The Legacy of Ancient Rome in the Russian Silver Age

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To Władysław and Paul Zajac

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Any faults that remain are mine, and mine alone.

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Note on Transliteration

For the sake of readers who do not know Russian, in the text I have adopted a modified Library of Congress system of transliteration in the case of proper names. Thus Dostoyevsky, rather than Dostoevskii, Solovyov, instead of Solov'ev. All other transliteration in the text (e.g., titles of works), as well as in the Notes and Bibliography, however, follows the Library of Congress system, without diacritics.

Introduction
Off to Rome…

Only in Rome can one educate oneself for Rome.
—Goethe, Letters from Italy

Johann Heinrich Wilhelm Tischbein, the last and youngest of a Hessian family of artists, traveled with Goethe to Italy. His most famous picture is that of *Goethe in the Campagna*, but his most telling is *Goethe at the Window of his Apartment in Rome*. Here Goethe is shown with his back turned to the painter, and to the viewer for that matter, looking spellbound out the window, totally absorbed by what he sees on the streets of Rome. That picture tells it all: intoxicated with the Eternal City, Goethe virtually "turned his back" on his northern past and began to look at the world through his new Italian experience.

Goethe's trip to Italy in 1787-88 and his stay in Rome constitute a milestone in the literary perception of Rome. It was there that the main part of Goethe's process of self-discovery took place and, notwithstanding the many prominent European writers who traveled there and found in Rome their inspiration, Goethe's position remains unique. In the rich European tradition of *admiratio Romae*, Goethe set the modern standard and an unsurpassed ideal.

Rome has been a source of inspiration for poets since ancient times. Virgil is considered the originator of what is called the "Roman text," but every poet of antiquity contributed to it, and numerous poets in modern times have been inspired by their ancient predecessors—Virgil, Horace, Propertius, Catullus, Ovid, Ausonius and others. In his comprehensive work *Europäische Romdichtung*, Walter Rehm points out that the modern "Roman text" or "Roman poetry" was created exclusively by writers from other countries, primarily by those located north of the Apennine Peninsula. Rehm goes so far as to say that *Europäische Romdichtung* lasted only until the second half of the

nineteenth century, when Italy regained its independence. Although this theory is attractive, it is not entirely valid. Many European poets are still enchanted by the greatness of Rome and continue to sing *admiratio Romae* poems. Moreover, one cannot ignore the contributions of Petrarch, Machiavelli, and the entire Italian Renaissance in renewing the vision of the past and the development of the modern *admiratio Romae* tradition.[1]

Among attempts to evaluate the phenomenon of the European "Roman text," four works are the most comprehensive: the early two books by Camillo von Klenze,[2] and the more recent studies by Walter Rehm and Paul Requadt. Sixteenth- and seventeenth-century travelers considered Rome solely as the home of ancient civilization, of ancient writers and art. Only later did Italy as a country and other periods and cities become subjects worthy of reflection and admiration. Thus, originally Rome was more an intellectual stimulus than an artistic one. Not until the eighteenth century, with such great talents as Winckelmann, Mengs and David, did Rome become the metropolis of *beaux esprits* and *belles ames*.[3] Goethe's Italy was bound to transcend. His *Italian Journey* introduced into German culture that southern influence without which no northern culture is complete.

However, in order to transform his Roman experiences into a mythic reality in the *Roman Elegies*, Goethe needed love.[4] The poet states this in his first elegy: "Rome, though you are a whole world, yet a world without love would be no world; and if there were no love, Rome would not even be Rome."[5] Thus, unlike DuBellay and Spenser, Goethe makes the identification of Rome with the World conditional, and love is the necessary condition. The anagrammatic relation between the words *Roma* and *Amor* has been referred to for centuries. In his *Europaische Romdichtung*, Walter Rehm emphasizes the fact that Goethe was fascinated by the Roman ruins not from an historical point of view but rather from an aesthetic one. This attitude will play a great role in Romantic poetics.

The many great European interpreters of Rome include such writers as Lamartine, Byron, Shelley, Chateaubriand, and Madame de Staël. Every literary generation introduced new elements into their perception of Rome. Romanticism stressed the republican ideal of freedom and introduced an appreciation for the charm of decay, a feature that remains important in Rome-related literature to the present. Shelley called Italian cities the "habitation of departed greatness."[6] Most often the educated visitor had already been exposed

to the classical tradition by studying Latin, history and the writings of the ancient authors, and it was the confrontation of one's classical education with the city itself that bore the lasting literary fruit, which critics call the "Roman text."

Russian travelers to Rome shared, to a great extent, the attitude of their European peers. They admired the greatness of classical civilization, of which Rome still bears witness; they were charmed by the natural beauty and overwhelmed by the grandeur of decay. But there was always something more that influenced the Russian perception of Rome, something more than the dynamics of North versus South, namely, the consideration of a vertical division between East and West. The claim to, or denial of, the Roman heritage has been a permanent presence in the Russian literary tradition, interwoven with philosophical and political thought, lending additional drama to the Russian "Roman text." Thus the legacy of ancient Rome has always constituted an important component of Russian cultural consciousness as it created tension between two very strong convictions: one stressing that accepting Christianity from Byzantium had cut Russia off from the Western tradition and Mediterranean culture; the other that it made Russia a true heir of that tradition via Byzantium. For believers in the latter tradition, Moscow was the Third Rome. For those who shared the former conviction, Petersburg represented a Northern Rome, providing a window to the West, to the lost link with European culture.

There were many points of identification between Russia and Rome. Rurik, the founder of the first Russian dynasty, was believed to have descended from Augustus. Peter the Great, by assuming the title of emperor in the beginning of the eighteenth century, once again alluded to Russia's identification with Rome.[7] The belief that St. Petersburg is a Northern Rome was shared by Lomonosov, Sumarokov, and Derzhavin.[8] Their early poetic testimonials set the pattern for the treatment of the theme of Roman heritage for future literary generations. In that pattern Rome is already identified with the world or rather the universe. This attitude, apparent in all Rome-related literature,[9] is not limited to the literary tradition alone. N. Ulyanov points out that the first Christians, even as they suffered cruel persecution, considered it necessary to pray for the Roman Empire and to sustain it with their prayers, because they believed that the existence of the whole world was inseparable from the existence of Rome.[10]

From the time of these early testimonials, every generation has left its own indelible mark on the ongoing discussion concerning the place of the Western tradition in Russian culture.[11] In the broader understanding of the Western tradition, Rome has always been considered a central theme and symbol. Many of Russia's most prominent authors touched upon this problem, among them Konstantin Batyushkov, Evgeny Baratynsky, Ivan Kireevsky, Peter Chaadaev, Alexander Pushkin, Nikolay Gogol, Nikolay Chernyshevsky. The discussion of this burning question continued through several succeeding generations, including the Realists, Symbolists, and Acmeists.

Chaadaev greatly influenced the development of this debate. His views found resonance with such figures as Alexander Herzen, Chernyshevsky[12] and later Osip Mandelstam.[13] In his essay on Chaadaev, Mandelstam writes:

> Chaadaev's thought is national in its sources, national even where it flows into Rome. Only a Russian could discover this West, which is far denser and more concrete than the historical West itself. By virtue of this right, Chaadaev, a Russian, stepped onto the sacred soil of a tradition to which he was not bound by heritage. […]
>
> For Chaadaev, Russia had only one thing to offer: moral freedom, the freedom of choice. Never in the West had it been realized with such grandeur, in such purity and fullness. Chaadaev took it as his holy staff and set off for Rome.[14]

Pushkin, in one of his poems dedicated to Chaadaev, writes: "He would have been Brutus in Rome."[15] And in one of his earlier poems, he exclaimed:

> Я сердцем римлянин; кипит в груди свобода;
> во мне не дремлет дух великого народа.
>
> [I am a Roman at heart; freedom seethes in my breast;
> the spirit of a great nation does not slumber in me.[16]]

These examples indicate how difficult it is to separate literary, philosophical, and political matters concerned with the symbolism of Rome.

In the first part of the nineteenth century discussion revolved around such problems as whether a lack of ties with Rome had prevented the Russian pre-Renaissance from developing into a Renaissance, or whether the concept of freedom as understood by the

Romans and Spartans was acceptable to the Russian mind.[17] Even as late as the beginning of the twentieth century, Innokenty Annensky felt very strongly that the Russian aesthetic inadequacy, the lack of purely aesthetic feelings, was not accidental. There are two reasons for this, he argued: alienation from Rome, the heir to the entire aesthetic tradition, particularly the poetic tradition, and the existence from time immemorial of the link with Byzantium, where there were very few poets.[18]

Classical literature and tradition held great appeal for Pushkin, who admired and embraced topics used widely by the classical writers, for example, his celebrated poetic testament "The Monument" (Pamiatnik), which has its origin in the Horatian ode. During his Lyceum days, Pushkin wrote the poem "To Licinius" in which he depicts Rome as abstract generalization, poetic allegory.[19] Later, Pushkin identified his experience as an exile with that of Ovid, whom he had read in the original, and to whom he dedicated the poem "To Ovid."[20] Boris Tomashevsky points out that in this poem, Pushkin overcame conventional and allegoric language and created a vivid image of Ovid's personality. For Pushkin, nicknamed by his friends "Ovid's nephew,"[21] Ovid's fate represented exile in general. From Bessarabia in 1822 Pushkin wrote a poem to Baratynsky, who had been exiled to Finland, in which he calls Baratynsky "a living Ovid."[22] Two years later, during his second exile in Mikhailovskoe, Pushkin swears on Ovid's shadow, writing a poem to his friend N. M. Yazykov.[23] It was during this stay at Mikhaylovskoe that Pushkin retold Ovid's story in *The Gypsies*.[24] Aleko reflects upon the fate of the famous exile in the apostrophe:

> О Рим, о громкая держава!...
> Певец любви, певец богов.
> Скажи мне, что такое слава?
>
> [O Rome, O, great power! . . .
> Singer of love, singer of gods.
> Tell me, what is glory?]

Pushkin's perception of Ovid, in turn, became an inspiration for many.

Aside from the problem of its identification with Rome on political and religious grounds, the *admiratio Romae* stood as an independent topic in Russian literature. The greatness of ancient

Roman heroes, the universal appeal of Latin literature, the significance of Roman and adopted Greek mythology, the beauty and *otherness* of Southern nature[25] and grand Roman architecture—all fascinated and inspired Russian writers. Rome influenced those who had the good fortune to come, to see and to admire it, as well as those who never set foot on Italian soil.

Russians began participating in the cult of the city during the Romantic period. The first visitors were art students traveling on government fellowships. They were followed by an increasing number of literary and intellectual figures. Thus before 1845, Konstantin Batyushkov, Evgeny Baratynsky, Pyotr Chaadaev, Pyotr Vyazemsky, Vasily Zhukovsky, Mikhail Pogodin, Aleksey Tolstoy, Apollon Maikov, Nikolay Stankevich, Ivan Turgenev, and of course Nikolay Gogol visited Rome. Toward the middle of the century, interest in Italy faded as a literary topic, despite the fact that this was a period of the most successful archeological research on Rome. Perhaps Rome as a theme declined with the rise of Realism and the Russian novel and the decline of poetry in Russia.[26] A general revival of interest in classical studies in the late nineteenth century brought about a new wave of popular and literary fascination with Rome. Once again the trip to Italy became an essential part of one's education. In the early twentieth century nearly all Russian poets traveled to Italy: Dmitry Merezhkovsky, Zinaida Gippius, Konstantin Balmont, Valery Bryusov, Alexander Blok, Vyacheslav Ivanov, Mikhail Kuzmin, Anna Akhmatova, Nikolay Gumilyov, and Osip Mandelstam.[27]

In his article on the "Virgilian Theme of Rome," V. N. Toporov focuses his attention on a very special aspect of the "Roman text," namely, those poems which combine the topic of Rome with the phonological repetition of the consonants *r-m* corresponding in Russian with the semantic theme *Rim* (Rome) and *mir* (world, peace). He examines poems by Karamzin, Pushkin, Shevyryov, Vyazemsky, as well as Karolina Pavlova and Tyutchev.[28] Even though many loved Rome, Toporov argues no one expressed that love better than Gogol and Vyacheslav Ivanov. These two created a Russian version of the Roman myth.[29]

Gogol's letters from Rome abound in testimonials to the beauty of the Eternal City. "Now I would like to talk with you about Rome," he wrote on June 3, 1837, to N. Ya. Prokopovich, "but this is such a fathomless sea that you don't know where to start and what to talk about. […] Only here do you find out what is art. And nature? She is an Italian beauty, I cannot compare her to anything else."[30]

Several months later he wrote from Switzerland that after leaving Italy everything seemed smoky and foggy and smelled like the North.[31] And finally, upon returning to Rome in October, he wrote to Zhukovsky those words so frequently quoted by scholars and writers: "I was born here—Russia, snow, scoundrels, department, a chair, the theater, it all was a dream…."[32] Almost one hundred years later Mandelstam made his lyrical persona—the exiled Ovid—pronounce:

> Я в Риме родился, и он ко мне вернулся.
> [I was born in Rome, and it returned to me.]

For Gogol, Rome was not only a desirable place to be born, but an equally desirable place in which to die. In his letter to P. A. Pletnyov[33] he confesses: "There is no better fate than to die in Rome; man is a whole mile closer to divinity here." It is almost impossible to exhaust all the expressions of the writer's enchantment with this city[34]: Stars in Rome are larger and brighter, the sky is unparalleled, landmarks are incomparable, and only in Rome is it possible to pray.[35] For Gogol, as for Goethe and Byron before him, Rome became the city of his soul. (Later, in the twentieth century it was Vyacheslav Ivanov who experienced a similar mystical unity with Rome.) Victor Erlich writes that Gogol's "love affair with Italy […] had been the only element of stability in his increasingly unsettled, nomadic existence."[36] Gogol's "Roman text" consists mainly of his letters. He dedicated a story to his beloved city entitled "Rome," which Erlich calls "little known and ostensibly unfinished, […] predominantly descriptive, […] weighed down, indeed stopped in its tracks."[37] But Louis Pedrotti suggests that the story attests to Gogol's love of the Eternal City's architecture.[38] One might add that love of architecture is a transcendental type, since architecture as "anti-nature" defies death. The most recent and comprehensive assessment of Gogol's Rome is found in Robert Maguire's *Exploring Gogol*.[39] Maguire examines the nature of Gogol's perception of Rome and places it in the context of the writer's aesthetics built around the theme of imitation.

Toporov sees a characteristic turn, a new development in the twentieth-century Roman text of Russian literature. Rome becomes not only a "world" but also a personality, and as such it plays an active role in the development of new ideas.[40] The metaphor of the city as a soul (as opposed to the city *of the* soul) is a twentieth-century phenomenon,[41] not limited to poetry alone. Sigmund Freud saw in the

Eternal City an analogy for "psychical entity," an analogy he vividly describes in *Civilization and Its Discontents*.[42] It is only natural that the Russian Symbolist poets, who place the image of the city at the very core of their poetic endeavor, found in Rome a perfect metaphor. Even Alexander Blok, who never reached Rome on his Italian journey and hardly participated in creating the Russian "Roman text," saw the "ghost of Rome" (*prizrak Rima*) and in his poem "Cleopatra," wrote:

> Ты видишь ли теперь, из гроба,
> Что Русь, как Рим, пьяна тобой
> Что я и Цезарь – будем оба
> В веках равны перед судьбой.[43]
>
> [Do you see now, from your grave,
> That Russia, like Rome, is drunk with you
> That in the centuries both of us—Caesar and I
> Will be equals when facing destiny.]

How does the image of the ancient city of Rome manifest itself through such a complex medium as Symbolist poetry? This study considers the poems of the major and minor Symbolist poets who contributed to what V. N. Toporov calls the "Roman text" and what Walter Rehm calls *Romdichtung*. I will investigate the poets' classical background, examine the circumstances (if known) leading to the writing of a particular poem and offer a formal or structural analysis of its devices and imagery. In many instances a comparative approach is used to determine the general pattern and function of recurrent images.

To this end, I have chosen the work of those poets who found their inspiration in ancient Rome, including Vladimir Solovyov, Dmitry Merezhkovsky, Valery Bryusov, Vyacheslav Ivanov, Maksimilian Voloshin, Vasily Komarovsky, and Mikhail Kuzmin. Aspects of Roman life that had special meaning for each of these poets are examined, as well as the way the Roman theme affects their imagery and poetics, and what sort of transformation it underwent. I have attempted to ascertain what the Roman legacy communicated to these poets, and through what themes and strategies they conveyed this legacy to their readers. In addition to the work of poets who are generally identified with the Symbolist movement, two poets immediately preceding this period are included: Apollon Maikov and Arseny Golenishchev-Kutuzov.

The theme of ancient Rome in itself comprises a variety of topics. Some poems were inspired by architectural or sculptural symbolism, others by admiration for great personalities; many were based on mythology and literary tradition, while still others constituted an attempt to gain insight into aspects of Gnosticism or mysticism. Special attention is paid to the semiotics of the city, since this is the area where the "Roman text" is closest to Symbolists poetics.

The twentieth-century "Roman text" of Russian literature, so prominently developed by the Symbolists, was continued by the following generation of poets. Among the Acmeists, Anna Akhmatova and Nikolay Gumilyov wrote about Rome, but Mandelstam is considered the main contributor to Rome's testimonial. Mandelstam's Roman poems, however have been thoroughly researched, discussed and analyzed.[44] It is only natural that other poets continued this great legacy: the Roman text is still open. In the second half of the twentieth century its pages were inscribed by other poets. A few Rome-related poems have appeared in the New York literary journal, *Novyi Zhurnal* (The New Review), among them the cycle "Rome" (Rim), written by Sergey Makovsky, who was once the editor of the magazine *Apollon.*[45] Three decades later N. Ulyanov published his cycle of sonnets also entitled "Rome,"[46] which was followed somewhat later by Valery Pereleshin's sonnet "Ave Roma."[47] In 1980 Yury Ivask wrote his "Roman Strophes," only partially published in *Novyi Zhurnal*.[48] Joseph Brodsky, the Nobel Prize laureate, followed Goethe's tradition in naming his Roman cycle *The Roman Elegies*.[49]

Now, as the new Russia reexamines its situation and redefines its relationship with the Western tradition, the intellectual and poetic work accomplished at the beginning of the last century may play a crucial role in this process.

Notes

1. Cf. Peter Bondanella, *The Eternal City. Roman Images in the Modern World* (Chapell Hill & London: University of North Carolina Press, 1987), 286.

2. Camillo von Klenze, *The Interpretation of Italy during the Last Two Centuries* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1907) and *From Goethe to Hauptmann. Studies in a Changing Culture* (Biblo and Tannen: New York, 1966; originally published in 1926). Walter Rehm, *Europäische Romdichtung* (Munchen: Verlag, 1960), 274. Paul Requadt, *Die Bildersprache der Deutschen Italien Dichtung* (Berne und Munich: Francke, 1962), 325.

3. Cf. C. von Klenze, 37ff.

4. Paul Requadt, "*Romische Elegien" und " Venetianische Epigramme*" in *Die Bildersprache,* 39 ff.

5. *Goethe's Roman Elegies*, trans., intro., and notes by David Luke (London: Chatto & Windus, 1977).

6. Cf. John Lehman, *Shelley in Italy* (London: Purnell and Sons 1947), 12.

7. Iu. M. Lotman and B. A. Uspenskii, "Echoes of the Notion 'Moscow as the Third Rome' in Peter the Great's Ideology," *The Semiotics of Russian Culture,* ed. Ann Shukman, trans. N.F.C. Owen (Michigan Slavic Contributions, vol. 11, Ann Arbor: Department of Slavic Languages and Literatures, University of Michigan, 1984), 53-67.

8. N. P. Antsiferov, *Dusha Peterburga* (1922; reprint, Paris: YMCA-Press, 1978), cf. 52ff.

9. V. N. Toporov, "Vergilianskaia tema Rima," *Issledovaniia po strukture teksta,* ed. T. V. Tsivian (Moscow: Nauka, 1987), 203.

10. N. Ulianov, "Kompleks Filofeia," *Novyi Zhurnal* 45 (June 1956): 251.

11. See, for example, P. V. Zenkovskii, *Russkie mysliteli i Evropa. Kritika evropeiskoi kul'tury i russkikh myslitelei,* 3d ed. (Paris: YMCA-Press, 1927); M. I. Gillel'son, *Ot arzamasskogo bratstva k pushkinskomu krugu pisatelei* (Leningrad: Nauka, 1977).

12. N. G. Chernyshevskii, "O prichinakh padeniia Rima" (1861), *Polnoe sobranie sochinenii v 15 tomakh,* ed. I. Kirpotin et al., 15 vols. (Moscow: Khudozhestvennaia Literatura, 1939-53), 7: 643-68.

13. Cf. Raymond T. McNally, *Chaadayev and His Friends* (Tallahassee: The Diplomatic Press, 1971), 315.

14. Osip Mandelstam, "Peter Chaadaev," *The Complete Critical Prose and Letters,* ed. Jane Gary Harris, trans. J. Gary Harris and Constance Link (Ann Arbor: Ardis, 1979), 88

15. A. S. Pushkin, *Polnoe sobranie sochinenii v desiati tomakh,* 2d. ed. (Moscow: ANSSSR, 1956-58), 1:414.

16. Ibid., 1:118.

17. Cf. M. I. Gillel'son.

18. Inokentii Annenskii, "A. N. Maikov i znachenie ego poezii," in *Knigi otrazhenii,* ed. N. T. Ashimbaeva (Moscow: Nauka, 1979), 291.

19. Cf. Boris Tomashevskii, "Iug," in *Pushkin* (Moscow: ANSSSR, 1956-1961), 1:541.

20. A. S. Pushkin, 2:67-70.

21. Cf. Arnold I. Gessen, "Ovidii, Iuliei venchannyi" in *Vse volnovalo nezhnyi um...: Pushkin sredi knig i druzei* (Moscow: Khudozhestvennaia Literatura, 1965), 124-27.

22. Quoted in Gessen, 127.

23. Ibid., 133.

24. Pushkin, 4:215. A century later in his poem "Ne mater'iu…," Vladislav Khodasevich alludes to Pushkin's words: "I vot, Rossiia gromkaia derzhava" (And there, Russia is a great power), thus creating the equation: Rim–Rossiia. (*Tiazhelaia lira* [Berlin: Grzheb, 1923.]) I am indebted to Prof. Zoia Iurieff for this observation.

25. For Pushkin, for example, the experience of the Black Sea inspired the theme of the contrast between the Southern and Northern natures.

26. I am indebted to Ronald Meyer for this observation.

27. Ettore Lo Gatto, *Russi in Italia*. Dal secolo XVII ad oggi (Rome: Riuniti, 1971), 332.

28. Toporov, "Vergilianskaia tema Rima," 208.

29. Ibid, 214.

30. Cf. N. V. Gogol', "Pisma 1836-1841," vol. 11, *Polnoe sobranie sochinenii*, (Moscow: ANSSSR, 1952), 100.

31. Ibid, 110.

32. Ibid, 111.

33. November 2, 1837; ibid, 114.

34. There are a number of descriptions of Gogol's stay in Rome, among them: Aventino, *Po sledam Gogolia v Rime* (Moscow: Tip. Mosk. Universiteta, 1902); Daria Borghese, *Gogol a Roma* (Firenze: Sansoni 1957); M. Pogodin, *Otryvok iz zapisok o zhizni v Rime*, *Russkii Arkhiv* (1865): 1269-1281.

35. Cf. N.V. Gogol, *Polnoe sobranie sochinenii*, 11: 141.

36. Victor Erlich, *Gogol* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1969), 158.

37. Ibid, 164.

38. Cf. Louis Pedrotti, "The Architecture of Love in Gogol's 'Rome,'" *California Slavic Studies*, vol. 6 (University of California Press, 1971), 17-27.

39. Robert A. Maguire, *Exploring Gogol*, (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1994), 409.

40. Toporov, "Vergilianskaia tema Rima," 209.

41. Vsevolod Setchkarev, *Studies in the Life and Work of Innokentii Annenskii* (The Hague: Mouton, 1963), 223. He also states that the image of the city became the image of modern man's soul.

42. S. Freud, *Civilization and its Discontents*, trans. J. Strachey (New York: W. W. Norton, 1962), 16-18. Cf. Bondanella, 6.

43. A. Blok, "Kleopatra," *Sobranie sochinenii v vos'mi tomakh*, ed. A. A. Surokov et al., vol. 3 (Moscow and Leningrad: Gosisdat, 1960-1963), 275.

44. Some of the analyses are listed here in chronological order: Gleb Struve, "Italianskie obrazy i motivy v poezii Osipa Mandel'shtama," in *Studi in onore di Ettore Lo Gatto e Giovanni Maver* (Florence, 1962), 601-14; Ryszard Przybylski, "Rome, or A Dream about the Unity of All Things," in *An Essay on the Poetry of Osip Mandel'shtam: God's Grateful Guest*, trans. Madeline G. Levine (Ann Arbor: Ardis, 1987), 11-38; and V. N. Toporov, "Vergilianskaia tema Rima," 196-228.

45. *Novyi Zhurnal* 32 (1953): 130-32.

46. Ibid., 154.

47. Ibid., 159, 170.

48. Iurii Ivask, "Afona," *Novyj Zhurnal* 3 (1963): 32-37. I am indebted to Prof. Zoya Yurieff for allowing me access to I. Ivask's letter stating the existence of this cycle.

49. Iosif Brodskii, *Rimskie elegii* (New York: Russica Publishers, 1982).

I.

Departing from Stylization
Apollon Maikov

When we turn our thoughts to Russian poetry it is not necessarily Apollon Maikov who first comes to mind. More often than not, we are looking for a big name, for a poet who represents the highest peak. But a poetic landscape, like any other landscape, is made up of a variety of elements—gentle hills and valleys contribute to the beauty in equal measure as the highest peaks. Maikov's poetry was appreciated by readers, critics and poets, especially poets of the so-called "Roman text." In the continuing flow of Rome-related poetry, the poetic output of Apollon Nikolayevich Maikov, and his cycle "Sketches of Rome" (Ocherki Rima), in particular, constituted a considerable link between the traditional, "anthological" approach to the theme of antiquity, and an effort to create a more tangible image of ancient Rome.[1] Maikov represents a typical poet of his generation, which like the French Parnassians and the English Keatsians "expressed itself in a predilection for visual subjects, among which nature and classical antiquity were particularly popular."[2]

Apollon Nikolayevich Maikov (1821-97) belonged to the generation of the forties known as the "imagists."[3] A friend and correspondent of Dostoyevsky, Maikov was educated in St. Petersburg and studied art in France and Italy. Upon his return to Russia he worked for the Rumyantsev Museum in Moscow.

While studying law at St. Petersburg University in 1837-44, Maikov learned Latin and read Horace, Ovid and Propertius. In his first volume of 1842 he published many antiquity-related poems of the so-called anthological variety.[4] In his article about Goethe's *Roman*

Elegies, Belinsky praised Maikov's poems as permeated with the classical spirit.[5] Maikov himself valued the virtues of anthological poetry, associating it with the harmony and clarity that he so cherished in ancient poetry. His admiration for ancient art as an ideal of beauty is reflected in his poetry, which often looks at the northern Russian landscape as if through ancient lenses.[6] Belinsky, discussing the ornamental character of Maikov's antiquity-related poems, stresses at the same time his inability to see the tragic elements of the ancient world.[7]

During his trip to Italy in late 1842 Maikov was able to compare his theoretical knowledge of Rome with the actual city. This comparison resulted in "Sketches of Rome," written in 1843-45, and published in 1847. His second European expedition, in 1858, did not, however, include Rome. Nevertheless, he brought back a new Italian cycle entitled "Neapolitan Album" (Neapolitanskii al'bom). Maikov was particularly interested in the problem of the conflict between the ancient pagan world and Christianity. In his mature years he preferred Rome to Greece.[8] His fascination with this topic found expression in his poems "Olinf and Esfir" (1840), "Three Deaths" (Tri smerti, 1852), and, perhaps its final formulation, in the poem "The Death of Lucius" (Smert' Lutsiia, 1863). At the end of his life Maikov returned to his ancient heroes and wrote a philosophical drama *Two Worlds* (Dva mira, published in 1880). This drama, which juxtaposes the Epicurean ethics of pagan civilization (great in its own right) to newborn Christian morality, preoccupied the poet and his reading public.

Innokenty Annensky, summarizing his reflections on "Ancient Rome" (Drevnii Rim, 1845), "Three Deaths," and *Two Worlds*, in his essay on Maikov's significance,"[9] stresses the fact that the absence of symbolism in Maikov's poetry prevented him from depicting and expressing the essence of the momentous conflict between ancient Roman culture and the early Christians. A. Amfiteatrov, in his article "Maikov and the Catacombs" (Maikov i katakomby)[10] examines Maikov's Rome-related poetry, with special attention to his three monumental works and their mixed reception by the critics. While sharing his colleague's critical opinion, he is slightly more appreciative of Maikov's efforts. In his defense of *Two Worlds*, he argues that there was something instinctive, and therefore inspired, in the poet's attachment to this topic.[11]

Maikov's cycle "Sketches of Rome," published in 1847 and reprinted in his collected works in 1901,[12] contains many elements

typical of Rome-related poetry. One finds here the invocation of the juxtaposition of North and South, the scorching southern sun, palms, cypresses, poppies, and Winckelmann. Certainly the ruins, aqueducts, fountains, and marble are here too. Annensky points out the predominance of the sun-drenched landscape and the fact that the author depicts momentary situations, thus, exercising his sculptural approach.[13] The poems reveal Maikov's sensitivity to colors and other visual elements. Well-written and well-informed, they convey the message but fail to stir emotion. They are somewhat lifeless, at best a still life with very few individual emotions and alien to symbolism.[14] What is characteristic of Maikov's Roman poetry is the confrontation between then and now, namely, between the grandeur of the ruins embellished by the rich southern vegetation and the poverty and homelessness of contemporary Italians.

In Stepanov's opinion, Maikov in this cycle overcame the limitations of his earlier "anthological" poems. Nevertheless, Stepanov perceives the poet's inability to recognize and understand contemporary Italy, and his insistence on seeing it only through the grandeur of the old legend as shortcomings.[15]

In addition to the fourteen poems of "Sketches of Rome," Maikov devoted two more cycles to his interest in antiquity. These are "Antinous's Album" (Al'bom Antinoia), consisting of eight poems, and "From Apollodor" (Iz Apollodora Gnostika), fifteen poems. Maikov's Antinous desires death because of his longing for a better and more beautiful existence among the stars. Annensky considers Maikov's mysticism too optimistic and, of course, disapproves of it. Both Annensky and Stepanov describe Maikov's poetry as contemplative, and Annensky underscores its abstract character.

Maikov was a popular poet during his lifetime and quite an authority in artistic and intellectual circles. His Rome-related poetry certainly influenced the following generation of Russian poets. He is credited with passing on this interest, if only by pursuing it, and was perceived by poets of the younger generation as a standard-setting writer. In 1903 Blok began his review of A. Yagodin's trilogy *From Ancient Rome* (Iz drevnego Rima), with these words: "Only in a creative way can one revive the life of the ancient world. That's how, for example, Maikov has done it."[16]

Notes

1. In the Russian literary tradition “anthological” referred not only to the Greek and Latin anthological poems, but also to the Russian poems paraphrasing ancient themes and style.

2. D. S. Mirsky, *A History of Russian Literature* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1949), 219.

3. Ibid, 219-20.

4. N. Stepanov, *Poety i prozaiki* (Moscow: Kudozhestvennaia Literatura, 1966), 255.

5. V. G. Belinskii, *Polnoe sobranie sochinenii* (Moscow: ANSSSR, 1953-1959), 6:7-14.

6. Stepanov, 257.

7. Ibid., 21.

8. Ibid., 257.

9. I. Annenskii, “A. N. Maikov i znachenie ego poezii,” in his *Knigi otrazhenii*, ed. N. T. Ashimbaeva (Moscow: Nauka, 1979) 679.

10. *Antiki* (St. Petersburg: Prometei, 1909), 250-78.

11. Ibid., 250-251.

12. A. N. Maikov, *Polnoe sobranie sochinenii* (St. Petersburg: 1901).

13. Cf. Annenskii, “A. N. Maikov i znachenie ego poeziii,” in *Knigi otrachenii*, 274.

14. Ibid.,“Chuzhd simvolizma,” 277, 279.

15. N. Stepanov, “Apollon Maikov,” in *Poety i prozaiki,* 260-261.

16. Aleksandr Blok, *Sobranie sochinenii,* ed. A. A. Surokov, et al. (Moscow and Leningrad, 1960-1963), 5: 531.

II.

The Forum of Forgotten Thoughts
Arseny Golenishchev-Kutuzov

The "transitional"[1] generation of poets in 1880-90, immediately preceding the Silver Age, was not insensitive to the appeal of Rome's symbolism. Count A. A. Golenishchev-Kutuzov (1848-1913), often called the poet of Nirvana,[2] was born in Tsarskoe Selo and educated at St. Petersburg University. Having received a thorough education, he was prepared to appreciate what Rome had to offer. He attended very good schools, worked with tutors of modern languages, and as a student of law at Moscow and Petersburg universities, studied with many professors from the philology departments. The study of law itself involved studying Roman law in depth. He especially enjoyed the lectures of Professor N. I. Krylov, who had a habit of comparing life in ancient Rome to the surrounding contemporary reality. Golenishchev-Kutuzov's educational background and poetic sensitivity prepared him to find inspiration in Rome. The poet considered his visit to Rome his most significant intellectual experience. He actually divided his life into two parts: before seeing Rome and afterwards.[3]

A short prose work published in 1912 in the collection *On Leaflets* (On Leaflets) contains his impressions and remarks on the subject. In the fragment numbered XXI he advises his readers to consolidate their knowledge of European history by looking at Rome, the center of Western civilization, from the Palatine Hill, while at the same time he abhorred seeing other tourists on the same Palatine Hill he recommended to his readers. Golenishchev-Kutuzov's first encounter with Rome took place in 1865 when, after a trip to Karlsbad for therapeutic purposes, he traveled across southern Europe. His second trip to Karlsbad took place in 1868-69, and again he ended it with a relatively prolonged stay in Europe. Later in his life he frequently repeated this pattern. The poetic yield of these visits

amounted to two poems addressed distinctly to Rome and some lyrical impressions related to his perception of Italy, with a special emphasis on the beauty of southern nature. He visited with the greatest of pleasure the northern Italian lakes and old Italian cities and returned to Rome, where he wrote most of his novel *Distance Calls* (Dal' zovet), published in 1907. It was intended as the first part of a trilogy; the titles of the remaining unfinished parts to be *Life Calls* (Zhizn' zovet) and *God Calls* (Bog zovet).

Nevertheless, A. A. Golenishchev-Kutuzov experienced and consequently expressed some ambivalence concerning his relation to Rome and the legacy of Mediterranean culture. In the same collection *On Leaflets*, in which he urges his readers to learn the history of European nations from summit of the Palatine Hill,[4] he also writes: "Young people, turn away your eyes from the bygone West to the reviving, victorious East! Look at it, study it. You'll see light!—"*Ex oriente lux!*"[5] Oscillation between the values represented by the East and the West endows his relation to Rome with dialectical tension. A similar tension (involving different polemics) is evident in the poem "To Rome" (K Rimu), published in the collection *Poems 1894-1901* (Stikhotovreniia). This fifteen-quatrain (abab), apostrophic poem presents two different ways of perceiving such lofty notions as "eternal" and "immortal," which are usually associated with Rome. The poem's persona enters Rome, which he had visited in the past, now in the last phase of his life:

> В случайностях житель жительского скитания
> Тревогой грез несмолкших одержим,
>
> [In the haphazard course of worldly wanderings
> Possessed by ceaseless reveries.]

And although Rome offers this visitor its usual beauty and the comfort of the southern climate, he confronts Rome with a transformed perception. His onetime youthful memory of Rome is replaced by a new outlook, determined by his old age and the realization that this is his last visit to the Eternal City. It also involves two areas of identification: in the past the lyric persona had identified with Rome as full of potential, and as a promise of fame and eternity.

> Всей славою, всей властью, всей красою
> Твоих вождей, героев и богов.

[With all the might, all the power and all the beauty
of your leaders, heroes and gods.[6]]

And later in the eighth stanza we read:

Казалось мне [...] И в радуге триумфа, в Капитолий
Певец войдет венчанный.

[It seemed to me … In the rainbow of triumph,
the crowned poet would ascend the Capitol.[7]]

Now the old visitor identifies with the old and fallen Rome:

И посреди развалин Палатина
Развалиной умолкйшей я стою.

[Amidst the Palatine's ruins
A silent ruin—I stand.]

D. S. Mirsky finds Golenishchev-Kutuzov "at his best when he speaks of death and destruction."[8] Indeed, his rhetoric is endowed with impressive power when he confronts the notion of "eternal" in "eternal Rome." In this confrontation he finds Rome to be as temporal and as transitory as human existence. Moreover, the lyric persona's awareness of its transitoriness is a gift that Rome lacks. G. A. Byaly notes that Golenishchev-Kutuzov uses abstract, at times even mystical, utterances in his search for the beyond.[9] This is exactly what one finds in the poem "To Rome," when the poet, on the threshold of death, denies the Roman legacy and dismisses such worldly matters as the history of civilization (symbolized by the Palatine), honors and literary fame (symbolized by the laurel and the Capitoline Hill), and organized religion (symbolized by the Vatican). The existence of Rome, like human existence, is temporal. Rome has little to offer the lyric "I" as he faces eternity:

Все, что вокруг — развалины, чертоги...
Что мне до них и что им до меня! —

[Everything around is ruins and palaces...
What are they to me and what am I to them.]

And later:

Я не могу – мгновенный – преклониться
Перед твоей мгновенною красой!

[I, being transitory, cannot bow
To your transitory beauty.[10]]

In this poem Golenishchev-Kutuzov contributes a negative testimonial to *admiratio Romae* poetry. The poem's message is powerful within the limits of an abstract, classicizing idiom. It uses such classical devices as substitution of Phoebus (Apollo) for sunlight, and compound adjectives like *luchezarnyi* (radiant). Perhaps most interesting here is the image of the Palatine as an island (or a ship) situated among Rome's misty hills, which are presented as waves: "Palatin — volnami gor tumannykh okaimlen" (The Palatine—surrounded by the waves of the misty mountains). This image, in a different context but with a similar function, will resurface in the poetry of Kuzmin and Mandelstam.[11]

The second Roman poem, "On the Roman Forum" (Na rimskom forume), was probably written later and was not published in the collection *Poems: 1894-1901*. As in the previous poem, the lyric persona is preoccupied with a meditation on death, but, unlike the hero of the previous poem, he identifies totally with the Roman Forum. The majority of Golenishchev-Kutuzov's landscapes are, in fact, what are called mindscapes.[12]

"On the Roman Forum" follows the same principle with one significant exception—the tendency in "pure art" by which the image of the city will replace nature as a symbol of the inner life of modern man. It is clear that the ruins, stones, and remaining buildings represent the lyric persona's own life. He expresses hope that as Rome's ruins bear witness to its old beauty and grandeur, the future reader will find similar values in the poet's legacy—"The Forum of my forgotten thoughts." The four-stanza (abab) poem is abstract and discursive, rather than image-conveying.

Golenishchev-Kutuzov represents a long line of poets for whom the Roman ruins prompt self-reflection. It is mainly, but not exclusively, part of the romantic heritage.[13] As a poet who finds the ruins to represent mental and psychological principles, Golenishchev-Kutuzov anticipates such Symbolist poets as Valery Bryusov, who in his poem "On the Forum" (Na forume) explores to a greater degree the immense symbolic potential of ruins and stones.

Golenishchev-Kutuzov cultivated close ties with other writers of his time, including A. N. Maikov, A. A. Fet, Ya. P. Polonsky, D. V.

Grigorovich, V. S. Solovyov and Dostoyevsky. His friendship with Maikov, whom he valued both as a writer and as a man, was especially close. He considered him to be his mentor, along with Fyodor Tyutchev and Afanasy Fet.[14] It is possible that his literary friendships influenced his perception of Italy as a literary theme. In general, his poetic appreciation of that country relies on a contrast of North and South, even though this contrast does not allow the poet to forget his origins—even in the midst of Venetian nights and the waves of the Adriatic, he hears the call of his native country. For example, in the poem that begins with the words "Zvezdistyi sumrak, tishina" (The starry dusk, silence) he writes:

> Хочу лететь на север милый.
> [I want to fly to my sweet North.[15]]

This faithful recollection of his native North when he is in the South puts him in the tradition of Goethe.[16] Such poems as "In the gardens of Italy" (V sadakh Italii),[17] "It cannot be" (Ne mozhet byt),[18] "The Gardens of Florence" (Sady Florentsii)[19] and "On the lagoons of Venice" (Na lagunakh Venetsii)[20] evoke images of the southern sky, blue during the day and starry at night—a landscape conducive to the contemplation of one's dreams about love. In the poem which opens with the words "The Gardens of Florence," we read:

> Мы вольны, нет для нас закона.
> Там, где-то далеко, на севере, в снегах
> Мы плена кинули ненастье—[21]
>
> [We are free, there is no law for us.
> There, somewhere, far away in the North, in snows,
> We cast away the foul climate of captivity—]

Therefore, the theme of freedom is associated with the theme of the South. Freedom to love is stressed by the decadent "outside the law" (vne zakona). A similar contextual relationship (Italy and love) appears in the poem "In the gardens of Italy," which echoes Goethe's famous "Mignon" from *Wilhelm Meisters Lehrjarhe*.

Although Golenishchev-Kutuzov's contribution to the image of Rome in Russian poetry is modest, it demonstrates his intimacy with the *admiratio Romae* tradition and expresses the poet's own ambiguities toward "the Forum of forgotten thoughts."

Notes

1. Evelyn Bristol, *A History of Russian Poetry* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1991), 161.
2. D. S. Mirsky, *A History of Russian Literature,* 346.
3. *Sochineniia Grafa A. Golenishchev-Kutozova* (St. Petersburg: A. S. Suvorin, 1914); see also the preface by N. Zver'ev.
4. Ibid., fragment no. XXI.
5. *Na letuchikh listkakh*: *mysli, vpechatleniia, zametki* (St. Petersburg: A. S. Surovin, 1912), 113.
6. *Sochineniia Grafa A. Golenishchev-Kutozova*, 264.
7. Ibid.
8. Mirsky, *A History of Russian Literature,* 346.
9. Cf. the introduction to the anthology *Poety 1880-1890-kh godov*, ed. L. K. Dolgopolov, et al., Biblioteka poeta, malaia seriia, 3d ed. (Moscow and Leningrad, Sovetskii Pisatel', 1964).
10. *Sochineniia Grafa A. Golenishchev-Kutozova*, 266.
11. See the chapter on Kuzmin, where the function of this image is discussed.
12. Cf. Introduction to *Poety 1880-1890-kh godov*.
13. Cf. A. Kent Hieatt, "The Genesis of Shakespeare's *Sonnets:* Spenser's *Ruins of Rome: by Bellay*," *PMLA* 98, no. 5 (October 1983): 800-14.
14. Cf. *Poety 1880-1890-kh godov*, 302.
15. *Sochineniia Grafa Golenishchev-Kutuzova*, 95-96.
16. This North-South antithesis was also explored poetically by Tyutchev and Konevskoi. Fet also wrote under the strong influence of Goethe's "Roman Elegies." Cf. André von Gronicka, *The Russian Image of Goethe* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press), 2:100.
17. *Sochineniia Grafa A. Golenishchev-Kutozova*, 274.
18. Ibid., 276.
19. Ibid., 282.
20. Ibid., 303.
21. Ibid., 282.

III.

And a Fourth Shall Never Be…
Vladimir Solovyov

Unity and reconciliation are the first concepts that come to mind when discussing the theme of Rome in the poetry of Vladimir Solovyov. Through his poetry and the mystical concepts of Symbolism as a kind of faith, Solovyov exercised a tremendous influence on Ivanov, Bely, Blok, and many others. According to Renato Poggioli, Solovyov was "the only modern Russian whom, along with Dostoyevsky, they considered their apostle and master.[1]

Solovyov (1853-1900), a brilliant writer and astonishingly complex philosopher, was born in Moscow, where his father was an eminent historian. The poet grew up among the Moscow intellectual elite and studied at Moscow and Petersburg universities. After defending his dissertation he traveled abroad to London and Egypt and upon his return started teaching philosophy at the universities where he had studied. However, his university career was cut short after his 1881 speech against capital punishment.

Solovyov's contribution to the Symbolists' collective image of ancient Rome is relatively modest, but it concerns an important aspect of the theme: the idea of the Third Rome and the balance between the Eastern and Western elements within the structure of civilization. These philosophical and political concerns are reflected in two poems: "Ex oriente lux" (1890) and "Pan-Mongolism" (Panmongolizm, 1895), in which the poet treats Rome as an abstract notion rather than as an image. Solovyov's notion of Rome represents a certain set of the values that he considered vital for Russian progress.

