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**Patron:** Sandler, Stephanie

**Journal Title:** Russian subjects :empire, nation,  
and the culture of the Golden Age /edited by  
Monika Greenleaf and Stephen Moeller-Sally.

**Volume:** Issue:

**Month/Year:** 1998**Pages:** 151-172 plus notes to  
this cha

**Article Author:** Stephanie Sander and Judith  
Vowles

**Article Title:** Beginning to be a Poet: Baratynsky  
and Pavlova

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## Beginning to Be a Poet: Baratynsky and Pavlova

ONE MYTH of Russia's Golden Age is that it was itself a beginning, the point of origin for all that is great in modern literature. The myth endures in part because of Pushkin's rapid emergence as Russia's national poet, but even before the culture was shaped so dramatically by the Pushkin myth, talented poets found their own ways to test their identities as poets. Our concern is to study this sense of poetic debut, particularly the qualities of speech and self required by a poet's earliest efforts. It is not a straightforward matter, of course, to establish the precise moment or way in which someone grows from writing poems to being a poet, nor is it uniformly true that poets confer this status on themselves. In the rituals of poetic initiation we know best, poets are designated by their predecessors, and tales about these rituals often take on the cultural status of myth, as in Pushkin's recitation of "Remembrance in Tsarskoe Selo" (*Vospominanie v Tsarskom Sele*, 1814) before the aging Gavriel Derzhavin.<sup>1</sup> Equally well known is the portrait inscription from Vasily Zhukovsky on the occasion of Pushkin's having completed *Ruslan and Liudmila* (*Ruslan i Liudmila*) ("To the conqueror-student from the conquered teacher on that solemn day when he finished his poem," 1820).<sup>2</sup> These examples show us how poets created rituals of debut among themselves, often following on the completion of a "major" poem.<sup>3</sup>

Such self-consciously important poems ought not to push less formal and occasional poetry from view. Informal, fledgling, often tentative verse can be penned before any publicly acknowledged status as poet has stabilized; it also lets poets experiment with personal mythologies for relationships with their audiences. For many poets, rather than a ritual of momentous emergence into fame, there was a slowly graded ascent from juvenile experimentation, like the composition of madrigals for a salon hostess or verse epistles for friends, to publication in almanacs edited by those same friends.<sup>4</sup>

We treat three genres in which these early experiments most often appeared—the familiar epistle (*druzheskoe poslanie*), the album inscription, and the self-reflective short poem about poetry itself—in the work

of two poets, Evgeny Baratynsky (1800–1844) and Karolina Pavlova (1807–93). While they are divided by many differences, Pavlova and Baratynsky share an innovative use of poetic genres, a distinctive flair for unusual verbal formulations and psychological portraiture, and, most important, an affinity for a certain kind of meditative poetry and thus for the pose of poet as thinker. Both viewed this pose as central to their project as poets. Pavlova imagined herself as a poet according to the model Baratynsky first created: lyrics compare tender emotions with powerful thoughts, and poetry is measured by the quality of its thinking. In this sense, they are both poets of thought.

Because Pavlova was one of Russia's first serious women poets, her career also offers material for asking how gendered differences shaped poetic beginnings. In this period, changing concepts of gender, identity, and desire circulated in ways that shaped cultural processes and the social organization of polite relations. This social context exerted visible pressure on the poetic texts we examine. We suggest that poetic identity was typically achieved in poems that established relationships with other poets, relationships themselves marked by assumptions about gender differences. Baratynsky's earliest poems projected strikingly different identities for women and men in ways that were typical of the period; such views affected Pavlova's sensibilities and ambitions when she set about becoming a poet in the late 1830s.

Both Pavlova and Baratynsky wrote self-defining lyrics that were shaped by forms of address to others (and to each other, as we shall see); these turns to important others existed in some tension with the Romantic predisposition, particularly strong in their work, to value solitude. In the imagery and intonation of isolation Baratynsky and Pavlova comment on the value and the cost of solitude for any poet. Solitude seemed the site of thought itself, but increasingly it characterized the poets' experience in society and seemed imposed rather than chosen. Baratynsky and Pavlova wrote their mature work at a time when the cultural position of the poet was waning, and some measure of loneliness came to define their later work. In their beginnings, however, they think about poetic identity in terms of those around them. Baratynsky found the means of optimistic connection and of testing his similarity to poet-friends, but Pavlova quickly reached toward others who were like her in their utter difference from their surrounding world. Her greater difficulties connecting to others appears in her more hesitant use of two forms, the familiar epistle and the album poem, that were important to Baratynsky and other (male) poets.

#### SELF-DEFINITION IN THE FAMILIAR EPISTLE

The familiar epistle played an important role in the early work of Pushkin, Baratynsky, Delvig, Iazykov, among others.<sup>5</sup> A classic example of the form by

Baratynsky is "To Krenitsyn" ("K Krenitsynu," 1819), which ends in a self-conscious celebration of friendship: "O gentle friendship! Be thou true! / Let all else become a dream!" ("O druzhba nezhnaia! ostan'sia neizmennoi! / Pust' budet prochee mechtol")<sup>6</sup> But Baratynsky's early poetic epistles betrayed some nervousness about friendship and about the poetic vocation, especially after he reentered government service as a soldier.<sup>7</sup> In a poem to Baron Anton Delvig, for example, written in 1819, he juxtaposes his impending military service with the more attractive but faraway pleasures of being a poet. "How can I think of couplets?" ("Mne li dumat' o kupletakh?") he wonders, and then says:

Вам свободные пииты,  
Петь, любить; меня же вряд  
Иль камены, иль хариты  
В карауле навестят.

(59)

(Free poets, you  
Can sing and love; as for me,  
Neither the Camenae nor the Charites  
Are likely to come calling when I stand guard duty.)

Delvig responded with a poem about his own inability to write on martial or epic themes, as if reassuring Baratynsky that they can write on other topics.<sup>8</sup> He reiterates his own pose as a poet of pleasure and love and thus, indirectly, reaffirms Baratynsky's similar early poetic identity as consummate epicurean and master of erotic verse; his poem also confirms Baratynsky's continued participation in the fraternity of poets.<sup>9</sup> Elsewhere Baratynsky also stresses this side of his poetic personality, for example in a poem to Ivan Krylov on the pleasures of women and wine, "To K[rylo]v" ("K[rylo]vu," 1820; 67).

Baratynsky chose among several poses depending on his addressee. The pleasure-seeking poem to Krylov differs sharply from the lovely lyric to Wilhelm Kiukhelbeker written at precisely the same time (early January 1820), where Baratynsky presents himself as an involuntary wanderer, and where the muse is now associated with purest love and loyalty. The twenty-line poem begins:

Прости, поэт! Судьбина вновь  
Мне посох странника вручила,  
Но к музам чистая любовь  
Уж нас навек соединила!

(70)

(Farewell, poet! Dame Fortune has once again  
Handed me a wanderer's staff,  
But a pure love for the Muses  
Has already united us forever!)

Baratynsky bids Kiukhelbeker farewell by reaffirming their shared loyalty to the Muses. A longer lyric to Delvig that begins "Where are you, carefree friend?" ("Gde ty, bespechnyi drug?" 1820) includes detailed narrative evocations of their friendship and of Petersburg, the city that has been the scene for all these close bonds; it also reveals poignantly Baratynsky's fear of being forgotten by his friend.

Delvig was perhaps Baratynsky's most intimate addressee for familiar epistles. He was two years older and already situated among Petersburg's emerging poets, having been a lycée student with Pushkin and Kiukhelbeker. He saw Baratynsky's first poems to publication and introduced him to the literary salons of the city. And it was in the context of his epistles to Delvig and others that Baratynsky was first publicly attacked as a poet,<sup>10</sup> which was a further kind of initiation as a poet, one that strengthened the bonds of friendship and epistolary poetic conversation that themselves had provoked the polemic.

In the familiar epistle, then, we find poetic conventions and forms of address that enabled self-definitions based on similarity to one's addressee and often on a shared sense of identity as a poet. For Pushkin, Delvig, Baratynsky, Iazykov, and Kiukhelbeker, epistles circulated as frequent testimony to their having shared in an evolving project of refining literary taste;<sup>11</sup> as Lydia Ginzburg has noted, the verse epistle was a "transitional" genre, and thus was also chosen for experimental self-expression because it was malleable.<sup>12</sup> Epistolary verse was, however, largely a gentleman's genre. Karolina Pavlova emerged as a poet at a time when she knew many poets in Moscow, but she did not make similar use of this genre. To some extent, that was due to a changed cultural atmosphere: with the exception of one or two isolated poems, Pavlova's first Russian poems appeared at the end of the 1830s, when the cult of friendship had waned, indeed the ground note of cultural relations was contentious and more easily charged with anger, especially in the 1840s. But we should not put the familiar epistle aside so quickly, since poets continued to write these relatively informal but psychologically important poems to each other. Pavlova did work in this genre, although not at the very start of her career, and thus we need to return to the question of psychology: Why didn't she begin, as Baratynsky did, with poems that used the familiar epistle to experiment in poetic personae? The hidden assumptions about gender in the familiar epistle are not peripheral here: exchanged among men and frequently referring to amorous relationships with women, the familiar epistle imagined a specifically manly world of friendship and loyalty. For Pavlova, the genre had none of the instant ease that marked its use among men.<sup>13</sup> What, then, stood in its stead in her first poems?

PAVLOVA'S ALTERNATIVES TO  
THE FAMILIAR EPISTLE

We begin with an untitled poem in which Pavlova speaks of women's friendships without speaking to any particular woman friend. The poem thus repeats a major theme of the familiar epistle without its tone or rhetorical posture. Dated December 1839, it is one of Pavlova's earliest poems written in Russian:

Да, много было нас, младенческих подруг;  
На детском празднике сойдемся мы, бывало,  
И нашей радостью гремела долго зала,  
И с звонким хохотом наш расставался круг.

И мы не верили ни грусти, ни годам,  
Навстречу жизни шли толпою светлоокой;  
Блистал пред нами мир роскошный и широкой,  
И все, что было в нем, принадлежало нам.

