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Nietzschean Masks and the Classical Apollo in Andrei Bely's "Petersburg"

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Andrei Bely's indebtedness to Nietzsche as a source of knowledge and inspiration is well known. A wealth of criticism has focused on the impact of Nietzsche's works (primarily, "The Birth of Tragedy" and "Thus Spoke Zarathustra") on Bely's most influential novel, "Petersburg".[1] It is, therefore, hardly newsworthy that Dionysus's image pervades the novel. It is much less obvious, however, that the text leaves Apollo's identity largely undelineated. The obscurity of the symbolism surrounding Apollo is not altered by the fact that the two protagonists' names (Senator Apollon Apollonovich Ableukhov and his son, Nikolai Apollonovich) constantly allude to the Greek god. This leads Maguire and Malmstad to refer to Senator Ableukhov as the "modern Apollo" (110). An early twentieth-century version of the classical god, however, does not exist here in his own right but functions simply as a masked Dionysus. The novel's numerous Apollonian references are to Nietzsche's figure in "The Birth of Tragedy" rather than to the god known to us from classical mythology.

This study will trace the trajectory of the disappearance of the classical Apollo from "Petersburg". In order to achieve this, one must consider both Bely's reading of Nietzsche in the context of Symbolist literary criticism, and the interpretation of Greek mythology which Nietzsche derived from his readings of classical tragedy. With this background established, it will then be possible to compare the Apollo theme in "Petersburg" with that in Greek tragedy, and to demonstrate that Bely's concretization of the Petersburg myth — as embodied in "Petersburg" — has no significant connections with the image of Apollo which arises from the study of classical mythology, but only with Nietzsche's *interpretation* of this figure.

In examining Bely's use of classical mythology, one must remember the subjectivity which characterizes the literary activities of Russian Symbolists. It comes as no surprise, therefore, that Nietzsche, who was both popular and influential in Russia at the beginning of the twentieth century, was not cen-

[1] See: Vladimir E. ALEXANDROV, "Andrei Bely: The Major Symbolist Fiction." Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, 1985; Peter I. BARTA, "The Apollonian and the Dionysian in Andrei Bely's 'Petersburg'": Studia Slavica 32 (1986) 253—261; Virginia BENNETT, "Echoes of Friedrich Nietzsche's 'The Birth of Tragedy' in Andrej Belyj's 'Petersburg':" "Germano-Slavica 3 (1980) 4: 243—259; Horst-Jürgen GERICK, "Belys 'Petersburg' und Nietzsches 'Geburt der Tragödie' (see Works Cited); Robert A. MAGUIRE and John E. MALMSTAD, "Petersburg" in "Andrei Bely: Spirit of Symbolism" (see Works Cited).

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sured for shunning conventional philological techniques in interpreting his readings.[2] In fact, Vyacheslav Ivanov, the writer, and Faddei Zelinsky, the classical scholar, as well as the rest of the literary intelligentsia, looked at classical mythology in the light of "The Birth of Tragedy". Nietzsche's early book provoked far greater interest than his later works and the self-consciousness characteristic of his mature writings was largely ignored by his enthusiastic Russian followers.[3] In "The Birth of Tragedy", Nietzsche outlines parallels between Hellenic culture and Germany. He argues that pre-Socratic tragedy is of the same stuff as the indigenous "Dionysian root" of the "German spirit".[4] Vyacheslav Ivanov in "The Hellenic Religion of the Suffering God" develops Nietzsche's idea further and suggests that the Hellenic spirit, understood now in a mainly religious sense, should be seen as an example for the contemporary world. Ivanov draws upon Nietzsche's remedy against suffering in "The Birth of Tragedy", which suggests giving up individuality and merging into the Dionysian mass, the infinite, the abyss. Bely sees a "Hellenic" Russia in terms of explosions and abysses of cosmic proportions. Ivanov's and Bely's generalizations resemble Nietzsche's method in "The Birth of Tragedy".[5] "The Birth of Tragedy", however, contains primarily an aesthetic theory, while the Russian Symbolists tend to read this work as a transcendental history of culture.[6] In this sense, Ivanov and Bely, in their attempts to utilize the supposedly intrinsic meaning of the Classical text, go further than Nietzsche in ignoring the larger context into which it must be fitted.

