

ILLiad TN: 4023365



B-w

Scan&Deliver

Borrower: HLS
Lending String: HLS

11/28/2012 1:51:16 PM

Patron: Sandler, Stephanie

Journal Title: A History of Women's Writing in
Russia

Volume: Issue:
Month/Year: 2002**Pages:** 264-276

Article Author: Stephanie Sandler

Article Title: Women's Poetry Since the Sixties

Special Instructions:

ILL Number: 4023363



Call #: WID WIDLC PG2997 .H56
2002

Location: HLS

Shipping Address:
Harvard University - Widener Library
Interlibrary Loan
Harvard University
Cambridge, MA 02138

Fax:
Ariel:
Odyssey: 206.107.43.109
Email: 206.107.43.109

MaxCost:

Widener Library Interlibrary Loan



THIS IS NOT AN INVOICE!

NON-IFM LIBRARIES WILL RECEIVE AN
INVOICE UNDER SEPARATE COVER FOR THIS
TRANSACTION FROM HARVARD UNIVERSITY
ACCOUNTS RECEIVABLE IN 4-6 WEEKS

**PLEASE DO NOT SEND PAYMENT UNTIL YOU
RECEIVE AN INVOICE!**

Women's poetry since the sixties

During the last four decades of the twentieth century, Russian women poets have drawn creative energy from the changing world around them despite often living and writing at odds with that world. They have endured the thaw, with its temporary recovery from years of war and terror, then stability and stagnation in the 1970s and early 1980s, turbulent reforms in the late 1980s, the Soviet Union's collapse in 1990, and, most recently, the emergence of a new Russian state. The poets in question experienced nearly all these historical stages, although some came to consciousness only after the sixties (Nina Iskrenko, Irina Ratushinskaia, Tat'iana Shcherbina, and Olesia Nikolaeva, born after 1950), and others met untimely deaths (Kari Unksova in 1983, Nina Iskrenko in 1995) or emigrated before the demise of the Soviet Union (Natal'ia Gorbanevskaja, Elizaveta Mnatsakanova, and Marina Temkina). A few are long-lived women who survived World War II and Stalin's Terror (Inna Lisnianskaia and Iunna Morits), whereas others (Mnatsakanova, Iskrenko, Ry Nikonova) are bold experimenters whose work traditionalists barely regard as poetry.

Despite differences in age, experience, poetic school, and aesthetic taste, these poets share complex views of Russian experience and Russian identity. Either because they witnessed dramatic political change, or because they left Russia, or because they always felt alienated from official life, they have found the question of Russian identity unresolved and often disturbing. This dilemma of identity is not always grounded in material or historical reality: some of the best recent poetry, including that of Elena Shvarts and Ol'ga Sedakova, sidesteps historical realities to reinvent Russia's poetry of the spirit. History, however, suffuses most self-consciously Russian poems, some of which seem written from the

margins, as Bella Akhmadulina, Morits, and Gorbanevskaja did in the 1960s when alternative poetry flourished. Self-styled poets of the underground in the 1970s and early 1980s often have followed their lead.

The era of the late 1980s and 1990s has witnessed alienation from privatization and capitalism (as in Shvarts and Lisnianskaia's songs of a holy fool), but also enthusiasm for novel opportunities and for a chance to jettison entirely the poet's traditional burden of national spokeswoman (Shcherbina). The 1990s have been good years for poets, despite the occasional denigration of poetry in an age of electronic communication and mass media. New routes to publication have opened and some recent poetic experiments are truly inspired. Contact with western feminism, the rediscovery of Russia's heritage of women's activism, and an awareness of Russia's tradition of great women poets have expanded the repertoire of experiences that poets give their feminine personae.

Few would like being grouped as "women poets" (the derogatory sting of the term *poetessa* remains offensive). Akhmadulina shares more with the liberal young poets of the post-Stalin era Evgenii Evtushenko and Andrei Voznesenskii, and Shvarts with Viktor Krivulin, Mikhail Kuzmin, and Nikolai Zabolotskii, than they do with each other. Women poets' primary allegiance is not to other women poets, and none of them makes genuine and complete sense outside the context of their male contemporaries and precursors. But contemporary women poets require separate attention because surveys still do not integrate them into the history of Russian culture. This is a surprising omission given the acknowledgment of women poets' significant, valuable work.¹ Until criticism loses its largely unexamined emphases and preferences, separate accounts of women's contributions to poetry are needed if we are to know their work at all. Separate study also lets one ask what it means that these poets write and are read as women. The answer to that question cannot be unitary, for some poets explore feminine identity with curiosity and passion, while others find the very idea oppressive and uninteresting. But ignoring the question of gender diminishes our appreciation of the achievements of many remarkable poets. This essay treats questions of feminine and national identity by examining the kinds of poems women poets have written since the 1960s. Its ordering is largely thematic, with some poets treated in more than one category.