Since the thirteenth century the concept of Russia as the Third Rome has resurfaced repeatedly in Russian religious, philosophical, and political thought. "With the fall of Byzantium," writes V. V. Zenkovsky, "the idea of a 'wandering kingdom' began to be asserted with special force: The first two Romes (Rome and Constantinople) had fallen. Where was the third, the new one? Russian thinkers firmly and confidently accepted Moscow as the third Rome, for only in Russia, it was felt, had the Christian faith been preserved in its purity."[2] It should be noted that the application of the Third Rome concept to political rhetoric is not in keeping with the original spirit of the doctrine itself. As N. Ulyanov points out, originally the idea of the universal empire pertained to religious doctrine, not a secular or political one.[3] This idea influenced not only speculative fields, but the arts and poetry as well.[4] Renato Poggioli connects the origin of the idea of the Third Rome to the Symbolists' preoccupation with theology, which they considered the sister of poetry:

> [the Symbolists'] apocalyptic expectation of the imminent advent of a third and final phase in human and sacred history […] was often tied to the old myth of Moscow as the Third Rome, to the belief that Russia was to become the last of the three kingdoms of the spirit. It may not be amiss to recall at this point that the first Russian who developed this myth, the early sixteenth-century cleric Filofej of Pskov, had derived the idea of the three Romes from the heterodox doctrines of an Italian mystic of the twelfth century, Joachim of Flora, who, like Solovyov and his poetic disciples, had prophesied that the third person of the Trinity would sway the last age of the world in womanly form. All too many of Solovyov's followers treated that incarnation as an allegory of Holy Russia, thus falling back on the Slavophile idealization of Orthodoxy, on a national messianism as narrow-minded as Dostoevsky's.[5]

Solovyov, like many of his contemporaries, possessed an excellent classical background (he translated Plato quite early), which included a fluent knowledge of Greek, Latin, and Italian.[6] He developed a profound interest in philosophy at an early age; at twenty-one he defended his master's dissertation "The Crisis of Western Philosophy: Against the Positivists,"[7] and six years later his doctoral dissertation "Critique of Abstract Elements" at Petersburg University. Like many of his contemporaries he traveled west and south. However, unlike the majority of Russian poets, he was unaffected by the beauty of Italy. His nephew and biographer Sergey M. Solovyov was astonished by what he called "Solovyov's startling blindness toward Italy." "Neither nature, nor art, not even the churches of Italy made the slightest

impression on Solovyov. Here his total indifference toward the objective, his extreme subjectivism made itself evident. The country cherished by Goethe, Gogol, Baratynsky, to him appeared trivial."[8] Despite his indifference to the Italian landscape (he remarked in 1893 that "Finland is much more beautiful than Italy"[9]), Solovyov was intellectually and emotionally close to Roman ideas. He considered Rome (ancient and modern) the representative of Western civilization, which, in the later stages of his intellectual development, signified for him the unity of the world. Perhaps his best testimony to this legacy was given in the summer of 1887 at Fet's estate Vorobyovka, where both men were engaged in translating Virgil's *Aeneid*. The two poets managed to translate eighty lines a day. At the same time, Solovyov worked on the translation of Virgil's Fourth Eclogue, which fascinated him as a *sui generis portent* of forthcoming Christianity. In a footnote to his translation he wrote:

> This eclogue that seems mysterious even to the skeptical historian Gibbon, contributed to the conversion of Constantine the Great to Christianity and made Virgil almost a saint in the eyes of medieval Christians. The general sense of the poem is clear. The unification of the historical world in the Augustan Empire aroused in the poet the expectation of an even greater turning point—the coming of a Golden Age, or the reign of Saturn, with the return to earth of the virgin Astrea, the goddess of truth and peace. It is possible that Virgil may have been acquainted with the messianic prophecies of the Jews. The only mysterious thing is the relation of all these grandiose predictions to that authentic Roman child (was it the consul Pollion's son, or someone else's), with whom this poem is connected.[10]

This statement demonstrates Solovyov's profound knowledge of the period, and it illustrates not only his preoccupation with the eclogue, but with Virgil as a creator of the Roman idea. What is even more significant is Sergey Solovyov's belief that his uncle's work on the *Aeneid* deepened his interest in Roman Catholicism. Solovyov's own letter to Pirling seems to confirm this assumption: "Translating now, in my spare time, the *Aeneid* into Russian verse, I sometimes feel with a special vivacity this mysterious and at the same time natural necessity which made Rome the center of the universal [ecumenical] church."[11]

To put this preoccupation in broader perspective one has to remember that many Russian writers were fascinated by Virgil. Sometime later Valery Bryusov, with the help of Solovyov's nephew, was seriously engaged in translating the *Aeneid*. As G. P. Fedotov

writes in his essay on Virgil: "Virgil's shadow—perhaps invisibly—stood over the Russian Empire."[12]

The motif of Rome appears in two original poems "Ex oriente lux" and "Pan-Mongolism," both distinguished by a sharp polemical tone and an air of anxiety. The first poem's title is taken from the old Latin maxim: "Ex oriente lux, ex occidente lex" (From the East comes light, from the West law). Although the poet employs only the first clause of the proverb, he preserves the antithetical structure of the maxim throughout the poem. The problem of the relationship between East and West remained at the center of his intellectual efforts. His philosophical and religious thought reflected this question at every step of the development of his system. By the end of the 1880s, following his trip to Paris and Zagreb, he had undergone a substantial change. The expression of his new outlook occasioned a very deep rift with his former Slavophile friends. According to his nephew, "Ex oriente lux" (1890) was written in a period of internal crisis.

In his brief interpretation of this poem, Poggioli points to Solovyov's religious universalism as an underlying concept,[13] while Mirsky stresses the fact that Solovyov "was the first Russian thinker to divorce mystical and Orthodox Christianity from the doctrines of Slavophilism."[14]

Solovyov was deeply concerned with the question of the East-West conflict that persists throughout the history of civilization. In the "National Question" (Natsional'nyi vopros) he argued that it was "Russia's obligation to demonstrate that she does not only represent the East, but that she is indeed the Third Rome, not excluding the first [Rome], and to reconcile both in herself."[15] Certainly Solovyov considered this his own mission. In a letter to Aksakov he writes:

> You look *only* at papism, and I look first of all at grand, holy and eternal Rome, a fundamental and inalienable part of the universal church. I believe in that Rome, I bow down to it, I love it with all my heart, and with all the might of my soul I long for its restoration for the unity and totality of the world church, and let me be accursed as a patricide if I ever utter a word of condemnation against the sanctity of Rome.[16]

Unlike Dostoyevsky, who understood theocracy as the triumph of an Orthodox and imperial East over Catholic and papal Rome, Solovyov expected a future theocracy to unite the orthodox East with Catholic Rome, the Eastern empire with the Western pontificate. At least that is how Solovyov's nephew interprets the differences of these two close friends.[17]

The poem "Ex oriente lux," often quoted by critics probing the political views of its author, has at times invited contradictory interpretations, for example, the views expressed by émigré critic Konstantin Mochulsky and Soviet critic G. A. Byaly. Writing in 1951 in Paris,[18] Mochulsky characterizes the poem as extremely nationalistic. This judgment was challenged a few decades later by the Polish writer Wiktor Woroszylski, a Slavist by training and author of many books and articles about Russian literature, who in the fifties started as a socialist realist poet, and in the eighties was involved in the anti-Communist opposition. Woroszylski's essay "New Pan-Mongolism?" contests the accusation of nationalism on the grounds that "Solovyov's messianism sets for the Russian nation too categorical and too maximalistic a condition of religious rebirth, thus preventing any sort of nationalism to identify with its program."[19]

In his introductory essay to an anthology of poetry of the 1880s and 90s, published in 1964 in the Soviet Union, Byaly devotes nearly an entire page to the poem, which for obvious reasons is not printed in the anthology. For the same obvious reasons he would have us believe that the poem is a "manifestation of political opposition," even if it is veiled in "metaphysical obscurity."[20]

Universally known examples of great historical confrontations between the East and the West constitute the subject of this eight-stanza *abab* poem. The battle of Thermopylae in 480 B. C., when the Spartan King Leonidas resisted the Persian army, illustrates the poet's message that Greek society, by possessing the Promethean gift of freedom, was predestined to victory. Expeditions to the Ganges and India by Alexander the Great, and later by the Romans, are further instances of East-West confrontations.

Not until the third stanza does Solovyov allude to the remaining clause of the proverb, which is missing from the title:

> И силой разума и права –
> Всечеловеческих начал –
> Воздвиглась Запада держава.
>
> [And by the strength of law and reason
> of the human principles—
> the power of the West rose.[21]]

In this stanza, as well as in the fifth and seventh, the poet touches upon an idea dear to him and to Merezhkovsky and Ivanov—the idea

of the unity of the world, an idea that finds expression in the following phrases:

> И миру Рим единство дал,
> [And Rome gave unity to the world]
>
> Душа вселенной тосковала,
> [The soul of the universe yearned]
>
> Тот свет, исшедший из Востока
> С Востоком Запад примирил.
>
> [This light, coming from the East
> reconciled the East with the West.]

Thus instead of a confrontation between East and West the poet proposes mutual enhancement, provided that the East is represented not by Xerxes, but by Christ. He demands that his reader comes to the right conclusion and makes the right choice. This beloved idea is expressed not only in this poem but in his other writings as well, especially in his *The Great Schism and Christian Politics* (Velikii spor i khristianskaia politika).[22]

Three features of the Roman legacy are brought forth in "Ex oriente lux": the Roman eagle in the third stanza represents the military strength and the greatness of the Roman Empire; the phrase "and Rome gave unity to the world" underlines the function of Rome as a force unifying Western civilization and conveys the poet's longing for a Universal Church; and perhaps the most important part of this legacy—Rome as lawgiver (ex occidente lex).

In a later poem, numbered XXVI and entitled "Pan-Mongolism," Solovyov returns to the theme of the Third Rome. He coined the term "Pan-Mongolism" to represent a notion corresponding to Pan-Slavism and signifying some sort of union of the Asian nations.[23]

He had been preoccupied with the relationship between the Christian and Islamic worlds for some time. The third part of *The Great Schism* (published in *Rus'*, February 1883) was entitled "Christianity and the Reaction of the Eastern Principles in the Heresies—The Meaning of Islam." In a letter to Aksakov, written in January 1883, the poet summarizes his ideas:

> All the heresies, from the first Gnostic to the iconoclastic inclusively, originate from one source—the reaction of an Eastern inhuman god against God man, and this is linked with Islam; therefore, in that link the main sin of Byzantium (and of all Eastern Christianity) is indicated. Byzantium

> which theoretically stood for the Orthodox Christian principle of God-man, did not uphold it in life and practically fell into the heresy of separating the divine from the human, from which I deduce, on the one hand, the extremities of monasticism, and on the other, I explain the temporary success of Islam, which openly admits the incommensurability of the divine and the human.[24]

Over a century ago, then, Solovyov was concerned with the imminent confrontation with the people of Asia. In 1890 he published two articles on this issue: "China and Europe" and "Japan." Several years later, he formulated his final views on the subject of Byzantium in a series of articles published in 1896 in four consecutive issues of the journal *Vestnik Evropy* (The Herald of Europe, 1-4). A combination of these concerns found poetic expression in the poem "Pan-Mongolism."[25] The connection between the fear of invasion by the Mongol tribes and the doctrine of the third Rome existed in the Russian consciousness long before Solovyov. Yury Lotman and Boris Uspensky point to the complexity of this problem:

> The main point here is that the fall of Constantinople to the Turks (1453) coincided approximately with the final overthrow of Tatar rule in Russia (1480); these two events were naturally linked in Russia, being regarded as a shift in the centre of world holiness. At the same time as Islam was victorious over Orthodoxy in Byzantium, in Russia the reverse had taken place, i.e., Orthodoxy was triumphant over Islam."[26]

In "Pan-Mongolism," Solovyov presents history as a cycle perpetuated by sin and punishment. Thus Pan-Mongolism is an instrument of destiny unleashed as a response to the decay of spiritual life:

> остыл божественный алтарь,
> И отреклися от Мессии
> Иерей и князь, народ и царь.
>
> [The divine altar has grown cold
> Both priest and prince, people and tsar
> renounce the Messiah.]

The phenomenon of Pan-Mongolism is anthropomorphized ("he raised") in the poem and is given certain sacred qualities as an instrument of fate: the divine destiny, instrument of fate, instrument of the divine punishment. And probably because of this function, the Asiatic tribes, in addition to their insect-like qualities ("swarm of the

awakened tribes, host of regiments, innumerable as locusts") are endowed with divine protection as well, "protected by a mysterious power."

The poem is more discursive than lyrical. The introduction of the term *slovo* (word) is immediately followed by the antithetical characteristic which the author attributes to the phenomenon itself. Thus the "word is wild," but it carries the prediction of the fulfillment of destiny. This prophecy corresponds to the prophetic character of the doctrine of the Third Rome.[27] The second and third stanzas illustrate the role that "Pan-Mongolism" played in the theory of the three Romes. After combining these two notions ("Pan-Mongolism" and the idea of the Third Rome) and then demonstrating the mechanisms in the example of Byzantium (the second Rome), the poet brings the matter home: Russia did not learn from the errors of Byzantium and in considering herself the Third Rome, she commits the sin of pride. The fifth, sixth, and seventh stanzas describe this unavoidable danger. If in the first stanza the poet deals with an abstraction (*word*), here he resorts to geographical ("from the Malayan waters to the Altai / The chiefs from the Eastern islands / At the walls of China whose glory has passed") and anthropological (*tribes*) reality. We also encounter the juxtaposition of lower social organization (tribes) versus the higher (nation, second and third Rome), with the first Rome representing an ideal standard of political organization.[28]

The final two stanzas are written from a post-catastrophic point of view: Russia had been conquered, the past greatness had to be forgotten. In "Ex oriente lux," Solovyov uses the metonymy of an eagle as Rome—"Royal eagle of Rome." Here he uses the same device, namely, the substitution of emblem for country: "The two-headed eagle is crushed."

There is an interesting parity between two lines of "Pan-Mongolism" and two lines of Bryusov's "Julius Caesar" (Iulii Tsezar'), written in 1905 after the devastating Tsushima defeat. Both poets create the vision of humiliation caused by potential defeat:

Solovyov, "Pan-Mongolism":
И желтым детям на забаву
Даны клочки твоих знамен.

[And the yellow children are given
scraps of your flags to play with.]

Bryusov, "Julius Caesar":
Но что же! Римских легионов
Значки – во храмах у Парфян.

[And what ! The emblems of the Roman legions'
are placed in the Parthian's temples.]

As in the second Rome, whose fall followed the nation's renunciation of Christ ("And they renounce the Messiah..."), in the Third Rome it will follow the forsaking of Christ's legacy ("Who could forget the behest of love"). The theme of Russia's sinful pride permeates both poems. It is expressed explicitly in "Ex oriente lux":

О Русь! в предвидении высоком
Ты мыслей гордой занята.

[Oh, Russia! in your lofty foresight
You are absorbed in proud thought.]

and is alluded to twice in "Pan-Mongolism":

И все твердят льстецы России:
Ты – третий Рим, ты – третий Рим;

[And all Russia's flatterers repeat:
You are the third Rome, you are the Third Rome;]

and

Смирится в трепете и страхе
Кто мог завет любви забыть.

[He who could forget the law of love
Will submit in fear and trembling.]

Both poems must be treated as metatexts, since they directly refer to the widely-known prophecy of Filofei of Pskov. The last line of "Pan-Mongolism" is an exact quotation of that prophecy: "And a Fourth shall never be..."

Neither poem constitutes a simple repetition or variation of the text to which they allude. Instead, both represent challenging revisions in which Solovyov questions the self-congratulatory attitude which characterizes Russia's perception of itself in the light of the idea of a Third Rome.

Many of the questions raised by Solovyov remain unresolved more than a century later.

Notes

1. Renato Poggioli, *The Poets of Russia* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1960), 119.

2. V. V. Zenkovskii, *A History of Russian Philosophy, trans. G. L. Kline* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1953), 1:35

3. N. Ulianov, "Kompleks Filofeja," *Novyj Zhurnal* 45 (June 1956): 251.

4. For a thorough summary of the history of this concept see Robert Lee Wolf, "The Three Romes: The Migration of an Ideology and the Making of an Autocrat," in Henry A. Murray, ed., *Myth and Mythmaking* (New York: Geroge Braziler, 1960), 174-198. See also Iu. M. Lotman and B. A. Uspenskii, "Echoes of the Notion of 'Moscow as the Third Rome' in Peter the Great's Ideology," in *The Semiotics of Russian Culture,* ed. Ann Shukman, trans. N. F. C. Owen (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan, 1984), 53-67; originally in *Khudozhestvennyi iazyk srednevekoviia* (Moscow: Nauka, 1982)

5. Poggioli, *The Poets of Russia*, 120.

6. He knew poems of Catullus by heart and read Dante and Petrarch in the original. In the seventies he taught Latin and Greek to his friend's wife. Cf. S. M. Solov'ev, *Zhizn' i tvorcheskaia evoliutsiia V. Solov'eva* (Brussels: Foyer Oriental Chrétien, 1977), 74.

7. In his *History of Russian Literature* (348), Mirsky erroneously presents this work as Solov'ev's doctoral dissertation.

8. S. M. Solov'ev, *Zhizn' i tvorcheskaia evoliutsiia V. Solov'eva*, 150.

9. Sergei M. Solov'ev, Introduction in V. S. Solov'ev, *Stikhotvoreniia*, edited by S. M. Solov'ev, 6th ed. (Izdatel'stvo S. M. Solov'eva, 1914), 36.

10. V. S. Solov'ev, *Stikhotvoreniia,* 221.

11. S. Solov'ev, Introduction, *Stikhotvoreniia*, 29.

12. G. P. Fedotov, in *Novyi grad. Sbornik statei*, ed. Iurii Ivask (New York: Izdatel'stvo Chekova, 1952), 216.

13. Renato Poggioli, *The Poets of Russia*, 120.

14. D. S. Mirsky, *A History of Russian Literature,* 347-48.

15. Cf. S. M. Solov'ev, *Zhizn' i tvorcheskaia evoliutsiia V. Solov'eva,* 218. Also, V. S. Solov'ev, *Politics, Law, and Morality*: *Essays*, ed. and trans. Vladimir Wozniuk (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2000), 18.

16. S. M. Solov'ev, *Zhizn' i tvorcheskaia evolutsiia V. Solov'eva*, 220-221.

17. Ibid., 203.

18. K. Mochul'skii, *Vladimir Solov'ev: Zhizn' i uchenie*, 2ded. (Paris: YMCA Press, 1951), 189.

19. Wiktor Woroszylski, "Nowy Panmongolizm?" *Zeszyty Literackie*, 10 (1985): 112.

20. G.A. Bialyi, Introduction, in *Poety 1880-1890-kh godov*, 40.

21. V. S. Solov'ev, *Stikhotvoreniia*, 98.

22. Cf. S. M. Solov'ev, *Zhizn' i tvorcheskaia evoliutsiia V. Solov'eva*, 217-18.

23. It coincides with the development of Pan-Islamism, an ideological movement led by Jemal al Din Afgani (1839-1897), which had religious as well as political objectives. Cf. p.30 ff. of Serge A. Zenkovsky, *Pan-Turkism and Islam in Russia* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1967), 345. Also: V.S. Soloviev," A Brief Tale about the *Antichrist,"* in *Politics, Law, and Morality*, 264-66.

24. S. M. Solov'ev, *Zhizn' i tvorcheskaia evoliutsiia V. Solov'eva*, 219. The letter was originally published in *Russkaia Mysl'* 12 (1913): 18.

25. Cf.: S. M. Solov'ev, 342-44, and K. Mochul'skii, 212-13.

26. Iu. M. Lotman and B. A. Uspenskii, "Echoes of the Notion 'Moscow as the Third Rome' in Peter the Great's Ideology," in *The Semiotics of Russian Culture*, 55-56.

27. Georgii Chulkov, in his article "Poeziia V. Solov'eva," *Voprosy zhizni* 4-5 (1905); 101-17, writes: " The very important and innermost in Solov'ev's poetry is its prophetic character," 103.

28. "Contemporaries did not notice that to look to Rome as the norm and ideal of state power was itself traditional for Russian culture," Lotman and Uspenskii, 53.

IV.

The Contradictions of the Northern Pilgrim Dmitry Merezhkovsky

Dmitry Sergeyevich Merezhkovsky, the forerunner of the modernist movement in Russia, played a considerable role in creating the image of ancient Rome for the Russian reader. Born in St. Petersburg and educated at St. Petersburg University, Merezhkovsky (1865-1941) embarked on a successful literary career very early. In 1889 he married Zinaida Gippius, an exceptionally talented young poet. They created and maintained a literary salon that influenced the entire literary environment in St. Petersburg, and later in Paris where they emigrated after the Communist take-over. With a degree in history and philosophy, vast traveling experience, and fluency in Greek and Latin, Merezhkovsky was perfectly equipped to contribute to the revival of the symbolism of antiquity, and of ancient Rome in particular. He did so primarily in *The Death of the Gods* (Smert' bogov, *Julian the Apostate* in the English translation)[1] and the first part of his renowned historical trilogy entitled *Christ and Antichrist* (Khristos i Antikhrist), which brought him fame, first outside of Russia, and subsequently in his own country, where a novel on an ancient subject was still a rarity.[2]

In the trilogy *Christ and Antichrist* Merezhkovsky formulated his religious and philosophical concept—a concept very insightfully described by Nikolai Berdyayev:

> He was possessed by the pathos of globalism, of coercive universalism, typical for the Latin spirit, for the Roman idea. He apparently received this yearning for global unity from Dostoevsky. He perceives the entire world and the whole of world history either as poles, or as aspects of Christ and Antichrist. The whole diversity of the world's life, the whole immense sphere of relativity is lost from his view, does not interest him, or is

> brought by him to polar depths. In him there is not a grain of Goethean wisdom penetrating the cosmic multitude. [3]

Very much the same principle of polarization permeates the three poems that Merezhkovsky dedicated to the topic of ancient Rome.[4] "Pantheon" (Panteon), written in 1891 during the poet's stay in Rome, is structured around two sets of antitheses that lend tension to an otherwise poetically uneventful work. The first opposition is introduced in one of the opening lines:

> Путник с печального Севера...
> в древний вхожу Пантеон.
>
> [A pilgrim from the sad North. . .
> I am entering the ancient Pantheon.]

This opening introduces the confrontation between the lyrical subject and the symbolism of the Pantheon. When the wayfarer from the North enters this landmark, modern man is confronted with the Roman past, but the ancient (pagan) form of this structure is also confronted with its present Christian content and function.

As for many previous visitors, Winckelmann and Goethe the greatest among them, the heritage of Rome is twofold for Merezhkovsky. Seeing Greece in and through Rome, the poet addresses Greek gods. In this relatively short work he twice refers to the image of Olympus. With the theme of the Northern wayfarer in Rome, Merezhkovsky continues the tradition of the European *admiratio di Roma* literature that was originated by outsiders and cultivated especially by travelers from the North. Goethe in his *Roman Elegies* repeatedly refers to his lyrical subject's vantage point:

> …his tales about snow, mountains, and houses of wood (II) ;
> Oh, how happy I feel in Rome, when I think of the old days
> Dull gray days, till I fled from the imprisoning north! (VII).[5]

This topoi, created by Goethe, functioned in Russian literature for some time, perhaps since the first translation of the *Roman Elegies* by Strygovshchikov in 1840. [6]

In "Pantheon" the unique relation between the Northerner and Rome receives a special dimension in the words: "sladostnym strakhom obiat" (embraced by a delightful fear). Muratov, who visited Rome much later, made a similar confession in his famous "Images of Italy." "This eternal greenery," he writes, "crowning the hills and

ruins of Rome, excites and charms the hearts of Northern people, as if it were the words of ancient myth or the appearance of primeval deities."[7]

The Pantheon, built by Agrippa in 27 B.C. and rebuilt by Hadrian in 120 A.D., a golden age of Roman architecture, has been used continuously as a place of worship since its very beginning. It lends itself to such symbolic interpretation, especially since Hadrian, a very Hellenized Roman emperor and participant in the Eleusinian mysteries, intended it to reflect his deep interest in Greek civilization and to stress unity by "bringing together all the gods in an amazing new Pantheon built to symbolize the community of heaven under its prodigious and daring dome."[8] Later, in 609 A.D., it was dedicated as a Christian church. It is only natural that Merezhkovsky found the embodiment of his main philosophical and religious concerns—the relation between the principles of the pagan world and those of Christianity—in the Roman Pantheon. The polarities multiply.[9] The confrontation of space and time in the poem's introductory line is paralleled by a confrontation on the spiritual level—the opposition of the human spirit with the grandeur of the gods.

The atmosphere of the church reflects the suffering of Christ but the serene sky seems to represent the ancient (and very Hellenic) ideal of beauty and life. In the Pantheon these contradictions are united just as they are united in the human soul, without losing their dialectic polarization:

> Спорят в душе человека, как в этом божественном храме
> Вечная радость и жизнь, вечная тайна и смерть.
>
> [Eternal joy and life, eternal mystery and death
> Dispute in man's soul, as in this divine temple.]

This closing statement is preceded by the eternal, universal question: Where is Truth? Combining two grand cultures of antiquity, the Pantheon, Rome's Olympus, inspires the dispute that reflects Merezhkovsky's own concern. As we have seen, other works of the poet revolve around the quest for Hellenism, which reflects the quest for the inner self. The poem's lyrical subject identifies with Christianity and martyrdom.

> Видите: это – мой Брат,
> Это – мой Бог!... Перед Ним я невольно склоняю колени...

> [You see – this is my Brother,
> This is – my God! Before Him I involuntarily bend my knees.]

Thus in the person of the pilgrim, the sad North (pechal'nyi Sever) and Christianity share a common denominator. As a Northern wayfarer is alienated in the South, Christ is alienated in the Pantheon, under the Roman sky, pagan in its beauty and serenity.

> В тихой лазури небес – нет ни мученья, ни смерти ...
> [In the silent azure of the sky – there is no torment, no death…]

B. Griftsov points out that for the poet, "Christianity is first of all the destruction of beauty. Merezhkovsky shows no mercy to Christianity."[10]

Apart from its own symbolism, the poem gives voice to the architectural symbolism inherent in the plan of the Pantheon, namely, the correlation between the dome as a symbol of Providence and the sky that constitutes and substitutes for the cupola in the Pantheon. By making the Pantheon a reflection of the human soul, Merezhkovsky revives the romantic, specifically Byronic, notion of Rome as "the city of the soul."[11]

The notion of Rome as an ideal is pertinent to two other poems by Merezhkovsky: "Rome" (Rim) and "The Future Rome" (Budushchii Rim). In these poems the fate of the Eternal City is perceived as emblematic of the fate of humanity, and of its yearning for freedom and unity. The rhetorical and teleological question: "Kto tebia sozdal, o Rim?" (Who created you, oh, Rome?) opens "Rome" and is answered in the very same line: "Genii narodnoi svobody" (The genius of national freedom). The second, longer poem, "The Future Rome," is concerned with the problem of unity. It opens with the equally rhetorical statement: "Rim eto mira edinstvo" (Rome is the unity of world). At the heart of these two poems lies an assessment of Rome as the center of the world, which by its very existence endows everything with special significance. Merezhkovsky believed that the city represented the highest expression of ancient civilization, both Greek and Roman; in one essay he writes that Greco-Roman "impersonality" expresses itself in the city.[12]

Thus the poems dedicated to Rome constitute a testimonial to the city and to the ideal that is preserved as a potential in the stones and ruins that are so pertinent to the theme of Rome in Goethe's first "Roman Elegy."[13] For Merezhkovsky, "stones" and "ruins" are the

only poetically charged words and the only concrete images in poems otherwise entirely rhetorical and devoid of tangible representations, their symbolism relying solely on historio-philosophical categories. But it is significant that the main message of each poem is related to the above images. In "Rome" the "sacred stones" are the only heirs of the legacy of the Roman Republic—freedom; in "The Future Rome" the ruins may contain the panacea for the discord in the human race. Searching among the ruins, richly symbolical in itself, becomes the quest throughout the history of Western civilization for a new formula of unity. Both poems reflect Merezhkovsky's religious quest.

In "Rome" the myth of the creation of Rome is reinforced with the Promethean myth, both symbolizing the defiance of the human spirit, and both actualized in the poem in the Christian dogma of the immortality of the soul. The enslaved mortal is contrasted here with the free immortal one who is equal to the gods; ancient Rome is the embodiment of sacred values. "The Future Rome" directly identifies Rome with *sacrum* in the final exclamatory rhetorical question:

> Где ты, неведомый Бог, где ты, о будущий Рим?
> [Where are you, unknown God, where are you, future Rome?]

The symbolism of these two poems is historically oriented. The references, thus addressed to the educated reader, constitute a kind of metatext. The very word "Rome" is used repeatedly in its manifold meaning—as city, state (republic or empire), center of Christianity, center of the world, and period of civilization.

Merezhkovsky, who assigned an instrumental role to Greek statues in his prose, found only one Roman statue worthy of his attention, namely, that of Marcus Aurelius, the emperor-philosopher, illustrious member of the eminent dynasty of Antoninus. Marcus Aurelius lived in a period between two great crises: the struggle of the ancient world with barbarians and Christianity with paganism. Merezhkovsky believed that Marcus Aurelius was best equipped to carry out an end-of-the-century message. "And the wisdom of the great Caesar shines over a world doomed to perish," he writes in his essay on Marcus Aurelius,[14] applying the notion of doom to ancient Rome, as many of his contemporaries applied it to the fate of Petersburg. The same sentiments are repeatedly expressed in the poem "Marcus Aurelius" (Mark Avrelii):

Он знал: погибнет Рим отцов,
[He knew: the Rome of his fathers will perish]

and further:

За Рим, не веря в торжество,
Он умер и предвидел,
Что Риму не воскреснуть вновь,

[He died for Rome, not believing in Rome's triumph
And foresaw
That Rome would not rise again.[15]]

In his essay Merezhkovsky admits that he was overwhelmed by Ernest Renan's book *Marc Aurele et la fin de la monde antique.* His identification with the drama of Marcus Aurelius follows the course determined by Renan's title and reflects his own fascination. Prompted by Renan's great narrative, he wrote a twelve-stanza poem with regular, grammatical *abab* rhymes, for the most part, executed in the form of a meditation upon seeing the statue of Aurelius. The first two stanzas consist of a rhetorical apostrophe to the statue, which has survived centuries of turmoil. In the opening lines Merezhkovsky touches upon the problem of survival:

Века, разрушившие Рим,
Тебя не тронув, пролетели,
Над изваянием твоим, ...

[The centuries, destroying Rome,
Passed over your statue
without touching you.]

As a student of classical history and a studious visitor to Rome, the poet probably knew that the statue owes its preservation to mistaken identity; it was believed to represent Constantine the Great. For this reason alone it escaped the fate of countless other pagan monuments which were destroyed and melted down during the Middle Ages. As a writer Merezhkovsky was not interested in presenting historical facts but in illustrating his historio-philosophical concepts.[16]

By ending the first stanza with the exclamation "Bezsmertnyi Mark Avrelii!" (Immortal Marcus Aurelius!), the poet allows his readers to believe that it is due to the merits of Marcus Aurelius that this sculptural representation has survived. While this exclamation refers to the unceasing values of the emperor's philosophy, at the

same time it permits the poet to allude to the statue's miraculous preservation. Interestingly enough, throughout the poem the point of focus moves back and forth from the person to the statue and from the statue to the person. In his awe for the philosopher, Merezhkovsky does not hesitate to further idealize the emperor's divine status. In the eleventh, penultimate, stanza he refers to Marcus Aurelius in the third person, that is, in a more descriptive manner:

> Теперь стоит он, одинок,
> Под голубыми небесами
> На Капитолии, как бог.
>
> [Now he stands alone
> Under the blue skies
> On the Capitol, like a god.]

Aurelius experienced loneliness as an emperor and as a statue; the theme of loneliness pervades all of Merezhkovsky's work.[17]

When the statue was taken to represent Constantine, it stood near the papal palace, the Lateran. As soon as it was stripped of its religious symbolism, it was removed by Michelangelo Buonarroti to the Capitol.[18] These facts, however, proved irrelevant for the poet in Merezhkovsky, who was known for his liberal treatment of history, particularly when a religious or philosophical argument was at stake.

In his fascinating essay "The Statue in Pushkin's Poetic Mythology," Roman Jakobson writes:

> Verse about a statue is accordingly a sign of a sign or an image of an image. In a poem about a statue a sign (signum) becomes a theme or a signified object (signatum). The conversion of a sign into a thematic component is a favored formal device of Pushkin's, and this is usually accompanied by exposed and pointed internal conflicts (antinomies) which are the necessary, indispensable basis of any semiotic world.[19]

In the case of the statue of Marcus Aurelius, this basis is even more complex. Thanks to its great visibility, over the centuries this statue engendered hundreds of mounted figures throughout the Western hemisphere.[20] But as art historians emphasize, the statue of a Roman emperor is not a representation of the emperor's appearance, but of his image, and thus served as a vehicle of political propaganda. Therefore, already in the statue itself we are addressing an image of an image, which is further idealized in the poem. Merezhkovsky is not the only poet who attempted such a task. In 1832 Adam Mickiewicz

in his "Digression" (Ustęp) to the third part of his *Forefather's Eve* (Dziady) contrasted the statue of Marcus Aurelius to Falconet's statue of Peter the Great, with all the political and moral implications of such positioning. Mickiewicz chose to exemplify his moral judgment by contrasting the two monuments, especially the horses. The two statues (Marcus Aurelius and Peter the Great) had much in common, though their relationship has always been antithetical.[21] In commissioning the monument to Peter the Great, the court of Catherine the Great expected Falconet to deliver something similar to the celebrated Roman equestrian statue. The sculptor (who had never seen Rome) detested the Roman statue, and considered the representation of the horse inferior from an aesthetic point of view.[22] In his epistolary debate about the statue of Marcus Aurelius and his project for the monument of Peter the Great, the philosophy of art takes its place in an interesting configuration with the philosophy of power. What is more interesting, Falconet himself believed that he had portrayed Peter the Great as a legislator, that is, a philosopher.[23]

To some extent, we owe Mickiewicz's concept of the two conflicting equestrian images to Falconet's determination. In his book *Pushkin's Bronze Horseman*, Waclaw Lednicki writes that "willfulness and inexactness lie at the base of the entire conception of the poet."[24] Mickiewicz's vision partially serves as what Jakobson termed the *signum* for *The Bronze Horsemen*,[25] after which any Russian poem depicting the mounted emperor is a potential, multi-layered metatext, and a contribution to the so-called "Petersburg text."

Merezhkovsky's direct address to the Roman emperor ends with the words "philosopher-emperor," an attribute that reflects not only the person, but also the statue. According to art historian Donald Strong, "the public image of the philosopher-emperor is skillfully handled by the sculptors of the day. Some of the portraits of Marcus, and indeed of his successors, are occasionally difficult to distinguish from traditional heads of famous Greek philosophers."[26]

There are certain convergences in the poetic images of Marcus Aurelius in Mickiewicz's and Merezhkovsky's renderings. We have already mentioned immortality. Merezhkovsky writes: "Bezsmertnyi Mark Avrelii" (Immortal Marcus Aurelius) and Mickiewicz states: "Zgadniesz, że dojdzie do nieśmiertelności" (One would guess that he will attain immortality).[27] There are also similar oversights in the two renderings. The Roman emperor was not as irreproachable as the Polish poet would have us believe: he was guilty of persecuting Christians; moreover, his statue does not depict him at the moment of

his triumphal return. Instead, he is "dressed as a general in short tunic, general's cloak and laced riding boots,"[28] while the celebration of victory would require the triumphal quadriga.

Similar faults can be found in Merezhkovky's description:

> ... как триумфатор
> Сидишь на бронзовом коне [...]
> И в складках падает с плеча
> простая риза, не порфира […]
> И нет в руке его меча.
>
> [Like a triumphant conqueror
> You sit on a bronze steed /…/
> A simple garment, not a purple one
> falls in pleats from the shoulder /…/
> And there is no sword in his hand.]

The absence of the purple coat[29] and sword gains symbolic significance here. These two images contain one of the dichotomies typical of Merezhkovsky. The poet wants Marcus Aurelius to be humble and triumphant simultaneously. This is an example of what Berdyayev calls "doubling thoughts" and what Griftsov describes as "a passion for logical schemes and contradictions."[30] Just as Falconet created his horse as an antithetic response to the Marcus Aurelius statue, both Mickiewicz and Merezhkovsky portray their emperors as the antithesis of the image of the Russian tsar. It seems that Merezhkovsky went even further in his idealization, comparing the emperor to a god, which may be a poetic realization of the intent of ancient image-makers. Roman Jakobson stresses in his essay that "plastic art was linked to the concept of paganism in the Russian view."[31]

Merezhkovsky through the use of epithets attempts to convey the stoic tranquility of the emperor-philosopher: in blessed silence; imperturbable is his peace; sadness unearthly; hopeless sadness; the peace of great humility; tranquil grief.

It is hard to assess which of the two texts by Merezhkovsky—the poem or the essay—is more emotionally charged, since the latter, besides its informative virtues, appeals strongly to the reader's feelings and imagination: The mood of doom and the end of an era, pertinent to the frame of mind of all Russian poets of that time, is superimposed by Merezhkovsky on the period which was considered at the time to be a "golden age." It is Merezhkovsky's interpretation

of Aurelius's *Meditations* and of Renan's book that casts this shade on the emperor and his fate.

Merezhkovsky selected a few philosophical categories, rather than images, which helped him to express his own intellectual and religious anxieties and to promote the ideas constituting the *modus vivendi* of his life. As a poet he was not further inspired by the city of Rome and the history of Roman civilization. Although Merezhkovsky is not considered a great poet, his literary output exerted an enormous influence on his generation in Russia and abroad. His poems about Rome contributed to the development of the symbolic potential of that topic and proved that the subject served as a vehicle for a vital message.

Notes

1. "Iulian otstupnik" was originally titled "Otverzhennyi."
2. A. Amfiteatrov, "Russkii literator i rimskii imperator," in *Literaturnyi al'bom* (St. Petersburg: Izd. Tovarishchestva Obshch. Pol'za, 1907), 150.
3. Nikolai Berdiaev, "Novoe khristianstvo (D. S. Merezhkovskii)" in *Sobranie sochinenii* (Paris: YMCA-Press, 1989) 3:490-491. I am indebted to Professor Zoia Yurieff for bringing this article to my attention.
4. D. S. Merezhkovskii, *Sobranie stikhov, 1883-1910* (Letchworth: Bradda Books, 1969), 60-63.
5. J. W. Goethe, *Roman Elegies*, trans. David Luke (London: Chatto & Windus, 1977).
6. Cf. Andre von Gronicka, *The Russian Image of Goethe*, 2:268.
7. P. P. Muratov, *Obrazy Italii: Polnoe izdanie v trekh tomakh* (Leipzig: Z. J. Grschebin, 1924), 25.
8. Royston Lambert, *Beloved and God: The Story of Hadrian and Antinous* (New York: Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 1984), 42.
9. Cf. Berdiaev's statement: "Merezhkovskii constantly aspires toward synthesis, toward the third containing the thesis and antithesis, toward the treble" ("Novoe khristianstvo," 491).
10. B. Griftsov, "D. S. Merezhkovskii," in *Tri myslitelia* (Moscow: V. M. Sablin, 1911), 105.
11. George Byron, *Childe Harold's Pilgrimage*, Canto 4, 78.
12. D. S. Merezhkovskii, *Zachem voskres? Religioznaia lichnost' i obshchestvennost'* (Petrograd: Korabl', 1916), 11.
13. Omry Ronen discusses the problem of the poetry of stones in Goethe and in Mandel'shtam in his book *An Approach to Mandel'shtam* (Jerusalem: The Magnes Press, 1983), 48.
14. "Mark Avrelii, ocherk," *Trudovoi vestnik literatury i nauki* 12, no. 21 (1 November 1891): 250-66.
15. D. S. Merezhkovskii, *Sobranie stikhov 1883-1910*, 80-81.

16. Marc Aldanov, "D. S. Merezhkovskii," *Novyi Zhurnal* 2 (1942), 372.

17. B. Griftsov, *Tri myslitelia*, 90.

18 Heinz Kahler, "M. Aurelius Antoninus," in *The Art of Rome and Her Empire*, trans. J. R. Foster (New York: Crown Publishers, 1963), 167-170.

19. In *Pushkin and his Sculptural Myth*, trans. and ed. John Burbank (The Hague: Mouton 1975), 44.

20. G. Mc. Rushfort, "Architecture and Art," in *The Legacy of Rome*, ed. C. Bailey (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1923), 419.

21. Tadeusz Sinko, *Mickiewicz i antyk*, (Wroclaw and Krakow: Polska Akademia Nauk, 1957), 314-16.

22. He was not the only one to hold such an opinion. H. Kahler writes that "as a whole—in relation between rider and horse—it lacks the harmony of classical composition." *The Art of Rome and her Empire*, 167-68.

23. See Anne Betty Weinshenker, *Falconet: His Writings and His Friend Diderot* (Geneva: Droz, 1966), especially chapters: "The Tyranny of Antiquity" and "The Arts Compared." See also Z. V. Zaretskaia, *Fal'kone* (Leningrad and Moscow: Sovetskii Khudozhnik, 1965), 34-39.

24. Waclaw Lednicki, *Pushkin's Bronze Horseman* (Berkley: University of California Press, 1955), 34.

25. Roman Jakobson, 125.

26. Donald Strong, *Roman Art* (London: Penguin, 1976), 112.

27. This last statement refers to the horse.

28. H. Kahler, *The Art of Rome and Her Empire*, 167.

29. The rejection of the purple coat by prominent Roman figures seemed to hold a special appeal for poets; Bryusov in "Antonii" and Komarovskii in his "Augustus" employ this image.

30. Berdiaev, "Novoe khristianstvo," 492; Griftsov, *Tri myslitelia*, 99.

31. Jakobson, 40.

V.

Julius Caesar, Antony and Sulla
Valery Bryusov

Few people, if any, had a greater impact on the Russian literary scene at the turn of the twentieth century than Valery Yakovlevich Bryusov (1873-1924). Poet, critic, editor and translator, called "one of the most solemn […] figures in the whole of Russian literature"[1] and "reigning impressario of Modernism […], a cultural phenomenon of the first magnitude,"[2] Bryusov was born in Moscow in a merchant family, and educated at Moscow University. His early collections of poems *Tertia vigilia* (1900) and *Urbi et orbi* (1903) as well as his literary magazine *Vesy* (The Scales) placed him at the head of the entire movement known as Russian Symbolism, ultimately perceived as the Silver Age of Russian poetry.

Bryusov's fascination with Rome began in his *gymnasium* years and remained an inspiration throughout his prolific and multifaceted career. True, many of his poems, historical essays, and novels echo his concern for the fate of other ancient cultures and civilizations, among them the Aegean, the early Egyptian and the Babylonian. His interest in the Middle Ages resulted in his world-famous novel *The Fiery Angel* (Ognennyi angel), while speculations on the existence of Atlantis appeared in many other works. But the history of Rome and Roman culture and literature continued to play an important part throughout his life. His sister recalls that reading and reciting Latin poems became a family tradition, cultivated especially during summer vacations.[3]

In his final years (1917-24), he taught a number of courses at various universities on his favorite topics, for example, ancient literatures, the Latin language in relation to comparative linguistics, and the fall of the Roman Empire. In 1920-21, he even advertised in *Proletkult* his willingness to teach Latin to anyone who wished to learn the language.[4] The poet's well-preserved archives allow scholars to obtain an inside view of this passion. His notebooks, high-school compositions, and personal library catalogues bear witness to his early interests and at the same time shed light on the poems written throughout his life. Of the five thousand volumes in Bryusov's library, 241 are listed under ancient literature and history, most of them imported from abroad. In 1898, eight of the catalogue's thirty-one pages were devoted solely to the titles of ancient writers.

The marginal notes in his books provide valuable information. In Horace's *Selected Odes*, published in 1889 in St. Petersburg, Bryusov left many samples of his own translations. In his French edition of Horace, he made numerous notations, some of them in Latin. His analyses of euphony and alliteration reflect his great enjoyment of these poems. Next to Horace's verse "Et statuent tumulum et tumulo solemnia mittent,'' he noted the pattern of the recurrent consonants and vowels: "ttttttttt, m,m,m, eeeee," and next to the line "Non patrie validas in viscera vertite viris"—a similar pattern of "vvvv ttt -- rrrr."

Bryusov's friends admired his thorough knowledge of Roman history and letters. Nikolai Gumilyov adorned the opening page of his *Pearls* with the inscription: "To Valery Yakovlevich Bryusov—Caesar's Caesar." The poet Vyacheslav Ivanov wrote in the volume of his translations from Alcaeus and Sappho: "Candido indici / Vero Romano / docto poetae / Valerio sodalis."[5] Several years earlier, Ivanov had welcomed Bryusov's "Wreath" (Venok) with his own poem entitled "Wreath," dedicated to Bryusov:

> Певец победный Urbi пел et Orbi:
> То – пела медь трубы капитолийской ...
>
> [The victorious singer sang to Urbi et orbi:
> It was a song of the Capitoline trumpet's brass. [6]]

The *admiratio Romae* tradition was essential to Bryusov's entire artistic development. The young Bryusov quickly grasped the

universal appeal of the Roman heritage. Commenting on his composition on Horace, written in the eighth grade, he confessed that he did not try to picture the Romans, but people in general.[7] Alexander Ilinsky and N. Gudzy in their articles on Bryusov's juvenile work comment on the prevalence of Roman themes. At fourteen Bryusov wrote the poems "The Eruption of Vesuvius" (Izverzhenie Vezuviia) and "Italia." Two years later the young poet found Latin the best medium in which to express his thoughts; but "not his feelings," he added.[8] Gradually, as his studies progressed, more entries in his notebooks consist of translation from classical languages. He tried for the first time to translate the *Aeneid*, using the five-foot trochee. (He would return to this task repeatedly.) Some time later Bryusov began writing his own classical poem, "Brenna" (Brenn).

