kónu*). A more dramatic restiveness demands a stronger verb in English here.

## XXXVI

- 13 / [token]: Gofman, in a special Pushkin issue (1937) of the Russian-language periodical *Illyustrirovannaya Rossiya* (Paris), publishes with facsimiles (pp. 30 and 31) one of the few autographs extant of Chapter Six—a MS page in the possession of a Russian lady, Olga Kuprovich, in Viipuri, Finland, which is the final draft or corrected fair copy of Six : XXXVI and XXXVII. The variants are insignificant except for XXXVI : 13, where the word *príznak* (“sign,” “index,” “token,” “evidence,” etc.) is clearly written and thus should replace the word “phantom” (*prízrak*, “ghost,” “shade,” “apparition,” etc.), which is, as Gofman correctly points out, a misprint in the published texts (1828, 1833, 1837). Cf. *Conversation of Bookseller with Poet*, l. 111: “. . . God's token, Inspiration,” . . . *príznak bóga, vdohnovén'e* (see Comm., “Dropped Introductions”).

## XXXVII

- 12 / to his shade / *K néy*: “To her” (*ten'*, “shade,” is feminine).
- 13 / rush up / *domchítsya*: This verb combines the idea of “rushing” and “reaching.”

This stanza is known only from Grot's publication (see n. to XV–XVI).

- Having imbued his life with venom,  
not having done much good,  
alas, he might have with undying fame  
4 the issues of newspapers filled.  
Teaching men, gulling brethren, to the thunder  
of plaudits or of curses, he might have  
achieved an awesome course,  
8 so as to breathe his last  
in sight of solemn trophies  
like our Kutuzov, or like Nelson,  
or like Napoleon, in exile,  
12 or on the gallows, like Rileev . . .

The two last lines may have been left out by Grot for reasons of censorship.

- 1–7 This image is on Pushkin's part a case of second sight, since these traits refer to a type of beloved and hated publicist of the fifties, sixties, and seventies, such as the radicals Cherniŝhevski, Pisarev, and other civic, politico-literary critics, a harsh type that did not yet exist in 1826, when this admirable stanza was composed.
- 12 Kondratiy Rileev (1795–1826), a leading Decembrist, who joined the Decembrist movement in the beginning of 1823 and was executed by hanging. He is the completely mediocre author of *Meditations* (*Dumī*, 1821–23), twenty-one patriotic poems on historical subjects (one of them, a monologue by Boris Godunov, is curiously echoed in so far as certain intonations go, two years later, in a passage of Pushkin's tragedy of the same name). He also wrote a long poem, *Voynarovskiy*, on a Ukrainian theme (Mazepa, etc.), the separate edition of which appeared in mid-March, 1825.

See also n. to Four : XIX : 5.

## XL

5–14 The brook and the branches are tenacious of life, even after their chanter's death. In his first published poem (1814) to a rhyming friend, Pushkin advised him to forgo "brooks, woods, and gloomy tombs." But the mood is catching.

It will be noted that the Lenskian rill winds its way into the domain of Onegin. And Onegin's *Idol mio*, the last sound we hear him emit (Eight : XXXVIII : 13), is somehow congeneric to Lenski's "ideal" (Six : XXIII : 8), the last word he writes in our presence. Thus also the "ideal" in the last stanza of the novel recalls the adjectival "ideal" of the Prefatory Piece. There is a conspiracy of words signaling to one another, throughout the novel, from one part to another.

The "streamlets of the . . . brook" (ll. 8–9), *strúyki* (a diminutive of the *strúi* in Four : XXXIX : 2) . . . | *Ruch'ya*, which suddenly develop "waves" (l. 12), *vólni*, remind us of certain aqueous transformations in Tatiana's dream (Five : XI : 5–14; XII : 1–2, 13); but then, on the other hand, *volni* in both passages may be hardly more than an attempt to render the French *ondes*, which has no exact equivalent in Russian, while, generally speaking, *ruchey* is used in a very large sense by Pushkin, often being a mere synonym of the *potok* ("torrent").

Note also that "There is a spot," *Est' mesto* (l. 5), has the very classical intonation of *est locus* (e.g., "*est locus Italiae medio sub montibus altis*," *Aeneid*, VII, 563).

5–14 [and see XLI; Seven : VI–VII] Professor Chizhevski says (p. 270): ". . . this theme [the grave of a youth] was used by K. Delavigne (Messenie)." There is no such poet as "K. Delavigne," and if this is meant for Casimir Delavigne (as the index belatedly suggests), then neither

## Commentary

he nor anybody else wrote anything called "Messenie"; and if this is meant for Delavigne's collection of patriotic elegies, *Les Messéniennes*, then there is no grave of any youth sung therein.

- 14 [and see XLI : 13; Seven : VII : 9, 12] The simplicity of the monument is yet another thematic convention in the "bloom-doom" or "doom-tomb" series. Cf. the *romance*, in four elegiac quatrains, entitled *Werther à Charlotte, une heure avant de mourir*, by André François de Coupigny (1766-1835), st. III (in *Almanach des Muses* [1801], p. 106):

Vers le soir, près de l'urne où ma cendre paisible  
Dormira sous l'abri d'un simple monument,  
Viens rêver quelquefois; que ton âme sensible  
Plaigne l'infortuné qui mourut en t'aimant . . .

This is the model of Tumanski's elegy that I quote in my n. to Six : XXI : 4.

See also Byron's allusion to General Marceau's tomb, in *Childe Harold*, III, LVI, 1-2:

By Coblentz, on a rise of gentle ground,  
There is a small and simple Pyramid . . .

There is also a "simple monument" in Pushkin's ode of 1814, *Recollections at Tsarskoe Selo* (see n. to Eight : IC : 12).

## XLI

- 1-4 Cf. Millevoye, *La Chute des feuilles (première version)*:

Mais son amante ne vint pas  
Visiter la pierre isolée;  
Et le pâtre de la vallée  
Troubla seul du bruit de ses pas  
Le silence du mausolée.

Batyushkov, *The Last Spring* (1815), rendered the end of Millevoye's elegy thus:

And Delia did not visit  
his lonesome monument;  
only the shepherd in the quiet hour  
of sunrise, as he drove his flock  
into the field, with mournful song  
disturbed the sepulcher's dead silence.

The clumsy (in Russian) locution *kak . . . stado vïgon-yal* ("as he drove the flock" or "herd") instead of *kogda* ("when") is oddly echoed by Pushkin in Six : XLI : 1-2, "as [*kak*] begins to drip spring rain."

Mihail Milonov, *The Fall of the Leaves* (1819; see n. to Six : XXI : 4), winds up his bizarre version thus:

Close to the oak is the youth's grave;  
but with woe in her soul  
his love here did not come;  
only the shepherd, guest of the bare fields,  
when at the hour of the evening star  
he off the meadow drives his flocks,  
disturbs the sepulcher's  
deep silence with the rustle of his steps.

Chizhevski (p. 274) makes at least five mistakes in quoting the five lines of the French original.

Baratinski, in *his* rendering (1823), used the *deuxième version* of Millevoye's elegy, in which the author replaced the shepherd with the dead youth's mother (they *both* appear in a *troisième version*).

The theme is taken up again in the next chapter. Thus, after death has proved to exist in Arcadia, Lenski remains surrounded by the intertwined emblemata of minor poetry. He is buried by the side of a path, in pastoral solitude, not only out of elegiac considerations, but also because the consecrated ground of a churchyard was denied the suicide a dead duelist was assumed to be by the Church.

## Commentary

- 5 This young townswoman, the herdsman, and the women reapers are very pleasant stylizations. The herdsman will still be plaiting his shoe in Seven, and the young Amazon will, in a sense, become the Muse of Eight.
- 8 / *Nesyótsya po polyám*: Fr. *parcourt la plaine, les champs, la campagne*.
- 14 / *nézhnie glazá*: Alas, "tender eyes" is spoiled nowadays and hereabouts by consonance ("tenderize").

## XLII

- 1 / in open champaign / *v chístom póle*: Fr. *dans la campagne*, "in open country." Karamzin (in 1793) artificially employed *v chístom pole* in the sense of *à la campagne, aux champs* (locution of the seventeenth century). Pushkin himself, in his French translations of (eleven) Russian songs (he used N. Novikov's *New and Complete Collection of Russian Songs*, pt. I, Moscow, 1780), rendered *chístoe pole* "la plaine déserte"!

## XLIII

- 1-2 There is something pleasantly grotesque about this declaration of love for one's hero when one has just dispatched poor Lenski.
- 4 / *No mné tepér' ne do negó*: An intimate phrase combining the ideas of not being in the mood, not having the time for somebody or something, and not being up to the matter. See also n. to Three : xxxv : 6.
- 5-6 "And, to confess a truth . . . [the author] | Grows weary of his long-lov'd mistress, Rhyme," says Dryden in his excellent Prologue (ll. 7-8) to his ridiculous tragedy *Aureng-Zebe* (performed spring, 1675).

## XLIV

5–6 Should obsolete or otherwise unusual forms of Russian be rendered by unusual forms of English?

The noun *mólodost'* ("youth," as a state or a period) has an archaic form, *mládost'*, no longer in use even in poetry. In *EO* and elsewhere Pushkin employs both forms and their adjectives (*molodoy* and *mladoy*) indiscriminately, merely choosing that form which slips more easily into the right metrical compartment. Sometimes *molodoy* (masc. nom. sing. and fem. gen. sing.) or *molodaya* (fem. nom. sing.) dwindles to a shadow epithet with the Gallic intonation of, say, *la jeune Olga*, regardless of our already knowing that she is young. "Youthful," which of course is not archaic in the sense *mladoy* is, is hardly worth using when "young" can do just as well; but in the course of *EO* there are passages where *mládost'* should be rendered by "youthhood" or by an even more obsolete word. Thus, when in Six : XLIV Pushkin laments the passing of youth and mentions a twinning of rhyme words that in our times would not come about, one twin being dead—

*Mechtŭ, mechtŭ! gde vásha sládost'?*  
*Gde, véchnaya k ney rŭfma, "mládost' "?*

—this translator has not been able to resist the temptation of:

Dreams, dreams! Where is your dulcitude?  
 Where is (its stock rhyme) juvenitude?

It may be argued that in no age has dulcitude–juvenitude cropped up commonly in English poetry as *sládost'*–*mládost'* did in Pushkin's day and that therefore the analogy is strained. It might have been wiser to render the terminals as "sweetness" and "youth" and explain the situation in a note.

## Commentary

The flirtation with “pranksome rhyme” (see XLIII : 6), *shalún’ya rifma* (Fr. *la rime espiègle* or *polissonne*), can be traced back to the gratuitous “rose” of Four : XLII : 3.

7–8 / *i vpravdu nakonéts | Uvyál, uvyál eyó [mladosti] venéts*; 11: Thus Pushkin identifies in retrospect the Lenskian theme of withered bloom (Two : x : 13–14, Six : XXI : 3–4, and Six : XXXI : 12–13) with the effusions of his own youth. At twenty-one, in an elegy beginning “I have outlived my aspirations,” he wrote (ll. 5–8):

Under the storms of cruel fate  
My bloomy wreath has withered fast;  
Alone, forlorn, I live, and wait  
When will the end arrive at last.

(Three quatrains composed Feb. 22, 1821, at Kamenka, province of Kiev, and at first intended for insertion after l. 55 of the long poem *The Caucasian Captive*, which our poet was finishing at the time; it was completed the following day, and an epilogue was added May 15 of the same year, during a brief visit to Odessa.)

14 / thirty soon: This stanza (as well as XLIII and XLV) was written Aug. 10, 1827, at Mihaylovskoe. Our poet was twenty-eight years old.

Cf. Bertin, *Les Amours*, bk. III, *Elégie* XXII (1785):

La douce illusion ne sied qu'à la jeunesse;  
Et déjà l'austère Sagesse  
Vient tout bas m'avertir que j'ai vu trente hivers.

The drafts of XLIII (2368, f. 24<sup>r</sup>), XLIV (ibid.), and XLV (f. 24<sup>v</sup>) are one of the three autographs of Six that have reached us (the others are: the drafts of XXXIVa, b, and c, PD 155, and a final draft or first fair copy of XXXVI–XXXVII, coll. Kuprovich) and bear the date “10 avg [1826]” (the year, according to Tomashevski, Acad 1937, p. 661). See also n. to Six : XLVI : 1–4.

## XLV

- 1 / My noontide: Cf. Jean Baptiste Rousseau, *Odes*, bk. 1, no. x (c. 1695), “tirée du cantique d’Ezéchias, Isaïe, chap. 38, verset 9 et suiv. (*Ego dixi: in dimidio dierum meorum . . .*)”:

Au midi de mes années  
Je touchois à mon couchant . . .

(“In the noontide of my days,” Psalm of Hezekiah, king of Judah, in Isa. 38 : 10)

The romanticists improved on this: Cf. Byron, *Don Juan*, X, xxvii, 4–5:

That horrid equinox, that hateful section  
Of human years—that half-way house . . .

## XLVI

- 1–4 Pushkin wrote down this quatrain (already published in the 1828 and 1833 edns.), together with a quotation from Coleridge, Oct. 2, 1835, at Trigorskoe, in the gold-tooled red morocco album belonging to his inamorata of ten years before, Annette Vulf. The quotation is the beginning of a five-line epigram written by Coleridge in 1802:

How seldom, friend! a good great man inherits  
Honour or wealth with all his worth and pains!

- 1 / coverts / *séni*: The reference here (as in Two : I : 12) is to the shelter of trees. See my nn. to Six : VII : 9.

- 8 / nook / *úgol*: “Corner” or “hole” would seem to be less exact here. Elsewhere I have used “nook” for *ugolok*, the diminutive of *ugol*. See my nn. to Two : I : 2.

## VARIANT

- 13–14 In the first edition of *EO*, Chapter Six ended in the following (see Pushkin’s n. 40):

## Commentary

amidst the soulless proudlings,  
amidst the brilliant fools,

### XLVII

amidst the crafty, the fainthearted,  
crazy, spoiled children,  
villains both ludicrous and dull,  
4 obtuse and captious judges;  
amidst devout coquettes;  
amidst the voluntary lackeys;  
amidst the daily modish scenes,  
8 courtly, affectionate betrayals;  
amidst hardhearted vanity's  
cold verdicts;  
amidst the vexing emptiness  
12 of schemes, of thoughts and conversations;  
in that slough where with you  
I bathe, dear friends!

XLVII : 11–12 / amidst the vexing emptiness of schemes, of thoughts and conversations / *Sredi dosádnoy pustoti' | Raschyótov, dúm i razgovórov*: In a copy of the separate edition of Chapter Six (bound with the previous chapters), Pushkin, sometime in 1828, altered by hand *dum*, “of thoughts,” to *dush*, “of souls.” This hardly affects the meaning of the whole rather colorless passage (a very ordinary tabulation); in fact, both *dush* and *dum* might be rendered in English by “of mentalities.” Pushkin obviously did not bother much about this correction, for the stanza, when relegated to the notes in the complete 1833 and 1837 edns., retains the reading *dum*.

*Raschyoti'* means “schemes,” “calculations,” “computations,” “estimates.” *Dushi*, as already mentioned, means “souls.” Brodski (*EO* commentary, pp. 250–51), in his sociological fervor, abolishes the comma between *raschyotov* and *dush*, gives “souls” the sense of “souls of peasants” (serfs being reckoned by “souls,” as cattle are by “heads”), and makes the two lines read:

amidst the vexing emptiness  
of estimates of serfs and conversations . . .

implying that Pushkin is here satirizing barons who in high society engaged in shop talk, in calculating the number of slaves each possesses and haggling about their prices! This is sheer nonsense, of course: no such talk was typical of the beau-monde prattle. Besides, the construction *raschyotov dush* is impossibly clumsy and thematically throws out of balance both the “vexing emptiness” and the unspecified “conversations.”

## Chapter Seven

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### MOTTOES

The first motto is Dmitriev's poem *The Liberation of Moscow* (1795), ll. 11-12.

In the opening lines of the greatest ode in Russian, Pushkin's *Liberty* (composed 1817):

Be gone, be hidden from my eyes,  
weak queen of Cythera!

our poet slightly imitates Dmitriev's worthless *Liberation of Moscow* (liberation from Troubled Times, Poland, and Pretenders in 1613, when Prince Dmitri Pozharski vanquished the Lithuanians and the first Romanov was elected to the throne), ll. 3-4:

I wish to sing not noisy pleasures,  
not sweets of Cytherean bonds.

Dmitriev's poem (162 iambic tetrameters, irregularly rhymed) is marked, incidentally, by the most formidable clash of consonants known in Russian poetry (l. 14):

a diamond scepter in your hands . . .  
*Almáznīy skíp̃tr v tvoŭh rukáh . . .*

*ptrvtv!*

The second motto to Seven is Baratinski's *Feasts* (1821), l. 52 (see n. to Three : xxx : 1).

The third is Griboedov's *Woe from Wit* (finished 1824), I, vii, Sofia's taunt, Chatski's retort (see n. to Six : XI : 12).

For reasons that will transpire in the course of the notes to this chapter, one would like to suggest that Pushkin might have also used a fourth motto—from Kozlov's *Princess Natalia Dolgoruki*, can. II, st. IV:

. . . Moscow appears . . .  
The eye now sees Ivan Velikiy;  
its crown glows ember-bright . . .

The name "Big John" is applied to the tallest steeple of the city: ". . . the great campanile of Ivan Veliky, erected in the Lombardo-Byzantine style by Boris Godunov, in 1600, rises to the height of 271 ft. (318 ft. including the cross), and contains many bells, one of which weighs 64½ tons" (Prince Peter Kropotkin and John Thomas Bealby, in *The Encyclopaedia Britannica*, 11th edn., New York, 1911).

# I

1-3 / vernal beams . . . turbid streams: A literary, not a local spring. In many western European poems fashionable at the time, we find similar "rills | Let loose in spring-time from the snowy hills," from Moore's *Lalla Rookh* (1817): "The Veiled Prophet of Khorassan" (5th edn., London, 1817, p. 30), and the earlier "Dissolving snows in livid torrents lost," from Thomson's *Spring*, l. 16. Their real source is Virgil; cf. *Georgics*, I, 43-44:

Vere novo gelidus canis montibus humor  
liquitur . . .

or imitations of Virgil:

Au retour du printemps, quand du sommet des montagnes qu'elle blanchissait, la neige fondue commence à s'écouler . . .

# Commentary

- 4 / onto the inundated fields / *Na potoplyónnĭe lugá*; II : 2 /  
 spring, spring, season of love / *Vesná, vesná! porá lyubvi*:  
 A curious rewording of Baratĭnski's *Spring* (six tetra-  
 metric staves rhymed abba, first published December,  
 1822, in *The Polar Star*), ll. 5-10, 28-30:

The earth has risen from her sleep

The snows in torrents flow;  
 in hills again the horns resound;  
 again the zephyrs fly  
 onto the renovated fields [*Na obnovlyónnĭe lugá*].

Ah, if the generous gods allowed  
 that to a mortal would return  
 the season of love with the season of flowers [*Porá  
 lyubvi s poróy tsvetóv*]!

- 10 / waxen cell: A commonplace in both English and French  
 poetry. See, for instance, Gay, *Rural Sports, a Georgic*  
*. . . to Mr. Pope* (1713), can. I, l. 88: "[bees] with sweets  
 the waxen cells distend," or André Chénier, *Elégies*, I  
 (ed. Walter; XVI, *Œuvres posthumes*, 1826), l. 33: "Sa  
 cellule de cire"; there are many other examples.

In his commentary to *EO*, Brodski (p. 253) drags in a  
 bit of Russian "folklore," wherein is mentioned a little  
 cell of honey, which is obviously the work of some minor  
 Russian poet of the beginning of the nineteenth century  
 who had read French poets or their Russian imitators.

- 11 / after the tribute of the field / *za dán'yu polevóy*: To  
 fetch the mead's meed, duty, due; to tax the meadow.

Cf. Jean Antoine de Baïf (1532-89), *Passetemps*, bk.  
 I: *Du printemps*, st. IX:

Les ménagères avettes

Voletant par les fleurettes  
 Pour cueillir ce qui leur duit.

This also stems from Virgil and not from direct observation.

13 / *Stadá shumyát*: The herds and flocks bellow and bleat.

## II

There are a number of analogies (probably coincidental or going back to Chateaubriand) between sts. II and III and Letters XXII–XXIV of Senancour's *Oberman* (for instance, end of XXII: “. . . tout existe en vain devant lui, il vit seul, il est absent dans le monde vivant”; and XXIV: “. . . cette volupté de la mélancolie . . . printems. . . Saison du bonheur! je vous redoute trop dans mon ardente inquiétude”).

See also a passage of Chateaubriand's *Mémoires d'outre-tombe*, the chapter on his sojourn of 1793 on Jersey, written 1822 (ed. Levaillant, pt. I, bk. X, ch. 3):

Ce qui enchante dans l'âge des liaisons devient dans l'âge délaissé un objet de souffrance et de regret. On ne souhaite plus le retour des mois . . . une belle soirée de la fin d'avril . . . ces choses qui donnent le besoin et le désir du bonheur, vous tuent.

2 See n. to Seven : I : 4.

3 / dark / *tyómnoe*: Other editions have *Kakóe tómnoe vol-nén'e*, “What a languorous stir.”

5 / tenderness / *umilén'em* (instr.): The word can be accurately rendered only by the French *attendrissement*, for which the horrible “inteneration” has been suggested in English. It can be paraphrased by “melting mood,” “softheartedness,” “tender emotion,” and the like. It is related to compassion as charm is to beauty or a dewy eye to one brimming with tears. See n. to Six : XIV : 9.

## Commentary

### VARIANT

- 12-13 In a draft of II (Leonid Maykov coll., PD 108) a variant (possibly of 12-13) reads:

Give back to me snowstorms and blizzards  
and the long shade of winter nights . . .

### III

See my n. at beginning of II.

### IV

- 1 / Now is the time / *Vot vrémya*: Cf. Thomson, *Winter* (1726), ll. 33-35, 39:

. . . Then is the time [fair autumn],  
For those, whom wisdom, and whom nature charm,  
To steal themselves from the degenerate crowd,  
And woo lone quiet, in her silent walks.

- 1 / good lazybones / *dóbríe lenívtśi*: Fr. *bons paresseux*. *Len'*, in the idiom of the time, meant "the enjoyment of outward inactivity in contrast to the simultaneous animation of the inner senses" (Hodasevich, c. 1930, quoted from his *Literaturnie stat'i i vospominaniya*, New York, 1954). It has, moreover, a Gallic turn of meaning. Cf. the delightful note of indolence in Gresset's *Epître* v, to Father Bougeant, in which he speaks of the "smiling ease" of his verses, which have earned him

. . . l'indulgence  
Des voluptueux délicats,  
Des meilleurs paresseux de France,  
Les seuls juges dont je fais cas.

- 4 / you, fledglings [*ptentsí*] of the Lyóvshin school: Students of Lyovshin's works (not "peasants," as some Russian commentators have thought!).

Vasiliy Lyovshin (1746–1826), a Tula landowner, prolific compiler, author of over eighty works in 190 volumes, including various tragedies and novels, and whatnots, mostly translated from the German, such as *The Enchanted Labyrinth* (*Ocharovanniy labirint*), an Oriental tale in three parts (1779–80), and a *Life of Nelson* (1807). I have seen a work of his on windmills, steam mills, and water mills. He was known in the 1820's for his voluminous compilations dealing with *Flower Gardens* and *Vegetable Gardens*, and for a *Manual of Agriculture* (1802–04). At present he is remembered only for his rather remarkable *Russian Tales* (*Russkie skazki*), “containing the most ancient accounts of famous bogatirs [peasant knights, strong men], folk tales, and other adventures remaining in the memory through their retelling” (Moscow, 1780–83). Of all his works only this is mentioned by D. Blagoy, *Istoriya russkoy literatury XVIII veka* (Moscow, 1945), pp. 271–72, who is also my authority on the pronunciation of the name.

5 / Priams: Priam, last king of Troy, a gentle old man with more than fifty children. His life ended in despair and ruin. *Un Priam* is generally used in the sense of *type d'extrême malheur* rather than in that of a venerable rusticator or rural paterfamilias, as apparently Pushkin has it here, through some twist of literary memory.

14 / start to trek / *Tyanites'*: Inf. *tyanut'sya*. A term difficult to translate wholly. It blends the idea of “tending,” “stretching,” and “progressing in a long, slow line.” The same verb is used for the caravan of geese in Four : XL : 12.

## VARIANT

4 The draft reads (2371, f. 3<sup>r</sup>):

you, carefree songsters . . .

2 / calash / *kolyáske*: A four-wheeled open carriage with a folding hood. Also spelled, in eighteenth-century England, with a *g* (after its passage through Germany). It is the true French *calèche*—which, incidentally, the American reader should be careful not to confuse with the similarly named Canadian vehicle, a rude two-wheeled contraption (depicted, for example, in *Webster's New International Dictionary*, 1957). A later variety of *kolyaska* is the victoria.

6; vi : 5–6: The Batyushkov and Millevoje *décor* is again described as we revisit Lenski's tomb with the Amazon, an ally of Pushkin's Muse. The following observation may be of interest to the Pushkinian scholar.

In one of his greatest short poems, *The Lord Forbid My Going Mad* (1832), Pushkin, in his special code, signals an awareness of Batyushkov's madness: Batyushkov, in his elegy *The Last Spring* (1815), an imitation of Millevoje's *La Chute des feuilles* (discussed in my n. to Six : xli : 1–4), had used an epithet for the nightingale that was unusual in Russian poetry (ll. 3–4):

The brilliant [*yárkiy*] voice of Philomela  
has charmed the gloomy pinewood . . .

Pushkin, in his 1833 piece of five six-line stanzas, with masculine lines bbcddc, in iambic tetrameter (b, d) and trimeter (c), echoes Batyushkov's lines in the last stanza:

And I shall hear at night neither the brilliant  
voice of the nightingale,  
nor the dense forest's murmur,  
but my companions' cries,  
the oaths of the night wardens,  
shrill sounds, the clink of chains.

Batyushkov's and Pushkin's epithet is, really, a simple

Gallicism. See, for example, Dudoyer (Gérard, marquis du Doyer de Gastels, 1732-98), in a madrigal to Mlle Doligny (a charming actress, whom he eventually married), May 1, 1769 (*Almanach des Muses* [1809], p. 35):

. . . des oiseaux la voix brillante . . .

## VI

2-3 Cf. Addison, *The Spectator*, no. 37 (Apr. 12, 1711):  
 "... a little Rivulet which runs through a Green Meadow . . ."

5-6 See n. to Seven : v : 6.

6 / cinnamon rose / *shipónnik*: European brier with fragrant pink flowers and soft red fruit, *Rosa cinnamomea* L., the modest country cousin of some six thousand cultivated varieties of roses. It blooms in June. L. H. Bailey, *Manual of Cultivated Plants* (New York, 1949), p. 536, pleasingly says: "an old garden rose, running wild and persisting about old premises, along fences, in cemeteries, and by roadsides." Russian sources, on the contrary, consider it to be the ancestor of garden roses (M. Neyshtadt, *Opredelitel' rasteniy* [Moscow, 1947-48], p. 263).

10 / to the stranger / *Prishél'tsu*: *Prishelets* means grammatically "he who comes from another place," and possibly Pushkin used this loosely for *prohozhiy*, "passenger," "wayfarer," Lat. *viator*.

## VII

2-4 A poet's tomb, with a wreath and lyre suspended from the branches over it, had been sung by Zhukovski in a

## Commentary

famous elegy of 1811 entitled *The Bard* (*Pevets*). It consists of six stanzas of eight verses each, with rhymes abbaceec. Its meter is curious and was a great novelty in Russian prosody: four iambic pentameters are followed in every stanza by three iambic tetrameters, and the closing verse is a dactylic dimeter (ll. 41–48):

Gone is the bard, and from these haunts his traces  
Have disappeared, the voice we heard is still,  
And all is melancholy, dale and hill,  
And all is mute. Only the quiet zephyrs  
Shaking the withered wreath, when they  
Over the tomb sometimes suspire,  
Are sadly echoed by the lyre:  
Piteous bard [*Bédnĭy pevets*]!

It will be noted that the term *bednĭy pevets*, “poor songster,” “luckless poet,” is applied to Lenski in Six : XIII : 10, *Na vstréchu bédnogo pevtsá*, “à la rencontre du pauvre chantre.”

9–10, 12 See n. to Six : XL : 14.

9–11 In describing Lenski’s neglected tomb by the roadside in Russian Arcadia, Pushkin expresses the work of weeds and oblivion by means of two remarkable enjambments:

*No níne . . . pámyatnik untlĭy  
Zabĭt. K nemú privĭchnĭy sléd  
Zaglóh. Venká na vétvi nét . . .*

The translator would dearly wish to preserve the exact cut and the alliterations (the long-drawn *nĭ*, the recurrent rhythm of the two disyllables in *z*), but must content himself with the following:

but now . . . the drear memorial is  
forgot. The wonted trail to it,  
weed-choked. No wreath is on the bough.



## *Commentary*

(2368, f. 36<sup>r</sup>, according to Tomashevski, Acad 1937, p. 417):

Around it blooms the cinnamon rose,  
brief herald of warm days;  
the ivy twines, lover of tombs,  
anight there trills the nightingale.

Then the following seven lines in dactylic and anapaestic hexameter with feminine endings, unrhymed, are jotted down (1827):

In the groves of Caryae, dear to the hunters, a cavern is  
hidden:  
Lithe pines bend their branches around, and its entrance  
Is screened by the freely twining and rambling  
Ivy, lover of crags and crevices. Flowing from stone  
To stone, in a sonant arc, a boisterous brook  
Floods the cave's bottom and, cleaving a deep bed,  
meanders  
Afar through a dense grove, which with its purl it  
gladdens.

## VIII

In draft (2371, f. 4):

⟨But⟩ once, at eventide,  
one of the maidens hither came.  
She seemed to be  
4 disturbed by grievous anguish.  
As if beset by fear,  
in tears, before the cherished dust  
she stood, with downcast head  
8 and with her hands in tremor joined.  
But then, with hurried strides,  
a young uhlan in a tight tunic,  
well built and ruddy, overtook her,  
12 flaunting a black mustache,  
inclining his broad shoulders,  
and proudly making his spurs sound.

IX

In draft (2371, f. 4):

She at the warrior glanced.  
 His gaze burned with vexation,  
 and she grew pale <and> sighed,  
 4 but said nothing.  
 And Lenski's bride  
 in silence from the orphaned spot  
 with him retreated and henceforth  
 8 came no more from beyond the hills.  
 'Tis so! Indifferent oblivion  
 beyond the sepulcher awaits us.  
 The voice of foes, of friends, of loves abruptly  
 12 falls silent. Only over the estate  
 the angry chorus of the heirs  
 starts an indecent squabble.

9-14 It will be noted that when Pushkin dropped VIII and IX he transferred these lines to XI: 9-14.

X

1-2 / Pining away, she did not weep: A common construction with Pushkin instead of "she neither pined nor wept."

5-8 / [an uhlan] ravished . . . managed . . . knew how . . . / [*ulán*] *uvlyók* . . . *uspél* . . . *umél* . . .: All three Russian verbs in this alliterative sequence are difficult to render exactly: *uvlyok* is "carried away" when the object is a person; *uspel* can be understood here either as "succeeded" or "had time to"; and *umel* (a Gallicism) connotes "had the ability" and "found a way" (Fr. *sut*).

13-14 A shocking picture. We have gone far since our first impression of naïve little Olga, the sinless charmer gamboling with the lad Vladimir in the ancestral park

## Commentary

(Two : XXI). There is now something of a cunning young demon about Olga, strangely changed ever since that nightmare ball. What does that slight smile imply? Why this glow in a virgin? Should we not suppose—and I think we should—that the uhlan will have a difficult time with this bride—a sly nymph, a dangerous flirt, as Pushkin's own wife is to be a few years later (1831–37)?

This is the human-interest type of commentary.

## XI

2 / deaf / *gluhoy*: The epithet is ambiguous. In reference to a region, *gluhoy* (*gluhoy kray*, *gluhaya storona*) means “dense,” “dull,” “gloomy,” “muffled,” “remote,” “stagnant,” etc.

9–14 See n. to IX : 9–14.

## VARIANT

9–14 A draft (2371, f. 4<sup>v</sup>) reads:

At least, out of the grave  
there did not rise on that sad day  
his jealous shade,  
and at the late hour dear to Hymen,  
no traces of sepulchral visitations  
frightened the newlywed.

## XII

A very poor stanza—after a series of magnificent ones. As often happens with Pushkin, when he is obliged to attend to the plot and to outline a series of actions that do not interest him, his attempts at hurried conciseness result in dismembered platitudes and naïve awkwardness. Neither he nor any novelist of his time had mastered the art of transition that Flaubert was to discover three decades later.

## XIII

St. XIII (2371, ff. 5<sup>r</sup>–5<sup>v</sup>) is dated Feb. 19 [1828], at the top of the draft (f. 5<sup>r</sup>; the year according to Tomashevski, Acad 1937, p. 661).

6 / own dear / *rodnáya*: There is a subtle ambiguity here since, basically, *rodnaya* means “kindred,” and Olga was Tatiana’s “kindred” darling.

Incidentally, this passionate fondness for her younger sister is new to the reader, who will be wondering, when he reaches Eight, why Tatiana does not remember Olga any more.

## XV

1–2 Pushkin writes in a note (Boldino, 1830; draft in MB 2387A—a cahier sewed up from loose leaves by the police after our poet’s death—f. 22; first published 1841):

I glanced through the review of Chapter Seven in the *Northern Bee*\* at a house where I was a guest and at a minute when I was not concerned with *Onegin*. I noticed some very well-written verse and a rather amusing joke about a beetle. I have:

’Twas evening. The sky darkened. Waters  
streamed quietly. The beetle churred.

The reviewer [Faddey Bulgarin] welcomed the appearance of a new personage and expected him to prove a better sustained [*vīderzhannīy*] character than the others.

2 / The beetle churred / *zhúk zhuzhzhál*: The reference is to a cockchafer, a scarabaeoid beetle, the European may-bug, either of the two species of *Melolontha*, which flies at dusk, with a bumbling, blind perseverance, along country lanes in May and June. Some poets have con-

\*No. 35, Mar. 22, 1830; see my n. to Eight: xxxv: 9.

## Commentary

fused its drone, or whir, with the hum of hawkmoths bombinating at nightfall over flowers; and a dung beetle (*Geotrupes* sp.) has been suggested in Shakespeare's case (quoted below); but why Miss Deutsch should think fit to transform a coleopterous insect into an orthopterous one ("One heard the crickets' slender choir") is incomprehensible—especially since the chafer is a common component of descriptions of dusk in English poetry. When Bulgarin ironically welcomed Pushkin's beetle as a new character, he was wrong: it was a very old character indeed.

Shakespeare, *Macbeth* (1623), III, ii, 42–43:

The shard-born beetle with his drowsy hums  
Hath rung night's yawning peal . . .

William Collins, *Ode to Evening* (1746), ll. 11–14:

Or where the Beetle winds  
His small but sullen Horn,  
As oft he rises 'midst the twilight Path,  
Against the Pilgrim born in heedless Hum.

Thomas Gray, *An Elegy Wrote in a Country Church Yard* (1751), l. 7:

. . . the beetle wheels his droning flight . . .

James Macpherson, *The Songs of Selma* (the "royal residence" of Fingal; 1765):

The flies of evening are on their feeble wings; the hum of their course is on the field.

Robert Southey, *To Contemplation* (written in Bristol, 1792; pub. 1797), ll. 26–28, 31:

Or lead me where amid the tranquil vale  
The broken streamlet flows in silver light;  
And I will linger . . .

And hearken the dull beetle's drowsy flight . . .

Crabbe incorrectly transfers "the beetle's hum" to the "light and shade" of an autumnal evening (*The Cathedral-Walk*, in *Tales of the Hall*, 1819).

Young Zhukovski, in his famous, admirably modulated first version, the iambic one (1802), of Gray's elegy, loyally did his best (l. 7):

*Lish' izredka, zhuzhzhá, vechérniy zhúk mel'káet . . .*  
only at times, with drone, the evening beetle passes . . .

In his second translation (1839) Zhukovski used dactylic hexameter, unrhymed:

. . . Only at intervals passes  
Swiftly the beetle, with heavy somniferous hum.

(Zhukovski is influenced here by Southey.)

But in Chateaubriand's version of the elegy, *Les Tombeaux champêtres* (London, 1796), *Melolontha grayi* undergoes the following change:

On n'entend que le bruit de l'insecte incertain

—a very uncertain insect, indeed; but then the Age of Good Taste prohibited one's using the "specific and low" word *hanneton*. Forty years later the great French writer redeemed this surrender by his excellent translation of *Paradise Lost*.

8-14; XVI: 1-7 All this is embarrassingly close to a passage in Kozlov, *Princess Natalia Dolgoruki* (known in 1827, pub. 1828), can. 1, ll. 11-32, and is only a slight improvement on the blind poet's description of Natalia's approaching her former home (ll. 11-13, 24-26, 28-32):

she walks, her heart beats;  
there is a meadow with a grove before her;  
yonder a path winds to a village  
. . . . .  
but suddenly transfixed by something,  
she stops, woeful and pale;

## Commentary

perplexity is in her eyes,  
she does not go on [villageward], does not go back,  
she casts around a timid glance:  
“Oh, if down there . . . And I whom fate  
bids to lie hidden . . . May be . . . No!  
Who’d know me? . . .”

Kozlov’s long poem, in two cantos, consists of irregularly rhymed iambic tetrameters with staves of varying length; it recalls the misfortunes, Gothic rather than Slavic in nature, of the daughter of Count Boris Shermetev, a field marshal of Peter I. At one point, the ghost of her husband appears before her and, in order to show that he has been decapitated, takes off his head like a cap.

See also nn. to Seven : XXIX : 5–7 and XXXII : 13–14.

As said in my “Notes on Prosody” (see App. II), Pushkin’s text in XVI : 2–6 illustrates the longest sequence of scudless lines (in one stanza) in the entire work; the influence, perhaps, of a bad conscience.

- 13 / the heart in her: Since *sérdtse* (“heart”) is accented fore and *egó* (“his”) or *eyó* (“her”) aft, it follows that “his [her] heart” cannot be used within a Russian iambic or trochaic line. Hence the awkward *serdtse v nyóm* (“in him”) or *v néy* (“in her”), of which there are several examples in *EO*.

### XVI

- 14 / lady / *bárinyu*: I suspect that *barinya* may be a misprint for *barishnya*, “miss,” Fr. *la demoiselle*.

### XVIII

The way Anisia (a close relative of Tatiana’s nurse), as she rambles on, imperceptibly switches from Eugene to his uncle is a great artistic achievement on our poet’s

part. The real master for the old housekeeper was not the young blade from St. Petersburg, but the old gentleman who had grumbled at her since 1780.

- 1 / late Lenski / *Pokóyniy Lénskiy*: This is, of course, an impossible form of reference on the old serf woman's part. She would have referred to poor Lenski by his first name and patronymic or said *Krasnogorskiy barin*. Besides, she must have known that the host had killed the guest.
- 11 / tomfools / *durachki*: A simple card game, played in Russia now mainly by children.
- 13 / to his dear bones / *kóstochkam ego*: This affectionate diminutive cannot be rendered by "bonelets" or "ossicles."

XIX

- 11–14 At this point the reader should be reminded of the fascination that Byron exercised on Continental minds in the 1820's. His image was the romantic counterpart of that of Napoleon, "the man of fate," whom a mysterious force kept driving on, toward an ever-receding horizon of world domination. Byron's image was seen as that of a tortured soul wandering in constant quest of a haven beyond the haze, as in Pierre Lebrun's *En apprenant la mort de Lord Byron* (1824), II, 17–20:

Ainsi, loin des cités, sur les monts, sur les mers,  
Cherchant un idéal qui le fuyait sans cesse,  
Martyr des maux rêvés plus que des maux soufferts,  
Au gré d'une inconstante et sauvage tristesse . . .

- 12 / statuette: The old word for statue (now *statuya*) is *kumir* ("idol"), and the old word for statuette (now

## Commentary

*statuетка*) is *kukla* (“doll”), which is the word Pushkin uses here. He had used it before in a short poem, *Epistle to Pavel Yudin*, a schoolmate of his, written in the summer of 1815 (ll. 22–26):

contented with a humble lot,  
I asked myself why should bards have  
brilliants, and topazes, and sapphires,  
and empty porphyritic vases,  
and in the niches precious dolls?

### VARIANT

13–14 The draft (2371, f. 6<sup>v</sup>) leads us back to One : XXIV:  
crystal, and bronze, and china,  
〈and〉 an array of 〈modish〉 little brushes.

### XXI–XXII

### VARIANTS

In a canceled variant of XXI : 10–14 and in XXII alternate, we are introduced to an album Tatiana finds in Onegin’s study.

10–14 This alternate ending of XXI, in the fair copy (PB 43), reads:

At first she was not in a mood for books,  
〈when suddenly among them was revealed〉  
〈an album〉, and Tatiana fell to reading  
with avid soul; and there revealed itself  
a different world to her.

XXII alt. This variant, in the fair copy (PB 43), reads:

Along the edges neatly banded  
with gilded silver,  
with writings, drawings it was covered  
4 all over in Onegin’s hand.  
’Mongst unintelligible scribbling  
there flickered thoughts, remarks,  
portraits, dates,

- 8 names and initials, cryptographs,  
fragments, rough drafts of letters—  
it was, in brief, a candid journal  
where in his youthful days  
12 Onegin had poured out his soul:  
a diary of reveries and pranks.  
Some passages I'll copy out for you.

Similarly, Antonia, in Nodier's novel *Sbogar* (1818; see n. to Three : XII : 11), after *Sbogar*'s disappearance, comes across his jottings, some of which are in ink; others, in pencil; a few, in blood.

"Onegin's Album" begins immediately after XXI in the draft (cahier 2371), with XXI on f. 7<sup>r</sup> and XXII alt. (followed by the "Album") on f. 7<sup>v</sup>.

An album was a fashionable thing in those times. Compare Captain Jesse's description of Beau Brummell's album, *Brummell*, vol. I, ch. 11:

The corners and clasps are of massive embossed silver gilt, like those on old missals, and the binding is dark-blue velvet. . . . It contains no fewer than two hundred twenty-six pieces of poetry [by eminent contemporaries] . . . inserted with his own hand.

Onegin's album, the binding of which is also fortified with silver at the edges, seems to be, however, more on the lines of a diary than of a scrapbook.

After having had Tatiana learn—or think she learned—something of Onegin's nature from his album, or from the marginalia in his books (XXIII–XXIV), our poet planned at first to leave her brooding there in the desolate castle and to take up its former occupant again (see further, xxv alt.).

#### ONEGIN'S ALBUM

Twelve entries in fair copy. Numbered by Pushkin (no doubt, provisionally). MS in the Saltikov-Shchedrin Public Library, Leningrad (PB 43).

## Commentary

### I

- I am disliked and vilified;  
in a male circle I'm unbearable;  
before me little misses quake;  
4 dames look at me askance.  
Why is it? Because conversations  
we're glad to take for deeds;  
because to trifling men trifles are grave;  
8 because stupidity is volatile and wicked;  
because of fiery souls the rashness  
to smug nonentity is either  
insulting or absurd;  
12 because, by liking room, wit cramps.

It will be noted that ll. 6–12 (except for one word in 7) are identical to Eight : IX : 9–10, 12, 11, 5–8 (in that order), but have a more positive, less interrogative, tone.

### II

- "You are afraid of Countess -ov,"  
to them Eliza K.  
said. "Yes," retorted stern N. N.;  
4 "we are afraid of Countess -ov,  
as you are of a spider."

### VARIANTS

1 / Draft (2371, f. 8<sup>r</sup>):

. . . maiden Princess R—ov

Canceled variants:

. . . Eliza R—ov  
. . . old [Mrs.] K—ov  
. . . Countess K—ov

Fair copy, canceled (PB 43):

. . . old [Mrs.] Z. K.  
. . . old [Mrs.] V. K.

- 3 "N. N." is "[Mr.] E. K." in the draft (*ibid.*). "N. N." is not Tatiana's husband-to-be, whom Pushkin had not yet

evolved. Russians use the Latin *N* for the names of people or places as others use *X*.

III

Sound thoughts abound in the Koran.  
For instance, this: "Pray every time before  
you sleep, beware of devious ways,  
4 revere God and don't argue with a fool."

- 2-4 This "quotation," a very vague paraphrase of a passage in the Koran, which Pushkin knew from French versions, seems to be based on part of sura (section) LXXIII, referring to night prayer, where 8 and 10 read, in Richard Bell's translation, *The Qur'an* (Edinburgh, 1937-39), p. 614: "But remember the name of thy Lord and devote thyself entirely to Him . . . And have patience under what they [the unbelievers] say, and withdraw from them gracefully." The last is rendered by Edouard Montet, in his translation, *Le Coran* (Paris, 1925), p. 236: ". . . et éloigne-toi d'eux dans une retraite digne."

- 4 See end of *Pamyatnik* (or *Exegi monumentum*), quoted in my n. to Two : XL : var. 5-8.

IV

The flower of fields, the leaf of groves  
in a Caucasian brook are turned to stone:  
thus, in the stir of life grow numb  
4 both volatile and tender natures.

- 1-2 This petrifactive phenomenon is also referred to in the closing lines, 27-28, of a posthumously published poem of twelve quatrains (beginning "You're right, my friend"—a most melodious piece, with a Byronian slant, which Pushkin addressed to Vladimir Raevski in 1822):

## Commentary

. . . thus the light leaf of groves  
in the Caucasian springs is turned to stone.

Vladimir Raevski (1795–1872) was a (very minor) poet and Decembrist (not a member of General Nikolay Raevski's family).

Additional lines: Draft (2371, f. 8<sup>v</sup>):

If the burden oppressing me  
were passion, I would throw it off.  
Thus, by a straining of strong will,  
a frantic passion we subdue,  
endure disaster with proud soul,  
and sweeten woe with hope;  
〈but how . . . to comfort〉  
〈anguish, the frantic anguish [*toskú*]〉.

### V

- The sixth, went to a ball at V.'s.  
The place was rather empty.  
R. C. as pretty as an angel:  
4 Something so free about her manner,  
her smile, the languorous motion of her eyes.  
What softness and what soulfulness!  
(She mentioned—*nota bene*!—she  
8 would go to Célimène's tomorrow.)

### VI

- R. C. said yesternight to me:  
“I have long wished to meet you.”  
“Why?” “Everybody has been telling me  
4 that I would hate you.”  
“What for?” “For your sharp talk,  
your flippant views  
on everything; your caustic scorn  
8 of everyone. But that's all nonsense.  
You may well laugh at me—  
but you are not so dangerous at all,  
and did you know before this time  
12 that simply—you are very kind?”

- 1 "R. C." is "L. C." in the draft (2371, f. 9<sup>r</sup>), with the cancellation: "S. M."

VII

- The treasures of our native letters,  
sedate minds will remark,  
for foreign lisping  
4 we in our folly have neglected.  
We love the toys of foreign Muses,  
rattles of foreign idioms,  
and read not our own books.  
8 But where are they? Let's have 'em.  
And where, then, did we our first knowledge  
and first ideas find?  
Where do we verify our trials?  
12 Where do we learn earth's fate?  
Not in barbarous translations,  
not in belated works, wherein  
the Russian mind and Russian spirit  
rehash old stuff and lie for two.

Except for two changed words (in 9 and 11), this is an amalgam of Three : xxv1a : 1-8 and xxv1b : 1-8.

VIII

- Frost and sunshine! a splendid day;  
but seemingly our ladies are too lazy  
to step down porches, and above the Neva  
4 gleam with cold beauty.  
They stay at home. In vain the granite,  
sprinkled with sand, invites them.  
Wise is the Oriental system,  
8 right is the custom of the old:  
they were born for the harem,  
10 or for the thrallldom of the *terems*.

- 10 The *terem* was a kind of lady's bower, a special apartment to which Russian women were relegated in ancient Russia.

IX

- ⟨Last night, at V.'s⟩, leaving the feast,  
R. C. flew zephyrlike,  
unheeding plaints and lamentations,  
4 and down the polished stairs  
we, in a noisy crowd,  
flew after the young odalisque.  
The last sound of her last discourse  
8 I was in time to catch,  
I with black sable clothed  
her radiant shoulders,  
on the curls of her lovely head  
12 I flung a green shawl, I  
before the Venus of the Neva  
parted the amorous throng.

X

- 1 I love you . . .

“I love you etc.” is all there is under this heading. Gofman, in *P. i ego sovr.*, IX (1922), 181n, suggests that Pushkin may have planned to insert here some version of the discarded Three : XXIIIa (“But you, avowed coquettes, I love you . . .”).

XI

- Today I was to her presented.  
Quite half an hour gazed at her husband.  
⟨He is important.⟩ Dyes his hair.  
4 From having brains his rank exempts him.

[XII–XIII]

Two more entries are found in the draft, between II and III (2371, f. 8<sup>r</sup>):

[XII]

I do not like maiden Princess S. L.:  
    <of her involuntary coquetry>  
    she makes a <means>. It would be shorter  
4 to take it for a goal.

[XIII]

A rather <dull time> yesterday.  
    <Had in the morning visitors>.  
    What was it she desired so much?  
4 The first three letters shall I tell?  
    C, R, A—cra . . . What? Cranberries?

- 5 Cf. the second motto to a fragment (c. 1827) that seems to be the beginning of a long poem with scene laid in Italy. The fragment opens with the quasi-Goethian query, "Who knows the land," *Kto znáet kráy*, and the first of the two mottoes refers to the first line of Mignon's song heading Goethe's *Wilhelm Meisters Lehrjahre* (1795-96), bk. III, ch. 1.

The second motto reads: *Po klyúkvu, po klyúkvu | Po yágodu, po klyúkvu* (a folk ditty, or pseudo-folk ditty, referring to the picking of cranberries, *Oxycoccus palustris*). It is an allusion to the whim of a Russian tourist, the young Countess Maria Musin-Pushkin, who said that what she had missed most in Italy was cranberries.

I. Shlyapkin, *Iz neizdannih burnag A. S. Pushkina* (St. Petersburg, 1903), p. 3, attributes the following draft to the "Album":

Of course, it is not hard to scorn  
separately every fool;  
'tis likewise senseless to be cross  
with a separate knave [*stramtsá*],  
but in a heap 'tis somehow complicated

## Commentary

⟨to scorn⟩ . . .  
their vulgar epigrams  
borrowed from *Bievriana*.

For the collection of puns to which *Bievriana* applies, see n. to Two : Motto.

\*

These thirteen or fourteen "entries" represent all we have of "Onegin's Album." We now return to the main road: Seven : XXII.

## XXII

5 / *Pevtsá* [Fr. *le chanteur*] *Gyaúra i Zhudna*: Byron's poem *The Giaour* (1813) was known to Pushkin and Onegin in the Chastopalli translation (1820). Onegin might have marked such a passage as:

Les plus cruelles angoisses de la douleur seraient des plaisirs en comparaison de ce vide effrayant, de ce désert aride d'un cœur dont tous les sentiments sont devenus sans objet

(after shedding de Salle, Pichot replaced "ce désert" by "cette solitude" in the 1822 edn.). This is a dreadful paraphrase of Byron's ll. 957-60:

The keenest pangs the wretched find  
Are rapture to the dreary void,  
The leafless desert of the mind,  
The waste of feelings unemployed.

In the 1820 Chastopalli translation (Pichot's contribution) of the first two cantos of Byron's *Don Juan* (1819), Tatiana (in June, 1821) might have found the following passage marked by Onegin:

C'en est fait! jamais mon cœur ne sentira plus descendre sur lui cette fraîche rosée qui retire de tout ce que nous voyons d'aimable, des émotions nobles et nouvelles; trésor semblable à celui que l'abeille porte dans son sein [sic]!

This is supposed to render I : CCXIV : 1-5:

No more—no more—Oh! never more on me  
 The freshness of the heart can fall like dew,  
 Which out of all the lovely things we see  
 Extracts emotions beautiful and new,  
 Hived in our bosoms like the bag o' the bee.

Tatiana might also have found:

Les jours de l'amour sont finis pour moi: adieu les  
 charmes des jeunes beautés, de l'hymen. . . J'ai perdu  
 l'espoir d'une tendresse mutuelle!

This is apparently I, CCXVI : 1-5:

My days of love are over; me no more  
 The charms of maid, wife . . .  
 Can make the fool . . .  
 The credulous hope of mutual minds is o'er . . .

*Don Juan* was composed between autumn, 1818, and  
 spring, 1823, and the cantos were published at intervals:  
 I and II, July 15, 1819 (this and the following dates are  
 given N.S.); III, IV, V, Aug. 8, 1821; the rest, from  
 July 15, 1823, to Mar. 26, 1824. The reference in *EO* is,  
 of course, to the French version of *Don Juan* (1820,  
 1823-24), in Pichot's *Œuvres de Lord Byron*.

In the separate edition of Chapter Seven, l. 5 reads:

*Peutsá Manfréda i Zhudna . . .*

The reference is to *Manfred*, Byron's drama in blank  
 verse (written 1816-17, pub. 1817), translated by Pichot  
 and de Salle in 1819.

6-7 / also two or three novels / *eshchyó dva-tri romána*:  
 At this point one of the English "translations" (Miss  
 Deutsch's) reads: ". . . two or three bright-backed im-  
 ported | Romances."

VARIANTS

3-12 The draft contains two variants. The first (2371, f. 17<sup>r</sup>) reads:

However, several works  
he took with him on trips.  
Among these chosen . . . volumes  
. . . to you familiar  
not much you would have found:  
Hume, Robertson, Rousseau, Mably,  
Baron d'Holbach, Voltaire, Helvétius,  
Locke, Fontenelle . . . Diderot,  
. . . Lamotte,  
and Horace, Cicero, Lucretius . . .

The second variant (2371, f. 68<sup>r</sup>) reads (ll. 3-5):

Several favorite works  
he took with him merely from habit:  
*Melmoth*, *René*, Constant's *Adolphe* . . .

Canceled drafts (ibid.) also contain: "The whole of Scott" and "*Corinne* by Staël." The latter, of course, would have hardly surprised Tatiana, who had read *Delphine*.

These tabulations of names of authors and titles of works were well known in French and English literature (see n. to Eight : xxxv : 2-6). What amused Pushkin was to iambize and rhyme them.

In the first list are David Hume (1711-76), Scottish philosopher and historian, and William Robertson (1721-93), Scottish historian. There were several translations of their works; e.g., Hume's *Histoire d'Angleterre*, tr. J. B. D. Desprès (Paris, 1819-22), and Robertson's *Histoire d'Ecosse*, tr. V. Campenon (Paris, 1821).

John Locke, English philosopher (1632-1704), was also much translated; e.g., his *Essay Concerning Human Understanding* came out in a French version by P. Coste (Amsterdam, 1700), etc.

The rest are: Gabriel Bonnot, Abbé de Mably, French

political writer (1709–85); Bernard le Bovier de Fontenelle, French writer (1657–1757); and three French philosophers, Paul Henri Thiry, Baron d'Holbach (1723–89), Denis Diderot (1713–84), Claude Adrien Helvétius (1715–71).

Which Lamotte? Hardly François de La Mothe le Vayer. The least implausible candidates among the many La Mottes, all of them mediocre, who survive in bibliographic works are Antoine Houdar de la Motte (1672–1731), literary critic and playwright, and Friedrich Heinrich Karl, Baron de La Motte Fouqué (1777–1843), German poet and novelist, read by Russians in French. Houdar de la Motte and Fontenelle belonged to a literary school that sought in and demanded of poetry *des pensées raisonnables*. In La Motte's *Œuvres* (1754), Onegin might have found various essays on literary matters that students of literature were still supposed to be acquainted with in 1824, such as the correct forms of elegies and odes.

La Motte Fouqué is the author of the romance *Undine* (1811), in French *Ondine*, “traduit librement” by the indefatigable Mme de Montolieu (Paris, 1822), and imitated by Zhukovski (*Undina. Starinnaya povest'*, 1833–36). His *Pique-Dame*, “Berichte aus dem Irrenhause in Briefen. Nach dem Schwedischen” (Berlin, 1826), was, I suggest, known to Pushkin (in a French or Russian version) when he wrote his “Queen of Spades” (*Pikovaya Dama*). I intend to publish a note on the matter elsewhere.

The three Romans are the poets Quintus Horatius Flaccus (65–8 B.C.) and Titus Lucretius Carus (d. 55 B.C.) and the statesman and orator, Marcus Tullius Cicero (106–43 B.C.). *Kikeron*, instead of the usual Russian form, *Tsitseron*, looks suspicious to me. The MS should be re-examined.

In the second list, *Melmoth the Wanderer* (1820) is

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the novel by Maturin, in Cohen's French version (see n. to Three : XII : 9).

*René*, a work of genius by the greatest French writer of his time, François (Auguste) René, Vicomte de Chateaubriand (1768–1848; see n. to One : XXXVIII : 3–4), was, he says, thought up under the very elm at Harrow, in Middlesex, England, where Byron “s’abandonnait aux caprices de son âge” (*Mémoires d’outre-tombe*, ed. Levaillant, pt. I, bk. XII, ch. 4). This admirable short novel, whose art and *charme velouté* only Senancour’s *Oberman* (1804) can approach, appeared in the second volume of Chateaubriand’s *Le Génie du Christianisme* (1802) and through four editions (1802–04) remained attached to its mother volume. The sonorous sequence of titles and subtitles reads:

*Génie du Christianisme; ou Beautés poétiques et morales de la religion chrétienne. Seconde partie. Poétique du christianisme. Livre IV. Suite de la poésie dans ses rapports avec les hommes. Suite des Passions. René, par François-Auguste de Chateaubriand.*

In a pirated edition (Paris, 1802), the little novel came out under the title *René, ou les Effets des passions*.

In the next authorized edition (Paris, 1805), *René* accompanied *Atala* (another portion of the *Génie*, first pub. 1801).

In the wilds of Louisiana, under a sassafras tree, René, a French expatriate, “un jeune homme entêté de chimères, à qui tout déplaît, et qui s’est soustrait aux charges de la société pour se livrer à d’inutiles rêveries,” tells the story of his romantic past to Father Souël:\*

Mon humeur étoit impétueuse, mon caractère inégal. . . . Chaque automne je revenois au château paternel, situé au milieu des forêts, près d’un lac, dans une province reculée.

---

\* *René*, ed. Weil (1935), pp. 77, 16–17, 17–18, 23, 24, 25, 37, 40, 51, 59, 67.

The rhythm and richness of phrasing are admirable; Flaubert could not have done better.

Tantôt nous [René and his sister Amélie] marchions en silence, prêtant l'oreille au sourd mugissement de l'automne, ou au bruit des feuilles séchées, que nous traînions tristement sous nos pas; tantôt, dans nos jeux innocents, nous poursuivions l'hirondelle dans la prairie, l'arc-en-ciel sur les collines pluvieuses . . .

These rain-blurred hills slope toward a new world of artistic prose.

The melancholic and tender narrator, after the death of his father, wanders in the resounding and solitary cloisters of a monastery where he half thinks of retiring ("... la lune éclairait à demi les piliers des arcades, et dessinait leur ombre sur le mur opposé"). Then he decides to travel:

. . . Je m'en allai m'asseyant sur les débris de Rome et de la Grèce [where the next traveler, Childe Harold, will never recall his predecessor]. . . . La lune, se levant dans un ciel pur, entre deux urnes cinéraires à moitié brisées, me montrait les pâles tombeaux.

We find him next before the statue of Charles II in London. Up in the Highlands, he muses on the heroes of Morven. After a visit to Sicily, he returns to his country, which he finds corrupted and debased by the Revolution: "Traité partout d'esprit romanesque, honteux du rôle que je jouais, dégoûté de plus en plus des choses et des hommes, je pris le parti de me retirer dans un faubourg . . ." These intonations are echoed in the stanzas of *EO*, Chapter Eight, dealing with Onegin's return to St. Petersburg and his state of mind, which has affinities with René's ennui in Paris:

Je me fatiguai de la répétition des mêmes scènes et des mêmes idées. Je me mis à sonder mon cœur, à me demander ce que je désirois. Je ne le savais pas; mais je crus

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tout-à-coup que les bois me seroient délicieux. Me voilà soudain résolu d'achever, dans un exil champêtre, une carrière à peine commencée, et dans laquelle j'avois déjà dévoré des siècles.

He contemplates suicide, but Amélie comes and saves him: "... elle tenoit de la femme la timidité et l'amour, et de l'ange la pureté et la mélodie." A subtle perfume of incest permeates their relationship: "cher et trop cher René ..."

She leaves him for a convent. In her passionate letter to him there is "je ne sais quoi de si triste et de si tendre, que tout mon cœur se fondoit." After a wonderful visit to the country estate where they had lived, and a description of her consecration (at which she admits her "criminelle passion"), René sets out for America.

Constant's remarkable novel (written 1807, pub. 1816) *Adolphe*, "anecdote trouvée dans les papiers d'un inconnu, et publiée par M. Benjamin Constant" (Henri Benjamin Constant de Rebecque, 1767-1830), was represented in Pushkin's library by an 1824 edition; but he had read it earlier. *Adolphe* is a contrived, dry, evenly gray, but very attractive work. The hero courts, adores, and torments a more or less Polish lady, Ellénore (a niece of Rousseau's Wolmar), first in a vague German setting, then in a still vaguer Polish one, between 1789 and 1793, when (unmentioned) events and conditions in France prevented the author from localizing a purely psychological romance (where a bright specific backdrop would be a needless distraction) within such familiar surroundings as might be taken for granted; that pale Poland is at least pale, and the artist has managed to outwit history.

In an epistolary afterword to his novel, Constant describes *Adolphe* as blending egotism and sensibility, and as foreseeing evil but retreating in despair when the advance of evil is imminent. His is a checkered na-

ture, now knight, now cad. From sobs of devotion he passes to fits of infantile cruelty, and then again dissolves in saltless tears. Whatever gifts he is supposed to possess, these are betrayed and abolished in the course of his pursuing this or that whim and of letting himself be driven by forces that are but vibrations of his own irritable temper. "On change de situation, mais . . . comme on ne se corrige pas en se déplaçant, l'on se trouve seulement avoir ajouté des remords aux regrets et des fautes aux souffrances."

The analogies with Onegin are several, all of them obvious; it would be a great bore to go into further details. One thing should be marked, however: physically, Adolphe hardly exists. He glides and sidles, a faceless figure in an impalpable world. But as a character, as a case history, as a field of emotional tensions on display, he is vigorously alive, and his romance is a masterpiece of artistic saturation. In contrast to him, Onegin (if, for the nonce, we consider him a "real" person) is seen to grow fluid and flaccid as soon as he starts to feel, as soon as he departs from the existence he has acquired from his maker in terms of colorful parody and as a catchall for many irrelevant and immortal matters. On the other hand, as a physical being, Onegin, in comparison to the gray engraving of Adolphe, is superbly stereoscopic, a man with a wardrobe, a man with a set of recognizable gestures, a man existing forever in a local world colored and crowded with Pushkin's people, Pushkin's emotions, memories, melodies, and fancies. In this sense, Pushkin transcends French neoclassicism; Constant does not.

On Jan. 1, 1830, in the first issue of the *Literary Gazette* (*Literaturnaya gazeta*), published by Delvig, Orest Somov, Vyazemski, Pushkin, and Zhukovski (in that order of management), our poet published the following unsigned note:

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Prince Vyazemski has translated and is soon to publish Benj. Constant's celebrated novel. *Adolphe* belongs to the number of "two or three novels

in which the epoch is reflected  
and modern man  
rather correctly represented  
with his immoral soul,  
selfish and dry,  
to dreaming measurelessly given,  
with his embittered mind  
boiling in empty action."

Constant was the first to bring out this character, which later the genius of Lord Byron popularized. We await the appearance of this book with impatience. It will be curious to see if the experienced and live pen of Prince Vyazemski is able to overcome the difficulties of Constant's metaphysical language, always harmonious, elegant, and often inspired. In this respect the translation should be an original creation and an important event in the history of our literature.

(It was not. Polevoy, an influential reviewer who had translated the same book some ten years before, but with even less success, was right in accusing Vyazemski's version, which came out in spring, 1830, with a dedication to Pushkin, of being clumsy and inexact.)

Neither Chateaubriand nor Constant seems to have been highly appreciated by English critics. Of Chateaubriand's *Atala*, *The Edinburgh Review*, an influential Philistine sheet of the period, wrote, no. LXIX (March, 1821), p. 178: "The subject, conduct, and language of it, are, to our apprehension, quite ludicrous and insane." And Constant is referred to (same page) as "the author of a poor novel called 'Adolphe.' "

## XXIII

1-2 One recalls that in Sheridan's famous but singularly inept comedy, *The Rivals*, Lydia Languish says of Lady

Slattern that she “cherishes her nails for the convenience of making marginal notes” (i, ii). The art is a lost one today.

XXV

This stanza and the next three are wanting in Cahier 2371. None is numbered in the draft. The next stanza drafted (2371, f. 71<sup>v</sup>) is the XXIX of the established text.

2 / the word: A Gallicism, *le mot de l'énigme*. The key word, the solution.

8 / with a groan / *krehtyd*: A participle from *krehtet'* or *kryahet'* that cannot be rendered by one verb in English. It is to emit a deep diaphragmatic sound between a grunt and a groan in sign or result of a feeling of oppression or indecision.

13 / I'll not marry [him, you] / *Neydú* [*za negó, za vds*]: A contraction of *ne idu*, “I do not go,” “I do not accept.”

Cf. XXVI : 7, *poydyót*, “she will accept.”

ALTERNATE

Draft in 2371, f. 69<sup>r</sup>. In Tomashevski's recension of 1937 (p. 442, XXIVa) the cancellations are shown; they are not shown in the text published in his commentary of 1949 (p. 543) and 1957 (p. 546), where, moreover, one line reads differently (Acad 1937: “the driver lashed out, whistled”). I have been obliged, as in other cases, to follow 1937 for the deletions and 1949 (or 1957) for the actual wording.

On her discovery we shall congratulate  
my dear Tatiana,  
and turn our course aside,  
4 lest I forget of whom I sing.

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- After he'd killed his inexperienced friend,  
the weight of <rural> leisure  
Onegin was unable <to bear; he decided>  
8 <to seat himself in a kibitka>.  
The full-toned yoke bell <sounded>,  
the dashing driver whistled,  
and our Onegin sped away  
12 <to seek alleviation> of dull <life>  
in distant parts; whither exactly,  
he did not know himself.

In the course of composing Chapter Seven, Pushkin was twice faced with alternate routes: one branches off after XXI : 9 and the next (upon his returning to the main road) after XXIV.

At the bifurcation of XXI, he toyed, as we have seen, with the idea of having Tatiana discover Onegin's St. Petersburg diary (kept by the melancholy rake *before* his retiring to the country in May, 1820). This first alternate route is followed through XXII alt. (description of the album) to a kind of plateau with the ruins of the album's contents (accumulated in the moonlight), of which some fourteen, unstanzaed, entries, making about a hundred lines, are tentatively quoted. The idea fizzled out.

By omitting Tatiana's discovery and perusal of Onegin's St. Petersburg diary, Pushkin no doubt showed good taste and saved Tatiana from a brazen inquisitiveness hardly in keeping with her character. There is a world of difference between, on one hand, reading a private letter placed in a borrowed book and, on the other, deducing its owner's character from the scholia in its margins. However, one cannot help thinking that Pushkin might still not have deprived us of finding those picturesque fragments inset in his story at that particular place, if he had let Tatiana turn away in all modesty from the discovered album while allowing the reader to dip into it behind her back.

Upon returning to the main road Pushkin continued (XXI : 10, etc.) as we know from the established text: Tatiana reads Onegin's books (XXI : 10–14, XXII), and from the marks in their margins (XXIII) deduces more or less clearly their owner's character (XXIV).

After XXIV comes the next bifurcation. Our poet follows an alternate route for the stretch of one stanza (XXV alt.), in which he plans to leave Tatiana to her thoughts in the deserted château and to describe Onegin's sudden departure (say, in February or March, 1821) from his countryseat, whereupon, presumably, the rest of Seven would have been devoted to his arrival in St. Petersburg and the surge of patriotic sentiments that send him on the Journey, of which we have at least two thirds. But after composing XXV alt. Pushkin again changed his mind and returned to the highway. He remained with Tatiana (XXV) and launched, in the same stanza, upon the matrimonial theme that leads to Moscow.

#### XXVI

6 / *mélkim bésom rassipálsya*: The idiom is: "[he], a regular petty devil, dispersed himself [in crafty compliments]." Cf. Fr. *se répandit en compliments*.

#### XXVIII

Tatiana's soliloquy should be compared to Lenski's elegy in Six : XXI–XXII.

5–9; XXXII : 11–12: The intonation is a familiar one. See, for example, Pope's *Winter: The Fourth* (and last) *Pastoral* (1709), l. 89 (with three to go):

Adieu, ye vales, ye mountains, streams and groves . . .

XXIX

5-7 Cf. Kozlov, *Princess Natalia Dolgoruki* (1828), can. 1, XIV, 16, 18-19:

. . . pond, trees, flowers—  
.  
these unforgotten friends  
she meets again . . .

See nn. to Seven : XV : 8-14; XVI : 1-7.

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5-6 Draft (2371, f. 71<sup>v</sup>):

with oak grove, meadows,  
as with dear friends . . .

XXXI

1-3 / overdue . . . made solid / *prosróchen* . . . *upróchen*: To judge by a note (Cahier 2382, f. 15<sup>v</sup>; first published in *Rukoyu Pushkina*, p. 321) in the margin of the draft of the short poem *Winter*—" 'Tis winter: what can one do in the country?" (dated Nov. 2, 1829)—Pushkin intended at the time to change the order of the lines in the quatrain to 3, 4, 1, 2, and replace the rhyme *upróchen-prosróchen* by *ispráven-ob'yávlen* ("is mended" —"has been announced"). Above this is the word *voron* ("raven"), a memento referring to a contemplated change (never made) in the already published Five : XXIV : 7 (to which see note).

2 / now goes by / *Prohódit i*: Gofman's edn. has *Prihódit i*, "arrives."

14 / eighteen nags: In a canceled draft (2371, f. 72<sup>r</sup>), Pushkin had "six troikas" (6 x 3 = 18).

## XXXII

11–12 / Farewell . . . : Before his arrival in Mihaylovskoe from Odessa, in August, 1824, for a two-year stay, Pushkin had visited it twice: in the summer of 1817, soon after graduating from the Lyceum, and in the summer of 1819. During his first visit, he made the acquaintance of the Osipov family in nearby Trigorskoe, and on Aug. 17, 1817, before returning to Petersburg, dedicated to them a little elegy of sixteen iambic tetrameters that starts (ll. 1–2, 5, 11–12):

Farewell, ye faithful coppices,  
farewell, ye carefree peace of fields . . .  
.  
Farewell, Trigorskoe! . . .  
.  
Perhaps (delicious reverie!)  
I shall come back . . .

and it is, indeed, to Trigorskoe rather than to his own Mihaylovskoe that our poet returns in the last retrospective digression of *Onegin's Journey* (1830).

Cf. also Lenski's elegy in Six : XXI–XXII. And see n. to Seven : XXVIII : 5–9.

13–14 / And from the eyes of Tanya flows a stream of tears:  
Cf. Kozlov, *Princess Natalia Dolgoruki*, can. II, end of v:

. . . and sudden from her eyes  
[flow] streams of tears . . .

which has the same rhyme, *ochey–ruchey*.

See nn. to Seven : XV : 8–14; XVI : 1–7; and XXIX : 5–7.

Cf. a similar ending of a verse paragraph in Baratinski's *Eda* (1826), ll. 262–65:

Ah, where are you, peace of my soul?  
To find you, whither shall I go?

And infantine involuntary tears  
flow from her eyes.

XXXIII

- 4 / *Filosoficheskikh tablits*: This final reading is jotted down in the copybook (2382, f. 107<sup>r</sup>) that contains drafts of Onegin's travels, with the note "Canto VII."

Pushkin apparently wrote (the autographs, fide Tomashevski, are not very legible) in his draft (2371, f. 72<sup>v</sup>) *polistaticheskikh* after canceling "Dupin's comparative tables" and *geostaticheskikh tablits*. The reference is to Charles Dupin ("le Baron Pierre Charles François Dupin, Membre de l'Institut," as he was styled; 1784–1873) and to his statistical tables (*statisticheskikh tablits*, gen. pl., was what Pushkin wished to say, but was one syllable short).

In the glorious afterglow of her victories over Napoleon, political Russia, a young and acutely self-conscious world power, was greatly interested in anything the wary West wrote about her. Hence the vogue of Dupin's *Observations sur la puissance de l'Angleterre et sur celle de la Russie au sujet du parallèle établi par M. de Pradt entre ces puissances* (Paris, 1824; for the *parallèle* established by that prophet in regard to America and Russia, see my n. to Four : XLIII : 10). In a later work, *Forces productives et commerciales de la France* (Paris, 1827, 2 vols.), Dupin discusses (II, 284–85n) the *routes transversales* and the *routes radicales* in France; "Espérons," he says, "que le gouvernement . . . complètera notre système de communications transversales: c'est un des moyens les plus efficaces de favoriser le commerce, l'agriculture et l'industrie" (see, below, Vyazemski's fireside crack). In his tables Dupin compares the populations of the principal European states including Russia and predicts (II, 332) that by 1850 the

population of Paris will rise to 1,460,000. In 1827–28, Dupin also produced *Le Petit Producteur français*, in six handy volumes, with a “petit tableau des forces productives de la France” in vol. I.

- 5–14 Alexander I was almost pathologically interested in roads; many of them were built in his reign, and liberal critics had a great time poking fun at their defects (see Comm., Ten : VI : 5).

Cf. a passage (quatrain IV, ll. 1–2) in Vyazemski’s ponderous but picturesque and witty *Winter Caricatures* (1828), with the subtitle “Ruts, Caravans” (*Uhabī, Obozī*), published in Maksimovich’s literary almanac, *Sunrise (Dennitsa)*, for 1831 (and highly praised by Pushkin in a letter to its author, Jan. 2, 1831):

In armchair, by the hearth, I’m no less than Dupin  
cheered by the overplus of earthly force in motion . . .

but (to paraphrase the next lines) “I curse agriculture and commerce when I have to travel on roads that have been ruined by the heavy train of Moscow-bound wagons loaded with the produce of the land.”

#### XXXIV

- 1 The passage in Pushkin’s n. 42 is from *The Station (Stantsiya)*—meaning the stopping place, the roadside inn or the like, in a stage route—a poem by Vyazemski, pub. Apr. 4, 1829, in the literary almanac *Snowdrop (Podснеzhnik)*.

The line “for passers-by!,” *dlya prohodiyashchih*, which Vyazemski quotes in his poem (meaning occasional strollers who can admire the roadside trees, but are not obliged to endure the ruts), is the last in *The Passer-by*, in Dmitriev’s *Fables*, pt. III, bk. II, no. VII (5th edn., Moscow, 1818):

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A passer-by (*un passant*, a passenger) visits a monastery and is enchanted with the view from the steeple. "Is it not beautiful!" he cries;

And with a sigh  
"Yes," answered a laborious brother—  
"for passers-by!"

Dmitriev's little fable is based on an old French anecdote, cropping up in eighteenth-century collections of *bons mots* and ascribed to various persons. A version of it appears in the first edition (1834-36, edited by L. J. N. de Monmerqué, J. A. Taschereau, and H. de Château-giron, who had the MS since 1803) of the posthumous *Historiettes* written in 1657-59 by the gifted and witty Gédéon Tallemant des Réaux (1619-92; he died on the eve of his seventy-third birthday), whose name, incidentally, Chizhevski (p. 278) not only mutilates in three ways, but also transforms into the designation of a vacuum: "the anonymous [sic] *Les Historiettes de Tallement* [sic] *de* [sic] *Reaux* [sic]" (I defy, moreover, anyone to understand the same compiler's reference, in the same sentence, to Henri IV). The edition of the *Historiettes* that I have consulted is the third (1854-60), brought out in Paris by Monmerqué and Paulin. The anecdote is found under No. 108 in ch. 477, vol. VII (1858), p. 463. It goes:

Henry IV<sup>e</sup>, étant à Cisteaux, disoit: "Ah! que voicy qui est beau! mon Dieu, le bel endroit!" Un gros moine, à toutes louanges que le Roy donnoit à leur maison, disoit toujours: *Transeuntibus*. Le Roy y prit garde, et luy demanda ce qu'il vouloit dire: "Je veux dire, Sire, que cela est beau pour les passans, et non pas pour ceux qui y demeurent toujours."

In discussing the location of the MS, Monmerqué says that there have been earlier leakages (see VIII, 2). I suggest that Dmitriev saw the anecdote in Marmontel's *Essai sur le bonheur* (1787):

Aussi triste que le chartreux, à qui l'on vantait la beauté du désert qui environnait sa cellule, tu diras: "Oui, cela est beau pour les passans," *transeuntibus*.

McAdam, McEve (in Pushkin's n. 42): "Macadamization" (a fashionable topic; see, for example, *The London Magazine*, X [Oct., 1824], 350-52) was the paving of roads with small stones and shingles. The inventor was John L. McAdam (1756-1836), a Scottish engineer. Vyazemski's painful pun turns on the gender of the word for "winter" in Russian, *zima*, which is feminine (see, for example, Seven : XXIX : 13-14).

XXXV

5 / Automedon: The charioteer of Achilles (hero of Homer's *Iliad*).

7-8 In reference to Pushkin's n. 43, Spalding (1881, p. 271) calls this a "somewhat musty joke" and darkly adds: "Most Englishmen, if we were to replace verst-posts with milestones and substitute a graveyard for a palisade, would instantly recognize its Yankee extraction."

14 General evidence weighed, and particular circumstances considered, the most the Larins could have made that winter (January or February, 1822), with their four heavy sleighs and eighteen hoary jades, in a week, would have been two hundred miles (a distance that could be covered in as little as two days by traveling post in a light sleigh and changing horses every few miles). This and other considerations suggest locating their estate two hundred miles west of Moscow, about halfway between it and Opočka (province of Pskov), near which Pushkin's estate was situated. This would place the Larins' seat in the present Kalininskiy Region (consisting of the northern part of the former province of Smolensk and

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the western part of the former province of Tver). This district is about four hundred miles south of St. Petersburg and is bounded on the west by the source of the Western Dvina and on the east by the sources of the Volga. It will be noticed a little further (xxxvii, Petrovskiy Castle; xxxviii, Tverskaya Street) that the Larin procession penetrates Moscow from the northwest, where Pushkin himself entered it upon his arrival there from his Mihaylovskoe exile, in the midst of writing the preceding canto (on Sept. 7, 1826).

Caesar, who is said by Gibbon to have posted one hundred miles a day with hired carriages, could not have competed with his Russian colleagues. The Empress Elizabeth, daughter of Peter the Great, in the 1750's, had a special sleigh-coach, containing among other things a stove and a card table; by hitching twelve horses (which were changed every few miles) to this vehicle, she used to equal her father's record of making the journey on snow from St. Petersburg to Moscow (486 miles) in forty-eight hours. Alexander I, about 1810, beat the record by covering that distance in forty-two hours, and Nicholas I, in December, 1833, made it (according to a note in Pushkin's journal) in the phenomenal time of thirty-eight hours.

On the other hand, winter might pile up so much snow that traveling "on the snow track" was no better than in the seasons of slosh and mud. Thus, Vulf remarks in his diary that owing to a particularly abundant snow-fall it took him, with his uncle's troika, a whole day, from early morning to eight in the evening, to cover the forty miles between Torzhok and Malinniki, in the province of Tver. The heavy Larin caravan must have crawled not much faster.

In his draft (237<sup>1</sup>, f. 73<sup>r</sup>) Pushkin at first wrote "a week," then struck it out and altered it to "about ten days."

Brodski (*EO* commentary, p. 399) gives the wrong date for the arrival of the Larins in Moscow. They arrived there at the very beginning (not at the very end) of 1822, soon after Christmas, 1821 (see XLI : 13). By August, 1824, Tatiana has been married to Prince N. for about two years (see Eight : XVIII : 2).

VARIANT

1–6 A false start to the stanza is represented by the following lines in the draft (2371, f. 71<sup>v</sup>):

The nurse, <regarding still>  
Tatiana as a child,  
promises her a merry time, exhausting  
the rhetoric of her eulogy.  
<In vain> grandiloquently [she]  
describes vividly Moscow . . .

XXXVI

8 / domes / *chertógov*: Luxurious ceremonial halls, splendid buildings, palazzos.

12 / Moscow! . . . : Cf. the first line of a poem in Pierce Egan's *Life in London*, bk. I, ch. 2:

London! thou comprehensive word . . .

VARIANT

9–14 The draft (2368, f. 22<sup>v</sup>) reads:

Moscow! . . . How much within that sound  
is blended for a Russian heart,  
how strongly it is echoed there!  
<In banishment, woe, separation—  
Moscow, how I loved you,  
my sacred native town!>

XXXVII

2 / Petrovskiy Castle: John Lloyd Stephens, *Incidents of*

## Commentary

*Travel in Greece, Turkey, Russia, and Poland* (2 vols., New York, 1838), II, 72–73:

Pedroski [sic] is a place dear to the heart of every Russian. . . . The chateau is an old and singular, but interesting building of red brick, with a green dome and white cornices. . . . The principal promenade is . . . through a forest of majestic old trees.

The Petrovskiy Park is thus described in 1845 by Mihail Dmitriev, a minor poet, *Moskovskie elegii* (Moscow, 1858), pp. 40–41:

Merrily looks at the crowd our Petrovskiy Gothic old castle:  
Circular towers, spirals of chimneys, ogives of windows;  
Cut of white stone are its columns, its walls are dark red.  
There, in the dark dense and wide greenery of ancient  
pine trees,  
Merry and stately, it stands, a grandsire 'mid merry young  
grandsons.

This Mihail Dmitriev (1796–1866) was Ivan's nephew and Pushkin's Zoilus.

4–14 Fires had already started here and there on Sept. 3/15, 1812, at the time of Napoleon's entrance into Moscow. He removed from his quarters in the burning Kremlin, in the center of Moscow, to Petrovskiy Castle, in the western suburbs, on Sept. 4. The following day was overcast. A downpour at night and rain on the sixth extinguished the conflagration.

## XXXVIII

6–14 There is a slight echo of Tatiana's dream in this accumulation of impressions.

9 / Bokharans / *Buhārtsi*: Inhabitants of Bokhara (Bohara, Buhara), Russian Asia, north of Afghanistan. In Moscow they were hawkers of Oriental wares, such as Samarkand rugs and robes.

- 13 / lions on the gates: Lions of iron or alabaster, painted a reptile green and put up, generally in pairs, on or before house gates, as heraldic intimations. In their jaws they often held imposing iron rings, which, however, were only symbolic since they in no way controlled the opening of the gates.

In Pisemski's *A Thousand Souls*, a kind of Russian *Le Rouge et le Noir*, and on the same level of paltry literary style, there is an amusing passage concerning leonine ornaments (pt. IV, ch. 5):

On almost every holiday [the scene is laid in a provincial town], this rake and his valet would perch on the gateposts, tuck up their legs, put great rings in their mouths, and, forming certain grimaces with their noses, would represent, rather accurately, lions.

#### VARIANTS

- 6–14. In canceled drafts (2368, f. 23<sup>r</sup>) the list includes “dummies in wigs,” “bright-colored shop signs,” “columns,” “popes,” “wenches,” and “Germans.”

#### XXXIX

Perhaps a feigned omission to suggest the blurry repetition of trivial impressions.

#### XL

- 3 / hard by St. Chariton's / *u Haritón'ya*: A Moscovite identified his habitation by its proximity to this or that church. The saint figuring here was a martyr in the Orient, under Diocletian, about 303.

Pushkin lodged the Larins in the same “upper-class residential” quarter where he had spent several years as a child. St. Chariton's parish was in East Moscow, so that is why the Larins, who entered by the western gate, had to traverse the entire city.

## Commentary

Our poet was born (May 26, 1799) in a rented house, long gone, in Nemetskaya Street (now renamed Bauman Street in honor of a young revolutionist killed in 1905 in an affray with the police). The autumn and winter of 1799 were spent at the maternal estate of Mihaylovskoe, province of Pskov. After a brief stay in St. Petersburg, the Pushkin family lived again in Moscow, from 1800 to 1811, with summer sojourns at Zaharino (or Zaharovo), an estate acquired in 1804 (and sold in 1811) by our poet's maternal grandmother, Maria Gannibal, in the Zvenigorod district, some twenty-five miles from Moscow. The Pushkins resided (from 1802 to 1807), at No. 8 Greater Haritonievski Lane. Our poet's uncle, Vasiliy Pushkin, lived in Lesser Haritonievski Lane. For some of the information in this note I am indebted to Messrs. Levinson, Miller, and Chulkov, joint authors of *Pushkinskaya Moskva* (Moscow, 1937), and to N. Ashukin's *Moskva v zhizni i tvorchestve A. S. Pushkina* (Moscow, 1949).

## XLI

12 / by St. Simeon's / *u Simeona*: Simeonovskiy Lane in that parish (see n. to XL : 3). St. Simeon Stylites the Elder (390?-459) was a Syrian hermit who spent thirty-seven dull years on a pillar about sixty-six feet high and about three feet in width.

13 The "Christmas Eve" establishes the date of the arrival of Tatiana and her mother in Moscow (January or February, 1822).

## VARIANTS

9-10 Draft (2371, f. 74<sup>r</sup>):

Coz, you remember Grandison,  
and at our house that ball? . . .

13–14. Canceled draft (ibid.):

He is a Senator, he's got a married son,  
he visited me recently.

XLII

1 / As to the other / *A tót*: *Tót* here may also mean “the latter.” In fact, it is not too clear whether Aunt Aline is still speaking of the son of her cousin’s former beau or is referring to that “other Grandison” who formerly courted *her*, Aline.

XLIII

11 / The darkness thins / *Redéet súmrak*: An English poet would have said: “Night wanes” (e.g., Byron, *Lara*, beginning of can. II).

XLIV

8–14. It is not at all clear where and when these Moscow relatives could have seen Tatiana as a child. We may suppose that some of them had visited the Larins in the country.

11 / And since I pulled you by the ears: Cf. Griboedov, *Woe from Wit*, act III, ll. 391–92 (Beldam Hlyostov’s speech):

You, I recall, danced with him as a child,  
I used to pull him by the ears—too seldom!

XLV

3–10 Aunt Aline (Frenchified diminutive of Aleksandra), Pauline Larin’s cousin, whom we have already met, and this Aunt Elena are both spinsters and presumably sisters; both come from a titled family (they might be the Princesses Shcherbatski). Lukeria Lvovna (i.e., daughter of Lev) is presumably another grandaunt of Tatiana’s.

## Commentary

Lyubov, Ivan, and Semyon are evidently siblings, their father being Pyotr, possibly the father of Dmitri Larin. Palageya or Pelageya, daughter of Nikolay, may be a cousin of either Dame Larin or her late husband; and M. Finemouche may have been a former tutor of Pelageya's children.

- 12 / sedulous clubman / *klúba chlén isprávnîy*: Presumably a member of Moscow's so-called English Club (which was neither "English," nor, strictly speaking, a "club"), famed for its good food and gambling tables. It had at the time about six hundred members. This Moscow English Club should not be confused with the considerably more fashionable St. Petersburg English Club, with three hundred members, founded Mar. 1, 1770, by one Cornelius Gardiner (appearing as *Garner* in Russian sources), an English banker.

### VARIANT

- 14 The separate edition (1830) has:  
and just as gravely catches flies.

### XLVI

- 2 / Moscow's young graces / *Mladíe grátsii Moskví*: A most melodious line.
- 6 / affected / *zhemánnoy*: An outsider's simplicity may strike a group as affectation.
- 8 / on the whole / *vpróchem*: The Russian word is equivalent, in its various shades of meaning ("otherwise," "after all," "however," "besides," and so forth), to the French *d'ailleurs*, *au reste*, and *par contre*.

- 12 Moscow and Petersburg fashions closely followed Paris

and London, so that this passage—C. Willett Cunnington, *English Women's Clothing in the Nineteenth Century* (London, 1937), p. 95—is relevant:

All through the decade [1820–30] there was a steady increase in the apparent size of the [female] head, and especially in the breadth. The hair, instead of hanging in vertical ringlets by the side of the face [as was still fashionable in 1822], was now [c. 1824] puffed out in curls on the temples, causing the face to assume a round shape.

## XLVIII

- 1 / to make out / *vslúshat'sya*: A difficult verb to render. It conveys a sense of listening with a probing ear, of concentrating upon what is said, of lending one's closest attention.

## XLIX

- 1 / "archival youths" / *Arhívní yúnoshi*: A nickname coined by Pushkin's friend Sobolevski (according to Pushkin, in the draft—MB 2387A, f. 22<sup>r</sup>—of some critical notes, autumn, 1830) for denoting his, Sobolevski's, colleagues, young men of gentle stock enjoying soft jobs at the Moscow Archives (Office of Records) of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (*Moskovskiy arhiv kollegii inostrannih del*; see also n. to Two : xxx : 13–14). Pushkinists have made halfhearted attempts to explain the attitude our poet supposes that these youths would take toward Tatiana by the fact that the office harbored certain Muscovite *littérateurs* (such as Prince Odoevski, Sheviryov, and Venevitinov) who were immersed in Germanic mists of idealistic philosophic thought (Muscovized Schelling, especially) that were foreign to Pushkin's mind. In the draft (1–4), however, Pushkin had the archival youths enthusiastically admire "the dear girl."

It may be recalled that the prig and toady Molchalin,

## Commentary

in Griboedov's *Woe from Wit*, is also attached to the Archives (act III, l. 165), or, as an English commentator has it, "[is] on the rolls of the Records Office" (*Gore ot uma*, ed. D. F. Costello [Oxford, 1951], p. 177).

Pushkin's Zoilus, the minor poet Mihail Dmitriev (see n. to xxxvii : 2), was also employed there.

The employment was nominal; and the choice of that branch of civil service among young men who did not care to go into the army was owing to the fact that of all nonmilitary institutions only the Foreign Office (to which, in Moscow, only the Archives belonged at the time) was considered, in the 1820's, a fit place for a nobleman to serve.

- 5 The "melancholy coxcomb" (*shút pechál'nīy*) is replaced in the draft (2368, f. 31<sup>v</sup>) by "of Moscow dames the melancholy poet," and there are canceled readings: *poét pechál'nīy i zhurnál'nīy* ("topical") and *poét bul'várnyy* ("cheap," "popular," "meretricious"). Cf. vol. 2, p. 16n.

*Shut* has a variety of meanings, the main semantic subspecies being: court jester, clown, punchinello, and a jocose euphemism for "devil" and "house goblin," whence branches the (familiar and good-natured) equivalent of "rascal" in the parlance of Pushkin's time (a Gallicism, *le drôle*; see n. to XLIX : 10).

- 10 / V[yazemski]: The name is completed in the draft (2368, f. 31<sup>v</sup>).

There is something very pleasing in Pushkin's device of having his best friends entertain his favorite characters. In One : XVI : 5-6, Kaverin is there to meet Onegin at a fashionable Petersburg restaurant, and now Vyazemski in Moscow, by alleviating Tanya's boredom with his charming talk, provides her with the first moment of pleasure she has experienced since she left her dear woods. The bewigged old party who is fascinated by

Vyazemski's new acquaintance is of course not Prince N., Onegin's former fellow rake, now a fat general, whom Tatiana will presently meet, but a kind of fore-runner.

Vyazemski, in a letter to his wife, from Petersburg, Jan. 23, 1828, writes in reference to the fragment of the chapter that had come out in the *Moscow Herald*:

Pushkin's description of Moscow does not quite live up to his talent. It is limp and frigid, although, of course, containing many nice things. The rascal [*shut*] put me in, too.

The critic N. Nadezhdin, reviewing the chapter in the *Messenger of Europe* (*Vestnik Evrope*), 1830, found that the description was made in a manner "truly Hogarthian" (*istinno Gogartovski*).

## L

### VARIANTS

- 11-14 Contrary to the final text, Pushkin in his draft (2368, f. 32<sup>r</sup>) had Tatiana create quite a stir in the theater: lorgnettes and spyglasses did turn toward her; and the stanza is followed by the false start of La (f. 32<sup>v</sup>), ll. 1-3:

Questions were bruited in the pit:  
who is that on the right-hand side,  
in the fourth box? . . .