Dionysus Zagreus serves as the prototype of the tragic hero in "The Birth of Tragedy". For the aesthetic theory of Nietzsche's treatise, this particular figure proves ideal because of his suffering and his death, the latter of which brings about a new life. Nietzsche regards Zagreus's dismemberment as representative of the division of the original unity of nature into individuals, and likewise, his rebirth as the creation of a new fusion with "primal unity". Nietzsche interprets Attic tragedy on the basis of the Zagreus myth; the satyr chorus reenacts the fusion of suffering individuals into a unified harmony, which is then shared by the members of the audience who forget their own identities in order to unite (albeit temporarily) with the chorus.

[2] See: Lena SZILARD, "Apollon i Dionis" (155–157). Maguire and Malmstad also discuss how widespread Nietzsche's influence was in Russia at the beginning of the century. See their note following their translation of Bely's "Petersburg" (321–22).

[3] Nietzsche became strongly aware of the dependence of the creation of meaning in a text on the reader and that meaning, essentially, *is* interpretation. He wrote in "On The Genealogy of Morals": "whatever exists... is again and again reinterpreted to new ends.... [All] events... [involve] a fresh interpretation, an adaptation through which any previous 'meaning' and 'purpose' are obscured or even obliterated" (175).

[4] See "The Birth of Tragedy" (119, 121). In his essay, "Nietzsche—nach fünfzig Jahren," Gottfried BENN suggests: [Nietzsches] Verherrlichung des Griechischen ist uns ferngerückt. Bemerkungen wie ... 'die griechische Welt als die einzige und tiefste Lebensmöglichkeit'...— diese sein existentielle Verbundenheit mit den Griechen lebt in uns nicht mehr" (1049).

[5] For an analysis of the study of Classics at the turn of the century in Russia, and Vyacheslav Ivanov's literary criticism, see Catriona KELLY's article.

[6] Anschuetz suggests that Vyacheslav Ivanov read "The Birth of Tragedy" as a treatise on the history of culture while Bely read it as a treatise on the history of language (217).

The Zagreus myth in this aesthetically-focused interpretation thus offers a "paradigm of existential suffering".[7]

"The Birth of Tragedy" has failed to impress the mainstream of Classics scholars. They traditionally regard Nietzsche's unified view of Dionysus as basically ahistorical; the portrait of the god and his works in mythology exhibits such complexity that no single identity is available. Nietzsche associates the Zagreus myth with Greek tragedy, but most classicists argue that this is arbitrary as the Zagreus myth is the only one among a great number of legends which depicts Dionysus as a suffering god.[8] The Russian Symbolists were, however, unperturbed by this critical objection, because their interest lay less in mythological history than in the uncovering of the veil over what they regarded as spiritual reality and original nature.[9]

In "The Birth of Tragedy", Nietzsche largely ignores the Apollo figure and uses the pairing of the Apollonian and the Dionysian only to produce a more distinct picture of Dionysus.[10] In Ivanov's and Bely's readings of Nietzsche, Dionysus continues to be more highly valorized than Apollo. Propelled by an urge to create a new world, Ivanov and Bely even personally identify with Dionysus. Bely, in his dedication of the story "Mask" to Ivanov, calls him the "propagator of Dionysism". The title of Ivanov's review of "Petersburg", "Inspiration by Terror", refers to Bely's experience as he looks into the abyss (Anschuetz 216). In the article, "Ancient Terror", Ivanov connects the abyss with the myth of Atlantis, which in turn allows for extensive analogies to be drawn between the island and Petersburg, the Russian capital. The demise of the island-city represents the victory of Dionysus over Apollo — that is to say, the Dionysus Zagreus figure over the *principium individuationis*.[11] In short, Ivanov's and Bely's readings of "The Birth of Tragedy" turn Apollo and Dionysus into general forces of individual as well as universal life, but in this symbolist *Weltanschauung*, Apollo's identity remains uncertain: he is shown as a mask of Dionysus.[12]