Да, много было нас,—и где тот светлый рой? . . .  
О, каждая из нас узнала жизни бремя,  
И небылицею то называет время,  
И помнит о себе, как будто о чужой.<sup>14</sup>

(Yes, we were many, young girlhood friends,  
Once we gathered at childhood revels,  
The rooms rang loud and long with our joy,  
Amidst peals of laughter our circle dispersed.

We did not believe in sadness or misfortune,  
We flocked to meet life bright of eye.  
A world sumptuous and wide glittered before us,  
And everything in it belonged to us.

Yes, we were many, and where is that bright throng now . . . ?  
Oh, each girl among us learned the burden of life,  
And now calls those days a fabled time,  
And remembers herself as someone other.)

Scholars have suggested that Pavlova is recollecting her young girlhood, when she lived in the house of the Odoevsky family, but there is more than a familial memory here: the repeated use of first-person *plural* pronouns, unusual in her early verse, suggests that this is not an individualizing recollection of personal experience but rather a set of images that links the speaker to others like her.

Can Pavlova remain comfortably within this similarity among young girls, as Baratynsky stayed in his male circle? Pavlova carves out, with few of the "word-signals" Ginzburg would associate with the familiar letter,<sup>15</sup> a

fabled memory of childhood friendship, a time when sadness and misfortune were unbelievable, and when the rooms of the remembered past rang out with joyous laughter. If the "word-signals" are present, they point in an unexpected direction: for example, "krug" (line 4), which suggests literally a circle of laughing girls holding hands, rather than the figurative literary circle found in familiar epistles. Even that reference proves ephemeral, in that the circle is already dispersing ("rasstavalsia krug").

The final line of the poem, "And remembers herself as someone other," seems to describe each young girl in the circle, yet it also aptly describes Pavlova herself, in part because the grammatical subject "each girl" is isolating, turning the unifying experience of remembered girlhood into a recollection that differentiates one from the other and each within herself. It is the poem's final formulation, its *pointe*, quite unlike the familiar epistle's joining forms of address—indeed, in the absence of others like her, Pavlova speaks to herself alone in a manner that came to characterize much of her mature verse. In the final emphatic word, "chuzhaia," a word found in so many of her poems, the speaker emphasizes her "otherness."<sup>16</sup> In many of her later self-reflective poems an inner estrangement becomes the ground that makes self-analysis possible.<sup>17</sup>

In other early poems, Pavlova explores a poetic identity based on isolation and estrangement from others. In "Poet" ("Poet," 1839), we find a similar artlessness:

Он вселенной гость, ему всюду пир,  
Всюду край чудес;  
Ему дан в удел весь подлунный мир,  
Весь объем небес;  
  
Все живит его, ему все кругом  
Для мечты магнит:  
Зажурчит ручей—вот и хор с ручьем  
Его стих журчит;  
  
Заревет ли лес при борьбе с грозой,  
Как сердитый тигр,—  
Ему бури вой лишь предмет живой  
Сладкозвучных игр.

(77–78)

(He is a guest in the universe, everywhere is a feast for him,  
Everywhere a land of wonders;  
The earth entire is given him as his kingdom,  
The vast embrace of the heavens is his,  
Everything excites him, for him everything around  
Is a magnet for a dream:

A stream starts to murmur, and right away in chorus with the stream  
His poem murmurs.

Should the forest roar in battle with the storm  
Like an angry tiger,  
To him the howl of the storm is only the living subject  
Of mellifluous wordplay.)

Here Pavlova places the poet in an expansive natural cosmos that seems particularly attractive when compared to the "burden of life" that shrank the wide, sumptuous world that the young girls had hoped to enter. She confers great powers of response on the poet, who has the inner resources to hear harmonious, playful melodies in an angry roar. Yet the poet is isolated,<sup>18</sup> and interaction occurs not between poets, as in familiar epistles, but between the poet and the natural world. The poem's use of the third-person pronouns suggests Pavlova's distanced identification with the keenly attentive poet, and there is a powerful and gathering sense of unease in all the poem's imagery. If there is comfort in the first stanza's embrace of the heavens, then there is also a kind of nervous excitability in the second stanza's picture of a poet as subject to the sensations of every single thing in the natural world. Small wonder that Pavlova keeps some rhetorical distance between herself and this particular image of the poet, since this is a poet on whom forests seem ready to spring like an "angry tiger." The tiger is a wonderful image for this early poem, pointing to a "wildness" that Pavlova was drawn to, although she ultimately found more important a "civilized" view of poetry, where reading and writing take place among educated men and women, and with other poets. Brief as it is, this poem's metrical experiment that mixes anapest with iamb in every line, and its risk-taking rhyme ("tigr" / "igr") show the skill and craftsmanship that made Pavlova from the beginning a "poet's poet."

In another 1839 poem the idea of wildness recurs,<sup>19</sup> again with an envelope of taming imagery: Pavlova writes of poets whose thought "is maiden wild" ("Mysl' ikh devstvenno dika"; 79).<sup>20</sup> In this poem, "There are favorites of inspiration" ("Est' liubimtsy vdokhnovenii," 1839), Pavlova considers the kind of poet who has no audience, who may not even speak. Here are the first three of the poem's six stanzas:

Есть любимцы вдохновений,  
Есть могучие певцы;  
Их победоносен гений,  
Им восторги поколений,  
Им награды, им венцы.

Но проходит между нами  
Не один поэт немой,  
С бесполезными мечтами,

С молчаливыми очами,  
С сокровенною душой.

Этих манит свет напрасно,  
Мысль их девственно дика;  
Лишь порой, им неподвластна,  
Их слеза заблещет ясно,  
Вспыхнет жарко их щека.

(79)

(There are favorites of inspiration,  
There are mighty bards;  
Their genius is all-conquering.  
To them go the adulation of generations,  
To them the rewards, to them the laurel wreaths.

But among us passes  
More than one mute poet,  
With useless dreams,  
Unspeaking eyes,  
A guarded soul.

The world tempts them in vain,  
Their thought is maiden wild;  
But sometimes a disobedient  
Tear shines bright and clear,  
Their cheeks hotly flame.)

The epithet "devstvenno dika" is all the more striking after Pavlova's descriptions of those who succeed in the public eye: words like "moguchii" and "pobedonosnyi" attribute a martial quality to this accomplishment, as opposed to the vocabulary of the natural world which, in the final three stanzas, will characterize a different kind of poet. Only the adverb "devstvenno" mixes explicit femininity in with the nature descriptions (though something of a woman's face is also conjured up in the third stanza, where a shining tear or flaming cheek betrays the mute poet's depth of emotion). To the extent that Pavlova sets herself against a more readily successful, laurel-bearing masculine world, then, she does so with admirable subtlety.<sup>21</sup> The lasting impression of this poem, as of "Poet," rests in a Romantic conception of the poet as rarely inspired, intimately connected to the natural world, attractively awkward in social settings, and bearing a kind of involuntary chosenness that is as much burden as blessing.<sup>22</sup> As with "Poet," Pavlova feels kinship with the "mute poet" but does not fully identify with him. The "wildness" of the state within which the "mute poet" lives implies the same lack of civilization. The last line, "There are people without craft" ("Liudi est' bez remesla"), with its final emphasis on the "craft" central to Pavlova's mature conception of her

work, suggests that she will ultimately not wish to embrace the particular poetic identity presented in this poem.

Pavlova relied on these same ideas of the poet in what appears to be her first published lyric, one that is less a definition of the poet (as in "Poet" and "There are favorites of inspiration") than a narrative about one man's encounter with these norms. Here, Pavlova speaks powerfully of the social norms and barriers that poets could face; rather than the typically Romantic assault on the ignorant throng of uncomprehending multitudes, however, she points to obstacles within the supposedly elite intellectual circles. "To E. Milkeev" ("E. Mil'keevu," 1838) addresses the painful experiences of E. L. Milkeev (1815–46 or 1847), a Siberian self-taught poet "discovered" by Zhukovsky, brought into Moscow society, and then cast off to his own fate (a tragic fate, as it turned out; Milkeev later killed himself).<sup>23</sup> Pavlova wrote a poem that urged him back to the natural sounds of his Siberian wilderness. It begins:

Да, возвратись в приют свой скудный:  
 Ответ там даст на глас певца  
 Гранит скалы и дол безлюдный,—  
 Здесь не откликнутся сердца.

(75)

(Yes, return to your mean abode:  
 There the poet's song will find an answer  
 In the granite crag and uninhabited glen;  
 Here hearts do not respond to one another.)

The stress laid on the way there will be no response "here" to the poet's words looks ahead to poems where Pavlova will listen keenly for a response to her own words, prizing the answers that come while noting their rarity. This poem instead locates the ideal response in natural sounds, far from the bored and uncomprehending chatter of Moscow society; Pavlova hopefully believes that Milkeev can remain a poet once he is far away. She identifies with Milkeev, and uses this early occasion to record her sense of intrusion and self-conscious oddity by analogy to another's much more dramatic difference.<sup>24</sup> Ironically, we here find her speaking to *someone whom she resembles*, as Baratynsky and others did in verse epistles. At the same time, however, she identifies with the world that rejects Milkeev; the second stanza in particular emphasizes the "we" of society among whom she places herself. Once again, Pavlova is reluctant to discard civilized society for a "natural" universe.

When the poem appeared in *Notes of the Fatherland* (*Otechestvennye zapiski*) in 1839, an answering verse by A. S. Khomiakov was on the facing page. It speaks to Milkeev as well as to Pavlova, contradicting the repudiation she had chronicled and declaring Milkeev in fact to be "one of us." His poem ends:

Ты наш, ты наш. По сердцу братья  
Тебе нашлись. Тебя зовут  
И дружбы теплые объятья,  
И музам сладостный приют.<sup>25</sup>

(You are ours, you are ours. Brothers after your own heart  
You have found. You are called by  
The warm embraces of friendship  
And an abode delightful to the Muses.)