## LI

- 1 / *Sobránie* / *Sobrán'e*: Vigel thus describes its appearance in the beginning of the nineteenth century; *Zapiski* (Moscow, 1928), I, 116:

A three-story palace, all white, all full of columns, so brightly lit that it seemed on fire . . . and at the end of a ballroom, on a pedestal, the marble effigy of Catherine smiling upon the general gaiety.

## Commentary

The full name of the club (founded in 1783) was, since 1810, the Russian Assembly of Nobility (*Russkoe blagorodnoe sobranie*). It was also known as Dvoryanskiy Klub or Club de la Noblesse.

13-14 / haste to arrive . . . flash . . . and wing away: A well-known intonation in Western poetry. Cf. Moore, *Lalla Rookh*: "The Fire-worshippers" (5th edn., London, 1817, p. 184):

To show his plumage for a day  
To wondering eyes, and wing away!

### VARIANTS

10-11 A draft (A. Onegin coll., PD 156) reads:

an empty head, a corset,  
starched neckcloth, quizzing glass . . .

with the cancellation (l. 11):

here a starched pedant . . .

### Lia

1-4 A draft (Maykov coll., PD 108), continuing LI, reads:

How <vividly> did caustic Griboedov  
in a satire describe the grandsons  
as had F[on]v[izin] the grandsires described!  
<All> Moscow <he invited> to a ball . . .

### LII

1 / charming stars / *zvyózd preléstnih*: Some understand this as "wanton stars" (*prelestnitsa* being a "fallen woman," and a "falling star" being a *prelestnaya zvezda*), but this is farfetched.

1-4 / stars . . . moon: Commentators have seen a parody of the *Elegy to the Unforgettable One* here:

. . . and among young and charming maidens,  
as among stars the moon, she shone . . .

—a dreadful little poem by Mihail Yakovlev, in Voeykov's magazine *Literary News* (*Novosti literatūri*), no. 15 (St. Petersburg, 1826), p. 149.

And going further back, there is Semyon Bobrov's *Tavrida* (1798), quoted by Brodski, *EO* commentary (1950), p. 274:

O thou of winsome mien, Zarena!  
All stars are brilliant in the North,  
all daughters of the North are fair,  
but thou alone art moon among them . . .

- 2 / in Moscow / *na Moskvé*: "On Moscow," in the sense of "on the Moscow scene." The expression is ambiguous, since it may also be understood as "on the river Moskva."

LIII

- 14 / used to appear / *yavlyalsya*: She had seen him actually only once in the shade of those old limes, but, as we know from the end of Three : xv and the beginning of Three : xvi, he had "appeared" there to her more than once in her adolescent hallucinations.

VARIANTS

- 12–13 Canceled draft (2368, f. 35<sup>r</sup>), l. 12:

back to the country, to roses and tulips . . .

Draft (*ibid.*), l. 13:

to avenues of apple trees . . .

These last would have been more suggestive (unpleasantly so) of an orchard than of the private park to which the lindens of the canceled draft and final text belong.

LIV

- 12 / There where . . . those two / *Tam, gde eshchyó . . . dvóe*: *Eshchyó* means “more,” and from a formal point of view it would seem that besides the fat general there were two more military men standing there; but it seems to me that the *eshchyó* has merely the idiomatic emphasis of a pointer demanding *more* attention to a *more* specific point within a *more* limited space.

VARIANT

- 14 Draft (2371, f. 74<sup>v</sup>):

What, that old general?

In the light of Eight : XVIII : 7 and XXIII : 3–4, Onegin’s chum could have been at the most ten years his senior (thus about thirty-seven in 1822).

LV

- 11 / aslant and askew / *vkós’ i vkrív’*: There is a family resemblance here to Cowper’s definition of digression as “continual zigzags in a book” (*Conversation*, l. 861).

VARIANTS

- 5–6 In the draft (2371, f. 75<sup>r</sup>), the epithet to “hero” is “half-Russian” (cf. Lenski, Two : XII : 5).

- 9 Canceled draft (ibid.):

O Muse of Pulci and Parini . . .

Italian poets, Luigi Pulci (1432–84), author of *Morgante Maggiore* (1481, 1483), known to Pushkin from an anonymous French version, *L’Histoire de Morgant le géant* (Paris, 1625); and Giuseppe Parini (1729–99), author of *Il Mattino* (1763), being a set of ironical instructions to a Milanese scapegrace on how to spend his

day, followed by *Il Mezzogiorno* (1765), etc., known to Pushkin from a “traduction libre” (by the Abbé Joseph Grillet-Desprades) entitled *L’Art de s’amuser à la ville, ou les Quatre parties du jour* (Paris, 1778).

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On Nov. 28, 1830, at Boldino, Pushkin wrote the following note (Cahier MB 2387B, ff. 36 and 62), with which at the time he planned to preface a separate edition of two chapters, “Eight” (now *Onegin’s Journey*) and “Nine” (now Eight)—a plan not realized:

With us, it is rather difficult for the author himself to find out the impression that his work produces upon the public. All he learns from literary magazines is their editors’ opinion, upon which, for a number of reasons, it is impossible to depend. The opinion of his friends is, needless to say, partial, whereas strangers will certainly not berate his works to his face, even though they may deserve it.

When Canto Seven of *Onegin* came out, in general the reviewers reported on it very unfavorably. I would have readily believed them, had not their verdict clashed so inordinately with what they had said about the earlier chapters of my novel. After the excessive and undeserved praises that they lavished on the six parts of the same work, I found it odd to hear, for example, the following critique.

Bulgarin’s review in the *Northern Bee* (*Severnaya pchela*), Mar. 22, 1830, is meant, according to two footnotes in the same MS; the text was not copied out by Pushkin, but is given here as implied (see in footnote to Introd.: “The Publication of *EO*,” no. 13, Bulgarin’s fawning note to the lines on Moscow—Seven : xxxv—LIII—which he reprinted two years before):

Can one demand the public’s attention to such compositions as, for example, Chapter Seven of *Eugene Onegin*? We thought at first that this was some mystification, merely a joke or a parody, and would not believe this Chapter Seven to be the work of the author of *Ruslan and*

## Commentary

*Lyudmila* until the booksellers convinced us of this being indeed so. This Chapter Seven—two small printed sheets—is variegated with such verses and such clowning that even *Eugene Velski*\* appears in comparison to be something having a semblance of common sense.

The following lines, coming after “critique,” were intended by Pushkin as a footnote:

I beg the pardon of a poet unknown to me if I am forced to repeat this piece of rudeness. Judging by the fragments of his poem, I see no injury whatever to myself in the rating of *Onegin* lower than *Velski*.

Bulgarin continues:

Not one idea in this watery Chapter Seven, not one sentiment, not one picture worthy of contemplation! A complete comedown, *chute complète*. . . . Our readers may ask: What is the subject matter of this Chapter Seven consisting of 57 small pages? The verses in *Onegin* carry us away and force us to answer this question in rhyme:

How then to chase her grief away?  
Here's how: place Tanya on a sleigh.  
From her dear countryside she rides  
“to Moscow, to the mart of brides!”  
Daughter is bored, mother laments.  
Full stop. Here Chapter Seven ends.

Exactly, dear readers, the whole subject of the chapter is that Tanya is to be removed from the country to Moscow!

Pushkin intended to append a second footnote:

These verses are very good, but the criticism they contain is baseless. The most insignificant subject may be selected by the author for his poem. Critics need not discuss *what* the author describes. They should discuss *how* he describes it.

In one of our reviews it was said that Chapter Seven could not have any success because the age and Russia go forward whereas the author of the poem remains on the

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\*An anonymous novel, in *Onegin* stanzas, in three chapters (Moscow, 1828–29).

same spot. This verdict is unjust (i.e., in its conclusion). If the age may be said to progress, if sciences, philosophy, and civilization may perfect themselves and change, poetry remains stationary and neither ages nor changes. Her goal, her means remain the same, and while the conception, the works, the discoveries of the great representatives of ancient astronomy, physics, medicine, and philosophy have grown obsolete and are daily replaced by something else, the works of true poets remain ever fresh and young.

A work of poetry may be weak; it may be a fallacy or a failure; but then it is the author's talent that is at fault and not the age that has moved forward away from him.

Probably the critic wished to say that Eugene Onegin and his entire cortege are no longer a novelty to the public and that it is as much bored by him as are the reviewers.

Anyway, I venture to try the patience of the public again. Here are two more chapters of *Eugene Onegin*—the last ones, at least for publication. Those who would seek entertaining events in them may rest assured that there is less action in these chapters than in all the preceding ones. Chapter Eight [*Onegin's Journey*] I had all but resolved to abolish altogether and to replace it with a Roman numeral; the fear of criticism, however, stopped me. Moreover, many excerpts from it had already been published. The thought that a humorous parody might be taken for disrespect in regard to a great and sacred memory also restrained me. But *Childe Harold* stands so high that whatever the tone in which it is spoken about, the thought of a possible offense to it could not have arisen in me.\*

During the same autumn Pushkin jotted down another note of the same kind (draft in MB 2387A, f. 64<sup>r</sup>; first published 1841):

The omitted stanzas have repeatedly provided a pretext for blame.† The fact that *Eugene Onegin* contained

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\*See my introductory remarks to *Onegin's Journey*.

†Bulgarin, in his critique of Seven, wrote: "On p. 13 we find with a sense of the greatest enjoyment two stanzas omitted by the author himself and replaced by two beautiful Roman numbers, VIII and IX."

## Commentary

stanzas that I could not or did not wish to publish should not be deemed surprising. But since their exclusion interrupts the coherence of the story, it is necessary to indicate the place where they ought to have been. It might have been better to replace those stanzas by others, or to rework and recombine those I kept. But pardon me, I am much too lazy. Moreover, I humbly submit that two stanzas are left out of *Don Juan*.

There are more omissions than two stanzas in the text from which Pichot translated, but Pushkin may have been thinking of the first canto only. In the first editions of the original (1819–24), the following stanzas or parts of stanzas were excluded and replaced with dots:

I, xv, allusion to the suicide of Sir Samuel Romilly; cxxix, 7–8, cxxx, 7–8, and cxxxi, play on the “small-pox” and the “great.”

V, lxi, friendship of Queen Semiramis with a horse.

XI, lvii, 5–8, literary occupations of the Rev. George Croly; lviii, Henry Hart Milman.

“Nous ignorons,” says Pichot in his n. 2 to *Don Juan*, can. I, vol. VI (1823), p. 477, “si ces lacunes doivent être attribuées à l’éditeur anglais, ou à l’auteur lui-même.” And in his n. 39 to can. XI, vol. VII (1824), p. 383, he observes further: “Les points existent dans le texte, ce qu’il est bon de dire depuis que les points sont devenus une spéculation de librairie.”

Incidentally, in *Don Juan*, can. I, the numeration after cix differs from the original in Pichot (1820 and 1823), who does not have Byron’s cx, a stanza ending in a reference to the author’s mother. In other words, Pichot has 221 stanzas in I, and Byron has 222. I have not been able to discover how and why this happened.

## Chapter Eight

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### MOTTO

The beginning of Byron's famous and mediocre stanzas, *Fare Thee Well*, on his domestic circumstances, first published in the London *Champion*, Apr. 14, 1816.

### I

- 1 / In those days / *V te dni*: It is curious to note that this first stanza (as well as the dropped stanzas following it; see 1a, b, and e), written at the close of 1829, begins with the same formula and intonation as Pushkin's short poem *The Demon* (1823), which I discuss in a note to Eight : XII : 7, where it is mentioned.
- 1 / in the Lyceum's gardens / *v sadáh Litseyá*: The reference is to the Aleksandrovskiy Litsey, Lycée de l'Empereur Alexandre I, founded by that tsar Aug. 12, 1810, at Tsarskoe Selo (now Pushkin), twenty-two versts from St. Petersburg. Pushkin passed the entrance examinations in August, 1811. The Lyceum opened Oct. 19, 1811, with thirty pupils. The anniversary of this date was to

be piously celebrated by Pushkin, in company or in solitude, twenty times (1817-36). In modern terms, the Lyceum might be defined as a boarding school for young gentlemen, which offered three years of preparatory school and three years of junior college. Each of the thirty boys had his own room. The infliction of corporal punishment of any kind was absolutely forbidden, a great advance in comparison to the flogging and other brutal practices characteristic of the best English and Continental schools of the time.

It was in the Lyceum that Pushkin composed his first poems. Of these, the first to be published was *To a Friend Who Makes Verses* (*K drugu stihotvortsu*), in the *Messenger of Europe* (*Vestnik Evrope*), edited by Vladimir Izmaylov, pt. 76, no. 13 (July 4, 1814), pp. 9-12, signed "Aleksandr N.k.sh.p." To judge by final marks, Pushkin did "excellently" in literature (French and Russian) and in fencing; "extremely well" in Latin, state economy, and finances; "well" in sacred studies, logic, moral philosophy, and Russian civil and criminal law; and "also studied" history, geography, statistics, mathematics, and German. On June 9, 1817, he was graduated with the rank of collegiate secretary (the fourteenth, lowest in the civil service), was nominally attached to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and spent most of the next three years in St. Petersburg, leading the life of a rake, a poet, and a *frondeur*.

To the end of his life he remained deeply attached to what he considered his real home, the Lyceum, and to his former fellow students. He has commemorated these recollections, and the annual reunions on Oct. 19, in several poems. There is something symbolic in the fact that the one he composed for the last anniversary feast he attended was not completed. On the occasion of the Oct. 19 reunion of 1838, his schoolmate Küchelbecker, an exile in Aksha, Siberia, wrote in a wonderful piece:

At present with our Delvig he is feasting,  
At present he is with my Griboedov . . .

*On n'ne s nashim Del'vigom piruet,*  
*On n'ne s Griboédovim molm . . .*

The term *litsey* comes from the Parisian *lycée*. In 1781 Jean François Pilâtre de Rozier (b. 1756) established an institute in Paris called the Musée, where natural sciences were taught. Then, in 1785, after his death in a balloon accident, his Musée was reorganized under the name Lycée, and Jean François de La Harpe was invited to lecture there on world literature. He taught this course for several years, and began publishing his famous manual (1799–1805), *Lycée, ou Cours de littérature ancienne et moderne*, which was used at the Litsey eight years after his death.

In his letters of 1831 from Tsarskoe Selo, where he spent the first months (end of May to October) of his marriage and put the last touches to *EO*, Pushkin takes pleasure in referring to the place by its old Westernized name, “Sarskoe Selo” or “Sarsko-Selo.”

- 3 / Apuleius: Lucius Apuleius, Latin writer of the second century, author of the *Metamorphoses* (also known as the *Asinus aureus*, the *Aureate Ass*, imitated from the Greek), by Russians read mainly in tawdry French versions, such as, for instance, *Les Métamorphoses, ou l'Ane d'or d'Apulée*, tr. Abbé Compain de Saint-Martin (2 vols., Paris, 1707, and later editions), upon which a clumsy Russian adaptation, by Ermil Kostrov (Moscow, 1780–81), was based. This once-famous romance, dealing with the narrator's adventures when he is transformed into a donkey, contains some brilliant erotic images, but, on the whole, strikes the reader of today as even more boring than Cicero seemed to Pushkin in 1815—or to Montaigne in 1580.

See also my n. to One : xxxiii : 3–4.

1a-f

Pushkin scrapped a longer account of his youth at the Lyceum. We possess four stanzas in a fair copy (PB 21-26), which I have marked 1a, 1d, 1e, and 1f; and two in drafts (MB 2382, f. 25<sup>v</sup>), of which the second is incomplete. These two I have marked 1b (it is headed "Dec. 24, 1829," and was apparently the first one in this chapter to be written) and 1c. It will be noted that 1a : 1-4 is only a variant of 1b : 1-4 and that both have been used for 1 : 1-4. The batch 1a, 1d, 1e, 1f, II, and III is marked from "I" to "VI" in the fair copy.

1a

- In those days when in the Lyceum's gardens  
I bloomed serenely;  
would eagerly read *Eliséy*,  
4 while cursing Cicero;  
in those days when it would be a rare poem  
to which I'd not prefer a well-aimed ball;  
when things scholastic I deemed nonsense,  
8 and jumped into the garden o'er the fence;  
when I would be now diligent,  
now obstinate, now lazy,  
now sly, now frank,  
12 now subdued, now unruly,  
now sad, silent,  
now cordially talkative;

1b

- In those days when in the Lyceum's gardens  
I bloomed serenely;  
would furtively read Apuleius,  
4 while yawning over Virgil;  
when I was lazy, full of pranks,  
o'er the roof and into the window climbed,  
and would forget the Latin class  
8 for red lips and dark eyes;  
when to disturb my heart  
a vague sadness began;

when the mysterious distance  
12 enticed my dreamings,  
and in the summer [bird songs?] for the day  
would wake me gaily;

1c

when I was dubbed "the Frenchman"  
by cocky friends;  
when pedagogues prognosticated  
4 I'd be a scapegrace all my life;  
when on the field of roses  
we to our heart's content romped and went wild;  
when in the shade of alleys dense  
8 I listened to the calls of swans  
as I surveyed the lucid waters;  
or when among the plains  
. . . . .  
12 while visiting the Kagul marble

1d

When, in a trance, before the class  
I now and then lost sight and hearing;  
and tried to speak in a bass voice,  
4 and trimmed the first down o'er my lip;  
in those days . . . in those days when first  
I noticed the live features  
of a charming maiden, and love  
8 stirred my young blood;  
and yearning hopelessly, oppressed  
by the deceit of fiery dreams,  
I sought her traces everywhere,  
12 lapsed into tender thoughts of her,  
awaited all day long a minute's meeting,  
and learned the bliss of secret pangs;

1e

in those days—in the gloom of grovy arches,  
near waters flowing in the stillness  
in corners of Lyceum corridors,  
4 the Muse began to visit me.  
My student cell,

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- hitherto strange to gaiety, all at once  
was radiant with light! In it the Muse  
8 opened a banquet of her fancies;  
farewell, cold knowledges!  
Farewell, games of first years!  
I changed: I was a poet;  
12 within my soul nothing but sounds  
in modulations flowed,  
lived, ran into sweet measures.

### if

- Everywhere with me, never tiring,  
the Muse would sing, and sing again, to me  
(*amorem canat aetas prima*)  
4 of love incessantly, and yet of love,  
I echoed her. Young friends  
during enfranchised leisures  
were fond of listening to my voice.  
8 With partisan souls  
devoted to our brotherhood,  
my first wreath they presented me  
so that their songster might adorn with it  
12 his bashful Muse.  
O triumph in the days of innocence!  
Sweet is your dream unto my soul!

### 1a

- 3 / *Eliséy: Elisey, or Irate Bacchus* (1771), by Vasiliy Maykov (1728–78), a Scarronic poem of 2234 Alexandrine lines, in five cantos. A second edition came out in 1778, and it was reprinted in Maykov's *Works* (1809). The poem is known to have influenced *The Dangerous Neighbor*, by Pushkin's uncle, Vasiliy Pushkin, alluded to in *EO*, Five : xxvi : 9. Its hero is a Petersburg crack driver of hackney troikas. He is introduced (I, 94) as

Cardplayer, drunkard, rowdy, pugilist.

Bacchus chooses Elisey as his ally in his fight with the liquor contractors who charge forbidding prices. Elisey's favorite *vino* is pimpinella, otherwise anisated vodka, which he drinks by the tankard (I, 152–55). Although

of not very high literary quality, *Elisey* contains some excellent passages, such as I, 559 (describing the black mustache that Hermes, in order to impersonate a policeman, makes of his two wings, by gluing them to his upperlip); the incidental merchant of Old Believers faith who, as he says his evening prayer, “makes the schismatic cross upon his lardy forehead” (IV, 361); and the fine denunciation of bear-baiting (V, 239–40): “with a bored yawn to watch | dogs tearing innocent beasts”). The fun is coarse, albeit picturesque; for example, in I, 274, crimson-booted Bacchus speeds on winged tigers to the throne of drunken and drowsy Jove, whom he finds in the act of releasing “doves” (*golubey*, acc. pl., slang for “silent flatuses”).

5–6 Canceled fair copy (PB 21–26) reads:

in those days when to the black copybook  
I would prefer a nimble ball . . .

The reference is to exercise books used at Pushkin's school; they were bound in black cloth (oilcloth?).

6 / a well-aimed ball: The reference is presumably to *lapta*, a rudimentary form of baseball, in which a stick replaces the bat, and a serve-throw, pitching. Tagging is a conspicuous feature, the small, hard, hurtful ball being deftly hurled at the runner.

1b

The stanza is headed “Dec. 24, 1829,” which date also refers, presumably, to 1c (both in 2382, f. 25<sup>v</sup>).

1c

1 / dubbed “the Frenchman”: Pushkin's French, acquired in infancy from home tutors, was as idiomatic and

fluent, but also as ready-made, as that of any Russian nobleman in the nineteenth century. Not special proficiency in the language, but young Pushkin's agility and fierce temper earned him that nickname at school. A clue to its real meaning is given in the following explanation, added by Pushkin on Oct. 19, 1828, in St. Petersburg, to his signature, "the Frenchman" (*Frantsuz*), in the minutes of the annual reunion of the Lyceum alumni:\* "A cross between a monkey and a tiger" (*smes' obyезianiĭ* [sic] *s tigrom*). I find that Voltaire, *Candide*, ch. 22, defines France as "ce pays où des singes agacent [tease] des tigres," and in a letter to Mme du Deffand (Nov. 21, 1766) uses the same metaphor to divide the French into mocking monkeys and truculent tigers.

In the proclamation, written by Admiral Shishkov (who, despite his Gallophobia, knew French literature very well; see n. to Eight : XIV : 13), telling the nation of Napoleon's departure from Moscow (beginning of October, 1812), its author remarked that even the writers of France "described the nature of that people as a merging of the tiger with the monkey" (*sliyanie tigra s obez'yanoy*).

It is amusing to note that Pushkin's teacher of French literature and history at the Lyceum was one of the three brothers of Jean Paul Mara, alias Marat (1743-93), celebrated headman of the French regime of Terror. Dr. Augustin Cabanès (*Marat inconnu*, Paris, 1891; rev. edn., 1911) is positive that this brother, known in Russia, whither he emigrated in the 1780's, as "de Boudry" (from the place name in Switzerland), was Henri Mara (b. 1745). The two other brothers were David (b. 1756), referred to in his youth as *le borgne* (he had apparently lost one eye), and Jean Pierre (b. 1767). According to the

\*Published by Yakov Grot, in *Russkiy arhiv*, XIII, 1 (1875), 490.

Lyceum professor's obituary (d. Sept. 23, 1821, O.S.), however, he was David Mara ("David Ivanovich de Budri"), born in Neustadt in 1756. A Russian gentleman traveling abroad, Vasiliy Saltikov, engaged him as tutor for his children in 1784.\* In a cartoon by Illichevski (1816) depicting Lyceum teachers, many times published, Boudry has both his eyes (a glass one would not have escaped a schoolboy's notice), but does not look to be seventy, as Henri Mara would have been at the time. The whole question seems to invite some additional research.

1-2 There is a beautiful buzzing alliteration in these lines:

*Kogdá frantsúzom nazíváli  
Menjá zadórñie druž'já . . .*

5 / *Po róзовому pólyu*: The so-called Champ des Roses in the Tsarskoe Selo park, which had been a floretum in the days of Catherine II.

12 / the Kagul marble / *kagúl'skiy mrdmor*: Fr. *le marbre de Cagoul*, a Gallic-toned reference to the marble obelisk erected in the park of Tsarskoe Selo by Catherine II, in 1771, to commemorate a Russian victory, gained on July 12 of the previous year, over the Turks on the Kagul, a river in Moldavia. It is also mentioned in Pushkin's pseudoclassical *Recollections at Tsarskoe Selo* (see n. to II : 3), written in 1814, ll. 49-52:

In the dense shade of gloomy pine trees  
A simple monument doth stand.  
How baneful 'tis to thee, O Kagul's brink! How glorious  
To our belovéd native land!

The poetical abbreviation of trisyllabic adjectives in Russian (*dragoy* instead of *dorogoy*, "beloved") finds a

\*See Grot, in *Russkiy arhiv*, XIV (1876), 482.

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curious counterpart in the poetical lengthening of English epithets (be-lov-ed).

### Id

5-14 This young lady has been satisfactorily identified by Pushkinists as Ekaterina Bakunin (1795-1869), the sister of one of Pushkin's schoolmates. In an entry of Nov. 29, 1815, in his Lyceum diary young Pushkin dedicated an indifferent elegy to her (followed, in 1816, by some much better ones) and added a little effusion in prose:

I was happy! No, yesterday I was not happy: in the morning, racked by the ordeal of waiting, in a state of indescribable excitement I stood at the window and looked at the snowy road—she was not to be seen! Finally, I lost hope. All at once, I happened to meet her on the stairs. Delicious minute! . . . How charming she was! How becoming was [*pristalo*] that black dress to charming Miss Bakunin!

### If

3 / *amorem canat aetas prima*: Adapted from Sextus Propertius (c. 50-10 B.C.), *Elegies*, bk. II, no. x, l. 7:

aetas prima canat veneres, extrema tumultus . . .  
Young age sings lust; mature age, tumult . . .

With this line Pushkin epigraphed his first collection of short poems, 1826 (Dec. 28, 1825). *Veneres* was bowdlerized to *amorem*. When Pletnyov brought this volume to Karamzin, the latter understood *tumultus* as an allusion to the December insurrection and was horrified; but Pletnyov explained to him that Pushkin meant "strong emotions," "the tumult of the soul." Propertius meant "the tumult of war."

### II

2 / provided us with wings / *nas . . . okrilll*: "Bewinged us."

Derzhavin: Gavrila Derzhavin (1743-1816) is Russia's first outstanding poet. His celebrated *God: an Ode* (1784), with its curious borrowings from Friedrich Gottlieb Klopstock (German poet, 1724-1803, author of *Messias*, 1748-73) and Edward Young (English poet, 1683-1765, author of *Night Thoughts*, 1742-45), his odes of the same period to *Felitsa* (Catherine II), and such poems of the 1790's as *The Grandee* and *The Waterfall* contain many great passages, colorful images, rough touches of genius. He made interesting experiments in broken meter and assonance, techniques that did not interest the next generation, the iambophile poets of Pushkin's time. Derzhavin influenced Tyutchev much more than he did our poet, whose diction came early under the spell of Karamzin, Bogdanovich, Dmitriev, and especially Batyushkov and Zhukovski.

In his memoirs (1852), Sergey Aksakov (1791-1859), a very minor writer, tremendously puffed up by Slavophile groups, recalls that in December, 1815, Derzhavin told him that the schoolboy Pushkin would grow to be another Derzhavin. Aksakov's recollection was at the time almost half a century old.

Pushkin himself modestly implies a certain act of succession:

The aged Derzhavin noticed us—and blessed us  
as he descended to the grave.

Not to young Pushkin, however, but to Zhukovski did old Derzhavin address the lines:

To you in legacy, Zhukovski,  
My antiquated lyre I hand,  
While o'er the slippery grave abysmal  
Already with bent brow I stand.

And not Derzhavin, but Zhukovski did young Pushkin apostrophize in the final stanza of his ode *Recollections at Tsarskoe Selo* (an enthusiastic survey of historical associa-

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tions, in 176 iambic lines of varying length with alternate rhymes, composed in 1814), which jolted Derzhavin out of his senile somnolence. But let us turn to Pushkin's own notes of 1830 (*Works* 1936, V, 461):

I saw Derzhavin only once in my life but shall never forget that occasion. It was in 1815 [Jan. 8] at a public examination in the Lyceum. When we boys learned that Derzhavin was coming, all of us grew excited. Delvig went out on the stairs to wait for him and kiss his hand, the hand that had written *The Waterfall*. Derzhavin arrived. He entered the vestibule, and Delvig heard him ask the janitor: "Where is the privy here, my good fellow?" This prosaic question disenchanting Delvig, who canceled his intent and returned to the reception hall. Delvig told me the story with wonderful bonhomie and good humor. Derzhavin was very old. He was in uniform and wore velvet boots. Our examination was very wearisome to him. He sat with his head propped on one hand. His expression was inane, his eyes were dull, his lip hung; the portrait that shows him in housecap and dressing gown is very like him. He dozed until the beginning of the examination in Russian literature. Then he came to life, his eyes sparkled; he was transfigured. It was, of course, *his* poems that were read, *his* poems that were analyzed, *his* poems that were praised every minute. He listened with extraordinary animation [*s zhivost'yu neobiknovennoy*]. At last I was called. I recited my *Recollections at Tsarskoe Selo* while standing within two yards of Derzhavin. I cannot describe the state of my soul; when I reached the verse where Derzhavin's name is mentioned [l. 63], my adolescent voice vibrated and my heart throbbed with intoxicating rapture. . . . I do not remember how I finished my recitation [he turned to Derzhavin as he launched upon the last sixteen lines, which were really addressed to Zhukovski, but might be taken to mean Derzhavin]. I do not remember whither I fled. Derzhavin was delighted; he demanded I come, he desired to embrace me. . . . There was a search for me, but I was not discovered.

The passage referring to Derzhavin (ll. 63-64) goes:

Derzhavin and Petrov twanged paeans to the heroes  
On strings of thunder-sounding lyres.

Vasiliy Petrov (1736–99) was a third-rate Bellonian odist.

In November or December, 1815, Pushkin composed a satirical poem, *Fonvizin's Shade* (first pub. 1936, in *Vremennik*, vol. I), in which he parodies Derzhavin's *Lyrico-Epic Hymn on the Occasion of the Expulsion of the French from the Fatherland* (in ll. 231–40) and proceeds to exclaim (ll. 265–66):

Denis! he will be always famous,  
But, O why should one live so long!

“Denis” is the satirist Fonvizin (see One : XVIII : 3 and n.), and “he” is old Derzhavin, who had “blessed” our young poet less than a year before.

5–14 The fair copy gives the ten lines omitted in the established text:

And Dmítrev [sic] was not our detractor;  
and the custodian of Russian lore,  
leaving his scrolls, would heed us and caress  
8 [our] timid Muse.  
And you, deeply inspired  
bard of all that is beautiful,  
you, idol of virginal hearts:  
12 was it not you who, by partisanship  
carried away, would stretch a hand to me  
and summon to pure fame?

5 / Dmitrev: a poetical elision of Dmitriev.

Ivan Dmitriev (1760–1837), a very minor poet, shackled in his art by his indebtedness to French *petits poètes*. He is mainly remembered for a song (*Moans the Gray-blue Little Dove*), a satire (*As Others See It*; see Four : XXXIII : 6 and n.), and a few fables (see n. to Seven : XXXIV : 1). His only distinction really is that of having perfected and purified Russian poetical style

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when the national Muse was still a clumsy infant. He had even less to say than Zhukovski and unfortunate Batyushkov, and what he did say was worded with considerably less talent. He has left an autobiography in good, limpid prose.

Venevitinov, in a letter to Sheviryov, Jan. 28, 1827, accuses Dmitriev of being an envious person, ever ready to lower Pushkin's reputation if given a chance. However, in 1818 (and this is the recollection in II : 5), in a letter to A. Turgenev, dated Sept. 19, Dmitriev termed young Pushkin "a beautiful flower of poetry that will not fade soon." He was critical, however, of *Ruslan and Lyudmila*: "I find in it a great deal of brilliant poetry and narrative ease; but it is a pity that he often slips into *le burlesque*, and more pity still that he did not take for motto a famous verse [Piron's], slightly altered: 'La mère en défendra la lecture à sa fille' " (letter to Vyazemski, Oct. 20, 1820). (See also vol. 2, p. 240.)

An interesting situation arises when, in referring to an author, Pushkin uses a phrase that constitutes a parody of that author's diction. Yet even more interesting are such passages as those in which the aped phrase is found in the Russian version of the French translation of an English author, so that in result Pushkin's pastiche (which *we* have to render in English) is three times removed from its model! What should the translator do in the following case? The line about Dmitriev reads:

*I Dmitrev né bīl nāsh hulltel' . . .*

And Dmitriev was not our detractor . . .

Now, if we turn to Dmitriev's colorless version (1789), in Alexandrine couplets, of Pope's *Epistle to Dr. Arbuthnot* (1734-35), we discover in the second hemistich of Dmitriev's l. 176 the model of Pushkin's phrase:

*Kongrév* applauded me, *Swift* was not my detractor . . .

Dmitriev, who had no English, used a French transla-

tion of Pope (probably La Porte's), and this explains the Gallic garb of Congreve (which Dmitriev mentally rhymes with *grève*). If we look up Pope's text, we find that Dmitriev's line is a paraphrase of Pope's l. 138:

And Congreve lov'd, and Swift endur'd, my Lays . . .

But Pushkin, in *EO*, Eight : II : 5, is thinking not of Pope or La Porte, but of Dmitriev, and I submit that, in an accurate English translation, we should keep the "detractor" and resist the formidable temptation to render Pushkin's line:

And Dmitriev, too, endured my lays . . .

6-8 / custodian of Russian lore: The reference is to Nikolay Karamzin (1766-1826). Pushkin had been well acquainted with him in 1818-20, and appreciated him chiefly as a reformer of language and as the historian of Russia. Karamzin's *Letters of a Russian Traveler* (1792), an account of a trip he took through western Europe, had had a tremendous impact on the preceding generation. As a novelist, he is negligible. He has been called the Russian Sterne; but Karamzin's prim and pallid fiction is the very opposite of the great English prose poet's rich, lewd, and fantastic style: Sterne came to Russia in French versions and imitations and was classified as a sentimentalist; Karamzin was a deliberate one. Sharing with other Russian and French writers of his time a blissful lack of originality, Karamzin had nothing to say in his stories that was not imitative. His novella *Poor Liza* (1792) proved, however, most popular. Liza, a young country girl who lives with her aged mother in a hut (how these infirm and utterly decrepit old women in European lachrymose tales managed to bear children is a separate problem), is seduced near a moonlit pond by a frivolous nobleman graced with the comedy name of Erast, although the scene is laid in a suburb of Moscow.

There is nothing much more to say about this tale except that it reveals certain new niceties of prose diction.

Karamzin's charming, graceful, but now seldom remembered verses (*My Trifles*, 1794), which his friend Dmitriev followed up next year with his *And My Trifles*, are artistically above his prose fiction.

In his truly marvelous reform of the Russian literary language, Karamzin neatly weeded out rank Church Slavonic and archaic Germanic constructions (comparable, in their florid, involved, and uncouth character, to bombastic Latinisms of an earlier period in western Europe); he banned inversions, ponderous compounds, and monstrous conjunctions, and introduced a lighter syntax, a Gallic precision of diction, and the simplicity of natural-sounding neologisms exactly suited to the semantic needs, both romantic and realistic, of his tremendously style-conscious time. Not only his close followers, Zhukovski and Batyushkov, but eclectic Pushkin and reluctant Tyutchev remained eternally in Karamzin's debt. Whilst, no doubt, in the idiom Karamzin promoted, the windows of a gentleman's well-waxed drawing room open wide onto a Le Nôtre garden with its tame fountains and trim turf, it is also true that, through those same French windows, the healthy air of rural Russia came flowing in from beyond the topiary. But it was Krilov (followed by Griboedov), not Karamzin, who first made of colloquial, earthy Russian a truly literary language by completely integrating it in the poetic patterns that had come into existence after Karamzin's reform.

This is not the place to discuss the value of Karamzin's historical conceptions. His *History of the Russian State* was a revelation to an eager audience. The first edition, consisting of the first eight volumes, was published Feb. 1, 1818, and the total printing of three thousand copies was exhausted in the course of one month. A French

translation made by two French professors in Russia (St. Thomas and A. Jauffret) began to appear in Paris as early as 1819.

Karamzin is also the author of one of the best Russian epigrams (Dec. 31, 1797):

Life? A romance. By whom? Anonymous.  
We spell it out; it makes us laugh and weep,  
And then puts us  
To sleep.

And in a *bouts-rimés* exchange (using rhymes supplied by Dmitriev), Karamzin made the following New Year prophecy for 1799 (which was to be the year of Pushkin's birth):

To sing all things, Pindar will be reborn.

9-14 / And you, deeply inspired . . . : The reference is to Vasiliy Zhukovski (1783-1852), Pushkin's lifelong friend, a prudent mediator in our poet's clashes with the government, and his amiable teacher in matters of prosody and poetical idiom. Zhukovski owned a strong and delicate instrument that he had strung himself, but the trouble was he had very little to say. Hence his continuous quest for subject matter in the works of German and English poets. His versions of foreign poetry are not really translations but talented adaptations remarkably melodious and engaging; and they seem especially so when the original is not known to the reader. Zhukovski at his best communicates to his reader much of the enjoyment he obviously experiences himself in molding and modulating a young language while having his verses go through this or that impersonation act. His main defects are constant tendencies to simplify and delocalize his text (a method consistent with French translatory practice of the time) and to replace with a pious generalization every rough and rare peculiarity. The student who knows Russian will find it profitable to compare, for instance, Zhukovski's *Smaylhome Castle*

(*Zamok Smal'gol'm*, 1822) with its model, *The Eve of St. John*, by Walter Scott. It will be seen that Scott's specific details are consistently neutralized. The "plate-jack" and "vaunt-brace" of quatrain III become with Zhukovski merely "armor of iron"; the charming under-the-breath line about the page (VII, "His name was English Will") is ignored; the "bittern" is changed into an "owl"; the colorful description of Sir Richard's plume, shield, and crest is replaced by a very primitive and conventional blazon, and so on; but, on the other hand, there is in the Russian text a somewhat finer breath of mystery; everything about Scott's rather matter-of-fact adulteress acquires a more romantic and pathetic air with Zhukovski, and what is especially noteworthy, he evolves throughout the piece a set of wonderful, exotic sonorities by employing the least number of words to fill his muscular line and by making his musically transliterated names—*Broterstón* (Brotherstone), *Duglás* (Douglas), *Kol'dingám* (Coldinghame), *El'dón* (Eildon)—resonantly participate in his Russian rhymes and rhythms. There is a wonderful orchestration of letters in such lines as *S Ankrammórskih krovávih poléy* (last line of xxxv, meaning "From the Ankrammor gory fields," and corresponding in sense to the first line of xxxv in Scott, "The Ancram moor is red with gore"), and this kind of thing counterbalances the loss of lilt. The cadential swing of Scott's piece, in which, technically speaking, broken anapaestic lines commingle with iambic ones, is rendered in Zhukovski's Russian by regular anapaestic tetrameters alternating with regular anapaestic trimeters, whereas in Scott's typically balladic lilt the more or less anapaestic (sometimes frankly iambic) lines of four beats alternate with iambic (or sometimes semi-anapaestic) lines of three beats. Zhukovski retains the masculine endings of the alternate rhymes and reproduces some of the internal consonances.

Zhukovski met Pushkin a few months after that celebrated Lyceum examination which Derzhavin attended. In a letter to Vyazemski dated Sept. 19, 1815, Zhukovski writes:

I have made another agreeable acquaintance—this time with our young wonder-worker Pushkin. I visited him for a minute at Tsarskoe Selo. What a charming, lively creature! . . . He is the hope of our literature.

Zhukovski's portrait of 1820, a lithograph by E. Oesterreich, shows within its oval the poet's charming young features with a melancholy and penetrative expression about the lips and eyes. Under the oval, Zhukovski wrote, when presenting Pushkin with a copy of the portrait:

To the victorious pupil from the defeated teacher on that most solemn day when he finished his poem *Ruslan and Lyudmila*, Mar. 26, 1820, Good Friday.

In a five-line inscription, *To Zhukovski's Portrait* (an earlier portrait, by Pyotr Sokolov, published in the *Messenger of Europe*, 1817), paying deserved tribute to the evocative melody of his friend's poetry, Pushkin said late in 1817 or early in 1818 (ll. 1–2):

*Egó stihóv plenitel'naya sládst'*  
*Proydyót vekóv zavistlivuyu dal' . . .*

The captivating sweetness of his verses  
shall cross the envious distance of the ages . . .

(*Plenitel'naya sládst'*, incidentally, occurs in Mrs. Radcliffe's *The Romance of the Forest* [1791], ch. 1: "[Adeline's] features . . . had gained from distress an expression of captivating sweetness." But Pushkin was thinking of *douceur captivante*, a common formula of the time.)

\*

As early as 1816, in a poem of 122 iambic hexameters dedicated to Zhukovski (starting *Blagosloví, poét*, "Bless

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me, poet," which sounds comically like the "bless me, Reverend Father," *blagoslovi, vladiko*, of the Russian church ritual), Pushkin mentioned the three poets of *EO*, Eight : II, in a somewhat similar combination: "Dmitriev praised with a smile my feeble talent," "Derzhavin in tears embraced me with a faltering arm" (or would have, had not our poet fled), and "Zhukovski gave me his hand in token of sacred friendship."

### VARIANT

13-14. Canceled in fair copy:

call me to take the glorious road  
and tell me: Be my brother.

### III

4, 9 / frisky, friskd / *rézvuyu, rezvilas'*; 5, 12 / turbulent, turbulently / *búynih, búyno*: These awkward repetitions are difficult to explain, given the tremendous trouble Pushkin took over the beginning of this canto.

13-14. / and I was proud 'mong friends of my volatile mistress / *Podrúgoy vétrenoy moéy*: The same intonation and rhymes occur in Baratinski's *The Concubine* (*Nalozhnitsa*; composed 1829-30), ll. 779-80:

To his volatile mistress  
he daily was more dear . . .

*Podrúge vétrenoy svoéy*  
*On ezhdnévno bíl miléy . . .*

### IV

1-11 The instrumentation of the first eleven lines in the final text of this stanza (of which a lexical translation is

given below) is truly remarkable. The alliterations are built around the vowel *a* (which is also the sound of the unaccented *o*) and the consonants *l*, *s*, *z*, *k*.

- No yá otstál ot ih soyúza*  
 But I dropped out of their alliance  
*I vdál' bezhdál . . . oná za mnóy.*  
 and afar fled. She after me.  
*Kak chásto láskovaya Múza*  
 How often the gentle Muse
- 4 *Mne uslazhdála pút' nemóy*  
 to me made sweet the way [which was] mute  
*Volshebstvom táynogo rasskáza!*  
 with the bewitchment of a secret tale!  
*Kak chásto, po skalám Kavkáza,*  
 How often on the crags of the Caucasus  
*Oná Lenóroy, pri luné,*  
 she Lenorelike, by the light of the moon,
- 8 *So mnóy skakála na koné!*  
 with me galloped on a steed!  
*Kak chásto po bregám Tavridi*  
 How often on the shores of Tauris  
*Oná menyá vo mglé nochnóy*  
 she me in gloom of night  
*Vodíla slúshat' shúm morskóy . . .*  
 led to listen the sound of the sea . . .

- . . . . . al . . . . . za  
 . . . . . al . . . aza . . .  
 ka . . . as . . . ask . . . . . za
- 4 . . . . . sla . . . . . la . . . . .  
 . al . . . . . as kaza  
 ka . . . as . . . askala . ka . kaza  
 . . al . . . . . l . . .
- 8 . . . . . skakala . . ka . .  
 ka . . . as . . . . .  
 . . . . . l . . . . .  
 . . . lasl . . . . . sk . .

The play of inner assonances that is so striking in *EO* and other poems by Pushkin occurs, not infrequently, in English verse. One remembers Dryden's beautifully

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counterpointed lines (in his imitation, 1692, of Juvenal, *Satires*, VI) in which the confusion of intoxication is rendered by words echoing and mimicking each other (ll. 422–23; my italics):

When *vapours* to their swimming brains advance,  
And *double tapers* on the *table dance*.

“Table” combines the first syllable of “tapers” and the second of “double”; “vapours” rhymes with “tapers”; and the initial consonants of these two words are repeated in the terminal rhyme, “advance–dance.” One also recalls the technique by means of which Wordsworth, in *Poems on the Naming of Places*, VI (composed 1800–02; pub. 1815), renders the surf of an imaginary sea, heard through the murmur of a fir grove (ll. 106–08; my italics):

... and, with a store  
Of indistinguishable sympathies,  
Mingling most earnest *wishes* for the day . . .

1–2 / But I dropped out of their alliance—and fled afar . . .  
she followed me / *No yá otstál ot íh soyúza | Ivdál' bezhál*  
. . . *oná za mnóy*: I note here a curious reminiscence,  
the faint echo of a passage in Batyushkov's *Bacchante*  
(twenty-eight lines in trochaic tetrameter, 1816, imitating Parny's *Déguisements de Vénus*, IX, 1808 edn.):

The young nymph dropped back.  
I then followed her—she fled . . .

*Nímfa yúnaya otstála.*  
*Yá za néy . . . oná bezhála . . .*

2 I am reminded by the intonation of Pushkin's line, and by the sense of Batyushkov's trochaic one, of a line in *The Fall*, a poem by Sir Charles Sedley (c. 1639–1701), of whom neither could have known anything:

I follow'd close, the Fair still flew . . .

2 / fled afar; 6 / Caucasia's crags; 9 / shores of Tauris;  
v : 3 / Moldavia; 11 / in my garden: Pushkin's peregrinations have been alluded to several times in this commentary. After he fled (or rather was expelled) from Petersburg in the beginning of May, 1820, Pushkin spent most of the summer in the Caucasus and then stayed for three weeks in southern Crimea. These two stages are commemorated by the first draft of *The Caucasian Captive* (begun August, 1820) and *The Fountain of Bahchisaray*, which he wrote at his next official domicile, Kishinev, in the general region of Moldavia or Bessarabia (the scene of his *Gypsies*, 1823-24), where he had his headquarters from autumn, 1820, to summer, 1823, thence moving to Odessa. "My garden" refers to his countryseat Mihaylovskoe, in the province of Pskov, to which he was confined by governmental order from August, 1824, to September, 1826.

It has become a commonplace with commentators to deplore Pushkin's "exile." Actually, it may be argued that during those six years he wrote more and better than he would, had he remained in St. Petersburg. He was not permitted to return to the capital; this no doubt greatly irritated our poet during his years of provincial office and rural seclusion (1820-24, 1824-26). The biographer should not, however, exaggerate the hardships of his banishment. His chief, General Inzov, was a cultured and sympathetic person. Pushkin's vegetation in Kishinev was an easier life than that of many a military man gambling and drinking in the provincial hole where his duty took him and his regiment. His life of fashionable dissipation and romantic adventure in gay, sophisticated Odessa was a very pleasant form of exile indeed, despite his feud with Count Vorontsov. And the quiet of Mihaylovskoe, with the friendly Osipov family

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at the end of the pinewood ride, was in fact sought out by our poet again very soon after he was permitted to reside where he wished.

6 / on . . . crags / *po skalám*; 9 / on the shores / *po bregám*:  
The preposition *po* cannot be rendered by one word in English. It combines the idea of “on” (*na*) and that of “along” (*vdol’*).

7–8 / *Oná Lenóroy, pri luné, | So mnóy skakála na koné*:  
*Lenore* is the celebrated ballad written at Gelliehausen, near Göttingen, in the summer of 1773, by Gottfried August Bürger (1747–94). He had been assiduously reading the *Reliques of Ancient English Poetry* (3 vols., London, 1765), collected by Thomas Percy (1729–1811), later Bishop of Dromore. *Lenore* consists of 256 lines, or thirty-two stanzas of eight iambic lines, with a rhyme scheme going babaccee and with the masculine-ending lines in tetrameter and the feminine-ending ones in trimeter—a most ingenious arrangement. This pattern is exactly imitated by Zhukovski in his mediocre translation of 1831 (*Lenora*), and is exactly the stanza of Pushkin’s *The Bridegroom* (*Zhenih*, 1825), a poem far surpassing in artistic genius anything that Bürger wrote. His *Lenore* owes a great deal to old English ballads; his achievement is to have consolidated and concentrated in a technically perfect piece the moon-tomb-ghost theme that was, in a sense, the logical result of Death’s presence in Arcadia, and the cornerstone of Goethe’s Romanticism.

Scott’s version of the ballad—*William and Helen* (1796)—is well known (ll. 113–16):

We saddle late—from Hungary  
I rode since darkness fell;  
And to its bourne we both return  
Before the matin-bell.

Incidentally, the idea of magically rapid transit occurs, with a curious echoing ring about it, in *The Song of Igor's Campaign*, where in one famous passage or interpolation, concerning a necromancing prince (Vseslav, Prince of Polotsk, 1044-1101), the latter is said to have been able to travel ("enveloped in a blue mist") so fast across Russia that while the matin bells were ringing at his departure from Polotsk he would be in time to hear them still chiming in Kiev; and from Kiev he would reach the Black Sea before cockcrowing. This Vseslav is a kind of Slavic Michael Scot (c. 1175-c. 1234).

Zhukovski imitated Bürger's *Lenore* twice: in 1808 (*Lyudmila*, an approximate version, in 126 tetrametric couplets, among which we find one of the sources of Pushkin's information on *Lenore* in such a passage as: "the moon glistens, the dale silvers, the dead man with the maid gallops") and in his wonderful ballad of 1812, *Svetlana*, which I discuss in my n. to Three : v : 2-4.

Zhukovski had German, but most Russian men of letters knew Bürger's ballad only from Mme de Staël's *De l'Allemagne*, which contains an analysis of it, and from French versions. The title of the first French version beautifully brings out the method: *Léonora*, "traduction de l'anglais" (i.e., based upon W. R. Spencer's English version) by S. Ad. de La Madelaine (Paris, 1811). Another ridiculous French imitation came from the dainty pen of Pauline de Bradi (Paris, 1814), who at least knew the German text. I think that this is the model of Pavel Katenin's *Olga* (1815), a clumsy thing in trochaic tetrameter. A much finer French version is Paul Lehr's *Lénore* (Strasbourg, 1834):

Ses bras de lis étreignent son amant,  
Au grand galop ils volent hors d'haleine . . .

This is excellent music, though only a paraphrase of Bürger's ll. 148-49.

## Commentary

After Lenore, grieving over her William's absence, has thoroughly upbraided Providence (this passage was considerably toned down by Zhukovski), her lover, a dead man by now, comes to fetch her (ll. 97–105):

Und aussen, horch! ging's trap trap trap,  
Als wie von Rosseshufen,  
Und klirrend stieg ein Reiter ab,  
An des Geländers Stufen;  
Und horch! und horch! den Pfortenring  
Ganz lose, leise klinglingling!  
Dann kamen durch die Pforte  
Vernehmlich diese Worte:

“Holla, Holla! Thu auf, mein Kind! . . .”

The horseman warns Lenore that it is a hundred-mile ride to their nuptial bed in Bohemia, and, as transpires after a few more stanzas, this bed is his grave. Off they go in the famous lines (149):

Und hurre hurre, hop hop hop! . . .

and (157–58):

. . . Der Mond scheint hell!  
Hurra! die Todten reiten schnell!

At one point (st. xxv) they pass by a gibbet in the stark moonlight.

I have often wondered why Pushkin chose to identify his Muse with that frightened girl, and although no doubt his choice may be understood as an acknowledgment of the romanticism that used to tinge his early inspirations, one is tempted to decipher the figures of five spectral Decembrists dangling from those gallows by the autobiographical road over which he swiftly passes in his retrospective fancy of 1829.

12 / Nereid's / *Nereidi*: A sea nymph, daughter of the sea-god Nereus.

VARIANT

1-4 The fair copy reads:

But fate at me cast looks of wrath  
and bore me far. . . . She followed me.  
How oft the gentle maid  
would sweeten the nocturnal hour . . .

v

1-4 "And having forgotten of the capital distant | and the  
glitter and the noisy feasts, | in the wilds of Moldavia  
sad | she . . . the humble tents," etc.

3 / Moldavia: Moldova in Romanian; part of the province  
of Bessarabia, extreme SW Russia. It has already been  
mentioned with the same intonation of melancholy re-  
moteness in *One* : VIII : 13. And see n. to *Eight* : IV : 2,  
6, 9.

4-9 Pushkin has in mind his impressions of 1820-23, when  
he resided in Kishinev, capital of Bessarabia, and on two  
or three occasions toured the surrounding country. Thus,  
in December, 1821, he took a ten-day trip to Izmail. He  
revisited Moldavia briefly in January, 1824, going to  
Tiraspol and Kaushani (Kaushany), where he sought in  
vain the traces of Mazepa's grave. The main artistic re-  
sult of all this was *The Gypsies* (*Tsigani*), a romantic  
poem of 549 iambic tetrameters, begun in winter, 1823,  
in Odessa and finished in a fair copy Oct. 10, 1824, at  
Mihaylovskoe.

"The scant, strange tongues and songs of the steppe"  
refers to two pieces: (1) some indifferent couplets in  
amphibrachic tetrameter composed by Pushkin Nov. 14,  
1820, and called *Moldavian Song* (known as *The Black  
Shawl*), which became a popular ballad (and is said to  
have enjoyed, in a Romanian version, a new lease of

## Commentary

life as a "folk song"), and (2) the excellent little song of twenty anapaestic dimeters given Zemfira to sing in *The Gypsies*:

Husband old, husband fierce,  
cut me [*rezh' menyá*], burn me [*zhgi menyá*];  
I stay firm, unafraid  
of the knife or the fire.

There is said to be a genuine Moldavian gypsy song that goes "arde-ma, fride-ma" (fide Pushkin). In Romanian, *arde* is "to burn" and *fride*, "to fry" (Leonid Grossman, *Pushkin* [Moscow, 1939], transliterates *ardi ma, frídzhé ma*).

George Henry Borrow (1803-81), *Targum; or, Metrical Translations from Thirty Languages and Dialects* (St. Petersburg, 1835), p. 19, renders the song of Pushkin's Zemfira as:

Hoary man, hateful man!  
Gash my frame, burn my frame;  
Bold I am, scoff I can  
At the sword, at the flame.

Prosper Mérimée, in his inexact and limp prose version of Pushkin's poem, *Les Bohémiens* (1852), renders Zemfira's song as "Vieux jaloux, méchant jaloux, coupe-moi, brûle-moi," etc.; and thence it is in part transferred by Henri Meilhac and Ludovic Halévy, in their libretto of Georges Bizet's opera *Carmen* (1875), based on Mérimée's novella of that name (1847), to Carmen, who derisively sings it in I, ix.

Finally, Ivan Turgenev translated this nomadic song from *The Gypsies* for Edmond de Goncourt, who gives it as a "chanson du pays" to the gypsy woman Stepanida Roudak (also supplied by his Russian friend) in his mediocre *Les Frères Zemganno* (1879), ch. 8:

Vieux époux, barbare époux,  
Egorge-moi! brûle-moi!

and the last quatrain:

Je te hais!  
 Je te méprise!  
 C'est un autre que j'aime  
 Et je me meurs en l'aimant!

11 See n. to Eight : IV : 2, 6, 9.

13-14 / *S pechál'noy dúmoyu v ocháh, | S Frantsúzkoy knízhkoyu v rukáh*: Perhaps this is better rendered by:

sad brooding in her eyes,  
 a French book in her hands.

This sounds like a neat little summary of the closing lines of *La Mélancolie*, by Gabriel Marie Jean Baptiste Legouvé (1764-1812):

. . . tendre Mélancolie!  
 . . . . .  
 Ah! si l'art à nos yeux veut tracer ton image,  
 Il doit peindre une vierge, assise sous l'ombrage,  
 Qui, rêveuse et livrée à de vagues regrets,  
 Nourrit au bruit des flots un chagrin plein d'attraits,  
 Laisse voir, en ouvrant ses paupières timides,  
 Des pleurs voluptueux dans ses regards humides,  
 Et se plaît aux soupirs qui soulèvent son sein,  
 Un cyprès devant elle, et Werther à la main.

(*Werther*, pronounced "Verter," rhyming with *vert*—abbreviated title of Goethe's novel in a French version.)

Although this has nothing to do with Pushkin, and only concerns the harrowed translator, I choose to note that, by a kind of prosodic miracle, the combination of an iambic pentameter and an iambic dimeter, in my English, can be retitled and recut to form two perfect trochaic tetrameters:

With a sad thought in her eyes,  
 With a French book in her hands.

VARIANT

10 A fair-copy variant of this line reads:

but the wind blew, the thunder crashed . . .

The allusion is to the events of July, 1824—Pushkin's expulsion from the civil service, and from Odessa, to rustication at Mihaylovskoe.

VI

2 / high-life rout / *svétskiy ráut*: The term *raut* was still used in St. Petersburg society as late as 1916. Vyazemski, in a letter to his wife (Aug. 1, 1833), has the jocular barbarism, *fash'onabel'nïy raut*. The French called it *raout*.

3 / steppe / *stepnĭe*: In a larger sense than the "steppe" of v : 9; "agrestic."

6 / *Voénnih frántov, diplomátov*: It has been suggested (I do not remember by whom) that perhaps a misprint in all three editions (1832, 1833, and 1837) caused a comma to disappear after *voénnih*, a word that may mean either "military" or "military men." The comma would, of course, give the line a much more Pushkinian cut (besides disposing of the rather too-ostentatious image of "military fops"):

of military men, of fops, of diplomats.

14 / around . . . about / *Vkrug . . . ókolo*: The comparison is trivial, and the expression, clumsy. The whole stanza, in fact, is poor.

VARIANTS

5 The separate edition of Eight (1832) has:

Through an array of pompous magnates . . .

The draft of this stanza is on the cover of the fair copy of the canto.

10-11 Draft (2387A, f. 17<sup>r</sup>):

the slow turmoil of guests,  
apparel, feathers, speech . . .

## VII

6 / nebulous / *tumánnŭy*: “Misty,” “bemisted,” “with clouded brow” (a synonym of *pasmurnŭy*, “overcast,” and *sumrachnŭy*, “gloomy,” *ténébreux*, as used to characterize Onegin).

## VARIANTS

1-7 Fair copy:

Who there among them in the distance  
as a superfluous something stands?  
With none, it seems, is he in contact,  
he speaks to hardly any man  
.  
.  
.  
.  
.  
.  
he seems a stranger everywhere.

And these canceled lines in the fair copy (4-6):

lost, and forgotten, and alone,  
among the young aristocrats,  
among the transient diplomats . . .

## VIII

<sup>1</sup> / grown more peaceful / *usmirilsya*: The connotation is “tamed by life,” “quieted down” in relation to “passions,” etc.

2 | *kórchit* . . . *chudaká*: The verb *korchit'* combines two ideas: "to pose" and "to grimace." Impersonation rather

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than imitation is implied, and this precludes the use here of "to ape" or "to mimic."

5-7 Maturin's *Melmoth the Wanderer*, *l'Homme errant*, with the stamp of Fate and Eternity on his livid brow (see n. to Three : XII : 9).

"Cosmopolitan," a person at home in any country, but especially in Italy if an Englishman, and in France if a Russian. Onegin, however, had never been abroad.

"Patriot," a nationalist, a Slavophile. We know from *Onegin's Journey*, on which he started early in 1821, that he had gone through that phase and had come back disillusioned to Petersburg in August, 1824.

Byron's *Childe Harold*, friend of the mountains, companion of the caverns, familiar of the ocean, but in man's dwelling a restless stranger who looks at the painted world with a smile of despair and crushes his enemies with the curse of forgiveness.

"Quaker," a member of the Society of Friends, the religious sect founded by George Fox in England in the middle of the seventeenth century.

"Bigot," a blind worshiper of his own intolerance.

The bizarre beau of the time, while sitting in a state of torpor with his feet on the bars of the grate, might balance "between becoming a misanthrope and a democrat" (Maria Edgeworth, *Ennui*, ch. 5).

## VIII-IX

Brodski's well-developed sociological ear distinguishes in the reported speech of these stanzas (and in XII : 1-7) a volley of abuse hurled at Onegin by conservative aristocrats. This is, of course, nonsense. Brodski forgets that Tatiana, too, questioned Eugene's genuineness. Actually, the hubbub of queries and answers here is a kind of artistic double talk on our poet's part. The reader must

be made to forget for the time being that Onegin is Lenski's murderer. The "sensible people" (XII : 4) are merely the imagined reviewers of the canto. The statements that we are busybodies, that we dislike wit and cling to traditional values, had been the stock in trade of literary eloquence since the birth of satire and should not be taken seriously here. If they are, the whole passage becomes meaningless since such a phrase as "the rashness of fiery souls" is the last thing we could think of applying to Onegin, and such phrases are really smuggled in here only to create the right atmosphere for and prepare the transition to Onegin's passionately falling in love with Tatiana.

IX

8 / *Chto úm, lyubyá prostór, tesnít*: The meaning is: intelligence, needing elbowroom, squeezes fools out. *Prostór* has several meanings, all depending on the idea of spaciousness, such as "scope," "range," "open expanse," etc. The word for "space" itself is *prostranstvo*.

12 / grave are trifles / *vázhnĭ vzdóri*: Cf. André Chénier, *La République des lettres*, frag. VIII (ed. Walter): "S'il fuit les graves riens, noble ennui du beau monde . . ."

X, XI, XII

These three stanzas, composed in Moscow, are dated by Pushkin Oct. 2, 1829. They were at the time visualized by him as the beginning of the canto (note the proemial ring of x), which was to contain Onegin's Journey and which was to come after Chapter Seven. The established text to Eight (then Nine) was begun Dec. 24, 1829, in St. Petersburg, at Demut's Hotel. A fortnight later, in a letter to Benkendorf, he asked permission (which was

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refused) to go abroad as a private citizen—or to accompany a Russian mission to China.

### X

- 1 The not-very-new advice to be “young in one’s youth” had already been extended by Pushkin in a short poem of 1819 to the poetaster Yakov Tolstoy (1791–1867), whom he had met at dinners of the Green Lamp, another of those champagne clubs to which commentators are prone to ascribe too much revolutionary and literary significance.

- 3 Miss Deutsch serenely rhymes (with “merry”):

Who ripened, like good port or sherry . . .

### XII

- 1–7 See n. to Eight : VIII–IX.

- 7 A reference to Pushkin’s poem *The Demon* (October or November, 1823). It will be noticed that the first lines of this poem, given below, prelude Eight : I : 1 :

In those days when to me were new  
all the impressions of existence—  
and eyes of maids, and sough of grove,  
and in the night the singing of the nightingale;  
when elevated feelings,  
freedom, glory, and love,  
and inspired arts,  
so strongly stirred my blood;  
the hours of hopes and of delights  
with sudden anguish having shaded,  
then did a certain wicked genius  
begin to visit me in secret.  
Sad were our meetings:

his smile, his wondrous glance,  
 his galling speech,  
 cold venom poured into my soul.  
 With inexhaustible detraction  
 he tempted Providence;  
 he called the beautiful a fancy,  
 held inspiration in contempt,  
 did not believe in love and freedom,  
 looked mockingly on life,  
 and nothing in all nature  
 did he desire to bless.

This “demon” is connected with the “Byronic” personality of Aleksandr Raevski (1795–1868), whom Pushkin first met in Pyatigorsk in the summer of 1820 and of whom he saw a good deal in Odessa, in the summer of 1823, and at intervals later, till the summer of 1824. In the draft of a letter to him, October, 1823, Pushkin calls Raevski his “constant teacher in moral affairs” and remarks upon his “Melmothlike character.” When, in pt. III of the literary almanac *Mnemosyne* (c. Oct. 20, 1824), this piece appeared under the title *My Demon* (changed to *The Demon* when republished in the *Northern Flowers* for 1825 and in Pushkin’s *Poems*, 1826, from which text I translate it), some readers thought they recognized Raevski, and Pushkin wrote, but did not publish, a refutation. In this MS note (1827) our poet, writing of himself in the third person, advises readers that his *Demon* is to be regarded not as the portrait of any particular individual but as the spirit influencing the morality of the age, a spirit of negation and doubt (*Works* 1936, V, 273).

Pushkin left a tentative continuation of *The Demon* in rough draft, of which the last lines read:

I started looking with his eyes  
 . . .  
 with his dim words  
 my soul would sound in unison . . .

## Commentary

Very similar lines Pushkin planned to use at one time in continuation of One : XLVI (see n. to ll. 5-7 of that stanza).

An interesting sequel to all this comes in the form of Pushkin's poem *The Angel*, which is a kind of amendment to *The Demon*. It is a not-uncolorful but on the whole mediocre little poem, a cross between the Byronic elegy and the Gallic madrigal, marked by very routine rhymes and a telltale poverty of scud modulation\* (o, III, III, III, I, III, III, III, o, o, III, III, in contrast to the rhythm of *The Demon*: o, I-III, o, III, III, III, I-III, II, III, III, o, II, o, o, III, o, I-III, I-III, III, I-III, o, II, I, I-III). It was first published in the 1828 issue of the *Northern Flowers* and then appeared, in the form in which it is here translated, in Pushkin's *Poems* (1829), where it is dated 1827. Here it is:

In the doorway of Eden shone  
a tender angel's drooping head,  
while, gloomy and unruly, flew  
a demon over hell's abyss.

The spirit of negation, the spirit of doubt  
gazed at the stainless spirit  
and for the first time knew  
a melting heart's involuntary glow.

Quoth he: "Forgive me, I have seen you,  
and not in vain to me you shone:  
not everything in heaven I hated,  
not everything on earth I scorned."

It is surmised that the thing refers to Countess Vorontsov and Aleksandr Raevski, thus consolidating the presumed link between the fictional Onegin and the stylized Raevski (see n. to One : XLVI : 5-7).

A decade later, from these two poems the main strain of Lermontov's romantic epic *Demon* was evolved.

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\*See App. II, "Notes on Prosody."

9-14 The intonation here, especially in l. 13, is very like that in a passage of Chateaubriand's *René* (ed. Weil, pp. 41-42): "Sans parens, sans amis, pour ainsi dire seul sur la terre, n'ayant point encore aimé, j'étois accablé d'une surabondance de vie."

13 / *Bez slúzhbī, bez zhenī, bez dél*: Without any military or civil position in the government service; without a wife; and without any affairs, private or professional.

### XIII

1 / A restlessness took hold of him . . . / *Im ovladélo bespokóystvo*: A Gallicism; e.g., Chateaubriand, *Mémoires d'outre-tombe*, entry of 1838, on the death of the Duke of Enghien (ed. Levaillant, pt. II, bk. IV, ch. 2): ". . . Il me prend . . . une inquiétude qui m'obligerait à changer de climat."

See also Maria Edgeworth, *Ennui*, ch. 1: ". . . an aversion to the place I was in . . . a childish love of locomotion."

2 / to a change of places / *k pereméne mést*: The same Gallicism (*changement de lieu*) occurs in Griboedov's *Woe from Wit*, act IV, ll. 477-79:

Those feelings . . .  
which were not cooled in me either by distance,  
or by amusement, or by change of places.

This is also curiously close to the description of Len-ski's constancy in *Two*: XX: 8-14:

Neither the cooling [quality of] distance,  
nor the long years of separation . . .

10 / *Dostúpniy chíuvstvu odnomú*: An ambiguous line. "Accessible to one sensation only" (say, ennui or remorse) or

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“moved only by feeling” (not “reason”)? Neither makes good sense.

- 14 / from boat to ball / *s korablyá na bál*: An allusion to Chatski's arrival, in I, vii, of Griboedov's *Woe from Wit*. He suddenly makes his entry on a winter morning, in 1819, at Famusov's house in Moscow, whither he returns after three years spent in foreign climes (act I, l. 449). He has driven more than seven hundred versts (above four hundred miles) in forty-five hours (l. 303), without stopping, i.e., traveling post. This obviously refers to the St. Petersburg-Moscow stretch. He has come via Petersburg from abroad, apparently from a watering resort (in Germany? Liza's remark, l. 277, may also be construed as his having visited the Caucasus for his health at the start of his journey). He has, it would seem, been to France (obliquely mentioned in III, viii). The *korabl'* (“ship,” “boat”) in Pushkin's reference is a telescoped reminiscence of Chatski's having arrived in Russia from abroad, evidently by water (i.e., the Baltic), and of Sofia's (act I, l. 331) observing that she had been inquiring even of sailors if they had seen him passing in a mail coach. The “ball” refers to the party given at the close of the same day at Famusov's house in act III.

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At first blush, it would seem that Onegin has arrived in St. Petersburg by sea from a foreign country beyond the Baltic. But various complications arise:

How far—if at all—should one be influenced in one's understanding of the established text by details of plot and characterization explicitly mentioned by the author only in such MS passages as he had preserved but not published? And if some degree of influence be admitted, should it depend on the category of the MS (draft, fair copy, struck-out readings, etc.), as well as on special

reasons for its not being published by the author (e.g., pressure of censorship, fear of offending the living, etc.)? I am inclined to rely on the established text only.

In the established text of *EO* we find nothing of a positive nature to exclude the possibility of Onegin's having returned to Russia from a trip to western Europe (after the visit to the shores of the Black Sea, described in the passages of *Onegin's Journey* published by Pushkin). When using *all* the material we have, we find that, starting from St. Petersburg (where he had arrived soon after his duel) in summer, 1821, Onegin traveled to Moscow, Nizhni, Astrahan (Astrakhan), and the Caucasus, was in the Crimea in autumn, 1823, then visited Pushkin in Odessa, and in August, 1824, returned to St. Petersburg, thus closing the complete circle of his Russian tour, with no possibility of any trip abroad.

When in Eight : XIX Tatiana casually asks Onegin whether he had come to St. Petersburg from his country place, his reply is not given, but we can easily hear Onegin answering: "No, I came straight from Odessa"; but only by a great effort of the imagination can we have him say: "As a matter of fact, I was abroad: traversed western Europe from Marseilles to Lübeck—enfin, je viens de débarquer." I would suggest, without probing the problem any further, that the transition from deck to dance has no geographic reality and is a mere literary formula derived from a situation in *Woe from Wit*, where the "ship" is also more or less of a metaphor.

See my nn. to *Onegin's Journey*, where I give all variants and rejections.

There is another little problem here: logically, the events and moods described in the twenty-one lines from XII : 8 to the end of XIII seem to represent a consecutive series, and then Onegin should be twenty-nine now, in 1824; but stylistically one might be tempted to regard the whole of XIII as merely an illustration and develop-

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ment of the comments closing the preceding stanza (XII: 10-14), and then Onegin would be twenty-six now, in 1824, in which case a pluperfect turn (which Russian does not possess) should be given to XIII ("A restlessness had taken hold of him," etc.).

### XIV-XV

In these two stanzas Tatiana's entrance with Prince N., her husband (the "imposing general" of XIV: 4), is observed by Pushkin's wide-awake Muse, not by sluggish and sulky Onegin. *He* will notice her only in XVI (beginning with l. 8), by which time she has joined another fashionable lady. Meanwhile Prince N. has walked up to his kinsman—whom he has not seen for several years—and the Spanish ambassador is paying his respects to Tatiana.

### XIV

9 / without those little mannerisms / *Bez étiĥ mǎlen'kih uzhimok*: Fr. *sans ces petites mignardises*.

"... Whatever is evidently borrowed becomes vulgar. Original affectation is sometimes good *ton*; imitated affectation always bad," writes Lady Frances to her son Henry Pelham in Edward Bulwer-Lytton's tedious *Pelham; or, Adventures of a Gentleman* (3 vols., London, 1828), vol. I, ch. 26, a work that Pushkin knew well from a French version (which I have not seen): *Pelham, ou les Aventures d'un gentilhomme anglais*, tr. ("librement") Jean Cohen (4 vols., Paris, 1828).

9-10 / mannerisms . . . artifices: Although the following beautiful passage refers not to Russian wives of the 1820's but to English misses of a century before, it does convey some idea of what these airs and mannerisms

might be; letter signed Matilda Mohair, written by Steele, *The Spectator*, no. 492 (Sept. 24, 1712):

*Glycera* has a dancing Walk, and keeps Time in her ordinary Gate. *Chloe*, her Sister . . . comes into the Room . . . with a familiar Run. *Dulcissa* takes Advantage of the Approach of the Winter, and has introduc'd a very pretty Shiver, closing up her Shoulders, and shrinking as she moves. . . . Here's a little Country Girl that's very cunning. . . . The Air that she takes is to come into Company after a Walk, and is very successfully out of Breath upon occasion. Her Mother . . . calls her Romp . . .

13 / *comme il faut*; xv : 14, "vulgar": In a letter to his wife from Boldino to Petersburg, Pushkin wrote, Oct. 30, 1833:

I am not jealous . . . but you know how I loathe everything that smacks of your Moscow missy, everything that is not *comme il faut*, everything that is "vulgar."

13 / [Shishkov]: The reference is to the leader of the Archaic group of writers, Admiral Aleksandr Shishkov (1754–1841), publicist, statesman, president of the Academy of Sciences, and a cousin of my great-grandmother.

Shishkov's name is left out in all three editions (1832, 1833, 1837), but the presence of its first letter (*Sh*) in the fair copy, and a marginal gloss by Vyazemski in his copy of the novel, settle a problem, to the solution of which all logic points. Poor Küchelbecker was pathetically wrong when in his prison diary (entry of Feb. 21, 1832, Sveaborg Fortress) he bitterly hinted that the dots stood for his Christian name (Wilhelm) and that Pushkin was poking fun at his addiction to mixing Russian and French in his letters. Actually, he was closer in many ways to the Archaists than to the Moderns.

Facetious references to the champion of Slavisms were frequent in the first third of the century. Thus Karam-

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zin, Shishkov's amiable opponent, writes in a letter to Dmitriev, June 30, 1814:

You are angry with me—or am I mistaken? . . . I know your “tenderness” [*nezhnost'*]<sup>1</sup>—I would have said “delicacy” [*delikatnost'*, Fr. *délicatesse*], but I fear Shishkov.

Shishkov had the following to say in 1808, in commenting on his own translation of two French essays by La Harpe (I quote from Pekarski's excellent notes to his and Grot's edition of Karamzin's letters to Dmitriev, St. Petersburg, 1866):

The monstrous French Revolution, having trampled upon all that was based on the principles of Faith, Honor, and Reason, engendered in France a new language, far different from that of Fénelon and Racine.

This is presumably a reference to Chateaubriand, whose genius and originality owed nothing, of course, to any “revolution”; actually, the literature produced by the French Revolution was even more conventional, colorless, and banal than the style of Fénelon and Racine; this is a phenomenon comparable to the literary results of the Russian Revolution, with its “proletarian novels,” which are, really, hopelessly bourgeois.

“Simultaneously,” continues Shishkov, “our letters, too, following the model set by the new French and Frenchified-German literatures, started to lose all resemblance to Russian.”

This is an attack on Karamzin's prose of the 1790's. It was in order to stop this dangerous trend that Shishkov wrote, in 1803, his *Dissertation on the Old and New Styles in the Russian Language*, followed by an addendum in 1804. (Pushkin possessed an 1818 edition of that work.) What he attacked was liberal thought rather than Gallicisms and neologisms; but he is mainly remembered for the uncouth and artificial Russisms with which he attempted to replace the current terms that had been

automatically adopted in Russia from western European sources for the designation of a German abstraction or a French trinket. The struggle between him and the followers of Karamzin is of historical interest,\* but it had no effect whatsoever upon the evolution of the language.

On Mar. 25, 1811, Shishkov founded the group *Beseda lyubiteley rossiyskogo slova* (Concourse of Lovers of the Russian Verb). If we discount the nominal membership of two major poets, Derzhavin and Krilov, we can concur with Russian critics in defining the activities of the group as the naïve re-creations of elderly grandees. Its doomed purpose was to support "classical" (really, neo-classical or pseudoclassical) forms of Russian against Gallicisms and other infections. Another, younger, group of literary men took up the cudgels, and there ensued a rather insipid "literary war" on the lines of those *querelles* of the *anciens* with the *modernes* which are so tedious to read about in histories of French literature.

It has been quite a tradition with Russian historians of literature, ever since the middle of the last century, to assign exaggerated importance to the Arzamas group, which arose under the following circumstances.

Prince Shahovskoy, a Besedist, wrote and produced, Sept. 23, 1815, a weak play that contained a skit on Zhukovski (*The Lipetsk Waters*; see my n. to One : XVIII : 4-10). The future well-known statesman Count Dmitri Bludov (1785-1869) countered the attack on his friend with an (even more wretched) squib modeled on French polemical badinage and entitled *A Vision in an Arzamas Tavern, Published by the Society of Learned People*. Arzamas, a town in the province of Nizhni, was deemed as provincial as Lipetsk. It was famed for its poultry and was often mentioned in the gazettes because

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\*Foreshadowing as it did the mid-century antagonism between the politico-philosophical Slavophiles (*Slavyanofily*) and Westerners (*Zapadniki*).

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an artist of plebeian origin, with more energy than genius, Aleksandr Stupin (1775–1861), had founded there, about 1810, the first art school in Russia. The paradox (enlightenment coming from stagnation) tickled the Russian sense of humor. Moreover, Arzamas was a kind of incomplete anagram of Karamzin, the leader of the Moderns.

Zhukovski and Bludov founded the Arzamas Society (*Arzamasskoe obshchestvo bezvestnih lyudey*, Arzamasan Society of Obscure People) Oct. 14, 1815, and the first meeting was held soon after. It was meant to stand up against the Ancients for colloquial simplicity of idiom and for modern forms of Russian (many of which had been more or less artificially derived from the French).

The meetings of Arzamas consisted of roast-geese dinners followed by the reading of painfully facetious minutes and trivial verse. The carousers, of whom there were seldom more than half a dozen (out of the final number of twenty), donned red calpacks: these *bonnets rouges* are gloated upon by leftist commentators, who forget, however, that some of the heads that these caps covered belonged (e.g., in the case of the leaders of the group, Zhukovski and Karamzin) to ardent champions of monarchy, religion, and genteel literature, and that the thread of travesty that ran through the proceedings of the club precluded the presence of any serious political (or artistic) purpose. The club's juvenile symbols had a deadening effect on the few poems of Pushkin in which the Arzamas facetiae were reflected. It should also be remembered that Zhukovski's humor was at best that of a fabulist (e.g., monkeys and cats are a priori comic) and a child (the belly is comic). The nicknames by which the members of the group went were taken from his ballads: Zhukovski was Svetlana; Bludov, Cassandra; Vyazemski, Asmodeus; Aleksandr Turgenev, Eol's Harp; Vasilii Pushkin, Vot (Fr. *voici, voilà*, "here," "there," "lo!"),

and so on. When Pushkin joined this merry organization in the autumn of 1817, he was dubbed Sverchok (Cricket), the source being *Svetlana*, v, 13 (see my nn. to Five : x : 6 and xvii : 3-4). The whole affair, as so frequently happens with such things, soon became a bore and waned, despite Zhukovski's efforts to inject life into it. It disintegrated in 1818.

If Shishkov's group was notable for its insufferable black-letter pedantry and reactionary attitudes, Arzamas, on the other hand, was characterized by an archness of humor that sets one's teeth on edge. Its liberalism (in contrast to the obscurantism of the Ancients) had no political significance: Zhukovski, for example, was as staunch a supporter of monarchy and religion as was Shishkov. Russian historians of literature have vastly overrated the importance of these two societies. Neither had any marked influence on the course of Russian literature, which, as all great literatures, is the product of individuals, not groups.

From tactical considerations, Pushkin, in the months preceding the printing of the first canto of *EO*, voiced patriotic respect toward the leader of the Ancients. In his *Second Epistle to the Censor* (at that time, Aleksandr Biryukov, 1772-1844, who occupied the post from 1821 to 1826), consisting of seventy-two Alexandrines and composed late in 1824, Pushkin welcomed Shishkov as the new Minister of Public Education (ll. 31-35):

An honest minister our good tsar has elected:  
Shishkov already has the sciences directed.  
We cherish this old man. To honor, to the people,  
he is a friend. His fame is that of the year twelve;  
alone among grandees he loves the Russian Muses.

For similar reasons Pushkin, in 1824, changed his attitude toward the Besedist Prince Shahovskoy (who had been the main scapegoat of the Arzamasists) and inserted a couple of flattering verses about him in Chapter One.

4 / gaze / *vzór eyó ochéy*: Fr. *Le regard de ses yeux*.

7 Cf. Vyazemski, 1815, a tetrametric poem inscribed to Denis Davıdov (ll. 20–23):

. . . a general's epaulets  
 . . .  
 which often cause unconsciously the shoulders  
 of some to rise . . .

12 The fair copy contains a much better epithet than “autocratic,” namely “gentle-voiced” (*tihoglásnoy*).

14 / “vulgar”: The Russian adjective *vul'garnıy* was soon to come into general use. In its more general sense of “common” and “coarse” the term is equivalent to *ploshchadnoy* (from *ploshchad*, “town square,” “market place”), which appears elsewhere in *EO* (Four : XIX : 8 and Five : XXIII : 8).

Cf. Mme de Staël, *De la Littérature* (see n. to Three : XX : 14), pt. I, ch. 19 (1818 edn.), vol. II, p. 50n: “. . . ce mot *la vulgarité* n'avait pas encore été employé [au siècle de Louis XIV]; mais je le crois bon et nécessaire.”

See also n. to Eight : XIV : 13.

14–XVI : 6 The parenthetical passage from the *Ne mogu* (“I’m unable—”) that closes XV : 14 to the end of XVI : 6, where it is suggested we return to the lady in question, is a rare variety of interstrophic enjambment. In this specific instance, it also plays the amusing part of a kind of door that opens for the reader but is closed for Onegin, who only notices the lady (whose quality the reader has already appreciated) when she settles down next to Nina Voronskoy.

5 I have little doubt that the epigram stirring in the poet's mind has to do with a play on "vulgar" in connection with Bulgarin, the loathsome critic. Pushkin might have transformed him into "Vulgárin" or he might have given "vulgar" a Russian predicative turn and rhymed *Bulgárin-vulgáren*, "Bulgarin-is vulgar."

The stanza was written, presumably, in October, 1830, at Boldino. In the *Northern Bee*, no. 30 (Mar. 12, 1830), Bulgarin's insulting "Anekdot" had appeared (see n. to Eight: xxxv: 9) and, a week later, his adverse critique of Chapter Seven\* (see above, pp. 125-26).

In a Pushkin MS, among various autobiographical odds and ends, there is the following note (*Works* 1936, V, 461), dated Mar. 23, 1830:

I met [the critic] Nadezhdin at the house of Pogodin [another literary man]. Nadezhdin struck me as most plebeian, vulgar [in English], tedious, bumptious, and devoid of manners. For instance, he picked up the handkerchief I had dropped.

9-10 / Nina Voronskóy, that Cleopatra of the Neva: In Chapter Five, the tricky magician M. Triquet substituted "Tatiana" for "Nina" in his madrigal. Like most of the portents in that chapter (such as the "military husbands" predicted to both Larin girls), this comes true: Tatiana has now eclipsed "belle Nina."

Some prototypists have (incorrectly) identified this generalized belle with a historical person, Countess Agra-fena Zakrevski (1799-1879). Baratinski, who fell in love with her in the winter of 1824 in Helsingfors (her husband was governor general of Finland), and apparently became her lover in the summer of 1825, confesses

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\*See P. Stolpyanski, "Pushkin i 'Severnaya pchela,'" in *P. i ego sovr.*, V, 19-20 (1914), 117-90.

in a letter to a friend that he imagined her when making the heroine of his tasteless *The Ball* (February, 1825–September, 1828) lose her lover, Arseniy, to an Olenka and commit suicide; but “Nina” was a fashionable literary cognomen, and the fact that Baratinski’s heroine is called Princess Nina does not prove that her glorified model is the same as that of Pushkin’s “Nina Voronskoy” (“Volhovskoy” and “Taranskoy” in fair-copy cancellations).

Our only reason for thinking that Pushkin may have had a brief affair with Aграфена Zakrevski in August, 1828 (after shedding Anna Kern and while trying to shed Elizaveta Hitrovo, 1783–1839), is that her first name figures in his famous catalogue of platonically and sensually loved, successfully and unsuccessfully courted ladies (a list he wrote down in 1829 in the album of Elizaveta Ushakov, in Moscow). Of Aграфена Zakrevski he writes to Vyazemski (in a letter of Sept. 1, 1828, from St. Petersburg to Penza) thus:

I have plunged into the *monde* because I am shelterless [*bespriyuten*]. Were it not for your bronze Venus, I would have pined to death. She is consolingly amusing and charming. I write verse for her; and she has promoted me to the rank of her pimp.

Vyazemski, in his answer, punned on *bespriyuten*, inquiring if Pushkin was no longer being admitted to Priyutino, the Olenins’ estate near St. Petersburg; actually, Pushkin was to visit Priyutino at least once again, on Sept. 5, when (as Annette Olenin, to whom he had not yet proposed, noted in her diary) he darkly hinted he had not the force to tear himself away from her.

The literary critic should note that “bronze” is not “marble” (xvi : 12), and that the charming woman of Pushkin’s letter to Vyazemski is as different from “that Cleopatra of the Neva” (xvi : 10) as a comet is from the moon. Incidentally, I take “cette Cléopâtre de la Néva”

to mean hardly more than "cette reine de la Néva," with connotations of glamour and power but with no specific reference to the legend of the three immolated lovers that Pushkin made use of in his unfinished *The Egyptian Nights*. (Cf. also "Onegin's Album": IX : 13, above, p. 92.)

Less reckless prototypists point out that another lady, Countess Elena Zavadovski (1807-74, sister-in-law of the duelist mentioned in my n. to Istomina in One : xx : 5-14), has a better claim to be Nina Voronskoy's model. Her cold, queenly beauty was the talk of society, and, as P. Shchyogolev points out,\* Vyazemski, in a (still unpublished?) letter to his wife, explicitly identifies Nina Voronskoy with Countess Zavadovski.

We note, finally, that the wonderful, palpitating, pink Nina of *Eight* : xxviii is obviously a different person from the Nina of *Eight* : xvi.

I have gone at some length into this dreary and fundamentally inept question of the "model" of a stylized literary character in order to stress once again the difference between the reality of art and the unreality of history. The whole trouble is that memoirists and historians (no matter how honest they are) are either artists who fantastically re-create observed life or mediocrities (the more frequent case) who unconsciously distort the factual by bringing it into contact with their commonplace and simple minds. At best we can form our own judgment of a historical person if we possess what that person wrote himself—especially in the way of letters, a journal, an autobiography, and so forth. At worst we have the kind of sequence on which the prototypical school so blithely relies: poet X, an admirer of woman Z, writes a fictitious piece in which he romanticizes her (as Y) on the lines of the literary generalities of his time;

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\**Lit. nasl.*, nos. 16-18 (1934), p. 558.

## Commentary

the news is spread that Y is Z; the real Z is seen as a complete edition of Y; Z is referred to as Y; diarists and memoirists, in describing Z, attribute to her not merely the traits of Y but the later, popularized concepts of Y (since fictitious characters grow and change, too); comes the historian, and, from the descriptions of Z (really Z plus Y plus Y<sup>1</sup> plus Y<sup>2</sup>, etc.), deduces that she was the model of Y.

In the present case, the Nina of the established text (xvi) is too obviously a casual stylization to warrant the investigations undertaken to find her "prototype." But we shall presently come to the singular Olenin case, in which our materials will be the revealing writings of the people involved, and from which something will be added to our understanding of Pushkin's mind by the examination of an incidental character.

### VARIANT

7-9 Fair copy:

She sat upon a sofa [*na sofě*]  
between dread Lady Barifé  
and . . .

One wonders if this has been correctly deciphered (by Gofman). "Barife" looks Italian to me (cf. *baruffa*, "altercation"); there was an Italian traveler called Giuseppe Filippi Baruffi who left a *Voyage en Russie* at the beginning of the nineteenth century (according to Camille Koechlin in *La Grande Encyclopédie*). Or is it a real English name, e.g., Barry-Fey?

### XVII

3 / [of] steppe villages / *stepnĭh selėniy*: In VI : 3, Pushkin had used the same epithet in speaking of his Muse, *prėlesti eyó stepnĭe*, "her country charms," or "her agrestic charms." Basically, *stepnĭe* means "of the

steppe," "of the prairie," but I notice that Krilov, for instance, in his farce *The Fashion Shop* (*Modnaya lavka*; pub. 1807), uses it both in the sense of "provincial" or "rural" and in the direct sense of "hailing from the steppe region [beyond Kursk]." Neither the rather heavily wooded country whence Pushkin's Muse came (province of Pskov) nor Tatiana's home (two hundred miles W of Moscow) can be described as steppeland.

Steppes are grasslands with, in the past, a predominance of feather grass (*Stipa pennata* L.). They extend from the Carpathians to the Altay (Altai), in the black-soil belt of Russia, south of Oryol (Orel), Tula, and Simbirsk (Ulyanovsk). The steppe proper, which has timber (cottonwoods, etc.) only in river valleys, does not reach north beyond the latitude of Harkov (Kharkov; approximately 50°), between which and the latitude of Tula to the north there is a band of *lugovaya step'* (meadow steppe), characterized by scrub oak, *Prunus*, etc. This grades insensibly northward into birch woods, where the shade is limpid. Tambov lies within this region. Several passages in our novel certainly suggest that the region where the Larin, Lenski, and Onegin seats were situated was well forested and thus must have been still farther north. I place it midway between Opochna and Moscow. (See nn. to One : I : 1-5 and Seven : xxxv : 14.)

Elsewhere Pushkin uses steppe as a mere synonym of champaign, open country, plain; but I suspect that (just as the countryside in Four is a stylized Pskovan one, encroaching here and there upon Arcadia) the kind of country implied by the epithet "steppe" in Eight : vi and xvii is such as he saw at Boldino, where, from the first week of September, 1830, to the end of November, he spent the most fertile autumn in his entire life, owing partly to the consciousness of his impending marriage—a vague vista of financial obligations and humdrum obstacles to creative life.

The estate of Boldino (province of Nizhni, district of Lukoyanov, on the river Sazanka) comprised about nineteen thousand acres and a thousand male slaves. It belonged to Pushkin's father (Sergey Pushkin, 1770–1848), who, however, had never visited it and was happy to have his elder son take charge of it. The old master house turned out to have no garden or park, but the environs were not devoid of the kind of bleak, gray grandeur that has inspired many a Russian poet. The region belongs to the prairie belt of the steppe, with scrub oak and small aspen groves. It is here that Pushkin, during those three magic months, worked on *Eight* and finished *EO* in its first form (nine cantos); added to this at least two fifths of a tenth canto; composed some thirty short poems, an admirable mock epic in octaves (iambic pentameter), *The Cottage in Kolomna*, the five prose *Tales of Belkin* (experimental short stories—the first stories of permanent artistic value in the Russian language), his four small tragedies—*Mozart and Salieri*, which was probably already drafted; the draft of *The Stone Guest*, completed, it is supposed, on the morning before his duel (Jan. 27, 1837); *The Feast During the Plague*, which is a translation from a French literal translation of a scene from John Wilson's *The City of the Plague*; and *The Covetous Knight*, attributed (perhaps by a French translator) to Shenstone, whose name Pushkin wrote, in Russian transliteration, with a *Ch*, owing to his thinking that *Sh* was the same kind of Gallic mispronunciation as “Shild-Arold”—and a batch of wonderful, albeit not always truthful, letters to his eighteen-year-old fiancée in Moscow.

- 8 / Tell me, Prince: Both Onegin and Prince N. are noblemen. Onegin, in talking to his old friend and kinsman (possibly a first cousin), uses the intimate “thou,” *tī* (Fr. *tu*), and addresses him by his title, *knyaz'*, which, in this

context and under these circumstances, is on the same level of colloquial familiarity as would be *mon cher* or a surname (cf. the Onegin-Lenski dialogues in Three and Four). A brief title in this respect was merely a convenient handle. A social inferior would, and a jocosely equal might, use "Your Serenity" (cf. Prince Oblonski addressing Count Vronski, in *Anna Karenin*, pt. I, ch. 17).

The American reader should be reminded that a Russian, German, or French nobleman with the title of "Prince" (which roughly corresponds to the English "Duke") is not necessarily related to the reigning family. The introduction of theesings and thouings leads in English to ridiculous associations.

9 / in the *framboise* beret / *v malinovom berête*: A soft, brimless headgear; of crimson velvet, in this case. I have used *framboise* because "raspberry" as a color, both in Russian and in French, seems to convey a richer, more vivid sense of red than does English "raspberry." I see the latter tint as associated rather with the purplish bloom of the fresh fruit than with the bright crimson of the Russian jam, or the French jelly, made of it.