History, politics, national identity

In a period of turbulent political change, we might expect poets to reflect on public events in their works, yet Russia's notorious habit of politicizing culture has virtually ensured an apolitical stance in many poets. Those poets who best draw historical and political themes into their work do so with self-consciousness and irony, either dramatically retreating into the distant past to write allegories of the present or reporting with unsentimental clarity on their day-to-day lives. Their political positions widely differ. There are activists, like Gorbanevskaja, arrested in the 1960s for demonstrating on Red Square, and Ratushinskaia, imprisoned for anti-Soviet activities in the 1970s. Both wrote detailed and politically effective statements of their beliefs in prose, but their poems reflect the psychic consequences of imprisonment as well as the disillusionment and brutality that pushed them into emigration. Each penned original verses that indict Russia's violent indifference to human life, as in Gorbanevskaja's fine poem "Naznach' mne svidanie" ("Fix a time to meet me"), which transforms a love poem by Mariia Petrovykh into a bitter meditation on the twentieth century's history of terror.

Lisnianskaia underwent a different kind of political initiation after the *Metropol'* affair.² Early lyrics convey her inner experiences, but her post-glasnost poetry explores life in a time of chaotic transformation and deep-seated prejudices. Poems speak of earlier massacres in order to lament present-day violence in a waning empire.³ For Lisnianskaia, Russians live in a time of decline,⁴ and, like Akhmatova's writings after 1921, her terse poetry bears the trace of her culture's suffering. She is particularly eloquent in poems to exiled and dead friends, where her grief at their absence also indicts the culture that turned them away.

Morits has long written of suffering; her poems retain undimmed memories of war's destruction, but also curiously distanced ruminations on how poorly poetry marks loss, and how slowly societies learn to be less warlike. Although Morits's earliest poems include personal and moving accounts of the war, her work published after 1990 exudes a more powerful sense of what it has meant for her to live through her country's history.⁵ Morits laments her nation's hidden losses as well, famously in her poem on the execution of the Georgian poet Titsian Tabidze ("Na Mtskheta padaet zvezda" ["A star falls over Mtskheta"]).

Younger poets have written of history in still more disquieting ways. Inna Kabysh expresses ambivalence about national identity in her

pungent lyrics—for her the country pushes its citizens to live on its imaginative boundaries and then makes them feel superfluous. Even when set in the past, her poems reflect the disturbances of the present, for example in one poem's dreadful images of womb, fetus, birth, and abortion that retell the murder of the young Tsarevich Dimitry.⁶ Elena Ignatova, author of a history of Leningrad, mixes past and present through personal references, as in her poem "Rodstvenniki" ("Relatives"), a family history with an interesting admixture of folklore. Iskrenko addresses directly the social decline of the Brezhnev and Gorbachev years, but she conceives of that devaluation as the deformation of language itself. Her poems sprawl across the page in a loud mix of styles and jargons, languages and symbols, codes and conversations. We can expect such experiments in historical poetry to continue.

The natural world

When poets write nature poems, they also resort to radical experiment to revitalize what seems a traditional theme. Iskrenko uses graphic illustrations in her "Antil'skie ostrova" ("The Antilles Islands"), showing the railroad tracks as ("—x—x—x—") and coral reef, lake, and waterfall as tiny inserted drawings; she includes a line of musical notation in "Pesn' zhavoronka" ("Song of the Lark").⁷ Such experiments typically come from poets prone to seek the new, as in Mnatsakanova's cycle *Vremena neba* (Times of the Sky), where one poem ends with metrical notation rather than words.

- ' --
- ' ---
- ' -

- ' ' _8

Formally more traditional poems about the natural world were written by young poets in the 1960s and 1970s as a near initiation rite. Morits, Gorbanevskaja, Lisnianskaia, and others of their generation found the theme safe (from overt ideology) and promising (of a realm in which to explore spiritual values and new poetic lexicons). Especially intriguing is Morits's volume *Mys zhelaniia* (Cape of Desire) about her expedition to the North Pole: her landscape poems have unforgettable huge birds and looming ships.

