

BEYOND THE FEMININE IN PUSHKIN'S TATIANA

by

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## THESIS ABSTRACT

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Pushkin's Tatiana tends to be pigeonholed by criticism that acknowledges her dynamism and openness to creative possibilities but restricts her intertextual significance to the heroines of the European novelists she herself reads. I argue that only by viewing her as the construction of a narrator who relies heavily on the stylistics of Karamzin and Zhukovsky can Tatiana be pulled out of such narrow confines. By tracing the thread of these Russian texts in the novel in verse, I will show that they often beg comparison not with their predecessors' heroines but with their male counterparts. Tatiana's ambiguous characterization when read in conjunction with "Domik v Kolomne" (1830) shows the explicit gender parodies that *Onegin* only hints at. Using this text, I will ultimately consider Tatiana as an example of the ambivalence of Pushkin's heroine-muse in relation to his own participation in the 'ballad question' of the early 19th century.

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## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

Aleksandr Pushkin wrote *Eugene Onegin* over the span of seven years, and not always according to a clear plan about what was to come next in the story. Pushkin suffered growing pains during this work's cycle as a result of his isolation in exile, criticism from his contemporaries regarding his disputed role as Russia's greatest poet, and a tumultuous love life that threw his future familial happiness into question. In many ways his novel in verse grew along with him, at times finding parallels between his own stylistic progression and the life of 'Author'.<sup>1</sup> The focus of this study will engage the idea of a literary evolution in Pushkin from the perspective of his parodies of preromantic literary models, most notably in the Boldino Fall of 1830. Occasionally Pushkin ran to this device with a humorous intent to lampoon an adversarial poet or particular aesthetic ideal, and at others he adopted it carefully, using it as a non-belittling tool to create something new on the bones of the old. M. Gasparov and V. Smirin offer a helpful definition of the term 'parody' on which I will rely as I trace intertextual elements between Tatiana and both her literary predecessors and successors:

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<sup>1</sup> Anna Dvigubski coined the term 'Author' in her 2013 article: "And what of my Onegin?" Displacement and Reinvention of the Hero in *Eugene Onegin*. *The Russian Review*, Vol. 1, No. 23.: "My main focus in this article is on the author-narrator's status as a character and on the way in which his characterization compares to that of the hero Onegin. To emphasize my interest in the author-narrator as a character rather than a narrator (as well as in the interest of conciseness), I will refer to this figure as "Author" in the rest of this study." A possible criticism of this choice might be that this term is too reductive, for I will be considering the fluidity that this ambivalent narrator presents, be it as a character, a narrator, or Pushkin himself. Further revisions of this project would indeed call for a reconsideration of "Author" as such, especially as it concerns the implications of a singular "Reader".

Всем известно, какому переосмыслению подвергалось у Ю. Тынянова слово “пародия”, из второстепенного термина сделавшись едва ли не ключевым понятием в его взгляде на динамику литературы: пародия - это всякое вычленение отдельного приема из его функциональной системы и перенос его в другую систему.<sup>2</sup>

The concept is often associated with the comedic, but parody in Tynianov's understanding is defined by the notion of adaptation. I will use this more generalized understanding of the term to frame my discussion of how Pushkin engaged the works of Nikolai Karamzin, Vasily Zhukovsky, and Pavel Katenin. Its neutrality better reflects the strong continuity of a community of writers that was as close-knit as they were self-referential.

Tatiana is often recognized as the most significant achievement of *Onegin* because of a circular openness of her character, coupled with her irreducible literary construction when compared to the relative one-dimensionality of characters like Eugene or Olga. Her ability to unite varied literary material and live in both the “real” and imagined realms of the novel was a main focus of Olga Hasty’s crucial 1999 study *Pushkin’s Tatiana*. The tendency to view her as such unites dichotomies that are also present elsewhere in the novel, like prose and poetry, or the preromantic and the realistic, but there is nevertheless often an impulse to regard her character in strictly feminine terms. Douglas Clayton exemplifies this inclination in an article about ways to consider Tatiana: a “Mary” type, or a “Helen” type.<sup>3</sup> I believe that considering her character from

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<sup>2</sup> Gasparov, M.; Smirin, V (1986). Tynianovskii Sbornik: Vtorye Tynianovskie Chtenia, “Evgenii Onegin” i “Domik v Kolomne”: Parodiia i Samoparodiia u Pushkina. Riga: Zinatne. pp. 254.

<sup>3</sup> Clayton, Douglas (1987). Towards a Feminist Reading of Evgenii Onegin. Canadian Slavonic Papers, Vol. 29, No. 2/3. pp. 257. “The “Mary” type was characterized by her angelic nature, her chastity, her constancy, and her submissiveness. Vocabulary and emblems assimilated to the type included vernyi, luna. By contrast, the “Helen” type was associated with the vocabulary items volshebnitsa, izmennitsa, tsirtseia, lukavaia, zmeia. Helen’s beauty and unfaithfulness caused a thousand ships to be launched. The “circe” association suggested her ability to turn men into beasts by evoking their sensuality... the active search for

this restrictive set of terms is limiting from an aesthetic perspective, for it pigeonholes her by confusing poetic gender with the biological. Gitta Hammarberg's study about gender ambivalence in 18th and 19th century Russian literature will inform my argument that Tatiana's character deserves a reconceptualization from a more inclusive poetic gender perspective as the concept was understood in Pushkin's era:

The Enlightenment was oriented toward and encoded as masculine (reason, intellect, theory, depth, seriousness, solitude) dominance over the feminine (emotions, social skills, inferiority, frivolity), with the implication that certain standards of femininity and masculinity had become embedded in the culture as "natural". Women and men who did not conform to these "natural" patterns were regarded as mannish or effeminate. The degree of social stigma or approval attached to "unnatural" behaviors has varied historically and geographically and has not been symmetrically applied to the genders. Among the Karamzinists the favoring of the masculine gave way to privileging the feminine. Femininity was promoted in its natural and in its unnatural aspects. Behavior regarded as effeminate in men was more positively valued than mannish behavior in women. There was no major women's liberation campaign, and gender became central mainly in literary discussions as an *aesthetic, discursive* category - and not in any clear-cut way.<sup>4</sup>

The urge to psychologize Tatiana disregards Hammarberg's final point here that gender during this period wasn't a literal discussion of 'men' and 'women', but a discursive category that was unclear and under constant renegotiation. There are several questions I will address as it concerns poetic gender in *Onegin*: where does Tatiana's behavior follow and deviate from past representations of both male and female characters? How did Pushkin use parody to expand Tatiana's creative potential based on characteristics that belong to her hero predecessors? How does the muse character that spans from

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satisfaction of the bacchante was a "Helen" trait, while the reluctance and passivity of the smirennitsa was attributable to the "Mary" type."

<sup>4</sup> Hammarberg, Gitta (2002). Gender Ambivalence and Genre Anomalies in Late 18th–Early 19th-Century Russian Literature. *Russian Literature*, Vol. 52. pp. 300.

Svetlana and Tatiana to Parasha reevaluate and challenge the creative possibilities of women who act outside of roles taken from previous models?

To this end, I will rely on Hasty's idea that during Pushkin's writing of *Onegin* there was less a progression of style as a synchronicity of systems.<sup>5</sup> Pushkin was borrowing heavily from the preromantic system and its emphasis on the emotional over the rational, and chapter one of this study will consider Karamzin's influence in *Onegin* after his famous call for authors to write as women.<sup>6</sup> The numerous connections between Pushkin's work and that of his predecessor's relate the development of Pushkin's style to the sentimental soil in which it was born. Pushkin matured after Karamzin had already retired as a poet in the narrow sense, but the two were nonetheless intimately acquainted, and maintained the closest contact in the years before 1819.<sup>7</sup> Because of the variegated, *pestryj* composition of *Onegin*, it's possible to isolate those elements which most closely reflect the Karamzinian school's influence. Their thread is just one of many in the work, and as Yurii Lotman has argued, they eventually become muddled in the increasingly

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<sup>5</sup> Hasty, Olga (1999). Pushkin's Tatiana. Madison: University of Wisconsin Press. pp. 74.

<sup>6</sup> The concept of a literary "system" is a product of the Russian Formalists, and my understanding of the term comes mainly from Yuri Tynianov: Tynianov, Yurii (1977). *Poetika. Istorija Literatury. Kino. Literaturnyi Fakt*. Moskva: Nauka. Genres are a combination of their devices, and during the period when they are 'decomposing' one can witness their shift from centralized to occupying a position on the periphery ("не то, что в центре литературы движется и эволюционирует одна исконная, преемственная струя, а только по бокам наплывают новые явления, - нет, эти самые новые явления занимают именно самый центр, а центр съезжает в периферию. В эпоху разложения какого-нибудь жанра -он из центра перемещается на периферию, а на его место из мелочей литературы, из её задвор-ков и низин вплывает в центр новое явление"). The grouping of tropes and devices that make up the preromantic genre are in exactly this state of turmoil; displaced to the periphery, but fighting in Tatiana's character for a place closer to the center.

<sup>7</sup> Eidelman, Ya (1986). Pushkin: Issledovania i Materialy, Karamzin i Pushkin: iz Istorii vzaimootnoshenii. Leningrad: Nauka. Eidelman offers a very readable history of their relationship. Around 1819 Pushkin starts to visit Karamzin more out of politeness than desire. Differences in opinion over freethinking and the autocracy drive a wedge in their relationship, but from a stylistic perspective they remain aligned in Karamzin's polemic against Aleksandr Shishkov's circle of archaists (see *Onegin* (8:14) for further parody).

innovative ‘realistic’ framework of what he considers Pushkin’s gradual path to prose.<sup>8</sup> They are nonetheless essential for study, for they are underappreciated in both Tatiana’s characterization and Author’s own conflicts, and yet serve to unite the two in the final chapter. The implications this has for the recategorization of the sentimental system can bring us closer to an understanding of the roll of preromantic parody in the 1830 Boldino Fall.

The year 1830 in Pushkin’s life was one of focused and deliberate parody of previous modalities in literature, and *Poor Liza* and Zhukovsky’s “Svetlana” are most notable for their appearances in *Povesti Belkina*. It is a main goal of this paper to call for a reconsideration of the significance of these texts as they relate to Pushkin’s muse character outside of these short stories. In chapter two of this study, by considering chapter eight of *Onegin* as a quasi-separate work that parodies Zhukovsky’s balladic elements in particular, I develop a strategy for dislocating Tatiana from a poetic conceptualization of the feminine based in the context of the Boldino Fall. I will try and prove that *Onegin* (and chapter eight in particular) is a precursor and model to “The Little House in Kolomna” (“Domik v Kolomne”) (1830), which was written just weeks after *Onegin* was completed. Through a parody of Zhukovsky’s “Svetlana,” Pushkin creates a reimagined version of a folkloric heroine in Tatiana, which in turn then serves as the cornerstone for a parody in Parasha, the new muse in “Domik” whose strange double is as comfortable in mens’ clothes as she is in womens’. The serious, dramatic aspects of Pushkin’s greatest work only hinted at the creative possibilities female characters had in a time period where gender was first and foremost an aesthetic question. By mapping the

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<sup>8</sup> Eikhenbaum, Boris (1986). O Proze, o Poezii, Put’ Pushkina k Proze (pp. 29-44) Leningrad: Khudozhestvennaya Literatura.

progressive adaptations of these sources, Parasha can be treated regressively to demonstrate how the comedic nature of “Domik” realizes unfinished goals in *Onegin*.

The third and final chapter of this work will deal with Pushkin’s muse from both an aesthetic and a biographical perspective. Pushkin’s role in a polemic over how to write a proper ballad in the 1820’s between himself and Pavel Katenin informs much of my discussion of *why* Pushkin wanted to show gender ambivalence in his heroine-muse of this period. This in turn strengthens the aesthetic element of my discussion of *how* ballads are parodied in their tendency to revolve around the exposure of a secret. The various adaptations of Gottfried Burger’s “Lenore” (“Svetlana” being one of them) were predicated on the fear and excitement of unmasking, or revealing something long anticipated but withheld until the final moments of the work. In every ballad adaptation of Burger’s work the structure revolves around exposing a person to be not what they may seem; the narrator plays with a reader’s desire to look, and revels in their emotional reaction when presented with something unexpected. It is enough to cite Pushkin’s Byronic influence and the wildly popular dandyism of the era to understand how important the element of concealment and revelation were from a stylistic perspective. It’s the presentation of a ballad and how it functions formally to stage an exposure where Tatiana emerges at her most ambivalent and creative.

## CHAPTER II

### *POOR LIZA AND TATIANA: INNOVATIONS IN POETIC GENDER*

There exists no one complete study of the intertextual elements between Nikolai Karamzin's work and *Onegin*. Pushkin's novel in verse poses a particular challenge in this regard because Karamzin's most influential and widely read sentimental work, *Poor Liza*, is never directly referenced. Indeed, the allusions that I discuss in this chapter are in some respect the things of larger patterns, of interactions with the sentimentalist semantic system in general as it traverses both European and Russian borders. I see the benefits of comparing the two works as twofold: first, *Liza*'s innovations and originality are often jokingly cast aside by modern readers of Pushkin who have been exposed to much more experimental genres. Vladimir Nabokov's opinion on *Liza* is indicative of the dismay with which many view Karamzinian sentimentalism. In his notes to *Onegin*, he decries the "blissful lack of originality" in *Liza*, maintaining that it had "nothing to say that was not imitative," and ultimately offers no possibility of its influence on *Onegin*.<sup>9</sup> I believe that such a view is an oversimplification of a nuanced work that captivated Pushkin and sparked a number of adaptations.<sup>10</sup> Given Pushkin's fascination with the Liza character in "Ruslan and Liudmila," "Captive of the Caucasus," "The Stationmaster," and

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<sup>9</sup> Nabokov, Vladimir (1975). Commentary. Eugene Onegin: a Novel in Verse (Rev. ed., Vol. 2). Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press. pp.143

<sup>10</sup> Hammarberg, Gitta (1991). From the Idyll to the Novel: Karamzin's Sentimentalist Prose. Cambridge, England: Cambridge University Press. Hammarberg approaches Karamzin from a Bakhtinian perspective that focuses on the polyvocal narrator. His resistance to straightforward moralizing and ambiguous role as a character offer a more complex set of literary questions than past models had. In this light, Nabokov's insults are all but incomprehensible when considering his own mastery of narration.

“Baryshnia-Krestianka,” it is not unreasonable to maintain that parts of it creep into what he believed was his most successful work. Secondly, Author creates an elegized past during his digressions that is defined by certain formal elements at crucial moments that are remarkably similar to those in *Liza*. Author and his distribution of sympathetic affection provides a key to how the preromantic tradition isn’t just left behind as Pushkin matures, but reinvigorated to retain the value it placed on the emotional over the rational.

