THE POEMY-SEZKTI

In 1929 Tsvetayeva turned from dramatic to narrative poetry. The result was Tsvetayeva's "Kog-Muon", her first substantial narrative poem. It is a "melodrama" (she wrote), a novel in verse of the Russian folk-literature tradition. The poem is a satirical commentary on the life of the Russian peasant, a humorous and critical portrayal of the social conditions in the Russian countryside during the Civil War.

Tsvetayeva's work is characterized by a blend of poetic fantasy and social realism. Her poems are rich in imagery and metaphor, and she uses a variety of poetic forms and techniques to create a vivid and powerful portrayal of the Russian rural landscape and the human experience of war and revolution.

In the poem, the poet uses the figure of the "merry" (sezkti) to satirize the political and social conditions of the time. The "merry" is a type of folk character, often depicted as a carefree and optimistic figure who is able to find joy in even the most adverse circumstances. The use of this figure in Tsvetayeva's poem is a critique of the official Soviet ideology, which emphasized the importance of collective action and sacrifice for the sake of the greater good.

Tsvetayeva's work was widely read and admired during her lifetime, and it continues to be studied and appreciated today. Her legacy as a poet and writer is a testament to her commitment to the art of poetry and her dedication to capturing the human experience in all its complexity and richness.
The flowering of the poem-zakaz was brief; the main examples were written within fifteen years by three writers. They are Pushkin's Slavka o pupe i o natevalo do Baida (Tale of the Prince and his House Baida) (1830), Slavka o tave Sallane (Tale of the Tsar Saltan) (1835), Slavka o rytike i rytke (Tale of the Fiefman and the Peer) (1836), Slavka o mrakov bearnac do varo bezgjezdih (Tale of the Dark Princess and the Seven Giants) (1837), Slavka o zolotih petnaka (Tale of the Golden Camel) (1838), Zhukovsky's Slavka o tave Benedeka (Tale of Tsar Benedek) (1838), Spasovskaya tanecni (The Sleeping Princess) (1838), Slavka o vojeni rytike do kremelvke (Tale of the Ten Thousand and the Grey Wolf) (1839).

Ershov's Knyaz-gurbane (The Huntsman Horse) (1839) were, of course, narrative poems employing motifs from skAGH both before and after this period, but they were quite different in character. The 'classical' poem-zakaz discussed here can be distinguished from earlier and later versions by its purely literary motivation and its coherence of tone. Its principal purpose was to turn folklore into tales--letters--to make the popular form acceptable 'high' literature--whereas such works as Pushkin's early Tsar Nita's zegwolde (Tsar Nita and his Zayg Dzabgha) (1832) or the later works of Yazykov, Nelravno, Bazov-Vorkhoviantsev, and others are quite different: folk motifs (or, in some later cases, borrowings from earlier poem-zakaz) are used to motivate pornography, poetry, or political commentary. In other words, such works state their supposedly peripheral literary status by resort to the folklore. The later works of this type are the descendants of Yazykov's cumbersome parodies, Slavka o pastwike i stolom strepe (Tale of the Shepherd and the Wolf Hunts) (1835) and Zayg ritike (Petrichok) (1836), which expressed contemporary uncertainty about the new genre created by Pushkin, Zhukovsky, and Ershov. The original poem-zakaz aimed to reproduce the simplicity of the folk tale as manifested in its obvious devices (repetition, parallelism, and so on), but in literary form. The


2 Naumov, Vorontsov, ca. 1830-1835, p. 34; Naumov, Vorontsov, ca. 1830-1835, p. 20; Andreewskiy, Literatura i folk-lyrikh, p. 105.

3 For more details, and for more differing with mine, see R. Paul. "The exotic frame." The Slavonic Review (1833-1834).
Zhukovskii's addition of complex psychological motivation to his inherited themes indicates the total absorption of folklore into belle-lettre; by these means the original is made palatable, indeed recognizable as literature.

Folk literature continued to provide source material after the demise of the poema skaza, but literary versions of popular forms tended to become more and more attentive to the nature of the original, unless they were specifically parodic or political in content. This move towards yet greater 'authenticity' occurred in part because there emerged writers (Kołosov is an example) with a native familiarity with folklore. It was also a consequence of the increasingly scholarly collection and study of folklore. Vladimir Dal had recorded and collected, but not published, many authentic folk tales in the 1830s and 1840s, but in the 1850s and 1860s A. S. Makarov, using the manuscripts of Dal and others, brought out his Narodnye vstreki skazki (Popular Russian Tales), reproducing the originals with relatively few modifications. Thus, it was easier to treat folklore as simply an impoverished relative of belles-lettres; for example, when imitating folklore in his Pravda ego voprosov rasskaz i legendy (1867), Makarov employed popular verisimilitude and plot motifs, and equipped his version with footnotes. And so, close, semi-scholarly imitation was established as the dominant mode of recreation of folklore by Tveten's time. Literary reworking was often restricted to the removal of lacunae and inconsistencies. Remizov's folk tales in his collection Posud (The Cover of the Sun) (1880) provide an appropriate example among the work of Tveten's contemporaries: they are in praise, matching their sources in brevity and logical simplicity, and adding only greater

1 See M. Arzamaszov, Vnestrojennie skazki (1930); N. Makarova (1933); E. E. Semyan, 1927-30, 1934.
2 M. P. Kotsyubynskaya, Drevnosti rublennykh poety, folklorists' selection, 1868, 1873, 1885. Kotsyubynskaya's presentation of folklore in the Russian periodical has been much admired by folklorists, and has been extensively used as a source of folklore.

3 See M. Arzamaszov, Narodnye vstreki skazki, 1880; N. Makarova, 1933; E. E. Semyan, 1927-30, 1934.

4 Although Tveten's poetry has been praised for its freshness and simplicity, it is not without its flaws. The poet's use of language is often criticized for its lack of subtlety and complexity, which can be seen in the way he avoids intricate metaphors and similes.

typical of her, does the impossible. Tsar-Devitsa and Maiden
resemble a quite archaic genre: both are long treatises in verse
of short prose sources; both incorporate disparate materials
and devices; one is subtitled poema-smachka, the other smachka,
implying the abolition of the problematical differences between
folklore and literaturnaya, and suggesting that the innocent
appropriation of a popular source is as natural in 1920 as in the
age of Pushkin. Thus, her works involve a reading through the
original poema-smachka and against contemporary treatments
of folklore. At the same time, they are as different from those
literary prototypes as they are from the meticulous later-day
versions of folklore by Rimsky and Kuzmin. The appeal to
tradition is accompanied by a subversion of tradition.

Tsar-Devitsa was first published in 1923, both in Berlin
and in Moscow (with the help of Andrei Bely). It is dated 1 July
1945 September 1945 Old Style), making it Tsvetaeva’s second
poema (Chislennaya was the first). It is also her longest
completed work in verse. It was written less than a year after the
original version of what became Prëki (the last of the extant early
plays). Indeed, Tsar-Devitsa forms an interesting contrast with
the early plays, notable, it will be recalled, for their formal
regularity and conventional treatment of sources. It marks a
decisive break with that approach to sources in her longer
works. In contrast to the plays, Tsar-Devitsa has received
considerable critical attention.

In eponymous heroine, a warrior-maiden, falls in love with
the hero, the pale Tsarevich (a gentle paladyn-player), when
the sound of his music is carried across the sea to her palace.
However, the Tsarevich is also the object of the lustful and
illicit attentions of his young Stepmother, disenamished with
her husband, the aged and drunken Tsar. She, with the
magical aid of the Tsar’Devitsa’s treacherous Tsar, is able to
ensure that the Tsarevich is fast asleep on the three successive
mornings when the Tsar-Devitsa seeks out to meet his host.
Meanwhile, on successive nights, the Stepmother not only
pays in kind for the Tutor’s aid, but also attempts to seduce
the Tsarevich. On the third night, it is a drunken debauch, over
which the Tsar presides, “she takes physical possession of the
Tsarevich.” At the third meeting between the Tsar-Devitsa
and the Tsarevich he is fast asleep, the Stepmother pounces on
the Tsar-Devitsa, is interrupted by the crushing discovery of
a long black hair on her beloved’s white tunic. The hair, of
course, belongs to the Stepmother. The blond Tsar-Devitsa,
who had never dreamt that she might have a rival in the
affections of the pure Tsarevich, breaks her sword in distress,
tears her heart out of her breast, and casts it into the sea.
She summon her friend and ally the Wind, whose sedentary
advances she had previously rejected, calls upon him to fill
the hole in her breast, and disappears. Thereupon the Tutor,
his task complete, removes the magic pin from his charge’s
neck. As the first two occasions, the Tsarevich awakes, puzzled,
but this time he sees the three fruitless meetings depicted
in the clouds, reads a message which the Tsar-Devitsa had
written on to her abandoned armour, and dives into the sea to
reclaim her heart, after taking his vengeance on the Tutor.
The poem concludes with further retribution: the Wind enters
the Stepmother up to his head and then twists her off, the
people arise and overthrow the Tsar.

