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The Influence of Byron on Russian Poetry

by
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CHAPTER I

Early Impressions.

In Byron's life there is a passage of disgrace and compensating glory which strikingly illustrates the irony of fortune. Till 1816 his reputation as author was limited to England. Some years earlier he had compelled notice there with the first two cantos of *Childe Harold's Pilgrimage*, and the febrile narrative verse which he afterwards wrote, emulating and excelling Scott, had made him arbiter of literary fashion. Yet his brilliant success was, as events showed, only the prelude to a domestic scandal. When this was noised abroad, public adulation changed into opprobrium. Injuries were heaped upon him, and soon enough life in his own country ceased to be tolerable. To escape insult, he went into a self-imposed exile, which eventually took him to Italy. There the sinister echoes of his English notoriety began to recede. But if he had entertained any hopes

of seclusion, these were doomed to disappointment. Almost overnight, so it seemed, cultured Europe had fallen under his spell. His hitherto neglected poetry began to be translated and studied with a new-born enthusiasm. Writers of memoirs sought his company. Inquisitiveness thrust itself upon him. He had become a European name and a topic of general conversation, and his subsequent career, glossed by a brief dazzle of footlights, was followed in charmed suspense.

In literature, as in social gossip, he dominated. There was no resisting the storm of his magniloquent emotions. The aged Goethe succumbed to it: Byron, he once remarked to Eckermann, was the superlative genius of the age¹, and Euphorion² embodies his admiration for one in whom he vicariously re-experienced his youth. Heine's early devoted translations are in pointed contrast to his mature belittlement. In France Byron was the esteemed master of the romantics. Leopardi found his morbid ardours congenial. Espronceda's warm-blooded youth wore the cloak of a Byronist. And the tragic imagination of Mickiewicz and Słowacki was inevitably fired by the kindling agonies of his poetry.

Byron's continental progress as a literary celebrity and influence describes a slow curve from west to east. He had become prominent in France only in 1816, although there were earlier translations of some of his works. Three years later he was being eagerly discussed in Russia.

The history of Byron's Russian reputation can be sifted in a mass of intimate correspondence, in magazine articles, reviews and letters to the press, in the censor's reports, and in a large and motley body of translations.

Possibly the earliest allusion to Byron occurs in a letter addressed by S. Uvarov to the poet Zhukovsky in 1814³. "At the present time", it reads, "the English have only two poets: Walter Scott and Lord Byron. Perhaps the latter surpasses the former. In Byron's poetry I have found a certain resemblance to your own, but his is

¹ „Ich könnte als Repräsentanten der neuesten Zeit niemanden gebrauchen als ihn, der ohne Frage als das größte Talent des Jahrhunderts anzusehen ist.“ See H. Houben, „Eckermanns Gespräche mit Goethe“. 27th ed. 1925, p. 203.

² A symbolic character in *Faust II*.

³ St. Petersburg, December 20, 1814.

an evil genius, yours a good one." From this point the *Ostafyevo Archives* become invaluable. They are a collection of the private correspondence of the princes Vyazemsky, which includes the letters that passed between Prince Pyotr Andreyevich and his friend Aleksandr Turgenev in 1819. Vyazemsky read the fourth canto of *Childe Harold* (then Byron's newest work) "in a feeble French translation" while stationed at Warsaw⁴. It seems to have left him with the wild impression of a cataract bursting from a rock and to have inspired him with sudden and violent exultation. "There is enough vitality in it", he wrote to Turgenev, "for a whole generation of poets, and if ever I decide to learn anything at all it shall be the English language. Why doesn't Zhukovsky, knowing the language so well, fix his teeth in this prey? . . . Is there anyone in Russia who reads English and writes Russian? I will give him a drop of my life's blood for each one of Byron's verses." "We have been reading Byron's poetry all the summer through", replied Turgenev⁵. "Zhukovsky raves about him and batters on him. He has projected many translations. I am warming myself with him, and have lately bought his complete works in seven volumes. The fourth canto of *The Pilgrim*⁶ is my favourite, too." November found Vyazemsky still talking of *The Pilgrim* and urging Turgenev to persuade Zhukovsky to translate the poem. "But, mind you, Byron must be translated literally," he adds⁷. He was shocked and distressed when news of Byron's death reached Russia, yet he saw its artistic possibilities. "Such a poetic death!" he exclaims. "I envy the poet who commemorates it worthily. This is Zhukovsky's opportunity. If he lets it slip, it is all over with him; his torch has gone out. I rely on Pushkin, too." To both Vyazemsky and Turgenev Byron always remained the poet of *Childe Harold IV*. The spirited rhetoric of the poem, its strong pulsation of sincerity, the impressive images, and the human note in its musings could not but astonish and delight them. *Mazeppa* seemed "pallid" by contrast. No doubt the *Oriental Tales*, if measured by this standard, must have looked a shade meretricious.

⁴ Warsaw, October 11, 1819.

⁵ St. Petersburg, October 22, 1819.

⁶ *Childe Harold's Pilgrimage*.

⁷ Warsaw, November 1, 1819.

The numerous references to Zhukovsky in the passages which have been quoted contain an implicit suggestion that he was hard to please. With his knowledge of English, his familiarity with Byron's work, and his fastidiousness, he no doubt had an advantage over his friends. Apparently he was also too wary to commit himself to a thoughtless enthusiasm. He visualised Byron as a modern Prometheus, but was repelled by his misanthropy, indomitable pride, and scepticism. In calmer moments, a decade after the alleged "ravings", he wrote of him to Kozlov, restating his first impressions. The criticism is negative. "There is something horrifying in Byron", it reads. "He is not of those whose mission it is to console." And again: "Poetry is divine revelation, which flowers in the individual and ennobles his life on earth. Byron's poetry will not pass this test."

Byron's poetry had no terrors for the younger generation. The short-lived Venevitinov was a promising poet and philosopher of twenty-one when he sent his two critical articles on Byron to the *Moscow Telegraph* (1825). His ecstatic admiration for Byron must not be taken as wholly personal. "Byron belonged spiritually, not only to England, but to our time", wrote Venevitinov, "and in his fiery heart he concentrated the strivings of an entire century. All his work bears the impress of one deep thought — the thought of man in relation to nature and of man's conflict with himself and with his acquired prejudices." To Venevitinov, Byron was first of all a thinker. "If he were to disappear altogether from the annals of poetry, his name would still remain in the chronicle of the human mind." It may seem odd that the poet of whom Goethe said: "as soon he begins to think, he becomes a child", should have appeared to this young Goethean as a thinker, but Venevitinov was apparently too young and too partisan to plumb the shoals of Byron's "philosophy" and too responsive to be able to resist his passionate eloquence. This is another instance of the fascination exercised by the later cantos of *Childe Harold*.

For a more sober view of Byron we must turn to Pushkin. But we shall occasionally find him provocative. The growth of his Byronism is amusingly chronicled in his correspondence and in the notes he has left on Byron's writings. At first the poetry of

Byron struck him as sombre, heroic, powerful⁸. That was at the time of his exile in the south of Russia, when he had only just yielded to the new enchantment. Gradually, as Byron became less strange to him, he began to see more in him and also a great deal less than his first flush of admiration had anticipated. "You are sorry for Byron!" he wrote to Vyazemsky in 1824. "For my part, I am glad of his death. It is such an exalted theme for poetry. Byron's genius paled with his youth. In his tragedies, not excepting Cain, he is no longer the fiery demon of *The Giaour* and *Childe Harold*. The first two cantos of *Don Juan* are superior to the rest. His poetry was evidently changing. He was made all inside out. There was no progression in him. He matured suddenly and put on manhood, sang his song and grew silent, and he was never able afterwards to recapture his earliest notes. After the fourth canto of *Childe Harold* we heard no more of Byron; it was another writing, a poet with a large human talent." This first of Pushkin's lengthy observations on Byron is fresh and stimulating, although from a purely modern standpoint it may appear to be a thought uncritical. Not many today would subscribe to the view that Byron's powers failed him as he grew older. And *Don Juan*, to a majority of present-day opinion, seems to be a conspicuously sustained piece of work. Other statements could be challenged with equal cogency, but it is well to recall here that we, at this distance, enjoy the cold advantages of perspective. Pushkin's admiration for Shakespeare, whom he began to study seriously in 1825, prejudiced his matured opinion of Byron. The frequently quoted letter, which he never sent to Nikolay Rayevsky⁹, contains a comparison between Shakespeare and Byron as dramatists. Naturally Byron suffers by the comparison. "Byron n'a jamais conçu qu'un seul caractère et c'est le sien. Il a partagé entre ses personnages tel et tel trait de son caractère — son orgueil à un, sa haine à l'autre, sa mélancolie au troisième — et c'est ainsi que d'un caractère plein, sombre et énergique il a fait plusieurs caractères insignifiants. Ce n'est pas là de la tragédie! ... On a encore une manie: quand on a conçu un caractère tout ce qu'on lui fait dire en porte essentiellement l'empreinte. Ce n'est que ridi-

⁸ To Baron Delvig, Kishinev, March 23, 1821. This and subsequent letters are quoted from V. Saitov's edition of Pushkin's correspondence (1906).

⁹ August, 1825 (a rough draft in French).

cule!" But much the fullest critique of Byron's poetry is a review which Pushkin wrote of Olin's stage adaptation of *The Corsair*. It contains points to which one could take exception. One could, for instance, accuse him of inability to distinguish the first from the second half of *Childe Harold*; and his appreciation of the Oriental Tales may cause astonishment. But then he knew Byron as we cannot know him: he was Byron's contemporary. Moreover his review, though full, is brief. "Not one of Lord Byron's works", says Pushkin, "made such an impression in England as *The Corsair*, although it is inferior to many of the others: to *The Giaour*, for example, in the flamboyant delineation of the passions; to *The Siege of Corinth* and *The Prisoner of Chillon* in the spectacle of the touching growth of human affection; to *Parisina* in tragic intensity; to *Childe Harold* in depth of feeling and sublimity of lyric utterance, and to *Don Juan* in an astonishing Shakespearean variety." He explains that "*The Corsair* was indebted for its incredible success to the character of its hero — a personage, who figures in all Byron's works, and with whom Byron eventually identified himself". And touching technique, he adds that "Byron paid little or no attention to the planning of his poems: a few scenes linked loosely to one another sufficed him for a multitude of ideas, sentiments and images". When Pushkin wrote these words his reading knowledge of English was already considerable. The earlier remarks must be envisaged against a background of French translations and in the light of a disastrous attempt to turn the opening verses of *The Giaour* into French.

Study and discussion of Byron in Russia was at first possible only with the help of French translations and commentaries. But soon a desire to understand the poet better and to capture something of his original vigour induced a number of persons to learn English. Kozlov, it appears¹⁰, learnt to read the language in three weeks. One also recalls what Vyazemsky said of Zhukovsky's attainments. Zhukovsky knew English well, having studied it seriously long before Byron was heard of in Russia. A monument to his feeling for the language is his version of the *Prisoner of Chillon* (1821), a literary

¹⁰ Aleksandr Turgenev is the authority for this statement.

masterpiece and a *tour de force* of versification¹¹. Its accuracy, which may be easily established by collation with the English text, is perhaps its least remarkable quality. Byron's monosyllabic rhymes are retained throughout, a difficult thing to do in Russian, and the measure takes on a rhythmic ease and a richness of sound in supple contrast to the *staccato* movement of the original. There are inevitable flaws: Zhukovsky has a rigid habit of omitting whatever jars on his sensibility, and he occasionally uses a fuller language than the context justifies. But notwithstanding these venial peccancies, his rendering is without rival among the innumerable Russian translations of Byron's Tales.

A. Smirdin's *List of Russian Reading Books* (1828) records only five translations from Byron as against twenty-three from Scott and fourteen from Edward Young. These figures are misleading. A glance at the versions enumerated, for instance, in Gerbel's *Anthology* is sufficient to warrant the assumption that Byron was popular with Russian translators. Many of the early Russian versions were made from French translations such as had been used by Pushkin and Vyazemsky. Later they came to be made directly from the original text. It would be pointless to survey them all here, and I shall try merely to give an idea of the relative popularity of Byron's poems. *Childe Harold*, as we may have been led to expect, was most in favour with translators; but it is remarkable that a complete translation of this poem was not made until the eighties. *The Giaour* was translated in full as early as 1821, into both prose and verse, and in subsequent years was taken up repeatedly by various hands. In 1823 a prose version was made of *The Corsair*, another favourite, and two years later it was adapted by Olin for the stage. Translations of the other romances were not quite so numerous. *Manfred* was done into Russian several times in the later eighties. *The Hebrew Melodies* and certain others of the more finished lyrics attracted many verse-makers. But *Beppo* and *Don Juan*, Byron's most characteristic works, remained almost untouched. They had incurred the censor's displeasure.

¹¹ In a letter written to N. I. Gnedich from Kishinev on September 27, 1822, Pushkin says: "Zhukovsky's translation is a *tour de force*. One must be a Byron to describe the first symptoms of madness with such terrible veracity and a Zhukovsky to re-describe them."

Soon after the publication of the first Russian translations from Byron, critical articles, reproduced chiefly from French literary reviews, began to appear at intervals in the current magazines. Periodical literature had grown with bewildering rapidity in the eighteen-twenties, largely under the influence of English and French reviews. It was divided into two camps — a classical and a romantic. The romanticists took up Byron's cause; the classicists pitted themselves against him. N. Polevoy, the famous journalist, and the critic Shevyrev represented the romantic group. The classicists had Professor Nadezhdin.

The *Moscow Telegraph*, edited by Polevoy, was one of the leading periodicals of the day, and it was always at the disposal of the Byron critic and translator. Polevoy personally often embroiled himself in argument with both the poet's admirers and his detractors. The quarrel with Venevitinov is well known. But Polevoy's attitude to Byron emerges most fully not so much in his polemics with the young poet as in his *Outlines of Russian Literature* (1839). The passage I have in mind is a piece of rhetorical elaboration, but its meaning is plain enough. Like Venevitinov, Polevoy considers Byron to be "the personification of the age". Byron's poetry, he maintains, is essentially lyrical in inspiration, although with a hint of epic movement, and it is inferior at all points to both Dante's and Shakespeare's, but, "like the lightning or a falling meteor", possesses an irresistible fascination. He does not discuss Byron's poetry from a narrowly aesthetic or artistic point of view. He appears to be interested in its philosophical and psychological bearings. "An unusual phenomenon in the ethical world of our time, which must not be judged by accepted standards", he writes of Byron in his supplementary remarks to Scott's *Characteristics*. Shevyrev's standpoint is similar. When he writes of the *Giaour*, it is with his moral character that he is concerned, and Bonnivard strikes him chiefly as "a typical misfit". Nothing is said of the relations of these personages to others, or of the exotic background against which they move, or the situations in which one discovers them. But we shall subsequently learn that these things were not altogether ignored, especially by those who, like Vyazemsky, studied the technique of verbal presentation.

Nadezhdin, although an anti-romanticist, belongs to the same psycho-philosophical school of criticism. This criticism was a sign of the times, though rival modes of approach were not lacking. In

the next decade (1830—1840), with the appearance of V. G. Belinsky, the new school was the only one to win general recognition, and it assumed what was tantamount to a dictatorship of ideas.

Nadezhdin's opinion of Byron discloses an awe tempered by the critical spirit. In an article contributed to *The Messenger of Europe* (1828) he wrote as follows, presumably echoing the words of August Schlegel: "Byron's melancholy has infected the whole of contemporary poetry and transformed a smiling Charis into a petrifying Medusa. True, we have no right to blame him. He was the victim of nature and circumstance. Misanthropy was part of his character and constitutes the originality of his genius. He will always be a great but ominous luminary in the literature of the world." Nadezhdin's attitude to Byron was not unlike Zhukovsky's.

If we now turn to the diaries and commonplace-books of Russian readers in the eighteen-twenties and thirties we shall notice the same conflicting opinions, especially about Byron the man. Two diaries and a letter to the press will be sufficient, as they are fully representative. A. N. Wulf, Pushkin's young friend at Mikhaylovskoye, and the future academician, A. V. Nikitenko, both genuinely admired Byron. D. P. Runich, a member of the School Management Board, was vociferous and hostile.

Wulf read Moore's biography of Byron while on military service at Kholm. The entry in his diary, which records his impressions, runs¹²: "I have always loved and respected this poet as the greatest of geniuses, but since Moore laid the story of his life before me and showed me his character from all sides, in every variety of circumstance and in its gradual development, I have become partial even to his failings. I think that I now completely understand this great man and feel both his physical and his ethical charm. It seems as if we had lived together, so vividly do I picture to myself his mode of life, his habits and idiosyncrasies. I have come to understand even his intellectual life, the things that hurt and delighted his creative spirit . . . and, as usually happens, comparing his ideas with my own, I have often found them similar . . . Throughout the Turkish campaign I carried his works about with me; now they shall be inseparable from my person."

Nikitenko's is a more impulsive tribute. "I have read Byron",

¹² February 20, 1833.

he noted in his diary on December 20, 1826. "His poetry is like an Aeolian harp with its strings trembling in the gusts of a storm, and chords are struck that shake one like the groans of a dying friend. Napoleon, Byron and Schelling are the representatives of our age. They shall tell its secret to future generations and show these how, in our time, man's spirit strove to triumph over destiny and grew faint in the unequal conflict." He, too, thought Byron "the essence of everything that is great".

The vituperative letter which Runich sent to the *Russian Invalid* in 1820 is in vehement contrast to these eulogies. He had been annoyed by a note on Byron, translated from the Paris *Conservateur*, and wrote to the editor, easing his outraged sensibilities. "I cannot restrain myself from expressing to you, by letter, the feelings that were aroused in me by an article on the English poet Byron. That godless man, according to the French critic, has a black and cruel heart and an intellect disfigured by love of licence. Of what advantage is it to us Russians, or to humanity in general, to know that in Britain or America or Australia there are monsters who spend their leisure in devising imbecile systems and writing poems in obdurate unbelief, with the object of representing felonies as the passions and needs of great minds. Is there grandeur, elegance or usefulness in such things? Surely it is the devil's own philosophy!" He then overlooks a contradiction. "Those who are infected with Byron's ravings are lost for ever. The impressions that one gets from him, especially when the mind is young, can be obliterated only with the greatest difficulty." The mood persists to the end. "It is said that Byron's is the mind of a true poet (a signal merit no doubt!), but his poems are full of deadly venom and inculcate a philosophy that could have been hatched only in hell. So it comes to this, that to acclaim Byron's poetry is the same thing as to extol a murderous weapon which has been ground for the destruction of humanity." This bitter attack and others in the same spirit¹³ had im-

¹³ In the *Syn Otechestva (Patriot)* for 1825 there is an article entitled "The Spirit of Poetry", which concludes with these words: — "Byron has turned out to be the brilliant founder of a bad school. A false literature has sprung up under his influence, a literature that sheds no light on civic life and does not help one to understand human nature or to improve oneself, but offers, instead, a keen yet hurtful enjoyment and makes one murmur against providence."

portant consequences. The Censorship Committee of the Ministry of the Interior became thoroughly alarmed and began to take precautions that such of Byron's works as were deemed to have a questionable "content" should not come into readers' hands. These works were indexed, their matter was carefully examined and reported on to the Committee, and excisions were made of offending passages. Some of them were prohibited altogether. *Cain*, for instance, was banned as blasphemous. So also was *Don Juan*, which the censor described as "abounding in poetic beauties", but as being decidedly immoral and containing much that was injurious to the memory of the Empress Catherine II. *Marino Faliero* was thought to be dangerous in as much as it was capable, by its seditious rhetoric, of inflaming minds and possibly of fomenting a revolution against the established order. Even *The Deformed Transformed*, "a sort of comic poem in dialogue", and *The Island*, which was supposed to contain a "mysterious digression" vilifying Russian royalty (in point of fact an allusion to Cleopatra!) were "unconditionally and permanently prohibited", although the censor had said in his report that he considered them both to be innocuous¹⁴.