Lensky’s character is particularly essential to Pushkin’s adaptation of this system, and Monika Greenleaf has made some very useful observations about his idealistic placement in the novel. Her theory that Lensky, Eugene, and Tatiana “act out the poet’s metapoetic maturation” situates Lensky as Pushkin’s first stage of development during the seven years he worked on *Onegin*.<sup>11</sup> The biographical observations Greenleaf makes are indispensable for understanding the text as it relates to the perceived evolution of its author. Her critical stance also addresses the well-documented stylistic progression throughout the work, and most importantly finds Pushkin as a bonding element against which characters can be evaluated.<sup>12</sup> My interpretation of Lensky, while informed by Pushkin’s aesthetic developments, places the frame more around the lyrical element of the ‘lyrical : realistic’ dichotomy created throughout the work.<sup>13</sup> Not just clashing the

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<sup>11</sup> Greenleaf, Monika (1994). Pushkin and Romantic Fashion: Fragment, Elegy, Orient, Irony. Stanford, California: Stanford University Press. pp. 283. Greenleaf argues successfully that Author mourns the language of a lost era after Lensky’s death. His attachment to the formal aspects of writing inform his significance in this current study of his adaptations of the sentimental system.

<sup>12</sup> Sergei Bocharov, Viktor Vinogradov, and Yurii Lotman all address these broad problems as well in their respective works. The fact that Pushkin’s style developed within the span of writing the novel is now a truism based on their research. Nabokov may have only seen the symmetry between the two halves of the novel, but the preference during his time was to emphasize progression in line with Marxist theories. More recently, scholars like Greenleaf take a less ideological stance, but still support the main tenant that Pushkin’s style develops by the end beyond the terms he worked with in chapter one.

<sup>13</sup> Clayton, Douglas (2001). Wave and Stone: Essays on the Poetry and Prose of Alexander Pushkin, Plot and Fate in Eugene Onegin. Ottawa: Slavic Research Group at the University of Ottawa. pp.72. To this

lyric against the prosaic, Pushkin seemed to also clash the lyric against itself, holding his characters up against the backdrop of their literary predecessors, both Russian and European. Tatiana had her own preference for European novels and their literary models, so the critical focus is naturally moved away from a consideration of her native analogues, including Karamzin. Hasty mapped Tatiana's intertextuality between herself and the heroines of her favorite books, yet I find her method in part unsatisfactory because of the limitations it presents to considering her character as also playing with the models of the male characters.<sup>14</sup> This study could benefit from a rereading of these European novels from both the perspective of the heroes and heroines, but for the current scope I will consider only the traces *Liza* left on *Onegin*.

Perhaps better remembered for his linguistic contributions than his thematics, Karamzin comfortably occupies the position as one of the first great reformers of the Russian literary language. Although Nabokov may be unfair in his evaluation of *Liza*, his brief summarization of Karamzin's linguistic accomplishments is noteworthy:

In his truly marvelous reform of the Russian literary language, Karamzin neatly weeded out rank Church Slavonic and rank 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.<sup>15</sup>

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effect he maintains that "hybridness as a category occupies a central place in the thematics of the poem and is expressed by the most various means."

<sup>14</sup> Hasty. Pushkin's Tatiana. pp. 50-63. She traces Tatiana's commendable choice in literature, for in the three books she mentions the central conflict is the confrontation of powerful emotions with circumstances that requires their suppression.

<sup>15</sup> Nabokov. Commentary. pp. 143

Karamzin was responding to the neoclassical odists, who at the time were advocating for strict demarcations in literary style corresponding to a low (colloquial) or high (panegyric, Slavic) style at odds with general European tendencies. As Henry Nebel observes, Karamzin never strove to replicate real speech, but sought rather a sweet, middle style that would be non-offensive and grating to the ear.<sup>16</sup> Pushkin saw the merits in his new language, and further developed it according to his own views, becoming as it were the final and most lauded reformer of the Russian literary language. He was “style-conscious,” as Nabokov put it, but in the sense that sweetness and lightness of verse should be a vital source of meaning alongside other, rougher linguistic elements that Karamzin would have found unfit for a true writer.

Creating female characters and their speech were first and foremost linguistic problems in the early part of the 19th century. Those in the aristocratic milieu most often spoke in French, and therefore new writers were tasked with creating an ideal feminine language. Hasty brilliantly illuminates Pushkin’s contributions on this account in *Onegin*, particularly in regards to how Author chooses to translate Tatiana’s letter.<sup>17</sup> Women, regardless of what words they were using, were still viewed primarily as defined by a lack of depth in everything but love. Liza is a great example of this, as she is remembered mostly for the tragic end her paralyzing love led her to. But when considered in relation to other works in the genre, her innovativeness as a heroine is more perceptible. She was actually a failed representative of the pastoral ideal because, as Gitta Hammarberg points

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<sup>16</sup> Nebel, Henry (1967). N.M. Karamzin, a Russian sentimentalist. Paris: Mouton & Co. pp. 118-132. Nebel provides a more descriptive enumeration of the reforms Nabokov lists, and even discovers a discernible meter in Karamzin’s polished style.

<sup>17</sup> Hasty. Pushkin’s Tatiana. pp. 99. The intersection of the actual and imagined realized in Tatiana is another aspect of the hybridity Clayton discusses.

out, the idyllic tenent of intimacy between mothers and daughters was broken.<sup>18</sup> Liza hides her affair from her mother, and this moral transgression is the strongest factor that leads to her early demise, indicated by the fact that she apologizes only to her the moment before she leaps from the bridge. I will begin with a consideration of Tatiana and Lensky from this perspective of how to represent ideal feminine behavior.

### First Meetings and Promises

Because Pushkin chose to never reference *Liza* by name, elements of her story don't have to be limited to any one character. Similarities with this work emerge as a staggered group of associations that are at times connected only through *fabula* elements. Any allusions to the *siuzhet* are often so incongruous that Liza and Tatiana are characterized primarily by their differences.<sup>19</sup> Tatiana's letter writing scene in chapter three of *Onegin* exemplifies this tendency; while both works feature their heroines' first solitary meeting, a talk with an older, trusted female guardian, and the first decision to hide or reveal erotic emotions, they proceed quite differently. If we accept Hasty's interpretation that Tatiana meets her muse in the process of writing, then *Onegin* echoes *Liza* when the heroine has her first private meeting with Erast on the riverbank. He majestically paddles up at dawn to meet her just at the moment she is imaginatively creating an image of an idealized, shepard-suitor. As Erast comes into view he fades seamlessly into her vision, fulfilling her dream and yet dictating the terms of its ultimate realization:

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<sup>18</sup> Hammarberg. From the idyll to the novel. pp. 140.

<sup>19</sup> Tomashevsky, Boris (1986). Teoria Literatury. Poetika. Moskva: Aspekt Press. pp. 137. “Кратко выражаясь — фабула это то, «что было на самом деле», сюжет — то, «как узнал об этом читатель»”.

Между тем молодой пастух по берегу реки гнал стадо играя на свирели. Лиза устремила на него взор свой и думала: "Если бы тот, кто занимает теперь мысли мои рожден был простым крестьянином, пастухом, и если бы он теперь мимо меня гнал стадо свое; ах! я поклонилась бы ему с улыбкою и сказала бы приветливо: "Здравствуй, любезный пастушок! Куда гонишь ты стадо свое?" И здесь растет зеленая трава для овец твоих, и здесь алеют цветы, из которых можно сплести венок для шляпы твоей". Он взглянул бы на меня с видом ласковым - взял бы, может быть, руку мою, Мечта!" Пастух, играя на свирели, прошел мимо и с пестрым стадом своим скрылся за близким холмом.

Вдруг Лиза услышала шум весел - взглянула на реку и увидела лодку, а в лодке - Эраста.<sup>20</sup>

The flow from imaginary to real is almost magical, and the striking coincidence of the circumstances convince Liza of Erast's noble intentions. In *Onegin*, Tatiana's 'meeting' as she writes her letter remains imaginary. There is no heroic appearance of the object of her erotic imagination, and likewise nothing to finalize the creative potential of what she had created.

When Liza returns to her house she rouses her mother but remains silent about what Erast had instructed her: their relationship was not to be made public. His characterization as manipulative in this sense is reminiscent of Eugene in (1:11). Author describes his conduct, which was characteristic for young society men of the time:

Как он умел казаться новым,  
Шутя невинность изумлять,  
Пугать отчаяньем готовым,  
Приятной лестью забавлять,  
Ловить минуту умиленья,  
Невинных лет предубежденья  
Умом и страстью побеждать,  
Невольной ласки ожидать,  
Молить и требовать признанья,  
Подслушать сердца первый звук,  
Преследовать любовь, и вдруг  
Добиться тайного свиданья...  
И после ей наедине

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<sup>20</sup> Karamzin, Nikolai (1994). N.M. Karamzin: Izbrannye Sochinenia v Dvukh Tomakh. Moskva-Leningrad: Khudozhestvennaya Literatura.

Давать уроки в тишине!<sup>21</sup>

Although we don't see until later the cat-and-mouse game that leads to Liza's carnal submission like we do here, Erast nonetheless prepares for it early by manipulating Liza into silence. The reader eventually sees how Eugene manages to *davat' uroki*, but the scene is also delayed until the next chapter in his first private meeting with Tatiana. In these first chapters Erast and Eugene have a stronger correlation than Liza and Tatiana, but by the end of the novel it's Tatiana who adopts the didactic role during her final speech.

Tatiana's blunt explanation of the fruits of her nocturnal labors in (3:35) contrasts her character with both Eugene and Liza in different ways: (Ты видишь, дело о письме // к Онегину...). Tatiana chooses to lay her cards face up, to eschew the secretive and versatile masks that characterize the ostensible object of her affection. Her decision to share intimate details of her personal life with her nurse isn't incongruous with gender conventions like sending the letter itself is, but it marks her creative individuality over Liza's. Her character in fact puts on a mask, a dangerous mask that's advocated against by the light moralizing the narrator subjects his creation to in response to her deception. As a willing participant in a deceitful social game dictated and dominated by a singular male voice, Liza is ready to believe the narrative Erast feeds her. Regardless of Erast's true feelings for Liza at that moment, her decision to deceive her mother limits the creative force of her erotic energy that Tatiana comes to embrace. If we consider Tatiana's open behavior a comment on the danger of the dandy-esque social stance of deception based on convention, and thus align her with Author, Tatiana is distanced from

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<sup>21</sup> All citations of the original text are from: Pushkin, Aleksandr (1936). A.S. Pushkin: Polnoe Sobranie Sochinennii v Shesti Tomakh. Moskva: Academia.

both her male and female predecessors in *Liza*. She neither finalizes Eugene nor deceives her nurse.

In *Onegin*, Tatiana's nurse enters to rouse her (the opposite as in *Liza*), and after noting the change in her face in (3:33) (Лицо твое как маков цвет) much like Karamzin's narrator comments on the *radostnoe schastie* on Liza's, offers little more than comic relief with her complete lack of understanding of where the change came from. We might also observe that the epithet *makov tsvet*, used only once in Pushkin's oeuvre, hearkens back to the preromantic heroine of Pavel Katenin's 1814 folkloric ballad "Natasha," who is described using the same image: (Бела грудь, как снег пушистый, // Рдяны щеки, маков цвет...). In *Liza*, the heroine's mother bursts into a monologue that reconciles current earthy beauty and pleasure with past suffering as all part of God's discretion. Tatiana's nurse cannot reconcile the past with the present, and is in this way removed from the standard temporal bounds of the novel.<sup>22</sup> She is unable to read Tatiana and decode the new information she sees as having a connection to their current lives. But Liza's mother is similarly clueless, and also does not suspect the existence of the powerful erotic emotions that Liza displaces onto her natural surroundings. Tatiana's nurse is representative of the irreconcilable temporal distance that her character type has traveled in the transposition into a new genre.

The nurse is a nexus of folkloric energy from which Tatiana draws, and also the personification of *starina* in the novel. Author's elegiac outbursts in *Onegin* bare the device of creating a state of constant flux between the present of his literary world, and a lost but warmly remembered past. Many of the numerous elegiac outbursts serve to

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<sup>22</sup> (3:17): А нынче все мне тёмно, Таня: // Что знала, то забыла. (3:34): Я нынче стала бестолкова.

delineate the past as raucous, lively, and emotional, but the present as tamed and stable, but lacking passion.<sup>23</sup> The concept of *starina* stands as it were outside of this distinction, as an element of a distant past that is more culturally relevant in a folkloric sense than temporal. Tatiana draws from it in part because she is characterized as distinctly separate from the past time Author reminiscences about. During her introduction in (2:27) Author avoids equating her with Olga:

Но куклы даже в эти годы  
Татьяна в руки не брала;  
Про вести города, про моды  
Беседы с нею не вела.  
И были детские проказы  
Ей чужды: страшные рассказы  
Зимою в темноте ночей  
Пленяли больше сердце ей.  
Когда же няня собирала  
Для Ольги на широкий луг  
Всех маленьких ее подруг,  
Она в горелки не играла,  
Ей скучен был и звонкий смех,  
И шум их ветреных утех.

The dolls and mischievous behavior, the laughter and *vetrenykh utekh* that her sister enjoyed were for her foreign and boring. In line one the conjunction *dazhe* even further underscores the separation Tatiana has from the traditional past models her peers are characterized by. She is more drawn to frightening stories, the night, and winter, which may be traced back as balladic elements more closely associated with *starina* as a folkloric intrusion.<sup>24</sup>

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<sup>23</sup> (4:46) can serve as a general example: (Аи любовнице подобен // Блестящей, ветреной, живой, // И своюенравной, и пустой... // Но ты, Бордо, подобен другу, // Который, в горе и в беде, // Товарищ завсегда, везде.). The past is generally understood as full of unfettered emotion and devoid of all meaning other than its extremity, but nonetheless attractive and exciting in comparison to the level-headed present.

<sup>24</sup> This characterization is most significant for chapter two of this study, where I discuss Svetlana in relation to Zhukovsky's ballads.