Eventually the classical world became not only an outlet for Bryusov's intellectual pursuits, but also a retreat from emotional distress. In addition to the unpublished notebooks and letters, his diary gives us access to the underlying themes of his later works. In her introduction to the English translation of the diary, Joan Delaney Grossman notes, "The pretentious comparison with Sulla and the trumpet flourishes in various passages are partly fun but partly a way of keeping his eye on the target of future greatness."[9] Bryusov's favorite books and ancient literary and historical figures became a key to his personality. His friendships were often based on mutual intellectual interests. In his diary entry of October 1900, he records:

> An interviewer, one Zhdanov, visited us Decadents. I was going to receive him very pompously and began to put on airs, playing the role: "Valery Bryusov," but it turned out that he amounted to more than I thought. I showed him Verhaeren: "Ah, I know," he said, "the Belgian poet." I showed him Agrippa (Von Nettesheim), and he started to read it in Latin. He saw *Parnaso italiano* and began speaking to me in Italian. I was abashed. That was his book, it seems, under the initials L. G.[10]

In his autobiography Bryusov credited his university professors with instilling in him an interest in Roman culture.[11] Even though Greek-related topics were equally present in Bryusov's literary works, his intellectual and emotional make-up brought him closer to the Roman world.[12] On November 19, 1897, he wrote in his diary: "For me the worst exam was Greek. The only time I have ever received the

grade 'Satisfactory.'"[13] He told his friend, the poet Maksimilian Voloshin, "Rome is closer than anything to me. Even Greece is close to the extent that she is reflected in Rome. In fact, I relate to the Hellenic world with the same perplexity and incomprehension as the Romans did." [14]

On his two trips to Italy, in 1902 and 1908, Bryusov was able to experience what had been until then only a vicarious image. In 1902 he traveled only to Venice; in 1908 he reached Rome. In his diary he left a brief but significant entry about his stay there:

> July. Unbearable heat. Infinity of impressions. The whole ancient world—as if alive. The Forum, the Palatine, the Baths of Caracalla, via Appia, the two Capitoline museums. I was transported with delight by antiquity. Didn't like Michelangelo, didn't like Raphael, or the entire art of the Renaissance; exceptionally strong impression of the ancient world. [15]

These images remained extremely vivid for the rest of Bryusov's life. In his fiction and essays, his interest was mainly concentrated on the third and fourth centuries A.D. Nevertheless, he liked to wander into other periods of Roman history as well. His stories about Virgil take the reader to the first century B. C; "Rhea Silvia," written in 1914, takes place in the seventh century A.D. He attempted to translate Roman poetry, calling one cycle "Roman Flowers" (Rimskie tsvety), the other "Aurea Roma" (Golden Rome). The latter work combined translations with research material collected by the poet in the course of writing his novels, *Victory Altar* (Altar' pobedy) and *Jupiter Overthrown* (Iupiter poverzhennyi). Since he did not finish these translations, he utilized the material he accumulated for other projects, including his *History of Roman Lyric Poetry* (Istoriia rimskoi liriki) and the cycle of lectures "Rome and the World" (Rim i mir). All these works were written between 1909 and 1918, a period in which he apparently developed a more historical approach than is found in his earlier works. M. L. Gasparov contrasts the poet's perception of Roman antiquity in the 1890s with his perceptions after 1910, establishing the Russo-Japanese War as the influencing factor.[16] He warns against overestimating Bryusov's erudition, claiming that, contrary to numerous suggestions by others,[17] most of Bryusov's sources consisted of widely-known books on Rome, some of them popular rather than scholarly. On many occasions Bryusov apparently

contented himself with secondhand sources. Nevertheless, as Gasparov notes, the pathos with which Bryusov treats his favorite period, the fourth century A. D., deserves credit. In fact, despite extensive research on the subject, no complete agreement has been reached as to what the fourth century meant to the author of *Victory Altar*. S. V. Shervinsky claims that Rome in decline was what fascinated Bryusov the most—the Rome of moral indifference and religious perplexity.[18]

I. Malenin points out that Bryusov searched through all of antiquity and found a basis for his history of culture, to a great extent influenced by mythology. Above all, he found great personalities, supermen in the Nietzschean sense.[19] According to some scholars, the fourth century represented for Bryusov a spirit parallel to that of *fin de siècle* decadence. The theme of antique decadence fascinated all European modernists, starting with Verlaine.[20] Maksimov sees Bryusov as "attracted by the 'lyricism of fading,' the sensation of transitoriness and doom of the great Roman Empire at the time of its fall."[21] Another scholar, N. S. Burlakov, insists that it was not decline and decadence that attracted Bryusov, but, in fact, quite the opposite: as an artist he appreciated the tension of dramatic confrontation between paganism and Christianity.[22] Gasparov sees the fourth century as the embodiment of the Roman idea for Bryusov, while the critic Litvin argues that the third century may serve as another example of Bryusov's predilection for historical analogies.[23] In the spring of 1918 Bryusov began work on the essay "The Times of the Thirty Tyrants" (Vremena tridtsati tiranov), in which he analyzes the crisis of the third century as a social revolution.

The translation of poetry constitutes a separate chapter in Bryusov's literary career. His translations from the Latin were among his first attempts in the field. He began his work on *The Aeneid* in the gymnasium under the tutelage of the renowned philologist V. G. Appelrot. From the time of this early attempt until the final rendering in Russian of seven songs of the Virgil epic (which were not published until nine years after his death), Bryusov made three different translations executed according to three entirely different theoretical approaches. Fragments of these translations have come down to us in as many as seven versions. The poet was very concerned with the development of theoretical principles for translating from Latin to Russian. His final view on the matter is

expressed by a so-called "literal" translation, which inspired heated discussion until relatively recent times.[24] After years of controversy over this rendition, Gasparov sought to justify the poet's approach in his article "Bryusov and Literalism" (Briusov i bukvalizm) that prompted an important discussion in 1971 among writers, translators and researchers.[25] In addition to the widely publicized *Aeneid*, Bryusov translated Horace, with an accompanying theoretical discussion, and devoted much time and attention to his beloved poets of the fourth century: Ausonius, Claudianus, and others. Analogical thinking was very much behind Rome's appeal for Bryusov.

He was always eager to identify with the great Romans. On July 28, 1891, the eighteen-year-old Bryusov notes in his diary: "I am like Antony, charmed by Cleopatra. Breaking free from the power of love, I reign again. Today I was writing 'Julius Caesar.'"[26] A few weeks later he acknowledged the creative pains he suffered in writing the tragedy *Pompei*. "Antonines for me," confessed Bryusov to Voloshin, "is the golden age of humanity and Latin literature. Only then does Latin poetry have meaning for me. The age of Augustus is an archaic time. The Latin language at that time had not yet been developed. It was our Derzhavin's solemn language. Ovid and Horace are poets of the pre-Pushkin period of Latin literature."[27]

The three great Romans the young poet admired—Antony, Julius Caesar, and Sulla—became the heroes of his mature poems.[28] Apparently, reality did not provide him with an appropriate heroic model. All three poems are formally influenced by the odic tradition of eighteenth-century Russian classicism. Their similarities notwithstanding, each poem carries its own message and plays a different role in Bryusov's poetry.

"Antony" (Antonii) published in 1906, has become one of Bryusov's most popular poems. Maksimov goes so far as to call it "monumental."[29] It vividly brings together several favorite topics: heroism, love, the strong personality, and catastrophic moments and turning points in history.[30] Even Marina Tsvetaeva's less than laudatory description of Bryusov includes the exclamation: "Bryusov of the Black Mass, Bryusov of Renata, Bryusov of 'Antony.'"[31] The poem has received considerable critical attention. For Burlakov it typifies Bryusov's pre-Revolutionary output, with its images of great passionate personalities who are governed by strong feelings as they act out decisive moments on a great stage.

Both Maksimov and Burlakov find that in the last two stanzas of "Antony" the center of gravity shifts from the objective to the subjective plane. These two stanzas present Antony's flight from the battle of Actium as heroic, an act deemed cowardly by conventional standards. An exemplary hero is expected to overcome temptation and to return to his beloved after winning a battle. Bryusov proclaims as a virtue the hero's forsaking of the warrior's honor and glory for love.[32]

One may appreciate M. M. Girshman's detailed analysis of metrical, syntactic, and sound elements in "Antony." He examines its formal virtuosity and the correlations between the iambic meter and the antithetical structure of the phrasing. But he overstresses the prosodic elements at the expense of other strata of the poem. "Antony," he writes, is a synthesis of the historical ballad and the odic tradition, whose strength lies in the rhetorical exclamations which form its consecutive synonymic figures. Above all, Girshman tries to prove that an abstract subject, which he calls "thought-passion," constitutes the focal point of the poem, and that the latter is obtained by rational and rhetorical means devoid of the concrete rendering of individual meaning. "Antony," however, embodies much more than surfaces in Girshman's analysis.[33]

The battle of Actium in 31 B.C. was a battle between East and West, and at the same time a struggle for worldwide power; these are facts, not rhetorical ornaments. The passion that is the subject of the poem leads the hero to self-destruction. Thus the hero is placed between East and West at the decisive point of choosing between life and death, or having to choose death alone for two different reasons—power or love. The title, with its historical and existential references, prefigures the antithetical structure revealed in the syntactic stratum. To this horizontal structure another dimension is added: a vertical correspondence in time.[34] This correspondence substitutes for the symbolic vertical correspondence "as above so below" derived from the Hermetic tradition—"below" being Bryusov's period, "above"—antiquity.

The first stanza of "Antony"[35] immediately sets the scene: the hero appears "on the sunset horizon / of the solemn past." Bryusov then renders the image of his hero in two similes, one based on a concrete element (granite), the second being more metaphysical (an unforgettable dream). Antony, a giant and an unforgettable dream at the same time, becomes something which is neither. Thanks to the

dream element the giant undergoes sublimation, and the image created by this double simile generates great semiotic energy.

In this grand temporal setting, Bryusov outlines the historical situation in two lines of the next stanza, providing the reader with additional information: he depicts Rome's social structure as composed of the people, the tribunes who represent the people, and the emperors. The imperfective aspect of the verb "borolis'" (they were fighting) implies the continuity of the situation. All actions attributed to Antony are expressed by perfective verbs (*postavil, brosil, promenial, povernul*), emphasizing their completion as well as the powerful figure of the hero.

Although Girshman dismisses Bryusov's characterization of Antony as abstract, seeing all the references to artifacts as mere signs of antiquity without special significance, the epithets describing Antony as "beautiful, eternally young" do not seem abstract at all. Written sources, as well as sculptures and engravings, establish the prevailing image of Antony as young and attractive. According to Plutarch, Antony had "a very good and noble appearance; his beard was well grown, his forehead large, and his nose aquiline, giving him altogether a bold, masculine look that reminded people of the faces of Hercules in paintings and sculptures."[36]

The traditional images that are symbolic to begin with, such artifacts as "victorious laurels, the scepter of the universe, the crown and the purple cloak of the conqueror," have specific meanings—contrary to Girshman—as marks of distinction, and as material signs of power.

Antony was considered a good soldier; the phrase implying that he possessed "the shed blood of the armies" is a reference to his popularity and bonding with his troops. In Rome the loyalty of the army brought the highest worldly honors. By amassing such images Bryusov addressed the common knowledge of educated readers. Besides being symbolically valid, these images are structurally consistent. The victorious laurels and the crown, symbols of "the progressive identification of the hero with the motives and aims of his victory,"[37] are eventually replaced by the nimbus, "a visual expression of irradiating, supernatural force, or, sometimes, more simply, of intellectual energy in its mystic aspect." The replacement of one symbolic adornment of the head by another parallels the replacement of one set of values by another. The mystical significance of the

nimbus is strengthened by the epithet "blessed" (blazhen). With the glorification of anti-heroic values (disgrace, ridicule, shame), Antony's status of fugitive (beglets) is elevated. Since the last two stanzas refer to a universalization of Antony's experience, the correspondences among crown, laurel, and nimbus take on one more dimension.

A similar consistency of symbolism can be traced between "helm" (kormilo) in the fifth stanza and "ship" (korabl') of the last. Antony did turn his rudder to follow Cleopatra's ship. Yet, for all its reality, there is no action more endowed with symbolism than a sea voyage, which allows a variety of interpretations.

Throughout the entire poem, Cleopatra is never named directly; nonetheless, she is referred to metonymically: a kiss, the desired look, and an Egyptian rudder. The reader knows that the kiss is hers, the look is the look in her eyes, and the Egyptian stern stands for her as well as for the ship. A similar image would return years later in an untitled poem:

> Гордись! я свой корабль в Египет,[38]
> Как он, вслед за тобой провлек.
>
> [Be proud! I, like him, dragged my ship to Egypt,
> following you.]

Inevitably Antony chooses death. Thus, in a different stratum, he finds the kiss of death, he looks into death's eyes, and "the Egyptian rudder" leads him to death. This reading concurs with Girshman's observation that the hymn of love becomes the realization of a new antithesis between passion and destruction, love and death.[39] Here Bryusov uses "love" (liubov') and "passion" (strast') interchangeably in writing about Antony and Cleopatra. In another poem, "Images of Times" (Obrazy vremen), we read:

> Явись, предстань, как Клеопатра,
> Чтоб вновь Антоний пал, любя! [40]
>
> [Appear, come forth, like Cleopatra
> So Antony could, loving, fall!]

Bryusov's imagery is deeply rooted in life experiences or history. The purple (scarlet) cloak is one such reference. That Bryusov fully appreciated the significance of the cloak is evident in his *Victory Altar,* where it is used in the plot's suspenseful moments. Antony's scarlet cloak is mentioned twice by Plutarch, associated in each instance with its strong symbolic, almost ritual, power. Thus Plutarch writes:

> …throwing his own scarlet mantle, which was of great value, upon the body of Brutus, he gave charge to one of his own freemen to take care of his funeral. This man, as Antony came to understand, did not leave the mantle with the corpse but kept both it and a good part of the money that should have been spent in the funeral, for himself; for which he had him put to death.[41]

Of a later incident, Plutarch writes, "Antony, designing to harangue the soldiers, called for a dark cloak that he might move them the more, but was dissuaded by friends: so he came forward in the general's scarlet cloak, and addressed them."[42]

There are also literary references in "Antony." One of these leads to Tyutchev's "Cicero" (Tsitseron, 1830)[43]: both poems glorify the final moments of the two illustrious Romans whose paths of life and death happened to be entangled. Although they differ in their philosophical messages and mystical dimensions, both celebrate the grandeur of a time when a single act could determine the destiny of a man and of the world. Tyutchev and Bryusov, in accordance with long-standing literary tradition, identify Rome with the entire world. Apart from this universal parallel, certain phrases and images in both poems exhibit a striking similarity.

"Antony"	"Cicero"
Ты на закатном небосклоне Былых торжественных времен.	Во всем величье видел ты закат звезды ее кровавой!...
[You, on the sunset horizon of past solemn times.]	[In everything you saw greatness the sunset of its bloody star!..]
"Antony"	"Cicero"
Блажен, кто ведал посмеянье [Blessed is he who knew ridicule]	Блажен, кто посетил сей мир, [Blessed is he who visited this world]

As N. Gudzy[44] points out, despite all the differences between Tyutchev and Bryusov, one can trace certain echoes, particularly in the themes of sinful, fateful passion and of catastrophic changes in history.[45] He does not address the parallel between "Antony" and "Cicero," but he indicates several instances where Bryusov used lines from Tyutchev as epigraphs, or as a basis for paraphrase. These borrowings are more visible in Bryusov's historical poems. Interestingly enough, in one of the poetic cycles in *Stephanos,* Bryusov provides a quotation from "Cicero" as an epigraph.

Neither the grandeur of the past nor the passionate love celebrated with such mastery in Bryusov's poem exhausts the entire message. The figure of Antony is the perfect decadent, a blemished man with whom to identify. "Poet to the Muse" (Poet — Muze), one of Bryusov's patently programmatic poems, begins:

> Я изменял и многому и многим,
> Я покидал в час битвы знамена ...
>
> [I betrayed many things and people,
> I abandoned my banners at the hour of battle. . .]

Bryusov associated different values with the legend of Caesar. His poem "Julius Caesar" (Iulii Tsezar'), like "Antony" published in *Venok*, was written in 1905 after the Russo-Japanese war and the Tsushima defeat. Bryusov's sentiments concerning the events of 1904-5 are to be found in several other poems, for example, "To the New Year 1905" (Na novyi 1905 god), "To My Fellow Citizens" (K sograzhdanam) and "Tsushima." In "To My Fellow Citizens" he resorts to imagery derived from Roman history; in "Tsushima" he refers to Russia as the third Rome. These poems, as well as some letters of the period, reflect Bryusov's assessment of Russia's political situation: the capture and sinking of the Russian fleet in the Pacific marked the end of an era. He employs the myth of Caesar to express the longing for the ideal leader so sorely needed. As in "Antony," the correspondence between "now" and "then" is stressed in the poem, the past being the irretrievable model of greatness and glory. Unlike "Antony," however, "Julius Caesar" refers not to an individual's emotional experience, but to that of an entire nation.

Critics agree that his portrayal of Caesar's life and legend was intended to carry a strong political and ethical message. According to Burlakov, "Julius Caesar" attempts to portray the present through the mist of history.[46] The poet expresses his belief that the monarchy and a powerful dictatorship are needed and directs his indignation at the inertia of the conservative bureaucracy, which he held responsible for the Tsushima defeat. Maksimov, discussing the same poem, stresses the principle of heroism, which he perceives as the main, normative aesthetic principle unifying the author, the lyric voice, and the objectified personae of Bryusov's poems. The realization of this aesthetic principle is achieved by employing the odic trope.[47]

Apostrophe, enhanced by exclamatory repetitions and other modes of rhetorical emphasis, dominates the poem. The introductory stanza outlines the political situation by stating the accusations against Caesar:

> Они кричат: за нами право!
> Они клянут: ты бунтовщик,
> Ты поднял стяг войны кровавой,
> На брата брата ты воздвиг!
>
> [They shout: the law is on our side!
> They swear: you are a rebel,
> You raised the banner of a bloody war,
> You raised brother against brother!]

The apostrophe is strengthened by the repetition of the familiar pronoun *ty* (you). The reader can assume that Caesar is referring to these accusations in order to respond to them. He is not the addressee, but the main speaker—appropriately enough, since he was a celebrated orator, second only to Cicero. He forsook a rhetorician's career for a military one, but he owed many of his political victories to his verbal prowess. The next four and a half stanzas consist of Caesar's speech; out of eighteen lines seven start with the formal pronoun *vy* (you), addressing the Roman consuls and the Senate. This juxtaposition of *two voices* (a construction not at all typical of the ode) evokes a sharp image of conflict and heightens the dramatic immediacy.

The poem contains very few semiotic transformations; there is one personification in the second stanza ("the streets' stones speak"),

attesting to the popular discontent with the Roman Senate. There are also two metonymic expressions in the pre-penultimate stanza:

Хотя б прикрыли гроб законов
Вы лаврами далеких стран!

[Even if you had covered the grave of laws
With laurels from distant countries!]

and

Римских легионов
Значки во храмах и парфян!

[The badges of the Roman legions
are in the Parthian temples!]

These expressions point to the defeat of the Roman army in Parthia and, at the same time, to the losses of the Russian army in Tsushima. Bryusov accuses the Russian generals in Caesar's words. The phrase "degenerates of the past" in both situations signals the closing of a historical era. The strongest artistic effect is reserved for the last two lines; after delivering his arguments, the hero makes the monumental decision:

Довольно споров. Брошен жребий.
Плыви, мой конь, чрез Рубикон.

[Enough quarrels. The die is cast.
Swim, my steed, across the Rubicon!]

Ending the poem with the command to his horse implies the immediate subsequent action, thus heightening the dramatic quality.[48] This moment is described by Plutarch in his life of Caesar: "At last, in a sort of passion, casting aside calculation, and abandoning himself to what might come, and using the proverb frequently in their mouths who enter upon dangerous and bold attempts, 'The die is cast,' with these words he took the river."[49]

The command "Plyvi, moi kon', chrez Rubikon" (Swim, my steed, across the Rubicon) with its internal masculine rhyme and the legendary Rubicon in the final position with the rhythmic stress, and the rhyme of "vremen" and "kon'") brings together many threads of

the Caesar myth. One of them is the motif of trespassing upon water. Caesar was the "first man that should pass the Rhine with an army"[50]; he was also "the first who brought a navy into the western ocean, or who sailed into the Atlantic with an army to make war."[51] The legendary Rubicon was in fact the smallest river Caesar's army had to cross.

The only positive phrase of the poem is addressed to the horse. There are several legends and anecdotes illustrating the special place that horses held in Caesar's life. According to Plutarch, Caesar "had been an expert rider from his childhood; for it was usual with him to sit with hands joined together behind his back, and so to put his horse to its full speed."[52] According to Gaius Suetonius Tranquillus:

> The horse he [Caesar] used to ride upon was strangely marked, with feet resembling very near a man's, and the hoofs cloven like toes,[53] which horse was foaled about home; and when the soothsayers of their learning pronounced that he presaged unto his owner the empire of the world, very careful he was to rear him and nourish him. Now when as the beast should abide no man else to ride him, himself was he that backed him first. The full portrait and proportion of which horse he dedicated also afterwards before the temple of Venus Genetrix.''[54]

This legend's rendering of a horse almost as extraordinary as its rider suggests isolation from their peers. Bryusov, therefore, has Caesar direct his command to his unique horse at a dramatic moment, thus adding another dimension to the portrayal of his hero—the horse is his only equal.

The political analogies with Russia in the poem are not immediately perceived by the contemporary reader, yet it was the political ferment there that stimulated Bryusov to grasp the essence of Caesar's personality and his myth. Fifteen years later, he wrote the poem "Caesar to Cleopatra" (Tsezar' Kleopatre), which contains many historical facts and quasi-philosophical reflections, but does not come close to the vividness, consistency, and imaginative power of "Iulii Tsezar'."

Lucius Cornelius Sulla, known as Sulla Felix, was the third great Roman to capture Bryusov's imagination. The poem "Sulla" was written in 1912 and included in the collection *The Mirror of Shadows* (Zerkalo tenei) published that same year. Yet Bryusov's identification

with Sulla originated much earlier. In his diary entry of April 22, 1894, Bryusov writes:

> Sulla belonged to the same class of people as I. These are talented people "sans foi ni loi," living only for their own pleasure. Very, very often they perform splendid deeds, but they are also capable of God knows what. Sulla was not annoyed by the reproaches of a citizen after the formation of the dictatorship. But Sulla would in no way have considered it a crime to execute that citizen.[55]

Thus, for the future leader of the Russian Symbolist movement, Sulla personified decadence: talent, living beyond the boundaries of personal and social laws, and subscribing to hedonistic ethics. If one adds to the list cruelty, courage, and stoic endurance, one has to agree with Gasparov that Sulla belongs to the old "pantheon of Bryusov's supermen."[56]

Some critics maintain that the poet's views underwent substantial evolution in the early twentieth century. Gasparov claims that the political events of 1904-5 forced Bryusov to reexamine the function of the symbolism of the old civilizations and the great heroes of the ancient world.[57] Burlakov assesses this new period differently. While urging his fellow poets to turn to contemporary topics, Bryusov himself remains in a realm removed from his immediate present.[58] The collection *Mirror of Shadows* (1912) revolves around such giants of history as Moses, Alexander the Great, and Sulla. Burlakov, like Gasparov, acknowledges the change in Bryusov's attitude toward these ancient heroes, but whereas Gasparov claims that after 1910 Bryusov's poetry was informed by a different understanding of the historical process, Burlakov believes that the difference lies in the new "heroic" traits that attracted Bryusov's attention. Intellect and magnanimity, qualities that Bryusov ascribes to Sulla, replaced the virtues of the warrior. Maksimov notes that with the passage of time different kinds of people galvanized the poet; now they were cold and proud, indifferent to the rest of the human race.[59]

Lucius Cornelius Sulla, a Roman general and statesman, as cruel as he was refined, is not easily identifiable with a generally recognized set of values. To this day, one is confronted with an ambiguous assessment of his historical role and personal character. For some, his activities are overshadowed by the Great Proscription and bloody massacres; for others, he represents the attempt to build a

new Roman aristocracy, to found a new conception of law and a modern model of dictatorship. Sulla's resignation of the dictatorship and retirement into private life still puzzle historians. With his moral indifference, cynicism, wisdom, grand gestures, and attraction to bohemian society, Sulla seemed to meet Bryusov's need for self-definition. The poet is one of the first and very few to see the potential of Sulla's myth for the twentieth century. According to G. P. Baker: "Not until the idea of Dictatorship became a living contemporary issue was anyone likely to see either interest or meaning in Sulla's career."[60]

Like the poems "Antony" and "Julius Caesar," "Sulla" is written in the form of an apostrophe, but it is more descriptive than lyrical in character. Bryusov employs a few formal devices: in the first two lines he introduces his hero by placing him in a historical context and naming his major military victory:

> Утонченник седьмого века,
> Принявший Греции последний вздох.
>
> [The refiner of the seventh century,
> who accepted Greece's last breath.]

The reader learns that Sulla lived in the seventh century and brought refinement to his own time.[61] One may presume that Bryusov perceives the conquest of Greece as a contribution to that refinement; the plunder included the works of Aristotle, most of them unpublished at the time. The metaphor for the conquest, "Who accepted Greece's last breath," alludes to Sulla's demand for indemnity from the Greek cities that had aided Mithridates in the war with Rome. This metaphor betrays the insensitivity toward Greek civilization that Bryusov acknowledged on several occasions.

The motif of contempt for the human race, introduced in the first stanza, reappears at the close of the poem. Bryusov presents Sulla's faults as the product of a vile epoch. The dictator is pictured as being in the grip of a *mal de siècle*, and this is undoubtedly the area of the poet's own identification with him. The decadent traits are referred to in the third stanza:

> Ты был велик и в мести и в разврате
> [You were great in revenge and debauchery]

and find their apogee in the last two lines:

> С презрением невыразимым
> Народу ты свободу возвратил!
>
> [With inexpressible contempt
> You return freedom to the people!]

The entire second stanza of the poem, based on Plutarch's life of Sulla, is devoted to the famous inscription on his gravestone, penned by the dictator himself. Sulla sees himself as the object of divine favor, epitomized by his assumed name, Felix. (In the draft manuscript Bryusov's poem was entitled "Sulla Felix.") The poem echoes Bryusov's conviction that the dictator belonged to the class of people living for their own pleasure. All this is stated rather plainly, with the help of hackneyed epithets, such as: "ispugannym vekam," "velik," "schastliv," "zemnykh blazhenstv," "bezmernykh sil," "prezreniem nevyrazimym" (frightened centuries; grand; happy; earthly bliss; immense forces; inexpressible disdain). To attain historical flavor, Bryusov employs his typical poetic devices: old Russian forms[62] and neologisms, images representing the material culture of ancient Rome "mramor sarkofaga" (the marble of the sarcophagus), and hyperbolic metaphors:

> Ты перешел все грани вероятий,
> Вином земных блаженств упился ты вполне.
>
> [You crossed all the borders of probability,
> You got drunk with the wine of earthly bliss.]

as well as unadorned hyperbole:

> Не зная, где предел твоих безмерных сил.
> [Unaware of the limits of your boundless power.]

"Sulla" is not among Bryusov's best achievements. Nevertheless, in the company of "Antony" and "Julius Caesar," it attests to the continuity of Bryusov's attachment to the heroes of his early youth. Moreover, "Sulla" indicates that Bryusov was not afraid to introduce a

legendary figure less popular than Julius Caesar or Antony in order to explore its symbolic potential.

Each of the poems discussed treats a different aspect of Bryusov's recurrent themes: "Antony" represents love and passion, "Julius Caesar" expresses the poet's political thought, and "Sulla" demonstrates Bryusov's admiration for the strong, larger-than-life personality. The theme of decadence, present to some degree in "Antony," is central in "Sulla." Even though the legendary figures of Antony and Caesar had been exploited in many other literary works, Bryusov does not fail to breathe new life into them. Sulla was a new figure in poetry, but he, too, became a means of articulating Bryusov's main themes as they cast light on his poetical usage of historical myths.

One of the themes that Bryusov sought to express through the language of ancient images was that of passion and its relation to sensuality and death. "Antony," exemplifying the "extremism of passion,"[63] demonstrates that the subject occupied a high place in the poet's priorities. Bryusov dealt with the topic as a poet, novelist, essayist and translator. In 1890-92 he attempted a prose translation of Ovid's *Ars amandi* (The Art of Love).[64] In 1904 he published an essay entitled "Passion" (Strast') in the journal *Vesy*, of which he was editor. That it was printed in the section titled "Landmarks" attests to the importance of the subject on both the intellectual and emotional levels. In ancient cultures, passion and sexual desire, within and beyond marriage, were acceptable in their own right and were not "considered damaging to spiritual growth"[65] as in modern European culture.

Aware of Roman sexual customs and conventions, Bryusov in his Roman novels portrays several different types of liaisons—consummated and unconsummated—as well as ritual orgies. In Roman culture women were awarded the right of partnership and they accompanied men to dinner parties, which was not the custom in Greece. Bryusov was quite well read on this subject and owned the *Glossarium eroticum linguae latinae* by Pierre Pierrugues.

Quoting Nietzsche, Swedenborg, and Boehme, the poet strives to find proper artistic expression for newly liberated passion:

> The art of the past could never find the same strength for the representation of passion, as it found for the representation of love. Only the creation of Hindu

> or Japanese plastic art constitutes an exception, Greek and Roman efforts to imitate are far from the model. The art of modern Europe has made only weak and unsuccessful attempts in this direction. Who knows the name of Torrentius nowadays? Our Russian writers always shun the essential element of passion, accepting only its reflection in love.[66]

The critics did not appreciate Bryusov's efforts. Konstantin Mochulsky sarcastically discusses the poet's approach to the subject: "The sober-minded and cold Bryusov," writes Mochulsky, "considered it his obligation to sing of passion, lust, and erotic madness. He did it consciously and consistently. One can say that he was erotic, in principle."[67]

Maksimov qualifies Bryusov's images of passion in "The Pompeian Woman" (Pompeianka) as "heroic and elevated to tragic heights."[68] However, Maksimov emphasizes that the excessiveness of his assertive passion does not turn into a hegemony of the erotic idea, for Bryusov takes up the conflict between passion and will, or the citizen's duty, as it is illustrated in "Aeneas" (Enei) and "Circe" (Tsirtsea). Maksimov points out that Andrey Bely named Bryusov the poet of passion. Burlakov believes that the subject of passion was introduced into Russian literature by Tyutchev, but whereas Tyutchev considered passion a natural element of life, the Symbolists were primarily drawn to pathological passion.

Whatever Bryusov's shortcomings in realizing his ideal, his awareness of the philosophical dimension of the problem was much more acute than that of his critics. Viktor Zhirmunsky in his essay "Erotic Ballads from the Collection *To Rome and the World"* (Eroticheskie ballady iz sbornika *Rimu i miru*)[69] examines the formal means by which the image of erotic tension is rendered in ballads. The critic exposes what he calls the "emblematic accessories of balladic eroticism"[70] and their exotic backdrop.

The most remarkable observation concerns the rule of contrast that governs the majority of the erotic ballads. An additional function of this basic rule may be considered here. The sharp contrast very often presents itself as an obstacle, which supplies a necessary element of passionate love (according to the Romantic concept of love). As Denis de Rougemont, the vindicator of love in the times of sex, writes:

> Passion is that form of love which refuses the immediate, avoids dealing with what is near, and if necessary invents distance in order to realize and exalt itself more completely […]. No passion is conceivable or in fact declared in a world where everything is permitted. For passion always presupposes between subject and object, a third party constituting an obstacle to their embrace.[71]

Therefore the juxtaposition noted by Zhirmunsky may be attributed to the necessary barrier—be it social or physical—between the two potential lovers as in the ballad "Wayfarer" (Putnik) or in "Grille" (Reshetka). Furthermore, these two ballads precisely illustrate de Rougemont's thesis, since even willingness on the part of the princess (*tsaritsa*) to overcome the barrier is countered by the demand of the wayfarer—the desire remains unfulfilled, and the water from the symbolic cup spills onto the sand. (Thirst as an image of sexual desire may be traced as far back as Lucretius and, according to de Rougement, found its ultimate expression in the Tristan and Iseult epic.)

Placing the actors of his erotic lyrics in an antique, predominantly Roman, scene allows the poet a greater margin of freedom in treating the subject. Bryusov tried to bring to life the Roman attitude toward eroticism. The ancient cult of Priapus has remained in the modern consciousness only as a cult of motherhood; Christian society cast away the aspect of sexuality, especially male sexuality. Bryusov realized his poetic program with full intellectual consciousness. In the unfinished collection "Dreams of Humanity" (Sny chelovechestva), he placed several poems, along with other imitations, under the title "In the Spirit of the Latin Anthology" (V dukhe latynskoi antologii). Four poems are dedicated to the subject of love and are indeed in the Roman spirit. Bryusov here employs devices characteristic of Latin poetry, such as syntactic inversion and periphrasis. The second poem of this short cycle represents an outlook entirely alien to the Christian moral code:

> Мне говорят, что Марина многим дарит свои ласки.
> Что ж! получаю ли я меньше любви оттого?
>
> [They say that Marina bestows her favors on many.
> So what! Do I get less love for that reason?]

An antique costume allows Bryusov to write about liberated passion, sensual pleasure, and desire or, such taboo topics as sadism ("Slave" [Rab], "Grille," "Peplum"); after all, "cruelty and brutality were original Roman characteristics."[72] His comprehensive knowledge of the Roman world supplied him with the perfect actors to act out his quite modern ideas. His *carica* (a rendition of Virgil's *regina*) combines characteristics of an innocent beauty with sensuality and cruel sexual hedonism; *la femme fatale*—a character much revered by the Symbolists. In Bryusov's poems we recognize her in the heroines of "Slave," "Wayfarer" and in "Cleopatra," the ultimate femme fatale.

While the poems about great personalities and the erotic ballads represent Bryusov's philosophical stance, the poems about Rome as a city are closely linked to his thoughts about urban civilization, of which Rome has always been the ultimate symbol. On the first pages of his novel *Victory Altar* Bryusov depicts the enchantment of a young hero who comes to Rome for the first time. These scenes contribute to a universal image of the initiation into urban life with all its diversity, opportunities, grandeur, and danger.

The urban myth played a substantial role in the poetry of the Russian Symbolists, and Bryusov was one of its subscribers and major contributors. For the vast majority of readers brought up with a classical education, the image of Rome transmitted a complex message; it was at the same time an ideal and the first great city, as well as a major symbol of the Roman tradition. One of Bryusov's favorite Latin poets of the fourth century, Ausonius, called Rome a golden city. The remains of the ancient city, which Bryusov visited in 1908, did not sustain the golden color, but interestingly enough, the color became associated with the image of the city as such. In the poem "To the City" (Gorodu) we read:

> Ты, хитроумный, ты упрямый,
> Дворцы из золота воздвиг.
>
> [You are resourceful, you are persistent
> You erected the palaces of gold.]

Bryusov wrote few poems exclusively dedicated to Rome as such. The poem "Italia," published in the *Urbi et orbi* collection

(1902-3), written in the form of an apostrophic address is too rhetorical with its frequent use of elevated vocabulary (*sud'ba*, *rokovoi*, *kumir*, *chresla* [destiny, fateful, idol, loins]) and ponderous to the point that even the motif of sinful passion cannot save it. What deserves attention is the concept of the country as a woman, or rather the essence of femininity, with the everlasting ability to attract; simultaneously beautiful, fallen, seductive, and able to maintain her innocence and purity. Finally, Italy personifies the mother of the universe. This image echoes the Symbolists' longing for a positive unity of all things and carries associations of a concept so characteristic of Russian poetry—that of Mother Russia. Thus the mother of the universe concept, polymorphic in its origin, encompasses both voluptuousness and innocence. Rome, which is of masculine gender in Russian, is portrayed in this poem in a typically decadent manner:

> И Рим, чарователь единственный,
> Ужасный в величие своем,
> Лежит не живой, но таинственный,
> Волшебным оковнанный сном.[73]
>
> [And Rome, the unequalled enchanter,
> Ghastly in its grandeur
> Lies not alive but mysterious,
> Shackled by bewitching dream.]

The poem "On the Forum" (Na Forume), published in the collection *All the Melodies* (Vse napevy, 1906-9)[74] is one of the most emphatic examples of Bryusov's *admiratio Romae* poetry. Written during his second trip to Italy when Bryusov finally reached the country's capital, the poem captures the author's awe before the tangible signs of a civilization known to him intimately through his reading. Bryusov also left a direct expression of his Roman experience:

> On my second trip to Italy […] I felt the allure of the ancient world. In Rome and Naples, I treated with devotion the remnants of classical antiquity, for long hours I looked at the marble portraits of the emperors, trying to comprehend the soul of those personalities that endure through time; on the Roman Forum and in the subterranean vaults of the Palatine's palaces I experienced the breath of a life

> that vanished long ago; on the Apian Way I felt like a Roman citizen, as if there were not two thousand years separating me from the times of Caesar… [75]

The five-stanza poem "On the Forum" expresses similar sentiments. Its strophic form renders the description of a walk through the ruins, gradually building a panoramic image of the Forum. The last two stanzas express, in the form of an apostrophe, the poet's identification with the Roman past and its living legacy.[76] For visualization of this grandeur and power the author wholly relies on architectural symbolism, which serves at the same time as a carrier of auto-thematic topics. "On the Forum" seems to evolve around the motif of a road, which in the first stanza is implied only by the action of arriving. In the second stanza this motif is expressed explicitly by the image of stairs and a roadway. While absent from the third strophe, the road motif returns in the next, penultimate, stanza where the Romans are referred to as the road builders. And since in the same apostrophe the poet speaks of the nation's legacy, the reader may assume that the imperative to create roads is part of this legacy. This assumption finds its justification in the last stanza, where Bryusov proclaims the ruins as his inspiration to continue along his own way, amid deserts. The word *puti* (roads) ends the poem. It is fortified by its position and accentuated by rhyme (with *vesti*) and rhythmic stress.

The architectural images elicit a multi-layered interpretation of the poem's general and specific symbolism. Buildings as such symbolize mental, cerebral, and psychological values, whereas the ruins and the descent to ruins signify descending into the depths, thus also having a psychological connotation.[77] From the metaphysical point of view, the image of the ruins indicates quasi-death and resurrection; the road from the profane to the sacred leads to total reintegration with the absolute. In this respect descending into ruins should be read as a purgatorial experience. In the five-stanza poem Bryusov makes either direct or indirect reference to the ruins four times: "v stranu mogil," "bazilik rukhnuvshikh stupeni," "ruiny khramov i dvortsov," "razvalin kamen' kazhdyi" (to the country of graves; the basilica of tumbled-down steps; the ruins of temples and palaces; every stone of the ruins). The theme of purification is consolidated by the final image of roads amid deserts, since the symbolism of deserts also refers to purification and spiritual values. As a metatext, "On the Forum" represents a "poetics of quotations"

and a "poetics of realities,"[78] where the "quotations" come from a different field of symbolic thought, namely, architecture.

The very title of the poem depicts the most expressive sign of the city's mythology, the heart of ancient Rome. Several general architectural elements, such as the basilicas, courts, temples, and roads, signify aspects of the religious and secular life of the Romans. Above the ruinous landscape the poet places the Arch of Constantine, the best-known of the imperial triumphal arches, the "epitome of Roman sculpture."[79] The Romans took pride in their finest architectural innovations—the arch and the vault,[80] utilizing these structures to commemorate the magnificence and grandeur of the Empire. In Bryusov's poem the arch symbolically fulfills this function:

> […] как вершина
> Великих, пройденных веков,
> Венчали арки Константина
> руины храмов и дворцов.
>
> [/…/ like the summit
> Of the grand, past ages,
> the Arches of Constantine crowned
> the ruins of the temples and palaces.]

The phrase reveals its deeper meaning when we consider the fact that the Arch of Constantine has only one very narrow frieze that belongs to Constantine's day; the remaining elements were taken from previous arches and sculptures of the second century and were adapted to render Constantine.[81]

The arch, linked to rituals of triumph in Rome, possesses its own rich symbolism. These rituals have much in common with the Hellenistic Epiphany and Imperial Adventus. Both ceremonies emphasize deification and consecration by apotheosis; moreover, both are rooted in the city-gate concept.[82]

At the vantage point of this architectural elevation the poem changes its form from description to apostrophe. Bryusov directly addresses Marcus Ulpius Trajanus (A.D. 53-117), noted for building roads, aqueducts, and harbors:

Твой завет,
Спокойный, строгий и упорный,
В гранит и мрамор здесь одет.

[Your behest,
Serene, severe, and sustained,
Is dressed here in marble and granite.]

The Roman ideal of unity finds its reflection in architecture. Granite and marble, so often embellishing a concrete construction with decorative facing, imply firmness and endurance. Roman stonework was noted for its durability and provided the models and the standard for Western architecture. Stones and masonry are recurrent images in Bryusov's poetry. He repeatedly, and with varying success, kept returning to these images in the poems entitled "Bricklayer" (Kamenshchik) and "Stones" (Kamni). But in the poem "On the Forum" the very legacy which Bryusov accepts as his ideal is contained in stonework. In the final lines this universal legacy is transformed into an individual, almost personal imperative: "tvoikh razvalin kamen' kazhdyi napominaet *mne*…" (Every stone of your ruins reminds *me*… [emphasis added]).[83]

Thus, the last stanza echoes the theme of identification with the Roman past marked in the beginning of the poem. Here all the elements merge: the motif of the road, architecture, stonework, and the theme of legacy fuse to create the atmosphere of withdrawal into the poet's own world. Formally the poem relies primarily on similes ("ne kak prishlets," "kak v znakomyi mir," "kak vo sne," "kak vershina" [not like a stranger; as in a familiar world; as in a dream; like the summit]) with occasional metaphors ("venchali Arki Konstantina ruiny," "zavet… v granit i mramor zdes' odet"), and alliteration ("rodnye teni… s radostnoi toskoi," "vershina / Velikikh … vekov / Venchali," "Kamen' kazhdyi," pustyn'… puti"). The Roman forum in the poem shares certain characteristics ascribed to Rome in the poem "Italia," for example, the dream-like existence and the "wonder-working" properties in "On the Forum" correspond to the magic and enchanting qualities of Rome in "Italia." In Bryusov's poetry the city as such possesses this particular attraction. In his dithyramb "To the City," written in January 1907,[84] the poet calls the city "the tireless magician."

For Rome that magic derives from the ability to transform life to death, and sometimes even death to life. In the short poem "Via Appia," written in 1914 and designed for the unfinished collection "Dreams of Mankind," Bryusov explicitly expresses that the transformation—"smena vidov"—is what fascinates him. In this thirteen-line poem, nine lines consist of the description of a very dynamic street scene that suddenly changes into a dreamy picture of white graves under the vault of Italian pines.

> Сном застыл,
> Через белый строй могил,
> Темный свод роскошных пиний. [85]
>
> [Frozen in sleep
> Across the white line of the graves,
> The dark vault of splendid (Italian) pines.]

The poem "Epitaph to the Roman Warriors" (Epitafiia rimskim voinam), written in 1915 and published in the collection *Ninth Stone* (Deviataia kamena), is an example of a reverse change, where the grandeur of the city sprouts from the graves of the anonymous Roman heroes. We read:

> ...мы спим,
> Чтоб ты, великим из великих,
> как Древо Смерти, взнесся, Рим!
>
> […We are asleep,
> so that you, the great of the greatest,
> Rome, should rise like the Tree of Death!]

Although the Tree of Death is often equated with the Tree of Knowledge and the Tree of Life, it juxtaposes the general symbolism of a tree, with that of the life of the cosmos. In this poem, however, the word "vznessia" (rise) supports the meaning of upward movement that is connected with the symbol of the world axis.

Bryusov tended to explore transformations in cultures or conflicts between and among cultures. Two poems that utilize this theme, "The Romans in China" (Rimlianie v Kitae) and "The Song of the Normans in Sicily" (Pesnia normannov v Sitsilii), illustrate in a more general sense the confrontation between the Orient and the West ("Rimlianie

v Kitae") and the North with the South ("Pesnia normannov v Sitsilii"). Although the contrast is quite vivid, it does not extend beyond general associations and does not introduce any original characteristic. The splendor of China is characterized by the colorfulness and the variety of precious stones as opposed to the stark white Roman togas; the difference between Normans and Sicilians was to be found in the character of the people and their personal conduct. Bryusov depicts here Southern laziness, first observed and introduced into the literature by Goethe:

> Здесь люди дрелмют в пьяной неге,
> ведут войну рукой наемной.[86]
>
> [People here doze in a drunken languor,
> They wage war by hired hand.]

The subject of the transformations of civilizations appears in a very ambitious work—a crown of sonnets, entitled "The Torchbearer of Thought" (Svetoch mysli).[87] The cycle, written in 1918, the turbulent year in which Bryusov for many reasons was much preoccupied with the subject of the Roman Empire, remained unpublished during the poet's lifetime.