Bely's theoretical position accounts for the privileging of Dionysus in "Petersburg".[13] We learn in his essay, "The Magic of Words", in "Symbolism" that the transitional period from an Apollonian to a Dionysian phase in culture is "marked by the intrusion of the spirit of music into poetry": the Dionysian force of music ("substance") destroys the Apollonian form ("fa-

[7] "The Birth of Tragedy" describes the destruction of tragedy by the appearance of the Socratic "theoretical man" whose rational optimism crushes the force of Dionysian suffering, embodied in pre-Euripidean tragedy. HENRICHS examines the reasons that attracted Nietzsche to the myth of Dionysus Zagreus (221—22).

[8] See HENRICHS 209 and 221.

[9] See KELLY 240 and ANSCHUETZ 210.

[10] SILK and STERN warn that it is "not promising" to attach a single significance either to Apollo or to Dionysus (168).

[11] According to ANSCHUETZ, the flood of Atlantis in Ivanov's Ancient Terror" marks the end of the Apollonian period and the beginning of the Dionysian one (211).

[12] Bely writes in "The Window to the Future": "The question about the relationship of the Dionysian principle to the Apollonian one first arises in all of its world-historical sense in Nietzsche" (141) [my translation]. See also STAMMLER's discussion about Vyacheslav Ivanov's juxtaposition of the "Dionysian" and the "Apollonian" (298).

[13] Horst-Jürgen GERIGK argues: "Daß sich Belys Hauptwerk, der Roman "Petersburg" mit Nietzsche auseinandersetzt, wird jeder aufmerksame Leser ohne irgendwelche Hilfestellung bemerken" (356).

cade"), and this creates the condition in which *mythopoeia* is possible. Of course, Bely implies the superiority of *mythopoeia* to the formalization of myth, consequently the so-called Apollonian phase of culture remains relevant only inasmuch as it precedes the transition to the Dionysian.[14]

Yet, it is the name Apollo which dominates the consciousness of Bely's text. The senator's name, Apollon Apollonovich, in fact, strikes the implied reader as a *redende Name*. It suggests a strong connection with the Greek god. Undoubtedly, a number of similarities appear between the historical Apollo and the Petrine Establishment in which the official self of Senator Ableukhov is so firmly rooted. Clearly, Apollo's association with the construction of roads and cities links him with the progress of urban civilization in a geographically unsuitable setting. In Aeschylus's "The Eumenides" the Pythia praises Apollo as a "road builder" and mentions the road to the mountain sanctuary of Delphi — a notorious route over rough terrain:[15]

> Leaving the lake and ridge of Delos, landing at Pallas' ship-flocked headlands, he came to this land and the dwelling-places of Parnassus. And an escort filled with reverance brought him on, the road-builders, sons of Hephaestus who tamed the savage earth, civilized the wilds — on he marched and the people lined his way to cover him with praise. . . (9—15).

Petersburg, like Delphi, was also constructed on highly inhospitable ground in a deliberate attempt to civilize the "wilds". In this sense, then, one can relate the Petrine Establishment to an important attribute of the Greek Apollo: the imposition of order on chaos.

Furthermore, Apollo "Agyieus" is the patron of streets and is responsible for making them safe; his statue would be placed in the doorway and so he also marks the boundary between inside and outside.[16] Doors separate space into units but they also offer a means for communication because they reunite space when open. Note, however, that Bely's Apollo — Senator Ableukhov — most definitely resents open doors. Instead, he wants to have protective walls everywhere. Both Apollonoviches, father and son, also conceal their feelings behind masklike facial expressions.[17] Hiding behind doors and donning masks are not attributes of the mythological god Apollo, but they *are* features of the Nietzschean Apollonian. In "The Birth of Tragedy" Apollo is a veil or mask over the terrifying Dionysian reality of the formless abyss.[18] The Apollonian thus becomes the surface behind which lurks the real content, the Dionysian "truth". And so in Bely, Apollo functions as a veneer hiding Dionysus. Classical texts amply confirm the connection of masks with Diony-

[14] "The Magic of Words" is quoted from ANSCHUETZ's article (217).