## The Lost Preromantic System

Tatiana's removal from a past time Author cannot forget is placed in contrast to both her sister Olga, and her suitor Lensky. Both of their introductory stanzas rely heavily on preromantic thematics and lexicon. Most notably, (2:21) compares Olga's maturation to a lily (...цвела как ландыш потаенный), which were the same flowers that Liza was selling when she first met Erast, and which were subsequently thrown over the bridge as a foreshadowing of her own demise. Whereas Tatiana seems to have been born outside of time, Olga is defined squarely within the past's sentimental stylistics. The imperfective verb *tsvela* accentuates the lack of restrictions on growth that this period presents; it is a time characterized by a self-contained, cyclical development. Author may use her for parody as an idyllic caricature, but he simultaneously pines over the period that characterizes her in his own elegiac digressions. Olga, like her *potaennyi* lily, maintains a lyrically accessible exclusivity; a fragile, elusive, sought-after innocence that won't ever suffer at the hands of society men. Her lack of interest in Eugene situates her much closer to the idyllic ideal than Liza, who tried and failed to integrate the idyllic with the societal.<sup>25</sup>

Author disperses elements of *Liza* and its sentimental aesthetic across several characters, and the differences between herself and Tatiana encourage us to look elsewhere for connections. Lensky, Pushkin's elegiac, preromantic punching bag for the

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<sup>25</sup> Hammarberg. From the idyll. pp. 141. Olga does not try and operate outside of her singular characterization by bringing the Romantic Eugene into her idyllic world. Of course, it must also be mentioned that the class difference present in Liza is completely absent in *Onegin*, and Lensky does not hide his love for Olga. Despite the fact she grew up like a 'clandestine' flower, society knows and approves of Lensky's marital intentions.

first several chapters, is central to the sentimental layer of the novel. In (2:10), a stanza famous for its parody of tired rhymes, epithets and comparisons, Author engages the gender construction Karamzin tried to create through linguistic reform:

Он пел любовь, любви послушный,  
И песнь его была ясна,  
Как мысли девы простодушной,  
Как сон младенца, как луна  
В пустынях неба безмятежных,  
Богиня тайн и вздохов нежных.  
Он пел разлуку и печаль,  
И *нечто*, и *туманну даль*,  
И романтические розы;  
Он пел те дальние страны,  
Где долго в лоно тишины  
Лились его живые слезы;  
Он пел поблеклый жизни цвет  
Без малого в осьмнадцать лет.

By saying that his song is like the thoughts of a simple girl, Lensky is characterized like the woman of the period: frivolous and emotional. The hollowness of his lyrics are parodic in the comedic sense as well because his flowery introduction directly precedes one of Russian literature's most complex female characters. The sentimentalist construction of the kindhearted but intellectually devoid female finds a natural home in Lensky; it absorbs the space that would normally have been reserved for Tatiana. In (2:15), his *юный жар и юный бред* are mocked, and his belief in the wholeness and completeness of the world is reminiscent of that pastoral idyllic mindset that Liza's mother espoused and encouraged her daughter to replicate: (*Да верит мира совершенству; // Простим горячке юных лет // И юный жар и юный бред*). Filtered through Author's own elegiac lens, his status as an ideal of the past is emphasized on several occasions (2:20): (*Ах, он любил, как в наши лета // Уже не любят;...*).

Despite the ironic attitude in chapter two of the preromantic system, in chapter three Author's sympathies toward Tatiana develop similar contours. Her thematic overlap with Liza is rather incongruous, but Author's outbursts and interjections, of which there are over sixty in *Liza*, draw her into the stylized past as an aesthetic object.<sup>26</sup> Tatiana is situated within the sentimental system most noticeably by these formal narrative elements. The (3:15) effusion (Татьяна, милая Татьяна! // С тобой теперь я слезы лью; // Ты в руки модного тирана // Уж отдала судьбу свою. // Погибнешь, милая;...) is strikingly resemblant of the effluent Karamzinian narrator. Whipped up into an emotional frenzy at the recollection of his own lost love that precedes this stanza, Author transfers his emotions onto the current story and mourns Tatiana's seemingly irreversible entanglement with fate. *Liza* has similar imagery at the end, but in relation to Erast and not Liza, as one might expect if she were to be merely her successor. After Erast asks to have Liza escorted off his property, the narrator passionately exclaims “смотрю на него, и слеза катится по лицу моему.”<sup>27</sup> The same fate that led to Liza's demise Author assumes will be the same for Tatiana at this early point in the novel (3:15): (Погибнешь, милая;...).

The epithet *milyi* is a typical example of how Author expresses sympathy and affection for his creations. Epithets of this sort were used to exhaustion in Pushkin's and the previous generation, and are often parodied in *Onegin* despite their sometimes serious

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<sup>26</sup> “ “ pp. 150.

<sup>27</sup> A painfully lachrymose story in general, everyone at some point cries, and hopefully the reader as well if he adheres to Karamzin's idea of a sensitive audience. Karamzin found this reaction to sadness a highly laudable trait, and also posits the ability to cry as paramount to being a true author (see *chto nuzhno avtoru?* [1802]).

useage. In stanza (4:23) Author uses *milyi* again for its sympathetic effect, opting even for the friendly “Tania,” a shortened form that in previous chapters only her nurse used:

Что было следствием свиданья?  
Увы, не трудно угадать!  
Любви безумные страданья  
Не перестали волновать  
Младой души, печали жадной;  
Нет, пуще страстью безотрадной  
Татьяна бедная горит;  
Ее постели сон бежит;  
Здоровье, жизни цвет и сладость,  
Улыбка, девственныи покой,  
Пропало все, что звук пустой,  
И меркнет милой Тани младость:  
Так одевает бури тень  
Едва рождающийся день.

In the first line Author makes no allusion as to the singularity of the Eugene-Tatiana story, and has to remind the reader when he is returning to the ostensible subjects of his work. His digression started in (4:18), and he strains to emphasize a reading contract that's founded on the assumption that the reader will feel the same as himself (Вы согласитесь, мой читатель; Конечно так.). Hammarberg observes that *Liza* also relies on this sort of narrative ideology, and that it is a mainstay of the sentimental author.<sup>28</sup> In this environment Author capitalizes on epithets as lexical markers whose repetitions create associations with past systems. Tatiana may break with sentimentalist models in her treatment of love, but she cannot escape Author as he draws her into a past that she herself resists. This stanza is also notable for its inclusion of the epithet *bednaia* to

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<sup>28</sup> Hammarberg. From the idyll. pp. 151. Hammarberg describes readers and characters as ‘sensitive clones’ of the author. But this is not to exclude the possibility that the author here is being ironic to create a parodic effect. Stanza (4:18), immediately after Tatiana and Eugene’s first official meeting, suggests that Author can have a dry sense of humor about how he depicts his ‘hero’: Вы согласитесь, мой читатель, // Что очень мило поступил // С печальной Таней наш приятель;). Knowing Author’s attachment to Tatiana, the word *milo* reads more as a slight to his choice of behavior.

describe Tatiana. When viewed in all of its repetitions, I suggest that it becomes the most marked term Author has in his arsenal to imbue Tatiana's character with the emotional energy that was lost with Lensky's death.

### Lexical Links between Author and His Characters

Shuttled between Author's "real" world and that of his characters', the reader is primed to view common epithets as references to previous modalities in literature. But because literary questions were informed by the dominant social conventions of the time, Tatiana's character walks a thin line between the real and created.<sup>29</sup> The development of relationships in society so closely reflects how they are depicted in the literature of the time (and vice versa) that Author assumes the reader has an identical perception of events: Увы, не трудно угадать! Tatiana was naturally thrown into a state of emotional turmoil after Eugene's lecture, but whereas Liza killed herself after Erast's rebuking, Author now only hints at the possibility of such an irreversible outcome. Although her (Здоровье, жизни цвет и сладость, // Улыбка, девственныиий покой..), which are characteristics most at home with Olga, have disappeared (*propalo*), Author uses the present imperfective *merknet* (fade away) to describe her youth. Why would the tense and aspect change at this crucial moment, and especially after a list of characteristics that all metonymically serve as stand-ins for youth? It might be that Author refuses to finalize Tatiana's lost youth because of his own elegiac relation the past. As a metaphor, the past represents the previous generation of poets Author consistently references throughout the work. Tatiana's complete break from that time would destroy its significance for him.

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<sup>29</sup> Todd, William (1986). Fiction and Society in the Age of Pushkin: Ideology, Institutions, and Narrative. Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press.

Part of her belongs to the past because Author keeps her there, and despite her creative potential as a character, she cannot fully divorce herself from these formal constraints.

The epithet *bednyi* is of course not only a direct reference to the title of Karamzin's work. It is a common sympathetic term that was used long before Karamzin and his particular sentimental style came on the literary scene. Its usefulness for this study is as a focal point to mark where the narrator's sympathies lie, and how those sympathies interact with Tatiana's development. In fact, Lensky is described as *bednyi* even more than Tatiana, proving that it is more a marker of inclusion in a system than a direct reference. At the end of (4:50) it is used affectionately with a possessive pronoun that brings into question his function in the work as limited to just comedic parody: (Мой бедный Ленский, сердцем он // Для оной жизни был рожден.). Author seems to have genuine loving sympathy for the cruel fate he is to suffer at the hands of enigmatic Eugene. Clearly an allusion to the genre he characterizes, Lensky was born *serdtsem* for family happiness, for the world according to Jean De La Fontaine. Author and his presumed obedient audience believe the current generation already relates sceptically to this lifestyle/plot (Меж тем как мы, враги Гимена,...).

Stanza (6:13) once again describes Lensky as *bednyi*: (Не тут-то было: как и прежде, // На встречу бедного певца // Прыгнула Олењка с крыльца,...). Much the same as in the previous reference, *bednyi* hearkens back to the cyclical nature that characterizes the ideal sentimental world. Liza in 1792 had already broken the pastoral ideal of a united family life, but part of Lensky recognizes the destruction this decision brought. When he visits Olga for the last time he is reeling with doubt over his decision to go through with the duel. Ultimately, he challenges Eugene and tries to play outside of

the plots already prepared for him by his literary definition. His attempt at deviation by wearing a mask from Eugene's lineup is misguided and doomed to failure. Even though Olga greeted him *kak i prezhe*, Eugene has caused a break in the cycle, a disturbance that ultimately leads to Lensky's demise. The author mourns this inevitability with particularly strong emotion in stanzas (7:10) and (7:11), repeating the same interjection *bednyi Lensky!* at the start of both stanzas.

This new type of society character, Eugene, murders Lensky and, metaphorically speaking, undermines the semantic system on which he was founded. Although this provides strong evidence for the case of Pushkin's developing realist stylistics, Author himself is fundamentally conflicted about the value of the progression. This is evidenced most pointedly by a multi-stanza digression Author makes from (6:32 - 40) to try and find meaning in the results of the duel. Stanzas (6:36 - 37) represent the real anguish, confusion, and helplessness Author feels over the loss, but their singular emotional impact as lyrical effusions is tempered by the realism of (6:38).<sup>30</sup> Lensky might have had the potential to become a great literary mind, but was defeated by his misapplication of the new elements in literature and society as represented by Eugene. The sheer length of this digression, despite sometimes teasing the preromantic system (it contains the painfully ironic usage of the rhyme *sladost' - mladost'*), reveals a greater amount of genuine sympathy. In (6:40) Author refers to Lensky affectionately as *zadumchivyi mechtatel'*, a complimentary description I will address more in the next chapter of this

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<sup>30</sup> Author is an open nerve in the first several stanzas, incapable of making sense of the murder: (6:35) (Друзья мои, вам жаль поэта: // Во цвете радостных надежд, // Их не свершив еще для света, // Чуть из младенческих одежд, // Увял! Где жаркое волненье, // Где благородное стремленье // И чувств и мыслей молодых, // Высоких, нежных, удалых?), but he also recognizes how unspectacular and perhaps unnoteworthy the death may be: (А может быть и то: поэта // Обыкновенный ждал удел...)

study in relation to Zhukovsky's "Svetlana". Lensky's unfortunate death also prompts Author to consider the passing of his own life in (6:44), a subject he does not deal with comedically: (Ужель мне скоро тридцать лет?). He cannot comprehend the finality of the passing of a life, and likewise the end of an ideal. Unable to find an appropriate place to stop his elegiac outpour, even in the last stanza he asks permission to look back one last time in order to delay the inevitability of returning to the present: (Дай оглянусь...).

Author eventually centers himself with a reference to the current time that he occupies with his readers, a time of (мертвящее упоение света). With such a pessimistic view of the current world immediately following a lauding of the past, we can assume that for Author there was some great value in the time Lensky represented. He even begs the reader: (Не дай остыть душе поэта, // Ожесточиться, очерстветь, // И наконец окаменеть...). Pushkin also included a footnote to this stanza that leads the reader to a more expanded ending that paints an even darker picture of the world the first readers of *Onegin* were living in. The words *tupye*, *deti*, *zhestokoserdie*, *koketka*, and *dosadnaya pustota* characterize drawing rooms that are devoid of the youthful energy that, although in literary terms may be considered mockable in its traditional representation, could mitigate the triteness of the current world. It is interesting to note that Tatiana eventually ends up a veritable god in this very environment. If readers are to see her as belonging to this time, yet separated from Author's negative characterization of it, she needs to become the new carrier of the emotional energy that was lost in Lensky.

Hasty convincingly describes the creative, poetic openness of Tatiana as a manifestation of her ability to live in both the imaginative and "real" realm.<sup>31</sup> But Hasty's

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<sup>31</sup> Hasty. Pushkin's Tatiana. pp. 98-9.

straightforward psychologizing tends to minimize Author's role in her characterization. If his authorial status is ignored, then there is a risk of trivializing Author's attempt at connecting her with a sentimentalized literary past. Chapter eight offers a unique resolution to Tatiana's association with this time, and at once maintains both her development and her submission to Author. Taken as a whole, *Onegin* accentuates Tatiana's opposition to Eugene, who is also contrasted with Author. In the beginning she writes a letter, receives no response, and suffers the effects of his moralizing speech, but in the end everything is reversed. Not only does she not respond to Eugene's letters, but ends the action of the novel in verse with her own measured rebuke. Her character and Author are contrasted from Eugene in many ways, but if looked at from a literary-historical perspective, she is much less distinguishable from her heroic predecessor in *Liza* in the final scenes. I will address her connections with Author more in chapter two of this study when her slippage into his muse acquires particular significance when juxtaposed to Zhukovsky's ballads.

### Intertextual Confusion

As noted above, Tatiana is related to the Karamzinian aesthetic primarily through digressions, interjections, and epithets, or in other words by Author. His external description adds sentimental shading to her character that she cannot herself use creatively. Stanza (8:27) is one of four times in chapter eight *bednyi* is applied, and like in its previous applications, is used to delineate temporal-literary periods:

Но мой Онегин вечер целый  
Татьяной занят был одной,  
Не этой девочкой несмелой,  
Влюбленной, бедной и простой,

Но равнодушною княгиней,...

Author is preoccupied in this chapter with emphasizing Tatiana's new identity. After Eugene's travels cause a temporal gap in the narrative, Author must explain the evolution the reader missed with reference to the general scheme: before and after. Perhaps in an echo of his own characterization of her in chapter four as *bednyi*, Tatiana's past self is placed in direct opposition to what she has become. If she is now the princess, then she can no longer be recognized by a simple, idealistic love.