On February 26, 1918, in a letter to his brother, who was being kept in German captivity, the poet confessed: "Apropos, I read almost exclusively in Latin in order not to hold a newspaper in my hand."[88] A few months later in his unfinished article "The Times of the Thirty Tyrants" the poet urges his reader: "The forgotten 'Augustan History' in our time assumes an absolutely new meaning; if it did not pay to read it during the last 1600 years, now is the time to take it from the shelf, dust it off and put it on one's desk. The time has come for the biographies compiled at the time of Diocletian and Constantine around 300 A.D. to become the reference book for the Russian reader of 1918 A.D." [89]

These two quotations cast light on the poet's frame of mind at the time when he was working on the cycle that embraces the history of civilization from legendary Atlantis to World War I. In this work of fourteen sonnets (excluding the final one), the fifth, sixth, and part of the seventh deal with Roman civilization. In the sonnet "Hellenism and Rome" (Ellinizm i Rim) Bryusov argues that by defeating Greece,

Rome united the Hellenistic legacy with the Western element.[90] As the apogee of Rome's triumph, the poet chose the time of Julius Caesar, ending the sonnet with the words: "On vstal, kak tsar', v torzhestvennoi porfire" (He rose, like a tsar, in the triumphant purple). This final line, in accordance with the very strict form of a crown of sonnets,[91] will be repeated two more times in the cycle, bringing back the image of that symbolic garment[92] into his poetry, and manifesting his fascination with the power based on divine right—the autocracy. The next sonnet "Roman Empire" (Rimskaia imperiia) expresses his deeply felt conviction, that only fate can match forces with the grandeur of Rome and its heroes.

Many writers and historians at the turn of the twentieth century sought analogies with the fourth century—the century of Rome's fall. Bryusov was among those who believed that at the moment of its fall the Roman Empire was at the peak of its development. Unfortunately, in these last poems the philosophical concept is not matched by artistic technique, which may account for the fact the reason that "The Torchbearer of Thought" was never published.

But even the less successful poems demonstrate a profound and thorough understanding of what one might *per analogiam* to the "Petersburg text" call the "Roman text" and its attendant complex symbolism. Rome with its larger-than-life heroes, with its architecture and customs, with its unprecedented grandeur and its mysterious fall was an omnipresent entity in Bryusov's poetic consciousness. The poet never tired of exploring Roman images and myths for the realization of his artistic ends. They served to universalize his poetic message as well as human experience. Even "Oarsmen of the Trireme" (Grebtsy triremy), a poem depicting the fate of the lowest class of slaves, the oarsmen chained to the galleys of the trireme, ends with the existential universal symbol of men journeying through a sea, unaware of their destination:

> Быстро со мглой гробовой
> Снова сливаемся все мы,
> Мча на неведомый бой
> Бег быстролетной триремы.[93]
>
> [Swiftly with the deathly mist
> We all merge once again,

Rushing to unknown battle
The race of the swift-flowing trireme.]

Rome, the indisputable cradle of Western culture, provided the poet with a means of expression in his poetic quest. It was in the world of poetry that the young leader of a new trend held his third vigil (*Tertia vigilia* is the title of his 1900 collection) and received much-desired recognition. The same sort of analogy prompted Bryusov to name his next collection *Urbi et orbi*. The common interpretation of the title, which in Russian (*Rimu i miru*) repeats the phonetical parallel (*-rbi* in Latin; *mir* in Russian), has it that the title was meant to address a wider audience, beyond the exclusively literary one.

There is no evidence that the concept of Moscow as a Third Rome appealed to Bryusov on religious grounds. Nevertheless, he did not hesitate to employ this concept in the context of his political views. The Russo-Japanese War awakened in Bryusov very strong political feelings. Joan Delaney Grossman[94] believes that Bryusov's love affair with Nina Petrovskaya, which began at this time, contributed considerably to his heightened emotions, political and otherwise. At the time Bryusov's attitude toward the Revolution was mixed, if not entirely negative.[95] It appears that Bryusov saw parallels between Russia and the Roman Republic not only in his poems. In his review of the book *Battle for the Great Ocean* (Bor'ba za Velikii okean), written by Renepinon in 1904, Bryusov writes: "The Roman Senate was able to calculate in advance, for whole centuries. Russia—the new Rome—can think only about yesterday."[96] This characterizes his frame of mind underlying the writing of several civic poems. Hence, in the poem "To My Fellow Citizens" Bryusov resorts, to some extent, to the analogy with Rome, and in "Tsushima" he employs the concept of the Third Rome. In the poem "To My Fellow Citizens," written in December 1904, the poet appeals to his fellow citizens for unity in the face of external danger, unity necessary to succeed in the Russo-Japanese War:

Теперь не время буйным спорам,
Как и веселым звонам струн.
Вы, ликторы закройте форум!
Молчи, неистовый трибун!
Когда падут крутые Веи

И встанет Рим как властелин
Пускай опять идут плебеи
На свой священный Авентин![97]
[Now is not the time for turbulent disputes
As well as for the joyous sound of strings
You, lictors, close the Forum!
Keep silent, furious tribune,

When the stern Veii fall
And Rome will rise up like a ruler
Let the plebeians again go
To their sacred Aventine!]

Significantly, while addressing his fellow citizens, Bryusov invokes an analogy from the period of the beginning of the Roman Republic. On the eve of the 1905 Revolution and in the midst of the Russo-Japanese War, he sought parallels with the famous conflict between the patricians and plebeians.[98] In 494 and 449 B.C. the plebeians marked their protest by abandoning Rome and going to Aventine Hill.[99] But Bryusov's poem contains something which may be called a cryptic or reverse analogy. Having in mind the internal turmoil and the imminent Revolution of 1905, Bryusov wants his compatriots to behave in exactly the opposite manner as did the early Republic's plebeians. He wants them to protest after the war is over; when it has ended victoriously, and when they no longer have their leverage. In Rome, the plebeians exerted pressure just when they were being summoned by the councils to join the annual campaign against the hill tribes. Thus, in alluding to the political model of the virtuous Roman Republic,[100] the poet extols only one aspect of its principles—the readiness of the citizens to defend the republic. At the same time he denies, if only temporarily, their right to defend their public liberty.[101] Unlike Mandelstam, who in his well-known poem "Offended, they depart for the hills" (Obizhenno ukhodiat na kholmy)[102] invoked the image of Aventine to acknowledge the people's "thirsting for freedom and a role in the governance of the state,"[103] Bryusov used the symbol of Aventine to urge people to renounce these longings. No wonder, he himself always worshiped absolutism and autocracy. "Any democratic government seemed to him," writes Vladislav Khodasevich, "either a utopia or an ochlocracy, mob rule."[104] Even if one questions Bryusov's use of the

symbolism of Aventine, one cannot deny the force of the message. Equally strong is the message of the poem "Tsushima."[105] We have already discussed Bryusov's civic outrage upon hearing the news of the sinking of the Russian fleet by the Japanese.[106] As Grossman writes: "In majestic cadence the poet there mourned not only the loss of life and ships at Tsushima, but the end, for the foreseeable future, of Russia's great hope for 'Both the scepter of the Far East / And the crown of the third Rome.'"[107] The strength of these lines is achieved not only by alluding to the concept of the Third Rome, but also by combining this with the image of the nonexistent crown, the main symbol of Roman triumph.

Bryusov embraced a variety of Rome-related motifs and images in his poems to express his longing for Russia's political grandeur. His use of the image of the victorious purple was not abstract. He hoped that the Russian generals, whose cloaks were also ornamented with red, would be as victorious as Julius Caesar. At times he thought of himself as Antony, but he often saw himself as Sulla.

Bryusov also thought it appropriate to address *Urbi et Orbi* from the place of his permanent residence—Moscow.

Notes

1. D. S. Mirsky, *A History of Russian Literature*, 435.

2. David M. Bethea, *Khodasevich. His Life and Art*. (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1983), 32.

3. When they read Catullus together, Bryusov exercised censorship, choosing only poems "proper for girls." N. I. Briusova, "Vospominaniia o Valerii Briusove," *Briusovskie chteniia*, 1962 (Erevan: Gosudarstvennoe Izdatel'stvo: 1963), 487-93.

4. N. S. Burlakov, *Valerii Briusov: ocherk tvorchestva* (Moscow: Prosveshchenie, 1975).

5. V. Purisheva, "Biblioteka Valeriia Briusova," *Literaturnoe Nasledstvo* 27-28 (1937), 673.

6. Viacheslav Ivanov, *Sobranie sochinenii*, ed. D.V. Ivanov and O. Deschartes (Brussels: Foyer Oriental Chrétein, 1971-79): 2:327.

7. Aleksandr Ilinskii, "Literaturnoe nasledstvo V. Briusova," *Literaturnoe Nasledstvo*, 27-28 (1937): 457-504; N. Gudzii, "Iunosheskoe tvorchestvo Briusova," *Literaturnoe Nasledstvo*, 27-28 (1937): 198-238.

8. N. Gudzii, 217.

9. Joan Delaney Grossman, Introduction to *The Diary of Valery Bryusov* (1893-1905), ed. and trans. Joan Delaney Grossman (Berkeley & Los Angeles & London: University of California Press, 1980), 31.

10. *The Diary of Valery Bryusov*, 103.

11. Briusov, "Avtobiografiia" (Moscow, 1914), reprint in *Russkaia Literatura XX veka (1890-1910)*, ed. S. A. Vengerov, (Munich: Wilhelm Fink, 1972), 108.

12. Dmitrii E. Maksimov, *Briusov: poeziia i pozitsiia* (Leningrad: Sov. pisatel', 1969), 111.

13. *The Diary of Valery Bryusov*, 88.

14. M. A. Voloshin, *Liki tvorchestva*, quoted in D. E. Maksimov, 111-12.

15. *The Diary of Valery Bryusov*, 139-40

16. See M. L. Gasparov, afterword to the fifth volume of Bryusov's collected works: V. Briusov, *Sobranie Sochinenii v semi tomakh*, ed. P. G. Antokol'skii, et al. (Moscow: Khudozhestvennaia Literatura, 1975).

17. Among them, P. N. Berkov in "Problemy istorii mirovoi kul'tury v literaturno-khudozhestvennom i nauchnom tvorchestve Briusova,'' *Briusovskie chteniia*, 1962, 20-56.

18. S. V. Shervinskii, "Briusov i Rim," *Valeriiu Briusovu (1873-1923). Sbornik posviashchennyi 50-letiiu so dnia rozhdeniia poeta*, ed. P. Kogan (Moscow: KUBS'a, 1924), 92.

19. A. I.. Malenin, "V. Ia. Briusov i antichnyi mir," originally in *Izvestiia Leningr. Gos. Universiteta* 2(1930):185, quoted in P. N. Berkov, 20-56.

20. Verlaine's impact on Bryusov is indisputable. In his diary on December 31, 1895 (old Russian calendar), we read: "Verlaine is dead." Verlaine died on January 8, 1896. *The Diary of Valery Bryusov*, 44.

21. D. E. Maksimov, *Briusov: poeziia i pozitsiia*, 111.

22. Burlakov, 145-46.

23. Cf. E.S. Litvin, "Evoliutsiia istoricheskoi prozy Briusova" *Russkaia literatura* 2 (1968):154-63.

24. G. P. Fedotov considers Bryusov, "perhaps the only Russian poet able to render a congenial translation of Virgil," ("O Virgilii," 216).

25. Lev Ozerov, "Priglashenie k diskussii," in *Masterstvo perevoda* 8 (1971): 88-90.

26. V. Briusov, *Dnevniki 1891-1910*, 6.

27. M. A. Voloshin, *Liki tvorchestva*, quoted in D. E. Maksimov, *Briusov: poeziia i pozitsiia*, 11.

28. D. E. Maksimov, *Briusov: poeziia i pozitsiia*, 159.

29. Ibid., 159.

30. Cf. V. Zhirmunskii, *Valerii Bryusov i nasledie Pushkina: opyt sravnitel'no-stilisticheskogo issledovaniia* (St. Petersburg: El'zevir, 1922; reprint: The Hague: Mouton, 1970).

31. Marina Tsvetaeva from "Hero of Labor: Notes on Valery Bryusov," in *The Diary of Valery Bryusov*, 164.

32. Besides the attention given to "Antonii" by Zhirmunskii, Maksimov, and Burlakov, the poem is the subject of a twelve-page article by M. M. Girshman: "V. Briusov—'Antonii'" in *Poeticheskii stroi russkoi liriki* (Leningrad: Nauka, 1973), 199-210.

33. Girshman, 200.

34. Maksimov, *Briusov: poeziia i pozitsiia* and Burlakov.

35. Among the classics inspired by this story are Shakespeare's *Anthony and Cleopatra* and Dryden's *All for Love: or, the World Well Lost*. An attentive reader of Plutarch will note that the suicides of Anthony and Cleopatra resemble those of Romeo and Juliet. This resemblance, unrelated to "Antony," resurfaces in "Ballada o liubvi i smerti" V. Briusov, *Sobranie sochineni*, 2:173.

36. Plutarch, *Lives of Nine Illustrious Greeks and Romans*, The Dryden-Clough Translation (New York: Washington Square Press, 1964), 350.

37. J. E. Cirlot, *A Dictionary of Symbols*, trans. form the Spanish by Jack Sage (New York: Philosophical Library, 1962), see laurel and halo.

38. V. Briusov, *Sobranie sochinenii*, 3:403

39. Girshman, 207.

40. V. Brusov, *Sobranie sochinenii*, 2:177. Carol Ueland called my attention to the interesting parallel to the phrase "umru liubia" in Pushkin's "Tsygany" (Gypsies).

41. Plutarch, 381.

42. Ibid., 381.

43. F. I. Tiutchev, *Lirika*, ed. K. V. Pigarev, 2 vols. (Moscow: Nauka, 1965), 1:36.

44. N. Gudzii, "Tiutchev v poeticheskoi kul'ture russkogo simvolizma", *Izvestiia po russkomu iazyku i slovesnosti*, no. 3 (1930):465-549.

45. Ibid ., 491

46. Burlakov, 95.

47. Maksimov, *Briusov: poeziia i pozitsiia*, 133.

48. To use Bakhtin's terminology, Caesar is represented here as "a person on the threshold of a final decision, at a moment of crisis, at an unfinalizable—and unpredeterminable—turning point for his soul." Cf. Mikhail Bakhtin, *Problems of Dostoevsky's Poetics*, ed. and trans. Caryl Emerson (Minnesota: University of Minnesota Press, 1984), 61; see also 62-63.

49. Plutarch, 318.

50. Ibid., 309.

51. Ibid., 310.

52. Ibid., 305.

53. One finds similar horse's feet on the Greek vase drawing showing Apollo's arrival in Delphi.

54. Suetonius, *History of Twelve Caesars*, trans. Philemon Holland, 1606, reprint, edited by J. H. Freese, (London: G. Routledge, 1930), 41.

55. *The Diary of Valery Bryusov*, 38.

56. M. L. Gasparov, "Neizdannye raboty V. Ia. Briusova po antichnoi istorii i kul'ture," *Briusovskie chteniia* 1971, ed. K. V. Aivazian (Erevan: Aiastan, 1973), 190.

57. Ibid.

58. Burlakov, 140.

59. Maksimov, *Briusov: poeziia i pozitsiia*, 136.

60. G. P. Baker, *Sulla the Fortunate: The Great Dictator*, 2d ed. (New York: Barnes and Noble, 1967), 5.

61. Sulla's political activity dates to the years 88-79 B.C., that is, some 700 years after the legendary foundation of Rome (754 B.C.), (ab urbe condita). Cf. footnote to "Sulla" Briusov, *Sobranie sochinenii*, 3:412-13.

62. Cf. A. Lozovoi, "Istoricheskie motivy v poezii V. Ia. Briusova," *Russkaia rech'* 6 (1973), 18-24.

63. Maksimov, *Briusov: poeziia i pozitsiia*, 159.

64. Gudzii, "Iunosheskoe tvorchestvo Briusova," *Literaturnoe Nasledstvo* 27-28 (1937): 236.

65. Catherine Johns, *Sex or Symbol: Erotic Images of Greece and Rome* (London: British Museum Publications, 1982), 152.

66. *Vesy* 8 (1904), 25-26.

67. K. Mochul'skii, *Valerii Briusov*, 93.

68. Maksimov, *Briusov: poeziia i pozitsiia*, 155.

69. Viktor Zhirmunskii, *Valerii Briusov i nasledie Pushkina*, 104.

70. Ibid., 11. (Zhirmunskii, however, does not elaborate on the function of this Roman environment.)

71. Denis de Rougemont, *Love Declared: Essays on the Myths of Love*, trans. Richard Howard (New York: Pantheon Books, 1963), 41-42.

72 . Otto Kieffer, *Sexual Life in Ancient Rome*, trans. Gilbert and Helen Highet (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1950), 65.

73. Briusov, *Sobranie sochinenii*, 1:301.

74. Ibid., 1:530.

75. "Za moim oknom'' (Moscow, 1913), 33-34; in Briusov, *Sobranie sochinenii*, 1:649.

76. This is not an accident; in the poem "Fonariki," written in 1904, one finds the exclamation: "O Rim, svet oslepitel'nyi odinnadtsati chash: / Ty--belyi, torzhestvuiushchui, ty nam rodnoi, ty nash!'' (O Rome, the blinding light of the eleven cups: You (are) white, triumphant, you are our native city, you are ours!), 435.

77. Cf. Maria Podraza-Kwiatkowska, *Symbolizm i symbolika Mlodej Polski (*Kraków: Wydawnictwo Literackie, 1975), 230.

78. "Peterburgskii tekst," Semiotika goroda i gorodskoi kul'tury; Petersburg, *Trudy po znakovym sistemam*, vol. 28, no. 664 (Tartu, 1984), 78-92.

79. G. McN. Rushforth, "Architecture and Art," in *The Legacy of Rome*, ed. Cyril Bailey (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1923), 415.

80. Ibid., 389.

81. *Encyclopedia Britannica* 19, 472 b.

82. Baldwin E. Smith, *Architectural Symbolism of Imperial Rome and the Middle Ages* (New York: Hacker Art Books, 1978), 12-13.

83. Cf. the chapter on Merezhkovskii. Roman stones usually speak to the poets, for example Goethe, Merezhkovskii, Mandel'shtam.

84. Briusov, *Sobranie sochinenii*, 1:514-15.

85. V. Briusov, *Izbrannye sochineniia v dvukh tomakh* (Moscow: Gosudarstvennoe Izdatel'stvo Khudezhestvennoi Literatury, 1955), 1:530.

86. Briusov, *Sobranie sochinenii*, 3:519

87. Ibid., 3:383-89.

88. Quoted in M. L. Gasparov, "Neizdannye raboty V. Ia. Briusova," *Zapiski otdela rukopisei Gosud. Bibl. im. Lenina*, 1962, no. 29: 220.

89. Gasparov, "Neizdannye raboty V. Ia. Briusova po antichnoi istorii i kul'ture,'' *Briusovskie chteniia* 1971, 205.

90. Cf. with the poem "Sulla.''

91. A cycle comprising fifteen sonnets, which are interlinked.

92. Cf. "Antonii"

93. Ibid., 1:420.

94. Joan Delaney Grossman, *Valery Bryusov and the Riddle of Russian Decadence* (Berkley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1985), 397. See especially the chapter "The Year 1905 and Stephanos," 264-97.

95. Cf. J. D. Grossman review of the related literature, ibid., 265-66.

96. N. Ashukin, "Nenapisannaia poema 'Agasfer' v 1905 godu'' in *Literaturnoe Nasledstvo*, 27-28 (1937): 239.

97. Briusov, *Sobranie sochinenii*, 1:425.

98. Cf. the exhaustive footnote, *Sobranie sochinenii*, 1:631-32.

99. Cf. Titus Livius, *The History of Rome*, trans. George Beker (London: Strahan and T. Cadell Jun. and W. Davies, 1797), 1:214.

100. Cf. Peter Bondanella, Introduction to *The Eternal City, Roman Images in the Modern World* (Chapel Hill and London: University of North Carolina Press), 4.

101. Niccolo Machiavelli in his *The Prince and the Discourses*, comments on these events: "I maintain that those who blame the quarrels of the Senate and the people of Rome condemn that which was the very origin of liberty [...]; and all the laws that are favorable to liberty result from the opposition of these parties to each other, as may easily be seen from the events that occurred in Rome" (trans. Christian E. Detmold [New York: Modern Library, 1950], 119).

102. Osip Mandel'shtam, *Stikhotvoreniia*, 310.

103. R. Przybylski, "Rome, or a Dream about the Unity of All Things" in An *Essay on the Poetry of Osip Mandelstam: God's Grateful Guest*, 21.

104. V. F. Khodasevich, "Bryusov" in J. D. Grossman, *Valery Bryusov and the Riddle of Russian Decadence*, 158.

105. Briusov, *Sobranie sochinenii*, 1:426-27.

106. J. D. Grossman refers to the substantial literature on this theme.

107. J. D. Grossman, *Valery Bryusov and the Riddle*, 278.

VI.

The God-Loving Roman
Vyacheslav Ivanov

No other Symbolist poet had ties with Rome as numerous, strong, complex, and formalized as Vyacheslav Ivanov. He spent crucial periods of his life in the city of Rome, and his classical scholarship had a tremendous impact on his poetic output. It is only natural that in Ivanov's most prominent poetic statements these factors interacted at the highest level. At times a religious or amatory inspiration experienced at some impressive Roman site, aided by the poet's profound knowledge, culminated in great poems.[1]

Vyacheslav Ivanovich Ivanov, whom Mirsky calls "an uncrowned king of Petersburg poets,"[2] and whom Shestov nicknamed "Vyacheslav the Magnificent," was born in Moscow in 1866, and died in 1949 in Italy an exile and a converted Catholic. A scholar of classics and ancient history, he knew Greek and Latin as intimately as Russian, was attracted to the great poets of antiquity, and was influenced by Dante, Goethe, Nietzsche and Solovyov. His erudition and mystical anarchism made him a leader of the Petersburg literary circle. In his apartment, which has gone down in history as the famous "Tower," the intellectual elite met every Wednesday for seven years. Married three times, once divorced and twice widowed, Ivanov moved back to Moscow in 1912; nine years later he was appointed professor of Greek at the State University in Baku, Azerbaijan, from where in 1924 he left Russia forever with his two children.

Rome played a significant role in the awakening of Ivanov's poetic gift. Moreover, it touched all the vital areas of the poet's life: love, religion, scholarship, and literature. Chronologically his scholarship came first. Long before his first visit to Rome, Ivanov had spent nine semesters in Berlin studying under the world-renowned Theodor Mommsen and preparing his dissertation, "On the Tax-Forming Companies of the Roman People," in Latin. He began these studies in late 1886, completed his dissertation in 1895, but decided against defending it. He abandoned his plans for an academic career, though not his scholarly interest in Rome.[3] In 1897, in the British Museum, he researched the historical roots of the idea of the universal mission of Rome, a central theme of his public lecture "On the Russian Idea" (O russkoi idee), published in 1909 in *Zolotoe Runo* (The Golden Fleece). In the course of an historical analysis of the notion of nationalism, the poet formulated his own view of the *pax Romana*:

> The Roman national idea has been worked out by the complex process of collective myth-making: the legend of the Trojan Aeneas, along with Greek and eastern Sibylline prophecy, was needed to establish gradually in the national consciousness a vivid sense of Rome's global role-task to unite the early Roman tribes into one political body, in a spirit of universal harmony that the Romans called *pax Romana*.[4]

In the same lecture Ivanov expressed his conviction that Virgil "asserts not a national egoism, but the providential will and idea of sovereign Rome, which was becoming a world. The idea of the empire, as it developed in Rome, was forever severed by Rome itself from the national idea." And the poet stresses that in contrast to Russia: "'Rome' is always a universe."[5]

V. Rudich points out the significance of this distinction in Ivanov's mind:

> For all his tremendous knowledge of things Roman, he could in no way identify himself with the Roman spirit. In contrast to many Russian thinkers, he was indifferent to the imperial ideal, so crucial in Roman experience. If he had any profound concerns related to Roman culture, they were eschatological: hence his interest in Virgil and in the emergence of Christianity.[6]

The poet's attitude toward his own scholarship in this field was at best ambivalent,[7] though it did help him later to survive the difficult,

transitional period of his life in Baku, where he supported his family by teaching Tacitus, Virgil's *Bucolics*, and other classical subjects.

One may detect a similar ambivalence in Ivanov's relation to the city of Rome. For many years he kept postponing his first trip to Rome because he felt unprepared. He was finally persuaded to go by a scholar and friend, I. M. Grevs.[8] After this first stay, which lasted from 1892 to 1895, he frequently returned to Italy, sometimes for long periods of time. Finally, Rome, the city of love and creative inspiration, became the last refuge for him and his children, a fact that led Ivanov to identify himself with Aeneas.[9]

In Rome, in 1893, Ivanov first encountered Lidia Zinovieva-Hannibal, who was to become his second wife.[10] The relationship, especially in its early adulterous period, resulted in tremendous tension and feelings of guilt, but at the same time in the realization of Ivanov's poetic gift. The interplay of these forces can be seen in Ivanov's poem "In the Coliseum" (V Kolizee).[11] Rome played a critical role in the poet's life again in 1910, when he decided to marry his stepdaughter Vera. Two years later, when Vera bore him a son, Ivanov with his daughter Lydia and the new family stayed in Rome for a year, seeking refuge from the malicious gossip of Petersburg's literary circles.[12] In 1924, Rome served Ivanov as a haven from a much more serious danger. The poet, widowed for the second time, brought his two children there, fleeing the perils of post-Revolutionary Russia. Once again Rome offered the poet something more than safety and relative stability—it reawakened his poetic inspiration, as it was to do once more in 1944.

The significance of Roman topics in the literary output of Vyacheslav Ivanov cannot be overestimated. His application of Latin in titles, inscriptions, quotations, and poems has long been discussed by scholars. On two occasions he said he heard voices dictating poetry to him in Latin.[13] He communicated in Latin with his fellow poet, Valery Bryusov. The cycle of poems "Carmen Seculare," dedicated to Bryusov, uses Latin titles and inscriptions.[14] Ivanov's lifelong appreciation of the beauty of southern nature and the architectural symbolism of Rome gave rise to many poems.

Sorrows Blended with Joys

"Laeta" (Joys),[15] the very first poem written after Ivanov's arrival in Rome in 1892, contains almost an entire index of the themes that would occupy the poet in the years to come. It is a guided tour around the city of Rome, enhanced by the poet's erudition. Even if it lacks the depth of his later work, the poem does not lack the universal references that would prove prophetic in the poet's life. The main idea of the poem is the contrast of the poet's own situation to that of the Roman poet Ovid.[16] He makes this connection explicit with an epigraph taken from Ovid's "Tristia": "Tristia miscentur laetis" (Sorrows are blended with joys).[17] For Ovid, exiled from Rome to Pontus (Black Sea), *tristia* (sorrows) prevailed, whereas for Ivanov, who came to Rome voluntarily, the prevalent emotion was joy. His joys (laeta) may have been, to a certain degree, blended with sorrows as well, since he missed the close friend to whom he dedicated the poem, and who at the time was somewhere near the site of Ovid's exile.

Ivanov starts his three-part "Laeta" by stressing these biographical and topograhical reversals:

> В Рим свой "Тристиа" слал с берегов Понтийских Овидий:
> К Понту из Рима я шлю – Лаэта:… [18]
>
> [To Rome from the shores of Pontus Ovid sent his "*Tristia*":
> To Pontus from Rome I am sending – Laeta:…]

Variations on this theme appear in the first and second parts of the poem. "Pontus" stands here for the Crimea, where the addressee resided at that time, but in general it stands for distant peripheries. In 1892 Ivanov's experience did not really merit such a comparison: Ovid was exiled in Pontus, whereas Ivanov had come to Rome voluntarily. But what is here simply rhetorical ornamentation eventually became his destiny. When he came to Rome from Baku in 1924, Ivanov was genuinely in exile (as he was to some extent in Baku),[19] though he did not return to this comparison in his "Roman Sonnets" (Rimskie sonety) written during that period. In "Laeta," however, the poet dwells on the theme of homelessness and exile:

> Рим – всех богов жилищем клянусь! – мне по сердцу обитель:
> Цели достигнув святой, здесь я, паломник, блажен.
> Здесь мне сладок ночлег; но сладостней здесь пробужденье:

> Здесь бы поставил я прочный алтарь усталым Пенатам –
> Странник бездомный!
>
> [Rome—I swear by all the gods' abodes!—is the abode of my heart:
> After achieving the sacred goal, here I am, a pilgrim, blessed.
> Sweet is my night lodging here; but sweeter still the awakening:
> Here I would erect a lasting altar to weary Penates—
> Homeless wanderer!]

The poem, 156 lines of blank verse, is written in the form of an address, but to more than one addressee. The poet includes an exchange between himself and the *Genius Loci*, parts of a prayer to the Roman god Pan, and an oration to Janiculum, one of the Roman hills. The reader finds here a mixture of Greek and Roman mythology, and the description (or rather enumeration) of several landmarks, all quite artificially kept together by the lyrical persona, who is only nominally lyrical. Nevertheless, certain elements deserve attention, among them the part dedicated to the Pantheon. In his notes, Ivanov confesses that his "characterization of the Pantheon is more faithful to the spirit of ancient pantheism than to the historical significance of the monument."[20] It is with sorrow that the poet acknowledges the later function of this temple as a Christian church. He praises Rome as the home of many gods[21] and he describes himself as "Worshipper of many gods, I am a carefree pagan" (Mnogikh poklonnik bogov, ia sam, iazychnik bespechnyi).[22] Years later the poet expressed his unique identification with the Roman spirit differently; the lyrical hero of his *Melopea*, identified as Man, confesses:

> Я – римлянин боголюбивый –
> Крест суеверно сторожу.
>
> [I—a god-loving Roman—
> superstitiously guard the cross.[23]]

In the second part of "Laeta" the poet meditates on the subject of his fatherland: "Rodine veren, ia Rim rodinoi novoiu chtu" (Faithful to my homeland, I honor Rome as my new homeland). He then poses further questions answered with the rhetorical question: "Ili ne Rim zolotoi – moi narechennyi predel?" (Isn't golden Rome—my betrothed portion?). Eventually the poet's life would bring a positive answer to this question, but already in this poem he calls Rome "favorite," exclaiming:

Как ты мне дорог, мой Рим!
Вечный, великий, святой!

[How dear you are to me, Rome!
Eternal, magnificent, sacred!]

Thus on his first encounter with the Eternal City, Ivanov was fully aware of its symbolism and its significance for his life, but at that early point in his emotional and artistic development he was unable to endow his expression with that enormous poetic energy characteristic of his later Roman poems.[24]

The Funereal Coliseum

"In the Coliseum," written between 1893 and 1902, is a poem written under a new tension. Combining Roman and autobiographical themes,[25] the poem celebrates both the famous landmark and the poet's meeting with Lidia Zinovieva-Hannibal, his future second wife.

The Flavian Amphitheater was named the Coliseum during the medieval period, because of an association with Nero's colossus. Its design, very original for its time, represents the ultimate stage of Roman architecture. But the perception of the Coliseum as a place of Christian martyrdom has overshadowed the appreciation of its architectural significance. The structure is demonized in many literary renditions. In 1787 Goethe called it "especially beautiful" and a "superb sight," but a year later, while describing his farewell sightseeing in Rome, he writes: "But when I approached the grand ruins of the Coliseum and looked through the gate into the interior, I must frankly confess that a shudder ran through me, and I quickly returned home. Any gigantic mass has a peculiar effect on me; it has something about it which is at once fascinating and awe-inspiring."[26]

Vasily Rozanov devotes a few long passages to the Coliseum's architectural design and its place in the Christian tradition. He concludes with this reflection: "Fortunate are the Coliseum martyrs of the second and third centuries; sad are the Coliseum visitors of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries,"[27] thus underlining the spiritual richness of the martyrs and the spiritual emptiness of man at the turn of the twentieth century.[28]

Ivanov's poetic perception of the famous structure is equally polyvalent. "In the Coliseum" is a poem of four stanzas with a simple *abab* rhyme pattern, which changes in the last quatrain to *abba*. The

epigraph, from Lord Byron's "Heaven and Earth" ("Great is their love, who love in sin and fear"), alludes to Ivanov's relationship with Lidia, of which he once said, "We both thought our mutual attraction to be dark, demonic, but it turned out that it was a true love."[29] The poem starts with the image of the Coliseum at twilight. The structure of the amphitheater represents simultaneously chaos and inertia, but the play of light, duplicated by the movement of air, introduces a dynamic element. Poised between light and darkness, the structure emanates ambivalence,[30] with evil forces prevailing. The oxymoron "nedvizhnyi khaos" (immovable chaos) is the key phrase in the poem, reflected in many other ideas and images. To the same category belong "stikhiinaia t'ma" (elemental [spontaneous, uncontrolled] darkness), "sudeb bezvremennye ochi" (the fate's untimely eyes), "bur'i istomnye" (wearisome storms), "glyby" (slabs), "vechnost' rokovaia" (fateful eternity), "bezvol'nykh" (weak-willed), and the oxymoron "plen svobody" (freedom's bondage). At first encounter, the lyrical "we" of the poem are overwhelmed by these uncontrollable chaotic forces emanating from the Coliseum. The light seen through the clouds in the first stanza corresponds with the image of nemesis piercing the elemental darkness in the second quatrain. Unlike many Roman other architectural monuments depicted in poetry, the Coliseum is seen not as its creators intended—as a harmonious blending of all Roman architectural achievements—but in the light of its negative role in the persecution of the Christians as well as in its decay.

A second poem, "The Coliseum" (Kolizei),[31] entirely dedicated to the drama of the persecution of the Christians, invokes the nocturnal image of the structure. There is only one source of light—the moon. In this *abba abba cdc dee* sonnet the pairs of rhymes in both quatrains are identical: the *a* rhymes are two short-form adjectives, *gust* and *pust* (dense and hollow), and two genitive plural forms, *Lokust* and *ust* (of Locustas, of lips). The *b* rhymes are grammatical—formed by the four nominative plural nouns: *gromady, arkady, miriady, vzgliady* (heaps/piles, arcades, myriads, glances).

As in the first Coliseum poem, the scene is set in the opening stanza. The lyrical subject's testimony, *i mnitsia* (methinks, or, it seems to me) is followed by a description of an imaginary scene ruled by dream logic, as indicated here by antinomy–*nezrimo-zorkie* (invisibly sharp-sighted) and oxymoron–"bezzvuchnyi slyshen plesk, i klik bezglasnykh ust" (the soundless splash is heard and cry of the silent mouth). Two prominent characteristics of dreams, a

transcendent vision and confusion about time, permeate the poem. There are three time planes: the time of the poem's persona, the time of the persecution of the Christians, and the time of the installation of the cross in the Coliseum arena—in 1744 by Pope Benedict XIV in recognition of the Christian martyrs. The merging of these time strata allows the lyrical persona to witness the crucifixion of Jesus Christ.

Despite the differences between the two Coliseum poems in form and theme, there are certain similarities in imagery, particularly of eyes and eyesight. The metaphor "sudeb bezvremennye ochi" (the fates' untimely eyes) of the first poem finds its counterpart in the simile-metaphor "kak vpadiny ochei potukhnuvshikh, arkady gliadiat okrest" (like sockets of lifeless eyes, the arcades look around). The two poems share other related imagery: *glyby* (blocks) corresponds to *istlevshie gromady* (decayed masses); the phrase "vechnost' rokovaia v grekhe sviatilas' i krovi" (fateful eternity consecrated itself in blood and sin) may be compared to "dni krovavykh orgii" (the days of bloody orgies).

Whereas in the first poem the theme of the persecution of the Christians forms the background for an experience of forbidden love, in the second it is the background for a religious, mystical experience, a revelation that the lyrical persona shares with the ancient audience he envisions. He calls the audience "the ancient clan of Neros and Locustas," alluding to the cruelty of the Romans. Notorious Nero Claudius Caesar was the last emperor of the Julio-Claudian house; he had no heirs. Locusta, on Nero's orders,[32] was instrumental in the poisoning of Claudius Britannicus, along with many others. The Flavian Amphitheater was built ten years after Nero's death by the first member of the Flavian dynasty—Vespasian. Thus the ruins of the Coliseum evoked in Ivanov dark, demonic impressions through which he expressed his most profound spiritual experiences of love and faith by juxtaposing images of the heaviness of the structure to images of lightness, which represent spiritual reality. In the first Coliseum poem, "immovable chaos" and "blocks" are opposed to "hopeless spirit," "like two weak-willed leaves," "light sigh"; in the second poem "heavy resonant vault," "keen dense darkness," "masses," "arcades" are contrasted with the most ethereal reality: "whose shadow in front of me?"; "the cross visible on the shadow, and The Crucified—on the cross."

After the death of his beloved wife Lidia in 1907, Ivanov once again recalled the image of the Coliseum in the cycle "Love and Death" (Smert' i liubov'):

Наш первый хмель, преступный хмель свободы!
Могильный Колизей
Благословил:[33]

[The funereal Coliseum
Blessed
Our first intoxication, transgressive intoxication of freedom!]

Diana and the Sacred Grove at Lake Nemi

Two of Ivanov's "Italian Sonnets" (Ital'ianskie sonety)[34] and one ballad in "Speculum Speculorum,"[35] the second book of *Cor Ardens*, are built around the theme of the cult of Diana and the sacred grove at Lake Nemi at Aricia. The mistletoe on the oak that gave the title to Sir James Frazer's famous anthropological work *The Golden Bough* (1890) became at the end of the century the most celebrated topic of intellectual discussion concerning the origins of myth.[36] The sonnet entitled "Lunar Bondage" (Lunnyi plen) from the Italian cycle, concerned primarily with the landscape of the lake, introduces familiar elements of Diana's myth: the moon and hunting. Descriptive in the first quatrain, the sonnet (whose rhyme scheme is *abba baab cde edc*) turns into a meditation on the landscape, and is the most allusive of the three "Lake Nemi" poems.

In the next Diana sonnet, "Speculum Dianae," the poet practices mythmaking at its best.[37] The very human representation of Diana is closer to the spirit of Greek than Roman mythology. The first three stanzas of the poem contain a narrative description of the goddess's daily routine. The playful mood of the beginning is replaced by a more intense image of a contemplative Diana, which, in turn, is followed by the image of the cult's ritual. Significantly, the tension grows with the passing of time. She spends the morning and daytime hours swimming, running, hunting. The change is signaled by the first line of the last tercet: "i rano zdes' zhar ostyvaet dnia" (And the heat of the day cools down here early). This line provides the division not only between daylight and twilight, but also between mythic and historical reality—worship by the goddess and worship by the people. The poem opens with the image of a water-mirror (*Speculum Dianae)* and ends with the image of sacrificial fire combining the purificatory

(corresponding to water) and purgatorial (corresponding to fire) character of the rites:

> И Рима дочерь смолистые лучины
> Сюда несет обетного огня.
>
> [And the daughter of Rome brings
> Here the resinous torches of the sacrificial fire.[38]]

In 1891, the first volume of *The Golden Bough* prompted discussion in the *Quarterly Review* and the *Athenaeum* of the meaning of water and fire worship in the rites at Nemi. It is quite possible that Ivanov was exposed at least to the echoes of these polemics in the leading journals.[39] Having already written two sonnets on the theme of Diana before 1902, Ivanov once again returned to it in the ballad "Priest of Lake Nemi" (Zhrets ozera Nemi) in *Cor Ardens*, whose first two books were written in the years 1904-9.[40] By this time the second, revised and enlarged edition of Frazer's book had been widely discussed in reviews and articles. Ivanov's ballad touches upon all the elements of Frazer's narrative concerning the priest of Nemi and the rites of the cult of Diana, including the theme of blood sacrifice, which is absent from the two sonnets.

The main element of this myth, the confrontation between the aspiring and the present priest, resulting in the slaying of that priest, is indicated in the following phrases: "pridet li moi sopernik ... ot ch'ei ruki padu ia" (Will my rival come... from whose hand I will fall); "kto moi skiptr i mech voz'met v boiu?" (who will take my scepter and sword in battle?)[41]; "otsvetnyi mech" (shining sword); and "v bitve odolet'" (to conquer in battle). The theme of human sacrifice, pertinent to this myth, is openly indicated in the poem: "novoi krov'iu zhadnyi dern kurgana okropit'" (to sprinkle the greedy turf of the mount with the fresh blood). The whole myth is skillfully reflected in and enhanced by paronomasia: "zhrets i zhertva" (priest-devotee and victim-sacrifice), a favorite device of poets of the period.

Ivanov does not avoid the already controversial matter of the sacred marriage between the priest of Nemi and Diana of the Grove[42]:

> И сойдешь ты вновь в одеждах белых
> На устах пришельца омертвелых
> Поцелуй небес запечатлеть.

[And you'll descend again, clad in white
To imprint heaven's kiss
On the newcomer's lifeless mouth.]

The more accommodating ballad form seems better suited to retelling the myth than the restricted sonnet form. The poet makes full use of the ballad's properties by subjectivizing the narrative and inserting mysterious elements. Composed of five sextets with an *aabccb* rhyme pattern, "Priest of Lake Nemi," subtitled "A Lunar Ballad," depicts only the nocturnal landscape, which also suits the myth, since the killing of the priest probably occurred at night. The image of a double-mirrored landscape (water and sky), so dear to Romantic esthetics, reflecting the symbolic correspondence between "above and below," finds a strong structural foundation in this myth. Diana, the goddess of the moon and of Lake Nemi, unites both elements of the landscape. The poet assembles images to express the reflection of sky in water:

И влачит по заводям озерным
Белый челн, плывущий в небе черном
Тусклый плен божественных сетей.[43]

[(Diana)
Drags along the coves of the lake
The white boat swimming on the black sky,
Dim captivity of the divine net.]

In order to evoke the elusive and allusive aura of Lake Nemi in all three poems Ivanov employs similar devices,[44] including, for example, compound adjectives and Homeric epithets[45]: "luchezarnoi" (radiant) and "srebrotkanno" (weaved with silvery thread) in the sonnet "Lunar Bondage" and "dnesvetlyi" in "Speculum Dianae." There are also certain images common to all three poems; the grove in "Lunar Bondage" is rendered as "zelen' tumannaia," "listvennyi krov," "drevniaia roshcha," "chutkie kushchi," and "olivy" (hazy greenery, leafy roof, ancient grove, delicate foliage, olive trees); in "Speculum Dianae" we find: "krug magicheskikh dubrav i pastbishch gornykh," "dnesvetlyi lug," "mezh kiparisov chernykh" (ring of magic oak groves and of mountainous pastures, daylight meadow, among black cypresses). It is not accidental that the adjective "magic" appears repeatedly, considering the fact that the first part of Frazer's *Golden Bough* is entitled "The Magic Art and the Evolution of the King." The priest of Lake Nemi is at times considered a king, and his

assassination is viewed as regicide. There are also recurring images of bondage: "magicheskaia nevolia" (magic captivity, "Lunar Bondage"), "krug magicheskii… somknul svoi plen" (the magic circle… closed its captivity, "Speculum Dianae"), "tusklyi plen" (dim captivity, "Priest of Lake Nemi"). The image of silver is present in every poem: "krai stoly srebrotkannoi, serebriannoe pole" (the edge of your stole, intervowen with silver, silvery field, "Lunar Bondage"), "serebro puchiny" (silver of the deep, "Speculum Dianae"), "kormchaia serebriannykh putei" (you [female] pilot of silvery paths, "Priest of Lake Nemi"). And all three contain images of Diana's attributes: "prizrachnyi lov," "razkinutye seti" (spectral/illusory hunt, nets streched out, "Lunar Bondage"), "luk emlet i napriagaet tug" (the bow is taken and is tightly tensed, "Speculum Dianae"), "belyi cheln" and "tusklyi plen bozhestvennykh setei" (white boat, dim captivity of the divine nets, "Priest of Lake Nemi").

These examples indicate that the poems with common "thematic centers" or "lyrical idea"[46] share similar images, devices and sometimes language. This consistency of images illustrates Sergey Averintsev's assertion that in Ivanov's poetry "the symbol is not a decorative attribute that creates 'atmosphere,' but the foundation on which the edifice is erected…. One must note that his symbols truly constitute a system in the full sense of the word, a system that is closed to a greater degree than that of any other Russian Symbolist."[47]

Personal Dedications

Interestingly enough, only one of Ivanov's dozens of Rome-related poems is concerned with the Roman personality, for which one may seek an explanation in Ivanov's reservations about the Roman character. An avid subscriber to the Winckelmann doctrine, he was probably most attracted to Roman culture and myth as a continuation of Greek tradition. He found it difficult to identify with the actual actors of the Roman scene. Therefore, the only "personality" poem, "Petronius Redivivus," identifies a friend—not the poet—with a Roman persona. The composer V. I. Nuvel was nicknamed by friends "Petronius Redivivus," or simply "Renouveau."[48] In his diary of 1906, Ivanov repeatedly refers to Nuvel as Petronius or Renouveau.[49] In the poem, dedicated to Nuvel, the lyrical "I" presumes that Petronius has been sent back to earth in order to fulfill his mission, to advocate what Tacitus called "refined luxury." To convey this message, Ivanov

assumes an ironic distance by employing paradoxes, alliterations, and repetition. The phonetic organization of the poem includes refined assonances (svoego—Renouveau; stare—trepidarii) and interesting rhymes (Petronii—ironii; ven—plen; porok—urok), of which only two are grammatical (blagovonnoi—blagosklonnoi; blag—sarkofag). The poet makes use of the details commonly known about Petronius, namely, his good taste, his sense of irony and his forced suicide. Nevertheless, even in such a playful, light dedication the poet was able to touch upon his concept of rebirth as well as his concept of mission.