[15] It is noteworthy that Apollo — the supporter of urban civilization — also helped Neptune build Troy. Concerning the problems involved in building Delphi, Pausanias writes in his "Guide to Greece": "The high road. . . to Delphi gets more precipitous and becomes difficult even for a fit man" (415). Unless otherwise stated, all translations from classical texts are mine.

[16] See ARISTOPHANES' "Wasps" (875).

[17] Virginia BENNETT enumerates Bely's articles which deal with the theme of masks: "The Mask," "A Window to the Future," "Friedrich Nietzsche," "The Green Meadow," "The Song of Life," and "The Present and Future of Russian Literature" (174).

[18] Nietzsche writes in "The Birth of Tragedy": "And thus the Apollinian [sic] illusion reveals itself as what it really is — the veiling during the performance of the tragedy of the real Dionysian effect; but the latter is so powerful that it ends by forcing the Apollinian itself into a sphere where it begins to speak with Dionysian wisdom and even denies itself and its Apollinian visibility" (130).

sus, but the masked Dionysus is an entity completely separate from any known ancient manifestation of Apollo.[19]

In fact, in his belief that tightly-sealed facades offer protection against undesirable forces, Apollon Apollonovich Ableukhov resembles not Apollo, but Pentheus, the tragic hero of Euripides' "Bacchae". As king of Thebes, Pentheus takes it upon himself to "shut out" the new god Dionysus and his followers. Both Pentheus and Apollon Apollonovich assume that they can use force to protect their physical and spiritual possessions against unwanted influences. Senator Ableukhov dislikes open spaces and big windows: he likes to be surrounded by such clearly-defined geometrical units as cubes and rectangles. He wishes he could arrange the whole city and the entire country as he has his personal belongings at home: in boxes and drawers following a highly systematic order. He believes that walls *can* protect against the irrational. Likewise in the "Bacchae", Pentheus assumes that he can separate his people from Dionysus by strong walls. He says, "I order every gate in every tower / to be bolted" (653); as he orders Dionysus to be locked away, he gives the order: "Away with him! Chain him in the stables by the palace" (509—11). But walls — just like masks — prove to be ineffective against the "enemy", whether it is Dionysus in the "Bacchae" or the revolutionary force in "Petersburg". Walls do not accomplish their intended purpose: instead of protecting by sealing off, they become useless in the face of intangible mental forces. Such imposed barriers resemble the Nietzschean mask behind which lurks chaos, ready to erupt.

Carl Jung treats this phenomenon in psychoanalytical terms. The unwelcome force appears to penetrate with such ease because, in fact, it is already present *inside* the walls. When it erupts, it merely reveals the mask for what it is: in Jung's words,

> . . .the apparently sudden eruption of alien contents from the unconscious is really not sudden at all, but is rather the result of an unconscious development that has been going on for years (Jung, 125).

In the "Bacchae", when Dionysus asks Pentheus whether he would like to see the orgiastic activities against which he wants to protect his city, Pentheus betrays the contradiction between his hidden inner desire and his carefully-controlled outer facade:

Dionysus: Would you like to see them lying together in the mountains?
Pentheus: Yes, I would pay a great sum to see that sight.
Dionysus: Why are you so passionately curious?
Pentheus: Well, of course I'd be sorry to see them drunk —
Dionysus: But for all your sorrow, you'd like very much to see them?
Pentheus: Yes, very much. I could crouch beneath the fir trees, out of sight.

. . .

[19] The source of such an association may be Erwin ROHDE's theory about Dionysus being a foreign god whose anthropomorphic Olympian nature is a veneer over his true self — that of a nature god of Thracian origin. Incidentally, the theory that Dionysus was a peculiarly foreign god has recently been somewhat undermined by the discovery of what looks like a form of the name of Dionysus in the Linear-B tablets. HENRICHS cites research which disproves Erwin Rohde's theory, according to which Dionysus was not a Greek but a Thracian god: on the Linear-B tablets the name of Dionysus appears in Greek and the tablets predate Dionysus' supposed arrival from Thrace by some five hundred years (224).

Dionysus: Shall I lead you there now and put you on the road?
Petnheus: The sooner the better. I begrudge you the delay (811—20).