Tsarevich consists of nine sections: a brief introduction;
four night-time scenes at the royal palace, separated from
each other by three dawn meetings at sea; the final scene of popular
revel. It is based on two folk tales entitled “Tsar-Devitsa” In
Almazov’s Narodnye russkie skazki. Tsvetaeva, as she records
in “Nesledovym vecherom,” received a copy of Almazov’s
while visiting her in Petrograd in early 1916.” Her version differs quite
considerably from Almazov’s. In them the meetings of hero
and heroine, and the Stepmother’s attempts to prevent their
union are only part of the story; the Tsar-Devitsa departs, leaving instructions that the hero should seek her out, which he does, after various encounters with some of the familiar figures of Russian folklore. They marry and live happily ever after. Tsar-Twetaeva’s plot is more complex than that of the relevant episodes of the folk tale. The Wind is a completely new character; the roles of the Stepmother, the Tsar, and the Tsarev are all greatly increased. For example, the opposition between the blind, pure Tsar-Devitsa and the dark, hostile Stepmother, around which much of Tsar-Twetaeva’s story is built, is barely suggested in the folk tale. The substitution of the Stepmother and the Tsarev, the story of the Tsar, and so on are all new. The stories all end in ways alien to the folk tale and the final scene of popular ridicule and retribution is without precedent.

Of course, inherited material in folk literature itself is more readily combined with new material than is the case in belles-lettres, and it would be wrong to suggest that there is a single, definitive story of the Tsar-Devitsa which Tsar-Twetaeva has rewritten. Every version of a folk tale is slightly different, and various stories are readily combinable. Indeed, this is exactly what has happened in the two tales in Afanasiev; they combine a number of different motifs and differ somewhat from one another. The Tsar-Devitsa herself occurs in various guises in other folk tales. Like most figures in folklore she has no literal identity. The case with which folk tales accept modifications and their relative indifference to narrative unity may have contributed to Tsar-Twetaeva’s narrative; she has seen it. It refers the reader not only to a traditional figure in Russian folklore, but also to a number of well-known works of belles-lettres. One commentator mentions the origin of ballads by Derzhavin, also entitled Tsar-Devitsa, and Polonsky’s lyric of the same title, another cites a third example, from Ershov’s Tsar-Devitsa, in which the Tsar-Devitsa is the object of the hero’s love quest, and his eventual bride. The Tsar-Devitsa is a very different figure in each of these works, and some of them have much to do with the folk tales used by Twetaeva. However, both Derzhavin’s work and Ershov’s are imitations of folk literature. In different ways both employ the language and style of folklore and both are in the familiar end-stopped trochaic verse form. Thus, Tsar-Twetaeva’s Tsar-Devitsa is in its subject and title drawn directly from a wide variety of sources and is in this respect a new type of a tale.

Tsar-Devitsa, like many of Tsar-Twetaeva’s lyrics, provides an example of the subversion of sexual stereotypes and conventional sexual myths. Her heroine, like Derzhavin’s (a sibyl for Catherine the Great), is a bold warrior endowed with masculine virtues. The antecedents for such a figure are to be found, not in the folk tales of Afanasiev but, as Knorre suggests, in the modern, the stage-heroines of some bylye. In Tsar-Twetaeva’s revised version of the tale the heroine and hero are strikingly analogous, both are endowed with feminine qualities to match the masculine virtues of the hero. This reversal of sexual roles and subversion of stereotypes is a marked transgression of expected norms, social and literary, as several critics have observed. Smith and Visits and the equally important point that during the story both hero and heroine more closely to sexual stereotypes and the Tsar-Twetaeva’s heroic couple is closely related to the popular version of the tale; here characterization is limited to stereotypes and the initial attack on stereotypes and hero’s psychology is shown to be natural and rational. The movement away from sexual normality does not, as might be expected, lead to reconciliation.
and a happy end. The progress towards sexual balance is ironic: the two wicked levers are not joined, at least not in 'this world', nor in this work. Their story, like others in Tsr's Deva, ends in separation and dissolution. In other words, the expectations raised both by folk and high literature are disappointed and subverted: the end is neither happy nor tidy. Sex is a dominant element in the work as a whole: the opposite passions of the Tsr-Devan and the Stepmother, the sexual indifference of the Tsarевич, the lust of the Tutor, and the implied impotence of the Tsr provide relatively complex psychological motivation and plot features alien to folk literature. The overt, literary eroticism of some passages should also be noted. An example is the embrace of the Stepmother and the Tutor who has turned himself into an owl:

'"Fylyat b'vam' b'kuka-b'vans come!
Majyast i s'kawam-maaddamom,
V'faras i b'kova in p'kawam-b'vam,
V'faras i b'kova in kivmok-b'vam.
Mugaso—a kik'vam b'kumum,
Tsr-kumus i b'kumuk s'mo.
A si gui—d'kam kumum-
G'to si iti tak 't'kum yamok.'
—Big yam 'kam na d'kumunum-
K'va s'jama b'kaasam.
Tsr nag yamok-
Majyast i kipidam....

Moon and wind-blown.
Set through musk-stained.
With hoot and howl pressed together,
With hoot and hoot in embrace.
Moon brushed off little stars.
While the wind shook a bird......
But from lips a double moan—
What is this a rust-red mark?
Lord preserve our sovereign state!—
Bloodied is the hoot-male's herald.
Wind washed waves upon waves.
Moon obscured in face.

"For a very different account of the and many other elements of the poem's 'Tsar Blizhni' in Abkhazian, see Farny's 'Tsar Blizhni' in Abkhazian. In his very thorough analysis of mythological elements in Tsr's fiction he means the poem as an integral whole, not necessarily or not the poet has intended it. Instead it is a kind of a mythical account, inspired by traditional symbols. Some of these elements in the poem are recorded. (437)"
Once again, transgression of sexual propriety is emphasized by literary transgressions; the abuse of another text that is popular and liturgical.  It has been noted that scenes of this sort take Tsar-Devitsa "far out of the literary genre and tradition of the nineteenth-century verse slavke" and further suggested that this eroticism is close to "authentic Russian folk tales." Yet such scenes are self-conscious and markedly literary, as the literary reference in the second passage quoted emphasizes. It is more accurate to say that Tsar-Devitsa is equally at odds with the traditions of folk literature and those of the literary appropriations of folklore. A number of critics share the view that Tsar-Devitsa is closer to the folk originals than previous purists suggest. Smith argues that Tsvetareva's choice of the folk-tale convention can be explained by the fact that it "dispenses with the necessity for verisimilitude in the appearance, actions, and psychology of the protagonists." Certainly, the poem slavke suits Tsvetareva's talents better than the well-made play, but her modifications, and the self-conscious eschewal of realistic conventions, mark Tsar-Devitsa as a literary, not a popular work. Moreover, although the psychology of the characters is not governed by the demands of realism, it is very far from that of the folk tale the sort of development noted by Smith himself, and the complexity of the relations between the main characters, emphasize that Tsar-Devitsa imposes literary features on folklore. They are, of course, different literary features from those added in the nineteenth century, but, mutatis mutandis, Tsvetareva's additions can be compared to those of Zhukovsky, who introduced the vocabulary and psychology of Sentimentalism to the folk tale, thereby producing what can be seen today as distinct versions of his sources, while at the same time, in terms of belles-lettres, seamless, continuous works. Tsvetareva's dissonance, however, is far more self-conscious. Indeed, Tsar-Devitsa repeatedly refers to the conventions both of its literary prototypes only to transgress them. It mirrors folk literature in its incorporation of material from disparate sources: elements of the story of Phaedra and Hippolytus are imposed on the basic tale, predating the complex family relationship which motivates the action; the Stephanoth's dance very clearly recalls the story of Salome and John the Baptist (another tale of incest). Direct literary references are also made: the example from the liturgy has already been quoted. Another, more obscure, is made during the "quarrel" between the kises of the Stephanoth and the Tsar-Devitsa (both left on the Tsvetareva's tune); the Tsar-Devitsa's kiss is described as a pechot' ("imprint")—an allusion to Poseisky's lyric "Tsar-Devitsa," in which the lyrical hero is obsessed with the one kiss he receives from the distant heroine, a kiss described in the same terms (see 4: 56-70):

No, olkhun's ne gikh,'
Vdol' karep' gothu neg.
Mne pechot' nega pechot.'

Tsvetareva retained the "Tsar-Devitsa" as a formal and, if not more, in Hippolytus (after 1892), printed in Steklova in Devitsa (1890). The Stephanoth's poetic conventions help to reveal the "form" of the story, concealed by the "shadows" of rational and other supernatural forces. Her attitude towards her textual or scholarly approaches to sources is also illustrated by the fact that, although her intertextual work is in text, self-conscious in direct references, these sources are not incorporated to avoid alien material, and so are for her own employment of literary sources, and of the expectation of treatment genre, and tradition which those sources bring with them, even after rather subordination.
Such disparate combinations of texts recall the unembarrassed combinations of folk tales. Yet each of the works listed above is quite clearly a product of belles-lettres or high culture: classical tragedy and myths; the Bible; the Orthodox liturgy; near-contemporary Russian poetry. Most references, moreover, are self-conscious (as ever, the familiarity of the material is important in drawing attention to the reference). In other words, Tsar-Dmitri is not seamless, as are the earlier examples of its genre, nor is it self-conscious, as a folk tale is. It shows the joins in an emphatic, literary way.  