The competing perspectives of Author and Eugene in this chapter frame the connections Eugene fails to see between past Tatiana, and the current princess. In (8:27) it is ostensibly Eugene who struggles to reconcile her new societal position with the rural maiden of his past. Author first notes Eugene's difficulties even earlier, in (8:20): (Но и следов Татьяны прежней // Не мог Онегин обрести.). Compared to (8:41), when Eugene finally catches Tatiana by surprise and in tears over what are presumably his letters, the narrator accentuates Eugene's lack of perception: (Кто прежней Тани, бедной Тани // Теперь в княгине б не узнал!). In doing so, he also strengthens the presumed understanding between what is agreed upon by both himself and the reader. Even more damning than a library of unopened books, Eugene is portrayed as an incompetent reader of Tatiana. She possesses a depth and complexity of character that escapes categorization as a typical member of society as he understands it in his limited perspective. But where Eugene fails, Author (and presumably the reader) can see her multivalency because they are capable of making creative use of past models.

Author for the first time states unequivocally in these lines that his sympathetic epithet is interchangeable with a past time he struggles to keep relevant in his own

digressions: (прежней Тани, бедной Тани). Two lines later Eugene falls defeated at Tatiana's feet, a motif that is also a mainstay in the sentimental canon.<sup>32</sup> Read in conjunction with *Liza*, in this scene the hero and heroine experience an identity reversal. Instead of Liza catching Erast by surprise in town and rushing to him with the expectation of reclaiming her past love, it's Eugene who is now playing the sentimental role, emotionally overwhelmed and desperate to reconnect. Whereas Erast explained in unmitigated official terms that he can no longer fulfil his promises (Лиза! Обстоятельства переменились; я помолвил жениться), now it's Tatiana who is in this uncomfortable position. Her measured speech in (8:42) (Довольно; встаньте. Я должна // Вам объясниться откровенно) and (8:47) (Но я другому отдана) might be understood as a stylistic echo of 'the rational' male.

There are undoubtedly many differences between Erast's and Tatiana's final speeches, both in tone and content, and they are comparable mostly to the extent that they both perform the same function. Yet (8:47) provides a particularly strong allusion to Karamzin's work through Tatiana's self-characterization as *bednaia*: (...для бедной Тани // все были жребии равные...). Liza referred to herself in the same way on two separate occasions, and the overlap between Author and Tatiana's lexicon presents a crucial moment of overlap in the separation of the narrative and thematic worlds. For sentimental authors, characters were merely extensions of the self, tricks used as an intermediary in order to transfer their emotions onto the reader. The similarity between Author and Tatiana's vocabulary offer the hint of artifice needed to complicate the boundary Tatiana navigates between the world she inhabits and the world that's created

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<sup>32</sup> Vinogradov, Viktor (1941). *Stil' Pushkina*. Moskva: Khudozhestvennaya Literatura. pp. 172-4.

her. She is at the very least conscience of the sentimental trope of an adherence to fate, and marks her speech to reflect a degree of recognition that Author is pulling the strings.

By including this piece of the structural puzzle at the end of the novel, Tatiana retains the vital emotional energy that was released with Lensky's death. Interestingly enough, the only means she has to do this are lexical because of the innovativeness of her behavior. Pushkin seems concerned at this crucial moment in the novel with sentimentalizing her character, but she maintains her thematic distance from any one discernible predecessor. For example, in *Liza* Erast gets married not out of respect for his parents, but out of a personal unwillingness to abandon his privileged position in order to live out the idyllic fantasy he destroyed with his own machinations. Whereas he was motivated by wealth and greed, Tatiana does not have to compromise her morals because she can harness the power of her creative imagination. She can both honor her mother and harbor the passionate energy the reader sneaks an intrusive glance at in (8:40):  
(Сидит, не убрана, бледна, // Письмо какое-то читает // И тихо слезы льет рекой, // Опершись на руку щекой). It might also be noted that both Erast and Tatiana choose older, established spouses who don't promise the same level of erotic fulfillment as their younger counterparts.

This persistent pattern of incongruous allusions leads us to recognize that Tatiana is as reasonably comparable to the hero of her sentimental predecessors as to the heroine. In literary terms, she becomes both types of the preromantic characterization of rational-minded man and emotional woman. From this perspective, Tatiana is dislodged from a simple female characterization, which supports Hasty's observation that: "...Tatiana exemplifies the quintessentially poetical requirement that either/or be replaced with

both/and.”<sup>33</sup> We risk simplifying a pillar of the work that deals with Tatiana’s comparison and development beyond Eugene if we separate hero and heroine as gendered instead of integrate them as viable material from a literary perspective.

Tatiana takes seemingly opposed cultural material and integrates it creatively, and in this process is comparable to Author. I believe that this slippage she experiences between genres and characterization is particularly significant given Pushkin’s parodic tendencies during the 1830 fall at Boldino. If we trace the connections Tatiana has to her preromantic heroine from “Svetlana,” we can see how comparison to Liza was just a detail in a larger picture. The narrative structure and thematic elements of the preromantic ballad play a key role in Pushkin’s parody of its model, and also the innovativeness of his new muse. From Svetlana, to Tatiana, to Parasha in “Domik v Kolomne,” play with the “Lenore” cycle suggests a more sustained interest in problematizing heroines and their need to stay within the bounds of certain restrictions.

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<sup>33</sup> “ “ pp. 10

## CHAPTER III

### VASILY ZHUKOVSKY'S BALLADS IN *EUGENE ONEGIN*

I have often wondered why Pushkin chose  
to identify his Muse with that frightened girl...  
-Vladimir Nabokov on “Lenore” in *Onegin* (8:4)

Vasily Zhukovsky published “Svetlana” in 1813, his second and considerably less restricted adaptation of Gottfried Burger’s ballad “Lenore” (1774). Its overwhelmingly popular reception can be attributed to a combination of the reading public’s desire for narodnost’ in literature, and the measured, middle-style of diction and syntax popularized by Karamzin. It is often a focus of *Onegin* scholarship because of its folkloric elements, but if we are to see Tatiana in all of her complexity, other aspects of its stylistics and structure must be considered as well.<sup>34</sup> With both Liza and “Svetlana,” this requires particular attention to be paid to chapter eight. We recall that in the gradual development of a preromantic system centered on epithets, intertextual allusions to Liza acquire their most cogent meaning when in the final chapter Tatiana’s voice overlaps with Author’s. The reversal her character experiences with Erast is also most perceptible at the end, and discourages restricting her intertextual characterization to just her heroine predecessor. Because the text pushes her into the authorial, discourse level of the novel’s relationship to its literary models, Tatiana is exposed as not just a creative being, but a created one.

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<sup>34</sup> Lotman, Yurii (1995). Pushkin: Biografiia Pisatelja: "Evgenii Onegin", Kommentarii: Stati i Zametki, 1960-1990. St. Peterburg: Iskusstvo. pp. 646. Lotman focuses exclusively on the names of Romantic folkloric heroines and the implications they had as a “pechat’ narodnosti,” which critics at the time said was all but absent in Russian letters. Olga Hasty follows suit, which I discuss more in depth below.

“Svetlana” provides a complement to Tatiana’s diverse characterization by further blurring the lines of distinction between heroes and heroines, with Author again driving the unification.

A significant, unattested aspect of “Svetlana’s” parody in *Onegin* is realized through formal components of the balladic genre that create the frame in which intertextual transgressions take place. The structure of “Lenore,” as Boris Tomashevsky observes, is “built on the revelation of a secret in the final lines,” with the plot heightening suspense toward an exposure in a single moment.<sup>35</sup> Zhukovsky’s adaptations retained this structure, and I believe that Pushkin appreciated it for its potential as a playful, theatrical element that privileges the emotional over the rational. It engaged the reader by toying with their desire to look. In his own work, Pushkin parodied and complicated the aesthetic delight that results from the recognition that looks can be deceiving through the characters of Eugene and Tatiana. The ballad was indeed a new and exciting genre for the preromantics that aroused great interest in Pushkin throughout his career, but its significance to *Onegin* beyond Tatiana’s dream has yet to attract much critical attention. Perhaps this is a result of the difficulty of determining what defines a ballad’s quintessential features.

In Pushkin’s own oeuvre he only gave the classification ballada to two of his works, both of which are humorous in content and from 1819. This suggests that he did not view the genre as restricted to a defined set of formal markers.<sup>36</sup> Tomashevsky’s

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<sup>35</sup> Tomashevsky, Boris (1961). Pushkin (Kniga Vtoraya). Moskva-Leningrad: Izdatel’stvo Akademii Nauk SSSR. pp.104. In an analysis of Pushkin’s “Zhenikh” (1825), he recognizes the structural repetition it has with “Lenore”: “...Такое развитие рассказа мало похоже на сказочное повествование, но возможно в балладе. В частности, именно «Ленора» построена тоже на раскрытии тайны в последних стихах.”

<sup>36</sup> Gavrilova, N., & Shamkova, I. (2005). Literaturnye Sviazi Ballady A.S. Pushkina “Zhenikh”. Paper at the “Odnadtsataia nauchno-prakticheskia konferentsia uchschikhsia Pskovskoi oblasti”, Pskov, Russia.

description isolates the ‘final reveal’ structure as essential to “Lenore,” but he does not view it as definitive to the genre as a whole. In his comments in Lyrical Genres, he offers the following general definition of ballads in the Russian context:

В начале XIX в. в литературе модным было подражание шотландской балладе (род народной песни), и вскоре под словом "баллада" стали объединять стихотворения, тема которых разрабатывала предания и мифы народной устной литературы (фольклора). Вскоре утратилось чувство имитации фольклора — балладой стали называть всякую стихотворную повесть о чудесном, *затем отпал и элемент фантастики, и под балладой* *стали разуметь стихотворение с фабулой.*<sup>37</sup> (italics mine)

Without any accompanying dates, it’s difficult to resolve when the final highlighted sentence started to become generally accepted, which would in turn allow a consideration of *Onegin* within its frame. Looking more specifically at Zhukovsky’s adaptations of “Lenore,” it wasn’t just the inclusion of a narrative that was important, but elements like an uncanny atmosphere and the anticipation of death. “Svetlana” in part became so popular because it deviated from this last requirement; the heroine is ultimately saved from her gruesome fate by a sympathetic narrator. Zhukovsky gives the reader both the shock of seeing the bridegroom dead, and the satisfaction of seeing the beloved heroine saved. As Michael Katz observes, the work is an example of “Romantic folklore,” and a parody of the frightening aspects of “Lenore”.<sup>38</sup> It is also often considered a smoothed

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The two works in question are «Что ты, девица, грустна» and «Жил на свете рыцарь бедный». This is not to say that he didn’t have an understanding of the genre much as Tomashevsky described it. As Gavrilova points out, he refers to ballads in several different ways, including: «повествовательное стихотворение с фантастическим, историческим, бытовым сюжетом» and, «лирическое стихотворение определённого строфического построения». Still, I find it curious that Pushkin neglected to define something like “Zhenikh” as a ballad despite using “Lenore” as a model.

<sup>37</sup> Tomashevsky. *Teoria literatury*.

<sup>38</sup> Katz, Michael (1976). The literary ballad in early nineteenth-century Russian literature. London: Oxford university press. pp. 44.

over, or sentimentalized version of his own “Liudmila” (1808), which was stylistically much closer to “Lenore.” These two earlier works had a more limited, less inclusive set of aesthetic terms. Zhukovsky’s first adaptation had overwhelming elements of fear and mystery that tapped into the core of Burger’s model, which was predicated on the singular emotional excitement and pleasure of fear. Lexically, this was achieved by repeating certain eerie sounds (skripit, shataetsia, etc.) and epithets like strakh. The tension readers felt was never relieved or overshadowed by narrative sympathies. Instead, the miraculous and mysterious were to be drawn out to prepare the reader for a grotesque, gruesome, and tragic graveyard scene.<sup>39</sup> The unpleasant scenes of cursing god, the horrible unreality of reality, and the heroine’s inescapable death are also all done away with in Zhukovsky’s more ‘pleasant’ adaptation.

Zhukovsky championed the “dominance of the emotional over the rational” in his art, an aesthetic that Pushkin also espoused as part of his system in *Onegin*.<sup>40</sup> Tatiana is a new folkloric heroine that may borrow narodnyi elements from Svetlana, but she is similarly endowed with the softer aspects of the work meant to invoke emotional reactions of sympathy. The lexicon of “Svetlana” is markedly preromantic in its polished appearance, and there are almost no diminutives or colloquial elements that would be out of step with Karamzin’s middle-style. When compared to “Liudmila,” common sentimental epithets like *blednyi*, *unylyi*, and *zadumchivyi* are met with surprising frequency. Katz notes that those in Pushkin’s era who saw Svetlana as a quintessentially

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<sup>39</sup> See Zhukovsky’s most literal adaptation “Lenore” (1831) for a version of the work that maintains the most gruesome elements.

<sup>40</sup> See Semenko’s introduction to the complete collection of Zhukovsky’s works: Zhukovsky, Vasily (1980). V.A. Zhukovsky: Sochinenia v Trekh Tomakh. Moskva: Khudozhestvennaya Literatura. pp. 18

folkloric heroine were most overzealous in their characterization.<sup>41</sup> Zhukovsky had scarcely any previous models to adapt, so the work borrowed from several European traditions for its style. Its striking originality is therefore more located in the intermingling of the narodnyi and the foreign, not just the presence of the former. Svetlana found her home in a folkloric setting, but the character herself is characterized as a more general preromantic heroine. There is an analogous situation in Pushkin's own "Captive of the Caucasus," where the Circassian girl lives in an orientalized setting, but is considered more in line with a portrait of one of Pushkin's own milieu.

The combination of the mysterious and melancholy with upbeat, sentimental belief in a happy fate is a uniquely Zhukovskian contribution to the balladic genre. The sentimental requirement that acceptance of fate be the strongest spiritual signifier of a character also shows through strongly in "Svetlana." In his first adaptation, Zhukovsky's heroine dies a horrifying death exactly because she curses God's decision to separate her from her beloved. "Svetlana" does not show the heroine cursing her fate, replacing it instead with a folkloric divination scene that goes on to serve as the main model for Tatiana in chapter five of *Onegin*.<sup>42</sup> When Svetlana suddenly awakens at the end unharmed, she presumably accepts the narrator's entreaties to trust in Providence and its ability to bring happiness to those that do:

Вот баллады толк моей:  
«Лучшей друг нам в жизни сей  
Вера в провиденье.  
Благ зиждителя закон:

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<sup>41</sup> Katz. The literary ballad. pp.67

<sup>42</sup> Ryan, W.; Wigzell, Faith (1992). Gullible Girls and Dreadful Dreams: Zhukovskii, Pushkin and Popular Divination. *The Slavonic and East European Review*, Vol. 70, No. 4. pp. 647-669. The authors of this work trace in detail what they claim to be a near-exhaustive list of intertextual allusions between Zhukovsky, Pushkin, and beyond as concerns scenes of divination in *Onegin*.

Здесь несчастье - лживый сон;  
Счастье - пробужденье».<sup>43</sup>

Zhukovsky opted for such a resolution because the ballad was originally intended as a birthday gift for a beloved niece, but this biographical explanation has little merit for the current study. By putting the action in a dream sequence, the narrator provides a private emotional experience for the reader. This is crucial for the camaraderie a sentimental author seeks to establish between themselves, their reader, and their clone-characters.