Pentheus is so eager to observe the rites of the Theban women that he is willing to put on women's clothes and to climb a tree in order to see better. His curiosity betrays that aspect of his self which he attempts to disguise even from himself: his desire to participate in Dionysian activities. Herein lies his destruction. While perched on the the treetop, the crowd of frenzied revelers spot him and tear him to pieces.

The supposedly rational Apollon Apollonovich meets his demise in a similar way. It seems that the Senator does not like to do anything without a clear purpose. As he is about to go home from a ball one night, he sends his carriage away and decides to go for a walk. The Senator usually prefers not to walk because he fears wide open spaces. He feels unsafe even in his own elegant house, because of the large windows through which the view of the river and the threatening island fills the room. On this night he wanders about aimlessly in the dark working-class areas of Vasilevsky Island. A crisis provokes his strange course of action after the ball: he has received frightening news about his son's subversive behaviour (revolutionary activities which Nikolai had hidden from his father). Furthermore, he has been informed that he is the target of an assassination plot. The decision to walk about on the dark islands marks the coming to surface of a hitherto well-hidden desire: to see the ordinary citizens — ruled, but also feared, by the Senator — in their natural habitat. Apollon Apollonovich's Pentheus-like curiosity about the suppressed revolution motivates his walk on the island. A similar motivation lies behind Apollon Apollonovich's desire to espy his son's activities. Like Pentheus who rushes to the mountain to see the women, Apollon Apollonovich would like to drill a hole in the wall which separates his son's rooms from his own. He would then be able to watch the activities of the son whom he fears and fails to understand, but to whom he is nevertheless powerfully drawn. The same urge ultimately leads to Apollon Apollonovich's clandestine entry into his son's private quarters during his absence.

An irresistable urge drew him into his son's room. The door squeaked and the reception room opened up before him. He stopped on the threshold. . . He worried the raspberry-colored tassels of his dressing gown as he surveyed the hodgepodge: the cage with the green parakeets, the Arabian tabouret of ivory and copper. He saw something absurd: winding down from the tabouret were the folds of a domino that had fallen full on the head of a spotted leopard, which lay sprawled, teeth bared (248).

While the disparate collection of objects — their colour and shape — irritates every aspect of the Senator's public self, they attract his private self with which he is unprepared to come to terms. The destruction of Apollon Apollonovich, like that of Pentheus, is linked to his uncontrollable attraction: as the hidden force in his consciousness bursts out from behind the mask, he wants to see what he fears most. As he searches his son's desk, the Senator picks up a sardine-tin, not knowing that it contains a time-bomb, and carries it first to the drawing room and then to his study. Both in "Petersburg" and the "Bacchae", the resolution of the conflict begins with a violent crash and a flash of light. Before Pentheus's demise, there is an earthquake and a lightning-flash and his palace walls collapse; similarly, the explosion in the

Senator's house shatters the walls and heralds the demise of the Ableukhov family.[20]

The destructive force against which the individual strives to protect himself is firmly established in his consciousness whether or not he is aware of it. Jung discusses this phenomenon; he terms the revelation of the hidden content of consciousness "individuation"; its purpose is "nothing less than to divest the self of the false wrappings of the persona" (123). The conscious mind of Pentheus and Apollon Apollonovich is not able to assimilate the contents of the unconscious and the result, as Jung would put it, is a "conflict that cripples all further advance" (Jung, 111). Both Pentheus and the Senator see "two worlds". This suggests that attempts to contain the contradiction between public appearance and hidden secret desires are not successful. As the repressed conflict externalizes itself, it foreshadows the two men's fall. Pentheus remarks as he goes to the mountain: "I seem to see two suns blazing in the heavens. / And now two Thebes, two cities and with seven gates" (917 – 20). The Senator and his city, Petersburg, are characterized by a similar double vision:

> Apollon Appollonovich always saw two spaces: one, material (the walls of the rooms, of the carriage) the other, not exactly spiritual (it was also material). Now, how should I put it: over Ableukhov's head, Ableukhov's eyes saw bright patches and dots of light, and iridescent dancing spots with spinning centers. They obscured the boundaries of the spaces.
> Appollon Apollonovich had his very own secret: a world of contours, tremors, sensations. .. He would remember everything he had seen the day before so as not to remember it again. (93)