Landscape poetry may also be a poet's enduring genre. Akhmadulina has stayed with it throughout her career, exploring favorite locales

(Peredelkino, Tarusa, and Georgia) and objects (house, snow, rain, cricket, garden, cherry tree). Although the places are familiar, Akhmadulina writes slightly estranged poems, often choosing to talk about the poem's words – their sound, spelling, and resonance with others' words. She begins "Sad" ("The Garden"), for example, by declaring, "I went out into the garden, but luxuriant overgrowth / lives not there, but in the word *garden*" ("Я вышла в сад, но глушь и роскошь / живут не здесь, а в слове «сад»").⁹ Rather than a description, "Sad" offers an aesthetic depiction of a garden. Akhmadulina's natural world brims over with poets – fall is Pushkin's, Tarusa Tsvetaeva's, rain Pasternak's. The familiar theme will not let her go, particularly in poems about the creative process, where Akhmadulina inevitably relies on natural images to evoke inner experiences.¹⁰ Nature is not infinitely solacing, however; doubts about the garden's vivacity in "Sad" yield a meager affirmation – that the poet has written the simple sentence "I went out into the garden."

Gorbanevskaia and Sedakova also wonder whether language can encompass the natural world, but they counter skepticism with a sense of religious faith. There the similarity between them ends, for Sedakova exudes wonder and pleasure in the world around her, while Gorbanevskaia seems easily overcome with grief. She commands anxiety to grow within her, heavy like white clouds, or hears an echo and then wonders why all is exhausted into silence.¹¹ Sedakova's natural world buzzes with life and movement; its wind, water, sky, air, stone, and mountains greet the poet in generosity; she delights in domestic nuances like cats and needles, scoops and candles that feel archaic but weightless, as if they were poised in the air outside rather than inside a house or a room. She ends her lovely "Kitaiskoe puteshestvie" ("Chinese Journey"), "Let us praise our earth, / let us praise the moon on the water, / and that which is with no one and with all, / that is nowhere and everywhere –."¹² Her praise has religious and philosophical dimensions, but Sedakova's radiant calm emerges as well in the joyful attention she accords all that she contemplates.

Religious visions

Sedakova is the most erudite among a large group of poets who write on religious themes. Some speak boldly of religious experience, spiritual growth, and self-exploration; others prefer allusion to religious motifs in the context of a broader skepticism about God, church, and moral truth.

Catriona Kelly has argued that much of this verse conventionally repeats the "repentant sinner" motif familiar from Silver Age poets, particularly Akhmatova.¹³ Kelly's exceptions to the rule include Lisnianskaia, who shows the resentments that religion's requisite self-deprecations elicit, and Shvarts, whose unpredictable rhythms of sin and confession can verge on parody. Less problematic from an Orthodox standpoint is Nikolaeva (often featured in *Novyi mir* and in nationalist publications). In "Na bolote" ("In the Swamp"),¹⁴ Nikolaeva's world mires her in its troubles and pushes toward spiritual journeys of impossible difficulty. Her admiration for saints who withstand what many would deem unendurable suffering lets her affirm human fortitude and express despair when ordinary mortals cannot achieve it.

Nikolaeva's "Zealots and Old Believers" vividly contrast with the saints in Sedakova's poems. "Legenda dvenadtsataia: Sergei Radonezhskii" ("Twelfth Legend: Sergei of Radonezh") has none of Nikolaeva's ecstasy and exhortation, but rather a calm recollection of people and things once able to attest to the life of Sergei.¹⁵ In Sedakova's retelling, events are witnessed by the soul, which circles around what is seen as if in blossom. Her lucid, flourishing images are unlike the darkness of Nikolaeva's poem. Nikolaeva sees her verse and her readers as "twisted through with the serpents of passion," whereas Sedakova quietly personifies the vanished saint in the rainy weather, the pine forest, and the startled air, which visibly bow to her respectful reader.