#### Direct and Indirect Allusions to “Svetlana”

Pushkin played with the possibilities of this combination of the uncanny with the sympathetic throughout *Onegin* in both direct references and indirect intertextual allusions. The name of the work is quoted three times, each time through a different voice. Tatiana is of course characterized as a folkloric character by these references, but they also emphasize the narrator and his play with the model. Lensky mentions Svetlana’s name first in (3:5) when he describes Tatiana to Eugene after their first acquaintance: (—Да та, которая, грустна // И молчалива, как Светлана, // Воплья и села у окна. —). The function of this reference is to shade Lensky as preromantic and reinforce the imagery taken directly from the ballad that Author alluded to without reference in chapter two.<sup>44</sup> It also offers a glimpse into the Russian literary sources of the *Onegin* world with which Pushkin was himself artistically aligned. Being more closely

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<sup>43</sup> All citations from the original are taken from: Zhukovsky, 1980.

<sup>44</sup> We recall that in (2:26) there is emphasis on Tatiana’s zadumchivost’, as well as her love for winter and gazing at the moon.

associated with European poets, Lensky could have used another romantic author, perhaps Schiller (which he reads the night before the duel), as a comparison, but instead shades her with the ‘Russian’ folkloric element that modern readers were fascinated with. Lensky, not to mention Pushkin, as a reading member of Russian aristocratic society, had other models available for the purpose of a folkloric reference, but nonetheless chose “Svetlana.” He ignored Pavel Katenin’s 1816 “Olga,” which was also an adaptation of “Lenore” that strove to include narodnyi elements. As a result, Pushkin’s preference for Zhukovsky over Katenin as an authoritative representative of the Russian-English balladic adaptation appears even before he writes “Zhenikh” in 1825.<sup>45</sup>

Because Lensky cites the work directly along with references to epithets applied to its heroine, he also effectively marks the disconnect in the novel between what the characters read themselves, and how they are characterized through reading. Even though no one reads Liza, some of its formal aspects still leak into the work and complicate granting Tatiana complete autonomy as the master of her own reality. The reader doesn’t know that Tatiana ever reads “Svetlana,” but it is clear that it exists in the characters’ world. Lensky’s comment echoes Author’s own description in chapter two, bearing the tactic of romanticizing her so he doesn’t have to. Putting her first intertextual reference through Lensky’s character disperses the responsibility Author might otherwise have to bear for aligning his own tastes with those of Zhukovsky’s.

The next mention of “Svetlana” is in the epilogue to chapter five, and much ink has been spilled over trying to discover the meaning of Tatiana’s dream, its most obvious

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<sup>45</sup> The feud between Pushkin, Zhukovsky, and Katenin centered on how to properly adapt Burger’s “Lenore,” and is a main focus in chapter three of this study.

referent. Olga Hasty's summarization details the various attempts at uncovering the dreams meaning:

The dream ensures a rich yield for any number of textual strategies, and it is precisely the polyvalence of Tatiana's nocturnal vision rather than any particular meaning that might be coaxed from it that is crucial here. Not a specific message, but the potential of the dream to signify luxuriates before the reader, for Pushkin has crafted a fruitful confusion of possibilities that defies all attempts at reduction.<sup>46</sup>

It is not my goal to reduce Svetlana's dream to a mere intertextual association with Zhukovsky's work, as doing so is firstly impossible, and secondly would compromise the rich semantic meaning Pushkin endowed it with. As a parody of "Svetlana" and her dream sequence, Pushkin took artistic license to break from the model it was built on in order to create something new. But this isn't to say that "Svetlana" isn't an understandably popular reference for discussions of the dream. Hasty herself even maps some allusions, but avoids crediting "Svetlana's" experience as definitively crucial for ascribing any certain meaning. Instead of recounting the various interpretations, I will offer only my own consideration that the dream is significant for bringing more than just folkloric elements of "Svetlana" into *Onegin*. The two mentions of Zhukovsky's work in this chapter frame how the dream deprives the reader of the final reveal (the ending) upon which "Lenore" adaptations are founded. In doing so, it creates anticipation for a return to the structure in the final lines that will make up for this frustrated expectation.

The lines quoted directly from "Svetlana" are taken from the narrator's final sympathetic interjection in the epilogue: (О, не знай сих страшных снов // Ты, моя Светлана!). While the significance of Tatiana's placement in a folkloric atmosphere

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<sup>46</sup> Hasty. Pushkin's Tatiana. pp.146. She sums up the expansive critical treatment of this passage in *Onegin* in the following pages.

shouldn't be eliminated from the discussion, it should be noted that these particular lines are not in themselves referencing the ballad's narodnyi features. In fact, a longer quotation from the work in which Svetlana is described in her folkloric setting was the original epigraph, but was eventually discarded.<sup>47</sup> Therefore, part of the lines' function in *Onegin* may be seen as a parody of how the narrator deals with structuring his story. The lasting significance of the revelation in "Svetlana" that her beloved is dead is undermined by the sentimentalized intrusions that resolve the conflict on the narrative level in the epilogue. It's the "Svetlana" narrator that is brought in as a character to *Onegin* from this quote, not necessarily just Svetlana, for by drawing attention to the narrative aspect readers are encouraged to look beyond just thematic connections between the heroines. Readers are likewise tasked with following how Author's own behavior coincides and breaks with Zhukovsky's balladic tradition.

Hasty's treatment of the "Svetlana" references and allusions is an example of the work's typical restriction to a pool of traits Tatiana absorbs from her predecessor. In her introduction, she credits Zhukovsky's influence as limited to just the folkloric and erotic energy Tatiana borrows from her heroine.<sup>48</sup> Author's utilization of his power on the narrative level beyond the ironically botched prediction to manipulate narrative elements in conjunction with her character is not assigned any meaning. When Hasty compares the two works directly after the chapter five epigraph, she again fails to consider the

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<sup>47</sup> The excised portion is a selection from the second stanza of "Svetlana": (Тускло светится луна // В сумраке тумана - // Молчалива и грустна // Милая Светлана. // "Что, подруженька, с тобой? // Вымолви словечко; // Слушай песни круговой; // Выйнь себе колечко.). The portion in quotes here is from one of Svetlana's sisters, not the narrator.

<sup>48</sup> Hasty. Pushkin's Tatiana. pp. 8. "He aligns her with the dual tradition of Russian folklore and the European novels of sentiment that exert a formative influence on her, endowing her with the erotic energy of her preromantic literary predecessor, Burger's Lenore (via Zhukovskii's translation)."

comment from a narrative perspective: “The similarity between Svetlana and Tatiana is further reinforced by Pushkin’s choice of two lines from Zhukovsky’s work for the epigraph to chapter 5...”<sup>49</sup> Her final significant comparison involves her argument that in preromantic works female eros leads to death, which is indeed a crucial element of Zhukovsky’s adaptations of “Lenore.” However, in two direct comments on the epigraph coupled with a number of thematic connections, Hasty doesn’t address comparisons between the formal structure and the narrator’s role as a character beyond the ironic prophecy. Her focus on this particular intertextual element sometimes even seems hurried. Towards the end she conflates Zhukovsky’s cycle of adaptations with the original with the phrase “Burger/Zhukovskii’s Lenore,” as if the changes in Zhukovsky’s innovative parody are insignificant.

Hasty’s analysis is lacking in this respect, but not without reason. A significant portion of her argument relies on a portrayal of Tatiana as outside of Author’s clutches:

Yet Tatiana herself is innocent of the larger literary context that threatens to absorb her defining features. Her singularity derives largely from the fact that her behavior - even when it coincides with preexisting models - is never convention-driven, but always individual, motivated from within.<sup>50</sup>

While this stance is beneficial for exploring the unprecedented amount of autonomy Tatiana has in the work, we must move in a different direction when analyzing what is arguably her most essential intertextual element. Tatiana always acts as an individual in relation to the plot of her predecessors, but as literary material she is utilized by Pushkin in part to maintain continuity with the preromantic system, a stance that was under fire by

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<sup>49</sup> “ “ pp. 42.

<sup>50</sup> “ “ pp. 32.

those seeking more ‘purpose’ in literary works. For example, in (5:10) Author exclaims (Но стало страшно вдруг Татьяне... // И я — при мысли о Светлане // Мне стало страшно — так и быть...). This is the second time Tatiana is linked to Svetlana through rhyme, and it backs her into a thematic corner. I believe Hasty is correct in her observation that Tatiana has to battle against the literary context that threatens to absorb her, but it is impossible to ignore Author’s own stance in relation to the work. This reference is a narrative interjection that jerks the reader rapidly between the complementary Author-character settings mid-stanza. It doesn’t just characterize Tatiana as a folkloric heroine, it reminds the reader with equal strength of the unique aesthetic merit of Zhukovsky’s ballad. Not only should we be scared at the anticipation of the climax, but we should be watching narrators as characters, imitating and reflecting the emotions we are instructed to. This reference is more of an invitation to be attuned to the aesthetics of fear that the ballad accomplishes through the narrator’s own careful construction.

Just like he did with Liza, Author wants to privilege preromantic narrative techniques like apostrophes and interjections as a way to draw Tatiana into his play with their content. Author is, nonetheless, not the sole creator of Tatiana’s world in *Onegin*. He is there as sort of an intermediary between herself and the literary/aesthetic world that threatens to absorb her. Where we might think that he will act like Zhukovsky’s narrator because of the epigraph, he won’t, the irony of which mocks the idea of his own autonomy. But he also excises the trope of the bride’s death, following in “Svetlana’s” footsteps and adhering to its most notable deviation. This begs the question of what the reason might be for Author’s fear as he thinks of “Svetlana”. I believe that this reference,

in addition to the ironic prophetic element that becomes known in chapter six after Eugene slays Lensky, emphasizes the “Lenore”-cycle plot development that culminates in a singular revelation and relies on the pure emotional reaction of seeing something terrifying. The phrase *tak i byt'* might be tacked on the end of Author's interjection to mock how overdone the emotional layer of “Svetlana” is, but it might also represent the requirement of looking to the narrator for answers. If everything ‘is as it should be’, then it is so by the design of the creator in coherence with tradition.

### The Final Exposure

So where is this final moment in *Onegin*? If we consider the most logical place, the dream itself, it slips away because Eugene is in a way “unrevealable” from the start. In the dream he fulfills the typical balladic requirement that the hero is exposed as a murderer, but there is nothing about his character that implies there is something underlying him that is capable of being exposed. He kills Lensky, but it's not because his true identity is that of a murderer, or that through him Tatiana is being punished for her erotic desires. He kills Lensky because of his societal posturing and his desire to fulfill the role deemed fit by wherever he may find himself. Eugene remains painfully loyal to his Byronic origins and acts only according to the rules of the circumstances he is in. Eugene might even be considered a different person every time he is shown, whether it be in a duel with Lensky or wandering abroad; he does nothing more but shuffle his masks. This is why the work returns to this structure of ‘revelation’ in chapter eight and parodies the fear that it is normally associated with.

*Onegin* is too varied and expansive a work to be considered as merely a protracted ballad, but the elements in chapter eight lend themselves well to analysis through this lens. In the midst of a lyrical introduction of the important stages in his creative development, Author himself references the significance “Lenore” had for him (8:4): (Она Ленорой, при луне, // Со мной скакала на коне!). Lotman considers this reference to be neutral, and hints that “Lenore” was cited instead of its many adaptations in order to avoid dredging up the polemic over ballads that began around Zhukovsky and Katenin’s respective works.<sup>51</sup> Most educated men of letters of the time were familiar with Burger’s work through a French analysis, so it’s possible that Pushkin wanted to maintain ambiguity out of appreciation for the work’s original features. The claim to neutrality is nonetheless unconvincing because of the additional comment that his muse rode horseback with him under the moon. Reaching back to the language Pushkin used in 1833 to defend Zhukovsky’s supremacy in writing ballads, we note that Pushkin preferred the картин, озарённых летнею луною, to the rough lexicon and uninspiring settings of Katenin’s “Olga”.<sup>52</sup>

What’s also intriguing about this reference is that Pushkin’s muse, concealed under the mask of his English predecessor, is significant to intertextuality on the narrative level. The qualification that the muse rode so mnoi situates Author himself in the role of the corpse-groom in the “Lenore” cycle. By placing himself in the tale, he aligns himself with the dead, perhaps an egotistical praise for their value in being able to jolt the reader into aesthetic ecstasy. From this perspective it is impossible to consider the representation

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<sup>51</sup> Lotman. Pushkin. pp. 709. “П дал обобщенную романтическую формулу и уклонился от того, чтобы присоединиться к конкретным интерпритациям ее в русской поэзии.”

<sup>52</sup> See Pushkin’s 1833 article: “Сочинения и переводы в стихах Павла Катенина”

of the undead hero deplorable or a valorization of the forces of evil, for in the romantic system these characters are just literary material, relieved of any dubious requirements of having realistic or intellectual features. The muse's development in the proceeding stanzas delineates Pushkin's own development beyond this understanding of art, but as we've already seen in chapter one of this study, he is unlikely to do away with old models entirely. Like Tatiana, Author takes material from disparate places and marries it together to create new creative possibilities. Bringing the core of Zhukovsky's ballads into chapter eight along with the culmination of all the other elements of the novel in verse is not surprising. After the action returns to Eugene in (8:7), other shades of Zhukovsky's work combine to result in the final revelation that chapter five failed to deliver.

Eugene's character, although it takes a minute for Author to rub his eyes and bring him into focus, is recognized immediately: (Кто он таков? Ужель Евгений? // Ужели он?.. Так, точно он. // — Давно ли к нам он занесен?). Despite the masks he uses in society having a concealing effect, to Author and his audience there can be no question (*tak tochno on*) as to the man they represent. Unlike the undead groom in "Svetlana," the revelation chapter eight builds to must take place in a different character, one that is flexible enough to defy a singular characterization. To increase anticipation of this event, Author makes several interjections to add tinges of mystery to the atmosphere in order to produce a giddy, fearful effect when considered in the context of "Lenore" established in (8:4). In (8:20) Author questions the reality of events in a setting where Tatiana is all of a sudden inaccessible to Eugene: (Та девочка... иль это сон?..). In the very next stanza he reinforces this ambiguous environment by again questioning reality: (Что с ним? в каком он странном сне!). Tatiana's strange behavior is being considered

through Eugene's eyes. His incredulousness takes on additional meaning when considering that Author uses a typical sentimental interjection (*chto c nim?*) to create the illusion that he too is reading right along with the reader, and is sharing their same suspicions.