The repetition that “you are ours” might disclose Khomiakov’s own suspicion that Milkeev had not found a uniformly warm reception among Moscow’s intellectual elite, belying his assertion that the encounter sparked mutual affection and mutual attachment. Addressed to Milkeev, the poem also spoke directly to Pavlova, given its placement in the journal. Khomiakov’s rhetoric of brotherhood and friendship draws the Siberian poet into the poet’s circle, but it rejects Pavlova by narrowing the “we” of her poem to a fraternity of poets. If she was writing allegorically about her culture’s hesitating embrace of a poet marked by his difference, then her “readers” (those same poets who constituted a circle of poets bound by common experience and friendship) should have easily understood the response as throwing the allegory back at her. In this direct contradiction, Khomiakov pointedly reminds Pavlova of the boundaries of friendship, brotherhood, and the sweet embrace of the muse. Retrospectively, we might read his poem as a forewarning of the criticism that was to come,<sup>26</sup> or merely as a confirmation that her poetic debut challenged unspoken but crucial social and cultural norms. More important, we can see in “To E. Milkeev” and in “Poet” the ways in which Pavlova explored a poetic identity in which one’s “wildness” led to a solitude where the wildness of language itself might be comprehended.<sup>27</sup> In her more measured mature verse, Pavlova adopted a different poetic identity, but a streak of rule-breaking and resistance remained visible to the end. Some sense of her ambivalent conformity to convention also emerges in her belated and unusual use of the verse epistle.<sup>28</sup> In 1842 she wrote one to Baratynsky, thanking him for sending his last volume of poetry, *Twilight* (*Sumerki*, 1842). We turn now to this poem, to clarify her relationship to Baratynsky and to establish her particular way of using the genre of the verse epistle to speak of herself as a poet.

#### PAVLOVA’S VERSE EPISTLE TO BARATYNSKY

Baratynsky and Pavlova met in the fall of 1825 in Moscow.<sup>29</sup> They frequented the same salons (although Pavlova of course did not share in all-male gatherings, and thus not in his world of wine, women, and song). We have little documentation of their friendship. Pavlova admired his work sufficiently to include five of his poems in her book of translations into German,<sup>30</sup> and

Baratynsky charmingly claimed to regret not knowing the language in order to read her translations.<sup>31</sup> Her admiration lasted through the end of his life in 1844, when she dedicated to him her narrative poem *Quadrille* (*Kadril'*, 1844); she also spoke fondly to him in "Life calls us" ("Zovet nas zhizn'," 1846), a longer, philosophical lyric that shows the substantive traces of his influence as well.

Her 1842 verse epistle to Baratynsky suggests that he remained her symbol of the ideal meditative poet. After three stanzas that conventionally recall how refreshing the sight and scent of a native flower can be to a wanderer, Pavlova writes of the similar effect on her of Baratynsky's volume of verse:

Так эти, посланные вами,  
Сладкоречивые листы  
Живили, будто бы вы сами,  
Мои заснувшие мечты.

Последней, мимоходной встречи  
Припомнила беседу я:  
Все вдохновительные речи  
Минут тех, полных бытия!

За мыслей мысль неслась, играя,  
Слова, катясь, звучали в лад:  
Как лед с реки от солнца мая,  
Стекал с души весь светский хлад.

Меня вы назвали поэтом,  
Мой стих небрежный полюбя,  
И я, согрета вашим светом,  
Тогда поверила в себя.

(112-13)

(Just so these sweet-tongued leaves  
Sent by you  
Quickened to life, as you yourself would,  
My slumbering dreams,

I recalled the conversation  
Of our last, fleeting meeting;  
All the inspiring talk  
Of those minutes, full of life's essence.

Playing, thought led to thought,  
Words tumbling out rang in harmony:  
Like ice on the river in May sunshine  
All society coldness melted from my soul.

You named me a poet,  
Liking my careless verse,  
And I, warmed by your light,  
Began to believe in myself.)

These lines (four stanzas from the poem's total of eleven) demonstrate the enabling poetic presence that Baratynsky represented in Pavlova's work. That is not to say that she never wrote with similar gratitude to others (in three poems to Nikolai Iazykov [1840, 1842, 1844], for example, Pavlova casts him as a reminder of earlier, more harmonious days for poets).<sup>32</sup> But Pavlova places Baratynsky in a separate category because of the quality of his writing, and because, as was noted by Munir Sendich, he "was the first to 'discover' her."<sup>33</sup>

She thus reminds Baratynsky that he "named" her a poet and gave her new faith in herself. These facts are reported straightforwardly in the poem, and our gaze rightly wanders to the more interesting narrative that contextualizes them. Baratynsky's recognition of her gifts, for example, happens in a salonlike setting: it is described as a conversation in which the coldness of typical social chatter melts away. Pavlova had seemed to come out of the salon milieu in the late 1820s and to occupy it centrally after her marriage. She valued the salon as a place of civilized discourse in the tradition of serious versions in eighteenth-century France: there, a woman could engage in intellectual conversation and literary work. In her salon, Pavlova worked to encourage the Enlightenment tradition, and her gatherings were known for their seriousness of conversation and pursuits.<sup>34</sup> At the same time, her writings frequently criticize more frivolous versions of the salon, particularly salon discourse: she finds it a site for false flattery, dangerously misleading impressions, and hostility toward the poet, as in *A Double Life* (*Dvoinaia zhizn'*, 1848).<sup>35</sup> Such views of the salon became increasingly common in the 1830s and 1840s, as literary life shifted to the commercial world and that disparagement of the salon is reflected in her epistle to Baratynsky. Her encounter with the older poet is not frivolous salon talk, but words that bespeak intense thinking.

The central stanza of the poem is thus the one that begins "Playing, thought led to thought" ("Za myslei mysl' neslas', igraia"), and it is also literally at the poem's center, falling sixth of eleven. The stanza has many virtues, not least its imagery of words eagerly flowing like ice being carried away by the sun's warmth (and in the next stanza, Pavlova will claim that his encouragement similarly warmed her with its radiant light). Pavlova may have had in mind Baratynsky's own stunning use of water frozen in apparent movement in his poem "Look on this cold countenance" ("Vzgliani na lik

kholodnyi sei"), which we consider in a moment. But her emphasis is on warmth: elsewhere in the poem Baratynsky seems almost life-giving (the word "zhivitel'nyi" appears twice, stressing how his words animated her talent).

Indeed, their connection is built around his beneficent presence in her emergence as a poet. Clearly, the capacity of conferring identity and status was one that only he had; it was not reversible. Pavlova rather uncomfortably writes in "Life calls us" of the oddity that it is she who speaks his name: "Must I then name you, Evgeny / Do I alone pay you the tribute of verse?" ("I mne prishlos' tebia nazvat', Evgenii, / I dan' stikha ia dam tebe odna?" 130). If her self-questioning reflects her own uncertainty about her right to name him a poet, the context within which she does so—in the absence of other poets—suggests the ways in which literary life was changing. The singularity of her naming him reflects not only the deaths of leading Russian poets but also her larger sense of the decline of poetic circles during the dawning age of prose, a decline she describes in "Meditations" ("Dumy," 1847) as "Gone the chorus of poets" ("Ischez poetov khorovod," 135). The absence of response that troubles Pavlova in her earlier verse now helps her. She can urge Evgeny to accept her poetic tribute when there are no longer poets to address him as their equal, "Take it, then, when they are silent" ("Voz'mi zh ee [dan'], kogda molchat oni," 130). In the last stanza of "Meditations" she reflects on the difficulty of speaking as a poet under such circumstances:

Пришлось молчать мечтам заветным;  
Зачем тому, кто духом нищ,  
Тревожить ныне словом тщетным  
Безмолвный мир святых кладбищ!

(135)

(Cherished dreams must fall silent;  
Why should a beggar in spirit  
Trouble now with a futile word  
The quiet repose of sacred graveyards!)

In many respects, the silence within which she now writes is familiar. As we have seen, Pavlova's first poems strikingly asked whether the poet's words will reach any audience.<sup>36</sup> It had mattered deeply to her identity as a poet that her words reach Baratynsky. The final stanza of "Meditations" echoes another of his poems, an album verse that Baratynsky addressed to her.

We thus turn to a third genre, album verse. It plays an important role in Pavlova's relationship with Baratynsky; it also figures crucially in the process through which he announced himself a poet. His erotic album poems figure in the process of poetic initiation we are observing, taking their place next to his early verse epistles.

ALBUM VERSE AND ITS GAMES  
OF SELF-EXPRESSION

Like familiar epistles, album poems concentrate assumptions about the social positions and forms of knowledge available to men and to women, although in a more complex way. Album poems were a fact of social life and thus vividly bear the imprint of the relations they fortified. In them, roles were assigned to women and men that seemed to flow so naturally from the norms of the genre that few scholars have mentioned the gender arrangements of these poems. The history of album ownership and album inscription complicates quick judgments. Not all album owners were women, nor were inscriptions always by men, but the assumption that albums were prized by women and that album verse was a masculine tribute addressed to the woman owner of the album was powerful.<sup>37</sup>

Pavlova left very few album poems, although she was familiar with their conventions.<sup>38</sup> There were fewer ways in which she could turn the genre around to her own advantage (as she did brilliantly with narrative verse, for example, in *Quadrille*, and with some success in her work with the verse epistle, as the poem to Baratynsky bears out).<sup>39</sup> One difficulty seems to have arisen from the genre's usual address to a beautiful woman. As the oddity of her later poem "To A. D. B." ("A. D. B. . . . oi," 1858) suggests, poets' poems to beautiful women were traditionally written by men, not by other women.<sup>40</sup>

Baratynsky, however, wrote many album poems, some with stunning portrayals of women quite consonant with the norms of Western Romanticism.<sup>41</sup> His album poems associate women with thoughtlessness or cruelty, inconstancy or danger, and beauty that can be frighteningly erotic or sweetly lovely. Whereas, in familiar epistles, the speaker can take on the shared values of loyal friendship he attributes to his male addressee, flirtatious album poems to women pose a problem for poetic self-characterization. Is the poet to characterize himself as loyal and rejected? Some do, relying on a contrast between speaker and listener, which also lets the poet constitute himself as a locus for thinking and reflection in comparison to his empty-headed addressee. Women become objects to the masculine subject, the imagined "other" through whom he comes to comprehend his own feelings and ideas. For example, Baratynsky wrote an album poem in 1827 that associates its female addressee with the playful antics of a child (Romantic poetry commonly linked the feminine to the childlike on the basis of shared simplicity, happy innocence, and empty-headedness).