Some of the self-conscious references are parodic—another feature which aligns the work with belles-lettres (the parody of the liturgy is an example). Equally self-conscious and literary is the depiction of the Tsarevich as an artist devoted entirely to his art, and of that art as a powerful, ' demonic' force (Paul's term). In this the Tsarevich anticipates the sorcerer-heroe of Pushkini's Sletn- 

strego, and the Piper of Ryabok (The Bicantin), both of them artists working magical, but ambiguous, transformations on the world. As in both these later works, the story of the artist in Tsar-Dmitri is associated with the sexual and romantic aspects of the plot. However, in this early treatment, playfulness notwithstanding the ambiguous and romantically unsatisfactory.

---

28. Ye. Polonskiy, Poetschina olkvenmar: i tsat umej (St Petersburg, 1869), 419.

29. Vilde, in his very helpful treatment of Tsar-Dmitri, lists many poetic sources

30. Sources for sources, 37 ff. (quite accurately observes this feature).

passage are they identified, making it possible to understand the dialogue:

Tak, pochmurno, poslenednih konacno,
Sporatne prej, v medenih boh, bole.
(4: 25)

Thus, when they'd had a sip of two-days-ago's tea,
Talked in dispute—conversation the shark and the whale.

Smith cites examples of narrative in the first person, both singular and plural. Often such narrative is spoken by recognizable female voices. At the very beginning of Tar-Danch the narrator undermines the supposed objectivity of the narrative by interrupting her own voice to reject the same which has just been suggested:

Spis Tar-Dancha, ni spisova,
Spis na splošnih nagibih,
Rome paliha na splošna,
Moglo si štiri zg.

Seveda, deti paliha,
Potran stanov, Palaih, (4: 9)

All spread out, the Prince is sleeping,
Sleeping, deaf to everything.
Just as if the moon had leaned
With a stick upon his face.
No, I lied about the stick
With its gleaming index finger.

Here, moreover, the narrative has offered a surprising smile (the moon poking a stick), while the narrator's interruption ironically resounds conversation with the stylistically marked potram stanov (a more appropriate, lyrical register for the moon). No sooner has the narrative asserted its objective authority than it rejects its authoritarian mode. The rejection is especially clear at points when the reader is invited to participate directly in the narrative—and thus to undermine further its fictive coherence. The most startling example comes when the narrator abandons her attempt to distinguish

* See also Farley's comments on the significance of the moon (Mihajlov, 136).
the Tsarevich from the Tsar-David. This is during the First Meeting, when the hereditary bonds over the hero’s sleeping form.

—Glaza, glaza, i ramenki
Dotsa — goli, i goli detsa?
Ty napisal, nﺒevsel?
Gde yamesh? Gde detsa?
Tet yamesh? — Tenne krygle,
Tet yamesh — nahe maka.
Odne byly dne planekh,
Dve desity-bazartikhi.
Da li te tsey te tsey tabin —
A moke dea poryev?
Tet detsa — gudlit anaberk;
Tet detsa — koloka raz!
Odne rik sawtikhi,
Dve yamesh bangunikhi.
Koeb na izgin naa smorin
Nevverin mioxid nach Fenika —
Gde tsar — na nakhit pokhet;
Tova mado madno sedek.
Kun sam — sot sty — sa yamesh-
Tomh pokhet — dze yamesh.
Kun rikok pokok nabez —
Tova pokhet — des detsa.
A na khor cherej pogufden —
Is eou eou shemov eou,
Is eou nob ramon — gya,
Nad bhebeuee — sefegf?
Spom ... (4 25-29)

I look and look and do not know
Where is the girl and where her friend.
Unask yourself, you little string,
Where is the boy and where the girl?
Is that the boy? Her face is round,
Is that the boy? The hand’s too small.
Two trees of a single plot,
Two lovely-looking girls.

Here the sexual ambiguities of the characters are explicitly associated with the narrative uncertainty of the poem. Neither sex nor literature can be regulated by royal decree (Gde tsar — na nakhit pokhet). Instead, the reader is invited to abandon the passivity demanded by traditional literary forms and allow his or her own sex decide that of the two figures in the story (once again, sexual and literary conventions are transgressed simultaneously). Finally, the text appears to abdicate itself, and ends on page...

The fragmentation produced by this subsection of the narrative is reinforced by the division of every part of the poem, not only by changing metrical patterns, but also by typographical devices. In the Moscow edition of 1922 each section (a section may be as short as six lines, or as long as several pages) is separated from the next by a clear space. This device is replaced in Egnymne prozorenjma i Slidtovomnyni i poemy by a long dash. Parallelism, parataxis, and repetition, so characteristic of folk literature, are also found in Tsar-David. But here they contribute to the suppression of causal links.
and the assault on linear narrative, where literary coherence is expected. For example, the narrative compartment remains a gesture towards the poetics of folktale, but at the same time also serves a very different purpose: strikingly inappropriate elements are introduced into compartments:

To se dynamis, anastichon hupate—
To Tsevnoj ton Tseson antisto.
To sti paragw kai ta esarche symouna—
To xrismoi eis aggeia, anexoreia. (485)
It's not smoky mist, nor Turkish incense
It's the sigh of the Prince before the King.
Not two birds behind their prison net—
It's his low and humble eyelashes.

Here the parts are not joined into a satisfying unity (the compartments, indeed, are singularly inappropriate); there is no literary resolution. Similar observations can be made of more general features of Tsar-Dmitriia. Resolution of the story of the Tsar-Dmitriia and the Tsarevich, achieved at the end of the folk tale, is postponed beyond the end of the poem-thea. The Tsarevich finally learns the truth (through heavenly intervention) but this knowledge is ironically ineffectual and not, as might be expected, the means to a happy end. He can only read the heroine's message:

Nigira srova neu,
F wladia se popola.
Nako to deandw.
Nako to emvata. (485)
Nowhere will you find me.
I am lost in no place.
And no one can catch me.
And nothing return me.

and then plunge into the sea. This end—the consequence of love and art—is as ambiguous as the death of the children under the spell of the flute in Klyso. The Stepanov's story ends in equally physical separation and magic, but dubious, transformation when dropped by the Wind her body shatters on the ground, and she slides away, transformed into a snake. The end of the story of the Tsar, which is also the end of the whole work, provides the most violent narrative disruption of all. In the final section both folk and high literature expect some sort of resolution and neat closure, especially of such a work as Tsar-Dmitriia "they lived happily ever after"; and that is the tragic end of the tale; they lived on, sadder and wiser men, and so on. But these expectations are disappointed. The stories of the other characters have already ended in disunity and destruction, but now the whole context of the poem, the ill-defined, atemporal world of the folk tale, is violently disrupted. Indeed, violence is done not only to the narrative, but also to the person and property of the Tsar. The opening stanza of the final part suggests neat, orderly conclusion, but it is soon clear that this is not to be. What seemed at first to be the measured eg of the narrative turns out to be the choral voice of a rebellious population, intent on destroying the royal order:

Nadb poliala—poj,
Nadb poliala—pokol,
Kapula—ndi Kapulu,
Habula—ndi Kapulu.
Li es nezakula dela.
Poliono kele—Sadba.
Pojol—nayo pagono pochel.
Ni de grunyia es koulis.
Bunis, suni (knobchopnoj),
Pojol pdogiho uitronok.
N ti abiahi, trenzat geza—
Chat zaube—nzo itroia.
Pod pehde—pojoli,
Nad pehde—teka.
Oblaks kapruy, grunyiz
5 kraus, hoto 15 gromo.

But note that the arrest himself in Tsar-Dmitriia is an innocent, under his successors to Pozdneie and Klyso, Knyazh takes this ending rather differently (Spiteration, p. 208).
Over cellars there are thrones
When the Lord disperses storms,
What was over becomes under.
Over cellars there are thrones,
Under cellars there are graveyards,
With the black bones of us slaves.
With the dead flesh of us cattle.
Last above and scratch below...
And yet they blame the slaves!
Keep opposing, poor and fallen!
Under thrones there are cellars.
By the final cockcrow.
Who was under becomes over.

Who has scattered all my kingdom into dust?
—And who are you?—The King.
What King are you?
No, you’re no King, say.
Masquerade!