An elegant lady of 1824 would use a flat beret of claret-colored or violet velvet for day wear (the rout to which Onegin came is presumably a late-afternoon affair). The beret might be adorned with drooping feathers. According to Cunningham, *English Women's Clothing*, p. 97, English ladies in the 1820's wore "The beret-turban," made of crepe or satin and adorned with plumes; it was probably this variety that Tatiana wore. Other fashionable colors were *ponceau* (poppy red) and *rouge grenat* (garnet red). In the September, 1828, issue of the review *Moscow Telegraph*, p. 140, there is the following description, in French and in Russian, of Parisian fashions:

Dans les premiers magasins de modes on pose des fleurs en clinquant sur des bérêts de crêpe bleu, rose ou ponceau.

## Commentary

Ces bérêts admettent en outre des plumes de la couleur de l'étoffe ou blanches.

According to B. Markevich,\* a toque of ponceau velvet was worn by the brilliant Caroline Sobanski (born Countess Rzhevuski, elder sister of Eva, Mme Hanski, whom Balzac was to marry in 1850) at social functions in Kiev, where Pushkin first saw her during a brief visit to that town in February, 1821. Three years later, in Odessa, he courted her, and they read *Adolphe* together. Still later, he frequented her Moscow salon and wrote her passionate letters and poems (*I Loved You*, 1829, and *What Is There in My Name for You*, 1830). She was a government spy.

The beret, plumed and plain, of the 1820's became extinct by 1835 but has been revived in many other forms in modern times.

In a fair-copy variant (Gofman, 1922), Pushkin first had a "red shawl" instead of a "yellow shawl" in Three : xxviii : 3, and a "ponceau shawl" instead of a "green shawl" in the draft (2371, f. 9<sup>v</sup>) of "Onegin's Album," ix : 12. Finally, he limited the red to Tatiana's beret.

According to V. Glinka,† the Hermitage, the Leningrad picture gallery in Million Street (from which that clip-clap of a droshky came in One : XLVIII), possesses a nationalized portrait by (Sir George) Hayter, 1832, of Countess Elizaveta Vorontsov showing her wearing a beret *rouge-framboise*.

I suggest that, when composing Eight, Pushkin visualized not the fashions of 1824 but those of 1829-30 and, possibly, the very beret of eminence color (a pur-

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\**Works* (St. Petersburg, 1912), XI, 425; quoted by Tsyavlovski, in *Rukoyu Pushkina*, p. 186.

†*Pushkin i Voennaya galereya Zimnego Dvortsa* (Leningrad, 1949), p. 133.

plish red) which is prominently illustrated in vol. LXII (no. 2, Pl. 2, fig. 1; Jan. 11, 1829) of the *Journal des dames et des modes*, imported into Russia from Frankfort on the Main. This issue, incidentally, carries the second and last installment of Bulgarin's *Le Partage de la succession*, a translation of his Oriental tale *Razdel nasledstva* (*Polar Star* for 1823).

- 10 In autumn, 1822, at the Congress of Verona, Austria, Russia, and Prussia agreed upon armed intervention in liberal Spain. A French army entered Spain in spring, 1823, and took Madrid. Despotism, with Ferdinand VII, was restored in 1823. By the winter of 1824–25, diplomatic relations between Russia and Spain (where the French remained till 1827) were, I presume, re-established, but a Spanish ambassador does not seem to have been appointed before 1825.

Lerner, in *Rukoyu Pushkina*, determines that in 1825–35 J. M. Páez de la Cadena was Spanish ambassador to Russia; and Pushkin knew him personally (Aug. 9, 1832, he discussed French politics with him at a dinner); but the incident in Eight: XVII refers to August, 1824, before Páez de la Cadena's time.

#### XVII—XVIII

In the course of these casual notes I have refrained from paying too much attention to the disastrous versions of *EO* in English doggerel. Here and there, however, a glance at their faults may be of some assistance in convincing readers of translations and publishers of translations that the use of rhyme, while mathematically precluding exactitude, merely helps its user to conceal what plain prose would reveal, namely his inability to render accurately the difficulties of the original. The passage I have selected for display here—end of st. XVII

## Commentary

(8–14) and beginning of st. XVIII (1–7)—is an especially hard one, and reveals with especial clarity the unintentional insults and injuries that the rhyming paraphrast inflicts on an innocent and unprotected text. Let me first present the text with an interlinear literal translation, then unfold four rhyming versions and comment on their particular features.

### XVII

- 8 “*Skazhi mne, Knyáz’, ne znáesh’ tš,*  
“Tell me, prince, you don’t know  
*Kto tám v malinovom beréte*  
who there in the *framboise* beret  
*S poslóom Ispánskím govortš?*”  
with the Spanish envoy is talking?”  
*Knyáz’ na Onégina glyadit.*  
The prince at Onegin looks:  
12 —“*Agá! davno zh ti né bil v svéte.*  
“Aha! long indeed you’ve not been in the *monde*.  
*Postóy, tebyá predstavlyu yá.*”  
Wait, I’ll present you.”  
—“*Da kto zh oná?*”—“*Zhená moyá.*”  
“But who is she?” “My wife.”

### XVIII

- “*Tak tš zhenát! ne znál ya ráne!*  
“So you’re married! I did not know before!  
*Davno li?*”—“*Ókolo dvuh lét.*”  
How long?” “About two years.”  
—“*Na kóm?*”—“*Na Lárinoy.*”—“*Tat’yáne!*”  
“To whom?” “The Larin girl.” “Tatiana!”  
4 —“*Tš éy znakóm?*”—“*Ya tm soséd.*”  
“You to her are known?” “I’m their neighbor.”  
—“*O, tak poydyóm zhe.*”—*Knyáz’ podhódit*  
“Oh, then come on.” The prince goes up  
*K svoéy zhené, i éy podvódit*  
to his wife and to her leads up  
*Rodnyú i drúga svoegó.*  
his kin and friend.

A "literal translation," as I understand it, is a somewhat tautological term, since only a literal rendering of the text is, in the true sense, a translation. However, there are certain shades to the epithet that may be worth while preserving. First of all, "literal translation" implies adherence not only to the direct sense of a word or sentence, but to its implied sense; it is a semantically exact interpretation, and not necessarily a lexical one (pertaining to the meaning of a word out of context) or a constructional one (conforming to the grammatical order of words in the text). In other words, a translation may be, and often, is, both lexical and constructional, but it is only then literal when it is contextually correct, and when the precise nuance and intonation of the text are rendered.\* A lexical and constructional translation of *ne znaesh' tī* (XVII : 8) would be, of course, "not knowest thou," but this does not render the idiomatic simplicity of the Russian construction (in which the pronoun may be placed without change of meaning either before *ne znaesh'* or after it), while the archaic, sectarian, and poetical implications of the second person singular in English are absent from its plain, colloquial counterpart.

"The Larin girl" is the best I can do for *Na Larinoy* (XVIII : 3), the noun here being the locative of *Larina*, the feminine form of *Larin*. The difficulty of rendering this exactly and rapidly is augmented by the absence of the articles "a" and "the" in the Russian language, so that to say "a Larin" (or "a Larina") would be much too offhand, and to say "the Larin" (or, even worse, "the Larina") would convey an impossible ring of notoriety. This does not mean that I am absolutely satisfied with "the Larin girl" (which is a jot more familiar than the text); I toyed with "Mlle Larin" and "Miss Larin," and rejected them. The Larins were a good family, and al-

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\*See also Foreword.

## Commentary

though Onegin had not circulated in society for some time, the prince might automatically assume that the fact of there having been a marriageable girl in that family was known to him.

Lexically *Ti ey znakom?* (XVIII : 4) is "Thou [art] to her known?" which is, or rather was, more courteous (to the lady involved) than *Ti s ney znakom?*, "Thou art with her acquainted?" This is a case in which the lexical grades into the literal.

Lexically *Ya im sosed* (XVIII : 4) is "I [am] to them neighbor," but again this would not be a literal translation, especially as the word "neighbor" itself is not as simple as it looks. The phrase means "our estates adjoin."

Let us now turn to the four versions.

Spalding (1881):

- 8 "Inform me, prince, pray dost thou know  
The lady in the crimson cap  
Who with the Spanish envoy speaks?"—  
The prince's eye Onéguine seeks:  
12 "Ah! long the world hath missed thy shape!  
But stop! I will present thee, if  
You choose."—"But who is she?"—"My wife."  
  
"So thou art wed! I did not know.  
Long ago?"—" 'Tis the second year."  
"To——?"—"Làrina."—"Tattiana?"—"So.  
4 And dost thou know her?"—"We live near."  
"Then come with me." The prince proceeds,  
His wife approaches, with him leads  
His relative and friend as well.

The attempts to remain faithful to the text while dallying with the rhyme are truly heroic, seeing that Spalding could not write poetry. The passage is a good example of his manner throughout the poem. It should be noted that the rhyme scheme is reduced to masculine terminals and that some of them are very weak (the lame "shape" in XVII : 12, for example, makes the reader

wonder if the cap Tatiana is made to wear should not be a "cape"). The dialogue is that of two Quakers. The "so" closing XVIII : 3 is dreadful. "We live near" is meaningless. The last two lines are ludicrous. The phrase "His wife approaches" is supposed to mean "the prince proceeds to approach his wife."

Elton (1938):

- 8 "—Prince, wilt thou tell me—dost thou know  
Who, in the raspberry beret yonder  
Talks with the Spanish Envoy there?"  
And the Prince answers, with a stare,  
12 "So long a stranger? ha! no wonder . . .  
But see, I will present thee; stay!"  
"But who, but *who?*"—"My wife, I say!"
- "So, married? till to-day, I knew not!  
Married . . . some while?"—"Two years or so."  
—"To whom?"—"A Larina."—"You do not  
4 Mean, to Tatyana?"—"Her you know?"  
—"Their neighbour, I!"—"Then, come!" Preceding,  
The prince unto his wife is leading  
His friend and kinsman. . . .

The two Quakers are still with us. Again, the passage is characteristic of the translator. The alternations of the rhyme scheme are scrupulously and miserably reproduced. The "stare," the "ha!," and the idiotic ejaculation "stay!" are impossibly vulgar. The "But who, but *who?*" is a preposterous reiteration. The end of XVII ("I say!") sounds as if the prince actually stamps his foot. A characteristic feature of Elton's notion of versification and syntax is the little exchange: "Her you know?" "Their neighbour, I!" No less horrible are the "Preceding" (whom?) and "is leading" of ll. 5 and 6.

Radin (1937):

- 8 "Who is the lady yonder, Prince,  
The one in crimson over there  
With the Ambassador from Spain?"

## Commentary

- The prince looked at Eugene again—  
12 “You must be introduced to her,  
You’ve lived too long outside our life.”—  
“But tell me who she is?”—“My wife.”—  
  
“You’re married, then! I didn’t know it.  
And how long since?”—“Two years.”—“To  
whom?”—  
“Her name was Larin.”—“Not Tatyana?”—  
4 “You know her?”—“I lived near their home.”—  
“Then come!” In such an unforeseen  
Encounter Tanya met Eugene,  
Her husband’s relative and friend.  
8 She saw him come and slowly bend  
Before her. . . .

Despite their impossible English, Spalding and Elton are, after a fashion, faithful to their text, or at least to their notion of the text. With Miss Radin and Miss Deutsch, the wild paraphrase triumphs. Miss Radin clothes the entire Tatiana in crimson. The “outside our life” (xvii : 13) is a very clumsy euphemism. The phrases “in such an unforeseen | Encounter Tanya met Eugene” (xviii : 5–6) and “She saw him come and slowly bend | Before her” are not in the original. It should be noticed that the first quatrains of the stanza are not rhymed in the odd lines (feminine terminals), and that all the rhymes are masculine.

Deutsch (1936):

- 8 “Forgive me, Prince, but can you not  
Say who it is that now the Spanish  
Ambassador is speaking to?  
She’s wearing raspberry.” “Yes, you  
12 Have been away! Before you vanish  
Again, you’ll meet her, ’pon my life!”  
“But tell me who she is.” “My wife.”  
  
“Well, that is news—couldn’t be better!  
You’re married long?” “Two years.” “To whom?”  
“A Larina.” “Tanya?” “You’ve met her?”

- 4 "I am their neighbor." "Come, resume  
Your friendship." At this invitation  
The prince's comrade and relation  
Now met his spouse. . . .

The rhyme scheme is reproduced, but the subject matter has little to do with *EO*. Why must the prince "Forgive" Onegin (xvii : 8)? What is the "raspberry" (11) the lady is wearing: gown? slippers and purse? Why does the prince think Onegin will "vanish" (12)? Why does he swear (13)? Why does Onegin think that nothing could be "better" (xviii : 1) than the news of his "comrade's" (6) marriage? Why does the prince assume that there had been a "friendship" between Onegin and Tatiana (5)? Is it because Onegin calls her "Tanya" (3)? None of these questions are answered in Pushkin's text. In the college library copy of this "translation" that I consulted, a poor, misguided, foolish, endearing, anonymous college student has dutifully written in pencil the word "Irony" against the "better" of xviii : 1. Irony, indeed.

# XVIII

- 13 / *ton*: Pushkin was fond of this French word, which the English sometimes did not italicize in those days. It was used in the sense of social style in Russian drawing rooms as well as in the English ones. A Russian of today would be apt to confuse with *ton* its homonym meaning "tone," individual manner of speaking, assumed attitude, and so on. *Ton*, in the early nineteenth-century sense, was the "bon ton." This reminds me incidentally of perhaps the most cacophonous line ever penned by a French rhymester, Casimir Delavigne's "*Ce bon ton dont Moncade emporta le modèle*" (my italics), *Discours d'ouverture du Second Théâtre Français* (1819), l. 154.

Cf. Rousseau's *Julie* (Saint-Preux to Lord Bomston, pt. iv, letter vi); Julie's former lover sees her, married to

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another, after he had traveled for some four years:  
"Elle conserva le même maintien et . . . continua de me  
parler sur le même ton."

### XIX

- 11 / *I ne iz th li uzh storón*: A string of six monosyllabics, oddly revealing (through the very rarity of such a rhythm in Russian verse) a certain constraint, the mere ghost of a stutter, distinguished by Pushkin's reader, but not by his hero, in Tatiana's speech.

Ll. 10, 11, 13, and 14 turn on the same rhyme (*ón*, *storón*, *vón*, *ón*)—an unusual monotone in the novel.

### XX

- 7 / a letter he preserves: Pushkin also preserved that letter ("religiously," according to Three : xxxi : 2). We must assume that when Onegin got together with his pal in Odessa in the winter of 1823, he not only showed Pushkin Tatiana's letter, but allowed him to transcribe it. It is that copy which Pushkin has before him when translating it from the French into Russian verse in 1824.

### XXII

7-14:

- . . . *néskol'ko minút*  
8 *Oni sidyát. Slová neydút*  
*Iz úst Onégina. Ugryúmoy,*  
*Nelóvkiy, ón edvá, edvá*  
*Ey otvecháet. Golová*  
12 *Egó polná upryámoy dúmoy.*  
*Upryámo smótrit ón: oná*  
*Sidít pokóyna i vol'ná.*

My purpose was to render the deliberately stumbling enjambedments of the Russian text (echoed further on by the staccato intonations of Tatiana's speech in XLIII and

XLVII); hence the somewhat rugged meter, which had to be made to follow both sense and scansion. The run-ons of the text are all reproduced here, but are more tuneful in Russian, filling up as they do with perfect saturation of rhythm the *en-escalier* sections of these tetrameters. The end of l. 10, *edvá, edvá*, is an idiomatic repetition, which “hardly, barely” renders rather clumsily. In the next run-on (11–12) the order of noun and pronoun (*Golová* | *Egó*, “head his”) and their remarkable separation could not be preserved by English syntax, and I was not tempted by the artifice of “That head | of his . . .”

XXIII

3–4 Initially (fair-copy variants and cancellations) Pushkin had Tatiana’s husband and Onegin recall “the stunts [*zatéi*], opinions . . . friends, belles of former years,” which confirms the fact that Prince N. could not have been more than half a dozen years older than his kinsman Onegin, thus in his middle thirties.

In the published text of a famous but essentially clap-trap politico-patriotic speech, pronounced on June 8, 1880, at a public meeting of the Society of Amateurs of Russian Letters before a hysterically enthusiastic audience, Fyodor Dostoevski, a much overrated, sentimental, and Gothic novelist of the time, while ranting at length on Pushkin’s Tatiana as a type of the “positive Russian woman,” labors under the singular delusion that her husband is a “venerable old man.” He also thinks that Onegin had “wandered in foreign countries” (repeating Prosper Mérimée’s error in *Portraits historiques et littéraires* [Paris, 1874], ch. 14: “Oniéghine doit quitter la Russie pour plusieurs années”) and that he is “infinitely inferior socially to Prince N.’s brilliant set,” all of which goes to show that Dostoevski had not really read *EO*.

## Commentary

Dostoevski the publicist is one of those megaphones of elephantine platitudes (still heard today), the roar of which so ridiculously demotes Shakespeare and Pushkin to the vague level of all the plaster idols of academic tradition, from Cervantes to George Eliot (not to speak of the crumbling Manns and Faulkners of our times).

12 / [without] pedantry / *bez pedantstva*: See n. to One : V : 7.

### VARIANT

13-14 The fair copy reads:

nor did the talk contain one word  
about the rain or bonnets.

### XXIIIa, b

The fair copy gives the following rejected stanzas:

#### XXIIIa

In the salon authentically noble  
one shunned the elegance of speech  
and bourgeois prudishness  
4 of priggish judges in the journals.  
    <In the salon, high-life and free,  
    a plain-folk language was accepted,  
    nor did its vivid oddity  
8 shock anybody's ears,  
    at which assuredly will wonder,  
    preparing his critical sheet,  
    some deep reviewer;  
12 but after all in the beau monde  
    a lot occurs, of which perhaps  
    none of our journals has an inkling!>

#### XXIIIb

<None thought of greeting an old man  
with a cold sneer  
on noting the unfashionable collar

- 4 under the bow of his neckcloth;>  
 nor did the hostess <with her *morgue*> embarrass  
 the tyro from the provinces;  
 alike with everybody she  
 8 was unconstrained and charming;  
 only a far-flung traveler,  
 a brilliant London jackanapes,  
 provoked half-smiles  
 12 by his studied deportment,  
 and an exchange of rapid glances was  
 his general condemnation.

a: 2-4 I have contrived to replace with a makeshift alliteration Pushkin's marvelous play on the sounds *shch* and *ch* in ll. 2-4:

*Chuzhdális' shchegol'stvá rechény  
 I shchekotlívosti meshchánskoy  
 Zhurnál'nih chópornih sudéy.*

b: 9-10 / a far-flung traveler, a brilliant London jackanapes; and XXVI: 9-10 / a far-flung traveler, an overstarched jackanapes: Apart from the possible connection \* that this image has with the figure of an actual Englishman, Tom Raikes, whom Pushkin met in St. Petersburg society (see my nn. to Two: xvIIa-d), I suggest that our poet's mind had reverted here to his Odessa impressions and to the arrogant Anglomania of the governor general, Count Mihail Vorontsov. This name, according to a Russian eighteenth-century official fashion of German spelling, was transliterated as Woronzoff, and Pushkin mockingly transliterated this back into Russian, giving an English value to the *W*, as Uorontsov. This General Vorontsov (1782-1856), son of Count Semyon Vorontsov, Russian ambassador in London, received an English education there. Since May 7, 1823, Vorontsov was the

\*As first conjectured by S. Glinka, in *P. i ego sour.*, VIII, 31-32 (1927), 105-10.

governor general of New Russia (Novorossiia, as the southern provinces of the empire were called) and viceroy of the Bessarabian region. In the 1840's, he was named viceroy of the Caucasus and given the title of prince. In a letter to Aleksandr Kaznacheev, director of Vorontsov's chancery, written beginning of June, 1824, in Odessa, Pushkin said:

Je suis fatigué de dépendre de la digestion bonne ou mauvaise de tel et tel chef, je suis ennuyé d'être traité dans ma patrie avec moins d'égard que le premier galopin anglais qui vient y promener parmi nous sa platitude et son baragouin.

(Draft, 2370, ff. 8<sup>v</sup>, 9<sup>r</sup>; not to be confused with the earlier, Russian, letter to same, May 22, 1824, draft, 2370, ff. 1<sup>r</sup>, 2<sup>r</sup>.) A couple of months earlier, Vorontsov, in a letter to Nesselrode, characterized Pushkin as “. . . un faible imitateur d'un original très peu recommandable: Lord Byron.”

In 1808, Vorontsov's only sister, Catherine, married George Augustus Herbert, Earl of Pembroke and Montgomery (1759–1827), and English relatives visited the Novorossiyan viceroy in Odessa.

XXIV

According to Tomashevski (*Works* 1957, V, 627), sts. XXIV–XXVI, including the variants, were worked over and the established ones sorted out, in June, 1831, at Tsarskoe Selo, after the canto, except for Onegin's letter, had been completed (at Boldino, late 1830). See also n. to XXVa : var. 1–9.

- 1 / here was / *Tut bíl*: The recurrent intonations in the listing of the participants of this noble rout, sts. XXIV–XXVI, are too close to those in Byron's *Don Juan*, XIII, LXXXIV–LXXXVIII (“There was Parolles, too, the legal

bully,” “There was the Duke of Dash,” “There was Dick Dubious,” and so forth), to be a coincidence.

XXIVA

A stanza written on the same separate leaf as XXIV (fair copy) bears the numeral 25, corrected from 26 (the numeral of the established XXIV is corrected from 25):

- And she upon whom smiled the grace  
of life in bloom;  
and she who was already  
4 about to govern general opinion;  
and she who represented the beau monde;  
and she whose modest planet  
was to shine forth someday  
8 with humble happiness;  
and she whose heart, bearing in secret  
the torture of an insane passion,  
nursed jealousy and fear;  
12 by chance united, and in spirit  
strange to each other,  
sat here together.

XXVa

The following stanza appears on a separate page in the fair copy:

- Here was, to epigrams addicted,  
with everything cross, Prince Brodín,  
with the too-sweet tea of the hostess,  
4 the women's crassness and the *ton* of men,  
the badge two orphans had been granted,  
the talk about a foggy novel,  
<his wife's vacuity,  
8 and his daughters' *gaucherie*>.  
Here was a certain ball dictator,  
a hopper, grim, industrious.  
Against the wall stood a young fopling,  
12 as if he were a fashion plate,  
as rosy as a Palm Week cherub,  
tight-coated, mute, and motionless.

## Commentary

5 / badge / *vénzél*: From the Polish *wezel*, “knot.” The two orphaned (*sirotkam*, dat. pl.) young ladies had been made ladies in waiting of the empress and as such received a *venzel*’ or *shifr* (Fr. *chiffre*), a court decoration with the royal initials. In another, more usual, sense, *venzel*’ means simply “monogram,” and is so employed in Three : XXXVII : 14.

12–14 See XXVI : 6–8 and nn. to XXVI : 6 and 7.

### VARIANTS

1–9 Lerner, in *P. i ego sovr.*, I, 2 (1904), 81, published the following rough draft (a separate page, numbered 53, in the Imperial Public Library, St. Petersburg), a variant of XXVa:

Here was, displeased with the whole world,  
angry with all things, Count Turin,  
with the house of his hostess, much too free,

· · · · ·  
· · · · ·  
the talk about a mannered novel,

· · · · ·  
8 <the snow [ . . . . . ] the war>,  
the waists of his ripe daughters . . .

On the same scrap of paper there is a note (conjectured by Lerner to be written prior to the verses), in Zhukovski’s hand: “Come at half-past one; we shall go to the Lyceum, where they have the examination in history.” This establishes the fact that the fragment was written in June, 1831, at Tsarskoe Selo, where our poet was spending his honeymoon, in the vicinity of his old school.

6 A canceled line reads:

<the prose style of the press, the foggy day> . . .

Tomashevski (Acad 1937, p. 311) publishes a draft of xxva (PD 164) in a different form (ll. 1–2, 6–9):

Entered, pleased only with himself,  
always cross, Prince Brodín  
. . . . .  
Poland, the foggy climate,  
the muteness of his wife,  
the waists of his ripe daughters.  
Entered Prostóv, ballroom dictator . . .

The autograph described by Lerner is designated by Tomashevski (Acad 1937, p. 629) as a fair copy, with canceled readings corresponding to Lerner's recension.

XXVI

- 1 / [. . .]: The name Prolazov, or Prolasov, is derived from *prolaz*, *prolaza* (both masc.), something like "climber," "vile sycophant." Prolazov is a ridiculous personage of eighteenth-century Russian comedies and popular pictures.

The editorial tradition of filling in the blank after "was" with the surname of Andrey Saburov (1797–1866), later the inept director of the imperial theaters, whom Pushkin hardly knew, is founded on a series of wild guesses that I don't think worth while discussing. It would be much more interesting to check if caricatures of Olenin frequently occur among Saint-Priest's drawings (preserved where?).

- 4 / Saint-P[riest]: The reference is to Count Emmanuil Sen-Pri (1806–28), said to have been a gifted cartoonist. None of his drawings seem to have been published. He was the son of a French *émigré*, Armand Charles Emmanuel de Guignard, Comte de Saint-Priest, who married a Russian lady, Princess Sofia Golitsin.

This young artist shot himself, according to some, on

### Commentary

Easter Day in Italy, in church, or, according to others, in the presence of an eccentric Englishman who had promised to pay his gambling debts if granted the spectacle of self-murder.

Pushkin also alludes to Saint-Priest's caricatures in a short poem of 1829 addressed to N. N. ("You are fortunate in foolish charmers" [. . . *v prelésthñh dúrah*]).

6 / like a fashion plate / *kartinkoyu zhurnál'noy*: "Like a [fashion] magazine picture."

7 / *vérbniy heruvim*: *Verbnïy* from *verba*, various species of sallow. The allusion is to paper figures of cherubs (glued to gingerbread, etc.), sold at the annual fair on what is translated as Palm Week, Willow Week, and (more appropriately) Catkin Week—the week preceding Easter.

9–10 See also n. to Eight : xxiii b : 9–10.

10 / overstarched: The reference is to the neckcloth. Beau Brummell, in the first decade and a half of the century, had set the fashion of having it slightly starched. His followers, in the late 1820's, shocked French and Russian taste by overdoing it. Brummell himself, in the last period of his life, when dwelling at Caen (he began losing his mind about 1837, and became hopelessly imbecile by summer, 1838), seems to have starched his cambric cravats more heavily than before.

### XXVIA

This stanza appears on a separate page in the fair copy:

Here was Prolasov, who had gained  
distinction by the baseness of his soul  
and blunted in all albums,  
4 Saint-Priest, your pencils;

- here was <Prince [?] M.>, a Frenchman, married  
to a debile and hunchbacked doll  
and seven thousand serfs;  
8 here was, with all his decorations,  
<a member of the censorship board> inflexible  
(this awesome Cato recently  
had been removed for taking bribes).  
12 Here also was a sleepy senator  
who had at cards spent his life span:  
for government a needed man.

Ll. 12-14 have been cut off. The reconstruction is based on the text published in the *Messenger of Europe*, vol. I (1883), by A. Ott-Onegin, who then possessed the autograph.

5-6 A cancellation in the fair copy reads:

here was a great patrician married  
to a yellow and hunchbacked doll . . .

5-11 The "debile and hunchbacked," *cháhloy i gorbátov* (fem. loc.), of the fair copy of xxvii, recalls the "so diminutive," the epithet in some drafts to be mentioned further, which certainly refer to Olenin's daughter, Anna (1808-88). The *gorbatov* is a vicious allusion to her somewhat prominent shoulder blades. It is curious to note that eventually (about 1840) she did marry a person of French extraction (Fyodor Andro, Fr. Andrault, a military man and later a senator). I do not know if the letters *K. M.*, referring to the husband of the debile doll, have been correctly deciphered in the draft, but if they have, I suspect that *K.* is the usual initial for "Prince" (*knyaz'*).

If xxvii : 5-7 represents a coarse travesty, with added details for camouflage, of Annette Olenin, the same may be said of ll. 8-11 in regard to her father. He did not take bribes, but he did like wearing his decorations. The words beginning l. 9, *Pravlen'ya Tsensor*, are a sole-

## Commentary

cistical ellipsis for *chlen Glavnogo Upravleniya Tsensuri*, "member of the Chief Board [or Administration] of Censorship."

By a decree of 1828, censorship in Russia was subordinated to the Ministry of Public Education, and among the members of its higher council were presidents of learned institutions. Aleksey Olenin became an ex officio member of the Chief Board of Censorship on Sept. 6, 1828, and remained one till 1834; he was no doubt acquainted with the work of the special institution (a Provisional Supreme Commission, consisting of Prince Viktor Kochubey, Count Pyotr A. Tolstoy, and Prince Aleksandr Golitsin), which, from Apr. 28, 1828, to Dec. 31, 1828, examined the *Gavriliada* case (see below). I cannot find, however, if Olenin was ever "dismissed" from the board, and I suppose this dismissal and its cause are meant as a makeshift camouflage just as is the marital state of the "hunchbacked doll."

In the draft of XXVIA (2382, f. 32<sup>v</sup>), ll. 11–14, Liza Losin (from *los*’, "moose," in allusion to *olen*’, "stag") is described with bitter fury as being:

so mannered, so diminutive,  
so slatternly, so shrill,  
that every guest unconsciously  
conjectured wit and wickedness in her.

(Natalia Pushkin, on the other hand, was almost five feet six inches tall, very elegant, and so stately-looking that people seeing her at balls thought her to be cold and brainless.) I assume that these lines were penned by our poet during his honeymoon, in Tsarskoe Selo, 1831. Is all this merely a little present of his past that a hypocritical and passionate young husband makes to his young wife, or is it, as I think much more plausible, a rejected suitor's unquenchable exasperation with an unforgettable girl and her Philistine parents?

She produces a "shudder" in Onegin (canceled draft of XXVIA : 7, in 2382, f. 32<sup>v</sup>). In these cancellations she is "hunchbacked," with a "hunchbacked little zero" for father, and on the same f. 32<sup>v</sup> Tomashevski deciphers (ll. 7-10):

Annette <Lisette> Olénine [Fr.] here was [*tút bílá*],  
so very [*uzh ták*] mannered, so diminutive [*ták malá*],  
so scatterbrained, so shrill,  
that she seemed quite the picture of her parents [*Chto*  
*vsyá bílá v otsá i mát'*] . . .

Had I had access to Pushkin's MSS, I would have managed probably to give a fuller and clearer picture of the reflection in them of Pushkin, the rejected suitor, and Pushkin, the artist. The artist (and the gentleman) triumphed, and no trace of Annette Olenin or her father subsists in the established text. There is no doubt of one thing, however: that the heart of our poet was more deeply involved in his courtship of Annette Olenin than in his sensual enchantment with his bride.

Pushkin had probably first seen Annette when she was a pale child of eleven, at her father's house, and, for all we know, she may have taken part in the charades at that very party in 1819 where he flirted with her cousin Anna Kern (his *maîtresse en titre* in 1828), and where Krilov recited the fable about the honorable donkey (one line from which was to become the starting point of *EO* in 1823; see n. to One : I : 1). As so often happens with well-studied lives, an artistically satisfying pattern appears at this point of our inquiry, linking up the beginning of *EO* with its end.

In her journal, written partly in Russian and partly in French (*Dnevnik Annī Alekseevni Oleninoy*, 1828-1829, edited by Olga Oom, who appears to have lavishly corrected her grandmother's Russian, Paris, 1936), Anna Olenin describes Pushkin as avidly watching her very small feet "glissant sur le parquet" at a ball in St. Peters-

burg, in winter, 1827–28. “Parmi les singularités du poète était celle d’avoir une passion pour les petits pieds, que dans un de ses poèmes il avouait préférer à la beauté même” (entry of July 18, 1828). In the same entry she writes (in Russian):

God, having endowed him with unique genius, did not grant him an attractive exterior. His face was, of course, expressive, but a certain malevolence and sarcasm eclipsed the intelligence that one could see in his blue, or better say vitreous, eye. A Negro profile acquired from his maternal generation did not embellish his face. Add to this: dreadful side whiskers, disheveled hair, fingernails like claws, a small stature, affected manners, an arrogant way of looking at the women he chose to love, the oddities of his natural character and of his assumed one, and a boundless *amour-propre*. . . .

She dubbed Pushkin “Jack Rover,” a stage player in *Wild Oats*; or, *The Strolling Gentleman*, a comedy in five acts by John O’Keeffe (which Annette Olenin had probably read in *The British Theatre*, ed. Elizabeth Inchbald, London, 1808, vol. XXII), who is (I quote from the play) “hurried on by the impetuous flow of his own volatile spirit,” whose “life is a rapid stream of extravagant whim,” and whose “features shine with laugh and levity” while “the serious voice of humanity prompts his heart to the best of actions.” He falls in love with the fair Quaker, Lady Amaranth. The editor, Miss Oom, reads “Jack” as *Krasnĭy*, “Red,” and anachronistically lends it a political sense.

Annette Olenin was at twenty a small graceful blonde, “as cute and as quick as a mouse,” says Vyazemski (in a letter of May 3, 1828, to his wife). In a poem (seventeen iambic tetrameters, beginning abaab, with the rest alternate) entitled *Her Eyes*, Pushkin wrote in the spring of 1828 in Petersburg or at Priyutino, the Olenins’ estate, seventeen versts out of town, beyond the Okhta suburb (ll. 9–17):

the eyes of my Olenin!\*

What pensive genius dwells in them,  
 what infantine simplicity,  
 what languorous expression,  
 and how much tenderness and fancy!

When with Lel's smile she casts them down,  
 the triumph of shy graces they reflect,  
 and when she raises them—Raphael's angel  
 thus contemplates divinity.

In a transcript made in an unknown hand in Anna Olenin's album, it is signed (in that hand) *Arap Pushkin*, "Pushkin the Blackamoor."

Among the poems addressed by Pushkin to Annette Olenin there is one that is exceptionally interesting. Its draft is in 2371, f. 13<sup>r</sup>—that is, in the midst of Chapter Seven (the draft of Seven : XIII, dated "Feb. 19," 1828, is in 2371, f. 5<sup>r</sup>; "Onegin's Album" ends in 2371, f. 10<sup>r</sup>; and Seven : XXII, *Hotya mī znaem chto Evgeniy . . .*, is in 2371, f. 17<sup>r</sup>):

    <Alas! the tongue of love loquacious,  
     an incomplete [?] and simple tongue,  
     with its negligent prose  
 4 bores you, my angel>.

    But sweet is to the ear of a dear girl  
     vainglorious Apollo,  
     <dear to her> are the measured songs,  
 8 <sweet to her> is the rhyme's proud ringing.

    You are afraid of love's confession,  
     and a love letter you will tear,  
     but an epistle writ in verse  
 12 you will read with a tender smile.

    Ah, blessed be henceforth the gift  
     on me by destiny conferred!  
     Up to now in the wilderness of life  
 16 it brought me only persecution

    <or slander, or> imprisonment  
     and, seldom, frigid praise.

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\*Replaced by "Elodia" in the *Northern Flowers* for 1829.

## Commentary

Under the draft of this poem (<Uvī!> *yazīk lyubvt boltllvoy*) there is the following date: "May 9, 1828." After this comes the word: "Sea" (*Móre*). This is immediately followed by two words that can be read as "on day" (Eng.)—perhaps, a reference to the poem having been composed on the (fatidic) day, May 9, the anniversary, by Pushkin's calendar, of his expulsion from St. Petersburg in 1820.

Anna Andro, née Olenin, in a letter to Vyazemski written (in bad Russian) on Apr. 18, 1857, recalls a trip to Kronstadt made on May 25, 1828:\*

Do you remember that happy time when we were young and merry, and in good health? When Pushkin, Griboedov, and you accompanied us [the Olenin family] to Kronstadt on the Neva steamship [steamships started to run regularly between St. Petersburg and Kronstadt in 1815]. Ah, how beautiful everything was then, with life flowing like a rapid noisy stream!

Tsyavlovski, who reads the words after "Sea" as "on day," comes, however, to a strange conclusion:† "This has no sense. If Pushkin wanted to say *dnyom* [in the afternoon], it should have been 'by day' [Eng]." Other commentators have suggested a slip for "one day" (which is meaningless).

On the other hand, *Works* 1949, vol. III, pt. 2, p. 651, deciphers this as *Ol[enins,] Dau* (this tome was edited by Tsyavlovski, who died before its completion, and Tatiana Tsyavlovski-Zenger took over); *Dau* is an incorrect Russian transcription (delta, alpha, upsilon) of Dawe, the name of an English painter, which Pushkin transliterated elsewhere (*Journey to Erzerum*, 1829, in

\*Quoted by Olga Popov, in an article on Griboedov, in *Lit. nasl.*, nos. 47–48 (1946), p. 237.

†"Pushkin i angliyskiy yazīk," in *P. i ego sovr.*, V, 17–18 (1913), 66n.

description of General Ermolov) as *Dov*, the way French-speaking Russians did.

A poem entitled by Pushkin *To Dawe, Esqr.* reads:

Why draw with your pencil sublime  
My Negro profile? Though transmitted  
By you it be to future time,  
It will be by Mephisto twitted.

Draw fair Olenin's features, in the glow  
Of heart-engendered inspiration:  
Only on youth and beauty should bestow  
A genius its adoration.

The epithet to "pencil" in the first line is *divniy*, a word that resembles in sound the French *divin*, "divine." Cf. Voltaire, *Poésies mêlées*, CXX: *A Madame de Pompadour, dessinant une tête*:

Pompadour, ton crayon divin . . .

George Dawe (1781–1829), English portrait painter and mezzotint engraver, had been invited to Russia by Tsar Alexander to depict the heroes of the 1812–14 campaigns in a special "military" gallery of the Winter Palace, St. Petersburg. Dawe arrived in 1819 and by 1825 had personally completed 150 portraits. He left Russia in May, 1828, having depicted in all 352 generals at a settled price of a thousand rubles each. The unknown drawing he made of Pushkin may be in Dawe's papers if these are preserved anywhere. Dawe visited Russia again the following winter and left for Warsaw, in the retinue of Tsar Nicholas, in spring, 1829, hopelessly ill.

In the autumn of 1828 Pushkin was in trouble: MS copies of his poem *Gavriliada* (1821), pleasantly depicting in the irreligious and elegantly lewd style of his French models an intrigue between the Archangel and the old carpenter's young wife, had come to the notice of the government. On Oct. 2 Pushkin wrote the tsar a

frank letter (which has not reached us) and was pardoned. The poem (in iambic pentameters, rhymed) contains some marvelous passages but is spoiled by a juvenile look-how-naughty-I-am strain running through it.

Anagrams in French of "Annette Olénine" blossom here and there in the margins of our poet's manuscripts. One finds it written backward in the drafts of *Poltava* (2371, f. 11<sup>v</sup>; first half of October, 1828): *ettenna eninelo*; and the earnestness of his hopes is reflected in "Annette Pouchkine" jotted among the drafts of the first canto of *Poltava*, apparently on the very day that the repentant letter about the Gabriel poem was written to the tsar.

Some time in the winter of 1828-29 Pushkin proposed to Annette Olenin and was refused. Her parents (much as they admired Pushkin's genius) were a conservative, career-minded couple and no doubt did not relish his immoral verses, his amours, his addiction to stuss. But it is also quite clear that Annette Olenin did not love him and hoped for a much more brilliant marriage.

#### VARIANTS

In various drafts, corrected or canceled, referring to XXVI and XXVIa (2382, ff. 32, 33<sup>r</sup>, 34<sup>r</sup>), the first quatrain describes a person ("Count D.," "Prígov," "Stásov," "Tásov," "Prolásov") who is "a good fellow" and is known for his "baseness" and his "passion for opening balls."

A canceled draft of l. 1 (f. 32<sup>r</sup>) has also:

a hussar, handsome, with blond hair . . .

and another canceled draft of ll. 1-3 reads:

Here was a ball dictator, gloomy [*hmúroy*]

. . .  
here was with his charming goose [*preléstnoy dúroy*] . . .

The "other" ballroom dictator appears in a draft (f.

32<sup>v</sup>) as “⟨Hrushchóv⟩ . . . author of a French elegy” (ll. 5–6) and as the father of “Liza Losin.”

A draft of l. 7 (f. 33<sup>r</sup>) reads:

here was Liza Losin . . .

Her father is depicted in a first variant of ll. 10–11 (f. 32<sup>v</sup>) as:

a little zero with two little feet . . .

and a canceled draft identifies him quite certainly:

here was her father Q . . .

This is the monogram of Aleksey Olenin (1763–1843), director of the Public Library since 1811, president of the Academy of Arts since 1817, and an artist in his own right.

Several years earlier, in a letter to Gnedich, Mar. 24, 1821, Pushkin, thanking the latter for sending him a copy of the first edition of *Ruslan and Lyudmila* (which Gnedich had seen through the press), expresses his delight with the title-page vignette executed by Olenin: “My cordial thanks to the esteemed Q.” This frontispiece (actually drawn by another hand from Olenin’s sketch) represents four scenes from the poem, among which one distinguishes the wizard Chernomor, with Ruslan clinging to his beard, flying over the notched tower of an extremely Western-looking castle.

It should not be forgotten that Olenin, together with Karamzin, Zhukovski, Gnedich, Chaadaev, and, last but not least, Aleksandr Turgenev, had done his best to intercede with the court and with the cabinet ministers on behalf of Pushkin when (April, 1820) the tsar threatened to dispatch him to a monastery in the polar region—namely, to the Solovetskiy Monastir, where, a hundred years later, the Soviets were to have one of their most infamous and inhuman concentration camps.

13-14 / *Zaprétnĭy plód vam podaváy*, | *A bez togó vam ráy ne ráy*: The necessity of having thirteen English semeia render eight Russian ones is quite unusual. It is owing partly to the terms “the forbidden fruit,” “to you,” and “paradise” exceeding in syllable length their Russian equivalents (*zapretnĭy plod*, *vam*, and *ráy*) and partly to the idiomatic conciseness of the text (“you must have to you supplied,” *vam podaváy*, a dative followed by an imperative). Spalding paraphrases it rather neatly as:

Unless forbidden fruit we eat,  
Our paradise is no more sweet.

XXVIIa

The draft (2371, f. 88<sup>v</sup>) contains the following alternate stanza:

    <Look:> Nina comes into the ballroom,  
    stops at the door,  
    and lets her abstract gaze  
4 roam over the attentive guests:  
    her bosom palpitates, her shoulders shine;  
    her head blazes with diamonds,  
    around her figure twines and trembles  
8 in a transparent network lace  
    and on her rosy legs shines through  
    the patterned gossamer of silk.  
    <Alone Onegin> [. . . .]  
12 <before this magic picture>  
    struck only by Tatiana,  
    only Tatiana does he see.

This and the second alternate stanza, XXVIIb, abound in unusually rich imagery. Nina certainly would have eclipsed Tatiana, had our poet kept these voluptuous verses.

Her head, which “blazes with diamonds,” *Gorit v*

*almázah golová*, is doubtlessly a reminiscence of Baraťinski's *The Ball* (pub. 1828), in which the hairdress of the ballroom belles is described (1951 edn., ll. 16–17) as “blazing with precious stones,” *Dragími kámnyami u nih | Goryát ubóri golovně*, and the “diamonds” of Princess Nina's flickering earrings (ll. 481–82) “blaze behind her black curls,” *Almáz mel'káyushchih seryóg | Gorít za chyórnými kudryámi*. It will be remembered that the description of carriages at the door of the festively lit mansion in *EO*, One : xxvii, affected the beginning of Baraťinski's *The Ball*; and now we have a reverse process: the end of *EO* (see xxvii b, XLIV : 14, and n. to XLIV : 6–14) echoes *The Ball*. A curious pattern of give-and-take.

## xxvii b

This stanza, in fair copy, is thought by Tomashevski (*Works* 1957, p. 556) to have replaced xxvii a, draft:

- And in a ballroom bright and rich,  
when into the hushed close circle,  
akin to a winged lily,  
4 balancing, enters Lalla Rookh,  
and shines above the bending crowd  
with regal head,  
and gently weaves and glides—  
8 a starlike Charis among Charites,  
and the gaze of commingled generations  
streams, glowing with devotion,  
now toward her, now toward the tsar—  
12 for them no eyes has only Eugene;  
struck only by Tatiana,  
only Tatiana does he see.

- 4 This splendid quatrain, with its unusually bright imagery, is magnificently orchestrated. There is a subtle alliterative play on the letters *l*, *k*, and *r*. Note how the six last syllables of the third line of the Russian text are

## Commentary

echoed by the closing three syllables in the last line of the quatrain:

*I v zále yárkoy i bogátoy,  
Kogdá v umólkshiy, tésnŷy krúg,  
Podóbna lílii krílátoy  
Koléblyas' v hódit Lálla-Rúk . . .*

What a pity that Pushkin had to discard this exceptionally beautiful stanza, one of the best he ever composed! It is, of course, impossibly anachronistic. Yielding to personal recollections of 1827–29, Pushkin describes a ball in the first years of the reign of Nicholas I (1825–55) and momentarily dismisses the fact that the balls and routs at which Onegin saw Tatiana are supposed to take place in the autumn of 1824, in the reign of Alexander I (1801–25). Naturally, the stanza would never have been allowed to appear in print so long as Onegin preferred Tatiana N. to the imperial couple.

- 4 / Lalla Rookh: The young Empress Alexandra of Russia (1798–1860), who had been Princess Charlotte of Prussia (daughter of King Frederick William III and Queen Louise) when Nicholas married her in 1817, had received this *nom de société* ever since she appeared in a piece of fashionable pageantry, disguised as the heroine of Thomas Moore's very long poem, *Lalla Rookh; an Oriental Romance* (1817). She was sung under that name by her teacher of Russian, Zhukovski, who devoted three poems to the fashionable theme of Lalla Rookh when staying in Berlin, where, in January, 1821, various court festivals (described, with illustrations, in a special album: *Lallah Roukh, divertissement mêlé de chants et de danses*, Berlin, 1822) took place with Princess Alexandra in the part of the Oriental princess and the Grand Duke Nicholas in the part of Aliris. Of these three poems, the sixty-four trochaic lines addressed to Alexandra, beginning

"Winsome dream, the soul's enchanter," are singularly close in imagery to Pushkin's overrated madrigal to Anna Kern beginning "I recollect a wondrous moment" (July, 1825), twenty-four iambic tetrameters, which he gave her, with *EO*, One, in exchange for a heliotrope sprig from her bosom. Pushkin repeats twice (ll. 4 and 20), with the addition of an initial monosyllable (*kak*, "like"), needed to iambize it, Zhukovski's trochee (l. 42), which reads:

Spirit of pure loveliness

—a phrase that Zhukovski also uses elsewhere.

The young empress' innocent-looking beauty is said (by Bartenev, who had it from Nashchokin) to have had, like that of Anna Kern, a strong sensuous attraction for Pushkin.

The habitat of Moore's princess is in the India of eighteenth-century jejune fantasies. She is entertained by a minstrel in a wilderness of monotonous couplets and Gallic *chevilles*. Pushkin, as other Russians of his time, knew the poem from Amédée Pichot's prose version, *Lalla Roukh, ou la Princesse mogole, histoire orientale* (2 vols., Paris, 1820).

- 8 It is curious to note that the Charites come from Baratin-ski's *The Ball*, l. 23, "around the captivating Charites," *Vokrug plenitel'nih harit*.

### xxx

- 10 / fluffy boa / *Bod pushistiŭ*: The fair copy contains a modish image: *zmeyú soból'yu*, "the snake of sable."
- 13 / the motley host / *pyóstriŭ pólk*: Influenced probably by the French descriptive term for lackeys, *le peuple bariolé*, a common formula of the seventeenth century.

XXXa

In a false start, Pushkin continued xxx (in fair copy):

- Days pass, weeks fly,  
Onegin thinks of but one thing,  
finds for himself no other aim  
4 than only, wheresoever, openly  
or stealthily to meet the princess  
in order to observe upon her face  
at least anxiety or wrath.  
8 His *sauvage* nature daunting, everywhere—  
at a soiree, ball, theater,  
at the artistes of modes,  
on the embankment of the frozen waters,\*  
12 in street, in vestibule, in ballroom—  
he chases like a shadow after her.  
Whither is gone his indolence?

XXXI

- 8 Pushkin knew better, but pathetically used this pious didacticism to influence his bride, who, had she read Pushkin, might have been led to cast aside her “Moscow miss” affectations.

XXXII

- 7 There is no punctuation mark at the end of this line in the text, but surely that is a clerical or typographical oversight.
- 14 / word for word / *toch' v toch'*: Should we understand that the *toch' v toch'* (“as exact as exact can be”) refers not to a literal translation but to a faithful copy (it may mean either), and that Onegin, in concession to Princess N.’s genuine unaffectedness and in contrast to Tatiana’s

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\*The Neva was *not* frozen in October, 1824, which is the latest possible date here.

derivative romanticism of Chapter Three, couches his otherwise very Gallic epistle in neo-Karamzinian Russian and not in the conventional French of its literary models? One wonders. Anyway, the method of bringing this letter into the novel is direct and matter-of-fact. The reader will recall the trouble Pushkin said he had (Three : xxvi-xxxi) in "translating" Tatiana's letter.

VARIANT

- 14 Before Pushkin added Onegin's letter between xxxii and xxxiii, the last line of xxxii read:

He waits for the answer day and night.

It is then followed by the "no answer" beginning xxxiii.

ONEGIN'S LETTER TO TATIANA

Sixty lines in iambic tetrameter, freely rhymed: baabecec, aabeebicoddo, babacece, babacceded, ababececidobbo, baab; the spacing is the one generally adopted in Russian editions; coincidence in literation, owing to a paucity of available vowels, does not imply a similarity of rhymes, except in the case of the first lines of the second and third sections (where b denotes the same rhyme, in *-as*) and in the penultimate section (where b denotes a rhyme in *-or*); the feminine rhyme in the last section echoes the identical one, *bóle*, "more," and *vóle*, "will," of ll. 1 and 3 in Tatiana's letter, which is nineteen lines longer.

- 1 Cf. Rousseau, *Julie* (Saint-Preux to Julie), pt. I, letter II: "Je sens d'avance le poids de votre indignation . . ."
- 10 / a spark of tenderness: Cf. the "drop of pity" in Tatiana's letter, l. 6, and the "étincelle de vertu" in Julie's first long letter to Saint-Preux.

## Commentary

12 / sweet habit / *Privíchke míloy* [fem. dat.]: A Gallicism, *douce habitude*, *doux penchant*. Onegin's literary model seems to have been a passage in Laclos' *Les Liaisons dangereuses* (1782), letter XXVIII: "Quoi! je perdrois la douce habitude de vous voir chaque jour!" The term crops up commonly, from Chaulieu to Constant.

16 / a hapless victim Lenski fell / *Neschástnoy zhértvoy Lénskiy pól*: This is very oddly phrased by Onegin. *Bon goût* and a bad conscience combine to blur his style here. Victim of what? Jealousy? Honor? Fate? Onegin's marksmanship? Onegin's ennui?

A profound commentator might suggest that while a hypkish Englishman shoots himself, a Russian chondriac shoots a friend—committing suicide by proxy, so to speak.

17–18 This rhetorical turn was a great favorite with poets of the time. Cf. Baratinski, *The Ball*, ll. 223–24:

and clasping Nina to his heart,  
his heart from Nina he concealed . . .

20–21 / I thought: liberty and peace [*vól'nost' i pokóy*] are a substitute for happiness: Cf. the last line of Pushkin's *Liberty: an Ode* (1817), and his short poem beginning "'Tis time, my dear, 'tis time" (eight iambic hexameters, composed about 1835), l. 5:

*Na svéte schást'ya nét, no ést' pokóy i vól'ya.*  
On earth there is no happiness, but there is  
peace and freedom.

*Pokoy* combines the meanings of "peace," "rest," "repose," and "mental ease." (See also *Onegin's Journey*: [XVIII]: 13.) Elsewhere (Two: xxx: 14) the substitute is "habit."

29 / to melt in agonies before you; 38–40 / that my life may

be prolonged I must be certain . . . of seeing you; 49–52 / to embrace your knees . . . ; 53 / but in the meantime . . . : As pointed out by Russian commentators,\* Onegin's letter is full of echoes of Constant's *Adolphe* (see my n. to Seven : XXII : 6–7). It is the same hard, petulant tone: "Mais je dois vous voir s'il faut que je vive" (ch. 3), with paraphrases of "Mais alors même, lorsque tout mon être s'élançe vers vous, lorsque j'aurais un tel besoin de me reposer de tant d'angoisses, de poser ma tête sur vos genoux, de donner un libre cours à mes larmes, il faut que je me contraigne avec violence . . . (ibid.)."

30 / grow pale and waste away / *Blednét' i gásnut'*: This is an almost exact echo of Four : XXIV : 2: [*Tat'yana*] *Blednéet, gásnét*.

49 / to embrace your knees. An amphoral enfoldment of supplication and devotion constantly met with in European fiction of the day. See, for example, Mme de Krüdener, *Valérie*, letter XLII: "Je [Linar] m'élançai à ses [Valérie's] genoux, que je serrai convulsivement."

In Richardson's epistolary novel *The History of Sir Charles Grandison*, vol. I, letter XXIX to Miss Selby, Monday, Feb. 20, Miss Byron is taken in a chair by treacherous chairmen to a house where Sir Hargrave Pollexfen "threw himself at my feet"; "[she] sunk down on [her] knees wrapping [her] arms about [one of the women who were withdrawing]." Then she kneels before the wretch. Then she throws herself upon the window seat. Then he throws himself at her feet. Then he

\*N. Dashkevich, in the collection *Pamyati Pushkina* (Kiev, 1899); Lerner, in the Petersburg daily, *Rech'*, Jan. 12, 1915; and especially Anna Ahmatov, "'Adol'f Benzhamena Konstanta v tvorchestve Pushkina," in *Vremennik*, I (1936), 91–114.

## Commentary

embraces her knees with his odious arms (see a similar scene in Mme de Staël, my n. to Three : x : 3).

49–51 Gentil-Bernard's recommendations to the would-be lover in *L'Art d'aimer* (1761), can. II, ll. 218–19:

Meurs à ses pieds, embrasse ses genoux,  
Baigne de pleurs cette main qu'elle oublie . . .

are followed by Onegin in Eight : XLI–XLII.

53–54 Cf. Rousseau, *Julie* (Saint-Preux complaining to Lord Bomston), pt. IV, letter VI: "Quel supplice de traiter en étrangère celle qu'on porte au fond de son cœur!" The Saint-Preux tone of Onegin's letter was already noted in 1832 (Feb. 21) by Küchelbecker in his prison diary.

## VARIANTS

9–53 The draft (PD 165) gives the following alternate lines:

9 But let it be: against myself  
I cannot struggle any more.  
I've been the victim more than once  
12 of insane passions and of fate . . .  
. . . . .  
23 I had forgotten your dear image,  
the tender sound of your shy speech,  
and with a sullen soul I bore  
26 life as a purifying pain.  
. . . . .  
50 Granted—I am insane; but is it  
so very much that I am asking?  
O could you comprehend only the shadow  
53 of what I carry in my heart!

55–61 Tomashevski and Modzalevski, in *Rukopisi* (1937), facing p. 72, publish the facsimile of a fair copy from the Maykov collection:

look at you with a cheerful look,  
maintain a trivial conversation.

With this inferno you are not acquainted.  
What then? Now this is what I want:  
walk for a little at your side,  
imbibe sweet poison drop by drop,  
and gratefully lapse into silence.

Here the letter ends.

Under the last line of the draft (PD 165) Pushkin wrote: "Oct. 5, 1831, S[arskoe] S[elo]." This is the last date we have pertaining to Pushkin's work on the novel. The canto was published three months later.

XXXIII

- 6 / *Egó ne vıdyat, s nım ni slóva*: Her apparent indifference is idiomatically rendered by the omission of the subject and by the vague plural in which the verb stands: "him [they] not see, with him no word." Something of this slightly jocular, or at least familiar, intonation might be rendered in English by "My lady sees him not . . ." It is really a Gallicism: "On ne le voit pas, on ne lui parle pas."

XXXV

- 2–6 The listing-of-authors device, although characteristic of Pushkin (who has a particular fondness for the tabulations of objects, names, emotions, actions, etc.), is not his invention. Indeed, the list in this stanza is nothing beside the fabulous catalogue of books read by Faublas (in Louvet de Couvray's *Une Année de la vie du Chevalier de Faublas*; see n. to One : XII : 9–10) during a spell of enforced solitude. In his list of forty authors, against Onegin's ten, the reader will recognize old friends, such as Colardeau, Dorat, Beaumarchais, Marmontel, de Bièvre, Gresset, Mably, Jean Baptiste Rousseau, Jean Jacques Rousseau, Delille, Voltaire, and others.

We shall also note that Pushkin omitted to give his

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hero to read, in the winter of 1824–25, the two foreign books that were most avidly read that season, the controversial *Mémoires de Joseph Fouché, duc d'Otrante*—Fouché had been Napoleon's chief of police (2 vols., Paris, September and November, 1824); and *Les Conversations de Lord Byron* (Pichot's version of Medwin's *Journal of the Conversations* . . . ; see n. to Three : XII : 10).

\*

The tabulation device was a great favorite also with Pushkin's uncle, Vasiliy Pushkin, and was parodied by Dmitriev, who published (Moscow, 1808; fifty copies for private distribution) a charming poem in iambic tetrameter dealing with Vasiliy Pushkin's trip abroad (in 1803; see the latter's own reports in the June and October issues of the *Messenger of Europe* for that year). It is entitled *The Journey of N. N. to Paris and London*. The following lines (21–27) occur in pt. III:

What dress coats! pantaloons!  
All in the newest fashion!  
What a fine choice of books!  
Count them—I'll tell you in a second:  
*Byuffón, Russó, Mablí, Korniliy,*  
*Gomér, Plutárh, Tatsít, Virgíliy,*  
all *Shakesptr*, all *Póp* and *Gyúm*.

*Korniliy*, facetious form of Corneille; *Shakesptr*, three syllables, French pronunciation; *Póp*, French pronunciation of Pope; *Gyúm*, Russianized French pronunciation of Hume; the rest, in Russian form and transcript.

For the unfinished novella now known as *The Blackamoor of Peter the Great*, begun July 31, 1827, Pushkin, to judge by a MS medley of mottoes, planned to head the first chapter with a quotation from the *Journey of a Traveler* (sic):

. . . I'm in Paris.  
I have begun to live—not breathe.

2 / Gibbon: Edward Gibbon (1737–94), English historian. Onegin might have read the French translation (Paris, 1793) of Gibbon's memoirs, an edition Pushkin had in his own library. The eighteen volumes of the *Histoire de la décadence et de la chute de l'empire romain* (Paris, 1788–95), Leclerc de Sept-Chênes' translation of Gibbon's *Decline and Fall*, should have kept Onegin busy for at least a month.

3 / Rousseau: After taking his fill of Gibbon, I suppose Onegin turned to Jean Jacques' *Julie* (see n. to Three : ix : 7) or *Confessions* rather than to the didactic works. Two weeks of Rousseau would probably satisfy him.

3 / Manzoni: Alessandro Francesco Tommaso Antonio Manzoni (1785–1873), the laborious, pious, and naïve author of such mediocre works as the “romantic” tragedy *Il Conte de Carmagnola* (Milan, 1820), which Onegin could have read in Claude Fauriel's French version, *Le Comte de Carmagnola* (Paris, 1823). It had also been translated by Auguste Trognon (Paris, 1822). I suspect Pushkin wished to lend Onegin *Les Fiancés, histoire milanaise*, etc., the French version, by Rey Dussueil (Paris, 1828), of Manzoni's romance *I Promessi sposi* (1827), an echo of Mrs. Radcliffe's divagations, but this came out too late for his purpose.

There is a canceled reading, “Lalande” (Joseph Jérôme Le Français de Lalande, 1732–1807, French astronomer), instead of “Manzoni,” in the fair copy.

3 / Herder: Johann Gottfried von Herder (1744–1803), German philosopher.

Unless our hero knew German, which we know was not the case, or had obtained an advance copy of the French version by Edgar Quinet, who at twenty-two, in 1825, translated the first volume of Herder's *Ideen zur*

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*Philosophie der Geschichte der Menschheit* (1784–91; *Idées sur la philosophie de l'histoire de l'humanité*, of which I have reluctantly seen an 1827–28 edn.), it is not clear how exactly the Rigan thinker, who “rappelait l'humeur souffrante de Rousseau fugitif et vieilli,” could have in 1824 communicated with *Onéguine fugitif et vieilli*.

- 4 / Chamfort: The reference is no doubt to the *Maximes et pensées* in the *Œuvres de* [Sébastien Roch Nicolas] *Chamfort*, “recueillies et publiées par un de ses amis” (vol. IV, Paris, 1796; Pushkin had the 1812 edn.).

Onegin may have thumbnailed the following items (pp. 384, 344, 366, and 552):

Je demandais à M. N. pourquoi il n'allait plus dans le monde? Il me répondit: “C'est que je n'aime plus les femmes, et que je connais les hommes.”

Le Médecin Bouvard avait sur le visage une balafre, en forme de C, qui le défigurait beaucoup. Diderot disait que c'était un coup qu'il s'était donné, en tenant maladroitement la faux de la mort.

Pendant la guerre d'Amérique, un Ecossais disait à un Français en lui montrant quelques prisonniers américains: “Vous vous êtes battu pour votre maître, moi, pour le mien; mais ces gens-ci, pour qui se battent-ils?”

Je ne sais quel homme disait: “Je voudrais voir le dernier des Rois étranglé avec le boyau du dernier des Prêtres.”

The last reference is to the lines (which La Harpe, *Lycée*, attributes to Diderot):

Et des boyaux du dernier prêtre  
Serrons le cou du dernier roi.

According to O. Guerlac, *Les Citations françaises* (Paris, 1931), p. 218n:

On a longtemps attribué ces vers à Diderot qui a, en effet, dans les *Eleuthéromanes ou abdication d'un Roi de la Fève* (1772), écrit deux vers similaires. Mais ceux-ci, dont on ignore le véritable auteur, ne sont que la paraphrase d'un vœu du curé d'Etrépigny en Champagne, Jean Meslier, dont Voltaire publia un extrait de testament, d'ailleurs considéré comme apocryphe, où se lisent ces mots: "Je voudrais, et ce sera le dernier et le plus ardent de mes souhaits, je voudrais que le dernier des rois fût étranglé avec les boyaux du dernier prêtre."

The lines were paraphrased in a Russian quatrain of c. 1820, attributed by some to Pushkin, but probably written by Baratinski. It circulated in a variant with "Russian" instead of "last" in reference to "a priest" and "the tsar":

Good citizens we shall amuse,  
and at the pillory  
with the last priest's intestine  
we'll strangle the last tsar.

- 4 / Mme de Staël: Onegin, according to a canceled passage in One, had read this popular lady's work on German literature in his youth. He may now have turned to *Delphine*, which, with *Julie*, had been among young Tatiana's favorite novels.

- 4 / Bichat: The great physician, anatomist, and physiologist, Marie François Xavier Bichat (1771-1802), author of *Recherches physiologiques sur la vie et la mort* (Paris, 1799; 3rd edn. seen, 1805). He distinguished two lives in a creature: "organic life," depending on the body's asymmetrical internal structure, and "animal life," depending on the body's symmetrical external structure. Onegin may have been especially interested in Article Six, on the physiology of passions, in which the author proves that all passions affect the functions of the organism. Bichat has left wonderful pages on the death of the

heart, the death of the lung, the death of the brain; he died at an even earlier age than Pushkin.

- 4 / Tissot: Simon André, according to some, Samuel Auguste André, according to others, Tissot (1728–97), a famous Swiss doctor, author of *De la santé des gens de lettres* (Lausanne and Lyon, 1768).

Onegin may have also noted (pp. 31, 91):

Il y a eu des tyrans qui ont condamné à la mort des philosophes qu'ils haïssaient, mais ils n'ont pu la leur faire craindre. Combien auraient-ils été plus cruels, si en leur accordant la vie, ils eussent pu leur inspirer les craintes qui sont le tourment des hypocondriques?

Rien au monde ne contribue plus à la santé que la gayeté que la société anime et que la retraite tue. . . . Elle produit cette misantropie, cet esprit chagrin . . . ce dégoût de tout. . . .

In reading Tissot, Onegin followed the advice of Beaumarchais:

. . . Si votre dîner fut mauvais . . . ah! laissez mon *Barbier* . . . parcourez les chefs-d'œuvres de Tissot sur la tempérance, et faites des réflexions politiques, économiques, diététiques, philosophiques ou morales.

(“Lettre modérée sur la chute et la critique du *Barbier de Séville*,” which is an introduction to *Le Barbier de Seville, ou la Précaution inutile*, “comédie en quatre actes, représentée et tombée sur le Théâtre de la Comédie Française, aux Tuileries, le 23 de Février 1775,” in *Œuvres complètes de Pierre Augustin Caron de Beaumarchais*, Paris, 1809, vol. I.)

It is curious to note that in his diminutive drama *Mozart and Salieri* (composed 1830), Pushkin has Beaumarchais give Salieri, according to Salieri, a very different piece of advice (sc. ii, ll. 31–35):

. . . Beaumarchais  
was wont to say to me: Look, friend Salieri,

whenever by black thoughts you are beset,  
uncork a bottle of champagne or else  
reread *Figaro's Marriage*.

Some commentators have dragged in another, completely irrelevant, Tissot: Pierre François (1768–1854), author of a *Précis des guerres de la Révolution jusqu'à 1815* (Paris, 1820) and *De la poésie latine* (Paris, 1821).

5 / the skeptic Bayle: Pierre Bayle (1647–1706), French philosopher.

What was it exactly? Perhaps his marvelously cynical and misleading account of Abélard (d. 1142) and Héloïse (d. 1163), with lewd footnotes, in his *Dictionnaire historique et critique* (Rotterdam, 1697; Pushkin possessed A. J. Q. Beuchot's 1820–24 edn., in 16 vols.).

6 / works of Fontenelle: Bernard le Bovier de Fontenelle (1657–1757), in a new edition of his complete works (3 vols., Paris, 1818), might have tempted Onegin with his *Entretiens sur la pluralité des mondes* (1686), or, more practically, *Discours de la patience* (1687).

A still better choice, prompted by Lenski's shade and by a recollection of that careless talk on Arcadian topics (Three : I–II), may have been *Poésies pastorales, avec un Traité sur la nature de l'églogue* (1688). His best work, however, is *Dialogues des morts* (1683), in which, through the airy wit and rigid rationalization of his time, one distinguishes an individual flow of strong, lucid thought.

7–8 Among Russian poetical works that appeared at the end of 1824 and at the beginning of 1825, the following are especially mentioned by contemporaneous critics: a collection of Zhukovskii's poems; Pushkin's *Fountain of Bahchisaray*; fragments of Griboedov's *Woe from Wit* (in *The Russian Thalia*; see n. to One : XXI : 5–14).

## Commentary

Furthermore, Rileev's *Meditations* (*Dumī*), and various magazine pieces by Pushkin, Baratinski, Küchelbecker, Delvig, Yazikov, and Kozlov received good reviews.

In Delvig's literary "almanac" for 1825, *Northern Flowers*, which came out about Christmas, 1824, Onegin might have found a fragment, four stanzas (Chapter Two : VII–X) describing the pure soul of the young idealist he had dispatched four years before (Jan. 14, 1821).

In the last week of February, 1825, having acquired Chapter One, he might have read with a smile, half amused and half nostalgic, about himself, Kaverin, Chaadaev, Katenin, and Istomina in his old pal's sympathetic survey of a young rake's life in 1819–20.

About the same time (beginning of 1825) he could have seen in the first three issues of *The Son of the Fatherland* for that year Bulgarin's venomous criticism of Karamzin's *History of the Russian Empire*, vols. X and XI (Bulgarin considered Karamzin wrong in making a villain of Tsar Boris Godunov).

- 9 / *al'mandhi, i zhurnālī*: The main literary magazines, or collections, termed "almanacs" (which differed from *zhurnalī*—literary reviews—mainly in appearing at erratic intervals, sometimes as "annual miscellanies," and in leaning toward the anthological in pocket form), were, in 1824–25, *Mnemosyne* (ed. Odoevski and Küchelbecker), *Northern Flowers* (ed. Delvig), Bulgarin's theatrical review, *The Russian Thalia*, and others. The *al'manah* I am holding at the moment is *The Polar Star* (*Polyarnaya zvezda*), 1824, "a pocket book for female and male lovers of Russian letters, edited by A. Bestuzhev and K. Rileev, St. Petersburg, 322 pages, illustrated."

The term "almanac," as used in Russia in the sense of a more or less periodical collection of new literary pieces,

stems from Karamzin's venture of 1796, *Almanac of the Aonids*, in imitation of the famous French *Almanach des Muses*, a *recueil* of fugitive poems (with a sprinkling of enduring ones), published at intervals from 1764 to 1833.

Among the *zhurnali* (literary reviews, weeklies, monthlies, and quarterlies) of 1824-25, we may mention *The Messenger of Europe*, *The Literary News*, and *The Son of the Fatherland*. The most successful were Bulgarin's *Northern Bee* and Polevoy's fortnightly *Moscow Telegraph*. In the latter Pushkin was attacked in 1830 (see, for example, Polevoy's harsh critique of Chapter Seven in no. 5). In the former, Bulgarin, in 1824-25, had eulogized Pushkin in various brief references to his poems. An abrupt change occurs only in 1830; that year, in no. 5, in reference to Pushkin's short poem entitled *May 26, 1828*, Bulgarin still speaks of our poet's "inspiration of genius," but then in no. 30 (Mar. 12, 1830) Bulgarin publishes a piece called "Anekdot," grossly insulting to Pushkin, followed by a violent critique of Seven in no. 35 (Mar. 22, 1830) and no. 39 (Apr. 1, 1830).

Pushkin wrote to the chief of the Gendarmes Corps, General Benkendorf (Count Alexander Benckendorff, 1783-1844), Mar. 24, 1830, Moscow:

. . . M. Boulgarine, qui dit avoir de l'influence auprès de vous [Bulgarin was a police agent], est devenu un de mes ennemis les plus acharnés à propos d'une critique qu'il m'a attribuée . . .

It is true that Delvig's journal, *The Literary Gazette*, of which Pushkin was the leading spirit, had harshly criticized Bulgarin's two very mediocre and popular novels, published March, 1829, and March, 1830, respectively (*Ivan Vozhigin*, a moral satire, 1086 pp., and *The False Demetrius*, a historical romance, 1551 pp.);

especially blasting was Delvig's unsigned review (*Literary Gazette*, no. 14, 1830), which Bulgarin attributed to Pushkin; but the specific cause that prompted Bulgarin's attack was a MS epigram by Pushkin (written February, 1829, and circulated in MS). It goes:

The harm is not that you're a Pole;  
so are Kosciusko and Mickiewicz;  
a Tatar be, for all I care:  
likewise no shame can I see there;  
or be a Jew, no harm there either;  
the harm is you're Vidocq Figlyarin.

The allusion is to François Eugène Vidocq (1775–1857), chief of the secret police in France, whose spurious *Memoirs* were such a hit in 1828–29. "Figlyarin," drawn from *figlyar* ("zany") and rhyming with the subject's real name.

Bulgarin boldly published this epigram, unsigned, in the review *Son of the Fatherland*, XI, 17 (Apr. 26, 1830), 303, with a note saying: "This curious epigram by a well-known poet circulates in Moscow and has come here [St. Petersburg] to be distributed." Bulgarin changed the last two words of the epigram to "Faddey Bulgarin," thus making it look like a direct libel.

The "Anekdot" (subtitled "From an English Journal") reads, in part:

Travelers are cross with our Old England because the rabble here behaves discourteously toward foreigners and employs the name of a foreign nation as an invective [possibly an allusion to the derivation of "bugger" from "Bulgar"]. . . . In civilized France [where] foreign-born writers enjoy the particular esteem of the natives . . . there appeared a French rhymester who, after deceiving the public for a long time by aping Byron and Schiller (whom he did not understand in the original), fell at last into disesteem and switched from poetry to criticism.

The "Anekdot" goes on to relate how this shameless person vilified a distinguished German-born writer, and

rounds up the attack on Pushkin by describing this "Frenchman" as a trivial versificator "with the cold and mute heart of an oyster," a tippler, a sycophant, and a cardsharp. \*

- 12 / *such* madrigals: Although on the whole Pushkin's first long poems, *Ruslan and Lyudmila*, *The Caucasian Captive*, and *The Fountain of Bahchisaray*, were met with ecstatic applause by the reviewers, there were a few ferocious dissenters, such as the viciously conservative Mihail Dmitriev, who, in *The Messenger of Europe*, no. 3 (Feb. 13, 1825), denied Pushkin the status of true poet and affirmed that the "lauded music of his verse can mean nothing to posterity, nor does it mean much to contemporaries."

XXXVI

In a work in which, on the whole, the poet is at pains to keep his imagery within the limits of the accepted, the rational, the not-too-bizarre, the *déjà dit* (with melodious novelty supplied by its Russian garb), sts. xxxvi and xxxvii stand out as something very special. The wording may fool one at first, for it seems a routine display of formulas to which *EO* has accustomed us—"dreams," and "desires," and "legends," and the usual epithets "secret," "forgotten," and so forth. Yet very soon the inner eye and the inner ear begin to distinguish other colors and sounds. The elements are the old ones but their combination results in a marvelous transmutation of meaning.

The passage is not easy to render accurately. The *I chtó zh?*, opening it, is not the plain "Eh, bien, quoi?

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\*For quotations from Bulgarin's article I rely upon P. Stolpyanski's "Pushkin i 'Severnaya pchela,'" in *P. i ego sovr.*, VI, 23-24 (1916), 127-94 and VIII, 31-32 (1927), 129-46.

## Commentary

Tué'' (*Nu, chtó zh? ubít*) of Zaretski (Six : xxxv : 4) or the storyteller's oratory in Tatiana's dream (. . . *i chtó zh? medvéd' za néy*, Five : XII : 14). I have translated it "And lo—" because nothing short of it would render the mysterious tone of warning in the particular "And what?"

There is a kind of irrational suggestiveness, a hypnotic and quaint quality, about those *táynie predán'ya*, "secret legends [or traditions] of the heart's dark [or obscure] past," *tyómnoy stariní*, where two great romantic themes, folklore and heartlore, merge as Onegin is lulled into one of those predormant states in which levels of meaning shift slightly and a mirage shimmer alters the outline of random thoughts. Especially remarkable in enigmatic tone are the *ugrózi, tólki, predskazán'ya*—"threats" (what threats? evil omens? fatidic menaces?), "rumors" (or, perhaps, "interpretations," strange glosses in the margin of life?), "presages" (are these omens related to those which so beautifully linked up Tatiana's dream with her name-day party?). The gay patter of l. 13 resembles those little voices which start to narrate vivacious nonsense in one's ear as one is about to doze off; and Tatiana's only letter to Onegin is miraculously multiplied in the last prismatic line. The next stanza contains one of the most original images of the novel.

In connection with these considerations, one is tempted to quote a passage from Baron E. Rozen's fine "Reference to the Dead" (in *The Son of the Fatherland*, 1847), which I slightly condense:

Pushkin was addicted to deep, somber brooding; and in order to relieve his natural taciturnity he sought every pretext for mirth. There was something forced about that bright laughter of his. Frequently what provoked it was the unexpected, the unusual, the fantastically monstrous, the contrived. And when nothing could satisfy this need, he, that prodigy of harmonious thought, would depart

from his stately norm to compose strange verses, deliberate nonsense, but the nonsense of genius. And *those* verses he never committed to paper.

- 13 / of a long tale / *dlinnoy skazki*: It is difficult to decide whether *skazka* here means “fairy tale” or merely a conte in the French sense.

XXXVII

- 4 The magnificent image of the faro game has us recall the stanzas on gambling in Canto Two that our poet rejected. The dead youth is forever encamped in Onegin’s mind, forever Zaretski’s casual croak reverberates there, and forever the snow of that frosty morning melts under shed blood and scalding tears of remorse.

VARIANT

- 5–6 A rough draft published by Shlyapkin (1903), p. 24, and mentioned in *Rukopisi* (from Shlyapkin’s collection), dated September, 1830, has:

Quick visions slyly  
glide left and right . . .

and Onegin has “lost all the stakes of life” (last line?). In the left-hand corner, Pushkin wrote in pencil the following aphorism in prose: “Translators are the post horses of enlightenment.”

XXXVIII

- 5 / magnetism: A year later, namely in December, 1825, a committee in Paris was appointed by the French Academy of Science to examine the claims of magnetism, otherwise hypnotism. After five and a half years of cogitation, the committee announced that the effects of magnetism were sometimes produced by lassitude, en-

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nui, and imagination. Pushkin has apparently in view here self-hypnotism leading in some cases to automatic rhyming, graphomania.

Cf. Pierre Lebrun, *L'Inspiration poétique* (written in 1823):

Le poète! . . .  
 . . . . .  
 Dans l'inspiration, pareil  
 A l'enfant que l'art mesmérique  
 Fait parler durant son sommeil . . .

12 / "Benedetta": Pushkin, in July, 1825, wrote to  
Pletnyov:

Tell [Ivan] Kozlov from me that our part of the world [Trigorskoe] is visited by one charmer [Anna Kern] who divinely sings his *Venetian Night* [*Venetsianskaya noch', fantaziya*, composed 1824] to the tune of a gondolier's recitative ["Benedetta sia la madre"]. I promised to communicate this to the dear inspired blindman. Pity he cannot see her; but let him imagine, at least, the beauty and the soulfulness. God grant that he may hear her.

The end of this stanza is a curious echo of the themes in One : XLVIII–XLIX (see nn. to these stanzas).

12–13 / “Benedetta” . . . “Idol mio”: “Benedetta sia la madre,” “Let the mother be blessed,” a Venetian barcarolle. To this tune were adapted the Russian trochaic tetrameters of Kozlov’s *Venetian Night*, inscribed to Pletnyov, published in the review *The Polar Star* (1825):

'Twas a night in springtime, breathing,  
Full of Southern beauty bright,  
With the Brenta gently streaming  
Silvery in Luna's light . . .

“Idol mio, piu pace non ho,” “My idol, I have no peace any longer”: the refrain in a duettino (“Se, o cara, sor-

ridi," "If only, my dear, you would smile") by Vincenzo Gabussi (1800-46).

13-14 Elton has the hilarious:

. . . *The News*  
Drops in the fire—or else his shoes.

XXXIX

5-9 I am inclined to select the morning of Apr. 7, 1825, as the date of Onegin's awakening from hibernation, this being the first anniversary (O.S.) of Byron's death at Missolonghi. On that day Pushkin and Anna Vulf, in the province of Pskov, had Greek-Orthodox rites performed in commemoration of "the Lord's slave Georgiy" at the local churches on their lands of "Mihaylovsky" and "Trigorsky" (as Pushkin Frenchified these names). Writing that May from Trigorskoe to his brother in St. Petersburg, our poet compares these prayers to "la messe de Frédéric II pour le repos de Monsieur de Voltaire."

7 / *zimovál on kak surók*: A locution adapted from the French (*hiberner comme une marmotte*). *Surok* corresponds to the generic marmot, but the rodent known to the French as *la marmotte* (*Marmota marmota* L.) is restricted to the mountains of western Europe. It is replaced in southern and eastern Russia by *Marmota bobac* Schreber, Fr. *boubak*, Russ. *baybak*, Eng. bobac, also known in England as the "Polish marmot" and in America as the "Russian woodchuck"; and apparently, i.e., as far as a nonmammological taxonomist can make out, it is congeneric with the three American marmots (the Eastern "ground hog," the Western "yellow-bellied marmot," and the "gray marmot" or "whistler"). The "prairie dog" belongs to another genus.

It is curious to note incidentally that the bobac is

## Commentary

described, with fabulous details, in La Fontaine's *Fables*, bk. ix: "Discours à madame de la Sablière."

Onegin went into hibernation just before the calamitous inundation of Nov. 7, 1824 (after which, expensive social festivities such as those at which he could see Tatiana were temporarily forbidden by government decree). In other words, Pushkin very conveniently, for the structure of the novel, has Eugene sleep through the disaster. Another Eugene, however, is in the meantime losing his betrothed to the raging waters and being driven mad by the fancied gallop of an equestrian statue in the poem Pushkin devoted to that flood, *The Bronze Horseman* (composed 1833). The way Eugene Onegin, while hibernating, lends his first name to this unfortunate man is very amusing (pt. I, ll. 1-15, rhymed arbitrarily aabebeccibbicco):

- O'er the ensombered Town of Peter  
November breathed with autumn chill.  
Plashing with noisy wave against  
the margins of her trim embankment,  
5 the Neva tossed about  
like a sick man upon his restless bed.  
'Twas late and dark. The rain  
beat crossly on the windowpane,  
and the wind blew with a sad howl.  
10 At this time from a visit  
came home young Eugene.  
We'll call our hero  
by this name. It  
sounds pleasingly. With it, moreover,  
15 my pen somehow has long been friends.

*The Bronze Horseman* is also linked up with *EO* by a remarkable series of stanzas in *EO* rhyme sequence, *The Pedigree of My Hero* (*Rodoslovnaya moego geroya*, 1832); Pushkin hesitated to which of the two Eugenes to apply it, and then chose another hero altogether (Ivan Ezerski). See my Epilogue, following nn. to Ten.

- 11 The ice of the Neva starts breaking up and moving between mid-March and mid-April (end of March and end of April, N.S.). Generally, two or three weeks later the river is quite free of ice, but sometimes ice keeps floating as late as the second week of May. In XXXIX, the snow in the streets has given place to mud. Some readers understand the *issechyónnïe l'dî* of the text as "scarred ice," floating remnants of ice cut up by the action of water, friction, and thaw, rather than those splendid aquamarine blocks that are hacked out of the frozen Neva and stand on its sparkling snows, ready to be conveyed wherever needed. On Turgenev's suggestion, Viardot writes: "le soleil se joue sur les blocs bleuâtres de la glace qu'on en a tirée."

Cf. ll. 81–83 in the exordium of *The Bronze Horseman* (composed October, 1833), ll. 75–83:

O military capital, I love  
the smoke and thunder of your fortress [gun]\*  
when of the Midnight Realm the empress  
gives the imperial house a son  
or victory over the foe  
Russia again is celebrating,  
or having shattered her blue ice,  
the Neva bears it to the seas  
and, sensing vernal days, rejoices.

On the same Palace Quay, it will be recalled, Onegin and Pushkin strolled in May, 1820.

- 14–XL : 1 A type of enjambment from one stanza to another of which only a few examples occur in the novel (see Introduction). There is beautiful logic in the fact that a similar run-on occurs in Chapter Three (XXXVIII : 14–XXXIX : 1: "panting, on a bench she drops"), where Tatiana flees into the park, only to be discovered there

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\*Whose puff is seen from the opposite Palace Quay an instant before the detonation is heard.

## Commentary

and sermonized by Onegin. Now the roles are reversed, and it is Onegin who is breathlessly heading for the place where *he* will be lectured on love.

### XL

My predecessors vie here, as elsewhere, in grotesque achievement. Spalding has: "Pallid and with dishevelled hair, | Gazing upon a note below"; Elton: ". . . sitting full in sight, | Still in her *négligé*, and white"; Miss Deutsch: "Looking too corpselike to be nobby, | He walks into the empty lobby"; and Miss Radin: ". . . and his passion swelled | To bursting as he saw she held | the letter he had sent . . ."

5-8 There is a dreamlike atmosphere about all this. As in a fairy tale, silent doors open before him. He penetrates into the enchanted castle. And, as in a dream, he finds Tatiana rereading one of his three letters.

12 / *kakóe-to*: Ordinarily, the meaning of this word is less close to "some kind of" than to a plain "a," but the way it sprawls all over the line reflects on the sense here.

### XLII

10 Cf. Saint-Preux's appearance, in Rousseau's *Julie* (Julie to Mme d'Orbe), pt. III, letter XIII: "pâle, défait, mal en ordre," bidding adieu to sick Julie. And Linar's moan, in Mme de Krüdener's *Valérie*, letter XLII: ". . . voyez ces yeux éteints, cette pâleur sinistre, cette poitrine oppressée . . ."

### XLII

In one of Tatiana's favorite novels, Goethe's *Werther*, in the French of Sevelinges (1804), the theme of confession

and separation takes a more violent turn: “[Werther] couvrit ses lèvres tremblantes de baisers de flamme. [Charlotte] le repoussait mollement. . . . ‘Werther,’ s’écria-t-elle enfin du ton le plus imposant et le plus noble. [Werther] la laissa échapper de ses bras,” and fainted. She ran out of the room. He scrambled up and cried through the door: “Adieu!”

- 1 / *Oná egó ne podímáet*: “Elle ne le relève pas.” (See n. to Three : xxxiii : 1.)

2–6 / *ochéy . . . Beschúvstvennoy . . . O chyóm . . . mechtán’e . . . molchán’e*: There is a charming alliteration on *ch* here.

- 5 / *O chyóm tepér’ eyó mechtán’e*: I have tried to retain the queer turn of the original.

## XLIII

- 2 / I was . . . better-looking / *Ya lúchshe . . . bíld*: Basically and grammatically *lúchshe* means “better”; it is the comparative of *horosh*, fem. *horosha*, “is good.” But this predicative *horosh*, *horosha*, has a secondary meaning (of Gallic origin), namely “is good-looking” (cf. *il, elle est bien de sa personne*, “he, she is a good-looking person”). In other words, when rendering the second line of this stanza, the translator has to choose between “I was a better person” and “I was a better-looking person.” I chose the “looks,” as also did Turgenev-Viardot (“ . . . plus jolie, peut-être”).

Tatiana, if anything, is now a much better person than the romanesque adolescent who (in Three) drinks the philter of erotic longings and, in secret, sends a love letter to a young man whom she has seen only once. Although she may be said to have sacrificed certain impassioned

## Commentary

ideals of youth when yielding to the sobs of her mother, it is also obvious that her newly acquired exquisite simplicity, her mature calm, and her uncompromising constancy are ample compensations, morally speaking, for whatever naïveté she has lost with the rather morbid and definitely sensuous reveries that romances had formerly developed in her. On the other hand, the ravages of age (she is now at least twenty-one) have, in her own mind, impaired her former looks, her pristine delicacy of complexion and feature. What, however, seems to me the decisive factor in settling the meaning of *luchshe* is the intonation of “I think” or “I daresay” (*kazhetsya*), which, while not interfering with the straightforwardness of a statement referring to physical beauty (“I was younger and, I think, prettier”), would be arch and artificial in reference to one’s soul. One does not “think” that one used to be “a better person”; one knows it, and keeps it to one’s self. And, moreover, from Tatiana’s point of view, Onegin neither then nor now could or can care much for moral qualities.

Three English paraphrasts have “better.”

Spalding:

Onéguine, I was younger then,  
And better, if I judge aright . . .

Deutsch:

Then I was younger, maybe better,  
Onegin . . .

Elton:

I then, Onegin, they may tell me,  
Was better:—younger, too, was I!

And only one version gives the correct sense of *luchshe* in l. 2; Radin:

Onegin, I was then much younger,—  
And better-looking, possibly . . .

See also the rhymed version of a fragment of *EO* by Prince Vladimir Baryatinski, in *Pushkinskiy sbornik* (St. Petersburg, 1899):

Onéguine, autrefois plus belle  
Et, certes, plus jeune j'étais.

See also Pushkin's *The Gypsies*, ll. 170-71:

*A dévī . . . Kak tī lúchshe ih*  
*I bez naryádov dorogih . . .*

And maidens . . . How fairer than they are you  
even without adornments dear . . .

- 13 / *Vī bíli právī predó mnóy*: "You acted correctly in regard to me," "your attitude toward me was the right one." The idiom is "you were right before me."

XLIV

- 1 / *Then*—is it not so? / *Togdá—ne právda li?*: There is the usual trouble here in translating Gallic intonations: "Jadis—n'est-ce pas?"

- 1 / in the wilderness / *v pustíne*: I have already discussed this Gallicism. It has a romantic tang here, in Tatiana's speech.

The most beautiful use of the word that I know of occurs in Senancour's marvelous description of the birch tree (*Oberman*, letter XI): "J'aime le bouleau . . . la mobilité des feuilles; et tout cet abandon, simplicité de la nature, attitude des déserts."

- 6-14 We recall that Tatiana had read Mme de Staël's *Delphine* (Delphine to the man Léonce, suggesting they separate), pt. IV, letter XX: "Demandez-vous si cette espèce de prestige dont la faveur du monde . . . [m'entourait] ne séduisoit pas votre imagination . . ."

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However, *soblaznitel'nyu* (fem. acc.) is also "scandalous," and Pushkin certainly recalls here Baratinski's *The Ball*, ll. 82–84:

Is not the ear of people tired  
by rumors of her shameless conquests  
and scandalous passions?

Cf. Goethe, *Werther* (tr. Sevelinges, p. 234; Charlotte, Albert's wife, saying to Werther, who has become to her "infiniment cher"):

Pourquoi faut-il que ce soit moi, Werther, moi, précisément, la propriété d'un autre? Je crains, je crains bien que ce ne soit que l'impossibilité de me posséder qui rend vos désirs si ardents!

9 / maimed / *izuvéchen*: This is a strong term on a romantic heroine's lips. We never find out what scars Prince N. bore. We know he was fat; the tinkling of his spurs and his proud port suggest his legs were intact. Had he lost an arm?

10 / *Chto nás za tó laskáet Dvór*: Lexically and constructionally "because us for that caresses the Court." The separate edition (1832) of the canto gives: *Chto mílostiv za tó k nam Dvór*, "because is graciously disposed for that to us the Court." The change was prompted, I suggest, by Pushkin's noticing the cacophonic intrusion of *óknam* (dat. of "windows"!).

## VARIANT

13–14 The fair copy reads:

*Podíte . . . póлно—Yá molchú—  
Ya vás i videt' ne hochú!*

Go, 'tis sufficient, I am silent,  
I do not want even to *see* you!

Note the hysterical little yelp *Ya vas i videt'* . . . ! "even to see you!" How this telltale note would have encouraged Onegin!

XLV

1–2 Odd talk. When had she been *his* Tanya? It would seem that Princess N. has again fallen under the spell of the novels she read as a girl, in which an epistolary custom made young ladies speak of themselves to their correspondents as "your Julie," "your Corinne," and so forth, not only in the signature. The author may have relied on the reader's recollecting Four : XI and on its providing an illusion of logic for accepting the diminutive here.

8–10 / *K moim mladéncheskim mechtám* | *Togdá iméli v' hot' zhálost'*, | *Hot' uvazhénie* . . . : Here is a very pretty play on the maudlin repetition of *m* with an emotional transition to the strong swelling *zh*, as if, after the murmur and the moan, the lady's nostrils were dilating in a spasm of wholesome but somewhat exaggerated scorn.

14 / *chiústva mélkogo*: "D'un sentiment mesquin."

XLVI

VARIANT

8–9 Fair copy:

for our small house, for the wild garden,  
and for the mill, and for the ruins . . .

*Gorodishche*: the ruins of some former habitation; an abandoned fortress or the like (but also a place in or near a village where peasant girls would gather for choral dances and games, while their masters looked on).

There is a *gorodishche* named Voronich, the remnants

of a huge earthen rampart of the seventeenth century, at Trigoriskoe, near Mihaylovskoe.\* As to the mill, it would have been unseemly to remind Onegin of *that*.

XLVII

5-6 Cf. in Rousseau's novel (the scene occurs in pt. III, letter XVIII, Julie to Saint-Preux) Julie's father, the Baron d'Etange, sobbing, kneeling before his daughter, imploring her to marry the opulent Pole. (Technically, all this is needed in novels for the sole purpose of keeping the noblehearted heroines beyond any suspicion of their being swayed by mercenary motives in marrying wealth or position while remaining true to their first love, the haggard rover.)

12 / I love you (why dissimulate?) / *Ya vás lyublyú (k chemú lukávit'?)*: Cf. Julie de Wolmar, in her last letter to Saint-Preux, in the last part of Rousseau's novel, confessing she loves him (pt. VI, letter XII): "Eh! Pourquoi craindrois-je d'exprimer tout ce que je sens?"

13-14 / but to another I belong: to him I shall be faithful all my life / *No yá drugómu otánd; | Ya búdu vék emú verná*: Cf. *Julie*, pt. III, letter XVIII (Julie to Saint-Preux): "Liée au sort d'un époux . . . j'entre dans une nouvelle carrière qui ne doit finir qu'à la mort." And *ibid.*: "... ma bouche et mon cœur . . . promirent [obéissance et fidélité parfaite à celui que j'acceptois pour époux]. Je . . . tiendrai [ce serment] jusqu'à la mort."