Перелетай к веселью от веселья,  
Как от цветка бежит к цветку дитя;  
Не успевай, за суетой безделья,  
Задуматься, подумать и шутя.

Пускай тебя к Кориннам не причислят,  
Играй, мой друг, играй и верь мне в том,  
Что многие о милой Лизе мыслят,  
Когда она не мыслит ни о чем.

(136-37)

(Flit from pleasure to pleasure,  
As a child runs from flower to flower;  
Don't hasten, pursuing idle vanities,  
To reflect seriously, or to think when you are joking.  
Don't let yourself be counted among the Corinnes,  
Play, my friend, play and believe me:  
Many think of dear Liza  
When she is thinking of nothing.)

The poet, moreover, finds that the woman who herself thinks of nothing (as he describes her in the poem's final line) is most likely to be the object of attentive thought. Composing this kind of poetry, like thinking itself, is the province of those who contemplate her; thus the description of "lovely Liza" as a flighty, empty-headed child enables Baratynsky's self-characterization as a poet.

He also left us poems in which it is the poet who is, if not flighty, then changeable and uncertain, and in these poems his addressee is often all too knowing. As in other genres, most women in album poems are either ideal visions of purity or infernal nightmares of sexual temptation, so that the latter becomes a perfect foil for a poet who appears to founder on his own innocence. Baratynsky's 1821 poem "In an album" ("V al'bom," 1821) offers a good example:

Вы слишком многими любимы,  
Чтобы возможно было вам  
Знать, помнить всех по именам;  
Сии листки необходимы;  
Они ненужны были встарь:  
Тогда не знали дружбы модной,  
Тогда, Бог весть! иной дикарь  
Сердечный адрес-календарь  
Почел бы выдумкой негодной.  
Что токовать о старине!  
Стихи готовы. Может статья,  
Они для справки обо мне  
Вам очень скоро пригодятся.

(84-85)

(You are loved by too many  
For you possibly to know or  
To recall all by name;  
These pages are essential.

They were not needed in days of old,  
Then fashionable friendship was unknown,  
Then, God knows, any savage  
Would have thought the heart's day book  
A worthless invention.  
But why talk of the good old days!  
The verses are ready. Perchance  
They will very soon provide you  
With all necessary information about me.)

The poet contends with excessive attention already lavished on the lady, as evidenced in the multitude of album inscriptions she has collected. He playfully notes his insignificance by suggesting that the lady will soon forget him; although the move to self-reference has a certain admirable deftness, the ending conforms to another cliché in pointing to the readiness of the verse. The poet expects he has provided "information," but he imparts precious little about himself. In the face of this woman's ability to choose among many men, Baratynsky stumbles into speechlessness. Without being able to evoke something more definite in the addressee, he seems to fall into comparative if ironic anonymity.

The poem's history provides a further twist on the themes of loyalty and identity. It is not just the lady who has quickly changing admirers; Baratynsky offered the poem to more than one lady, originally writing it to Sofiia Ponomareva but finally inscribing it in the album of A. V. Lutkovskaia. This was not the only occasion on which he let his poems do double duty—an apparent advantage of his habit of rewriting verse and, while he was at it, reconsidering the context of its creation.<sup>42</sup> Some have argued that this readiness to re-address poems reveals how little of the original inspiration came from the lady in question,<sup>43</sup> but Baratynsky's involvement with Ponomareva was deeply affecting.<sup>44</sup> Re-addressing poems once inscribed in her album let him turn dramatically away from a woman he found seductive and frightening.

Baratynsky's poems to Ponomareva test the elegiac reflections on erotic disillusion that stand out in his early poetry. In writing to her, he created his first version of the femme fatale whose snares men rarely resisted; a vivid example is the poem that begins "The lure of fond words" ("Primankoi laskovykh rechei," 1821), which he first read in the literary society Ponomareva created in her Petersburg salon. This lyric, with its images of entrapment, insanity, risky jokes, and passionate confession, may have been inspired by Ponomareva, but its audience was a larger circle of men—poets and intellectuals, friends and bare acquaintances—for whom Baratynsky sought to characterize himself as a shrewd analyst of women's wiles. In other poems to and about Ponomareva, Baratynsky develops the vocabulary of danger, combat, hot passion, and icy revenge that he was to use to brilliant effect in poems about

other women or imagined heroines and in his lyrics of self-description. Of these, the following untitled poem from 1825 is one of the most interesting, in part because scholars originally claimed that the poem describes the great beauty Agrafena Zakrevskaia (on whom Baratynsky modeled the heroine of his narrative poem *The Ball* [*Bal*, 1828]).<sup>45</sup> In recent decades, an assertion that Baratynsky was writing about himself has gained sufficient credence to appear in commentaries to his work.<sup>46</sup>

Взгляни на лик холодный сей,  
Взгляни: в нем жизни нет;  
Но как на нем бывших страстей  
Еще заметен след!  
Так ярый ток, оледенев,  
Над бездною висит,  
Утратив прежний грозный рев,  
Храня движения вид.

(129)

(Look on this cold countenance,  
Look: there is no life in it;  
Yet how perceptible still  
The trace of former passions!  
Just as the raging torrent, ice-bound,  
Hangs over the abyss,  
Its former threatening roar now spent,  
Its appearance of movement—preserved.)

The extraordinary image of water frozen in apparent movement makes this one of Baratynsky's most memorable short poems. It is a conceit worthy of the English metaphysical poets, which is unusual for Baratynsky, who rarely grounds philosophical reflections in intricate metaphorical patterns. The Orthodox tradition is invoked by his usage of the Old Church Slavic word "lik" for face. However, he preserves nothing that is identifying in the face he describes, although the face in the Western and Orthodox tradition is imagined as a locus of identity.

What are we to make of the suggestion that this poem, once thought to speak a woman's dangerousness, actually reflects on the poet's own enigmatic face? An apparent meditation on another's face is transformed into self-portraiture. That shifts cuts across many of the assumptions of gender asymmetry that have been at work in this essay, particularly in the discussion of album poems, in that it imagines an equivalency between the face of a woman (with whom one has an erotic relationship) and the face one presents to the world.<sup>47</sup> Baratynsky was more likely to establish an equivalency between himself and a male addressee, as in the familiar epistles discussed above, or in his occasional album poems to men.<sup>48</sup>

Such questions of equivalency, self-inscription, and description of one's addressee are rearranged slightly but startlingly in the final example we want to consider. Addressed to a woman, it too is an album poem ("V al'bom," 1829).

- А Альбом походит на кладбище:  
А Для всех открытое жилище,  
Б Он также множеством имен  
В Самолюбиво испещрен.  
Г Увы! народ добросердечный  
Д Равно туда или сюда  
Е Несет надежду жизни вечной  
Ж И трепет Страшного суда.  
З Но я, смиренно признаюсь,  
И Я не надеюсь, не страшуся,  
Й Я в ваших памятных листах  
К Спокойно имя помещаю.  
Л Философ я: у вас в глазах  
М Мое ничтожество я знаю.  
(148—49)

(An album is like a graveyard:  
A dwelling place open to all,  
Strewn self-regardingly  
With a multitude of names.  
Alas! just so do good-hearted people  
Bring there and here  
Hope of life eternal  
And fear of Judgment Day.  
But I, I humbly own,  
I neither hope nor fear.  
In your memorial pages  
I calmly place my name.  
I am a philosopher: I know  
My insignificance in your eyes.)

This poem has some features typical of album verse; self-consciousness about the act of inscription, awareness of others whose contributions will frame one's own. The latter topos allows the poet to invoke his modest claims on the lady's attention by comparison to others whose superiority is measured by their more successful album poems. The reference also gently attributes sexual availability to the lady in whose album so many others have already flatteringly made their mark.

This poem's overarching imagery of the graveyard, however, undercuts this sexual play, as does the lyric's curiously obsessive delineation of the poet from the "good-hearted people" who waver between hope for eternal life

and fear of the Last Judgment. The first two sentences are about the album and about people, but the final sentences are about the self, repeating the pronoun "I" five times. What, the poet asks, is the relationship of his name, mentioned in line 12, to the multitude of names in line 3? He tries to take a stoical view, writing his name with insistent calm, but he can take little comfort from having dispatched the threats of competing album writers or inevitable mortality by concluding that he recognizes his insignificance in the eyes of his addressee.

Even given the very broad range of album inscriptions we have surveyed here, these are strange jottings. One reason for the oddity is Baratynsky's relationship with the owner of this particular album: the poem was addressed to Pavlova.<sup>49</sup> She would have been twenty-two years old at the time, and while it might seem that she was hardly the poet we recognize her becoming less than a decade later, these years are in fact the precise time when her identity as a poet was being formed.<sup>50</sup> Baratynsky writes with full knowledge of her intense engagement with words, ideas, and images. He addresses Pavlova as one poet to another. The light tone of his poem catches the atmosphere of the gentry world of salon culture, although the diction and the intonation do not entirely match. Genres almost seem to mix, as if Baratynsky knows that the familiar epistle would be a more appropriate form to speak to another poet but insistently models his poem differently; indeed, he begins with the word "album," as if the word can prompt him to think in terms of the genre. One senses his constraint: designed to be sent to an absent poet, the verse epistle's conventions of flattering nostalgia will not work when the act of composition and inscription must take place before the very person one writes to and about.

Baratynsky blends embarrassment at this proximity with ironic distancing from it, largely by means of two surprising bits of diction. First, the comparison of album to graveyard permits a rather deprecating but humorous gesture as Baratynsky regards the act of writing in the album to be as inevitable as dying. Death being one of his great themes in the mature philosophical lyrics, we could justifiably suspect him of substituting a self-identifying signature for the social ritual of album inscription that takes away all individuality—as he notes. The second important word here is *filosof*, also a moment of Baratynsky's identifying himself quite recognizably. As with the imagery of death, the usage seems at first humorous. It suggests the resignation of one who takes life's little rejections ironically, rather than the profound engagement with ideas that would define Baratynsky's emergence as a poet of thought. But like the idea of the album as a graveyard, the word *filosof* resounds with irony, which is to say that in both cases the meanings are doubled. Baratynsky's final sentence affirms his knowledge of this irony; he "knows" about his insignificance in the eyes of the album owner.