(emphasis Tsvetayev's)

Popular rebellions do not, of course, usually occur in folk tales, nor in the pamy-seksii of Puskin, Zhukovsky, and Erdman. It is true that the genre was used as a vehicle for political comment, as Puskin insists throughout her study, but the specific political content of the end of Tzar-Bashie distinguishes it sharply from its predecessors: the people announce themselves as Krasnaya Ros ("Red Russian Lord"); thus disrupting the ahistorical world of the story so far with a reference to contemporary Soviet Russia. The work ends on a note of elemental violence. The final line consists of a single word, divided by a dash into its composite syllables: She—kot ("Finished") (p. 90). And so Tzar-Bashie ends with dismemberment, even of individual words. The division of words into constituent syllables (implying multiple stress—an impossibility in standard Russian) is a favourite device in Tsvetayev’s later poetry, but this is the only example in Tzar-Bashie; a new element of disruption and uncertainty is introduced in the very last word.

There are many other linguistic distortions of this kind, counterparts at the levels of grammar and syntax to the
disruptions of narrative already examined. Some of them can be seen as imitations of the linguistic irregularities of folk literature, but, again, their effect in this context is totally different. For example, in folklore the phonetic coupling of synonyms is a common device of rhetorical intensification. In Tuir-Destua words are often joined together in chains, sometimes occupying more than a line, but they are not synonyms; on the contrary, they are disparate elements of language, usually different parts of speech:

Rego-ra, mo, lopelik-lyfano mastrulakad! (4:99)
Your row-mouth, a fist-scarred-crap!

Stia i staula na-synas-ja-kyth (4:74)
Some alarm-right-row-confusion occurred!

Morphological distortions are also prominent. The roughening of language is often given material emblems by rhyme, itself a device not found in most forms of folk poetry, so that its presence here emphasizes that this is a highly literary work:

Dre o jhut? Soulat yhet?
One o jhut? 'Kemb' (4:15)
Blow and spit And make a ripple
What do you see?—A little shipp!

Emphasis here is provided by the half-rhyme (yhet / -nat) and the use of a non-standard form (kemb for kemb.) Stress, like morphology, is variable in folk poetry. There are altered stresses in Tuir-Destua too, but, again, they are foregrounded, not presented as 'natural' devices. For example, one of the most common verbs in the language is given a quite irregular stress, which is emphasized by its position in the line, repetition, and the use of the conventional regular trochaic tetrameter:

Iht o kaw, kaw o lorn.
Iht o kaw, kaw o kaw. (4:25)
Going smoothly, going boldly,
Going boldly, going fleet.

On another occasion the same word is given two different stresses in the same line:

The literary style of the third line forms a striking contrast with the folkloric lexicon of the rest of the stanza (bustaw, pudugibi, lablog), a contrast reinforced semantically (the narrator is intending to discuss herself and all these like her).

In folk literature language is undifferentiated. For example, kings and queens speak the same language as everyone else. In Tuir-Destua this occurs, but is commented on and emphasized:

'Thir i lablog o abada toripu.
Ty lablog boon nacron lipidu.
Ty lablog boon nacron lipidu.
Lablog, o lablog, o lablog! (4:14)
The King swears, chewing his food,
You lire tip the prince's blood.
Lay him on my horns like a lamb!
The old man gave a shout in his beard
Though a queen, she is simple of speech.

The language of Tuir-Destua is self-conscious, always posing new problems for the reader. The same can be said for the verification, which is far removed from any popular metre, and equally far from the models of the nineteenth-century puuy-dazlak. Tuir-Destua is aggressively polysemic, purposefully unstable, underlined by changes of metre, the interpolation
of ‘alien’ lines or stanzas, the disruption of standard form. In Tsvetayeva’s verse the verbatim of the later twentieth-century style is transitional: it marks a decisive break with the metrical unity and regularity of the early plays, and points towards the metrical innovations of the later poetry. Most of its metrical schemes are variations on the binary and ternary metres of ‘classical’ Russian prosody. The trochaic metres of many earlier imitations of folk literature occur frequently, but are often disrupted (emphasis added):

Although this metre is not the more familiar tetrameter but a trochaic trimeter, lines 1-4, 6, 8, 11, and 12 show the sort

of simple end-stopping found in the tetrameter, making the amphibrachic interruptions in the remaining lines all the more striking. Elsewhere schemes alternate, in some cases introducing different elements of the narrative, at the seduction scene, when the narrator and the reader become entangled (here the first stanza is in trochaic tetrameter; the couplet of commentary in anapaestic dimeter):

Lastly, there are examples of very striking incomplete rhyme (emphasis added):

Once Tser-Destina is seen to deny its own stability, it cannot be fixed as a successful imitation of folklore, nor as fatally flawed by its moments of incoherence. Smith is concerned that the ending is not fully integrated into the rest of Tser-Destina, but it could be argued that Tser-Destina, while never totally incoherent, constantly drags the possibility of the sort of amplying integration which he seeks. Tser-Destina belongs

with other literary appropriations of folklore, but, at the same
time, it differs radically from the established modes of appro-
priation. Although, for the reader familiar with the norms of
setting, it poses problems (discontinuity, patchwork nar-
native, lexical instability, and so on) similar to those of oral
narrative, it is far from a distended essence of folklore, being
rather a work which exploits and distorts its dual provenance.
Folklore provided sources for three more poem in 1921-2.

In its "pair-bird" setting and characterization adopted in the early plays were
rejected. Instead, the magical transformations worked by fan-
tastic heroes of Russian folklore served as models for the work
of the poet herself, transforming through her own poetic spills
the material which she inherited.

Shortly after completing "Pair-Bird", Tsvetayeva began work
on a second narrative poem echoing folk literature: "Egnafora.
The eponymous hero is loosely based on Egorii Khvostlyi,
the popular version of St. George. "Egnakha, Tsvetayeva's longest
work in verse, was never completed, and only extracts of
parts which she did finish had been published before 1988,
while the full text of its five cantos (all with lacunae) and
her plans for other parts were included in the new Sobranie."

Tsvetayeva worked on the poem in early 1922, writing the first
canto, "Khvostlyi" ("Youth"), "Pastushok" ("Life as a Shepherd"),
and "Kupechistvo" ("Life as a Merchant"), none of which is entirely finished, and parts of the fourth,"Serfim-Graf" ("Serf-Merchant")
There are also loose plans for further parts of the poem. She
resumed work on it in 1926, and abandoned it once more, after writing a fifth (and
again incomplete) canto, "Kokoljina Shokol'ka" ("Falcon City.
"She left no known explanation of her failure to complete
Egnakha. However, differences between it and her other
folklore-based poem are very telling. The completed parts of
Egnakha bear little resemblance to any works of folk liter-

ature based on the life of St. George, although her plans do
involve a meeting with the dragon and the rescue of a
princess. The most common works of folklore dealing with St.
George are dalkhame st bók ("spiritual verses"), retelling in popu-
lar form the familiar episodes from the Saint's legendary life.

But "Egnakha, in contrast to Tsvetayeva's other folklore-based
works, is not a corrupted version of a single, familiar source.
Instead, it is a compilation of many folklore and literary
motifs, from the story of Rambouillet and Remus to the Grail
legend and even the fables about the Neveusor merchant
Sadok, combined with Tsvetayeva's own inventions. The folk-
lore fabula of the quest emerges at the end of the third
canto, while a series of loosely associated trials and
adventures for the hero are all that sustain the narrative up to
that point. Each canto describes a self-sufficient episode.
The first tells how the energetic and powerful hero was born of
a coastal woman and an eagle, and succumbed to a wolf along
with her own cub, only to learn more gentle habits through
divine intervention, when he and his wolf-brother broke into
the garden of paradise. "Egnakha" continues in this
spiritual quest, whereupon they are miraculously transformed into
good citizens. In the second canto the returned Egorii and his
brother guard a herd of sheep and other domestic animals.
Egorii, bored with being good, provokes a bull to single
combat and pulls off his horns; he is calmed by a lamb.
A sinister snowstorm (apparently called Martiniksha) attempts
to seduce him, and, when rejected, to kill him, but he is
sovereign by his brother. Finally, he has to save a lamb from

1 Sobranie (Moscow, 1988), p. 196 [hereafter cited as Sobranie], p. 888. Fragments
were published in Novoe slovo, 1921, no. 19, pp. 18, 22, with a misleading introduction
by A. K. Egor, Egorii, 1923, no. 34, pp. 18-19. These two publications are
integrated in the new Sobranie.

2 Sobranie, p. 888. Egorii, 1923, no. 34, pp. 18, 22, with the introduction and general
annotation by A. K. Egorii, Egorii, 1923, no. 34, p. 17. For a fuller account of Egorii's
introduction to the "Sobranie" edition, see P. F. Vashman, Egorii, Sobranie, 1923, no. 34, p. 9.
See also Sobranie, p. 888. Egorii, 1923, no. 34, pp. 18, 22, with the introduction and
general annotation by A. K. Egorii, Egorii, 1923, no. 34, p. 17. For a fuller account of Egorii's
introduction to the "Sobranie" edition, see P. F. Vashman, Egorii, Sobranie, 1923, no. 34, p. 9.