The first space is measured by three dimensions and houses every-day, public life; the second space is something "other" which the Senator would rather not acknowledge. His second space is in the fourth dimension of Petersburg which is invisible to the eye but it, nevertheless, makes itself forcefully apparent in people's lives. In this realm, there is no escape from the repressed secrets and unacknowledged desires. Other characters in *Petersburg*, such as Nikolai Apollonovich, Sofia Petrovna and Dudkin, also experience a second space which cannot be concealed.[21] Shishnarfne, a mysterious "Persian" visitor, appears from the fourth dimension of Petersburg which is separate and not to be controlled by the three concrete, physical dimensions. He says:[22]

[20] The narrator in "Petersburg" informs the reader that Apollon Apollonovich suffers from explosive force inside his body: he has a dilated heart and expanding gases.

[21] Apollon Apollonovich's "cerebral play" produces "thought images" which "stubbornly evolved" into "spatiotemporal" images. Since these "images" continue their "uncontrolled activities outside the senatorial head," the narrator comments ironically: "Oh, better that Apollon Apollonovich should never have cast off a single idle thought." The "cerebral play" not only produces images whose "spatiotemporal" manifestations will strengthen the order which Senator Ableukhov supports *ex officio*, but also generates subversive creatures who threaten his public, masked, entity ("Petersburg," 20). For more on the Senator's "second space," see *Piskunov* (145—146).

[22] Sidney Monas suggested in his talk "Medny vsadnik: The City and the Swamp," given at the annual convention of the American Association for the Advancement of Slavic Studies in Chicago on 4 November 1989, that while in Pushkin's poem only Evgeny heard the hoofs of the Bronze Horseman, in Bely's "Petersburg" everybody heard it.

Petersburg is in the fourth dimension which is not indicated on maps, which is indicated merely by a dot. And this dot is the place where the plane of being is tangential to the surface of the sphere and the immense astral cosmos. A dot which in the twinkling of an eye can produce for us an inhabitant of the fourth dimension, from whom not even a wall can protect us. A moment ago I was one of the dots on the window sill, but now I have appeared. . . (207).

The fourth dimension is Dionysus's realm. One critic suggests that Shishnarfne is endowed with Dionysian qualities.[23] Ancient Greek culture indeed associates Dionysus with chthonic religion and also with the underworld mysteries of Pluto. Dionysus is related to the earth-bound, pre-Olympian tradition in several ways: he was the son of Semele, an earth goddess, and is consistently linked with Demeter, as Teiresias explains in "The Bacchae":[24]

There are two supreme blessings, young man, among men.
First of these is the goddess Demeter, or Earth—whichever name you choose to call her by. It was she who gave to man his nourishment of grain.
But after her there came the son of Semele, who matched her present by inventing the liquor of the grape as his gift to man (174—80).

In the Greek tradition, Dionysus is particularly popular with the masses. Significantly, the aristocratic Pentheus proves most hostile to this movement, which is destructive for the Establishment: the mystical orgies are always performed by the group, the will of the individual is demolished and the crowd dominates.[25] According to E. R. Dodds, "The Bacchae" is primarily about the introduction of a new religion;[26] "Petersburg", too, is about the introduction of a new cult in which the will of the mass destroys the individual. In a dream Nikolai Apollonovich sees himself, as an individual, torn apart by the same force which destroys his father.[27]

In "Petersburg", then, the Dionysian cancels out the Apollonian. The Dionysian essence bursts out, shattering its own mask, the rigid Apollonian facade. But in Greek culture Dionysus and Apollo coexist. Contrary to the case in "The Birth of Tragedy", they operate as completely separate entities and instead of destroying each other, they compromise. In ancient Greece, Dionysus and Apollo are not viewed as antagonistic figures; at least they show no more hostility towards each other than prevails among other gods. There is no antagonism between Apollo and Dionysus which parallels the hostility

[23] GERICK argues that Shishnarfne is Nietzsche's Zarathustra — "der dionysische Unhold" (370).