In spite of that knowledge, or perhaps thanks to it, the poem is not a study in failure, but rather a cautious assertion of success: success at overcoming the daunting situation of writing verse in the presence of the addressee (writing where her eyes can see him, as he suggests), and success at overturning the conventions of album verse by converting a meditation on one's sameness to all others into an individuating mark of difference. Baratynsky exudes, even speaks about, his calm response to these challenges. Naming has none of the disruptiveness that, in other poets, contemporary to him and more frequently since, can cause a dizzying acknowledgment of how uncertain identity actually is.

Pavlova tried hard to match his calm. In a poem she dated June 1844, the month of his death, Pavlova assembled the pieces of identity we have tracked through this essay—solitude, self-address, a self-consciousness about the process of thinking (the poem is entitled “Meditation” [“Duma”]—to write about loss. It is a beautiful poem, whose last stanza reaches for a stoical posture:

И я встречаю, с ним не споря,  
Спокойно ныне бытие;  
И горестней молодого горя  
Мне равнодушие мое.

(122)

(And now, without disputing, I calmly  
Meet life's essence;  
And to me more sorrowful than youthful sorrow  
Is my indifference.)

The indifference in the last line does not convince, particularly since the poem is only one in a series of “duma” poems that variously revise these same emotions. Thus the calm becomes excessive, something of a pose. But Pavlova pays tribute here to a way of being a poet, and to a way of describing that idea of the poet in her verse. She may not have known about Baratynsky's death when she wrote the poem (he died at the end of the month), but the dateline was added in her 1863 collection, and can be read as echoing the impression of Baratynsky's presence in the poem in the word *spokoino*.

His album poem has brought us right up to the moment when Pavlova was a mature poet, a point at which this essay must stop. But it also brings us back to the rituals of initiation with which we began. Baratynsky's album poem to Pavlova recalls Zhukovsky's portrait inscription to Pushkin, particularly in the way that an intense form of self-reference (Zhukovsky, after all, was inscribing a picture of himself) and a scenario of the moment of writing combine to confer the status of poet on the addressee. Zhukovsky's was after the fact, as we suggested earlier, and in a way Baratynsky's was a bit early.

But the gesture was powerfully felt by both recipients: Pushkin, for whom Zhukovsky was always a mentor and a difficult substitute-father, and Pavlova, who tried to keep writing long after Baratynsky was dead, and after the Golden Age of Russian poetry had ended.

Baratynsky's album poem thus characterizes Pavlova as significantly as it acts as a poem of self-description. Although the forms of address are lightly flirtatious and although there are similarities, as we have noted, to the erotic collections in women's albums, this poem seems knowingly to have been penned in the album of a woman for whom each inscription was prized *as a poem*, and a woman who was herself imagined in the album *as a poet*.<sup>51</sup> The possession of an album might have made Pavlova seem a typical woman, but her actual album distinguished her (this follows the same logic as Baratynsky's self-description in the poem).

The word that Baratynsky's album poem uses to name the dry self-regard that he and Pavlova shared is *filosof*. He seems to mean a person who accepts life, bears its burdens, withstands its privations. The other usage that would have been current in Baratynsky's lifetime would have been a person inclined toward meditation, thoughtfulness.<sup>52</sup> Such an inclination was part of Pavlova's and Baratynsky's conception of poetic identity, we have argued, and it was the basis for their laying claim to a position of centrality in cultural debates in their day. But even in the 1820s the many ironic instances of the term *filosof* in Pushkin's poetry readily attest to the way it was slipping in prestige as a form of social identity.<sup>53</sup> The person of philosophical demeanor was being displaced by a more activist, practical representative of the intelligentsia.

Pavlova went on to try out other ideas about herself as a poet, but in some ways the outmodedness of the philosophical temperament would have been no more limiting to her than the indisputable fact that poetry was going out of fashion. The salon settings for playful versions of these poems or for serious discourse were to fade from view by the mid-1840s, which by all rights should have been Pavlova's mature period as a poet. Instead, she seems almost to start over again (quite successfully in *A Double Life*),<sup>54</sup> only to repeat the process of beginning anew in the early 1850s (again, with some success, in the cycle of poems to Boris Utin), and then to try it one more time in the 1860s (now with very little success), as her life receded into emigration, translation, and isolation.

Baratynsky emerged from his early experiments in self-presentation to become a powerful poet of thought, writing some of the finest Russian lyric poems of the nineteenth century. But he was also a victim of the growing unfashionability of poetry, and for all the impressive achievements of his later work it still struck contemporaries as peripheral to the central tasks facing Russian literature in the 1840s. Fated to marginality, Baratynsky became an unexpectedly appropriate figure through whom a woman poet

could see herself. It is a final paradox that both poetic debuts, although they successfully taught each poet a wonderful facility with reworking received literary precedent and with reconceiving a relationship to an audience and to oneself, should have led to poetic careers strangely tinged with a sense of failure. The stoical attitudes of both poets served them well as they wrote their ways through their respective lives: short and intense, in Baratynsky's case, cut off by death in Naples at the early age of forty-four; long and filled with drastic changes, for Pavlova, leading in the end to decades of poverty in Germany and self-imposed exile from Russia. After 1863, no poems of hers in Russian have survived.

## Cossacks and Women: Creation without Reproduction in Gogol's Cossack Myth

IN A DRAWING by the popular cartoonist Gary Larson, a saber-wielding horseman addresses a small group of warriors: "Listen up, my Cossack brethren! We'll ride into the valley like the wind, the thunder of our horses and the lightning of our steel striking fear in the hearts of our enemies! . . . And remember—stay out of Mrs. Caldwell's garden!" The success of the joke depends on several factors: the reader must hold a coherent mental picture to correspond to the word COSSACK; the rhetoric of thundering horses and lightning steel must reinforce that picture, exclamation points and all; and, finally, it must seem obvious that the Cossack of that mental picture, would never, ever care a hoot about Mrs. Caldwell.

The Cossack's gender is a vital element of the picture. He participates in a brotherhood ("Listen up, my Cossack brethren!"), a military cohort of men bonded to each other and their horses who evoke, but do not experience fear. It is to the exclusive maleness of our Cossack picture that this essay will attend. Other aspects of that mental picture—the Cossack's "Russianness," his association with freedom and the boundless steppe, his communal and organic connection to the Russian earth—will play a role in our analysis insofar as they relate to Cossack male exclusivity and their violent birth by and collective marriage to a free and expansive nonhuman female partner.

### UNDERSTANDING THE COSSACK MYTH

To begin our analysis of the Cossack, we must ask whence comes the picture against which we read the cartoon described above. The answer depends on who the reader is. Americans have Yul Brenner to thank, in the 1962 film of Nikolai Gogol's *Taras Bul'ba* (1835; rev. 1842), or perhaps a translation of the nineteenth-century novel itself (although the seemingly jingoistic story has never been popular with Western audiences), or of Mikhail Sholokhov's *And Quiet Flows the Don* (*Tikhii Don*, 1928–40), or Isaak Babel's *Red Cavalry*

in the fifty-first stanza of chapter 8 of *Eugene Onegin*—"Inykh uzhi net, a te daleche / Kak Sadi nekogda skazal" (Some are no longer, and the others are far away / As Saadi once said)—there is no ambiguity whatsoever. Whether the friends are dead or in exile, the meaning is ominous. Moreover, the quotation, rather than forming an epigraph as it does in "Bakhchisarai," appears in the final, rather melancholy stanza of the novel in verse. Though the two quotations are used in rather different ways, when Pushkin alludes to Saadi in *Eugene Onegin*, his allusion is rich with texture: he refers to his former narrative poem, written before the Decembrist uprising; to the "fountain of tears;" to the Russian south, where so many Decembrists were exiled; and to the notion of poets' work outlasting any physical monument. To most Russians, a more immortal monument than *Eugene Onegin* can hardly be imagined.

23. Recent scholarship has suggested that a 1796 translation of Saadi into Russian did exist and that Pushkin may have known it (M. L. Nol'man, "Saadi ili Tsitseron?" from *Tvorchestvo Pushkina i zarubezhnyi Vostok* [Moscow: Nauka, 1991]: 219–28). However, other aspects of Moore's *Lalla Rookh* indicate that Pushkin encountered the quotation in Moore. A prose passage introducing the framed poem "The Light of the Haram" contains a number of motifs that correspond to motifs in "Bakhchisarai." Eyes that had created a garden, but were now no longer there to see it, recalls the Saadi epigraph; Moore's Sultana Nourmahal fed fishes in marble basins, a detail very similar to the description of the khan's wives dropping earrings to fishes in marble basins. Most strikingly, Lalla Rookh's visit to the Royal Gardens called forth a poem about the woman, Nourmahal, who was memorialized by the gardens and basins, just as the poet-narrator's visit to Bakhchisarai called forth a poem about Maria and Zarema (Moore, *Lalla Rookh*, 237).

24. *Morals Pointed and Tales Adorned: The Bustan of Sa'di*, trans. G. M. Wickens (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1974), Persian heritage series 17:30; emphasis added.

25. See *Encyclopaedia Britannica* (Chicago: Wm. Benton, 1965), 2:184–85. See also G. M. Wickens, "Persian Literature" in *Encyclopedia Americana*, International Edition (Danbury, Conn.: Grolier, 1988), 21:753, and Edward G. Browne, *A Literary History of Persia: From Firdawsi to Sa'di* (New York: Scribner, 1906), 17–34.

26. Browne, *A Literary History of Persia*, 528.

27. This move is in some sense an adoption of a Byronic mask, since Byron also molded himself as the latest successor to oriental poets, but it is noteworthy that Pushkin was in fact called "our young Saadi" by a delighted critic who wrote a short review in the *Damskii zhurnal* (referred to by Tomashevskii in *Pushkin: Kniga pervaya*, 521).

28. Iu. M. Lotman, "Problema Vostoka i Zapada v tvorchestve pozdnego Lermontova," in *Lermontovskii sbornik* (Leningrad: Nauka, 1985): 5–22; see in particular 16–17.

29. See Greenleaf, *Pushkin and Romantic Fashion*, Layton, *Russian Literature and Empire*, and Peter Scotto, "Prisoners of the Caucasus: Ideologies of Imperialism in Lermontov's 'Bela,'" *PMLA* 107 (1992): 246–60.