3 See P. F. Vashman, Egorii, Sobranie, 1923, no. 34, pp. 888, 921-34, for many examples of
Egorii's discussion with M. L. Egorii, "Egorii, 1923, no. 34, pp. 888, 921-34, for
more examples of Egorii's discussion with M. L. Egorii, "Egorii, 1923, no. 34, pp. 888, 921-34.

4 See also Sobranie, p. 888. Egorii, 1923, no. 34, pp. 18, 22, with the introduction and
general annotation by A. K. Egorii, Egorii, 1923, no. 34, p. 17. For a fuller account of Egorii's
introduction to the "Sobranie" edition, see P. F. Vashman, Egorii, Sobranie, 1923, no. 34, p. 9.

5 See also Sobranie, p. 888. Egorii, 1923, no. 34, pp. 18, 22, with the introduction and
general annotation by A. K. Egorii, Egorii, 1923, no. 34, p. 17. For a fuller account of Egorii's
introduction to the "Sobranie" edition, see P. F. Vashman, Egorii, Sobranie, 1923, no. 34, p. 9.
his adoptive mother the wolf and five of her cubs: rebuked by her, he refuses to fight, and is about to surrender to her paws when the tree where he has put the lamb, out of harm's way, catches light: the lamb is untouched in the midst of the flames. In the third canto Egmont becomes a merchant, but rather than making his masters any money, gives all the goods away: on the last day of his week's trial his masters reveal themselves as other-worldly (Korkina suggests that they are the three favourite saints of Russia, St. Sergius of Radonezh, St. Seraphim of Sarov, they predict his future service to Russia and his coming trials, and instruct him to seek a special kham (goblet). In the fourth canto Egmont visits the unearthly Seraphim-gard, passes further tests, and is taken across a river of fire by a winged soldier (Korkina suggests that St. Michael is the prototype). Sketches of further developments suggest trial by lazur neka (azure-river) (later used in Persadokhi), allegorical commentary on the Civil War and Bolshevism Russia, defeat of robbers, an encounter with the dragon, the rescue of a princess (Elissiavna), arrest and incarceration by an evil tyrant, escape from a fiery furnace, and, finally, with the help of Elissiavna and her gudamosho kreni (book of depth), the salvation of Russia, ensured by spending three nights on the Throne-Mountain, and resisting the earthly temptations of Elissiavna herself (the gudamosho kren is a folkloric cosmology in the form of a illuminated book, its title suggesting 'light', 'depth', and 'dove'). In 1616 Tavrtsa returned to Egmont, wrote further plans, and the fifth canto, in which the hero visits the artisan settlement Sokolovna sloboda, where he practices his own craftmanship, each time producing a curious, magical, and sacred artefact in an unexpected and, at that, misunderstood manner.

Egmont is a fascinating collage. It combines pagan and Christian motifs, the sacred and the profane. It introduces occasional references to contemporary Russia into the generally folkloric world of trial and quest. Many obviously folkloric narrative devices are employed, especially in the longest canto, 'Seraphim-gard', which consists of a series of slightly modified, repeated episodes; the disparate constructions of so many works of folklore are much in evidence. As in her other inspired works, markedly literary devices are also prominent. for example, the formulaic, distantly Hesiodic descriptions of dusk (each a modification of the last, and each with an element of carry over) which introduce the accounts of Egmont's days as a merchant in 'Seraphim-gard'. Egmont the artisan in the latter (and perhaps more self-conscious) 'Seraphim-gard', like the artisans of Leskov, a writer whom Tavrtsa admired, can be seen as representing the artist himself when he magically produces curious, seemingly sinister, mysterious, or vulgar versions of the familiar and popular as when he apparently weeps and urinates on pour molten lead, which then turns to silver.

As in Tavrtsa's Drissa, repetition, linguistic distortion, parataxis, narrative ellipses, and polyphonic prose are encountered, although often the overall effect is more robust and comic.
It is evident that Egenadis was a very ambitious project, combining many different motifs, and anticipating a number of Tweteoic's later works: the storm-sorceress and other temptations anticipate Pendekg, in which, as to Madrib, the name 'Mantikha' provides an especially clear link; the emphatic combination of pagan and Christian motifs anticipates the lyric poetry of Tweteoic's Aegina ("flowering") of such biblical motifs as the burning bush and the fiery furnace place Egenadis among Tweteoic's apocrypha. It is equally evident that, despite its fictitious language and its awkward points out, novel, humour, the work is a failure—and Tweteoic's failure to complete it suggests that she herself felt so. The narrative does not have the truthness (nor, for the most part, the difficulty) seen in most of her other poetry—indeed, there are painful regions; the first two cantos occupy almost sixty printed pages, and take Egenadis only a small part of the way towards his goal; the longer are reinforced by the folkloric repetitions, here much more marked than in Taur-Dinah. In the other poetry examined in this chapter there is a vital tension between the relative simplicity of the inherited narrative and the distortion of that narrative in the poet's new version. Egenadis can, like most of the other long works examined in these pages, be read against other contemporary versions: the Saint and his life (biographical and folkloric) attracted Tweteoic's contemporaries, including Balbion, Eros, Bens, Khyar, Kazmin, and Remizoz; and Tweteoic herself wrote other St. George poems.7 But the story of Egenadis is entirely new, episodic, and fragmentary. Consequently, there is also less

7 For Balbion and Kazmin's treatment of St. George (and Tweteoic's later version see Ch. 2 below. Eros's was a patriotic, Tweteoic's was a religious; the hero is guided by the Saint; the Saint leads the hero through the trials; the hero succeeds; the Saint rewards the hero. For Remizoz, see below; Kazmin's is complex; Tweteoic's is more straightforward.
opportunities for productive friction between the poetics of folkloric and early stylistic literary traditions, and a nascent modernist sensibility.

The fact that Tsvetateva was not restricting a single, familiar source may help to explain her failure to finish the work: there was nothing to subvert, and nothing to hold the story together. In Egerdzhika the magical transformations and human voice play a smaller role. Moreover, they do not involve spells, and therefore cannot be the agents of literacy incantations (as in the transitive language of incantations: the speech of characters who have succumbed to some form of enchantment). Commentators have pointed out that Tsvetateva's acquaintance with a young Bolshiev, Boris Bessarabov, provided some of the inspiration for Egerdzhika. More telling, however, in the case of the less successful early plays, is the absence of a source which can be self-consciously manipulated.

In early 1920 Tsvetateva wrote Pentschokh, her third folkloric-based poem. It is included in the collection Romans and is accordingly examined in detail in the following chapter. Pentschokh is based not on folk tale but a bylina. It is much shorter and much more obscure than her Pemig-stanchka, but it shows the same preoccupation with incantatory effects and with the rewriting and radical disruption of a single source. Here she seems to have succeeded where she failed in Egerdzhika: using

left the icon, apparently, as the 25-year-old – and sometimes Tsvetateva's Muscovite girl/girlfriend recorded in Ch. 3 above, when he leaves the room to smoke (N. B. Svetkova, Ekaterina Svetkova, ed. G. Stepanov and R. Vlases, vol. C. Zumbulay, R. Bubin, and B. Illyicheva, Svetkova (Moscow, 1987).)

Svetkova, Ekaterina Svetkova (Moscow, 1987): 491-492. Radzis has suggested an interesting political interpretation of the poem; the question is whether the iconography suggests a metaphor of revolution. When Tsvetateva saw that parent iconography would not overcome the iconography, she detached her work on it (Ekaterina Tsvetateva, The Woman, 1993). This speculative argument is not, however, supported by the evidence of Tsvetateva and Miloserd, both with significant political overtones (the iconography of the more famous Tsvetateva in the Song of the Great Mother) and even in the song of the iconography as it is understood today.

the bylica as a model, she created a complex, coherent poem. For another model and example, see: The bylica as a model, she created a complex, coherent poem.

the bylica as a model, she created a complex, coherent poem. For another model and example, see: The bylica as a model, she created a complex, coherent poem.
night the nobleman joins his servant to keep watch. When
the same transformation takes place he strikes the girl
and decides to marry her. She consents, setting one condition: she
will not go to church for four years. After two years of
conjugal bliss the nobleman ill-advisedly boasts of his wife's
beauty to some guests. They object that she is not baptized.
He promises her baptism the following Sunday and asks her
personal circumstances. When he is asked a question she
responds: "I'm not a virgin."

Maruya answers that she was at the church, and
did see what was done (marriage ceremony). She denies
the of the church. Upon hearing her denial he says that her father
died the next day, and then vanishes. After her father's death
Maruya marries her, and again encounters the young
man (now described as nokampusu). At the end of the
night he asks her the same question, and she gives
the same reply. He feuilleter her mother's death and vanishes.
Her mother dies, Maruya sees him again, and this time he
predicts her own death. She seeks the advice of her aged
grandmother, who tells her that, after her death, her body
must be washed out of the house beneath the threshold and
buried at the crossroads. Maruya instructs the village priest,
accordingly, goes home, and dies. Shortly afterwards a young
nobleman (kenshi) passes her roadside grave and sees a beautiful
flower on it. He instructs his servant to dig it up and they take
it home. One night the servant sees the flower fall off the plant,
turn into a beautiful girl, and wander round the house. She
helps herself to food, and then resumes floral shape. The next
She went out on the street, began to bid him goodbye, and quietly turned to one of his friends. He sat on his way, and she stood and let the ball of thread wind; she let it all wind and ran to find out where her chosen bridgegroom lived.