"Petronius Redivivus" is a part of the entire cycle "Inclinations" (Pristrastiia), included in the book "Speculum Speculorum" of *Cor Ardens*. As Johannes Holthusen writes:

> The large number of personal dedications in this cycle seems to document convincingly the poet's interrelationships with other people in the years 1905-1906. The personal inclinations (*pristrastija*) of the poet are as evident in his concern with older poets as in his passionate disputes with both his closer and his wider circles of friends (Bryusov, Blok, Gorodetsky, Kuzmin, I. Annensky, Gumilev, Khlebnikov, and many others).[50]

Three more dedications relevant to classical Rome are to be found in the same cycle, most notably in "Wreath" (Venok), a sonnet dedicated in 1906 to Bryusov[51] on the occasion of the publication of his volume of poetry *Stephanos*, which Bryusov dedicated to Ivanov. Ivanov names Bryusov "the pale magician" and "the victorious singer" who sang "Urbi et Orbi," equating Bryusov's poetic gift with the copper trumpet of the Capitol ("med' truby kapitoliiskoi").[52] Of interest here is the poets' common interest in or inclination (*pristrastie*) toward Roman culture. The same may be said of "Anachronism" (Anakhronizm),[53] a poem dedicated to Mikhail Kuzmin in which Ivanov calls him "singer and peer of Antinous." In 1912 during his stay in France, Ivanov prepared for publication his subsequent collection, entitled *Tender Mystery* (Nezhnaia taina), to which he added a special part entitled "Mite" (Lepta), consisting of new dedications to his literary friends. In one of these, a three-part poem for Kuzmin called "Vicinity" (Sosedstvo), Ivanov refers to Kuzmin's Italian journey, calling his friend "the inhabitant and favorite of the fields, / Where Virgil sang," and addressing him as "Rome's son."[54] Also in the cycle "Inclinations" are two sonnets dedicated to his friend I. M. Grevs, the "door-keeper of Rome," who had prompted Ivanov to make his first visit to the Eternal City. The

sonnet alludes to their shared fondness for classical culture, their "guiding dream."[55]

The Roman Legacy and the Political Turmoil of 1905

The political turmoil of 1905 affected Vyacheslav Ivanov as it did so many of his fellow writers; like two of them, Bryusov and Voloshin, he responded by drawing on Roman myths and symbols. The fifth part of *Cor Ardens*, "The Time of Wrath" (Godina gneva)[56] addressed matters which alarmed the entire Russian population, for example, the Russo-Japanese War (particularly the Tsushima defeat), the Revolution, and Bloody Sunday. Ivanov returns to the Roman tradition in two of the thirteen poems of the cycle: in the sonnet "Populus-rex," written on October 18, 1905, the day after the convocation of the State Duma, and in "Lucina," written on New Year's Day of 1906, shortly after the insurrection.[57]

In "Populus-rex," Ivanov expresses his fondness for Roman republican ideals, which were so important to Russian Romantic thought. The poet makes a strong distinction here between the concept of the slave who has been freed (vol'noodpushchennik—"freedman") and the free man who has been enslaved and has thrown off his yoke:

> ... в узах были мы заложники-цари;
> Но узы скинули усильем всенародным,
> Кто не забыл себя в тюрьме багрянородным,
> Наследие державств властительно бери,
> И память Вечную борцам своим твори,
> Насильникам отмстив забвеньем благородным.[58]
>
> [… in bonds we were hostage-kings;
> But we threw off the bonds through nation-wide effort,
> Let he who did not forget in prison that he was born to the purple
> masterly take the heritage of power
> and create the Eternal Memory for your fighters
> and by noble oblivion revenge against the aggressor.]

The composite "zalozhniki-tsari" (hostage-kings) and the compound "bagrianorodnyi" (born to the purple) reflect the Latin title "Populus-rex."

But within three months Ivanov had also drawn on the other main model in the Roman political legacy, namely, the empire. In the nine-stanza poem "Lucina," whose epigraph is taken from a famous

quotation from Virgil's Fourth Eclogue, the poet refers to the most hopeful period of the empire—its early years. The Eclogue, written in 40 B.C., in the midst of civil war, created a myth of its own. Its visionary message is connected with the Sybilline Books, and the poem was considered to be the prophecy of a new golden age under Augustus.[59] The epigraph from Virgil's Eclogue was easily identified by the average reader at that time, and Ivanov's invocation directed to Lucina[60] was read in its political context. The child destroyed at birth in the poem is the Revolution of 1905.[61] In the spirit of Virgil's prophetic Fourth Eclogue, Ivanov follows a tragic pronouncement with an expression of hope:

> Все перемнется в нас, что глина;
> Но сердце, сердце – как алмаз.[62]
>
> Everything will take its shape in us like clay:
> But the heart, the heart—like a diamond.

Thus "Lucina" and "Populus-rex" represent a combination found in Ivanov's other Roman poems, namely, a strong conviction or sentiment, a heightened emotional state, and reference to a contemporary events by allusion to a Roman myth that is already embedded in the Russian tradition.

The fate that Ivanov had imagined, or perhaps sensed, for himself in 1892 when he first visited Rome—exile from his homeland—was fully realized when he returned there in 1924. During his first visit, he wrote and sent home his "Laeta." When he arrived in Italy as an actual exile, his feelings were those of a mature poet, and his means of expression had been enormously enriched. The result was "Roman Sonnets."[63] In his diary entry of December 1, 1924, we read:

> And thus, we are in Rome. We are on the island. Our friends are in Russia—*rari nantes in gurgite vasto*.[64] The feeling of salvation, the joy of freedom hasn't lost its freshness to this day. To be in Rome seemed an unrealizable dream not long ago! But how can we stay here, what will we live on?... And again plunge alone *in gurgite*? Doesn't it mean to put destiny to the test? [65]

The majority of poems in the *admiratio Romae* tradition were written by prominent visitors to this great city. After 1924 Ivanov had become a permanent resident of Rome, and thus his point of reference also changed. In his close readings, Alexis Klimoff has identified the most important topics and formal characteristics of Ivanov's poetry after 1924.[66] He has also made essential strides regarding the

treatment of the Roman theme in Vyacheslav Ivanov's late poetry. His most valuable essay, an exemplary analysis of the first sonnet in the cycle,[67] discusses the "symbolic homecoming" of Ivanov's pilgrim, Ivanov's use of the notions of "Eternal Rome" and "New Troy," the theme of fiery renewal, and the function of memory.[68] A broader discussion of the entire cycle is presented in Klimoff's doctoral dissertation, which stresses the theme of Rome as an emblem of cultural continuity and pays special attention to the profound role of water symbolism.[69]

While Klimoff's studies assist me in my task, they also make it somewhat more difficult because of the necessity to look beyond his interpretation, and to explore areas not entirely exhausted. Therefore, I will present a detailed analysis of the second sonnet of the cycle, along with a more general discussion of the remaining poems. In the second sonnet Ivanov turns to the myth of the Dioscuri, the divine twins, who, according to legend, were the sons of Leda and of two fathers, one of whom was said to be Zeus. These gods of Greek origin were adopted at an early stage in the development of Roman religion. A temple was dedicated to them at *pomoerium*, a location generally reserved for native gods, near the Juturna spring, where, legend states, the Dioscuri watered their horses.[70] Three Corinthian columns on a high podium, remnants of the latest version of the temple, remain the most prominent ruins in the Forum Romanum. Aleksis Rannit draws an interesting parallel between Ivanov's poetry and Corinthian architecture:

> In its structure, the poetry of V. Ivanov is of the Corinthian order, the most elegant of all Greek architectural styles. It is remarkable that it developed fully and was widely used precisely in the architecture of ancient Rome. As in the Corinthian style, in Ivanov's work the meeting of the Greek and Roman spirit is accomplished. The Corinthian style, a synthesis of richness, plenitude, profusion, sometimes even extravagance, is widely represented in Roman architecture, and the Roman Pantheon, a specimen of it, undoubtedly attracted Ivanov with its grandeur.[71]

In his poem "Laeta," written in 1892, Ivanov only alludes to the Corinthian columns of the Dioscuri temple: "Castor and Pollux guard three incomparable columns."[72] But it was another monument, the so-called Dioscuri group of Monte Cavallo, located in the Piazza del Quirinale, which inspired the sonnet originally entitled "Monte Cavallo." The Dioscuri are introduced as they are often depicted in pictorial representations—as riders holding the reins of their steeds.

As in the other mythology-related poems, in this *abba abba ccd ede* sonnet, Ivanov touches upon many aspects of the Roman tradition, the origin of myth and worship.[73] The reader is provided with the most important characteristic of the twins: their role as gods of sports games, and as dauntless participants in innumerable wars and quests. In the last tercet, the poet refers more explicitly to the celestial aspect of this myth, and to the Greek origin, not only of the twins themselves, but also of the Monte Cavallo sculpture. As in many other poems about statues, we encounter an intentional ambiguity between the references to the sculpture and the subject it represents. The ambiguity is especially significant in this case, since the origin of the monument remains in dispute.[74] Some believed this to be a Roman copy of a Greek work of the 4th century B.C., and some considered it a falsification made some 500 years later and signed with the names of Phidias and Praxiteles.[75] The monument, known as *Group* or the *Colossus*, inspired many poets, Goethe and C. F. Meyer among them; even Wagner was involved in research concerning the *Colossus*. Ivanov, who spent years studying antiquity in Berlin, was certainly aware of this, and this awareness informs the sonnet as well.

In the second stanza the poet elaborates on the twins' relationship to Rome. Apparently considering this little-known part of the myth, he provides the following footnote: "The Dioscuri (Castor and Pollux) first—according to legend—appeared at the Forum; and after watering their horses at the Juturna spring they announced to the citizens the victory gained by the army at Lake Regillo (496 B.C.)."[76] In the eight lines of the poem, with only two verbs, the poet encompasses the Greek origin of the Dioscuri and their Roman stature. Besides the identical rhyme schemes, the correspondence between the two quatrains is reflected in one more parallel—the nominal attribute placed at the end of each quatrain: "brat'ia-bliznetsy" (brothers-twins); then "bogi-prisheltsy" (gods-newcomers). The area of identification between the reflecting lyric persona and the subject of the sonnet is precisely in the word "newcomers." The poet, at that time also a "newcomer," refers to himself as a "pilgrim" in another sonnet, and calls his Rome a "haven from wanderings." He noted in his diary: "When I was leaving Russia I said I wanted to die in Rome."[77]

In light of this entry we may interpret the line "And they remained in it [Rome] till the end of the world," as an extremely personal statement, identifying the poet with those, gods included, who have come to Rome in order to die there. Its forcefulness is

achieved by its syntactical exclusion from the tercet to which it metrically belongs. This line hints that the end of the world is the end of Rome, since in Russian *mir* (world) and *Rim* (Rome) constitute an anagram.[78] Just as the first two stanzas define the Dioscuri's origin and their place in Roman mythology, the two tercets deal with their permanent presence in the Eternal City. The poet does not leave to chance the reader's perception of their importance; the so-called "Dioscuri Group" occupies a prominent place on the highest of Rome's seven hills. If in the first eight lines Ivanov employs only two predicates concerning the "living" gods, in the next four lines he uses four verbs to establish their place for eternity: *ostalis', ne sdvinulis', i tam stoiat, gde stali* (remained, did not move, and there they stand where they stood). Interestingly, the accumulated verbs do not convey action, but rather the statue's immobility.[79] The acknowledgment of the statue's permanence at the same time is an admission of one's own yearning for permanence. Additionally, the phrase "I tam stoiat, gde stali iznachala" (and there they stand, where they stood from the beginning) joins the mythical with the actual and introduces the notion of "now as then," so crucial to symbolic correspondences.[80]

Three toponyms are enumerated in the poem and all these sites are endowed with a *genius loci*. The first, the Juturna spring, is located at the very heart of the Forum Romanum, where the Dioscuri's temple was raised, and where the three columns still attest to the grandeur of Roman architecture. The other two toponyms are the summit of Quirinal hill and the remaining six hills of Rome. Thus the sonnet reconstructs not only the myth but also the topography of Rome, pointing to its center, its highest point, and the surrounding hills. At the end the poet introduces the astral aspect[81] of the Dioscuri's myth, enriching the poem with the correspondence between "above" and "below" so vital to Symbolist aesthetics.[82] With this last connotation the sonnet achieves the full meaning implied by its mythological, historical, topographical, and cosmological references. If in his first sonnet the poet expresses directly his feelings about returning to Rome, in the second he celebrates his return to a world in which he has been a spiritual citizen (Quirite) for a long time now—the world of Greek and Roman mythology and art, the world of cultural continuity and cultivation of memory.

Sonnet III of the Roman cycle (the fourth in chronological order, originally entitled "L'aqua felice") is the last one with a direct link to the Greek tradition, and the first to present the theme of water, which prevails throughout the remainder of the cycle. The poet juxtaposes

the development of Roman aqueducts with the development of the water-praising poetry of the Greeks. As the water of Rome is drawn from mountain springs, the poetry about water derives from Pindar. Both sources are introduced in the first quatrain of this *abba abba cde edc* sonnet, which praises the beauty of Rome but also Roman genius. The aqueducts supplied the ancient city of Rome with 300,000,000 gallons of potable water daily.[83] The poet clearly signifies this dual source: the water comes from the mountains, but it also comes "of yore." The second quatrain enumerates the modes of distribution: "wells, fountains, streams, canals."[84] In the tercets the poet moves from the general to the particular, a fountain surrounded by sculptural images of sea gods. Here the poet plays on the opposition of the motion of water and the motionlessness of the city's buildings. Thus the poem begins with the evocation of Pindar's song praising water and ends with the image of the resounding voice of water.[85] This image is reinforced by the thematic and formal frame joining the two tercets; the identical rhyme (*ulok - gulok*) is reflected by the image of the "resounding water in the narrow lane." An astute remark by Maurice Bowra may be applied to this sonnet: "True to the Greek tradition, Ivanov regarded the task of poetry as a search for an unchanging reality behind the veil of changing appearances."[86]

The remainder of the cycle pertains to the images of later Rome, predominantly to the baroque sculptured fountains. In the fifth sonnet[87] Ivanov projects himself against the backdrop of the great *admiratio Romae* tradition, represented here by two great Italians—Bernini and Piranezi—and two Russians—Nikolay Gogol and the painter Alexander Ivanov.

One may venture to make the statement that the "Roman Sonnets" were Ivanov's "Laeta" (Joys) of 1924, which means—his *Tristia* (sorrows) in reverse. Ivanov was one of the major Russian poets in exile, but unlike Ovid exiled from Rome to Thracia, he came to Rome, the imaginary situation that he created in his early poem "Laeta" materialized as a real life situation.

Between 1924 and 1943 Ivanov wrote only twelve poems. Klimoff ascribes this near silence to the poet's disillusionment with Europe after World War I. In 1944 Ivanov experienced a rebirth of his poetic powers and once again the city of Rome was his inspiration. *The Roman Diary* (Rimskii dnevnik), Ivanov's last testimonial to the Eternal City that had became his destiny, collects 118 poems, of which all but one were written in 1944.[88] "It is both fitting and symbolic," writes Alexis Klimoff, "that the first poem reflecting

Ivanov's return to a faith in culture, myth and memory describes a sacred road which leads to the hallowed remains of Rome."[89] In "Via Sacra" (II), as in the Coliseum poems written so many years earlier, the reader again finds a fusion of personal experience, profound classical knowledge, and myth. The tone, which Klimoff has described as the "tone of quiet acceptance of fate," is quite different, however."[90]

The new tone is reflected in the phonological strata as well. V. N. Toporov, discussing the anagrammatical phenomenon of Ivanov's earlier poems, writes:

> In the poetry of the last years of his life V. Ivanov changes his former firm predilection toward a forced euphonic structure of the text and the creation of anagrammatical situations. Thus in the *Roman Diary*, where the image of Rome is definitely drawn from the sphere linked to the idea of the world and presented without any forced euphonic associations, the only exception is the one poem that has particular relation to the poet's life in Rome. [91]

Ivanov's "most powerful works," writes Maurice Bowra,

> were written in response to […] disasters…. He wrote his *Roman Diary* in Rome in 1944, when the Eternal City, which he had hoped would be his refuge and resting place, seemed likely to be destroyed in the holocaust of war. In each case Ivanov wrote in an agonizing torment of spirit, and in each case he kept control of his feelings by means of his regular, highly organized art.[92]

The Rome of World War II that emerges in the *Roman Diary* is definitely a continuance of its ancient past and a component of its image as the eternal. The departing Germans are likened to Attila (in the fourth poem in June), or to the Goths (in the fifth poem of July).[93] Describing an air raid (in the second poem of March), Ivanov refers to the Harpies, a familiar image from Virgil's *Aeneid*. Thus Ivanov is confronted with the Harpies, as Aeneas was on his way to his new homeland.[94] Modern Rome is, as in ancient times, the center not only of the world but of the universe. Reflecting upon the Americans entering the Eternal City, the poet writes on June 28:

> Волей неба сокровенной / ... /
> Все ведут в тебя дороги, средоточье вселенной.
>
> [By the sacred will of heaven /… /
> all roads lead to you, the center of the universe.]

In the different parts of the *Roman Diary* the poet summarizes the major phases of his life as they relate to the Eternal City. With the theme of his relationship with Lidia Zinovieva-Hannibal, introduced cryptically[95] in the poem of March 1, Ivanov creates his own Roman myth by employing the symbolism of the Ides of March in reference to his own personal destiny.[96] Expressing his enchantment with Rome's fountains on August 8, the poet recalls his period of silence after the death of his wife Vera (1920), a silence broken upon his arrival to Rome in 1924. As Klimoff points out repeatedly, water is identified here with the source of poetic inspiration, and with life itself.

In the second part of November's diptych, starting with the words "Blagovonnye kolonny / Kiparisy pokhoronny" (Fragrant columns / Funereal cypresses),[97] Ivanov addresses a problem which Mandelstam treats in his famous "Priroda tot-zhe Rim" (Nature is also Rome).[98] "When he [Ivanov] writes of nature," Maurice Bowra declares, "he sees in it much more than [what] merely delights the senses. So too, when he writes about places, especially about Rome, he sees them as the embodiment of the highest elements in man, who by shaping his aspirations in palpable forms conveys what is finest and most worthy to endure in himself."[99]

The *Roman Diary*, Vyacheslav Ivanov's last poetic work, treats the images of ancient Rome in relation to all areas of the poet's vast life experience: his love, his poetic gift, dangers encountered, and the search for ultimate refuge. He reflects on war and peace, and lastly upon death. In the last poem, the ninth in November's cycle, we read:

> Вели аллеею гробниц
> Дороги Аппиевой плиты
> Во град, откуда шли квириты
> Вслед похоронных колесниц.[100]
>
> [The slabs of the Appian Way
> Lead through the avenue of graves
> To the city, from which citizens came
> Following the hearses.]

Initially Ivanov's interest in ancient Rome was not spontaneous, but imposed on him by his scholarly obligations and other circumstances. Despite his ambivalent sentiments about the Roman tradition, he did not fail to recognize the significance and the impact

of the Eternal City and, of all the Symbolists, he created the most unique and complex testimonial to its greatness. As Renato Poggioli points out, "Ivanov represents within the poetry of Russia the same tendency that in English literature is often defined by such epithets as 'Latinate' and 'Italianate.'"[101] Long before his *Roman Diary*, he followed his "Italian Sonnets" with the quatrain:

> Италия, тебе славянский стих
> Звучит, стеснен в доспех твоих созвучий
> Стих родины отзвучной и певучей,
> Прими его – дар от даров твоих![102]
>
> [Italy, for you Slavic poetry
> Constrained by the armour of your harmonies
> The verse of the resounding and melodious land,
> Accept it—a gift from your gifts.]

Notes

1. The poet's ties with Rome, to a certain extent, have already been described, researched, and analyzed. The essential source is Ivanov's *Sobranie Sochinenii*, 3 vols. (Brussels: Foyer Oriental Chrétien, 1971-79), referred to hereafter as *SS*. It includes the "Avtobiograficheskoe pis'mo" (Autobiographical Letter), 2:252, along with an indispensable introduction and notes by Olga Deschartes, 1: 5-227. Cf. also Alexis Klimoff's "Dionysus Tamed: The Late Poetry of Vycheslav Ivanov" (Ph.D. dissertation, Yale Univeristy, 1974), and his essay "The First Sonnet in Vycheslav Ivanov's Roman Cycle," in *Vyacheslav Ivanov: Poet, Critic and Philosopher*, eds. R. L. Jackson and L. Nelson, Jr., Yale Russian and East European Publications no. 8, (New Haven: Yale Center for International and Area Studies, 1986), 134-46. In the same publication a study by Vasili Rudich, "Vyacheslav Ivanov and Classical Antiquity," 275-89, treats the subject of Ivanov's classical scholarship, and Dmitri Ivanov's essay "Recurrent Motifs in Ivanov's Work," 367-89, also sheds some light on this subject. Among other works concerned with this matter are the introduction by Sir Maurice Bowra to Ivanov's collection *Svet vechernii* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1962), and a review of this collection by Aleksis Rannit, "O Viacheslave Ivanove i ego *Svete vechernem," Novyi Zhurnal* , 77 (1964): 75-94.

2. Mirsky, pp.448-51.

3. See M. S. Al'tman, "Iz besed s poetom Viacheslavom Ivanovichem Ivanovym, Baku 1921," *Trudy po russkoi i slavianskoi filologii, literaturovedenie, Uchenye zapiski Tartuskogo gos. univ.*, vol. 11, no. 209 (1968): 321. Cf. also V. Rudich, "Vyacheslav Ivanov and Classical Antiquity," 276, 277, 278, and V. Ivanov, "Avtobiograficheskoe pis'mo," *SS*, 2:5-22.

4. Ivanov, *SS*, 3:326.

5. Ivanov, *SS*, 3:326

6. Rudich, "Vyacheslav Ivanov and Classical Antiquity," 278. Rudich, Klimoff and D. Ivanov all attribute Ivanov's reluctance to pursue a promising academic career in the field of Roman history to the fact that his interest was diverted toward Greek philology. Cf. Klimoff, "Dionysus Tamed: The Late Poetry of Vycheslav Ivanov," and D. Ivanov, "Recurrent Motifs in Ivanov's Work ."

7. His thesis was finally published in 1915, and republished in Italy in 1971.

8. Grevs was also the person who introduced Ivanov to Lidia Zinov'ev-Hannibal, who was to become his second wife. Cf. "Avtobiograficheskoe pis'mo" and the Deschartes introduction to *SS*, 1:23.

9. Cf. The first of the "Roman Sonnets," *SS*, 3:578: and A. Klimoff, "The First Sonnet," 134-46.

10. Valeri N. Blinov, "Chronology of the Life and Works of Vyacheslav I. Ivanov," in *Vyacheslav Ivanov: Poet, Critic and Philosopher*, and A. Klimoff, "Dionysus Tamed." Cf. also "Avtobiograficheskoe pis'mo" and the Deschartes introduction to *SS*.

11. Ivanov, *SS*, 1:521.

12. Cf. the introduction of O. Deschartes, *SS*, 1:138.

13. Cf. "Ekho," *SS* , 3:646-49, and the footnote, 3:862, as well as 2:395 and 2:768; also Deschartes introduction to *SS* , 1:130-31.

14. *SS* , 2:286-87, and 711-13.

15. Dedicated to Aleksei M. Dmitrievskii, then Ivanov's brother-in-law and an intimate friend, "Laeta" was published in *Kormchie zvezdy* (The Guiding Stars). Placed at the end of that collection, chronologically it precedes all the other Rome-related poems. Cf. *SS*, 1:636-40.

16. Klimoff writes in his dissertation that "Laeta" was meant as an answer to Ovid's "*Tristia*."

17. The poem is provided with two mottos, the first from Propertius: "Roma, fave: tibi surgit opus" (O Rome, be well disposed: for you [i.e., in your interest] a great work rises.)

18. Cf. this and further quotations from the same edition, pp. 636-40.

19. Renato Poggioli, in his book *The Poets of Russia* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1960), 165, asserts that in Baku Ivanov felt "exiled as Ovid in barbaric Thrace."

20. Ivanov, *SS* , 1:861.

21. Mnogikh bogov Rim pochtil, vsekh priniav vo sviashchennye nishi (Rome honored many gods, receiving all in its sacred niches).

22. "Iazychnik" (pagan) may signify Hellene (Greek) here.

23. Ivanov, *Mel'opoeia* "Chelovek" (part 4, "Chelovek edin"), *SS*, 3:237: Cf. also the footnote, 737-41.

24. V. N. Toporov finds that "Laeta," as "a vivid panoramic description of Rome, synthesized in its various spatial and temporal images, leads to the theme of returning *again according to his circuits* and faithfulness to Rome… and further to the theme of homeland. *Vergilianskaia tema Rima*, 214.

25. The context underlying the genealogy of this poem is described by Deschartes, *SS*, 1:21-22. Pamela Davidson was able to establish even more tenable circumstances surrounding the origin of the Coliseum poem. Cf. *The Poetic Imagination of Vyacheslav Ivanov. A Russian Symbolist's Perception of Dante* (Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 1989).

26. J. W. Goethe, *Italian Journey* (New York: Schocken Books, 1968), 156, 361, 497.

27. V. Rozanov, "Na vershine Kolizeia" in *Ital'ianskie vpechatleniia* (St. Petersburg, 1909), 107.

28. The theme of the insignificance of the tourist's experience as juxtaposed to that of a participant's in the life of a place reverberates through many poems and prose works about Italy.

29. M. S. Al'tman, 311.

30. It is interesting to compare Ivanov's images with Goethe's impression of his evening visit to the Coliseum on February 2, 1787: "Like the human spirit, the sun and the moon have a quite different task to perform here than they have in other places, for here their glance is returned by gigantic, solid masses" (Goethe, Italian Journey, 157).

31. Published in *Kormchie zvezdy* as a part of the cycle *Ital'ianskie sonety* (Italian Sonnets).

32. Cf. Suetonius, *Nero*, paragraph 33, and Tacitus, *The Annals and the Histories* (London: William Benton, Encyclopedia Britanica), 7:15.

33. Ivanov, *SS* , 2:398. *Liubov i smert'* (Love and Death) in *Cor Ardens* , begun in 1908, is dedicated to Lidia's memory. The first canzone, introduced by an inscription from Petrarch, is written in the spirit of his canzones on the death of Laura.

34. Ibid., 1:618-19; "Kormchie zvezdy" (Pilot Stars) were published in 1903.

35. The cycle *Arcana*, in *SS*, 2:293-94, was first published in *Fakely* 3 (St. Petersburg, 1908).

36. Cf. "If I am right, the Golden Bough over which the King of the Wood, Diana's priest at Aricia, kept watch and ward was no other than a branch of mistletoe growing on an oak within the sacred grove." J. G. Frazer, *Balder the Beautiful*, (New York: St. Martin's Press 1966), v.

37. Cf. Ivanov's discussion of the principles of mythmaking in *Po zvezdam. Statii i aforizmy* (St. Petersburg, 1909), 278-80: and a discussion of the above by James West, *Russian Symbolism. A Study of V. Ivanov and the Russian Symbolist Esthetic*s (London: Methuen, 1970), 55, 76 ff.

38. Ivanov, *SS*, 1: 618.

39. John B. Vickery, *The Literary Impact of The Golden Bough* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1973), 435.

40. Johannes Holthusen, "Vyacheslav Ivanov: *Cor Ardens* and the Esthetics of Symbolism," in *Vyacheslav Ivanov: Poet, Critic and Philosopher*, 59-82.

41. Scepter indicates the king-priest connection

42. Ivanov, *SS*, 2: 293-94

43. Cf. my discussion of M. Kuzmin's poem "Ozero Nemi."

44. The notes in the *Biblioteka Poeta* edition of 1976 and the *SS* link only two poems to the myth of Lake Nemi.

45. Cf. Vladimir Markov's "Vyacheslav Ivanov the Poet" in *Vyacheslav Ivanov: Poet*, Critic and Philosopher, 56.

46. Cf. Holthusen, 59

47. Sergei Averintsev, "The Poetry of Vyacheslav Ivanov," *Vyacheslav Ivanov: Poet, Critic and Philosopher*, 28.

48. It was customary in the poet's inner circle to assume Roman or Greek names. Lidia Zinovieva-Hannibal was known as Diotima, Kuzmin as Antinous or Charicles, Ivanov as Hyperion.

49. Ivanov, *SS*, 2:744-49.

50. Holthusen, 74.

51. Ivanov, *SS*, 2:727-28. The exchange of poetic dedications, and some letters written in Latin as well, are exhaustively documented in the footnotes to the poem and analyzed by J. Holthusen,76-77.

52. Cf. the discussion of "copper" in the following chapters on Komarovskii and Kuzmin. Since many poets use *med'* for bronze objects, this usage may be considered as *pars pro toto*, i.e., synecdoche.

53. Ivanov, *SS*, 2:332-33.

54. Cf. Ivanov, *SS*, 3:48-49: and Deschartes' comments, 701-2.

55. Ivanov, *SS*, 2:354.

56. Ibid., 3:249-57.

57. Cf. Deschartes, Introduction, *SS*, 1:90.

58. Ivanov, *SS*,2: 253-54.

59. While working with Fet on a translation of the *Aeneid* in 1887, Solovyov attempted to render the same Eclogue into Russian. See chapter 4.

60. *Lucina* is one of the names for the goddess Juno, who aided women in childbirth.

61. *SS*, 2:255.

62. Ibid., 2:256.

63. Olga Deschartes has provided detailed information about the genesis of the sonnets. Ivanov, *SS* , 3:849.

64. "Scattered floating in a huge whirlpool," Cicero, *Reppublica luminosa*, 6,19,20.

65. Ivanov, *SS*, 3:850-51. Rome became an island for Ivanov, as it was for Kuzmin in his gnostic poems written in Russia approximately at the same time.

66. See Klimoff's Ph.D. dissertation and his essay "The First Sonnet in Vyacheslav Ivanov's *Roman Cycle*," in *Vyacheslav Ivanov: Poet, Critic and Philosopher*, 134-46.

67. Klimoff, "The First Sonnet in Vyacheslav Ivanov's *Roman Cycle*, 125.

68. These last two themes were central to Ivanov's aesthetics. Cf. the problem of fiery renewal in my analysis of Voloshin's poetry.

69. The sequence of the *Roman Sonnets* in their final version (first published as a unit in *Sovremennye Zapiski*, 62 [1936]) differs from the sequence in which they were written. Also, in this version the titles of the individual poems were replaced by Roman numerals. (Cf. footnotes in *SS*, 3:849-50.) Alexis Klimoff treated the sonnets in their original order. In this analysis the sonnets will be discussed according to the author's final intention, with due respect to the chronological data.

70. The original temple was erected in 484 B.C. by the son of Aulo Postumio, and rebuilt twice, first by Tiberius in 6 A.D., and later by Hadrian.

71. "O *Svete Vechernim* V. Ivanova," *Novyj Zhurnal*, 77 (1964): 81.

72. Ivanov, *SS*, 1: 639.

73. Cf. Donald Ward, "The Divine Twins. An Indo-European Myth in Germanic Tradition," *Folklore Studies*, vol. 19, (Berkeley: University of California Publications. Folklore and Mythology Studies, 1968), 137.

74. Cf. Adolf Stahr, *Die Kolosse der Dioskuren von Monte Cavallo*, (Berlin: Carl David, 1853), 24

75. Licia Vlad Borreli, "History of Falsification," in *Encyclopedia of World Art*, (New York: McGraw Hill, 1964), 335.

76. Ivanov, *SS*, 3:850

77. Ibid., 3:852.

78. As has already been mentioned, V. N. Toporov devotes a great deal of attention to the rendition of the "Rim-mir" theme in Ivanov's poetry. Toporov, *Vergilianskaia tema Rima*, 211 ff.

79. "If the discourse about the statue is at the same time a discourse about the past, 'a reminiscence,' then the immobile duration of the statue is opposed to the ephemerality of the living being." Since this statue also "implies activity and movement" it "displays the pure embodiment of supernatural, free creative rest...." (Jakobson, *Pushkin and his Sculptural Myth*, 38, 40.)

80. It could also allude to the fact that the statue was removed to another location by Constantine, and placed back at the original location by Syxtus.

81. Transported to the sky as stars the Dioscuri became guardians of sailors, to whom they appeared as St. Elmo's fire. Later the twins were identified with the Gemini constellation.

82. This juxtaposition, essential to the entire concept of Symbolism, is Ivanov's favorite device. Cf. the title of the poem "Nebo — vverkhu, nebo — vnizu" (Sky—above, sky—below), Ivanov, *SS*, 2:267.

83. Cf. Charles Singer, "Science," in *The Legacy of Rome*, ed. C. Bailey (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1923), 290.

84. Cf. Paul Requard's discussion of the water motif in chapters on Meyer and Rilke in *Die Bilder Sprache der Doetzen-Italien Diechtung* (Bern and Munich: Francke, 1962).

85. The theme of water in relation to the Roman theme is thoroughly discussed in A. Klimoff's doctoral dissertation.

86. Sir Maurice Bowra, Intro. to Viacheslav Ivanov, *Svet vechernii* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1962), xv.

87. In "O *Svete vechernim* I. Ivanova" Alexis Rannit includes an exemplary analysis of the fifth sonnet. Cf. pp. 86-92.

88. The birth of the *Roman Diary* has been meticulously documented by Olga Deschartes in *SS*, 3:853 ff.

89. Klimoff, *Dionysus Tamed*, 131.

90. Ibid., 136.

91. Toporov alludes here to the second poem of "Via Sacra," and after referring at length to O. Deschartes's story about the circumstances leading to the writing of this poem, he concludes that one cannot dismiss the anagrammatic "connection" between the toponym Monte Tarpeo and the verse "Topor s motygoi spotyklivoi" (The ax with the stumbling mattock.), "Vergilianskaia tema Rima," 212-13.

92. Sir Maurice Bowra, Introduction to *"Svet vechernii,"* xix.

93. Respectively: "Tak ot l'va bezhal Attila" (That is how Attila ran from the lion), "Razrushil v begstve Got zloradnyi / Nam akvedukty" (The gloating Goth destroyed our aqueducts in his flight). Ivanov, *SS*, 3:615, 3:619.

94. Cf. Virgil, *Aeneid*, book 3, 209-12. Cf. the symbolism of the Harpies in my chapter on Komarovsky.

95. The poem can only be understood in the light of O. Deschartes's comments, Ivanov, *SS*, 3:857.

96. Cf. the discussion of the motif of the Ides of March in my chapter on Voloshin.

97. "Kiparisy" (Cypresses), Nov.4-7. Ivanov, *SS*, 3:637,

98. Cf. discussion of this problem in the chapters on Komarovsky and Kuzmin.
99. Bowra, xxiii.
100. Ivanov, *SS*, 3:640.
101. Poggioli, 167.
102. Ivanov, *SS*, 1:612.

VII.

From Prophecy to Transubstantiation
Maksimilian Voloshin

Among the Russian Symbolists who contributed to the creation of the image of Rome, Maksimilian Alexandrovich Kirienko-Voloshin (1877-1932) represented the younger generation. Born in Kiev, the poet spent his youth in Moscow, where he enrolled in Moscow University in 1897. Expelled in 1901 for participation in the student unrest, he was sent to Tashkent. From 1901 until 1916 he divided his time between Europe and Crimea, where he settled for good after the Revolution of 1917.

Neglected and almost forgotten for many years, Voloshin's poetry has enjoyed something of a revival during recent decades, a revival marked by the publication of new editions of his poetry (and prose) both in Russia and in the West, and by the appearance of several critical monographs.[1] Voloshin's contribution to the "Roman text" of Russian poetry is modest—three poems, written in 1900, 1905, and 1918. Nevertheless, it is a significant contribution, if for no other reason than the poems of 1905 and 1918 draw parallels to Roman history for the most dramatic events of his time—Bloody Sunday in Petersburg on January 9, 1905, and the events of 1918. Like many of his fellow poets, Voloshin was exposed to the history of Rome during his education at the university. The study of law in Europe was not exclusively preparation for the legal profession; courses in modern and ancient history, logic and philosophy made the law a good way to acquire a solid education in the humanities. As a law student, Voloshin learned about Rome by attending courses in history and philology; in addition, in 1897 he enrolled in a course on Roman law taught by I. Kh. Ozerov at Moscow University.

On his first trip abroad in 1899, to Italy, Switzerland, France and Germany, Voloshin did not have a chance to see Rome. On that journey Venice constituted his first Italian experience; his poem "Venice" (Venetsiia) contributes to the "Venice text" in Russian literature, a tradition established by such poets as Blok, Mandelstam, Akhmatova, and others. The following year, on his second trip abroad, Voloshin visited Rome with three traveling companions. The friends recorded their itinerary and impressions in what they called "the diary of a journey, or how many countries one can see for 150 rubles."[2] The diary begins on May 26 and ends on July 24 of 1900. On his way to Italy, Voloshin expressed his enthusiasm in a quatrain:

> В Италию – тихо звенело в ушах,
> В Италию – птицы мне пели,
> В Италию – тихо шуршали кругом
> Мохнатые старые ели.[3]
>
> ["To Italy"— it rang softly in my ears,
> "To Italy"—the birds sang to me,
> "To Italy"—the shaggy old spruces
> softly whispered all around.]

This is not Voloshin's only poem in which the theme of Italy is associated with birds. In his poem "Trills" (Treli) nightingales actually sing the Latin words: "Filiae et filii."[4]

The Italian cities, with their vestiges of antiquity and numerous museums, made a powerful impression on the young Russian students. After thirty-five days the tourists arrived in Rome. On that Sunday, July 2 (15th according to the old Julian calendar), when admission to many sites was free, Voloshin went to see the Forum with his friends and apparently also wrote the poem known as "Night in the Coliseum" (Noch' v Kolizee). The poem, unfinished, was never published,[5] but its main image re-surfaced some eighteen years later in "Transubstantiation" (Preosushchestvleniia), his third Roman poem.

Two years later Voloshin visited Italy for a third time, and afterwards on many occasions he traveled to Mediterranean countries, visiting places associated with famous writers and artists.[6] The poet was acutely aware of the importance of his journeys for his education as a poet and an artist. Many years later, in April 1919, in what L. A. Evstingneeva has labeled "Creative Notebook No. 3," the poet commented on the importance of his trips to the West:

> It was given to me to experience the motherhood of Asia in the desert. Europe—the cactus in the midst of the desert (Asia). Return! Go to the Latin world to define boundaries and reflect the rainbow of the world. Russia permitted me go. Now she calls me: comprehend, let me permeate you, give me a name, read my dreams![7]

The poet's seventeen-day stay in Rome was just the beginning of the realization of this objective. This comment indicates also the poet's perception of the relation between Asia and Europe, Russia and the Western world, and certainly his place within these continental and cultural parameters.

Voloshin's poem "On the Forum" (Na Forume), written in 1900 and published for the first time in the almanac *Grif* (Moscow, 1903), shares similarities with Bryusov's poem of the same title written several years earlier. Voloshin's twenty-line poem relies, to a great extent, on architectural symbolism.[8] Despite its essentially non-strophic form, the syntactical structure (each pair of lines forms a closed unit) and the regular rhyme pattern *abab* allow us to distinguish five closed stanzas.

The poem is a description of a hot summer day in the Roman Forum. Even though many critics have characterized Voloshin's poetry as cold,[9] as D. S. Mirsky points out, "Among his best poems are splendid evocations of the Greek summer, full of the aroma of dry lavender…."[10] The "splendid evocation of summer" proves true for the poem in question, although the architectural elements here predominate over nature. The poet enumerates major architectural forms whose origin was either Greek (like the column and the ledge) or Roman, such as the arch and the vault.

The word "arka" (arch), placed at the beginning of the poem, and divided from the following words by ellipsis, has multiple thematic functions. First, it introduces the concept of entering the place that once constituted the center of public life in Rome. There are two arches on the Roman Forum: Arco di Settimo Severo and Arco di Tito. It is irrelevant for the poem which arch constitutes the lyrical persona's vantage point, but knowing it would determine whether the hill in line thirteen is the Palatine or Capitol. As Wladimir Weidle points out, in ancient Rome the only passage to the Capitol leads from the Forum side.[11]

The general function of the arch in Roman architecture—the apotheosis of the Roman leaders and emperors—adds another dimension to this first image; the arch was an architectural element used to epitomize the triumphs of the Roman leaders and emperors.[12]

Triumphal rites had celestial content; the Roman public associated the archway with heaven. Thus, on the anagogical level, the initial "arch" finds its correspondence in the final "Ave Maria" of the poem.[13] Structurally these two elements create the main axis on which one glorification is replaced by another, and the symbol of pagan rites is replaced by the symbol of Christian ritual. Along this axis a different type of opposition will also evolve. Immediately after the introduction of the arch, the reader is confronted with the image of ruins, the symbolism of which was widely explored by the Romantics.[14] That image is achieved by amassing words denoting fragmentation and truncation, implying the absence of the columns. Rhythmically, the catalectic form of the third and fourth verses enhances the impression of fragmentation. This is what Tomashevsky calls "the device of incompleteness, abruptness, literary ruins."[15]

Voloshin was a painter as well as a poet. It is therefore appropriate to look for analogies in the art world, for example, the drawings of Piranesi.[16] One can detect an indication of drawing, or etching, in the text:

> Зданье на холм поднялось,
> Цепью изогнутых линий.
> В кружеве легких мимоз
> Очерки царственных пиний. [17]
>
> [The building ascended the hill
> Like a sequence of slanted lines
> In the lace of the light mimosas,
> Outlines of the regal pines.]

In Voloshin's poem, as in Piranesi's prints, the ruins are depicted in the contrasting light of day and night, evoking what Muratov calls "the pathos of destruction."[18] Voloshin perceives the Forum as a stage on which history played its high drama, an image that finds its correspondence in the *rostra*, a platform for the speaker decorated with the prows of captured ships. Thus, every element of this ruined landscape indicates the greatness and glory of the past. The lines: "Gde govoril Tsitseron, / plavno, krasivo i ostro" (Where Cicero spoke, / Smoothly, beautifully and sharply)[19] stress this motif of greatness, and at the same time conclude the part of the poem dedicated to reflections on the past. The motif of the great personality—Cicero—has only a marginal, illustrative function, namely, to make the image of the *rostra* more vivid. Voloshin did not

intend to evoke the drama of Cicero's life, so congenially depicted by Tyutchev in his poem "Cicero" (Tsitseron).[20] In Voloshin's poem the name of Cicero signifies the glorious achievements of ancient civilization. Therefore, the next lines "Mezhdu razbitykh kamnei / Iashcherits bystrykh dvizhen'e" (Between the broken stones / Motion of the swift lizards")[21] produce the effect of juxtaposing two extreme realities. The lizard, like all reptiles, represents an inferior, primitive stratum of life and is associated with debasing qualities. Thus, the pathos of destruction envelops not only material substance but civilization itself.

The motif of the lizard introduces the theme of nature and the related theme of life and movement. Against the background of the still, lifeless ruins, nature is represented by the lizard, the spring (Juturna Spring), the mimosa and the Italian pine. Movement is also represented by these, as well as by the twinkling, fluctuating glow of evening ("zari mertsan'e"), which contrasts with the still rays of the sun ("znoi nepodvizhnykh luchei"). It is interesting that movement itself is represented not by verbs, but by verbal nouns, for example, "dvizhen'e" (movement), "pen'e" (singing), "mertsan'e" (twinkling), in contrast to the motion verbs used to describe the ruins: "vozvyshaetsia rostra" (the rostral column towers above) and "zdan'e na kholm podnialos'" (the building ascended the hill).

The image of hills is pertinent to Rome, since initially the Roman Forum was just a marshy valley between the Capitolino, Palatino, Viminale, and Quirinale hills. The aquatic motif is equally relevant,[22] as we saw with Vyacheslav Ivanov's "Roman Sonnets."[23] The adjective modifying the spring's singing ("nemolchnoe" [incessant]) enhances the theme of continuity—the aqueducts and fountains constitute the living heritage of ancient Rome. The chain of nature (lizard, water, mimosa and pine) in combination with the ruins represents what V. N. Toporov calls a "diarchy of nature and culture," a feature typical of urban poetry.[24]

On the axis that connects the initial word "arka" to the final "Ave Maria," there are a number of contrasting themes, motifs and images. The last quatrain, with a catalexis in the final line, stands thematically in opposition to the rest of the poem, yet structurally it echoes the first stanza, creating a frame. The word "vecher" (evening), like the poem's initial "arka" appears in the same position, followed by the ellipsis and introduces several motifs. As mentioned earlier, the spiritual content of "Ave Maria" balances the anagogical meaning of the arch symbolism in the first line.