There can be no doubt that Pushkin intended Princess N.'s decision to be a final one; but has he achieved his purpose?

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\*See photograph, 1936, in *Pushkin v portretah i illyustratsiyah*, collected by Matvey Kalaushin (2nd edn., Leningrad, 1954), p. 145.

Ninety-nine per cent of the amorphous mass of comments produced with monstrous fluency by the *ideynaya kritika* (ideological critique) that has been worrying Pushkin's novel for more than a hundred years is devoted to passionately patriotic eulogies of Tatiana's virtue. This, cry the enthusiastic journalists of the Belinski-Dostoevski-Sidorov type, is your pure, frank, responsible, altruistic, heroic Russian woman. Actually, the French, English, and German women of Tatiana's favorite novels were quite as fervid and virtuous as she; even more so, perhaps, for at the risk of breaking the hearts of the admirers of "Princess Gremin" (as the two bright minds that concocted Chaykovski's libretto dubbed Princess N.), I deem it necessary to point out that her answer to Onegin does not at all ring with such dignified finality as commentators have supposed it to do. Mark the intonations in XLVII, the heaving breast, the broken speech, the anguished, poignant, palpitating, enchanting, almost voluptuous, almost alluring enjambments (ll. 1-2, 2-3, 3-4, 5-6, 6-7, 8-9, 10-11), a veritable orgy of run-ons, culminating in a confession of love that must have made Eugene's experienced heart leap with joy. And after those sobbing twelve lines—what clinches them? The hollow perfunctory sound of the pat couplet "wife-life": shrill virtue repeating its cue!

In June, 1836, while on a diplomatic mission to Russia, a Parisian *littérateur* of German extraction, Loewe de Weimars or Loève-Veimars, baronized by Thiers, persuaded Pushkin to translate several Russian folk ditties into French. In 1885 (*Russkiy arhiv*, pt. 1) Bartenev published our poet's very pallid French versions of eleven pieces, the originals of which are all found in N. Novikov's *New and Complete Collection of Russian Songs*, pt. I (Moscow, 1780). One of these contains the following pertinent passage:

## Commentary

Le jeune seigneur tentait de faire entendre raison à la  
jeune fille.

“Ne pleure pas, ma belle jeune fille! Ne pleure pas, ma  
belle amie!

Je te marierai à mon fidèle esclave,  
Tu seras l'épouse de l'esclave, et la douce amie du maître;  
Tu feras son lit et tu coucheras avec moi.”

La jeune fille répond au jeune homme:

“Je serai la douce amie de celui dont je serai la femme;  
Je coucherai avec celui dont je ferai le lit.”

*Komu budu ladushka, tomu milen'kiy druzhok,*

*Pod slugu budu postelyu slat', s slugoy vmeste spat':*

I shall be sweetheart of him, whose bonnie wife I shall be,

If I make the bed for your servant to lie in [meaning: if

I marry him]—with your servant I shall sleep.

In MS subscribed “Chansons Russes” in Pushkin’s hand.  
Under this, on the cover, the Baron has written: “Tra-  
duites par Alex. de Pouschkine pour son ami L. de  
Veimars, aux îles de Neva, Datcha Brovolcki, Juin,  
1836.” (The correct address: Kamenniy Ostrov, Villa  
[rented from] F. Dolivo-Dobrovolski.)

\*

My predecessors had a horrible time with this couplet:

Spalding:

But I am now another’s bride—  
For ever faithful will abide.

Miss Deutsch:

But I became another’s wife;  
I shall be true to him through life.

Elton:

But am another’s, pledged; and I  
To him stay constant, till I die.

Miss Radin:

But I am someone else’s wife  
And shall be faithful all my life.

- 13 / *otdaná* (= am given): Küchelbecker, in his remarkable journal, in an entry made Feb. 17, 1832, Sveaborg Fortress, notes that Pushkin is very like the Tatiana of Chapter Eight: he is full of feelings (liberal ideas) that he does not want the world to know, but is given to another (Tsar Nicholas).

XLVIII

- 5 / clink of spurs / *shpór . . . zvón*: As we part with Onegin, a curious type of poetical vengeance swoops down upon the rhymesters who have betrayed him in English. The Deutsch version commits a kind of rhetorical hara-kiri by inquiring (XLVIII : 5): "But are those stirrups he is hearing?" They are not. They are spurs. Yet an even more comic predicament fell to the lot of the Elton jingle at the time it was serially appearing in *The Slavonic Review* and had reached Chapter Two. In an essay published in English in *The Slavonic Review* (London), XV (Jan., 1937), 305-09, under the misleading title "On New Translations of Pushkin" and the equally misleading subtitle "How Should Pushkin Be Translated?" (there is nothing about actual translations in it—except an accidental and shocking sample to be discussed presently), V. Burtsev suggests that in future original and foreign editions of *EO* should be published in nine cantos "as Pushkin . . . would have liked to publish it" (which, of course, is a meaningless phrase). In the course of this essay, Burtsev (in his Russian original, of which the *Review* article is a translation) quotes Eight : XLVIII, and metaphorically remarks that the *shpór nezápnyy zvón* might have heralded the appearance of the Chief of Police, Count Benkendorf (Benckendorff), whose shadow caused Pushkin to interrupt his novel. Prof. Elton was asked to supply the translation of Eight : XLVIII, and this he did; but he did not understand the

### Commentary

passage in question, and betrayed not only Pushkin, but poor Burtsev, by putting:

*Like sudden spur*, a bell his hearing  
Strikes—it is Tanya's lord, appearing!

This bell should be considered the toll announcing the death of all doggerels posing as translations.\*

13 / land: Cf. *Roland furieux*, by “L’Arioste” (de Tressan), can. XLVI (the last):

. . . J’espère découvrir bientôt le port . . . je craignois de m’être égaré de ma route! . . . Mais déjà . . . c’est bien la terre que je découvre. . . . Oui, ce sont ceux qui m’aiment . . . je les vois accourir sur le rivage . . .

### XLIX

1–2 / Whoever . . . you be / *Kto b ni bil tš*: “Qui que tu sois”—Gallic rhetoric.

6–12 This tabulation is an echo of the closing lines of the Prefatory Piece.

8 / live images / *Zhivŭh kartŭn* [gen.]: One is tempted to translate “living pictures,” but that is not the poet’s meaning here.

### L

8 / many days: Three thousand seventy-one days (May 9, 1823–Oct. 5, 1831).

13 / magic crystal / *magicheskiy kristal*: I find it curious that “crystal” had been applied in an analogous sense by

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\*Elton later corrected his translation to “A sudden, tinkling spur his hearing | Strikes . . .”

our poet to his inkstand in a trimetric poem of 1821, ll. 29-30:

Your sacred [*zavetnĭy*] crystal  
contains celestial fire.

Lerner, *Zven'ya*, no. 5 (1935), 105-08, has a rather naïve little essay on crystal gazing (which, incidentally, was not, in its typical sense, a Russian form of divination).

LI

3-4 / "Some are no more, others are distant" / *Inĭh uzĭh nĕt, a tĕ dalĕche* / as erstwhiles Sadi [Muslih-ud-Din Sadi, Persian poet of the thirteenth century] said: *Uzh*, the Russian "already," redundant in English; *a tĕ*, grammatically "whereas those"; *dalĕche*, the rarer word for "far"; *daleko* or *dalyoko* would be the usual, less evocative, form today.

There exist four expressions of the same idea in Russian prior to 1830:

(1) An Alexandrine line reading "Some friends already are no more; others [are] in the distance" (*Druzĕy inĭh uzĭh nĕt; drugĭe v otdalĕn'e*, "in removal"), in a poem of 1814 by the minor poet Vladimir Filimonov (1787-1858).\*

(2) The prose motto, probably translated from the French, that Pushkin prefixed to his Oriental romance, *The Fountain of Bahchisaray*, which he considered "better than the whole poem." This motto reads: "Many, similarly to me, visited [*poseshchali*] this Fountain; but some are no more, others are journeying far" (*inĭh uzĭhe nĕt, drugĭe stranstvuyut daleche*). The wording of the second sentence seems to have been suggested by Filimonov's line.

\*As first noted by Yuriy Ivask, in the review *Opiti* (Essays; New York), no. 8 (1957).

(3) The last two lines of the sixth quatrain of Baratinski's poem *Mara* (the name of the poet's estate in the province of Tambov)—ten quatrains in iambic tetrameter, rhymed abab, composed in 1827, but published in full only in 1835 (it had appeared, *without* quatrain VI, as *Stanzas*, in January, 1828, in the review *The Moscow Telegraph*. This quatrain, which Pushkin may or may not have been acquainted with in 1830, reads (ll. 21–24):

Brethren I knew; but youthful dreams  
brought us together for one moment:  
far, in necessity, are some,  
and others are no more already on the earth.

*Daléche bédstvuyut iné*  
*I v mîre nét uzhé drugih.*

(4) In the draft of an elegy (presumably addressed to Natalia Goncharov), which in its final form begins, "Upon the hills of Georgia night's gloom lies" (*Na hól-mah Grúzii . . .*), composed in 1829, during his visit to Transcaucasia, Pushkin struck out a stanza containing a similar phrase (ll. 9–12):

Days after days went by. Vanished have many years.  
Where are you, dearest of dear beings [*bestsénñie*  
*sozdán'ya*]?  
Some are far, some on earth already are no more [*Iné*  
*dalekó, inih uzh v mîre nét*],  
With me are only recollections.\*

It will be seen that Baratinski transposed the two clauses of the second sentence of Pushkin's motto, substituted for *stranstvuyut* the very similarly sounding *bédstvuyut* ("live in necessity"), added "on the earth," changed the order of the words *inih uzhe net* (*iné* and *drugie* are similar in meaning). It will be also seen that Pushkin's verse, Eight : LI : 3, although in the same

\*See M. Sultan-Shah's discussion of this piece in the collection *Pushkin* (Moscow, 1956), pp. 262–66.

meter as Baratinski's quatrain, is less close to it than to his own seven-year-old motto: he now uses the abbreviated form of *uzhe*; *drugie* has been turned into the more elegant and remote-sounding *a te*; the verb has been dropped; but otherwise the words are the same in the same order.

Baratinski's quatrain alludes to the friends he had among the unfortunate conspirators of December, 1825, some (five) of whom had been executed, while others lived in dingy exile on the Siberian confines of northern China. Evidently the wording of his lines written in 1827 was suggested by the fact that Pushkin's motto, which in 1824 was a quite innocent bit of nostalgic literature in the pseudo-Oriental style of the day, had now received a specific political slant through the following chain of events.\* In the beginning of 1827, *The Moscow Telegraph* had published an article by the critic Polevoy, "A Glance at Russian Literature for 1825 and 1826," subtitled "A Letter to S. P. [Sergey Poltoratski] in New York." A government agent (probably Bulgarin) reported that the article contained a clear allusion to the Decembrists, and indeed the allusion is clear in Polevoy's sentence, "I look at the circle of our friends, formerly so lively and gay, and often repeat sadly the words of Sadi, or of Pushkin, who rendered them, 'some are no more, others are far.' " Henceforth, the epigraph to Pushkin's *Fountain* (kept in the next editions, 1827 and 1830, but dropped in the edition of 1835) received a retrospective meaning. When in 1832 Pushkin published Chapter Eight of *EO* separately, readers had no difficulty in deciphering the enriched allusion.

Pushkin's main contact with the men variously involved in the revolutionary activities that after the events of December, 1825, were to be known as "De-

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\*First noted by Lerner, *Zven'ya*, no. 5 (1935), pp. 108-11.

cembrism" (see my n. to Ten : XIII : 3) goes back to 1818–20, before his expulsion from Petersburg, and to a sojourn he made in the winter of 1820–21 at Kamenka, province of Kiev, the countryseat of the retired General Aleksandr Davıdov, where Pushkin saw several Decembrists, such as Davıdov's brother Vasiliy, Orlov, Yakushkin, and others. Between his starting to compose *EO* (May 9, 1823) and the Decembrist rising (Dec. 14, 1825), Pushkin had not actually read the first cantos "at friendly meetings" to any of the five conspirators who were to die on the gallows July 13, 1826 (see my n. to Five : v–vi, ix–x, on Pushkin's sketches); he had seen Rıleev (at a gentlemanly distance) before he left Petersburg, and his brief acquaintance with Pestel in Kishinev was prior to the writing of Canto One. Among those Decembrists who were at the moment "far," i.e., in Siberian exile, Pushkin's intimate friend Ivan Pushchin had presumably heard our poet recite three and a half cantos when he visited Pushkin in Mihaylovskoe, Jan. 11, 1825. But otherwise we must accept as a piece of lyrical exaggeration the vision of Pushkin reading *EO* at gatherings of Decembrists before he had started to write it; neither is there any proof that Pushkin read the first two cantos of *EO* in Odessa to people he was very little acquainted with, such as the Decembrists Nikolay Basargin, Prince Aleksandr Baryatinski, and Matvey Muravyov-Apostol, who visited Odessa in 1823–24. It is not worth while discussing other suggestions that have been made. We know for certain of only one Decembrist in Odessa who heard Pushkin recite at least the first chapter of *EO*, and this is Prince Sergey Volkonski (among the wives of Decembrists, we may conjecture that Ekaterina Orlov and Maria Raevski, later Volkonski, were more or less acquainted with the beginning of *EO*). According to a, not-altogether convincing, tradition stemming from the Volkonski family, Sergey Vol-

konski had been asked by the Southern Society to enroll Pushkin, but in the course of their meeting in Odessa (presumably, in June, 1824) he decided that for this the poet's tongue was too careless, his nature too frivolous, and his life too precious. That Volkonski knew Canto One in 1824 is proved by a phrase in his letter of Oct. 18, 1824, to Pushkin, who by that time had already been in Mihaylovskoe two months:

Dear Aleksandr Sergeevich, When I left Odessa I did not think that upon my return from the Caucasus I would not see you. . . . I am forwarding you a letter from Melmoth [Aleksandr Raevski]. . . . You will be glad to hear of my engagement to Maria Raevski. . . . P.S. . . . I have helped enroll in the Lyceum the son of the majestic cornuto [Aleksandr Davïdov, whose mother owned Kamenska; brother of Vasiliy Davïdov, the Decembrist].

This definition is a quotation from One : XII : 12.

Other Decembrists said to have visited Odessa in 1823-24 are V. Davïdov and perhaps Pestel, but whether Pushkin read *EO* to them is unknown.

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I have not been able to discover the exact source of Pushkin's motto, which is at the back of LI : 3-4. *Goulistan, ou l'Empire des roses*, by Sadi, had appeared in a loose French version by André du Ryer (Paris, 1634), and an anonymous collection of selections and adaptations derived from it came out in Paris in 1765. I have found nothing suitable in versions of this work, of which a literal French translation, not seen by me, by N. Semelet, *Gulistan, ou le Parterre-de-fleurs du Cheikh Moslih-eddin Sâdi de Chiraz* (Paris, 1834), was in Pushkin's library.

The nearest I can get to the quotation is a passage in a long poem in ten "portals," the *Bustan*, or *Bostan*, or *Bashtan* (*The Aromatarium*, as one would like to trans-

late it instead of *The Orchard*), by Sadi, 1257:

On dit que le bienheureux Djemschîd fit graver ces mots sur une pierre au dessus d'une fontaine. "Beaucoup d'autres avant nous se sont reposés au bord de cette source, qui ont disparu en un clin d'œil. Ils avaient conquis le monde par leur vaillance, mais ils ne l'ont pas emporté avec eux dans la tombe; ils sont partis . . . ne laissant après eux qu'un souvenir d'estime ou de réprobation.

I do not know how the words "fontaine," "d'autres," "ont disparu," and "ils sont partis" may have been combined in the French version Pushkin saw. Could it have been the fragments of the *Bustan* reproduced in French by Silvestre de Sacy in 1819 in his notes on the *Pand-namah* (Scroll of Wisdom)? The translation I have consulted is *Le Boustān ou Verger*, tr. A. C. Barbier de Meynard (Paris, 1880), p. 34.

In The Wisdom of the East series, there is a worthless adaptation of *The Bustān of Sadi*, "translated" into "polite English" by A. Hart Edwards (London, 1911). In "Chapter IX," p. 115, of this product I find the following vague connection with Pushkin's lines: "Our friends have departed, and we are on the road."

Finally, Tomashevski observes in his *Pushkin* (1956, vol. I, p. 506n) that in Moore's *Lalla Rookh* (in the prose passage preceding the poem "Paradise and the Peri") there occur the words: ". . . a fountain on which some hand had rudely traced those well-known words from the Garden of Sadi, 'Many like me have viewed this fountain, but they are gone and their eyes are closed for ever!'" —translated by Pichot as "Plusieurs ont vu, comme moi, cette fontaine: mais ils sont loin et leurs yeux sont fermés à jamais."

6 / And she from whom . . . / *A tā, s kotóroy* . . . : With a delightful alliterative play on *ta* (*ta* . . . *Tat'yanī*).

Cf. the echo in *Onegin's Journey*, XVI : 10, *A tam . . . tatar*.

Gofman, *Pushkin, psihologiya tvorchestva*, p. 22n, says that in the fair copy the line reads:

and those from whom . . .  
*A té s kotórih . . .*

and correctly argues that whatever Pushkin's reasons (euphonic ones, I think) for using the singular in the published text, it would be a waste of time to look for a historic "prototype" of Tatiana.

- 9-11 / life's banquet . . . goblet full of wine: One recalls André Chénier's beautiful lines in the poem known as *La jeune Captive* (ll. 25-30):

Mon beau voyage encore est si loin de sa fin!  
 Je pars, et des ormeaux qui bordent le chemin  
     J'ai passé les premiers à peine,  
 Au banquet de la vie à peine commencé,  
 Un instant seulement mes lèvres ont pressé  
     La coupe en mes mains encor pleine.

(Ode addressed to Aimée Franquetot de Coigny, Duchesse de Fleury; composed in prison in 1794; first published in *La Décade philosophique*, 20 Nivôse, An III, i.e., Jan. 10, 1795—if I have calculated this correctly—and then in the *Almanach des Muses* for 1796.)

- 11 The fair copy has instead of *Bokála pólnogo vind* the much better *Bokálov yárkogo vind*, "goblets of gaudy wine." Beneath this last stanza is the date: *Boldino sent*. [Sept., 1830] 25 3¼ [P.M.?]. At the end of the separate edition (1832) a note reads: "The end of the eighth, and last, chapter."

## Notes to *Eugene Onegin*

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Notes to *Eugene Onegin* / *Primechaniya k Evgeniyu Oneginu*: Pushkin's forty-four notes come immediately after Chapter Eight in the final editions of the novel (1833, 1837). They have no compositional value. Their choice is haphazard, their matter rather inept. But they are Pushkin's and belong to the work as published by him.

## Fragments of *Onegin's Journey*

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### PUSHKIN'S FOREWORD

Fragments of *Onegin's Journey* / *Otrivki iz Puteshestviya Onegina*: Immediately after the forty-four notes, Pushkin added in the final editions of 1833 and 1837 a commentary entitled "Fragments of *Onegin's Journey*," in which he embedded the first five lines of a dropped stanza pertaining to the established Eight, as well as stanzas, and fragments of stanzas, describing Onegin's tour of Russia, which is mentioned in Eight : XIII.

Eight : XLVIIIa : 1 / 'Tis time: the pen for peace is asking / *Porá: però pokóya prósit*: One wonders if this stanza was really completed or if Pushkin got to l. 5 and stopped there because of the difficulty of finding a rhyme to *Kaménam*, dat. pl. of *Kamena* (Camena, one of the Roman water nymphs identified with the Greek Muses). *Izménam* ("to the betrayals")? *Pereménam* ("to the changes")? *Kolénam* ("to the knees")?

The intonation of the first line is an obvious confirmation of the *póra* ending XLVIII : 14. *Porá . . . pokóya prósit* is curiously echoed in the poem to his wife (*Porá, moy drúg, porá, pokóya sérdtse prósit*, " 'Tis time, my dear, 'tis time, for peace the heart is asking") written

## Commentary

some five years later (see also, after nn. to XXXII, n. to Eight : Onegin's Letter : 20-21). *Pokoy* includes the ideas of "peace," "ease," "repose," "rest," "calm," "serenity," and "quiet."

Katenin: Katenin, in his *Vospominaniya o Pushkine* (Recollections of Pushkin), \* describes an interview he had with the poet July 18, 1832, in a villa on the Peterhof Road, near St. Petersburg, concerning *EO*, the last chapter of which had recently appeared:

I remarked upon the omission [of *Onegin's Journey*] and guessed that [these stanzas] had contained an imitation of *Childe Harold* canceled by Pushkin presumably because the inferior quality of places and things had not allowed him to compete with the Byronian model. Without saying a word, Pushkin inserted what I had said among his notes [to the complete editions].

Katenin makes a curious mistake here. It is not this ridiculous remark about the "inferior quality of places and things," but another, somewhat less trivial, observation of his that Pushkin mentions. Our poet's respect for Katenin remains inexplicable.

### THE FRAGMENTS (INCLUDING EXPUNGED STANZAS)

Initially, in 1827, when only the stanzas describing Odessa had been composed (they were written in 1825), our poet planned to deal with Onegin's travels in Chapter Seven, on which he was working at the time. In the stanza (which is our Seven : XXV alt.) that was to follow XXIV, he intended to leave Tatiana brooding over Onegin's books and to turn his course in another direction:

After he'd killed his inexperienced friend,  
the agony of <rural> leisure

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\*Written Apr. 9, 1852; published, with Y. Oksman's notes, in *Lit. nasl.*, nos. 16-18 (1934), pp. 617-56.

*Onegin's Journey*: INTRODUCTORY

- Onegin was unable <to bear; he decided>  
8 <to seat himself in a kibitka.>  
The full-toned yoke bell <sounded>,  
the dashing driver whistled,  
and our Onegin sped away  
12 <to seek alleviation> of dull <life>  
in distant parts—whither exactly,  
he did not know himself.

Here Onegin, in a hooded sleigh, sets out in January or February, 1821, from his countryseat, presumably for Petersburg (which he will leave for his tour of Russia on June 3, 1822, in the later text, *Journey*, VI), and a description of his travels was to follow.

After canceling the idea of thus devoting the second part of Chapter Seven to Onegin's travels, and after replacing them with Tatiana's journey to Moscow, Pushkin decided to assign a whole chapter, the next one, to the pilgrimage. By the fall of 1830, the plan had been realized, and (as more exactly described in "The Genesis of *EO*"; see my Introduction) Pushkin jotted down (Sept. 26, 1830) the complete pattern of the poem he had begun May 9, 1823:

Part First

Cantos

- One: Hypochondria  
Two: The Poet  
Three: The Damsel

Part Second

Cantos

- Four: The Countryside  
Five: The Name Day  
Six: The Duel

Part Three

Cantos

- Seven: Moscow  
Eight: The Wandering  
Nine: High Life

## Commentary

To this in the course of the next three weeks he added at least eighteen stanzas of a Canto Ten, "The Decembrists."

In the course of 1831 he changed his plan. "The Wandering" was expelled from its place in the arrangement of chapters, the parts were abolished, and "chapters" replaced "cantos." Had our poet set down the new order of *Onegin* as it was to be published in 1833, the program would have looked as follows:

### Chapters

- One: Hypochondria
- Two: The Poet
- Three: The Damsel
- Four: The Countryside
- Five: The Name Day
- Six: The Duel
- Seven: Moscow
- Eight: The Grand Monde
- Notes to *Eugene Onegin* (44 items)
- Fragments of *Onegin's Journey* (including comments)

The complete text of *Onegin's Journey* does not exist in its initial form, i.e., as "Canto Eight." It has been, however, restored in its major part, quantitatively speaking. The first stanza was probably the one that later became st. x of Chapter Eight. Then, after II, came, presumably, sts. XI and XII of the present Chapter Eight. It is clear that a number of stanzas—anything from ten to twenty—are missing. We may suppose that at first, in September, 1830, the Decembrism themes were dealt with in certain stanzas of "Canto Eight: The Wandering." It is also likely that there were allusions to political circumstances that Pushkin thought wise to leave out. In 1853, Katenin wrote to Annenkov, the first intelligent editor of Pushkin's works:

Concerning the eighth chapter of *Onegin*, I heard from the late poet in 1832 that besides the Nizhni market and

the Odessa port, Eugene saw the military settlements organized by Count Arakcheev,\* and here occurred remarks, judgments, expressions that were too violent for publication and that he decided were best assigned to eternal oblivion. Therefore he discarded the whole chapter from his tale—a chapter that after that cancellation had become too short and, so to speak, impoverished.

For *Onegin's Journey* Pushkin used a combination of impressions stemming from his Southern tour of 1820 and from his second visit to the Caucasus in the summer of 1829. The stanzas referring to the description of life in Odessa (a fragment including xx to the first line of xxix) were composed at the end of 1825 and were published anonymously on Mar. 19, 1827, under the title "Odessa (From the seventh chapter of *Eugene Onegin*)," in the *Moscow Herald*, pt. II, no. 6, pp. 113–18. The rest of the *Journey* was composed, after Pushkin's return from the Caucasus, in Moscow (Oct. 2, 1829); at Pavlovskoe, Pavel Vulf's countryseat (second part of October, 1829); and at Boldino (autumn of 1830).

In the rough draft of an Introduction that our poet planned to prefix to the *Journey* when, as Chapter Eight, it preceded the *grand-monde* chapter, Pushkin wrote:

I deliberated with myself if I should not destroy this chapter, being tempted to do so by the fear that a playful parody might be regarded as an expression of disrespect toward a great and sacred memory. *Childe Harold*, however, stands on such a height that, whatever the tone adopted in speaking of it, I could not have harbored the thought of any possibility of insult existing there.

Since the *Journey* has nothing "playful" about it (except, perhaps, the bits about the plump oysters and the traffic conditions in Odessa) and, moreover, bears no resemblance whatsoever to the Childe's pilgrimage, we

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\*Camps of militarized peasants in Novgorod and Staraya Russa, a faint adumbration of Soviet slave-labor camps. See n. to One : xvii : 6–7.

may assume that the reference to lighthearted parody was meant to divert the censor's attention from a too-close probing of the complete text.

I hesitated whether I should not call the thing *Onegin's Pilgrimage*, but concluded that it would be crudely emphasizing a resemblance that Pushkin himself tried to avoid. The *Pilgrimage* of Byron's title was translated by Pichot as *Pèlerinage*. When attempting, in some jottings of 1836 (MS 2386B, f. 2<sup>r</sup>), to turn the dedication ("To Ianthe") of *Childe Harold's Pilgrimage* into Russian, with the help of an English-French dictionary, Pushkin rendered that title as *Palomnichestvo Chayl'd Garol'da* (see *Rukoyu Pushkina*, p. 97). But in Russian *palomnichestvo* (from *palomnik*, "palmer," "pilgrim") happens to connote a holy goal somehow more strongly than "pilgrimage," and this was felt by Russian translators of Byron, who rendered "pilgrimage" as *stranstvovanie*, a synonym of *palomnichestvo*, but with the stress rather on the "wandering" than on the purpose of pious peregrination. Initially, Pushkin planned to entitle the account of Onegin's tour *Stranstvie*, "Wandering," which is very close to *stranstvovanie*, but later settled for the matter-of-fact and un-Byronic *Puteshestvie*, "Journey."

In the case of Griboedov's Chatski, despite the total absence of mentioned place names, we have the definite impression—based on three or four distinct references—that in the course of his three-year-long travels Chatski has been abroad. Onegin's journey from the time of his leaving Petersburg to his returning to it in August, 1824, also lasts three years; but has he been abroad *between* his departure from his countryseat and his departure from Petersburg for his Russian tour?

Writers of the ideological school such as Dostoevski were sure that Onegin went abroad, not because they had closely studied the text, but because they knew it only vaguely and, besides, confused Onegin with Chat-

ski. That Pushkin *might* have thought of sending his man abroad is suggested to us by two considerations: (1) in a canceled stanza (Seven : xxv alt. : 13) Onegin sets out from his countryseat (which was 400 miles E of the German border) to seek relief from *tedium vitae* "in distant parts," *po otdalyónnīm storonám*, which sounds more like an allusion to foreign countries than to Russian provinces; and (2) in a canceled stanza of the *Journey* (v) the first quatrain might be understood as Onegin's returning to Petersburg from western Europe and being sick of western Europe, after wandering about like a Melmoth. In that case, of course, we would have to take the date of his departure from Petersburg for Moscow in VI : 2 as June 3, 1822, instead of 1821—and this would get his calendar and whereabouts hopelessly entangled with those of Tatiana, since it is impossible to conceive that either in Petersburg or in Moscow, where she too lived in 1822, Onegin would not have (at least) heard about her from mutual friends, such as his cousin Prince N. or Prince Vyazemski. As things stand, however—i.e., basing ourselves only on such stanzas as Pushkin has allowed to remain—we have to limit Onegin's travels to Russia. (See also my n. to Eight : XIII : 14.)

\*

I have collected below the expunged stanzas and parts of stanzas that fill the gaps between the fragments of *Onegin's Journey* (printed in vol. 1, pp. 335-45).

[1]

- Blest who was youthful in his youth;  
blest who matured in the right time;  
who, with the years, the chill of life  
4 was gradually able to withstand;  
who never was addicted to strange dreams;  
who did not shun the fashionable rabble;  
who was at twenty fop or dasher,

## *Commentary*

- 8 and then at thirty, profitably married;  
who rid himself at fifty  
of private and of other debts;  
who gained repute, money, and rank  
12 calmly in turn;  
about whom lifelong one kept saying:  
N. N. is an excellent man.

### [II]

- Blest he who understood  
the stern voice of earthly necessity;  
who walked in life on the great route,  
4 the great route with its mileposts;  
who had a goal and strove to it,  
who knew wherefore into the world he came  
and who gave up the ghost to God  
8 a general or a farmer-general.  
“We are,” said Seneca,  
“born for our fellows’ good and for our own”  
(one could not be plainer or clearer)—  
12 but after living half a century  
’tis painful in the past to see only the trace  
of lost, unprofitable years.

### [III]

- It is unbearable to think that youth  
was given us in vain,  
that we betrayed it every hour,  
4 that it duped us;  
that our best aspirations,  
that our fresh dreamings,  
in quick succession have decayed  
8 like leaves in putrid autumn.  
It is unbearable to see before one  
only of dinners a long series,  
to look on life as on a rite,  
12 and in the wake of the decorous crowd  
to go, not sharing with it either  
the general opinions or the passions.

### [IV]

When one becomes the subject  
of noisy comments, it’s unbearable

*Onegin's Journey: EXPUNGED STANZAS*

- (you will agree) to pass among  
4 sensible people for a feigned eccentric  
or for a melancholy crackbrain,  
or a satanic monster,  
or even for my Demon.  
8 Onegin (let me take him up again),  
having in single combat killed his friend,  
having without a goal, without exertions,  
lived to the age of twenty-six,  
12 irked by the inactivity of leisure,  
without employment, wife, or occupation,  
could think of nothing to take up.

[v]

- Grown sick of either passing for a Melmoth  
or sporting any other mask,  
he once awoke a patriot  
4 during a rainy tedious spell.  
For Russia, gentlemen, he instantly  
felt a tremendous liking,  
and it is settled. He is now in love,  
8 he raves of nothing now but Rus',  
he now hates Europe  
with its dry politics,  
with its lewd bustle.  
12 Onegin is to go: he will  
see holy Rus': her fields,  
wilds, towns, and seas.

[vi]

- Ready to start he got, and God be thanked.  
On June the third  
a light calash upon his travels  
4 with posters carried him away.  
Amidst a half-wild plain  
he sees Great Novgorod.  
Quelled are its squares: midst them  
8 bestilled is the rebellious bell,  
no longer roam the shades of giants—  
the Scandinavian conqueror,  
the legislator Yaroslav,  
12 with the pair of redoubtable Ivans;

## *Commentary*

and round the bowed-down churches seethes  
the people of past days.

### [VII]

Ennui, ennui! Eugene makes haste  
to speed on. Now  
before him flicker-flick, like shadows,

4 Valdáy, Torzhók, and Tver.

Here, from the clinging peasant girls  
he purchases three strings of bangle buns,  
there, he buys slippers; further on,

8 along the proud banks of the Volga,  
he drives asleep. The horses speed  
now over hills, now by the river.

The versts flick by. Post coachmen

12 sing, whistle, squabble.

Dust spins. . . . Now my Eugene  
wakes up in Moscow, in Tverskaya Street.

### [VIII]

Moscow welcomes Onegin  
with her conceited bustle,  
lures with her maidens,

4 treats to its sterlet soup.

At the assemblage of the English Club  
(a tryout of parliament sessions),  
silently plunged in thought,

8 he hears debates on gruels.

He is remarked. He is discussed  
by Rumor, varivoiced;

Moscow is occupied with him,

12 dubs him a spy,

makes verses in his honor, and promotes him  
an eligible bachelor.

### [IX]

1 Ennui, ennui! He wants [to go] to Nizhni,  
Mínin's birthplace; before him . . .

[For ll. 3-14, see vol. 1, p. 335.]

*Onegin's Journey: EXPUNGED STANZAS*

[x]

- Ennui! Eugene awaits fair weather.  
The Volga, "paragon of rivers, lakes,"  
now summons him onto its sumptuous waters,  
4 under the canvas sails.  
To win the willing is not hard.  
Renting a merchant vessel,  
he swiftly sails downstream.  
8 The Volga swells. The haulers leaning  
against boat hooks of steel,  
in plangorous voices sing  
about that robbers' den,  
12 about those sallies bold  
when in the old times Stenka Razin  
begored the Volga wave.

[XI]

- They sing of those unbidden guests  
who burned and butchered. But behold—  
amidst its sandy steppes  
4 upon the shore of salty waters  
the trading town of Astrahan unfolds.  
Scarce has Onegin plunged  
in memories of former days  
8 when the heat of meridian rays  
and clouds of malapert mosquitoes,  
from all sides shrilling, humming,  
meet him; and in a rage  
12 the crumbly shores of Caspian waters  
he forthwith leaves.  
Ennui! He fares on to the Caucasus.

[For sts. XII–XIV, see vol. 1, pp. 336–37.]

[XIIa]

- 5 Afar loom the Caucasian masses.  
The way to them is clear. Across their barriers,  
beyond their natural <divide>,  
8 to Georgia war has rushed through.  
Perchance, by their wild beauty  
he might be touched—

## Commentary

- and so, surrounded by an escort,  
12 preceded by a field gun,  
    <Onegin enters> suddenly  
the mountains' forecourt, their lugubrious ring.

### [xii**b**]

- He sees: the raging Terek  
shakes and erodes its banks.  
Above, from the brow of a beetling crag,  
4 a deer suspended is, horns bent.  
Snowslides sweep down and glitter;  
along sheer cliffs the torrents swish.  
'Tween mountains, 'tween two <lofty> walls,  
8 a gorge goes; cramped closer and closer  
is the perilous path;  
the skies above are barely seen;  
nature's dark beauty everywhere  
12 discloses the same savageness.  
Praise, hoary Caucasus, to you:  
Onegin's moved for the first time.

### [xii**c**]

- In times of yore, ago, gone,  
    <. . . you knew me> Caucasus!  
to your deep-tangled sanctuary  
4 you <called> me more than once.  
Madly I was in love with you,  
and noisily <you welcomed me>  
    <with your storms' mighty voice>.  
8 <I heard> your brooks' roar and <the thunder>  
of snowslides,  
    <the cry of eagles>, songs of maids,  
the fierce roar of the Terek  
12 and the far-sounding laughter of the echo;  
and I saw, your weak songster,  
the kingly crown of Mt. Kazbék.

### [xv]

- Blest who is old! blest who is ill;  
over whom lies Fate's hand.  
But I am hale, I am young, free.  
4 What have I to expect? Ennui, ennui! . . .

*Onegin's Journey*: EXPUNGED STANZAS

Farewell, summits of snowy mountains,  
and you, plains of the Kuban;  
he fares to other shores,  
8 he from Tamán arrives in the Crimea

[For XV : 9-14-XXIX, see vol. 1, pp. 337-39.]

[xxx]

And so I lived then in Odessa,  
among new-chosen friends,  
having forgot the somber scapegrace,  
4 the hero of my tale.  
Onegin never boasted of a postal  
friendship with me,  
and I, fortunate man,  
8 had never corresponded in a lifetime  
with anyone. Judge then  
with what amazement I was struck  
when he appeared in front of me  
12 like an unbidden apparition,  
how loud the friends exclaimed,  
and how gladdened I was!

[xxxI]

O sacred Friendship! voice of nature!  
<Glancing> at one another, presently,  
like Cicero's two augurs  
4 we softly broke out laughing.

[xxxII]

Not long did we together wander  
upon the shores of Euxine waters.  
We by the Fates again  
4 were separated and assigned a march.  
Onegin, very much cooled down  
and glutted with what he had seen,  
set out for Neva's banks;  
8 while I, from charming Southern ladies,  
from the Black Sea's <plump> oysters,  
from the opera, from the dark loges,  
and, thank God, from grandees,

## Commentary

- 12 departed for the shade of Trigorsk woods,  
in a far Northern district,  
and sad was my arrival.

### [PENULTIMATE STANZA]

- Ah, wheresoever Fate assign  
to me a nameless nook;  
no matter where I be; whithersoever  
4 she rush my humble skiff;  
wherever a late peace for me she destine;  
wherever wait the grave for me;  
everywhere, everywhere, within my soul  
8 I'll bless my friends.  
No, no, nowhere shall I forget  
their winsome fond discourse.  
Afar, alone among men, ever  
12 I shall imagine  
you, shadows of riverside willows,  
you, peace and sleep of Trigorsk fields.

### [ULTIMATE STANZA]

- And Sorot's sloping bank,  
and the striped hills,  
and in the grove the hidden paths,  
4 and the house where we feasted—  
refuge clad in the radiance of the Muses,  
by young Yazikov sung  
when from the shrine of learning he arrived  
8 into our rural circle  
and glorified nymph of Sorot,  
and made the fields around  
ring with the sound of his enchanting verse;  
12 but there I too have left my trace,  
there, as an offering to the wind,  
on a dark fir I've hung my vibrant pipe.

\*

Here follows the Comm. on "Fragments of *Onegin's Journey*," consecutively by stanzas, including the fragments printed in vol. 1 and those given above.

[I]

In fair copy (2382, f. 120<sup>r</sup>). This stanza = Eight : x.  
Pushkin also noted the first line in PB 18, f. 4<sup>r</sup>.

VARIANT

13-14 Draft (PD 161):

and who gave up the ghost  
as senator or general.

In the canceled draft (ibid.), the "senator" is replaced by *kamergér*, "gentleman of the chamber," and in the first variant of the fair copy or final corrected draft (2382, f. 120<sup>r</sup>) by "contractor" (*otkupshchik*, "farmer-general").

See also [II] : 7-8.

[II]

In fair copy (2382, f. 119<sup>v</sup>).

9-10 / "We are," said Seneca, "born for our fellows' good and for our own": A passage in the treatise *De otio* (On Leisure, Inactivity), by Lucius Annaeus Seneca (d. A.D. 65), addressed to his friend, Annaeus Serenus, reads (III, 3):

Hoc nempe ab homine exigitur, ut prosit hominibus, si fieri potest, multis, si minus, paucis, si minus, proximis, si minus, sibi.

What is, indeed, demanded of a man is to be useful to men: to the many if he can; if not, to the few; if not, to the near; if not, to himself.

And in an epistle (LX) to his friend Caius Lucilius, Seneca writes:

Vivit is, qui multis usui est, vivit is, qui se utitur.

He lives who is useful to many. He lives who is useful to himself.

## Commentary

### [III]

In fair copy (2382, f. 119<sup>v</sup>). Except for the beginning of l. 1, this stanza = Eight : XI.

### [IV]\*

In fair copy (2382, f. 100<sup>r</sup>). This stanza = Eight : XII.

### [V]

Canceled in the fair copy. This stanza is placed by Acad 1937 and other editions in *Onegin's Journey*. But Pushkin crossed it out in the fair copy and (in a marginal note) assigned it, or part of it, in this or in another form, to Chapter Ten. See Addendum to Notes on "Chapter Ten."

### VARIANT

- 4 By sheer luck we have a photograph of the corrected fair copy (PB 18, f. 4<sup>r</sup>) of this fifth stanza (and of the first four lines of the next). It is buried in nos. 16–18 (1179 large pages) of *Lit. niasl.* (Moscow, 1934), and the number of the page (nowhere mentioned) is 409. It has been published by Tomashevski, in the course of an essay on Chapter Ten of *EO*, for the purpose of showing in the margin the note "in Canto X," meaning that this fifth stanza (or at least the lines referring to the Slavophilism in *Onegin*), crossed out by the same pen that scrawled the marginal note, should be transferred to Chapter Ten. The stanza was composed Oct. 2, 1829, and was copied out on or not long before Sept. 18, 1830.

What is especially lucky is that in this photograph we

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\*In a recent edition of Pushkin (*Works*, vol. 4, 1960, ed. Blagoy, Bondi, Vinogradov, and Oksman, and even inferior to *Works* 1936, on which it is largely based) ll. 5–6 are given, without explanation, as:

"a Quaker of some kind, a Mason,  
or a home-bred Byron."

can study Pushkin's work on v : 4. The line of the initial text (in 2382 ff. 119<sup>r</sup>, 118<sup>v</sup>) is carefully deleted here:

⟨*V* Hôtel de Lóndres *chtó v Morskóy*⟩.  
in the Hôtel de Londres in Morskaya Street.

Through the erasure one can make out the first word of the known draft, and perhaps a Latin *t* in the next. Above this abolished verse, a new line is written:

*Dozhdlivoy vëshneyu poróy*.  
during a rainy vernal spell.

The "vernal" is struck out and the (abbreviated) word "tedious" (*skúchnoyu*) scrawled above.

With the same heavy pen he used to write the marginal note, Pushkin struck out "vernal" and wrote above it a word that is a mere thick wiggle, but which looks to Gofman like the abbreviation of the word *skúchnoyu*.\*

The oldest hotel in St. Petersburg was the Hotel Demut, on the Moyka Canal, near Nevski Avenue. It had been established in the 1760's by the merchant Philip Jacob Demuth or Demouth (d. 1802). Moreover, Demuth acquired a large house at the corner of Nevski and Admiralty Square, where he established another hotel, London, also known as the Hôtel de Londres. It is not far from Morskaya Street (which crosses Nevski at a slightly more southern point), but Pushkin erred in situating it specifically there.

In his memoirs, Andrey Delvig (1813-87), a cousin of the poet, mentions stopping at this hotel in his youth (October, 1826).

William Rae Wilson, an English traveler, has this to

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\*M. Gofman, "Propushchennïe strofï 'Evgeniya Onegina' " (Omitted Stanzas of *EO*), in *P. i ego sour.*, IX, 33-35 (1923), 1-328. Gofman's transcriptions, often elaborate and sometimes doubtful, are not documented by any photographic reproductions; but then, in those years of terror and misery, it was a great feat to produce any transcription at all.

## Commentary

say in his *Travels in Russia* (London, 1828), I, 218: We, at length, found our way to the Hôtel de Londres, and . . . agreed to pay for dining-room, bed-room, and servant's apartment, seventy-five rubles [sixty-two shillings] weekly.

An English physician, Dr. Augustus Bozzi Granville, who set out for St. Petersburg in July, 1827, having been engaged by Count Mihail Vorontsov to accompany him and his Countess on their way back from London via Germany to Russia (the Countess suffered from *mal de mer*), says, in his chatty *St. Petersburg. A Journal of Travels to and from That Capital* (2 vols., London, 1828), I, 466-67:

The *Hôtel de Londres*, placed at the corner of the [Nevski Avenue], and opposite the Admiralty, in a cheerful but noisy situation . . . [offers] a sitting-room, and a bed-chamber, with breakfast and dinner at the *table d'hôte* . . . [for] twelve rubles a day (from eight to ten shillings).

### [VI]

In fair copy (PB 18, f. 4<sup>r</sup>).

2 / June the third: The day after Pushkin's name day. I note a curious coincidence—in Pope's imitation (1738), "in the manner of Dr. Swift," of Horace, *Epistles*, bk. I, no. VII:

'Tis true, my Lord, I gave my word,  
I would be with you, June the third . . .

and in Byron, *Don Juan*, I, CIII:

'Twas on a summer's day—the sixth of June:  
I like to be particular in dates,

. . . . .

They are a sort of post-house, where the Fates  
Change horses, making History change its tune . . .

This is the "fatal day" (I, CXXI, 2) on which Juan's romance with Julia began, to last till a vaguer date in

November, whereupon the youth was sent on a four-year-long journey, in the course of which he reached the court and bed of Catherine II of Russia in 1784–85. The curious part is that the sixth of June was (N.S., end of the eighteenth century) Pushkin's birthday. "History" did "change its tune" June 6, 1799, N.S.

*Don Juan* was commenced in Venice, Sept. 6, 1818, and the last complete canto was finished on May 6, 1823. Before leaving Italy for Greece, Byron had composed (May 8, 1823; all these dates are N.S.) fourteen stanzas of an additional, seventeenth, canto. At the time Pushkin was about to begin *EO* in Kishinev (May 9, O.S.; May 21, N.S.).

I do not know why, after establishing the "June the third" reading in Acad 1937, Tomashevski gives "July the third" in *Works* 1949 and 1957.

6–14 Novgorod, ancient Holmgard, was founded by the Vikings at the gray dawn of our era. The "Scandinavian conqueror" is the Norman Rurik, whom legend has invade, in the 860's, the east bank of the Volhov River, which flows through Novgorod. Rurik's descendants transferred their throne to Kiev. Yaroslav the Wise (r. 1015–54), author of the first Russian Code, granted Novgorod important privileges, and by the thirteenth century the town had gained a kind of republican independence, with a public assembly, the *veche*, governing the region through an elected chief, the *posadnik*. But with the lugubrious rise of Moscow and its ruthless despots the "Volhov Republic" fell amid horrific massacres. Ivan III in 1471 imposed his law upon it. The bell (*vechevoy kolokol*) convoking the people to the *veche* is termed "rebellious" in allusion to the efforts of the stout-hearted Novgorodans to resist Moscow; but nothing availed, and Ivan IV the Terrible destroyed the last vestiges of Novgorodan liberty in 1570.

## Commentary

In this stanza our poet limits himself to a singularly poor description of Novgorod: "half-wild" (*poludikoy*) has no pictorial sense, a bell is not "amidst" public squares, "rebellious" (*myatézhiy*) is ambiguous, though not new, the four "giants" are of very unequal stature, and the "bowed-down" or "drooping" (*poniknushie*) churches, around which a ghostly people swarms, resemble snowmen in a thaw.

In his letter to Pushkin of Oct. 18, 1824 (see my n. to Eight : LI : 3-4), the Decembrist Prince Sergey Volkonski, writing from St. Petersburg to Mihaylovskoe, suggested that "the vicinity of Great Novgorod, the memory of its *vechevoy kolokol*," would inspire Pushkin.

### VARIANT

- 3 Draft (2382, f. 118<sup>v</sup>) and canceled fair copy (PB 18, f. 4<sup>r</sup>):  
a Viennese calash . . .

Cf. the "imported calash" of Seven : v : 2.

### [VII]

In fair copy (PB 18, ff. 4<sup>v</sup>, 5<sup>r</sup>).

- 3 / flicker-flick, like shadows / *Mel'káyut mél'kom búdto téni*: A curious prefiguration of cinematography.
- 4 / Valdáy, Torzhók, and Tver: This is the order of these towns in a southeastern direction, between Novgorod (which is a hundred miles S of Petersburg) and Moscow, a distance of about three hundred miles. Valday is a burg situated in a hilly region on the south shore of beautiful Valday Lake. Torzhok, a larger town, was at the time famous for its leathern and velvet goods. Onegin reaches the Volga and the large city of Tver (now Ka-

linin). He has still a hundred miles to go before reaching Moscow.

It is curious to compare the stylized account of Onegin's route in the stanza to Pushkin's ribald description of his journey along the same highway—but in an opposite direction—in a letter of Nov. 9, 1826, from Mihaylovskoe, to Sergey Sobolevski (a disreputable but talented and cultured friend with whom he stayed in Moscow on his crucial visit there from Mihaylovskoe, September–October, 1826). He left Moscow for Opočka on the morning of Nov. 2, broke two wheels, continued by stage, and, via Tver, arrived next evening in Torzhok (130 miles). At Novgorod he turned west toward Pskov. The whole journey from Moscow to Opočka (450 miles) took him eight days.

In this epistle there are six quatrains in trochaic tetrameters, which he suggests be read to the tune of *Once upon a Time a Turkey* (a facetious ballad of twenty trochaic tetrameters by Baratinski and Sobolevski),\* and which contain various viatic suggestions. At Galiani's tavern (with an obscene pun, showing some knowledge of Italian, on the name in the rhyme) in Tver, he recommends macaroni with Parmesan, and at Pozharski's, in Torzhok, that restaurant's famous *côtelettes*. In the last stanza he advises the traveler to buy bangle buns for tea from Valday's *podátlivih* ("yielding") peasant girls. It will be noted that the epithet in the *Journey* (VII : 5) is less colorful (*privyázchivih*, "clinging," "obtrusive," "pertinacious," "overaffectionate").

Pushkin's letter to Sobolevski drolly adumbrates Onegin's journey and, with its mixture of prose and verse, its light tone, its attention to good cheer, reflects

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\*Published later, 1831, in Voeykov's *Russkiy invalid*, no. 6, lit. suppl., under the title *A True Story (Bil')* and over the signature "Stalinski," according to *Pushkin* (1936), pp. 522–24 (Letopisi gosudarstvennogo literaturnogo muzeya I).

in miniature the seventeenth-century joint composition known as *Le Voyage de Chapelle et de Bachaumont* (*Voyage de Languedoc*, 1656, by Claude Emmanuel Lhuillier, known as Chapelle, 1626–86, and his friend, François le Coigneux de Bachaumont, 1624–1702).

Aleksey Vulf, who traveled with Pushkin along the same route in mid-January, 1829 (from Staritsa, in the province of Tver, to St. Petersburg), calls the *baranki*-vending girls at Valday “cheap belles” (*P. i ego sovr.*, VI, 21–22 [1915–16], 52).

Aleksandr Radishchev (1749–1802), the liberal-minded author of *A Journey from St. Petersburg to Moscow*, printed on his private press, a work for which he was banished to Siberia by Catherine the Great for the rest of her reign, but which Alexander I allowed to be published in 1810. The *Journey* is a clumsily worded but fiery piece of eighteenth-century prose directed against oppression and slavery. Pushkin, who condemned its style (see his posthumously published essay, “Aleksandr Radishchev,” written August, 1836), knew it well. In it there occurs the following passage (a fact suggestive of a sly attempt on Pushkin’s part to smuggle Radishchev’s shade into *Onegin’s Journey*):

Who has not visited the Valday Hills, who does not know the Valday *baranki* and the rouged Valday wenches? Every time a traveler passes by, these brazen Valday wenches, shedding all shame, stop him and meretriciously attempt to fan the passenger’s lust.

*Baranki*, “bangle buns,” are known commercially in the U. S. as “bagels” (through the Yiddish).

- 11 The “versts” mean the wooden posts (painted white with black stripes) indicating the stretches. A verst is 0.6 of a mile. The coachmen, *yamshchiki*, driving the post troikas were called “post-boors” by English travelers of the time.

[VIII]

In fair copy (PB 18, f. 5<sup>r</sup>).

- 5 / [Moscow] English Club: Should not be confused with the incomparably more fashionable St. Petersburg English Club (colloquially, *Angliyskiy klub* or *klob*; officially, Sankt-Peterburgskoe Angliyskoe Sobranie; it was founded in 1770, and Pushkin was a member from 1832 to his death). Cf. Blagorodnoe Sobranie (Assembly of Nobility); n. to Seven : LI : 1.
- 6 / of parliament sessions / *narodnih zasedaniy*: "Of the people's sessions"—meaning *parlamentskih zasedaniy*.
- 8 / gruels: Boiled groats, hot cereals (buckwheat, barley, millet, etc.), fancy varieties of which, boiled, served with meat, enfolded in pies, or porridged and buttered, are favorite features of a Russian's fare.
- 12 / spy / *shpión*: A government spy, a secret agent working for the political police, is meant here as well as in Two : xivb : 5. Pushkin himself, even in his Odessa days, had been accused by contemptible gossips of "working for the government,"\* as did one of his most glamorous lady friends (Countess Caroline Sobanski; see n. to Eight : xvii : 9). The word "promotes" (*proizvódit*), which in another connection, at the end of this stanza, echoes the "promote" of Two : xivb : 5, tends to prove that the latter passage was in Pushkin's mind when this stanza was written (seven years later, in the autumn of 1830).

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\*See also the draft of a letter to Vyazemski (Sept. 1, 1828, St. Petersburg): "Aleksey Poltoratski, twaddling in Tver, mentioned that I am a spy, that I get 2500 rubles a month (which, thanks to craps, would have come in very handy), and distant cousins are already coming to me for situations and the tsar's favors."

- 14 / "an eligible bachelor" / *v zhenihí*: One wonders if a mysterious undated stanza, with an *EO* rhyme scheme and an *EO* family air, written on a scrap of gray paper, and first published, with the verses in a wrong sequence (1–6, 10–14, 7–9) and containing other errors, as a separate poem by I. Shlyapkin in 1903 (*Iz neizdannih bumag A. S. Pushkina*, p. 22), may not have been planned by our poet to come somewhere here, where rumors of Onegin's being an eligible bachelor are circulated:

- Marry? Whom? Vera Chátski?  
 Too old. Miss Rádin? \* Too naïve.  
 The Hálski girl? She has a silly laugh.  
 4 The Shípov girl? Too poor, too fat.  
 Miss Mínski? Breathes with too much languor.  
 Miss Tórbín? She composes ballads,  
 her mother kisses you, father's a fool.  
 8 Well, then, Miss [N-ski?] Catch me doing that—  
 and getting flunkydome for kin!  
 Miss Lípski? What a *ton*!  
 A million airs, grimaces.  
 12 Miss Lídin? What a family!  
 You're offered walnuts at their house,  
 they at the theater drink beer.

The various editions I have consulted print this as a dialogue (between Onegin and a friend suggesting he marry). I take it to be a soliloquy akin to One : 1, but have not seen the MS.

*Works* 1949, V, 562, corrects the sequence of lines, writes "Miss Lidin" and "Grusha Lipski," and (following Shlyapkin) omits the editorial question mark after "Miss Lenski." I cannot believe Pushkin could have

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\*Shlyapkin has "Solín" for "Rádin," "Masha Lanski" for "Lipski," and "Sitski" for "Lidin." *Works* 1936, I, 596, misplaces the lines (following Shlyapkin), has "Lida" (*na Lide*) instead of "Miss Lidin" (*na Lidinoy*), has "Masha Lipski" instead of Shlyapkin's "Masha Lanski," and instead of my "Miss N-ski" has "Miss Lenski."

used that name within this context—unless the passage was written not in 1829–30 (when the *Journey* was written) but between May and October, 1823 (before Canto Two, in which Lenski appears, was begun). Let us have the MS reproduced.

The name “Chatski” is probably taken from Griboedov’s *Woe from Wit*. If so, this stanza must have been written not before 1825. “Radin,” “Minski,” and so on are invented names of the kind given to gentlefolk in novels and plays of the time. *Tsaliet mat’*, “mother kisses [you],” alludes to a provincial way a matronly hostess might have of kissing a visitor on the brow while he kisses her hand. However, in the 1957 edition, Tomashevski reads *Shalín’ya mat’*, “the mother is a romp,” a not-very-convincing recension.

According to Shlyapkin, the following canceled readings can be made out (ll. 2 and 3): “Miss Sédin,” “Miss Rzhévski.”

I notice that Zenger, in her excellent article on certain draftings, in *Pushkin, rodonachal’nik novoy russkoy literatury* (1941), pp. 31–47, also concludes that the stanza may refer to the Moscow section of *Onegin's Journey*.

VARIANTS

2 Draft (2382, f. 118<sup>r</sup>):

. . . Oriental bustle . . .

8 Canceled draft (ibid.):

*Chatámov prén’ya slíshit ón.*

of Chathams the debates hears he.

William Pitt the Elder, Earl of Chatham (1708–78),  
English statesman.

[IX]

1–2 From the fair copy (PB 18).

1-3 From Moscow, in July, 1821, Onegin drives directly east three hundred miles to Nizhni Novgorod (now Gorki), an old town on an old hill at the confluence of the Volga and the Oka. Nizhni's famous citizen, a butcher by trade and a politician by inclination, Kuzma Minin-Suhorukiy, was instrumental in promoting a victorious rising against the Polish invaders of the Moscow state in 1611-12.

Makariiev is a reference to the famous Makariiev Market in Nizhni, whither it had been transferred, in 1817, from Makariiev, a town some sixty miles east of it. The fair was held in midsummer. The "bustle" is rather automatically repeated in [v] : 11 and [viii] : 2.

According to the "list of goods and capital announced at the Director's Office, at the fair of [Nizhni Novgorod], in the year 1821" (i.e., at the time of Onegin's visit), there were, among forty items of merchandise, "Small silver plate and pearls" for 1,500,000 rubles, "Wine and brandy" for 6,580,000 rubles, and "horses" for 1,160,000 rubles (as quoted by Lyall, *Travels*, II, 349-51).

[X]

From the fair copy (PB 18).

2 / Volga, "paragon of rivers, lakes": Dmitriev's rococo ode *To the Volga*, l. 4. It consists of nine ten-line stanzas in iambic tetrameter rhymed according to the sequence in French and Russian odes: ababeeciic. Karamzin received the MS of this ode from Dmitriev Sept. 6, 1794. The passage reads (ll. 2-7):

completed is the happy voyage,  
and you that brought us to the shore,  
O Volga, paragon of rivers, lakes,  
their chief, their queen, their honor and their glory,

O sumptuous, stately Volga,  
adieu! . . .

8 / The Volga swells: In result of midsummer rains at its upper reaches—as has been known to occur in certain years.

13-14 / Stenka Razin . . . : The famous robber chief, hero of several songs, a riparian Robin Hood of sorts, but considerably more sanguinary than the good yeoman. L. 14 runs “begored the Volga wave.” The Soviet policy being to present Robin Razin as an early promoter of the People’s Revolution, Comrade Brodski suggests that this l. 14 is merely a romantic reference to a song in which Razin casts a sweetheart of his—a Persian princess—into the Volga wave (so that cosmopolitan love may not interfere with patriotic communistic activities). But Persian princesses do not necessarily bleed when drowning—and what about the beginning of the next stanza?

The epithet “canvas” (l. 4) also occurs in a song about Stenka Razin (the one referred to in my n. to Five : xvii : 7-8), derived by Pushkin from folk poetry (l. 10):

*Raspusti parusá polotnyánie . . .*  
spread your canvas sails . . .

[XI]

From Nizhni Onegin sails down the Volga toward Astrakhan, a leisurely voyage of about two thousand miles, with stops at Kazan, Sızran, Saratov, and so on. I should date Onegin’s brief stay on the Caspian shores late autumn, 1821.

7 I cannot understand the failure of Soviet commentators,

who are usually thankful for any scrap of revolutionary offal they can obtain from *EO*, to notice that the naïve phrase “memories [*vospominán’ya*] of former days” relates not to private but to historical memories, and refers, doubtlessly, to the civil and military rebellion in Astrahan in the reign of Peter the Great; the insurrection, starting as a protest against harsh taxes, lasted from July 30, 1705, to March 12, 1706, and more than two thousand people were executed after it had been quenched.

- 9 The mosquitoes of Astrahan are berated by several travelers. See, for example, Voeykov’s “Logbook” in his magazine *Literary News* (*Novosti literaturī*), no. 9 (Aug., 1824). The classic account, however, of the “affecting visitation” of Tatar mosquitoes is that by E. D. Clarke (*Travels in Various Countries*, II, 59–61), whom they almost killed one July night in 1800 on the banks of the Kuban.

The draft of XI (2382, f. 117<sup>v</sup>) is dated Oct. 3 [1829, Pavlovskoe, province of Tver].

[XII]

- 1 / Terek: A Caucasian river that has its source in a small glacier in the Central Chain on Mt. Kazbek (see n. to XIII : 2–4). The Terek skirts the Kazbek group and flows turbulently in a general NE direction through a series of gorges (such as the Daryal Canyon) along which runs the Military Georgian Road (see n. to I. 13). Below Vladikavkaz the Terek collects the waters of various mountain streams, flows N toward the steppe country, then turns resolutely E and continues its course to the Caspian Sea.

- 10–12 See n. to XIIIa : 8.

- 13 / Arághva and Kurá: Rivers S of the Central Chain. The Aragva, a mountain stream, rises NW of the Pass of the Cross (7957 ft.), flows sixty miles S, and falls into the Kura's livid waters.

The Kura, the most important river in Transcaucasia, rises NW of Kars, Turkey, and flows E across Georgia to the Caspian Sea.

The Pass of the Cross, where the highway traverses the main range of mountains, which runs roughly from NW to SE across the breadth of the Caucasus, is famous in literature for being described in the beginning of Lermontov's *A Hero of Our Time* (pub. 1839-40). (An English translation of it by Dmitri Nabokov was published New York, 1958.)

The so-called Military Georgian Road (the construction of which was begun in 1811), running from Vladikavkaz, some fifty miles N of the pass, winds through the Aragva Valley S to Tiflis, the capital of Georgia, a journey of about 135 miles.

[XIIa]

In draft (PD 168).

- 8 / to Georgia / *do Grúzii*: In earlier Soviet editions the reading here has always been *do glubini*, "to the bottom," but *Works* 1957, without explications (as is the rule in this ridiculously laconic edition), prints *do Grúzii*; Georgia is the region in southern Caucasia (Transcaucasia) bounded by the Black Sea in the W and the Dagestan region in the E.

The gradual annexation of the Caucasus by Russia went on intermittently from the capture of Derbent in 1722 by Peter I to the capture of the leader of the Lezgians, Shamyl, in 1859. The advance of the Russian Empire in the Orient (narrowly watched by England

### *Commentary*

and stubbornly opposed by Turkey) was realized by various means, from semivoluntary integration (e.g., Georgia in 1801) to a series of fierce wars with the mountaineers, of whom various Moslemized Circassian tribes offered the toughest resistance.

12 / by a field gun / *púshkoyu stepnýy*: A fieldpiece for use in the steppes.

[XI1b]

In draft (PD 168).

[XI1c]

In draft (2382, f. 39<sup>v</sup>).

On Sept. 24, 1820, from Kishinev, Pushkin wrote to his brother Lev, in Petersburg:

... Upon my arrival in Ekaterinoslav [about May 20, 1820], feeling bored, I went for a boat trip on the Dnepr, took a dip, and, as usual with me, caught a fever. General Raevski, who was traveling to the Caucasus with his son [Nikolay] and his two daughters [Maria and Sofia], found me in a Jew's shack, doctorless, with a mug of iced lemonade. Young Raevski (you know our close friendship and the important, unforgettable services he rendered me) [an allusion to the fact that the trip to the Caucasus had been planned at least a month earlier] suggested my traveling also to the Caucasian spas, and the physician [a Dr. Rudikovski] they had with them promised not to do me to death.

Further he describes the wild beauty of the Caucasus:

The curative springs are all situated at a short distance from one another, in the extreme spurs of the Caucasus Mountains. I regret, my friend, that you did not see with me that magnificent range, those ice-covered summits, which, from afar, at a clear sunrise, look like bizarre

clouds, varicolored and motionless; I regret you did not climb the peaks of Beshtu's five hills. . . .

(See n. to XIII : 2-4.)

- 4 / more than once: Pushkin visited the Caucasus twice—in the summers of 1820 and 1829. Artistically, the account in the *Journey* is much inferior to his beautiful "A Journey to Erzerum," a prose description of his 1829 trip, published 1836 in his literary review *The Contemporary* (*Sovremennik*).

Pushkin took part in the Caucasian campaign of 1829 as a poet, informal war correspondent, would-be lancer, *bon vivant*, and semiprofessional gamester. He traveled in the first week of May from Moscow to Tiflis via Kaluga and Oryol, after which he drove through the green Voronezh steppes and then by the Military Georgian Road from Ekaterinoslav to Vladikavkaz (May 21) and Tiflis, where he stayed from May 27 to June 10. Count Paskevich, the commander in chief, permitted Pushkin to ride to Erzerum (with the Nizhegorodski dragoons, in which Nikolay Raevski, Jr., and Lev Pushkin served). On June 11, near the fort Gergeti, Pushkin met the coffin of Griboedov, who had been murdered in Teheran. On June 14, he attempted to take part in a skirmish with the Turkish cavalry. His civilian coat and round hat (*chapeau rond*) puzzled the Russian troops, who mistook him for a German doctor or Lutheran clergyman. On June 27, he witnessed the taking of Erzerum and stayed there for almost a month. About July 20 he left for Tiflis and Pyatigorsk, left Pyatigorsk in the second week of September, and was back in Moscow before Sept. 21.

[XIII]

- 2-4 / Beshtú . . . Mashúk: The reference is to the conic peaks of Besh Tau, a five-coned eminence timbered

## Commentary

with oak and beech N and E of Pyatigorsk, a mineral-spring resort in the northern Caucasus. These peaks are Mt. Besh (4590 ft.); Mt. Iron (Zheleznaya, 2795 ft.); Mt. Snake (Zmeinaya, 3261 ft.); Mt. Mashuk (3258 ft.); and Mt. Bald (Lisaya, 2427 ft.). Some fifty miles to the S, in the western part of the Central Chain (running from parallel 44° in NW Caucasus to parallel 41° in SE Caucasus), loom Mt. Elbruz, the highest mountain in Europe (about 18,500 ft.), and Mt. Kazbek (about 16,500 ft.).

Onegin spends more than a year (1822) in the Caucasus. The next celebrated literary character to stay at its spas and cross its passes is Lermontov's Pechorin (1830-38).

- 6 / its magic brooks / *ruch'yóv egó volshébnih*: I suspect that  
my translation is too nice and that Pushkin meant merely  
“founts” or “streams.”

Cf. Fontanes' description of a similar resort (Bagneres), in his *Les Pyrénées* (c. 1805):

Le vieillard de maux escorté,  
Le héros encor tourmenté  
De cicatrices douloureuses,  
La mélancolique beauté  
. . . . .  
Viennent chercher ici les jeux ou la santé . . .  
. . . . .  
L'ennui, les sombres maladies  
Et la goutte aux mains engourdis  
Tout cède au breuvage enchanté . . .

- 9 / Cypris: A euphemism for *Lues venerea*. Pushkin is known to have suffered from a venereal disease—gonorrhea and/or some form of syphilis—at least three times in his life (January, 1818, in St. Petersburg; spring, 1819, same place; and mid-July, 1826, after a visit to a Pskov brothel).

[XIV]

- 4 / smoking / *dîmnîe*: Misprinted *zimnie*, “wintery.” A curious repetition of the slip mentioned in Pushkin’s n. 17.

VARIANT

- 13–14 PB 18, f. 7<sup>v</sup>:

I also, like those gentlemen,  
with hope might be acquainted then.

[XV]

- 1–8 In fair copy (PB 18).

- 6 / Kubán: A river that rises in a glacier at the foot of Mt. Elbruz and flows N and W to the Sea of Azov.

- 6–8 / plains of Kuban . . . Crimea: From central Caucasus Onegin travels some four hundred miles in a NW direction to the tip of the Taman peninsula, where he boards a ship for the Crimea. This is Pushkin’s route of early August, 1820. In a letter to his brother (Sept. 24, 1820) from Kishinev to Petersburg, he writes:

I saw [on Aug. 8, 1820] the banks of the Kuban and outposts—admired our Cossacks: always in the saddle, always ready to fight, always on the lookout. I rode in sight of inimical plains belonging to free mountain tribes. We were escorted by sixty Cossacks, and behind them there dragged a loaded cannon. . . .

Our poet saw the Crimea for the first time not from board ship but from Taman, in mid-August, 1820, across the Kerch Strait (same letter to Lev). It will be recalled that Pechorin, in Lermontov’s story “Taman” (1840), sees from the town of that name, on an azure morning, “the distant shoreline of the Crimea, which stretches in a lilac band and ends in a cliff with the white of a light-

## Commentary

house perceivable on its summit" (note "lilac," a color that is absent from Pushkin's classical palette).

Pushkin sailed from Taman to Kerch, his first stop on the Crimean peninsula. At Kerch (Aug. 15, at sunset) he visited the ruins of a tower called the Sepulcher of Mithridates: "There I picked a flower as a memento, and next day lost it without regret"—quoted from the "Extract from a Letter to D[elvig]" (first pub. in *Northern Flowers* for 1826), a deliberately supercilious narrative, which our poet prefixed to the third edition, 1830, of his *Fountain of Bahchisaray*.

From Kerch Pushkin traveled by land south to Feodosiya (ancient Kaffa), on the SE coast of the Crimean peninsula, sixty-three miles—a day's journey. There he spent the night (now No. 5 Olginskaya Street), and next day (Aug. 18), at dawn, with the Raevskis boarded a navy brig, which took them along the shore in a general SW direction. During the voyage he wrote a Byronic elegy ("Extinguished is the orb of day"), published at the end of the year in the review *Son of the Fatherland*, and incorrectly dated "September" by Lev Pushkin, who received it with his brother's September letter.

At dawn, Aug. 19, they landed at Gurzuf (for a discussion of the emotional mystery in the last lines of XVI, see my n. to One : xxxiii : 1). There he spent three blissful weeks with the—now reunited—Raevski family at the villa placed at their disposal by Armand Emmanuel du Plessis, Duc de Richelieu.

About Sept. 5 he left Gurzuf with the general and his son. They visited "the fabulous ruins of Diana's temple" near the Georgievskiy monastery and taking the Balaklava Road reached Bahchisaray, the very center of the Crimea, some sixty miles from the seacoast. Bahchi Saray means "garden palace," and the place lives up to its name. It was the residence of the Tatar khans from the beginning of the sixteenth century to the end of the

eighteenth. A little fountain trickles from a rusty pipe into dimples of marble in a cool hall, where swallows dart in and out. I saw the place in July, 1918, during a lepidopterological excursion.

From Bahchisaray our travelers rode (on the eighth) to Simferopol, whence, via Odessa (mid-September), Pushkin reached Kishinev Sept. 21.

8 / Tamán: A Black Sea port in the extreme NW corner of the Caucasus, on Taman Gulf (an eastern inlet of Kerch Strait), about 250 miles NW of Suhum, a western Caucasian maritime town. Here, too, Lermontov's Pechorin has an adventure, in the least successful section ("Taman") of *A Hero of Our Time*.

10 / with Orestes argued Pylades: As retold in old French *mythologies*, from which Pushkin and his readers gained familiar information about these things, the legendary young man Orestes and his faithful friend Pylades, being desirous to obtain purification from a complicated vendetta that they had brought to a successful close, were directed by the oracle at Delphi, in Greece, to bring thither a statue of Artemis (Diana) from Tauric Chersonese (Korsun, near Sebastopol). So to the land of the Tauri the two sailed. King Thoas, high priest of the goddess' temple, ordered the young strangers to be sacrificed, as was the rule. Orestes and Pylades heroically argued with one another, each desiring to die in the other's place. Both escaped, with Iphigenia (a local priestess, who turned out to be the sister of Orestes) and the statue.

Pushkin calls Orestes *Atrid*, meaning "one of the Atridae."

11 / Mithridates: Mithridates the Great, King of Pontus, who in 63 B.C. ordered an obedient Gallic mercenary to

kill him. His alleged tomb and throne are shown on Mt. Mitridat, a knoll near Kerch, a port on the Sea of Azov (see above, n. to 6–8).

12–14. Adam Bernard Mickiewicz (1798–1855), Polish poet and patriot, spent four and a half years in Russia (from October, 1824, to March, 1829). During that time he visited the Crimea—five years after Pushkin; i.e., in the autumn of 1825—and composed his eighteen admirable *Crimean Sonnets* (*Sonety Krymskie*) upon his return to Odessa, completing his work on them in 1826 in Moscow. The Polish text was published there in December, 1826, and the first, very mediocre, Russian versions came out in 1827 (by Vasilii Shchastniy) and 1829 (by Ivan Kozlov). Mickiewicz evokes Pushkin's *Fountain of Bahchisaray* in Sonnet VIII, *Grob Potocki* (the mausoleum of a Tatar Kahn's wife believed to have been a Polish maiden of the Potocki family). In that sonnet, as well as in others, especially in Sonnet XIV, *The Pilgrim* (*Pielgrzym*), Mickiewicz nostalgically recalls his native Lithuania.

Pushkin made his acquaintance in October, 1826, in Moscow, but the cordiality of this relationship did not survive later political events. The Polish insurrection broke out Nov. 17/29, 1830, and continued for about nine months. The news of the uprising in Warsaw was communicated by Nicholas I to the officers of the guard at a trooping of colors on Nov. 26, 1830. He said that he was sure they would help to quell it. Generals and officers broke into huzzas and started to kiss the hands of Nicholas and the rump of his horse as if the man were a centaur. Pushkin, much to the distress of Vyazemski and A. Turgenev, gave the quelling of the revolt overenthusiastic support. In his iambs *To the Slanderers of Russia* (August, 1831) and in the odic *Anniversary of Borodino* (September, 1831), our poet indulges in a torrent of lurid nationalism and speaks in cold mocking tones of the

defeat of rebellious Poland. In a blank-verse fragment dated Aug. 10, 1834, Petersburg, he recalls Mickiewicz's visit and happy sojourn among an "alien race" and contrasts the guest's serene discourses with the "baneful verses" ("dog's barks," in a canceled draft, a phrase that ties up with the end of Mickiewicz's poem addressed "to Russian friends," in which the voice of any Russian who might resent the Polish poet's attack on despotism is compared to the bark of a dog biting the liberating hand) that the angry poet now directs at Russia from the west: Mickiewicz in 1832-34, living in exile in Dresden and Paris, in satirical verse (copied out by Pushkin in Cahier 2373, ff. 35<sup>v</sup>, 34<sup>v</sup>) accuses his former Russian friends of being bribed by their government, of glorifying the triumph of their tyrant, and of exulting in the sufferings of the Poles. It is owing rather to Mickiewicz's fine personality than to historical reality that the idea of "liberalism" became associated at the time with the idea of "Poland," a country that in some of its periods of sovereignty was as autocratic as Russia.

Pushkin greatly admired Mickiewicz's works. In October, 1833, at Boldino, he composed one of his very few anapaestic pieces, a fine-toned but hopelessly inexact version of Mickiewicz's ballad *The Three Sons of Budrys*.

VARIANTS

12 In the fair copy (PB 18) "the inspired exile" replaces "inspired Mickiewicz."

12-14 Canceled drafts (2382, f. 115<sup>v</sup>):

There my inspired Mickiewicz  
.  
.  
.  
composed immortal verses.

and (l. 14):

composed his sonnets.

Literary fashions are delightfully epitomized in these stanzas. They illustrate two subspecies of romanticism.

As I have noted elsewhere (see n. to Six : XXIII : 2), the generalized form of romanticism can be traced back to the contrived Arcadia of Italian and Spanish romance. From its lowland meadows distraught lovers—wretched knights and young scholars—would repair to its montane zone and run amuck there in amorous madness. Clouds masked the moon and brooks murmured in pastoral poesy as allegorically as rack and rill were to do above and below Lenski's tomb some three centuries later. In the eighteenth century, Swiss and Scottish guides pointed out to the panting poet the waterfall and its lugubrious conifers. From there it was an easy mule's ride to the desolate Byronic scene—up to the boulders above timberline or down to the sea cliffs where the surf boomed. This generalized subspecies of romanticism is closely associated with the pathological dislike that the Age of Reason had for the specific "unpoetical" detail and with its passion for the generic term. In this sense the "romanticism" of Byron logically continues "classicism." The vague term merely became vaguer, and the moonlit ruins remained as noble and blurry as the "passions" inspired by incest and ancient plays. As I have also noted before, only in a few snowscape stylizations did Pushkin switch (in the established text) from the generalized Arcadian vista to the specific description. In the depiction of nature his leanings were always on the side of the eighteenth century. St. XVIII illustrates critically the second, specific, phase of romanticism, its interest in "ordinary" details and in "realistic" trivialities, having none of that natural poetical residue that the words "ocean" or "nightingale" had. It is in connection with this new fashion that the Flemish masters—and the Elizabethan

playwrights—were rediscovered by the romanticists.

Finally, it should be noted that in these stanzas Pushkin uses an allusion to recent literary trends, the transition from the “poetical” Oriental fountain to the “unpoetical” duck pond, as an allegory of personal life. One can also find some analogy between the evolution he outlines here and that which he suggests in relation to Lenski in sts. xxxvi and xxxix of Chapter Six.

[XVII]

VARIANT

In a draft (2382, f. 111<sup>r</sup>), probably referring to l. 8, Pushkin pleasingly alludes to the shade of olive and mulberry trees—which at once reconstructs in one’s mind the stony trails leading up the mountainside from the southern Crimean shore. The mulberry (and the rather unexpected pineapple) had been already mentioned by Mickiewicz in 1826, in his Sonnet xiv, *The Pilgrim*, as a component of the Crimean landscape.

[XVIII]

- 2 / hillside slope / *kosogór*: The Russian word implies a twofold incline: the sloping of the hillside and the slanting of a road (or some other definite stretch of ground) coming down it diagonally.
- 6 The word *gumno* means “barn” or “granary,” including the threshing floor and the resulting store of grain.
- 13 / peace / *pokóy*: See n. to l. 20 of Onegin’s Letter in Eight and n. to Eight : XLVIIIa : 1, above, p. 253.
- 14 / *shchey* [gen.; *shchi*, nom.]: Cabbage soup. In this line

## Commentary

Pushkin uses a Russian proverb meaning "my fare is plain but I am my own master."

### VARIANTS

5-6 The draft (PB 18, ff. 1<sup>r</sup>, 2<sup>v</sup>) reads:

and through a sunny meadow  
afar a peasant maiden running . . .

with a variant for l. 6:

and shapely washerwomen near the dam . . .

13 Draft (*ibid.*):

a simple, quiet wife . . .

### [XIX]

5-11 See *The Fountain of Bahchisaray* (a poem of 578 lines in iambic tetrameter, freely rhymed, composed, 1822, at Kishinev, and published, 1824, Moscow, with an essay by Vyazemski), especially ll. 505-59, describing Pushkin's visit to the former "Garden Palace" of the khans, where the answer to *Journey*, XIX : 7-10, is given in ll. 533-38, with the same rhyme *shum* ("noise," "purl") and *um* ("mind").

A deliberately "prosaic" description of the fountain is added by Pushkin in a note to the poem; and this may be compared to the "dross" of the *Journey*, XIX : 1-4.

### [XX]

1 We are not shown Onegin actually participating in the gay Italianate life of Odessa (XX-XXIX). Not he, but our other hero, Pushkin, is seen enjoying it in these ten stanzas, which echo in a Southern strain the theatrical,

erotical, and gastronomical delights of the Petersburg life depicted in Chapter One.

In that Chapter One, Pushkin intermingled his Petersburg recollections with the circumstances of his life in Odessa at the time of his writing about them (autumn, 1823). We had a glimpse there (One : L) of his roaming along the shore line and yearning for a sail that would carry him from Russia to Africa, reversing his ancestor's route. The present stanzas of the *Journey* are being written in the enforced seclusion of Mihaylovskoe, early in 1825. The Odessa of 1823–24, a mere harbor of nostalgia at the time, is evoked now, in 1825, with as much delectation as the pleasures of Petersburg then were. And the "golden Italy" of One : XLIX has now dwindled to a recollection of melodious Italian voices in the streets of Odessa.

- 2 / There for a long time skies are clear: A tetrametric condensation of Tumanski's Alexandrine—the second line of his poem *Odessa* (quoted in my n. to XXI : 1–9).

VARIANTS

- 5–14 Gofman (1936) quotes the following rough-draft fragments (2370, f. 66<sup>r</sup>; see also p. 464 in Acad 1937)—A, ll. 8–9:

There the bland merchant's  
sportive companion [*rézvaya podrúga*, Fr.  
*compagne folâtre*] shines.

and B, ll. 5–6:

. . . I lived there as a poet,  
logless in winter, droshkyless in summer . . .

(For A, ll. 8–9, see n. to XXVIII : 5–14.)

Apparently the gap between this and the following lines was to be filled with some reference to future im-

## Commentary

provements of Odessa's canalization. A draft reads (ll. 12–14):

and instead of Count Vorontsov  
there will be some fresh water there—  
and thither we shall then repair.

Which reminds one of the Lord Chancellor, equated, through “M'lud,” with London's “mud,” in the first chapter (written November, 1851) of Dickens' *Bleak House*.

13 Canceled draft (2370, f. 66<sup>r</sup>):

and a black guest from my own land . . .  
meaning—an African.

## [xxi]

1–9 / Odessa in sonorous verses our friend Tumanski has described . . . : Tumanski, a minor poet, Pushkin's fellow clerk in Count Vorontsov's bureau, in 1824 dedicated the following ponderous iambic hexameters to Odessa:

This region, glorified by fame of martial days,  
Where for a long time skies do gratify the gaze,  
Where murmur cottonwoods, where waves are blue and  
bold,  
Where nature's radiance dumfounds the son of cold.  
Beneath the canopy of evening clouds so light,  
Here you may drink the breath of gardens with delight . . .

and so forth—ten limp lines more.

6–7 / roam . . . above the sea: The image of Tumanski, who “went off to roam” (*poshyól brodit'*) “above the sea,” i.e., along the sea front, *nad mórem*, repeats in a lighter key the anxious “I roam above the sea” (*Brozhú nad mórem*) of One : L : 3. A curious dovetailing, at the

Odessa port, of the beginning and of the end of our novel. The harassed gray Muse of translation has granted me a natural rhyme here (“then–pen,” *potóm–peróm*) in recompense for having noticed the way a theme tapers to a sparkling point of blue sea.

- 11 / *stép' nagáya*: Lyall, *Travels*, I, 190; passage referring to May, 1822:

The environs of Odéssa present a pleasing sight. The former arid *step* is now covered by villages, and farms, and cultivated fields, which near the town, are intermixed with villas, nurseries, and public and private gardens.

[XXII]

- 3–4 / muddy Odessa: Lyall, *Travels*, I, 171: “The streets of Odéssa . . . are still unpaved . . . [and] indescribably dirty in autumn and spring after heavy rain . . .”

\*

From Odessa, Pushkin wrote Vyazemski, Oct. 14, 1823 (by that time Onegin had already turned up): “’Tis dull and cold, I shiver under the Southern sky.” And to Aleksandr Turgenev, Dec. 1, 1823: “Two cantos are ready” (by then Onegin had supplied his biographer with the data for Chapter Two).

- 10 / on stilts / *na hodúlyah*: I seem to have read somewhere the remark that Odessans (who speak the worst Russian in Russia) call the clogs they wear on days of slush *hoduli* (“walkies”!); I doubt, however, that Pushkin would have used such vulgar slang in so pointless an instance. The hyperbole on which the whole stanza rests would collapse.

[XXIII]

1-3 / sledge-hammer . . . city / *mólot* . . . *górod*: An incorrect rhyme, one of the few bad ones in *EO*. The others are the terminals of Two : VI : 10-11 and Three : XIV : 10-11 (the worst).

6-8 Lyall, who visited Odessa in May, 1822, writes (*Travels*, I, 168-70):

Two powerful obstacles . . . to the commerce and increase of this town . . . always will operate,—the want of a navigable river and of a supply of water for the purposes of life. . . . The chief fountain of supply of water for Odéssa lies at the distance of [about two miles] south of the town . . . on the sea-shore. . . . The ascent of the hill is a serious draft for loaded horses, and increases the expence of the water, each small barrel of which costs from a rouble to a rouble and a half, according to the distance.

It seems a pity that Pushkin sometimes sets going the marvelous machinery of his verse in order to express merely a hackneyed idea. Jokes concerning the lack of water in Odessa had been cracked and re-cracked ever since the foundation of the town in the last decade of the eighteenth century. Its very name, in those days of dreadful French puns, was attributed to the frequency with which its governor (1803-15), Armand Emmanuel, Duc de Richelieu, made the optimistic retort to critics: "Assez d'eau, eau d'assez." (Later jesters derived "Odessa" from "au-dessus de la mer.")

[XXIV]

9-14. The club Casino de Commerce was an annex of the Reynaud House, where Pushkin lived, Rishelievskaya Street, corner of Deribasovskaya (the names come from those of two former governors, Richelieu and de Ribas).

Lyall writes (*Travels*, I, 183):

*Assembly-rooms* were many years ago erected by Monsieur Rainaud [or Reynaud], and, we understood, are well attended [May, 1822]. The great oval hall, which is surrounded by a gallery, supported on numerous columns, is used for the double purpose of ballroom, and an *Exchange*, where the merchants sometimes transact their affairs. . . .

[XXV]

- 1 / *Glyadish' i plóshchad' zapestrelá*: A constructional translation would read:

You look—and the square has grown motley.

*Glyadish'*, however, means in this type of phrase “while you look,” or “the next time you look,” or “presently.” It is a weak “behold.” The verb *pestret'*, an old enemy of the translator (Two : I : 8; Seven : LI : 6), implies here *narodom*:

And lo—the square is gay with people.

- 12 / conflagrations / *pozháři*: In the draft (2370, f. 67<sup>r</sup>) the line reads:

*I chtó Kortési il' pozhári* . . .

and what of Cortes or of conflagrations . . .

—which makes it pretty clear that *pozhari* in the final text means “revolutions,” a point that Sovpushkinists have missed.

[XXVI]

- 5–6 / glee . . . juveny / *rdást' . . . mládost'*: I have tried—not quite successfully, I am afraid—to imitate this rhyme (nowadays fallen into desuetude with the archaic *mládost'*), which was as common in Pushkin's time as the analogous one he was to criticize not quite two years later, at the close of 1826 (in Six : XLIV : 5–6, *sládost'–mládost'*). Cf. the French rhyme *allégresse–jeunesse*.

## Commentary

The stanza is thematically close to One : xvi, with the restaurateur Automne replacing Talon (see n. to l. 12).

- 8 Cf. Dorat's fable of the not-too-astute oyster: "Huître dodue: fraîche et bien nourrie | . . . animal tenace [qui] s'emprisonne | [mais] l'écaille va s'ouvrir en deux, | Et Mon Seigneur mangera la personne. . . ."

Five decades later Tolstoy was to describe in much more original language the "scabrous" (*shershavie*) outsides and "mother-of-pearl" (*perlamutrovie*) insides of shells, from which Oblonski detaches with a little silver fork the "plopping" (*shlyupayushchiesya*) oysters. " 'Not bad,' he kept repeating as he glanced up with humid and glistening eyes now at Lyovin and now at the Tatar waiter" (*Anna Karenin*, pt. I, ch. 10, Oblonski and Lyovin dine at a Moscow restaurant).

- 12 / *Otónom* [instr. sing.]: César Automne, or Autonne, restaurateur on Deribasovskaya Street, opposite the Casino. Pushkin transliterates the name in Russian *Oton*.

## [xxvii]

- 3 / Rossini: "Rossini" rhymes with *stniy*, "blue." The only pre-Pushkinian case I can remember of *siniy* being rhymed at all is a line in an ode (1775) by Vasiliy Petrov (1736–99), in which *stniy* rhymes with *iney*, "hoarfrost."

- 8–14 This "sustained" comparison between music and champagne, with its disparaging closure, does not really differ much from the "suspended" one between champagne and "this and that," in Four : XLV, or "a vivacious mistress," in Four : XLVI. A more provincial brand of brisk wine is also compared to "Zizi" at the end of Five : xxxii. The harping on this theme of wine and its analogies is a little painful.

[XXVIII]

5 Alongside this line the name “Monari” (a first-rate Italian tenor of the Odessa opera) is written in the margin of the draft (2370, f. 68<sup>r</sup>).

5–14 The reference seems to be to Amalia Riznich, or Risnich, née Ripp, daughter of an Austrian-Jewish banker, one of Pushkin’s three or four Odessa loves. She died in Genoa in May, 1825, about the time Pushkin (who learned of her death more than a year later) was working on these stanzas (c. March). Her mother was Italian. Her husband, Ivan Riznich (or, as he wrote his name in French, Jean Risnich), was an opulent and civilized Dalmatian merchant in the grain trade.

She is also mentioned, presumably, in a first draft of XX:

There, the bland merchant’s  
Sportive companion shines.

*Tam hladnokróvnogo <kuptsá>*  
*Blistáet rézvaya podrúga.*

See also n. to Ten : XIII : 3.

Pushkin courted Amalia Riznich in the summer and fall of 1823 in Odessa. His passionate elegy beginning “My voice for you, caressive, languorous,” is presumably addressed to her. She bore her husband a son in the beginning of 1824, and in May of that year, very ill with consumption, left Odessa for Austria and Italy, where she died.\* Her husband remained in Odessa and learned of his wife’s death on June 8, 1825. Tumanski, in Amfiteatrov’s and Oznobishin’s almanac *Northern Lyre* (*Severnaya lira*) for 1827 (pub. November, 1826), inscribed a pentametric sonnet to Pushkin dated Odessa,

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\*See A. Sivers, “Sem’ya Riznich (nov’ie material’i),” in *P. i ego sovr.*, VIII, 31–32 (1927), 85–104.

## Commentary

July, 1825, *On the Death of R.*\* It is odd that Pushkin learned of Amalia Riznich's death (from Tumanski?) only in July, 1826.

Early in 1827 Riznich married Countess Pauline Rzhevuski, sister of Caroline Sobanski and Eveline Hanski.

### [XXIX]

It is curious to compare this pseudo-Italian night, with its golden Rossini music (xxvii : 11) and its Odessite Ausonians, with the imaginary, longed-for nights of golden Italy, invoked so romantically in One : XLIX. It will also be noted that One : L, by means of its allusion to the Odessa sea front, links up One with the last lines of *EO* in its established form. Indeed, the very last line ("And so I lived then in Odessa," which begins *Journey*, xxx, in the MS) coincides practically with Pushkin's note to the word "sea" on One : L : 3 ("Written in Odessa")—the Black Sea, which sounds in the penultimate line of *EO* (*Journey* : xxix : 14) and unites, with the curve of its horizon, the beginning and end of the established text in one of those inner structural circles of which I have given other examples in the course of this commentary.

### [XXX]

In fair copy (PB 18, f. 1<sup>v</sup>).

- 1 / in Odessa / *v* *Odésse*: This is the last word of the established text. It rhymes with *povese* (loc.; see next note),

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\* It begins:

"Upon this earth you were Love's fair companion,  
and sweeter than the roses breathed your lips.  
In your live eyes, which were not made for tears,  
burned Passion, and the Southern heavens shone."

which, in the nominative, *povesa*, rhymes in the second stanza of *EO* with *Zevesa* ("of Zeus"), which in turn rhymes with "Odessa" in *Journey* : [XXII], a most pleasing exchange of echoes under the arc of our poem.

- 3 / having forgot the somber scapegrace / *Zabýv o súmračnom povése*: The epithet *sumrachiñy* is close here to the French *ténébreux*. The type of *le beau ténébreux* (the handsome and somber knight, from "Beltenebros," as Amadis de Gaul called himself) was a fashionable model for young men in the late 1820's.

- 7-9 / and I, fortunate man, had never corresponded in a lifetime with anyone: Mark in the original the jolt and the jibe of the enjambment:

*A yá, schastlívyy chelovék,  
Ne perepisivalsya vvék  
Ni s kém . . .*

It was, among other matters, the interception of a chatty letter to one of his numerous correspondents (possibly, Küchelbecker; see vol. 1, p. 70, and vol. 3, p. 306) that caused our poet's expulsion from Odessa in July, 1824.

- 13 / the friends: The place is Odessa, the time is autumn, 1823. The two friends (for this is how I understand *druz'yá*, which can also mean "our friends") have not seen each other since May, 1820, when Pushkin left the capital for Ekaterinoslav and the Caucasus, while Onegin set out for his uncle's manor, situated midway between Opochna and Moscow. The story since Chapter One has completed a full circle. The reader should suppose that now in Odessa Onegin tells Pushkin of the intervening events. The rest will be reported to Pushkin by his Muse, whom we meet in Seven : v : 5 and Eight : I-VII.