The priest carries on Manaya's instructions about her burial without comment, even though they mark her as sacrilegious. One might turn her back into a flower, the next she remains in human shape with the kerch (fording). Such 'problems' do not exist for the folk tale—she stems from questions which it does not ask itself.

Moldaviets follows the outline of its single source very closely (in contrast to Tsvetavarov's Eseninovets), leading Kastiansky to speak of its 'almost fidelity' to its source. However, many of the familiar operations of literary appropriation are performed on details. Moldaviets is divided into two parts, each of five cantos. The first part tells the story of Manaya's meeting with the Vampire and the consequent deaths, concluding with her burial. The second tells the story of Manaya and the nobleman. The plot is fuller than the folk tale's redundant details are removed, explanation added. The Vampire's role in the third deaths is made explicit; he kills her victims in the time-honoured manner. The Grandmother is removed, her burial instructions to the heroine now provided by the Vampire himself. The kerch prevents Manaya's return to floral form by making the sign of the cross over her. But most important of all, psychological motivation is added in the folk tale things 'just happen'; in Moldaviets they are explained. Thus, the silence of the heroine and the persistence of the Vampire are motivated: she will not reveal the truth for love, he is attracted to her for the same reason, therefore offering her every opportunity to save herself, and then escape damnation.

Tsvetavara herself explained what she did to the story in her article 'Poezii krilca': "A Poet on Criticism."
blue). In other words, the very logic of literary rewriting, which demands the addition of psychological motivation, leads not to the elaboration of the story in terms of the usual sexual and literary stereotypes, but to subversion of those stereotypes. A tale which provides a myth of sexual repression and male fantasy (with the subliminal message that women are the objects of uncontrollable male desire, losing their lives with their virginity when they fall victim to that desire) has been reversed by the very features which might have been expected to elaborate the basic myth.

Comparison of Medea with Remizov’s literary version of a vampire tale illustrates the radical nature of Tsvetayev’s rewriting. His “Upur” in Poshter takes no such liberties. The form and style of a folk tale are closely followed: “Upur” is brief and in prose. The stance of this treatment was clearly established when “Upur” appeared with a short scholarly note about vampires in Remizov’s collected works. Remizov’s tales are tidy, literary versions of the folk original; as Shane writes, “Remizov frequently amplified details or inserted additions which unified and emphasized the sense, imagery and setting of the original text.” In other words, the literary rewriting helps the tale to state more clearly what it is supposed to say in the original form (or, the poetics and myths of folklore are dismembered, in order to facilitate the creation of a work recognizable as closer to cyclic: such is the purpose of the traditional literary appropriations of folklore to which Medea refers in form and theme, but which, simultaneously, it subverts. In Remizov’s “Upur” gendered emotion is emphasized in the heroine, Princess Chuchelska, is the vampire’s passive victim:

“Remizov, Sonnet Enough, 11. 364-5, 664-5. Remizov confirms the importance of such work, arguing that Remizov’s increasing use of them is significant in the development of his poetry.”

Upon the goblet
He fell.
—An end to your riches!
With humming, humming, humming!
—An end to their world.
With singing, singing, singing.
—Ah! you're sore?
—No!—more!
Drink all.
My heart.
Quaff—deny.
Re—deny.
Drink, see.
Ah, see!

Sexual pleasure is asserted against the conventions of familial and social order. Mariwa refuses to obey conventional demands, sacrificing her family to her sexual love for the Vampire. Moreover, another change, small but significant, has been made to the source: in Malibati Mariwa sacrifices her brother, not (as in the tale) her father; there is no mention of her father at all. The removal from the story of the traditional source and agent of family power, whose role in retributing and defining a daughter's character is especially large, suggests that a psychoanalytical reading would also conclude that in Malibati female sexuality is freed from its conventional constraints. Tsetaveta draws telling analogies between Malibati and Fonta, while emphasizing that, for Tsetaveta, it is the heroine, not the hero, whose fate is central. 

Akhenenivald, whose critic's view of Malibati annoyed Tsetaveta, complained of its "abnormal" and "pathological morality" (in which meaning's linguistic virtuosity is "a code, a logic of sound") had taken the place of meaning as conveyed in the transparent language of the classical pone-stacle. Yet it has been demonstrated that the story of Malibati is, on the contrary, very logical (the rewriting has rendered the source 'literary', said and told, with all the necessary motivation and psychological explanation). But, of course, the logic is subjective, and ironic (disappointing the expectations which literary reworkings of this theme exist, and is allied with, not opposed to, Akhenenivald's Apilikulwa. Just as the heroine frees herself from the constraints of social and sexual conventions, explicit in her marriage to the vampire, so too the language of Malibati frees itself from the demands of conventional linguistic order. No longer a transparent (and, therefore, passive) conveyer of meaning, language itself is a sensual object, to be enjoyed in its own right, on its own terms. 

Whereas the plot and story of Malibati are simple and linear, the narration is indirect and difficult. Verbs are omitted, juxtapositions and parallelisms replace the standard expressions of narrative causality; where verbs are present conjunctions are missing, and so on. This is especially evident in such climactic scenes as the consummation, quoted in part above. In the twelve lines from Kanu to Amal and to Amul there are no finite verbs. The passage also illustrates the disturbing polyphony of Malibati: the narrative voice is not only of many, and is often submerged by others, some choral, some clearly belonging to participants in the story. Discordant, unidentified voices often interrupt and contradict one another, subverting the putative unity of the narrative. At other times, as in the extract above, the passage from one voice to another is not announced, nor marked typographically. The first line of the first stanza is evidently spoken by Mariwa, the second line of the first stanza and the first two lines of the second stanza by the Vampire, while the third and fourth lines of each stanza belong to the narrative. But this is not clear until the fourth line of the second stanza, when its narrative statement papa (he fell) another illustration of the association of the breaking
of linguistic constraints with the transgression of other norms is provided by the culmination of the second part of Midoset, when the heroine travels to church, meets the Vampire again, and abandons her husband and son. Indeed, her final words to her husband explicitly announce her rejection of him as the conventional choice: posadzit, posadit (Placzew well-fed) (4:146). On their way to church, and during the service, voices belonging to or suggestive of the Vampire are heard, mocking the world of the hajuk and of the Orthodox liturgy. Moreover, it is clear that Mariya’s submission is social, as well as sexual, from the claims of ownership made by her husband during the journey to church:

Rah, sha, bii, bii.
Vaches miluiu—slo!
Bra, miluiu, s bii!
Nadet nekliu—nai!
Oti klimii—Barmiyu!
Bra—as o!
Barmiyu!
Aas—klyt, bii!
Mei—slo,
Oo deem, zupi.
Rag, nekliu.
—Sobach, nekliu!
Oti nochii—Barmiyu!
Bra—as o!
Oti nochii—Barmiyu!
Mei shaalii,
Mei kwei,
Tamer eti,
Rah, sha, bii.
—Es, pos xamii!
China—slo!
Es, rii zhehomii!
Oti Rini—Barmiyu! (4:146)
Writ, pos sha, in black and white.
Of our indulgence—this he said!

Bow, my dear, in beefer food!
Of our indulgence—these the sera!
Whose bowl?—Master’s!
Whose thee-bowl—Master’s!
Whose pan—Master’s!
Whose la—Master’s!
Mine—the bowls,
Mine—the loaves.
Father wrested,
God blessed them.
—Bonets of felt!
Whose legs—Master’s!
—Earrings presented,
Whose nights—Master’s!
My fears,
My means,
God-speeded.
—Hey, fired gardeners!
Whose gardeners—Master’s!
—Hey, vasted members!
Whose Russian—Master’s!

Similar disruptions are worked on the fabric of language itself: non-standard stresses and morphological forms are common. Such disruptions are often given especial prominence, for example, by providing the standard form in the same line:

Posden-preden
K shevii-t shehi!
Pokhidron—pokhidron
A poshenib 8 pokhidrou! (8:142)
Let’s go—let’s go
To mans-to mass!
Let’s rush—let’s rush
To communion-communion!

On this see as characteristic of popular forms, but note also Berez, see Lemon and Mints, “Khlebok prihody,” (3).
In these lines another device common in Molodtso (and found in Yoruba-Dinbala) is seen: the jumbling of words by the hyphen. It is distantly reminiscent of the pleonastic synonyms of folk literature, but is employed here to join disparate (not, as in Yoruba, similar) elements. Furthermore, its disruptive function is emphasized by the fact that a similar typographical device—the dash—is also used (sometimes in adjoining lines or stanzas) to divide words into their constituent syllables (implying a multiple stress impossible in standard Russian):

—Pover-gleve!
Ente pishe!
—Povar dashar,
Povar dashar.