[24] COLE argues that Dionysus appears on Locrian terracotta *pinakes* of the early 5th. century B. C. making offerings to Persephone, Hades and Demeter (235). MANNSPERGER speaks of the "griechische Gotterdreiheit": Demeter, Dionysus and Persephone (389).

[25] Peisistratus, the Tyrant, was an aristocrat who used popular support to weaken the power of the aristocratic ruling class and placed himself at the head of a government of the *demos:* in religious policy, he emphasized deities with universal appeal. Among these was Dionysus, who had always been popular with the masses. SILK and STERN argue that Dionysus was suppressed from the early epic because he was popular with the masses and was alien to the aristocratic Homeric world (171).

[26] See E. R. DODDS' introduction to his second edition of Euripides' "Bacchae," Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1960, xi.

[27] See the sections in "Petersburg" entitled "The Last Judgement" in chapter five and "Dionysus" in chapter six. In the Dionysian ritual of the *sparagmos*, the victim was torn to pieces by bare hands or was attacked by a crowd and each person ripped off whatever piece he or she could grab.

between, say, Aphrodite and Artemis in Euripides's *Hippolytus*. Delphi, it is all too often forgotten, served as a location for the cults of both Apollo and Dionysus. The mountain had two peaks: one sacred to Apollo, the other to Dionysus. The sculptures on the gable end of the temple of Apollo reflect the peaceful and independent coexistence of the two deities: on the eastern pediment stood the god Apollo encircled by the Muses; on the western side was Dionysus surrounded by his maenads. A late 5th century B.C. red-figured vase painting depicts Apollo and Dionysus, extending hands to each other, in front of the Delphic *omphalos*.[28] It is clear from the words which Teiresias and the chorus-leader address to Pentheus in "The Bacchae" that Apollo is not opposed to Dionysus (or Bromius, which was another name for the god). Teiresias tells Pentheus: "You are mad, grievously mad, beyond the power of any drugs to cure, for you are drugged with madness." The chorus leader adds, "Apollo would approve your words", and warns: "Wisely you honor Bromius: a great god" (325—29).

A willingness to compromise establishes a vital and essential component of the Greek god Apollo's temperament. Apollo is not weakened by the cult of Dionysus, because he recognizes, rather than crushes, its force. Moderation, self-restraint and the ability for reconciliation stand out as the most celebrated virtues of Apollo Patroos, patron of Athens, in Euripides's "Ion". Significantly, the Pythia — Apollo's priestess at Delphi — makes highly respectful references to Earth, Themis *and* Dionysus in Aeschylus's "The Eumenides". This play best symbolizes the peaceful coexistence of different values and interests. The harmonious existence of dissimilar values is recognized as inevitable, omnipresent and a beneficial fact of life. The play concludes with an agreement between Apollo, Pallas Athene and Orestes on the one hand, and the Furies on the other. The Furies, earth goddesses who rule the dark aspects of human nature and who represent libidinal energies, are, to some extent, analogous to Dionysus. They, too, are united with the Olympians as Dionysus was. Apollo settles his disagreement with them in a trial held in the court of the Areopagus, which upholds the value of a rational dispensing of justice through a court-system, rather than through a private system of individual justice outside the law. The Furies are renamed "Eumenides" — the kindly ones — which signifies that the values of Olympian Apollo can only operate in an atmosphere of tolerance and recognition of other deities who represent the libidinal aspect of human nature. The same is the attitude of the followers of Apollo in the "Bacchae", the wise Teiresias and Cadmus, who show appropriate "honour" to the new god, Dionysus.

In the "Bacchae", Dionysus certainly brings disaster to Pentheus, but Pentheus does *not* symbolize Apollo. The forces which contradict the spirit of Dionysus in the "Bacchae" are *hybris* and *amathia*, neither of which is

[28] A fourth-century *calyx-crater*, displayed in the Hermitage in St Petersburg, depicts Apollo and Dionysus shaking hands in front of a palm-tree near the Delphic *omphalos* (St Petersburg, St. 1807; Beazley *ARV* 2 1185/7). Parke notes that the Dionysian festivals of the *Oschophoria* took place on the same day as the *Pyanopsia*, the festival of Apollo (77—81). See also Nilsson 194 and 208—209.