Eugene is overwhelmed with being unable to perceive traces of the former Tatiana. In (8:33) Tatiana is covered with *kreshchenskii kholod*, which hearkens back to both the time of year chapter five is set in with Tatiana's divination, and also the first line of "Svetlana": (У! как теперь окружена // Крещенским холодом она!) and (Раз в крещенский вечерок // Девушки гадали). But Eugene is incapable of seeing the preromantic shades of "Svetlana" that traverse time as viable material for her continuing characterization. This quote is indeed difficult to reconcile, as the starina implications of *kreshchenskii* are offset by the comment that it is only teper' that Tatiana is seen as such. The old fades into the new without breaking continuity, and yet remains imperceptible to Eugene. At the end of the stanza, Eugene is still unable to reconcile her dual characterization as at once sentimental and coldly rational with the girl he read nastavlenii to in the garden: (Где, где смятенье, состраданье? // Где пятна слез?.. Их нет, их нет! // На сем лице лишь гнева след...).

The final revelation of secrets that comes in (8:40) is carried out with strong allusions to "Svetlana." Placed side by side, the similarities in imagery and atmosphere come into relief:

<p>(8:39)</p> <p>...</p> <p>Куда по нем свой быстрый бег</p>	<p>Вот примчалися... и вмиг Из очей пропали: Кони, сани и жених Будто не бывали. Однокая, впотьмах, Брошена от друга, В страшных девица местах; Вокруг метель и выюга. Возвратиться — следу нет... Виден ей в избушке свет: Вот перекрестилась; В дверь с молитвою стучит... <b>Дверь шатнулася... скрыпит...</b> <b>Тихо растворилась.</b></p>
<p>(8.40)</p> <p>Стремит Онегин? Вы заране Уж угадали; точно так: Примчался к ней, к своей Татьяне Мой неисправленный чудак. <b>Идет, на мертвеца похожий.</b> <b>Нет ни одной души в прихожей.</b> <b>Он в залу; дальше: никого.</b> <b>Дверь отворил он. Что ж его</b> <b>С такою силой поражает?</b> Княгиня перед ним, одна Сидит, не убрана, бледна, Письмо какое-то читает И тихо слезы льет рекой, Опершись на руку щекой.</p>	<p><b>Что ж?.. В избушке гроб; накрыт Белою запоной;</b> .....</p> <p>Смерть изобразилась... Глядь, Светлана... о творец! Милый друг ее — мертвец! Ах!.. и пробудилась.</p>

The dramatic tension is much more palpable in “Svetlana,” but there are echoes in the development of events. The hero/heroine arrives (*primchatsia*), action is somehow delayed into the passage of the secret area, and the narrator interjects with a question in anticipation of the reveal: (Нет ни одной души в прихожей. // Он в залу; дальше: никого. // Дверь отворил он. Что ж его // С такою силой поражает?). One couldn’t consider the atmosphere of *Onegin* frightening in the same way the repetition of sounds in “Svetlana” produce the effect, but there is a similar discomfort created by Eugene being unable to recognize Tatiana. Combined with similarities in phraseology, we might assume that Pushkin structured this scene according to balladic principles of the “Lenore” cycle. But as Pushkin is wont to do, the character roles are completely reimagined. The

heroine in “Svetlana” becomes the hero, and Tatiana is placed like the groom, out of sight and waiting concealed in some isolated space. Tatiana’s similarity with the hero of “Svetlana” is all the more significant when considering that this stanza is directly before allusions to Liza suggest a similar gender parody. Eugene might also be considered like Svetlana in that he has lost the object of his affection, and his unexplainably powerful emotions of love (taken literally) draw him closer to the preromantic system than his more controlled behavior in past chapters allowed for. He follows her like Svetlana does her own beloved, not on horseback together to a grave, but to his metaphorical death, as the novel ends with him still on his knees. After entering the house like Svetlana, the last lines of the stanza offer what promises to be the horrifying secret: the true form of the beloved (dead and unholy in “Svetlana”), and a lasting reservoir of the preromantic system in Tatiana.

Vladimir Nabokov noted the peculiar atmosphere this stanza creates in his notes to the English translation:

There is a dreamlike atmosphere about all this. As in a fairytale, 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.<sup>53</sup>

Recalling the *skazochnaia* element Tomashevsky mentions in his definition of the ballad, I believe his observations maintain the essence Pushkin was striving for in this vital scene. Instead of an unhappy and gruesome death, we get a picture that is mysteriously dreamlike and enchanted, more relevant to the Romantic aspect of the concept of “Romantic ballads.” Author’s interjected question reminds the reader that he is just telling a story, that his world is created and that he chooses to reveal information in

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<sup>53</sup> Nabokov. *Commentary*. pp. 234.

accordance with his aesthetic goals. What Eugene discovers is the old Tatiana, the sentimental Tatiana that Author stressed Eugene had been unable to see. Only now is it finally confirmed that Tatiana was not only receiving his letters, but that they caused in her extreme emotional distress. Knowing where to look and what to see is masterfully guided by Author's presentation and intrusion into the story. The release of tension comes from the acknowledgement that Tatiana can rise from the dead too; not literally like the groom in "Svetlana," but figuratively in the sense that she can resurrect what was lost in Lensky. Tatiana's integrated old/new dichotomy finds natural expression in the resolution to the story, which Tatiana provides in her final speech with a conversational realism instead of sentimentally like the narrator in "Svetlana."

Escaping comparison between Svetlana and herself, Tatiana may be best understood here as the only character in *Onegin* capable of having the multidimensionality that allows her to be the subject of a revelation. Her resistance to static characterization challenges even a consideration of her as an essentially female character when considered intertextually. The structure that in previous models privileges the emotional over the rational is utilized to expose the emotional elements of Tatiana as occupying a significant role next to her rational ones. But this realization takes place in a dramatic environment that stands as it were outside the bounds of pure aesthetic enjoyment. Perhaps because of this disconnect, Pushkin wrote "Domik v Kolomne", one of his most enigmatic and playfully enjoyable substantial works. Its completion almost immediately after chapter eight might imply that Pushkin was looking for a way to emphasize the ambivalence of his heroine in a comedic format that did not need to mask the preference for one system over another.

## CHAPTER IV

### “LENORE” AND THE NEW MUSE OF “DOMIK V KOLOMNE”

Pushkin completed chapter eight of *Onegin* in September, 1830 while receiving significant negative attention for what his contemporaries termed “literary aristocratism.” With the opening of Literaturnaia Gazeta, the first major publication of the young archaists since the December revolt, there was a reinvigorated call for the meaning of a literary work to reach beyond the purely aesthetic and into something more socially or politically valuable. These types of works were typically defined stylistically by a more colloquial, prostonarodnyi lexicon. Yurii Lotman observes that Pushkin adopted these rougher elements and intertwined them with the more idealized, polished style of the Karamzinian school as early as “Ruslan and Liudmila,” but they never came to define his work.<sup>54</sup> By 1830 Pushkin was reaching beyond these tired distinctions and into new prosaic forms of language, new landscapes and characters, and a general atmosphere of anti-Romantic sentiment and parody. In the midst of the critical interest in Pushkin’s ironic play with older forms during this Boldino period, the parody of the “Lenore”-cycle folkloric heroine and how it is transposed onto both *Onegin* and “Domik v Kolomne” remains largely unacknowledged. I suggest that parodying these adapted English ballads has particular significance for Pushkin beyond their saliency in “Metel” from *Povesti Belkina*. Echoes of balladic elements between *Onegin* and “Domik” can inform our

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<sup>54</sup> Lotman. *Pushkin*. pp.144. Despite Pushkin’s adoption of elements that Karamzin might have considered vulgar, Pushkin was never accepted by the archaists because it was never enough. He united various styles and had them live together in his work rather than strictly obeyed the aesthetic demands of any one literary circle.

understanding of Pushkin's own artistic development through his depiction of the Russian muse, and also his response to Pavel Katenin and his camp's persistent criticism.

### “Svetlana” and Marya in “Metel”

Zhukovsky's ballad and its potential for parody undoubtedly captivated Pushkin in October, 1830 when he wrote “Metel’.” Most recently, David Bethea has argued that the nine lines taken from “Svetlana” to serve as the epigraph to the short story are meant to “lay bare the conspicuous dovetailing of coincidences so typical of the prose of the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries.”<sup>55</sup> He also notices a parody of the Gothic theme “Lenore” popularized because of its artificial transposition from poetry to prose, dulling the fear it would otherwise invoke. Taken as a whole, his argument is that this intertextual element ironically shows that the Zhukovskian *vera v providenii* (and its grounding within the preromantic system) doesn't lead characters to happiness. The church Zhukovsky's heroes pass becomes the church Vladimir cannot find, and in which Marya and Burmin are wed. We might also note that Boris Eikhenbaum shares a similar view, and maintains that the parody lies in the fact that Marya is rewarded with a replacement groom instead of the evil undead.<sup>56</sup> Discussing the type of irony that alters the siuzhet instead of the fabula is the preferred method for approaching this problem. We can also go one step further to point out the parodic role of the dismantling of the

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<sup>55</sup> Bethea, David; Davydov, Sergei (1981). Pushkin's Saturnine Cupid: The Poetics of Parody in the Tales of Belkin. PLMA, Vol. 96, No. 1. pp.12.

<sup>56</sup> Eikhenbaum, Boris (1987). O Literature, Boldinskie Pobasenki Pushkina (pp. 343-352) Moskva: Sovremennyyi Pisatel'.

“conceal - reveal” trope, which sits at the core of “Lenore” and Zhukovsky’s plot.

Pushkin presumably sought not just to parody the thematic elements “Svetlana” brings into the text, but also the banal effect produced when this formal aspect of the ballad is transposed artificially into prose.

The second half of “Metel” is structured on the anticipation of a final exposure of the hero’s true identity. This is not to say that the means with which the plot is developed to this critical point is a similar reflection of the ballad (sounds, dreams, a horse ride, etc.). The final reveal is displaced to the end, after the mysterious, ‘wintry’ elements of “Svetlana” have all been applied, much like in *Onegin* after Tatiana’s dream. Differences in the realization of this structure is undoubtedly a result of Pushkin’s free adaptation. Nevertheless, the secret of who Marya married that day is withheld from the reader and the heroine until the last pages of the work. It serves as the climax, after which the story ends abruptly with an ellipses. But the description Burmin offers of his experiences is too lengthy and conspicuous to misinterpret. The shocking effects of the reveal are mitigated by a parody of the obvious conclusions of dramas involving dovetailed situations. The true identity of the groom is held in secret like in “Svetlana,” but in a much more literal use of the term. The groom’s state of being (evil or good) becomes irrelevant to the mystery of who in fact the groom actually is. When the truth finally comes out, it is torn from the typical balladic environment of fear and excitement, and the length with which Burmin’s speech is drawn out is simply incapable of evoking the powerful reaction it does in narrative poetry. The aesthetic effect of seeing something horrible that the ballads were predicated on is minimized to nothing, replaced with an unsatisfied, ironic feeling that even though the tale couldn’t have ended any other way, it fails from an emotional

perspective when compared to its predecessor. The satisfaction of the work is derived from viewing its model ironically.

### The Ballad Question

So what was so crucial about Burger's work that it continues through the 1820's as a recurring point of interest for Pushkin? The answer might lie in the polemically divided literary environment it belongs to. In 1816, Pavel Katenin wrote "Olga," an adaptation of "Lenore" that was meant partially as a response to Zhukovsky's 1808 "Liudmila." Both poets were using different techniques to create a Russian folkloric heroine based on Burger's ballad, considered at the time to be one of the pinnacles of German Romanticism. There is evidence to suggest that Katenin was trying to make the new genre of the ballad 'Russian' in the Orthodox sense. He was critical of the idealized language of Zhukovsky, and claimed that it was unbefitting for a heroine who should be punished for cursing God. Alternately, Zhukovsky applied an idealized middle-style for depicting his heroine that reflected Karamzin's linguistic reforms and was in line with current perceptions of 'good taste'. This discrepancy of vision deepened the rift between the Karamzinian school and the young archaists, and created two distinct directions for the Russian ballad. In 1816-7 there were a series of articles written by poets such as Wilhelm Küchelbecker and Aleksandr Griboedov defending Katenin, which simultaneously took a negative stance against Piotr Viazemsky and Nikolai Gnedich and their support for Zhukovsky.<sup>57</sup> A decade later in 1825, Pushkin took interest in this

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<sup>57</sup> Gavrilova. *Literaturnye Sviazi Ballady*. pp. 2.

discussion by publishing “Zhenikh,” a piece that Tomashevsky and Lotman maintain is also a free adaptation of “Lenore.”<sup>58</sup> In it can be found lexical elements reminiscent of both “Olga” and “Liudmila,” albeit with a leaning towards the latter.

Lotman and his tendency to see Pushkin’s style as a development towards realism naturally finds the *prostorechii* in “Zhenikh” indicative of exactly that. Tomashevsky takes a more neutral stance, and maintains that preromantic diction was also a main element.<sup>59</sup> He justifiably observes that by 1825 the binary strain of ballad adaptations coalesces into a singularity in Pushkin’s work, where he engages in “обработку фольклора в соответствии с законами романтизма.”<sup>60</sup> In 1827, Pushkin himself articulated the problem as he saw it in “On the poetic word:”

Мы не только еще не подумали приблизить поэтический слог к благородной простоте, но и прозе стараемся придать напыщенность, поэзию же, освобожденную от условных украшений стихотворства, мы еще не понимаем. Опыты Жуковского и Катенина были неудачны, не сами по себе, но по действию, ими произведенному. Мало, весьма мало людей поняли достоинство переводов из Гебеля, и еще менее силу и оригинальность Убийцы, баллады, которая может стать на ряду с лучшими произведениями Бюргера и Саувея. Обращение убийцы к месяцу, единственному свидетелю его злодеяния:

Гляди, гляди, плешивый —  
стих, исполненный истинно трагической силы, показался только смешон людям легкомысленным, не рассуждающим, что иногда ужас выражается смехом.<sup>61</sup>

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<sup>58</sup> Because Pushkin only gave the title ballada to two of his works, researchers have had to defend their own classifications. For a consideration of formal parallels between “Zhenikh” and its balladic predecessors, see Yurii Lotman “Из творческой истории баллады Пушкина «Жених»” (1941)

<sup>59</sup> Tynianov, Yurii (1969). Pushkin i ego Sovremenniki. Arkhaisty i Pushkin. Moskva: Nauka. “И в балладах своих он идет за Катениным, а не за Жуковским.”

<sup>60</sup> Gavrilova. Literaturnye Sviazi Ballady. pp. 3.

<sup>61</sup> See Pushkin’s 1828 article: “О поэтическом слоге”

Pushkin seems to advocate for the marriage of both ‘vulgar’ and ‘artistic’ speech, and sees no value in letting affiliations to a single group dictate aesthetic choices. Zhukovsky, who represented the ‘artistic’ aspect, and Katenin, who represented the ‘vulgar’ aspect, are lightly chastised for their role in creating a rift that led to sharp disagreements.

Therefore in 1827, Pushkin considered the answer to the ballad question of how to adapt “Lenore” in Russian to lie somewhere in between the two dominant schools.