Viewed against this oppressive background of censorial restrictions and unfriendly criticism it may appear strange that Byron should have become a literary force in Russia. The truth, however, is that, although seriously handicapped, he could always count on the support of a large and influential following. It was the men of letters in Russia, and especially the impulsive younger minds, who made his triumph possible.

CHAPTER II

Lyric Poetry, 1820—1830.

Certain Byronic *motifs* recur in the lyric verse of some of the leading Russian poets between 1820 and 1830. What follows is a brief survey of their incidence and treatment.

The Persian conceit of a nightingale's love for a rose is found in *The Giaour* and in the *The Bride of Abydos*. This was one of the favourite similes, not only of Byron, but of all those romanti-

¹⁴ See Yu. G. Ochsmann, "The Campaign against Byron in the Reigns of Alexander I and Nicholas I" (*Nachala II*, 1922).

cists who had dabbled in "oriental" literature. Whether those Russian poets who toyed with it took it from the original source seems doubtful, and we may even assume as fairly certain that Byron was one of the first to introduce it into Russia as an element in the local colour of his Levantine romances. The conceit figures twice in Pushkin's lyrics and once in the narrative poem, *The Fountain in Bakhchisaray. O Roseal Virgin* (1820), the first of the lyrics, appeared in print in 1826 as "an imitation of a Turkish song". The poem is supposedly an apostrophe of Yelena Rayevskaya, for whom Pushkin entertained a Shelleyan affection. He compares his own captivity to her beauty to the nightingale held captive by the rose. The image recurs in the first stanza of *The Nightingale* (1827) as a symbol. The second stanza of this lyric enlarges the symbol by example. The whole poem is thus a sort of inverted simile. The poet is in hopeless love with an unfeeling beauty, and his plight resembles the nightingale's, to whose wooing the rose is unresponsive. In both lyrics there is nothing beyond this image to suggest Pushkin's familiarity with Byron.

The apostrophe of the evening star is a device which must be nearly as old as poetry itself. Since Sappho's ἔσπερε πάντα φέρεις it has been frequently rediscovered. Byron used it in *Sun of the Sleepless*, and Pushkin has a lyric, printed in 1824 as *The Tauric Star*, which reflects this Hebrew Melody in theme, occasional expressions and the arrangement of its rhymes¹⁵. Byron lends the *motif* the aspect of a simile (the feeble light of the star is compared to the cold distant "light of other days"), whereas Pushkin uses it merely as an invocative introduction to a record of awakened memories. The verbal analogies, limited to the opening line and a few phrases here and there, are not oversignificant. Nor is the measure helpful: Pushkin's poem is in rhymed alexandrines with the conventional alternation of masculine and feminine endings; Byron uses a freer form of the heroic couplet. But there are affinities enough between the two to enable one to speak definitely of influence.

¹⁵ "Rarer grow the scudding drifts of cloud. O melancholy star! O evening star! your beams have silvered the arid plain, the slumbering bay and the tops of the sombre cliffs. I love your feeble light. It has awakened memories in me that were asleep." Cp. "Sun of the sleepless! melancholy star! whose tearful beam glows tremulously far, that show'st the darkness thou canst not dispel, how like art thou to Joy remembered well!"

More numerous parallels with Byron's poetry are afforded by a group of Russian lyrics written in praise of an idealised Italy. Naturally enough they are all by poets who had never lived outside Russia. Kozlov, according to the critic Rozanov, was the first Russian to write variations on this favourite theme. *A Venetian Night* and *To Italy* were set down, like all his other poems, in blindness. Their indebtedness to Byron is general. Kozlov's Italy is even less real than the Italy of *Childe Harold*: it is idealised, sublimated, and as unattainable as some dissolving, sunny paradise of the imagination. The exclamatory, lyrical manner, which Kozlov uses to obtain this effect, is also characteristic of Byron. But it is difficult to go beyond such generalisations: the rare coincidences in epithet are unconvincing, and the measure shows no trace of being derivative. Moreover, Kozlov knew Italian and had translated passages from *Orlando furioso* and Tasso's *Gerusalemme liberata*.

Pushkin's "Italian" poetry consists of two lyrics, which are both called *Desire* by the editors of his works and begin with a modification of Goethe's lyric formula: "Kennst du das Land wo die Zitronen blüh'n?" The first, written in 1821, is in *ottava rima*, which may possibly, but not necessarily, have been suggested by *Beppo* and *Don Juan*. Its theme is the Crimean landscape (Russia's Italy), of which the poet gives an elaborate, if rather conventional, picture. The phrasing of the first octaves may be compared with some verses in the two earlier cantos of *Childe Harold*¹⁶. The catalogue of southern loveliness seen in its midday colours is very much in Byron's taste. And the sweep of the measure gives point to the assumption that it was influenced by Byron's poetry.

The second poem (1827) has been examined line by line by Sumtsov¹⁷, who distinguishes a core of Italian landscape-painting

¹⁶ "A golden land", "lofty heights, pleasant streams of clear water, lovely valleys, flowering hillocks, amber fruit suspended among the vine leaves, flocks drowsing in the shadow of the olives, houses trellised for the grape, convents, villages, towns, the noise of the sea and the murmur of cascades, vessels scudding over the waves, and the bright rays of Phoebus and the blue arch of the southern sky." Cp. C. H. II, 87. "Yet are thy skies as blue, thy crags as wild, sweet are thy groves, and verdant are thy fields, thine olive ripe, etc.... Apollo still thy long, long summer gilds." Cp. also C. H. I, 19 and C. H. II, 49—50, 52.

¹⁷ N. F. Sumtsov, "Studies in the Poetry of A. Pushkin." (*Kharkov University Memorial Miscellany to A. S. Pushkin*, 1900.)

and an appendix of observations on Italian art and literature. The landscape is unlocalised and transfigured by poetic vision. Byronic influence appears at the seventh line, which is the first of a quatrain on the Adriatic echoes of Tasso's songs¹⁸. For the earlier verses Goethe seems to have been drawn upon as much as Byron. The couplet of the opening formula and the fifth and sixth lines on the laurel and cypress may be recollections of *Mignon*. But it is not impossible that all four verses were inspired by the overture to *The Bride of Abydos*. Later there are allusions to Canova, the Florentine Aphrodite and the Venetian carnival, all of them apparently reminiscences of *Childe Harold* and *Beppo*, and an ornate apostrophe of Italy in the person of a beautiful woman. This image seems also to have been suggested to Pushkin by Byron, who is himself "epigrammatised" in a couplet as the "stern martyr who loved, suffered and blasphemed". The Tasso *motif* engaged Pushkin again in an elegiac fragment which belongs to 1829¹⁹.

The Greek rising of the early twenties had its enthusiasts all over Europe. Everywhere youth was roused to a pitch of martial exaltation. Khomyakov ran away from his home in Moscow to throw in his lot with the Philike Hetaireia. Those who, like Pushkin, were in Bessarabia at the time had the chance of meeting the "comrades" in numbers and of catching the infection of their fighting spirit. They must all have been familiar with Riga's name, and no doubt some of them could repeat his Δεῦτε, παῖδες τῶν Ἑννήνων. Byron himself had translated this war-song in 1812, and there is evidence to show that Pushkin knew the version. The Tyrtæan lyric, *Arise, O Greece, arise!* which, it is conjectured, was written in 1821, contains the invocation: "Shatter your servile chains to the singing of the fiery verse of Tyrtæus, Byron and Riga." It would hardly do to talk of Byronic influence here, for, after all, Byron's poem is

¹⁸ "Where glorious Tasso sang, and where to this day his octaves are echoed by the Adriatic wave in the darkness of the night." Cp. E. O. I, 49 and C. H. IV, 3 *etc.*

¹⁹ "Where the boatman no longer sings Tasso's airs, and where the ruins of ancient cities sleep under a mantle of ashes." Cp. C. H. IV, 3. "In Venice Tasso's echoes are no more and silent rows the songless gondolier; her palaces are crumbling to the shore *etc.*"

only a translation, and a fairly literal one at that. But certain resemblances in the wording compel attention²⁰.

Venevitinov's general indebtedness to Byron is clearer. About the year 1824 he wrote an unfinished prologue to a projected drama, *The Death of Byron*, and a narrative poem called *The Song of the Greek*, both of which drew on recent historical events for their themes. From our point of view the first is the more significant. It consists of four fragments: a monologue, a dialogue and two choruses. The monologue is supposed to be spoken by Byron, who in glowing words expresses the passionate longing he has always felt for Greece. In the dialogue, in answer to the call of "son of the north, prepare for battle", he tells a Greek chieftain that he is ready to die. The last choral fragment is a lament on his death. It is here that we get a breath of the sea. "Roar, stormy waves! Tell Albion's distant shores that he is fallen." The first line of this invocation is plainly a loan from *Childe Harold*. At the close Venevitinov strikes new rhetorical chords. "Come, peoples of Hellas, children of victory and freedom, take oath at his tomb... to bring the eclipsed crescent as an offering to the dead hero."

The sea has never been a source of pure inspiration in Russian poetry. An inland country with land-locked or frost-bound waters is hardly likely to kindle affection for what to her is virtually an alien element. Russian maritime poetry is small in compass and owes its origin mostly to books. Derzhavin's rare seascapes with their hazy outlines are recollections of his beloved *Ossian*. The nineteenth century poets learnt theirs from Byron, whom Pushkin, in his obituary elegy, called "the singer of the sea". As we know, the sea is a dominant *motif* in Byron from *Childe Harold* to *Don Juan*. The first is so full of it that Vyazemsky visualised its noblest canto as "a sea of poetry", and its influence can be detected in the sea poems which Zhukovsky and Pushkin wrote in the early eighteen-twenties. Zhukovsky's elegy *'The Sea'* came in 1822. One may doubt whether this poem was inspired by *Childe Harold*, although it is possible that the conception of the sea as a mirror

²⁰ (a) "Land of gods and heroes, break your servile chains!" Cp. "Let your country see you rising, and all your chains be broke."

(b) "The sacred marbles of Athens, tombs of Theseus and Pericles." Cp. "Theseus' fane" (C. III, 121) and G. 2 "the Athenian's grave".

of the sky is a reminiscence of a stanza (the 183rd) in the fourth canto. The apostrophic overture — "Soundless sea, azure sea!" — is in a gentler mood than Byron's invocations. Zhukovsky has marvellously captured the motion of the waves, and there is a fullness and accuracy of observation, as well as a delicate fancy, in his explanation of the sea changes.

Pushkin is more impassioned in *his* elegies. His first sea poem appeared in 1826, six years after it had been written. It is usually known by its first line "The daystar has set" (Pogaslo dnevnnoye svetilo). Investigators are agreed that it is the first Russian poem, in point of time, which shows traces of Byron's influence. There is no doubt that, but for the measure, the poem is Byronic. The valedictory theme derives from *Childe Harold's Good Night*, from which Pushkin also borrowed certain expressions²¹. But that *Childe Harold* was the immediate impulse to the composition of his poem is unlikely. At the time when he wrote it Pushkin was sailing from Feodosiya to Yurzuf. His being on board ship no doubt recalled the first canto of *Childe Harold* and especially the undeservedly popular *Good Night*. In these circumstances the poem was written. It is a poem of bitter recollections. The first part is a descriptive introduction and the second a catalogue of memories, the two being connected by a middle passage, in which the poet apostrophises the ship. Many verses, particularly in the overture and the "interlude", give the impression that Pushkin wrote them with *Childe Harold* vividly in mind. The disenchanting verses of the latter half of the poem read as if they had been inspired by a mood of passionate remorse. Many of them recur in an altered shape in the lyric *I do not grieve for you, years of my spring* (1820).

Pushkin's other sea poem of the twenties is a memorial elegy. It was first printed in fragmentary shape as *The Black Sea* soon

²¹ (a) "The star of day has set; the evening mist has fallen on the blue sea. Shake, shake, O willing sail! Roll on, O gloomy ocean!" Cp. C. H. IV, 179. "Roll on, thou dark and deep blue ocean — roll!" which in Batyushkov's translation reads "gloomy ocean". Cp. also C. H. I (*Childe Harold's Good Night*): "Yon Sun that sets upon the sea."

(b) "Fly, vessel! bear me to distant parts (bear me anywhere), so long as it is not to the shores of my native country." Cp. C. H. G. N. 10. "With thee, my bark, I'll swiftly go athwart the foaming brine; nor care what land thou bear'st me to, so not again to mine." Cp. also C. H. I, 14.

after Byron's death. Later the *Mnemozina* (Mnemosyne) published it with its complement of fifteen stanzas. It is more concerned with the death of Byron and of Napoleon than with the sea. "Following him (Napoleon)", wrote Pushkin, "another genius has fled from our midst, another lord of our thoughts has forsaken us. Roar, O sea! for the was your singer. Your image was set upon him as a mark; he was created by your spirit. Like you, he was mighty, sombre and profound; like you, there was none that could curb him²²." The poetic device of apostrophising the sea came from Byron. Moreover, there are a number of correspondences in expression with *Childe Harold*²³.

If one compared a certain patriotic ode which Pushkin wrote in his lyceum days with the more celebrated *Napoleon* of 1821, which cost the poet so much trouble to write, one would immediately discover a startling change of attitude. The bloodthirsty monster of the earlier poem has become a man and a hero. The old bitter words and hard feelings are, as it were, retracted, and Pushkin has nothing but a real pity for the fallen emperor. It seems plausible to surmise that Byron was responsible for this change, though one must admit the possibility that it was spontaneous. Pushkin is certainly kinder to Napoleon than Byron was in the *Ode to Napoleon Bonaparte*, but then the subject is not identical. Byron wrote of Napoleon's downfall; Pushkin of his death. Nevertheless there are verbal resemblances between the poems²⁴. "You insolently believed in your destiny, and absolute dominion fascinated you with its disenchanting beauty", wrote Pushkin. "Thou, forsooth, must be a King, vain forward child of Empire" — is from a later stanza (18)

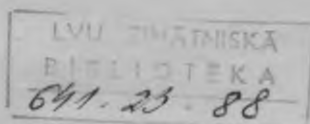
²² An earlier manuscript version of this stanza and a half reads as follows: "Roar, O Sea! rise up in tempest! Byron was your singer. He died proudly at the moment when liberty was reborn."

²³ (a) "The fisherman's lowly sail glides boldly over the waves." Cp. C. H. II, 21. "Glanced many a light Caïque along the foam."

(b) "But you, who are invincible, uprose to sink a fleet of ships." Cp. C. H. IV, 180. "Thou dost arise and shake him from thee." Cp. also C. H. IV, 179, 181.

(c) "How I loved your echoes, O Sea, your muffled sounds — the voice of the deep." Cp. C. H. IV, 184. "And I have loved thee, Ocean!"

²⁴ In St. Helena, "the exile, fixing his eyes upon the sea, remembered the clash of swords". Cp. Ode 14. "Then haste thee to thy sullen Isle, and gaze upon the sea."



of the *Ode*. Our parallel, however, proves little beyond the fact that both poets understood Napoleon in much the same way. Pushkin, it will be noticed, avoids the critical, moralising tone.

The theme of disillusionment, which occupies Pushkin's first Byronic poem, is paramount in the lyrics of the period of his exile. Disillusionment, however, was with Pushkin a transient state of mind and not, as it was with Byron, one of the mainsprings of his poetry. The *motif* appears for the first time in the epilogue to the narrative of *Ruslan and Lyudmila*, which he wrote at the beginning of his exile. As he had not read anything of Byron's until 1821, it is obvious that his disillusionment was not a borrowed theme, but a mood which had grown upon him naturally. Yet it seems fair to suppose that this mood was emphasised by the influence of Byron, for it is unlikely that a man such as we know Pushkin to have been would otherwise have dallied with it so long. We cannot, however, be at all certain of English influence. In metrical architecture the Pushkin lyrics are very different from Byron's. And the parallel passages which commentators usually adduce are neither numerous nor convincing.

The most personal of the elegies, *I have outlived my desires* (1821), presents no verbal analogies to Byron's poems. Two others, both of them written in 1822, resemble, more or less, the latter part of the lyric, *The daystar has set*. The first (*I love your dusk*) is on immortality. Like Byron, Pushkin was uncertain of the survival of the soul. "Perhaps at death I shall shed away all earthly feelings, and the world will cease to exist for me. Perhaps my heart will lose all remembrance of my past life, and I shall not know regret, and the pangs of love will be forgotten." The parallel to this and to the earlier portion of the poem, which is more hopeful, occurs in the seventh and eighth stanzas of *Childe Harold II* ("Peace waits us on the shores of Acheron"). At best the analogies are slight. The subject is not even disillusionment, but a tranquil scepticism.

The second poem is a lyric of nine verses and exhibits a shade more resemblance to the Byronic *Daystar*. It is called *Feasts, mistresses and friends*, after the opening line. "You have vanished", says the poet, "with my light illusions. I am left alone, alone. My youth has lost its bloom. Thus candles that have burnt through a long night for wanton youths and girls pale before the light of day at the end of a wild orgy." This is how Childe Harold must

have felt. His creator wrote in a similar strain. "Foes, friends, men, women now are nought to me but dreams of what has been" (cp. D. J. II, 166). Apart from the parallels I have drawn and the general tone of the lyrics, which is not a safe guide, there appears to be nothing to incline us to believe that Byron's influence was responsible for Pushkin's poetry of disillusionment, although we may assume, on the showing of the comparisons, that it encouraged his mood of introspection.

It must have become apparent by now that the influences which have been studied in this chapter are of any but a lyrical origin. Byron's lyric poetry, although a great favourite with translators, who included many well-known poets of the time, seems to have remained sterile. *Childe Harold*, especially its maturer cantos, was the poem which made his reputation in Russia, as it had done in England. It was discovered to be a mine of suggestions. Its influence was more numerous reflected than that of any other of Byron's poems, except the group known as the Oriental Tales and perhaps the poetry in *ottava rima*. For the Byronic lyric it was almost the only source of inspiration. The theme of Napoleon-worship, for example, occurs in *Childe Harold* as well as in the *Ode to Napoleon Bonaparte*.

There is one very strange poem, the subject-matter of which is unique in Byron's poetry. The poem is called *Darkness*. Its theme is the end of the world — the theme which had engaged Campbell in *The Last Man* and one or two obscure writers who lived before the Romantic Age. *Darkness* seems to have influenced Borotynsky's *The Last Death* (1828). The subject-matter of the two poems is identical. The measure, but for the rhymes and stanzaic structure of the latter, is the same iambic pentameter or "pentatonic iamb". There are also analogies in expression. But it is interesting that the first few stanzas of *The Last Death* were affected not by the prospective *Darkness*, but by the nobler retrospect of *The Dream*. From *The Dream* Boratynsky took the device of a preface on the mysteries of sleep and waking. His treatment of the subject, however, is not identical with Byron's. He is thinking of the unexplored limbo between the two physical states, whereas Byron writes of the reality of dreams. Nevertheless, there are a number of verbal correspondences which establish the relation of

influence between the poems²⁵. Especially noteworthy is the recurrent phrase, "ages passed by", which serves to introduce each fresh tableau and seems to have been suggested by Byron's capital burden: "A change came o'er the spirit of my dream."

Immediately after his preface, Boratynsky approaches the main subject of his poem. The influence of *Darkness* obtrudes itself here in the panorama of the end of the world and may be studied in a sequence of comparisons²⁶. But perhaps it would become plainer if we also took note of the differences. In *Darkness* Byron describes the earth as he imagines it on the day of its destruction. Boratynsky paints two pictures: one shows the earth before the extinction of life; the other shows it after the cleansing. Byron's vision is a vast, extravagant vision, entirely in keeping with his strenuous art. The Russian poet draws comprehensive miniatures with a few emphatic strokes. His artistic media are severely under control. His pictures discover no waste of creative energy. The close of his poem is as different as it could be from *Darkness*. Byron says: "The bright

²⁵ (a) "There is a state of being which is nameless. It is neither sleep nor waking; it lies between these and is the point at which human reason confines upon insanity." Cp. *The Dream*: "Our life is twofold: sleep hath its own world, a boundary between the things misnamed death and existence etc."