Verbal sound is also encountered by grammatical distortion and neologisms is also encountered:

V shche ne dovolis'?
Reseacha tired.

Reseacha tired,
Reseacha tired.

Reseacha tired.
Reseacha tired.

Reseacha tired.
Reseacha tired.

Reseacha tired.
Reseacha tired.

Reseacha tired.
Reseacha tired.

Reseacha tired.
Reseacha tired.

Reseacha tired.
Reseacha tired.

Reseacha tired.
Reseacha tired.

Reseacha tired.
Reseacha tired.

Reseacha tired.
Reseacha tired.

Reseacha tired.
Reseacha tired.

Reseacha tired.
Reseacha tired.

Reseacha tired.
Reseacha tired.

Reseacha tired.
Reseacha tired.

Reseacha tired.
Reseacha tired.

Reseacha tired.
Reseacha tired.

Reseacha tired.
Reseacha tired.

Reseacha tired.
Reseacha tired.

Reseacha tired.
Reseacha tired.

Reseacha tired.
Reseacha tired.

Reseacha tired.
Reseacha tired.

Reseacha tired.
Reseacha tired.

Reseacha tired.
Reseacha tired.

Reseacha tired.
Reseacha tired.

Reseacha tired.
Reseacha tired.

Reseacha tired.
Reseacha tired.

Reseacha tired.
Reseacha tired.

Reseacha tired.
Reseacha tired.

Reseacha tired.
Reseacha tired.

Reseacha tired.
Reseacha tired.

Reseacha tired.
Reseacha tired.

Reseacha tired.
Reseacha tired.

Reseacha tired.
Reseacha tired.

Reseacha tired.
Reseacha tired.

Reseacha tired.
Reseacha tired.

Reseacha tired.
Reseacha tired.

Reseacha tired.
Reseacha tired.

Reseacha tired.
Reseacha tired.

Reseacha tired.
Reseacha tired.

Reseacha tired.
Reseacha tired.

Reseacha tired.
Reseacha tired.

Reseacha tired.
Reseacha tired.

Reseacha tired.
Reseacha tired.

Reseacha tired.
Reseacha tired.

Reseacha tired.
Reseacha tired.

Reseacha tired.
Reseacha tired.

Reseacha tired.
Reseacha tired.

Reseacha tired.
Reseacha tired.

Reseacha tired.
Reseacha tired.

Reseacha tired.
Reseacha tired.

Reseacha tired.
Reseacha tired.

Reseacha tired.
Reseacha tired.

Reseacha tired.
Reseacha tired.

Reseacha tired.
Reseacha tired.

Reseacha tired.
Reseacha tired.

Reseacha tired.
Reseacha tired.

Reseacha tired.
Reseacha tired.

Reseacha tired.
Reseacha tired.

Reseacha tired.
Reseacha tired.

Reseacha tired.
Reseacha tired.

Reseacha tired.
Reseacha tired.

Reseacha tired.
Reseacha tired.

Reseacha tired.
Reseacha tired.

Reseacha tired.
Reseacha tired.

Reseacha tired.
Reseacha tired.

Reseacha tired.
Reseacha tired.

Reseacha tired.
Reseacha tired.

Reseacha tired.
Reseacha tired.

Reseacha tired.
Reseacha tired.

Reseacha tired.
Reseacha tired.

Reseacha tired.
Reseacha tired.

Reseacha tired.
Reseacha tired.

Reseacha tired.
Reseacha tired.

Reseacha tired.
Reseacha tired.

Reseacha tired.
Reseacha tired.

Reseacha tired.
Reseacha tired.

Reseacha tired.
Reseacha tired.

Reseacha tired.
Reseacha tired.

Reseacha tired.
Reseacha tired.

Reseacha tired.
Reseacha tired.

Reseacha tired.
Reseacha tired.

Reseacha tired.
Reseacha tired.

Reseacha tired.
Reseacha tired.

Reseacha tired.
Reseacha tired.

Reseacha tired.
Reseacha tired.

Reseacha tired.
Reseacha tired.

Reseacha tired.
Reseacha tired.

Reseacha tired.
Reseacha tired.

Reseacha tired.
Reseacha tired.

Reseacha tired.
Reseacha tired.

Reseacha tired.
Reseacha tired.

Reseacha tired.
Reseacha tired.

Reseacha tired.
Reseacha tired.

Reseacha tired.
Reseacha tired.

Reseacha tired.
Reseacha tired.

Reseacha tired.
Reseacha tired.

Reseacha tired.
Reseacha tired.

Reseacha tired.
Reseacha tired.

Reseacha tired.
Reseacha tired.

Reseacha tired.
Reseacha tired.

Reseacha tired.
Reseacha tired.

Reseacha tired.
Reseacha tired.

Reseacha tired.
Reseacha tired.

Reseacha tired.
Reseacha tired.

Reseacha tired.
Reseacha tired.

Reseacha tired.
Reseacha tired.

Reseacha tired.
Reseacha tired.

Reseacha tired.
Reseacha tired.

Reseacha tired.
Reseacha tired.

Reseacha tired.
Reseacha tired.

Reseacha tired.
Reseacha tired.

Reseacha tired.
Reseacha tired.

Reseacha tired.
Reseacha tired.

Reseacha tired.
Reseacha tired.

Reseacha tired.
borne by ranks of angels)—only the first four words are actually heard in Maloide; they provide dramatic and stylistically emphasized contrast with the profane flight of the heroine and the Vampire: *Ta-ya-ya* / *To-ate* ("She—up / He—near"). The proclamation of the sacred text, and the choice of the pagan over the Christian, are typical of Tveretava, especially in this period, as is her exploitation of the renowned *dzyne* (combination of paganism and Christianity) of Russian popular culture.

Nearly a decade later Tveretava preferred to emphasize the damnation of her heroine; when she wrote of the end of Maloide: 'And then there is the child, adored and abounded—for you do not take your son with you to hell', and referred to Marusya's destination as 'eternal damnation'. But these remarks were later reflections on Maloide (and by then Tveretava had lost her own adored son, Georgi). It would be wrong to read them as unproblematic commentary on the end of the poem. More appropriate is Tveretava's remark to Pasternak in 1968 apropos of Maloide: *Te se zyna, cze takie andachtsanta ("I do not know what blasphemy it is").

Tveretava ended with the strikingly subversive introduction of historical time (the red revolution which overthrows the tsar of the folk-tale kingdom); Maloide ends with the abolition of time, as Marusya flies into *aqat* air, while the Vampire, which suspends earthly time, takes place in the church.

The quotations from the liturgy also serve yet another purpose: they introduce a familiar cultural model for Tveretava's polyphony—the Orthodox church service. The parallel is ironically emphasized by the antiphonal comments of the Vampire, as the Sixteenth Psalm is heard:

---

148

**THE POETICAL SKETCH**

_Poeti! ko do načia?_  
_Co do bi le pročed?_ (p. 112)

Lash, chill  
Endure, relish!  
Wife and husband—  
One wildness!  
With a pair—don't tarry,  
Untamed beggars!  
'Hey, lovely girl!  
Rooftop forgotten!'  
Away! No brother means!  
What was—is shattered!

The culmination of the story, when Marusya rejects husband and son for flight with the Vampire, takes place at the church service, against the choral background of the liturgy. Communion, it should be recalled, is taken more rarely in the Eastern Orthodox than the Western churches, so that the preparations for the Eucharist have an especially elevated tenor. Interruptions from the liturgy provide an ironic commentary on the approach of the Vampire and on Marusya's preference for him over her respectable family. First fragments of the Sixteenth Psalm (in the Orthodox Psalter; Seventeenth in the Western version), then of the Fifth (Fifty-first), then of the Fifty-fourth (Fifty-fifth) are heard; after two more ironic interventions from the service, the beginning of the Choralic hymn sounds, as Marusya abandons her family for her other-worldly lover. Thus, Marusya flies off into *aqat* air (Tveretava notes that Maloide begins and ends on the word *aqat* in a vital moment in the service. The faithful, having called upon the Lord for protection ('From the wicked that oppresses me') and for cleansing ('Pour me with thy compassions'), and having heard the call for the excommunication of non-communicants (ugly name of the liturgical service— the Vampire would more certainly number among them, are preparing for the Eucharist with the Choralic hymn. The images of sacred flight ("O that I had wings like a dove'"); _Tais do taya zet policiyaneggod samon nartsden du- namen ekidts_ ("that I might be the King of all, inviolate"; 149

---

119 Translated from the Russian translation of her poem in Le Gor, her French version of Maloie, in _Santoro &客户服务_ (1968), p. 99. 1199 are also Korkina, _Lipshchinski namet_, p. 92. Le Gor says, p. 13, below.