The first two chapters of this study accentuate Pushkin’s valuation in *Onegin* of the idealized style Zhukovsky’s heroine was characterized with. This is justifiable to an extent because even in 1833 he was still singing Zhukovsky’s praises over Katenin’s, but they are, admittedly, less emphatic. Similar to the quote above, Pushkin recognizes the merit of Zhukovsky’s stylistics, but still defends Katenin’s work at the hands of Zhukovsky’s supporters and their unjustified criticism in the 1810’s.<sup>62</sup> When considered from the perspective of his attraction to parody in 1830, we must see him addressing the problem by integrating styles, not dividing them in his own work. As Bethea put it in relation to *Povesti Belkina*: “instead of slavishly imitating existing literary models (as his contemporaries believed), [Pushkin] follows them only so far, whereupon he regularly frustrates them, inserting unexpected and often comic denouements.”<sup>63</sup> Pushkin’s participation in the ballad argument cannot be reduced to supporting just one poet and

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<sup>62</sup> See Pushkin’s 1833 article: “Сочинения и переводы в стихах Павла Катенина”. “Первым замечательным произведением г-на Катенина был перевод славной Биргеровой Леноры. Она была уже известна у нас по неверному и прелестному подражанию Жуковского, который сделал из неё то же, что Байрон в своём «Манфреде» сделал из «Фауста: ослабил дух и формы своего образца. Катенин это чувствовал и вздумал показать нам «Ленору» в энергической красоте её первобытного создания; он написал Ольгу. Но сия простота и даже грубость выражений, сия сволочь, заменившая воздушную цепь теней, сия виселица вместо сельских картин, озарённых летнею луною, неприятно поразили непривычных читателей, и Гнедич взялся высказать их мнения в статье, коей несправедливость обличена была Грибоедовым.”

<sup>63</sup> Bethea, David; Davydov, Sergei. Pushkin's Saturnine Cupid. pp. 9.

strengthening the divide in a polemic he viewed as unproductive and unfair, because no single traditional model was safe from his pen as his work matured. His comedic narrative poem “Domik v Kolomne”, for instance, has allusions to the literary value of both Zhukovsky and Katenin’s work. Ostensibly a mock-epic, this work is a concentrated web of competing intertextual elements and their parodies of previous models, but also a direct response to demands from Katenin to write using certain formal and lexical features. Brian Horowitz was the first to situate “Domik” within the critical narrative of Pushkin’s new path to prose, and the curious new muse it creates parodies tired models where *Onegin* couldn’t.<sup>64</sup>

### “Domik” and the Katenin Polemic Expanded

“Domik” has eluded scholars since it was first published in 1833 because of its metatextuality, playful narrator, and conscious obfuscation of meaning. It’s constructed from two distinct sections, the first being an 8-stanza metapoetic introduction that deals unmistakably with Katenin’s formal demands, and a much longer and less understood narrative portion about a sexual ruse in the (then) outskirts of St. Petersburg. Michael Finke claims to unite the two in his analysis, and provides a detailed description of the polemic between Pushkin and Katenin as a singular frame for understanding the work. In the first section, Pushkin writes biographically in the Byronic sense, even egging his audience on in an excised stanza by emphasizing the ‘easily decipherable’ mask his

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<sup>64</sup> Horowitz, Brian (2013). Pushkin’s Shifting Poetics: Deceptive Subtexts in “Domik v Kolomne”. *Pushkin Review*, Vol. 8. pp. 46. “Like Eichenbaum, I consider generic and poetic deformations in “Domik” as indicative of a new aesthetics of the 1830s.”

narrator dons.<sup>65</sup> By making the work comedic, Pushkin could poke fun at the young archaists' criticism that claimed his work lacked goals (*tseli*), avoided contemporary events like war with the Turks, and avoided moralizing elements. From a formal perspective, Pushkin was responding to Katenin's demand in 1822 that the *ottava rima*, a classical form used to translate from Italian, should become the meter for epics written in Russian. The first stanza of the poem is a noteworthy snapshot of the formal complaints:

Четырестопный ямб мне надоел:  
Им пишет всякий. Мальчикам в забаву  
Пора б его оставить. Я хотел  
Давным-давно приняться за октаву.  
А в самом деле: я бы совладел  
С тройным созвучием. Пущусь на славу!  
Ведь рифмы запросто со мной живут;  
Две придут сами, третью приведут.

Pushkin takes Katenin's requirements of a double rhyme one step further here, opting instead for the more challenging triple rhyme. Other elements of the Katenin parody involve putting the caesura on the second iamb, underutilizing verbs for rhymes, and insulting the classical muses by referring to them as old and unattractive. This metapoetic section was originally much longer and more explicit, but large sections were excised before publication in 1833 because some of the biographical elements were no longer relevant to the current literary scene.

Pushkin finally decided in 1830 to engage Katenin's comment from 1822 because Katenin challenged Pushkin directly in 1828 with his allegorical poem "Staraya Byl". Hidden in it is a series of challenges understood broadly as those by the young archaists

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<sup>65</sup> Excised from the introductory stanzas: (Когда б никто меня под легкой маской // (По крайней мере долго) не узнал!)

directed at Pushkin. Finke reads “Domik” as Pushkin’s response, and “Staraja Byl” as the key to understanding the Aesopic content of the narrative section. It’s understood as the work’s main intertext because it creates a bridge from the metapoetic introduction to the enigmatic anecdote. But this is far from the only intertextual element that critical discussion of the work has addressed. Some other examples include Vasily Maikov’s “Elisei,” Byron’s “Beppo” and “Don Juan,” and several works from the medieval French fabliau genre.<sup>66</sup> The sheer volume of potential intertexts accentuates the narrator’s conscious obfuscation of meaning and play with reader expectations. It’s irreducible to any singular text much like *Onegin*, but in turn shares with it its own connections.

On the basis of Tynianov’s research on Pushkin, Gasparov and Smirin list a series of direct and indirect allusions to *Onegin* in “Domik.” They expand and clarify Tynianov’s assertion that “Domik” is a self-parody (*samoparodia*) of the narrative structure of *Onegin*. Because *Onegin* was not clearly planned from start to finish, Pushkin’s main goals for the work changed repeatedly, moving away from what they saw in chapter one as an attempt to parody a Byronic structure. To their minds, Pushkin wanted to include extensive digressions coupled with a minimal plot, but the endeavor got off track as the plot became more essential to the Eugene-Tatiana drama. As Pushkin came under fire about his aesthetic choices for the reasons discussed above, they maintain, he decided in defense in 1830 to fully realize his original goal of making a meaningless plot in “Domik.” In fact, the work was originally framed as just a fragment of a digression, further distancing it from any united, meaningful whole. As it concerns thematic allusions, they make special note of the similarity of the muse: (He вертись,

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<sup>66</sup> For a complete list of intertextual elements, see: Horowitz. Pushkin’s Shifting Poetics. pp. 49-56.

резвушка), the narrator's call to his muse directly before the narrative portion of “Domik” begins, hearkens back to Author’s comment (я музу резвую привел (8.3)) in *Onegin*.<sup>67</sup> Author’s early muse who rode alongside him like Lenore returns, but begs to be read ironically given that Tatiana eventually usurped this position when she faded into Author’s muse at the beginning of chapter eight.

With the connection between the two works as it concerns this character, and the obvious intertextuality it shares with Svetlana and Tatiana, can we read the “Lenore” cycle as also relevant to both? This brings us back to the question of how Pushkin adapted “Lenore” in “Zhenikh” (1825) with the help of both Zhukovsky and Katenin. Written in exile in Mikhailovskoe as part of a series of works in the “folk style,” the heroine of Pushkin’s work, Natasha, is actually an homage to the folkloric heroine of an earlier Katenin ballad, “Natasha” (1814). This work enjoyed lasting success even beside Zhukovsky’s more popular ballads because of its depiction of a Russian folk heroine. Despite his attempt to integrate and adapt Katenin’s lexicon and heroine, Pushkin still drew criticism from an offended Katenin, who in 1827 in a comment about “Zhenikh” states: “Наташа Пушкина очень дурна и вся сшита из лоскутьев”. Given what some may call a completely unjustifiable insult, I believe that Pushkin eventually hid his response in “Domik.” I will address more below how Parasha parodies this comment and comically usurps the throne as a new type of anti-hero and muse.

A crucial piece of evidence in support of the theory that Pushkin engages the “Lenore” cycle is that the narrative section of “Domik” is structured on the same principle, with a revelation and exposure in the last lines resolving the uncanny

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<sup>67</sup> Gasparov, M.; Smirin, V (1986). Tynianovskii Sbornik: Vtorye Tynianovskie Chtenia, “Evgenii Onegin” i “Domik v Kolomne”: Parodia i Samoparodia u Pushkina (pp. 254-264) Riga: Zinatne. pp. 261.

atmosphere. Parasha also interacts intertextually with other heroines from the preromantic era, and Horowitz argues that Poor Liza is meant to be a perceivable intertext as well. I believe these references to preromantic heroines could extend to both Zhukovsky and Katenin's ballads. Pushkin takes the opportunity to respond to both authors through his dynamic and challenging construction of Parasha and her role in the tale. Trying to make sense of how preromantic intertextuality exposes meaning in the work, Horowitz poses the following dilemma:

Pushkin's association of Parasha with the muses is also confusing. Parasha's lovely songs and her melancholic demeanor contradict the aggressive "manwatching" that she does from her window. The positive attributes which the narrator gives Parasha, offered as a contrast to those possessed by the Countess, which are recognized by society—"Blazhennee stokrat ee byla, / Chitatel', novaia znakomka vasha, / Prostaia, dobraia moia Parasha"—appear incongruous in light of the story's denouement. Perhaps Parasha is a parody of the many innocent young ladies from Russian literature, or perhaps her figure mocks the haughty selfperception of aristocratic women (as in "Domik"), or perhaps she symbolizes something else completely. Nevertheless, one can only say conclusively that what Parasha is intended to signify is not clear and the author's irony, rather than any serious message, appears to surround his heroine.<sup>68</sup>

There is a fundamental contradiction in Parasha's character that makes her comparison with the Russian muse a mystery. Perhaps the association Pushkin made with the "Lenore" muse in chapter eight of *Onegin*, and its transposition into "Domik," might shed some light on this problem.

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<sup>68</sup> Horowitz. Pushkin's Shifting Poetics. pp. 54.

## Pushkin's Muse Reconsidered

The narrative portion of “Domik” is begun abruptly in the middle of stanza nine with the fairytale mainstay *Zhila-byla vdova*. This *skazochnyi* frame is notable because of a possible ironic echo to the first line of Katenin’s “Natasha”: (Ax! жила-была Наташа, // Свет Наташа красота). It recalls the undertaking of creating a heroine based in folklore, and Parasha’s description as a *krasotka* is a word choice Katenin would have undoubtedly been proud of, but an immediate digression focuses more on the narrator than the fairytale genre typically allows. The atmosphere is broken before it even began; instead of continuing the story, the narrator yanks the reader back into his reality as he describes walking around the now much changed city of Kolomna with his unnamed acquaintance. The house itself is considered significant for the introduction of the *meshanskyi* element of the new setting for realist writing (what used to be just a *domik* is now a three-story house), as well as perhaps part of a biographical allegory (Finke makes the suspicious claim that it represents the Winter Palace), but the identity of the narrator’s acquaintance receives less attention: (Странным сном // Бывает сердце полно; много вздору // Приходит нам на ум, когда бредем // Одни или с товарищем вдвоем).

Because the narrator is reminiscing about a past time, and this chain of recollected thoughts leads to the creation of the following narrative, it might be assumed that this *znakomyi* may be representing Pushkin’s muse, entirely anonymous, and notably male. The punchline of the humorous anecdote might even hearken back to this figure; an explanation for where Mavra disappeared to at the end.

This quote also accentuates the unrealistic, fantastic atmosphere ballads are set in. But the images that come to the narrator from this genre are all overused, all remnants of the past that don't befit this enigmatic new muse he has just introduced: (Старушка (я стократ видал точь-в-точь // В картинах Рембрандта такие лица)...). The only direct comparison of Parasha to the muse is also reminiscent of a tired caricature of the "Lenore" cycle, with the epithets *unyliy* and *grustnyi* now indistinguishable from Svetlana and Tatiana: (Поет уныло русская девица, // Как музы наши грустная певица.). The narrator is so painfully and consciously aware of his ironic adherence to these old models that he even interjects during the description of Parasha sitting under the moonlight:

...Бледная Диана  
Глядела долго девушке в окно.  
(Без этого ни одного романа  
Не обойдется; так заведено!)  
Бывало, мать давным-давно хрюпела,  
А дочка — на луну еще смотрела

It's hard to ignore the similarity of these lines to a similar description of Tatiana in (6:2): (Одна, печальна под окном // Озарена лучом **Дианы**, // Татьяна бедная не спит // И в поле темное глядит). This suggests that Pushkin's traditional preference for Zhukovsky's character is now fragmenting under the weight of the parody it has been subject to as a result of his own adaptations.

From a thematic perspective, the erotic energy a balladic heroine is tasked with containing at the threat of a terrible demise is parodied quite obviously. Despite characterization in the beginning as *dobraia* and *prostaia*, Parasha and her attitude towards men would be unable to conjure the sympathies of the narrator. Her sexually

aggressive behavior, as Horowitz points out in the above quote, is indicative of a number of incongruities with past models, as well as a portrayal of the less-approved “woman acting like a man” that vexed the public in early 19th century Russia. Another incongruity is that balladic elements in the *narodnyi* vein like divination are displaced onto the mother (А вечером за маленьким столом // Раскладывала карты и гадала.), and although Parasha finds a new cook during the typically enchanted winter nights (пред рождеством), the climax of the story is pushed closer to spring. The sense that “Domik” is using these folkloric elements as ways of honoring the past tradition is mitigated by the recognition that they are being made more banal. Divination now belongs to the clueless, older generation, and the power/magic of the *kreshchenski* nights is dulled by their usage as a backdrop to a tryst masterminded by a morally questionable heroine. These markers of the “Lenore” cycle are recategorized to show their last life as they try to adapt to a new heroine.

Naturally, not all mystery is removed from the tale, for the climax of the anecdote revolves on the typical “Lenore” structure of a final exposure of what was earlier unknown. When Parasha leaves in stanza 29 to seek a new cook, the surreal setting sets the stage for the final lines. Perhaps an echo of “Zhenikh,” the suspect behavior of the heroine as a result of the secret she is holding creates the dramatic tension:

— Узнаю, маменька. — И вышла вон,  
Закутавшись. (Зима стояла грозно,  
И снег скрыпел, и синий небосклон,  
Безоблачен, в звездах, сиял морозно.)  
Вдова ждала Парашу долго; сон  
Ее клонил тихонько; было поздно,  
Когда Параша тихо к ней вошла,  
Сказав: — Вот я кухарку привела.