Possessed by an exuberant faith, Shvarts freely mixes religious traditions. She combines the darkness we noted in Nikolaeva with the light-filled celebration typical of Sedakova. Shvarts's near-novel in verse, *Trudy i dni Lavinii* (Days and Works of Lavinia), describes an errant soul in search of religious faith who stumbles upon experiences of spiritual tribulation and insight. In *Days and Works of Lavinia* and in her shorter lyrics, Shvarts writes lovingly of demons, who inspire poetry as often as they cause evil. Shvarts shows her pagan side in poems about seances and otherworldly experiences; this playfulness concerning demons, ghosts, and spirits challenges the discipline of Orthodoxy,¹⁶ making her poems of faith necessarily ambivalent.

Poetic selves

When Shvarts writes in *Lavinia* of the travails of her novice nun, she does so in the first person, taking on Lavinia's naïvete, passion, curiosity, and

wit. Some of her other poems purport to be written by Cynthia, an ancient Roman woman, or Arno Tsart, an Estonian poet; the latter is an invention, and Cynthia, the beloved of Sextus Propertius, left no poems of her own. Shvarts calls these impersonations a form of “masked speech,” using a theatrical metaphor to describe herself as watching from the wings.¹⁷ But her poems do not fully conceal their author: she vulnerably exposes the scars not only of abusive relationships and drunken wildness, but also of her historical surroundings. Some poems that successfully combine the individual and social realms are grounded in Russia’s history, such as “Detskii sad cherez tridsat’ let” (“Kindergarten After Thirty Years”); others achieve searing results more abstractly, as in “Elegii na storony sveta” (“Elegies on the Four Corners of the World”). The former is particularly striking because Shvarts writes only occasionally of children, or of herself as a child.

Contemporary women poets often recall childhood in their lyric poems, perhaps to counter the culture’s dominant image of them as mothers. (Strikingly, many of these poets have no children, an absence movingly recorded in Akhmadulina’s “Zavidna mne izvechnaia privychka” [“I find enviable the age-old habit”]; ambivalence about mothering marks Lisnianskaia’s work in “Docheri” [“To My Daughter”].) Kabyshev’s seemingly autobiographical volume *Detskii mir* (A Child’s World) fuses free-verse lyrics into an idyll of childhood impressionability and adult clarity. The guitar poet Veronika Dolina, whose songs show her enacting various quintessential women’s roles, wished in earlier songs for children from past lovers and friends, but she confronts the reality of children’s maturation as well. She maps the fate of mother onto daughter in “Razgovor” (“Conversation”), and in “Dochke” (“To My Little Daughter”), she offers her poems as an inheritance, yet the gesture mixes tenderness with danger because poetry is associated with injury to her child.

Other aspects of women’s daily lives let poets create personae familiar to readers who know these experiences all too well. Marina Tsvetaeva’s memorable fury at *byt* has not stood in the way of later poets who intertwine details of daily life with more profound meditations, bracingly so in the work of Unksova. She writes with self-irony about a lovely woman who washes dishes rather than standing idle in her loveliness (“Stsenarii” [“Scenario”]), and Akhmadulina’s poem about a vending machine, Gorbanevskaya’s about a city bus and laundry, and Lisnianskaia’s about

a vacuum cleaner similarly come to mind.¹⁸ In Kabysh's poem "Galina," a woman laden with grocery bags waits to see the Mona Lisa, sits in a freezing cold lecture hall, and lights a candle in a church. Kabysh tellingly juxtaposes the daily needs of food and warmth with the spiritual experience of hearing a great scholar of religion and culture (Sergei Averintsev) and of mourning a murdered priest (Aleksandr Men') – names which firmly locate the poem in early post-Soviet reality. A similar contrast informs "Argumenty i fakty" ("Arguments and Facts") by Iskrenko. The title names a prominent post-Soviet newspaper, but the poem punctuates its indictments of cynicism and bloodlessness with untimely interjections, creating an internal argument that has more to do with the appropriate subject matter for poetry. The poem verges on a parodic romantic encounter (what it calls "Five Minutes of Love"), but settles into a confession: "My planet – is the door to an open sea / My sculpture – is the air between words / My work – is self-objection / I object".¹⁹ These twists and turns are typical of Iskrenko, as is the agile mix of self-revelation and distancing parody.