After twice indicating that it is evening ("vecher" and "mertsan'e zari" [twinkling of sunset]), the poet describes the air as clear ("iasnyi"). This quality of the evening air appealed to other northern visitors to Rome. Muratov mentions the "mysterious light of Rome at the time of Ave Maria."[25]

"At the Forum" is an early poem and its very few metaphors, for the most part personifications ("pen'e struiki" [singing of the stream]; "zdan'e podnialos'" [the building ascended]; "forum molchit" [the forum keeps silent]), are quite commonplace. More picturesque are the phrases "kruzhevo legkikh mimoz" (lace of the light mimosa) and "ocherki… pinii" (outlines… of the Italian pines). The epithets, however, are original and elaborate: "nepodvizhnykh luchei" (motionless rays), "nemolchnoe pen'e" (incessant singing), "tsarstvennykh pinii" (regal Italian pines). What enhances this poetic sketch are its rhymes—elaborate, deep and original: "karniz - kulish"; "kolonn - Tsitseron"; "rostra - ostro"; "podnialos'- mimoz"; "zari ia - Maria." E. Rais, referring to the poet's refined rhymes, states that "after Pushkin none of the Russian poets had such a command of euphony as Voloshin."[26]

Voloshin's second Roman poem, "Portents" (Predvestiia) is dated January 9, 1905 (Bloody Sunday), St. Petersburg. According to Evstingneeva,[27] however, the poem is purposely misdated; the poet actually finished it on June 20, 1905, and sent it to his friend A. M. Petrova on July 1.[28] The poet, who had arrived in St. Petersburg on the morning of January 9, 1905, witnessed Bloody Sunday, and the following month, upon his return to Paris, he published a report about it in the French magazine *Courrier Européen.* "Portent," the poetic report, was first published in *Rus'* on August 14, 1905. To express his sorrow and his shock the poet drew on the legend of Julius Caesar. The poem refers to Caesar only once, indirectly, but touches the very nerve of the most dramatic moment of Julius Caesar's life and of Roman history, as narrated by both Plutarch and Suetonius.

Not every critic has appreciated this strategy. Renato Poggioli notes, not without scorn, "It is highly characteristic of Voloshin that he could not give direct representation of the world-shaking events he had personally witnessed, and that he would depict those events only at a double remove, by transferring them to another place or time."[29] One might make the observation, however, that other poets had employed similar tactics.

While Bryusov drew upon the most positive and optimistic aspects of the Julius Caesar legend in his poetic and political polemic

"Julius Caesar," a poem written almost at the same time, namely, after the Tsushima defeat, Voloshin made use of the darkest moments of the legend, that is, the assassination and the end of the Roman Republic. In this five-strophe, *abab* poem, the Roman motif appears only in the last two lines of the first stanza, but precisely because of this position it colors the entire poem. The poet has chosen Rome in 44 B. C.; the assassination of Julius Caesar is foretold, and therefore unavoidable. The poem starts with the words:

> Сознание строгое есть в жестах Немезиды:
> Умей читать условные черты.
> Пред тем как сбылись Мартовские Иды,
> Гудели в храмах медные щиты.[30]
>
> [There is somber knowledge in the gestures of Nemesis:
> Know how to read the tell-tale lines.
> Before the Ides of March had passed,
> The copper shields sounded in the temples.]

Thus Voloshin implies that the prediction of Bloody Sunday had been ignored, just as the warning to Caesar was ignored. At the same time, Bloody Sunday itself constitutes an omen of approaching catastrophe. In Vyacheslav Ivanov's famous essay of 1906, we read: "By prophecy we do not mean necessarily the exact foretelling of the future, but we mean always a creative energy that conceives [*zachinaet*] and anticipates the future, fundamentally a revolutionary energy."[31] And Johannes Holthusen points out, "All prophecies of the Symbolists were built on this idea of causality."[32] I. T. Kupriianov reflects on the nature of Voloshin's forebodings:

> If the mystic "premonitions" of such Symbolists as A. Blok, Andrey Bely and others during the Revolution acquired a concrete historic character, the "mystic insights" of Voloshin went further. The summation of his thoughts about the past and his presentation about future social reforms found their formulation in Voloshin's article "Prophets and Avengers. The Portents of the Great Revolution."[33]

This title indicates the linkage between premonition and revenge, an association that is reflected in the myth of Julius Caesar, assassinated midday on March 15.[34]

In "Portents" Voloshin alludes to Caesar's death, without mentioning his name but referring to the Ides of March and the warnings recorded by Plutarch and Suetonius,[35] which Caesar hears on his way to the Curia. Challenging a man who has already warned

him, Caesar says: "The Ides of March are come," and the man answers calmly, "Yes, they are come, but they are not past."[36] "Khram" (a temple) alludes to the Court of Pompei, where the Senate was summoned to meet.[37] The line "Gudeli v khramakh mednye shchity" (The clanging of the copper shields in the temple) constitutes a metaphoric rendition of the event; obviously, the senators did not wear shields to the state council. Nevertheless, it was a battle. Plutarch comments that "conspirators themselves were many of them wounded by each other, whilst they all leveled their blows at the same person."[38] This ensured collective responsibility.

The image of the shields introduces the motif of copper, which has attracted the imagination of many poets, not only Voloshin's.[39] It also contributes to the "almost metallic" pomp for which Poggioli criticizes Voloshin. Vsevolod Setchkarev writes: "*Med'* [copper] is a recurrent symbol, combining the idea of bad quality, poison, and the tolling of the death bells."[40] As a matter of fact, Roman armor was made from bronze, an alloy of copper and tin. In the same poem Voloshin refers to Peter the Great as a "bronzovyi Gigant" (bronze giant).

Elements of the Julius Caesar myth reappear throughout the poem: the theme of the ignored forewarning, and that of a new omen—three bloody suns in the third stanza and the prophetic incantation of the fifth. The image of Nemesis incorporates the themes of fate and revenge.

Michael Grant calls Nemesis "the retribution which falls on the justly disapproved."[41] He also writes that Nemesis "binds man's pride with the indissoluble bonds of fate."[42] The theme of revenge is linked to the conflict between Caesar and Pompeii that ended with the defeat of the latter during the civil war. The fact that the political assassination took place in the Court of Pompeii implies the revenge for his death.

Originally the poem had one more stanza that read:

> По улицам толпой нестройной и неслитной
> Бродили мы, и каждый был далек
> С одной мечтой – бесстыдно любопытной –
> Увидеть кровь – святой, запретный плод.[43]
>
> [Along the streets in disorderly and disjointed throngs
> We wandered, and everyone was distant
> With one reverie—shamelessly curious—
> To see blood—the sacred, forbidden fruit.]

This stanza, excluded from the final version, contains two themes pertinent to the Julius Caesar myth: the violation of the taboo related to looking at or shedding human blood and the theme of collective responsibility. The notion of violating the taboo, of sacrilege, is very much present in the first line of the second stanza, immediately following the indirect reference to the assassination: "Sviashchennyi zanaves byl v skinii rasporot" (the sacred curtain in the sanctuary was torn). The image of the curtain returns in the last stanza, but with a very different meaning and function, now linked to the theme of prophecy, the main theme of the entire strophe: "Uzh zanaves drozhit pered nachalom dramy" (Already the curtain trembles before the beginning of the drama). There is a link between the first and the second meanings for the sacred curtain of the altar (the place of ritual) and the theater curtain ("nachalo dramy") since drama, as we know, originated from ritual.[44] In this poem the two curtains are united by the theme of portent, the theme of premonition, introduced in the first stanza with the myth of Julius Caesar, constituting the frame of the poem, as underscored by the title. The phrase "nachalo dramy" brings out still another aspect of the "curtain" motif—the *theatrum mundi*, which would find its justification in the subsequent symbol of the pentagram.

> Уж кто-то в темноте – всезрячий, как сова,
> Чертит круги и строит пентаграммы,
> И шепчет вещие заклятья и слова.[45]
>
> [Already someone in the darkness—all-seeing, like an owl,
> Draws circles and builds pentagrams,
> And whispers prophetic incantations and words.

This "all-seeing" one is the spiritual heir of the soothsayer, who warned Caesar about the Ides of March, and who now "draws circles and builds pentagrams." "Pentagrammy," which interestingly enough rhymes with the word "dramy," symbolizes a macrocosm, as well as a man.

"Portent" is undoubtedly a "city poem," a contribution to the "Petersburg text," and a metatext in this respect. The powerful apostrophe in the second stanza: "O bronzovyi Gigant! ty sozdal prizrak gorod" (O Bronze Giant, you created a phantom city) simultaneously alludes to both Pushkin and Gogol.

Georgette Donchin argues that the "Symbolists disregarded almost completely the *couleur locale* and the *couleur du temps*. […]

Historical exactitude was suspect in their eyes," she says, adding that they utilized "legendary heroes merely as mouthpieces of their own feeling."[46] This certainly overstates the Symbolists' treatment of the Roman theme. They were too well educated to disregard "historical exactitude." On the contrary, *couleur locale* and *couleur du temps* fed their poetry and were sources of inspiration. Kupriianov attests that Voloshin, like Bryusov, gravitated toward the earth, its history, and human culture.[47] This, however, is not a guarantee that the intensity of the message equals that of the image. D. S. Mirsky maintains that "Voloshin's philosophy of history is superficial and simplistic."[48]

Thirteen years after the publication of "Portents," Voloshin seemed compelled to invoke another catastrophic moment in Roman history in his poem "Transubstantiation." While the death of Julius Caesar marked the end of the Roman Republic, Totila's invasion of Rome marked the end of the ancient empire. "Transubstantiation," dated January 17, 1918, and published for the first time in the collection *Deaf-and-Mute Demons* (Demony glukhonemye) in Kharkov in 1919, is dedicated to K. F. Bogayevsky, a prominent painter and friend of Voloshin. It is considered an important poem that figures even in general discussions of Voloshin's work, though critics usually maintain a distance from its message. Mirsky ends his brief description of the poem with the conclusion: "Thus the most Western and cosmopolitan of Russian poets constructed the theory of super-Slavophile quietism."[49]

Renato Poggioli in his renowned book *The Poets of Russia* indirectly refers to both of Voloshin' Roman poems, "Portents" and "Transubstantiation":

> One could then say that Voloshin tried to express and reinterpret the catastrophe he was witnessing in the light of a tragic and passive historical view, in scenes and visions from the national past, reflecting or projecting almost emblematically the present nemesis. Despite his attempt to achieve an attitude of contemplative serenity, controlling hope and despair, even in his last poems Voloshin yielded to his cosmic pessimism and nihilism; the only feeling which still seemed to quicken the cold blood of this poet was the morbid sorcery of mortality, the lugubrious charms of the tomb. In both Holy and Unholy Russia he saw, with fascinated eyes, only the triumph of death. [50]

Understandably, in his 1978 book about Voloshin, Kupriianov finds fault with the poet for his alleged ignorance and lack of understanding of the "law of history" the phenomenon so revered by the Soviet critics.[51]

The genealogy of Voloshin's poem is best elucidated in. "Russia Crucified. Auto-commentary to the Poems Written at the Time of the Revolution" (Rossiia raspiataia. Avtokommentarii k stikham, napisannym vo vremia revoliutsii).[52] In the entry dated May 17, 1920, Voloshin writes:

> The memory involuntarily sought the analogy to the fate of Russia in the history of the fall and destruction of other empires, and it concentrated certainly on Rome. In the middle of the sixth century, one of the most dark and woeful centuries experienced by humanity, one moment was astounding in terms of meaning and significance. Rome, already pillaged more than once by barbarians, but still having preserved its walls, buildings and temples intact, was for forty days left by its population. It happened during the second capture of Rome by the Goth king Attila.[53] It was a turning point in Rome's history. Up to this moment Rome was governed by the remnant of the senatorial families. At the time of this flight they vanish without leaving a trace, and when the population of Rome returns to its old home the power naturally passes into the hands of Rome's bishop—the Pope. These forty days of desolation and neglect separate imperial Rome from papal Rome, which gradually grows from the ruins and again climbs to worldwide dominion, this time a spiritual dominion.
>
> The election of a Patriarch in the October days in Moscow, when the remnants of the tsar's authority were definitively wiped away, involuntarily led to the recognition of this historical analogy and inspired the idea of the poem "Transubstantiation."[54]

The image of a deserted Rome appears for the first time in the poem "Night in the Coliseum,"[55] written in 1900, a juvenile, descriptive, and uneventful poem that was never published. The historical circumstances of 1918 inspired Voloshin to return to the image once again, which the poet now found to be full of historical and political symbolism. The fact that such an analogy evolved so naturally, almost automatically, in the poet's mind has immense significance. It shows how deeply rooted these connections were in Russian perceptions. At the same time, it is an important specimen of *admiratio Romae* literature, since Voloshin was able to see the greatness of Rome even in its fall. Perhaps Poggioli is right when he points to Voloshin's "attraction with nothingness" and obsession with "the mystique of negation."[56]

In his book *The City as Metaphor*, David Weimer points out that the main characteristic of Rome-related poetry is "the double focus on modern and ancient civilizations…, the assumption that history is

cyclical or otherwise repetitive and historical parallels are therefore enlightening."[57]

"Transubstantiation" opens with a Latin epigraph[58] from the work of the historian Ammianus Marcellinus (330-400), which describes the situation in the fourth century when Rome, after the demolition by the Huns, remained desolate for more than forty days. In the poem itself, the forty-day desertion of Rome in the sixth century is described by Jordanes, a contemporary historian, who became a monk. These references already indicate the cyclical character of history. The poet sees a parallel between the invasions of Rome by the Huns and the Goths, and the situation of Russia in 1918. Several years later Voloshin will draw on images of the French Revolution to imply a parallel between the terror of the Jacobins and the Bolsheviks.[59]

In the introductory lines the poet places the action in the sixth century: "V glukhuiu noch' shestogo veka" (In the dead of night in the sixth century). Rome is the place but at the same time it is the main persona: "Kogda byl mir i Rim prostert" (When Rome and the world were prostrate). Once again, Rome is identified with the world; these two entities (Rome and world [mir i Rim]) are graphically mirrored along the caesura. This particular device is possible with the Russian language only, but Rome had been identified with the world by European poets as well.[60] Voloshin makes the same identification later in the poem:[61]

> ... громады
> Дворцов и ярусы колонн, [...]
> Загромождая небосклон
> И горизонт земного круга
>
> […a mass of
> Palaces and tiers of columns /…/
> Blocking the sky
> And the horizon of the earthly sphere]

There are further indications that the poet considers Rome the entire world: "vsemirnoi vlasti na zemle" (the universal power on earth) and "i vypal mir" (and the world fell). Even the earlier phrase "grud' zemli" (the bosom of the earth) suggests the notion of the center of the earth. In his article on the role Virgil plays in the Roman text, V. N. Toporov considers this poem a typical example of what he calls the "Roman theme."[62]

Most of the fifteen lines of the first stanza describe Rome's destruction. The poet does this by juxtaposing images of the invaders ("litso germanskikh ord" [the face of the German hordes]; "got" [Goth]; "Totilla"; "konnitsa" [cavalry]) and images of the means of destruction ("topot kopyt" [clatter of horse's hoofs]; "ogon' i kluby dyma" [flame and clouds of smoke]) against images of the victims ("Rim prostert" [Rome prostrated]; "grek" [the Greek]; "grud' zemli i mramor plit" [the bosom of earth and marble slabs]; "ravnina sred' mogil" [a plain amidst the graves]; "zheltye Tibrskie berega" [the yellow banks of the Tiber]; "vse naselen'e Rima" [the entire population of Rome]). One can hardly accuse the poet of disregarding the *couleur locale.* Not only does he imbue the text with details, but in order to increase the veracity of his picture, he introduces an objective witness—"monakh pisavshii / Akty ostgotskikh korolei" (the monk writing the / Acts of the Goth kings). The event presented at a double remove is observed by Jordanes, the author of *De origine actibusque Getarum.* The poet exercises poetic license here, since Jordanes, a Goth himself, is believed to have lived in the eastern Roman Empire, and the monastery in the poem—on Mount Soracte[63]—was founded no earlier than the eighth century. The snowy Soracte was introduced to literature by Horace in his Carmen 19; we may therefore regard Voloshin's reference to be a metatext.

Every detail in this poem is endowed with moral evaluation and emotional charge. Most are obvious; some slightly covert. In the phrase "I got tesnil i grabil greka" (And the Goth oppressed and looted the Greek), the use of the singular instead of the plural (Goth and Greek) is a typical example of a synecdoche, but "Greek" is also an example of an interesting metonymy. Richard M. Haywood writes, "Julian asserts that the Romans became Greeks, meaning that they became devoted to Greek culture; Augustine asserts that the Greeks became Romans, meaning that they became part of the commonwealth which the Romans built."[64] Voloshin does not shy away from involving his reader in such intricacies.

Thanks to the use of numerous verbs, onomatopoeic words, for example, "gudeli topotom kopyt" (clamored with the clatter of hoofs) and alliteration (mir, Rim, prostert, pered; germanskix ord, got, grabil greka, grud'), the description of Totila's invasion is vivid and dynamic. The battle scene is enhanced with rich and differentiated masculine and feminine rhymes and a diversified metric pattern.

Just as in the first stanza the poet identifies Rome with the world, in the second he introduces the notion of *Urbs Aeterna*, or Eternal

City. This epithet, used for the first time by Tibullus and Ovid in the Augustan Age, became an official formula only with Hadrian. It has never been attributed to any other city.[65] The notion of the Eternal City supports the assumption that history is cyclical and also provides the basis for the idea of transubstantiation (from *eterna* to *sacra*), the poem's central theme.

The second stanza starts with a paraphrase of the epigraph:

> И сорок дней был Рим безлюден.
> Лишь зверь бродил средь улиц.
>
> [And forty days Rome was desolate.
> Only a beast wandered along the streets.]

It is followed by a very static and grand picture, another solemn celebration of what Muratov calls "the pathos of destruction."[66] The poet states: "Chuden byl vechnyi grad" (Wonderful was the Eternal City). As in "At the Forum," he evokes the image of Rome deserted by enumerating grand architectural objects and historical symbols of greatness. In order to deepen and invigorate the architectural symbolism the poet endows these images with mystical undertones. The deserted city has the characteristics usually attributed to land in its primeval stage ("pervozdannyi" [primordial]) and to human consciousness in its most subliminal state ("bezumnyi bred" [mad delirium]). Thus presented, the images create an impression of what could be called a "higher disorder" as opposed to a higher order. Deserted Rome ("velik i pust i dik" [grand and empty and wild]) lives a life of its own, and still represents the world. The silence of its stones is prophetic ("v molchanii veshchem tsepeneli […] / ego kamnei nagromozhden'ia" [piles of its stones turned motionless in the prophetic silence]). The accumulation of nouns signifying architectural objects ("steny chertogov" [the walls of halls]; "kamnei nagromozhden'ia" [piles of stones]; "trofei i oblomki tronov" [trophies and debris of thrones]; "neimovernye gromady dvortsov i iarusy kolonn" [the incredible masses of palaces and tiers of columns]) symbolizes the greatness of Rome at the time of its fall.

The sole toponym in this part of the poem is the Sacred Way, the road leading through the Forum to the Capitol on which the Romans celebrated their triumphs.

Священный Путь, где камень стерт
Стопами медных легионов
И торжествующих когорт.[67]

[The Sacred Way, where the stone is worn
by the feet of the copper legions
and the triumphant cohorts.]

These evocative lines with the extremely interesting rhyme ("stert – kogort") stress the triumphant ancient tradition.[68] Only after creating an awesome picture of the invasion and desolation of Rome does the poet treat the theme of transubstantiation to realize his main parallel between Rome and Russia. Apparently Voloshin had hoped that the election of a new patriarch in October 1917 would have the same effect in Russia that the election of Pope Gregory the Great (590-604) had in Rome.

И новый Рим процвел – велик,
И необьятен, как стихия.[69]

[The new Rome blossomed—grand
And unbounded, like the elements.]

The poet's premonition proved wrong; Russia was not to become a religious spiritual kingdom. Having exploited the historical analogy in the poem, Voloshin resorts to another example, this time taken from nature: the image of a seed that has to undergo decay in order to be reborn.

Так семя, дабы прорасти,
Должно истлеть ...
Истлей, Россия
И царством духа расцвети!

[Thus the seed, in order to sprout
Must decay...
Decay, Russia,
And blossom as a kingdom of the spirit!]

This very complex and multi-tiered image of the grain of wheat, a quotation from the Gospels, has a long-standing tradition. As the author of the commentary in Voloshin's collected works explains, in Russian literature the quotation was "taken by Dostoyevsky as an epigraph for his *Brothers Karamazov*—also as an analogy with Russia." The concept of destruction and regeneration was certainly

not alien to the Symbolist poets. Vyacheslav Ivanov was preoccupied with the idea of man created from ashes of burnt Titans in his Parisian lectures "The Hellenic Religion of the Suffering God" (Ellinskaia religiia stradaiushchego boga). In his letter of June 19, 1920 in *Correspondence across a Room* (Perepiska iz dvukh uglov),[70] Ivanov refers to the image of a seed that has to decay in order to germinate in connection with Goethe's prerequisite.[71] The exclamation "Stirb und werde" (Die first and become) as well as the concept of "Flammentod,"[72] quoted in the *Correspondence* comes from Goethe's poem "Selige Sehnsucht."[73] Ivanov was very fond of this poem and used its first stanza as a motto to the first part of his collection *Cor Ardens*.[74]

In November 1917, in a letter to a young singer and composer, Voloshin confesses that every day he reads the Apocalypse—the Book of Revelation, calling it the most contemporary of all books. In the same letter he calls Dostoyevsky's work, especially *The Possessed*, the "Russian Apocalypse."[75]

In his introduction to Voloshin's collected works, Boris Filippov comments on the climactic apostrophe of "Transubstantiation": "It is a Gospel image—the inextinguishable candle of Dostoevsky's *The Possessed.*"[76] In a second introductory essay for the same collection, Emmanuil Rais interprets the concept of transubstantiation in light of Rudolph Steiner's anthroposophy.[77] Voloshin, at one time a disciple of Steiner's, seemed to be fond of the myth of periodic destruction followed by regeneration.[78]

Voloshin's poem "Europe" (Evropa),[79] which directly alludes to the legend of the Phoenix symbolizing destruction and regeneration, echoes some of the themes of "Transubstantiation." In this hyperbolic and unpoetic poem, written on May 20, 1918, in Koktebel, Voloshin confronts Europe-related myths and tries to form his own contemporary myth based on the concept of Russia as the Third Rome and the concept of Pan-Mongolism as formulated by Vladimir Solovyov.[80] Europe, envisioned here as both harlot and maiden,[81] is seduced by Islamic Asia, represented by the bull; Russia is the result of this forced marriage:

> И зачала и понесла во чреве
> Русь – Третий Рим – слепой и страстный плод ...[82]
>
> [And Europe conceived and carried in her womb
> Russia—the Third Rome—the blind and passionate fruit.]

This union is supposed to produce an ideal entity, "Slavia." Thrilled by that prospect, the poet embarks on a fantastic etymology combining the Latin word *sclavus* (slave) with *Slavia* and *slava* (fame, glory). His political prediction is as fantastic as his etymological derivation. Nevertheless, the poem "Europe," often published under the title "The Angel of Time" (Angel vremen),[83] indicates that the idea of the Third Rome has a tendency to resurface in the search for political solutions in historiosophic concepts rooted in mythology. Many of the problems faced by the poet and his peers have remained unsolved to this day.

The Roman theme played a vital, though limited, role in Voloshin's poetic output. Dividing his time, attention and imagination, between Paris as a symbol of Western civilization, and Crimea as a symbol of Southern nature, the poet turned to Rome when he needed to interpret the past, or to express his political traumas and hopes. To the Roman tradition of Symbolist poetry, he contributed powerful images of Rome's greatness, especially in the poems "On the Forum" and "Transubstantiation."[84] He also succeeded, in "Portents," in bringing about a full poetic realization of the myth of Julius Caesar.

Notes

1. The essential source is Voloshin's *Stikhotvoreniia i poemy v dvukh tomakh*, ed. G. P.Struve, B.A.Filippov, N.A.Struve (Paris: YMCA-Press, 1982-84), referred to hereafter as *Stikhotvoreniia i poemy*. The collection includes introductory essays by B. Filippov and E. Rais. Two other collections of Voloshin's work were consulted: *Stikhotvoreniia*, ed. L. S. Geiro, (Leningrad: Sovetskii Pisatel', 1977); *Sochineniia* (Moscow: Kniga, 1989); as well as I. T. Kupriianov, *Sud'ba poeta: Lichnost' i poeziia Maksimiliana Voloshina* (Kiev: Naukova Dumka, 1978), and C. Marsh, *M. A. Voloshin, Artist-Poet: A Study of Synaesthetic Aspects of His Poetry* (Birmingham: Dept. of Russian Languages and Literatures, University of Birmingham, 1982).

2. Cf. I. T. Kupriianov, *Sud'ba poeta*. The author had access to Voloshin's unpublished autobiography.

3. M. A. Voloshin, *Stikhotvoreniia i poemy*, 2:267. The poem, "I vot ia svoboden! Ves' mir predo mnoi" (And here I am free! The whole world before me) was first published in *Russkii Turkestan* (March 18, 1901): 1.

4. Voloshin, *Stikhotvoreniia i poemy*, 2:167.

5. Kupriianov, 61.

6. Ibid., 64.

7. Voloshin, *Stikhotvoreniia,* 414. The editors of *Stikhotvoreniia i poemy* quote the same statement by Evstingneeva in 1:461.

8. Cf. the analysis of Bryusov's "Na Forume."

9. Cf. D. S. Mirsky, R. Poggioli, B. Filippov.

10. D. S. Mirsky, 452.

11. Vladimir Veidle, *Rim. Iz besed o gorodakh Italii* (Paris, 1967), 71. Cf. 9.

12. Cf. the discussion of arch symbolism by E. Baldwin Smith, *Architectural Symbolism of Imperial Rome and the Middle Ages*, "The City-Gate Concept."

13. Cf. Voloshin's "Gnosticheskii gimn Deve Marii" (Gnostic hymn to the Virgin Mary), written in 1907 and dedicated to Vyacheslav Ivanov, which also ends with the words "Ave Maria." *Stikhotvoreniia i poemy*, 1:68-9.

14. Cf. The symbolism of ruins discussed in reference to Bryusov's poetry.

15. B. Tomashevskii, "Novoe o Pushkine," *Literaturania Mysl',* 1 (1922), 178.

16. Cf. Cynthia Marsh, *M. A. Voloshin: Artist-Poet.*

17. Voloshin, *Stikhotvoreniia i poemy*, 1:12.

18. P. Muratov, *Obrazy Italii*, 2:132.

19. Voloshin, *Stikhotvoreniia i poemy,* 1:12.

20. Twenty-five years later the poet referred directly to Tyutchev's poem, as he considered his generation as those who "imeli chest' / Mir posetit' v minuty rokovye." Cf. the poem "Dom poeta," 2:93-8.

21. Voloshin, *Stikhotvoreniia i poemy*, 1:12.

22. P. Muratov writes: "Drugoe chuvstvo neotdelimoe ot chuvstva Rima, eto chuvstvo vody" (The other feeling inseparable from the feeling of Rome, is the feeling of water), 26.

23. Cf. the chapter on Viacheslav Ivanov.

24. V. N. Toporov, "Petersburg and 'Petersburgskii tekst,'" *Semiotika goroda i gorodskoi kul'tury*, 24.

25. Muratov, 30

26. E. Rais, Introduction to *Stikhotvoreniia i poemy,* lvii. On the subject of the sound structure of Voloshin's poetry, see also K. F. Taranovskii, "Zvukopis' v Severovostoke M.Voloshina" (835 - 40) in *Orbis Scriptus, Dmitrij Tschizhevsky zum 70. Geburtstag*, ed. Dietrich Gerhardt, Wiktor Weintraub, Hans-Jürgen zum Winkel (Munchen: Wilhelm Fink, 1966), 989.

27. L. A. Evstingneeva ed., M. Voloshin, *Stikhotvoreniia* (Leningrad: Sovetskii Pisatel', 1977), see footnote 393-94.

28. The genealogy of the poem is described by Evstingneeva in her footnote, and by Kupriianov in his monograph (Kupriianov, 89).

29. R. Poggioli, 175.

30. M.Voloshin, *Stikhotvoreniia i poemy*, 1:221.

31. V. Ivanov, *S.S.*, 2:87. English trans. quoted by J. Holthusen, 80.

32. J. Holthusen, "*Cor Ardens* and Esthetic of Symbolism," in *Vyacheslav Ivanov: Poet, Critic and Philosopher*, ed. by Robert Louis Jackson and Lowry Nelson, 9.

33. Kupriianov, 95; Voloshin's article "Proroki i mstiteli. Predvestiia Velikoi Revoliutsii" appeared in *Pereval*, 2 (1906): 12-27.

34. In this poem the theme of the portent is not exhausted by the legend of Caesar. It is also pertinent to the unrelated image of the "three suns" appearing in the

sky over Petersburg. This image is mentioned by I. T. Kuprianov, 89, and is discussed at length by Cynthia Marsh, 98.

35. Suetonius, *J. G. Caesar*, 81.

36. Plutarch, *Caesar*, 341.

37. Ibid., 342-43.

38. Ibid., 344

39. Cf. A. Blok's "Lish' med' torzhestvennoi latyni/ poet na plitakh kak truba," *Sobranie sochinenii v vos'mi tomax* (Moscow-Leningrad, 1960), 3:99.

40. Vsevolod Setchkarev, *Studies on the Life and Work of Innokentij Annensky* (The Hague: Mouton, 1963), 76.

41. M. Grant, *Myths of the Greek and Romans*, 68.

42. Ibid., 187.

43. Voloshin, *Stikhotvoreniia i poemy*, 1:221

44. Tomas Venclova, in his inspiring analysis of Marina Tsvetaeva's poem "Zanaves" in *Neustoichivoe ravnovesie*, gives a revealing discussion of the dialectic of the curtain in poetry of the Silver Age. My analysis of the related passage in Voloshin's poem was done independently of this book. Marina Tsvetaeva was a close friend of Voloshin. "Zanaves," however, was written in 1923, "Predvestiia" in 1905.

45. Voloshin, *Stikhotvoreniia i poemy*, 1:221.

46. Georgette Donchin, *The Influence of French Symbolism on Russian Poetry*, 153.

47. Cf. Kupriianov, 83.

48. Mirsky, "O sovremennom sostoianii russkoi poezii," *Novyi Zhurnal* 131 (1978): 85-86.

49. Mirsky, 452-53.

50. Poggioli, 175-76.

51. Kupriianov, 193.

52. Voloshin, *Stikhotvoreniia i poemy*, 1:353-79.

53. In the commentary, Voloshin mistakenly identifies the Ostrogoth king as Attila, the king of the Huns who died in 453 A.D, instead of Totillla.

54. Voloshin, *Stikhotvoreniia i poemy*, 1:369.

55. Ibid., 2:268.

56. Poggioli, 176.

57. David R. Weimer, "Rome Sacked," *The City as Metaphor* (New York: Random House, 1966), 143; cf. 123.

58. Voloshin uses Latin quotations and epigraphs, as well as Latin titles for his books and poem cycles. He gave the Latin title *Anno Mundi Ardentis* to his second book, published in 1915. He named the second cycle of his book *Gody Stranstvii*, "Amori amara sacrum" (1:31), and intended to call one of his selections "Selva oscura" (1:109). For the remaining examples of the use of Latin or Italian quotations, cf. 1:9; 1:50; 1:74; 1:97; 1:167; 1:211; 1:256; 1:466; 2:81; 2:237.

59. Cf. Poggioli, 175.

60. Cf. Edmund Spenser's 26th sonnet in *Ruines of Rome by Bellay*: "Rome was the whole world, and all the world was Rome."

61. Cf. V. N. Toporov, "Vergilianskaia tema Rima," in *Issledovaniia po strukture teksta*. This article came to my attention after the above analysis was written. In his article "The First Sonnet in V. Ivanov's Roman Cycle" (published in

1986), A. Klimoff devotes a great deal of attention to the anagrammatic character of Ivanov's sonnet, and independently (earlier) demonstrates the same phonological pattern.

62. V. N. Toporov, "Veriglianskaia tema Rima," 210.

63. Soracte, a picturesque mountain, which thanks to its isolated position is visible from Rome, is one of the three toponyms, beside Rome itself, named in the poem. The other two are the bank of the Tiber and the Via Sacra.

64. Richard M. Haywood, *The Myth of Rome's Fall*(New York: Thomas Y. Crowell, 1962), 132.

65. Cf. F. G. Moore, "On *Urbs Aeterna* and *Urbs Sacra*," in *Trans. of the Amer. Phil. Association*, 25 (1894), 34-60.

66. Cf. my analysis of the "At the Forum."

67. Voloshin, *Stikhotvoreniia i poemy*, 1:231.

68. As in many other Rome-related poems the image of copper functions as a metonymy. Cf. analysis of "Predvestiia" and other chapters, where copper images are discussed.

69. Voloshin, *Stikhotvoreniia i poemy*, 1:232.

70. V. I. Ivanov and M. O. Gershenzon, *Perepiska iz dvukh uglov*, 14.

71. This evangelical image became a source of inspiration for other poets, among them Andrei Belyi and Vladislav Khodasevich (*Put'em zerna*).

72. Cf. *Perepiska iz dvukh uglov*, 14.

73. Part of "West-Oestlicher Diwan," cf. *Goethes Werke*, ed. Ernst Merian-Genast, (Basel: Birkhauser, 1944), 2:289.

74. V. Ivanov, *Sobranie sochinenii*, 2:222.

75. Cf. Voloshin, *Stikhotvoreniia i poemy*, 1:488.

76. B. Filippov, vii.

77. E. Rais, lxxvii..

78. Cf. Kupriianov's remarks concerning Voloshin's religious education and experiences, 78-79.

79. This poem appears under that title in the *Stikhotvoreniia*, 253-55, and under the title "Angel Vremen" in *Stikhotvoreniia i poemy*, 233-34.

80. See the discussion of both concepts in the chapter on Vladimir Solovyov. Cf. also the footnote to the poem (1:500) where this subject and its relation to Steiner's theory is discussed thoroughly, as well as comments on the entire cycle "Puti Rossii" (1:488), and the poet's own commentary (1:378). L.A. Evstingneeva calls this poem "a tribute to the Neo-Slavophile views [...] in the religiously-mystical spirit." M. Voloshin, *Stikhotvoreniia*, 430.

81. Cf. the chapter "Tekst goroda — devy i goroda — bludnitsy v mifologicheskom aspekte," 121-32, in the article by V. N. Toporov "Zametki po rekonstruktsii tekstov" in *Issledovaniia po strukture teksta*, 302.

82. Voloshin, *Stikhotvoreniia i poemy*, 1:234.

83. Stikhotvoreniia i poemy, 1:233-34, where it is published under this title, whereas in *Stikhotvoreniia*, it is published under the title "Evropa." Cf. also comments related to that poem, 1:500.

84. Among his translations from Verhaaern there is the Rome-related poem, "Gorod" (City), *Stikhotvoreniia i poemy*, 2:307-10.

VIII.

The Quest for *Pax Romana* as a Quest for Peace of Mind Vasily Komarovsky

A great minor poet of the Silver Age, Count Vasily Alekseyevich Komarovsky (1881-1914) should be credited with creating a very distinctive image of Rome, although he was never able to visit Italy.[1] He studied law and literature, but most sources include only biographical information concerning his mental illness. Komarovsky's poetic gift has always been admired by refined critics. D. S. Mirsky writes about him: "Probably no poet ever succeeded in giving his verse that absolutely indefinable touch of unique personality so well as Komarovsky did,"[2] while Tomas Venclova writes that "it can be expected that the time will come for his poems."[3] A friend of the major Acmeist poets but not an Acmeist himself, Komarovsky was rooted in Tsarskoe Selo, a suburb of St. Petersburg, the traditional summer seat of the imperial family, famous for its classical palaces, galleries, parks, and monuments. Komarovsky's exposure to classical architecture in Tsarskoe Selo and St. Petersburg evidently influenced the image of Rome that he created in his poetry. Komarovsky, as well as Annensky whom he admired, is associated with Petersburg Poetics,[4] which may be well summarized in his phrase: "Na skudnom severe dalekii otblesk Rima" (On the meager North the distant reflection of Rome). The word "reflection" significantly exposes a paradoxical congruence: Rome and North. Since Komarovsky never experienced Rome personally, the light in his Roman poems has an essentially northern quality; it is broken, or

blurred, more a reflection of light than light coming directly from its source. The absence of direct sunlight is invoked in the first poem of "Italian Impressions" (Ital'ianskie vpechatleniia), written in 1912, in which the poet describes Russia:

> Люди солнца не помнят;
> Курят, снуют, грустят;
> В мороке мутных комнат
> Северный горький чад....[5]
>
> [People don't remember the sun;
> They smoke, dash about, grieve;
> The Northern, bitter fumes stray
> In the darkness of turbid rooms.]

Thus most of the time Komarovsky looks at sculptures through these "Northern, bitter fumes"; the statues in the poem "Museum" (Muzei) are seen in moonlight, while the beautiful alabaster bust of Agrippina the Elder comes from Copenhagen, even further north.[6]

Komarovsky's interest in Rome was enhanced by his thorough knowledge of Latin, the history of ancient Rome, and its cultural legacy. His association with other Petersburg poets, who embraced both the modern city culture and its classical roots, strengthened his preoccupation with the Roman theme. However, in his search for classical values and in his identification with them, he was able to maintain a certain ironical distance, for example, in his choice of Incitatus—the name of Caligula's horse—as his literary pseudonym.

"Komarovsky was attracted to statues," writes George Ivask in his miniature essay on statues in the poetry of Annensky and Komarovsky.[7] Ivask argues that Komarovsky was inspired by sculptures perhaps to the degree that Pygmalion was enamored with his own sculptural creation. In discussing a poem dedicated to a statue, Ivask asks, "Isn't she dearer to him than the live woman"?[8] Poems about sculpture form a rich tradition in Russian poetry, to which Pushkin's contribution stands out in particular. The complex interaction between the two texts—sculptural and literary—and the relation between the model and its sculptural representation has attracted the attention of scholars as well. As noted earlier, in his essay "The Statue in Pushkin's Poetic Mythology," Roman Jakobson explored many of these complex problems. One of them especially applies to Komarovsky's treatment of statues in his poetry:

> Only the opposition of the dead *immobile matter* from which the statue is shaped and the *mobile, animate being* which a statue represents provides a sufficient distance . . . , and it is just this basic antinomy of sculpture that has been most effectively captured and exploited in poetry.[9]

Komarovsky was a poet with a rare gift, who was not only inspired by statuary, but who was also able to inspire life back into the "dead immobile matter." He was thus able to draw the ultimate conclusion from Jakobson's "basic antinomy." In his brilliant analysis, Toporov points precisely to this phenomenon, stating that Komarovsky instills his own image into the image of the statue by enlivening it with his breath.[10] This gift was nurtured by his admiration for the classical canon, which remained with him throughout his short and tormented life. "Na kopengagenskii biust Agrippiny Starshei" (On the Copenhagen Bust of Agrippina the Elder), a sestet with an *aa bb cc* rhyme pattern, in which the first two pairs consist of assonances, and only the *cc* rhymes are exact, is a poetic portrait of Agrippina the Elder—Augustus's granddaughter, the daughter of the exiled Julia, and the wife of Germanicus (Tiberius's adopted son). She was Caligula's mother, and Nero's grandmother. Throughout her life, she never failed in her humanity and courage; her chastity and fertility made her the ideal Roman matron. She died of voluntary starvation. Hers is one of the most tragic biographies we have of women from antiquity, which Komarovsky encapsulates in his image of the three phases of the day: "den' bezsolnechnyi, vecher temnokrylyi, noch bezlunnuiu" (sunless day, dark-winged evening, moonless night).[11] In this poetic substitution of the time of day for the time of life, the poet reverses the direction of light—the silvery light emanating from the individual illuminates her dark somber life. The image of light and the poet's almost physical attraction to the bust give it life. On the linguistic level this is achieved by bringing to life fossilized, idiomatic expressions. Tjalsma writes: "Significant of Komarovsky's emergence as a true Petersburg poet is his use in almost all his last poems, [. . .] of the conversational style. Here the reader is charmed by the unexpected meeting in the poem with the words and intonation of his own everyday spoken language."[12] In order to revitalize idiomatic expressions and accommodate the conversational language in the poem, the poet reverses or inverses its uses.

Thus the light expressed by "siianie" (shining), which in conversational Russian is usually associated with joy, here comes

from anguish; it is the shining of a blade. The blade may be associated with Agrippina's many years in army camps as well as her tragic life. Like a silvery face, "siianie" here is of metallic origin, although the sculpture is made of marble. A similar strategy is used in the description of the neck. The poet breaks down the idiomatic "swan neck," and creates "swan wrinkles of a marble neck," thus inducing the image of mature beauty. The last two epithets, "torzhestvennyi i sladkii" (solemn and sweet), underscore the solemnity of the topic and the attractiveness of the character, as a woman and a sculpture.

According to Susan Wood, the portraits of Agrippina reflect "the diverse roles she played in political propaganda during her lifetime and after her death." Besides Agrippina's youthful portraits, "some replicas… like the Capitoline head, include subtly modeled furrows under the eyes and across the cheeks, which suggest mature age (Agrippina was between 45 and 50 when she died), as well as physical and emotional sufferings."[13]

We learn from art historians that figures of lesser importance than the emperor, including members of the imperial family, were portrayed in the form of a bust, but they were all presented as a certain dynastic type, ready for acceptance as divine beings in their own lifetime. Donald Strong writes: "The phenomenon of Julio-Claudian dynastic portraiture is the creation of an idealized family image which became all-pervading."[14] Komarovsky works with idealized images, but unlike Merezhkovsky, he uses his knowledge of biography and his language strategy to reduce the degree of idealization.[15] He sees through the official image, to the fate of the mortal.

The poet manifests his fascination with sculpture, both marble and metal, in several other poems. In "Statue" (Statua) he reflects on the incompatibility between the ideal represented by the work of art and the realization of that ideal in real life. The poet achieves this by using essential sculptural elements: marble, light (*siianie*), and a Pygmalion-like physical attraction to the sculpture:

> И равнодушная, она не обещала —
> Сияла мрамором у светлых берегов...
> Несчастный! — Вечную и строгую любовь
> Ты хочешь увидать одетой в плоть и кровь.[16]
>
> [And she, indifferent, did not promise—
> The marble radiated on the glowing shores.
> And you—misfortunate!—you wish to see
> Eternal, solemn love clothed in flesh and blood.]

One of Komarovsky's most admired poems, "Where the copper images" (Gde liki mednye, 1912), again brings together the themes of sculpture and Rome. V. N. Toporov considers this poem an example of the perfect balance that the poet was able to attain between the two "texts"—that of Rome and Tsarskoe Selo, between the reality of the period of ancient Rome and the beginning of the twentieth century.[17] The aura of this gloomy and revealing poem is introduced by images of two copper statues—of Tiberius, Augustus's successor, and Sulla, the general and dictator of the Roman Republic. These two statues, out of many situated in the famous Cameron Gallery, seen from the bank of the Big Pond in Tsarskoe Selo, are chosen by the poet for the darker sides of their personalities, particularly their debauchery and cruelty. On the visual plane the copper figures find their structural reflection in the image of copper-colored, gilded patches of light muddied by the heavy autumnal smoke. The reader is confronted with many transformations, which are to a certain extent inherent in the gloominess of statues. Initially these are natural transformations—the smoke darkens the light; the ice covers the water of the pond. But these natural transformations are followed by mysterious ones. Black swans, real animals with complex aquatic and death-related symbolism, are transformed in this poetic vision into chtonic demons—harpies representing "cosmic terror" and thanatic forces.[18] This transformation of images expresses "a situation in which man's inner wholeness is torn to shreds."[19] One should not forget that harpies terrified Aeneas during his quest for home.[20] On a social plane, the monsters stand for the wicked, tyrannical monarch,[21] perhaps Tiberius and Sulla of the first line of the poem.

What is even more interesting is the fact that Cameron and Rastrelli were considered masters of the effect of light in architecture and landscaping.[22] The movement of light and colors accompanies the increase of the emotional horror—from the red copper and dimmed sunlight, to the black color of the swans, and the dark-violet waters (*temnolilovykh vod*) and the similarly colored lilac night (*sirenevaia noch'*). This twelve-line poem manifests the highest qualities of Komarovsky's craftsmanship, which has been aptly characterized by Tjalsma:

> There is a sense of another reality in much of his verse, particularly in his early poetry written between 1903-1909 or 1910. There is a certain tremor, a certain inexpressible modulation of feeling, sometimes rendered as modulation of lighting, which has much more to do with the poet's sense, probably heightened by his experience of madness, of an inner

> reality than it does with observed natural phenomena. There is frequently a mood of foreboding, sorrow or shame which, though it can be attributed to Symbolist influence in his verse, also has a haunting reality about it which is Komarovsky's own and, again, is almost surely to be connected to his unstable mental condition.[23]

Sergey Makovsky links this poem to Komarovsky's insanity: "The poet wanted to express in words the inexpressible. These harpies, the fabulous sharp-clawed blood sucking eagles, are even more horrible, because they were the Tsarskoe Selo black swans flapping their wings, before their transformation. They flew from the heart of the poet recalling his own madness...."[24] V. N. Toporov points to the poetic "stylization" that combines the image pertinent to the Roman Empire, represented by the image of busts, with the image of the contemporary Tsarskoe Selo, represented here only by the image of ice.[25]

There is one more poem in this collection which relates to both the Roman and sculptural themes—"La cruche casse" (The Broken Pitcher), a poem that has been comprehensively analyzed by Toporov and Ivask. It is one of those poems that elicits endless chains of associations for someone who knows the statues of Tsarskoe Selo, and who knows the poems about them by Pushkin, Akhmatova and Annensky.[26] Ivask writes:

> Komarovsky does not experience horror, pity, or resentment. However, it is not indifference. This poem is not static, it is dynamic. Already in the first lines he in a solemn and majestic manner revels in melancholy at the pavilion of "born to the purple depression" and the reflections of Rome on the "meager North" of Russia. He doesn't strive to escape into the past of an ancient world; he lives in the present, passionately celebrating his anguish in the dusk. He displays the hopeless but somehow intoxicating stoicism of the "last Roman." [27]

According to Toporov, the entire poetic tradition is encoded in this poem, as a result of the interdependence between a very intimate, emotional treatment of the subject with the "strict form of the Alexandrian verse." [28]

Komarovsky often presented his subjects and motifs from different points of view. The number of poems about statues attests to this practice, as do the recurrent images of marble and copper.[29] The motif of marble appears in the beautiful poem "Far away from people" (Vdali liudei) related to the archetypal theme of quest for home, a

topic pertinent to the Roman theme in general. In this poem marble and stone serve as the building material for home and security:

> Построил мраморный триклиний
> и камнем обложил родник.[30]
>
> [He built the marble triclinium
> and encircled the spring with stones.]