(b) "In this state, although man is in complete possession of his reason, visions throng upon him from all sides like waves." Cp. D. "And dreams in their development have birth... They leave a weight upon our waking thoughts... They pass like spirits of the past."

(c) "He becomes the prey of an elemental terror. But sometimes, fired by illusions, he beholds a world that has not been revealed to others." Cp. D. ("Dreams") look like heralds of Eternity (and) speak, like Sibyls, of the future."

(d) "Whether the vision I had was the result of an unwholesome dream, or of a daring thought that came to me in the night, I do not know, but at that moment the coming years passed in procession before me." Cp. D. "I would recall a vision which I dreamed perchance in sleep — for in itself a thought... is capable of years, and curdles a long life into an hour."

²⁶ "Ages passed by, and then a terrible scene was enacted before my eyes. Death went stalking over land and sea. The destiny of living creatures was being accomplished. Where was man? Where? The grave concealed him! The last families lay about rotting like old frontier posts. Cities stood in ruins. Untended herds roamed over choked-up pastures." Cp. *Darkness*, of which this reads like an epitome.

sun was extinguished, and the stars did wander darkling in the eternal space." In Boratynsky, the sun rises over a purged earth.

A large number of Byronic themes repeat themselves, as we have seen, in the lyric poetry written in Russia during the first decade of Byron's ascendancy. They occur chiefly in Pushkin and in the work of some of his more talented contemporaries. But they are not strictly confined to the poetry of these writers. Many humbler names have been deliberately overlooked.

We shall discover later that some of the dominant *motifs* of the eighteen-twenties reappear in the lyric poetry of Lermontov, and that even in the thirties and forties there are faint reverberations of them.

CHAPTER III

The Oriental Tales.

The critics of the eighteen-twenties who reviewed the earliest narrative poems of Pushkin invariably drew attention to their resemblance to Byron's *Oriental Tales*. No matter to what set they belonged, these critics were primarily interested in Pushkin's art and its dependence on the art of Byron. Their interest also gave them an opportunity, seized readily enough, to examine and dispute over the relative merits of the classical and romantic styles.

Prince Vyazemsky, a classicist in practice, was the protagonist of the new romanticism. His preface to Pushkin's *Fountain in Bakhchisaray* started the issue. For us it is significant as a tentative study of literary influences. The peculiarities of the new *genre*, as represented by the *Oriental Tales*, are recorded and glossed: the importance of local colour, the exotic theme, the suggestive brokenness of the narration. Vyazemsky is even fuller and more explicit on these points in his review of *The Gypsies* (1824): he elucidates and justifies the interruptedness of the new narrative method, which is so essential a part of Byron's lyric story-telling. And he was not alone in his attitude to the *Oriental Tales*. Olin, in *The Russian Invalid* (1825), had made similar discoveries. "Look closely", he says, "at Byron's poems, and you will find a sustained plan." Again, the anonymous reviewer of *Poltava* in *The Patriot (Syn Otechestva)* was able, by shrewd observation, to supplement Vyazemsky's catalogue of idiosyncrasies. "Byron's poems consist of fragments of

the most significant episodes in the life of the chief character", he writes. "Among these fragments there is no rhetorical coherence, but they are held together by the bond of a common interest." He also observes that Byron begins his poems in the middle of the fable. Thus many peculiarities of Byron's style had been noted by Russian criticism in the eighteen-twenties. I have mentioned some of them in a previous chapter, but I shall give them here in full as a preface to my study of Byron's influence on the Southern Poems of Pushkin.

The origins of the Oriental Tales must be sought in the structure and substance of the English popular ballad and especially in the metrical romances of Coleridge (*Christabel*), Scott (*Marmion*) and Rogers (*The Voyage of Columbus*). Certain *motifs*, episodes and characters were probably drawn from the Tale of Terror as represented by the work of Anne Radcliffe, C. R. Maturin and "Monk" Lewis, with which Byron had been familiar from his boyhood. But Scott's *Marmion* seems to have been his immediate source of inspiration, if not also the actual incentive to write. The Oriental Tales are his peculiar contribution to the advancement of lyric romance. Coleridge and Scott had found their inspiration in the folk ballad; Byron found his in their ballad poetry. Coleridge had been engrossed by supernatural, wizard themes; Scott had specialised in historical narrative; Byron gave the lyric romance a new "oriental" setting²⁷. *Their* poems had, if anything, lacked narrative concentration; *he* made his compact, even centripetal, by enlarging the character of the leading figure to the detriment of the others and making him the centre and mainspring of action. Besides, he enriched his stories with a multitude of rather vulgar romantic *motifs*, which happened to be in the air at the time. All this was calculated to increase the appeal of his work.

The lyric romance is a markedly lyrical and dramatic narrative-poem, which differs materially at numerous points from the epos of classical times. The classical epos was built round a lofty theme, complicated by a multitude of external incidents. The story was

²⁷ Byron may have derived this from William Beckford's exotic romance, *Vathek* (1784), originally written in French and partly inspired by Voltaire. Incidentally, the hero, Caliph Vathek, and Beckford himself are prototypes of Lara and other such Byronic characters.

related slowly, gravely, and with dignified progression. The author often dwelt at length on minutiae, which necessarily impeded, though they did not deflect, the course of his narrative. His mode of treatment was objective: he deliberately concealed his personal feelings and allowed no interest that he might have in the fate of his characters to ruffle the even flow of his story. The story was one of national or historical significance. The leading characters were idealised and magnified to superhuman proportions. Certain *procédés* became gradually fixed as peculiar to the epic style. Personification of abstract conceptions (Faith, Charity), mythological machinery, allegory, the grand manner and long-drawn-out measures (the hexameter and the alexandrine) were the chief of these.

Compared to the detailed chronicle of the old epos, the lyric romance has the terse cohesion of a *novella*. Its subject is more suited to a ballad than to an epic. The narrative is vague, fragmentary, and proceeds, as it were, in spasms or snatches. Unlike the epos, the lyric romance admits of a mingling of literary *genres*: it varies plain narrative with dramatic interludes and is richly, even paramountly, lyrical in tone. The dramatic element, though subordinate to the lyrical, is also prominent. There is an abundance of dialogues and soliloquies, and the situations are chosen with an eye to their dramatic effectiveness. The lyric manner springs from the writer's interest in his plot and characters. It is a breathless, vibrant, impassioned manner, interpreted by short, swift verses, variously rhyming and loosely gathered into irregular sections or paragraphs.

As it took shape in Byron's hands, the lyric romance is known generically as the Oriental Tale, though Levantine appears to be a more adequate designation. Byron's Oriental Tales are a group of eight poems, of which six (*The Giaour*, *The Bride of Abydos*, *The Corsair*, *Lara*, *The Siege of Corinth* and *Parisina*) were written in England. These six romances, because of a certain family likeness, form a distinct sub-group. The remaining two (*The Prisoner of Chillon* and *Mazeppa*) are different in tone, and exhibit points of divergence in structure. They were written on the Continent.

The Oriental Tales may be examined in detail from the point of view of subject-matter (fable, *motifs*, characterisation, setting), composition, style and prosody. Their one abiding theme is passion wrought by unrestrained violence to the pitch of melodrama. Two passions, love and hatred, lead the action. Love, even in the closing

cantos of *The Corsair* and in *Parisina*, transcends mere bodily desire. It is so strong and loyal that, thwarted by human or super-human agency, it changes into an unfathomable bitterness of hatred or remorse. These passions are passive. Quickened into activity, hatred leads to revenge and remorse to self-destruction. *The Bride of Abydos* and *The Siege of Corinth* are tragedies of revenge. *The Giaour* and *Lara* are dramas of remorse and suicide, long drawn out. *The Corsair* is a romantic story of a love-inspired crime. *Parisina* is a tragedy of illicit love. The two not specifically "oriental" tales, *The Prisoner of Chillon* and *Mazeppa*, are spectacles, the one prolonged, the other brief, of man's cruelty to man.

The favourite or stock *motifs* and situations of the Oriental Tales are in keeping with their subject and setting. For the most part they are such as one finds in the Gothic Romance or the Romantic drama. They were familiar to all readers of popular literature and to theatre-goers. Byron had them ready to hand from the outset. They include seductions (G.), disguisings (G., C., L.), secret murders (B. A., L.), apparitions (G., B. A., L., S. C.), confessions (G., B. A., P.), trials and executions (G., P.), ambushades (G.), duels (L.), midnight visits (C.), trysts (B. A., P.), imprisonment (C., P. C.), battles and sieges (B. A., C., L., S. C.), flight (C.), piracy (B. A., C.), and spectacular horsemanship (G., M.). They are thrilling, melodramatic *motifs*, some of them vulgar in themselves, others vulgarised by the mode of treating them.

Byron's characterisation is crude, glaring and one-sided. It lacks variety and *nuance*, and abuses emphasis. The three leading characters — the hero, the heroine and the hero's antagonist, or villain — are well-contrasted types²⁸. The minor personages are so vaguely drawn that they can hardly be distinguished from one another against the sultry colours of the background. Of the three principal characters, the hero is the most evident. He is drawn with a fullness of knowledge and a depth of affection such as are not bestowed on the others. If he were an ordinary person he would

²⁸ E. g. *Giaour-Leila-Hassan* (G.), *Selim-Zuleika-Giaffir* (B. A.), *Conrad-Gulnare-Seyd* (C.), *Lanciotto-Francesca-Minotti* (P. C.), *Hugo-Parisina-Azo* (P.), *Mazeppa-Theresa-Falbowski* (M.). Cp. also the distribution of the characters in the comic poems: *Beppo-Laura-The Count* (B.), *Juan-Julia-Alphonso* (D. J. I), and *Juan-Haidée-Lambro* (D. J. II and III).

be repellent. But Byron makes him a superman and invests him with an irresistible personal attractiveness. He is a sinister personage. The adjectives which Byron repeatedly uses to describe him are all sombre. Pride, gloom, loneliness and misanthropy are equally personified in him. The air of mystery that surrounds him has magnetic properties. Socially he is an outcast, most probably a voluntary one. In person he is stalwart, pale, blackhaired and with penetrating eyes. Like all egoists he is without a glimmer of humour and an unconscious *poseur*. The attitudes he strikes are crudely theatrical. He can express brooding melancholy (C.), martial ardour (B. A. II), unbounded despair (C.), or fathomless remorse (L.). He can also express other moods that derive from spiritual exaltation or dejection. This hero appears under different names and in various guises in all the essentially "oriental" tales. In *Mazeppa* he is no longer a superman, and his sinister traits are only faintly drawn. As for Bonnivard, he is not a "Byronic" hero at all.

The hero's attitude to the heroine is that of an impassioned, high-minded lover. The heroine, for her part, returns his love with equal ardour. She is, with one exception, a frail creature, yielding, affectionate, clinging. It is fairly certain that she is a copy of Mrs. Radcliffe's heroines. She has no individuality, nothing about her to make her more than an almost impersonal type. She is the incarnation of all that is lovely, passionate, tender and true in woman. Compared to her lover-hero she is underdrawn. But the mode of portraiture is the same: she is idealised, and presented to us in a lovable, as the hero is in a striking, attitude (e. g. B. A. I.). There are two kinds of heroine. The European, as represented by Medora and Francesca, is a blue-eyed, gentle, yellow-haired woman. The Oriental (Gulnare, Kaled, Theresa) is dark, black-eyed and quick-blooded. There is an intermediate type, personified by Leila, who is a Caucasian with a fair skin and "hyacinthine" hair. Temperamentally she is European.

The villain of the Tales hardly needs description. He is the familiar figure of the old footlights and the Gothic Romance. His evil nature is stamped on his face and declares itself in ignoble actions. In Byron's Tales he assumes various disguises. Usually he is the possessor of a harem. Sometimes he is a narrow-minded, sensual old nobleman (Azo, Falbowski). He invariably wears a beard.

It might be thought from the designation of the Oriental Tales

that their setting is eastern. This is not quite true. The action of the first five takes place in Mohammedan Greece. The background of *Parisina* is Italian. That of *Lara* may be Spanish or Aegean, but it may also, as Byron once ironically suggested, be lunar. This vagueness is typical of all Byron's settings. Painted in gaudy colours though they are, they invariably lack a sharp outline. They are unlocalised, idealised, and as gorgeous as a sunset in a picture. As if to counterbalance the indefinite contours of the setting, there appears to be a sustained effort to add to the brilliance of the local colour by the use of "oriental" words. Chibouque, calpac, cymar, dervise and houri spot the text with bright, exotic hues. Exotic is perhaps the one word which most nearly suggests the background of the Tales.

The composition of Byron's romances is their most significant feature. It is designedly, or instinctively, systematic. The tensest episodes in the story, which is always an excerpt from the hero's emotional life, are isolated and vividly pictured. They are then arranged in an ordered sequence of detached images, like the Stations of the Cross, without intermediate narrative links, until the climax is reached. Thus the lyric romance presents the appearance of a mass of ordered fragments. These fragments are preceded by an overture or prelude, which, as it were, sets the tone of the story. It is an impassioned, high-pitched, unmodulated tone. It is also one of the chief means by which the writer fuses together the fragments of his narrative. The tone-plelude is unconnected with the story. Usually it describes in set terms the locality in which the episodes of the story occur, its inhabitants, and the narrator's impressions of it. Sometimes it has an historical, or a biographical, interest (S. C., M.), or it may be reflective (Is. III), or choral (C.). Immediately after the overture the story begins *in mediis rebus* with an effective situation²⁹. All that has happened before the moment at which the story begins is related either as a confession by the hero himself (cp. G., B. A.), or as a biographical sketch by the writer (L., S. C.). This pre-narrative (*Vorgeschichte*) usually comes directly after the opening episode, of which it is a sort of explanation. Other episodes follow in detached sequence,

²⁹ E. g. the Giaour's sudden appearance on horseback, Giaffir holding a divan, Parisina's tryst with Hugo, etc.

marking successive stages in the development of the plot. The gaps between them are filled in with pictures of nature, which Byron visualises more as an abstraction than as a reality³⁰, portraits of the leading characters, records of the hero's emotions, or the lyric ebullitions and musings of the writer³¹. These stopgaps serve rather to isolate than to bind the sequent episodes, among which they are interspersed, by impeding the course of the narrative. They also accentuate the writer's manner, its emotional quality, its reticence and vagueness about perplexing, momentous things³². The poem closes with an epilogue, which is almost always some species of description. Occasionally it is a catalogue of emotions (P. C.), or a necrology (B. A., L.), or a passage of biography (P.). Unlike the overture, it forms an integral part of the poem. In this respect it is like a musical *coda*.

Two other aspects of the Oriental Tales remain to be considered, namely, the style in which they are composed and their metrical structure. I have pointed out that the lyric romance is a syncretic medley of three literary forms — the lyric, the epic and the drama. All these constituents are reflected in its style. The narrative or epic element and the dramatic have equal significance. The latter occurs as monologue, usually a piece of self-revelation, and as dialogue, which is not quick and natural, but resemble an interchange of long soliloquies. The dramatic manner is essential to the lyric romance. The progressive phases of its growth are illustrated by the Oriental Tales from the *Giaour*, in which there is as much narrative as dialogue, to *Mazeppa*, which is almost exclusively dramatic. The Pacific romance of *The Island* (1823) marks a reversion to the earlier narrative style: it diverges from the other Tales in several ways and cannot be qualified as "oriental". The narrative-dramatic manner in which the Tales are written is suffused and permeated with lyric emotion. The writer appears to take a personal interest in the actions and fate of his characters. His interest emerges in the frequent use of emotional

³⁰ These scenic overtures usually consist of a description either of sunset, or of the fall of night. Cp. G. 537, B. A. 483, C. III, 1, L. I, 55, S. C. 242.

³¹ Cp. the meditations on remorse, the evanescence of beauty *etc.* in *The Giaour*.

³² E. g. the origins and fate of the hero.

figures of speech: question, exclamation, apostrophe, anaphora, the abstract simile³³, the interjected air or lyric (an operative device) and the verbal chain³⁴. But one also finds, embedded in the lyric language, relics of the older epic manner: personification, fixed epithet and metonymy.

The Oriental Tales are composed in two kinds of measure. Most of them, including *The Prisoner of Chillon* and *Mazeppa*, are in octosyllabic verse of four iambic beats. *The Corsair* and *Lara* are in the classical heroic couplet. Both measures exhibit a rhythmic monotony, which the poet tries to overcome with the aid of various devices. This monotony is least unrelieved in the percussive octosyllabic verse.

It is in the octosyllabic verse, too, that one observes any irregularity in the arrangement of the rhymes. As a rule the couplet occurs in counterchange with alternate and embraced groupings, but in the early part of *The Giaour* it is found to the exclusion of all other forms. The endings, and this applies equally to the heroic measure, are preponderantly single; which is keeping with the prosodic genius of the English language.

CHAPTER IV

Pushkin's Southern Poems.

The earliest lyric romances constructed on the model of the Oriental Tales in Russia are the so-called Southern Poems of Pushkin. That he was influenced by Byron in this group of poems, Pushkin admitted himself. "The Fountain in Bakhchisaray", he wrote in after life of one of them, "is weaker than the Prisoner (of the Caucasus) and, like that poem, recalls my reading of Byron, about whom I was crazy". The Southern Poems, so-called because most of them were written in the south of Russia (the Russian Orient), number three complete romances, *A Prisoner of the Caucasus*, *The Fountain in Bakhchisaray* and *The Gypsies*, and two fragments, *The Robber Brothers* and *Vadim*, all of which belong to the years between 1820 and 1824. In addition to these specifically "southern" poems Pushkin wrote two other narratives which reproduce the

³³ This corresponds to Chateaubriand's *comparaison ascendante*.

³⁴ An example of this "figure" may be found in the following line from *The Corsair*: "Mount-grotto-cavern-valley searched in vain" (1852).

composition and, less definitely, the manner of the *Oriental Tales*. They are of more recent provenance than the rest. *Poltava* appeared in 1828, and the unfinished *Galub* was sketched in 1833. They differ from the *Southern Poems* in that they represent the culmination of Pushkin's revolt against Byron.

From Byron, Pushkin borrowed the composition or architectonics of the lyric romance — its fragmentariness and suggestive vagueness, its tone-prelude and long train of detached episodes, which pass swiftly by, like the concatenated shots of a film. He also borrowed the lyric manner with its favourite rhetorical devices and, besides, a large number of separate *motifs* and the sentimental treatment of his heroines.

Pushkin's stories are as romantic and novellesque as Byron's. They are told against a bright-hued, "eastern" background and concentrated in the persons and emotional experiences of the hero and the heroine. Pushkin's heroes bear a superficial resemblance to Childe Harold: for the most part they are disenchanting, pleasure-drugged social renegades. The heroines, like Byron's, are either fair-haired European (Franghestani) girls, or dark "oriental" beauties. The situations are sometimes very dramatic and always effective; the style is lyrical; and the measure of the poems is the iambic tetrameter with a mobile scheme of alternating monosyllabic and disyllabic rhymes. This metre is not in itself evidence of Byron's influence. Pushkin had used it in *Ruslan and Lyudmila* (1820) a year before the Rayevskys introduced him to the *Oriental Tales*. More than that: the octosyllable, as he uses it, has a different rhythmic cadence from Byron's line because of cleverly contrived verbal assonances and a subtly changing pattern of variations in the position of the strong and the weak stresses.