It may be worth while to summarize at this point the main journeys of our two heroes, using all available data. From his countryseat Onegin travels to Petersburg early in 1821. On June 3 (or July 3?) he starts on his Russian tour. Its Moscow and Volga part (summer of 1821, by which time Pushkin is in Kishinev) lies far to the east of Pushkin's route (May-June, 1821, Petersburg-Kiev-Ekaterinoslav-Rostov) but merges with it in the northern Caucasus.

In May, 1820, Pushkin had been attached as a supernumerary functionary (*sverhshtatniy chinovnik*) to the bureau of General Inzov, who presided over a committee that took care of the interests of foreign-born colonists in the Southern region of Russia. Inzov's headquarters were in Ekaterinoslav (now Dnepropetrovsk), where Pushkin arrived from Petersburg about May 20, not only as a new employee, but as a courier bringing Colonial Superintendent Inzov the news that he had been made Acting Governor of Bessarabia. Between Pushkin's leaving Ekaterinoslav (May 28, with the Raevskis) on sick leave for the curative waters of Pyatigorsk, in the Caucasus, and his blissful sojourn in the Crimea (third week of August to Sept. 5), Inzov and the bureau moved to Kishinev, where Pushkin joined his chief on Sept. 21, 1820, four months after seeing Inzov in Ekaterinoslav.

Onegin's itinerary, after merging with Pushkin's at the spas of the northern Caucasus, coincides next with the journey to Georgia that, during the war with Turkey, Pushkin made in the summer of 1829. Onegin remains in the Caucasus from late 1821 to the summer of 1823, when he follows Pushkin's route of summer, 1820, via Taman to the Crimea and visits Bahchisaray in the autumn of 1823, three years after Pushkin.

In the meantime, since July, 1823, Pushkin has been transferred from Kishinev to Odessa, where he is now attached to the chancellery of a higher dignitary, the

Governor General of New Russia (including Bessarabia), Count Vorontsov, who proved to be a much more exacting and much less sympathetic chief than good old Inzov had been. In Odessa, Pushkin is reunited in late 1823 with Onegin, after a separation of more than three years, and the two pals are separated again by the end of July, 1824, when Pushkin is expelled to his Pskovan countryseat for two years of rustication, while Onegin arrives in mid-August, 1824, in Petersburg, where he again meets Tatiana, whom he had not seen since Jan. 12, 1821.

It is to be noted that another, smaller, loop, concentric to the one discussed, takes place in relation to Pushkin's Muse. In May, 1812, when the Muse first began visiting thirteen-year-old Pushkin in his student cell at the Lyceum (Eight : I), seventeen-year-old Onegin had already started his eight-year-long period of riotous life in Petersburg (One : IV). By Jan. 8, 1815 (Eight : II), she had evolved a pair of wings. In 1817-18, she is courted by the young rakes of St. Petersburg (Eight : III), and sometime in 1819-20 she and Pushkin vainly try to teach their new friend Onegin the mysteries of prosody (One : VII). In the beginning of May, 1820, Onegin leaves Petersburg for the countryside (One : I, II, LI, LII), while the Muse follows Pushkin to the Caucasus, the Crimea, and Moldavia (Eight : IV-V). She appears in Mihaylovskoe (to deal with the events after Onegin's departure) in August, 1824, by life's calendar (Eight : V); and in August, 1824, by the novel's calendar, she meets Onegin at a Petersburg rout (Eight : VI).

VARIANT

7-14 The draft (2368, f. 30<sup>r</sup>) reads:

and I, <a lazy] man,  
could not keep up in all my life  
a constant correspondence,

## Commentary

in certain cases being even glad  
to face a rupture only to be spared  
this ceaseless torture for a while.  
Really, the cause of this is laziness;  
the letter-writing day is my black day.

[XXXI]

In fair copy (PB 18, f. 1<sup>v</sup>).

- 1 / sacred Friendship: The same mildly ironic formula was used by Pushkin in the letter to Sobolevski summarized in my nn. to VII: “. . . in proof of friendship (that sacred sentiment) I am sending you my *Itinéraire* from Moscow to Novgorod . . .”
- 3 / augurs: Cicero, *De divinatione*, II, 24: “Vetus autem illud Catonis admodum scitum est, qui mirari se aiebat quod non rideret haruspex haruspicem cum vidisset.” The haruspex was a soothsayer who foretold the future from an examination of the entrails of animals. Although Cicero maintains here that one knows sufficiently well Cato’s remark that he “wondered how one diviner could see another without laughing,” no such “old saying” of Cato’s has come down to us. Actually, Pushkin’s source here is not Cicero. “Les augurs de Rome qui ne peuvent se regarder sans rire” was an old cliché of French journalism. It was even translated back into Latin as: “si augur augurem.”
- We find Lermontov using the same trite phrase ten years later in “Princess Mary” (Pechorin’s entry of “May 13”: “Then, after looking meaningfully into each other’s eyes, we began to laugh as Roman augurs did, according to Cicero”.)
- 4 The stanza remained unfinished. Burtsev has somewhere conjectured that the two were quietly chuckling over the

fact that they both belonged to the same revolutionary movement. I think that what made them smile was not so much the conjectures of commentators as the unholy and artificial quality of friendship that can allow two friends to forget each other completely for three years.

Cf. the last line of Pushkin's poem written in the summer of 1819 at Mihaylovskoe, addressed to Mihail Shcherbinin, a dashing friend of his in Petersburg (ll. 27–32):

pleasure we'll find, dear friend,  
in the blurred dream of recollection,  
for then, shaking my head,  
I'll say to you at the grave's door,  
"Remember Fanny, my dear fellow?"—  
And softly both we'll smile.

It is curious that Küchelbecker, who certainly could not have known Pushkin's line "we softly broke out laughing" (*Mi rassmeydlisya tishkóm*), *Onegin's Journey*, XXXI : 4, uses a similar adverb (*tihomólkom*) when introducing the same not-uncommon Gallic formula of Cicero's laughing augurs in can. III of his remarkable poem *Agasfer, The Wandering Jew* (*Vechnýy zhid*), written in exile, mainly in 1840–42, and published long after his death (1878). Despite its odd archaism, awkward locutions, crankish ideas, and a number of structural flaws, this poem is a major piece of work, with a harshness of intonation and gaunt originality of phrasing that should deserve a special study.

[XXXII]

In draft (2382, f. 17<sup>v</sup>).

14 / sad was my arrival: During the entire spring of 1824, from the last week of March to the first week of May, Count Vorontsov, Governor General of New Russia, had been clamoring from Odessa to St. Petersburg, in letters

to Count Nesselrode, Minister of Foreign Affairs, to rid him of the unpleasant and difficult Mr. Pushkin (“*Dé-livrez-moi de Pouchkine!*”), “a weak imitator of Byron” —but also the author of original epigrams and an admirer of the countess. The Vorontsovs’ private physician, Dr. William Hutchinson, had proved to be, despite his taciturnity, deafness, and bad French, an interesting interlocutor: of his “lessons of pure atheism” Pushkin wrote to a friend, this letter was seized by the police, and its immoral contents prompted the tsar to do something about Vorontsov’s request.\* Pushkin, on his part, had long been exasperated by Vorontsov’s morgue, Anglo-mania, and coarseness of discrimination. On May 22 Pushkin was ordered to investigate an invasion of grasshoppers in the Herson, Elizavetgrad, and Aleksandria districts. Next day he was given four hundred rubles for traveling expenses (a ruble per mile for post horses), but whether he ever drove farther than the first 120 miles (to Herson) is not known, and the interesting image of a disgusted poet directing, from his traveling cart, the beating down of the swarms with poplar branches and the treatment of the soil with quicklime is unfortunately not available to the historian. On June 7, the wife of one of his greatest friends, Princess Vera Vyazemski, arrived in Odessa with her sick children (six-year-old Nikolay and two-year-old Nadezhda) and became the confidante of his romance with Countess Vorontsov. The latter sailed with her husband for the Crimea on June 14; they came back on July 25, and two or three days later Pushkin was informed that he was discharged (as of July 8) from the civil service for “bad behavior” and ordered to the maternal manor, Mihaylovskoe. On the night of July 30 he was for the last time at the Italian opera in

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\*Or perhaps the “deaf philosopher” mentioned in Pushkin’s letter was a certain Wolsey, teacher of English at the Rishelievskiy Litsey in Odessa (*Works* 1962, IX, 432).

Odessa, where he saw Rossini's *Il Turco in Italia* (1814). Next day he set off for the province of Pskov, with the same valet (Nikita, son of Timofey Kozlov) whom he had taken with him when leaving St. Petersburg more than four years before. Traveling via Nikolaev, Kremenchug, Priluki, Chernigov, Mogilev, Vitebsk, and Opochka, he arrived in Mihaylovskoe on Aug. 9. Here he found his parents, his brother, his sister, and twenty-nine servants. His relations with his parents, especially with his father, had always been cool, and their reunion was now marked by recriminations of all sorts. On Oct. 4 the Civil Governor of the province of Pskov, Boris Aderkas, reported to the Governor General of that province and of the Baltic Region, General Filipp Pauluchi (Marquis Paulucci), that Sergey Pushkin had agreed to act for the government and keep his son under close observation. This spying led to a dreadful row between Pushkin and his father. His parents left for St. Petersburg about Nov. 18; his sister Olga had left a week earlier, and Lev Pushkin had taken a fair copy of *EO* to St. Petersburg in the first week of November.

[PENULTIMATE STANZA]

In fair copy (PB 18, f. 8<sup>r</sup>).

There is an obvious gap of at least one stanza between "xxxii" and this. The friendship mentioned in Penultimate : 8–10 (in contrast to the kind of casual comradeship implied by the tone of xxxi) is the genuine affection and understanding shown to Pushkin by his brother and sister at Mihaylovskoe and by the Osipov-Vulf family in the neighboring Trigorskoe.

[ULTIMATE STANZA]

In fair copy (PD 169). It is dated "18 sent. Boldino 1830."

6-11 / young Yazikov . . . enchanting verse: The poet Nikolay Yazikov was twenty-three in the early summer of 1826 when he, a student of philosophy at the University of Derpt, or Dorpat ("the Livonian Athens," as it was complacently termed), was brought by his fellow student, Aleksey Vulf, to Trigorskoe (known locally as Voronich), the seat of the latter's mother, Praskovia Osipov, Pushkin's country neighbor (see my n. to Five : xxxii : 11). In this final stanza, Yazikov takes a curtain call as Lenski's understudy (see Four : xxxi).

Yazikov's poetry is marked by a sonorous, ambitious ebullience (his iambic tetrameter is a veritable orgy of scuds), blended, however, with a vapid vulgarity of emotion and thought. Our poet, in his letters and verses, professed enthusiastic admiration for Yazikov; but one wonders if Yazikov (who in his correspondence reveals envious disapprobation of *EO*) was pleased to have his elegies identified by his celebrated friend with those of the obviously mediocre Lenski (Four : xxxi : 8-14).

The only interest Yazikov's poems present to us here is the picture they provide of Pushkin's rural existence. Yazikov dedicated a number of poems to Pushkin, Trigorskoe, and even Pushkin's housekeeper. *To Pushkin*, 1826 (ll. 1-4):

O you, whose friendship is to me  
dearer than fame's caressive welcome,  
sweeter than any bonny maid,  
more sacred than an emperor's life . . .

Yazikov further recalls the golden summer just gone by when Pushkin and he (l. 10)—

two first-born sons of the hyperborean Muses  
—concluded a poetic pact, while hot punch (prepared by  
young Zizi—Eupraxia Vulf) consisting of (ll. 17-21)

. . . mighty Rum  
with sweet Messina's fruit

*Onegin's Journey: ULTIMATE STANZA*

a little sugar and some wine,  
all this, fire-changed,  
streamed into giant glasses.

There are forty lines of this, ending:

now, while good-natured Moscow,  
full of a sacred hope,  
prepares the bright day of the coronation,  
I stand with lifted brow  
before the scrolls of inspirations  
and sing the freedom of our delectations,  
and Sorot's bank I sing.

In a longer piece of the same year, *Trigorskoe* (dedicated to Praskovia Osipov), Yazikov sings again

. . . the blue Sorot,  
companion of mirrory lakes

and the pleasures of bathing:

O how voluptuous, how tender  
the naiad that embraces me!

And finally, in another poem to Mrs. Osipov, 1827 (ll. 17-19, 24-30):

and often in a dream I see  
the three hills and the handsome house,  
and the meanders of the shining Sorot.

. . . . .

. . . and those slopes,  
those grain fields, from beyond which in the distance,  
used to appear  
mounted on a black *argamak*  
and wearing an exotic hat,  
Voltaire, Racine, and Goethe, all in one,  
our famous Pushkin, making for Trigorsk . . .

(An *argamak* is a large, lean, long-legged horse of Asiatic stock.)

At the end of his last visit to Mihaylovskoe, after burying his mother, Pushkin, before returning to St. Petersburg, wrote to Yazikov on Apr. 14, 1836, from Golubovo (the Vrevskis' seat, near Trigorskoe and Mihaylovskoe):

## Commentary

Guess where I am writing you from, my dear Nikolay Mihaylovich? From that part of the world . . . where exactly ten years ago the three of us [the third was Aleksey Vulf] banqueted; where sounded your verses and goblets of punch [*yonka*, a jocose Dorpatan—i.e., Germanic—corruption of *zhzhyonka*\*]; where we now recall you—and old times. A salute to you from the hills of Mihaylovskoe, from the coverts of Trigorskoe, from the waves of the blue Sorot', from Eupraxia Nikolaevna [Baroness Vrevski, née Vulf], formerly a half-ethereal maiden [Pushkin parodies his own *EO*, One : xx : 5], now a well-fed wife, for the fifth time big with child. . . .

Pushkin had only nine months and a half to live.

13–14 Virgil also speaks of hanging his “clear-sounding reed-pipe” on “this sacred pine”; *Bucolica*, Ecloga VII:

hic arguta sacra pendebit fistula pinu.

\*

The batch of the last five stanzas was completed Sept. 18, 1830, at Boldino.

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\*The Russian *zh* or *zhzh* (identically sounded) would be transliterated *j* in French, which a German would pronounce as our *γ*; hence *zhzhyonka* = *yonka*.

## “Chapter Ten”

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When we wonder about the destiny of an author's creature beyond the horizon of a discontinued romance, two feelings prompt our fancy and direct our conjectures. The character in the book has become so familiar to us that we cannot bear to have him depart without leaving us some address; and the author of the book has acquainted us with so many devices that we cannot help trying to imagine what we should do if called upon to continue the book in his name.

*Hamlet* is finished not only because the Danish prince dies, but also because those whom his ghost might haunt have died, too. *Madame Bovary* is finished not only because Emma has killed herself, but because Homais has at last got his decoration. *Ulysses* is finished because everybody has fallen asleep (although the good reader wonders where Stephen is going to spend the rest of the night). *Anna Karenin* is finished not only because Anna has been crushed by a backing freight train but because Lyovin has found his God. But *Onegin* is not finished.

To Captain Medwin, Byron said one day  
(October, eighteen twenty-one, at Pisa):  
“Poor Juan will be guillotined—*has been*—

In the French Revolution . . ."  
. . . but Eugene?

To Captain Yuzefovich, Pushkin said one day, June, 1829, in the Caucasus: "Onegin will either perish in the Caucasus or join the Decembrist movement."

Commentators suggest that in the memoirs written by Mihail Yuzefovich, a minor poet, formerly the adjutant of General Raevski, in July, 1880 (and published the same year in the *Russian Archives* [*Russkiy arhiv*], vol. XVIII, no. 3), there is some confusion after all these years: Pushkin probably meant to say that after having been connected with the Decembrist movement Onegin was to be banished to the Caucasus and killed there in a skirmish with the Circassians.

Before sailing for Greece, Byron had begun (May 8, N.S., 1823) a seventeenth canto of *Don Juan* in Italy, and after his death in 1824 fourteen complete stanzas of it were found in his room at Missolonghi (they were published for the first time by Ernest Hartley Coleridge, in 1903, in his edition of Byron's *Works*, vol. VI). But the eighteen stanzas of Pushkin's tenth canto have reached us only in a fragmentary form.

The existence of a "Chapter Ten" is referred to in the following texts:

(1) A note in the margin of a page in Cahier 2379, now in the Pushkinskiy Dom, Leningrad.

On Oct. 20, 1830, at Boldino, province of Nizhni, Pushkin finished writing his story "The Blizzard" (*Metel'*; see Comm., Ten : III : end note). On the last page of this MS, in the left-hand corner, next to the last lines of the story (" 'Goodness me, goodness me,' said M[aria] G[avrilovna], grasping his hand: 'So it was you! You, my husband. And you do not recognize me?' B[urmin] paled, and threw himself at her feet . . .") there is the note in Pushkin's hand: "Oct. 19 was burned X Canto." (The "9" is not too clear and may be read as

“1” or “8”; but of these three possible readings, the first is the best.)

(2) A note in the right-hand margin of a MS (PB 18, f. 4<sup>r</sup>) of *Onegin's Journey*, now in the Pushkinskiy Dom, Leningrad.

On this page st. v is crossed out; a marginal note places it “In X Canto.” I discuss its possible location in my Comm. to Ten : xviii : end note.

(3) An entry in Vyazemski's diary (Dec. 19, 1830).

Pushkin visited Vyazemski at his countryseat Ostafievo (five miles from Podolsk, province of Moscow) Dec. 17, 1830 (thus two months after burning “X Canto”), and read to him, presumably from memory, a set of stanzas dealing, according to Vyazemski, with “the events of 1812 and later ones. A splendid chronicle.” Onward in the same entry, Vyazemski quotes two lines from this Chapter Ten (xv : 3-4):

At inspired Nikita's,  
at circumspect Ilya's,

thus supplying l. 4, which our poet did not reach in his cryptogram (which I discuss further), and either misquoting l. 3 or else (more probably) quoting it in the form Pushkin recited it, which is different from the text he ciphered.

(4) A letter from Aleksandr Turgenev written Aug. 11 (presumably, N.S.), 1832, from Munich, to his brother Nikolay, in Paris. This letter is published by V. Istrin in the *Journal of the Ministry of Public Education* (*Zhurnal Ministerstva Narodnogo Prosveshcheniya*), n.s. pt. XLIV (St. Petersburg, March, 1913), pp. 16-17. It contains the following passage:

... Here are some immortal lines about you. Aleksandr Pushkin could not publish a certain part of his *Onegin* in which he describes the latter's travels across Russia and the insurrection of 1825; he mentions you among others:

## Commentary

seeing but Russia in the world,  
pursuing his ideal,  
to them did lame Turgenev hearken—  
[i.e., to the conspirators]; I told him that you neither  
hearkened to them nor frequented [*znaval*] them.  
And whips of slavery hating,  
in this crowd of nobles foresaw  
the liberators of the peasants.

(This is Ten : xvi : 9–14; the readings “pursuing” and “whips of slavery” are represented in Pushkin’s draft by “in her caressing” and “the word slavery,” respectively; unless no other source exists, we cannot consider a quotation to be anything more than a variant, and have to rely on Pushkin’s rough draft for our basic text.)

Let us now turn to the mysterious canto itself.

The MS fragments that we have of Chapter Ten, composed in the autumn of 1830 at Boldino, are represented by sets of lines belonging to eighteen consecutive stanzas. Our poet did not number these stanzas. I number them for easy reference, as I did in the case of *Onegin’s Journey* and of various canceled verses.

The following fragments of Chapter Ten are preserved in autographs (these I describe at the end of my commentary to the chapter; see Addendum to Notes on “Chapter Ten”):

A cryptogram (PD 170) containing: the first and second lines of I–X and XII–XVII; the third lines of I–IX and XI–XVII; the fourth lines of I–IV, VI–IX, and XI–XIII; and the fifth lines of IV, VI, VIII, and XI.

Rough drafts (PD 171) of sts. xvi (which is practically complete), xvii (with the end, from l. 9 on, difficult to decipher and incomplete), and xviii (the end of which, also from l. 9 on, is still sketchier).

Here is a reconstitution of these fragments (I have enclosed the cancellations in pointed brackets, and have square-bracketed my own suggestions or queries; I have not square-bracketed here, as I have in the cryptogram

and its translation, pp. 367–73, the words or parts of words Pushkin deliberately left out, the sense of which is unquestionable; I have also added xv : 4, quoted by Vyazemski):

I

A ruler weak and wily,  
a baldish fop, a foe of toil,  
fortuitously by Fame befriended,  
4 over us reigned then.

II

We knew him to be very quiet  
when not *our* cooks  
plucked the two-headed eagle  
4 near Bonaparte's tent.

III

The tempest of year 12  
took place. Who helped us here?  
The infuriation of the nation?  
4 Barclay? The winter? Or the Russian God?

IV

But [God?] helped—lower grew the murmur  
and, by the force of circumstances, soon  
we found ourselves in Paris,  
4 and the Russian tsar was the head of kings.  
The seas to Albion were apportioned . . .  
. . . . .  
14 . . . . . [the tsar grew fatter—]

V

—and the fatter the heavier.  
O our Russian stupid nation!  
Say, why indeed  
4 [endure the tsars from race to race?]  
. . . . .  
14 [Mayhap,] . . .

VI

“Mayhap”—O national shibboleth!

## *Commentary*

- I'd dedicate an ode to you,  
had not a highborn poetaster  
4 anticipated me already.  
Mayhap, the roads for us they will repair . . .

- VII  
Mayhap, forgetting leases,  
the bigot will shut himself up in a monastery.  
Mayhap, by the command of Nicholas  
4 Siberia to [their] families will give back  
[their sons] . . .  
. . . . .  
14 . . . [Napoleon].

- VIII  
That man of destiny, that martial wanderer,  
before whom groveled kings;  
that horseman crowned by a Pope,  
4 gone like a shadow of the dawn!  
Exhausted by the torture of repose,  
[mocked by the sobriquet of hero] . . .

- IX  
The Pyrenees shook ominously;  
Naples' volcano blazed.  
The one-armed prince to the friends of Morea  
4 from Kishinev already winked.

- X  
1 I, with my people, will curb everybody!  
our tsar in congress said . . .

- XI  
. . . . .  
and does not care a straw about you,  
4 you are the slave of Alexander.  
The dagger of L[ouvel], the shadow of B[erton]  
<do not> . . .

- XII  
Play regiment of Titan Peter,  
a bodyguard of old mustaches,

- who formerly betrayed a tyrant  
4 to a ferocious gang of deathsmen—

XIII

- Russia again grew quiet,  
and with more zest the tsar went reveling;  
but the sparks of a different flame  
4 already a long time perhaps—

XIV

- 1 They <had their own> forgatherings:  
they, over a goblet of wine,  
they, over a rummer of Russian vodka . . .

XV

- For trenchant oratory famed,  
the members of this group assembled  
at unquiet Nikita's,  
4 at circumspect Ilya's . . .

XVI

- A friend of Mars, Bacchus, and Venus,  
here Lúnin daringly  
suggested his decisive measures  
4 and muttered in a trance of inspiration;  
Pushkin read his noels;  
melancholy Yakushkin,  
it seemed, silently bared  
8 a regicidal dagger;  
seeing but Russia in the world,  
in her caressing his ideal,  
to them did lame Turgenev hearken  
12 and the word slavery hating,  
in this crowd of nobles foresaw  
the liberators of the peasants.

XVII

- Thus was it on the icy Neva;  
but there where earlier the spring  
gleams over shady Kámenka  
4 and over the hills of Tulchín;  
where Wittgenstein's detachments  
the plains washed by the Dnepr

## Commentary

- and the steppes of the Bug enlocked,  
8 there matters took another turn.  
There P[estel] [an indecipherable word] of the dagger  
and troops . . . mustered  
the cool general,  
12 and [three indecipherable words]  
and full of daring and of strength  
. . . hastened.

### XVIII

- At first these conspirations  
between Laffitte and Clicquot  
<were merely> conversations  
4 and did not <enter> deeply  
the science of rebellion into hearts;  
<all this was nothing but> ennui,  
the idleness of youthful minds,  
8 pastimes of grown-up scamps . . .

\*

Here follows the Comm. on the foregoing fragments  
of Chapter Ten.

### I

- 1 / ruler: The abbreviation (*Vl—*) used by Pushkin for this  
word of Chapter Ten suggests two, and only two, possi-  
bilities: *Vlastitel'* or *Vladika*—both meaning “sover-  
eign” or “ruler.” I prefer the second to the first for  
reasons of euphony (since it avoids the clash of con-  
sonants between the end of *vlastitel'* and the beginning  
of the next word, *slabïy*, “weak”) and also because Push-  
kin had used *vladika* in the same sense on previous  
occasions—in the *Ode to Liberty* (1817), ll. 37–38:

*Vladiki! vam venéts i trón*  
*Dayót Zakón, a ne priródá . . .*

Rulers! to you the crown and throne  
the Law gives, and not Nature . . .

in ll. 2, 7, 33, and 53 of a poem of sixty iambics, written in December, 1823, beginning "The stirless sentinel" (*Nedvizhnŭy strazh*) and consisting of ten staves, of which l. 5 is a trimeter and the rest are hexameters, with a rhyme scheme aabeeb (this poem contains several other themes related to Ten—see nn. to VIII and IX—and *vladika* in it denotes Alexander I); and in *Anchar* (Antiaris, the Upas Tree), composed Nov. 9, 1828, ll. 31–32:

*I ūmer bédnŭy ráb u nóg  
Nepobedimogo vladŭki.*

and died the poor slave at the feet  
of the unconquerable ruler.

- 2 / a baldish fop: Alexander I, officially surnamed the Blessed, in the second decade of his reign (1801–25) developed a bald spot (besides gaining weight, as noted further).

Cf. Byron, *Don Juan*, can. XIV (finished Mar. 4, 1823), st. LXXXIII, in which that witty poet addresses the English antislavery leader William Wilberforce with the following very pertinent plea:

Shut up the bald-coot bully Alexander!  
Ship off the Holy Three to Senegal;  
Teach them that "sauce for goose is sauce for gander,"  
And ask them how *they* like to be in thrall?

(Pichot, 1824: "Enferme cet empereur fanfaron à la tête chauve . . .")

In the same author's *The Age of Bronze* (1823), st. x, there is another reference to Alexander:

How well the imperial dandy prates of peace!

Had I not wished to be absolutely faithful to my text, I might have translated, perhaps, Pushkin's *Pleshivŭy shchyógol'* as the "bald-coot dandy." But that would have been a literary translation and not a literal one.

II

- 2 / not *our* cooks: The Russian bicephalous eagle lost a considerably greater amount of feathers to the French at Austerlitz, in 1805, and at Eylau, in 1807, than he did later to his own Russians, to those who tried to cook up internal strife in 1825, or to those who aimed political epigrams at the regime.

The rest of the stanza presumably dealt with the battles unlucky to Russian arms. It is amusing to note that Brodski says "army of the tsar" when the Russians are beaten by Napoleon and "army of the people" when Napoleon is beaten by the Russians.

III

- 1 / The tempest of year 12: Napoleon crossed the Neman into Russia with an army of 600,000 troops on June 12, 1812 (O.S.).

In his last Lyceum-anniversary poem, recited at the reunion of Oct. 19, 1836 (see also my n. to Six : XXI : 8), Pushkin in an autobiographical and epic strain, without any of the cold mocking notes characteristic of Ten, chronicles the same general order of political events from the rise of Napoleon to Tsar Nicholas' succession to the throne, when "new clouds" and a "new hurricane . . ." (the poem stops in the middle of its sixty-fourth line). In l. 37 there is an interesting aftersound of Ten : III : 1—Pushkin is recalling the beginning of the Lyceum in 1811 (ll. 37–40):

. . . the tempest of year 12 [*góda*]  
was still asleep. Napoleon had yet  
not tested [with invasion] a great people [*naróda*],  
he still preferred to waver and to threat.

- 4 General Barclay (Prince Mihail Barclay de Tolly, 1761–

1818) retreated toward Moscow, luring the French and exhausting them. Napoleon's failure in 1812 to provide against the harsh Russian winter that proved Russia's best ally, when after lingering near Moscow the puzzled conqueror began his "Great Retreat," is too well known to need any elucidation.

The Russian God. This local deity is often mentioned in Russian topical poems of the era. It is sufficient here to quote Vyazemski's poem of 1828, *The Russian God* (*Russkiy Bog*; couplets in Béranger's trivial style), which is the obvious reminiscence here. In his nine quatrains (trochaic tetrameters) Vyazemski describes the Russian God as the God of blizzards, bumps, excruciating roads, cold and hungry beggars, unproductive estates, pendant breasts and flabby buttocks, bast shoes and swollen feet, wry faces and soured cream, fruit liqueurs and marinades, mortgaged serfs, money-minded nitwits of both sexes, pectoral ribands and crosses, barefooted household slaves, and barons in sleigh-coaches with a brace of liverymen clinging behind. The Russian God is further described (we have reached quatrain VII) as full of benevolence toward fools but mercilessly severe toward intelligent people. He is the God of everything that is malapropos, outlandish, ill-fitting, ill-assorted, mustard-after-dinnerish. The God of itinerant aliens, and, especially, of Germans; "here he is, the Russian God"—a Bérangeresque refrain with which each quatrain ends. (See also n. to IV : 4, Dmitri's monologue.)

To judge by the beginning of Pushkin's next stanza, the rest of Ten : III dealt with the trials that beset the nation in 1812, such as the conflagration of Moscow.

\*

As late as the end of 1830 Pushkin was still able to work up a good deal of traditional enthusiasm for Alexander I.

## Commentary

Russian commentators do not seem to have noticed that the story "The Blizzard" (*Metel'*, October, 1830), in the margin of which the burning of Canto Ten is commemorated, contains an all-important paragraph (I would even suggest that the entire inept tale is there merely as a framework for that paragraph) in which Pushkin, both in matter and in manner, directly rebuts with a series of almost grotesque ejaculations the contemptuous attitude toward Alexander I, the Russian eagle, and the events closing the Napoleonic wars in Chapter Ten; in consequence of which the fact of its destruction being mentioned in the margin of *that* story acquires a certain symbolic significance. The passage goes:

Meanwhile the war had ended in glory. Our troops were returning from abroad. The people ran out to meet them. The bands played the captured songs: *Vive Henri IV*, Tyrolese waltzes, and arias from *Joconde*. \* . . Time unforgettable! Time of glory and enthusiasm! How violently beat the Russian heart at the word Fatherland! How sweet were the tears of reunion! How unanimously did we blend the feeling of national pride with that of love for our Sovereign! And for Him—what a moment!

"The Blizzard" is the second of the *Tales of the Late Ivan Petrovich Belkin* series, and is supposed to have been told to the fictional Belkin by a fictional Miss K. I. T. Through this double disguise comes Pushkin's modified but quite recognizable voice.

### IV

- 2 / by the force of circumstances / *siloyu veshchéy*: A Gallicism, *par la force des choses*. Cf. Fouché, *Mémoires* (a passage related to the events in France of December,

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\*This comic opera, *Joconde* (a young rake) *ou les Coureurs d'aventures* (Paris, 1814; St. Petersburg, 1815), is by Niccolò Isouard; in it occurs the celebrated couplet "Et l'on revient toujours | A ses premiers amours."

1813): “. . . On avait pressenti que, par la seule force des choses, tous les intérêts de la révolution que je représentais à moi seul, auraient prévalu et paré à la catastrophe.”

3 / we found ourselves in Paris: In his justly celebrated letter from Paris, Apr. 25, 1814 (N.S.), addressed to D. Dashkov, Batyushkov gives a wonderful account of the Russian entrance into Paris. The description starts with the words: “I shall simply say: I am in Paris” (a formula with which Karamzin’s letter from Paris, April, 1790, also starts). Alexander Turgenev, Pushkin’s lifelong friend, possessed a copy of this letter, and there is little doubt that Pushkin had read it.

4 / head of kings: Cf. “O tsar of tsars,” an ejaculation used in l. 10 of a mediocre hymn (six odic staves) to Alexander I, on the day of his coronation in 1801, by Dmitriev.

See also Ozerov’s *Dmitri Donskoy*, a patriotic tragedy in Alexandrine couplets, first produced Jan. 14, 1807, before a wildly enthusiastic audience. Dmitri’s last monologue in act v (delivered kneeling) begins:

To you the heart’s first tribute, king of kings . . .

and ends:

Ye nations know: great is the Russian God.

D. Sokolov, in a paper on Pushkin’s cryptogram,\* quoting, if I correctly understand him, I. Zhirkevich, *Russkaya starina*, XI (December, 1874), 649, says that the expression “Vive Alexandre, vive ce roi des rois” occurred in some couplets sung by François Lays on the stage of the Opéra in Paris Mar. 10, 1814 (N.S.), to the tune of *Vive Henri IV*. The term goes back to ecclesiastic sources. “Roi des rois” is applied to Jesus in French carols.

\**P. i ego sovr.*, IV, 16 (1913), 7n.

## Commentary

*Negus nagast*, the title of Abyssinian emperors, means “king of kings.” The hyperbole is as old as the hills.

- 5 Beginning with the position of this verse my recension disagrees thoroughly with that of Tomashevski and other commentators.

### V

- 4 / endure the tsars from race to race: The line accidentally omitted by Pushkin in coding the quatrain (see Addendum to Notes on “Chapter Ten”) might have been (I give this very diffidently, merely to fill up the melodic gap):

*Terpét' tsaréy iz róda v ród*

—the meaning being: why on earth did you suffer the rule of tsars from generation to generation (“generation” or “race,” in the sense of “lineage,” rhymes with “nation,” *naród*, of the second line)?

The stanza almost certainly must have ended in a line beginning “mayhap” (*avos*), an adverb implying a flaccid, fatalistic, good-natured, and vague appeal to probability.

### VI

- 1 / national shibboleth / *Shibolét narodniy*: Cf. Byron, *Don Juan*, XI, XII, 1–2:

Juan, who did not understand a word  
Of English, save their shibboleth, “God damn!”

- 3 / highborn poetaster: Prince Ivan Dolgoruki (1764–1823), the talentless author of the volumes of verse *The Being of My Heart* (*Bitiyo serdtsa moego*, Moscow, 1802) and *The Dusk of My Life* (*Sumerki moey zhizni*, Moscow, 1808). In his facetious ode, the word *avos* (“mayhap”) is described as:

O amiable, simple word!  
thee I shall sing in measures mine.  
Thou art indeed a Russian word,  
and thee I love with all my heart.

5 / the roads for us they will repair / *dorógi nám isprávyat*:  
“We shall see our roads repaired” might hug the sense  
closer.

What was the rhyme here (6)? *Zastávyat*, “will compel”? *Pozabávyat*, “will amuse”? *Postávyat*, “will set up”? *Proslávyat*, “will glorify”? *Rassdávyat*, “will place at intervals”? *Razddávyat*, “will crush”? *Ubdávyat*, “will make less”? *Uddávyat*, “will strangle”? And there are several other less obvious candidates.

## VII

1–2 / forgetting leases, the bigot / *aréndi zabíváya* | *Hanzhá*: The meaning of the word *arendi* (which is today “rents and leases”) varied in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Its old sense was the income paid one by the government in lieu of the temporary enjoyment of granted lands.

“Bigot” is an allusion to a person in power, a pious rogue, addicted alike to some current brand of mysticism and to the more material satisfactions of revenues; it has not been convincingly explained at the time of my writing this note (1958). Commentators have suggested Prince Aleksandr Golitsin, who had been Minister of Public Education and Ecclesiastic Affairs (1816–24) and a member of the Investigating Committee that in 1826 handled the case of the Decembrists’ insurrection. He had also investigated our poet’s morals in the *Gavriliada* affair (see n. to Eight : xxvIa : 5–11).

4 / Siberia to [their] families will give back: There is an enjambment here. The first words of l. 5 must have sup-

## Commentary

plied the direct object of the unfinished sentence (ll. 4-5):

*Seméystvam vozvratit Sibir'*  
[*Ih sinovéy*] . . .

The stanza must have ended with a reference to Napoleon, perhaps with the name of Napoleon actually closing l. 14. Siberia may still return the Decembrists to their families, but it is too late now for St. Helena to release her prisoner. Thus, perhaps, might have ended the very Pushkinian inventory of trivial and momentous probabilities prompted by the *avós*'.

## VIII

- 1 / That man of destiny: At Boldino, on the day of good resolutions, Lyceum anniversary, Oct. 19, 1830, Pushkin decided to destroy the stanzas of Chapter Ten and to transfer certain lines to another poem.

In his poem *The Hero*, composed about that time (it was ready by the beginning of November and was published in 1831), we thus find, preserved in an entirely different context (invoking a despot's courage rather than inveighing against that inherent ridiculousness of strong potentates which not even Napoleon could transcend), the following lines (14-17):

He, always he—that martial comer  
before whom humbled themselves kings,  
that warrior crowned by liberty,  
gone like a shadow of the dawn.

A historical generality is substituted for the hand of Pius VII, and there are other minor changes. "The martial wanderer" becomes "the martial comer" (*prishléts*, "intruder," "invader," "stranger"). The "always he" is an echo of a passage in Casimir Delavigne's *Messéni-*

ennes, bk. II, no. VI, *A Napoléon* (1823): "Seul et sur un rocher . . . | Du fond de son exil encor présent partout . . ."

Further on, ll. 37-45 of *The Hero* continue what we have of Ten : VIII to an illusory end, supplying, as they do, the rhyme *pokóya*, "of repose," to *geróya*, "of hero," and completing the Onegin rhyme sequence (37-45 = ecciddiff).

- 35 Not there, not on his rock, whereon  
settled, racked by the torture of repose [*pokóya*],  
mocked by the sobriquet of hero [*geróya*],  
he evanesces, motionless [*nedvizhím*],  
enfolded in his cloak of battle [*boevím*],  
40 no, not that picture is before me [*mnóyu*]!  
Of beds I see a long array [*stróy*],  
there lies on each a corpse alive [*zhivóy*]  
branded by the almighty plague [*chumóyu*]  
—the empress of diseases; he [*ón*]  
45 not with the dead of war surrounded [*okruzhyón*]  
with knitted brows passes between the beds [*odrámi*]  
and coolly shakes hands with the plague [*chumé*].

*The Hero* is a dialogue between Poet and Friend. It consists of sixty-six lines and one third of a line. Excepting ll. 36-45, the arbitrary rhyme scheme bears no resemblance to *EO*. The Friend asks the Poet what moment in Napoleon's life fascinates him most, and the passage given above is the Poet's answer. The Friend then says that stern history denies that this glamorous event ever happened. The Poet, inflating his voice, retorts (ll. 63-66):

More than a myriad of low truths  
I value the Delusion that exalts us.  
Leave the hero his heart! Without it  
what would he be? A tyrant!

And the Friend replies with quiet emphasis (l. 67):

*Utésh'sya* [Console yourself] . . .

## Commentary

The allusion is to the courage officially shown by Tsar Nicholas on Sept. 29, 1830, during his visit to cholera-stricken Moscow at the peak of the epidemic, when ignorance abetted by some antigovernmental propaganda was accusing the authorities of poisoning the people.

In the famous poem of his youth that Pushkin recited in the presence of Derzhavin, *Recollections at Tsarskoe Selo*, a set of 176 iambs, composed in the three last months of 1814, in twenty-two staves, tetrametric in ll. 1, 2, 4, and 8 and hexametric in the rest, with rhymes ababec, some of the elements of *The Hero* (1830) and of *Ten : VIII* (1830) are foreshadowed with a curious sharpness of detail.

In l. 138 of the *Recollections*, we find the same epithet *prishlets* ("comer," "intruder," "invader," "stranger") that replaces in *The Hero* (l. 14) the *strannik* ("rover," "wanderer," "l'homme errant") of *Ten : VIII* : 1; cf. ll. 137-38:

Console yourself [*Utésh'sya*], mother of Russian cities,  
the comer's downfall contemplate!

The theme of vanishment that in *Ten : VIII* : 4 and in l. 17 of *The Hero* is given in terms of the disappearance of a "shadow of the dawn," *ten' zari*, is distinctly indicated in l. 152 of the *Recollections*, likewise in connection with Napoleon (ll. 149, 152):

. . . the favorite son of Fortune and Bellona  
. . . . .  
gone like at morn a frightful dream.

The same theme is taken up in a poem of 1823, beginning "The stirless sentinel" (which I have already mentioned in my n. to *Ten : I* : 1), ll. 39-42:

This horseman before whom kings bowed,  
rebellious Liberty's the heir and murderer  
. . . . .  
that king gone like a dream, like a shadow of dawn.

Ten : VIII : 5 and *The Hero*, l. 36, are adumbrated in "The stirless sentinel . . ." by ll. 46-48 (with the same rhyme *geróya-pokóya*):

Nothing in him betrayed the exiled hero,  
when to the torture of repose  
amidst the seas condemned by the command of kings . . .

- 3 / crowned by a Pope: The formula is a borrowed one. See, for example, the beginning of the last strophe in Béranger's celebrated effusion (c. 1825), *Les Souvenirs du peuple*:

Lui, qu'un pape a couronné,  
Est mort dans une île déserte.

Another instance of Pushkin's paradoxical indebtedness to poetasters whom he held in contempt.

- 4 / a shadow of the dawn / *ten' zari*: If Pushkin had wished to say that Napoleon vanished like "a shadow at dawn," he would have had to express it by *ten' na zare*. I wonder if his strangely evocative "shadow of dawn"—an auroral phantom, an illusion of sunrise—has not been influenced by an image in Victor Hugo's *Buonaparte*, written in March, 1822. The end of the last (fifth) part of this Ode Onzième, in *Odes et Ballades*, bk. I, reads:

Ce ne sont point là les héros!  
Ces faux dieux . . .  
Vous trompent dans votre sommeil;  
Telles ces nocturnes aurores  
Où passent de grands météores,  
Mais que ne suit pas le soleil.

Pushkin had Hugo's *Odes* (3rd edn., Paris, 1827), in his library.

IX

- 1-2 / The Pyrenees shook ominously; Naples' volcano

blazed: Two easy metaphors alluding to the revolts in Spain and in Lower Italy.

The king of Spain, Ferdinand VII, in the course of a ruthless reign, had persecuted all liberal thought and had outraged national pride by selling Florida to the United States. In the beginning of 1820, a revolution broke out, led by Riego and Quiroga at Cádiz. At the Congress of Verona (October, 1822) the so-called Holy Alliance, France, Austria, Russia, and Prussia, resolved to maintain despotism in Spain, and in May, 1823, a French army entered Madrid. Ferdinand and despotism returned.

The volcano is Vesuvius, and its eruption is a journalistic one. In Naples, tyranny was met by conspiracy (the Carbonari societies). "The discontent of the Italians" (as an old edition of *The Encyclopaedia Britannica* puts it) "smouldered for five years, but in 1820 broke into open flame." Austria, ably assisted by England and France, crushed the Italian revolution in the spring of 1821.

Cf. in "The stirless sentinel . . ." (see n. to Ten : I : 1) the somewhat similar lines (21-23):

. . . Naples rebelled,  
beyond the Pyrenees . . . a people's fate  
already was by freedom ruled.

3-4 / one-armed prince . . . Morea . . . : The Greek war for independence (which the Russian government at first supported, then ignored) broke out in 1821. The insurrection against Turkish domination was begun by Prince Alexander Ypsilanti (Hypselantes, 1792-1828), a Phanariot in the service of Russia. He served in the Russian army and had lost one arm in the battle of Dresden. Ypsilanti, who had been elected head of the Hetaeria (a secret political organization that opposed Turkish rule), crossed the Prut on Mar. 6, 1821, N.S. His expedition was badly managed. In June he fled to Austria, and Russia disowned him. The war continued

without him. Russia wavered between the urge to help anyone against her old enemy, Turkey, and the fear of backing revolutionary activities in Greece. Russian secret organizations on the other hand, while sympathizing with the Greeks and working against the despotism of Alexander I, were not at all eager to have an arrant autocrat cripple liberalism at home by assuming the role of liberator abroad.

Ypsilanti is also mentioned by Pushkin in a fugitive poem of 1821 (c. Apr. 5, Kishinev), addressed to Vasilii Davïdov (1792–1855), active member of the Southern Society, brother of General Aleksandr Davïdov, with whose pretty wife (Aglaë, born Duchesse de Grammont) Pushkin, as many others, had had a brief affair. The poem consists of sixty iambic tetrameters freely rhymed; it begins:

While General Orlov,  
Hymen's recruit with shaven head,  
aflame with sacred passion,  
prepares to join the ranks;  
while you, wise wag,  
spend nights in noisy converse;  
while over bottles of Ay  
sit my Raevskis;  
while everywhere young Spring,  
smiling, sets loose the mud,  
and on the Danube's bank to drown his grief  
our one-armed prince stirs strife—  
I who love you, Orlov and both Raevskis,  
and memories of Kamenka,  
desire to say a word or two  
about myself and Kishinev . . .

General Orlov—he was general at twenty-six—is Mihail Orlov (1788–1842), member of the Union of Welfare (see n. to XIII : 3); he married, May 15, 1821, Ekaterina Raevski and dropped politics. Pushkin had briefly courted Ekaterina in August, 1820, in the Crimea. He

## *Commentary*

saw the couple in Kishinev, where they dwelled in 1821. The Raevskis are the brothers Aleksandr and Nikolay, sons of General Nikolay Raevski. Kamenka is the estate, in the province of Kiev, belonging to the mother of Aleksandr and Vasiliy Davïdov; she was the niece of Potyomkin; before marrying Lev Davïdov, she had been married to Colonel Nikolay Raevski (d. 1771); General Nikolay Raevski was their son.

Morea (southern part of the mainland of Greece) was the headquarters of the Hetaeria. In the spring of 1821 Ypsilanti had started to direct operations from Kishinev, and the rather odd "winking" is an allusion to his communicating with Morea, where his brother had already landed.

In his Kishinev diary, Pushkin made the following entry, Apr. 2, 1821:

Spent the evening at N. G.'s [not identified], a charming Greek lady. The talk was about Alexander Ypsilanti. Among five Greeks I alone spoke as a Greek: they all despair of success of the Hetaeria's enterprise. I am firmly convinced that Greece will triumph and that twenty-five million Turks will leave the flowering land of Hellas to the rightful heirs of Homer and Themistocles.

In the same entry, and in a letter (early March, correspondent not identified), our poet is enthusiastic about Ypsilanti and his courage. The tone in *Ten : ix* is very different. Already by 1823-24, Pushkin had emphatically voiced his disillusion. Thus in the draft of a letter to an unidentified correspondent from Kishinev or Odessa, basing himself on very limited, and somewhat provincial, observations, Pushkin calls the Greeks

. . . un tas de gueux timides, voleurs et vagabonds qui n'ont pu même soutenir le premier feu de la mauvaise mousqueterie turque. Quant à ce qui regarde les officiers [Greek officers whom he met in Kishinev and Odessa], ils

sont pires que les soldats . . . nul point d'honneur. . . Je ne suis ni un barbare, ni un apôtre de l'Alcoran, la cause de la Grèce m'intéresse vivement, c'est pour cela même que je m'indigne en voyant ces misérables revêtus du ministère sacré de défenseurs de la liberté.

The term *barbare* should be noted. It is the term used by Nikolay Turgenev in 1831 in speaking of Pushkin (see n. to XVI : 9-14).

X

The allusion here is probably to the Congress of Verona, 1822, at which, according to Charles Cavendish Fulke Greville's *Diary* (entry of Jan. 25, 1823), "the Emperor of Russia once talked to [the Duke of Wellington] of the practicability of marching an army into Spain; and seemed to think he might do so."

XI

Using the historical present, Pushkin apostrophizes, I think, in this stanza the same *Zakon*, "Law," that he made his main character in his *Liberty: an Ode* of 1817. I have constructed (with apologies to our poet's shade) the following dummy, merely in order to clarify my concept of the beginning of st. XI:

*Molcht, Zakón! Nash Tsár' tantsúet*  
*Kadril', mazúrku i galóp,*  
*A pro tebyá i v ús ne dúet,*  
 4 *Ti—Aleksándrovskiy holóp.*  
*Kinzhá! Luvélya, tén' Bertóna*  
*V' vidén'yah ne trevózhat tróna . . .*

Be silent, Law! Our Tsar is dancing  
 quadrille, mazurka, and galope,  
 and does not care a straw about you,  
 4 you are the slave of Alexander.  
 The dagger of Louvel, the shadow of Berton  
 do not in dreams disturb the throne . . .

- 5 This is an enigmatic line. The word *Kinzhal*, "dagger," is clear enough in the MS, and so are the capital letters *L* and *B*. It is the third word of the line that is difficult to decipher, though written in a bold hand. With most commentators, I take it to be *ten'*, "shadow." The first two letters of this *ten'* are formed differently from those in the *ten'* of VIII : 4 ("shadow of the dawn"); these are, however, duals commonly found within the limits of one person's handwriting. What is significant is the close similarity in the first two letters in the *ten'* of XI : 5 with the first two letters of *tem* ("the more") of V : 1; and since the third letter in *ten'* of XI : 5 is identical with the third letter in the *ten'* of VIII : 4, I feel certain that no other reading than *ten'*, "shadow," is possible in XI : 5.

*L* is generally accepted by commentators as such. It is the *B* that is puzzling, and some pretty silly suggestions have been made. At one time I fancied that the not-too-clearly written *ten'* might be read as *mech*, "sword," and then the sense "the sword of Bellona" seemed an obvious deduction; but lately I have arrived at a different conclusion (1952).

In an unsigned historical note published by Pushkin in the *Literary Gazette* (*Literaturnaya gazeta*), no. 5 (1830), "On the Memoirs of Samson [Sanson], the French Executioner," I find that Pushkin mentions Louvel side by side with Berton. Pushkin's note reads:

What will he tell us, the man who in the course of forty bloodstained years witnessed the last convulsions of so many victims, some famous, some unknown, some of sacred, others of hateful memory? All, all of them—his acquaintances of one moment—will ascend in turn the steps of the guillotine where he, the ferocious zany, plays his monotonous role. Martyrs, malefactors, heroes, the royal sufferer [Louis XVI] and his murderer [Danton], Charlotte Corday, and the courtesan du Barry, the madman Louvel and the insurgent Berton, the physician Castaing [Dr. Edmé Samuel Castaing, 1797–1823], who

poisoned his fellow men [the two Ballet brothers, Auguste and Hippolyte, in a complicated inheritance case], and Papavoine [Louis Auguste Papavoine, 1783–1825], who killed children [a little boy and a little girl whom he stabbed in a fit of insanity as they were walking with their mother in a public park]—we shall see all of them again at their last terrible minute.

Louvel is Louis Pierre Louvel (1783–1820), the sullen saddler, who had resolved in his lunes to exterminate all the Bourbons and had commenced his imbecile task by stabbing to death the Duc de Berry, heir to the throne, in Paris on Feb. 13, 1820, N.S., a crime for which he was beheaded.

I now suggest that *B* in Ten : xi : 5 stands for Berton. This is General Jean Baptiste Berton (1769–1822), a kind of French Decembrist, who dramatically conspired against the Bourbons in 1822, and died on the block, crying in a voice of thunder, “Vive la France, vive la Liberté!”

The spurious memoirs of Charles Henri Sanson (1740–93), “exécuteur des hautes-œuvres” during the Reign of Terror in France, appeared in several editions. The earliest and best known seems to have been *Mémoires pour servir à l’histoire de la Révolution française*, “par Sanson, exécuteur des arrêts criminels pendant la Révolution” (2 vols., Paris, 1829), a mediocre concoction by two littérateurs, Honoré de Balzac, later a popular novelist (1799–1850), and Louis François l’Héritier de l’Ain (1789–1852), who was also the “editor” of that other best-selling fabrication, *Mémoires de Vidocq, chef de la police de sûreté* (4 vols., Paris, 1828–29).

## XII

- 1 / Play regiment / *Potëshnĭy pólk*: The Semyonovskiĭ regiment is meant. It was established for Peter I, together

with the Preobrazhenskiy regiment. This tsar was one of the most bestial, but also by far the most intelligent, of Russian potentates of the Romanov dynasty. Pushkin had an epic respect for him and used him as a colorful character in two narrative poems (*Poltava* and *The Bronze Horseman*) and in his unfinished historical novel known as *The Blackamoor of Peter the Great*. The epithet *potesnñy*, from *poteha*, “fun,” was the term applied to companies of boy soldiers, animated toy troops, which Peter in his youth played with.

2 / old mustaches / *stárih usachéy* [acc. pl.]: A Gallicism we have already met with in Chapter Two (xviii : 13).

3 / The word *prédali* means both “betrayed” and “delivered.”

3 / tyrant: This is the lunatic Paul I (father of Alexander I and Nicholas I) who was murdered in his bedroom by a gang of courtiers on the night of Mar. 11, 1801, without the Semyonovskiy watch interfering. The event will be especially remembered as having inspired, in 1817, a magnificent passage (ll. 57–88) in Pushkin’s first great work, his *Ode to Liberty*.

Two of the hanged Decembrists had served in the Semyonovskiy regiment in the 1820’s, namely, Sergey Muravyov-Apostol and Mihail Bestuzhev-Ryumin. Presumably, the rest of Ten : xii continued the history of this regiment. Tsar Alexander used to say that if there was anything in the world more beautiful (*plus beau*) than the sight of a thousand identical men all performing exactly the same movement, it was the sight of a hundred thousand men performing it. Grand Duke Nicholas, later Nicholas I, had huge embarrassed grenadiers go through their steps on the parquetry of his ballroom, and, just for the fun of it, his young German wife,

an *Ur-Majorette*, would strut at their side. General Shvarts, an especially brutal and pedantic commander of the Semyonovskiy regiment, had soldiers come to his house in the evening for private lessons of pointing the toe. Shvarts had a bad temper and would often slap those impassive poor faces and spit into them. Finally, on Oct. 17, 1820 (not 1821, as some compilations have it), the regiment solemnly and decorously rebelled, demanding that Shvarts be dismissed, which he was; but some eight hundred soldiers were court-martialed.

Since completely erroneous, politically inspired notions are attached by some Soviet commentators to Pushkin's above-mentioned ode, in an attempt to make naïve and misinformed modern readers see a revolutionist's message in it, it cannot be too often reiterated that *Liberty* is the work of a conservative young liberal to whom Law, *Zakon, les lois* (in the humanitarian and philosophic sense attached to the term by such French thinkers as Fénelon and Montesquieu), represented the primary factor in the distribution of liberties and who fully subscribed to Byron's lines (*Don Juan*, IX, xxv, 7-8):

. . . I wish men to be free  
As much from mobs as kings . . .

Pushkin's *Vol'nost'*, in purely verbal intonation, is closer to the ode on slavery, *Na rabstvo* (1783), by Vasiliy Kapnist (1757-1824) than it is to the ode *Vol'nost'* (c. 1783), by Aleksandr Radishchev. It should also be noted that in his *Vol'nost'* Pushkin used not the usual odic stanza of ten lines (with rhymes ababeeciic or babaccdedde) but the stanza of eight lines (with rhymes babaceec, in the present case), which Derzhavin had borrowed from France for his famous *The Grandee* (*Vel'mozha*, begun 1774, final text published 1798). It is the *strophe de huit vers* or *huitain*.

Here is a translation (from Gofman's edition of Push-

## *Commentary*

kin's works in one volume, Berlin, 1937) with the iambic tetrameter preserved, but with the rhymes sacrificed to literal sense:

### *Liberty: an Ode*

Begone, be hidden from my eyes,  
delicate Queen of Cythera!  
Where are you, where are you, the terror  
4 of Kings, the proud chantress of Freedom?  
Arrive; pluck off my garland; break  
the lyre of mollitude! I wish  
Freedom to sing unto the world  
8 and smite iniquity on thrones.

Reveal to me the noble track  
of that exalted Gaul, to whom  
you, 'midst awesome calamities,  
12 yourself courageous hymns inspired.  
Nurslings of fickle Destiny,  
you, tyrants of the universe,  
shudder! and you take heart and hearken,  
16 resuscitate, you fallen slaves!

Alas! where'er my gaze I cast  
—everywhere whips, everywhere irons;  
the perilous disgrace of laws,  
20 the helpless tears of servitude.  
Unrighteous Power everywhere  
in condensed fog of prejudices  
has been enthroned—the awesome Genius  
24 of slavery, and fame's fatal passion.

There only on the kingly head  
suffering of nations has not fallen  
where firm with sacred liberty  
28 is the accord of mighty laws;  
where spread to all is their strong shield;  
where, grasped by trusty hands, above  
the equal heads of citizens  
32 their sword without preferment glides,

and from that elevation strikes  
wrongdoing with a righteous sweep;  
where their arm is unbribable  
36 by ravenous avarice or fear.  
Rulers! to you the crown and throne  
the Law gives and not Nature. Higher  
than the People you stand, but higher  
40 than you is the eternal Law.

And woe, woe to the nations where  
imprudently it slumbers; where  
either the People or the Kings  
44 to dominate the Law are able!  
As witness, you I call, O martyr  
of glorious errors, who laid down  
for ancestors a kingly head  
48 in the tumult of recent tempests.

Louis ascends to death, in sight  
of mute posterity. His head,  
now crownless, he has sunk upon  
52 the bloody block of Broken Faith.  
The Law is silent; silent is  
the People. The criminal blade  
now falls and lo! a villainous  
56 purple has clothed the shackled Gauls.

Autocratic Villain! You,  
your throne, I view with detestation;  
your downfall, the death of your children,  
60 I see with cruel jubilation.  
The Peoples read upon your brow  
the stamp of malediction. You  
are the world's horror, nature's shame,  
64 upon earth a reproach to God.

When down upon the gloomy Neva  
the star Polaris scintillates  
and peaceful slumber overwhelms  
68 the head that is devoid of cares,  
the pensive poet contemplates  
the grimly sleeping in the mist

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forlorn memorial of a tyrant,  
72 a palace to oblivion cast,

and hears the dreadful voice of Clio  
above yon gloom-pervaded walls  
and vividly before his eyes  
76 he sees Caligula's last hour.  
He sees: beribanded, bestarred,  
with Wine and Hate intoxicated,  
they come, the furtive assassins,  
80 their faces brazen, hearts afraid.

Silent is the untrusty watchman,  
the drawbridge silently is lowered,  
the gate is opened in the dark  
84 of night by hired treachery's hand.  
O shame! O horror of our days!  
Like animals, the Janizaries  
burst in. The infamous blows fall,  
88 and perished has the crownéd villain!

And nowadays keep learning, Kings!  
Not punishment, not recompenses,  
not altars, and not prison vaults  
92 provide you with secure defenses.  
Be you the first to bow your heads  
beneath the Law's trustworthy shelter,  
and guard eternally the throne  
96 shall liberty and peace of Peoples.

Here follows, by line numbers, a comm. on *Liberty*.

2 / *Tsitëri slábaya tsarítsa*: Cythera, one of the Ionian islands where stood a temple of Aphrodite, or Venus, the frail (*slabaya*, "weak," "delicate") goddess of Love.

4 / of Freedom / *Svobódi*: Sergey Turgenev (a brother of Pushkin's friends Aleksandr and Nikolay Turgenev, and a cousin of the father of Ivan Turgenev, the novelist) notes in the diary he kept in France, entry of Dec. 1, N.S.

(Nov. 19, O.S.), 1817: "[My brothers] again write to me of Pushkin as of an unfolding talent. Ah, let them hurry to infuse liberalism in him, and, instead of self-lamentations, let his first song be: Freedom [*Svoboda*]." To this plea, ll. 4 and 7 of *Vol'nost'* present an obvious response, and if we assume that Sergey Turgenev simultaneously with his journal note voiced the same wish in his correspondence, this would place the writing of the ode not earlier than the beginning of November, O.S., since otherwise Sergey Turgenev would have probably received it by the time he made that entry. In his MS "Imaginary Conversation with Alexander I" (1825) Pushkin implies that *Vol'nost'* was written in 1817, before his eighteenth birthday (May 26).

- 10 A likely candidate for the post of *vozhishenniy Gall* is the minor poet, Ponce Denis Ecouchard Lebrun, or Le Brun (1729–1807). Tomashevski, in his *Pushkin* (Leningrad, 1956), has discussed the question thoroughly and has correctly stressed the tremendous, though brief, popularity of Ecouchard's vigorous odes.

Another candidate is André Chénier, who died, aged not quite thirty-two, on the guillotine 7 Thermidor, Year Two (July 25, 1794). Before his arrest in 1794, he had published only two "courageous hymns" (one of which is *Le Jeu de paume, à David, peintre*, 1791). His most famous piece, the elegy known as *La Jeune Captive*, appeared in the *Décade philosophique* in 1795 and later in several magazines (as did *La Jeune Tarentine*). Chateaubriand quoted a Chénier fragment from memory in the *Génie* (1802), in eulogizing the poet. Fayolle, moreover, published various fragments of Chénier's work in *Mélanges littéraires*, 1816. I mention this because modern Russian commentators are under the singular impression that Pushkin could not have known anything about André Chénier before August, 1819, when his

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poems were first collected and published by Latouche.

16 / resuscitate / *vosstan'te*: Grammatically, this is "rise!" or "arise!" but, as noted by Tomashevski, *Pushkin*, pp. 170–72, it is not a command to rise politically, to rebel, to start an insurrection, but means in the context (as elsewhere in Pushkin's rhetorical pieces) "wake up!" "stand up!" "revive!" and so forth.

22–24 The "prejudices" refer to the power of the Church, to her political use of superstition and directed thought. The "Genius" is an eloquent synonym of "spirit." The definition of "fame" as a "fatal passion" applies to Napoleon—who is waiting in the wings of the poem.

25 / head: There is a curious obsession with "heads" throughout the ninety-six lines of the ode. This proximal part of the body is implied in ll. 5 and 61 and named in 25, 31, 47, 50, 68, and 93.

31–32 Tomashevski, p. 162, quotes from a speech pronounced by Aleksandr Kunitsin (1783–1840), the Lyceum professor of moral and political sciences, at the opening of the Lyceum in 1811, a citation from Guillaume Thomas François Raynal (1713–96), author of *Histoire philosophique et politique des établissemens et du commerce des Européens dans les deux Indes* (1770): "Law is nought unless it be a sword moving indiscriminately above all heads and smiting all that rise above the horizontal plane in which it moves."

32–33 Note the beautiful enjambment. Another, less striking one, links up ll. 69–72 with 73–76.

35 / their: This pronoun, as well as the "their" in ll. 29 and 32, refers to the "mighty laws" of l. 28. There is a

clumsy clash of forelimbs between ll. 30 (*rukánu*) and 35 (*ruká*).

39–40 Fénelon expresses the same thought in *Les Aventures de Télémaque, fils d’Ulysse* (1699), bk. v (1810 edn., p. 78): “Il [le roi] peut tout sur les peuples; mais les lois peuvent tout sur lui.” This writer was well known to Russians of the time. Incidentally, it is a copy of the *Fables* of Fénelon (Paris, 1809) that contains the earliest sample of our poet’s hand (probably 1811).

41–44 Cf. Ecouchard Lebrun’s windy and cold *Ode aux français* (composed 1762), which sings martial glory rather than liberty and law (ll. 79–80):

Malheur à qui s’élève en foulant les ruines  
Des lois et de l’état . . .

45–56 The reference is to Louis XVI, beheaded in 1793 during the French regime of Terror. Carlyle, in that admirable work *The French Revolution: a History* (1837), speaks of regicide in much the same tones (ch. 8):

O hapless Louis! The son of sixty Kings is to die on the scaffold by form of law. O haughty, tyrannous man! Injustice breeds injustice. . . . Innocent Louis bears the sins of many generations. . . .

55 / now falls: Here (*padyót*), as well as in l. 87 (*padiút*) and elsewhere in our poet’s works, this form (from *past*’, “to fall”), which is ordinarily employed in a future sense, is used in the present for strong brevity (instead of *padaet*, *padayut*).

56 / purple has clothed / *porftra* . . . *lezhít*: Grammatically: “is lying.”

57–64 This stanza refers to “Napoleon’s purple” (as Push-

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kin himself remarked in a marginal note of the autograph he gave Nikolay Turgenev in 1817). In later years his attitude toward Napoleon changed considerably, acquiring the fashionable romanticist tinge characteristic of the times. Who were those “children”? I can think only of Napoleon’s nephews: little Napoleon Charles Bonaparte, son of his brother Louis (1802–07), and tiny Dermide Leclerc, son of his sister Marie Pauline (1802–04).

66 / the star Polaris / *Zvezdá polínochi*: *Polunochi* is not only “of midnight” but also (poetical) “of the North.”

69 / the pensive poet / *zadúmchivÿy pevét*s: According to Vigel’s *Memoirs* (1864) and a letter from Nikolay Turgenev to Pyotr Bartenev (in 1867), Pushkin wrote (no doubt from memory—poets do not compose in public) the ode, or part of it, in the rooms of Nikolay Turgenev, who at the time lived in St. Petersburg on the Fontanka Quay, opposite the Mihaylovskiy Palace (also known as the Inzhenernÿy Castle), whither, flushed after a champagne supper and wearing their resplendent decorations, the assassins made their way to Tsar Paul’s bedroom on the night of Mar. 11, 1801.

73 / Clio: The hysterical Muse of history.

86 / Janizaries / *yanïchari*: In general, Turkish soldiers; specifically, slave soldiers of the Sultan; here, by extension, killers.

89–96 Tomashevski, p. 170, says that this stanza was added “later.” It was first published by Herzen in *The Polar Star*, bk. II (London, 1856). In the last line, *volnost’* is coupled with *pokoy*, an association that was to remain Pushkin’s ideal for the rest of his life (see nn. to ll. 20–21

of Onegin's Letter in Eight, and to Eight : XLVIIIa, given at beginning of "Fragments of *Onegin's Journey*").

## XIII

3 / the sparks of a different flame: Beginning with this line of the stanza, Pushkin starts to give his version of the Decembrist movement. Despite his (incorrectly) making himself a conspirator too, the manner of his account is curiously detached, and most of the facts he lists seem derived from documentary evidence rather than from personal observation.

A secret union of cultured young noblemen opposed to tyranny and slavery, the Union of Welfare (*Soyuz Blagodenstviya*) was formed in 1818 and lasted till 1820. This union was a tree of good, growing in a temperate, somewhat masonic climate. Its trunk was the welfare of the fatherland; its roots were virtue and unity; its branches, philanthropy, education, justice, and social economy. It was strongly nationalistic. Its disposition toward literature, as a means of enlightenment, was that of eighteenth-century common sense, recommending among other things in its statute "the decency [*Fr. la décence*] of expressions and especially the sincere rendering of lofty sentiments, urging man toward good." Its muffled toward the government was marked by a attitude rumble of dignified disapproval. Its seal was a hive, with bees circumvolant. Various clubs, such as the Green Lamp, were diffuse reflections of it.

The Union of Welfare preceded the formation of two conspiratorial societies. These were the Northern and Southern Societies, whose activities resulted in the abortive coup of Dec. 14 (hence the term "Decembrist" for the movement), 1825, on the Senate Square in St. Petersburg. The news of Tsar Alexander's death in Taganrog, Nov. 19, 1825, reached the capital on Nov.

27, and for the next two weeks nobody knew exactly who was going to succeed him. Finally, his brother Constantine, the rightful heir to the throne, declined to reign, and another brother, Nicholas, was proclaimed tsar. The Decembrists took advantage of the interregnum. Their plan was to overthrow the regime and to introduce a constitution. The publication of a manifesto was to be followed by a *Velikiy Sobor* (Legislative Assembly). The actual uprising fell to the lot of the Northern Society, which was less well organized and more moderate in its views than the Southern group, with its republican tendencies and military pattern of organization.

The ostensible aim of the insurgents was to stand up for Grand Duke Constantine's claims (against those of his brother Nicholas), but their real purpose was to set up a liberal form of government. On Dec. 14, 1825, the sun rose at four minutes past nine and was to set five hours and fifty-four minutes later. That morning the insurgents collected in the square with some troops; there were 671 men in all. It was very cold, and they had not much to do except form a compact *carré*. The leaders intended to compel the Senate to issue their proclamation to the people, but the people were not supposed to take any active part in the events and were merely to provide a sympathetic background, a classical *décor*. A pathetic touch was added by the confusion in the minds of the soldiers between "Constitution" and "Constantine." Everything went wrong from the start. Prince Sergey Trubetskoy had been elected dictator—but he never turned up. The bravest men among the leaders developed a strange apathy and unwonted lack of nerve. One of them, however, Lieutenant Kahovski, shot and killed Count Miloradovich, who was attempting to harangue the troops. The guns of the government, about five P.M., easily put an end to the insurrection. Of the 121 who were tried immediately after the rebellion, five

were condemned to be quartered, but the sentence was commuted to hanging. Thirty-one were condemned to decapitation, and this was commuted to hard labor in Siberia. The rest received varying periods of imprisonment and exile. The five hanged were condemned on the following grounds: Colonel Pavel Pestel (b. 1794), for planning to destroy all the members of the imperial family (see n. to XVII : 9); Lieutenant Pyotr Kahovski (b. 1797), for that and for the assassination of Count Miloradovich and Colonel Stürler; Second Lieutenant Kondratiy Rileev (b. 1795), Second Lieutenant Mihail Bestuzhev-Ryumin (b. 1803), and Lieutenant Colonel Sergey Muravyov-Apostol (b. 1791), for planning regicide. They were executed July 13, 1826, on the Crown-work Bastion of the Peter-and-Paul Fortress (north bank of the Neva, St. Petersburg).

Pushkin, in Mihaylovskoe, heard of the execution on July 24. Next day, a letter (presumably from Tumanski) informed him of the death in Italy, more than a year before, of Amalia Riznich, the young woman he had courted in Odessa. Of this coincidence he made a cryptic note at the bottom of the first fair copy (MB 3266) of the poem that on July 29 he dedicated to Mme Riznich's memory—sixteen iambs, alternate Alexandrines and tetrameters, with the rhyme scheme *baba*, beginning:

Beneath the blue sky of her native scene  
 She languished, she decayed;  
 Decayed at last, and over me, I ween,  
 Already hovered her young shade.

A famous ink drawing in Cahier 2368, f. 38<sup>r</sup>, was made by Pushkin probably about the same time. It was first published in 1906 by Vengerov in the Brockhaus edition of Pushkin's works and has been republished and rediscussed several times since.\* This f. 38<sup>r</sup> is covered

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\*E.g., by A. Efros, *Lit. nasl.*, nos. 16–18 (1934), pp. 944–46.

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with a dozen profiles, among which commentators recognize our poet's father and uncle. In the upper margin of the page Pushkin sketched a bastion and five little men dangling from a gibbet. The same drawing is repeated, with additional details, at the bottom of the same page. Above the upper gibbet, at the very top of the page, one can decipher the unfinished line

*I ya bi móg, kak shút na . . .*  
and I might, like a clown upon . . .

Pushkin struck out the words *shut na* and repeated farther down the page, under the drawing, the first four words.

I render *shut* by the generalized "clown," but a more specific translation is possible. One may assume, I suggest, that the image in Pushkin's mind was *shut na nitke* ("string"), a pantine (Fr. *pantin*), jumping jack, manikin on a string. The association between a hanged man and a jerking clown is a common one. An obvious example (cited by Tsyavlovski in *Rukoyu Pushkina*, pp. 159-60) is found in Maykov's *Elisey*, ll. 419-20 (see n. to Eight : 1a : 3), where Zeus threatens with dire retribution that vassal who will not heed his summons:

In plain words, I shall hang him upside down,  
And 'mid the gods he'll dangle like a clown.

On July 10, 1826, from Mihaylovskoe, Pushkin wrote to Vyazemski in Moscow: "Rebellion and revolution never pleased me, it is true; but I was connected with almost all [the Decembrists]."

From Yakushkin's memoirs (see n. to XVI : 1-8) and from those of another prominent Decembrist, Ivan Pushchin (1798-1859), one of Pushkin's schoolmates and closest friends, it is quite clear that our poet was not a member of any Decembrist organization, and the attempts of certain Soviet commentators to force him into

it retrospectively are, to say the least, ridiculous. It might happen that at some dinner or casual meeting of friends, six out of seven men were Decembrists; but the seventh was Pushkin, and the mere presence of an outsider automatically divested the meeting of any conspiratorial sense. According to evidence supplied by one minor Decembrist (Gorstkin) during the inquest in January, 1826, Pushkin used to recite (*chitival*) verses in the winter of 1819–20 at the Petersburg house of Prince Ilya Dolgoruki, one of the leaders of the Union of Welfare.\* But according to Yakushkin, when he met Pushkin at Kamenska, near Kiev, in the autumn of 1820, Pushkin was very much surprised when he, Yakushkin, recited his revolutionary verses, such as *Noel'*, to the poet. It appears from Yakushkin's memoirs that at the time—winter, 1820–21—Pushkin did not know of the existence of any organized secret society and never was a member of the Southern Society (which was founded in Tulchin in March, 1821), although Pushkin was acquainted with its leader, Pestel.

In his poems directly related to the fate of the Decembrist movement, Pushkin, while expressing a solemn sympathy for the exiled men, their families, and their cause, stressed his own artistic immunity, and this blend of participation and aloofness seems to have struck some of the Decembrists as slightly tasteless. In the beginning of January, 1827, Pushkin sent the following tetrametric stanzas (rhyme scheme *baba ceec diid boob*) to Chita with the wife of the exiled Nikita Muravyov:

Deep in Siberian mines  
preserve proud patience:  
not lost shall be your woeful toil,  
and the high surging of your meditations.

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\*See M. Nechkin, "Novoe o Pushkine i dekabristah" (New Findings Concerning Pushkin and the Decembrists), *Lit. nasl.*, LXVIII (1952), 155–66.

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Misfortune's faithful sister, Hope,  
within the gloomy underearth  
shall waken energy and gladness;  
the longed-for time shall come.

Love and Friendship shall reach  
you through the gloomy bolts,  
as now into your penal burrows  
my free voice reaches.

The heavy chains shall fall,  
prisons shall crumble down, and Freedom  
shall welcome you, rejoicing, at the entrance,  
and brothers shall return your sword to you.

One of the exiled Decembrists, Prince Aleksandr Odoevski, replied in four mediocre stanzas, wherein he said in effect: Do not worry, bard, we are proud of our chains and will forge swords out of them.

Later, on July 16, 1827, in fifteen iambic tetrameters (with rhymes baabeccecdiffi), entitled *Arion*, in allusion to the admirable Greek minstrel whom an appreciative dolphin saved from drowning, Pushkin evoked a boat with oarsmen (representing the Decembrists) and a poet (representing Pushkin) singing to them as they rowed. A storm wrecks the boat; all perish save the poet, who in the last lines, in a classical metaphor, is seen drying his raiments on a rock while singing his former hymns.

## XIV

- 2 / *Ont' za chásheyu víná*: What rhymed with this? There is nothing more futile, and more tempting, than filling such gaps as left here, in XIV, where l. 4 is automatically supplied by the ear: *osvobozhdáli plemená*, "freed the nations." But whether Pushkin intended this reading is another question.

## XV

This stanza refers presumably to sessions of the Union of Welfare in St. Petersburg, c. 1819.

The house where the Decembrists met, belonging to Nikita Muravyov (1796–1843), is now No. 26 on the Fontanka Quay, Leningrad.\* Muravyov was a member of the Union of Welfare and when, in 1820, the Northern Society was formed he became a member of its supreme council. He authored the project of a constitution that would give Russia a federal form of government, dividing Russia into states after the American pattern.

Ilya Dolgoruki (1797–1848). According to Yakushkin, the conspirators met at his house, too. He was a prominent member of the Union of Welfare but did not join the Northern Society that succeeded it. In 1820 he withdrew from secret political activities and was not arrested in December, 1825.

The two-line quotation in Vyazemski's diary, already mentioned in my introductory notes to Ten, supplies us with a variant (xv : 3: "inspired" instead of "unquiet") and with l. 4, which Pushkin did not reach in the course of enciphering this stanza.

## XVI

1–8 Mihail Lunin (1787–1845) and Ivan Yakushkin (1793–1857) were active members of the Northern Society. Pushkin was personally acquainted with both.

Yakushkin's memoirs (1853–55), written in exile, can be found in vol. I of *Izbrannïe sotsial'no-politicheskie i filosofskie proizvedeniya dekabristov* (Selections from the Socio-Political and Philosophical Works of the Decem-

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\*A. Yatsevich, *Pushkinskiy Peterburg* (Leningrad, 1931).

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brists; 3 vols., Leningrad, 1951; I have seen only two), ed. I. Shchipanov, with notes by S. Shtrayh.

- 5 / Pushkin read his noels: In a literal sense, noels are French Christmas carols of some historical interest but of no poetical value. The form goes back to the eleventh century. Parodies of such carols, with political implications, are meant here.

Young Pushkin in Petersburg certainly recited anti-governmental poems to his friends of the Green Lamp group and at other gay suppers, where future Decembrists were present. But these meetings were not conspiratorial sessions. In those he did not participate. As elsewhere, our poet here stylizes his connection with the Decembrist movement.

What exactly were these “noels”? Only one has reached us, a rather mild piece composed probably in 1818, four iambic octaves, each consisting of five trimeters (1–4, 8), one Alexandrine (5), and two tetrameters (6–7), with rhyme scheme ababecce (ll. 1–4):

Hurrah! Posthaste to Russia  
The roving despot hies.  
Our Saviour bursts out crying,  
And all the nation cries.

Mary quietens her child, the tsar arrives “hale and stout” and promises to fire the Director of Police, to lock up the Secretary of Censorship in the madhouse, and “to give people all the rights of people”—a reference to Alexander’s liberal speech in Warsaw to the Diet, Mar. 15, 1818. The jingle ends with the following lines (25–32):

Then the delighted infant  
Begins to jump in bed:  
“He *really* is not joking?  
The truth he *really* said?”  
And Mary on her Child with lullabies prevails  
To close its little eyes: “ ’Tis late,

You've heard our father Tsar relate  
His bedtime fairy tales."

All this is in Béranger's journalistic style and has little literary value—in striking contrast to the *Ode to Liberty*.

Bernard de la Monnoye (1641–1728) worked on the *Noël bourguignon* in the 1670's and published them, with his translations into French, over the pen name of Gui Barôzai in 1720. Pushkin may have seen La Monnoye's *Noëls bourguignons* (which in the Burgundian original are more impious than in their French form). The edition I have consulted is found in the Leyden reprint (1865) of the rare anthology *Recueil de pièces choisies rassemblées par les soins du cosmopolite* (Armand Louis de Vignerot Duplessis Richelieu, duc d'Aiguillon, 1683–1750; Véretz in Touraine, 1735), pp. 427–500. These are flippant, sometimes impious, sometimes tender and quaint, little songs telling of Christ's birth, and so on. Noel v, st. II, goes, for example:

A la Nativité  
Chantons, je vous supplie.  
Une Vierge a porté  
Neuf mois le fruit de vie;  
Le Saint-Esprit futé  
Fit cette œuvre jolie ["bé sutie"  
in the Burgundian text].

I happen to notice that Ten : XVI : 5 is translated by Babette Deutsch (1943, a somewhat enlarged edition of her 1937 version of *EO*, which is remarkable only for Fritz Eichenberg's hideous and absurd illustrations):

Here Pushkin read his verses with a swagger . . .

6–8 / melancholy Yakushkin . . . regicidal dagger: Yakushkin's portraits convey an impression of dejection. He is said to have been unhappy in love. In his memoirs, he recalls that the thought of killing Alexander I over-

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whelmed him one day in 1817, in Moscow, when the bizarre rumor spread that the tsar was transferring his residence to Warsaw and annexing a part of Russia to Poland. Yakushkin's plan was to arm himself with a brace of pistols, one with which to shoot the tsar and the other to shoot himself, in a kind of one-man duel. He gave up this plan when the rumor proved to have no foundation in fact.

9-14 / seeing . . . lame Turgenev . . . : Nikolay Turgenev (1789-1871) was a prominent member of the moderate wing of the Secret Society and was the author of an important section of the statute in the Union of Welfare. This part dealt with the limitation of the tsar's powers.

On Apr. 9, 1824, he left for western Europe and remained there till 1856, when the Decembrists were granted amnesty. I have not been able to discover any details about his limp.

His brother, Aleksandr Turgenev (1784-1845), director of the Department of Foreign Creeds, was one of Pushkin's staunchest supporters and truest friends. It was he who helped to enroll young Pushkin in the Lyceum in 1811. It was he and Karamzin who in the last week of April, 1820, persuaded the Minister of Foreign Affairs to have Pushkin attached to General Inzov's chancellery in southern Russia—an uncommonly benign arrangement in contrast to other possibilities of exile. It was he who in the beginning of June, 1823, again spoke to Count Nesselrode and arranged Pushkin's transfer to Odessa ("A Maecenas [Vorontsov], a fine climate, the sea, historical memories—Odessa has everything," so wrote Turgenev to Vyazemski, June 15, 1823, about his protégé's new assignment). And, finally, it was he who, at midnight, on Feb. 1, 1837, after the funeral service at the Konyushennaya Church in St. Petersburg

accompanied (with the gendarme Rakeev, who a quarter of a century later was to arrest the radical publicist Nikolay Cherniŝhevski) Pushkin's coffin to the Svyatie Gori monastery, province of Pskov, district of Opochka, where the poet was buried on Feb. 6, 1837, on the next day after the last rapid journey that his poor body took.

In his letters to his brother (*Arhiv brat'ev Turgenevŭh*, Petrograd, 1921), Nikolay Turgenev plays the part of a person much surprised and deeply hurt at being called a state criminal by the Russian government. "I was never interested in insurrection," "My conscience is clear."

In a letter of Apr. 26/May 6, 1826, from Edinburgh, to Aleksandr Turgenev in Petersburg, Nikolay Turgenev writes: "I always considered the Secret Society to be a thing one occupied oneself with rather in jest than in earnest." And a fortnight later:

One may ask me: but why all those secret societies, if you saw they were nonsense? What can I answer? To amuse themselves some people gamble, others dance or play blind man's buff, others again forgather to spend the time in conversations. I belong to the latter kind of person. Could I foresee that one would make a crime out of those conversations?

Another letter of June 25/July 7, 1826:

I have stated already [in a letter to the government] what I saw in secret societies. The liberation of the peasants has always been for me a most sacred cause. It was my only purpose in life. . . . But not seeing any material results, i.e., not seeing any freeing of slaves [on the part of slaveowners], which I demanded, I left at last that barren land and in recent time did not give the Secret Society a thought.

It seems to me perfectly clear that Pushkin saw these letters.

In a letter to his brother of Aug. 11, 1852, Aleksandr Turgenev quotes Ten : XVI : 9-14 and continues:

## Commentary

In this part of *Eugene Onegin*, Pushkin had some delightful characterizations of Russians and Russia [no doubt, the "Mayhap" stanzas, VI and VII], but it will have to be withheld for a long time. All he read to me in Moscow [early December, 1831] were fragments [obviously the same stanzas he read to Vyazemski].

To this Nikolay Turgenev replied from Paris in great rage (the real cause of which is not clear) nine days later:

Pushkin's verses about me, communicated by you, made me shrug my shoulders. The judges who condemned me and condemned the others were performing their job: the job of barbarians devoid of any civic or civilized lights. That is in the nature of things. But here come new judges. A person can have talent for poetry, a lot of intelligence, and still be a barbarian. And Pushkin and all Russians are certainly barbarians. . . . If those who were less lucky than I and perished had no better claims to civilization than has Pushkin, they acquired at least other rights through self-sacrifice and sufferings that placed them above the judgment of their compatriots.

Aleksandr Turgenev did not understand his brother's wrath, and in a letter of Sept. 2 wrote:

Your conclusion regarding Pushkin is correct insofar as there remains indeed some barbarism in him, and Vyazemski in Moscow took him to task severely for his attitude toward Poland; but in his verses about you I do not perceive it [the barbarism], and generally there is much that is correct in the opinion he expressed about you. It is only in regard to Poland that he is a barbarian.

Tomashevski, "Desyataya glava 'Evgeniya Onegina.' Istoriya razgadki" (The Tenth Chapter of *Eugene Onegin*. The Story of Its Solution), *Lit. nasl.*, nos. 16-18 (1934), p. 388, gives Nikolay Turgenev's answer to this in a Russian translation (that particular letter was written in French):

One could argue a good deal concerning the poetical importance you assign to Pushkin and he assigns to him-

self. That would lead us too far. Byron was indubitably a poet, but it was neither his principle nor his custom to wallow in mud.

Displeasure with the crude nationalism Pushkin expressed in eloquently supporting the Russian government in the Polish question is not sufficient to explain the acute personal irritation one discerns in Nikolay Turgenev's letters. At Decembrist meetings in 1819-20, Turgenev may not have promoted his views on emancipation with the cranky perseverance described by Pushkin. It would seem that he was shocked mainly by the tone of the thing and might have mistaken Pushkin's stylization for a jeer at his most cherished idea. From our point of view, over and across the softening remoteness of time, we distinguish in Pushkin's account of the Decembrist conspiracy little more than a detached, slightly flippant note. But a reformer of Turgenev's type might have felt that any attitude save one of pious and fervid sympathy was insulting. Lerner (1915, quoted by Tomashevski, "Desyataya glava," p. 389) has suggested that Pushkin, who in 1819 had already expressed the hope of seeing slavery abolished by the tsar, must have found it ridiculous for Nikolay Turgenev to expect that a group of noblemen should perform that act. (This, of course, is exactly what happened thirty years later, when groups of altruistic noblemen prevailed on the government to liberate the serfs.)

It has also been suggested (1) that Nikolay Turgenev was displeased by Pushkin's evidently knowing of a MS essay, a *pièce de justification*, in which great stress was laid on the liberation of peasants, which Nikolay's brother had given Zhukovski in Leipzig in 1827 to show to the tsar, and in which Nikolay Turgenev harshly criticized the Decembrist movement; and (2) that he was enraged by Pushkin's making a conspirator of him, Turgenev, who emphatically denied having any connections

## Commentary

with the Decembrists (Volkonski and others called Turgenev a liar for this).

Pushkin's esteem for Nikolay Turgenev—and for all freedom-loving, independent people as such—is evident from a marvelous epigram on Neptune (iambic tetrameters, rhymed abba cece) that heads a letter to Vyazemski, Aug. 14, 1826, from Mihaylovskoe to Petersburg:

So 'tis the sea, the ancient assassin  
that kindles into flame your genius?  
You glorify with golden lyre  
Neptune's dread trident?  
No, praise him not! In our vile age  
gray Neptune is the Earth's ally.  
Upon all elements man is a tyrant,  
a traitor, or a prisoner.

This is an answer to a poem entitled *The Sea* that Vyazemski sent him in a letter of July 31, 1826, from Revel. Pushkin's epigram was prompted by rumors (which later proved false) to the effect that Great Britain had surrendered the political émigré, Decembrist Nikolay Turgenev, to the Russian government. In his letter following the epigram, Pushkin says: "My warmest thanks for your poem. I shall criticize it another time. Is it true that Nikolay T. has been brought by ship to Petersburg? . . ."

Vyazemski's poem is a set of twelve tetrametric staves of eight verses each (baabcece, which is a rare and harsh sequence), eulogizing the purity and beauty of the sea.

Aleksandr Turgenev's letter (see introduction to these nn. to Ten, p. 314) supplies us with the variants of two lines: 10, "pursuing [*presleduya*] his ideal"; and 12, "whips [*pleti*] of slavery."

Tomashevski's photograph ("Desyataya glava," p. 391) of Pushkin's rough draft of the stanza shows that he canceled, l. 3, "destructive," *gubitel'nie* (replaced by "decisive," *reshitel'nie*); l. 5, "poems," *stihi* (replaced

first by *satiri* and finally by *noeli*); l. 7, "as one who's doomed," *kak obrechyonniy* (replaced by "it seemed, silently," *kazalos' molcha*); l. 12, "chains," *tsepi* (replaced by "whips," *pleti*); and ll. 13-14, "in this crowd . . . foresaw the liberators" (replaced by "in this crowd . . . saw the deliverers").

# XVII

2 / earlier the spring: Pushkin now turns his attention to the activities of the Southern Society. It consisted of three groups, the central one, at the headquarters of the Second Army, in Tulchin (Bratslav District, province of Podolsk), directed by Pestel and Aleksey Yushnevski; the group at Kamenka (Chigirin District, province of Kiev), directed by Vasiliy Davidov and Prince Sergey Volkonski; and the group at Vasilkov (Vasilkov District, province of Kiev), directed by Sergey Muravyov-Apostol and Bestuzhev-Ryumin. The society was in touch with Polish groups working toward the independence of Poland.

5 Count Peter Wittgenstein (1768-1842) commanded the Second Army, with headquarters at Tulchin. A good and brave man, he was greatly loved by his subordinates.

9 / P[estel]: Colonel Pavel Pestel (1794-1826), adjutant of Count Wittgenstein from 1813 to 1821 and then commander of the Vyatskiy regiment. Author of a constitution (*Russkaya pravda*, Russian Justice) and the main leader of the Southern Society, which he organized in March, 1821, in the provinces of Podolsk and Kiev. Pestel was by far the most intelligent, gifted, and energetic man among the conspirators, but unfortunately was not in St. Petersburg on Dec. 14, 1825. He said in a written statement after his arrest:

## *Commentary*

The events in Naples, Spain, and Portugal had a great influence upon me. I perceived there . . . the proof of the instability of monarchic constitutions and found ample reason to doubt that monarchs genuinely accept any such constitutions. . . . This affirmed me very strongly in a republican and revolutionary mentality.

Pushkin met Pestel Apr. 9, 1821, in Kishinev (and may have first seen him at Tulchin in February). Under this date there is the following entry in the poet's diary:

Spent the morning with Pestel [who, rather paradoxically, had been sent by the government to Kishinev to report on the activities of the Free Greece group there]; an intelligent man in every sense of the word. *Mon cœur est matérialiste, mais ma raison s'y refuse* [said Pestel]. Our conversation was metaphysical, political, ethical, etc. He is one of the most original minds that I know.

In the same entry Pushkin reports that the Greek leader's brother, Prince Demetrius Ypsilanti, tells him that the Greeks crossed the Danube and smashed a Turkish army corps; in the next entry, May 4, he says he has been made a mason, and in the one after that, May 9, he notes: "Today is exactly one year since I left Petersburg." Pushkin saw Pestel again in Kishinev in the last week of May, after which the latter returned to Tulchin. (There is no evidence that they saw each other in Odessa, which Pestel seems to have visited in the winter of 1823.)

Pushkin, in Mihaylovskoe, heard of the uprising in Petersburg a week after the event, about Dec. 20, 1825. In the course of the next fortnight the news of the participation of Rileev, Küchelbecker, and Pushchin, and the information regarding Pestel's arrest at Lintsä, must surely have reached our poet by means of "occasions" (letters sent not by post but by reliable travelers). On Jan. 4 or 5, 1826, in the left margin of the draft of *Five*: v-vi, which is the exact middle of the novel ("Tatiana . . . [believed in] dreams, cartomancy, prognostications by

the moon . . ."; expected misfortune if "a swift hare . . . would run across her path"), and farther, in the left margin of the draft of Five : IX-X ("The night is frosty. . . . 'What is your name?' . . . Hariton"; a mirror lies under Tatiana's pillow for the registration of dreams' portents), Pushkin commenced a column of profiles: in both cases the top profile is that of Pestel. In these two pencil sketches, Pestel has the head of an ancient Greek with the heavy jaw of a medallion Napoleon. In the margin of the Five : V-VI draft, the other profiles under Pestel's represent, in the following order: a stylized combination of Robespierre and Pushkin; under this, a large, Punch-like Mirabeau; under this, the old-*gavroche* features of Voltaire; and to the left from Voltaire, the duck-nosed profile of homely Rileev. Pushkin had last seen Pestel more than four and a half years earlier, and Rileev more than five and a half years earlier; the artist's visual memory must have been exceptionally retentive.\* In the draft of Five : IX-X, the sequence of profiles under that of Pestel represents: the very Russian features of Ivan Pushchin (twice) and bespectacled Vyazemski (not a Decembrist), while in the lower corner of the opposite margin a second sketch of Rileev's head is accompanied by the long-nosed, chinless, and pathetic profile of Küchelbecker.