Where Parasha was supposed to be able to find a new cook at night during a snowstorm is at best comical, and at worst maniacal. Her recklessness in this respect underlines the boldness with which she takes advantage of her mother's old age. Juxtaposed to the other reference of the two young lovers' nighttime meetings in stanza 19, several similarities emerge: (И слушала мяуканье котов // По чердакам, свиданий знак нескромный, // Да стражи дальний крик, да бой часов — // И только. Ночь над мирною Коломной // Тиха отменно. Редко из домов // Мелькнут две тени.). These two stanzas create the uncanniness typical of the ballad genre's inclusion of fairytale elements based in folklore. Both the stormy winter night and a traditional sound repetition<sup>69</sup> of a cat's meowing set the tone for tragedy.

These last lines can also be read as a parody of the Gothic sound repetitions in “Lenore” because they form a rather safe atmosphere where guards stand watch and the clock ensures the clandestine meetings don't go too late. In Stanza 35, the stanza before the final reveal, the parody of “Lenore” becomes even more palpable:

«Стой тут, Параша. Я схожу домой;  
Мне что-то страшно». Дочь не разумела,  
Чего ей страшно. С паперти долой  
Чуть-чуть моя старушка не слетела;  
В ней сердце билось, как перед бедой.  
Пришла в лачужку, в кухню посмотрела, —  
Мавруши нет. Вдова к себе в покой  
Вошла — и что ж? о боже! страх какой!

The first several lines and the word strashno might be an allusion to “Svetlana,” which also used this particular repetition to create an atmosphere of fear.<sup>69</sup> Pushkin is probably

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<sup>69</sup> Katz. The Literary Ballad. pp. 58. “The atmosphere in “Svetlana” is created in part by the frequent repetition of the word strakh in its various forms: strashno (5:10, 15:6), strakh (5:11, 6:9), strashnyi (11:7, 12:6-7, 13:6, 20:1); this makes the horror of the story explicit, rather than demonstrating it implicitly.”

flouting the trope with the rather awkward and repetitive construction: (Мне что-то страшно». Дочь не разумела, // Чего ей страшно). The individual sounds of the word are also displaced onto the first and fourth lines, strengthening the sense that fear should be dominating the atmosphere: Parasha, starushka. The parodic implication of the repetition is concluded with the ironic last line: (Вошла — и что ж? о боже! страх какой!).

This stanza can be appreciated from a balladic perspective for its repetition of Gothic lexicon, but also its similarity to analogous scenes in “Svetlana” and chapter eight of *Onegin*, works that excised this particular auditory trope in favor of ‘smoothing out’ the atmosphere. In these works the final moment is also delayed by a passage through empty rooms like in “Domik”: (Пришла в лачужку, в кухню посмотрела, — // Мавруши нет...). There is also the narrative interjection *i chto zhe*, which emphasizes the narrator’s conscious role as a storyteller with the goal of lengthening the pleasant but (traditionally) horrifying feeling at being just about to make a discovery. At this moment the narrator always tries to align himself with the reader and place himself alongside them, tightening the camaraderie and allowing himself to join in the pleasure of fear. But unlike the real fear of death “Lenore” adaptations produce with the exposure of the bridegroom as dead, murderous, or both, Pushkin removes any real need to be scared in “Domik.” The device produces a humorous effect because of the disparity between it and its predecessors. Whereas in “Zhenikh” the final moment exposes the tragedy of murder and the heroism of the heroine, in “Domik” we are confronted with playful realism: Mavra is just shaving, and Parasha is safe at church. Her suitor does not pose any real threat, and even when considered from the old woman’s worst fears (Mavra might be

stealing something), the pleasure of revealing a secret is met with the banality and humor of very un-fantastic circumstances. The old woman obviously doesn't even know what's happening, which hearkens back both to Tatiana's nurse, and Liza's mother: (Мне, право, ничего понять нельзя;). Her similarity with these characters is also enhanced by the mention of her late husband, a characteristic shared by both of her preromantic predecessors: (Она здесь брилась!.. точно мой покойник! —).

The final revelation that Mavra is a man unfolds most humorously when considered a parody of "Lenore" adaptations. The hero disappears entirely, leaving no lasting effects other than the old woman's fear and the reader's laughter and perhaps confusion. The argument that Zhukovsky's ballads are of questionable literary merit because they glorify evil by expressing it in such beautiful terms falls flat, for it's the comedic plot in "Domik" that takes precedence as the driving force. The aspect of evil is removed entirely from the "Lenore" system, but the situation is portrayed almost identically. A possible reason for this might be gleaned from Pushkin's own comment in 1827 on the topic of representing murderers in ballads that "иногда ужас выражается смехом." Although the quote deals with using vulgar lexical elements to produce humor, Pushkin in "Domik" transposes the idea onto a genre context. The horror one expects when prompted by certain allusions to the "Lenore" cycle is realized instead through comedic means. Pushkin shows the full range of application that horror can achieve when the true aesthetic value of the ballad is understood outside of literary alliances.

The incongruity "Domik" experiences with its balladic intertexts is significant, but not unexpected based on the imagery of the last scene. If Parasha really reminded the narrator of 'our' muse, then we must embrace the distortions and consider how her

character builds upon those models that came before her. In this respect, we recall most notably that Mavra is sitting in front of Parasha's mirror at the moment of her final exposure. Pushkin's own drawing (Figure 1) to accompany this scene is a worthwhile visualization of the first crucial moment before Mavra had time to react:



Figure 1. (from the 1830 manuscript)

As Mavra stares at his reflection, the reader is compelled to see a doubling between the characters, who are like-minded in their passion and committed to the ruse against the widow. But unlike in Liza, we will never know if Parasha suffered morally for her transgressions against her poor mother, for the narrative is cut off indefinitely. The characters' doubling provides a way to see that the muse visiting Pushkin at this time wasn't just changing his style, but was doing so by complicating characterization as articulated by current poetic demands. If Parasha and Mavra are seen as doubles, then this

new muse is capable of integrating the most varied personalities and character types, and transcends boundaries in genre, narration, generation, and even gender. She does all this without exposing who she really is or what her innovativeness represents. This finds reflection in the fact that not only does Mavra escape with soap obstructing his face, preventing as it were a clear glance at his features, but also literally hides his face as he runs:

Пред зеркальцем Параши, чинно сидя,  
Кухарка брилась. Что с моей вдовой?  
«Ах, ах!» — и шлепнулась. Ее увида,  
Та, второпях, с намыленной щекой  
Через старуху (вдовью честь обида),  
Прыгнула в сени, прямо на крыльцо,  
Да ну бежать, закрыв себе лицо.

He pops out of the narrative in a cloud of ambiguity, but leaves the fact of his exposure a conspicuous element of the literary flexibility of Parasha-as-muse.

Unlike in “Zhenikh” or “Natasha,” where the heroine acts courageously, the balladic parody also finds home in Parasha’s status as an anti-hero. She dupes her mother, and instead of exposing the transgressions of the hero, aids in their concealment. Nonetheless, Mavra might be interpreted as showing her true character in a way Parasha never does. We know that he leaves forever, but are left to conjecture that perhaps he is the moral beacon in the work: he takes with him the conflicted emotions she feels over taking advantage of and scaring her mother, and rids the narrative of the need to explain what happens between them. The narrator even withholds Parasha’s reaction to the event, preventing us from knowing whether her blushing might mean she is just embarrassed, or genuinely repentant: (Параша закраснелась или нет, // Сказать вам не умею;...). I imagine that Pushkin may even be concealing part of himself in this final (non-)image of

Parasha, wrapping up a work that laughs (albeit goodnaturedly) in the face of readers who do not share his progressive aesthetic agenda, or those that try to impose their own views on it.

Frustrated expectations are an integral part of the work, even as it concerns the formal elements.<sup>70</sup> While Parasha can still give us the aesthetic pleasure of a quasi-balladic heroine placed in a modern setting, her role as a conduit through which a moral is articulated and nudged forward is lost entirely. The famous epilogue to the tale tackles this idea boldly:

Вот вам мораль: по мнению моему,  
Кухарку даром нанимать опасно;  
Кто ж родился мужчиною, тому  
Рядиться в юбку странно и напрасно:  
Когда-нибудь придется же ему  
Брить бороду себе, что несогласно  
С природой дамской... Больше ничего  
Не выжмешь из рассказа моего».

Pushkin uses the balladic form to create comedy from fear, but in an environment that relates to the demand to rationalize fear with significant irony. In “Zhenikh” and *Onegin* the demands of the plot were too important and restrictive to give such a significant role to just the pleasurable, non-intellectual effects “Lenore” tropes can bring to any genre.

This begs the question of why Pushkin chose this work to parody the theme and structure of the ballad. I believe that it was motivated by Pushkin’s playful relation to the arguments between himself and Katenin. Katenin’s Natasha lost the battle to become the quintessential Russian heroine and muse to Zhukovsky’s Svetlana, and we recall that he

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<sup>70</sup> Worhey, Glenn (1997). Gender Poetics and the Structure of Pushkin's "Little House in Kolomna". *Elementa*, Vol. 3. Worhey observes the conspicuous placement of the missing line in one of the final stanzas. Right at the moment of revelation, where one would expect a feminine rhyme, there is a male one, which breaks the rhythm of the entire poem.

insulted Pushkin's homage in "Zhenikh" in 1827 with the line: "Наташа Пушкина очень дурна и вся шита из лоскутьев". By viewing Parasha as interacting with some of the same terms the ballads used, Pushkin shows the true value of having a folkloric heroine 'pieced together' from different styles. It's difficult to not go one step further than Horowitz did when he classified Parasha's first introduction listing the activities she was good at as an allusion to *Poor Liza*: (Параша (так звалась красотка наша) // Умела мыть и гладить, шить и плесть;). Her adept domestic ability to sew is the perfect way to hide a comment to Katenin that integrating disparate material is not to be considered an aesthetic negative. As part of the new muse and double of Parasha, it is likewise not unexpected that the narrator also included a comment about Mavra's lack of success in this regard: (Шить сядет — не умеет взять иголку;). The implications of integrating two genders in Parasha's character are discussed further in the conclusion to this project.

## CHAPTER V

### CONCLUSION

The marriage between the three chapters of this project becomes less ideal as I continue my research. Chapter one dissociates itself most noticeably from the general leanings that the remaining two have towards reconceptualizing Pushkin's muse through the lens of ballad parodies. Nevertheless, I choose to include it because of the opportunity it provides to discuss other characters and aspects of *Onegin* that seem limited in the other sections. Poor Liza serves as a stand in for the sentimental system in general as a modality that Pushkin engaged, and despite a certain futility of reading the two works in parallel, it is best considered in the scope of this project as an introduction to how parody in *Onegin* is carried out (mostly) harmlessly. Lensky, Olga, and their childlike romance are mocked to a certain extent, but Author is also conflicted when it ends with Lensky's tragic death. The significance this moment carries for the work is paramount, for the raw, youthful energy associated with the preromantic system that's lost with Lensky finds a new home in Tatiana. This is achieved through thematic means (Tatiana crying at the end as she rereads Eugene's love letters), as well as formal ones (Tatiana's own usage of sympathetic epithets). Her final scene in chapter eight is a reinterpretation of the feminine that gives autonomy to female characters to act outside of the bounds that their poetic

gender inscribed. She can act equally like an Erast or a Liza, and is most productively considered as doing both.<sup>71</sup>

Constructing *Onegin* in order to make this ambivalence perceptible in chapter eight was aided greatly by the structural repetition of the exposure of a secret that “Lenore” was founded on. By parodying this particular ballad, Pushkin was playing with and frustrating reader expectations about what a Russian folkloric heroine was supposed to look like. Scared but courageous, she was originally supposed to be a reservoir of the positive aspects of Russian reality. The question of how to portray this in the early 19th century was first and foremost a lexical one, but whether or not she was to be idealized or ‘realistic’ with a more vulgar vocabulary also found other ways into the narrative. In *Onegin*, Tatiana takes with her the element that made “Svetlana” innovative: the coexistence of the preromantic with the folkloric. At the climax of the story Tatiana’s tears signify that any parody Pushkin had in mind that he wanted to make visible through a structural repetition was supposed to show that the aesthetic potential a ballad had in causing a strong emotional reaction can be equally impactful outside of its original reliance on fear. Instead of shocking his audience with something horrifying in Tatiana, he shows that she retains the romantic energy that Eugene was unable to see in the final chapter. The result is to refocus emotional energy from literal fear onto a drama showcasing the anxiety of losing an artistic standard that was falling out of fashion with contemporaries.

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<sup>71</sup> One point that remains anchored in conceptions of the feminine is that Tatiana, unlike Erast, is unable to make the same sexual transgressions that men were allowed to. Tatiana would be unable to have an affair with Eugene when she is wed to the general, as doing so would ostracize and alienate her from society.

The recycling of this structure in “Domik”, coupled with the repetition of other balladic elements like the folkloric heroine and an uncanny atmosphere, is essential in understanding the irreducible characteristics Pushkin had in mind for Tatiana. As Glen Worthey points out, one of the most persistent problems in “Domik” is the reason for making gender reversal a salient element of both form and plot.<sup>72</sup> I suggest that the reason was to realize a parody of previous models of heroines that was left buried in the drama of *Onegin*. The Svetlana character and setting had profound influence on Pushkin’s interpretation of his own muse, and his creative tendency to adapt elements from a variety of literary sources naturally disassociated her from only her feminine predecessors. Showing that what was once seen as a woman can also be a man fulfills the goal of integration Pushkin advocated for in a stylistic sense between Zhukovsky and Katenin’s work. The dichotomy “polished : rough” finds a new home thematically with the conflicting characterization that Parasha is both a sentimental heroine, and an aggressive man-hunter. Parasha is the final installment of a long line of male and female intertextual interactions with “Lenore,” and the end result is so utterly disjointed that making a joke about confusing men with women makes salient what other works said only implicitly. “Domik” is praised as being a masterful marriage of form and content, but equally significant is the way it uses that material to foreground the uselessness of tired poetic gender characterizations.

By considering Parasha the final installment of the folkloric heroine with its origins in the ballad, the integrative possibilities of Tatiana are dealt with explicitly. The comparison of formal gender (rhymes) and socially constructed gender (Mavra is a man

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<sup>72</sup> “ ” pp. 286. “This blindness to the gender theme, in spite of its humorous explicitness, has been a constant in readings of the poem, from its first publication in 1830 until rather recently.”

but is wearing women's clothes) in "Domik" is really just as artificial as the poetic gender that Tatiana was deconstructing in *Onegin*. Expecting a feminine rhyme but getting a male one does not ruin the value of "Domik," just as expecting Parasha to conform to a certain notion of a folkloric heroine creates a frustration that makes the work truly innovative. Pushkin couldn't show Tatiana in such blunt terms, but created Parasha immediately afterwards to show that trying to reduce his heroine to "one or the other" is futile and comic. Her true value to Russian literature is in part her fluidity between poetic dichotomies.

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