This divergence from Byron's practice is only one of many. Pushkin did not merely take over the lyric romance from Byron, but he scrupulously and consistently adapted it to the demands of his own classical French culture. The differences between the *Southern Poems* and the *Oriental Tales* are as remarkable as the resemblances. Pushkin's theme, unlike Byron's, is always a violent tragedy of love or jealousy. Remorse and hatred occur as elements, but they are never governing impulses. The "discrowning" of the Byronic hero, which is best seen in *The Gypsies*, gives the lyric romance in Pushkin's hands a less centripetal and more articulated and

balanced aspect. Of the wealth of detail, which Byron lavishes on the delineation of his hero, there is little in the Southern Poems: Pushkin's hero is a very ordinary, even contemptible, person, not a superman. The heroine is more often than not a stronger character than he, and the action invariably proceeds from her initiative. The Byronic villain, as such, does not occur in Pushkin's poems. Certain traits of his character and outward appearance are sometimes distinguishable in the hero: Ghirey, for example, resembles Seyd and Giaffir more than Conrad. The minor personages, unlike Byron's, have each an individuality. The pictorial epilogues and ethnographic overtures are poems in themselves, consummately executed. Vyazemsky was the first to observe this independent treatment of pure description. Pushkin himself, writing of his picture of Circassian ways in *A Prisoner of the Caucasus* to Gorchakov and Gnedich³⁵, called it an *hors d'oeuvre*, a something quite extraneous to the narrative. The epic element in Pushkin is much more prominent than in the Oriental Tales. Its presence has the effect of binding together more closely the episodic fragments of his poems. And the lyric, emotional style, so characteristic of Byron, is not too obtrusive.

Pushkin's art, in contrast to Byron's, is an exact art. Where Byron is undisciplined and exuberant, Pushkin is restrained. Like Flaubert, he has the craftsman's care and patience, and nearly always achieves the *mot juste*. That his work sometimes leaves the impression of being spontaneous is an additional merit.

The growth and enrichment of Pushkin's art is illustrated by the Southern Poems and the verse-tales he wrote in the eighteen-thirties. His last narrative poem, *The Bronze Horseman*, represents the acme of his artistic development. It has the lineaments of a sober, realistic art. But this art, to use a paradox of literary terms, was made possible only by the filling out of his classical training with his romantic experiences.

The first of the Southern Poems was *A Prisoner of the Caucasus*, which Pushkin finished at Kamenka, in the province of Kiyev, in 1821³⁶. The poem came out the following year and was re-

³⁵ To V. P. Gorchakov, Kishinev, 1821—22, and to N. I. Gnedich, Kishinev, April 29, 1822.

³⁶ To Delvig, Kishinev, March 23, 1821.

viewed by Vyazemsky and Pletnev. "This narrative", wrote Pletnev, "is written in the style of the latest English romances, like those of Byron." Pushkin admitted that Byron had been his pattern, and in maturer years alluded to his firstling as "an unsuccessful character study". "It was received with more favour than anything else I have written", he says, "because of some elegiac and descriptive verses it contains. But the Rayevskys and I have had our fill of laughter out of it".

A Prisoner of the Caucasus tells a tragic story of unreturned love. Its action springs from a conflict between first love and satiety. The fable, which was suggested to Pushkin probably by the third canto of *The Corsair*, is romantic. A young Russian, whom licentious living in the capital has exhausted and embittered, goes to the Caucasus in quest of distraction. He is taken prisoner by Circassian tribesmen. A Circassian beauty falls in love with him and helps him to escape, and then drowns herself because her love was not returned.

The hero and the heroine are the only important personages in this story. The hero is a sort of Russian Childe Harold,³⁷ quite unlike the titan of the *Oriental Tales*. "The character of the Prisoner is a failure", Pushkin wrote to Gorchakov.³⁸ "This merely proves that I am unfit to be a romantic hero. I tried to portray in my poem that indifference to life and its pleasures, that premature spiritual senility which has become so characteristic of nineteenth-century youth". He is a man who has been spoilt by dissipation and warped by a fashionable pessimism. Like Conrad, he is a voluntary outcast. His relation to the heroine is Conrad's to Gulnare. The heroine is an impulsive, single-minded child of nature. She belongs to the company of Gulnare, and like Byron's heroine she is a dark-featured Mohammedan beauty³⁹. The action proceeds entirely from her will.

In setting, the poem is Caucasian. Its local colour is less glowing than Byron's, but it is accurate. Pushkin was afraid that his landscapes might suffer through comparison with the "magical ima-

³⁷ Cp. C. H., I, 19.

³⁸ Kishinev, 1821—22.

³⁹ Cp. C. 1576—78.

gery" of Byron and Scott.⁴⁰ He lavished scrupulous care on them and on the description of tribal customs which occurs in the prelude. "My account of Circassian ways is the most tolerable part of the poem. It is not connected with any episode, and is merely a sort of geographical article or traveller's report".⁴¹ In this respect it differs from Byron's ethnographic essays.

The composition of *A Prisoner* betrays palpable resemblances to that of the *Oriental Tales*. In the lyric overture there is a picture of a Circassian *aoul* or village, which is a necessary part of the story. This is entirely against Byronic usage and, as such, an early sign of Pushkin's artistic independence. The *Vorgeschichte*, placed immediately after the opening situation, contains an account of the origin and progress of the hero's disillusionment⁴². Then follows a series of episodes. Certain *motifs* embodied in these are patently of Byronic provenance. That of the midnight visit occurs in *The Corsair*,⁴³ and the *motif* of the first meeting between two young lovers, who do not share a mutually intelligible language, is from *Don Juan*.⁴⁴ The descriptive interlude, in which Pushkin sketches the Circassians' habits of life and martial exercises, has a counterpart in *The Bride of Abydos* (I, viii-ix). The numerous other parallels are with *The Corsair*, a poem to which *A Prisoner*

⁴⁰ To N. I. Gnedich, Kishinev, April 29, 1822.

⁴¹ *ibid.*

⁴² Cp. C. 249-64, L. I, ii and C. H. I, 1-12.

⁴³ (a) "When the prisoner hears the (girl's) light footfalls he starts up." Cp. C. 1034. "He (Conrad) starts — awakes!".

(b) "He gazes speechless at the girl and thinks: this is a lying dream, the sport of a morbid fancy." Cp. C. 1036-39. "His eye seemed dubious if it saw aright. What is that form, if not a shape of air?" Cp. also M. 796-802, S. C. xx, D. J. II, 148-9.

⁴⁴ (a) The prisoner "tries to catch the magic sound of her pleasant speech". He does not understand it, but "her sweet look, her blushes and her tender voice bid him live — and he begins to revive." Cp. D. J. II, 150-52. Juan "looked upon the lady, in whose cheek the pale contended with the purple rose. Her eyes were eloquent, her words would pose... Juan could not understand a word... but he had an ear, and her voice was so soft, so sweet, so delicately clear."

(b) "Her lips tremble involuntarily and are parted to speak." Cp. D. J. II, 150. "With an effort she began to speak."

(c) "Her eyes were filled with tears." Cp. C. 1145. "What gem hath dropped and sparkles o'er his chain?"

is more indebted for its *motifs*, language and characters than to any other Oriental Tale. The Circassian girl's confession of her love for the Prisoner⁴⁵; the rudimentary *motif* incorporated in her threat to "resort to dagger and poison"⁴⁶; the meetings between her and her lover⁴⁷; the parting⁴⁸; and the image of the Circassian beauty with her black dishevelled hair and tear-stained eyes⁴⁹ are all derived from that poem. Moreover, Pushkin had in mind an alternative *dénouement* for his story, which completes the evidence for the argument that *The Corsair* was fresh in his memory when he conceived and wrote the *Prisoner*⁵⁰.

⁴⁵ "My whole being is drawn to you; I love you, dear heart; my soul is enraptured by you." Cp. C. 1463. "It feared thee — thanked thee — pitied — maddened — loved."

⁴⁶ Cp. Gulnare's murder of Seyd for love of Conrad (C. III).

⁴⁷ (a) The prisoner pleads "coldness of heart", to explain his unresponsiveness, like Byron in *To Inez* (C. H. I).

(b) "Unhappy darling", says the prisoner, "why did you not appear to me before now?" Cp. C. 1096. "Till (thy form) appeared, Gulnare, mine eye ne'er asked if others were as fair" (as Medora).

(c) "She parted her lips and sobbed tearlessly; her moveless, misty eyes expressed a silent rebuke." Cp. C. 468. Medora's "deep blue eye... drooped downward in a tearless agony".

(d) "And you, O Russian! you love another? You are beloved?" Cp. C. 1097. "Thou lov'st another, then?" Cp. also C. 1405.

(e) "I would have sweetened your lot with tender care", says the Circassian girl, "and watched over you sleeping, but you would not have it so". Cp. C. 1469. "Were I thine own thou wert not lonely here." Cp. also B. A. 400.

⁴⁸ (a) "Run! make haste away! Do not waste the night hours. Take this dagger." Cp. C. 1475. "Receive this poniard, rise and follow me!"

(b) "An involuntary tear rolled down her cheek, and the chain fell clanking in two." Cp. C. 1145 above.

(c) "You love another! Go find her; love her! Why should I grieve?" Cp. C. 1517. "Thou lov'st me not, etc."

⁴⁹ "Pale and sad, she draws close to him. Her lips are parted as if to speak, her eyes are full of grief, and her hair falls in black waves over her breast and shoulders." Cp. C. 1576—78. "The wildness of her (Gulnare's) eye... her dark far-floating hair that nearly veiled her face and bosom fair."

⁵⁰ To N. I. Gnedich, Kishinev, April 29, 1822. "It would have been easy for me to enliven the story with episodes flowing naturally from the circumstances. The Circassian who took my Russian prisoner could have been the girl's lover. *De là* scenes of jealousy, discontinued meetings etc. The mother, father and brother could have had characters of their own and their own parts to play in the story."

The epilogue to *A Prisoner of the Caucasus*, written in Odessa three months after the completion of the narrative, is not a constituent part of the poem. Though chiefly a record of the poet's Caucasian impressions, it also contains a laconic account of the conquest of the Caucasus by Russian arms. Similar detached epilogues were appended to the later Southern Poems.

In *The Robber Brothers* we have a fragment of a much longer work, which Pushkin completed in 1821 and burned because it displeased him. A manuscript copy of part of it, the extant poem, was subsequently discovered in the possession of Nikolay Rayevsky. But a programme of the entire work has been preserved, and this enables us to form an idea of the original fable⁵¹. The earlier plot was not dissimilar to that of *The Corsair*, which, as we have just learned, had so strongly influenced *A Prisoner of the Caucasus*. On the other hand, the fragment of *The Robber Brothers*, as we have it, resembles *The Prisoner of Chillon*. Pushkin was aware of this. "Here are The Robbers", he wrote to Vyazemsky from Odessa in 1823⁵². "An actual occurrence inspired me to write this fragment. In 1820, while I was in Ekaterinoslav, two brigands, chained together, swam across the Dnepr and escaped. Their stay on the islet and the drowning of one the warders are my own invention. Some of the verses remind one of *The Prisoner of Chillon*. That is my misfortune. I came across Zhukovsky's version casually. My fragment was written at the end of 1821." An earlier letter, also addressed to Vyazemsky, contains further observations on the poem⁵³. "Your remarks about my Robbers are unjust. As a subject, *c'est un tour de force*. This is not praise, but the contrary. As a piece of writing, I have done nothing better."

The story of *The Robber Brothers* is a criminal's confession. It tells of lawlessness, imprisonment and crime. Two orphans, who have lived an unhappy childhood and youth among strange people,

⁵¹ "A girl sits weeping at night, sorrowing. The men are ready to sail. Vice-captain: 'Where is our captain?' They cast off, singing. Near Astrakhan they seize a merchantman. The captain takes another mistress. His first mistress goes mad. The new one does not love him and dies." Cp. C. 1117. "Where is our chief?" and also the plot of C., on which this plan is based.

⁵² November 11, 1823.

⁵³ Postscript, Odessa, October 14, 1823.

take to brigandage "for revenge". After a short spell of outlawry, they are caught and put in irons. The younger brother falls ill in prison. On his recovery, the two break their chains and swim across the Dnepr, after killing one of their pursuers. The younger brother is again attacked by a fever in the woods and dies. The elder brother becomes a hardened cut-throat.

There are only two characters, one of whom appears in the story of the other. The story is told by the elder brother round a camp-fire to a crew of brigands. This desperado is not in the least like a Byronic figure. Pushkin's sense of the realities of life was too keen for him even to wish to put a halo round the head of a common ruffian. The younger brother stands in the same relation to the elder as Bonnivard's younger brother does to Bonnivard. Both young men have a gentle, almost feminine, disposition, and perish miserably from the effects of long imprisonment. The setting of the story is not "southern", in the sense of exotic, but Russian. Like *The Prisoner of Chillon* and *Mazeppa*, *The Robber Brothers* is related in the first person. The prelude to it is a masterly piece of versified ethnography. It describes a motley band of outlaws gathered round a camp-fire on the eastern bank of the Volga⁵⁴. The connection between it and the brigand's narrative is slight. As in *Mazeppa*, the story begins, not *in mediis rebus*, but *ab origine*. The opening words and several expressions in the body of the poem are nearly those of the *Prisoner of Chillon*⁵⁵. Especially close is the parallel between

⁵⁴ (a) "What a medley of clothes and faces, tribes, languages etc." Cp. B. A., 847. "And every creed and every race with them are found."

(b) "And the bowl of foaming wine passes from hand to hand." Cp. C. 67. "Ne'er for his lip the purpling cup they fill."

(c) "There are those here who have passed through all the stages of crime." Cp. C. H. I, v. "He through Sin's long labyrinth had run."

⁵⁵ (a) "We were two — my brother and I." Cp. P. C. 49. "And we were three."

(b) "I was the elder by five years and could bear more than my brother." Cp. P. C. 69. "I was the eldest of the three, and to uphold and cheer the rest, I ought to do and did my best."

(c) "In the stifling cell my brother sickened. Breathing hard, and his head leaning on my shoulder in fevered oblivion, he lay dying, and ever and again he cried: I am suffocating here. I want to be back in the woods. Water, water!" Cp. P. C. 126. "I said my nearer brother pined... Had his free breathing been

the brigand's and Bonnivard's description of the prison cell⁵⁶. The state of the brigand's mind after his brother's death — his dull despair, hardness of heart and sense of isolation — is the state of Conrad's mind and Lara's. The moral tag at the end of the poem is an innovation only as regards its position: as matter, it is sententious and Byronical.

Vadim (1822), like *The Robber Brothers*, is a fragment of a romance with a national background. It has an historical theme, and the structure is that of the lyric romance. As the poem is unfinished, the trend of the narrative must remain a puzzle: it is difficult to say whether it is primarily a love-drama, or a drama of revenge. The young Russian warrior returns by water to what is presumably Novgorod the Great: the locality is not indentified. He is accompanied by a decrepit old boatman. As it is already dark when they come ashore, they kindle a fire. When the fire is low, Vadim goes to sleep and has a bad dream. He dreams that his beloved, or his mistress, is dead. The story advances no further.

At first glance Vadim seems to be like Bonnivard's youngest brother, with blue eyes and fair hair. But we gather from the *Vorgeschichte* that he has the courage of Selim (B. A.) and Hugo (P.), besides their passionate nature, love of liberty and extensive experience of war and adventure in strange lands. It is impossible to say in which direction Vadim's character will develop: Pushkin merely sketches a portrait of him. The aged boatman presents the strongest possible contrast to this virile youth, and is in the poem apparently to emphasise the hero's splendid manhood.

denied the range of the steep mountain side; but why delay the truth? — he died."

(d) "The fever troubled his thoughts and his blood. There was a wild glint in his eyes, his hair stood on end, and all his body trembled like a leaf. Full of terror, my brother fell fainting on my breast." This appears to be a development of lines 82—3 in P. C.

⁵⁶ "Our hearts hankered after the woods and the open air. The gloom of the cell, the daylight filtering through the grates, the voices of the warders, the clank of chains and the fluttering of strayed birds were alike hateful." Cp. P. C. 30. The dungeon is "dim with a dull imprisoned ray *etc.*" Cp. also 252. "the carol of a bird", 301. "the keepers", 305. "broken chain", and 329. "barred windows", all of which are mentioned as parts of the prison setting.

Vadim begins with a pictorial overture which, like many of Byron's scenic interludes, is a nocturne⁵⁷. The sudden exclamation introducing the first episode is a Byronic device⁵⁸. After the first episode comes a descriptive passage. Unlike Byron's landscapes, this has an air of concreteness. *Vadim's* appearance is sketched in terms that recall *The Prisoner of Chillon* and *The Bride of Abydos*⁵⁹. His pensive attitude by the fire is like Alp's (S. C.) "declining attitude" on the temple stone. The biographical reminiscence or *Vorgeschichte* is devoted, as in *A Prisoner of the Caucasus*, to the hero's past: this is Byron's normal practice. *The Corsair* seems to have been laid under contribution for the last stirring moments of *Vadim's* dream⁶⁰. At the end of the poem the description of the silent house and grass-grown court has a counterpart in the picture of Hassan's mouldering halls in *The Giaour*.

In *The Fountain in Bakhchisaray* (1823) Pushkin produced the most "oriental" poem of his romantic apprenticeship. He set little store by it, even at the time of writing. "It is trash", he wrote to Vyazemsky from Kishinev in 1823 (see above). "But the epigraph is charming." Still he was delighted with its success⁶¹. "I am glad

⁵⁷ "The moonlight falling from among the clouds was reflected in an uneven column in the Varangian waters." Cp. C. H. II, 21. "The Moon is up... long streams of light o'er dancing waves expand."

⁵⁸ (a) "Whose sail is this? Whose arm has set it in the dusk?" Cp. C. 83. "A sail! a sail!"

(b) "The other, having lowered the sail, brings in the boat and makes it fast to a willow." Cp. C. 98. "The sails are furled, and anchoring round she swings etc."

⁵⁹ "Youth glows in his face; he is as beautiful as a spring flower. But it seems as if happiness and he have not been acquainted with each other since childhood. There is sorrow in his downcast eyes." Cp. P. C. 79. "For he was beautiful as day..." P. C. 164. "the favourite and the flower..." and B. A. 256. "pale, mute and mournfully sedate."

⁶⁰ "He enters. What is this? On a cold bed, under a coverlet, lies a dead girl. His heart stands still for a moment, then begins to pound violently. He lifts the cover and looks. — His dream has fled. It is she, it is she! Her face! There is a wound on her breast. 'She is dead!' he cries." Cp. C. 1765. "His steps the chamber gain — his eyes behold all that his heart believed not — yet foretold!... The white shroud and each extended tress, long, fair — but spread in utter lifelessness... these became the bier. — But she is nothing — wherefore is he here?"

⁶¹ See the letter to A. Bestuzhev, Odessa, February 8, 1824.

to hear that my Fountain is making a noise", he says. "The want of a plan is not my fault. I put into verse with superstitious fidelity the story that was related to me by a young woman. *Aux douces lois des vers je pliais les accents de sa bouche aimable et naïve.*" The lady referred to was presumably one of the Rayevskys. One thing only, apart from the motto, called for his praise in *The Fountain*. "The scene between Zarema and Mariya has dramatic qualities", he wrote in later days. But, as if this were saying too much, he added: "A. Rayevsky and I roared over certain verses in the poem. Young writers are generally incapable of describing the physical reflexes of the passions."