Pushkin had last seen Vyazemski and Küchelbecker some six years before. He had last seen his old friend and schoolmate Pushchin when the latter visited him Jan. 11, 1825. According to Pushchin's memoirs, our poet knew of his belonging to a secret society and said to him: "I do

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\*Quite apart from this fact it should be remembered that, before photography had introduced its more flexible and more fluid (and thus less stylized) portrayal of facial expressions, the frequent occurrence of one's friend's silhouette or caricature in a common friend's album helped to fix its typical feature in one's mind as firmly as the endlessly recopied pictures of long dead poets and kings.

not force you, dear Pushchin, to talk. Perhaps you are right in distrusting me. No doubt I am unworthy of your trust because of so many foolish things on my part.” Pushkin’s relations with Rileev are tantalizingly brought out by a not-too-trustworthy account that a later friend of Pushkin’s, Sobolevski, left us. It would appear that about Dec. 10, 1825, Pushkin, upon learning of Alexander I’s death, decided to disobey orders and travel to St. Petersburg, where he planned to put up at Rileev’s apartment, although he had many other, closer, friends. He would have arrived just in time to participate as a sympathizer in the events of Dec. 14; but a hare crossed his path, and he turned back. If the story is true (which is not certain), the portent of the “swift hare” provides a nice link between Pushkin’s description of Tatiana’s superstitious shivers and his meditative sketches in the same Cahier 2370 of the rebels he might have joined.

- 11 The “cool general” may be a reference to the stolid, not very intelligent, but courageous and liberal Aleksey Yushnevski (1786–1844), a general in the Second Army, a friend of Pestel.

#### VARIANTS

A possible variant of l. 12 begins with the crossed-out words:

There R—

*R* may stand either for the adjective “Russian” or for the name Ryumin, in reference to Second Lieutenant Mihail Bestuzhev-Ryumin, a recklessly brave young man, one of the five Decembrists hanged.

Another deleted line reads:

Recruited for the Union of the Slavs . . .

and may be a variant of 10 or 11.

## XVIII

2 / between Laffitte and Clicquot: This is a Gallicism, *entre deux vins*, meaning “casually,” “between sips.”

8 / pastimes of grown-up scamps / *Zabávi vzróslih shalunóv*: Brodski's commentaries to this stanza are shamelessly grotesque. That Soviet toady, in his servile eagerness to prove that Pushkin was a solemn admirer of revolution, decides to apply not an “esthetic” or “textological” method but a “historical” and “ideological” one; whereupon he easily comes to the conclusion that the stanza in question should be placed before XIV, so as to represent the rudiments of the Decembrist movement in a historical sequence (the late Tomashevski in 1934 dared make some crushing remarks on Brodski's maneuvers). Brodski insinuates that *zabávi* (“pastimes,” “amusements”) meant “love” and “inspiration” in Pushkin's idiom, and that in the same idiom *shalun* (“scamp,” “frolicker,” “gay dog,” “naughty boy,” Fr. *polisson*) meant “a revolutionary” and “philosopher”; in result of which, the line would idiotically read: “the love and inspiration of adult philosophers” instead of Pushkin's “pastimes of grown-up scamps.”

Sometime in 1824, probably in May, from Moscow Vyazemski wrote to Pushkin in Odessa:

... You have teased the government sufficiently; this will do now. The fact is that all our opposition can be marked by nothing *que par des espiègleries*. It is not given unto us to oppose it like men [*muzhestvovat' protiv nego*]. We can only behave like children. And persistent childish behavior is apt to become a bore.

## VARIANTS

The stanza is obviously unfinished, and this leads one to think that not more than eighteen stanzas ever existed.

## Commentary

Its position after xvii is also obvious, though perhaps the actions in it should be rendered by "had been" rather than by "was."

Pushkin apparently intended to start the stanza with the formula "all this was . . ." and then to enumerate the various items, conversations over wine and (canceled variant of l. 3) "couplets, friendly disputes." He then altered the "conversations" (*razgovóri*) in l. 1 to "conspirations" (*zagovóri*) and altered l. 3 to "were merely conversations"; but then he crossed out the first two words.

Another canceled variant occurs in l. 5: *myatézchnoe mechtán'e*, "rebellion's dream," instead of *myatézhnaya nauka*, "rebellion's science"; and this variant rhymed with a canceled variant of l. 6: *Vsyó éto bílo podrazhán'e*, "all this was imitation," instead of the final "all this was nothing but ennui," *Vsyó éto bílo tól'ko skúka*.

The rest of the stanza consists of disjointed words. One can make out: "everywhere the talk of grumblers . . . knots . . . and gradually with a secret web. . . . Our tsar was dozing . . ."

\*

To this batch of stanzas may be added another stanza or part of a stanza (in the fair copy of *Onegin's Journey*, v, where alongside its middle verses Pushkin drew a vertical line and wrote alongside l. 10: *v X pesn'*, "in Canto x"). It may be assumed that the chronicle of events leading to the formation of secret societies ended with Ten : xviii and that Pushkin then took up Onegin again (he is in Petersburg, after the scene with Tatiana, in the fictional April of 1825). After a preliminary stanza (say, "Ten : xix"), the canto may have continued (say, "xx"):

Grown sick of either passing for a Melmoth,  
or sporting any other mask,

- he once awoke a patriot  
4 during a rainy tedious spell.  
For Russia, gentlemen, he instantly  
felt a tremendous liking,  
and it is settled. He is now in love,  
8 he raves of nothing now but Rus,  
he now hates Europe,  
with its dry politics,  
with its lewd hubbub  
. . . . .

After which Onegin may have entered into contact with the Decembrists and witnessed the uprising of Dec. 14, 1825.

ADDENDUM TO NOTES ON "CHAPTER TEN"

According to Tomashevski ("Desyataya glava," pp. 378-420), the material related to Chapter Ten, as preserved in 1934 at the Institute of Russian Literature (Pushkin-skiy Dom), Leningrad, consists of two MSS (referred to further as "cryptogram" and "draft"), donated in 1904 to the autographic section of the Academy of Sciences in Petersburg, item 57 (cryptogram) and item 37 (draft), by Aleksandra Maykov, widow of Leonid Maykov, a scholar who had commenced a new edition of Pushkin's works. The two items are:

Cryptogram. A half sheet, classified (as of 1934) as IRLI 555 and (as of 1937) PD 170, folded in two, with columns of lines decipherable as sixty-three discrete verses, on the inner side of both quarters, the right-hand page containing thirty-two verses, and the left-hand page, thirty-one verses. The paper has an 1829 watermark, and the pages have been numbered in red ink by the police (in 1837) as 66 and 67. (In Tomashevski's photograph of the right-hand page, the latter figure is visible just beneath the eleventh line.)

Draft. A quarter sheet of grayish paper, watermarked 1827, classified (as of 1934) as IRLI 536 and (as of 1937)

## Commentary

PD 171, with the rough draft of three *Onegin* stanzas: two (the second incomplete) on one side (further termed "upper"), with the police number 55 in the middle of the left-hand margin, and a third (incomplete) stanza on the other side (further termed "lower"). These three stanzas are numbered XVI, XVII, and XVIII in my recension.

P. Morozov in 1910\* easily broke the clumsy code of the cryptogram; further work on the text was accomplished by Lerner, in his notes to vol. VI of the Vengerov edition of Pushkin's works (1915), by Gofman, in his "Propushchennïe strofi 'Evgeniya Onegina' " (Omitted Strophes of *Eugene Onegin*), *P. i ego sovr.*, IX, 33-35 (1922), 311-17, and by Tomashevski, in his excellent paper in *Lit. nasl.*, nos. 16-18 (1934). My conclusions differ from those of Tomashevski and other commentators, especially Brodski. As I shall explain presently, I take the cryptogram to contain sets of lines representing not sixteen (as previously assumed) but seventeen stanzas. The study of Tomashevski's photographs of the cryptogram reveals the following:

### *Right-hand page*

A column of sixteen lines in strong thick pen (further termed "pen 1"), representing the first lines of sts. I-X and XII-XVII.

Under this, separated by a horizontal dash, another column in smaller hand and thinner pen (further termed "pen 2"), representing the second lines of sts. I-IX.

Two sets of lines in the same pen 2, in the left-hand margin, the lines parallel to the margin; the lower marginal set represents the second lines of sts. X, XII-XIV, and the upper marginal set represents the second lines of sts. XV-XVII.

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\*"Shifrovannoe stihotvorenie Pushkina" (Pushkin's Coded Poem), *P. i ego sovr.*, IV, 13 (1910), 1-12.

*Left-hand page*

A column of twenty-seven lines in pen 2 down the left-hand side of the page, representing the third lines of sts. I–IX and XI–XVII, followed (without any gap or dash) by the fourth lines of sts. I–IV, VI–IX, and XI–XIII.

A column of four lines in larger hand, weak thickish pen (“pen 3”), at the top of the right-hand side of the paper, representing what I take to be the fifth lines of sts. IV, VI, VIII, XI.

Let us now follow Pushkin in his coding.

Some words he did not complete; others he omitted altogether, or used symbolic abbreviations, such as the capital Z for “tsar.” All such omissions, as well as their English counterparts and my explanations, are square-bracketed in my reproduction and translation of the coded MS, with question marks denoting doubtful readings. Cancellations are as usual enclosed in pointed brackets. To avoid puzzling too much the non-Russian reader, for whom these notes are meant, I have departed from good scholarship in two respects: Pushkin’s misspellings and mergings of words are not reproduced, and transcription follows, as throughout this work, the new orthography, not that of Pushkin’s time. The presumable place of the line within the text of the chapter is given in roman characters for the stanza, in arabic for the line, and both are enclosed in brackets. For the sake of perfect structural correspondence I have, in certain cases, followed the Russian order of words.

*Right-hand page, pen 1*

- [I : 1] *Vl[adīka] slábīy i lukávīy*  
A [ruler] weak and wily  
[II : 1] *Egó mī óchen’ smīrn[īm] ználi*  
Him we very quiet [or “meek”] used to know  
[III : 1] *Grozá 12[=dvenádsatogo] góda.*  
The tempest of year 12

## Commentary

- [IV : 1] *No [Bóg?] pomóg—stal rópot ntzhe*  
But [God?] helped—grew the murmur lower

The questioned word is very scribbly; and if we accept this reading, the intonation seems to clash with that of III : 4. Other monosyllables, however, such as *bes*, “the devil,” or *rok*, “fate,” do not look any fitter scriptorially.

- [V : 1] *I chém zhirnée tém tyazhéle*  
And the [“more”] fatter the [“consequently  
more”] heavier
- [VI : 1] *Avós', o Shibolét narodnĭy*  
Mayhap, O national shibboleth
- [VII : 1] *Avós' aréndi zabĭváya*  
Mayhap, leases forgetting
- [VIII : 1] *Sey múzh sud'bĭ, sey stránnik bránnĭy*  
That man of destiny, that wanderer martial
- [IX : 1] *Tryasl'sya gróžno Pirenĭi*  
Shook ominously the Pyrenees
- [X : 1] *Ya vséh uymú s moĭm národóm*  
I everybody shall curb with the aid of my people

The next line, XI : 1, was accidentally omitted by Pushkin, and we shall see that in his next set he will also omit the second line of the same stanza. He will, however, remember to insert the rest of the quatrain in his third-line and fourth-line sets, but in compensation he will leave out the third and fourth lines of st. x.

- [XII : 1] *Potéshnĭy pólk Petrá Titána*  
Play regiment of Peter Titan
- [XIII : 1] *RR [= Rossĭya] snóva prism[irĕla]*  
Russia again grew quiet [or “inert”]

Our poet's attention had begun to flag by the end of st. x. He may have initially planned to do first a batch of ten stanzas, first lines, and then go on to the second lines. He decided, however, to go on with set 1—and made his first mistake, the omission of XI : 1. Now he makes another mistake. In this kind of task, especially when done from memory, as doubtlessly this was done, the mind

tires easily because of the contrast between the percept of the material as live verses and the concept of it as mechanical itemization. The "flowing" tetrameter (i.e., with the scud on the third foot) always came to Pushkin more naturally than the "slow" tetrameter (scudded on the second foot), and, as he became bored with his coding, automatism turned the "slow" *Rosstiya prismiréla snóva* into *Rosstiya snóva prismiréla* (which, of course, abolished the rhyme). I think Pushkin noticed his mistake not at this first cryptogrammatic session, but at a later one, when glancing through the column to check if he had the first line of XI. The discovery of his mistake in XIII : 1 caused him to forget what he had wished to check. Now a curious thing happened: Pushkin's first movement was to cross out the two words (*snova prism*); his eye, however, was misled by the similarity of a word just beneath (*svoy*, "their") in the next line (XIV : 1), and it was through this and through the next word that he drew several rapid dashes. Then, noticing his error, he went one step up to the real offender, XIII : 1, improved its script by repeating more plainly the first letter (putting an additional *R* before the not very clear one already there), and, instead of rewriting the *snova prismirela*, scribbled a "2" above *snova*, meaning that it should follow *prismirela*.

- [XIV : 1] *U nít <svot biváli> skhódki*  
 They <their own had> forgatherings  
 [XV : 1] *Vitlystvom rézkim znamenítĩ*  
 For oratory trenchant famed  
 [XVI : 1] *Drug Mársa, Vákha i Venéri*  
 A friend of Mars, Bacchus, and Venus  
 [XVII : 1] *<No t[am]> Tak bílo nad Nevóyu l'dístoy*  
 <But t[here]> Thus was it on the Neva icy

Here comes another mishap. Pushkin is already thinking of his second set of lines and, instead of XVII : 1, starts to write XVII : 2 (*No tám gdye ráne[e] vesná*, "but there

## Commentary

where earlier the spring"). He notices his error and crosses out what he has already written, the first word of l. 2 and the first letter of its next word. Having now completed, as he thinks, set 1, he draws a line under XVII : 1, and launches upon the set of second lines. But after writing the first three letters (*Ple*) of the Russian for "bald," i.e., the beginning of I : 2, tedium (or some interruption) leads him to postpone set 2. When he resumes the task, he has a new pen, pen 2. The writing becomes smaller and finer; many words are now fused or not finished.

### *Right-hand page, pen 2*

[I : 2] *Pleshtvīy shchýógol', vrág trudá*  
a baldish fop, a foe of work

The switch from pen 1 to pen 2 takes place after *Ple* and is very clear in the script.

[II : 2] *Kogdá ne náshi povará*  
when not our cooks

In this line, and in two further lines, one notices a feature that was absent from the first set—the merging of words: *nenashi* instead of *ne nashi*, *iskoro* instead of *i skoro*, and *yaodu* instead of *ya odu*.

[III : 2] *Nast[ála]—któ tut nám pomóg?*  
took place—who here us helped?

[IV : 2] *I skóro stlo[γu] veshchéy*  
and soon by the force of circumstances ["things"]

[V : 2] *O R[ússkiy] glúp[īy] násh na[ród]*  
O our R[ussian] stup[id] na[tion]

[VI : 2] *Tebé b ya ódu posvyatil*  
to you I'd an ode dedicate

[VII : 2] *Hanzhá zapryóts[ya] v monasttr'*  
the bigot will shut himself up in a monastery

[VIII : 2] *Pred kém untzilis' Z [Tsart]*  
before whom groveled kings

[IX : 2] *Volkán Neápolya pílál*  
the volcano of Naples blazed

Here our poet, being cramped for space but wishing to have the whole of set 2 on the same page as set 1 (which up to here he had been continuing down the page), addressed himself to the left-hand margin and wrote in it, at right angles to the central column, the following lines in two adjacent columns of their own.

*Lower part of left-hand margin, right-hand page, pen 2*

[x : 2] *Nash Z [Tsár'] v kongr[ésse] govoritl*  
our t[sar] in Congr[ess] said

XI : 2 is omitted, probably in consequence of the accidental omission of XI : 1.

[XII : 2] *Druzhína stárih usachéy*  
a bodyguard of old mustaches

[XIII : 2] *I púshche Z [Tsár'] poshyól kuttl'*  
and with more zest the t[sar] went reveling

[XIV : 2] *Oní za chásheyu viná*  
they over a goblet of wine

*Upper part of left-hand margin, right-hand page, pen 2*

[xv : 2] *Sbirdlis' chlénĭ séy sem't*  
assembled members of this group ["family"]

[xvi : 2] *TUt <bes> L[únin] dérsko predlagál*  
here <un-> L[unin] daringly suggested

Here Pushkin makes another slip and again corrects himself. Instead of "Here Lunin," *Tut Lunin*, he starts with the beginning of xv : 3—"At unquiet Nikita's"; he writes *U bes*, intending *bespokoyного*, and then, seeing his error, crosses out the *bez*, but uses the *U* for *TUt*, flanking it with the two *t*'s. It is characteristic that these slips occur toward the end of sets, with fatigue and a fore-sense of the next set mingling. It confirms me in the notion that Pushkin worked from memory. Subliminally, moreover, he might have been disturbed by the recollection of having committed the same kind of mis-

## Commentary

take in set 1 at a point where XVII : 1 got entangled with the next line.

- [XVII : 2] *No tám gde ráne[e] vesná*  
but there where earlier the spring

### *Left-hand page, left-hand column, pen 2, continued*

- [I : 3] *Necháyanno prigrétīy Slávoy*  
fortuitously befriended by Fame  
[II : 3] *Orlá dvuglávogo shchipáli*  
the eagle two-headed [they] plucked  
[III : 3] *Ostervenénie naróda*  
The infuriation of the nation  
[IV : 3] *Mi ochuttlīsyā v Pa[rīzhe]*  
we found ourselves in Paris  
[V : 3] *Skazhi zachém zhe v sámom [dēle]*  
Say, why indeed  
[VI : 3] *No stihoplyót Velikoródnīy*  
had not a poetaster Highborn  
[VII : 3] *Avós' po mán'yu [Nikoláya]*  
Mayhap, by the command of [Nicholas]  
[VIII : 3] *Sey vsádnik Pápoyu venchánnīy*  
that horseman by the Pope crowned  
[IX : 3] *Bezrúkiy K[nyaz'] druž'yám Moréi*  
The one-armed prince to the friends of Morea

It is now l. 3 of st. x that Pushkin accidentally leaves out.

- [XI : 3] *A pro tebyá i v ús ne dúet*  
and about you does not care a straw  
[XII : 3] *Predávshih nékogda [tirána]*  
who betrayed once a tyrant  
[XIII : 3] *No iskrī plámeni inógo*  
but the sparks of another flame  
[XIV : 3] *Oni za ryúmkoy rússkoy vódkī*  
they over a rummer of Russian vodka  
[XV : 3] *U bespokóynogo Nikítī*  
at unquiet Nikita's  
[XVI : 3] *Svoí reshítel'nīe méri*  
his decisive measures  
[XVII : 3] *Blestít nad K[ámenkoy] tenístoy*  
gleams over Kamenka shady

- [I : 4] *Nad námi Z-val* [tsárstvoval] *togdá*  
over us reigned then  
[II : 4] *U B[onapártova] shatrá*  
near Bonaparte's tent  
[III : 4] *B[arkláy], zimá il' R[ússkiy] b[óg]*  
Barclay, the winter, or the Russian God?  
[IV : 4] *A R[ússkiy] Z [Tsár] glavóy Z [Tsaréy]*  
and the Russian tsar the head of kings

Pushkin accidentally left out v : 4.

- [VI : 4] *Menyá uzhé predupredíl*  
me already anticipated  
[VII : 4] *Seméystvam vozvratít S[iblr']*  
to their families will give back S[iberia]  
[VIII : 4] *Izchéznuvshiy kak tén' zarí*  
gone like a shadow of the dawn  
[IX : 4] *Iz K[ishinyóva] uzh migál*  
from K[ishinev] already winked

x : 4 is omitted, probably in consequence of x : 3 having been left out.

- [XI : 4] *Tï A[leksándrovskiy] holóp*  
you, [or "you are"?] A[lexander's] slave  
[XII : 4] *Svirépy sháyke palachéy*  
to a ferocious gang of deathsmen  
[XIII : 4] *Uzhé izdávna mózhet bít'*  
already a long time perhaps

Here Pushkin stopped. This is all we have of set 4. Some time later, however, he added on the same page the following lines from set 5:

*Right-hand column, left-hand page, pen 3*

- [IV : 5] *Moryá dostális' Al'biónu*  
The seas were apportioned to Albion  
[VI : 5] *Avós' dorógi nám ispr[ávyat]*  
Mayhap, the roads for us they will rep[air]  
[VIII : 5] *Izmúchen kázníyu pokóya*  
Exhausted by the torture of repose  
[XI : 5] *Kinzhál L[uvélyá] tén' B[ertóna]*  
The dagger of L[ouvel], the shadow of B[erton]

Pushkin's plan in scrambling the fifth lines was, I think, to make things more difficult by starting with st. IV, then going to the next, then leaving one out, then leaving two out, and so on (IV : 5; V : 5; VII : 5; X : 5). However, for the wretched cryptographer that our poet was, the carrying out of this plan proved disastrous. When he consulted his set of fourth lines, he failed to notice that he had left out sts. V and X, so that when he wrote down the fifth lines of what he thought were IV, V, VII, and X, these proved to be actually IV, VI, VIII, and XI. I also suggest that he soon noticed that something was very wrong with his cipher and in utter disgust gave up the whole matter.

In 1831, a year after the destruction of Chapter Ten, Pushkin excluded the "Travels" as a "Chapter Eight" and revised the "High-Life" Chapter, making it Chapter Eight. I do not think that he had completed any more stanzas of Chapter Ten in addition to those he ciphered, and I think he did not cipher st. XVIII for the simple reason that it was not finished. Aleksandr Turgenev's reference to an account of the "Insurrection" (*Vozmushchenie*) suggests to Tomashevski that Pushkin had actually described—in stanzas that had not reached us—the abortive *coup d'état* of Dec. 14, 1825. I think we should understand under *Vozmushchenie* the specific preparations and the general unrest depicted in the stanzas we have. When Pushkin jotted down the remark "burned X Canto," we need not assume that any more than one third of it had been written.

Tomashevski also asserts, in a footnote to his 1934 paper in *Lit. nasl.*, that the nature of the code our poet used "would absolutely preclude any possibility of writing from memory; in front of him there certainly lay a fair copy of the stanzas he was ciphering." Tomashevski probably had not tried out the procedure. Anyone with an average verbal retentiveness should be able to keep

in mind seventeen stanzas (238 lines). I have experimented on such sequences in *Onegin* as I know by heart. The first and second lines, and generally the opening quatrains with their autonomic lilt, are easy to deal with; it is beginning with the fifth lines that a kind of woolly weariness sets in and errors accumulate. I maintain that Pushkin sat down to cipher his text not prior to his burning the completed stanzas of the Tenth Canto (Oct. 19, 1830), but soon after reciting them by heart to Aleksandr Turgenev (beginning of December, 1831)—that is, when he began to feel doubtful of being able to retain them any longer. Indeed, by the time he started to embalm them in his code, the stanzas might have already begun to fade out in their vulnerable middle parts. The strange fact that, in the few cases when his auditors quote him, variants occur suggests that Pushkin may have filled up slight gaps of oblivion with substitute words here and there in the uneven course of recitation. I maintain, finally, that only the absence of a written text before him can account for the blunders he committed. In this respect the transposition of words in XIII : 1 is especially characteristic and could hardly have occurred if he had been transcribing from a copy.

## *Translator's Epilogue*

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Pushkin put the last touches to *EO* in the beginning of October, 1831, at Tsarskoe Selo, and a complete edition of the novel came out in 1833. It is futile to discuss our poet's possible reasons (political, personal, utilitarian, artistic) for ending it as he did; but there is no doubt that *EO* was his favorite work, and the beautiful verses he composed upon completing the nine-canto version at the end of September, 1830, at Boldino (see last page of my commentary) reflect the difficulty he had in weaning himself away from *EO*.

Several times during the ensuing years he dallied with the idea of continuing the novel. Thus, in the course of his penultimate visit to Mihaylovskoe, soon after his arrival there on Sept. 7, 1835, he began a verse epistle to Pletnyov, who had urged him to continue *EO*. He began his epistle (Cahier 2384, f. 30<sup>r</sup>; on the other side of the page there is the draft of *Mihaylovskoe Revisited*) in iambic pentameters (A), which turned into octaved Alexandrines (B), but then thought better of it and (about Sept. 16) switched to his old *EO* stanza (C):\*

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\*I translate A, ll. 1-8, from Acad 1948, vol. III, 1, p. 395; A, ll. 9-12, from *Works* 1949, vol. III, pp. 991-92; B from Acad 1948, vol. III, 1, p. 356; and C from *ibid.*, pp. 397-98.

*Translator's Epilogue*

A

- You give me the advice, my dear [*lyubéznīy*] Pletnyov,  
to go on writing <our> abandoned novel  
<and> to amuse <this austere> age, this iron  
4 age of accounts, with empty narratives.  
You think that with a profitable object  
one can combine the restlessness of fame.  
<Therefore your> colleague <you advise> to take  
8 a reasonable payment from the public . . .

- For every line ten rubles, which would make  
a hundred forty rubles for a stanza,  
five rubles for each published part . . .  
12 a trifling tax for people who can read.

B

- . . . while he's alive, unmarried,  
4 the novel is unfinished. 'Tis a treasure.  
Into its free and ample frame insert  
a set of pictures, start a diorama:  
people will flock to it, and you will pocket  
8 the entrance fee, thus gaining fame and profit.

C

- During my days of autumn leisure—  
those days when I so love to write—  
you, friends, advise me to go on  
4 with my forgotten tale.  
You say—and you are right—  
that it is odd, and even impolite,  
to interrupt an uncompleted novel  
8 and have it published as it is;  
that one must marry off one's hero  
in any case,  
or kill him off at least, and, after having  
12 disposed of the remaining characters  
and made to them a friendly bow,  
expel them from the labyrinth.

You say: thank God, while your Onegin  
is still alive,

## Commentary

- the novel is not finished; forward go  
4 little by little, don't be lazy.  
While heeding her appeal, from Fame  
collect a tax in praise and blame.  
〈Depict the dandies of the town,  
8 your amiable misses,  
warfare and ball, palace and hut,  
cell . . . . . and harem, meantime〉  
take from our public  
12 a reasonable payment—  
five rubles for each published part:  
really, 'tis not a heavy tax.

B : 6 / diorama: *Webster's* says: "A mode of scenic representation, invented by Daguerre and Bouton, in which a painting (partly translucent) is seen from a distance through an opening. By a combination of translucent and opaque painting, and of transmitted and reflected light, and by contrivances such as screens and shutters, much diversity of scenic effect is produced" (and this applies to *EO*, too).

Louis Jacques Mandé Daguerre (1789–1851) gave his first show in 1822, in Paris. A diorama was shown in St. Petersburg in November, 1829, hence the topicality of the verse. The spectator sat in a loge that slowly revolved, with a slight rumble, not drowned by soft music, and took him to Rome, Egypt, or Mt. Chimborazo, "the highest mountain in the world" (it is only 20,577 ft. high).

\*

In vol. V of *Acad* 1948, Bondi, the editor of that tome (Long Poems, 1825–33), basing himself on the researches of M. Gofman ("Propushchennïe strofi") and B. Tomashevski (*Neizdannïy Pushkin* [St. Petersburg, 1922], pp. 89–91), publishes under an arbitrary title (*Ezerski*) a set of fifteen stanzas of the *Onegin* type, of which II–VI, fragments of VII, VIII, and IX (combined to form two

stanzas), and x were published by Pushkin in *Sovremennik*, 1836, under the title *The Pedigree of My Hero* (*Rodoslovnaya moego geroya*), with the subtitle "Frag-ment of a Satirical Poem." This hero is Pushkin's con-temporary, the scion of a thousand-year-old line of warriors and boyars, originating with the Norman chiefs who, according to tradition, invaded Russia in the ninth century and gave her her first princes. The poem is an absolutely stunning performance, one of Pushkin's greatest masterpieces, and reflects the historiographic interests of Pushkin's last years. It was begun at the very end of 1832 and was taken up again in 1835 and 1836. The fair copy is in a batch of autographs sewn by the police into a cahier, PB 2375, ff. 23<sup>r</sup>-28<sup>v</sup>, except four stanzas, which are in PD 194.

Ivan Ezerski's grandfather had 12,000 slaves, and his father had only one eighth of that number, and these "had long been mortgaged." Ezerski lives on a salary and is a *chinovnik* (official, functionary, civil servant, clerk) with a drab job as "collegiate registrar" (the fourteenth and lowest rank in the service) in some government bureau in St. Petersburg.

- I  
O'er the ensombered town of Peter  
the autumn wind was driving clouds;  
the sky was breathing humid chill,  
4 the Neva boomed. The billow beat  
against the trim embankment's wharf  
like some restless petitioner  
against the judge's door. The rain  
8 tapped sadly on the windowpane.  
'Twas getting dark. Ivan Ezerski,  
my neighbor, entered at this time  
into his narrow study [*tésniy kabinét*].  
12 However, his forebears and tribe,  
his rank, his office, and his age  
you should know, gentlemen.

## Commentary

### II

- Let's start *ab ovo*: my Ezerski  
was a descendant of those chiefs  
whose spirit bellicose and savage  
4 was once the terror of the seas.  
The generator of the family,  
Odulf "was a most awesome warlord"  
—so says the Sophian chronograph.  
8 In Olga's reign his son Varlaf  
embraced the Gospel in Constantinople  
together with the dot of a Greek princess.  
Two sons were born to them, Yakub  
12 and Dorofey; of these, in ambush  
Yakub was slain; while Dorofey  
fathered twelve sons.

### III

- Ondrey surnamed Ezerski, fathered  
Ivan and Ilya, and took vows  
in the Pecherskiy Monastery.  
4 Thence the Ezerskis  
derive their family name  
. . . . . \*

### IV

- In centuries of our old glory  
as well as in unhappy times,  
in gory days of riots and uprisings,  
4 the names of the Ezerskis shine.  
They're in the army and in council,  
they are the governors and envoys  
. . . . .

### V

- But when from the majestic Council  
Romanov had received his crown;  
when under a pacific rule  
4 at last Rus rested,  
and our foes were subdued,  
then the Ezerskis came  
into great force at court  
8 under the Emperor Peter  
. . . . .

\*I omit the rest of this stanza and the closing lines of the next two stanzas.

*Translator's Epilogue*

[I omit translations of VI–XII and finally of XV.]

XIII

- Why does the wind twist in a gully,  
sweep up the leaves and bear the dust,  
when avidly on stirless water  
4 wait for his breath the galleon must?  
From mountains and past towers, why  
does the dread heavy eagle fly  
to a sear stump? Inquire of him.  
8 Why does young Desdemona love  
her blackamoor as the moon loves  
the gloom of night? Because  
for wind and eagle  
12 and maiden's heart no law is laid.  
Poet, be proud: thus are you too:  
neither is there a law for you.

XIV

- Fulfilled with golden thoughts,  
but understood by none,  
before the crossroads of this world  
4 you pass, morose and mute.  
You share not with the crowd its wrath,  
its needs, its mirth, its roar,  
its wonder, or its toil.  
8 The fool cries: "Whither? Whither?  
*This* is the road!" You do not hear.  
You go where you are urged  
by golden dreams. Your secret work  
12 is your reward; 'tis what you breathe.  
Unto the crowd you throw its fruit  
—unto the slaves of vain pursuit.

And here follows a comm. on the foregoing fragments.

I

This stanza is very close to the beginning of *The Bronze Horseman* (1833), which I quote in my n. to Eight :  
XXXIX : 7.

## Commentary

- 9 In the fair copy (PD 194) Pushkin, probably in the fall of 1835, started to change the name Ezerski to “Evgeniy” and “Onegin” (Acad 1948, vol. V, p. 419)—II : 1:

Let’s start *ab ovo*: my Evgeniy . . .

III : 4–5:

Thence the Onegins  
derive their family name.

V : 6:

then the Onegins came . . .

One wonders if Pushkin knew that the Ezerskis were existing Polish noble families, going back to the sixteenth century, with one branch stemming from Kiev.

## II

- 2 / those chiefs: The Northmen; Russ. *Varyagi*, Varangians.

- 7 / the Sophian chronograph: The so-called *Sophian Annals* (*Sofiyskie letopisi*) of the fifteenth century, based on the records kept at the House of St. Sophia, headquarters of the bishop of Novgorod in the city of that name.

- 8 / Olga: Queen of Kiev in the middle of the tenth century (d. 969).

## III

- 3 / Pecherskiy Monastery: Kiev-Pecherskaya Lavra in the southern part of Kiev, founded in the eleventh century.

## V

- 2 / Romanov: Tsar Michael (r. 1613–45).

XIII–XIV

A different and inferior version of the same idea is expressed in a draft (Cahier 2384), which recent editors quite arbitrarily insert in the gap of Pushkin's unfinished novella *The Egyptian Nights* (autumn, 1835).

\*

After completing st. xv, Pushkin attempted to continue this poem, and made the scion of the Northmen a poor *chinovnik* in "a green dress coat bleached by wear" (canceled draft, 2375, f. 36<sup>r</sup>). One immediately recalls Gogol's Bashmachkin, created a few years later (and of humbler descent): "His regulation dress coat was no longer green but a sort of mealy hue tinged with russet." It is this seedy young man, Bashmachkin's precursor, whom Pushkin, on second thought, employed in *The Bronze Horseman*. The Evgeniy of *The Bronze Horseman*, pt. I, is described coming home thus (l. 28):

threw off his carrick, undressed, went to bed.

In the draft of *The Bronze Horseman* (2374, f. 10<sup>v</sup>), the lines corresponding to 24–26 read:

he was an impecunious <clerk> [*chinovnik*],  
kinless, a total <orphan>,  
<his face a little> pockmarked [*litsóm nemnógo*]  
*ryabovátīy*] . . .

In Gogol's story *The Carrick (Shinel')*, begun not earlier than 1839, in Marienbad, and completed in 1840, in Rome (first edition 1842, in *Works*), Akakiy Bashmachkin is also "somewhat pockmarked" (*neskol'ko ryabovat*), besides being "somewhat on the carrot side" (*neskol'ko rīzhevat*).

THE WORK [TRUD]\*

Come is the moment I craved: my work of  
long years is completed.

Why then this strange sense of woe  
secretly harrowing me?

Having my high task performed, do I stand as  
a useless day laborer

Stands, with his wages received, foreign  
to all other toil?

Or am I sorry to part with my work, night's  
silent companion,

Golden Aurora's friend, friend of the  
household gods?

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\*Pushkin dated this poem: "Boldino, Sept. 25, 1830, 3:15."  
Translated one hundred and twenty-six years later, in Ithaca,  
New York.

## APPENDIXES



## Appendix One

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### ABRAM GANNIBAL

#### FOREWORD

*Pridyót li chás moéy svobódi?*

Will [it] come the hour of my freedom?

*Porá, porá!—vživáyu k néy;*

Time, time!—I call to it;

*Brozhú nad mórem,<sup>1</sup> zhdú pogódi,*

I roam above the sea, I wait for the [right] weather,

4 *Manyú vetrila korabléy.*

I beckon to the sails of ships.

*Pod rízoy búr', s volnámi spórya,*

Under the cope of storms, with waves disputing,

*Po vól'nomu raspút'yu mórya*

on the free crossway of the sea

*Kogdá zh nachnú ya vól'nŷy bég?*

when shall I start [on my] free course?

8 *Porá pokínut' skúchnŷy brég*

Time to leave the dull shore

---

1. The numeral "10" attached to "sea" in the established text refers the reader to Pushkin's note: "Written in Odessa"; i.e., on the northern shore of the Black Sea, in 1823.

## Appendix One

- Mne nepriyáznennoy stihí,*  
of a to me inimical element,  
*I sred' polúdennih zibéy,*  
and 'mid the meridian swell,  
*Pod nébom Áfriki moéy,*  
beneath the sky of my Africa,<sup>2</sup>  
12 *Vzdihát' o súmrachnoy Rossii,*  
to sigh for somber Russia,  
*Gde yá stradál, gde yá lyubíl,*  
where I suffered, where I loved,  
*Gde sérdtse yá pohoroníl.*  
where [my] heart I buried.

—*Evgeniy Onegin, One : L*

The following sketch, which deals mainly with the mysterious origin of Pushkin's African ancestor, has no pretensions to settle the many difficulties encountered on the way. It is the outcome of a few odd moments spent in the admirable libraries of Cornell and Harvard universities, and its purpose is merely to draw attention to the riddles that other workers have either ignored or answered wrongly. Although in several instances I have keenly felt the want of original documents, preserved in Russia (where, it seems, they are inaccessible even to native Pushkinians), I am consoled by the fact that any material pertaining to any research is incomparably easier to obtain in the institutions of this country than in those of a wary police state. A list of some of the works consulted in the present case will be found at the end of these notes.

### PUSHKIN'S COMMENTS PUBLISHED DURING HIS LIFETIME

Pushkin's n. 11 to *EO*, One : L : 11 ("... my Africa"), reads in the 1833 edn.: "The author, on his mother's

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2. Here another numeral, "11," refers to a note discussed further.

side, is of African descent," and in the 1837 edn.: "See the first edition of *Eugene Onegin*," which is a reference to the 1825 (Feb. 16) separate edition of Chapter One, in which there is a long note (written probably in mid-October, 1824,<sup>3</sup> and certainly after Aug. 9, 1824, the date of his arrival at his estate Mihaylovskoe (near Opochka, province of Pskov) from Odessa, and presumably before his brother's departure for Petersburg, in the first week of November, with the apograph of the canto), based mainly on the MS biography in German of his maternal great-grandfather. Pushkin's note reads:

The author, on his mother's side, is of African descent. His great-grandfather, Abram Petrovich Annibal,<sup>4</sup> in his eighth year was kidnaped on the coast of Africa<sup>5</sup> and brought to Constantinople. The Russian envoy, having rescued [*vīruchiv*] him, sent him as a gift to Peter the Great,<sup>6</sup> who had him baptized<sup>7</sup> in Vilno. *In his wake, his brother arrived, first in Constantinople, and then in St. Petersburg, with the offer to ransom him; but Peter I did not consent to return his godchild.*<sup>8</sup> Up to an advanced age, Annibal still remembered Africa, the sumptuous life of his father, and nineteen brothers, of whom [*sic*] he was the youngest; he remembered how they used to be led into his father's presence with their hands bound behind their backs, whilst he alone remained free and went swimming under the fountains [or "cascades"] of the paternal home; he also remembered his beloved [or

3. Old Style (Julian calendar) is used throughout for the dating of events in Russia.

4. This is the French form of the English and German "Hannibal" and of the Russian "Gannibal" or "Ganibal"; we should constantly bear in mind that our poet's classical education was entirely dependent on French versions of, and French commentaries on, the ancients. See further my discussion of Abram's assumed surname.

5. Or, lexically, "was stolen from the shores of Africa."

6. Peter I, emperor of Russia, reigned 1682-1725.

7. *Krestil ego*, which also implies "godfathered him."

8. Here, and elsewhere in Pushkin's notes, I have italicized passages that are not supported by, or are in blatant contradiction to, possible or actual facts, as discussed further.

## Appendix One

“favorite”] sister, *Lagan*,<sup>9</sup> swimming in the distance after the ship in which he was receding.

At *eighteen*, Annibal was sent by the tsar to France, where he began his military service in the army of the regent; he returned to Russia with a slashed head<sup>10</sup> and the rank of French lieutenant [Fr. *capitaine*]. Thenceforth he remained *continually* near the person of the tsar. *In the reign of Anna*,<sup>11</sup> Annibal, a personal enemy of Bühren,<sup>12</sup> was dispatched, under a specious pretext, to Siberia. *Getting bored with an unpeopled place and a harsh climate, he returned to St. Petersburg of his own accord and appeared before his friend Münnich*.<sup>13</sup> *Münnich was amazed and advised him to go into hiding without delay. Annibal retired to his country estates and dwelled there all through the reign of Anna, while nominally serving in Siberia.* When Elizabeth ascended the throne, she lavished her favors upon him. A. P. Annibal lived to see the reign of Catherine II, when, relieved of important duties of office, he ended his days with the rank of general in chief, dying in his *ninety-second year* [in 1781]. [An authorial footnote to this reads: “We hope to publish in due time his complete biography.”]

His son, Lieutenant General I. A. Annibal, undoubt-

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9. An inept, albeit traditional, Russian transliteration; the name is spelled “Lahann” in the German biography.

10. The fact of his having been wounded seems to be supported by the headaches he suffered in later years. The regent was Philippe d’Orléans, who ruled from 1715 to 1723, during the minority of Louis XV.

11. The succession of royal personages in Russia during Annibal’s lifetime was: Catherine I, Peter’s widow (r. 1725–27); his grandson, Peter II (r. 1727–30); Anna, daughter of Ivan, Peter I’s, brother (r. 1730–40); Anna, daughter of Charles Leopold, Duke of Mecklenburg-Schwerin, and Peter I’s grandniece, regent (1740–41) during the minority of her son, who never reigned; Elizabeth, Peter’s daughter (r. 1741–61); another grandson of Peter’s, Peter III (1761–62); and Catherine II, called the Great (r. 1762–96), self-made widow of Peter III.

12. Anna’s powerful favorite; in Russian, Biron; Ernst Johann Bühren, Duke of Courland (1690–1772).

13. In Russian, Minih. Burkhard Christoph, Count Münnich (1683–1767), field marshal.

edly belongs to the number of the most distinguished men of Catherine's age. He died in 1800.

In Russia, where the memory of eminent men is soon obliterated owing to the absence of historical memoirs, the bizarre life of Annibal is known only through family tradition.

#### PUSHKIN'S ANCESTORS

On the Russian nobility side, Pushkin's family name can be traced back to one Konstantin Pushkin, born in the early fifteenth century, younger son of a Grigoriy Pushka. From Konstantin, there is a direct line of descent to Pyotr Pushkin (d. 1692), the ancestor of both parents of our poet (the paternal great-grandfather of his father and the maternal great-great-grandfather of his mother).

Pyotr Pushkin's son, Aleksandr (d. 1727), was the father of Lev (d. 1790), who was the father of Sergey (1770-1848), who married Nadezhda Gannibal (1775-1836) in 1796 and fathered our poet, Aleksandr Pushkin (1799-1837).

Pyotr Pushkin's younger son, Fyodor (d. 1728), was the father of Aleksey (d. 1777), who was the father of Maria (d. 1818). Maria Pushkin married Osip Gannibal (1744-1806), third son of Avraam Petrov, alias Gannibal, a Russianized African (1693?-1781). Osip's and Maria's daughter, Nadezhda, married Sergey Pushkin (her mother's second cousin) and was our poet's mother.

Abram (Avram, Avraam, Ibragim) Petrovich, or Petrov (baptismal patronymic), Annibal, or Gannibal, or Ganibal (assumed surname), hereafter referred to as "Abram Gannibal," had eleven children by his second wife, Christina Regine von (?) Schöberg, or Scheberch (b. 1706, d. two months before her husband): among them, Ivan Gannibal (1731?-1801), a distinguished general; Pyotr Gannibal (1742-1825?), artillery officer and country squire; Osip Gannibal (1744-1806), also a

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military man of sorts, our poet's maternal grandfather (in 1773 he married Maria Pushkin, second cousin of Sergey Pushkin); and two obscurer Gannibals, Isaak (1747–1804) and Yakov (b. 1749).

The following notes, in so far as my own research goes, mainly concern the origins and the first third of Abram Gannibal's life.

### THE DOCUMENTS

The basic documents regarding Abram Gannibal's origins are:

The petition: a clerical copy of a petition addressed in February, 1742 (i.e., in the reign of Elizabeth, Peter's daughter), by Major General Abram Gannibal, *ober-komendant* of Revel, or Reval (now Tallin), NW Russia, to the Senate, applying for a nobleman's diploma and heraldic arms.

The German biography: ff. 40–45 of a manuscript some 4000 words long (classified in the Lenin State Library, Moscow, as Cahier 2387A, which is a batch of sheets sewn together, to form a book, by the police immediately after Pushkin's death), comprising an anonymous biography of Abram Gannibal, written in a small Gothic hand, and pompously worded in idiomatic but none-too-literate German. All we know about this German biography (the MS of which I have not seen) is that it was written after Abram Gannibal's death (1781); that it contains certain details, such as a few names and dates, that only Gannibal would have remembered; and that it also includes a number of passages, contradicted either by historical documents (such as Gannibal's own petition) or by plain logic, that were obviously inserted by the biographer with a view to pad the story, to span its gaps, and to give a eulogistic (but actually absurd) interpretation of this or that event in the hero's life. I

think, therefore, that whoever spun this grotesque fabric had before his or her eyes some autobiographic notes left by Gannibal himself. The German seems to me to be that of a Rigan or Revalan. It may be the work of some Livonian or Scandinavian relative of Mme Gannibal (née Schöberg). The bad grammar seems to preclude its being a professional genealogist's job.

Pushkin's n. 11 to *EO* (mainly based on the biography, but with some new details supplied by family tradition or romantic imagination) has already been quoted.

We have in addition four items, curious and important in themselves, but not casting any new light on the subject: (1) an anonymous, very clumsy and incomplete, Russian version of the German biography, on ff. 28–29 and 56–58 of the same Cahier 2387A, in Pushkin's hand, but obviously dictated to him, judging by the uncouth style, probably in October, 1824, and certainly not later than the end of the year, by someone who had more German than he, with some desultory marginalia by Pushkin; (2) a very brief *curriculum vitae*, written or dictated to somebody by Pyotr Gannibal in his old age,<sup>14</sup> when he lived near the Pushkins' Mihaylovskoe, at his small countryseat, Petrovskoe; (3) a few words concerning Abram in a genealogical note, written by Pushkin in the early 1830's, known as *Rodoslovnaya Pushkinih i Ganibalov*, in which a short passage concerning Gannibal begins: "My maternal great-grandfather was a Negro . . ." (same Cahier 2387A, ff. 25, 60, 26, 59, 62); and (4) the factual as faintly seen through the fictional in Pushkin's unfinished historical romance (1827), six chapters and the beginning of a seventh, published

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14. In a letter dated Aug. 11, 1825, Pushkin wrote to his country neighbor, Praskovia Osipov: "I plan to look up my old Negro great-uncle, who, I suspect, will die one of these days: I am anxious to obtain from him certain memoirs regarding my great-grandfather." Was this all he was able to get?

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posthumously (1837) as *Arap Petra Velikogo* (The Blackamoor of Peter the Great), in which Abram appears as Ibragim (Ibrahim, Turkish form of Abraham).

### DATES OF ABRAM GANNIBAL'S BIRTH AND DEATH

The three biographers nearest to Gannibal in time, Helbig (see "Works Consulted"), the unknown author of the German biography (c. 1785), and Bantish-Kamenski (1836), are not in agreement. Helbig says that Abram died in 1781, and reckons his age at eighty-seven. The German biography says he died May 14, 1781, in his ninety-third year, which would have made him about seventeen years old when he first arrived in Moscow, whereas the same document says that he was "unter zehn Jahren" at the time, and in his twenty-eighth year in 1723-24. Bantish gives the date of Abram's death as 1782 and his age as ninety-one (a figure he obtained presumably from Pushkin's published note of 1825). This gives us a range of possible birth dates between 1689 and 1697; I am inclined to take 1693 as the nearest to historical truth.

On the grounds of Pushkin's marginalia in Cahier 2387A (as given in the descriptions of that MS), we can establish the fact that, except for the German biography, our poet had no chronological information regarding his great-grandfather's origin and youth. When beginning (July 31, 1827) his historical romance "*Arap Petra Velikogo*," Pushkin attempted to calculate Gannibal's birth and death dates from the scanty and conflicting data of the German biography (he appears not to have known, or to have ignored, Helbig at the time). In the margin of the first page of the Russian version of the German biography (f. 28 in the batch of sheets in the order in which they were posthumously sewed), our poet computed that if Abram was twenty-eight in 1725

(which would make him only eighty-four at the time of his death), he must have been born in 1697, and at the age of nine (in accordance with the statement in the German biography, a statement that might have set the numerative ball rolling in the first place) was brought to Russia in "1708" (either a mere slip for the correct 1706 or wishful miscalculation). Like many great men, Pushkin was a sedulous and wretched mathematician.

In another abstruse task—namely, at the top of the fourth page of the abridged Russian version of the German biography dictated to him (2387A, f. 56)—our poet apparently attempted to find the date of Gannibal's birth if, say, he were not twenty-eight, but twenty-six, in 1725. He discovered this to be 1699 and, adding nine, obtained the desired "1708," the year in which he thought that Gannibal had been baptized immediately upon his arrival in Russia.

A cryptic note in the right-hand corner of the second page (2387A, f. 57) reads: "brought [to Constantinople] [1]696," which is evidently the result of reckoning based on the fact that the German biography says that Gannibal was seven when removed from Abyssinia and ninety-two at the time of his death. We do not know how Pushkin coped with the awkward mathematical consequence that makes the little Moor spend ten years in the sultan's seraglio and appear as a gangling youth of seventeen before the tsar in Moscow. The only other jotting of interest is the name "Shepelyov," written in the left-hand margin of the same page. It would seem that Pushkin thought Dmitri Shepelyov (d. 1759)<sup>15</sup> to have been the Russian envoy at the time in Turkey. The envoy was, of course, Pyotr Tolstoy.

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15. As *gofmarshal* (earl marshal, master of ceremonies), Shepelyov accompanied Peter I on his journey to western Europe in 1716–17; he was made a general by the tsar's daughter, Elizabeth, in 1743.

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### GANNIBAL'S ORIGIN

The German biography begins: "Awraam Petrowitsch Hannibal war . . . von Geburt ein Afrikanischer Mohr [a blackamoor, an African black] aus Abyssinien. . ."

This fact therefore was known to Pushkin (who took down the Russian translation), but nowhere in his own notes does he ever refer to a specific region when speaking of his ancestor.

The *EO*, Chapter One, note (see earlier, "Pushkin's Comments . . .") begins: "The author, on his mother's side, is of African descent."

Aleksey Vulf, in an entry in his journal, mentions retrospectively that Pushkin showed him, on Sept. 15, 1827, at Mihaylovskoe, "the two first chapters he had just written of a romance in prose [now known as *Arap Petra Velikogo*], in which the main character represents his great-grandfather Gannibal, the son of an Abyssinian emir, captured by the Turks and sent from Constantinople by the Russian ambassador as a gift to Peter I, who had him educated and grew very fond of him."

In the Russian version of the German biography our poet's unknown dictamenter translates "Afrikanischer Mohr" "African Negro." And the German biography itself, in a further passage, refers to Gannibal as a *Neger*.

Abyssinians (or Ethiopians, in the strict sense) have a skin color varying from dusky to black. Their type represents a Hamito-Semitic component of the Caucasian race; and a Negroid strain may so strongly predominate in some tribes that the term "Negro" is in such cases applicable in a general sense; but apart from these considerations (to which I shall return at the end of these notes), the European layman of the time—and, in fact, Abram Gannibal himself—would classify colloquially as a "Negro" or "blackamoor" (in Russian, *negr* or *arap*—note the ultima) any more or less dark-

skinned African who was not an Egyptian and not an Arab (in Russian, *arab*).

In his brief *curriculum vitae*, in badly misspelled Russian, written or more probably dictated in his dotage, Pyotr Gannibal makes the following statement (probably in the autumn of 1825, when our poet presumably consulted him):

My father . . . was a Negro; his father was of noble origin; that is, a ruling seigneur. My father was taken as an *amanat* [a Caucasian term meaning "hostage"] to the court in Constantinople, whence he was stolen and dispatched to Tsar Peter I.

This is repeated in Pushkin's note *Rodoslovnaya . . . Ganibalov*.

The German biography continues thus:

[He was] the son of a local ruler, powerful and rich, who proudly traced his descent in direct line from the house of the famed Hannibal, the terror of Rome. [Abram's] father was a vassal of the Turkish emperor or the Ottoman Empire who by the end of the preceding century, because of oppression and molestation [*Druck und Belästigung*], had revolted, with other Abyssinian princes, his countrymen and allies, against his overlord, the sultan; whereupon various petty but bloody wars followed, in which, however, might eventually triumphed and this Hannibal [Abram], still a boy, the youngest son of the ruling prince, with other highborn youths, was sent in his eighth year to Constantinople as a hostage. Although, given his youth, this fate should not have befallen him so early, still, owing to the fact that his father, according to the Moslem custom, had very many wives (even up to about thirty, with a correspondingly large progeny), the numerous old princesses and their children joined forces in the common intention of protecting themselves and their offspring; and since [Abram] was the youngest son of one of the youngest wives, who did not have at court as many supporters [as the elder princesses had], these contrived through trickery and intrigue, almost by force, to put him on a Turkish vessel

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[*Fahrzeug*] and turned him over to the fate that had been assigned him.

I shall presently show that in the 1690's, the period referred to here, no Abyssinian was a vassal of the Ottoman Porte, and no Abyssinian prince could have been a Moslem or could have been forced to send any tribute to Constantinople. The "terror of Rome" will also be discussed. But before I attempt to clear up all this muddle, let us glance at the geographical situation.

### GANNIBAL'S BIRTHPLACE

Abram Gannibal's petition (1742) contains the following brief but important information:

I, your humble subject, am a native of Africa [*rodom ya . . . iz Afriki*], of the high nobility there [*tamoshnego znatnogo dvoryanstva*]. I was born in the demesne [*vo vladenii*] of my father, in the town of Lagona [or Lagono or Lagon: *v gorode Lagone*—this is the locative case, which in Russian does not disclose the ultima of the nominative]. Moreover, my father had under his rule [*imel pod soboyu*] two other towns . . .<sup>16</sup>

It will be noted that (in so far as we have to rely on this text as it appears in the various biographical works listed at the end of this appendix—e.g., Anuchin) no particular region in Africa is indicated in the petition. On the strength of the German biography, I assume that this town is in Abyssinia. The locative case, as already stated, does not provide one with any clue to the orthography of the nominative; moreover, the ridiculous Russian custom of transliterating both *h* and *g* by means of a Russian gamma does not tell us whether this African name in a Roman transcription<sup>17</sup> should be "Lagon,"

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16. For the next sentence of the petition see the section "Gannibal and Raguzinski."

17. I.e., the characters universally accepted in geographic

“Lahon,” “Lagona,” “Lahona,” “Lagono,” or “Lahono.” I suspect that “Lahona” is the correct transcription of the unknown original but shall further refer to the place as “L.” The similarity between the name of the sister mentioned in the German biography and the name of the native town mentioned only in the petition is very disturbing. I have not found—within the limited scope of my reading—any instance of an Abyssinian child receiving the name of its birthplace.

In the course of a work that in its historical, ethnical, and geo-nomenclatorial portions is below criticism, Dmitri Anuchin (1899), an anthropologizing journalist, states that after talking to a “French traveler, Saint-Yves” (Georges Saint-Yves?), and to “Professor Paulichke” (presumably, Philippe Paulitschke), he has come to the conclusion that “L” is a town and a district located “on the right bank of the river Mareb in the province of Hamasen.” The “Loggo” supplied by Paulitschke (teste Anuchin), and also by an Italian map of 1899 (which I have not seen), and the “Logo” of Salt (to be discussed presently), somehow, in the course of Anuchin’s comments and deductions, evolve first a caudal *t* and then a caudal *n*, which none of *my* “L’s” do; for at this point I abandoned Anuchin and launched upon some research of my own.

Charles Poncet (traveling in 1698–1700) divides the empire of Ethiopia into several kingdoms (provinces), such as the Tigré. He divides the Tigré (ruled by Viceroy “Gaurekos”) into twenty-four principalities (districts),

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nomenclature. This has nothing to do with individual mistakes or transliterative predilections (Latin, Spanish, Italian, German, English, French, etc.) within the range of this alphabet, or the tendency on the part of experts in this or that language transliterated to break into a rash of diacritical signs. This writer fervently hopes that the Cyrillic alphabet, together with the even more absurd characters of Asiatic languages, will be completely scrapped some near day.

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of which he names only a few, such as the "Saravi" (Serawe), a plateau 6000 feet high.

Henry Salt, a century later, divides the Tigré proper ("commonly called the Kingdom of the Baharnegash") into less than half of Poncet's number of districts, among which he names the Hamazen in the north, the Serawe south of it, and, still farther south, the tiny district of Logo. At some later date, when the Hamazen (or Hamasen) and the Serawe became provinces, the latter, in its spread or shift southward to the Mareb River, engulfed the Logo district and other small districts.

The Mareb is easily located, and its name hardly varies in travelers' accounts, of which there are so few prior to the nineteenth century. An examination of the reproductions of the old maps in the splendid work of Albert Kammerer (1952) shows that this is the Mareb of Jacopo d'Angiolo (alias Agnolo della Scarperia), Rome MS, c. 1450; of Melchisedec Thevenot (after Balthazar Tellez), 1663; of Job Ludolf, 1683; of Bourguignon d'Anville, 1727; of Bruce, 1790 (drawn 1772); it is the Marib of Fra Mauro, 1460; the Marabo of Jacopo Gastaldi, 1561; the Marabus of Livio Sanuto, 1578; the Marab of Father Manoel de Almeida, 1645 (sketched c. 1630). It is also the Moraba of Poncet's account (1704).

Anuchin's informer, or more probably Anuchin himself, has confused two separate places: Logo and Logote. Saint-Yves, traveling, I suppose, sometime in the latter part of the nineteenth century, had seen from a mesa (Tokule Mt.) the town of "Logot" (teste Anuchin, Russian transliteration) in the valley of the Mareb. In Salt's time (1810), Logo and Logote (or Legote) were separate townlets in two adjacent districts, the northern Logo and the southern Legote, the latter bounded south by the Munnai stretch of Mareb River. According to the only other author who mentions Logote (T. Lefebvre,

1846, III, 21, 28; whom, no doubt, Anuchin's French informer had read), the district of Logote (Salt's Legote) is separated from the districts of "Tserana" and "Tokoulé" by the Belessa River (which is the Mai Belessan of Salt (1816 edn., p. 195), a tributary of the Mareb. Lefebvre describes the Belessa as following the example of the Mareb by disappearing under the sands during the dry season, when, however, a little digging provides one with plenty of water. "Cette vallée de Logote étant très malsaine et remplie d'animaux carnassiers [lions, panthers], tous les villages sont situés sur la chaîne," and the villagers, having to come from those arid heights for water into the valley, are "très avarés de leurs provisions."

The Mareb, which in its central course may be roughly said to separate northern Abyssinia from the rest of the country, is at various seasons and at various points of its meandering progress a raging torrent, an underground stream, or a dribble losing itself among the sands. Its various stretches bear, or have borne, local names. Its headwaters arise in the northeast, within fifty miles of Annesley Bay on the Red Sea; it is a tiny rivulet with a narrow bed below Debarwa; then it swells, sweeps south, turns west, and, collecting numerous other streams from the northern mountains, flows west toward the Sudan frontier, to disappear in the soil near Kassala, though in very wet weather an ultimate trickle reaches Atbara. Among these little northern tributaries we find the Seremai, the Belessa, and the Obel. The last appears on Bent's map (1893) and on the U. S. Army map (1943); the Seremai River, which is apparently just east of the Obel, is mentioned by Salt (1814), who, on his way inland from the Red Sea and the town of Dixan, which he left Mar. 5, 1810 (p. 242), arrived the following day at the picturesque village of Abha (p. 245):

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March 7th.—We struck our tents at five in the morning, and after proceeding about a mile southward, brought the hill of Cashaat to bear due east of us, at which point . . . we turned off a little to the west, and travelled about eight miles . . . until we reached an agreeable station, by the side of a river called Seremai. This river shapes its course through the bottom of a small secluded valley, surrounded on every side by steep and rugged hills, in a nook of which, about a mile to the eastward, lay a large town called Logo, whence the surrounding district takes its name.

Logo at that time (1810) was commanded by a rebellious chieftain “who in the campaign of the preceding year had been reduced to obedience by the Ras,” and who made an attempt to stop and rob Salt’s caravan. For all we know, he may have been Pushkin’s fourth cousin.

From Logo the Salt party traveled SSW (p. 248) “Our road now [Mar. 7, 1810] lay . . . through a wild and uncultivated country; we crossed the stream called Mai Belessan . . . and, after mounting a steep ascent, reached the village of Legôte. . . . The distance we had travelled from our last station [on the Seremai River, one mile west from the village of Logo] may be computed at about eight miles.” Salt then crossed the Mareb and proceeded southward toward the “completely scarped” mountain (Debra Damo), “which in the earliest periods of the Abyssinian history, served as a place of confinement for the younger branches of the [royal] family” (p. 248), at which point Salt recalls Dr. Johnson’s “beautiful and instructive romance.” This is a reference to Samuel Johnson’s insipid tale, *The Prince of Abissinia* or (in later editions) *The History of Rasselas, Prince of Abissinia*,<sup>18</sup> which appeared anonymously in two volumes

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18. *Rasselas* was represented in Pushkin’s library (Ballantyne’s Novelist Library, vol. V, London, 1823, which also contains Sterne’s *Sentimental Journey* and Goldsmith’s *The Vicar of Wakefield*), but Pushkin had not enough English to

in the spring of 1759—at a time readers managed to find poetry and talent in the journalism of Voltaire's flat *Contes*. Earlier (1735) Johnson had translated for a few shillings Joachim Le Grand's *Voyage historique d'Abissinie, du R.P. Jérôme Lobo*, Paris, 1728 (and this is the explanation of the spelling "Abissinia" in *Rasselas*, which puzzled James Macaulay, author of the preface to the 1884 facsimile edition of that work). Jeronimo Lobo, whose own text has never been printed, was a Portuguese Jesuit; he visited Abyssinia during the years 1624–32, in the reign of Susneyos (Malak Sagad III, later known as Seltan Sagad I), who publicly made his submission to Rome; the hero of Johnson's tale was that emperor's brother, Ras (Prince) Ce'ela Krestos (spelled also Cella Christos), the *Rasselas* of Le Grand (p. 502), governor of Gojam, and one of the stanchest supporters of the Jesuits (Beckingham and Huntingford, 1954, pp. xxv, 59). It is most pleasing to reflect that Salt may have seen on the very same day the birthplace of Pushkin's ancestor and the scene of Johnson's story.

The only maps on which I have been able to locate Logo are: the one in Salt's work and a smaller one (obviously copied from Salt, without acknowledgment) illustrating the 1830–32 journal kept by Samuel Gobat (a Swiss clergyman born in 1799). On Salt's map, this townlet or village of Logo is situated at 39°2'5" E and 14°7'5" N. It lies about forty-five miles NNW of Aksum and about fifty miles S of Debarwa. I doubt if it exists today;

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read it. If he knew Johnson's tale at all, as he probably did, it was in a French translation, of which there were several (Belot, 1760; Fouchecour, 1798; Louis, 1818; Notré, 1823). A Russian translation was published in Moscow, 1795, but a Russian gentleman would ignore the wretched Russian adaptations of the time and prefer the more fluid, though hardly more exact, French versions. Thus the poet and rebel Küchelbecker read *Rasselas* in French in prison, at Sveaborg, Feb. 2, 1832.

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perhaps it has wandered to some other site, as Abyssinian villages have been known to do; but its ghost should be sought N of the Munnai stretch of the Mareb River and E of its little northern tributary, the Obel (*obel* means "tamarisk" in Tigré), in the former province of Seraoe (Serae, Serawe). On Baratieri's map (1896) there is a "Mai Laham" at  $38^{\circ}7' \text{ E}$ ,  $14^{\circ}7'5'' \text{ N}$ , and on the U. S. Army map (1943), there is an "Adi Mai Laam" on the "Asmara" at  $38^{\circ}9' \text{ E}$ ,  $14^{\circ}8' \text{ N}$ . *Adi* means "village," *mai* is "water" or "ford," *laham* may be "cattle" or (according to Salt, 1811, III, 12) a "mango-like tree" (which is, I presume, *Eugenia owariensis* Beauv.). On none of the numerous maps made prior to the eighteenth century have I found any locus suggestive of "Logo," or "Lagon," or "Lagona," except obvious Italian or Spanish descriptive terms for "lake," "canal," "hot spring," or "pool" (*lagone*).

The trouble is that at exactly the necessary period, between the last visits of Jesuit priests in the 1630's and James Bruce's travels in the 1770's, no vocal European except Poncet (1698–1700) journeyed to northern Abyssinia—and neither Lobo (in Le Grand), nor Almeida, nor Poncet, nor Bruce mentions "L."

I have discovered, however, another candidate for Gannibal's birthplace. Salt, in his earlier journal (1811, III, 61), mentions the village of "Lahaina,"<sup>19</sup> which he saw on Sept. 9, 1805, on his way northward from "Antalow" (Antalo), the capital of Tigré-Endorta, to "Mucullah" (Macalle), in the same province. This Lahaina is, or was, about six miles from Antalo, in a direction nearly NNE, and thus about a hundred miles SSE of Logo. I cannot locate it on any map, but judging by

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19. Or is this a misspelling for "Lahama" or "Lehama," a small district in Endorta mentioned by Lefebvre (III, 43)? There is, of course, another "Lahaina" in the world—namely, the former residence of the kings in the Hawaiian Islands.

Salt's account (he had just passed by "a picturesque village called Haraqué," which I identify with Gargara of the U. S. Army map, 1943), I should place Lahaina midway between  $39^{\circ}$  and  $40^{\circ}$  E and midway between  $13^{\circ}$  and  $14^{\circ}$  N. Beyond "Haraqué," after proceeding from one hill to another, Salt saw "on a rising ground to our right [to the east] a village of considerable extent called Lahaina, from which place the road, turning a little more to the west, led through a more cultivated country, thickly set with acacia and brushwood . . ." There is no reason why this Lahaina, rather than Logo or Logote, should not have been the Lagona or Lahona of Gannibal's petition, and there may have existed other similarly sounding place names (on a "Laham" basis, for instance). I would consider therefore the determination of "L" as not settled at the time of writing (1956); but I am inclined to assume that it was situated in the general region of northern Abyssinia, where we have been following, through the bibliographic dust, the mules and camels of several adventurous caravans.

#### GANNIBAL'S SISTER

After the passage concerning the scheming senior wives, who managed to have the youngest one's son turned over to the Turks, the German biography continues thus:

His only full sister, Lahann, who was some years older than he, had yet sufficient courage to oppose this act of violence. She tried everything, but had to yield to number; she accompanied him to the very deck of the small ship, still nursing the hope that she might obtain by entreaties the freedom of this much beloved brother or purchase it with her jewels; but when she found that her tender efforts [*zärtliches Bemühen*] remained fruitless to the last, she cast herself in despair into the sea and was drowned. To the very end of his days, the venerable old man [Abram] would shed tears of the tenderest friendship

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and love as he recollected her; for although he was still very young at the time of that tragic event, yet whenever he thought of her this vague memory would become new and complete for him; and this offering [Abram's tears] was the better deserved by her sisterly tenderness since she had struggled so hard to free him, and since these two were the only siblings from the same mother.

Pushkin, in his note to the 1825 edn. of Chapter One of *EO*, obviously improves upon the German biography when he says: "[Abram] also remembered his beloved [or "favorite"] sister, *Lagan'* [Russ.], swimming in the distance after the ship in which he was receding."

As I have already mentioned in a footnote to his *Lagan'*, Pushkin carelessly follows here the Russian tradition of rendering the Latin *H* by the Russian gamma (so that, for instance, Henry becomes *Genri* and Heine masquerades as *Geyne*). Moreover, he attempts to feminize the ending of the name, which terminates in a consonant (an impossible ending for a feminine name in Russian), by closing it with a "soft sign" (an apostrophe in transliteration).

The receding ship, in whose wake swam—somewhat ahead of the romantic era—a passionate sister, might be easily condemned to dwindle to a reed raft on a seasonable river; indeed, the entire event might be dismissed by the cynic as one of those fairy-tale recollections that old age confuses with true happenings; but there is one reason it should command attention: the name "Lahann" is, I find, a plausible Abyssinian name.<sup>20</sup>

Generally speaking, names in *L*, and particularly in

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20. In Turkish, a language that Gannibal must have been able to understand at one time, *lahana* means "cabbage" and *lahin* "note," "tone," "melody." In Arabic, *lahan* means "melody," "modulation," "mispronunciation," and *layan* means "softness," "gentleness," *Zärtlichkeit*. In several Oriental languages, the stem *lah-* is associated with "loose woman" (cf. the Russian *lahanka*, a slattern, Pskovan dial., and *lahudra*, an inferior whore).

*La*, occur comparatively seldom in Abyssinian chronicles. According to Amharic dictionaries, there is a man's name "Layahan"; and in the reign of King Bahafa (1719-28) there was a general named Lahen, who died about 1728 when governor of Hamasen (R. Basset, 1881, XVIII, 363).

We do not know how old was Ras Fares, governor of Tigré, in the 1690's, nor do we know the number of his wives or concubines. But we do know that Fares must have been an elderly man at the time, and we also know from the chronicles (Basset, XVIII, 310) that a young wife of his, who died at the latest in 1697, bore the name of Lahia Dengel or Lahya Dengel (meaning in Tigré "beauty of the Virgin"), which has a striking resemblance to that of the girl who may have been her daughter.

#### GANNIBAL'S PARENTAGE

To understand the various improbabilities and absurdities in the German biography, the history of Abyssinia should be briefly recalled.

The Gospel was introduced there about A.D. 327 by Frumentius (c. 290-c. 350), a native of Phoenicia, who was consecrated bishop of Aksum by Athanasius of Alexandria. An awareness of that primitive empire, so near to Arabia, so far from Rome, was slow in reaching western Europe. The first reliable information was the fortunate outcome of ill-fated ventures on the part of heroic Jesuit missionaries who affronted the nameless dangers of a fabulous land for the holy joys of distributing images of their fair idols and of secretly rebaptizing native children under the pious disguise of medical care. Some of these brave men were successful as martyrs, others as mapmakers. In the sixteenth century, Portuguese troops helped the Abyssinians to break a relatively brief spell of Moslem domination that began about 1528

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and lasted till the middle of the century. At one time, c. 1620, under King Susneyos, Abyssinia was actually converted by Portuguese Jesuits into a grotesque form of Catholicism, which petered out about 1630, in the beginning of the reign of Fasilidas, who restored the old religion and had the churches occupied again by the Monophysite clergy. In modern times, Russians have been pleasantly surprised at finding a kind of natural Greek-Orthodox tang to certain old eremitic practices still persisting in Ethiopia; and Protestant missionaries have been suspected by the natives of paganism because of their indifference to pictures of female saints and winged boys.

In the period that alone interests us—the last years of the seventeenth century and the first ones of the eighteenth—most Abyssinians were Christians; i.e., members of the Abyssinian Church, a dreary, Coptic-flavored brew of the more absurd ideas of old Christian and Jewish priests, all this spiced with barbarous local abominations. Despite the memory of cruel invasions, the state tolerated, for commercial reasons, Moslems and, for sporting ones, heathen Negro tribes, such as the Shangalla group, to which belonged the black savages inhabiting at the time a region not far from, or including, Logo, at a point “where the river Mareb, leaving Dobarwa, flows through thick bushes” (Bruce, 1790, II, 549). In the late seventeenth century, and afterward, these heathens were enthusiastically hunted by Abyssinian kings in periodical safaris, and there is nothing impossible in a hypothesis that Pushkin’s ancestor was captured in the process and sold to the Turks.

By 1700, little trace remained of the Moslem invasion that had been led by Ahmed ibn Ibrahim el Ghazi, surnamed Gran (Lefty), possibly a Somali, more than a century and a half before. Indeed, by the time of John I (c. 1667–81), the Moslems, although holding the east-

coast islands, had no political power inland and were compelled to live in separate quarters in Abyssinian towns. It is conceivable that Gannibal's father was a pagan warrior or a well-to-do Moslem trader, and it is likewise conceivable that he was a local chief of princely blood, ruling over a district or a province, but it is impossible for one to imagine (as does Anuchin, blindly followed by Vegner and other ovine compilers) that about 1700, some 150 miles north of Gondar, the proud capital of Abyssinia, and less than 50 miles north from her sacred city Aksum, an Abyssinian nobleman governing three towns would be a subject of the Turkish sultan and thus a vassal of the Ottoman Empire!

We shall now suppose that (1) Gannibal's father was indeed a regional governor in northern Abyssinia and that (2) Gannibal's recollection of "taxes" and "tributes" corresponded in a twisted and nebulous way to certain historical realities.

Gannibal was born in a town beginning with *L*, in the Tigré proper or the Tigré-Endorta, about 1693, in the reign of Jesus the Great (Jyasu I; throne name, Adyam Sagad I), who succeeded his father John in 1680 (according to Basset), 1681 (according to J. Perruchon), or 1682 (according to Beckingham and Huntingford) and was assassinated in result of the machinations of Queen Melakotawit (Fr. transliteration), who wanted her son, Tekla-Haymonot, to reign. Poncet, when spending the summer of 1700 in Debarwa, then the capital of Tigré, feasted there with two regional governors: one of them was apparently the governor of the whole Tigré province (*bahrnegas* or *bahr-negus*, a title that originally meant "lord of the sea," but that by the beginning of the preceding century had lost much of its importance); the other chief was either a temporary coruler or a district governor. Poncet gives the name of the first as "Gaurekos." This, I suspect, should read

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“Gyorgis” (or “Guirguis”<sup>21</sup>), which is the Arabic Jirjis and the European George.

The chronicle published by Basset mentions only one governor of Tigré about 1700, namely, Ras Fares (*ras* or *raz* meaning “head” in the Geez language). He became governor in the eleventh year of the reign of Jesus I and was still governor in the twenty-second year of that reign. In the first years of the eighteenth century he seems to have been assigned to other, presumably military, duties, although exercising his governorship off and on; and perhaps the other fellow, George, ruled in the intervals—and was being broken in at the time Poncet found the *bahrnegas* twinned.<sup>22</sup> Ras Fares survived the two-year-long reign of Tekla-Haymonot I and was exiled to the isle of Mesrah by the next emperor, Theophilus (Tewoflos), who reigned for three years (c. 1708–11). At this point I lose track of Fares, who presumably died in exile.

Jesus I (1682–1706, according to Beckingham and Huntingford and to Budge) was a not-untalented despot, and a mighty hunter, inordinately fond of chasing the buffalo and the Galla. He also kept a sharp eye on his provincial and district administrators. In the seventeenth year of his reign—that is, in the late 1690’s (when Gannibal was five or six years of age)—the exactions of the officials and their robbery of the nation in collecting taxes became so outrageous that the emperor summoned all the notables from Endorta and other districts and

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21. The Portuguese Jesuit Almeida, who journeyed inland from the Red Sea in 1621, mentions Keba Christos, governor of Tigré, “encamped in a beautiful meadow near Debaroa [Debarwa],” and Asma Guirguis, his brother.

22. Poncet later met “Guarekos’” brother, an eremite whom he saw in September on his way to Massawa and the Red Sea, in the Monastery of Bizen (Debra Bizan, near Asmara), where the sixty-six-year-old holy man was making himself dreadfully ill by trying to subsist on a diet of raw rack-tree leaves.

demanded an explanation of them. The principal article of merchandise was rock salt. The officials, in the name of customs dues, used to confiscate most of the salt that the merchants brought on their asses into the town. The emperor decided that the tax on salt should be uniform throughout the country. The tax on five mules laden with salt was to be one slab (see Basset, XVIII, 303-20, and Budge, I, 417).

The scandal coincided with Poncet's arrival in Abyssinia, and it is possible to believe that Ras Fares and various district governors in the province of Tigré (including Endorta) were involved. In these cases the emperor would no doubt feel even freer than usual to exact tribute from the governors—and probably would think nothing of ordering them to send their children as samples of Abyssinian nobility to the court of a Frankish king.

#### GANNIBAL'S ENSLAVEMENT

In the Abyssinia of those days everybody seems to have been selling everybody else into slavery. There is a charming story about an Abyssinian priest who is sent young divinity students by a friend, another priest, sells these youths one by one to a Moslem trader, then sells him his friend the priest, and then gets sold himself. In his *Travels* (1790), Bruce mentions Dixan (at 14°59'55" and 39°38'30", according to Salt), the first frontier town he reached in Abyssinia from the coastal island of Masuah (Massawa), on the Red Sea. "Dixan is built on the top of a hill, perfectly in form of a sugar loaf" (III, 84), and consists of Moslems and Christians; "the only trade of either of these sects is a very extraordinary one, that of selling of children. The Christians bring such as they have stolen in Abyssinia to Dixan as to a sure deposit; and the Moors receive them there, and carry

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them to a certain market at Masuah, whence they are sent over to Arabia and India" (III, 88).

About 1700, according to Poncet, the price for a robust male slave was only ten *écus* (fifty shillings). In 1880, according to Enid Starkie, the average price of a small boy was twenty strips of copper cut from a kettle. Some eight years later, in the days of "trader Rainbow" (as the English called the French ex-poet Rimbaud), Christian Abyssinian boys cost eighty Levant dollars (about 150 shillings) per head. One suspects that most of the little Africans shipped to Arabia and Turkey were used there as catamites before reaching the age of toil.

I do not know how probable it may have been for the child of a seigneur, a province governor, or district governor to be directly or indirectly sold into slavery; but there is definite information (for instance, in Poncet) that in 1700 Emperor Jesus could and did command the noblemen—i.e., various relatives of his, as all nobles were—to dispatch their children to a distant European court, with the result that these unfortunate Abyssinian youngsters were captured en route by the Turks.

Poncet, a French pharmacist in Cairo, who was invited to Abyssinia to treat Jesus I for conjunctivitis, left Cairo June 10, 1698, and, via the Nile and Dongola, reached Gondar July 21, 1699. The emperor proclaimed a young Armenian merchant (named "Murat" or, more exactly, Murad ben Magdelun, said to be the nephew of one of the emperor's ministers) ambassador to France: he was to accompany Poncet to Paris with gifts for King Louis XIV such as elephants, horses, and *jeunes enfans éthiopiens*, scions of noble families.

On his return voyage to Cairo (now via the Red Sea), Poncet left Gondar May 2, 1700, for Massawa, planning to stop on the way in the capital of Tigré, Debarwa, which he reached in mid-July, and to wait there for

Murad, who was still collecting the animals and the children. But there were further delays; several horses and the only elephant, a young tuskless beast, died while crossing the Serawe Mts., and on Sept. 8, 1700, after waiting for Murad for almost two months, Poncet left Debarwa for the coast. Nine days later he reached the island of Massawa, embarked for Jidda on Sept. 28, and arrived there on Dec. 5. Murad being still delayed, the next meeting place was fixed at the head of the Red Sea in Suez, for which Poncet set out Jan. 12, 1701. At the end of April he reached the Mt. Sinai Monastery, where a month later Murad finally caught up with him, bringing a sad report: in Jidda, "le Roy de la Mecque" (the Grand Sherif Saad?) took away from him the highborn Ethiopian children that Murad had collected for the king of France—and it is not inconceivable that some of these the governor of Mecca (or that of Jidda) forwarded to the sultan of the Ottoman Empire, Mustafa II, as his own little tribute. All Murad now had were two young attendants obtained on the way at Suakin, "the bigger one an Ethiopian, the smaller a [Negro?] slave" (Le Grand, p. 431). Poncet's and Murad's caravan reached Cairo in the first week of June, and Poncet presented himself there before the French consul, Maillet.

In Cairo Poncet, now impatient to leave for France, got into trouble with Maillet, who questioned Murad's ambassadorial status, and with the Turks, who questioned the religion of the two slave boys (Murad's acquisition?) whom Poncet was taking with him. Says Le Grand (pp. 417–18): "L'Aga et les gens de la Douane [vinrent] l'avertir [June 26, 1701] que ses deux domestiques Abissins étant Mahométans devoient etre rachetés . . . [Poncet] répondit que si ces enfans étoient Mahométans" he would make a gift of them to the Turkish governor of Egypt. But the local Jesuit superior, "touché de zèle pour le salut de ces deux enfans," intervened,

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and Poncet was not bothered any more. Whether he got the two youngsters out of Cairo, we do not know. It is also not clear if we should count as one of these boys or count separately as a third item, or consider as representing both, a “jeune esclave éthiopien” (Le Grand, p. 432) whom Murad had brought to the French consul at Cairo, to be shipped to France together with the remains—ears and trunk—of the young elephant. This *petit esclave*, when already placed on the Nile barge that was to take him to the ship, began to cry that he was a Moslem, that he was being kidnaped, that he did not want to go to Christendom, which provoked a tumult, in consequence of which the Turkish officials removed the boy from the barge and placed him in the keep of one Mustafa Kiaya Kazdugli, after which Poncet sailed for France. Incidentally, the episode is curiously distorted in its retelling by Bruce (II, 488–89), who says that Poncet, when embarking at Bulaq, on the Nile, for his voyage to France, “watched helplessly as a bought slave, a poor Abyssinian lad, whom he was bringing for Louis the Fourteenth . . . was being taken out of ship by the Janizaries . . . and made a Mahometan before his eyes”—which implies, if I correctly understand what Bruce means, that the boy was an uncircumcised heathen Negro, and not a Christian Ethiopian, who would have been circumcised anyway (on the eighth day after his birth).

### GANNIBAL IN TURKEY

After describing Lahann's death at the time of her brother's departure from Abyssinia or some neighboring seaport, the German biography continues:

Not long after [*nicht lange nach*] this separation forever, Hannibal arrived in Constantinople and with the other young hostages was confined in the seraglio, to be raised there among the noble pages of the sultan, and there he

spent one year and some months [*ein Jahr und etliche Monate*].

Let us pause here for a moment in order to check the chronological situation. We shall see presently that the Russian envoy could have obtained the young *arap* only between the autumn of 1702 and the summer of 1705 and that the most probable year is 1703. Working backward, we arrive at the following conclusion.

The journey from his home in inner Abyssinia—which, according to the German biography, Gannibal was forced to leave at seven years of age (“in seinem achten Jahre . . . nach Constantinopel gesandt”)—to Turkey must have taken considerably longer than the meaningless gap-filler “nicht lange nach” implies—even if we choose for him the shortest itinerary of the time, from the Tigré Province to northwestern Turkey. There was an initial trek to a Red Sea port, then the tricky passage up the Red Sea to Suez, then another land journey to a Mediterranean port, and finally the long, awesome, and nauseous voyage to Stambul. Taking into account the difficulties of navigation and many delays, we must reckon the whole journey to have lasted at least one year—probably longer, especially if we take into consideration that Gannibal might have been conveyed to Turkey not by sea but by the caravan road via Arabia and Syria. In other words, he must have left home in 1700 if, by 1703, he had been living in Constantinople since the end of 1701.

We now have to choose between two possibilities: (1) that the boy landed in the Constantinople slave market in the ordinary course of the trade or (2) that, as the German biography avers, he was smuggled out of the sultan’s seraglio and delivered to the Russian envoy, with the help of a grand vizier.

If we consider the first proposition, all we can say is either that the Russian envoy’s agent may have induced

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his employer to show more gratitude by persuading him that the young slave had really been a highborn prisoner in the palace or, more likely, that the Russian envoy, having purchased the boy by ordinary means, cooked up the exotic version to impress the tsar. Since, however, we are inclined to accept the story of Gannibal's noble origin, for want of a better hypothesis, we may as well see what historical background there is to support the contention of the German biography, which, after the sentence referring to the length of time spent by Gannibal in Constantinople, launches upon the account of his deliverance with the following idiotic argument:

At that time the Emperor Peter I [was] introducing the arts and the sciences in his realm and endeavoring to spread them among [his] noblemen. He did succeed to some extent in this undertaking; yet considering the great multitude of nobles in that most extensive of the world's empires, the number of people who showed inclination toward learning proved much too insignificant, a state of affairs that caused the late emperor most grievous and vexing pain. He cast around for means to extract from among the nation . . . examples and models. Finally, he conceived the idea of writing to his ambassador in Constantinople, requesting him to obtain for him and send him some young black boys of good abilities. His minister followed his orders with the utmost fidelity: he got acquainted with the supervisor of the seraglio where the sultan's pages were being reared and educated, and then, through the intermediation of the grand vizier obtained, in a secret and dangerous manner, three lads. . . .

One of these was Gannibal.

Prior to the era of more or less normal diplomatic relations between Russia and Turkey, a councilor of Peter I, Emelian Ukraintsev (1660?–1708), had been sent as envoy extraordinary to Constantinople in 1699, after the cessation of a long and confused war.<sup>23</sup> He

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23. The Karlowitz Treaty between Turkey on one side and Austria, Poland, and the state of Venice on the other was

concluded a peace treaty (July 3, 1700), supposed to be good for thirty years, and returned to Russia.<sup>24</sup> In 1700–01 Russia was briefly represented at the Porte by the grand envoy, Prince Dmitri Golitsin (1665–1737), who was in Constantinople only to ratify the treaty.

The first regular Russian ambassador to reside in Turkey (where he stayed for twelve years) was Count Pyotr Tolstoy (1645–1729), who was appointed Apr. 2, 1702, and arrived in August. The sultan in power, Mustafa II, had one more year to reign before being dethroned (Aug. 22, 1703), in consequence of a thirty-six-day-long military rebellion, by his brother Ahmed III (who was to last till 1730). Mustafa granted Tolstoy his first audience in November, 1702. During the period interesting us (1702–05), seven grand viziers succeeded one another.

Of these, Hussein Kuprulu,<sup>25</sup> an intelligent and amiable pasha, retired Sept. 5, 1702. During his rule, the mortality among Turkish poets was, for some reason, very great: as many as twelve died in 1699. The next grand vizier (*krayniy vizir*’, in the Russian of the time) was Daltaban the Serbian, whom European observers

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signed the same year. Incidentally, Emelian Ignatievich (patronymic) Ukraintsev is split into three persons in my edition of Hammer-Purgstall (XIII, 37n): the councilors Amilianusch, Ignatodesich, and Oukraintzov!

24. Subsequently this tough politician was appointed to settle the Russian-Turkish frontier on the river Bug, after which he headed the Department of Provisions, was accused of profiteering, and survived a thrashing with *dub’yo* (a collective noun meaning oak cudgels or knotted clubs), to become envoy to Hungary.

25. The transliteration of Turkish names is the whim of this or that European historian, and the right form is hard to choose without special study. Kuprulu, for instance, appears as Koeprulu in Hammer, Kuprulis in Bonnac, and Kiuprili, Koprulu, or Kuprullu in English works on the subject. As in the case of Abyssinian history, there is also a bothersome discrepancy in matters of dates (I have, on the whole, followed Hammer, with some misgivings).

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call an illiterate brute, and who among other wise and important decrees forbade Christians and Jews to wear kalpaks of red cloth. His bellicose spirit made him unpopular, and four months later he was quietly strangled by the palace executioner. He was succeeded on Jan. 25, 1703, by Rami Pasha, said to be an honest and enlightened personage who wrote verse in a polished style. He fell with his master, Sultan Mustafa. The next grand vizier (Aug. 23–Nov. 16, 1703), the first to serve Sultan Ahmed, was a pasha of Russian extraction, Chancellor Ahmed, a very corrupt, rotund little man, dubbed Beehive because of his squat shape and his ability to store up the sweets of life. Less than four months later he was exiled to Lepanto, after having been made to disgorge the treasures he had accumulated. His successor, Hasan, a son-in-law of the sultan, reigned for less than a year (till Sept. 28, 1704). He was a very honest and comparatively humane pasha of Greek origin and cannot be suspected of selling the sultan's pages to a foreigner. His successor was the bad-tempered and violent Kalailikoz, who detested Frenchmen and Russians and who, in his turn, was succeeded on Dec. 26, 1704, by Baltaji Mohammed (a former governor of Jidda), a wily pasha who lasted till May 3, 1706. During his rule, not later than the summer of 1705, Abram Gannibal was shipped to Azov, so we do not have to bother about the next grand vizier (the tyrannic Ali, 1706–10); but if any of these worthies was involved in Gannibal's surreptitious removal from the seraglio to the Russian embassy or to a moored Russian vessel, I would suggest it was Beehive or Mohammed.

Pyotr Tolstoy is described by historians as a crafty, unscrupulous, and sinister character. In 1717, he was sent by the tsar to retrieve Prince Alexis, the heir to the throne, who had taken advantage of his ferocious sire's journey abroad to escape from Russia to Austria and

Italy, and whom the tsar's agents tracked down and brought back, in a series of quiet moves marked by the kind of hypnotic tenacity, persuasion, and deceit that we associate today with the forced repatriation of fugitives by Soviet thugs. The man who could lure Alexis from the security of Naples to his terrible fatherland, to be tortured to death there under Peter's supervision, might easily have devised a means to obtain a poor little blackamoor for his master's amusement.

My opinion that the tsar's envoy to the Ottoman Porte obtained Gannibal, by the tsar's order and for the tsar's service, not earlier than 1703 and not later than 1704 is corroborated by Gannibal himself in the following two documents:

(1) In a letter from Paris to Councilor Makarov, dated Mar. 5, 1721 (probably, N.S.), Gannibal mentions that he has served the tsar for seventeen years.

(2) In an address to Empress Catherine I, in 1726 (when presenting her a textbook on military engineering that he had compiled on the basis of his *La Fère* or *Metz* notes; see below, "Gannibal in Western Europe"), he mentions that he has lived for twenty-two years *pri dome* (at the domicile, in the entourage, in the household) of the late tsar (who died in 1725).

#### GANNIBAL AND RAGUZINSKI

"In the meantime," the German biography continues, using its favorite formula:

the father of the late general [of Abram Gannibal], who had been ripe in years and almost senile at the time of [Abram's] departure, died, and the succession of his rule [*Regierung*] fell to the lot of one of Abram's stepbrothers. . . . The Russian envoy, who was glad to observe the will of his emperor, sent to Moscow [the three lads]: Ibrahim Hannibal; another black boy—a compatriot of his of noble birth—who, however, died of smallpox on the way;

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and a Ragusan of nearly the same age, i.e., under ten. Although deploring the loss of one of the boys, the emperor was delighted that the two others arrived safely, and took over personally the care of bringing them up; the more eagerly because, as already said, he wished to make examples of them . . . and put [Russians] to shame by convincing them that out of every people, and even from among wild men—such as Negroes, whom our civilized nations assign exclusively to the class of slaves—there can be formed men who by dint of application can obtain knowledge and learning [and thus] become helpful and useful to their monarch. . . . A no mean connoisseur of mankind, the emperor investigated in advance the inclinations of his newly arrived objects [sic]. He destined Hannibal, who was a quick, keen, and fiery young fellow, for a military career; and he destined the Ragusan (later known in Russia as Count Raguzinski), who was of a quieter and more meditative nature, for the civil service.

We can ignore the passage concerning the succession of rule, which is only there to dismiss a possible accusation of secondary abduction, this time on the part of the beloved monarch, and turn to Abram Gannibal's petition (1742). This petition, after mentioning the three towns Abram's father governed (see earlier, "Gannibal's Birthplace"), proceeds thus: "In 1706, at an early age [*v malih letah*], I set out for Russia from Constantinople, in the retinue [*pri*] of Count Savva Vladislavich, by my own will, and was brought to Moscow. . . ."

The date 1706 refers to his arrival in Moscow. As we shall presently see, he left Constantinople in the summer of 1705. The Ragusan Vladislavich is the same person that the German biography describes as Gannibal's coeval and fellow page, a preposterous allegation that can be explained only as an attempt to puff up the prestige of the biographee by giving him reputable companions in misfortune and fortune. This Ragusan was thirty-seven years old in 1705, when, according to the relevant passage in the German biography, Gannibal was about ten

years of age—or about twelve, according to a more plausible computation. Curiously enough, Pushkin preserves the fictional synchronization of the two men's respective ages in his mediocre romance known as *Arap Petra Velikogo*: when "Ibragim" at the age of almost thirty (he is "twenty-seven" at the beginning of the novel, when, c. 1720, he falls in love in Paris with a French lady) returns to Petersburg in 1723, he sees in the emperor's palace "young Raguzinski, his former chum [*bivshego svoego tovarishcha*]"—who, historically, was fifty-five years of age at the time.

Who, then, was this Ragusan of the changeable years?

As early as 1699–1700 Ukraintsev had employed in Constantinople the services of secret agents of Illyrian extraction. One of these was a Servian trader named Savva (Christian name) Lukich (patronymic) Vladislavich (surname), known later as Count Vladislavich-Raguzinski (1668–1738). He was born in Popovo, Herzegovina, was brought up in his father's merchant business in Ragusa, and when about twenty-five (thus in the 1690's) was transferred to Constantinople. Rightly or wrongly, his father, Luka Vladislavich, considered himself descending from a Bosnian princely family of that name. Upon his removal from Bosnia to Ragusa, he assumed the composite surname Vladislavich-Raguzinski. His son's title of count, or at least its formal fixation, seems to have been a favor granted by Tsar Peter in recognition of Savva's services.

Under Mustafa II and Ahmed III, Turkey exacted a tribute from Ragusa (e.g., the sum of 4000 ducats in 1703) as well as from Arab tribes;<sup>26</sup> but (according to

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26. The Arabs, on the other hand, kept pilfering the yearly caravan (a stately affair led by a bejeweled camel) that was sent yearly from Constantinople to Mecca with money for the poor. Some of this pilfering seems to have been organized from Constantinople by the grand viziers themselves.