Others have juxtaposed the spiritual self with an all too material world, including Ella Krylova in a poem on the "orphaned material world" ("сиротский мир материальный").²⁰ Elena Kriukova, who often writes on religious themes, also wonderfully embodies this contrast in "Zakupliu v magazinakh nekhitruiu sned'" ("I will buy simple sustenance in stores"):

I am a page in the book of Being!
Each line is a celebration. Each line is drudgery.
But beneath the velvet raincoat is my body.
Bare,
as always.²¹

The poem ends with the tart hope that the speaker will not trip on her high heels. The ending recalls that of Aleksandr Blok's "Unizhenie" ("Humiliation," 1911), but Kriukova gives voice to the silent temptress on whom Blok once cast his gaze. Small wonder that the poet remains poised tensely between body and spirit. Others similarly bring the body into poems about women's purported spiritual identity; Nikolaeva's "Pered zerkalom" ("In Front of the Mirror") comments that women's self-contemplated beauty has been trivialized by poets and philosophers as ephemeral, but she ends in celebration, as the woman poses before eternity itself, which is blind to her beauty.

Philosophical lyrics

The lucid management of argument in Iskrenko and Nikolaeva stands as their contribution to another poetic mode, the philosophical. These contributions are especially noteworthy because women have traditionally been deemed unable to write “high” philosophical poetry. Philosophical dimensions inform the clear-headed reflectiveness of Marina Temkina’s poetry, for example, and Sedakova, in a series of long and short poems, poses questions about being, thinking, essence, identity, and meaning. As in the genre of religious poetry, Sedakova’s learnedness and sheer inventiveness make her philosophical poems particularly important. Her “Stely i nadpisi” (“Stellae and Inscriptions”) interpret nearly effaced markings on stone, speculating on the experiences and emotions of those pictured. These poems treat a traditional epistemological problem—how do we know something to be true—but will not choose between sensory stimulation and imagination as the chief source of knowledge. More ambitious are Sedakova’s five great odes named “Stansy” (“Stanzas”); “Piatye stansy” (“Fifth Stanzas”) contemplates the Heideggerian question of what is a thing, using imagery that is beautifully tangible.²²

A similarly meditative temperament inflects much of Unksova’s work, often in language more colloquial than Sedakova’s. In “Ia pozdno poljubl tebia, Krasota” (“I belatedly came to love you, Beauty”),²³ Unksova irreverently embeds an erotic appeal into her reflections on the philosophical concept of beauty. Taking the existentialists as her point of departure, she criticizes their “mania for self-indictment,” yet she pauses over St. Augustine (who also informs Sedakova’s “Piatye stansy”), feeling the lure of his confessional mode, only to reject him as well. Unksova transforms Augustine’s suspicion of the beautiful into a suspicion of philosophy itself.

Unksova is wonderfully irreverent, but when read side by side with Shcherbina, she seems almost cautious. Shcherbina can write with grotesque mode images, and, like Shvarts and Iskrenko, she often jolts the reader with her juxtapositions of different linguistic registers, indeed, different languages, and disparate forms of experience. The philosophical conclusions implicit in her poetry are post-modern: Shcherbina has noted that the old oppositions that founded the Modernist avant-garde have been rearranged in the contemporary period.²⁴

Poems of love and sickness

Contemporary poems about romance and the body also explore post-modern possibilities. After the overshadowing innovations of Tsvetaeva and Akhmatova, poets have been reluctant to merely copy their approaches to the love lyric, and one alternative has been to exceed their boldness. Shcherbina, for example, blithely searches for a metaphor to describe the taste of semen ("Eros Poesis," 1987), but then adds an affectionate address to her poetry, retreating to a safer if also erotic theme (if one wants to express love, poetry is always a worthy object). Consistently and charmingly outrageous is Temkina's "Kategoriiia lifchika" ("The Brassiere Category"), which mixes high philosophical language with vulgar Soviet jargon, and dry reportage with hilariously inappropriate comparisons; throughout, she contrasts women's experiences of their bodies with men's perceptions. Temkina subtitles the volume containing this poem "Gendernaia lirika" ("Gendered Lyrics"), and she shows unusual insight into the dynamics of gendered identity throughout her work.

These poems seem all the bolder when compared to more traditional erotic elegies, a genre we find in nearly every poet's oeuvre. Tatiana Bek self-consciously recreates the world of early Akhmatova elegies in "Ne zametil (poskol'ku privyk)" ("You didn't notice [since you're so used to me]") and "Ya znaiu, chto ty izmuchen" ("I know you're tormented"). She fuses the erotic theme with the question of national identity in "Ya liubila tebia namnogo sil'nei, chem nado" ("I loved you much more intensely than was necessary"). With an intonation that recalls Tsvetaeva and Brodsky, Bek bitterly celebrates her freedom to walk in other lands, but metaphors of entrapment suggest ties that can never be severed.