The Fountain is a tragedy of love and jealousy. The action and the issuing crime are the result of blindness caused by an excessive passion. The plot is developed by the initiative of a female character. There are three characters in all: two women and a man. One of the women is the fair, gentle and devout Polish princess, Mariya. The other is the Georgian odalisque Zarema, black-eyed and passionate, like Gulnare. The hero is Khan Ghirey of Crimea, a brave, violent man, who has no double among Byron's heroes, but closely resembles his villains. Yet it is significant that in one point, at least, he is different from Giaffir and Seyd: his love for Mariya is the chaste, exalted love of the Byronic hero for the Byronic heroine. The situation in which the characters are placed resembles, in some ways, the situation in the last two cantos of *The Corsair*. Zarema loves Ghirey passionately, Ghirey loves Mariya, but Mariya loves only the Blessed Virgin and the Saviour. In *The Corsair*, Gulnare loves Conrad, Conrad Medora, and Medora Conrad. There is a difference here: Medora loves Conrad, but Mariya does not love Ghirey. The story runs a violent course. Ghirey makes an incursion into Poland, sacks the ancestral mansion of Prince Potocki, and carries off his daughter Mariya to his palace in Bakhchisaray. He falls in love with his captive. Mariya keeps to her room and refuses to see him. The khan becomes moody and neglects his odalisques. Zarema, "queen" of the harem, entreats Mariya to "give up" the khan and threatens her with death if she should refuse to do so. The innocent Mariya is perplexed and frightened. What immediately follows is involved in obscurity. Later, Zarema is drowned in a sack by the khan's orders, probably for killing the princess. Ghirey

is unable for years afterwards to forget his lost love, and builds the "Fountain of Tears" in Bakhchisaray, to consecrate her memory.

Not one of the Southern Poems contains so many Byronic motifs as *The Fountain in Bakhchisaray*. In the opening scene (there is no overture), which shows Ghirey sitting silent and gloomy in his palace, we have almost a facsimile of a scene in *The Bride of Abydos*⁶². Pushkin does not explain the real cause of the khan's mood, but suggests a possible cause, namely that a harem beauty has been unfaithful to him; which represents a rudimentary motif apparently suggested by *The Giaour*. The eventless life of the odalisques in the palace is described in the *Vorgeschichte* with Byronic touches⁶³, but it is possible that the description also reflects Pushkin's personal impressions of Bakhchisaray. The black eunuch might have stepped out of *The Bride of Abydos* or *Don Juan*⁶⁴. Pushkin's interjected *Tartar Song*, like the *Circassian Air* in *The Prisoner*, represents a device he had learnt from *Childe Harold* and *The Corsair*⁶⁵. Zarema's portrait is as eloquent, if not as emotional,

⁶² "Ghirey was sitting with downcast eyes. The smoke curled upwards from the amber between his lips. Servile courtiers thronged mutely about him. The palace was silent. On his dark face they eyes read the signs of rage and grief. Then the haughty tyrant made an impatient gesture, and the courtiers bowed themselves out of the chamber." Cp. B. A. 20. "Begirt with many a gallant slave... awaiting each his Lord's behest... old Giaffir sate in his Divan: deep thought was in his aged eye... his pensive cheek and pondering brow did more than he was wont avow. 'Let the chamber be cleared' — The train disappeared." Cp. also C. 635 f.

⁶³ "No, no, the timid wives of the khan dare neither wish nor think. They live in a gloomy seclusion, vigilantly guarded, and know nothing of infidelity. Their charms lie concealed behind the walls of their prison: thus flowers of Araby grow behind the panes of a hot-house. They stroll in graceful be vies amid the murmur of flowing waters, in the cool shade of the platanes, or sit on silken cushions round the fountain, idly expectant of the khan's coming, while slaves carry sherbet round on trays, and the harem echoes with the sound of beautiful singing." Cp. C. H. II, 61. "Apart, and scarce permitted — guarded, veiled — to move, she (the odalisque) yields to one her person and her heart, tamed to her cage, nor feels a wish to rove." Cp. also G. 312. "And oft had Hassan's youth along its (the fountain's) bank been soothed by Beauty's song."

⁶⁴ "Motionless and not daring to breathe, the eunuch waits at the door for a sign from Ghirey." Cp. B. A. 35. "The Nubian awaiting the sire's award."

⁶⁵ See *Childe Harold's Good Night* and *To Inez* in C. H. I, *Tambourgi* in C. H. II, *The Castled Crag of Drachentfels* in C. H. III, and *Medora's Song* in C. I.

as Leila's⁶⁶. The account of Mariya's girlhood and the picture of her deserted chamber have their analogues in *The Bride of Abydos*⁶⁷. The old *motif* of a midnight visit (here preceded by a nocturne⁶⁸) is repeated in Zarema's visit to Mariya. Zarema's punishment is recorded, like Leila's, by suggestion. The fate of the two beauties is the same⁶⁹. Ghirey's tortures of memory are like the Giaour's in their origin and violence. The memory enshrined in the Fountain of Tears is the memory that clings to Zuleika's grave. At the close, the poem is full of personal reminiscences: Pushkin recalls his visit to Bakhchisaray and mentions having seen the apparition of Zarema. This rudimentary phantom *motif* is fully developed in two of the Oriental Tales⁷⁰: it reflects Byron's influence. The last few lines of the epilogue contain a gorgeous pageant of the natural beauties of Tauris and are among the most musically caressive that Pushkin wrote.

The breach with Byron, the beginnings of which we discovered in *A Prisoner of the Caucasus* and which shows itself in Pushkin's restrained lyricism, his expressive concision, his detached epilogues, the compactness of his narrative and his "unheroic" characterisation, becomes evident to the eye in *The Gypsies*, where it is no longer a mere fissure. This poem contains fewer reflections of the Oriental Tales than any other of the Southern Poems. It

⁶⁶ Zarema, "star of love and beauty of the harem, twice round your lily brow your hair is twined, and your enchanting eyes are brighter than day and blacker than night." Cp. G. 473. "Her eye's dark charm, twere vain to tell... Her hair in hyacinthine flow hath swept the marble at her feet *etc.*" Cp. also M. 208. "She had an Asiatic eye... dark as above us is the sky." C. H. III, 92 and the lyric *She Walks in Beauty*.

⁶⁷ "Her hand was sought after by the rich and noble, and many a youth sighed for her in secret. She had a sweet disposition, graceful movements and languid blue eyes." Cp. S. C. 194. "Sought by numbers, given to none, had young Francesca's hand remained." Cp. also B. A. I and G. *passim*.

⁶⁸ "Only sweet-voiced fountains, imprisoned in marble, are playing, and nightingales singing to the roses in the darkness." Cp. G. 21, 300; B. A. 88, and C. H. I, 62. The *motif* of the nightingale and the rose was discussed in Chapter II.

⁶⁹ "She was let down into the deep by the harem guards. Her sufferings ended on the night the princess died. Whatever her guilt may have been, her punishment was horrible." Cp. C. 1509. "There yawns the sack and yonder rolls the stream." Cp. especially G. 374 f.

⁷⁰ *The Giaour* and *The Siege of Corinth*.

was finished in 1825 at Mikhaylovskoye, and was acclaimed on its appearance by all Pushkin's friends. "The Gypsies has made us all crazy," wrote Ryleyev in 1825⁷¹. Even the usually sober and critical Nikolay Rayevsky permitted himself expressions of unmixed admiration⁷². "Votre fragment des Tsiganes, qui a paru dans l'Etoile Polaire avec une suite que je ne connaissais pas, est peut-être le tableau le plus animé, du coloris le plus brillant que j'aie jamais lu dans aucune langue. Bravo, bravissimo!"

The Gypsies is a drama of jealous passion, and the catastrophe with which it ends is not the punishment of a crime, as in *The Fountain*, but the outcome of a suspicion, which becomes a blinding obsession. The action proceeds partly from the heroine's, partly from the hero's, initiative. There is a "semi-oriental" setting to the plot.

Aleko, a young Russian, who has wearied of city life and its factitious pleasures, joins a band of Gypsies in Bessarabia. A fine, strapping Gypsy girl called Zemfira takes a fancy to him and claims him for her lover. They are married according to Gypsy custom. After two years of love and bickering, Zemfira tires of Aleko and bestows her affections on another. In a fit of jealous fury, Aleko kills both his "wife" and her Gypsy lover. The Gypsies bury their dead and banish Aleko from their midst. This is the whole story.

There are three characters in *The Gypsies*. The heroine is the dark, warm-blooded beauty, Zemfira. She has the simplicity and singleness of purpose that are common among the untutored. Her only law is her fancy. The hero is a cultivated town-dweller, whom a craving for the simple life has driven into "voluntary exile". To his discomfiture, he learns that he has only exchanged one prison for another. He brings his sophisticated ideas and moral code into a primitive society which is utterly ignorant of such things. The resultant clash between civilised and primitive is the deep underlying cause of the catastrophe. The immediate cause is a jealousy which feeds on growing suspicions. The relation between the two characters recalls the relation between the Prisoner and the Circassian girl and that between Conrad and Gulnare: the hero is a cultivated European, the heroine an uncivilised Oriental. The third character in

⁷¹ St. Petersburg, March 25, 1825.

⁷² Belaya Tserkov', May 10, 1825 (rough draft).

the poem is Zemfira's father, a very mild and very wise old man like Chactas in Chateaubriand's *René* (1805). There is no counterpart to this character in the *Oriental Tales*: Byron drew no one who is at once so noble and so pathetic. It would be fair to suppose that Pushkin found him in the earlier romantic literature. He is a foil and a standing rebuke to the violent Aleko.

The Gypsies is the most intensely dramatic of the Southern Poems. In this it resembles the later *Oriental Tales*. After *The Gypsies* the latent epic element reasserts itself in Pushkin's work (cp. Byron's *The Island*) and reaches its climax in *The Bronze Horseman*. But in *The Gypsies* it is subordinated to the dramatic element. This probably accounts for the fragmentariness of the poem, which was noticed by its earliest reviewers and which brings it closer to the *Tales*. Pushkin begins the poem with an overture, which describes "the wandering Gypsy life" of the Bessarabian Tsigane. The overture resembles the prelude to *The Siege of Corinth* as a piece of ethnography and is similarly detached from the episodes in the poem. The account of Aleko's past is paralleled by a passage in *Lara* (canto I, ii) and especially by the closing Spenserians of the second canto of *Childe Harold*⁷³. There is a Byronic passionateness in Aleko's vindictive tirade on the vanity of glory. "What is fame — a passing bell, the voice of praise, or a wild Gypsy's tale?" he asks, venting his disillusion on Zemfira's father. The dream which rouses him from sleep on the eve of the double murder is as keen-edged as Lara's vision: he starts up with a

⁷³ (a) "If you only knew the misery and suffocation of town life. People live there cooped up behind walls and do not know what it is to breathe the fresh morning air. They are ashamed of love, shun thought, barter away their liberty and prostrate themselves before idols. What have I forsaken? The agitations that unfaithfulness brings, the judgments of prejudice, the heartless persecution of the crowd and dazzling iniquity! What is the noise of multitudes to me?" Cp. C. H. II, 97. "Then must I plunge again into the crowd and follow all that peace disdains to seek. Where revel calls and laughter, vainly loud, false to the heart, distorts the hollow cheek..."

(b) "Aleko had never known a safe harbour in his life and had not become accustomed to anything. His unresisting heart was the playground of passions. With what a fury they seethed in his tortured breast!" Cp. L. 14. "Lord of himself, that heritage of woe, that fearful empire which the human breast but holds to rob the heart within of rest."

terrible cry. When he first catches sight of Zemfira with her lover, he thinks, with Conrad and Mazeppa, that it is all a dream⁷⁴. And as soon as his victims are buried, he falls down from the stone on which he has been sitting, like Parisina collapsing in the court room. The old Gypsy dismisses him with the words: "Leave us, proud man — we are a timid, kindly folk." This is the symbolic "discrowning" of the Byronic hero. Aleko is left to a remorseful loneliness, "like a wounded crane deserted by its companions." The simile sadly recalls Byron's comparison of Azo to a blasted oak (cp. P. 597f.). Pushkin ends his poem with an autobiographical epilogue, which is as separate from the narrative as are his other epilogues. The moral observation at the close is in Byron's taste.

Poltava was written four years after *The Gypsies*, in 1828. The pattern of the Oriental Tales is broadly reproduced in it, and there are even traces of Byron's immediate influence, but the poem displays, nevertheless, considerable divergences from the old models, and is plainly marked by the independent treatment of an un-Byronic theme. "Poltava is the maturest of all my verse-tales," wrote Pushkin. "Almost everything in it is original. It had no success. Perhaps it did not deserve any, but I was pampered and spoiled by the reception that had been accorded to my earlier, much weaker, productions. The Messenger of Europe observes that the title of the poem is wrong, and that I did not call it Mazepa probably because it might then have suggested Byron. Quite right! but there was also another reason, namely the motto (which is taken from the prologue to Byron's *Mazeppa*)⁷⁵. The same thing applies to the Fountain in Bakhchisaray: it was called The Harem in manuscript, but the melancholy epigraph tempted me."

Unlike the Southern Poems, *Poltava* is a lyric romance grafted on to a miniature epic. It reminds one more of *Marmion* than of the Oriental Tales. It is like a step backward in the history of the verse-tale, for it would appear that it was not uninfluenced by Scott. But, as our business is only with Byron, I can do no more than allude to this other influence. *Poltava* is a tragedy of treachery and betrayed love inserted, like a jewel, into the epic bezel of Russia's

⁷⁴ Cp. the formula already quoted from *The Corsair* and *Mazeppa*.

⁷⁵ Cp. M. 5—8. Some of these lines are quoted later in a different connection.

triumph over Sweden. Mazepa's crimes are only part of the poet's theme. The gigantic figure of Peter the Great dominates the whole poem as the shadow of Falconet's statue haunts the mad Evgeny in *The Bronze Horseman*.

Poltava is at once history and melodrama. Its action, in contrast to that of the Southern Poems, is started and directed by the felon-hero, — but only in the first two cantos. In the last canto he is like a straw in a mill-race. Greater forces than he are at work, and he is powerless to resist or control them. Against the united will of a mighty people, his will is pitiably weak. Peter I is the real hero of *Poltava*. Yet he is not one of the leading characters of the poem; he is merely a symbol.

Poltava has three principal characters and several minor personages, among whom are Kochubey's wife and Orlik, Mazepa's henchman. The principals face one another in a Byronic relation. Mazepa is the villain-hero, or rather a villain in the hero's part. He is bloodthirsty, callous and perfidious. Beside him Byron's heroes are like saints. Only the Byronic villain can be at all compared to him, and even he seems the gainer by the comparison. Mazepa is the heroine's lover and the antagonist of the Russian Tsar, who may be taken to personify the primitive strength and articulate will of Russia. Mariya, daughter of a Ukrainian nobleman, is the heroine. She is as lovely and helpless and trusting as Leila, whom she resembles. Kochubey, her father, is the obstacle to her love for Mazepa. His role is that of the Byronic villain, but Pushkin makes him a just and righteous man. Mazepa's iniquity looms large when seen against Kochubey's nobility: Mazepa is the Byronic hero vilified.

The story of *Poltava* is historically true. Mariya Kochubey, the beautiful daughter of a wealthy magnate and state dignitary, is sought in marriage by the blood and wealth of the Ukraine. Among her suitors is the old hetman, Mazepa. She falls in love with him and wants to be his wife against her parents' wishes. Mazepa carries her off. Old Kochubey renounces his daughter. By and by he discovers that Mazepa is plotting with Charles XII of Sweden to set the Ukraine free, and warns the Tsar. But Peter accepts Mazepa's assurance of loyalty and gives him leave to punish his hereditary enemy. Kochubey is tortured and executed along with his friend Iskra. Mariya goes mad with grief at her father's death; then she

disappears. After the battle of Poltava, when the fugitive hetman and his ally are camping by night near the Kochubey estate, Mariya comes to her husband and, in her crazy innocence, tells him some bitter home-truths.

The matter of the story is presented in a style which is preponderantly narrative. It is mostly tranquil and unlyrical. There is also a logical sequence in the narrative itself, fresh episodes, for instance, being rarely introduced abruptly, or with the customary interrogative formula⁷⁶. That the style is entirely unemotional, however, it would be an error to maintain. One finds the usual rhetorical figures — question, apostrophe, exclamation, anaphora — and there are passages of extreme lyrical beauty. But on the whole, and especially when it is compared with that of the Southern Poems, the style of *Poltava* appears to be restrained, severe and majestic with an epic majesty. The measure, too, leaves a different rhythmic impression from that of the gentle and limpid "southern" measure: it has a sort of metallic ring and resilience.

Byron's influence on *Poltava* has more to do with its structure and *motifs* than with its style. We find in the poem a multitude of reminiscences of the Oriental Tales. The poet begins his narrative with a lyrical prologue, which is part of the story and serves the original purpose of introducing a character. In his account of Kochubey's riches, Pushkin seems to have drawn upon a passage in *Mazepa*⁷⁷. Mariya's portrait is a replica of Leila's⁷⁸. Her behaviour,

⁷⁶ The exceptions are:

(a) "Who rides so late by the light of moon and stars?" Cp. G. 180. "Who thund'ring comes on blackest steed?" and the probable source of both these, viz. the initial line of Goethe's *Erkönig* ("Wer reitet so spät durch Nacht und Wind?").

(b) "Is it all a dream? Mariya can it be you?" Cp. C. 1038, cited above, and M. 796.

⁷⁷ "And much wealth he has—furs, satins, silver, both displayed and under lock and key." Cp. M. 156. "Rich as a salt and silver mine... he had such wealth in blood and ore as few could match beneath the throne."

⁷⁸ "She is as fresh as a vernal flower (cp. *Vadim*) sprung in the shade of the woods, and as straight as a poplar on the heights above Kiyev. Her motions are now like the smooth walk of the swan on lonely waters, now like the swift movements of the hind. Her breast is white as the sea-foam. Her hair, clouding a high forehead, is in black ringlets. Her eyes shine like stars. Her mouth is red as a rose." Cp. G. 473. "Her eyes' dark charm 'twere vain

when she discovers that her parents are against her marrying Mazepa, resembles Haidée's after Lambro's return⁷⁹. The mystery of her disappearance from home is eked out by the use of the device, borrowed from Byron⁸⁰, of putting the story into the mouth of a humble eye-witness. The historical interlude alluding to the fortunes of the Swedish King reflects *Mazeppa*⁸¹. The story of the old hetman's courtship is recounted as a biographical reminiscence in the approved manner, and his character is described with a wealth of gloomy adjectives which reminds one of Byron's characterisations⁸². The scene and dialogue between him and Mariya at the head

to tell, but gaze on that of the Gazelle, it will assist thy fancy well. On her fair cheeks' unfading hue the young pomegranate's blossoms strew their bloom in blushes ever new; her hair in hyacinthine flow has swept the marble at her feet... The cygnet nobly walks the water; so moved on earth Circassia's daughter." Cp. also C. 203. "His forehead high and pale the sable curls in wild profusion veil."

⁷⁹ "For two whole days, now crying quietly, now moaning, Mariya neither ate nor drank, but flitted about, sleepless, like a ghost." Cp. D. J. IV, 59 f.

⁸⁰ In *Lara* a servitor witnesses Ezzelin's death, and in *The Giaour* the narrator is a fisherman.

⁸¹ "Crowned with a transient glory, the daring Charles was drawing towards the brink of a precipice. He was marching on Moscow, driving the Russian armies before him as the storm drives the dust in a valley. He went the way along which, in our time, a new and powerful foe has left his trail." Cp. M. 5. "The power and glory of the war... had passed to the triumphant Tsar and Moscow's walls were safe again — until a day more dark and drear and a more memorable year should give to slaughter and to shame a mightier host and haughtier name."

⁸² (a) "Who can sound the abyss of a cunning heart. Thoughts born of repressed passions lie buried there, and the designs of long ago are perhaps maturing secretly." Cp. C. 227. "Slight are the outward signs of evil thought, within — within 'twas where the spirit wrought."

(b) "But the more evil Mazepa is, the more his heart is cunning and false — the more careless his mien, and the simpler he is in his dealings with others." Cp. C. H. II, 62. "Yet in his lineaments ye cannot trace, while gentleness her milder radiance throws along that aged venerable face, the deeds that lurk beneath and stain him with disgrace."