[29] Gerigk suggests: "Belyj sieht im petrinischen Rußland eine 'künstlerische' Kultur, deren zunehmende apollonische Starrheit dem Geist ihres titanischen Gründers, Peters des Großen, nicht mehr entsprechen kann (357).

an attribute of Apollo. The chorus in Euripides's play expresses *sophia* — the well-known Apollonian virtue — in its warning to Pentheus:

> Life is short, wherefore, he who in such a brief span pursues great things will miss what is here and now. In my opinion, such men are mad their counsels evil (397—401).

The spirit of Dionysus infuses Bely's novel. Here, as in "The Bacchae", Dionysus destroys human beings who deny him. In "Petersburg", as in "The Birth of Tragedy", the Dionysian principle derives partially from the legend of Zagreus (who was torn to pieces). In Thracian ritual a bull, representing Dionysus, was dismembered; in the *Bacchae*, Pentheus — again representing Dionysus — is deprived of his mask and is torn apart. In *Petersburg*, the walls and masks of Apollon Apollonovich and Nikolai Apollonovich are shattered. Bely's two sons of Apollo represent Dionysus Zagreus. What a critic calls "Apollonian rigidity" is — in the case of the Ableukhovs — analogous to the mask of Nietzsche's Dionysus, covering his identity as nature god.[29]

Thus it is clear that Apollo — the Greek god — whose image emerges from archeology and classical philology — provides no textual foundation to "Petersburg". The concept of the "Apollonian" in Bely is the result of his interpretation of Nietzsche. Consequently, Russia is seen as analogous to the Hellenic world in "Petersburg" only inasmuch as this helps to prove that chaos wins over rigid order and that "the Dionysian tide of revolution is about to flood the Apollonian dream city . . ." (Anschuetz 211). Bely's reading of "The Birth of Tragedy" highlights the Apollonian-Dionysian opposition. Like "The Birth of Tragedy", "Petersburg" consistently ignores the fact that Apollo, too, is plentifully endowed with ecstatic features and is traditionally associated with music.[30] Since Apollon Apollonovich suppresses and denies having such qualities, he can hardly qualify as a latter-day equivalent of the Greek god. Furthermore, Bely's Nietzschean interpretation of antiquity dismisses Euripides altogether. Nietzsche and the Russian Symbolists quite mistakenly considered Euripides to be hostile to Dionysus.[31] Nietzsche and Bely in his footsteps demonstrate prime examples of what Harold Bloom calls "creative misreading", when evidence from precursory texts which mars the integrity of the image of the world "desired" in the new text is simply ignored. The gentle face of Dionysus, responsible for the wine, games and creative festivals is likewise absent in "Petersburg". He appears suppressed and furious and leaves no room for Apollo. But then he is no longer in Hellas whose cosmopolitan spirit was tolerant of other races and cultures. Instead, he is in a city on the verge of explosion.

[30] COLE argues that "when Euripides addresses Apollo as 'Bakchos' he is using the term to suggest the similarity of the divine mania of Dionysus and the mantic possession of Apollo" (227). See also G. Aurelio PRIVITERA's "Dionisio in Omero e nella poesia Greca arcaica," Rome, 1970, 125—26, and Pugliesa CARRATELLI's "Ancora sulla lamina orfica di Hipponion," "Per Pass" 31 (1976): 458—466. SILK and STERN point out that Nietzsche ignores several aspects of Apollo in "The Birth of Tragedy," such as his ecstatic features and his association with music (170).

[31] In "The Birth of Tragedy," Nietzsche suggests that Euripides is the spokesman of the "newborn demon," Socrates (82) and is, as such, opposed to Dionysus all his life. Nietzsche's Russian symbolist followers did not question the accuracy of this bias against Euripides. In this light, KELLY offers a useful caveat by pointing out that the chorus in Euripides is no less devoted to the "Dionysian" than in Aeschylus; the chorus in the "Bacchae" consists of the followers of Dionysus (251).

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