30. See Mark Bassin, "Russia between Europe and Asia: The Ideological Construction of Geography," *Slavic Review* 50 (1991) 1–17.

31. Here, and elsewhere in the essay, in discussing the uses of the doubled time frame of "Fountain," I am indebted to Andrew Wachtel's insightful commentary.

32. Tomashevskii, *Pushkin: Kniga pervaiia*, 503–4.

33. Jeremiah Curtin, *The Mongols in Russia* (Boston: Little, Brown, 1908), 453.

34. Alan Fisher, *The Crimean Tatars* (Stanford, Calif.: Hoover Institution Press, 1978), and George Lantzeff and Richard Pierce, *Eastward to Empire: Exploration and Conquest on the Russian Open Frontier to 1750*. (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1973).

35. Tomashevskii, *Pushkin: Kniga pervaiia*, 496.

36. For an explanation of the functioning of the term "north" to denote Russia, see Lotman, "Problema Vostoka i Zapada v tvorchestve pozdnego Lermontova."

37. George Gordon, Lord Byron, "The Giaour," from *Poetical Works* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1987), lines 723–28, p. 259.

38. *Ibid.*, lines 1329–34, p. 264.

39. See "O romanticheskoi poezii" in Orest Somov, *Selected Prose in Russian*, ed. John Mersereau and George Harjan (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan, 1974), as well as the first chapter of my "Empire of the Imagination."

40. Iurii Lotman, *Aleksandr Sergeevich Pushkin: Biografiia pisatella* (Leningrad: Prosveshchenie, 1983). See chapter 3, "Iug," 52–110. For additional discussion of this issue, see Monika Greenleaf, "Pushkin's Byronic Apprenticeship: A Problem in Cultural Syncretism," *Russian Review* 53 (1994): 382–98. See also her *Pushkin and Romantic Fashion*.

41. See Sandler, *Distant Pleasures*, 165–66. See also Grossman, "U istokov 'Bakhchisaraiskogo fontana,'" in *Pushkin: Issledovaniia i materialy* (Moscow: Akademiia nauk, 1960), vol. 3, 49–100.

42. Sandler, *Distant Pleasures*, 180–81.

STEPHANIE SANDLER AND JUDITH VOWLES,  
"BEGINNING TO BE A POET: BARATYNSKY AND  
PAVLOVA"

We note with gratitude the astute readings offered by Catherine Ciepiela, Sarah Pratt, Monika Greenleaf, and Stephen Moeller-Sally of earlier versions of this essay.

1. For a fine analysis of Pushkin's poetic debut, see David Bethea, "Where to Begin: Pushkin, Derzhavin, and the Poetic Use of Filiation," *Rereading Russian Poetry*, ed. Stephanie Sandler (New Haven: Yale University Press, forthcoming). Mikhail Lermontov's "Death of a Poet" ("Smert' poeta," 1837) similarly drew public attention to an emerging poetic voice able to speak a nation's anger and grief at the death of Pushkin.

2. For an insightful study of Pushkin's lifelong friendship with Zhukovsky, see R. V. Iezuitova, "Zhukovskii i Pushkin (K probleme literaturnogo nastavnichestva)," in *Zhukovskii i russkaia kul'tura*, ed. D. S. Likhachev, R. V. Iezuitova, and F. Z. Kanunova (Leningrad: Nauka, 1987), 229–43.

3. It might seem to us, from the vantage point of late twentieth-century American poetry, that the publication of a first book of poetry would have this status. But that appears not to have been the most important symbolic element in a poet's biography in Pushkin's lifetime, though the details of book publication were themselves quite symbolic. Sometimes the first publications were handled entirely by others; it was common among Pushkin's contemporaries to have collections of verse discreetly assembled by friends who also solicited subscriptions. For examples of such arrangements, as well as an analysis of how the practice stemmed from typical self-mythologizations by gentlemen-poets, see William Mills Todd III, *Fiction and Society in the Age of Pushkin* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1986), 82.

4. In an illuminating study of Pushkin's ways of shaping his career, Monika Greenleaf considers such seemingly "minor" genres as love elegies and anthology poems. See her *Pushkin and Romantic Fashion: Fragment, Elegy, Orient, Irony* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1994), 56–107.

5. Many early poems by these and other poets contain invocations of enabling friendships; such references document the cult of friendship described in William Mills Todd III, *The Familiar Letter as a Literary Genre in the Age of Pushkin* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1976), esp. 40–42.

6. E. A. Baratynskii, *Polnoe sobranie stikhotvorenii* (PSS) (Leningrad: Sovetskii pisatel', 1989), 58 (all subsequent Baratynsky quotations come from this source). A. N. Krenitsyn (1801–65) was a close friend from the *pazheskii korpus*, also a poet.

7. For a discussion of Baratynsky's early misadventures in the *pazheskii korpus*, resulting in his being banned from all government service save being a soldier in the military, see Geir Khetso (= Geir Kjetsaa), *Evgenii Baratynskii: Zhizn' i tvorchestvo* (Oslo: Universitets Forlaget, 1973), 16–37.

8. "K Evgeniiu" (1819) in A. A. Del'vig, *Polnoe sobranie stikhotvorenii* (Leningrad: Sovetskii pisatel', 1959), 129–30. As we know, Baratynsky's army service took him to Finland, a separation that enabled his pose as a "Finnish

exile” and helped along his emerging poetic fame; Delvig’s poem offers reassurances that predate this successful Romantic self-fashioning.

9. For a brief, clear account of the epicurean, erotic aspect of Baratynsky’s early poetry, see M. L. Gofman, *Poeziia Boratynskago* (Petrograd: Gosudarstvennaia Tipografiia, 1915), 7–15.

10. The parody “Soiuz poetov” by Boris Fedorov was part of the attack launched by the “izmailovtsy” on the pages of *Blagonamerenyi* and *Vestnik Evropy*: it refers to Baratynsky as Barabinsky, and contains palpable references to the 1819 epistle to Delvig. Reprinted in *Poetry 1820–1830-kh godov*, 2 vols. (Leningrad: Sovetskii pisatel’, 1972), 1:202–4.

11. The role of familiar letters exchanged among Arzamasians and others played perhaps an even greater role in the formation of literary tastes and habits, as William Mills Todd III has shown in *The Familiar Letter*.

12. Lidiia Ginzburg, *O lirike*, 2d ed. (Leningrad: Sovetskii pisatel’, 1974), 39–41. See also V. A. Grekhnev, *Lirika pushkina: O poetike zhanrov* (Gor’kii: Volgo-Viatskoe knizhnoe izdatel’svo, 1985), 18–86.

13. Ironically, Mikhail Saltykov-Shchedrin’s denunciation later in the century pegged her as a representative of this very aspect of early nineteenth-century Russian poetry: he cast her as the author of verse epistles, and saw her within the culture of the salon. See his 1863 review of *Stikhotvoreniia K. Pavlovoi* in his *Polnoe sobranie sochinenii*, 20 vols. (Moscow: Khudozhestvennaia literatura, 1966), 5:362–67. He singles out for criticism some of the same early poems about the image of the poet that are discussed below.

14. Karolina Pavlova, *Polnoe sobranie stikhotvorenii* (PSS) (Moscow: Sovetskii pisatel’, 1964), 80. (Subsequent quotations from Pavlova come from this source.)

15. The poem also recalls the elegiac tradition, as in Pushkin’s “Arion” (1827), which begins “We were many in the boat” (“Nas bylo mnogo na chelne”) and ends by delineating its poet/speaker from all the others. Pavlova’s domestic and feminine narrative contrasts sharply with Pushkin’s shipwreck imagery and his civic pathos in referring to the Decembrists, however; thus she stands in the same self-consciously unsure position toward the elegy as toward the genres we discuss more fully in this essay.

16. In a brief reference to this poem, Barbara Heldt also stresses its “theme of being a stranger to one’s former self” and suggests that this theme was productive for later women poets, her example being Anna Akhmatova. See Heldt, *Terrible Perfection: Women and Russian Literature* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1987), 112.

17. Sarah Pratt has delineated five Romantic images of the poet in Russia in this period. See her *Russian Metaphysical Romanticism: The Poetry of Tiutchev and Boratynskii* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1984), 95–104. Only one of these self-images, the poet as outsider, appears to have been

immediately useful to Pavlova; a second, poet as mystic, occurs in some lyrics, for example “Poet” (discussed below), but its presented warily, as if Pavlova foregrounds her own uncertainty about appearing in this guise.

18. Pavlova reinforced this sense of isolation when revising the poem in 1863; there she excised an earlier third verse in which another human figure appears. See Pavlova, *PSS*, 550.

19. We shall cite a third instance of the image of wildness, Pavlova’s poem to E. Milkeev, in a moment. The idea of Pavlova herself as uncivilized became the basis for an epigram against her by S. Sobolevsky, cited in *A History of Russian Women’s Writing, 1820–1992*, by Catriona Kelly (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1994), 96. Kelly comments on the poem’s image of a “she-wolf” as implying that Sobolevsky saw Pavlova as “a woman whose unmusical rampages are unfit for civilized society.”

20. This phrase is all the odder since at the time a girl was more often represented as a stranger to thought. See Baratynsky’s poem “Flit from pleasure to pleasure” (“Pereletai k vesel’iu ot vesel’ia”) discussed below and Khomiakov’s “Meditations” (“Dumy,” 1831), in A. S. Khomiakov, *Stikhotvoreniia i dramy* (Leningrad: Sovetskii pisatel’, 1969), 95–96. Pavlova, reaching for the image of the poet found in Baratynsky, wants to write philosophical poetry (see her later phrasing “deva-duma” in “To N. M. Ia . . . v” [“N. M. Ia[zyko]vu” 1844], 119).

21. Compare Rostopchina’s poem “How Women Should Write” (“Kak dolzhny pisat’ zhenshchiny,” 1840), in Rostopchina, *Stikhotvoreniia. Proza. Pis’ma*, ed. Boris Romanov (Moscow: Sovetskaia Rossiia, 1986), 133–34, which develops explicitly the feminine aspect of this imagery, something contemporary readers would have sensed.