(c) "With what confidence he can attract other hearts to himself and read their secrets, and with what a proud sense of security he can rule other minds!" Cp. C. 177. "Still sways their souls with that commanding art that dazzles, leads, yet chills the vulgar heart."

of the second canto is not unlike that between Selim und Zuleika⁸³. The beautiful nocturne, which precedes the scene of the execution, is in complete harmony with the structural and tonal peculiarities of the lyric romance⁸⁴. Kochubey crying under torture is like Lara haunted by his visions: the effect of their cry is not dissimilar⁸⁵. Byron's *Parisina* seems to have been Pushkin's model for the picture of Kochubey's execution⁸⁶. It was also suggested, no doubt, by a similar episode in Ryleyev's *Voynarovsky* (see later), which Pushkin admired. Mariya, swooning at the news that her father is to die, recalls Parisina falling into a faint when she learns that Hugo is to be beheaded. In the last canto there is little that can be called Byronic. The thrilling battle-picture is drawn upon an ample canvas with a master's vigour and objective eye: Byron wrote nothing to surpass it. The meeting between Mazepa and the insane Mariya at the end of the poem is Byronic only as a simple *motif* and in the

⁸³ "Mazepa is gloomy. Evil thoughts are thronging in his mind. Mariya gazes tenderly at her lover and, embracing his knees, whispers endearing words. Coldly Mazepa looks down at her and answers her affectionate chiding with a sullen silence." Cp. B. A. 252. "No word from Selim's bosom broke..." "What, sullen yet? it must not be — Oh! gentle Selim, this from thee!"... The next fond moment saw her seat her fairy form at Selim's feet."

⁸⁴ "Silent is the Ukrainian night. The sky is clear. The stars are glittering. The air is unwilling to overcome its own drowsiness. The leaves of the silver poplars scarcely seem to flutter. But the thoughts in Mazepa's mind are sombre. The stars, like accusing eyes, gaze mockingly at him. The poplars, huddled together in a row, swaying their tops gently, whisper like judges to one another. And the darkness of the summer night is as stifling as a prison." Cp. L. 155. "It was night — and Lara's glassy stream the stars are studding, each with imaged beam... Its banks are fringed with many a goodly tree... All was so still, so soft in earth and air... Lara turned in silence to his castle gate... a night like this, a night of Beauty, mocked such breast as his."

⁸⁵ "Suddenly — a feeble cry comes (floating) from the castle... a feeble cry which is long drawn out." Cp. L. 204. "A sound — a voice — a shriek — a fearful call!"

⁸⁶ (a) "The headsman playfully picks up the axe." Cp. P. 401. "And the headsman with his bare arm ready... feels if the axe be sharp and true."

(b) "The axe flashed as it was swung, and the head sprang off. A great sigh escaped from the onlookers. Another head came rolling after, with the eyes in it blinking. The grass was dyed red with blood." Cp. P. 456. "And flashing fell the stroke — rolled the head — and gasping sunk back the stained and heaving trunk... His eyes and lips a moment quiver... and with a hushing sound compressed a sigh sank back in every breast."

figure that the poet uses to introduce the heroine. On the contrary, the epilogue, for once, adheres to the tradition of the Oriental Tales. It is necrological. The old oaks that flourish to keep green the memory of Kochubey and Iskra and the blind pandore-player who sings to the village girls of Mariya remind one, in their purpose, of Zuleika's memorial rose and the epilogue to *Lara*⁸⁷.

Poltava was not the last of Pushkin's Byronic poems. In 1833, when he had already "descended to prose", he wrote *The Bronze Horseman*⁸⁸ and a fragmentary "oriental" romance, which he called *Galub*, after one of its leading characters. Both these narratives may be said to have been influenced by Byron. But the word "influence" cannot be construed here in its fullest sense, at least with regard to *The Bronze Horseman*. It is only in structure — in the use of overture, biographical reminiscence, scenic interlude and obituary epilogue — that this poem is Byronic. The fable and the manner are entirely original. Nothing could savour less of Byron than the story of a poor civil servant, who goes mad after losing his betrothed in the St. Petersburg floods, curses the equestrian statue of Peter the Great and fancies himself pursued by it through the unpeopled streets. Nor is the style Byronic. Terse, compact with meaning and unemotional, there is not one echo in it of the old lyricism. And the rhythmic architecture of the poem, although Pushkin still uses the octosyllable, is vastly different in effect from that of his earlier work. The metallic vigour of *Poltava* stiffens into a wrought-iron hardness and closeness of grain, which make the verse resound with the clangour of a hammer striking an anvil.

Galub is Byronic in some of its *motifs* and in its "eastern" (Caucasian) setting, as well in its general framework. But neither the fable nor the manner in which the story is told exhibits the least trace of his influence. The story is realistic, and contains no more than a hint of the old romanticism. The language is chaste, spare, almost laconic.

⁸⁷ Cp. also D. J. IV, 72—73.

⁸⁸ In one sense, though not in a Byronic one, this poem closely resembles *Poltava*. It is patriotic. Petrophil. Ettore Lo Gatto, writing of it in *Russia*. (No. 2, 1923, p. 254—5), says: "... secondo le intenzioni iniziali del poeta, l'eroe dovrebbe essere un solo: 'Pietro il Grande'. And on p. 257: 'Pietro il Grande' fa parte del numero degli eroi preferiti di Pushkin."

Galub is an unfinished, unrevised poem. This makes it impossible to form a true idea of the course of the narrative. It may be told in a few words as far as it goes. Galub is a Chechenian chieftain whose elder son has been killed. The old man's grief is allayed only when a stranger brings him his younger boy, Tazit. But Tazit soon begins to displease his father by his shiftlessness, and when Galub discovers that he has met and spared his brother's murderer, he drives him from his house. Tazit goes into the hills, to ask for the hand of a girl he loves. But there, too, he is called a craven and shown the door.

The poem has an ethnographic prelude, which offers analogies to the prologues to the *Prisoner of the Caucasus*, *The Robber Brothers* and, ultimately, *The Siege of Corinth*. To all appearance, it is an accurate essay on the habits and customs of mountain tribesmen. Pushkin wrote this overture after his second visit to the Caucasus. The description of the hillmen's military sports in Chechenia is probably the outcome of personal observation. Nevertheless, it reveals a more than passing likeness to a paragraph on the same subject in *The Bride of Abydos*⁸⁹. The piece of *Vorgeschichte*, describing Tazit's unsuccessful suit for the hand of the old tribesman's daughter, points to Pushkin's familiarity with the second canto of *Don Juan*: the placing of the characters is identical, except that Juan and Haidée do not even trouble to ask Lambro's blessing on their "marriage". The behaviour of Tazit's beloved in his presence recalls Zuleika and Selim⁹⁰. And Galub's bitter soliloquy after Tazit's second home-coming and especially the last furious scene with his son present a noteworthy resemblance to the scene between old Giaffir and his nephew in *The Bride of Abydos*⁹¹. It is not improbable that these parallels are no more than coincidences, and that the entire

⁸⁹ "The Chechenian braves, galloping at top speed, pierce the cap with arrows or cleave the trebly folded rug with a single stroke." Cp. B. A. 248. "Careering (they) cleave the folded felt with sabre stroke right sharply dealt."

⁹⁰ Cp. also: "Among the girls there was one who was silent, sad and pale" and S. C. 200. "Her wonted smiles were seen to fail and pensive grew the maid and pale."

⁹¹ (a) "His forays do not increase my droves and herds. He does not know how to steal the Nogay-saddled horses and to fill the barques in the Anapa with slaves. He can only listen idly to the waters and gaze up at the

poem was composed out of information which Pushkin had collected on his second Caucasian tour. But it seems likelier that they are die-hard recollections of Pushkin's early reading of Byron.

CHAPTER V

Other Verse-Narratives.

The lyric romance was introduced into Russian literature as a new *genre* by Pushkin and Zhukovsky. *A Prisoner of the Caucasus* was published in 1822, and was the first of a series of poems which reproduced, with novel variations, the principal architectonic features of the Oriental Tales. Zhukovsky's translation of *The Prisoner of Chillon* (1821) had appeared a little earlier. Very soon after the publication of these poems, the pioneer imitations of them made their appearance. The number of such imitations multiplied rapidly between 1821 and the end of the decade. The eighteen-thirties and forties, too, had their petty Byronists: nameless Maydanovs wrote nameless *Murderers* and lyrics "in the romantic or Byronic *genre*"⁹². "Votre Prisonnier", Rayevsky had written to Pushkin in 1825, "a ouvert une carrière qui sera l'équeil de la médiocrité." This discerning critic was rarely wrong in his pronouncements. His prophecy was amply fulfilled: most of the Byronic poems are worthless, and they are so much alike, even in their titles, that it is often difficult to distinguish one from another.

I have called them Byronic poems. In point of fact they are only remotely Byronic, for the poet of the Oriental Tales was no more than a name to their authors. It was from Pushkin and his contemporaries, Zhukovsky and Kozlov, that the creative impulse really came. *They* had established the tradition of the lyric romance,

stars." Cp. B. A. 85. "Thou when thine arm should bend the bow and hurl the dart and curb the steed... must pore where babbling waters flow and watch the unfolding roses blow."

(b) "Begone! — you are no son of mine; you are no Chechenian, but an old woman; you are a craven slave, an Armenian. Go, and may none know of your cowardice." Cp. B. A. 81. "Son of a slave!... vain were a father's hope to see aught that beseems a man in thee... Go — let thy less than woman's hand assume the distaff."

⁹² See Ivan Turgenev's story, *First Love*.

and *they* were the authorities to whom the imitators and plagiarists deferred.

But it would be an error to suppose that the talented Byronists are so easily numbered. Among Pushkin's contemporaries there was a galaxy of writers who contributed to the development of the new *genre*. The poems they wrote on the Byron model possess the virtues and defects of personality, and these poems are so individual that it is hard to find more than a few among them which deal with closely resembling themes. Kozlov's story, *The Monk* (1825), is a tragedy of remorse founded, in part, on *The Giaour*. His *Natalya Dolgorukaya* (1828) is a study of an extreme form of conjugal affection. The last of his stories, *The Mad Girl* (1830), tells of faith and trust betrayed. Besides these, there are Ryleyev's "romances of freedom" — *Voynarovsky* (1825), *Nalivayko* and *Khmel'nitsky*, the last two mere fragments; *Prince Andrey of Pereyaslavl'* (1828), an unfinished historical romance by the novelist Aleksandr Bestuzhev; Boratynsky's tragedies of unreturned love — *Eda* (1824—26), which superficially resembles *A Prisoner of the Caucasus*⁹³, *The Ball* (1825—28) and *The Gypsy Girl* (1829—31), both exercises in contemporary realism; two verse-tales of Andrey Podolinsky — *Borsky* (1829) and *The Beggar* (1830), in which the modern realistic touch seems to derive from Boratynsky's example; and Aleksandr Polezhayev's historical romance, *Coriolanus* (1834).

The most Byronic of all these poems is Kozlov's *Monk*, which, as we shall presently discover, contains entire passages that are almost translations of parts of *The Giaour*. Ryleyev, Bestuzhev and Kozlov diverge from Byron and resemble Scott in their preference for historical and national settings. Podolinsky's peri poems were inspired by Moore and are quite alien, down to their trochaic lilt, to the traditional usage of the Oriental Tales. Boratynsky sought to avoid "the beaten track" by combating Pushkin's influence and studiously banishing the romantic element from his poetry. But he was unable, for all his realism and originality, to dispense with the structural *procédés* of the lyric romance. In this respect he was no better off than those who, like Kozlov, offered no resistance to the new influences.

⁹³ The character of *Eda* has been compared with that of the Circassian Girl. Cp. V. Zhirmunsky's published lecture. "*Pushkin's Byronism as a Problem of Literary History*" (1922).

Kozlov admired Byron unreservedly. When Childe Harold came to him, as he tells us in his *Epistle to Walter Scott*, "with his tempestuous passions, his sorrows and bitter tears", he found a sympathetic listener. Kozlov is said to have learnt English in under a month to read the Byron originals. His translations from Byron are very numerous and include the whole of *The Bride of Abydos* and two long passages from *Lara* and *The Siege of Corinth*. Perhaps the first trace of Byron's influence on his work appears in the knightly ballad, *The Hungarian Forest*. In structure this poem belongs to the Bürger cycle of ballads (e. g. *Lenore*), which had been popularised in Russia by Zhukovsky⁹⁴, but the fable, the distribution of the characters⁹⁵, and certain *motifs* have counterparts in Byron's *Oscar of Alva*. There are also signs of a close acquaintance with *The Bride of Abydos*, especially in the scene between Ostan and Princess Veleda⁹⁶ and in the tender *finale*, with its picture of white roses growing on the heroine's grave. The coincidences in plot and *motifs* between the *Hungarian Forest* and *Oscar of Alva* may be fortuitous; after all, the latter is largely an adaptation of part of Schiller's *Geisterseher*. But the resemblances in diction and image with *The Bride of Abydos* are undoubtedly due to Kozlov's recollection of that poem.

It is not, however, in chance parallels and odd reminiscences such as these that one discovers the full measure of Byron's influence on Kozlov. I have already mentioned his three lyric romances, and I singled out *The Monk* from among them as the one Russian poem that may be called *Byronical par excellence*. This poem and its congeners must be studied in detail.

The Monk was published in 1825. "C'est un fort bon ouvrage à mon avis", wrote Boratynsky to the author, four years after⁹⁷.

⁹⁴ It is interesting that Zhukovsky had imitated *Lenore* in his *Lyudmila* (1808) long before translating it (1831).

⁹⁵ Cp. Ostan-Veleda-Izved and Allan-Mora-Oscar. The difference is that Izved is Veleda's brother, whereas Oscar is Mora's betrothed. Both Ostan and Allan are murderers, whose guilt is revealed by the ghosts of their victims.

⁹⁶ "With you", says Ostan to Veleda, "love beguiles one into finding happiness everywhere, and the sun seems to shine brighter and the moon clearer." Cp. B. A. 934. "With thee all toils are sweet, each clime hath charms."

⁹⁷ January 7, 1829.

"Les situations sont fortes, le style plein de vie et brillant de couleurs; vous y avez répandu votre âme. Les endroits imités de Byron le sont supérieurement autant que je puis le deviner... Mais ce que Byron lui-même aurait imité c'est la fin de votre poème. Elle parle singulièrement à l'imagination, elle est d'un romantisme singulièrement national et je crois que vous êtes le premier qui l'ayez si bien saisi." "Kozlov's story is lovely", we read in a letter which Pushkin sent to his brother soon after the appearance of *The Monk*. "It is worthy of Byron. The vision and the close are beautiful⁹⁸." The poem seems to have given pleasure even to the critical Nikolay Rayevsky. Naturally, he put his finger on its defects. "Il y a de la véritable poésie dans le Moine", he wrote to Pushkin⁹⁹, "tant que Kozloff parle d'après lui-même, mais pourquoi a-t-il pris pour cadre une parodie du Giaour et finit-il par une longue paraphrase d'un passage de Marmion? Il a imité, et parfois heureusement, votre narré rapide et les tours de phrase de Joukoffsky. Il doit savoir l'anglais et avoir étudié Coleridge."

Rayevsky, in his letter, has pointed out the dependence of *The Monk* on *The Giaour*. A larger meaning may be read into this fact of dependence. *The Monk* is a lyric romance which reproduces many of the artistic media used in the make-up of the Oriental Tales. The story is one of remorse, cast in the form of a death-bed confession. A young man falls in love with the daughter of a retired officer, who has come to live near Kiyev. The girl returns his passion, and her parents countenance their betrothal. After the mother's death, the girl's father is persuaded by a distant relative, who is an ensign (*chorąży*) in the Polish army, to withdraw his consent to the marriage. The young people elope, and are married secretly. At the end of a year rumour reaches them that the old man has laid a curse on his daughter. She dies from shock. The hero is distracted by her death, leaves Russia, and spends many years in travel. On his return he meets and kills the ensign, but, taken with sudden remorse, goes into a monastery, where from then onwards he passes his hours in penance. On the day of his death he confesses to the prior. The confession is the story, of which this is an outline.

⁹⁸ To L. S. Pushkin, Mikhaylovskoye, April, 1825.

⁹⁹ May 10, 1825.

As a piece of narrative, *The Monk* appears to be a dilution of the fable of *The Giaour*. There are several characters, but only three of any importance. The Monk is the penitent, inglorious hero, a sort of chastened Giaour with something of the Giaour's passion, but without his iron will. By his faith in a beneficent providence he also differs from his prototype. He is not a Byronic hero. Conrad, Lara and Lanciotto do not humble themselves before destiny. They may, and do, lose their faith in man and God, but they are never resigned to their fate. The heroine is a Russian Francesca in all but her outward appearance, in which she resembles Leila. She is drawn so faintly that she seems more like a spirit than a living woman. The villain, who uses the heroine's father as a tool, is a craven and has nothing in common with Byron's Turks. The setting of the poem is national: Kozlov called it a "story of Kiyev". In this respect it diverges from the work of most Byronists.

In composition, *The Monk* follows the pattern of the Oriental Tales. The familiar *procédés* are repeated, and there are a large number of Byronic *motifs*. The lyric overture contains the picture of a monastery. This is immediately followed by a prelude nocturne and the first episode (cp. L. I, x). The description of the penitent's last hours and his life in the monastery from the point of view of one of the brothers¹⁰⁰; the monk's eulogy of his beloved

¹⁰⁰ (a) "The dread mark of passions, sorrows and losses is stamped upon his sullen brow." Cp. G. 796. "That face... so marked with inward pain." Also L. 67. "That brow in furrowed lines had fixed at last and spake of passions, but of passions past."

(b) "His fate is involved in darkness: no one knows where he comes from and who he is." Cp. G. 806. He "broods within his cell alone, his faith and race alike unknown."

(c) "He came to us one stormy night and has since then been an inmate of the monastery, leading the joyless life of a monk, avoiding everybody, hiding from everyone. His strange aspect terrified the brethren; he spoke to none; and there seemed to be a something about him that appalled us. In the hour of prayer he, too, would lift up his voice (contrast G. 891. "There will he pause till all is done and hear the prayer, but utter none."), but often groans of unbearable torment would interrupt the holy sounds. Sometimes, in the night, he could find no peace in his cell and would then roam like a ghost among the graves." Cp. G. 798. "'Tis twice three years at summer time since first among the friars he came; and here it soothes him to abide for some dark deed he will not name." Also G. 844 f. "Others quail beneath his look", and G. 883 f. "His floating robe around him folding, slow sweeps he through the columned aisle."

and his impassioned effusion on the power of love¹⁰¹; his account of the effect which his wife's death produced on him¹⁰²; and finally, the phantom *motif*¹⁰³ are all evidence of *The Giaour's* in-

¹⁰¹ (a) "She has long been dead, but I live in her alone... She alone is in my dreams, whether of earth or of heaven." Cp. G. 1123 f. "She sleeps beneath the wandering wave... She was a form of life and light... Leila! each thought was only thine! my good, my guilt, my weal, my woe, my hope on high — my all below."

(b) "O my father! the fire in our hearts is the sublime gift of a beneficent heaven... That sacred fire cannot burn in a soul that is darkened by sin. Love is a holy thing on earth." Cp. G. 1131. "Yes, Love indeed is light from heaven; a spark of that immortal fire with angels shared, by Allah given to lift from earth our low desire."

¹⁰² (a) "Perhaps, holy father, you accuse me of temerity (referring to his clandestine marriage), but, O righteous man! you never knew the strength of a fatal passion." Cp. G. 1159. "Fierce as the gloomy Vulture's now to thee, old man, my deeds appear: I read abhorrence on thy brow."

(b) "Behold the dread mark of my love!" Cp. G. 1056. "She died — I dare not tell thee how; but look, 'tis written on my brow!"

(c) "Yet be my destiny still more terrible than it is, I can say this — that once she was mine." Cp. G. 1114. "I die — but first I have possessed, and come what may, I *have been* blessed."

(d) "I stood beside her grave — and yet I live." Cp. G. 1192. "And she was lost — and yet I breathed."