Akhmadulina's poems have long described such psychological constraint. "Oznob" ("Chills") famously portrays the poet beset by chills that vibrate through an apartment house and scare the neighbors. Disease is a common metaphor for love's sickness, but a poem that escapes such clichés (and learns from Pasternak's abstractions of illness) is Sedakova's two-part poem "Bolezn'" ("Illness"), where concrete objects and human beings lack tangible materiality, but pain does not. A headache arises of its own will, casts its glance around, and strides off like a fairy-tale hero. Sedakova responds with confidence in her self-discoveries ("I believe that there, where I am not, / I will meet myself" ["Я верю, что там, где меня уже нет, / я сам себя встречу . . ."]),²⁵ and with gratitude for all the illness teaches.

Less metaphysical, and more in protest against pain is the work of Lisnianskaia, for whom physical ailment has long been coupled with psychic anguish. Lisnianskaia often gives suffering a moral explanation: as in Akhmatova's early work, her poems link the soul's anguish to its sins. Lisnianskaia's later work more frankly addresses the social sources of suffering, freeing her to treat the body and its woes ironically. In "Oda sosedu po kommunalke" ("Ode to My Neighbor in the Communal Apartment"), she sardonically embraces images of death:

The head of the morgue
On his days off
Ecstatically used to display me
To his visitors
Once a month.²⁶

Aging is also treated symbolically, as when her muse is said to gray,²⁷ and Lisnianskaia seems to write knowingly of themes that provoke pathos as well as a smile of satisfaction in her readers.

Poems about poems

Indirectly, many of the poems about poets' bodies, pleasures, and illnesses also refer to the experience of writing poetry. Akhmadulina's "Oznob" tells of inspiration as disease, and Ushakova's "Posle grippa" ("After the Flu") celebrates the return of clear hearing. Ushakova writes extravagantly about poetry, perhaps in self-consciousness at the idiosyncrasy of her long lines of pure accentual verse (itself the topic of "K aktsentnoi rechi" ["To Accentual Speech"]). In a poem about intonational patterns, she prosaically describes herself as a detective reading books about linguistics, but her poem ends in wonder at the mysteries of language and the sweetly bitter pleasure of the "melody of unaddressed speech."²⁸ Despite that last epithet, many of Ushakova's poems are dedicated to Russian intellectuals and friends, and more than any other woman poet in the 1990s she writes directly to and about Joseph Brodsky, probably the most influential Russian poet of the period. Her quotations from Silver Age poets are also unabashed and refreshing—no doubt she is freed from the fear of seeming to repeat their themes because her poems so dramatically reaccentuate familiar lines.

The anxiety of repeating predecessors' work is not unknown to women poets of this period, however; indeed, most have been seen as

writing in the shadow of Tsvetaeva or Akhmatova (or both).²⁹ The poet Tat'iana Bek follows this habit when introducing Kabyshev's *Detskii mir*, although Kabyshev's poetry points toward quite different models (like Ushakova's, her accentual verse recalls that of Kuzmin). The fusion of Akhmatova and Tsvetaeva, because both were women, reflects nothing so much as the continuing sexism of Russian culture, and canny poets may rightly see them as monstrous alternatives, as in Morits's "Mezhdu Stsilloi i Kharibdoi" ("Between Scylla and Charybdis"), with its brilliant epigraph that ends with the quip: "the unit of female force in Russian poetry is one *akhmatsvet*."³⁰ Tasks facing scholars of the contemporary period include disentangling the legacies of the two poets (Catherine Ciepiela's essay in this volume argues for the greater impact of Tsvetaeva on émigré poets, for example), studying the use of their poems as sub-texts alongside poetic material by other poets, and understanding the way their poetic careers became seductive models or taboo examples—or both.

While there is no evidence that any significant poet of this period experienced Russian poetry as having a separate tradition of women poets, each of them has at some point been turned into a "poetessa" by a critic or reader. All of the themes and forms associated with women, from love lyric to poems to one's child, from incantation to poems of domestic detail, have now been used with great self-consciousness and irony, and it is to the considerable credit of the poets discussed here, and others too numerous to mention, that such dangerous ground has been traversed intrepidly, and with great style.