22. Her notions of poetry, as Mikhail Fainshtein has observed, were formed under the aegis of Romanticism. See M. Sh. Fainshtein, *Pisatel’nitsy pushkinskoi pory: Istoriko-literaturnye ocherki* (Leningrad: Nauka, 1985), 109.

23. Such poet-outsiders were fashionable in the Romantic period and their fates were often tragic. Compare the life history of John Clare.

24. Milkeev stayed in Pavlova’s imagination long beyond this poem. He is commonly assumed to be the model for the poet who uncomfortably declaims his verse in the opening pages of her novel *Dvoinaia zhizn’* (1848), and Pavlova was to write a poem in memory of him in 1855 that recounts all the more starkly the cruel indifference with which Moscow society treated him, and imagines the scene of his suicide. See “In Memory of E. M.” (“Pamiati E. M[il’keeva]”), in Pavlova, *PSS*, 185.

25. Khomiakov, *Stikhotvoreniia i dramy*, 110. Khomiakov’s ending with the word *priiut* aggressively corrects Pavlova’s beginning with this image (in

her poem, as cited above, it refers to Siberian open spaces, which are the only true haven Milkeev can expect to find).

26. For an account of the reception of Pavlova's mature poetry, most of it infused by the ideological struggles of the later 1840s and by the hostility directed against Pavlova after her husband's arrest and her having left Moscow without attending her father's funeral (both in 1853), see Barbara Heldt's introduction to Pavlova, *A Double Life*, trans. Barbara Heldt Monter (Ann Arbor, Mich.: Ardis, 1978), i-xxii.

27. The penultimate stanza in the poem to Milkeev nicely images this preference for dangerous natural sounds over tame social chatter:

Не гул там разговоров скучных,  
Там бури бешеный набег,  
И глас лесов седых и звучных,  
И шум твоих сибирских рек.

(76)

(No droning there of dull conversation,  
There the storm's frenzied assault,  
And the voice of gray, echoing forests,  
And the noise of your Siberian rivers.)

28. One vivid example of her self-consciousness with the genre (the opposite of others' natural-seeming ease) emerges in the opening lines of her first verse epistle, to N. M. Iazykov in 1840. She subtitles the poem "Reply" ("Otvét"), as if wishing to clarify that she has not initiated this poetic correspondence, and beginning "Improbable and unexpected, / The poet's greeting song winged its way to me" (Neveroiatnyi i nezhdannyi / Sletel ko mne pevtsa privet," 88). The poem is also interesting for its offering her the occasion of self-definition as a poet, again so self-consciously as to seem clumsy; "Here I write Russian poems / To the noise of Russian rain" ("Stikhi zdes' russkie pishu ia / Pri shume russkogo dozhdia").

29. A letter from Baratynsky, apparently written shortly after their acquaintance, apologizes in gallant French for canceling a planned outing, and it is this document that lets us date their acquaintance. See Khetso, *Evgenii Baratynskii*, 589-90 for the brief text in full.

30. Pavlova's first published book was *Das Nordlicht: Proben der neueren russischen Literatur* (Dresden: In der Arnoldischen Buchhandlung, 1833), and included translations of Pushkin, Baratynsky, Zhukovsky, Iazykov, and others into German. Her next book, *Les Préludes*, appeared in Paris (Typographie de Firmin Didot Frères, 1839), and included Mickiewicz's work along with translations from the Russian. Later in her life she continued to publish translations, in part to earn a living. For a listing, see Munir Sendich, "The Life and Works of Karolina Pavlova" (Ph.D. diss., New York University,

1968), 284–85. The translations let her experiment with poetic identities, and her original poems in German and French also offered opportunities for impersonation or ventriloquism. See Catriona Kelly's comment, in the beginning of her discussion of Pavlova, that Pavlova's having been born into linguistic and genetic difference from her Russian surroundings was a salutary source of identity for her as she moved through a society that believed that "the composition of poetry was anomalous for women" (*History of Russian Women's Writing*, 93).

31. See his letter to I. V. Kireevsky from May 1832, cited in E. A. Baratynskii, *Razuma velikolepnyi pir: O literature i iskusstve*, ed. E. N. Lebedev (Moscow: Sovremennik, 1981), 139.

32. We exclude her final poem to Iazykov from 1846, the sad result of their political and personal dispute (Pavlova, PSS, 88–89, 113–14, 119–21; and for the 1846 poem, 133–34). On Pavlova's relationship with Iazykov, see Sendich, "The Life and Works of Karolina Pavlova," 32–36.

33. Sendich, "The Life and Works of Karolina Pavlova," 31.

34. Munir Sendich, "Moscow Literary Salons: Thursdays at Karolina Pavlova's," *Die Welt der Slaven* 17 (1972): 341–57. On the eighteenth-century salons and the serious endeavors of women who headed them, see Dena Goodman, *The Republic of Letters: A Cultural History of the French Enlightenment* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1994). Goodman traces the transformation of attitudes toward such salons and the history of the ways in which their gatherings were slowly discredited and their work presented as frivolous. Such views found their way to Russia, for example, in Pushkin's criticisms of how the presence of women trivialized the intellectual work undertaken there. See "O predislovii g-na Lemonte k perevodu basen I. A. Krylova," in Pushkin, *Polnoe sobranie sochinenii*, 10 vols. (Leningrad: Nauka, 1977–79), 7:19–24, esp. 22. Recent scholarship on Russian women's salons in this period includes Lina Bernstein, "Women on the Verge of a New Language: Russian Salon Hostesses in the First Half of the Nineteenth Century," in *Russia—Women—Culture*, ed. Helena Goscilo and Beth Holmgren (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1996), 209–24; and Bernstein, "Avdotia Petrovna Elagina and Her Contribution to Russian Letters," *Slavic and East European Journal* 40, no. 2 (1996): 215–35.

35. See also her poem "Strangely we met" ("My stranno soshlis'," 1854) for a still later poem that similarly characterizes the true and false languages of conversation (153–54).

36. These poems ask repeatedly whether one should make deeply held emotions or convictions public at all, and more than once they resolve in favor of preserving the heart's secrets. In this mistrust of words, Pavlova comes close to the sentiments of Tiutchev's "Silentium" (1829/early 1830s). Her views

also recall those of Rostopchina's poem "How Women Should Write," where silence is linked to femininity (see note 21).

37. For the history of albums, the various kinds, and the range of inscriptions, see M. P. Alekseev, "Iz istorii russkikh rukopisnykh sobranii," in *Neizdannye pis'ma inostrannykh pisatelei XVII-XIX vekov iz leningradskikh rukopisnykh sobranii*, ed. M. P. Alekseev (Moscow: AN SSSR, 1960), 1-122, esp. 1-28; and V. E. Vatsuro, "Literaturnye al'bomy v sobranii Pushkinskogo doma (1750-1840-e gody)," in *Ezhegodnik rukopisnogo otdela Pushkinskogo doma na 1977 god* (Leningrad: Nauka, 1979), 3-56. See also Vatsuro, S. D. P.: *Iz istorii literaturnogo byta pushkinskoi pory* (Moscow: Kniga, 1989) and Gitta Hammarberg, "Flirting with Words: Domestic Albums, 1770-1840," in *Russia—Women—Culture*, ed. Goscilo and Holmgren, 297-320. Lotman has suggested that albums were like "manuscript almanacs," continuing the traditions of handmade books and joining the cultural contexts of family and literary circle in their creation and circulation: see Iu. M. Lotman, *Roman A. S. Pushkina 'Evgenii Onegin': Kommentarii* (Leningrad: Prosveshchenie, 1980), 241. Perhaps the best-known characterization of albums is in *Eugene Onegin*: see Pushkin, *Polnoe sobranie sochinenii*, 5:77 (*Evgenii Onegin*, chap. 4, lines 27-30).

38. See, for example, the later poem "A piece of a page in this album" ("Stranitsy chast'v al'bome etom," 1861). Pavlova also wrote erotic poems, much like men's album verse, in connection with her ill-fated encounter with Adam Mickiewicz. But they seem to have been possible for her only *after* she had established her readiness to write at all in the first place. She did not publish her two poems about Mickiewicz at the time ("November 10, 1840" ["10 noiabria 1840"] appeared in 1863; "On the Tenth of November" ["Na 10 noiabria"], not at all in her lifetime), further suggesting that these were not meant as public poems of initiation in the way that Baratynsky's erotic verse could function. We discuss Pavlova's relationship with Mickiewicz more fully in "Abandoned Meditation," forthcoming in a collection of essays on Pavlova edited by Susanne Fusso and Alexander Lehrman (Northwestern University Press).

39. This distance from album verse marks an important difference between Pavlova and the other reasonably well known woman poet of her generation, Countess Evdokiia Rostopchina. Rostopchina made varied use of album poetry conventions—for example, "The Empty Album" ("Pustoi al'bom," 1841), "In an Album to Sofia N. Karamzina" ("V al'bom Sof'e N[ikolaevn]e Karamzinoi," 1843)—and she placed herself squarely within various social settings, like the ballroom, even to the point of self-irony, as in "Temptation" (*Iskushen'e*, 1839). See Rostopchina, *Stikhotvoreniia*, 99-101, 152-56, 171.

40. This poem is addressed to Baratynsky's sister-in-law, A. D. Baratynskaia, herself a translator and poet of some note.

41. On gender and poetic identity in the Romantic period, see Margaret Homans, *Women Writers and Poetic Identity: Dorothy Wordsworth, Emily Brontë, and Emily Dickinson* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1980), 12–40; Anne K. Mellor, *Romanticism and Gender* (New York: Routledge, 1993), 13–29; and Karen Swann, "Harassing the Muse," in *Romanticism and Feminism*, ed. Anne K. Mellor (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1988), 81–92.

42. Another example is "Delightful as the Graces, and modest" ("Mila, kak gratsiia, skromna," 1824) to A. V. Lutkovskaia, but originally written to S. D. Ponomareva; see also "May I paint your image, can your image be captured?" ("Tebia l' izobrazit' i ty l' izobrazima?" 1819, 1823–24), first written to Varvara Kuchina and finally inscribed in Lutkovskaia's album (Baratynskii, PSS, 59, 125).