(e) "What happened to me next I do not know; my reason was suddenly darkened within me." Cp. P. C. 231. "What next befell me there and then I know not well — I never knew — first came the loss of light and air, and then of darkness, too."

(f) "I wandered through distant dingles and forests and dark defiles. Mountains listened horrified to my groans and reproaches. The shadows of night, the torrents, the howling of winds and the whistling of the storm mingled with my gloomy thoughts and inconsolable grief." Cp. G. 1197. "Shuddering I shrank from Nature's face, where every hue that charmed before the blackness of my bosom wore."

¹⁰³ (a) "Yesterday, at the stroke of midnight, something from above seemed to fill my spirit with light... Shrouded in white, she appeared to me, her black eyes brighter than autumnal stars. Ah no! it was not a dream... an illusion of the fancy. Why doubt it, holy father? The shroud fell from her, and, believe me, it was she, beautiful and young, a heavenly smile on her lips, and the dark curls falling from her brow to her lily-white breast." Cp. G. 1257. "Tell me no more of Fancy's gleam, no, Father, no! 'twas not a dream. 'Twas then — I tell thee — father! then I saw her in her white cymar... with braided hair and bright black eye." Also S. C. 532. "There sate a lady, youthful and bright."

fluence on the poem, which is supported by numerous verbal analogies. Besides, there are recollections of *Lara*¹⁰⁴ (the interlude in *The Monk IX*) and *Parisina*¹⁰⁵ (the passing bell *motif*), all of them tributaries to the broader and deeper influence of *The Giaour*.

Kozlov's second essay in the Byronic *genre* is markedly different in subject and setting from the *Oriental Tales*. *Natalya Dolgorukaya* is an historical poem with a Russian background. Less derivative than *The Monk*, it is not so intense in feeling, and the impression it leaves behind is less profound. The story is mildly interesting. Natalya Sheremeteva married Prince Dolgoruky against the wishes of her parents. The prince, who had enjoyed the favour of Peter II, fell from power after that monarch's death, was exiled, imprisoned, and eventually beheaded. His wife, left a widow with a little son, was in despair. When her child grew up, she took the veil. The narrative begins at the point where Natalya goes to Moscow with her child to meet her husband, who is in prison there. She reaches the city after his execution and sees his ghost in the Kremlin. This episode occupies most of the second canto. The close of the poem tells of Natalya's admission to a nunnery.

There are three personages in this narrative: the heroine, a

(b) "Beside myself, I rushed to her and tried to clasp her to my breast. But her heart was still; she was silent; and then she vanished... My greedy hands trembled and clutched only air; deceived by a dream, they were crushed against my own breast." Cp. G. 1283. "I rose forgetful of our former woes; and, rushing from my couch, I dart and clasp her to my desperate heart; I clasp — what is it that I clasp? no breathing form within my grasp, no heart that beats reply to mine... Alas! around a shadow prest they shrink upon my lonely breast."

¹⁰⁴ "One night I was sitting sadly beside a river. The stars, the moonlight, the fluttering leaves and plashing waters enchanted me and tempted me by their loveliness into a realm of bliss." Cp. L. I, x, above; also P. 8. "And in the sky the stars are met, and on the wave a deeper blue... and in the heaven that clear-obscure... which follows the decline of day *etc.*"

¹⁰⁵ (a) "Sad were their (the monks') languid voices praying for the soul of the departed." Cp. 391. "Hark! the hymn is singing — the song for the dead below."

(b) "And the sound of the bells made a threefold echo across the waters and bore tidings of the departed far beyond the river." Cp. P. 386. "The convent bells are ringing, but mournfully and slow... with a deep sound, to and fro, heavily to the heart they go."

priest and the hero's ghost. Only the heroine is Byronical. She has all the sweetness, the devoutness and the affection of a Medora or a Francesca. In appearance she is fair; her movements are graceful like Leila's, and, like Francesca, she has a very high moral character. The priest is a genuinely Russian figure, kind, hospitable, religious and very wise. We know nothing of the hero as an individual.

The Giaour had suggested the subject of *The Monk* (a tragedy of remorse) and its mode of treatment (a confession) besides many separate motifs. *The Siege of Corinth* gave *Natalya* its main motif (hallucination) and one or two expressions which have to do with its development. Structurally Kozlov's second poem owes as little to Byron as it does in fable or characterisation. There is no overture, and the poem begins abruptly with the initial episode. In one or two places there are hintings of an external influence. The air of desolation which hangs over the manor-house of the Sheremetevs is like the loneliness which inhabits the ruins of Hassan's palace (cp. G. 288). The old village priest plays the role of the prior in *The Monk*, with this difference that he is articulate: he is the poet's mouthpiece. The pre-narrative passage shows signs of original invention. It is placed in the mouth of the priest, who is made to tell the heroine the story of her early life. Only in the second canto, where the Byronic theme of hallucination (the phantom motif) occurs, are there authentic traces of Byron's influence. The canto begins with a pictorial prelude containing a description of a thunderstorm (cp. B. A. II, i, and C. II, vii). The episode of the heroine's meeting with her husband's ghost is introduced after a prologue-nocturne (cp. the *Oriental Tales passim*). *Natalya's* agitation resembles Alp's in *The Siege of Corinth*¹⁰⁶. The meeting itself

¹⁰⁶ (a) "Timidly she sat down upon a stone." Cp. S. C. 507. "He sate him at the pillar's base."

(b) "She sat there scarcely daring to breathe... Something seemed to hover about her, to press towards her. She sighed; her heart beat fast; and a chill ran through her veins." Cp. S. C. 519. "There he sat heavily... Was it the wind through some hollow stone, sent that soft and tender moan?" Also S. C. 597. Her touch "shot a chillness to his heart".

has a certain likeness to that between Alp and Francesca¹⁰⁷. But Kozlov is much more crude and melodramatic than his original. The incident of Dolgoruky's ghost lifting its head from its shoulders destroys the gravity of an otherwise tense situation. The last episode (the taking of the veil) recalls an incident in Chateaubriand's *René*. The autobiographical epilogue repeats a Pushkin device from *The Fountain in Bakhchisaray*: Kozlov describes a personal visit to the Crypt Monastery in Kiyev, where, he says, "the ghost of Natalya hovered about me in the gloom of her cell."

The Mad Girl (1830), which Kozlov described as "a Russian tale", was his last exercise in lyric romance. Like *Natalya's*, its links with the Oriental Tales are relatively few and slight. The fable is Kozlov's own invention and purports to be a morsel of personal experience. As a piece of unembellished "autobiography", it presents a contrast to Byron's verse-tales. The narrative is very different, too, in as much as there is a minimum of action. The story is told brokenly by a simple village girl who has been betrayed by her lover. It is supposed to be related to the poet himself, who, as listener, is placed in the same position as the father-confessor in *The Giaour*, and the prior in *The Monk*. The form of a confession, which the story takes, derives from the example of these poems.

The heroine's story of blighted affection is easily told. In happier days she knew and loved a young man of her village. They used to meet secretly at night in the woods. By and by the young man left her, promising to return. But he never came back, and she

¹⁰⁷ (a) "You here! O God, by what chance do we meet? Is it, indeed, you dear, who are with me again?" Cp. S. C. 535. "God of my fathers! What is here? Who art thou?"

(b) Her husband "stands before her, troubled and sad. He does not move towards her, says nothing, but gazes at her intently. He is folded in a wide mantle and sunk in deep and dark thoughts. His eyes flash strangely; his face is pale and aspect troubled; and the ringlets of his black hair do not fall down to his bared neck. A sudden terror fixes her... He approaches stiffly... then lifts his hand slowly *etc.*" Cp. S. C. 597. "A chillness... which fixed him beyond the power to start." S. C. 554 f. "Around her form a thin robe twining, nought concealed her bosom shining; thro' the parting of her hair floating darkly downward there, her... arm showed white and bare: and ere yet she made reply, once she raised her hand on high." Also Kozlov's *Hungarian Forest* (ll. 13) and Byron's *Oscar of Alva* (46 l.).

went mad, like Ophelia. The other girls shun her now. Her affection for her lover, however, has not declined. The memory of those trysts in the woods is so sweet that she says she would sacrifice her reason and happiness again to live through what she did then. At the thought that her lover might be dead she experiences a violent paroxysm of grief. An old woman with a lantern comes to take her away; and the poet is left alone with his reflections.

There are two characters in this story, neither of which is in the least Byronical. Only in her constancy can the heroine be likened at all to, say, Medora or Francesca. Ostensibly she is a poor, untutored village girl, but she speaks like a cultivated lady. She is a typical heroine of the Russian Sentimental School (e. g. Karamzin's Liza and Boratynsky's Eda), which had a predilection for seduced peasant girls and faithless lovers. The hero has no life at all outside the girl's story. Though lovingly described, he strikes one as mean and despicable.

In its architecture, *The Mad Girl* is a Byronic poem. The prelude, the epilogue, the scenic interludes and two or three derivative passages disclose the influence of the Tales. The overture is meditative: Kozlov describes the "mysterious agitation" which he experiences at the sound of sleighbells heard on a snowy night. The picture of a winter evening, which ushers in the first incident, represents a familiar Byronic device. The heroine is introduced with the customary interrogation, which, in this case, suggests the influence of *The Siege of Corinth*¹⁰⁸. Her account of her trysts with her lover in the forest is paralleled by some lines in *Parisina*¹⁰⁹. The

¹⁰⁸ "Who comes like a ghost, like a phantom of the night's mid hour, like a secret dweller among tombs? Who flits there before me?" Cp. S. C. 535 above and C. 1000.

¹⁰⁹ (a) "As soon as the shadows of night had covered the sky, I would run stealthily to my favourite copse, not to listen to the nightingale or gaze delighted at the sky as the stars come out, but (to meet him), my own nightingale in the shadow of the birch-trees." Cp. P. 18. "It is not to gaze on the heavenly light that the lady walks in the shadow of night... She listens — but not for the nightingale."

(b) "And my heart beat quick and stood still by turns as I waited for him in the silent night, not daring to breathe, trembling, blushing, going cold all over... And then he would come! — and, as in a dream, all things would fade away." Cp. P. 24. "And her cheek grows pale and her heart beats quick... and her blush returns, and her bosom heaves: a moment more and they shall meet — 'tis past, — her Lover's at her feet."

passionate words which she uses when she confesses to a lasting affection for her seducer, are clear echoes, in a higher key, of the Giaour's vehemence¹¹⁰. At the end of the poem there is a description of the heroine's grave, modelled on the memorial imagery in *The Bride of Abydos* (XXVIII).

2.

In the strong character of Ryleyev, who was hanged as one of the leaders of the Decembrist conspiracy, we have a contrast to the less prominent character of the mild and amiable Kozlov. Ryleyev was a born revolutionary with a keen sense of civic duty¹¹¹ and a passionate love of pure liberty. As a man of his time he read and loved Byron, whose death he lamented, along with Vyazemsky and others, in an elegy. The aspect of Byron's poetry which appealed to him most was that which is quintessentially embodied in the *Sonnet on Chillon*. Liberty under all shapes was a constant vision to him. The national past, which he studied, gave him images of conflict between freedom and tyranny. These images he made into poems.

Of Ryleyev's first narrative poem, Pushkin wrote to his brother¹¹²: "I make my peace with Ryleyev. His Voynarovsky is full of life." To Ryleyev himself he wrote a year later¹¹³: "This poem was needed for our literature." But he must have said some unpleasant truths about the characters in *Voynarovsky* because Ryleyev sent him a letter in June, 1825¹¹⁴, in which we read these lines: "Thank you, dear enchanter, for your plain-spoken observa-

¹¹⁰ (a) "If what is past and gone were to come back to us poor creatures, I would stifle my sorrow in my breast, hide my shame and go into the copse once more." Cp. G. 1119. "Give me the pleasure with the pain, so would I live and love again."

(b) "And even if I were sure that he is dead, I would not part with him, but put on a white shroud and lie down quietly by his side in a coffin." Cp. G. 1124. "Ah! had she but an earthly grave, this breaking heart and throbbing head should seek and share her narrow bed."

¹¹¹ See the *Epistle to A. Bestuzhev* in which he says: "I am not a poet, but a citizen."

¹¹² To L. S. Pushkin, Odessa, January, 1824.

¹¹³ Mikhaylovskoye, January 25, 1825.

¹¹⁴ St. Petersburg, June, 1825.

tions on Voynarovsky. You are right in much that you say... Yet I have no intention of making any alterations." Rayevsky held contrary opinions from the first. "Voynarovsky¹¹⁵ est un ouvrage en mosaïque composé de fragments de Byron et de Pouchkine rapportés ensemble sans beaucoup de réflexion. Je lui fais grâce pour la couleur locale. C'est un garçon d'esprit mais ce n'est pas un poète."

Voynarovsky is a poem in which a story of conjugal fidelity and affection is woven, like a coloured strand, into the ampler texture of a second Iliad. It is national in theme and setting. The love-story is intertwined with political sentiment, and behind it all are images and figures of Ukrainian history which, in the latter part of the narrative, disappear behind a new background of Siberian forest. The fable is related fragmentarily, as Rayevsky pointed out in his letter. Pieced together, the fragments give the following story. Voynarovsky marries Mazepa's daughter, who has saved him from a slow death in the steppes. The bond of kinship rather than patriotic feeling impels him to participate in Mazepa's conspiracy against the Tsar. After the battle of Poltava he is arrested and transported to Siberia. His wife joins him there, but her health has become so feeble that, shortly after her arrival, she dies. Voynarovsky is inconsolable. About this time he makes the acquaintance of the historian Müller. It is Müller who finds his friend dead on the day that news of his reprieve comes to Yakutsk.

Certain incidents in this narrative are, as we shall see presently, taken straight from Byron's *Mazeppa*. The partial identity of subject made it almost impossible for Ryleyev to escape influence. The characters, too, although they are not placed in a specifically Byronic relation to one another, are not unlike certain personages in the *Oriental Tales*. Voynarovsky, who is the leading character, not only because he is the hero, but because all the other active characters live in his story and Müller is only "a graven image"¹¹⁶, is a sort of Conrad with all his evil qualities shed away. The heroine is a Russian Medora and shares Medora's fate. There is no villain. But the part of villain is played by a force outside the control of

¹¹⁵ May 10, 1825.

¹¹⁶ See the letter which Ryleyev sent to Pushkin from St. Petersburg in June, 1825.

men, which uses men as pawns in a confused and incomprehensible game. It uses Mazepa, Peter I and the hero himself to precipitate the catastrophe.

The composition of *Voynarovsky* is eminently Byronical. From the descriptive overture with its ethnographic minutiae (cp. S. C. overture) we pass on sharply to the first episode. The exiled hero is introduced with an agitated question¹¹⁷ and presented with bold strokes that recall Byron's¹¹⁸. Especially remarkable is his description of his own appearance, which reads like a variation on the opening passage of *The Prisoner of Chillon*¹¹⁹. The *motif* of martial exploits performed by the hero in his youth recalls *Parisina*. Voynarovsky's thrilling ride across the steppes is an exact replica, in miniature, of Mazeppa's "death-ride"; the coincidences between the two are so obvious that they strike one as being the result of partial translation¹²⁰. Out of the last two sections of *Mazeppa*, which contain

¹¹⁷ "Who comes stealthily out of his shack in the morning mists?" Cp. O. T. *passim*.

¹¹⁸ (a) "His look is unquiet and sombre; there is sternness and grief in his lineaments; and fate's cruel hand has lightly traced the lines of troubled thought across his brow. His aspect is fiercer than the wild aspect of a branded criminal. He is calm, but Baykal is as calm as he before a storm... A sudden flame blazes up in his eyes." Cp. L. 67. "That brow in furrowed lines had set at last and spake of passions..." Also S. C. 879. "A flash like fire within his eyes blazed..."

(b) "I am wild and gloomy... my eyes have sunk into my head, and on my brow are the furrows of grief... I have become decrepit... cold and callous. Nothing cheers me." Cp. P. C. 1. "My hair is grey but not with years... my limbs are bowed, though not with toil..." Also P. C. 372. "I learned to love despair" and G. 793. "That face... so marked with inward pain."

¹¹⁹ (a) "His look is unquiet and sombre *etc.*" See above.

(b) "I am wild and gloomy *etc.*" See above.

¹²⁰ (a) "Then suddenly my spent horse stopped dead, swerved and crashed to the ground." Cp. M. 689. "A moment staggering, feebly fleet, a moment with a faint low neigh he answered and then fell."

(b) "And there I lay alone with my dead horse under the blue sky, gloomy and sad, the sweat dripping from my brow, and the horse's wounds gushing blood." Cp. M. 709. "They (the drove of horses) left me to my despair, linked to the dead and stiffening wretch." Also 763. "Still I lay chained to the dead and stiffening steed."

(c) "I lay motionless and fancied that I was dying and that, looking me in the eyes, the predatory raven was wheeling above my head." Cp. M. 765.

an undeveloped love *motif*, Ryleyev has woven a pretty romance such as Byron might have written if he had been able to take away his eyes from the rushing picture of the naked man on the horse. The description of the battle of Poltava is not so impressive as Pushkin's. But it is very interesting, from our point of view, because it presents, in one place, a parallel to a situation in *The Siege of Corinth*¹²¹. The flight from Poltava and the night camp of the refugees beyond the Dnepr discover further resemblances to *Mazeppa*¹²². In his delirium, just before death, the hetman recaptures with painful vividness the scene of the execution of Kochubey and Iskra. We know that Pushkin particularly admired this passage. It was apparently inspired by the account which Byron gives of Hugo's decapitation in *Parisina*¹²³. The effect of Mazepa's death on Voynarovsky is the effect which Leila's death had on the Giaour

"I thought to mingle there our clay... I cast my last looks up the sky and there... saw the expecting raven fly."

(d) "Suddenly I heard a rustle behind me and saw a young Cossack girl veiled with a sarp-cloth bending timidly over me in mute despair and tender pity." Cp. M. 806. "A slender girl... sate watching (and), ever and anon, she threw a prying, pitying glance at me."

(e) "I recall the sweetness of our first meeting, I remember her caressing words... With what care she tended me, with what eagerness she gratified my every wish!... At times, when I could not sleep, she would lean her head against my bedpost... How often her eyes lingered on me tenderly and kindly!" Cp. M. 808. "The sparkle of her eye I caught... she smiled... and then her hand on mine she laid and smoothed the pillow for my head... and spoke in whispers — ne'er was voice so sweet!"

¹²¹ "The field smoked with blood. Scarred bodies lay rotting everywhere, and dogs and wolves were devouring them." Cp. S. C. 454. "Lean dogs... gorging and growling o'er carcass and limb."

¹²² "Once at midnight we halted in a little wood beyond the Dnepr... The wearied Charles lay down to rest under an oak-tree... In the distance, on a blackened stump before a blaze of pine-wood sat Mazepa, gloomy and stern." Cp. M. 27. "And in the depth of forests darkling, the watch-fires in the distance sparkling... a king must lay his limbs at length... Mazeppa spread his cloak and laid his lance beneath an oak."

¹²³ "See, see, they're there!... and the executioner is with them... They are led on to the scaffold... groans and wailing... The executioner is ready: he rolls up his sleeves. See, he has taken up his axe; and there rolls a head and there another." Cp. P., cited above.

and the loss of his youngest brother on Bonnivard¹²⁴. Voynarovsky's spiritual experiences during the early years of his exile have affinities with Byron's as described in *Childe Harold IV*¹²⁵. The exile's empty shack, like the cell of The Prisoner of Chillon is illuminated by a feeble ray of light¹²⁶. The epilogue to the poem is necrological: the hero is found covered with snowdrift on his wife's grave, and his aspect, as he lies there, recalls the marble features of the Giaour and of Lara in their spiritual agonies¹²⁷.