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B. H. Sumner, p. 8n) the law for collecting Christian tribute boys, although nominally in existence until 1750, had not been enforced since the middle of the preceding century. There is no reason not to believe that Savva Vladislavich had been dispatched to Constantinople in the natural course of personal adventure and paternal trade; but the fact of there having been Ragusan tribute boys in the past may have somehow influenced the account of Gannibal's boyhood.

On Sept. 25, 1702, a month after his arrival in Turkey, Pyotr Tolstoy wrote to Count Fyodor Golovin, Minister of Foreign Affairs, thus:

A Ragusan dwelling in Constantinople, Sava Vladislavov [sic], who as you know is a good man, has now, by my advice, set out with wares for Azov and from there will proceed to Moscow. [He] is here an infinitely useful person to His Muscovite Majesty.

Sometime in the autumn of that year Vladislavich arrived in Azov with an ostensible cargo of olive oil, cotton, and calico, and eventually (by the first week of April, 1703) reached Moscow, where in result of the secret reports he brought he was made much of by Peter I.

Bringing sables and ermines, Russian fox (white-collar and red) and wolf (Muscovite and Azovan), he returned to Constantinople in 1704 or early 1705, and then in the summer of 1705 set out again for Azov and Moscow, carrying more calico and more secret dispatches from Pyotr Tolstoy as well as a live present for the tsar.

It is evident that Gannibal was obtained sometime between the dates of Vladislavich's two departures from Constantinople. To judge by a letter from the tsar to the Constantinople ambassador's brother, Ivan Tolstoy, commander of Azov, Vladislavich was in Moscow with the reports, and presumably with the little blackamoor, not later than Jan. 12, 1706 (the exact date of his arrival

might be easily settled by consulting unpublished papers in the local archives). Vladislavich traveled in 1716–22 on diplomatic missions to Venice and Ragusa and in 1725–28 was envoy to China.

GANNIBAL'S FIRST YEARS IN RUSSIA (1706–16)

At the time of Gannibal's arrival in Russia, Peter was in the midst of the Swedish campaign, with the battlefield—a fluctuating and somewhat phantomic affair—in Poland. He had stayed in Vilno from July 8 to Aug. 1, 1705, and arrived in Moscow (from Grodno) on Dec. 19, 1705, remaining there till Jan. 13, 1706, when he went back, via Smolensk, to the martial sport in Poland. In Moscow he amused himself with establishing an anatomical and biological museum, with a botanical garden in front of it. The young blackamoor was no doubt welcomed as an additional curio. Peter visited Kiev in July–August, 1706, and, traveling north again, was just in time to enjoy watching, on Sept. 11, 1706, the first inundation in “Piterburh” (or “Paradis,” as he fondly called the town he had just founded). Especially entertaining was the sight of men and women huddling on the roofs of submerged shacks.

Peter was again in Vilno (on his way back from Warsaw to Petersburg) by Sept. 24, 1707, and stayed there till Oct. 10. It is within these time limits that the, at least, fourteen-year-old Abyssinian was baptized and given the name Pyotr. More or less synchronously (Sept. 27, 1707), his royal sponsor jotted down a little memorandum dealing with the naming of the progeny of Lenita or Lenta (from the Latin *lenis*, “gentle,” or *lentus*, “tenacious,” “slow”), an English mastiff: two years before (June 30, 1705), in the monastery of Polotsk, the tsar had had this hound maul Theophanus, an outspoken Uniate monk of the St. Basil Order, whom

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he had then hacked in two with his sword. The pseudo-classical names for her seven pups, which the tsar translated no doubt from some current nomenclator, read—as translated back from Peter’s uncouth Russian—Pirrhou (reddish), Eous (dawn), Aethon (bright), Phlegethon (blazing), Pallas, Nymph, and Venus. The eventual surname Annibal given to the blackamoor may also have been thought up by the enlightened monarch, although there are other possibilities (see further, “Gannibal and Annibal”). The fate of the young mastiffs can be traced to another note, a fortnight later (Oct. 10, 1707), in which the tsar commands Lenita’s pups to be taught by some foreign-born fancier on his staff to perform various tricks, such as doffing a cap, shouldering a toy musket, and marching under arms into water.

At the time, according to western European observers, reiteration of baptism, and baptism anew, of youths and adults, was performed at Peter’s court by pouring cold water three times over the whole body from head to foot. If Gannibal had been born an Abyssinian princeling, he would have been baptized at birth, since Abyssinia had been Christianized six centuries before Russia; but it is quite probable that upon capture the Turks had him Moslemized (*pobasurmanili*, in the Russian of the time), whatever that process implies. The question, however, is completely futile because, first, any African was to Russians a heathen and, second, the ceremony performed on the young blackamoor, at the Pyatnitski church, in late September or early October, 1707 (not “1705,” as the memorial plaque there oddly says), with Peter I as godfather and Christiana Eberhardina, wife of King Augustus II of Poland, as godmother (fide the German biography), was conducted in the rowdy and slapstick atmosphere of Peter’s court and smacks of mock marriages between freaks or the elevation of jesters to the

rank of governors of Barataria. Indeed, there seems to have been an attempt by some zealous courtiers, a few months before, to marry the blackamoor: in a letter from Poland, dated May 13, 1707, the tsar writes to Councilor Avtonom Ivanov that he does not wish to have the *arap* conjugated—with, presumably, the daughter of some grandee's Negro servant, or a dwarf, or a Russian female house fool (*domashnyaya dura*, *shutiha*). This was a critical moment for the gene that participated in the making of Pushkin, and the tsar should be thanked for directing the course of chance.

With the light of history now beginning to glimmer upon our subject, we can drop the tedious task of following the burlesque and bombastic German biography, which rambles on for as many pages as I have already quoted or paraphrased. We shall still have to refer to it, however, now and then in connection with certain bothersome trivia. Let us turn to some of the anecdotes about young Gannibal.

The best-known story is one given in preposterous detail by the German biography, and repeated with personal variations by Golikov and Pushkin. The gist of it is that young Abram, upon becoming the tsar's valet or assistant valet, slept in an adjacent room and proved his intelligence by transcribing the drafts of decrees that his master would scribble at night on slates. Among a series of Pushkin's notes entitled "Table Talk" (Eng.), 1836–37, the posthumously published eighth item (1873, in *Vestnik Evrope*), described by Pushkin as "A story [that] is not particularly clean but depicts Peter's ways," reads:

One day a little blackamoor accompanying Peter I on his promenade [canceled beginning: "The blackamoor Gannibal accompanied Peter I on one of his journeys. One day the child"] stopped for a certain need and all at once cried out in terror: "Sir, sir! The gut's a-coming out of me!"

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Peter went up to him and, having perceived what the matter was, said: "Bosh, this is no gut, it is a worm," and pulled it out with his own fingers.

In a document dated Dec. 20, 1709 (quoted by M. Vegner, p. 23), a passage reads: "By [the tsar's] order, in view of the Christmas holidays, coats have been made for Joachim the dwarf and Abram the blackamoor, with camisoles and breeches. Moreover, eight arshins [six yards] of scarlet cloth . . . and brass buttons have been purchased for both." E. Shmurlo (1892) vaguely refers to some documents in which "Abram is mentioned three times, in the same breath, with the tsar's jester Lacosta." This is Yan Dekosta or, correctly, Jan d'Acosta, Peter's favorite court jester, a Christianized Jew born in Holland.<sup>27</sup> According to another anecdote, one day in the summer of about 1715, on board ship, just before a royal cruise from St. Petersburg to Revel, the tsar's physician, Lestocq,<sup>28</sup> and a gentleman of the chamber,

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27. He was a man of parts and a member of a well-known marrano family (da Costa, or Mendez da Costa) that had fled from Portugal in the seventeenth century and settled in Italy, Holland, England, and other countries. Jan d'Acosta, who was a lawyer in Hamburg, sought a more colorful life and finding a patron in the Russian consul followed him to Muscovy. The tsar was delighted with his wit, made him a count, and gave him a barren island off the Finnish coast.

28. The high spirits of this adventurous French nobleman, Count Jean Armand de Lestocq (1692-1767), also known as "Hermann Lestock" and "Ivan Lestok" (he emigrated to Russia in 1713), appealed to the tsar, who nonetheless would give him a sound thrashing now and then. That despot's guffaws and snarls easily intergraded. Dr. Lestocq seems to have been a confirmed jester-baiter, whereas the tsar, on the other hand, had a special tenderness for his fools. In 1719, Lestocq got into trouble with d'Acosta, whose daughter he had seduced. Peter banished his gay bloodletter to Kazan, in eastern Russia, where Lestocq remained till the reign of Elizabeth. The source of the nautical story is a collection of *Anecdotes* pertaining to Russian customs, etc., published (London, 1792) anonymously by a friend of Lestocq, the

Jonson,<sup>29</sup> two merry fellows, having found the tsar's Russian jester Tyurikov fast asleep on the deck, played a period prank upon him: they took some tar and glued his long beard to his bare chest. Upon awakening, the poor jester howled, at which the tsar, interrupted in his studies of navigation and keelhauling, came pounding along, bumped into the innocent Gannibal, and, in a rage, flogged him unmercifully with a length of rope. At dinner the two pranksters could not help chuckling at the sight of the Moor's glum face. When the good tsar, a humorist in his own right, learned the cause of their mirth, he burst out laughing too and told Abram that to mend matters he would ignore his next misdemeanor.

This is about all I was able to gather in the way of published material pertaining to Gannibal's first ten years in Russia. We can dismiss as family fantasy a passage in the German biography that asserts that "the ruling half brother" of Gannibal instructed a young brother to travel to Constantinople to ransom Abram; that, not finding him there, this brother traveled on to Petersburg, bringing as gifts "precious weapons and Arabic writs," which established Abram's princely origin; that the latter refused to go back to heathendom; and that the brother set out on his return journey "with tears on both sides." There is hardly any need to remark that no Abyssinian seigneur could have traveled to Muscovy via Turkey without being enslaved there, nor is there any historical information of any free Abyssinian undertaking such a journey in the first part of the eighteenth century.

It is likely that the tsar took his *arap* along on some of his travels or campaigns, but hardly on all his marches,

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German and French writer Johann Benedikt (Jean Benoît) Scherer (1741–1824), who came to Russia about 1760 and joined the French embassy in St. Petersburg.

29. The son of a Livonian architect.

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as family tradition has it. We get a ghostly glimpse of a stylized young blackamoor in more or less Turkish garb lurking in the emblematic background—holding a battle horse or a bunch of grapes—in several portraits of Peter I. He is present in an engraving executed by Adriaan Schoonebeeck (d. 1705) from a lost picture painted about 1704; there he stands at the back, and to the anatomical right, of the tsar, who, for the nonce, sports a French king's dress. I am not sure there is not some error in the dating of the thing itself or of its engraver's death. But if we accept the date, and the possibility of the pictured blackamoor being Gannibal, we have to suppose that either he was brought by Raguzinski on the latter's first trip to Moscow (1703) or that he was portrayed—prospectively, as it were—on the strength of information received in Moscow from Constantinople: a blackamoor in attendance was a symbol of supreme luxury and grandeur, and the tsar must have awaited his 1706 New Year gift from his envoy with as much eagerness as he did shipments of lilies and lilacs.

### GANNIBAL IN WESTERN EUROPE (1716–23)

In January, 1716, Peter I set out on a European tour. After spending a month or so in Copenhagen, he pursued his journey to Holland and France. He landed in Dunquerque on Apr. 30, 1717, N.S., and arrived May 7 in Paris, where he forthwith asked for beer and bawds. Philippe, Duke of Orléans, was regent of France (1715–23) during the minority of Louis XV. The Muscovite tsar's six-week stay produced little more than a crop of dirty stories—though why the grandees of the Régence, a filthy pack in a disgusting and talentless age, should have been so puzzled by Peter's habits is not quite clear.

In the same spring of 1717, four young men arrived in France from Russia to study fortification and military

mining. They may have come with the tsar, but more probably they voyaged separately from him and did not sojourn in Denmark. The four were: Abram Arap, Stepan Korovin, Gavril Rezanov, and Aleksey Yurov, our hero's chum.

The German biography, with its usual overstatement, bad grammar, and inexactitude, says that Peter I sent Gannibal straight to the Regent, asking the latter "to assume supervision," and that Gannibal at first studied "under the great Belior [sic] at a military school for young noblemen." The reference is, I suggest, to Bernard Forest de Belidor (1693-1761), a brilliant young French engineer who taught at the Ecole d'Artillerie of La Fère (in the Aisne, NW of Laon) and wrote a *Sommaire d'un cours d'architecture militaire, civile et hydraulique* (1720) and other distinguished works. As to the Regent's "personal supervision," I cannot find any indication among French sources that he (or any member of his entourage) was aware of Abram's existence.

According to the German biography, Gannibal then joined an artillery regiment in France and as a *capitaine* of a company participated in a war against Spain. This war was declared Jan. 9, 1719, and peace was signed Feb. 17, 1720. During an undermining operation—somewhere in Catalonia, I suppose—he was severely wounded in the head and taken prisoner (it is odd that he never mentions this event in his letters from France). Upon his return to France, Abram apparently went on with his studies at another school, the Ecole d'Artillerie of Metz, an institution founded by the illustrious military engineer Sébastien Le Prestre, Marquis de Vauban (1633-1707). According to E. A. Bégin (1829, p. 592), the subjects taught there at the time were mathematics, physics, and chemistry, on Monday, Wednesday, and Friday; "l'école pratique se faisait les autres jours, excepté le dimanche, dans l'île Champière, où existait

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un parc. . . . Ce n'était, à bien dire, qu'une école régimentaire dont les cours cessaient dès que Metz était privé du corps d'artillerie qui y tenait habituellement garnison."

By January, 1722, the Russian ambassador, Prince V. L. Dolgorukov, had announced to the four young men that they would have to return to Russia, but a year of procrastination followed. It would seem that part of that year Abram and his companions spent in Paris—in the hectic Paris that had been left a financial shambles by John Law. Early spring was marked by fabulous balls and illuminations in honor of the arrival of a tentative bride for the king, the blonde little infanta, aged four and a half, whom, however, the twelve-year-old Louis did not like. The Regent was energetically pursuing his life of debauchery. Courtesans wore stockings of flesh-colored silk. Thieves and highwaymen were subjected to the iron boot, the toasting of toes against an ordinary or extraordinary fire, and foot baths of boiling oil. The financial term "liquidated" (*liquidé*) was used in regard to executed criminals. The poet Arouet (better known as Voltaire) was thrashed by the footmen of an officer whom he had called a police spy. Prodigious sums were won and lost at faro. The Marquis de Saillant successfully wagered he would ride ninety miles on horseback in six hours.

In the midst of these dazzling frolics, little is known of Abram's existence, except that he was continuously and abjectly hard up. I can find nothing in the French memoirs of the Régence that would corroborate statements made by Pushkin in his novel that all the ladies desired to entertain *le nègre du Czar*, that he hobnobbed with Voltaire, and that the playwright Michel Guyot de Merville introduced him to a woman of fashion, "Countess Lénore de D.," who bore him a black baby. The letters Abram wrote in Russian from France to

various officials (clamoring for money, pleading not to be sent home by sea, saying he would rather walk than sail, begging in vain to be left in France for further studies, and so forth) seem to me to have been worded not by him but by his companion in hyperbolic distress, Aleksey Yurov. After six or seven years abroad, Abram appears to have forgotten Russian so thoroughly that upon his return the autocrat bundled him off to grammar school at the Aleksandronevskiy Monastery, where he was enrolled on Mar. 14, 1723, O.S. He seems to have been returned to the imperial household on Nov. 27, 1724 (see P. Pekarski, 1862, I, 112). Commentators have wondered if perhaps the event might refer to some other "Abram the blackamoor" (though no other is known), since it seemed to them to clash with the fact that on Feb. 4, 1724, by a ukase in the tsar's own hand Abram ("in dem 28-sten Jahre seines Alters," says the German biography) was made a lieutenant (*poruchik*) in the bombardier company of the Preobrazhenskiy regiment. However, the whole age was a freakish one.

Gannibal brought from France a small library (sixty-nine titles) consisting mainly of historical works, military manuals, travels, and a sprinkling of fashionable exotica; all these volumes he sold (in 1726) for two hundred rubles to the Imperial Library but bought them (or a similar set) back in 1742. Although the list is quite conventional, with works by Bossuet, Malebranche, Fontenelle, Corneille, and Racine representing its literary section, there is a distinct stress on various voyages, with Chardin taking the reader to Persia to discover that a milk diet cures ulcers; Lahontan visiting, in a kind of proto-Chateaubriandesque America (1688), the Gnacsitares and the Mozemleks, whom none saw after him; and Cyrano de Bergerac journeying to the moon, where people have names only expressible by little melodies of a few musical notes.

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### GANNIBAL AND ANNIBAL

Officially, the name of Peter I's godchild had become Pyotr Petrovich Petrov (Christian name, patronymic, and surname), but he had grown used in Turkey to the name of Ibrahim and was allowed to call himself by its Russian counterpart, Avraam or Abram. Actually, he should not have boggled at bearing his godfather's name: after all, it had been a Petrus Aethiops (Pasfa Sayon Malbazo) who published in Rome, about 1549, after thirteen years of labor, the New Testament in the language of Abyssinian liturgy (that is, Geez, the ancient Ethiopic, which was later replaced by Amharic).

The statement in the beginning of the German biography to the effect that Abram's father, a proud Abyssinian seigneur, traced his lineage two thousand years back to Hannibal, the famous Carthaginian general, is of course nonsense: it is impossible to conceive that an Abyssinian of the seventeenth century should have known anything of him. The surname Gannibal was applied to Abram in official documents as early as 1723, upon his return from France. In other references, and in all earlier ones, he is called *Abram arap* or *Abram Petrov Arap*, where the middle term is the patronymic in the act of changing into a surname. It is interesting to mark how puzzled Russian commentators are by this choice of name, which in reality is such an obvious one. Anuchin, for example, absurdly suggests that Abram or Abram's family might have derived "Gannibal" from Adi Baro (a village just north of Debarwa, northern Abyssinia)! Why not from Lalibala (an Abyssinian emperor of the thirteenth century), or from Hamalmal (a provincial governor who rebelled against his royal cousin, Malak Sagad I, in the late 1500's), or, still better, from *gane bal*, which means "strange master" in Tigré; there are no holds barred in these linguistic *petits-jeux*.

Actually, of course, our hero's eponym was as trite and familiar a figure in the pseudoclassically minded Europe of the eighteenth century—in its textbooks, essays, historical works, newspaper articles, and academic speeches—as were Caesar and Cicero. In Tsar Peter's Russia no illumination was complete without the names of Greek and Roman heroes appearing in a pyrotechnical display of old saws. Pushkin was quite right in Gallicizing the adopted surname that Abram had most probably brought from France in 1723. There, and in Italy, it was not infrequently met with as a given name (e.g., François Annibal, duc d'Estrées, d. 1687). He had certainly encountered it in his military studies. He had read about "le grand génie d'Annibal" in Bossuet's *Discours sur l'histoire universelle*. If he really took part in the Spanish War, he must have been stationed in 1719 at the fort of Bellegarde (rebuilt by Vauban in 1679) and have trodden there, on the Spanish border, near the village of Le Perthus (Pyrénées Orientales), the Elephant Steps of Hannibal's Highway, still visible today among the arbutus and oak brush. And one also wonders if in Metz he had not had for schoolmate a certain Pierre Robert *dit* Annibal (1699–1783), who must have been living there about 1720, according to the parish records published by Poirier.

GANNIBAL'S LATER YEARS IN RUSSIA (1723–81)

*Le capitaine Petrov dit Annibal*, having acquired in France some knowledge of bulwarks and buttresses, lived, from 1723 on, in Russia, teaching mathematics and building fortresses. I have not performed any special research in regard to this final lap of his life; it is fairly well known in its main features, and, as Russian commentators have pointed out, Pushkin's presentation of Abram's Siberian period is false. On May 8, 1727, im-

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mediately after the end of Catherine I's reign, he was dispatched to inspect a fort in Kazan and then to build one in Selenginsk, on the Chinese border—where, incidentally, Lieutenant Gannibal encountered his former patron, Count Vladislavich-Raguzinski, who was returning from his Chinese embassy. Vaguely accused of political intrigue, Gannibal found himself kept at work in Selenginsk and Tobolsk for a couple of years, and only in the beginning of Anna's reign the governor of St. Petersburg, Münnich, needing a good military engineer, had him transferred to a Baltic fort. In 1731, Gannibal married Evdokia (Eudoxia) Dioper, daughter of a sea captain, Andrey Dioper, presumably of Greek origin. She was unfaithful to him, and so was he to her. According to documents described by Stepan Opatovich (in *Russkaya starina*, 1877), Gannibal, in 1732, rigged up at his home a private torture chamber complete with pulleys, iron clamps, thumbkins, leathern whips, and so forth. An obstinate and formalistic man, he then managed to have his victim imprisoned by the state for marital betrayal. She stayed five years in jail, after which—while divorce proceedings were dragging on—she was more or less at liberty till 1753, when the final separation was accorded; upon which, the unfortunate woman was packed away to a remote convent, where she died. In the meantime, in 1736, Gannibal had married (unlawfully) his mistress of four years' standing, the daughter of another captain, an army captain this time, named Matthias Schöberg, Lutheran, of Swedish-German descent. By this second wife (whose first name was Christina Regine, according to the German biography) Gannibal had eleven children, of whom the third son, Osip, was to be Pushkin's maternal grandfather.

Gannibal spent a few years as a country squire on a piece of acquired land, and then went on building fortresses. In 1742, Elizabeth, Peter I's younger daughter,

made him a major general and four years later granted him the countryseat Mihaylovskoe in the province of Pskov, which was to be forever linked up with Pushkin's name. During these years, Gannibal proved himself an expert at arranging fireworks at state festivals and composing denunciations of various officials. In 1762, after building his last fortress and propelling his last rocket, he was retired and lived in obscure senility for another twenty years on yet another country estate (Suida, near Petersburg), where he died in 1781, at the advanced age of (probably) eighty-eight.

#### CONCLUSIONS

Besides the unfinished romance (1827) "*The Blackamoor of Peter the Great*" (in which a greatly glamorized Ibrahim is given fictitious adventures in France and Russia—all this not in the author's best vein), there is among Pushkin's works a remarkable piece in verse referring to the same character. In this postscriptum of five stanzas to a poem on his paternal lineage (*Moya rodoslovnaya*), in iambic tetrameter, Pushkin has this to say about his maternal ancestor (I have not rendered the rhymes, feminine and masculine, which alternate in the original):

Figlyarin, snug at home, decided  
That my black grandsire, Gannibal,  
Was for a bottle of rum acquired  
And fell into a skipper's hands.

This skipper was the glorious skipper  
Through whom our country was advanced,  
Who to our native vessel's helm  
Gave mightily a sovereign course.

This skipper was accessible  
To my grandsire; the blackamoor,  
Bought at a bargain, grew up stanch and loyal,  
The emperor's bosom friend, not slave.

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“Figlyarin” (from *figlyar*, a zany, a coarse buffoon) is a play on the name of a hated reviewer, Fadey (Thaddeus, Thady) Bulgarin. It was thought up by the minor poet Vyazemski, Pushkin’s friend, and first used by another poet, Baratinski, in a published epigram of 1827. Pushkin’s piece was written on Oct. 16, 1830, and revised on Dec. 3 of the same year. It is his answer (posthumously published in 1846) to the following vicious innuendo by Bulgarin in his magazine *Severnaya pchela* (The Northern Bee), no. 94 (Aug. 7, 1830):

Byron’s lordship [*lordstvo*] and aristocratic capers, combined with God knows what way of thinking, have driven to frenzy a multitude of poets and rhymesters in various countries: all of them have started talking about their six-hundred-year-old nobility! . . . It is openly related that some poet or other in Spanish America, likewise an imitator of Byron, being of mulatto descent on his father’s or (I do not quite remember) mother’s side, began to affirm that one of his ancestors was a Negro prince. A search in the town hall’s archives disclosed that in the past there had been a lawsuit between a skipper and his mate on account of that Negro, and that the skipper maintained he had acquired the Negro for a bottle of rum.

And Nikolay Grech adds in his memoirs (*Zapiski moey zhizni*, St. Petersburg, 1886, p. 456) that the story of the transaction supposedly made in Kronstadt was first told by Count S. Uvarov at the Olenins’.

It would be a waste of time to conjecture that Abram was not born in Abyssinia at all; that he had been captured by slave traders in a totally different place—say, the Lagona region of equatorial Africa, south of Lake Chad, inhabited by Mussulman Negroes; or that he was, as Helbig (1809) affirms, a homeless little *Mohr* (Negro), acquired in Holland by Peter I to serve as a ship’s boy (Bulgarin’s source); we may also brood on the puzzling question why Gannibal, with his sense of the political, and Pushkin, with his sense of the exotic, never once

allude to Abyssinia (Pushkin, of course, knew of its mention in the German biography, the Russian translation of which had been dictated to him). Nonetheless, it is upon nonbelievers in the Abyssinian theory that the burden of the proof rests; while, on the other hand, those who accept it must waver between seeing in Pushkin the great-great-grandson of one of those rude and free Negro nomads who haunted the Mareb region or a descendant of Solomon and the Queen of Sheba, from whom Abyssinian kings derived their dynasty.

According to N. Barsukov (1891), who had it from Elizaveta Pushkin, widow of our poet's brother Lev, the hands of Nadezhda Gannibal, Pushkin's mother, had yellowish palms; and according to another source, quoted by V. Vinogradov (1930), all the daughters of Isaak Gannibal, Pushkin's grand-uncle, son of Abram, spoke with a peculiar singsong intonation—"an African accent," quaintly says an old-timer, who remarks that they "cooed like Egyptian pigeons." There exists no authentic portrait of Abram Gannibal. A late eighteenth-century oil, which some suppose represents him, wearing a decoration he never received, is, anyway, hopelessly stylized by the dauber. Nor can one draw any conclusion from the portraits of his progeny as to what blood predominated in Abram, Negro or Caucasian. In Pushkin, admixtures of Slavic and German strains must have completely obscured whatever definite racial characteristics his ancestors may have possessed, while the fact that certain portraits of Pushkin by good artists, and his death mask, do bear a remarkable resemblance to modern photographs of typical Abyssinians is exactly what one might expect in the descendant of a Negro married to a Caucasian. It should be repeated that "Abyssinian" implies a very complicated blend of the Hamitic and the Semitic and that, moreover, distinct Negroid types commingle with Caucasian ones on the northern plateau and among

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ruling families almost as much as they do among the nomadic heathens of the lowland brush. The Galla tribes (the Oromota), for example, who overran the country simultaneously with the Turkish invasion in the sixteenth century, are Hamites with a strong Negro strain. Abram may have had the characteristics that Bent found in the Tigré and Hamasen tribes: "skin . . . of a rich chocolate color, the hair curly, the nose straight with a tendency toward the aquiline, the lips thickish," or—while still technically an Abyssinian—he might have possessed the traits that Pushkin, a conventionalist in these matters, gives Ibrahim in his novel: "a black skin, a flat nose, inverted lips, and rough woolly hair" (ch. 5). The taxonomic problem remains unsettled and will probably remain so despite "anthropological sketches" of the Anuchin brand. And although Abram Gannibal used to refer to himself, in humble letters to grandees, as "a poor Negro," and although Pushkin saw him as a Negro with "African passions" and an independent brilliant personality, actually Pyotr Petrovich Petrov, alias Abram Gannibal, was a sour, groveling, crotchety, timid, ambitious, and cruel person; a good military engineer, perhaps, but humanistically a nonentity; differing in nothing from a typical career-minded, superficially educated, coarse, wife-flogging Russian of his day, in a brutal and dull world of political intrigue, favoritism, Germanic regimentation, old-fashioned Russian misery, and fat-breasted empresses on despicable thrones.

Basing himself on the fact that in 1899, under Italian domination, Debarwa, once the capital of Tigré, was included in a district called at that time "Logon-Chuan" (an assemblage of letters I have been unable to check), Anuchin comes to the singular conclusion, for which there is not a scrap of evidence, that two centuries earlier Logo was synonymous with Debarwa. In Poncet's day

(summer, 1700), Debarwa was divided into two towns, upper and lower, the lower one being assigned to Mohammedans; in Bruce's time, seventy years later, not Debarwa but Adowa, a neighboring town, was the capital of Tigré; and by the end of the nineteenth century, Debarwa was "a place of abject squalor and misery" (Bent, 1893). But if Anuchin is right in identifying "L" with Logo or Legota, it is in that general district that clues should be sought today; for there may still persist a faint chance of experts in Abyssinian history and lore discovering on the spot some trace, some memory, of the circumstances and events that resulted in the son of an Abyssinian becoming a Russian general in the eighteenth century.

We shall now go back to a certain passage in Pushkin's note to One : L : 11, in the separate edition of Chapter One of *EO* (1825). It reads:

Up to an advanced age, Annibal still remembered Africa, the sumptuous life of his father, and nineteen brothers, of whom he was the youngest; he remembered how they used to be led into his father's presence with their hands bound behind their backs, whilst he alone remained free and went swimming under the fountains of the paternal home . . .

Had Pushkin explicitly stated here that the paternal home was in Abyssinia, we might have argued that he had borrowed from literary sources of his time this strikingly specific detail of an Ethiopian ruler's sons being treated as captives, potential parricides, possible usurpers. The banishment of young princes to bleak hilltops in the Tigré Province by kings and viceroys as a precaution against violent succession had had a great romanesque impact on the imagination of western Europe in the eighteenth century. And, most curiously, the Abyssinian chronicler Za-Ouald (French transcription) tells us that in the twenty-second year (1702, 1703,

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or 1704) of Jesus I's reign he caused all his sons to be put in chains—and was assassinated a couple of years later by his only free son, Tekla. I do not think that Pushkin deliberately introduced here this local note—to corroborate a statement of locus he had never made and allude to a specific incident he could not have known. It seems more plausible to suppose that the governor of "L" dutifully followed his "sultan" in this colorful custom. In fact, I would say that this, and the sister's name Lahann, are the only details that have a true Abyssinian flavor.

The other detail, concerning the swimming under the fountains, *pod fontanami*, is less convincing, unless we take it to imply cascades, small waterfalls, etc., and not the playing sprays of an African Versailles, Abram's paternal home. Of that home we know even less than we do of a certain farm at Snitterfield, near Stratford. One thinks of the faucets in Johnson's watery *Rasselas* (of which Salt thought in Abyssinia) as well as of the *cent mille jets d'eau* of King Belus' marble palace on the Euphrates in Voltaire's unreadable novella *Voyages et Aventures d'une princesse babylonienne, pour servir de suite à ceux de Scarmantado, par un vieux philosophe qui ne radote pas toujours* (Geneva, 1768): "... Chacun sait comme le roi d'Éthiopie devint amoureux de la belle Formonsante" (daughter of Belus, king of Babylon) "[et] qu'Amazan" (her lover) "... coupa la tête perverse du nègre insolent." Kammerer (1949), pl. CXII, reproduces the picture of "le Roi d'Éthiopie abusant de son pouvoir" (embracing a distraught pale-skinned lady in her bed), which is a vignette by Monnet, engraved by Vidal, in Bevillon's edition (Paris, 1778) of Voltaire's *Romans et contes*.

If one likes to think that Dr. Johnson's contemporary, Pushkin's great-grandfather, was born practically in "Rasselas'" lap, at the foot of the joint memorial blend-

ing Ethiopian history and the didactic romance of the French eighteenth century, one may allow oneself also to visualize a Frenchman of Louis XIV's time feasting with Pushkin's dusky great-great-grandfather in the land of Prester John. Let me conclude these rapid notes about Gannibal with the following poetical excerpt from the anonymous English translation (1709) of the travels of Charles Poncet, who stayed in Debarwa in the summer of 1700 (pp. 149-50):

After a solemn service for the emperor's son [Fasilidas, heir to the throne], who had just died, the two Governors [*les deux Barnagas*] seated themselves in a great hall, and placed me in the middle between 'em. After that, the officers and persons of note, both men and women, rang'd themselves round the hall. Certain women with tabors [*tambours de basque*] . . . began to sing [*commencèrent des récits en forme de chansons*] . . . in so doleful a tone that I could not hinder being seized with grief. . . .

One's marginal imagination conjures up here many a pleasing possibility. We recall Coleridge's Abyssinian maid (*Kubla Khan*, 1797) singing of "Mount Abora," which (unless it merely echoes the name of the musical instrument) is, I suggest, either Mt. Tabor, an amba (natural citadel), some 3000 feet high in the Siré district of the Tigré, or still more exactly the unlocated amba Abora, which I find mentioned by the chronicler Za-Ouald (in Basset's translation) as being the burial place of a certain high official named Gyorgis (one of Poncet's two governors?) in 1707. We may further imagine that Coleridge's and Poncet's doleful singer was none other than Pushkin's great-great-grandmother; that her lord, either of Poncet's two hosts, was Pushkin's great-great-grandfather; and that the latter was a son of Cella Christos, Dr. Johnson's Rasselas. There is nothing in the annals of Russian Pushkinology to restrain one from the elaboration of such fancies.

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## *Appendix Two*

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### NOTES ON PROSODY

#### 1. PROSODIES

The following notes on English and Russian iambic tetrameters are intended only to outline the differences and similarities between them. Pushkin is taken as the greatest representative of Russian poetry; the differences between his iambic tetrameters and those of other masters of the meter among minor and major Russian poets are matters of specific, not generic, distinction. Russian prosody, which came into existence only two centuries ago, is tolerably well known to native students: some good work has been done by a number of Russian theorists in relation to *Eugene Onegin*. On the other hand, the huge and ancient English genus is very imperfectly described. I have not been particularly interested in the question, but as much as I can recall I have not come across a single work that treated English iambics — particularly the tetrameter — on a taxonomical and comparative-literature basis, in a way even remotely acceptable to a student of prosody. In my casual perusals,

I have of course slammed shut without further ado any such works on English prosody in which I glimpsed a crop of musical notes or those ridiculous examples of strophic arrangements which have nothing to do with the structure of verse. In other works, muddleheaded discussions of "short" and "long," "quantity" and "equivalence," not only contain various traditional nonsense or subjective illusions of sense but do not afford any systematic notion of the iambic modulation beyond tedious arguments around and around "apostrophization," "substitution," "spondees," and so forth. In consequence, I have been forced to invent a simple little terminology of my own, explain its application to English verse forms, and indulge in certain rather copious details of classification before even tackling the limited object of these notes to my translation of Pushkin's *Eugene Onegin*, an object that boils down to very little—in comparison to the forced preliminaries—namely, to a few things that the non-Russian student of Russian literature must know in regard to Russian prosody in general and to *Eugene Onegin* in particular.

## 2. FEET

If by prosodies we mean systems or forms of versification evolved in Europe during this millennium and used by her finest poets, we can distinguish two main species, the syllabic system and the metrical one, and a subspecific form belonging to the second species (but not inconsistent with certain syllabic compositions), cadential poetry, in which all that matters is lilt depending on random numbers of accents placed at random intervals. A fourth form, which is specifically vague and is rather a catchall than a definite category (not yet having been instrumental in producing great poetry), takes care of unrhymed free verse, which, except for the presence of typographical

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turnpikes, grades insensibly into prose, from a taxonomic point of view.

Except in one or two special cases, Greek and Latin verse forms are not taken into consideration in the following notes, and such terms as "iambic tetrameter" and so forth are not meant to suggest their ancient application, whatever that was, but are used strictly in reference to modern types of prosody, as convenient and innocuous nomenclatorial handles, instead of such ambiguous terms, in relation to metrical verse, as "octosyllables," and so forth. A foot is not only the basic element of meter but, in action, becomes the meter itself: a "monometer" is a line of one foot, and so on, to "hexameter," a six-foot line, beyond which the metrical line is no longer felt as a line and breaks into two.

Taken all in all, and with our quest limited to the latter half of the millennium in question, the greatest representative of the syllabic prosody in delicacy and complexity of modulation is certainly the French Alexandrine. The student is generally taught that its three characteristics are: an obligatory equality of syllables (twelve in masculine lines, thirteen in feminine ones), obligatory rhyme (in couplets or in any other arrangement, but with no two different masculine or feminine endings occurring in adjacent lines), and an obligatory caesura after the sixth syllable, which must be accented (or, if this is followed by a final *e muet*, the latter must be neutralized by an apocopate fusion with the vowel heading the second hemistich). Apart from niceties of instrumentation, which, after all, can be paralleled in other prosodies, but to which the French ear seems to be especially sensitive, a major part in the composition of the Alexandrine is played by a combination of the following elements (of which the first is, of course, a feature of other syllabic lengths as well). It should always be remembered that, whatever prosody is followed, the art of the poet depends

on certain contrasts and concords, constraints and liberties, denials and yieldings:

(1) The *e muet*: the interplay between the theoretical or generic value of the unelided *e muet* (which is never heard as a full semeion, as all the other vowels in the line are) and its actual or specific value in a given line. The number of such incomplete semeia and their distribution allow endless variations of melody, in conjunction with the neutralizing effect of apocopes in any part of the line. There are two main varieties of *e muet*, especially noticeable in rhymes (see §13, Rhyme).

(2) The interplay between the prosodically existing pause in mid-line and another pause, or pauses, or absence of pause, proceeding from the inward rhythm or logical sense, or irrational lilt, of the line. Especially beautiful effects have been achieved by the so-called romantics after the pedestrian eighteenth century had all but stamped out French poetry. This kind of acrobatic shifting back and forth across the constant caesural ha-ha is something not duplicated in English or Russian iambic pentameters (of the blank-verse type), in which the artificial caesural pause after the second foot is triumphantly sung out of metrical existence by a Milton or a Pushkin. In the French Alexandrine the caesura is well adjusted to the rhythm of human breath in slow reading, while, on the other hand, secondary pauses owing to "shifts" allow for precipitated or delayed exhalations.

(3) The enjambment or run-on, a fertile source of modulation, which is too well known from its presence in English iambs to need any explication here.

(4) The rich rhyme (which is especially beautiful *when* enjambed, just as the caesural pause is especially enhanced *when* sense glides across it). It is imitated by the Russian rule of rhyme, which will be discussed later.

The metrical system, on the other hand, is based first

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of all on a regular recurrence of rhythm within a line of verse, in which foot stress tends to coincide with accent (word stress), and nonstress with nonaccent. This recurrence is seen as a sequence of similar feet. Each such foot can consist of either two or three divisions (*semeia*), one of which is stressed by the meter but not necessarily by the syllable of the word coinciding with it. This stressed division is called the *ictus*, while the unstressed divisions are called *depressions*. Mathematically, only five kinds of feet can exist: the iamb, the trochee, the anapaest, the amphibrach, and the dactyl.

For the final foot to be complete, the presence of one *semeion* is sufficient, provided it is an *ictus*. Conversely, the identity of the meter is not affected by any number of unstressed syllables coming after the final *ictus* of the line. This final *ictus* and these additions to it are called “*terminals*.” A line terminating in an *ictus* is called “*masculine*”; a line terminating in one unstressed syllable is called “*feminine*.” If the terminals of two, not necessarily adjacent, lines correspond in sound, the result is a “*rhyme*.” The rhyme is masculine if the ultima of the last word of the line is stressed and coincides with the *ictus*. It is feminine if the penultimate coincides with the *ictus*, and “*synthetic*” or “*long*” if it is the antepenultimate that is stressed.

The samples given below illustrate the five combinations (of one *ictus* and one or two *depressions*) mathematically possible within the limits of one metrical foot. The first two are masculine tetrameters: (1) iambic and (2) trochaic; the rest are masculine trimeters: (3) dactylic, (4) amphibrachic, and (5) anapaestic.

- (1) The rós- | es áre | again | in blóom
- (2) Róses | áre a- | gáin in | blóom
- (3) Róses a- | gáin are in | blóom
- (4) The róses | again are | in blóom
- (5) And the rós- | es again | are in blóom

An example of pausative or cadential verse using the same words would run:

And again the rose is in bloom

which the metrically trained ear hears as three anapaests with one missed depression in the second foot causing a little gasp or pause, hence the term.

And a syllabic line would be:

De nouveau la rose fleurit

in which the *e* of *rose* is a type of depression that cannot be rendered in English, German, or Russian.

An iambic foot cannot be illustrated by a word unless that word is part of a specific iambic line. An iambic foot can be illustrated by signs only insofar as these signs are made to express the maximal four variations in which an iambic foot actually appears in verse:

- ∪ ∟ regular beat
- ∪ – scud (or false pyrrhic)
- ∩ – tilted scud (or false trochee)
- ∩ ∟ false spondee

To the discussion of these we shall now turn.

An ordinary iambic foot (i.e., one not affected by certain contractional and rhymal variations) consists of two semeia, the first semeion being called a depression (∪ or ∩) and the second an ictus (– or ∟). Any such foot belongs to one of the following types (with the basic metrical stress marked –, and the variable word accent '):

(1) Regular foot, ∪ ∟ (unaccented nonstress followed by accented stress); e.g., “Appéase my gríef, and déadly páin” (Earl of Surrey, *The Lover Describeth His Restless State*).

(2) Scudded foot (or false pyrrhic), ∪ – (unaccented nonstress followed by unaccented stress); e.g., “In expec-

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tátion of a guést" (Tennyson, *In Memoriam*, vi) and "In lóveliness of pérfect déeds" (ibid., xxxvi).

(3) Tilt (or inversion),  $\cup -$  (accented nonstress followed by unaccented stress); e.g., "Sense of intólerable wróng" (Coleridge, *The Pains of Sleep*), "Vaster than Émpires and more slów" (Marvell, *To His Coy Mistress*), and "Perfectly púre and góod: I fóund" (Browning, *Porphyria's Lover*).

(4) False spondee,  $\cup \cup$  (accented nonstress and accented stress); e.g., "Twice hólý wás the Sáb bath-béll" (Keats, *The Eve of St. Mark*).

### 3. THE SCUD

We speak of an "accent" in relation to a word and of a "stress" in relation to a metrical foot. A "scud" is an unaccented stress. "An inextínguishable fláme" has two accented and two unaccented stresses.

When in verse a weak monosyllabic word (i.e., one not accented in speech) or a weak syllable of a long word happens to coincide with the stressed part (ictus) of a foot, there results a modulation that I term a "scud."

If an accented syllable in speech be notated ', and a stress accent in verse  $\cup$ , then a scud is marked  $-$ .

The unstressed part of a foot is marked  $\cup$  (for which a "depression" is the best term).\*

The verse quoted above is notated:  $\cup - \cup \cup \cup - \cup \cup$ .

A scud can occur in any foot of any metrical line but is far more frequent in double-semeion meters or "binaries" (iambes and trochees) than in triple-semeion meters or "ternaries" (anapaests, amphibrachs, and

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\*When in verse a strong monosyllable coincides with a depression, the resulting element is marked  $\cup$ , but the use of this sign is really necessary only in the case of "tilts" (of which further).

dactyls).<sup>\*</sup> We shall be mainly concerned with scuds in the iambic tetrameter.

Weak—i.e., scuddable—monosyllables may be described as follows:

Monosyllables that are of comparatively minor importance (articles, prepositions, etc.), unless especially emphasized, and that are not usually rhymed on, are counted as scuds equivalent to unaccented but metrically stressed syllables in longer words (actually, this is truer of English than Russian, because in Russian verse a scud provided by a monosyllable is a trifle less fluid than one provided by a polysyllable—which, of course, has no secondary accent in Russian). Between a typical weak monosyllable (such as “the”) and an indubitably accented one (such as querulous “why”), there are gradations and borderline cases (“while,” “when,” “had,” etc.), which may be termed “semiscuds.” To determine them depends so much upon context, and is often so subjective a matter—in reference to random lines, at least—that one is not inclined to furnish a special mark for them (say, ÷). I have disregarded them in my percentile calculations. Semiscuds are not frequent enough in either English or Russian to affect numerical results when dealing with relatively small samples (say, fifty lines per poet). A special study of scuds, however, should take into account the fact that if we examine such Russian or English dipodies as:

*eyo toski*, which means, and is accented, “of her distress”  
*i on ubit*, which means, and is accented, “and he is killed”

we cannot but notice that if these syllables are iambized, the first ictus in each case is somewhat less strongly emphasized than in:

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<sup>\*</sup>A good example of scuds in the amphibrachic trimeter is Praed's *Good-Night to the Season*, ll. 23-4:

“Misrepresentations of reasons  
And misunderstandings of notes.”

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*nemoy toski*, which means, and is accented, "of mute distress"

*i Dzhim ubit*, which means, and is accented, "and Jim is killed."

Among indubitably scudded monosyllables the most obvious ones are: "a," "an," "and," "as," "at," "but," "for," "from," "if," "in," "like," "of," "on," "or," "the," "to," etc.

The scudding of such particles as "all," "no," "not," "was," etc., is a question of context and individual taste.

Similarly, in Russian, obvious and unquestionable scuds are: *dlya* ("for"), *do* ("till"), *i* ("and"), *na* ("on"), *ne* ("not," a word that should never be accented in good Russian), *no* ("but"), *ot* ("from"), *po* ("along"), *pod* ("under"), *u* ("at"), etc., whereas the scudding of *bil* ("was"), *net* ("no"), etc., depends on context and elective intonation.

When we turn to polysyllabics, the first thing we notice is an important accentual difference between English and Russian, and this has a definite repercussion on the frequency of pure scuds. In Russian, a polysyllabic word, no matter how long (provided it is not a blatantly artificial compound with the seam showing), can bear but one accent, and consequently a word of any length can bear only one stress accent in verse. Neither *neveroyátneyshie* ("most improbable," pl.) nor *víkarabkavshiesya* ("scrambled out," pl.) has more than one accent. The first can easily be woven into a mellifluous iambic tetrameter (in which the last word means "dreams"):

*neveroyátneyshie sní*

whereas the shortest measure into which the second may be crammed is a somewhat bumpy trochaic pentameter:

*víkarabkavshiesya kótí*

(which means, in prose, "the cats that have scrambled out").

In English polysyllabic words, on the other hand, there may occur a secondary accent, especially in American speech, but still there are numerous long words that have only one accent, such as "guárdedly" or "cónsidering." The secondary accent is found, for example, on the third syllable of the following word, when pronounced the American way: "mátrimòny"; but in British parlance, and thus in poetry written by Englishmen, it should be scanned "mátrimony." In the various examples of verses given further I shall disregard secondary accents when not intended by an English author, but the fact remains that a number of ordinary compounds, constantly recurring in poetry, do bear the ghost of an additional accent, with a resulting semiscud, such as "óvermúch" or "sémidiámeters," whereas their Russian counterparts, *chereschúr* and *poludiámetrĭ*, are strictly single-accented.

In regard to nomenclature, I should note at this point that Russian theorists use or have used for, or in connection with, the element I call a scud the terms *pyrrihiy* ("pyrrhic"), *peon* ("paeon"), *poluudarenie* ("half stress" or "half accent"), and *uskoreníe* ("acceleration"). None is satisfactory. The notation of the pyrrhic (∪∪) suits, at best, two adjacent depressions in a line of ternaries, since it suggests an identical absence of stress and accent on both syllables, whereas the point is, of course, that there persists the shadow of the expected metrical beat on one of the semeia of a binary foot when it is scudded (nor can the pyrrhic be used in the sense of a foot in speaking of scuds in anapaests, amphibrachs, and dactyls, in which it is, as just said, a basic component). The same considerations apply to the paeon, which is a bulky thing containing two binaries (∪⊥∪∪ or ∪∪∪⊥, and there are other variations), so that the verse "the

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inextinguishable flame” would be represented by two paeons of the type  $\cup \cup \cup \cup$ , whereas the verse “extinguishable is the flame” would be represented by both types. If the “paeon” is too big for use, the “half stress” or “half accent” is too small, since it strictly limits to one semeion the idea of “scud” (which, although focused on one semeion, affects the whole foot, especially in “tilt” variations). Moreover, this would entail terming the incomplete scud a “three-quarter accent,” which would lead to cumbersome complications. Finally, the term “acceleration” is misleading because second-foot scuds have an exactly opposite—namely, slowing-down—effect upon the line.

In English theories of prosody scuds have been described as "weak places," which is too vague and ambiguous for recurrent nomenclatorial use, and defined as "omitted stresses," which is meaningless, since the metrical stress of a scudded foot is not "omitted," but merely not trodden upon by the unaccented syllable of the passing word, which, however, is aware of the unused steppingstone it skims.

The scudding of iambic tetrameters produces, in English, four simple varieties (of which, as we shall presently see, variety IV can hardly be said to be represented in Russian poetry); the scudded feet are underlined in the following examples:

- I    ○ — ○ ┘ ○ ┘ ○ ┘    Thē dīsregardēd thing we break  
   Is ōf the kind we cannot make;
- II    ○ ┘ ○ — ○ ┘ ○ ┘    We break thē dīsregardēd thing,  
   Not thinking ōf its wistful ring;
- III    ○ ┘ ○ ┘ ○ — ○ ┘    We break the thing wē dīsregard,  
   We break the statūe ōf a bard
- IV    ○ ┘ ○ ┘ ○ ┘ ○ —    Near which an age was linger-  
   ing;

o ∪ ∟ ∪ ∟ ∪ ∟ ∪ ∟ We take the thing and break the thing.

(The last example is, of course, a scudless line.)

The following are examples of combinations of the above scuds:

I + II + IV ∪ ∪ ∪ ∪ ∟ ∪ ∪ Ĭncōmprēhēnsibīlītŷ,  
 I + III ∪ ∪ ∪ ∟ ∪ ∪ ∟ This in the unīvērse we see;  
 I + II ∪ ∪ ∪ ∪ ∟ ∪ ∟ Ānd, in thē cōnflagratiō blent,  
 I + IV ∪ ∪ ∪ ∟ ∪ ∟ ∪ ∪ Stārs ānd the awful firmāmēnt  
 II + IV ∪ ∟ ∪ ∪ ∪ ∟ ∪ ∪ Shine distāntlŷ and silēntlŷ  
 II + III ∪ ∟ ∪ ∪ ∪ ∪ ∟ On wildērnessēs ānd on me.

Of the above six forms, only I + III (not too frequent in English, but fairly frequent in Russian) and II + III (about as infrequent in Russian as in English) have Russian counterparts.

Other possibilities are, theoretically, III + IV, I + II + III, I + III + IV, but they are artificial tongue-twisters of no prosodical importance. I have omitted the accent on "stars" (∪) for simplicity's sake; the foot is a tilt-scudded one (∪-) instead of the basic ∪ ∟. (See § 4, Tilted Scuds.)

The scuds in the same verse and those in adjacent verses, when connected with lines, may form various figures, which express the modulation of the piece. Andrey Beliy (1880-1934), the inventor of this diagrammatic system, was the first to reveal that certain frequencies of scuds (which he called *poluudareniya*, "half stresses") and certain geometrical figures resulting from their being connected by lines (triangles, quadrangles, trapezoids, etc.) were characteristic of this or that Russian poet's iambic tetrameters.\* When I was still a boy, I was greatly fascinated by Beliy's admirable work, but have not consulted it since I last read it in 1919.

\*See his tables, "Opit harakteristiki russkogo chetiryohstopnogo yamba," in *Simvolizm*, a collection of essays (Moscow, 1910).

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If we apply the Belian system to the fourteen lines, above, given as examples of scudding, but use a slightly different kind of notation (with scudded feet represented by x's and scudless feet by o's), we obtain the following scheme:

I	II	III	IV
x	o	o	o
x	o	o	o
o	x	o	o
o	x	o	o
o	o	x	o
o	o	x	o
o	o	o	x
o	o	o	o
x	x	o	x
x	o	x	o
x	x	o	o
x	o	o	x
o	x	o	x
o	x	x	o

For the sake of easy reference I have collected, below, some English examples of scud modulation. They are mostly culled from Tennyson's *In Memoriam* (1850), which is by far his best work, and are then marked by the numeral of their section. The rest are added because not found in *In Memoriam*. Scudded feet are underlined.

*Scudless:* ∪ ∟ ∪ ∟ ∪ ∟ ∪ ∟

Defécts of dóubt, and táints of blóod	[LIV]
And “Áve, Áve, Áve,” saíd	[LVII]
The little village lóoks forlórn	[LX]

*Scud I:* ∪ — ∪ ∟ ∪ ∟ ∪ ∟

<u>And with the thought</u> her cólour búrns	[VI]
<u>The generáti</u> ons éach with éach	[XL]
<u>Imagináti</u> ons cálm and fáir	[XCIV]

*Scud II:* ∪ ∟ ∪ — ∪ ∟ ∪ ∟

In lóveliness of <u>pérfect</u> déeds	[XXXVI]
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And thine in undiscóver'd lánds [XL]  
A frésh associátion blów [CI]

*Scud* III: ∪ ∟ ∪ ∟ ∪ ∟ ∟  
The fá-r-off ínterest of teárs [I]  
She tákes a ríband or a róse [VI]  
In váin; a fá-vourable spéed [IX]

*Scud* IV: ∪ ∟ ∪ ∟ ∪ ∟ ∟  
The práise that cómes to cónstancy [XXI]  
Defámed by évery chárlatan [CXI]

*Scuds* I + II: ∪ ∟ ∟ ∟ ∪ ∟ ∟  
As on The Lariáno crépt [Tennyson, *The Daisy*]

*Scuds* I + III: ∪ ∟ ∟ ∟ ∪ ∟ ∟  
In expectátion of a guést [VI]  
My capabílties of lóve [LXXXV]  
A contradíctiön on the tóngue [CXXV]  
On the bald stréet breaks the blank dáy [VII]  
[Cf.] To a green Thought in a green Sháde [Marvell,  
*The Garden*]

*Scuds* I + IV: ∪ ∟ ∟ ∟ ∪ ∟ ∟  
All-comprehénsive ténderness, [LXXXV]  
All-subtilising íntellect

*Scuds* II + IV: ∪ ∟ ∪ ∟ ∪ ∟ ∟  
On glórious insufficiéncies [CXII]  
With ágonies, with énergies [CXIII]

*Scuds* II + III: ∪ ∟ ∪ ∟ ∪ ∟ ∟  
Most músicall, most melanchóly [Milton,  
*Il Penseroso*]  
This Éxtasie doth unperpléx [John Donne,  
*The Extasie*]

Below is the analysis of fifty-line-long samples of scudded and scudless iambic tetrameters from ten com-

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positions, of which eight are by English authors. Three belong to the seventeenth century, one to the eighteenth, and four to the nineteenth: Donne's *The Extasie*, ll. 1-50; Butler's *Hudibras*, pt. I, can. I, ll. 187-236; Marvell's *The Nymph Complaining for the Death of Her Fawn*, ll. 73-122; Cowper's *Written after Leaving Her at New Burns*, 49 ll. in all; Coleridge's *The Pains of Sleep*, ll. 1-50; Tennyson's *In Memoriam*, ll. 1-50; Browning's *Porphyria's Lover*, ll. 1-50; and Arnold's *Resignation*, ll. 1-50. These are compared to two sequences of similar length from Lomonosov's *Ode to Empress Elizabeth* (1747), and from Pushkin's *Evgeniy Onegin*, Four : IX-XII : 1-8 (1825). Semiscuds are not counted in any of the samples, and these are not large enough to permit more than a general impression of comparative scud frequency.

	I	II	III	IV	I-II	I-III	I-IV	II-III	II-IV	O
Donne	6	4	8	2	1	1		1	1	26
Butler	6	5	8	6		3			1	21
Marvell	16	4	8	1		1			1	19
Cowper	12	4	7		1		1			25
Coleridge	5	8	2	1		4		1		29
Tennyson	3	1	4							42
Browning	6	2	6							36
Arnold	6	10	5	1		1	1			26
Lomonosov	1	8	24			2		1		14
Pushkin	3	3	31			6				7

See also § 9, Examples of Modulations.

### 4. TILTED SCUDS

In reference to an iambic line, a typical or unqualified "tilt" denotes a sequence of accented depression and unaccented stress,  $\cup -$  (instead of the expected  $\cup \angle$  or  $\cup -$ ),

coinciding with any foot in the line.\* Any tilt is a tilted scud, since the stress in such feet is not accented. English theorists term tilted scuds "inversion of stress"; a better description would be "inversion of accent," since it is the word stress that (more or less gracefully) feigns a surrender to the meter. The meter is basic and cannot succumb to the word.

Typical tilts in English iambs, to which they add considerable beauty, belong to four varieties insofar as number and length of words are involved in their producement:

(1) The frequent "split tilt," which consists of an accented monosyllable (say, "deep") and an unaccented one (say, "in");

(2) The not-very-frequent "short tilt," which consists of an accented monosyllable and the unaccented first syllable of the next polysyllabic word ("dark in-"; see example, below);

(3) The fairly frequent "duplex tilt," which consists of a disyllabic word accented on the first syllable in ordinary speech (say, "guarded"); and

(4) The rare "long tilt," which consists of the first and second syllables of a trisyllabic word, accented on the first syllable in ordinary speech ("terri-"; see example, below).

Examples:

- (1) *Deep in* the night on mountains steep,
- (2) *Dark, inaccessible* and proud,
- (3) *Guarded* by dragons, castles sleep;
- (4) *Terrible* stars above them crowd.

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\*Even with the last one, if we regard the famous (perhaps, accidentally fivefold, or, perhaps, meant as a prose interpolation) "Never, never, never, never, never!" in *King Lear* (v, iii, 309) as a masculine line in iambic pentameter, entirely consisting of five tilted scuds and thus representing a maximal disembodiment of meter.

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The "reverse tilt," which is less interesting artistically, denotes a combination of unaccented stress and accented depression,  $- \cup$ , instead of the expected  $\cup \cup$  or  $- \cup$ , and may coincide with any even-place, odd-place segment of the iambic line except the last. The result is a scud tilted in reverse.

Reverse tilts come mainly in one variety, the fairly frequent "split reverse tilt," which consists of two monosyllables, the first unaccented and the second accented:

Sweet is the shiver *of cold* Spring  
when birds, in garden *and grove*, sing.

There are two reverse tilts here: "of cold" and "and grove"; both are notated  $- \cup$ ; but in the first line the accent (on "cold") is slighter, and metrically more acceptable, than the accent on "grove" in the second line. "Cold" is connected logically with the next word ("spring") and therefore skims on with the impetus of anticipation; it constitutes a common variation throughout the history of English iambs; but the logical beat on "grove" is equivalent in speech to that on the first syllable of "garden," with which it is phrasally linked; in result, the voice strains unduly to combine accent and stress, and the effect is jarring to the ear unless accepted as a deliberate experiment in rhythm variation transcending the meter. It will be noticed, incidentally, that if the second verse is read with a strict adherence to meaning, the prosodical result of "grove, sing" is, in binaries, the closest possible approach to a spondee (two adjacent stress accents); but they are separated by a pause (and it is in pausative variations that we take off from the metrical system in the direction of cadential forms).

Another variety, the "duplex reverse tilt," consisting of a disyllabic word accented on the second syllable

against the grain of a stress-unstress sequence of semeia (in the even-odd places of an iambic verse or in the odd-even places of a trochaic one), inevitably produces a harsh and uncouth effect, since the accent does not submit to the stress as flexibly as it does in the ordinary duplex tilt. Metrically, the iambic foot is stronger than the trochaic word; dictionally, the iambic word is more self-conscious, and thus stronger, than the trochaic foot. Reverse tilts have been vaguely designated as "recession of accent" by English theorists; e.g., Robert Bridges, in *Milton's Prosody* (Oxford, 1893, pp. 52-61).

As with all modulations in iambic meter, the beauty of tilt, especially of duplex tilt, which is such an admirable and natural feature of English iambic pentameter, and gives such allure to the rare lines in which Russian poets use it, lies in a certain teasing quality of rhythm, in the tentative emergence of an intonation that *seems* in total opposition to the dominant meter, but actually owes its subtle magic to the balance it tends to achieve between yielding and not yielding—yielding to the meter and still preserving its accentual voice. Only a blunt ear can perceive in it any "irregularity of meter," and only an old-fashioned pedant would treat it as the intrusion of another species of meter. In English poetry, its carefree admission by major poets, especially in the beginning of the iambic lines, is owing partly to the comparative scarcity of such words in English as conform to the regular iambic foot and partly to accents in English words not being so strong and exclusive as they are in, say, Russian.

I use the new term "tilt" or "tilted scud" in preference to "nonterminal wrenched accent," because physically no special wrench is involved; on the contrary, what happens is an elegant sliding movement, the tipping of a wing, the precise dipping of a balance. "Hovering accent" is ambiguous; and still more ob-

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jectionable is the crude term "trochaic substitution," suggesting as it does a mechanical replacement of one block of elements by another block. The whole point of the device lies precisely in the iambization of a trochaic, or sometimes even dactylic, word. It is not a substitution, but a reconciliation: the graceful submission of a noniambic word to the dominant iambic meter of the verse. Further confusion arises from the fact that tilts can, and do, also occur in trochaic lines (in which case the sequence of places that a duplex tilt, say, occupies is not odd-even, as in an iambic line, but even-odd).

Duplex tilts have nothing to do with certain emancipations of meter that form a gradation toward cadential verse (e.g., the recurrent substitution, in the course of a piece, of one entire foot, in, say, an iambic tetrameter, by a triplex foot represented by a word, or words, that cannot be elided). George Saintsbury, for example, who somehow sees tilts as forms of "equivalence," gets hopelessly muddled in his treatment of these modulations.

The application of "wrenched accent" should be limited to forced terminals; i.e., to an artificial switch of accent, in a disyllabic rhyme word, from feminine ("Éngland") to masculine ("Énglánd").

When we turn to an examination of tilts in Russian iambic tetrameters, the following facts transpire:

Split and short tilts are as natural a modulation in Russian as they are in English but occur less frequently. They are definitely rare in *EO*.

The split tilt is even less frequent than the short tilt, whereas the contrary is true in the case of English, where the long word is less frequent in the 1 + 4 or 1 + 5 or 1 + 6 or 1 + 7 syllable compartments of the line (where it has to sprawl in order to crowd out, as it were, the lone initial monosyllable of the line and thus produce the short tilt).

Finally (and here we have one of the main differences

between English and Russian prosodies as used by major poets), the duplex tilt, in any part of the line, does not exist in Russian trochaics or iambics (except for the small group of certain two-syllable prepositions, to be discussed further).

The split tilt is represented in *EO* by such more or less widely scattered lines as, for example:

Eight : xvii : 3: *Kák? iz glushí stepníh seléníy . . .*  
How? from the dépth of práirie  
hómesteads . . .

Eight : xvii : 11: *Knyáz' na Onégina glyadít\** . . .  
prínce at Onégin [tum-tee] lóoks . . .

Seven : xvii : 10: *Klý na bil'ýárde otdíhál . . .*  
cúe on the bílliard did repóse . . .

Six : xl : 13: *Tám u ruch'ýá v tentí gustóy . . .*  
thére, by the bróok, in sháde opáque . . .

In this last example the tilt is not so strong as in the preceding ones, and there are in *EO* a certain number of other tiltings of even less strength, such as on *gde* ("where"), *on* ("he"), etc., which are only semitilts.

The short tilt is represented by such lines as:

Three : ix : 4: *P'ýót obol'stitel'nÿy obmán . . .*  
drínks irresístible decéit ["imbibes  
the ravishing illusion" would, of  
course, be a closer rendering of the  
contextual sense] . . .

One : xxxiii : 7: *Nét, níkogdá sred' pílkih dnéy . . .*  
Nó, [tum-]not ónce mid férvíd  
dáys . . .

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\*Here, and elsewhere, the obligatory article and absence of inflective extensions in English make it impossible to render, with any elegance or completeness, both sense and scansion in the same number of semeia. The translation follows the word order.

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Six : v : 14: *V dólǵ osushát' butílki trí . . .*  
 [The meaning is "on credit to drain  
 some three bottles."]

Two : xxviii : 4: *Zvyózd ischezáet horovód . . .*  
 [*Zvyozd*, "of stars," *ischezaet*, "dis-  
 appears," *horovod*, a choral round  
 dance performed in the open by  
 Russian peasant men and maidens.  
 The sense is "the choral dance of  
 stars is disappearing."]

The duplex tilt does not occur freely in Russian verse: \*  
 its use is strictly limited to a dozen or so humble and  
 servile disyllables, which, in speech, are accented on  
 the first syllable but in verse are made, if need be, to  
 undergo a neutralization of accent by scudding. In Push-  
 kin's poems, these words are: *cherez* ("across," "over"),  
*chtobí* ("in order to," "so that," "lest"), *dabí* ("so as  
 to"), *ili* ("or," "either"), *mezhdú* ("between," "among"),  
*oto* (the extended form of *ot*, "from," as used before some  
 words beginning with certain combinations of conso-  
 nants such as *vs*), and *pered* ("before," "in front of"): †

*Ruslan and Lyudmila*,

1 : 22: *Cherez lesá, cherez moryá . . .*  
 Over the woods, over the seas . . .

\*I notice that on p. 39 of his frankly compilatory *Russian Versification* (Oxford, 1956), Prof. Boris Unbegaun, when speaking of the device here termed "tilts," is misled by one of his authorities and makes a singular error in his *only* (would-be) example of a duplex tilt in Russian verse by assuming that the first word in the iambic line that he quotes from the poem *Fireplace in Moscow* (*Kamín v Moskve*), published in Penza, 1795, by the poetaster Prince Ivan Dolgoruki, is pronounced *krásen*, when actually here it should be *krasyón* (despite the absence of the diacritical sign)—which, of course, eliminates the "trochaic substitution."

†Not only *oto*, but each of the other words (except *dabí*), possesses an abbreviated form: *chtob*, *chrez*, *il'*, *mez*, *pred*; the last four are mainly used in verse (cf. "amid" and "mid," "over" and "o'er," etc.).

*EO*, Six : XVII : 11: *Chtobī dvuhútrenniy tsvetók . . .*  
[which means: "lest a two-morn-  
old blossom"]

Six : VII : 2: *Dabī pozávtrakat' vtroyóm . . .*  
[which means: "so as to lunch  
all three" (*à trois*)]

Seven : II : 9: *Ili mne chúzhdo naslazhdén'e?*  
[which means: "or is enjoyment  
strange to me"]

Eight : "Onegin's  
Letter" : 17: *Oto vsegó,\* chto sérdsu mílo . . .*  
[which means: "from all that to  
the heart is dear"]

One : LI : 6: *Pered Onéginīm sobrál'sya . . .*  
[which means: "before Onegin  
there assembled"]

Lines beginning with these neutralized words are few in *EO*. It is therefore of great interest to note that in One : LVI, in which our poet affirms his eagerness to differentiate between Onegin and himself, lest the sarcastic reader or some promoter of slander accuse him of narcissism, Pushkin disposes consecutively three lines, each beginning with one of the six tiltable disyllables:

4      *Mezhdu Onéginīm i mnóy,*  
         *Chtobī nasméshlivīy chítátel',*  
         *Ili kakóy-nibud' izdátel' . . .*  
         [the last word meaning "editor,"  
         "publisher," or "promoter"]

One would almost think that our poet, in 1823, recalled Sumarokov's prosodical experiment of 1759 (see p. 490).

Only one scudded trisyllable occurs in *EO* and in Russian verse generally. This is the staple *peredo* (an end-vowelized form of *pered*, "before," used in speech

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\*In masculine genitive case endings the gamma of the ultimate is pronounced *v* (*vsevo*).

## Appendix Two

mainly with *mnoy*, “me,” to buffer the clash of consonants), which is normally accented on the first syllable, but in verse may be tilted in such a way as to coincide with a depression-beat-depression compartment; e.g., in *Onegin’s Journey*, XVI : 9:

*Razóstlan bǐl peredo mnóy*

which may be paraphrased so as to render the tilt in the third foot:

before me spréad welcoming mé.

Otherwise, the long tilt, rare in English, never occurs in Russian iambs. An approach to it appears in artificially compounded epithets, such as this translation of “rosy-fingered dawn”:

*Rozovo-pérstnaya zaryá*

in which the hyphen does not prevent the epithet from becoming a word of six syllables carrying but one accent on *perst*, despite the fact that in ordinary speech *rozovo* as a separate adjective or adverb is accented on the first syllable.

The split reverse tilt occurs now and then in Russian verse, but on the whole Pushkin avoids it. Curiously enough, our poet was far from being a lucid theorist in prosody, but, as in Coleridge’s case, the intuition of genius was a more than sufficient substitute in practice. In a MS footnote to *EO*, Four : XLI : 7, Pushkin incorrectly defends (by notating it as a pyrrhic ∪ ∪) the jarring split reverse tilt *vo ves’* (“at all,” “in all,” “in the whole”), which as a separate locution is accented in speech on the *ves’* (“all”) and which he scud-tilted in reverse in two passages:

Four : XLI : 7: *Nesyótsya v góru vo ves’ dúh . . .*  
goes téaring úp hill at all spéed . . .

Three : v : 14: *I pósle vo ves' pút' molchál . . .*  
and áfter, the whole wáy was múte\* . . .

The duplex reverse tilt is completely banned by Russian major poets (but unintentionally used by some minor ones, such as Vyazemski, Ríleev, and others) because of its association with vulgarity and ineptitude, with the efforts of inexperienced versifiers, as well as with the semiliterate ditties of the servant hall such as the strum songs (*chastushki*) belonging to that deadliest of all folklore, the citified. Thus, in Chapter Four of his admirable novella *The Captain's Daughter* (1833–36), Pushkin, wishing to indicate the poor quality of a madrigal in trochaic tetrameters written by the young “T” of the story, Pyotr Grinyov, has him start l. 7 with a duplex reverse tilt characteristic of such stuff:

*Oni dúh vo mné smutlí . . .*

*Oni* (sounded as “ah-nee”), which means “they” (referring to Masha Mironov’s eyes), is accented on the second syllable in speech but is horribly tilt-scudded in reverse here. The line means “they have confused [*smutlí*] the spirit in me.” A criticism of this effort, and of the young lady who inspired it, is made by a fellow officer, Aleksey Shvabrin, and leads to an *épée* duel.

The *only* time Pushkin himself, by an unfortunate and incomprehensible oversight, uses a duplex reverse tilt is in l. 21 of his *The Feast at the Time of the Plague* (1830), a blank-verse translation (made from a French prose version) of act I, sc. iv, of *The City of the Plague* (1816), a blank-verse tragedy by John Wilson, alias Christopher North (1785–1854). The trochaically tilted word is *ego* (“his”), which is iambically stressed in speech:

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\*In the preceding stanza, Three : iv : 2, Pushkin stresses *vo ves'* correctly: . . . *vo ves' opór*, “at full career.”

## Appendix Two

*Ya predlagáyu vřpit' v ego pámyat'.*

In mémory of him I suggest drinking.\*

Pushkin must have got hold of a fairly accurate version, perhaps with the English original *en regard*.

### 5. SPONDEES

Strictly speaking, the spondee—i.e., two adjacent semeia bearing exactly the same stress accent ( $\angle \angle$ ) and following each other without any break or pause (as might suggest to the ear an inner caesura or missed beat)—is an impossibility in metrical verse as distinguished from cadential or pausative forms. But a kind of false spondee ( $\cup \angle$  or  $\angle \cup$ ) is not infrequent.

It should be noted that there are certain disyllabic words, implicitly or actually hyphenated, that in a certain type of speech or under certain emotional conditions can sound like spondees. I have heard Berliners pronounce *Papa* as “pá-pá.” American youngsters, especially when stylized on the stage, give the two parts of “gée-whíz” practically the same value. And in slow, deliberate, ruminant American speech, especially in business pronouncements or didactic monologues, such a word as “contact” may become “cón-táct.” Any number of other two-syllable formulas of a similar kind can be listed. But the matter is rather of duration and jaw action than of accent, and whenever such a word is used in metrical verse it is bound to become a trochee or an iamb, or a scud, or a tilt; but it never becomes a spondee, unless its hyphen snaps and is replaced by a pause.

“Good God!” Blanche uttered slowly: “Good God! Look!” I looked, and understood.

“Rise! Rise!” I loudly cried to her

“O rise! Rise!” But she did not stir.

\*Incidentally, Wilson's original (l. 20) reads:

“Therefore let us drink unto his memory.”

If these lines are to scan at all, their only logical rhythm is:

♩ ♩ ♩ ♩ ♩ ♩ ♩  
♩ ♩ ♩ ♩ ♩ ♩ ♩  
♩ ♩ ♩ ♩ ♩ ♩ ♩  
♩ ♩ ♩ ♩ ♩ ♩ ♩

The force of the meter sorts out the monosyllables in a certain, iambic, way, and it would be sheer lunacy on a theorist's part to see "Good God" and "Rise! Rise!" as spondees. Thus the first "Rise! Rise!" is a rapid attack on a natural iambic scale, whereas the second set sounds much more slowly, with the last "Rise" lingering on in despair. In whatever way they are pronounced, they belong to the meter.

If we regard the so-called "elegiac pentameter" (really a dactylic hexameter with the depressions of two feet, third and sixth, missing) as one line:

♩   ♩   ♩   ♩   ♩   ♩   ♩   ♩   ♩  
Cynthia, prim and polite, Cynthia, hard to outwit

then the midway combination of "-lite" and "Cynth-" may be regarded as a spondee, but a spondee interrupted by the caesura. This is tantamount to considering the two hemistichs as two separate verses, each a dactylic trimeter with a masculine ending. In result, what we call here a spondee is merely the combined effect of a strong termination and a strong beginning.

A similar case may crop up in trochees:

Pity, if you have a heart, pretty Nancy Brown,  
Who on winter mornings, poor girl, must walk to town.

The second line is unscannable metrically unless we spade the spondee in two and write or hear these verses as:

Pity, if you have a heart,  
Pretty Nancy Brown,

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Who on winter mornings, poor  
Girl, must walk to town.

The first verse of a famous, though not very good, poem by Tennyson (1842):

Break, break, break,

if given to read to a person who does not know the entire piece, will probably be scanned as a trio of solid and slow beats devoid of any pathetic sense. For all we know, it might be a boxing referee talking in his sleep. When, however, the dominant rhythm of the poem is known beforehand, then its ternary lilt, broken by pauses, affects by anticipation the scansion of the first line, which may be then scanned either as an anapaestic monometer or, more artistically, as an anapaestic trimeter, with the depressions missing and replaced by rhythmic pauses.

For true spondees, we have to go not to metrical verse but to cadential ones, in which the tonic scansion of what are "irregularities" to the confirmed metrist is of little or no interest:

Gone is Livia, love is gone:  
Strong wing, soft breast, bluish plume;  
In the juniper tree moaning at dawn:  
Doom, doom.

It should be noted that in metrical verse the false spondee, when represented by a hyphenated word or by two strong monosyllables, will disclose its metrical leaning as soon as placed in any compartment of an iambic or a trochaic line and should not be confused with disyllables that may be accented either fore or aft. A false spondee will *generally* lean toward the iambic, for the simple reason that, while its first syllable can take care of itself, the second syllable or monosyllable must be especially strongly stress-accented in order to keep up with its predecessor and show what it can do in its turn (this is

especially clear when two strong monosyllables coming one after the other are identical words).

In Russian poems false spondees are less frequent than in English ones, only because strong monosyllables are less frequent. Turning to *EO*, we find therein a number of these combinations behaving as English false spondees do. Thus *hle<sup>˘</sup>b-sol<sup>˘</sup>* ("bread-salt," meaning "hospitality," "welcome," "shared repast," "good cheer") is metrically duplicated by the sounds of "prep school" or "ebb-sole" (presumably a kind of fish), and *gde, gde* or *tam, tam* by "where, where" and "there, there" respectively. They *may* be placed in a trochaic medium, but (their inclination being iambic) a split reverse tilt will be the only result.

False spondees occur here and there throughout *EO*, but their presence adds little to variety in modulation. In such lines as:

Five : XVII : 7: *Láy, hóhot, pén'e, svíst i hlóp . . .*  
Barks, laughter, singing, whistling,  
claps . . .

Six : XXXIX : 11: *Píl, él, skuchál, tolstél, hirél . . .*  
drank, ate, was dull, grew fat,  
decayed . . .

the accents (*Lay, Pil*) starting the lines are swept off their respective feet by the strong current of the iambic meter.

## 6. ELISIONS

There are two varieties of elision in English prosody, and it is especially the second that enhances richness of rhythm (the presence or absence of an apostrophe is, of course, merely a typographical detail of no metrical significance; but for the linguist its omission in print

## Appendix Two

sometimes throws light on matters of local or periodic pronunciation).

Of these two varieties the first is the rudimentary apocopation—i.e., the dropping or slurring of a final vowel before an initial vowel in the next word. A standard English apocope is the metrically suggested reading of “many a” as  $\text{ˌ} \cup$  (instead of  $\text{ˌ} \cup \cup$ ). I find it as early as c. 1393, in John Gower’s *Confessio amantis* (bk. III, l. 605). An especially common apocope is the one involving the definite article in such combinations as “th’advice,” “th’enemy,” and so forth. It is still used in modern metrical verse, but the diacritical sign is dropped, perhaps because of its association with obsolete and artificial forms of poetry.

The second variety of elision is the contraction that implies the elimination from the metrical count of a vowel in the middle of a word. Common contractions are, for example, words that have *ve* in the second syllable, such as “heaven,” “haven,” “given,” “never,” and so forth. A well-known contraction is “flower”—with tacit acknowledgment of its French pedigree (*flor*, *flour*, *fleur*) and its prosodical relationship with such rhymes as hour–our (cf. higher–fire). Shakespeare contracted not only “flower” and “being” into one semeion each, but compressed into two semeia such words as “maiden-head” and “violet” (“maid’nhead,” “vi’let”). In some cases, the strange evolution affecting *ve* has resulted in the formation of a new word, such as “o’er” instead of “over.” Among time-honored slurrings is the curious case of “spiritual” contracted from four semeia (spir-it-u-al) to a disyllable sounding like something between “sprichal” and “spirchal,” on the perfectly logical basis that if “spirit” is scanned, as it often is, monosyllabically (by analogy with “merit” and “buried”) and if, say, “actual” is scanned “actu’l,” why not contract to one semeion each part of “spiritual” (“spir’tu’l”)?

The vowels *u* and *e* in the unaccented second syllable of trochaic verbs are prone to be elided in participle forms (“murm’ring,” “gath’ring,” “gard’ning,” etc.). Numerous other cases of elision, such as the loss of the *i* value in “-tion” (another obvious analogy with French), come readily to mind and need not be discussed here. In result, the employment of tilt and elision can make a perfect iambic tetrameter out of a sentence that as spoken fits no meter:

watching the approaching flickering storm  
watching th’approaching flick’ring storm.

The beauty of the English elision lies neither in the brutal elimination of a syllable by an apostrophe nor in the recognition of an added semeion by leaving the word typographically intact, but in the delicate sensation of something being physically preserved by the voice at the very instant that it is metaphysically denied by the meter. Thus, the pleasure produced by a contraction or a liaison is the simultaneous awareness of the loss of a syllable on one level and its retention on another and the state of balance achieved between meter and rhythm. It is the perfect example of the possibility of eating one’s cake and having it.

Indiscriminate apostrophation disfigures elision by trying to reconcile eye and ear and satisfying neither. Judging by a certain pentametric line in *The Canterbury Tales* (“Twenty bokes, clad in blak and reed”—“Prologue,” l. 294), I suppose Chaucer pronounced “twenty” as “two-enty,” as children still do today, but must a printer try to reproduce chance mannerisms or iron out blatant errors? Inexperienced Russian versifiers have been known to expand *oktyábr* (“October”) and *skiptr* (“scepter”) to *ok-tyá-ber* and *skl-pe-ter*—mere prosodic mistakes of no interest.

Elision, properly speaking, does not occur in Russian.

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Faintly approaching it is the substitution in verse of a "soft sign" (transliterated coincidentally by an apostrophe) for the valued *i* before a final vowel in such endings as *-anie* and *-enie* (analogical to "-ion" endings in English). Thus, the contraction of the three-syllabic *tlénie* ("decomposition") to the disyllabic *tlén'e* (I repeat, to avoid confusion, that the apostrophe here merely transcribes the soft sign—a letter that looks somewhat like a 6 in print or script) may be compared to the slurring of the *i* in "lenient" or "onion." Pushkin and other poets of his time wrote and pronounced *koy-kák* ("haphazardly") for *kóe-kák*; and the archaic omission of the final vowel in adjectives, which Pushkin permitted himself now and then (*stáři gódī*, "olden times," and *táyna prélest'*, "secret enchantment," for *stárīe gódī* and *táynaya prélest'*), may be regarded as a crude form of elision. Otherwise, such metrical pronunciations as *zháv'ronok* for *zhávoronok* ("lark") and *dvoyúr'dnīy brat* for *dvoyúrodnīy brat* ("first cousin") are but the blunders of poetasters.

### 7. THE ORIGINATION OF METRICAL VERSE IN RUSSIA

*Iz pámyati izgrízli gódī,  
Kto i za chtó v Hotíne pál;  
No pérvīy zvúk Hotínskoy ódī  
Nam pérvīm kríkom zhízni stál.  
—HODASEVICH (1938)\**

Years have from memory eroded  
Who perished at Hotin, and why;  
But the Hotinan ode's first sound  
For us became our life's first cry.

\*This century has not yet produced any Russian poet surpassing Vladislav Hodasevich (1886–1939). The best edition of his poems is *Sobranie stihov*, ed. Nina Berberov (Munich, 1961).

In this section I am not concerned with the anonymous remnants of medieval narrative poetry in Russia, the unrhymed and nonmetrical recitatives, whose form, botched by centuries of oral transmission, was, by the eighteenth century, when the metrical system was first borrowed from the West, incapable of providing individual talent with a diction and a technique:

*Chelovécheskoe sérdtse nesmýslenno i neútmchivo:  
Prel'stílsya Adám so Évvoyu,  
Pozabíli záповed' Bózhíyu,  
Vkusíli plóda vinográdnogo  
Ot dítvnogo dréva velíkogo . . .*

Literal English translation:

The human heart is unreasonable and uncontrollable:  
Adam was tempted, with Eve;  
They forgot God's commandment,  
They tasted the fruit of the grape  
From the wondrous great tree . . .

These lines (11–15) from a famous recitative piece entitled *The Tale of Grief and Ill-Fortune* (*Povest' o gore i zloschastii*), written probably about 1625 and preserved in a single eighteenth-century MS copy, afford a good example of a loose folk rhythm or ritual rhythm that had flowed on for anything up to half a millennium, but that in the age of Lomonosov had practically no effect at all on the evolution of verse form in Russia. Patriotic scholars have attempted to find a trochaic rhythm in short-line Russian folk songs, but I cannot think of any such piece following a regular tonic scheme before the eighteenth century had set the metrical tune; the latter happened to be congenial to national speech accentuation but was, as most of modern Russian culture, a western European grafting upon an organism that, in intrinsic poetical power, surpassed the models stemming from eighteenth-century Germany and France.

## Appendix Two

The origins of a national versification are seldom interesting. Prosody begins to matter only after poets have started to use it, and no poets were the makers of ponderous didactic doggerels who in the seventeenth century and on the threshold of the eighteenth century rhymed unscannable lines of random length, in an abruptly Westernized Russia, in an attempt to introduce a Polish system of syllabic verse, with strictly feminine rhyme, stumbling on in cacophonous couplets. Unendurable dullness settles upon him who peruses these imitations of structures, mediocre in themselves and completely alien to the rhythm of live Russian. His poor rewards are a few chance strains of trochaic lilt audible here and there in the otherwise amorphous heptasyllables (not counting the feminine terminals) of the learned monk, Feofán Prokopóvich (1681–1736), and a few curious samples of moralistic pieces, in ludicrously incorrect Russian, put together by German pedagogues peddling various metrical imitations at the Russian court.

By the third decade of the eighteenth century, the syllabic line that really threatened to stay was an uncouth thing of thirteen syllables (counting the obligative feminine terminal), with a caesura after the seventh syllable:

*Bezúmnñy prósit viná; zri! múdrost' p'yot vódu.*

The madman clamors for wine; see! wisdom drinks water.

The marks are there merely to show the accentuation of the Russian words; the English counterpart conforms exactly to the original. The order of stresses in the thirteener went in jumps and jolts and varied from line to line. The only rule (followed only by purists) was that the seventh, caesural, syllable must bear a beat. Another beat, the rhyme stress, fell on the twelfth syllable. It was on these two crutches that, as we shall presently see, a metrical form hobbled out of its syllabic prison and, casting away its props, suddenly began to dance.

In 1735, Vasiliy Trediakovski (1703–69), a wretched rhymester but a man of intuition and culture, published a muddled and yet rather remarkable *New and Brief Method of Russian Verse-making*, in which he proposed a theory of metrical versification applicable to Russian thirteeners and offered examples composed in accordance with this theory. His “Rule First” reads: “The Russian heroic line [or “Russian hexameter”] consists of thirteen syllables, or six feet.” All these feet were, according to him, binaries,\* of four species, iamb, trochee, “pyrrhic,” and “spondee,” placed in any order within the line, except that the last foot (forming the feminine rhyme) was always a trochee, and the third foot was never a trochee or a “pyrrhic.”

Now—granted that other misguided metrists had also considered the “pyrrhic” and the “spondee” as “feet”—Trediakovski’s system of dividing a thirteener into six feet might have been all right if he:

(1) Had postulated that one of the six feet—namely, one in the first section (of seven syllables)—should be a ternary foot (anapaest, amphibrach, dactyl, or any of the fancy varieties of the old pedants), or

(2) Had transformed his “heroic line” into a feminine-ending Alexandrine by moving the caesura one syllable proximad, thus cutting the line into 3+3 feet, with a stress on the sixth syllable, and discounting the unstressed last syllable of the second section, as being part of the (feminine) rhyme.

Instead, Trediakovski, in order to divide thirteen by six without remainder, followed what seemed to him a more scholarly course: he disregarded the seventh (stressed) syllable of the first (seven-syllable) section, calling it a hypercalectic syllable; i.e., a stressed stop (by analogy with the time-honored error of counting as a

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\*He denounced ternary feet because their use made an “unseemly scamper” of Russian verse!

## *Appendix Two*

caesural stop, and not as the normal ictus of a truncated dactylic foot, the third stress in the so-called elegiac pentameter (see p. 473).

According to his system, the following typically syllabic couplet would have to be scanned as a first line consisting of a medley of myths: two iambs, a pyrrhic, the caesural stop syllable, a spondee, an iamb, and a trochee; and a second line consisting of another assemblage: three iambs, the caesural stop syllable, two iambs, and a trochee:

◡    ◡		◡    ◡		◡    ◡		STOP		◡    ◡	
The mad-		man cla-		mors for		wine;		see! wis-	
◡    ◡		◡    ◡							
dom drinks		water;							
◡    ◡		◡    ◡		◡    ◡		STOP		◡    ◡	
The pant-		ing rake		arrives		late;		success	
◡    ◡		◡    ◡							
is thrift's		daughter.							

Trediakovski continues thus: "However, the most perfect and best verse is a line that consists solely or mainly of trochees, whereas a line consisting solely or mainly of iambs is a very bad one."

The first part of this passage was an epoch-making statement. Trediakovski's attack on the iamb is readily explained by the fact that he so labeled an arbitrarily chosen component of a heterogeneous line broken by a gap no iamb could bridge. Well might he find fault with such doggerel rhythms as I have mimicked above.

It is also of no consequence that he saw his trochaic line as a combination of trochees and "pyrrhics," with the beat of the seventh syllable not counted as part of a foot. This omission did not distort the trochaic meter, for the simple reason that what he omitted was really a trochee truncated by a masculine termination. His faulty theories were redeemed by the "elegies" he submitted as examples; they possess no literary merit but

contain the first trochees deliberately composed in Russian, and prefigure, if not inaugurate, the metrical system.

His *Elegy* II (1735), ll. 79–82, reads:

*Dolgovátœ litsó i rumyáno bílo,  
Beliznýu zhe svoéy vsyó prevoskhodílo;  
Búd' na bélost' zrísh' litsá, to liléi zryátsya,  
Na rumyánost' búde zrísh', rózi tóy krasyátsya.*

Elongated was her face and of rosy brightness,  
While surpassing everything by its lily whiteness;  
When its whiteness you regard, lilies it discloses,  
When its color you regard, lovely are its roses.

In each of these lines the thirteen-syllable abomination of the schoolman was metamorphosed, and what emerged was not one metrical line, as Trediakovski thought, but two trippingly scudded verses—a trochaic tetrameter (with a masculine termination) and a trochaic trimeter (including a feminine rhyme at the end):

When its whiteness you regard,  
Lilies it discloses;  
When its color you regard,  
Lovely are its roses.

The birth of the iambic tetrameter, to which we now must turn, was not a consequence of the breaking up of the Russian heroic line—a trochaic potentiality to begin with. The favorite meter of later poets is heard raising its melodious voice now and then in syllabic verse as an undifferentiated variation of the nonasyllable. Thus, in a “cantata” consisting of syllabic lines of varying length, mostly unscannable, that Trediakovski, in his pre-metrical period, knocked together on the occasion of Empress Anna’s coronation (July 30, 1730), there is an accidental modicum of adjacent metrical verses such as:

*Vospléshchem grómko i rukámi,  
Zaskáchem vésele nogámi . . .*

## Appendix Two

With hands, too, loudly let's be clapping,  
With feet let's merrily be hopping . . .

which are ordinary iambic tetrameters scudded on the third foot.\* But the introduction of the iambic tetrameter as an emphatic and conscious act, and the establishment of a clearly and correctly expressed metrical system of Russian prosody, were not owing to Trediakovski. He may be deemed the sponsor of the trochee. The godfather of the iambic tetrameter is the famous reformer Lomonosov.

In September, 1739, in a "Letter about the Rules of Russian Versification" (first published in 1778), which Mihail Lomonosov (1711-65) sent (from the German university town of Freiburg, where he was studying metallurgy) to the members of a philologic committee attached to the Academy of Sciences in St. Petersburg, he advocated the total adoption of the metrical system and added as a separate illustrative item the first Russian poem, an ode, entirely and deliberately composed in iambic tetrameters. This is the *Ode to the Sovereign of Blessed Memory Anna Ioannovna on the Victory over the Turks and Tatars and on the Taking of Hotin* (or Khotin, a fortress in Bessarabia, SW Russia, formerly an old Genoese citadel, restored by the Turks with the assistance of French engineers, and stormed by Russian troops on Aug. 19, 1739). The MS of this piece, now known as *The Hotinan Ode*, is lost. Scattered fragments of its initial text are quoted by Lomonosov in his manual,

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\*Just as in the Northumbrian Psalter, of four and a half centuries ago, we find, here and there, iambic tetrameters, some of which are scudded on the third foot, such as "Of mǫuth of cȳlder and soukǣnd [sucklings]"—Psalm 8, l. 5. See also the beginning of the so-called "Tale of a Usurer" in the *Sunday Homilies* of c. 1330, in which a Scud II occurs:

"An hólí mǫn biyónd the sé  
Was bíschop of a grét cité."

*A Brief Guide to Rhetoric*, 1744 (pars. 53, 54, 79, 100, 105, 112) and 1748 (pars. 68, 163, 203). The *Ode* was published by Lomonosov, in a revised edition (revised both in matter and manner, to judge by the fragments in his *Guide to Rhetoric*), only in 1751 (*Collection of Various Works by Lomonosov*), though it seems to have been known to the curious long before that. It is in stanzas of ten iambic tetrameters rhymed babaccdde (as usual in my notation, the vowels represent feminine rhymes). In this particular ode the rhyme scheme reverses the feminine-masculine sequence (ababecic) of the usual French ode of ten-verse stanzas (inaugurated by Ronsard, popularized by Malherbe), which Lomonosov used as a stanza model, and of the later odes by Lomonosov himself and by Derzhavin, his great successor.

In its preserved form of 1751 *The Hotinan Ode* begins:

- Vostórg vnezápnyĭ úm pleníl,*  
*Vedyót na vérh gorí vísokoy*  
*Gde vétr v lesáh shumét' zabíl;*  
 4 *V dolíne tishiná glubókoy;*  
*Vnimáya néchto, klyúch molchít,*  
*Kotórĭy zavsegdá zhurchít*  
*I s shumom vntz s holmóv stremítsya.*  
 8 *Lavróvĭ v'yútsya tám ventsĭ,*  
*Tam slúh speshít vo vsé kontsĭ;*  
*Daléche díť v polyáh kurítsya.*

- A sudden rapture thralls the mind,  
 leads to the top of a high mountain  
 where wind in woods forgets to sound;  
 4 there is a hush in the deep valley;  
 to something listing silent is  
 the spring that murmured all the time  
 and down the hills with noise went surging;  
 8 there, laurel crowns are being wound;  
 there, hastes a rumor to all points;  
 smoke in the fields afar is rising.