NOTES

The author thanks Helena Goscilo for excellent editorial and substantive comments.

1. See, for example, I. Falikov, "Stekliannyi chulan: Zapiski stikhotvortsy," *VopLit* (September-October, 1997), 55–86; esp. 83–6; compare the otherwise excellent survey by Mikhail Aizenberg, "Nekotorye drugie," in Aizenberg, *Vzgliad na svobodnogo khudozhnika* (Moscow, 1997), 38–109, where the only woman to receive even a paragraph of attention is Elena Shvarts (84).

2. In 1979, twenty-three Moscow writers unsuccessfully tried to publish the almanac *Metropol'*. The event resulted in the exile of some participants (e.g., Vasily Aksyonov) and the internal suppression of others. The almanac soon appeared in the West in English and Russian versions.

3. For example, "A kak on byl liubim – " and "Dekabr' devianostogo goda" (Lisnianskaia, *Posle vsego*, 93, 57).

4. See "Prodolzhaetsia vremia raspada" (Lisnianskaia, *Iz pervykh ust*, 330).

5. Examples include "Poeziia zhiva svobodoi i liubov'iu," in *Contemporary Russian Poetry*, 148–9, and "Monolog Vintika," *Oktiabr'* 1 (1989), 130–1.

6. "Kogda k Borisu Godunovu v ocherednoi raz," *DN* 6 (1997), 75.

7. Iskrenko, *Neskol'ko slov*, 40–1; *Interpretatsiia momenta*, 41.
8. Mnatsakanova, *Shagi i vzdokhi*, 7–32, quotation from “Zimnee utro,” 21; but see the entire book for her experiments with visual poetry, often in poems about nature.
9. Akhmadulina, *Taina*, 5.
10. Sonia Ketchian, *The Poetic Craft of Bella Akhmadulina* (University Park, PA, 1993), 25–48.
11. Gorbanevskaiia, *Stikhi*, 85; *Chuzhie kamni*, 19.
12. Похвалим нашу землю, / похвалим луну на воде, / то, что ни с кем и со всеми, / что нигде и везде — Sedakova, *Stikhi*, 296.
13. Kelly *History*, 379.
14. Nikolaeva, *Na korable zimy*, 85.
15. Sedakova, *Stikhi*, 89–90. Sergei of Radonezh, a venerated fourteenth-century saint, led the development of Russian monasticism.
16. Shvarts, *Opreделение v durnuiu pogodu*, 98–113 and the poem “Natal'ia Shishigina” in *Stikhi*, 1990, 31–2.
17. Shvarts, *Mundus imaginalis*, 108–9.
18. Akhmadulina, “Gazirovannaia voda,” *Sny iz Gruzii*, 67; Gorbanevskaiia, “Oda 83-mu avtobusu,” *Chuzhie kamni*, 62 and “Voskresen'e,” *Poberezh'e*, 66; Lisnianskaia, *Iz pervykh ust*, 117.
19. Моя планета дверь в открытом море / Моя скульптура воздух между слов / Моя работа само-возражение / Я возражаю. Iskrenko, *Neskol'ko slov*, 75.
20. “Prisutstvie Tvoe poroi,” *DN* 9 (1997), 3.
21. Я—страницей в книге твоей, Бытие! / Строчка—праздник. Строчка—страда. / А под бархатом плащика—тело мое. / Обнаженное, / как всегда. *Ogonek* 10 (1990), 16.
22. Kelly *History* 429–32, includes a feminist reading of “Piatye stansy.”
23. Unksova, *Izb*, 139–41.
24. *Third Wave*, 14.
25. Sedakova, *Stikhi*, 61.
26. Заведующий моргом / Вне трудового дня / Своим гостям с восторгом / Показывал меня / Раз в месяц. *NM* 2 (1998), 65.
27. Lisnianskaia, “Evterpa,” *Posle vsego*, 100.
28. Ushakova, “I kogda chitala o tom, chto terminal'nye tony,” *Zvezda* 5 (1997), 41–2. Ushakova has said that “Poetry’s destiny is to immortalize the fleeting, momentary, purely locutionary acts of speech, in the first instance its intonation” (Valentina Polukhina, *Brodsky Through the Eyes of His Contemporaries* [New York, 1992], 96).
29. See Carol Ueland’s examples in Clyman and Greene, 242–3.
30. *Contemporary Russian Poetry*, 138–43 (English and Russian).