120 Both Korkina, in _Lipshchinski namet_, and Pasternak, in his commentary to Maloide (Moscow, 1968, p. 68-90), disagree: they treat this phrase as a direct account of Tveretava's view on Maloide. However, we may only say that Pasternak is in error, as one of the events described in the phrase suggests, but it may also be a product of a later stage in her writing and thought, when the speaker has become too unpopular about the value of certain texts (and, for that matter, in Russian language).

121 _Dzyne_, and _imri_ (letter of May 1968).
Throughout *Moleste*, the narrative is similarly elliptical, denying the transparency and ease of consumption which the genre leads the reader to expect; just as the literary reworking of plot leads not to conventional, but to unconventional and challenging resolutions. The story shows Marusya actively enjoying and welcoming her diabolical lover; to, too, language offers itself as a sensual object, and welcomes the participation of the reader. The text, far from surrendering easily, offers a challenge and an invitation to participate in its own construction; for example, words are often omitted, or merely suggested, so that the narrative requires an active response.

---

**Gusak, posli**

Gusak, darhi,

*Stranei* furtvnenie

*Eh!*

*Mu* — *zharka,*

*Tov* — *zharka,*

U* Marusa — zharka veshch!*

Bright ones burn,
Hot ones burn,
Valued in heat —
Old
Mine are hotter,

---

The *poetry-Salat*.

Yeats are hotter,
Marusya has the hotter yet!

In this example, phonically and semantically sensual, the word omitted is *zharka* (*check*). At other moments in *Moleste* the omission of words or parts of words is emphasised by rhyme:

*Lyrics:*

*Lezha* — *lezi* (p. 100),

*Guzh* — *guzh* (p. 100).

Wild is your wedding feast,
Your groom's a deadly b——

The reader of the Russian is invited to intervene, and to complete the line with the syllable *pyr,* forming the word for *'vampire.'* This device, like so many others, emphasizes the literary structuring of poetic discourse, and the reliance on conventions, in this case subverted by knowing omission, while at the same time coinciding exactly with the narrative requirements of the story (the revelation—from the heroine's brother—is cut off by the Vampire himself as he commits his murder).

As Tsvetaeva wrote to Pasternak, *Moleste* is built from the minimal divisions of words. She might have added that narrative voices, prosodic sections, and other, conventionally unified, elements are also divided, often into minimal parts. Consequently, it is not a ready-made and easily consumed work. Akhikin's *complaining* of this, formulated precisely the originality of *Moleste*:

*Stashe to napismu stikami i napismu tab, chto to tezda byt.* Tove omen ne negoizhestvo chitatel'ja, a negoizhestvo knigi. . .Vse skazki ne imeet prinica byt' ote negoizhestva, o skazkovom negoizhestve, ne byti, kniga, chasto ona byla pravda i proizvedenie.*

This tale is written in verse, and written in such a way that it is hard to understand. It is not the reader's slow-wittedness, but the book's which is to blame for this. . . After all, a folk tale has no

---

*Teleston makes the intriguing suggestion that the last such entry above, in the second-from-last stanza of *Moleste,* identifies the Vampire with the biblical angel of death, Azazel, whom Tsvetaeva, in *Azaz*, a poem of sometime date (Teleston says 1925), identified with Ezra (Teleston, *Poesie Moleste*, p. 159). If Tsvetaeva is correct, the references above to proliferation, poetic flight, and finally reification, but her argument is not entirely convincing, but her argument is not entirely convincing.

*Teleston loc. cit. and footnote, p. 146.

*Quoted in Kadrova, *Poesia e Parole*, p. 151.*
right to demand execution from us—she wants it to take it in early, she wants it to be simple and transparent.

The language of *Molodets* is never transparent, nor is it an undemanding work, and, Al'khrebrov's complaints notwithstanding, these are the features which make it of particular value.

The metre of *Molodets* is equally unsettled and unsettling. Individual metrical patterns (often 'compound' or 'logoadic') predominate only for short periods. The work is aggressively polymetrical, consisting mostly of short lines in irregular strophic patterns. Itsmetrical fabric is roughened by lines of irregular length, adjacent stresses, heterotonic rhyme, violent enjambement, and so on. It is not, however, written in *dilya*.

Its metrical effects (like its narrative and linguistic effects) depend upon the disruption of regular and familiar forms, not on the establishment of novel irregular ones. The metre gestures towards the neat literary closure of the traditional *posh-shag* only to emphasize its own openness. In this respect it is typical of the work as a whole, which invites comparison with inherited classical forms, but in doing so underlines its own divergence from them.

*Molodets* has been read as a modification of the original *posh-shag*, bringing it closer to the devices and interests of folklore than were its literary antecedents. Others consider it an example of *style mair*, the nostalgic, decadent, and self-conscious imitation of the national content and vital style of folklore. Both approaches betray the anxiety experienced by readers faced with a work which gestures too strongly towards continuity (in genre, theme, and, at times, device), only to reveal its radical discontinuity (the expectations raised by

---


For a fuller discussion of the metre of *Molodets*, see Al'khrebrov, *Romanticism in the Literary World*.

This is implicit in Kar'inskii's discussion of *Molodets* and the other folkloric-based *posh-shag* (his *Mirev* and *Romantic*).

---

genre and story are subverted, conventional sexuality and narrative are reversed; language and semantics join the heroine's rebellion against ossified forms and notions of ownership.

The textual violence of *Molodets* (the source of such critical anxiety) provides one of the best examples in *Tsverataev's* work of her use and abuse of literary sources, and of the importance in her poetics of the friction thereby created.

*Molodets* marks the culmination of *Tsverataev's* interest in folklore. More concise and sophisticated than *Tsar Devstvo*, it is a paradoxical combination of narrative clarity and difficulty, of literary convention and transgression. As it was written in the year when she left Russia and began work on *Pode Rastu*, the collection which announces a new development in her lyrical poetry, it is tempting also to see *Molodets* as her farewell to Russian folklore. It is, indeed, true that she did not publish any more folklore-based *posh-shag*, but she did, of course, return to the unfinished *Egoscuev* in 1928. Moreover, around the same time she also returned to *Molodets*. If the original enterprise of writing *posh-shag* in the tradition of Pushkin, Zhukovsky, and Evshov was an 'impossible' one, the new enterprise was doubly so: she set about translating into French her radical revision of this specifically Russian genre. The result, *La Gare*, is examined below. The two finished *posh-shag* contribute much to an understanding of the treatment of inherited texts in *Tsverataev's* work. Both place themselves firmly in a familiar tradition and refer to familiar material, but the familiarity of their antecedents only underlines their own radical novelty. An archaic genre is revived, but simultaneously subverted. *Molodets* is her most successful use of Russian folk literature. It condenses and reinforces the devices developed in her first mature *posh-shag*, *Tsar Devstvo*. It is clear that both *posh-shag* announce her discovery, after the relative failure of the early plays, of an appropriate form for a poetic voice which had, in her words, "...grown lyrical verse." They point towards the most elaborate and sophisticated *posh-shag* based on a literary source, *Kysytsa*.

Reminiscent of the collection comprised just after *Tsar Devstvo* and just before

---

*See Ch. 8.* *See Ch. 2 above.* *See Ch. 6 below.*
Molodets, indicates a similar advance to maturity and concision in the lyric poetry, and its use of literary material is examined in the following chapter.

By April 1921 Tsvetaeva, now twenty-eight years old, had written about 800 lyrics. She had also extended her poetic range with the poem and plays examined above, and began to incorporate into her poetry diverse literary sources, transforming them in many different ways. Some of her most significant work had been written in the difficult years of Revolution and Civil War, when she had been separated from her husband and had suffered the death of her second daughter, Irina. In July 1921 she finally received news of her husband, whom, it will be recalled, she had not seen since 1917; he had been evacuated with the White Army, after its defeat at Pervomay in 1920, and was living in Prague. She decided to join him, was granted a passport, and left Russia in May 1922, not to return for seventeen years.

Between April 1921 and April 1922 she wrote the 104 lyrics and the poem Povodechnyi (Subtexts) which comprise her next collection, Remeslo (Craft). Like Vesy i, Remeslo contains almost all the poetry completed by the poet during the period which it covers, and represents her poetic production from the completion of Na brestskom kole (On a Red Street) to her emigration. It is the first of her two most significant collections: Remeslo and Putevki Rossii (the second) contain her finest achievements as a lyric poet, matching in range and interest the narrative poems Tar-Dvatin, Molodets, and Krays, and the plays Ariadna and Fedra. Although the writing of Remeslo complies

1 See also Razmyslovsky, Maria Tsvetaeva, 15; Schweitzer, Reviis 506, 726-827;
V. S. Shostak, Sovetskaia poeziya i novelya, 301, 537; Lusky, 'Artsy noblenie', 110, 116-20.
Marina Tsvetaeva: 
Poetics of Appropriation 

MICHAEL MAKIN 

CLARENDON PRESS · OXFORD 
1993