Another device that attracted Komarovsky was to speak in the language of the "other," the "stranger," which Toporov calls the "external I" (*vneshnee ia*).[31] There are several poems in which the lyrical "I" becomes an imaginary Roman, either an old veteran who received land from the agrarian assignment, as in "Evening" (Vecher) and "Far away from people" or a young inexperienced soldier, as in "Toga virilis."[32]

The sonnet "Evening" (1910), with its precise though restrained rhyme pattern (*abba*, *abba*, ccd, eed), is built around the veteran's meditation upon seeing a storm. The title refers to the time of day, and also to the time of life of the ex-legionnaire, who has been wounded many times, and who has for the past thirty years been a settler in the area of Milan. The same device, connecting the phases of a day to those of life, was used by Komarovsky in his poem about the bust of Agrippina. Another correspondence presented in this poem is between a storm and war: "Liubliu grozy voinstvennyi raskat" (I like the warlike peal of a thunderstorm). Using very picturesque imagery, the poet brings this quite worn metaphor to life again. In this reversed realization of the metaphor one can trace the approach that Osip Mandelstam demonstrated in his famous line: "Priroda tot-zhe Rim" (Nature is also Rome). If nature is Rome,[33] then nature's phenomena may signify history or its elements, such as war and peace.[34]

The poem "Far away from people," written in 1907 and dedicated to Baroness M. F. Taube, subtly accentuates its Roman theme. Actually only "mramornyi triklinii" (a couch used by ancient Romans for reclining at meals, or a dining room furnished with a triclinium) points to a Roman setting. There are also some indications that the poem's lyrical persona may share the identity of the protagonist of the sonnet "Evening," written three years later. Let's compare them:

> "Far away from people":
> Холмы взрывая дважды плугом
> я сеял трепетной рукой.

[Having ploughed the hills twice
I was sowing with a trembling hand.]

"Evening":
За тридцать лет я плугом ветерана
провел ряды неисчислимых гряд.

[In thirty years with a veteran's plough
I furrowed countless rows.]

Old age is implied by autumn in "Far away from people" and by the night in "Evening." These two poems share other Roman themes—the quest for home, and for peace (*pax romana*). The veteran's principal concern, like that of Aeneas, is founding a new home. In "Far away from people" we read:

И стали за вольшебным кругом,
Колося, тишина, покой.

[And beyond the magic circle stood
The ears of grain, silence, and peace.]

At the same time both veterans experience some anguish, and an inner desire to shatter that peace. In "Far away from people" this is expressed by the wait for the unknown visitor who

Рассказом горести случайной
тревоги разбудить потерь.

[With his tale of chance sorrow
will stir up the anxiety of losses.]

The protagonist of "Evening" is experiencing an imaginary war. On the mythical plane it is a battle between good and evil, with the storm representing

дремучий край,
Где залегли зловещие драконы.

[the dense land,
Where ominous dragons slumber.]

The vindicatory symbolism comes from the Roman side. The Roman legions are led by an eagle—the bird placed on the highest step of the symbolical ladder of beings, and an emblem of Rome. The

justification of the Roman cause is strengthened by light—the image of the golden eagle and the epithet *pylaiushchie*, signifying flaming and burning.[35]

In the poem "Toga Virilis" (1911), the lyric persona is again a Roman, this time a young warrior awaiting his first battle. As in "Evening" the title of the poem has a paraphrastic character. In Rome, *toga virilis* was the garment of initiation into manhood for young patricians; here the first battle will function as a "toga virilis."

As the first line of this *abba abba ccd ccd* sonnet announces, the battle against the Dacians will be led by Domitian, whose name is introduced in the ninth line. There were two confrontations between Domitian's army and that of Decebalus of Dacia. In the first one the Roman army suffered defeat. They were the victors in the second war, but were hindered by Domitian's determination to make peace. Domitian, who never got to the battlefield, celebrated a splendid triumph in Rome. The poem captures the impatience in the war camp before the attack. Perhaps it is the second confrontation and the soldiers want revenge. By using short, verbless phrases in the first three lines and two present-tense verbs in the fourth, Komarovsky creates the dynamic atmosphere of excitement before a battle.[36] The three first lines sound almost like a short cabled message:

> На площади одно лишь слово — «Даки».
> Сам Цезарь — вождь. Заброшены венки
> Среди дворцов — военные рожки.
> Сияет медь и ластятся собаки.[37]
>
> [On the square only one word — "Dacians."
> The Emperor himself — the chief. Wreaths are cast
> In the midst of courtyards — military trumpets,
> The copper shines and dogs fawn.]

The tension is expressed by the soldiers' utterances, along with the anxiety conveyed by the words "dogs fawn" in the fourth line. This aura of anxiety, as experienced by the lyrical "I," develops gradually to find its ultimate expression in the last line: "I tol'ko vchuzhe serdtse klokotalo" (And only strangely the heart was beating). If the first quatrain of the sonnet describes the camp, the next takes the reader to an imaginary battle. Through the young, inexperienced soldier's daydreaming about his first combat, the poet exercises his imagination: the exhausting march in the sand ("i po kolena tina i

peski"), the campfires,[38] the riverbank (most probably the Danube), and crossing the river.

In the first tercet the poet actually returns to reporting from the camp. The very conversational "No nado zhdat'" (One has to wait) fulfills a double function here: it informs the reader of the postponement, and delays the quasi-narrative, enabling the persona to complete the characterization of Domitian. This characterization is laconic, but not enigmatic; it touches upon few traits, but very important ones for Domitian. In the elliptical introductory sentence, "The Emperor himself—the leader," the poet alludes to Domitian's longing to establish his own military fame, equal to that of his father, Vespasian, and his brother, Titus.[39] Although he was disdained by the Senate, and not well known by the population, he was very popular with his army. The first tercet tells about Domitian's inclination to preside over judiciary proceedings. According to Suetonius: "In ministering justice precise he was and industrious. Many a time, even in the common place, sitting extraordinarily upon the tribunal, he reversed the definitive sentences of the centumvirs, given for favour and obtained by flattery."[40]

"The trial of a handful of Christians" (Sud' nad gorst'iu khristian) alludes to the fact that Domitian was a very strict defender of the national religion. He had a record of persecuting Christians, according to J. B. Bury, who writes that it "has been supposed that Flavius Clement and Domitilla, who are said to have been accused of 'impiety,' were Christians and this is not improbable."[41] Naturally, the view of Domitian that is given in the poem bears all the features of what the Formalists defined as the device of "estrangement "or "defamiliarization." The "external I" represents the mentality of a dedicated soldier, not an omniscient narrator; he repeats the justification of Domitian's persecutions without judging his cruelty. The poem is realized by the juxtaposition of this naive perception of the lyrical persona and the perception of the reader. Domitian himself is a peripheral figure in this poem. There were other emperors who persecuted Christians and fought Dacians as well. Nevertheless, the poet, in the manner of a good Renaissance painter, took great care with his background.[42] Not unlike Andrea Mantegna in his canvas the *Triumph of Caesar*, Komarovsky leaves no space unfilled on this sonnet's canvas, where every single detail is saturated with symbolism, with the symbolic ladder of beings—from dogs to emperors. Having painted this background, the poet returns to the drama.

Not until the final tercet does the poet express the central theme of the sonnet, the theme presented by the metonymic title—the initiation into manhood, and the impatience, anxiety, and expectation related to it. The young warrior in Komarovsky's sonnet confesses in the last tercet:

> Я никогда не пробовал меча,
> нетерпливый — чуял зудь плеча.
>
> [I have never tried the sword,
> impatient—I felt the itch in my shoulder.]

But he also shares the pre-battle excitement of the old veteran in "Evening":

> "Toga Virilis":
> И только вчуже сердце клокотало
> [And only strangely the heart was beating]
>
> "Evening":
> Пылающие идут легионы
> [Blazing legions go]

The parallelism manifests itself in the implication of "pylat'" (to blaze) and "klokotat'" (to beat).

If in "Toga virilis" the image of the emperor occupies a prominent, albeit secondary position, the sonnet "Augustus," also written in 1911, is dedicated entirely to the theme of the founder of the Roman Empire. The two quatrains of this *abba abba ccd ede* sonnet are written in the apostrophic form with the obligatory rhetorical second person singular. In these eight lines the poet epitomizes Augustus's image as perceived by the lyrical "I." He expresses the complexity of Augustus's personality and his place in history by juxtaposing his vices and virtues, and by enumerating his great deeds in a quasi-objective manner. Thus in the first line the noun "serdtse" (heart) is modified by two attributes,[43] one adjectival and negative and one nominal and positive; he has a "kholodnoe serdtse" (cold heart), but "serdtse mudretsa" (the heart of a sage). The ambivalence signaled in the first line is continued in the second line, where the poet states that "tribun, zhrets i tsenzor" (tribune, priest of heathen religious cult, and keeper of the census/censor) are encapsulated by this "kholodnoe serdtse mudretsa" (the cold heart of a sage). The *tribun* stands for the tribunician powers, the title Octavian

used to disguise the real nature of his authority; the word *zhrets* alludes to his becoming *pontifex maximus* in 12 B.C., after the death of Lepidus, but with *tsenzor*, the poet consciously plays on the word's ambiguity, for censorship was suspended, not abolished, during the rule of Augustus. Initially in ancient Rome, the censor was an elected official whose responsibility was to register individuals and their property; later censorship became the crown of a political career; after Augustus, the emperors assumed censorial powers. Augustus exercised the powers, but never assumed the title. Placing the all-too-well-known word *tsenzor* next to the archaic *zhrets* and *tribun* the poet leaves to the reader the concretization of its meaning. After defining Augustus's functions, the poet proceeds to describe his deeds: "Ty Kassiia zastavil udavit'sia / I rimlianam ostalsia za ottsa (You forced Cassius to strangle himself / and you became the father of the Romans). Gaius Cassius Parmensis, whom Augustus put to death after the battle of Actium, stands metonymically for Octavian's many victims on his road to power. Naturally, the perception of the profundity of these two lines depends on the reader's erudition. The reader who is aware of the repute of the Cassius family will realize an entire political drama in these two lines. There was another Cassius, Gaius Longinus, who participated in Caesar's assassination and fought at Phillippi against Octavian's and Anthony's legions.

The reader not as well informed will miss most of the political and philosophical subtleties of the period, but will be able to decipher the message that Augustus's political career was not devoid of cruel moments. One moment where fascination with cruelty surfaces, albeit with an ironic undertone, is the line "I rimlianam ostalsia za ottsa" (And you became the father of the Romans). A factual statement in itself, the line becomes ironic only because of its position. After years of anarchy, wars, and turmoil, Octavian's leadership was perceived by Romans as necessary for establishing integrity and stability.[44]

In the second quatrain, again an apostrophe, the poet semantically abandons the rhetorical style of the first quatrain by using such colloquialisms as "lstets" (flatterer) and "lukavaia lisitsa" (sly fox). These words are meant to undermine the veracity of the previous statement. The poet characterizes the same person once in an odic style as "zhrets," and soon after in the style of a fable, "lukavaia lisitsa." By simply juxtaposing these two styles the poet distances himself from both extremes, pathos and satire, and instead endows everything with an ironic undertone. It is evident that in calling

Horace a court flatterer, which he never was, Komarovsky employs a grand gesture of irony; it is a very Pushkinian line.

Nikolay Punin underscores this very specific ironic touch in Komarovsky's Roman poems: "There are verses written only with the aim to instill the sense of the epoch, to teach irony—they are beautiful; others excite like lyric poetry, but this is not a lyric at all. It is born and fed by the refined and good-natured irony of the veteran, who has seen with his own eyes the Roman emperors…."[45]

The imperial title, insignia of power, and garments of distinction, like the *toga virilis*, appealed to the poet's imagination. In "Augustus" Komarovsky ironically refers to the fact that Augustus declined to wear the type of attire befitting an emperor. He writes:

> И не надел, лукавая лисица,
> Ни затканных одежд, ни багреца.
>
> [And you, the cunning fox, did not wear
> Either brocade or purple.]

This paraphrastic statement is historically true and precise. "Zatkannaia odezhda" refers to "the purple gold-broidered toga, worn by victorious generals in triumphal procession,"[46] while "bagrets" stands for the purple-edged toga of a magistrate. Abandoning these garments of distinction is an act as symbolic as putting them on. In his poem "Antony," Valery Bryusov uses a similar device: "Venets i purpur triumvira ty promenial na potselui (The laurel and purple of the triumvirate you exchanged for a kiss). Where Bryusov used justification fortified by pathos to characterize Antony, Komarovsky distances himself from his hero's point of view, and introduces his own vantage point with an ironic ring to it. The reason Augustus declined to wear a special toga was political and diplomatic; he wanted to preserve, at least partially, the appearance of the republic. He did not want to appear as an emperor, even though he was inaugurating the empire. Suetonius writes, "When the people offered and instantly forced upon him the dictatorship, he fell upon his knees, cast his gown from off his shoulder, bared his breast, and, with detestation of the thing, besought them not to urge him further."[47] Thus, not the clothing, but the absence of it provided Augustus with the means of political disguise. "Lukavaia lisitsa" (sly fox) alludes to this clever feat of diplomacy by the Princeps.

In "Augustus," Komarovsky treats the theme of Horace much as he did with Domitian in "Toga virilis." Horace is introduced at the

beginning of the second quatrain, then suspended, and masterfully elaborated upon in the tercet. During the reign of Augustus, his office and person became the main source of inspiration for the great authors of the period. Charles T. Cruttwell writes: "Augustus has been the most fortunate of despots, for he has met with nothing but praise. […] As it is, all the authors that have come down to us are panegyrists. None seem to remember his early days, all centered their thoughts in the success of the present and the promise of the future."[48] However, he stresses the fact that "the works by Horace and Virgil abundantly prove that servile compliment was neither expected by him nor would have been given by them."[49] It took greater effort for Augustus to win approval from Horace than from Virgil, who was enthusiastic from the start. Throughout his life Horace was able to maintain independence, and to a certain extent, a critical attitude. Having been a victim of the emperor's policy himself,[50] he did not approve of Augustus's politics before the closing of the Temple of Janus in 29 B.C., which signaled a proclamation of peace. He refused the office of the secretary and, as Cruttwell writes, "scrupulously abstained from pressing his claims of intimacy, as the emperor wished him to do."[51] So much for the "flatterer"!

In the first tercet the rhetorical "you" (second person singular) is abandoned (to return in the next tercet), and the entire stanza takes on the form of a digression about Horace. It is a testimonial to the author of "Exegi monumentum," reflecting Horace's outlook on temporality and immortality. The image of an ox grazing over Maecenas's ashes seems to be taken from Horace's own ode. Horace died within a month of Maecenas and his ashes were buried beside his patron's on the Esquiline. The metaphor 'i zvonkaia tsitata poroiu v'et lavrovye venki" (and a ringing quotation at times weaves the laurel garlands)[52] echoes Horace's concept of poetic powers.

Komarovsky twice commends the ancient meter in "Augustus": "zvonkaia tsitata" (a ringing quotation) refers to Horace's verse, and "mednyi plesk serebrianoi reki" (The [copper] brazen lapping of the silver river) alludes to the *Aeneid*. It is common knowledge that Virgil's *Aeneid* provided the mythical justification for Augustus's governmental reforms. It is believed that humanity owes the preservation of this great epic to Augustus, who acted against the poet's last wish. The reasons that Augustus's "ostryi slukh pleniala Eneida" (keen ears were captivated by the *Aeneid*) were not solely aesthetic but philosophical and political as well. The structure of the last stanza recalls the ambiguity between exposing Augustus's abuses

("obida") and glorifying his deeds, which is the main political theme of the *Aeneid*. In his essay "On Virgil" (O Vergilii) George P. Fedotov states, "Virgil is inseparable from Rome, and his poetic work—from the political deed of Augustus."[53] The words "Pust' velika narodnaia obida" (Even if a great national offense) refer to proscriptions, cruelties, and other of Augustus's wrongs, which he himself could not forget—even if he was forgiven by his favored poets. Komarovsky here raises the moral question: How much could and should be sacrificed for the welfare of the state? This matter hit quite close to home in imperial Russia. Fedotov sheds light on this relation when he writes, "The shadow of Virgil—perhaps invisibly stood over the Russian Empire." And he continues, "Virgil's school is almost adequate to the Russian Empire." [54]

Fedotov also points to the very significant fact that the Roman poets forgave Julius Caesar and Augustus's infringements of liberties in exchange for the *Pax Romana* and the glory of Rome. This is exactly the sentiment expressed in the last stanza of the sonnet, but it may not be the poet's own judgment. Nevertheless, it is reflected in the rhyme pattern, in which *obida* is balanced by *Eneida*.

There is still another important factor here. Horace's "zvonkaia tsitata" (ringing/resounding quotation) is described objectively, regardless of Augustus's perception, whereas the evaluation of Virgil's poetry is presented only through Augustus's eyes.[55] In the Russian literary tradition Augustus is known above all as Ovid's persecutor; by choosing the emperor's appreciation of the two greatest poets of the period as a topic, Komarovsky vindicates Augustus by promoting his image as a literary patron.[56] The poem "Augustus" constitutes what may be called Komarovsky's Roman text.

In the cycle "Italian Impressions," which was intended as an imaginary travel journal, the poet is preoccupied with the landscape and the relaxed ambiance of the South. These themes predominate, supplanting the motif of antiquity. However, Komarovsky forces the reader to remember that the persona of these poems is a tourist aware of both the classical and the modern *admiratio Romae* traditions, the tourist for whom "klasicheskoi tolpoi begut barany (the sheep run in classical formations) and "o forume beseduet pedant" (a pedant lectures about the Forum).[57] Number VI of the cycle constitutes a summation of the lyrical hero's experiences. As he tours places of historical, mythical, and religious significance, he is aware of the pathos and solemnity of events long past, and at the same time he expresses his relaxed, humorous perception of the *genius loci*. In each

of the poem's five stanzas the situation of "then" and "now" is juxtaposed. The poet uses here both syntactic and compositional parallelism. The discrepancy between the presumed and the actual perception of the described place or event creates poetic tension, and constitutes the charm of this light poem. The key to the structure of the poem lies in the motto, taken from Bryusov's poem "In a casino" (V igornom dome).[58] Bryusov's stanza, written in a very solemn spirit, became the stimulus for the stylistic and even philosophical polemic with the Symbolist leader. Using the parallel structure and juxtaposition of "now" and "then," exactly as in Bryusov's stanza, Komarovsky parodies Bryusov's rhetorical style. The "then" part of the consecutive parallels deals with the grandeur of the ancient past, while the corresponding "now" part deals with trivial matters of the tourist's physical comfort.

From Rome's glorious past the poet depicts the struggle of the Roman republic:

> а здесь прошел с когортами
> Сенат перехитривший Кай.
>
> [Kai passed here with his cohorts,
> outwitting the Senate.]

This is a reference to the conflict of Gaius Marcius Coriolanus, who besieged his native Rome with the Volsci tribe. In another example he evokes images from the beginning of Christianity:

> Там где идти ногами босыми,
> Благославлая час и день.
>
> [Where one would go barefoot
> Blessing the hour and day.]

In still another we find the sentimental enthusiasm of Winckelmann,

> Где над редчайшую находку
> Счастливый, плакао Винкельман!
>
> [Where over the most rare find
> Happy Winckelmann wept!]

These examples mark milestones of the modern *admiratio Romae* tradition. The poet matches these unique, symbolic, grand events with common, trivial, but nevertheless very human gestures:

Затягиваюсь папиросую
И всюду выбираю тень;
Бреду ленивою походкою
И камышек кладу в карман;

[I inhale the cigarette
And look everywhere for the shadow;
I stroll in a lazy stride
And put a small stone into my pocket;]

Komarovsky also touches upon the relation between Russia and Rome, and the Turkish origin of his presumed Cossack ancestors. In the opening strophe, he compares the Cossacks wandering in their country of origin, Anatolia of Asia Minor, with his own imaginary wanderings around the Capitoline Hill. In the closing stanza he compares Moscow's Jauza with Rome's Tiber, aware that the informed reader may find an allusion to the Third Rome concept here.[59] The word "Jauza" may also refer to Bryusov's poem "At Night" (Noch'iu), where the same word appears.[60] Bryusov was very proud of finding a rhyme for "Jauza," as he mentions in a letter to Pertsov.[61] Komarovsky's purpose in this poem is to parody the stiff rhetoric of Bryusov's poetry and to indicate to the reader how far his Petersburg poetics is removed from that of the Moscow Symbolist leader. It is significant that this literary polemic takes place on a subject so close to the hearts of both poets—Rome. Thus it combines the so-called texts of three Romes: Rome, Moscow, and classical Petersburg.[62] Komarovsky was evidently aware that his contribution to the Russian *admiratio Romae* tradition was quite unique.

Notes

1. See W. Tjalsma, "Count Vasily Komarovsky, A Minor Master of the Petersburg Style," in V. A. Komarovsky, *Stikhotvoreniia i proza*, ed. George Ivask (Munich: Wilhelm Fink, 1979), 10. This edition is the essential source for this chapter. See also Toporov, "Dve glavy iz istorii russkoi poezii nachala veka," *Russian Literature*, 7 (1979): 312, note 73; I am indebted to Prof. Yurieff for pointing out this article to me.

2. D. S. Mirsky, *A History of Russian Literature*, 473

3. Tomas Venclova, "The Exemplary Resident of Tsarskoe Selo and the Great Pupil of the Lycée: Some Observations on the Poetics of Count Vasily Alekseevich Komarovsky," *A Sense of Place Tsarskoe Selo and Its Poets. Papers from 1989 Darthmouth Conference Dedicated to the Centennial of Anna Akhmatova*, ed. by Lev Loseff and Barry Scherr (Columbus, Ohio: Slavica Publishers, 1993), 260-74.

4. V. Veidle, "Petersburgskaia poetika," *O poetakh i poezii* (Paris: YMCA-Press, 1973), 102-26.

5. Komarovsky, *Stikhotvoreniia i proza*, 117.

6. The distinction of the Northern light is being recognized as an important factor in art and its perception, particularly Symbolism. Cf. Kirk Varnedoe, *Northern Light, Nordic Art at the Turn of the Century* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1988), 286. The bust of Agrippina the Elder was created in the Southern light but is being seen in the Northern.

7. George Ivask, "Statui Annenskogo i Komarovskogo," in Introduction to V. A. Komarovsky, *Stikhotvoreniia i proza*, 10.

8. Ivask, ibid., 31.

9. Roman Jakobson, *Pushkin and His Sculptural Myth*, trans. and ed. John Burbank (The Hague: Mouton, 1975), 32.

10. Toporov, "Dve glavy," 266-67.

11. Komarovsky, *Stikhotvoreniia i proza*, 58.

12. Tjalsma, 16.

13. Susan Wood, "Memoriae Agrippinae. Agrippina the Elder in Julio-Claudian Art and Propaganda," *American Journal of Archeology*, 92 (1988): 411. I am indebted to Cora Acebron Tolosa for pointing out this article to me.

14. Donald Strong, *Roman Art*, 45.

15. See my chapter on Merezhkovsky.

16. Komarovsky, *Stikhotvoreniia i proza*, 63-64.

17. Toporov, "Dve glavy," 264-65. The more recent collection of academic articles *A Sense of Place: Tsarskoe Selo and Its Poets*, edited by L. Losev and B. Scherr, constitutes a continuation and further explication of Toporov's thesis on Tsarskoe Selo.

18. These swans, Tsarskoe Selo "mythologems" as Venclova calls them, undergo transformation in Akhmatova's poem as well, only there the white swan changes into a raven, cf. Anna Lisa Crone "Akhmatova and the Passing of the Swans: Horatian Tradition and Tsarskoe Selo" in *A Sense of Place,* 90; see also *Dictionary of Symbols*, 13, 44.

19. Ibid., 212.

20. Vergil, *Aeneid* 3, verse 210 and ff.

21. *Dictionary of Symbols*, 302.

22. Cf. A. N. Petrov, *Pushkin. Dvortsy i parki* (Leningrad: Isskustvo, 1969).

23. Tjalsma, 13.

24. Sergei Makovskii, *Na Parnase "Serebrianogo Veka"* (Munich, 1962), 229.

25. Toporov, "Dve glavy," 265.

26. Pushkin was the first Russian poet to introduce the landmarks of Tsarskoe Selo to literature. Other prominent poets who are considered creators of the so-called "Tsarskoe Selo text" include Innokenty Annensky and Anna Akhmatova. Because of its vicinity and affinity with St. Petersburg, the architecture of Tsarskoe Selo is quoted

as an example of the Petersburgian period of Russian architecture, and the so-called "Tsarskoe Selo text" is treated as a part of the "Petersburg text." Apparently only a person who knows Tsarskoe Selo could decipher to which statue the poet refers.

27. Ivask, "Statui Annenskogo i Komarovskogo," 30.

28. Toporov, "Dve glavy," 267.

29. The rich deposits of copper in Tuscany may have been precisely the reason for Etruscans to settle in the area. Cf. Michael Grant, *Myths of the Greeks and Romans* (London: Weidenfield and Nicolson, 1964), 365. There are a few copper images always related to antiquity: "Priskachet vsadnik v brone mednoi" (The horseman in the copper armor will come galloping) "V dali ljudej" (1907); "Siiaet med' i lastiatsia sobaki" The copper shines and the dogs fawn), "Toga virilis" (1911); "iz mednykh izognutykh naiad" (from the copper urns of the bending naiads), "Muzei" (1910). Komarovsky mentions Corinthian copper as well in the prose fragment "Sabinula."

30. Ibid., 76

31. Toporov, "Dve glavy," 276.

32. Cf. Toporov's analysis of the structure of these three Roman sonnets, 280.

33. Cf. Ryszard Przybylski, *An Essay on the Poetry of Osip Mandelshtam: God's Grateful Guest*, trans. Madeline G. Levine (Ann Arbor: Ardis, 1987), 15-16.

34. Toporov states that Komarovsky's images prepared some elements of the poetics of Osip Mandelstam and, to a lesser degree, those of Anna Akhmatova. See Toporov, "Dve glavy," 274.

35. Cf. the topic of combat with a dragon in Mircea Eliade, *The Myth of Eternal Return*, 37-42, especially footnote 70 on page 40.

36. Cf. V. N. Toporov on Komarovsky's utilization of adjectives and nouns (adj. & subst.) structures, and the function of these in the strategy of retardation, antiquization and "antologization." Op.cit., 272-75.

37. Komarovsky, *Stikhotvoreniia i proza*, 104.

38. Cf. My analysis of Kuzmin's poem "Rimskii otryvok."

39. As Komarovsky's prose indicates, he was especially interested in this period and he seems to have known it well.

40. Suetonius, *History of Twelve Caesars*, 377.

41. J. B. Bury, *A History of the Roman Empire from its Foundation to the Death of Marcus Aurelius* (London: 1930), 394.

42. Cf. Komarovsky's poem "Vozrozhdenie," 105-7.

43. Cf. Toporov's examination of Komarovsky's usage of double attributes. "Dve glavy," 272.

44. Kenneth J. Pratt points to the fact that "the eternity of the city was fitted into the pragmatic aspect of the Roman religious structure, but only after a development which took place from the principate of Augustus through the reign of Hadrian." Kenneth J. Pratt, "Rome as Eternal," *Journal of the History of Ideas* 26, no. 1 (1965): 27; see also Suetonius, "The History of Octavius Caesar Augustus," 99.

45. Nikolai Punin, in V. A. Komarovsky, Stikhotvoreniia, 22.

46. Cf. J. B. Bury, 21.

47. Suetonius, chapter 52, "The History of Octavius Caesar Augustus." And in chapter 73 he writes: "He wore not lightly any apparel but of housewife's cloth, made within house by his wife, his sister, his daughter, and nieces. His gowns were neither

strait nor scant, nor yet wide and large; his senator's robe neither with overbroad studs of purple guarded, not with narrow."

48. Charles T. Cruttwell, *A History of Roman Literature* (London, Charles Griffin), 3d edition (1878), 243.

49. Ibid., 248.

50. His father's estate was confiscated after the civil wars to provide lands for discharged soldiers.

51. Ibid., 282

52. Komarovsky, 103

53. George P. Fedotov, *Novyi grad. Sbornik Stat'ei*, ed. Iu. P. Ivask, (New York: Chekhov, 1962), 219.

54. Ibid., 216, 219.

55. In his prose published in 1912 in *Apollon,* Komarovsky's hero is much more eloquent in his assessment of Augustus: "*Emu vspominalis' sviashchennyia imiena Skipionov, Tsezaria, Avgusta i on kusal guby, soznavaia nichtozhestvo svoego pokoleniia"* (He recalled the sacred names of the Scipios, Caesar, Augustus and he bit his lips, realizing the nothingness of his own generation). Komarovsky, *Stikhotvoreniia i proza*, 38.

56. He mentions Ovid in his prose.

57. Komarovsky, 120.

58. First published in 1912; V. Briusov, *Sobranie Sochinenii v semi tomakh,* 2: 57-58.

59. Cf. the chapter on Soloyov.

60. I am indebted to Professor Zoya Yurieff for pointing this out to me.

61. Briusov, *Sobranie sochinenii v semi tomakh,* 1: 82-83, and note 578.

62. According to Toporov this poem represents "a typical stand of the contemporary man, either toward the exclusion of the sphere of the contemporary, or the exclusion of the sphere of the genuine" ("Dve glavy," 282).

IX.

The Distant Eternal City
Mikhail Kuzmin

The symbolism of Roman antiquity, so avidly explored and employed by the Russian Symbolists in their poetry, by no means presented a unified image, a single-voiced message, or a monolithic whole; therefore, their treatment of the Roman theme defies most attempts at systematization. Difficulties arise not only from the Symbolists' pursuit of originality, but also from the innate nature of the symbol. For classically-oriented trends, *topoi* taken from antiquity held, at least to a certain extent, the firm and one-sided virtue of allegory. But the same topoi function differently when endowed with the depth and opalescence of symbol. The same name, figure, or architectural object may carry an entire spectrum of meanings within a given poetic system, exposing the philosophical, psychological, or aesthetic aspect of an image. Thus, when taking up the subject of crossing the Rubicon, Bryusov expresses his political views, while Mikhail Alekseyevich Kuzmin (1872–1936) an accomplished poet and musician, regarded by some to be the last Symbolist[1] and by others a post-Symbolist,[2] employs the symbol of the Rubicon in a philosophical meditation on human destiny and the passing of time.

Двенадцать вещее число,
А тридцать Рубикон —

[Twelve is a prophetic number,
And thirty — the Rubicon.[3]]

In these lines the poet touches upon two Roman myths. The highly symbolic twelve signifies, among other things, the twelve eagles seen by Romulus, while thirty stands for Caesar's age at the time of crossing the Rubicon, the age of self-realization. Thus for Kuzmin, the originator of a new sub-trend in Russian literature called Clarism, the Rubicon and the symbolism pertaining to these prophetic numbers carries not a political but an eschatological message. On the personal level, it marked the thirtieth birthday of Kuzmin's friend and lover Yury Yurkun and the twelfth anniversary of their union.[4]

Born in 1872 in Yaroslavl, Kuzmin spent most of his life in St. Petersburg, where he died in 1936 right before the worst years of the Terror. However, throughout the entire post-Revolutionary period he was subjected to harassment, both for his poetry and for his homosexuality.

As Mirsky writes, "though a member of the symbolist set (and for several years an intimate of the "Tower"), as a writer [Kuzmin] stands apart from the symbolist school. He is a pure aesthete. […] His craftsmanship is very high, and his verses are often exquisite."[5]

The *admiratio Romae* tradition was linked for Kuzmin with his very intimate concerns, for throughout his creative career he incorporated the theme of homosexuality within the classical theme. It could have not escaped Kuzmin's attention that classical literature itself produced quite a few examples of homosexual literature, since bisexuality was socially accepted by the Roman upper classes. Kuzmin introduced this topic in the Italian episode of *Wings* (Kryl'ia), his first novel, which was published in *Vesy* (The Scales) in November 1906. The Roman theme is very much present in *Wings.* The heroes walk Rome's streets, discuss topics of classical antiquity, and conduct their crucial conversations in the museum in front of a statue of Running Boy or a "bust of a youthful Marcus Aurelius." Several motifs from this novel were later reworked in poetic form. It was typical of Kuzmin to repeat images, myths, and legends in various poems, works of prose, and plays. The legend about the mysterious death of Antinous represents an excellent example of this literary practice. Kuzmin wrote several poems about Antinous, and in his story "House of Cards" (Kartonnyi domik) published in the almanac *Belye Nochi* (White nights) in 1907, the hero, modeled after Kuzmin, has a seal with an image of Antinous's head. Moreover, Kuzmin assumed the name of Antinous as his nickname in the private "Gafiz-Kabachok" society, whose members included Nouvel, Somov and himself. Vyacheslav Ivanov, who actively participated in the

society's meetings under the pseudonym "Hyperion," called Kuzmin "pevets i sverstnik Antinoia" (singer and peer of Antinous).[6] The legend of the relationship between Hadrian and Antinous functioned for Kuzmin as a metaphor for his own sexual preference and as grounds for the psychological acceptance of his homosexuality. In the novel *Wings*, in a scene depicting a conversation between the canon and Vanya, the author clearly distinguishes between the significant, spiritual union of Hadrian and Antinous, on the one hand, and Tiberius's lust and licentiousness, on the other. This juxtaposition of the two types of homosexual relations indicates that Kuzmin in his novel refers to the modern version of the Antinous legend. Kuzmin is considered a pioneer in introducing the subject of homosexuality into Russian literature, a contribution that was recognized and appreciated by younger Russian poets, who in the 1920s established a literary organization under the sign of Antinous in Moscow.

Kuzmin utilized his Italian experience and his knowledge of the classical world on many levels. More than twenty years after his short stay in Italy, he created two major cycles of Italian poems. In the same period he began working on two novels about ancient Rome, *Virgil* (Virgilii) and *Roman Marvels* (Rimskie chudesa).[7] Roman history serves as a metaphor for the bleak post-Revolutionary period; upon learning of Lenin's death, Kuzmin got an idea for a new play, *The Death of Nero* (Smert' Nerona).[8] Kuzmin's friends were enchanted by his profound understanding of Italy. A. D. Radlova stated in 1938 that while sitting in his home on Spasskaya Street, Kuzmin knew and understood Italy better and more deeply than Blok did.[9]

Kuzmin's fondness for Italy, its language, and its culture originated early in his life, under the influence of his close friend, Georgy Chicherin (1872-1936). Unlike Ivanov and Bryusov, Kuzmin did not have a formal degree in classics, but he dedicated a great deal of time to studying the subject. As a composer, he used classical motifs for his operas,[10] and he was well-read in such classical writers as Petronius, Catullus, Horace, and Apuleius—as we learn from his memoirs.[11] In the same place he acknowledges his affinity for languages. After studying Italian in 1892-93, he read Dante and Italian Renaissance writers, as well as some modern Italian writers in the original. Interestingly enough, this undertaking coincided with his first self-conscious religious interest. These intellectual preparations must have contributed greatly to Kuzmin's Italian experience.

The time that he spent in Italy was actually quite short. He left for Italy in March 1897 and was back in Russia by July. He altered his

original detailed itinerary, visiting a larger number of cities than he had planned and staying in Rome nearly the entire month of April, instead of the scheduled two weeks. He also pursued an interest in Italian Catholicism. Various sources provide information regarding Kuzmin's Italian journey—his newly published memoirs,[12] unpublished personal letters, poems written throughout Kuzmin's lifetime, and prose, especially his novel *Wings*, based on his actual experiences. Malmstad and Bogomolov write: "Nothing can exaggerate the hold Italy exercised on Kuzmin. […] For Kuzmin it was a dream he kept returning to all his life in his imagination, especially at moments of greatest trial."[13] The significance of this experience as a source of poetic inspiration intensified for Kuzmin periodically, and, characteristically, with the passing of time. The Roman motif appeared in his volume *Nets* (Seti), published in 1908, which includes the well-known cycle "Alexandrian Songs" (Aleksandriiskie pesni), which dates from as early as 1904, as well as the scene set in ancient Rome in the unpublished poem "Charicles from Miletus" (Kharikl iz Mileta) from the same year.

According to John Malmstad, Kuzmin's letters written during the trip to Italy reveal that "ancient Rome and its religion were of little interest to him. Far more fascinating to Kuzmin was the Rome of the late first century A. D., i.e., the Rome of early Christianity."[14] Thus, in Kuzmin's poetry, Hadrian's relationship with Antinous, the catacombs and the symbolism of their drawings, and his favorite ancient writer Apuleius will all appear and reappear, wrapped in an aura of Gnosticism, magic and sorcery—features that were characteristic of the period[15] and which had great appeal for the Symbolist imagination.

Kuzmin was not the first writer to create a somewhat eclectic image of Rome. His most prominent predecessor was Goethe, in whose *Roman Elegies* "all worlds interpenetrate and meet and mingle," as David Luke notes in the introduction to his English translation of that cycle.[16] This convergence might not be coincidental, since Goethe was one of Kuzmin's favorite writers.[17] Kuzmin's partially published novel, *Roman Marvels*, contains typical examples of his syncretic, manifold perception of Rome.

The Roman motif first appears in Kuzmin's cycle "She" (Ona) of the "Alexandrian Songs" in poem number five, subtitled an imitation of Pierre Louis. Though Rome is only mentioned here as a distant place, a point of reference, it is presented as the center of the world, though viewed and experienced from afar. A very similar treatment

can be traced in the poem that closes the entire cycle, "Akh, pokidaiu ia Aleksandriiu" (Oh, I will abandon Alexandria).[18] Thus, Kuzmin's first mentions of Rome are typical of his poetic practice, presenting the confrontation between the Eternal City and the provinces.[19]

The city represents the ideal, the distant goal, greatness. The lyrical subject is usually placed in the provinces, in the best circumstances he is on his way to Rome, in constant motion. Considering Kuzmin's interest in the late first and the second century, this approach seems appropriate, as this was a time when major historical events took place outside of Rome and the most prominent Romans, including several emperors, came from the provinces. Hadrian, for example, "mistrusted" Rome and spent more years of his reign outside the city than within.[20] It may also reflect the poet's own perception of a capital as such. Kuzmin himself was born outside Russia's two capitals, both of which, for different reasons, were at times compared to Rome. Kuzmin's favorite personalities, Apuleius and Antinous, were from the provinces, and his first exposure to the south occurred in Alexandria, the city linked to the Antinous legend. Markov notes that in *Nets* Alexandria is embellished with "Roman endings."[21] In the "Alexandrian Songs" we find three poems with such Roman endings. Thus, in most of Kuzmin's *admiratio Romae* poems there are usually two centers, Rome and the place where the lyrical subject is actually present. Rome appears in conversation:

> А разговор меж тем велся
> О власть Рима и о папах[22]
>
> [And meanwile the conversation turned to
> the power of Rome and the popes.]

and in memory:

> В вечной памяти реке:
> [In the eternal river of memory]
>
> Античность надо позабыть.[23]
> [Antiquity should be forgotten.]

The legend of Antinous, introduced in the fifth poem of the cycle "Fragments" (Otryvki) will resurface time and again throughout various books. This poem, "I saw him three times" (Tri raza ia eg videl), was published originally among eleven "Alexandrian Songs" in the journal *Vesy* in 1906-7, and reprinted in a separate edition in

1921 in Petrograd. (The cycle was also published twice in the larger collection of poems entitled *Nets*, in Moscow and Petrograd.) In the 1921 edition the lines concerning homosexuality, as well as the subject of Antinous's deification were deleted by the censor.

"I saw him three times," the seventy-three-line free-verse monologue of a Roman soldier, a native of Bithynia, is constructed around three encounters between the narrator and Antinous, whose name is never even mentioned in the poem. The narrator falls under the spell of Antinous's charm and beauty. He finds himself close to the site where Antinous drowned, and mourns Antinous's death. This poem, which does not even mention Rome (Where the Emperor is, there is Rome),[24] introduces an entire chain of motifs, structures and associations, which will inform Kuzmin's Roman poems. This narrator will appear again in "Roman Fragment" (Rimskii otryvok)[25] and, according to Vladimir Markov's notes,[26] in "Basilides" (Bazilid).[27] The term "narrator" is not accidental here: plot-like structures are typical of Kuzmin's poetry.[28]

Other recurrent themes have their beginning in this poem, among them, sorcery, astrology, eroticism with homosexual undertones, and religious vacillation (Christianity, Gnosticism, and Roman pantheism). Some of these themes attracted other Symbolists, although not necessarily in connection with Rome. Both Blok and Bely were very much interested in Gnosticism. The theme of homosexuality, though, belongs exclusively to Kuzmin. Limiting the symbolism of the Antinous legend to its erotic context, however, would not do it justice. The centuries of fascination with this figure endow this story with a more complex and profound meaning. Goethe had a copy of Antinous's statue in his house in Weimar, and Winckelmann contributed to the "aesthetic apotheosis of the boy from Bithynia."[29]

The mysterious aura of the poem is set, in the first encounter, by music combined with the sound of a fountain. This initiates aquatic symbolism, so crucial to the legend of Antinous and to Kuzmin's Italian poems in general. Here also the color white (seen on a dog) is introduced. The color white and its transformation into an emanation of light will intensify in a subsequent part of the poem:

> Луна бросала светлый квадрат на пол,
> и медные украшения моей обуви,
> когда я проходил светлым местом
> блестели.
> […] Он был бледен,

но мне казалось,
что комната осветилась
не факелом, а его ликом...[30]

[The moon cast a bright square on the floor,
and the copper buckles of my sandals,
glinted
as I trod the patch of brightness.
/…/ He was pale,
but it seemed to me
that the room was lit
not by the torch but by his countenance. . .[31]]

A highly organized phonetical structure, especially in the introductory part—many liquids, and the predominance of the dark vowels "o" and "u"—enhances the poem's appeal. The beauty of Antinous evokes uneasiness at first sight; the narrator responds with the sign of the cross, a gesture indicating his familiarity with Christianity that adds to the complexity of the picture. Light emanating from the face and white clothing prepare the reader for the transformation of a magic figure into a deity. His supernatural powers are alluded to by the words *vol'shebstvo, litso kolduna* (magic, the face of a sorcerer), and by the final exclamation:

Осанна! Новый бог
дан людям![32]

[Hosanna! The new god
given to the people!]

In Kuzmin's novel *Wngs*, the canon, who studies the lives of the Roman Caesars, talks at length about Antinous:

> He was a native of Bithynia—Bithynia—the Switzerland of Asia Minor…. At the hour of his death, the astronomers discovered a new star in the heavens. His death, with its aura of mystery, and his remarkable beauty, which had breathed life into a decaying art, had an effect which was not limited to the court…. Even centuries later we find sects dedicated to Diana and Antinous…. Thus with the passing of time the deified favorite of the emperor took on the aspect of a nocturnal deity associated with the afterlife, and, while not as wide spread as the cult of Mithras, the worship of Antinous has remained one of the most powerful manifestations of the religion of the deified man.[33]

The legend of Antinous is not only a vehicle for the homosexual theme, but also the theme of transition connected with death at a

young age.[34] Antinous was perhaps the most prominent, though not the only youth deified after drowning in the Nile. [35]

In *Wings*, Kuzmin makes the Catholic priest utter the following statement about the homosexual union: "There was something noble in that, although I must emphasize that it was a terrible perversion of feeling—one, however, which even those enlightened by baptism were not always able to resist."[36] Markov stresses that Kuzmin treated the homosexual theme very naturally.[37] It is not unusual for poets to place their most powerful erotic poems in an exotic environment—Alexandria or Rome. Goethe's *Roman Elegies* evoked quite a scandal when they were published. Bryusov's erotic ballads are another example of such a practice.

In *Nets*, Antinous is mentioned in two other poems: "Akh, usta tselovannye stol'kimi (Oh, the lips kissed by so many) and "Esli b ia byl drevnim polkovodtsem" (Had I been an ancient commander). In these poems he is presented indirectly, through someone else, seen by the lyrical persona. His name is merely mentioned in the poem (Oh, the lips kissed by so many), which touches upon the topic of jealousy. Antinous is depicted here as a type rather than as an individual.