The fountain is Castalia, on Mt. Parnassus.

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This 1751 version of *The Hotinan Ode* has rather frequent scuds—for example, in II (a modulation that Lomonosov held in better favor than did Pushkin):

41 *Ne méd' li v chréve Étnī rzhyót*  
*I, s séoyu kipyá, klokóchet?*  
*Ne ád li tyázhki úzī rvyót*  
*I chélyusti razínut' hóchet?*

Does brass in Etna's belly neigh  
And bubble, with the sulphur boiling?  
Is Hades tearing heavy chains,  
Endeavoring his jaws to open?

I have kept the literal sense and the rhythm but have sacrificed to their retention the alternate, masculine and feminine, rhymes. The word “neigh” is taken in the old sense, both English and Russian, meaning “to make a loud, harsh, jarring, and jeering sound.” (In modern Russian *rzhanie*, “neighing,” would apply only to the voice of a horse, or, vulgarly, to a succession of human guffaws.)

The rhyme sequence babaccdde in the odic stanza of ten lines (as used in *The Hotinan Ode*, ll. 41–50, in which the terminals are *rzhyot*, *klokóchet*, *rvyot*, *hóchet*, *rabí*, *rví*, *brosáet*, *naród*, *bolót*, *derzáet*;<sup>\*</sup> the cc rhyme here is a poor one, as will be explained further) follows not the musical French alternation that begins on a feminine rhyme and ends in a masculine one (ababeeciic, as used, for instance, by Malherbe and Boileau), but German models in the odic department (in other respects, imitations of French, of course), which also provided Lomonosov with the predominance of scudless lines that he advocated in his early metrical theories. The babaccdde alternations are found, for example, in an ode by Johann Christian Günther (1695–1723), *Auf*

<sup>\*</sup>In English: neighs, bubbles, tears, wishes (all verbs), slave (fem. gen.), fosses, throws, people, marshes (gen.), dares.

*den zwischen Ihre Röm. Kaiserl. Majestät und der Pforte An. 1718 geschlossenen Frieden*, a formidable engine of five hundred verses dedicated to the peace concluded between Austria and Turkey (July 21, 1718). It has less than twenty per cent of scudded lines (not counting a few semiscuds). For example, ll. 11–20:

Die Walstatt ist noch nass und lau  
Und stinkt nach Türken, Schand und Leichen.  
Wer sieht nicht die verstopfte Sau  
Von Äsern faul und mühsam schleichen?  
Und dennoch will das deutsche Blut  
Den alten Kirchhof feiger Wut  
An jungen Lorbeern fruchtbar machen,  
Und gleichwohl hört der dicke Fluss  
Des Sieges feurigen Entschluss  
Aus Mörsern und Kartaunen krachen.

Using my modification of the Belian system of notation (see p. 460), we have:

I	II	III	IV
o	o	o	o
o	o	o	o
o	x	o	o
o	o	o	o
o	o	o	o
o	o	o	o
o	o	o	o
o	o	o	o
o	o	x	o
o	x	o	o

There are a Scud II in ll. 13 and 20 and a III in l. 19.

*The Hotinan Ode*, although reversing the French order of rhymes (followed by Lomonosov in his later odes and in an earlier effort of his, in trochaic tetrameter, October, 1738, an imitation of an ode by Fénélon), contains in the quoted lines clumsy echoes of the imagery in the third stanza of Boileau's *Ode sur la prise de Namur* (1693; an imitation in style of Malherbe's ode *Au Roy*

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*Henry le Grand, sur la prise de Marseille*,\* composed 1596, pub. 1630), ll. 21–30:

Est-ce Apollon, et Neptune  
Qui sur ces Rocs sourcilleux  
Ont, compagnons de fortune,  
Basti ces murs orgueilleux?  
De leur enceinte fameuse  
La Sambre unie à la Meuse  
Deffend le fatal abord,  
Et par cent bouches horribles  
L'airain sur ces monts terribles  
Vômit le fer, et la mort.†

Among the fragments (1744–48) of *The Hotinan Ode* we find such archaic lines as:

*Pretit' ne mógut ógn', vodá,  
Orlítsa kak parít tudá*

which can be rendered in sixteenth-century English:

Her can ne flame, ne flood retard  
When soars the eagless thitherward.

Like all Lomonosov's verses, *The Hotinan Ode* has little poetic merit, but prepares the advent of Derzhavin, who was the first real poet in Russia. It should be noted that despite the clumsiness of Lomonosov's idiom, with its obscure banalities and perilous inversions of speech,

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\*That particular ode by Malherbe, and Boileau's poem, happen to be not in octosyllabics (as French odes generally are) but heptasyllabics, thus corresponding, in Russian or English, not to iambic but to trochaic tetrameters. The first Russian ode (1734), Trediakovski's *Ode on the Surrender of the Town of Gdansk* (*Oda o sdache goroda Gdanska*, referring to Danzig taken by the Russians in a war with Poland, 1734), in syllabic verse, is also an imitation of Boileau's piece, and was present at the back of Lomonosov's mind in the course of composition.

†The insipid rhymes *sourcilleux-orgueilleux* and *horribles-terribles* contrast oddly with the rich rhymes *Neptune-fortune* and *fameuse-Meuse*, both of which, however, were at least a century old in 1693. The two gods mentioned helped to rebuild the walls of Troy.

his iambic tetrameter already includes all the modulations that Derzhavin, Batyushkov, Zhukovski, and Pushkin brought to such perfection. At first Lomonosov deemed scuds good only for light verses, but in the mid-1740's gave in and sparingly used all the types of scuds we know. He was the first Russian to allow cross rhyme.

To be quite exact, actual priority in the inauguration of the Russian iambic tetrameter should be given not to the fragments of *The Hotinan Ode* found scattered through the *Rhetoric*, but to a sample of this meter supplied by Lomonosov in his letter of 1739 (and marked by a subtle, perhaps unconscious, use of the same "fair-face" imagery as that in Trediakovski's sample trochaic lines of 1735). This very first Russian iambic tetrameter goes:

*Beléet búdto snég litsóm . . .*

in which *Beleet*=he, she, or it "looks white," or "is fair-skinned," or "whitens" (intr.); *budto*="as if," "similar to"; *sneg*="snow"; *litsom*=instr. of *litso*, "face"; corresponding to "in face" or "of face." The closest translation allowed by the meter would be:

Appeárs as whíte of fáce as snów . . .

A little further, in the same letter, Lomonosov devises an example of a scud in the regular iambic tetrameter (at the time he approved of these "pyrrhic" liberties only in "songs"):

*Tsvetí, rumyánets umnozháyte!*

The first word means "flowers," the second, "rosy complexion" (cf. Trediakovski's less colloquial *rumyánost'*), and the third is "augment" (pl. imp.).

Ye bloóms, augmént your colorátion.

The samples of other meters that Lomonosov gives in his letter look similar, as if stills were taken of them while they hovered above an unknown context; but one

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of his illustrations—namely, that of a dactylic hexameter—makes at least pleasing sense:

*V'yótsya krugámi zmiyá po travé, obnovtvshis' v  
rasséline . . .*

Windeth in circles a snake through the grass, in  
a crack having molted . . .

I have not managed to keep the dactylic ending, but the feminine one is the one used by Zhukovski and Pushkin in this measure.

Of tremendous interest to the student of Russian prosody is a forty-four-line song (beginning *Gde ni gulyáyu, ni hozhú*, "Wherever ramble I or go," *Grust' prevelikuyu terplyú*, "I bear immeasurable woe"), which one of Boileau's Russian followers, Aleksandr Sumarokov (1718–77), produced in 1759, when, with Trediakovski's trochees and Lomonosov's iambs, the metrical system had triumphed over the syllabic one. This lyrical poem, a stylized peasant girl's love chant, is of little artistic worth but reveals a singular purity of phrasing, superior to the more imaginative but also more awkward idiom of Lomonosov. In it Sumarokov attempts to blend the liberties of stress, characteristic of the syllabic octosyllable, with a scansion that is practically an iambic one. To an iambically trained ear catching the rhythm of the first two verses, the entire piece sounds exactly like the Russian counterpart of an English poem in which the first foot, and the first foot only, is being boldly tilted in every line. There are as many as twenty duplex tilts, and even one long tilt, in it, while all the rest of the lines are split-tilted with various degrees of sharpness. Of the duplex tilts only one belongs to the small group of "neutral" words (l. 32, *Ili on póverhu plívyót*, "Whether upon the surface floats"). The others are such disyllables as *vésel* (l. 23) and *túzhít* (l. 29):

*Vesel li tŕ, kogdá so mnóy?*  
Merry are you when you're with me?

*Tuzhit li v tóy on storoné?*  
Grieving is he in yonder land?

The long tilt is in l. 18, *Sdelalsya mŕl mne kak dushá*, "Lovable grew he as my soul." Unfortunately, Sumarokov's tilts proved stillborn. This and other poems of his were rejected as syllabic fossils by the next generation, and not a single Russian poet, except one or two innovators of today, ever dared use the free duplex tilt that had been accidentally introduced by the rhythm of Sumarokov's curious experiment in meter.

#### 8. DIFFERENCE IN MODULATION

The first thing that strikes the student visually when he compares Russian verse structures to English ones is the lesser number of words that go to form a Russian line metrically identical to an English one. This feature is owing both to an actual preponderance of polysyllables in the Russian language and to the inflective lengthening of its monosyllables such as nouns and verbs. Certain disyllabic forms, such as nonmasculine nouns of two syllables, remain of that length despite inflective alterations (except in the instrumental plural, when a syllable is added); and, on the other hand, certain participial adjectives are capable of such a hypertrophy of caudal segments as to make them uncontainable within a tetrametrical line.

Generally speaking, it is only the lower words, such as prepositions and conjunctions, not affected by inflection, that can be readily compared to their English counterparts as represented in verse. But even this is sometimes not possible, since another extreme is obtained in Russian through the scriptorial dwindling of

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three common Russian words to metrical nothings in the case of the prepositions *k* ("to"), *s* ("with"), and *v* ("in"), which as such (i.e., not lengthened to *ko*, *so*, *vo*, as they are for euphonic reasons before certain words) are not monosyllables at all, but ethereal consonants that are allowed a discrete existence only by grammatical courtesy. There is no doubt in my mind that in the revised, and romanized, Russian script of the future these consonantal prepositions will be connected with the mother word by means of a hyphen (*v-dushe*, "in the soul").

The predominance of polysyllables in Russian verse (as compared to the prodigious quantity of monosyllabic adjectives and verbs in English) is basically owing to the absence of monosyllabic adjectives in Russian (there is only one: *zloy*, "wicked") and a comparative paucity of monosyllabic past tenses among the verbs (e.g., *pel*, "sang"), all of which, adjectives and verbs alike, are lengthened by number, declension, conjugation, and nonmasculine gender. Inflection also results in the comparatively rare occurrence of lower words corresponding to those that speckle English verse and pullulate in English speech, although of course, in a stanza or short poem in which the notions of altitude, confrontation, or distance happen to predominate, the occurrence of *na* ("on"), *nad* ("above"), *pod* ("under"), *pred* or *pered* ("before"), *ot* ("from"), *do* ("to"), and so forth would be as frequent as in English. And last but not least, the quantity of words in the line is affected by the non-existence of Russian words exactly corresponding to the English definite and indefinite articles.

In result of all these facts, a Russian who wants to say "the man" uses only one word, but this word is a trisyllable: *chelovék*. Its dative, "to a man" or "to the man" or "to man," is *chelovéku* or *k cheloveku*—four syllables. *Dushá* is "soul"; and "in the soul" is *v dushé*—two syllables.

bles. Very seldom, in translations from Russian into English and vice versa, can one monosyllabic noun be rendered by another. Some comfort is afforded in this respect by the coincidences *dni* and "days," *snī* and "dreams," *mir* and "peace," and a few others, but the singular *son* is "a dream" or "the dream"—two syllables—and *sna* is "of the dream"—three syllables. And although we can find quite a few long adjectives in English to match those of five, six, and seven syllables that are so abundant in Russian, it will be immediately clear from a comparative study of serious English and Russian poets, especially those of the nineteenth century, that because of associations with the burlesque genre the lyrical English poet will use conspicuous polysyllables warily, sparingly, or not at all, whereas the Russian lyricist, especially one of Pushkin's time, who has no such worries, will feel a natural melodic association between, say, the melancholy of love and polysyllabic epithets. In consequence, the mark of a first-rate performer of the time—the 1820's, when the Russian iambic tetrameter was at its highest level of popularity with minor and major poets\*—was the two-word or three-word technique; i.e., the art of making a minimum of words shape the line. This I term the "full line." The natural colloquial falling into place of large words coin-

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\*A decline of poetry set in after the time of Tyutchev (1803–73), despite the continued existence of two other major poets, Nekrasov (1821–77) and Fet (1820–92), neither of them a master of iambic tetrameter. The revival of poetry in the first two decades of this century was also marked by a revival of the meter in question; but a tendency has arisen among serious poets in recent years to give the form a greater concentration of meaning, sometimes at the expense of melody, owing perhaps to one's irritation by the upstart modulations used by a generation of rhymesters who easily caught the scudding knack after Beliy's work (1910), which found in scudding a separative agent to distinguish genius from mediocrity in the untheorizing past.

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cides with an absence of gap fillers and lame monosyllables and results in a surge of scuds, so that, in the nineteenth century, a high rate of scuds became a sign of expert handling in matters of poetical idiom.

Masculine full lines in *EO* are limited to twenty-one combinations of three words and to six of two words (the additional possibility 1+7, involving the unpleasant I-II scud, was not used in Pushkin's day). The following are random samples typical of Pushkinian intonations in *EO*:

- 2+5+1: *Egó toskúyushchuyu lén'* [One : VIII : 8; which means "his fretting indolence" (acc.)]  
2+4+2: *Vdál't Itál'ii svoéy* [One : VIII : 14; which means "far from his Italy"]  
3+4+1: *Zhelániy svoevól'nñy róy* [One : XXXII : 8; which is best rendered by the eighteenth-century French "Des désirs le volage essaim"]  
1+4+3: *Chtob epigráfi razbirát'* [One : VI : 4; which means "in order to make out epigraphs"]  
7+1: *Zakonodátel'nitse zál* [Eight : XXVIII : 7; which means "in the legistatrix of salons"]  
6+2: *Ostanovílasya oná* [Five : XI : 14; the first word means "stopped," and the second "she" (one wonders by means of what miraculous circumlocution an English versifier might manage to compose a double-scud iambic tetrameter merely meaning "she stopped"))]

The number of two-word or three-word lines is about thirty per cent in *EO*, to judge by a number of random samplings. In samplings from English poets, it rises from zero to barely five per cent. Among poets who use full lines more often than most English poets do, we find:

- 2+3+3: Suspends uncertaine victorie [Donne, *The Extasie*, l. 14]  
2+6: Upon Impossibility [Marvell, *The Definition of Love*, l. 4]  
4+2+2: Magnanimous Despair alone [ibid., l. 5]

and so forth; but in romantic poets, a natural contempt for Hudibrastics restrains somewhat the urge toward the formation of full lines. \*

We can now sum up the main differences in modulation between English and Russian iambic tetrameters as used by major poets. †

### English

(1) Scudless lines predominate over scudded ones in any given poem. In exceptional cases, at the maximal frequency of scudded lines, their number is about equal to that of scudless lines.

(2) Sequences of scudded lines are never very long. Five or six in a row occur very seldom. As a rule, they merely dot the background of scudless series instead of forming sustained patterns from line to line.

(3) Scuds are frequently associated with weak monosyllables, duplex tilts, and scudded rhymes (Scud IV).

(4) Scud I and Scud II occur about as frequently as Scud III but often tend to predominate, with Scud IV comparatively a rarity. The line is weighted accentually toward its end.

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\*Paradoxically enough, it is to English that we must go to find instances, in minor poetry, of a tetrameter made up entirely of one word. I am thinking of T. S. Eliot's *Mr. Eliot's Sunday Morning Service*, which begins with the (apparently, jocular) line: "Polyphiloprogenitive." This, of course, can be (but never has been) duplicated in Russian; e.g., *polupereimenovát'* (which means "to rename incompletely" and illustrates the additional metrical feat, impossible in English, of obtaining three scuds in a row instead of the scud, semiscud, accented stress-scudded terminal of the English example).

†Among major Russian poets, the greatest masters in the form were, in the nineteenth century, Pushkin and Tyutchev and, in the twentieth, Blok and Hodasevich. Lermontov's iambic tetrameters do not reflect his genius at its best, even in his celebrated *Demon*. Baratinski and Yazikov are often mentioned with the major poets as tetrametric performers, but the first was definitely a minor poet and the second a mediocre one.

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- (5) Feminine rhymes are scarce, insipid, or burlesque.
- (6) Elisions are more or less frequent.

### Russian

(1) Scudded lines greatly predominate over scudless ones.

(2) Scuds often form linked patterns from line to line, for half a dozen lines in a row and up to twenty or more. Scudless lines rarely occur in sequences above two or three lines in a row.

(3) Scuds are frequently associated with the unaccented syllables of long words. Apart from the few exceptions noted, there are no duplex tilts. Rhymes are not scudded (absence of Scud IV).

(4) Scud III greatly predominates over other scuds. The line is weighted accentually toward its beginning.

(5) Feminine rhymes are as frequent as masculine ones and add extrametrical music to the verse.

(6) There are, strictly speaking, no elisions of any kind.

### 9. EXAMPLES OF MODULATIONS

English meter came into being almost four centuries before Russian meter did. In both cases, modulation was born with the measure. Among the tetrameters of Chaucer's *The Hous of Fame* (1383-84), there are trochaic and iambic lines that contain all the scuds of later poets, although as usual with English poets the basic pattern is the scudless line and not, as in Russian, the third-foot scud. In *The Hous of Fame* we find a few third-foot scuds (l. 352, "Though hit be kevered with the mist," or l. 1095, "Here art poetical be shewed"), a few second-foot scuds (l. 70, "That dwelleth in a cave of stoon"), a few combinations of second-foot and third-foot scuds (l. 223, "And prevely took arrivage"). It dis-

plays such rhythmic formulas as, for example, the famous one based on two sonorous names (l. 589, "Ne Romulus, ne Ganymede"), which probably every English poet who favored the tetrameter has used once or twice, down to our own times. Even tilts are present (l. 605, " 'Gladly,' quod I. 'Now wel,' quod he"), but they are still rare, for when faced with the necessity of using an initial strong monosyllable or a strongheaded disyllable, old poets often preferred to switch for a verse or two from the dominant iambic meter to a trochaic one (i.e., to a line shorter by one, initial, syllable) rather than to tilt the iambic foot.

It is not my intention here to outline, even cursorily, the history of the English iamb. But a few disjointed observations may be of some use.

I think that on the whole the iambic tetrameter has fared better in Russia than in England. The Russian iambic tetrameter is a solid, polished, disciplined thing, with rich concentrated meaning and lofty melody fused in an organic entity: it has said in Russian what the pentameter has said in English, and the hexameter in French. Now, on the other hand, the English iambic tetrameter is a hesitating, loose, capricious form, always in danger of having its opening semeion chopped off, or of being diluted by a recurrent trimeter, or of developing a cadential lilt. The English form has been instrumental in producing a quantity of admirable short poems but has never achieved anything approaching, either in sheer length or artistic importance, a stanzaic romance comparable to *Eugene Onegin*. The trouble is that with the English iambic tetrameter the pendulum of its purpose swings between two extremes—stylized primitivity and ornate burlesque. The scudless or nearly scudless iambic tetrameter has been consistently looked upon by English poets and critics as something characteristic of the "folk ditty" and conducive to an effect of "simplic-

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ity” and “sincerity.” Now, this kind of thing is a serious obstacle to the evolution of an art form. I am aware that the specious terms “simplicity” and “sincerity” are constantly employed in a commendatory sense by well-meaning teachers of literature. Actually, of course, no matter how “simple” the result looks, true art is never simple, being always an elaborate, magical deception, even if it seems to fit in well with an author’s temperament, ideas, biography, and so forth. Art is a magical deception, as all nature is magic and deception. To speak of a “sincere” poem or picture is about the same thing as to call “sincere” a bird’s mating dance or a caterpillar’s mimetic behavior.

By the seventeenth century, the English iambic tetrameter, in the hands of some performers of genius, becomes capable of elaborate music while treating frivolous as well as metaphysical themes. But at this historical point a disaster takes place. The emancipation of the iambic tetrameter in England becomes associated with the tendency toward Hudibrastics. Even the exceptionally artistic poetry of Marvell tends fatally to lapse into the atrocious genre associated with Samuel Butler’s burlesque. This kind of stuff—the boisterous and obscure topical satire, the dismally comic, mock-heroic poem, the social allusion sustained through hundreds of rhymed couplets, the academic tour de force, and the coy fugitive verses—is something intrinsically inartistic and antipoetical since its enjoyment presupposes that Reason is somehow, in the long run, superior to Imagination, and that both are less important than a man’s religious or political beliefs. It has nothing to do with wit, but has a great deal to do with a certain persistent strain of mental archness that in modern times is so painfully audible in much of Mr. T. S. Eliot’s work.

The sad fact is thus that the English iambic tetrameter, despite the genius of some great poets who made it sing

and shimmer, has been maimed for life by certain, still thriving, trends and forms such as light verse (e.g., more or less elegant rearrangements of conventional images and ideas), the burlesque or mock-heroic genre (a dreadful category that includes political and scholarly romps), didactic verse (comprising not only catalogues of natural phenomena but also various "meditations" and "hymns" reflecting the standard ideas and traditions of organized religious groups), and various junctions and overlappings of these three main varieties.

This is not to say that there are not many tetrametric masterpieces in English. Some of the following samples, to which diagrams of modulations are appended, come from immortal productions unsurpassed in any language by poems belonging to the same category. These samples are followed by diagrams of *EO* rhythms.

In all the diagrams, a scudless foot is designated by an o and a scudded one by an x. Semiscuds (such as the word "when") are treated as regular beats. Duplex tilts are italicized in the text (e.g., in the second sample, l. 6). Split tilts (e.g., in the same sample, l. 5) are not italicized. False spondees (*ibid.*, l. 2) are not marked in the diagrams, even when so topheavy as to border on the split tilt (e.g., in the sixth sample, l. 8, or in the sixteenth, l. 1).

I. Henry Howard, Earl of Surrey (1517?-47), *The Lover Describeth His Restless State*:

	I	II	III	IV
1 As oft as I behold, and see	o	o	o	o
The sovereign beauty that me bound;	o	o	x	o
The nigher my comfort is to me,	o	o	o	o
Alas! the fresher is my wound.	o	o	o	o
As flame doth quench by rage of fire,	o	o	o	o
And running streams consume by rain;	o	o	o	o
So doth the sight that I desire	o	o	o	o
Appease my grief and deadly pain.	o	o	o	o

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x	o	o	o	Like as the fly that see'th the flame,
o	o	x	o	And thinks to play her in the fire;
o	o	o	o	That found her woe, and sought her game
o	o	o	o	Where grief did grow by her desire.
o	o	o	o	First when I saw those crystal streams,
o	o	o	o	14 Whose beauty made my mortal wound . . .

In this poem of forty-five lines, with from twenty-six to thirty-one words in each of its nine quatrains, there is only one word that has more than two syllables. In the fourteen lines given above, there are ninety-seven words, a number that is interesting to compare with the eighty words in a reasonably well-scudded English sample or with the Russian average of about fifty in a fourteen-line stanza of *EO*.

### II. William Shakespeare (1564–1616), Sonnet CXLV

I	II	III	IV	(1609):
o	o	o	o	1 Those lips that Love's own hand did make
o	o	o	o	Breathed forth the sound that said "I hate"
o	o	x	o	To me that languish'd for her sake;
o	o	o	o	But when she saw my woeful state,
x	o	o	o	Straight in her heart did mercy come,
x	o	o	o	<i>Chiding</i> that tongue that ever sweet
o	o	o	o	Was used in giving gentle doom,
o	o	o	o	And taught it thus anew to greet;
o	o	x	o	"I hate" she alter'd with an end
o	o	o	o	That follow'd it as gentle day
o	o	x	o	Doth follow night, who, like a fiend,
o	o	o	o	From heaven to hell is flown away;
o	o	o	o	"I hate" from hate away she threw,
o	o	x	o	14 And saved my life, <i>saying</i> "not you."

In this elegant little sonnet (Shakespeare's only tetrametric one) the readers should note the comparatively high rate of scudding and, in the last line, the comparatively rare third-foot duplex tilt, here eased in by means of a concettic alliteration.

*Notes on Prosody*

III. John Donne (1572-1631), <i>The Extasie</i> (pub. 1633):		I	II	III	IV
37	A single violet transplant,	o	o	x	o
	The strength, the colour, and the size,	o	o	x	o
	(All which before was poore, and scant,)	o	o	o	o
	Redoubles still, and multiplies.	o	o	x	o
	When love, with one another so	o	o	o	o
	Interinanimates two soules,	x	x	o	o
	That abler soule, which thence doth flow,	o	o	o	o
	Defects of loneliness controules.	o	o	x	o
	Wee then, who are this new soule, know,	o	o	o	o
	Of what we are compos'd, and made.	o	o	o	o
	For, th'Atomies of which we grow,	o	x	o	o
	Are soules, whom no change can invade.	o	o	o	o
	But O alas, so long, so farre	o	o	o	o
50	Our bodies why do wee forbear?	o	o	o	o

A certain interesting eccentricity marks the rhythm of Donne, who has been somewhat overrated in recent years by lovers of religious verse. I have been slightly influenced in the choice of this particular passage by the presence of the very rare variation I+II, which, however, is a little impaired by the possibility of substituting a secondary accent for the second scud. There are plums in the rest of the pie; e.g., l. 29, "This Extasie doth unperplex," = II+III, and l. 66, "T'affections, and to faculties," = II+IV. The apostrophization of the ugly and trite elision in the second example is a mannerism of the time.

IV. John Milton (1608-74), <i>L'Allegro</i> (c. 1640):		I	II	III	IV
103	She was pincht, and pull'd she sed,	o	o	o	o
	And he by Friars Lanthorn led	o	o	o	o
	Tells how the drudging Goblin swet,	o	o	o	o
	To ern his Cream-bowle duly set,	o	o	o	o
	When in one night, ere glimps of morn,	x	o	o	o
	His shadowy Flae hath thresh'd the Corn	o	o	o	o
	That ten day-labourers could not end,	o	o	o	o
	Then lies him down the Lubbar fend.	o	o	o	o

## Appendix Two

o	o	o	o	And stretch'd out all the Chimney's length,
x	o	o	o	Basks at the fire his hairy strength;
o	x	o	o	And Crop-full out of dores he flings,
x	o	o	o	Ere the first Cock his Mattin rings.
o	o	o	o	Thus don the Tales, to bed they creep,
o	o	o	o	116 By whispering Windes soon lull'd asleep.

It is not easy to find a sustained sequence of iambic tetrameters in Milton, who deliberately interrupts their flow by beheading the iamb every time it begins to domineer. Cadential verse for him, as for Coleridge and Keats, was a great and fertile temptation. This extract from a resplendent masterpiece (l. 112 is one of the best in English poetry) is not very abundantly scudded, but extra modulation is achieved by means of the contractions so characteristic of Milton's style: l. 108, "His shadowy Flale . . ."; l. 109, "That ten day-labourers . . ."; and l. 116, "By whispering Windes . . ."

v. Samuel Butler (1612-80), *Hudibras*, pt. I (pub.

I	II	III	IV	1662), can. I:
o	o	o	o	187 For his Religion it was fit
o	o	x	o	To match his Learning and his Wit:
x	o	x	o	'Twas Presbyterian true blew,
o	x	o	o	For he was of that stubborn Crew
o	o	o	o	Of Errant Saints, whom all men grant
o	o	o	x	To be the true Church Militant:
x	o	o	o	Such as do build their Faith upon
o	o	o	o	The holy Text of Pike and Gun;
o	x	o	x	Decide all Controversies by
o	x	o	x	Infallible Artillery;
o	o	o	x	And prove their Doctrine Orthodox
x	o	o	o	By Apostolick Blows and Knocks;
o	o	x	o	Call Fire and Sword and Desolation,
o	o	x	o	200 A godly-thorough-Reformation . . .

*Hudibras* teeters, of course, on the verge of jingle; in fact, it is the very parade of this teetering that barely saves it from hopeless topicality; but I give a sample of

the stuff because it displays one of the standard uses—the journalistic, mock-heroic genre—to which English and German satirists have put the most poetical of meters. The passage is scudded ostentatiously and vulgarly (a symptom of this is the frequency of IV). A rich scudding of iambic tetrameters is fatally associated in the English mind with jocose forms of minor poetry and with the same suggestion of verbal intemperance that makes the fancy rhyme odious in English.

VI. Andrew Marvell (1621–78), *To His Coy Mistress*  
(pub. 1681):

	I	II	III	IV
1 Had we but World enough, and Time,	o	o	o	o
This coyness Lady were no crime.	o	o	o	o
We would sit down, and think which way	o	o	o	o
To walk, and pass our long Loves Day.	o	o	o	o
Thou by the Indian Ganges side	x	o	o	o
Should'st Rubies find: I by the Tide	o	o	x	o
Of Humber would complain. I would	o	o	o	o
Love you ten years before the Flood:	o	o	o	o
And you should if you please refuse	o	x	o	o
Till the Conversion of the Jews.	x	o	x	o
My vegetable Love should grow	o	x	o	o
Vaster than Empires, and more slow.	x	o	o	o
An hundred years should go to praise	o	o	o	o
14 Thine Eyes, and on thy Forehead Gaze.	o	x	o	o

Note the modulations in the second part of this passage. It comes from one of the greatest English short poems. I think that the “you” after the tilted “Love” in l. 8 rates half a scud, while the next one does not. Of the hundreds of English tetrameters I have examined, this—and certain sequences in Cotton and, alas, Samuel Butler—are closest in melodic figures to those so typical of Pushkin and his contemporaries, though still falling short of the Russian predilection for the rapid ripple of Scud III.

## Appendix Two

				vii. Charles Cotton (1630–87), <i>The New Year</i> (pub. 1689):	
I	II	III	IV		
o	o	o	o	25	And all the moments open are
x	o	o	x		To the exact discoverer;
o	o	o	o		Yet more and more he smiles upon
o	x	o	x		The happy revolution.
o	o	o	o		Why should we then suspect or fear
o	x	x	o		The Influences of a year
o	o	x	o		So smiles upon us the first morn,
o	o	o	o		And speaks us good so soon as born?
o	o	o	o		Pox on't! the last was ill enough,
o	x	o	o		This cannot but make better proof;
x	o	o	o		Or, at the worst, as we brush'd through
o	o	o	o		The last, why so we may this too;
o	o	o	o		And then the next in reason shou'd,
x	o	x	o	38	Be superexcellently good . . .

For an English poet, Cotton is an uncommonly rich scudder and, in fact, outranks Marvell in the use of long words and rare modulations but also is much inferior to him artistically. He is the only poet among those I have studied whose iambic tetrameters contain a number of the unusual scud variation I+II, with or without tilt (e.g., *The Retreat*, l. 8, “And to my admiration finde”; *Valedictory*, l. 22, “Scarsely to Apprehension knowne”; *The Entertainment to Phillis*, l. 25, “Vessells of the true Antick mold”; and a few others).

				viii. Matthew Prior (1664–1721), <i>An Epitaph</i> (“Interr’d beneath this Marble Stone”; pub. 1718):	
I	II	III	IV		
o	x	o	x	17	Their Moral and Œconomy
o	x	o	o		Most perfectly They made agree:
o	o	o	o		Each Virtue kept it's proper Bound,
o	x	o	o		Nor Trespass'd on the other's Ground.
o	o	o	o		Nor Fame, nor Censure They regarded:
o	o	o	o		They neither Punish'd, nor Rewarded.
o	o	o	o		He car'd not what the Footmen did:
o	o	o	o		Her Maids She neither prais'd, nor chid:

## Notes on Prosody

So ev'ry Servant took his Course;	o	o	o	o
And bad at First, They all grew worse.	o	o	o	o
<i>Slothful</i> Disorder fill'd His Stable;	x	o	o	o
And sluttish Plenty deck'd Her Table.	o	o	o	o
Their Beer was strong; Their Wine was Port;	o	o	o	o
30 Their Meal was large; Their Grace was short.	o	o	o	o

I have chosen the most modulated passage in this poem by an essentially second-rate performer true to his pedestrian age. Another sequence of the same number of lines (37-50) is completely scudless. The occurrence of scuds—when they do appear—in II is characteristic of poorly modulated, commonplace poems in which the scudless type of line greatly predominates. The rarity of tilts (in accordance with contemporaneous theory) is also symptomatic of prosodic poverty in poems of that period.

IX. Jonathan Swift (1667-1745), *Stella's Birth-day*  
(1726-27):

	I	II	III	IV
1 This Day, whate'er the Fates decree,	o	o	o	o
Shall still be kept with Joy by me:	o	o	o	o
This Day then, let us not be told,	o	o	o	o
That you are sick, and I grown old,	o	o	o	o
Nor think on our approaching Ills,	o	o	o	o
And talk of Spectacles and Pills;	o	o	x	o
To morrow will be Time enough	o	o	o	o
To hear such mortifying Stuff.	o	o	x	o
Yet since from Reason may be brought	o	o	o	o
A better and more pleasing Thought,	o	x	o	o
Which can in spite of all Decays,	o	o	o	o
Support a few remaining Days:	o	o	o	o
From not the gravest of Divines,	x	o	x	o
14. Accept for once some serious Lines.	o	o	o	o

This jogging rhythm, with isolated, halfhearted scuds and an avoidance of tilts, is typical of the "light verse" (a ponderous and dreary machine) of the Age of Reason. Some may not think that l. 8 should be allowed a full scud in III. I am not quite sure I should have included Swift's doggerel.

## Appendix Two

I	II	III	IV	x. John Dyer (1700?–58), <i>Grongar Hill</i> (pub. 1726):
o	o	o	o	79 And there the fox securely feeds;
o	o	o	o	And there the pois'nous adder breeds
o	o	o	o	Conceal'd in ruins, moss and weeds;
o	x	o	o	While, ever and anon, there falls
o	o	o	o	Huge heaps of hoary moulder'd walls.
o	o	o	o	Yet time has seen, that lifts the low,
o	o	o	o	And level lays the lofty brow,
o	o	o	o	Has been this broken pile compleat,
x	o	x	o	Big with the vanity of state;
o	o	o	o	But transient is the smile of fate!
o	o	o	o	A little rule, a little sway,
o	x	o	o	A sun beam in a winter's day,
o	o	o	o	Is all the proud and mighty have
o	o	x	o	92 Between the cradle and the grave.

A tame and typical minor poet endowed with a certain delicacy of touch and not as color-blind as most of his grove-and-rill brethren in that most inartistic of centuries.

I	II	III	IV	xi. Samuel Johnson (1709–84), <i>On the Death of Dr. Robert Levet</i> (written 1782; pub. 1783):
o	o	o	o	1 Condemn'd to hope's delusive mine,
o	o	o	o	As on we toil from day to day,
o	o	o	o	By sudden blasts, or slow decline,
o	o	o	o	Our social comforts drop away.
o	o	o	o	Well tried through many a varying year,
o	x	o	o	See Levet to the grave descend;
o	o	x	o	Officious, innocent, sincere,
o	o	o	o	Of ev'ry friendless name the friend.
o	o	o	o	Yet still he fills affection's eye,
o	o	o	o	Obscurely wise, and coarsely kind;
o	o	x	o	Nor, letter'd arrogance, deny
o	o	x	o	Thy praise to merit unrefin'd.
o	o	o	o	When fainting nature call'd for aid,
o	o	o	o	14 And hov'ring death prepar'd the blow . . .

The scant microbes of rhythm are a good test-tube sample of Samuel Johnson's plain rhythms.

xii. William Cowper (1731–1800), *Written after Leaving Her at New Burns* (written c. 1754; pub. 1825):

	I	II	III	IV
12 <i>Welcome</i> my long-lost love, she said,	x	o	o	o
E'er since our adverse fates decreed	o	o	o	o
That we must part, and I must mourn	o	o	o	o
Till once more blest by thy return,	o	o	o	o
Love, on whose influence I relied	x	o	o	o
For all the transports I enjoy'd,	o	o	o	o
Has play'd the cruel tyrant's part,	o	o	o	o
And turn'd tormentor to my heart;	o	o	x	o
But let me hold thee to my breast,	o	o	x	o
Dear partner of my joy and rest,	o	x	o	o
And not a pain, and not a fear	o	o	o	o
Or anxious doubt, shall enter there.—	o	o	o	o
<i>Happy</i> , thought I, the favour'd youth,	x	o	o	o
25 Blest with such undissembled truth!	x	x	o	o

Cowper has left very few iambic tetrameters. Those of several of his flat *Olney Hymns* are not worth dissecting. The modulations of this poem come rather as a surprise (and perhaps reveal the concentrated music that the poor sick man had in him), seeing the pedestrian quality of most of his rhythms. I have chosen this passage to get in the very rare I+II.

xiii. William Wordsworth (1770–1850), *A Whirl-blast from Behind the Hill* (composed 1798; pub. 1800):

	I	II	III	IV
1 A whirl-blast from behind the hill	o	x	o	o
Rushed o'er the wood with startling sound;	o	o	o	o
Then—all at once the air was still,	o	o	o	o
And showers of hailstones pattered round.	o	o	o	o
Where leafless oaks towered high above,	o	o	o	o
I sat within an undergrove	o	o	o	o
Of tallest hollies, tall and green;	o	o	o	o
A fairer bower was never seen.	o	o	o	o
From year to year the spacious floor	o	o	o	o
With withered leaves is covered o'er,	o	o	o	o
And all the year the bower is green.	o	o	o	o
But see! where'er the hailstones drop	o	o	o	o

## Appendix Two

o	o	o	o	The withered leaves all skip and hop;
o	o	o	o	14 There's not a breeze—no breath of air . . .

The poem, which is an admirable one, seems to have been deliberately kept almost scudless by its author, save for a burst of music toward the end, with the final line (22) scudded on II and IV ("Were dancing to the minstrelsy"). Wordsworth's later tetrameters are also sparsely scudded, with singing lines here and there interrupting lengthy spells of regular ones. With the Hudibrastic nightmare hardly more than a century old, no wonder genuine poets were chary of their scuds in serious verse. That Wordsworth could orchestrate his scuds brilliantly is proved by such lines as 1342-45 of *The White Doe of Rylstone* (composed 1807-08; pub. 1815):

Athwart the unresisting tide  
Of the spectators occupied  
In admiration or dismay,  
Bore instantly his Charge away

in which the combination of scuds (II, I+III, I+III, II) produces a very Pushkinian modulation. In the same poem occurs the very rare I+II line (754):

With unparticipated gaze . . .

				XIV. Samuel Taylor Coleridge (1772-1834), <i>The Pains</i>
I	II	III	IV	<i>of Sleep</i> (composed 1803; pub. 1816):
o	o	o	o	14 But yester-night I prayed aloud
o	x	o	x	In anguish and in agony,
o	x	o	o	Up-starting from the fiendish crowd
o	o	o	o	Of shapes and thoughts that tortured me:
o	o	o	o	A lurid light, a trampling throng,
x	o	x	o	Sense of intolerable wrong,
o	o	o	o	And whom I scorned, those only strong!
x	o	o	o	Thirst of revenge, the powerless will
o	x	o	o	Still baffled, and yet burning still!
o	o	o	o	Desire with loathing strangely mixed
o	o	o	o	On wild or hateful objects fixed.

## Notes on Prosody

Fantastic passions! maddening brawl!	o	o	o	o
And shame and terror over all!	o	o	o	o
27 Deeds to be hid that were not hid . . .	x	o	o	o

In this great poem, contractions and split tilts add to the rippling of scuds, which here and there occur in consecutive lines as they do in the verses of Andrew Marvell and Matthew Arnold.

xv. George Gordon, Lord Byron (1788–1824), *Mazeppa* (composed 1818; pub. 1819):

	I	II	III	IV
15 Such was the hazard of the die;	o	o	x	o
The wounded Charles was taught to fly	o	o	o	o
By day and night through field and flood,	o	o	o	o
Stained with his own and subjects' blood;	x	o	o	o
For thousands fell that flight to aid:	o	o	o	o
And not a voice was heard to upbraid	x	o	o	o
Ambition in his humbled hour,	o	x	o	o
When Truth had nought to dread from Power.	o	o	o	o
His horse was slain, and Gieta gave	o	o	o	o
His own—and died the Russians' slave.	o	o	o	o
This, too, sinks after many a league	o	o	o	o
Of well-sustained, but vain fatigue;	o	o	o	o
And in the depths of forests darkling,	x	o	o	o
28 The watch-fires in the distance sparkling . . .	o	x	o	o

*Mazeppa* is not one of Byron's happiest compositions, but it serves my purpose as being mostly in iambic tetrameter. I have selected a passage from it to show his scudding at its poor best. The commonplace idiom is not redeemed, as it is in Wordsworth, by a concentration of rich poetical sense.

xvi. John Keats (1795–1821), *The Eve of St. Mark* (composed 1819):

	I	II	III	IV
1 Upon a Sabbath-day it fell;	o	o	o	o
Twice holy was the Sabbath-bell,	o	o	o	o
That call'd the folk to evening prayer;	o	o	o	o
The city streets were clean and fair	o	o	o	o

## Appendix Two

o	o	o	o	From wholesome drench of April rains;
x	o	o	o	And, on the western window panes,
o	o	o	o	The chilly sunset faintly told
x	o	o	o	Of unmatur'd green vallies cold,
x	o	o	o	Of the green thorny bloomless hedge,
o	o	o	o	Of rivers new with spring-tide sedge,
o	x	o	o	Of primroses by shelter'd rills,
o	x	o	o	And daisies on the aguish hills.
o	o	o	o	Twice holy was the Sabbath-bell:
o	o	o	o	14 The silent streets were crowded well . . .

The iambic tetrameter is not Keats' favorite medium of expression. He interrupts its flow either with shorter, lilted lines, as in *La Belle Dame Sans Merci* (in which each quatrain ends in a cadential line), or with sequences of trochaic tetrameters, as in the batch coming after l. 30 in *The Eve of St. Mark*. In the minds of many English poets of the time, tetrametrics were associated with folklore, naïve ditties, knights-errant, minstrelsy, fairy tales, and so forth.

xvii. Alfred, Lord Tennyson (1809–92), *In Memoriam*, XI (pub. 1850):

I	II	III	IV	1	Calm is the morn without a sound,
o	o	o	o		Calm as to suit a calmer grief,
x	o	o	o		And only through the faded leaf
o	x	o	o		The chestnut pattering to the ground:
o	o	x	o		Calm and deep peace on this high wold,
x	o	o	o		And on these dews that drench the furze,
x	o	o	o		And all the silvery gossamers
o	o	o	x		That twinkle into green and gold;
o	o	o	o		Calm and still light on yon great plain
x	o	o	o		That sweeps with all its autumn bowers,
o	o	o	o		And crowded farms and lessening towers,
o	x	o	o		To mingle with the bounding main:
o	o	o	o		Calm and deep peace in this wide air,
x	o	o	o	14	These leaves that redden to the fall . . .

I have chosen this as a particularly brilliant example of scudding (based mainly on monosyllabics and partly owing to the repetition of a specific split tilt). There are,

however, other sequences of fourteen or more lines in other parts of *In Memoriam* in which there are no scuds at all, or in which these are reduced to one half of their value (e.g., sec. xv). See also pp. 460–61.

xviii. Robert Browning (1812–89), *Porphyria's Lover* (1836):

	I	II	III	IV
29 For love of her, and all in vain:	o	o	o	o
So, she was come through wind and rain.	o	o	o	o
Be sure I looked up at her eyes	o	o	x	o
<i>Happy</i> and proud; at last I knew	x	o	o	o
Porphyria worshipped me; surprise	o	o	o	o
Made my heart swell, and still it grew	o	o	o	o
While I debated what to do.	o	o	o	o
That moment she was mine, mine, fair,	o	o	o	o
<i>Perfectly</i> pure and good: I found	x	o	o	o
A thing to do, and all her hair	o	o	o	o
In one long yellow string I wound	o	o	o	o
Three times her little throat around,	o	o	o	o
And strangled her. No pain felt she;	o	o	o	o
42 I am quite sure she felt no pain.	o	o	o	o

As already noted, the perception of semiscuds is a somewhat subjective affair and depends very much on the accentuation of adjacent words in the line. "She's," "me's," and "I's" may be sometimes very slightly accented, as I think they are here. Browning crams his iambic tetrameter so full of solid words that no wonder this admirable poem is so little scudded. There is a wonderful long tilt in l. 21, "Murmuring how she loved me—she," and the still more beautiful one in l. 37, which induced me to choose this passage. Split reverse tilts are also characteristic of his style.

xix. Matthew Arnold (1822–88), *Resignation* (pub. 1849):

	I	II	III	IV
122 Signs are not wanting, which might raise	o	o	o	o
The ghosts in them of former days—	o	o	o	o

## Appendix Two

o	o	x	o	Signs are not wanting, if they would;
o	x	o	x	Suggestions to disquietude.
o	o	o	o	For them, for all, time's busy touch,
o	o	o	o	While it mends little, troubles much.
o	o	x	o	Their joints grow stiffer—but the year
o	o	o	o	Runs his old round of dubious cheer;
x	o	o	o	<i>Chilly</i> they grow—yet winds in March
o	o	o	o	Still, sharp as ever, freeze and parch;
o	o	o	o	They must live still—and yet, God knows,
x	o	o	o	<i>Crowded</i> and keen the country grows;
o	o	o	o	It seems as if, in their decay,
o	o	o	o	135 The law grew stronger every day.

Further on, in l. 160, there occurs the rare long tilt (“Beautiful eyes meet his—and he”). Arnold’s tetrameters are splendidly modulated and marked by that special device of artists in prosody, the interruption of musically flowing lines by compact verses full of false spondees. Compare all this with the snip-snap banalities of, say, Arthur Hugh Clough (1819–61), a poetaster, or the eighteenth-century meagerness of modulation in Byron’s flat iambic tetrameters (e.g., *The Isles of Greece*, in which geographical names produce the few good scuds).

I	II	III	IV	xx. William Morris (1834–96), <i>Old Love</i> (pub. 1858):
o	x	o	o	9 He gazed at the great fire a while:
o	o	o	o	“And you are getting old, Sir John;”
o	x	o	o	(He said this with that cunning smile
o	o	o	o	That was most sad;) “we both wear on,
o	o	o	o	Knights come to court and look at me,
o	o	o	o	With eyebrows up, except my lord,
o	o	o	o	And my dear lady, none I see
o	o	o	o	That know the ways of my old sword.”
o	x	o	o	(My lady! at that word no pang
o	o	o	o	Stopp’d all my blood.) “But tell me, John,
o	o	o	o	Is it quite true that pagans hang
o	o	o	x	So thick about the east, that on
o	o	o	o	The eastern sea no Venice flag
o	o	o	o	22 Can fly unpaid for?” “True,” I said . . .

This minor poet, a kind of sterile cross between the stylizations of Tennyson and those of Browning, is no "master of the iambic tetrameter" (as I think Saintsbury has termed him), but he has not unpleasingly experimented in subdued rhyme and curious run-on patterns. The enjambment from one quatrain to another via an unaccented monosyllabic rhyme word in l. 20 is a rarity. The postverbal "on" (closing 12) is of course accented in speech and is not a rare rhyme.

xxi. Modulations in *EO*, Four : IX, X, and XI:

	I	II	III	IV
1 <i>Tak tochno dúmal mój Evgéniy.</i>	0	0	0	0
<i>On v pérovy yúnosti svoéy</i>	0	0	X	0
<i>Bíl zhértvoy búrnih zabluzhdéniy</i>	0	0	X	0
<i>I neobúzdannih strastéy.</i>	X	0	X	0
<i>Privéchkoy zhtzni izbalóvan,</i>	0	0	X	0
<i>Odním na vrémeya ocharóvan,</i>	0	0	X	0
<i>Razocharóvanniy drugím,</i>	X	0	X	0
<i>Zhelán'em médlénno tomím,</i>	0	0	X	0
<i>Tomím i vétrennim uspéhom,</i>	0	0	X	0
<i>Vnimáya v shúme i v tishí</i>	0	0	X	0
<i>Roptán'e véchnoe dusht,</i>	0	0	X	0
<i>Zevótu podavlyáya sméhom:</i>	0	X	0	0
<i>Vot, kak ubil on vósem' lét,</i>	0	0	0	0
14 <i>Utrátya zhtzni lúchshiy tsvét.</i>	0	0	0	0

	I	II	III	IV
1 <i>V krasávits ón uzhe vlyublyálsya,</i>	0	0	X	0
<i>A volochílsya kák-nibúd' ;</i>	X	0	0	0
<i>Otkázhut—mígom uteshálsya;</i>	0	0	X	0
<i>Izményat—rád bíl otdohnút'.</i>	0	0	X	0
<i>On ih iskál bez upoén'ya,</i>	0	0	X	0
<i>A ostavlyál bez sozhalén'ya,</i>	X	0	X	0
<i>Chut' pómnaya ih lyubóv' i zlóst'.</i>	0	0	0	0
<i>Tak tochno ravnodúshniy góst'</i>	0	X	0	0
<i>Na víst vechérniy priezzhdét,</i>	0	0	X	0
<i>Sadítsya; kónchilas' igrá:</i>	0	0	X	0
<i>On uezzhdét so dvorá,</i>	X	0	X	0

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0	0	x	0	<i>Spokóyno dóma zasípádet,</i>
0	0	x	0	<i>I sám ne znáet poutrú,</i>
0	0	x	0	14 <i>Kudá poédet vvecherú.</i>

I	II	III	IV	
x	0	0	0	1 <i>No, poluchítv poslán'e Táni,</i>
0	0	0	0	<i>Onégin zhtvo trónut btl:</i>
0	0	x	0	<i>Yazík devícheskih mechtániy</i>
0	0	x	0	<i>V nyom dúmĩ róem vozmutill;</i>
0	0	0	0	<i>I vspómnil ón Tat'yáni mloy</i>
0	0	0	0	<i>I blédnĩy tsvét, i víd unfloy;</i>
0	x	0	0	<i>I v sládostnĩy, bezgréshnĩy són</i>
0	x	0	0	<i>Dushóyu pogruzílsya ón.</i>
0	0	0	0	<i>Bit' mózhet, chíuvstviy píl startínnoy</i>
x	0	x	0	<i>Im na minútu ovladél;</i>
x	0	x	0	<i>No obmanút' on ne hotél</i>
0	x	0	0	<i>Dovérchivost' dushí nevínnoy.</i>
0	0	x	0	<i>Tepér' mĩ v sád pereletím,</i>
0	x	0	0	14 <i>Gde vstrétilas' Tat'yána s ním.</i>

### 10. COUNTS OF MODULATIONS IN "EUGENE ONEGIN"

Pushkin's pet line was the *chetirestopnĩy yamb*, the iambic tetrameter. It has been calculated that during a quarter of a century, from his Lyceum period—say, 1814—to the end of his life, January, 1837, he composed in this measure some 21,600 lines, which amounts to more than half of his entire output in any kind of verse. His most prolific years in regard to poetry were 1814, 1821, 1824, 1826, 1828, and especially 1830 and 1833 (from above 2000 to above 3000 lines yearly); his most barren years in the same respect were 1834 and 1836, with the annual count sinking to about 280. His greatest year in the production of iambic tetrameters was 1828, with some 2350 lines, after which there is a decided decline (e.g., only thirty-five such lines in 1832). I have taken

these figures, with slight alterations, from the *Metrical Guide to Pushkin's Poems* (*Metricheskiy spravochnik k stihotvoreniiyam A. S. Pushkina*, 1934).

After having composed his long poem *Poltava* (in which, incidentally, such passages as ll. 295-305 and 401-14 form *EO* stanza sequences of rhyme but do not present separate entities of sense) in one fortnight (Oct. 3-16, 1829, in St. Petersburg) Pushkin seems to have experienced a certain revulsion toward his pet line, although *EO* was not yet completed. His remarkable piece *A Small House in Kolomna* (forty octaves in iambic pentameter, 1829-30) opens with the petulant statement:

Of the four-foot iambus I've grown tired.  
In it writes everyone. To boys this plaything  
'Tis high time to abandon . . .

However, he used it again for *The Bronze Horseman* (1833), the most mature of his tetrametric masterpieces.

In these notes on prosody, when illustrating such devices as scuds, tilts, false spondees, and so forth, I have discussed several aspects of the versification of *EO*. From the complete table of the scud modulations of *EO*, given for all 5523 lines, it will be seen that the predominant rhythm is Scud III (2603 lines). This is typical of the Russian iambic tetrameter in general. It will also be noted that the sum of all other scudded lines is about equal to the number of scudless lines (1515). Chapter One is unique in variety and richness of scudding. Two, Three, Four, and Five resemble each other in general modulation. Six, Seven, and Eight offer a certain drop in some of the categories.

There are six stanzas in *EO* with every line scudded (Two : IX, Lenski's soul; Three : VI, gossip about Tatiana and Onegin; Three : XX, Tatiana's confession to nurse; Three : XXIV, Tatiana defended; Six : XIII, Lenski goes to visit Olga before duel; Six : XL, Lenski's tomb) and

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twenty-six stanzas with only one scudless line in each. No stanza is entirely scudless. The maximum amount of scudded lines is twenty-three in a row, and there are three cases of such sequences: Three : v : 11 to vii : 5; Three : xxiii : 11 to xxv : 5; and Six : xii : 6 to xiii : 14. In all these cases the vivid sustained melody coincides with a torrent of inspired eloquence.

A closer look at the six varieties of modulation (and here the bilingual reader should consult the original text of *EO*) reveals the following facts:

The maximum of first-foot scudders for any given stanza is four (in the last eight lines of One : xxxiii, the famous evocation of the amorous surf; and in Eight : xxiii, Onegin's second conversation with Princess N., "this painful tête-à-tête") and five (in the first seven lines of Six : x, Onegin's dissatisfaction with himself before the duel). In Chapter Seven (in which the number of first-foot scudders ebbs almost to one half of that found in Chapter One) we find runs of six and five stanzas completely deficient in this scud (vii-xiv, Olga's marriage and Tatiana's solitude; xxviii-xxxii, departure; xliii-xlvi, first impressions in Moscow).

The number of second-foot scudders, so abundant (100) in Chapter One, dwindles by almost one half in the last three chapters, in which there are also long runs of omissions (172 lines in a row in Eight, interrupted only by a single such scud in "Onegin's Letter"). There are several stanzas containing as many as five such scuds; and one stanza (One : xxi, Onegin's arrival at the theater) breaks the record with six. There are some interesting runs of consecutive second-foot scudders; e.g., four at the end of One : xxxii (see n. to One : xxxii : 11-14) and four at the end of Four : xlvi.

The commonest line in Russian poetry, the pastime of the cruising genius and the last refuge of the poetaster, is that facile and dangerous thing, the third-foot scudder.

It is the predominant melody in *EO* and is generally tripartite; i.e., made up of three words or three logical units. The line "sings" (and may lull the Russian versificator into a state of false poetical security), especially in the frequent cases in which the central word in the third-foot scudded line has at least four syllables after a first word of two syllables, or has at least three syllables after an initial trisyllable. No stanza in *EO* consists exclusively of third-foot scudders; the closest approach to this is presented by Five : xxxv (end of name-day feast), with twelve such lines, and Six : xl (Lenski's tomb), with thirteen such lines. Sustained runs of this rhythm are often associated with a technique much favored by Pushkin, the rapid listing of various objects or actions.

The combination of two scuds in one verse, the fast first-foot scud and the flowing third-foot scud, is what gives vigor and brilliancy to a Russian poet's work, and Pushkin is a great artist in the use of this "fast flow." It is especially attractive when the line is followed or preceded by a second-foot scudder (see n. to One : xxiii : 11-13). The pleasure derived from the fast flow is owing not only to its euphony but also to the perception of its plentitude, of its perfect fit in regard to form and contents. The highest frequency of this line in any stanza is six (*Journey*, xxviii). There are three stanzas with five such lines (Two : xi, Eugene's neighbors; Four : xxx, modish albums; and Eight : ix, defense of Onegin) and fifteen stanzas with four. Very sonorous and delightful are the runs of three consecutive fast flows in Four : xx : 9-11 (on relatives) and Six : xxvii : 3-5 (Onegin's retort to Zaretski).

The frequency of the "slow-flow" line (second-and-third-foot scudder) reaches the extraordinary figure of nine in the brilliantly scudded first chapter, in which it even occurs adjacently (see n. to One : liii : 1-7). The decrease of II+III in all the other chapters may be the

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result of Pushkin's deliberate control in regard to a rococo rhythm.

I find the maximum number of scudless lines in a stanza to be nine, and of such there are only two cases: Three : II (Lenski and Onegin talk) and Six : XLIV (sober maturity). In regard to runs of scudless lines (often associated with didactic or conversational passages), I find nine stanzas having four such lines in a row, and five stanzas having five in a row. The record is six consecutive nonscudders: Three : XXI : 3-8 (Tatiana speaking to nurse) and Six : XXI : 4-9 (Lenski's lusterless elegy).

My list of scudded monosyllables commonly occurring in *EO* comprises some forty words. Their bulk is made up mainly of prepositions: *bez* ("without"), *chrez* ("through," "across"), *dlya* ("for"), *do* ("up to"), *iz* ("out"), *ko* ("to"), *mez*h ("between"), *na* ("on"), *nad* ("above"), *o* or *ob* ("about"), *ot* ("from"), *po* ("upon," "along"), *pod* ("under"), *pred* ("before"), *pri* ("by"), *pro* ("about"), *skvoz'* ("through"), *so* ("with"), *sred'* ("amid"), *u* ("at"), *vo* ("in"), and *za* ("behind"). Next come the conjunctions: *i* ("and"), *a* ("but," "and"), *da* ("and," "yet"), *no* ("but"), *il'* ("or"), *ni* ("nor"), *to* ("now," "then"), *chem* ("than"), *chto* ("that"), *chtob* ("in order to"), and *hot'* ("though"). Incidentally, the scuddability of the last word is nicely proved by its vowel being pronounced in good Russian as an unaccented *o*. Finally, there are a few adverbs: *ne* ("not"), *kak* ("as," "like"), *uzh* ("already"), and the terminal particles, conditional, interrogative, and emphatic: *bī*, *li*, and *zhe*.

The disyllables and the one staple trisyllable scudded in *EO* have already been discussed under §4, Tilted Scuds. They are: *pered*, *predo*, *peredo* ("before"), *oto* ("from"), *mez*hdu ("between"), *ili* ("or"), *chtobī* ("in order to"), and *dabī* ("so as to"), all of them accented on the first syllable in speech.

I have ignored the semiscuds completely (counting

them as regular beats) so as to avoid subjective preferences of intonation in assessing borderline cases. Their number is negligible; but in order that other workers may check my calculations when comparing their figures with mine, something about such weak words, which are not quite weak enough to be counted as scuds, should be said. There is, first of all, *bīt'* ("to be"), *bud'* ("be"), *bīl* ("was"), which I have invariably counted as beats, even in such combinations as *chto-nibud'* ("something") and *mozhet bīt'* ("maybe"), which are generally accented as dactyls in speech but not infrequently terminate a verse with a masculine rhyme. Monosyllabic numerals (such as *raz*, *dva*, *tri*, etc.), personal pronouns (*ya*, *tī*, *on*, etc.), and possessive pronouns (*moy*, *tvoy*, etc.) can be very weak semiscuds, especially in such dactylic locutions as *bozhe moy* ("my goodness") or in the recurrent combination *moy Onegin*. *Chto* in the sense of "what," and *kak* in the sense of "how," are almost good beats, and so are *kto* ("who"), *tak* ("so"), *tam* ("there"), *tut* ("here"), *gde* ("where"), *vot* ("now," "here"), and *sey* ("this"). The trickiest is the little group *bliz* ("near"), *vdal'* ("afar"), *vdol'* ("along"), *vrug* ("around"), *vne* ("outside"), *chut'* ("barely"), and *lish'* ("only"), but I have not succumbed to the temptation of having them influence my count. It is a curious thing that their allies *skvoz'* and *chrez* are felt by Russian prosodists to be true scuds (among which I place them), their pronunciation being affected by the very transiency they help to express. Finally, there is *vsyo* ("all"), which I have left among the semiscuds, although it is very weak when spoken, especially in such anapaestic combinations as *vsyo ravnó* ("all the same"). And among the disyllables that produce a semiscudding effect (as examined in another section) there are several pronouns, such as *oná* ("she"), *eyó* ("her," "hers"), *náshi* ("our," pl.), and to these may be added the words *sredl'* ("amid"), *hotyá*

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(“although”), *uzhé* (“already”), *kogdá* (“when”), *eshch-yó* (“still”), all of which slightly weaken the beat of the foot, especially when recurring in the beginning of several adjacent lines. None of these semiscuds have I taken into account when calculating the modulations in *EO*.

Consultation of the appended table may be facilitated by reference to the following examples of *EO* lines (the English versions faithfully follow the rhythm; the reader is reminded that a scud is an unaccented syllable coinciding with the stress of a metrical foot):

I: A line scudded on the first foot, or Fast:

*I vozbughdát' ulíbku dám . . .*  
and to provoke the ladies' smiles . . .

II: A line scudded on the second foot, or Slow:

*Sred' módnih i starínih zál . . .*  
in modern and in ancient halls . . .

III: A line scudded on the third foot, or Flow:

*Zarétski, nékogda buyán . . .*  
Zaretski, formerly a rough . . .

I+III: A line scudded on first and third feet, or Fast Flow:

*V filosoficheskoy pusttne . . .*  
in philosophical reclusion . . .

II+III: A line scudded on second and third feet, or Slow Flow:

*Blistátel'na, poluvozdúshna . . .*  
irradiant, half-insubstantial . . .

O: A scudless line, or Regular:

*Porá nadézhdi i grústi nézhnoy . . .*  
the time of hopes and tender sadness . . .

## Notes on Prosody

### SCUD MODULATIONS IN "EO"

CHAPTER	STAN- ZAS	I	II	III	I + III	II + III	O	TOTAL LINES
One	54	58	100	306	74	9	209	756
Two	40	32	62	261	56	—	137	548
Three	41	33	50	268	58	2	157	568
Four	43	38	67	278	53	1	164	601
Five	42	41	66	282	39	2	158	588
Six	43	59	43	301	39	2	158	602
Seven	52	32	52	378	68	3	195	728
Eight	51	50	41	325	76	1	205	698
Prefatory Piece		—	3	7	2	—	5	17
T.'s Letter in Three		8	6	31	6	—	28	79
O.'s Letter in Eight		8	1	26	1	—	24	60
Added in n. to Six		—	1	11	1	—	1	14
Added in n. to Eight		—	1	2	—	—	2	5
O.'s Journey		15	15	127	29	1	72	259
Totals		374	508	2603	502	21	1515	5523

### 11. OTHER METERS AND RHYTHMS

These notes on prosody, meant only to give the reader a clear idea of the meter used by Pushkin in *EO*, cannot include a study of other metrical forms, beyond the remarks made on their origination. Suffice it to add that the similarities and distinctions between Russian and English forms remain the same throughout. What has been said of scud, tilt, elision, and contraction in special reference to the iambic tetrameter is also applicable of course to its trochaic counterpart and to the other lengths of binaries in use, such as trimeters and pentameters. In ternaries, scudding is possible too, but is of an ex-

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tremely infrequent occurrence (being even rarer in English than in Russian), whereas the tilts possible in ternary lines belong to another type than those occurring in duplex feet, since in triplex ones they do not involve the stress but coincide with two adjacent depressions.

Iambic trimeters, those chimes of pocket poetry, whose lilting rhythm in English affords an easy line of communication between meter and cadence, have not thrived in Russian: I can recall no serious first-rate piece composed entirely in that measure. Tyutchev's famous stanzas beginning:

*Zimá nedárom zlítsya,  
Proshlá eyó porá . . .*

No wonder winter glowers,  
His season has gone by . . .

belong definitely to the lightweight category.

The iambic pentameter, rhymed or unrhymed, is not so abundantly represented in Russian as it is in English, but its blank-verse form vies with its English and German models in monosyllabic tilts, enjambments, and shifts of caesura (see especially Pushkin's "diminutive dramas"), while a greater variety of scuds and the free admission of sonorous feminine terminations among crisp masculine ones go far to compensate for the absence of elision and disyllabic tilting.

The iambic hexameter, which can breathe freely only if the modulations of long scuddable words lend sinuosity to its hemistichs, withers in English, being choked by fill-up words, dull masculine rhymes, and gritty monosyllables; but in Russian poetry it becomes an extremely musical meander because of fluid scuds and the melody of true cross rhyme (feminines interlaced with masculines). It should be noted that the Russian iambic hexameter permits a scudded caesura, which is taboo in its model, the French Alexandrine. Here is an example of

what a Russian elegiac stanza would sound like if transposed into English iambic hexameters:

A linden avenue where light and shadow mingle  
Leads to an ancient slab of opalescent stone,  
Whereon the visitor distinguishes a single  
Unperishable word to scholarship unknown.

Trochaic tetrameters are considerably more seldom used for serious verse than iambic ones in Russian but have provided a form for several memorable poems (such as Pushkin's *Fairy Tales*). Their system of scuds is exactly similar to that of the iambic tetrameter. It should be marked that in a tetrametric piece iambic lines are never combined with trochaic ones, as they have been by several English experimentators (Milton, Blake, Coleridge). On the other hand, a form that is very rare in English poetry—namely, the trochaic pentameter (used, for instance, by Browning in *One Word More*, 1855)—was established by Trediakovski in an idyl of 1752 and has provided Lermontov, Blok, and others with a remarkably musical medium of expression, which I can only mimic here:

Nobody has managed to unravel  
That inscription on the stone; and yet  
Fools get formidable grants to travel  
To the limits of their alphabet.

Ternary meters have thrived in Russia. Owing to the facility with which a Russian rhymester can launch a line upon a dactyl, Russian dactylic hexameters are not so repulsive as English ones, and ternary trimeters are among the most harmonious forms extant. The amphibrachic trimeter in English is generally intermixed with anapaestic lines. The purest example is probably Swinburne's, otherwise dreadful, *Dolores* (1866).

Scuds and tilts occur also in ternary feet, but the situation is somewhat different from that obtained in binaries.

Scudded feet in ternaries are comparatively rare; here

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are some examples of such modulations in (1) anapaestic, (2) amphibrachic, and (3) dactylic trimeters scudded on the second foot:

- (1) None too  $\overset{\text{˘}}{\text{prosperous}}$  but  $\bar{\text{not}}$  a  $\overset{\text{˘}}{\text{pauper}}$   
*Nezazhitochnŭy, nō i ne nishchiy*
- (2) Lived  $\overset{\text{˘}}$  opulently  $\bar{\text{but}}$  not  $\overset{\text{˘}}$  wisely  
*Roskoshestvoval, no ne mudro*
- (3) Sorrowful but not  $\bar{\text{submissive}}$   
*Gorestnŭy, nō ne pokornŭy*

Incidentally, as every poet knows, (1) can be also scanned as a trochaic pentameter (with a scud on “-rous” and a semiscud on both “None” and “not”); (2), as an iambic tetrameter (with two adjacent scuds in II and III, “-lent” and “but”); and (3), as a trochaic tetrameter (with scuds also in II and III, “-ful” and “not”).

Disyllabic tilts in ternaries are not associated with scuds (as they are in binaries), since, as already mentioned, they coincide with two adjacent depressions. The disyllable is practically neutralized into a pyrrhic. Their occurrence is common. An obvious example in Russian is the third verse of Zemfira’s song in Pushkin’s *The Gypsies* (composed 1824):

*Starŭy muzh, groznŭy muzh . . .*  
 $\overset{\text{˘}}$  Husband old, husband fierce . . .

For an English example we may select the word “only” in an amphibrachic line (12) of Wordsworth’s *The Reverie of Poor Susan* (composed 1797; pub. 1800):

The one  $\overset{\text{˘}}$  only  $\overset{\text{˘}}$  dwelling on  $\overset{\text{˘}}$  earth that she  $\overset{\text{˘}}$  loves.  
*Odno tol’ko v mire ey lyubo zhil’yo.*

12. DIFFERENCES IN USE OF METER

In both English and Russian there is a definite predominance of binaries over ternaries; but this predominance is perhaps more marked in English than in Russian. For reasons basically associated with the brevity of English words, an English poem in ternaries seems more diffuse, more self-conscious, more dependent on artificial gap filling, and, in fact, more difficult for the reader to tackle than a poem in binary meter. There is no such effort attending the assimilation of ternaries in Russian, in which long words are frequent and in which, in consequence, a greater number of memorable dactyls, anapaests, and amphibrachs than those in English have been produced.

Pausative forms (connecting meter and cadence) came naturally to English poets since ancient time and did a great deal to alleviate both the monotony and the ornamentality of English ternary feet. In Russian, omissions of depressions, resulting in pausative verse, did not come into general use until Blok (by far the greatest poet of the first two decades of this century), borrowing the device from German cadence (rather than from English cadence), composed a number of magnificent short poems in it. But Tyutchev, as early as 1832 (in the poem *Silentium*, first published that year in *Molva*), had already inaugurated the musical gasp of mixed or broken meter, which he followed up by his Heinian *Last Love*, first published in 1854 (*Sovremennik*). Cadential forms might have been evolved directly out of syllabic ones in Russia if a poet of genius had thought of it before Lomonosov introduced metrical prosody. Derzhavin did leave some experimental verse in that direction, but the rigid adherence of the Zhukovski-Batyushkov-Pushkin school to regular meter in serious poetry precluded the acceptance of cadential lilt.

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English poets, when they do turn to ternions, so consistently and so naturally intermingle anapaestic lines with amphibrachic ones that the English student of verse, unacquainted with other languages, is apt to dismiss the amphibrach altogether as an arbitrary meter devised by the ingenuity of prosodists (along with the molossus and what not)\* and to regard the amphibrachic lines, even when they predominate in a poem, as acephalous anapaests. In Russian, on the other hand, until the emancipation of meter associated with Blok's name, there was a definite tendency on the part of poets using ternaries to have every line of the poem, no matter how long (except for imitations of the so-called classical hexameters, in which omissions of depressions were permitted), run strictly amphibrachically, or strictly anapaestically, or strictly dactylically.

The most striking difference between Russian and English poems in binaries is the application to English iambs of the device of decapitation (which the anapaest, being bicephalous, can after all survive). The introduction of random trochaic tetrameters, or sequences of them, starting and affirming themselves as iambic tetrameters, is so usual with English poets, and has assisted them in producing such enchanting pieces, that in the light of these examples the trochee is demoted by the theorist to the rank of acephalous iamb. The interruption of an iambic sequence of lines by a trochaic line or lines is completely alien to Russian prosody, as studied in retrospect, but there is no particular reason why such variations could not be introduced. However, an organic reason for their absence may be traced to the general difference between Russian and English, a difference reflected both in speech and in metrical composition. This

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\*While perversely retaining the spondee and the pyrrhic, which are *not* feet, since no poem, not even a couplet, can be wholly made up of them in terms of metrical prosody.

difference is the greater rigidity, strength, and clarity of the single accent in a Russian word of any length, which leads to a sharper shock in the unexpected passage from an iambic line to a trochaic one (the looser and duller modulations of ternaries in Russian allow the passage from one ternary meter to another much more easily). In an English long word, on the other hand, a secondary accent often takes some of the burden of emphasis off the back of the main accented syllable; and in English verse, the existence of duplex tilt and scudded rhyme (both of which occur only in a rudimentary form in Russian poetry) illustrate the English elasticity of meter, of which, in tetrameters, the trochaic line takes such delightful advantage in rippling the couplet that had been ostentatiously begun by an iambic smoothness of sound in the preceding verse.

### 13. RHYME

If we exclude a few scattered masterpieces (such as Pushkin's beautiful but obviously derivative dramas), we can say that the medium of blank verse has not produced in Russia, during the two hundred years of its metrical history, anything similar in scope, splendor, and universal influence to the unrhymed iambic pentameter in England since Chaucer's day. On the other hand, there has not appeared, in the course of half a millennium, a rhymed English romance in iambic tetrameter comparable in artistic merit to Pushkin's *Eugene Onegin*. Further on, to simplify the comparison, the discussion of Russian and English rhymes is limited to nineteenth-century practice.

Rhyme is not a component of meter, not part of the final foot, but rather its stub or its shoe, or its spur. It may closely fit the ultima when it coincides with the last ictus in masculine lines (hence masculine rhymes or

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masculines, stressed on the only, or last, syllable of a word) or else it may be an ornamental and (in French and Russian) very beautiful appendage of feminine lines or of long lines (hence feminine rhymes or feminines, stressed on the penultimate, and long rhymes, stressed on the antepenultimate). The terms "single," "double," and "triple" used by some English theorists for masculine, feminine, and long are ambiguous because rhyme is not the participating word but the effect of two, three, or more "like endings" (to use a famous definition of rhyme); therefore, a "single rhyme" would correctly mean one set of such endings in a piece of verse (e.g., "like endings" throughout a poem). What I term the "long rhyme" Russian theorists call a "dactylic rhyme," which is extremely misleading not only because rhyme lies outside meter and should not be expressed in metrical terms, but also because a long rhyme, or long terminal, when attached to a line of binary verse, does not sound at all like the dactylic chime of the long rhyme, or long terminal, in ternary verse. In the case of iambics or trochees, the ear distinguishes an extrametrical echo of the binary measure, and the voice (while not giving the ultima the kind of value it gives a scudded masculine) reads the final, unaccented syllable more abruptly than it would the same syllable, had ternaries been scanned.

A further removal proximad of the accent results in stunt rhyme, which has not yet been instrumental in producing any major poetry either in English or in Russian. It should be noted that the feminine rhyme and the longer variants may involve two or more words.

Rhyme may be adjacent (in couplets, triplets, etc.) or alternate (bcbc, bcbcbc, abab, baba, AbAb, etc.)\* or in-

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\*Here and elsewhere vowels denote feminines, consonants denote masculines, and capital vowels denote long rhymes.

closing (one rhyme inclosing or “embracing” a couplet or a triplet; e.g., abba, bcccb, etc.).

The more distant a rhyme word is from its fellow in level of sense or grammatical category, the “richer” the rhyme is felt to be.

A rhyme may be formed by terminals spelled differently, such as “laugh–calf,” “tant–temps,” *lyod–kot* (Russian for “ice–cat”), which are then termed ear rhymes.

Eye rhymes, no longer used in French (“aimer–mer”), are permissible by tradition in English (“grove–love”)\* and are barely possible in Russian, as in the case of *rog–Bog* (“horn–God”), the latter being pronounced generally “boh,” with *h* as in “hob”; or *vóroni–stóroni* (“ravens–sides”), in which the second *o* in the second word is slurred so as almost, but not quite, to make the word sound disyllabic—a very rare case in Russian, in which, as a rule, the ear hears what the eye sees.† Perhaps the nearest approach to the English gynandrous type of rhyme, “flower–our,” would be *storozh–morzh* (“watchman–walrus”), but I do not think that this has ever been tried.

Strictly speaking, there are no laws or rules of rhyme except the very general rule that a rhyme should afford at the best “satisfaction and surprise” (as the French say) or at least a sense of euphoric security (which goes for the routine rhyme in all languages), with a hereditary acceptance of certain conventions. But even these sensations can be altered and these traditions broken by any poet whose genius proves powerful and original enough to inaugurate imitable trends.

\*In English, such inexact rhymes as “love–off” or “grove–enough” rather curiously combine visual and auditory satisfaction or pain.

†It should be noted, however, that to elide *storonĭ* to make it a trochee in a binary line would be considered in even worse taste than to rhyme it with *voronĭ*.

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The general difference between English and Russian rhyme is that there are considerably more feminine rhymes in Russian and that in diversity and richness the Russian rhyme is akin to the French rhyme. In result, Russian and French poets can afford the luxury of demanding more from the rhyme than English poets can afford to do. There is a certain subdued and delicate beauty of gray, gentle rhyme in English that is not duplicated in the dazzlingly brilliant romantic and neo-romantic arrays of French and Russian poets.

In French, the presence of at least two different consonants before a final *e muet* gives the latter a semblance of voice (*maître, lettre, nombre, chambre*, etc.) and allows the French poet to mimic both the meter and the feminine rhyme of English and Russian verse. If we devise the line:

Le maître siffle, son chien tremble

it may be scanned (if we do so with more deliberation than a Frenchman would) not much differently from, say:

The master whistles, his dog trembles

or from its Russian counterpart (in which, incidentally, the split reverse tilt is eliminated, together with the weak monosyllables):

*Hozyáin svtshchet, pyós trepéshchet.*

Similarly, if we take the words:

Phèdre (Fr.)  
feather (Eng.)  
*Fedra* (Russ.)

we may say that roughly they rhyme and that “Phèdre—cèdre” is as fully a feminine rhyme as “feather—weather” or “waiter—véter” (Russ. “wind”). A closer inspection, however, reveals that “Phèdre” is somewhat shorter,

and “feather” (or “waiter”) just a trifle shorter, than *Fedra* (or *véter*). This difference becomes immediately apparent if we take another set:

mettre (Fr.)  
better (Eng.)  
*metr* (Russ. “meter,”  
the measure of length)

*Metr-vetr* (archaic *veter*) is a masculine rhyme, but it is almost identical in terminal sound to the French “mettre” or “mètre.” On the other hand, if an Englishman manages to pronounce *metr* correctly, it will form a gynandrous association with “better” only insofar as “fire” does with “higher.”

Another type of *e muet* affecting the eye is what might be termed the deaf-mute *e*. If we take the words:

palette (Fr.)  
let (Eng.)  
*let* (Russ. “of years”)

it will be seen that what in French makes a feminine rhyme (“palette-omelette”) is to the English and Russian ear a harmony with masculine endings in “-et.” Consequently, if we devise the line:

Telle montagne, telle aurore

it comes to the metrist as something of a shock that it is syllabically identical to the iambically sounding:

Le maître siffle, son chien tremble.

We are now in a position to draw a comparison between English and Russian rhyme:

There are poems in Russian that consist of only masculine rhymes or only feminine rhymes, but whereas in English a feminine rhyme may crop up at random among a long sequence of masculines, no such cases occur in serious Russian verse. Neither in English nor in Rus-

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sian is it necessary for a rigid scheme of rhyme to be sustained throughout a poem, but in a Russian freely rhymed poem, in which both kinds of rhymes occur, terminals belonging to different sets of rhymes will not be placed in adjacent lines (say, ababaececeded, etc.) unless a certain standard scheme is deliberately repeated over and over again.

The Russian masculine rhyme allows identity to be limited to a final vowel if the latter is preceded by a vowel or a soft sign (*moyá*, "my," fem.; *tayá*, "concealing"; *ch'ya*, "whose," fem.); otherwise, it demands at least a two-letter coincidence (*moy*, "my," masc., and *Tol-stóy*, or *son*, "dream," and *balkón*, "balcony") and it conforms to the rule of the *consonne d'appui* ("supporting consonant") whenever a consonant precedes the final vowel. *Da* ("yes") rhymes with *vodá* ("water") but not with *Moskvá*; and *tri* ("three") rhymes with *dari* ("give") and *utri* ("wipe") but not with *prosi* ("ask") as "tree" and "see" would in English. In this respect a certain freedom is traditionally granted—owing to obvious lyrical reasons—to case endings of *lyubóv'*: *lyubvi* ("of love") is allowed to rhyme with words in which the penult is a vowel; e.g., *tvoi* ("thy," pl.). Pushkin happens to go further: in Three : xiv, he rhymes *lyubvi-dni* ("days"), which is not admissible and constitutes the one really bad rhyme in the whole of *EO*. In English it is, of course, the other way round, and although the support of a consonant is sometimes unavoidable—given the paucity of rhyme in general—such coincidences of sound as "sea-foresee" or "Peter-repeater" have been distasteful to most poets of the past.

A curious characteristic of Russian feminine rhymes is the license accorded to certain common unaccented endings. Let us consider the words

*záli* ("halls")

*málĭy* ("small")  
*áloy* ("of the red," fem. gen.)  
*zhálo* ("sting")  
*Urála* ("of the Ural")

The endings after the *l* are all slightly different in sound, but a Russian poet of Pushkin's time and later will think nothing of rhyming *zalĭ-malĭy*, *malĭy-aloy*, and *zhalo-Urala*. Of these three types, the first is not inelegant; the second is absolutely correct (indeed, in old-fashioned or declamatory style the adjectival ending *ĭy* is actually pronounced as an unaccented *oy*), and *zhalo-Urala*, though shocking to the purist, is frequently used (Pushkin rhymes both *rana*, "wound," and *rano*, "early," with "Tatiana"). *Zalĭ*, on the other hand, does not rhyme with *aloy* or *zhalo* or *Urala*, and the last does not rhyme with any of the first three in the column. There is no analogy for this in French, and only a very distant one in English (cf. "alley" and "rally" or such cockney assonances as "waiter-potato").

The feminine rhyme in Russian, as already mentioned, sounds a jot fuller and more fluent to the ear than the feminine rhyme in English. It is also (as well as the masculine) more of a masquerader than its English counterpart. The further proximad identity of spelling is carried, the more striking and more delightful the rhyme is deemed, granted that in the course of this improving consonance difference of sense grows in inverse ratio to that of sound. Thus, the identical rhyme *supruga* ("wife") and *supruga* (sing. gen. of *suprug*, "husband"), while conforming to the wonderful comical tone of the narrative poem wherein it occurs (Pushkin's *Graf Nulin*, 1825), would be weak in a serious piece.

In feminine rhymes or in two-letter masculine endings the *consonne d'appui* is welcome but not obligatory. Examples of rhymes that are rich owing to its presence and to other reasons are:

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*sklon* ("slope")

*Apollón*

*prostóy* ("simple")

*zolotóy* ("golden")

*prostóy*

*Tolstóy*

*prostáya* (fem.)

*zolotáya* (fem.)

*prostáya*

*stáya* ("a flock")

*vstrecháet* ("meets")

*otvecháet* ("answers")

Richness of rhyme can also be achieved by such subtle shuttles of critical consonants as in *balkón-sklon*, in which ornamental support is provided by alliteration.

The existence of a scudded terminal in binary meters depends on the line's ending in a word of at least three syllables with a secondary accent either upon the ultima or on the antepenult; and since organically a Russian word can have but one accent, it follows that scudded rhyme (Scud IV in iambic tetrameter) does not occur in Russian poetry. A few cases occur as prosodic mistakes in old doggerels going back as far as the eighteenth century, and a few experiments by genuine poets have been made in our time. In 1918, during the Civil War, I remember Maksimilian Voloshin, an excellent and erudite poet (1877–1932), reading to me at a Yalta café, one cold and gloomy night with the sea booming and splashing over the parapet onto the pavement, a fine patriotic poem in which the pronoun *moya* or *tvoya* rhymed with the end of the line *i nepreodolimaya* ("and [tum-tee-]un-surmoundable"), producing a I + II + IV scud combination.

The English situation is quite different. If we choose the word "solitude" for the ending of a line, we observe that a normal secondary accent on the ultima (especially

conspicuous in American speech) affords a perch for a perfectly banal rhyme (say, "solitude-rude"). Not all long words, though, provide this support or, if they do, do so under coercion (e.g., "horrible" forced into rhyme with "dull" or "dell"). In other cases, tradition comes into play, and by an ancient rule of the poetical game or prosodical agreement, polysyllables ending in  $\gamma$  ("-ty," "-ry," "-ny," etc.) may yield a dubious solace to the English versifier by rhyming with "see," "me," "tree," etc.

In Russian verse I find something faintly resembling a Semiscud IV only in the following case, which needs a brief preface. The Russian locution rendering the idea of "some" in relation to time, place, person, thing, or manner (sometime, somewhere, someone, something, somehow, etc.) is *-nibúd'*, and when properly printed is connected by a hyphen with the words for "when" (*kogda*), "where" (*gde*), "who" (*kto*), "what" (*chto*), "how" (*kak*), etc. Thus, *kogda-nibud'* means "some-time" or "someday," *gde-nibud'* means "somewhere," *kto-nibud'* means "someone" or "somebody," *chto-nibud'* means "something," *kak-nibud'* means "somehow," etc. Now, the point is that in ordinary speech, or in any part of a metrical line other than its terminal in binary verse, these compounds are accented on the syllable preceding the neutralized *-nibud'*. A line going:

*Któ-nibud', któ-nibud', któ-nibud'*  
Somebody, somebody, somebody

is a regular dactylic trimeter with a long terminal. Moreover, a few of these forms, when inflected—e.g., *kakáya-nibud'* ("some kind of," fem.)—automatically receive a single accent on the first part of the compound and lack all accent on the end of the second part when participating in a binary line in which otherwise they could not find a scannable place.

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Pushkin and other poets of his time rhyme *kto-nibud'*, *gde-nibud'*, etc., with *grud'* ("breast"), *put'* ("way"), *blesnúť* ("to flash"), etc. In describing Onegin's desultory and haphazard education, our poet starts a famous stanza (One : v) with the lines:

*Mĩ vsé uchilis' ponemnógu,  
Chemú-nibud' i kák-nibúd':  
Tak vospitán'em, sláva Bógu,  
U nás nemudrenó blesnúť.*

All of us had a bit of schooling  
in something and [tum-te-]somehow:  
therefore with culture, God be lauded,  
with us it is not hard to shine.

*Chemu-nibud'* is the dative of *chto-nibud'*, and the second line, in which it occurs:

*Chemu-nibud' i kak-nibud'*  
    ◡   ⊥   ◡   —   ◡   ⊥   ◡   ◡

is modulated very much like

With Cherubim and Seraphim

(Christina Rossetti, *The Convent Threshold*, l. 24). However, the Russian reader so little expects a scud on the final ictus that in reading Pushkin's line he would accent the *bud'* more than in ordinary speech.

In the first third of the nineteenth century in Russia there is a tendency on the part of good poets to resist the facile rhyme depending on verb endings (infinitives in *-at'*, *-et'*, *-it'*, *-ut'*; past tenses in *-al*, *-ala*, *-alo*, *-ali*, *-il*, *-ila*, etc.; present tenses in *-it*, *-yat*, *-aet*, *-ayut*, and many other overwhelmingly repetitious forms), either by using it as seldom as possible or by enriching it with a *consonne d'appui*. Although in *EO* poor verbal rhymes, as well as poor noun rhymes (in *-an'e* and *-en'e* corresponding roughly to "-ition" and "-ation," and case endings, such as *-oy*) are perhaps more frequent than our poet's miraculous art might warrant, the above-

mentioned tendency obtains too, even in such passages in which the deliberate listing of actions or emotions makes it difficult to avoid monotony of rhyme.

In scooping at random a handful of rhymes from *EO* we can sift out such rich ones as:

*piróv* ("of feasts")  
*zdoróv* ("in good health")  
*zevál* ("yawned")  
*zal* ("of halls")  
*da-s* ("yessir")  
*glas* ("voice")  
*króv'yu* ("blood," instr.)  
*Praskóv'yu* (fem. name, acc.)  
*nesnósniŭ* ("odious")  
*sósni* ("pine trees")  
*istór'ya* ("story")  
*Krasnogór'ya* (place name, gen.)  
*dovólen* ("pleased")  
*kolokólen* ("of steeples")  
*ráda* ("glad," fem.)  
*maskaráda* (gen.)

and the best rhyme in the whole poem:

*stniŭ* ("blue")  
*Rosstni*

There is also an abundant crop of weak or poor rhymes such as:

*Richardsóna* (acc.)  
*Grandisóna* (acc.)  
*blízhe* ("nearer")  
*ntzhe* ("lower")

easy case endings:

*umóm* ("mind," instr.)  
*litsóm* ("face," instr.)

the easy and inexact:

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*provórno* ("nimble")  
*pokórna* ("submissive")  
*priézd* ("arrival")  
*prisést* ("a sitting down")

and banal rhymes such as:

*lyubóv* ("love")  
*króv* ("blood")  
*óchi* ("eyes")  
*nóchi* ("nights")

In English, fancy rhymes or split rhymes are merely the jester bells of facetious verselets, incompatible with serious poetry (despite Browning's talented efforts to glorify them). The Russian Pushkin can quite naturally and artistically rhyme *gdé vī-dévī* ("where are you"—"maidens"), but the Englishman Byron cannot get away with "gay dens"—"maidens."

The beginning of Four : XLIV contains one of the most ingenious rhymes in the whole of *EO*, an unexpected but at the same time completely natural and delightful chiming of a foreign name with a very Russian locution accented on the preposition:

*Pryamŭm Onégin Chil'd Garól'dom*  
*Vdalsyá v zadúmchivuyu lén':*  
*So sná saditsya v vánnu só-l'dom,*  
*I pósle, dóma tsélŭy dén' . . .*

which means (in free iambs, unrhymed):

Onegin like a regular Childe Harold  
lapsed into pensive indolence:  
right after sleep he takes a bath with ice,  
and then remains at home all day . . .

but all Byron could have achieved, had the roles been reversed, might have resulted in the burlesque:

And similar to the boyar Onegin,  
With a cold bath my Harold would the day 'gin

or perhaps he might have rhymed "licent" with "ice in't" (for other remarks on this curious subject see my n. to Four : XLIV : 1). Another striking rhyme in the same canto, st. XLIII, coming on the heels of a quip regarding weak rhymes, is *W. Scott-rashód*, an ear rhyme with the second word sounding *ras-hót*, a comic echo of the English writer's name.

A few words remain to be said concerning the long rhyme. Since so many thousands of Russian words are accented on the antepenult, or incur this accent by inflection, a long rhyme, especially a weak one (e.g., *nézhnĭe-myatézhnĭe*, "tender-restless," or *pĭláyushchĭy-mechtáyushchĭy*, "the flaming-the dreaming"), is easier to find and is used far more extensively in Russian than in English. Nor does it have in Russian any particular association with the extravagant and the trivial. It was neither rich nor popular during the first third of the last century, but then steadily increased in fancifulness and charm with poets experimentally inclined. Probably the most famous short poem in long rhyme (alternating with masculines) is Blok's *The Incognita (Neznakomka)*, a set of iambic tetrameters in which the rhymal concatenation of extra syllables looks like the reflection of lights in the suburban puddles of the poem's locus. The long rhyme, however, leads to a deadly monotony of rhythm in a protracted piece, whereas its more striking specimens (Fet's *skrómno tĭ-kómnatĭ*, "demurely you-room," or Blok's *stólikov-królikov*, "of tables-of rabbits") become so closely associated with the poems in which they were initially used that their occurrence in later verse inevitably sounds like a reminiscence or an imitation. The quest for spectacular rhymes eventually led Russian poets to the incomplete or assonant rhyme, but this matter lies outside the scope of our present inquiry.

The reader should be careful not to confuse the scudded masculine rhyme with the long rhyme. In the following

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example, all six lines are in iambic tetrameter, with a long rhyme in 1 and 3, a masculine rhyme in 2 and 4, and a feminine rhyme with contraction in 5 and 6.

The man who wants to write a triolet,  
When choosing rhymes should not forget  
That some prefer a triple violet  
And some a single violet;  
Nor should he spurn the feminine vi'let  
Blooming, contracted, on its islet.

The fact that the rhyme, no matter its length, lies outside the metrical scheme of the line leads to some droll results. If we devise, for example, an iambic couplet in which the rhyme is not merely long, but monstrous and, indeed, a very sea serpent in length, we shall see that despite there being six additional syllables after the ictus, making fourteen syllables in all of the line, the latter still remains a tetrameter (or "octosyllable," as some would call it):

*Est' rífmĭ próchnĭe, napráshivayushchiesya,  
I mnogonózhki ést', podkáshivayushchiesya*

which means, in prose, "There are solid rhymes that suggest themselves readily, and centipedes, whose legs buckle under them." This couplet is identical in metrical length with, say:

*Est' rífmĭ tóchnĭe, i ést'  
Drugĭe. Vséĭ ne perechést'*

which means, "There are exact rhymes, and there are other ones. All cannot be listed."