43. Vatsuro, *S. D. P.*, 289–90. Igor' Phil'shchikov observes a similar pattern of shifting addressees in Baratynsky's epigrams in his essay "Debilitata venus (Dva stikhotvoreniiia E. A. Baratynskogo o starostii krasote)," in *V Chest' 70-letiiia professora Iu. M. Lotman*, ed. V. Besprozvannyi et al. (Tartu: Eidos, 1992), 108–21, esp. 118 n. 8.

44. Vatsuro, *S. D. P.*, 65–69, 177–202; see also Khetso, *Evgenii Baratynskii*, 76–78. For example, "We separated; a moment's enchantment," sometimes entitled "Parting" ("Rasstalis' my, na mig ocharovan'em," "Razluka," 1820, 1826); "Disillusionment" ("Razuverenie," 1821); "Do not demand feigned tenderness from me," sometimes entitled "Declaration" ("Pritvornoi nezhnosti ne trebui ot menia," "Priznanie," 1823, 1832); "We drink sweet poison in love" ("My p'em v liubvi otravu sladkuiu," 1824); and "How much in how few days you [lived]" ("Kak mnogo ty v nemnogo dnei," 1824–25).

45. On Baratynsky's passion for Zakrevskaia, see Khetso, *Evgenii Baratynskii*, 98–106, passim; and, in considerable and absorbing detail, P. P. Filippovich, *Zhizn' i tvorchestvo E. A. Baratynskago* (Kiev: Tipografiia Universiteta Sv. Vkladimira, 1917), 82–99.

46. For a condensed account of the history of interpretations of the poem, see Baratynskii, PSS, 407.

47. In *Pushkin and Romantic Fashion*, Monika Greenleaf uses Pushkin's erotic elegies as material for assessing his characteristic self-portraits. The argument runs throughout the book, but see, for example, 92–107, 287–348.

48. See especially a poem bidding farewell to Sh. Shlaktinsky (a friend from Smolensk) in Baratynskii, PSS, 65.

49. As established by V. Fridkin, "Al'bomy Karoliny Pavlovoi," *Nauka i zhizn'*, no. 12 (1987): 140–48; see 144, where Fridkin reproduces the autograph of the poem as it appeared in Pavlova's album, and 146–47, where he discusses the textological history of this poem, which exists in several versions.

50. Pavlova's salon acquaintances in the mid-1820s generally knew that she wrote original poetry and translated as well; see Fainshtein, *Pisatel'nitsy pushkinskoi pory*, 105, and Sendich, "The Life and Works of Karolina Pavlova," 29.

51. In that sense, Pavlova is like the serious "Corinne" of Baratynsky's album poem discussed above, rather than like its flighty addressee.

52. The term *filosof* would not yet primarily connote the contemporary sense of a professional scholar devoted to writing philosophical discourse. This usage came into currency in the nineteenth century, to be sure, but we rarely find it so early in the century. Rather, it was a contested term in ways that relate far more to eighteenth-century cultural debates influenced by French thought, when a *philosophe* was the term for the kind of cultural equivalent of the Renaissance man—someone who thought and wrote in a wide variety of ways (they would not yet have been separate disciplines), from the natural sciences to poetry to essays classifying human experience. The separate disciplines of thought began to emerge in the nineteenth century, a process we have come to understand better largely through the work of Michel Foucault (in *The Order of Things: An Archaeology of the Human Sciences* [New York: Random House, 1973]), and the term *philosopher* grew to have a narrower meaning.

53. The examples of usage from *Eugene Onegin's* description of Lensky are well known; for a fuller sense of the word's meanings in Pushkin's oeuvre, see *Slovar' iazyka Pushkina*, 4 vols. (Moscow: Gosudarstvennoe izdatel'stvo inostrannykh i natsional'nykh slovarei, 1961), 4:786.

54. In a sense, Pavlova's true "genre" was the nineteenth-century novel. This surprising insight was first suggested by Vladislav Khodasevich, who meant to criticize Pavlova by arguing that "Pavlova's poetry is like prose." See Vladislav Khodasevich, "Odná iz zabytykh," *Sobranie sochinenii*, ed. John Malmstad and Robert Hughes, projected 5 vols. (Ann Arbor, Mich.: Ardis, 1990-) 2:216–19, cited from 217. His review appeared in 1916 and polemicizes with Bely's praise for Pavlova's rhythmic innovations. But the interesting issue here is not so much the music of verse (Khodasevich's concern) as the fashioning of a self in a web of relationships to others. Identity emerges as a problem, an open-ended project for endless exploration in Pavlova's poetry—and in the poetry of Baratynsky. He, too, was to move beyond the formulae of friendly epistle, album verse, and madrigal to produce lyrics of incomparable psychological subtlety. Even more than in Pavlova's work, Baratynsky's poetry explores the theme of disillusionment, a psychological structure that also characterizes the best early novelistic achievements of the nineteenth century, including Balzac and Stendhal. For a much fuller discussion of the relationship between Russian psychological lyric verse and the emergence of the novel, see Ginzburg, *O lirike*.

JUDITH DEUTSCH KORNBLATT, "COSSACKS AND  
WOMEN: CREATION WITHOUT REPRODUCTION IN  
GOGOL'S COSSACK MYTH"

This paper is an expanded revision of "Death Transcended and the Female Threat" from my study of the Cossack in *The Cossack Hero in Russian Literature: A Study in Cultural Mythology* © 1992. Reprinted by permission of the University of Wisconsin Press.

1. Unfortunately, the post-Soviet crisis in Chechnya summons up similar images. The hostility between the Chechens and Caucasian Cossacks forms the background for Tolstoy's short novel, *The Cossacks*.

2. A fascinating example can be found in Edward T. Heald's account of his travels through the nascent Soviet Union. "I met an interesting Ural Cossack on the train," he writes in a letter of 27 May 1919. Heald then puts into the Cossack's mouth much of the inflated rhetoric of the Cossack myth concerning superhuman size, strength, freedom, and glory: "We have a rich country," says the Cossack:

We have fertile land and big crops. We have wonderful cattle and horses. And the rivers abound in the most tasteful fish, which have no bones. And watermelons that weigh from forty to eighty pounds, not like the little Petrograd melons which really aren't melons; everything that the heart can desire, except forests. For we live in the steppes, the broad level glorious steppes. But the crowning creation of all are the Ural Cossacks. We're the flower of creation. We have souls, and we fight, live, love, and die for glory, for freedom, for honor, for our rights.

Heald concludes the entry: "I jot this down because it is typical of the Cossack spirit and is the first time that I have had a Cossack open up to me so freely." *Witness to Revolution: Letters from Russia, 1916–1919*, ed. James B. Gidney (Ohio: Kent State University Press, 1972), 352–53.

3. Much good scholarship in American Studies has recently been devoted to debunking the myth of the cowboy, as well as the larger Turnerian myth of the American frontier. See, for example, *New Essays on the Literature of the American West*, ed. Michael Kowalewski (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996). Similar skeptical studies of the Cossack by Russian scholars are not yet in vogue.

4. See Kornblatt, *The Cossack Hero in Russian Literature*, 5–13 and 99–101, as well as the endnotes to chapter 1 for a brief account of Cossack history and biographies of several Cossack leaders. For the English-language sources of my own account, see: W. E. D. Allen, *The Ukraine: A History* (Cambridge, 1940); Paul Avrich, *Russian Rebels: 1600–1800* (New York: Schocken, 1972); Linda Gordon, *Cossack Rebellions: Social Turmoil in the Sixteenth-Century Ukraine* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1983); Philip Longworth, *The Cossacks* (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1969);

Ivan L. Rudnytsky, "A Study of Cossack History," review of Longworth's book in *Slavic Review* 31 (December 1972): 870-75; and Longworth's response to Rudnytsky's review and Rudnytsky's counterresponse in *Slavic Review* 33 (June 1974): 411-16; and Albert Seaton, *The Horsemen of the Steppes: The Story of the Cossacks* (London: Bodley Head, 1985). Research into Cossack history, as well as ethnographic and sociological studies of Cossack communities, are experiencing something of a boom in recent years, and a number of books are currently in progress.

5. Although myth in common parlance means a fiction, or made-up story, as Mark Schorer cogently wrote many years ago, myths are "the instruments by which we continually struggle to make our experience intelligible to ourselves. A myth is a large, controlling image that gives philosophical meaning to the facts of ordinary life; that is, which has an organizing value for experience" ("The Necessity of Myth," *Daedalus* 88, no. 2 [Spring 1959]: 360, excerpted from *William Blake* [New York: Henry Holt, 1946]). For the present study, this understanding of myth is complemented by the somewhat more political view of the early Roland Barthes (see below).

6. Roland Barthes, "Myth Today," in *Mythologies*, trans. Annette Lavers (London: Jonathan Cape, 1972): 129.

7. "Little Russia," "Malorossiiia," or "Malaia Rossiia" was the official term in the nineteenth century for the area called the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic under the Communists, and now called Ukraine. It was the location of ancient Kiev, Kievan Rus' as a whole, as well as of the powerful Zaporozhian Sech in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. The borderland ("Ukraina" literally means at the border) that was "Little Russia" held a particular fascination for the Russian Romantics of the first half of the nineteenth. The fascination was not without its political dimension, however, and later Ukrainian nationalists bristled under the connotations of "little." Ukrainians today usually object to the russifying tendency of the early Romantic writers. For a definition of the names of Russia and the Ukraine, see George W. Simpson, "The Names 'Rus',' 'Russia,' 'Ukraine,' and their Historical Background," *Slavistica* 10 (1951): 5-18. See also "Ukraina," in *Entsiklopedicheskii slovar'*, eds. F. A. Brokgauz and I. A. Efron (St. Petersburg, 1897), 68:633-35.

8. The idea that peoples create their history from these three processes is persuasively argued by Bernard Lewis in *History Remembered, Recovered, Invented* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1975).

9. Here, perhaps, is the place to recognize that scholars of Ukrainian literature and history insist on the integrity of the Zaporozhian Cossacks, and consider Cossacks a purely Ukrainian phenomenon. Without denying the vital role that the Zaporozh'e played in Ukrainian history and society, this study purposely views the Ukrainian Cossacks through the eyes of Russian