The poem "Esli b ia byl drevnim polkovodtsem" presents five conditional situations, one of which is being Antinous. In this free-verse poem the character of Antinous is briefly introduced in one strophe and the story is altered:

> Если б я был вторым Антиноем,
> утопившимся в священном Ниле —
> я бы всех сводил с ума красотою,
> при жизни мне были б воздвигнуты храму,
> и стал бы
> сильнее всех живущих в Египте.[38]
>
> [Had I been a second Antinous
> drowned in the sacred Nile —
> I would have driven everybody mad with my beauty,
> temples would have been raised for me while I was alive
> and I would have become
> stronger than all who lived in Egypt.]

The phrase "v sviashchennom Nile" (in the sacred Nile) stresses the sacrificial character of Antinous's death. The same motif is touched upon in "Basilides," a poem from the Gnostic cycle "Sofia" in Kuzmin's best collection *Unearthly Evenings* (Nezdeshnie vechera):

Я бы себя утопил ...
(Смерть Антиноя)
Но ужасно далеко Нил.[39]

[I would have drowned myself…
(The death of Antinous)
But the Nile is awfully far away.]

Bithynia became a Roman province in 74 B. C.; Nikomedia, one of its two major cities, was a favorite place of Roman emperors and generals during their eastern campaigns, because of its roads and strategic location. "Many later Emperors," writes R. Lambert, "lingered and wintered with their troops at Nikomedia, not so much for its balmy and civic luxuries, but because from this focal point they could swiftly control both the western and eastern division of their vast realm."[40] Kuzmin knew his ancient history well. The homeland of Antinous resurfaces in many of his Rome-related poems. Bithynia and Nikomedia—these two words, even on a strictly linguistic level, fueled Kuzmin's imagination. He returned to these geographical names even in poems unrelated to Antinous, as in "Roman Fragment," published first in the cycle "Visions" (Viden'ia) in *Severnye Zapiski* (Northern Notes) in 1916, and then in the collection *The Guide* (Vozhatyi) in 1918. Like the poem "I saw him three times," "Roman Fragment" is written in the form of a soldier's monolog and, according to Markov, is Kuzmin's experiment in carrying over rhymes. This time the lyrical subject is a participant in Hadrian's German campaign. The theme of nostalgia and fear of death on foreign soil are intensified by the very complex rhyme scheme: *abcddacb*. In "c" the exact rhymes appear only in the first strophe, after which they are followed by two pairs of assonants. The second "d" rhyme in each strophe consists of a divided word. Thus, instead of a heroic emblem, Kuzmin renders the intimate image of a human being.[41] Except for the title, the poem gives little indication of the Roman theme. The main elements of the landscape are mud (a recurring image in Kuzmin's Roman poems), the Great Bear constellation, and peat campfires. The scent of mignonette (*reseda*) is present in this poem, as well as in another of Kuzmin's Roman poems, "Faustina."[42] The female name Octavia imparts Roman flavor to this quite un-Roman "Roman Fragment."

The period of Hadrian's rule unites Kuzmin's Roman poems, even though Hadrian himself is not mentioned in any of them. Among the very few sources about this emperor is an eighty-volume history

of Rome written by Dio Cassius, a native of Bithynia, who was twice consul, and who apparently held an antagonistic view of Hadrian. Stewart Perowne, author of Hadrian's biography, supposes that Antinous's "tragic end may have affected Dio's view." Kuzmin creates an imaginary Bithynian, a witness to Hadrian's reign. Perowne points out that "the principate of the emperor Hadrian is generally agreed to have marked the zenith of the Roman Empire as a political and social institution, and secondly because it was Hadrian who made the triumph of Christianity inevitable."[43]

The Roman theme is also linked with several of Kuzmin's Gnostic poems. One of them, "Faustina,"[44] written in 1917-18, was published in the collection *Unearthly Evenings* in 1923. The name Faustina and the reference to the Palatine, one of Rome's seven hills, are the only Roman elements in this poem, noteworthy for its aquatic and naval symbolism, a feature of many of Kuzmin's Roman poems. Also characteristic is the effort to evoke a yearning for Rome, rather than a clear, definite picture of the city. "Ten' Palatina" (The shadow of Palatine), which rhymes with the preceding "tianetsia tina" (the mud stretches), deserves attention for its phonetic structure, especially paronomasia, typical of Kuzmin's poetics. An even more distinct example of this device is in another poem referring to the Palatine, "Children dance on the square" (Na ploshchadke pliashut deti). In the phrase "Polon teni Palatin" (The Palantine is full of shadows) the pattern of consonants and liquids of the word "Palatin" echoes the phrase "Polon teni."

The juxtaposition of "tianetsia tina and "ten' Palatina" also conveys a reality of ancient Rome. As Wladimir Weidle in an essay in the collection *Rim*, writes: "A small village on a hill on the left bank of the river. Behind the hill—pasture, muddy meadows. This hill—the Palatine. The mud—the future Forum. That's how it started."[45]

Gnosticism was thriving during the time of Antoninus Pius, but neither he nor his wife had any relation to this religious movement. The name Faustina appears again in the poem "Five" (Piat')[46] in the cycle "Poems about Italy" (Stikhi ob Italii). Markov associates the name with the Roman martyr, whose name is inscribed on the wall of the catacombs. However coincidental this may be, the same female name appears in Goethe's *Roman Elegies*, and, according to David Luke, the translator and author of the preface, "no original for the 'Faustina' of the elegies has ever been identified."[47] Perhaps Kuzmin, like Goethe, resorted to a conventional Roman name for a woman.

In many poems concerning the city of Rome, as in the poems about Antinous, aquatic symbolism plays a profound role.[48] Kuzmin often associates Rome with the image of the sea. In the poem "Faustina" the image of the sea allows the poet to introduce the vertical correspondence "as above, so below"[49]:

> серебристым рыба махнула хвостом,
> звезда зажелтела на небе пустом.
>
> [The fish wriggled its silvery tail,
> the star yellowed in the empty sky.]

Along with the Christian symbolism of the fish, the appearance of the star in the empty sky suggests mystical symbolism. A similar causal relation is seen in the myth of Antinous, whose death in the Nile results in the appearance of a new star. Such an occurrence also calls the reader's attention to the belief, rooted in mythical thinking, that in the ancient world the relation between the worldly and the divine was more immediate.

The Rome evoked in the poems "Sofia" and "Poems about Italy"[50] vaguely corresponds geographically and historically to the city. However, in many poems Kuzmin places Roman toponyms in an entirely alien environment—most frequently surrounded by the sea. Ryszard Przybylski in his analysis of Mandelstam's Roman poetry, calls our attention to a similar conflation of the image of Aventine (one of Rome's hills) and the image of the sea: "The shattering idea that life outside of Rome is a constant sinking into an ocean of darkness, hills into moving waves, is also found in the final version of this enchanting masterpiece."[51] Speaking of Mandelstam's famous poem "Offended, they depart for the hills" (Obizhenno ukhodiat na kholmy), Przybylski stresses that the hills outside of Rome move like waves and transform the earth into an ocean, the eternal sea–primordial chaos is anti-Rome.[52]

In Kuzmin's poem "Five," Ostia, the ancient Roman port, partially justifies the use of the aquatic landscape (waves, seashore lanterns, etc.). In "Faustina," Kuzmin places the lighthouse just across from the Palatine, making the utmost use of aquatic symbolism. As Markov points out, Kuzmin's fundamental method of evoking this prophetic indistinctness is through the confusion of images, schemes and words.[53] The critic considers this approach typical of Kuzmin's post-Revolutionary period and attributes it to the poet's "Gnostic lenses." According to Markov's comments, in "Five," as well as in

"Lake Nemi" (Ozero Nemi) and "Trasimeno Reeds" (Trazimenskie trostniki), Kuzmin returns to the theme that interested him from the very beginning, namely, the persecution of the Christians. The poem "Five" unites several themes and symbols, including the aquatic symbol, the theme of fiery renewal, Christian martyrdom, the journey to Rome—to mention only a few. Markov considers the entire cycle "Poems about Italy" (published in 1920-21 in Moscow) even more encoded and understated than Kuzmin's Gnostic poems.

> Everything that one can say with all probability about this dark poem (in both meanings—it has Rembrandt's light) is that the action takes place on the boat (vessel) not far from the mouth of the river Tiber (Ostia, the Roman seaport) and that the poem is about early Christians who sought martyrdom. Most probably the oil (Lord's Grace), honey (Christ) and milk with honey (heaven), and the ship-trireme (the church) may be considered the Christian symbols, and "five" almost certainly means the five wounds of the crucified Christ. [54]

The symbolism of this poem, like all symbolism, lends itself to other interpretations as well. One motif deserving closer examination is that of the journey, present in several of Kuzmin's Roman or Italian poems. In 1907, at the beginning of his literary career, and not long after his own trip to Italy, Kuzmin wrote:

> Отрадно улетать в стремительном вагоне,
> От северных безумств на родину Гольдони...
>
> [How delightful to fly away, in a swift tram car,
> From the northern madness to the country of Goldoni...[55]]

Later, when the prospect of another journey disappears, when Italy becomes unattainable, the casual, relaxed admiration is replaced by fiery passion. The poem "Five" is also organized around the theme of a journey, but the journey of "Poems about Italy" has nothing to do with a train. The means of transportation is old, yet universal—the archetypal sea voyage: [56]

Веслом по прежнему причаль
Не Остии ли фонари?

[Moor with the oar as in the old days,
Aren't these Ostia's lanterns?]

Unlike the poem "How delightful to fly away" (Otradno uletat'), in which Italy is associated with relaxation and rest, "Five" presents an uncertain and exhausting trip:

Мы без карт и без систем
Все плывем без передышки.

[Without maps and without a course
We keep sailing without respite.]

Rome, in addition to being "velikii" (grand—the most common epithet for the Eternal City in Kuzmin's poetry),[57] becomes a "gospoden' sad" (Lord's garden)—the center of the world, the sacred space. Thus, both Rome and the garden represent order as opposed to chaos. Generally, the garden symbolizes "the place where nature is subdued, ordered, selected and enclosed,"[58] and importantly, the image of the poet as a gardener in a garden of poetry is recurrent in Kuzmin's poetics.[59] Further, these images are associated with the concept of a return—a return to Rome for crucifixion, a spiritual homecoming. In his book *Italian Impressions* (Ital'ianskie vpechatleniia), Vasily Rozanov writes: "From the time of the catacombs and the Coliseum, in Rome there is one burning spot: the bloody cross. And all the blood of Europe surged there, like the heart in the body. And we for the cross, we also want to burn."[60]

Many writers expressed a desire to die, or to be buried, in Rome, including Shelley, Gogol, and Ivanov. Shelley and Ivanov died and were buried in Italy. In his poem "Italy" (Italiia) Kuzmin himself exclaims: "Italiia, o mat' vtoraia" (Italy, my second mother). The desire to return to die on one's native soil is strongly rooted in mythical thinking.

The nautical metaphor of this poem finds its reflection in water images: "water, fount, river of eternal memory." The river of memory places this journey on spiritual, imaginary, and mythical planes. The first, third, and fifth strophes end with the notion of remembering: "vernus' opiat'" (I'll return again); conveys eternal return: "gorim sebia raspiat'" (We are burning to crucify ourselves); implies

homecoming to die; and "piat'" (five) is whispered by the echo, which by its very nature represents repetition and memory.

The number five symbolizes love, health, and humanity—the extended symbolism embraces the pentagram, a sign of the cosmos.[61] As a diligent student of Gnosticism and ancient sorcery (like the other Symbolists), Kuzmin was aware of numerical symbology. The number five, as the title of the poem and as the last word, in connection with the desire to die through crucifixion, may carry the meaning of transcending death itself. In his book *Rome* (Rim), Wladimir Weidle dedicates a short chapter to the Roman catacombs, stressing the negation of death in death: "the ones negating death by accepting death"; "it is a city of the dead believing that there is no death."[62] A concise synopsis of "Five" includes a sea voyage, which is life—a journey through the memory, representing the eternal return to Rome (gospoden' sad [the Lord's garden])—and the desire to die with the promise of transcending death. Interestingly enough, Yury Yurkun, Kuzmin's closest friend, wrote that throughout his life Kuzmin, more than anyone else in world literature, succeeded in overcoming death.[63] It may also be that Kuzmin's anxiety, caused by the difficulties of censorship and other restrictions, and, last but not least, after the Revolution his utter poverty, contributed to the intensity of his vision.

Another motif in Kuzmin's poetry which relates to the Roman theme and which is prominent in "Five" is that of an inner fire, where it reappears in the first, third, and seventh strophes:

> А память сердцу все: гори!
> Горит душа — горя, дрожит...

and

> Господень сад, великий Рим,
> К тебе вернусь опять!
> К тебе мы, странники, горим,
> Горим себя распять...
>
> [And the memory says to the heart: burn!
> The soul burns and trembles burning…
>
> The Lord's garden, grand Rome,
> I'll return to you again
> Toward you, we pilgrims are burning
> We are burning to crucify ourselves ...[64]]

The image of the inner fire in association with Rome occurs once more in the poem written four years later that opens with the startling first line: "Antiquity must be forgotten" (Antichnost' nado pozabyt'). We read later in this poem:

> Тут — Моцарт, Гофман, Гете, Рим,
> Все, что мы любим, чем горим...
>
> [Here—Mozart, Hoffman, Goethe, Rome,
> Everything that we love, everything that we burn for… [65]]

Later poems in the "Poems about Italy," such as "Lake Nemi" "Trasimeno Reeds" and "Aeneas" (Enei), become more and more veiled. It is relatively easy to pinpoint the images associated with the Roman theme but it is hard to determine their function even within a single poem's system. Vladimir Markov tries and succeeds in decoding some references,[66] yet he also characterizes these poems as "lunar" and ascribes this to several techniques characteristic of Kuzmin, such as mixing historical periods, combining pagan and Christian mythologies, misleading the reader with false quotations, and introducing new and foreign elements into commonly-known myths. In "Lake Nemi,"[67] the poet, concerned with the mythical beginnings of Rome and the beginnings of Christianity, strives to create an aura of the unknown. Markov sees in this poem a variation on the motif of betrayal, a motif that pertains to the myth of the Golden Bough,[68] at the core of which is the ritual of treacherously killing the priest of Diana's grove. This betrayal transforms itself into the motif of Peter's denial.

An analogous melange is found in another "lake" poem, "Trasimeno Reeds."[69] Lake Trasimeno, west of Perugia, is known as the site of the defeat the Romans suffered from Hannibal in 217 B.C. As in his earlier poems, the poet here resorts to his favorite devices: tautology—"boltlivuiu boltovniu razboltali" (they chattered away with their chatty chatter), and more often paronomasia—"zatrepeshchut trazimenskie trostniki" (Trasimeno reeds will begin to flutter), "seryi serp," "lunnyi luch lukavyi," "stelet len Selena" (the dull sickle, sly lunar beam, Selena spreads the linen ["Lake Nemi"]). The image of copper, which other poets, for example, Bryusov and Komarovsky, associated with the Roman theme, appears in Kuzmin's Roman poems as well.

The poem "Aeneas" embraces Roman history, from Aeneas's mythical quest for a new home to an overextended *Pax Romana*

unable to rule its provinces any longer. Kuzmin depicts rather commonly known aspects of Roman mythology and history. He also tries, like Aeneas's father, to foretell the future from the vantage point of a mythological past. In "Lake Nemi" the final distich reads:

> *Italia* темно и
> Поет далекая труба
>
> [Italy, it is dark
> and the distant trumpet sings]

The last two lines of "Aeneas" paraphrase this same sentiment: "Zvuchit truboi luchistoi: *Pax Romana*" (*Pax Romana* sounds like a radiant trumpet).[70] Markov views the last stanza of this poem as ironic.[71]

Another cycle dedicated to memories of Italy is entitled "Journey through Italy" (Puteshestvie po Italii). Malmstad and Bogomolov comment:

> In a world of violent change dominated by a sense of inconclusive endings and uncertain beginnings, Kuzmin's art moved toward myth, the mystical, and the universally significant. […] Often memory of past experience impelled him, nowhere more so than in the cycle "A Journey through Italy," written in the end of April and in May. The seven poems form an imaginary trip with a beloved friend (it is dedicated to Yurkun) through a kind of Elysian Fields in which the lovers wander, "awakened in April and released from the "prison" of Soviet reality."[72]

The poem "Virgil's Motherland" (Rodina Virgiliia) in this cycle is closely related to "Lake Nemi" and "Aeneas," written in 1921, and combines the various guises of Virgil: poet, Dante's guide to the underworld, and sorcerer.[73] Kuzmin recreates topographical images present in his earlier poems: "molochnyi par polzaet bolotisto / Vody lezhat na vlazhnykh pastbishchakh (milky vapor crawls swampishly / the waters lay on damp pastures). Phonetically, he brings into play alliteration ("Medlitel'nogo Mincho k Mantue") and paronomasia ("zavidia zavody").[74]

Despite his erudition, the poet fails to revive old myths and images with the exception of occasional "golden rays"; otherwise, his symbolism becomes more and more remote and obscure. Several years after the Bolshevik Revolution, Kuzmin sought refuge in this imaginary journey. However, his readers were not able to follow him closely enough. Not all the poems of the cycle "Journey through Italy"

are dark and lunar. "The Coliseum," which consists of two octostichs, differs significantly from the more obscure poems. The poem opens with a casual scene of tourists sightseeing the Roman Coliseum, and demonstrates Kuzmin's inclination to macaronic verse and to mix meters. Within the first four lines one finds three Italian words (*una lira*, *forestieri*) and an English *miss*. Toward the end, the tone changes, the poet reflects upon the fate of the early Christians who strove for redemption through martyrdom.

In the second stanza the poet juxtaposes his way of life and that of his companions (who make up the collective persona we ["my"]) to that of the tourists. He contrasts the decadent poets with the philistine tourists who pay to experience Rome and see the places of martyrdom. The lifestyle of *my* represents a condition of spiritual lightness, if not malaise, in which people live only for the sensations of the moment. The poet writes:

> Не скупясь и не считая,
> Ночь за ночью, день за днем.
>
> [Not stinting and not counting
> Night after night, day after day.]

But like the first, the second octostich changes towards the end, and it concludes with rumination on death, the flow of time, and forgetting:

> Умирает, истекая,
> Позабытый водоем.
>
> [Dies flowing out
> The forgotten reservoir.]

Thus, by combining in each octostich a casual statement with a less temporal concern, the poet achieves a parallel and creates a bond between two rather loosely connected stanzas.

Kuzmin ends his second imaginary Italian journey on Via Appia, in the catacombs where biblical symbols of redemption are combined with pagan mythological drawings associated with death myths. In the poem entitled "Catacombs" (Katakomby) we find the irises of "Lake Nemi" and the martyrs of "The Coliseum." The poem consists of two descriptive quatrains and two apostrophic refrains—sextets of mixed meter. The instrumentalization of "l" and "r" predominates in the phonetical strata of the poem.

Wladimir Weidle points out that the proclamation of Christianity as a state religion constituted a turning point in Christian art. The drawings in the catacombs predated this and, therefore, their symbolic function takes precedence over the descriptive and narrative functions. These drawings symbolizing a yearning for redemption appealed to the poet's imagination. The period of the catacombs (the second to the fourth century) coincides with the period that especially interested Kuzmin. In his notes, Markov gives a very detailed reading of all the religious and mythological symbols utilized and mentioned by Kuzmin.[75] He also quotes Kuzmin's letter about his impressions of the catacombs.

The poem "Children dance on the square," also written in 1921 but included in the cycle "Phaedra's Flame" (Plamen' Fedry), shares certain characteristics with "Coliseum," but the summertime landscape is much more elaborate here. In this three-stanza (ab ab ba) poem, Kuzmin concentrates on light, scents, and the heat. The poem is built around the motif of a coach drive, but the boundary between the actual present time and memories of the past is blurred. The phrase "znoia severnyi pripek" (the northern scorch of heat) may suggest that the Palatine and the Roman ruins are actually remembered ("temnoi pamiat'iu uzhalen" [stung by the dark memory]) during a summertime ride in a northern landscape.[76]

An astute sensitivity to scents may be detected in Kuzmin's other Roman poems: "the scented gilly-flower" of "The Coliseum" reappears in "Fides Apostolica" in the phrase "Levkoi li pakhnet palevyi" (pale yellow gillyflower scents); the pagan "fimiam" (incense) from "Lake Nemi" is replaced in "Fides Apostolica" by "ten' ladana iz Rima" (shade of incense from Rome), combining both the impression of scent and light. The image of a blurred light is intensified by the cluster of phrases "polon teni Palatin," "tonet marevo ravnin," "vest' o blednom lete," "v tusklom zolote razvalin" (the Palatine is full of shadows, the mirage of plains is hidden, the news about pale summer, in the dim gold of the ruins) in the poem "Children dance on the square." Thus, images of Rome in Kuzmin's poetry tend to be seen and projected either by moonlight or daylight, but a daylight somehow veiled by fog, smoke, or shadow.

The discussion of Kuzmin's Roman themes would hardly be complete without mentioning Lucius Apuleius, the rhetorician, popular philosopher, writer and lawyer. Born in Madaura, Africa, in the first quarter of the second century (there is a discrepancy concerning his date of birth, which is thought to be between 114 and

125 A.D.), Lucius Apuleius fits the general model of Kuzmin's favorite hero. His origins (he was born outside the Roman Empire), his religious affiliation (he was a devotee of Isis), and the attribution of magic power make him akin to those figures who inspired Kuzmin's imagination. The first poem dedicated to Apuleius was published, according to Markov, in the journal *Mir Iskusstva* (The World of Art) in 1907, but was never included in any of his collections; it has been reprinted in the third volume of *Sobranie stikhov* (Collected Verse) in the section of uncollected and unpublished works.[77] Kuzmin's favorite topoi are present in this poem as well. It starts with "griadki levkoev" and ends with the death of Antinous, which here, according to Markov, is presented as a suicide committed in order to gain entrance into a better world.[78]

The other work which conveys the poet's admiration for Apuleius (whose *Golden Ass* Kuzmin translated into Russian) is "The Grove of Apuleius" (Apuleevskii lesok). This poem constitutes a part of the larger cycle "Lesok" (Grove), published in 1922 by the Burning Bush publishing house, and illustrated by his friend Alexander Bozheryanov. John Malmstad calls "The Grove" a "tribute to his favored cultural periods of the past…."[79] Markov suggests that the title could be derived from "Silva," since the form of these lyric poems with explanatory prose, is of a silvic structure. Markov points out that Kuzmin always associated Apuleius with death, and that "The Grove of Apuleius" shares more images with Kuzmin's Gnostic poems than with Apuleius's *The Golden Ass*. Summarizing Kuzmin's relation to Apuleius, Markov writes: "Apuleius stood before him in a much wider context: on the background of a spiritual syncretism of the second century, when antiquity was coming to an end and Christianity was beginning—an unstable time, which Kuzmin associated with the post-Revolutionary period in Russia (and in Europe)."

Apuleius was a formidable presence in the poet's consciousness. Although artistically this interest did not develop into a sound poetic achievement, it placed Kuzmin among the most prominent admirers of Apuleius: Boccaccio, Raphael, Bacon, La Fontaine, Molière, Calderon, Keats, Graves and others. Apuleius' writings have probably influenced more than just these two works by Kuzmin and it contributed significantly to the perception of Apuleius in Russian literature.

In April 1897 Kuzmin wrote to Chicherin from Rome :

> The old mosaics in numerous churches in Rome are magnificent, and exceptionally interesting is a Christian museum at S. Giovanni in Laterano—wonderful sarcophagi and bas-reliefs—an absolutely special world. And what a wonderful light on early Christianity, gentle, lovable, simple, idyllic, contiguous with antiquity, somewhat mystic and by no means dark: Jesus everywhere without a beard, beautiful and gentle, geniuses, collecting grapes, good shepherds—there is a sarcophagus with a history of Ion, an absolute masterpiece of grace and finesse. And catacombs—just a custom—there are pagan underground crypts and Jewish catacombs, not differing from the Christian ones, and the liturgy was performed there only out of necessity, in the time of persecution, and not from a penchant for the dark decor. The mosaics of the fourth century—are something else—here is asceticism and mysticism—it smelled of the East.[80]

These impressions remained with Kuzmin and inspired him for the rest of his life. Perhaps they returned most vividly in those difficult last years when Rome seemed more distant than ever to his lost generation.

Notes

1. M. B. Rozhdestvenskaia, "Mikhail Kuzmin v arkhive Vs. Rozhdestvenskogo," in *Mikhail Kuzmin i russkaia kul'tura XX: tezisy i materialy konferentsii 15-17 maia 1990 goda*, ed. G. A. Moreva (Leningrad, 1990), 212-19.
2. V. V. Ivanov, "Postsimvolism i Kuzmin," in *Mikhail Kuzmin i russkaia kul'tura XX veka*, 13.
3. M. A. Kuzmin, *Sobranie stikhov*, ed. J.Holthusen et al., 3 vols. (Munich: Wilhelm Fink, 1977-1978), 2: 482.
4. John E. Malmstad and Nikolay Bogomolov, *Mikhail Kuzmin. A Life in Art* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1999), 330.
5. D. S. Mirsky, *A History of Russian Literature*, 474.
6. *Cor Ardens*, 1:147
7. Cf. Malmstad and Bogomolov, *Mikhail Kuzmin*, 281.
8. Ibid., 314.
9. "M. A. Kuzmin v dnevnikakh E. F. Gollerbakha," in *Mikhail Kuzmin i russkaia kul'tura XX veka* , 230
10. John E. Malmstad, "Mixail Kuzmin: A Chronicle of His Life and Times," in M. A. Kuzmin, *Sobranie stikhov* (Munich: Wilhelm Fink, 1977), 3:28.
11. "Histoire édifiante de mes commencements," in *Mikhail Kuzmin i russkaia kul'tura XX veka*, 149.
12. Ibid., 152-53.
13. Malmstad and Bogomolov, *Mikhail Kuzmin*, 36.
14. Malmstad, "Mikhail Kuzmin: A Chronicle," 38.

15. Hadrian himself was interested in magic and astrology.

16. Goethe, *Roman Elegies*, 16.

17. Talking about books he would take with him for a trip, Kuzmin placed Goethe among Homer, Dante and Shakespeare. *Mikhail Kuzmin i russkaia kul'tura XX veka*, 226.

18. Kuzmin, *Sobranie stikhov*, 1:199.

19. See also Kuzmin's popular comedy, *O Aleksee cheloveke bozhi'em* (About Alexei, the Man of God), where the word Rome is used as a kind of refrain. Kuzmin, *Komedii* (St. Petersburg: ORY, 1908), 47-89. Even Moscow was the "provinces" for Kuzmin. Cf. Malmstad and Bogomolov, *Mikhail Kuzmin*, 322.

20. Cf. Stewart Perowne, *Hadrian* (London: Hodder and Stoughton 1960), 101. See also Royston Lambert, *Beloved and God: The Story of Hadrian and Antinous* (London: Viking, 1984), and Marguerite Yourcenar, *Memoirs of Hadrian* (New York: Farrar, Straus and Young, 1954).

21. V. Markov, "Poeziia Mikhaila Kuzmina," in Kuzmin, *Sobranie stikhov*, 3:330.

22. Kuzmin, *Sobranie stikhov*, 1:163.

23. Ibid., 2: 266 and 2: 424.

24. According to Hadrian's expression, quoted in E. Baldwin Smith, *Architectural Symbolism of Imperial Rome and the Middle Ages*, 56.

25. First book publication in the volume *Vozhatyi* ([The Guide], St. Petersburg, 1918), 69; reprinted in Kuzmin, *Sobranie stikhov*, 2: 67.

26. Kuzmin, *Sobranie stikhov*, 3: 330.

27. First book publication in the volume *Nezdeshnie Vechera* ([Unearthly Evenings], Berlin, 1923), 79; reprinted in Kuzmin, *Sobranie stikhov*, 2:249.

28. Cf. Markov inKuzmin, *Sobranie stikhov*, 3: 330.

29. R. Lambert, *Beloved and God*, 9.

30. Kuzmin, *Sobranie stikhov*, 1: 219.

31. Mikhail Kuzmin, *Selected Prose and Poetry*, ed. and trans. Michael Green, (Ann Arbor: Ardis, 1980), 356.

32. Kuzmin, *Sobranie stikhov*, 1:188.

33. *Wings: Prose and Poetry by Mikhail Kuzmin*, trans. and ed. N. Granoien and Michael Green, with preface by Vladimir Markov (Ann Arbor: Ardis, 1972), 106.

34. Cf. Markov, "Poeziia Mikhaila Kuzmina" in Kuzmin, *Sobranie stikhov*, 3: 334.

35. Stewart Perowne, *Hadrian*, 157. See also "Death in the Nile," in R. Lambert, *Beloved and God*, 128-42.

36. *Wings: Prose and Poetry by Mikhail Kuzmin*, 107.

37. Markov, "Poeziia Mikhaila Kuzmina," 331.

38. Kuzmin, *Sobranie stikhov*, 1: 183. The conditional seems to be Kuzmin's favorite form. There are six poems starting with *esli*, three of them—*esli b ja* or *ty byl* ("had I" or "had you been").

39. Kuzmin, *Sobranie stikhov*, 2:80.

40. R. Lambert, *Beloved and God*, 16.

41. This is a quite remarkable example of structure serving as symbol. Cf. William York Tindall, *The Literary Symbol* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1962), 229.

42. We find similar associations in the description of the landscape in Komarovsky's Roman poems: mud and mignonette. Cf. V. A. Komorovskii, *Stikhotvoreniia i proza*, ed. George Ivask (Munich: Wilhelm Fink, 1979), 87 and 104.

43. Stewart Perowne, *Hadrian*, 15.

44. According to Vladimir Markov, the name Faustina alludes to the church of St. Lavrenty, originally the temple built by Antoninus Pius (adopted by Hadrian) for his wife Anna Galeria Faustina. Antoninus Pius's only surviving daughter's name was also Faustina, the Younger. She was Marcus Aurelius's wife.

45. Vladimir Veidle, *Rim* (Paris, 1967), 72-75.

46. Kuzmin, *Sobranie stikhov*, 2:265.

47. Goethe, *Roman Elegies*, 10.

48. Cf. N.V. Zludneva, "Motiv volny v russkoi grafike nachala XX veka i poeticheskii mir M. A. Kuzmina," in *M. Kuzmin i russkaia kul'tura XX veka*, 57-60.

49. Cf. Tindall, 66.

50. Kuzmin, *Sobranie stikhov*, 2:249-83.

51. Ryszard Przybylski, 19.

52. Ibid., 21-22.

53. In his essay "Poeziia Mikhaila Kuzmina," 3: 358

54. "Poeziia Mikhaila Kuzmina," in *Sobranie stikhov*, 3:670.

55. The cycle "Seti" in *Sobranie Stikhov*, 1:113.

56. According to Tindall: "The motion and permanence of the sea, its depth and vast extent make it an image of refuge, danger, mystery, infinity, of all that is alien and welcoming," 151.

57. Kuzmin refers here to Horace's *maxima rerum*. Cf. V. Veidle's essay "Velichie Rima" in *Rim*.

58. *Dictionary of Symbols*, 110.

59. Cf. M. B. Rozhdestvenskaia, "Mikhail Kuzmin v arkhive Vs. Rozhdestvenskogo," 214.

60. St. Petersburg, 1909, 57.

61. Cf. *Dictionary of Symbols.*

62. V. Veidle, *Rim*, 19 and 23.

63. "Pismo Yu. I. Yurkuna E. V.Terletskoi i V. A. Milashevskomu." *Mkhяail Kuzmin i russkaia kul'tura XX veka*, 240.

64. Kuzmin, *Sobranie stikhov*, 2:265-66. Cf. "The myth of universal combustion (ekpyrosis) was decidedly in fashion throughout the Romano-Oriental world from the first century B. C. to the third century of our era–it successively found a place in a considerable number of Gnostic systems derived from Greco-Irano-Judaic syncretism." Mircea Eliade, *The Myth of the Eternal Return* , trans. Williard R. Trask (New York: Pantheon Books, 1954), 88.

65. Kuzmin, *Sobranie stikhov*, 2: 424.

66. Kuzmin, *Sobranie stikhov*, 3:670-671.

67. Ibid., 2:267.

68. "Every aspirant to the priesthood of Diana was a runaway slave—who, after breaking a certain branch as a challenge, struck down his predecessor—the priest who slew the slayer and shall himself be slain." Michael Grant, *Myths of the Greeks and Romans*, 342.

69. Markov, "Poeziia Mikhaila Kuzmina." The image of the lake is a recurrent image throughout Kuzmin's work; see Markov's note on this subject, 3:704.

70. Kuzmin, *Sobranie stikhov*, 2:267 and 275.

71. Cf. Markov's notes on "Enei," in which the scholar analyzes each image and reference. Markov, "Poeziia Mikhaila Kuzmina," 3:672.

72. Malmstad and Bogomolov, *Mikhail Kuzmin*, 293-94.

73. The supernatural powers were attributed to Virgil as early as Hadrian's time. According to C. T. Cruttwell, *A History of Roman Literature*, 278-79.

74. Kuzmin, *Sobranie stikhov*, 2:355. Cf. Markov's notes, 2:386.

75. Markov, "Poeziia Mikhaila Kuzmina," 3:681.

76. Markov supplies an interesting note to this poem: "Kuzmin perepletaet zdes' pamiat' o Rime s russkim sel'skim peizazhem. Sergei Solov'ev v 'Tsvetnike tsarevny' (M. 1913, str. 74) pishet: 'No strogie oktavy nadoeli: / Milei tvoi metr izyskannyi Kuzmin, / Vospevshii bulku, Palatin i tmin.' Opoznat' 'bulku' mogut dazhe prochitavshie u Kuzmina vsego odno stikhotvorenie. Odnako 'Palatin' i 'tmin' vmeste vstrechaiutsia u Kuzmina tol'ko zdes' i data stoit 1921." Ibid., 3:684.

77. Cf. Markov's interpretation of the poem. Ibid., 3: 711.

78. It is possible that reoccurrences of the suicide motif pertains to Kuzmin's own suicide attempt. Cf. "Histoire edifiante," 150-51.

79. Malmstad, "Mixail Kuzmin: A Chronicle," 3:261.

80. G. A. Moreva, ed. *Mikhail Kuzmin i russkaia kul'tura XX veka* (Leningrad, 1990), 27.

«Как сделан Рим»? (How Is Rome Made?)[1]
Conclusion

For most of the world's poets, Rome *is* the world. This is especially true for Russian poets, because of the anagrammatical relation of the words *Rim* and *mir* (Rome and world). There are other linguistic bases for similar equations: *urbs* and *orbis*, and *Roma* and *Amor*. One may also find the identification of Rome with the universe (vsellennaia) and nature (Mandelstam: Priroda — tot zhe Rim [Nature is Rome]). The difficulties did not emerge solely in the interpretative strata. The selection process alone involved constant experimentation. Rome is the Forum Romanum for Golenishchev-Kutuzov, Bryusov and Voloshin, but for Kuzmin the army camps in Northern Africa and the waters of the Nile constituted the Roman theme as well.

Rome forms a perfect background for Bryusov's experiments with erotic poetry, while the myth of Antinous provides Kuzmin with the means to explore the subject of homosexuality. The Coliseum provides Ivanov with a metaphor for guilt caused by forbidden love. The theme of forbidden love has been a Rome-related subject ever since Goethe's *Roman Elegies*. These examples represent merely a sampling of the intricacies of the theme of Rome. Ancient Rome is also a model city, republic, empire, a metaphor for decadence at various moments of its history. The *admiratio Romae* theme is inseparable from the theme of great Roman personalities and classical literature. The research of each author and often the analysis of every poem introduce a different subject, a separate set of references that impose a quest toward the definition of every time. Does every Latin inscription or quotation still contribute to the image of ancient Rome?

How far from Rome is still Rome, how far from antiquity is still ancient?

My definition complies—only to a certain extent—with the definition given by John H. Johnston in his book *The Poet and the City. A Study in Urban Perspectives*. Johnston, primarily interested in topographical poetry and the city as a physical place, defines city poetry as "poetry (or a poem) directly descriptive of the real physical city as an experiential[2] entity, or poetry descriptive of people whose lives are obviously affected by their experience of that entity."[3] Even this definition remains open-ended. My criteria have had to be far more open for obvious reasons, namely, Symbolist poetry is anything but descriptive. Johnston also admits that "this definition has excluded dream, vision, fantasy, hallucination, or phantasmagoria"[4]; again, this obviously cannot be done in reference to Symbolist poetry. Kuzmin's Roman text is almost entirely dream, vision, fantasy and phantasmagoria.

Dealing with such a city as ancient Rome, I could not ignore the intellectual implication of "the double focus on modern and ancient civilization," which David Weimer points to in his book, *The City as Metaphor*.[5]

Considering the vast material to be surveyed, the selection and parameters of inquiry posed difficulties at all levels. One may admire Toporov's solution to the problem of narrowing the material in his article "Vergilianskaia tema Rima" (The Virgil Theme of Rome). He draws two boundaries, one literary and one linguistic, and considers only those poems that met both criteria. This brilliant tactic was good for the purpose of his review, but would not, however, succeed in giving the broader panorama that was an aim of this work. Besides, I encountered a great many Roman poems without *r* and *m* in an anagrammatic situation, for example, Kuzmin's "Children dance on the square": Na ploshchadke pliashut deti / Polon teni Palatin," where the orchestration is based on the repetition of *p*, *l* and *n*.

In order to find some type of median for every poem or cycle of poems I have tried to seek proportion between the particular topic of the work, the depth to which to explore the symbolism, the references, and the connotation. In order to stay within the parameters of my topic I have excluded works referring to the Rome of modern times.

Even though one might find similarities in the poet's choice of subject (for example, the Forum Romanum, Lake Nemi, Caesar), the boundaries of each poet's poetics are so definite that they constitute a primary principle of classification. In order to avoid repetition in my

analysis of a poet's work, I have attempted to pinpoint something that Holthusen calls the thematic center and have analyzed groups of poems as a subsystem. This method proved to be fruitful in many instances, for example, in the analysis of Ivanov's poems about the Coliseum or Lake Nemi, Bryusov's poems on great personalities, and Komarovsky's poems about assumed personalities. This approach has allowed me not only to extract the particular image of Rome presented in those poems, but also to find analogies in the strategies used to evoke these images, since the theme rarely—if ever—stands apart from its poetic realization. The process of such individual analysis exposes certain overall analogies. A fundamental constant point of almost all Roman poems concerns the usage of polarities: North/South, East (oriente)/West (occidente), Rome as the center or an island versus the rest of the world, then and now, pagan and Christian, ancient greatness and modern gloom.

In every case the poem itself determined the extent of my analysis. Some poems require more explanation than others. Take, for example, the two poems linked to the legend of Julius Caesar, both written in 1905. Bryusov's poem is more explicit in its references to the legend than Voloshin's. And yet, Voloshin evokes a more profound meaning from the Caesar legend as the taboo of bloodshed, collective guilt, Nemesis, revenge. On the other hand, I hope I was able to demonstrate that Bryusov's poem exhibits a broad knowledge of historical facts, and is not limited to ostensibly ornamental details. At times, just the opposite happened. In order to prove his point the poet chooses to ignore indisputable facts of which he was clearly aware. An example of this is Merezhkovsky's "Marcus Aurelius."

The major aim of this work was to analyze the forms directly involved in creating the Roman image or symbol, to explore its functionality within the poem, and place it within the system of the author's other Rome-related images. In order not to leave the formal analysis in a vacuum, I have explored the background, where possible, the stimulus that lead to the writing of the poem. I have always tried to identify the toponyms and the personalities mentioned, or alluded to, in the text. Finally, I tried to place it in the context of other well-known poetic, or literary realization of this particular image, legend or myth. Thus when analyzing Ivanov's Coliseum poems I turned to Rozanov, who definitively provided the Russian reader with a set of references, as well as to Goethe; while analyzing Voloshin's Forum Romanum poem I pointed out the related fragments of Muratov's impressions.

I have tried to read every retelling of the myth from the perspective of the original version or other prominent interpretations. Perhaps the chapter on Bryusov is a good example of this technique, especially in reference to his presentation of the story of the plebeian revolt in the Roman Republic. In this case I placed Bryusov's reading in perspective with comparisons to Machiavelli and Mandelstam.

Such prominent references were not always available, in which case the analysis was placed in the context of a general understanding of architectural, religious, anthropological symbolism. The effort was directed to support every analysis with a maximum of tangible—factual and historical—basis in order to demonstrate whether the use of images was merely ornamental, or relied on the poet's knowledge and his attempt to understand classical culture, whether the identification was only nominal, or very deeply felt.

The analysis of the poems and cycles of poems constitutes this work's strength. However, it was not an art for art's sake endeavor. One can risk the observation that the classical tradition comprised a truly appreciated legacy for the writers and readers at the end of the nineteenth century in Russia, and their testimonials allowed the writers to form a specific language, the language that may be lost on the present generation of readers, since the general level of classical education is much lower.

Another outcome of this exegesis was the demonstration of how the images of Rome evolved with the development of Symbolist poetics. The pattern of application that was initially abstract, notional, and didactic at times, gave way to picturesque, multi-layered, and multiple interpretations that find reflection in the more intricate mode of identification of the lyrical I with the Roman theme. For example, from a quite detached, almost allegoric treatment of "Marcus Aurelius" by Merezhkovsky to the very intense treatment of a young soldier in Komarovsky's "Toga virilis," which, however, is endowed with an ironic distance.

In the process of determining the vertical development of the Roman theme in the work of every poet I also tried to link it horizontally to other recurrent themes within the poetics of that particular poet. The link between Bryusov's Roman poems and his other poems (for example, city and masonry) may serve as an example.

The examination of the recurrent image of copper, or of the rejection of the purple coat exemplifies such a horizontal link in the works of several poets. One cannot deny the existence of other

common topics, such a as the civic poems written as a response to the various political events of 1905. Bryusov, Ivanov and Voloshin each reacted to a different episode of that important period, each using a different frame of reference. There are other topics or strategies that simultaneously attracted more than one poet; after all, they shared a common heritage and experienced the same historical and political incidents. In such instances, the similarities and the differences were underlined in order to demonstrate how these repeated images delineate the overall image of ancient Rome in Symbolist poetry.

At times the Roman theme coincided with another subject, or more precisely, it served to explore another poetic terrain. This group would include the poems about statues, architecture, love, religion, political convictions, and so on. In the course of analyzing these poems both angles received appropriate attention.

Sometimes the transferal of an artistic problem from a different field had interesting consequences for literature. The history of Peter the Great's monument and its relation to the statue of Marcus Aurelius is the most prominent example of this phenomenon. This fusion of topics demonstrates the close and even overlapping fields of the Roman text and the Petersburg text of Russian literature.

I have demonstrated that the Roman theme operates on many levels: imagery, stylistic transformations, semantics and phonology. The analysis of such notions as the idea of the "Eternal City" or *Pax Romana* was placed in the context of the urban myth and the idea of universalism.

The aim of this study was to locate the pertinent material, analyze, and define the strategies used to evoke the image of ancient Rome. Through detailed analysis, at times drawing upon a comparative perspective, the literary facts of a greater reverberation have been established. For example, the significant link between the theme of Rome and the East-West opposition. This theme, though ever present, is not constant, because it is torn by inner tension; it changes its function and undergoes transformation. Even more interesting and unexpected is the link between the Roman theme and the theme of Europe-Asia that we find in the poetry of Golenishchev-Kutuzov, Solovyov, Bryusov and Voloshin.

The Roman text of Russian literature was enormously important for the poets and their reading public. Even the poets who contributed a small sample of work to the Roman text, like Solovyov and Merezhkovsky, used these poems to voice their deep intellectual and religious concerns expressed elsewhere in their writings and not

necessarily related to Rome. Had this discussion not been suppressed by the communist regime in the past, it would have contributed a great deal to the development of Russian political thought.

Naturally, utilitarian concerns are not a poet's foremost objective, at any rate, not for the Symbolist poets. Even when they wanted to communicate ideas, they wanted to do it through vivid and evocative images. And to demonstrate how they arrived at these images was the main objective of this analysis. It was done by way of the evaluation and attribution of what Averintsev calls a system of symbols and by demonstrating the consistency of that system within the poetics of the individual poet, or that of the cycle. It was also achieved through examining the prosodic forms contributing to the Roman text: poems in the odic tradition, ballads and sonnets. The latter prevail, if one includes Ivanov's and Komarovsky's sonnets, as well as the not very successful crown of sonnets by Bryusov. Another formal, and not unimportant matter, involves establishing whether the text relates to another artistic manifestation, that is, whether it constitutes a metatext. As I have shown, few poets chose to express their religious or poetic quest through architectural symbolism.

I hope that my work has fulfilled its task by providing at least a partial answer to the question, to paraphrase the title of Boris Eikhenbaum's fundamental formalist text, "Kak sdelan Rim" [How is Rome Made]?

Notes

1. I have borrowed and adapted the title of Boris Eikhenbaum's famous essay, "Kak sdelana Shinel' Gogolia?" (How Is Gogol's "Overcoat" Made?).

2. Pertaining to or derived from experience

3. Cf. Introduction to John H. Johnston, *The Poet and the City. A Study in Urban Perspectives* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1984), xvii.

4. Ibid.

5. David R. Weimer, *The City as Metaphor* (New York: Random House, 1966), 123.

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