Ryleyev's remaining poems are disconnected fragments, which were all written, along with *Voynarovsky*, in 1825. *Nalivayko* consists of three detached pieces: *Kiyev*, *The Death of the Sheriff of Chigirin* and *Nalivayko's Confession*. The second of these pieces seems to have pleased the poet Delvig¹²⁸. To the last Ryleyev himself referred in a letter to Pushkin¹²⁹. "You do not say a word about *Nalivayko's Confession*, which gives me greater satisfaction than the *Death of the Sheriff* that you like so much. In the *Confession* there are thoughts, feelings, verities — in a word there is much more pertinent matter than in the records of *Nalivayko's exploits*, although there is more action in these."¹³⁰ *Kiyev* seems to be the overture to the unfinished poem. In common with most Byronic overtures, it is founded on the antithesis of past glory and present decay. The second fragment is an incident in the poem. It is full

¹²⁴ "I stood before the old man (Mazepa) tearless, unfeeling and cold as marble." Cp. G. 238. "He stood... pale as marble o'er a tomb." Also P. C. 235. "I had no thought, no feeling — none — among the stones I stood a stone."

¹²⁵ "The moaning of the forest trees, storms, the howling of the gale and the plash of troubled waters were to me a comfort in my distress. During a tempest the conflict in my breast was stilled by the conflict of the elements." Cp. C. H. IV, 178 f.

¹²⁶ "A welcome beam shed a dim light through the ice-bound snow." Cp. P. C. 30. "Dim with a dull imprisoned ray, a sunbeam which had lost its way etc.", cited above.

¹²⁷ "Sombre and sad, the exile was seated on the grave-mound... the frost of death was in his staring eyes, and his brow glistened like marble." Cp. G. 238. "Pale as marble o'er the tomb... his brow was bent, his eye was glazed." Also G. 78, C. 1792, L. 211 and 1135.

¹²⁸ See the letter which Pushkin sent to his brother Lev on April 12, 1825.

¹²⁹ St. Petersburg, May 12, 1825.

¹³⁰ There is, in the last sentence, a pun which I am unable to translate without spoiling: *delo* and *del'noye*.

of rapid movement, and gives wider scope for the use of stirring rhetorical trope than the serener prelude. One parallel with *Mazeppa* occurs¹³¹. The last piece is more Byronic, as the title suggests (the confession *motif*); the opening verses especially resemble an apostrophe in *The Giaour*¹³². The entire fragment is simply a variation on a structural peculiarity of that poem, both model and replica being confessions. In both cases, too, love is the cause and justification of the crimes of the shriven, but there is this difference between them, that it is love of woman in Byron and love of country in Ryleyev. There are some verbal analogies besides¹³³.

Khmel'nitsky is also an unfinished historical romance. There are two fragments: *The Haydamak* and *Paley*. It is curious that neither of these pieces contains the very Byronic episode in Ryleyev's twenty-seventh historical lay (*duma*) *Bogdan Khmel'nitsky* (1822). The incident I allude to offers a strong resemblance, which cannot be explained away as coincidence, to an episode in *The Corsair*. Khmel'nitsky, taken prisoner by his enemy Czaplicki, is lying in a cell, burning with hate and vengeance. The cell is described in much the same words as Bonnivard's at Chillon¹³⁴. When the hetman least expects an intrusion, the bolt is drawn and in comes a young woman. Khmel'nitsky is astonished and wrongs her purpose by asking her whether she has come to mock him. She tells him that she is Czaplicki's wife and that she has been so moved by his sufferings and fortitude that she will set him free if only he will

¹³¹ "The courser flies like a whirlwind, his tail and mane streaming in the gale." Cp. M. 366. "And snorting, with erected mane... my steed... upon the pinions of the wind... sped etc."

¹³² "Do not say, holy father, that it is a sin! Words are useless... Let it be a sin, a horrible sin!" Cp. G. 1258. "No, father, no..." G. 1060. and ere thou dost condemn me, pause..."

¹³³ "Dark and stern and fierce are my looks... one thought pursues me like a shadow night and day, giving me no rest." Cp. G. 832. "Dark and unearthly is the scowl that glares beneath his dusky cowl."

¹³⁴ "In a damp and gloomy dungeon into which the light of day came stealthily, slipping along the arches and lighting up the horror of the place, lay Khmel'nitsky, stern and morose." Cp. P. C. 30, cited above, and C. 972. "In a high chamber of his (Seyd's) highest tower sate Conrad... in solitude (and) scanned his guilty bosom."

take her away from her hated husband¹³⁵. Khmel'nitsky eagerly grasps at the opportunity to escape which is held out to him. All this is merely Conrad and Gulnare played over again. The parallels in expression, too, are unmistakable.

Now if we turn to *The Haydamak*, which is the first part of the romance of *Khmel'nitsky*, we shall find something altogether different. This fragment is merely a piece of portraiture. The nocturne at the beginning is the overture and the first episode combined. The biographica are related by a Zaporogian Cossack. And the young *haydamak*, or brigand, who is presumably the hero, is described as a kind of double of the Giaour or Lara¹³⁶.

Paley, the second fragment, occupies the same position in this narrative as *The Death of the Sheriff* in *Nalivayko*. It is a dramatic incident chosen for its effectiveness as one of the pinnacles of the poem. Like *The Robber Brothers* and many Russian ballads (*staryny*), it opens with a negative comparison. A Byronic figure occurs a little later in the shape of a rhetorical question which precedes a description of Hetman Paley's daring plunge into the Dnepr on horseback. This thrilling incident recalls Mazeppa's swim across

¹³⁵ (a) "Who are you? Have you come to remove my fetters or to mock and abuse me?" Cp. C., cited above.

(b) "Oh no! Czaplicki's wife brings you the gift of freedom. Your sufferings and fortitude made me reverence you and touched my heart. I loved you." Cp. C. 1403. "I feared thee, thanked thee, pitied, maddened, loved."

(c) "To tear you from your chains I have broken my promise to a tyrant. Be mine! — I am yours! — Then take your sword!" Cp. C. 1487. "That hated tyrant, Conrad — he must bleed." Also C. 1475. "Receive this poniard."

¹³⁶ "His movements and gait, his proud eyes and his features all spoke of high lineage... The traces of grief were on his face... he frowned at everybody, like a tiger. He knew neither love nor friendship, but thirsted for blood... He would roam like sin in waste places, harbouring a secret thought in his mind. Sorrow had fallen on his heart and tortured him always and everywhere. The chillness of the tomb breathed from him... His flashing eyes were always downcast, and the blackness of sin, like the blackness of night, was on his brow. None ever saw him smile even for a moment and the wrinkles vanish from his bronzed face." Cp. G. 868. "The close observer can espy a noble soul and lineage high..." G. 832. "Dark and unearthly is (his) scowl... The flash of that dilating eye reveals too much of times gone by. That face... so marked with inward pain... that stony air." Also C. 203. "Sunburnt his cheek *etc.*," and "his features' deepening lines and varying hue."

the Dnepr¹³⁷, and is repeated in Bestuzhev's *Prince Andrey* and in Gogol's *Taras Bul'ba* (1835). To us it is valuable not only as a proof of Byron's influence, but also as an illustration of the dramatic qualities of the lyric romance. While the old epic was like a circumstantial chronicle, aureoled and animated, the lyric romance resembles the stage play and, even more, the cinematograph film. There were no breaks in the epic narrative: it had the fullness and continuity of life. But the lyric romance is a procession of detached images, a sequence of dramatic moments, which in their pictorial effectiveness and want of narrative cohesion present a manifest resemblance to the abruptly changing scenes and picturesque episodes of "screen drama".

3.

If among all the lyric romances which were written by Pushkin's contemporaries on the Byron model there is one that is less affected by his influence than any other, it is probably the unfinished *Prince Andrey* of Aleksandr Bestuzhev. *Prince Andrey of Pereyaslavl'*, was written in 1828. It is the work of an antiquary, romanticist and disciple of Walter Scott. The marks of Byron's influence are few, and if the poem were compared in detail with Scott's metrical romances, its larger indebtedness to these would no doubt be easily established. Our purpose, however, is to discover in what way and how far *Prince Andrey* was influenced by Byron. That it belongs to the Byronic cycle is obvious: its structural resemblances to the *Oriental Tales*, which are immediately discernible, are eked out by analogies in *motif* and phrasing.

Prince Andrey consists of a first, a second and a few odd fragments of an unfinished fifth canto. It is an historical poem, coloured by the writer's imagination and enriched by his researches into the archeology of old Russia. The setting is autochthonous. As the poem is unfinished, besides being unusually reticent, the course of the narrative is difficult to follow to the end. What may be

¹³⁷ "Like an arrow, Paley boldly leapt out from the bank and disappeared amid flying spray in the swirling waters... The wind blusters; the river roars... He is already in midstream, swimming strongly." Cp. M. 582. "The wild horse swims the wilder stream! The bright broad river's gushing tide sweeps winding onward, far and wide, and we are half way!"

gathered from the two earlier cantos (*The Journey* and *The Chase*) is that the poem is a story of treachery which resolves itself into a conspiracy against the Prince of Pereyaslavl'. The theme of *Poltava*, it may be recalled here, is similar.

Prince Vsevolod of Kiyev sends Roman as a courier to Pereyaslavl' with a writ demanding that Prince Andrey shall pay him tribute. On the way Roman rescues Svetovid from drowning. Svetovid is the son of the boyar Lyubomir, who is one of the conspirators. Prince Andrey declines to pay tribute on the grounds that Vsevolod is a usurper. Roman is impressed by his courage and address, and begins to wonder at Prince Vsevolod's denigration of his character. Bestuzhev breaks off his story here. In the fragment of the fifth canto Prince Andrey is discovered wandering alone in pilgrim's cloak on a battlefield. We are not told who the combatants were, but we may conjecture that Prince Andrey was the leader of the victorious forces. Beyond this it is unsafe and unnecessary to go. The picture of the stricken field reveals nothing.

There are four characters in *Prince Andrey*. Three of them resemble Byron's. Svetovid, the fair, blue-eyed, ingenuous youth, is a replica of the youngest Bonnivard in all that touches his appearance and disposition. Roman is another Selim, and Lyubomir another Giaffir. Prince Andrey, far-sighted, noble and pacific, has no counterpart in the Tales.

Both the first and the second canto of Bestuzhev's poem begin with lyric overtures. The characters are invariably introduced with an emotional query. The scene of the ruined monastery with Roman sitting thoughtful on a stone in the first canto strongly resembles a similar picture in *The Siege of Corinth*¹³⁸. The image of Svetovid

¹³⁸ (a) And the proud front of the arches is overgrown with grass and moss." Cp. S. C. 495. "A temple in ruin stands... two or three columns and many a stone, marble and granite with grass o'ergrown."

(b) "Possessed by an unfathomable melancholy, Roman sat down on a gravestone and let his eyes wander along the half-ruined walls." Cp. S. C. 506. "He sate him down at a pillar's base... like one in dreamy, musing mood, declining was his attitude."

(c) "And the white sand on both sides (of the river) lies like a pearly fringe." Cp. S. C. 438. "A smooth short space of yellow sand between it (the sea) and the greener land..." S. C. 436 "and the fringe of the foam may be seen below."

singing in a skiff bears a distant likeness to Childe Harold "pouring out his good-night to the elements". Bestuzhev's digression on the beauty of tears recalls a lyrical passage in *The Corsair*¹³⁹. In the second canto the contacts with the Tales are insignificant. But the unfinished fifth is rich in recollections of them. *Lara* was apparently drawn upon for details in the description of the field of slaughter¹⁴⁰. And the lonely figure of Prince Andrey walking among the dead is like another Alp under the walls of Corinth.

4.

"Je rougis de parler d'Eda après le Moine", wrote Boratynsky to Kozlov¹⁴¹. "Mais tout bien que mal j'ai fini mon griffonnage. Je crois qu'un peu trop de vanité m'a égaré: je ne voulais pas suivre le chemin battu, je ne voulais imiter ni Byron ni Pouchkine; c'est pourquoi je me suis jeté dans des détails prosaïques, m'efforçant de les mettre en vers; aussi je n'ai fait que de la prose rimée. En voulant être original je n'ai été que bizarre." The essential feature of Boratynsky's Byronism is hinted at in the words: "je ne voulais pas suivre le chemin battu". The poet began with the deliberate intention of being original. His success was partial, on his own confession. The temptations of Byron's and Pushkin's lyric romances were stronger for him than for any other. He did not resist their influence completely: he compromised.

Eda (1824) was the first poem Boratynsky wrote in the new "English" genre. It was published in 1826. Pushkin, who read it

¹³⁹ "O tears of innocent joy, you are jewels in the dust of the world... memories of heaven on earth." Cp. C. 1145. "What gem hath dropped and sparkles on his chain? The tear most sacred shed for others' pain that starts at once —bright— pure — from Pity's mine, already polished by the hand divine."

¹⁴⁰ (a) "Feebly lighted by the moon, glitter casques and hauberks. Bodies are lying about covered with dust and blood." Cp. L. 1039. "Day glimmers on the dying and the dead, the cloven cuirass and the helmless head."

(b) "Try to discover which are your friends and which your enemies." Cp. S. C. 1041. "Christian and Moslem which be they?"

(c) "Death has arrested the onward rush of the mighty war-horse and torn the proud snorting from his nostrils." Cp. L. 1041. "The war-horse masterless is on the earth, and that last gasp has burst his bloody girth."

¹⁴¹ January 7, 1829.

shortly after its appearance, was enchanted by it. "What a lovely thing *Eda* is!" he wrote to Delvig¹⁴². "Our critics will fail to understand all the originality of the story. What variety! The hussar, *Eda*, the poet himself — all speak in their own way. And the descriptions of Livonian (Pushkin meant Finnish) scenery! It is wonderful!"

This "Finnish" poem, written in a style which is as inornate and "prosaic" as the classical convention allowed, is a painful story of seduction. The action is started by a collision between young innocence and practised iniquity. As a story, *Eda* is very simple. A young hussar officer in the Russian army stationed in Finland is billeted on a Finnish peasant family, which includes an old man and his wife and a pretty daughter. The girl, who is called *Eda*, takes his fancy. He makes love to her and, having got her to love him after much coaxing, ravishes her. By and by he grows tired of his amorous dalliance, and when the order comes to change quarters on the outbreak of a war with Sweden, he is glad to go. *Eda* breaks her heart and dies.

The deplorable hero of *Eda* is an un-Byronic figure: he is very real. His attitude to the heroine is that of Erast to Liza in Karamzin's idyll¹⁴³. The situation is a favourite one of the Russian Sentimental School. *Eda*, the heroine, is a delicate creature. Fair, blue-eyed, graceful and innocent, she is more like a young lady than a peasant girl, and more like a picture than flesh and blood. Her resemblance to Medora, outwardly and in her fate, is more than superficial. We shall be able to compare their words and gestures presently. The old man is a dour, hard, but affectionate parent. The mother is admirably compassionate and kindly.

Boratynsky's familiarity with Byron's technique is plain right through the poem. This has no overture, but begins abruptly with a dialogue between the hero and the heroine. The *Vorgeschichte* contains an account of the circumstances which led to their meeting. *Eda* is described with something of the fervour which informs Byron's lyric lines on his heroines. She bears a perceptible outward resemblance to Medora and Parisina. The change which thoughts of love bring about in her mind and behaviour has a paral-

¹⁴² February 20, 1826.

¹⁴³ *Poor Liza*, a classic of Russian sentimental fiction.

lel in the change which comes over Francesca after Lanciotto's departure for Turkey. There is, further, a curious reminiscence of a playful incident in *The Bride of Abydos*¹⁴⁴. The hussar's prearranged visit to Eda's room is not unlike the midnight visits of the Tales, except that the hero, not the heroine, is the visitant¹⁴⁵. They part, like the characters in *The Corsair*, at daybreak. The last scenes in the poem, where the hero forsakes the heroine, strongly resemble Conrad's parting from Medora¹⁴⁶.

In his remaining narratives, *The Ball* (1826—28) and *The Gypsy Girl* (1829—31), Boratynsky tried, even more than in *Eda*, to avoid imitation of others and was correspondingly successful. There are fewer Byronic elements in these poems. For one thing, the structure of the lyric romance is not so fully reproduced as in *Eda*, and the style, for another, is touched with a grim humour such as does not enliven the solemnity of the Tales.

The Ball is a shade longer than *Eda*, but written in substantially the same manner. Its theme is a tragedy of unreturned passion. The story has a contemporary setting. The characters, of whom there are several, are Russian. Although an example of "modern" realism, the story is melodramatic; the love interest is strong, and there is a tragic catastrophe. Arseny, a highly sensitive young man, fancies that Olga, his betrothed, is trifling with his affections, and leaves

¹⁴⁴ "Sometimes Eda threw cold water over her sleeping lover and then ran away, laughing loudly as she ran." Cp. B. A. 273. "The drops (of perfume) that through his glittering vest the playful girl's appeal addressed, unheeded o'er his bosom flew."

¹⁴⁵ (a) "And her tears trickled down her cheeks in heavy drops." Cp. P. 336. "But every now and then a tear, so large and slowly gathered, slid from the long dark fringe of that fair lid."

(b) "The dawn reddens in the sky. The deceptive rapture has fled, taking with it the phantom of happiness." Cp. C. 1161. "Tis morn — and o'er his altered features play the beams without the hopes of yesterday."

¹⁴⁶ (a) "Kneeling she raised her hands to heaven, then stretching out her arms to him (the hussar) she fell prone in the dust, moaning." Cp. C. 499. "Against her heart that hand is driven, convulsed and quick — then gently railed to Heaven... She dared not look again (at the sea); but turned with sickening soul within the gate."

(b) "Pale as the wintry sky, she sits at the window, silent in her hopeless grief." Cp. C. 1245. "Sadly she (Medora) sate on high." C. 1243. "She that day had passed in watching all that Hope proclaimed a mast" Also P. 326, and B. A. 973.

Russia, in a fit of anger, to travel abroad. He indulges freely in occidental dissipations and, after several years' absence from home, returns to Moscow in a frame of mind resembling Lara's. Princess Nina, a Russian Cleopatra, falls in love with him, but he is mostly unresponsive. Nina discovers later that he and Olga have made it up and are to be married. She meets the couple at a ball and is so upset at the sight of their happiness that she returns home immediately and poisons herself.

The two principal characters in *The Ball* are Arseny and Nina. Olga is a secondary figure, like Medora. The situation is much the same as in *The Corsair*¹⁴⁷. The hero, a sort of Conrad or Lara, is placed between two women: a fair-haired, pleasant and rather stupid girl and a dark, passionate *intrigante*, in whom he succeeds in awakening a real affection. Nina is a woman of volcanic passions. There is no figure in the Tales that corresponds to her exactly. She is as repulsive as Gulbeyaz in *Don Juan* at one moment and as pitiable as Gulnare at another. Perhaps Gulnare is Byron's nearest approach to this character. Olga is a mindless creature and appears in the poem only as a foil to the heroine.

The Ball shares certain peculiarities of composition with the Oriental Tales, to which it also discloses a number of verbal analogies. It plunges at once *in medias res* with a brilliant picture of a ball. Nina's appearance and character are dwelt upon. In speaking of her paroxysms of grief, Boratynsky uses a sentimental phrase to which *The Bride* and *Parisina* offer a parallel¹⁴⁸. Arseny's features, the temper of his mind, and the dark chapters of his past are like so many recollections of *Lara*¹⁴⁹. The explanation he gives Nina of

¹⁴⁷ Cp. Olga-Arseny-Nina and Medora-Conrad-Gulnare.

¹⁴⁸ "What tears flowed from her eyes! Who would not have wiped them from sorrow's eyes! Who would not have left them in beauty's!" Cp. P. 326 above. Also P. 181. Eyes "which fill, as tear on tear grows gathering still" and B. A. 226. "So bright the tear in Beauty's eye, Love half regrets to kiss it dry."

¹⁴⁹ (a) "His brow bore the marks of wild passions and bitter thoughts. A gloomy indifference smouldered in his eyes. About his lips played a jeer rather than a smile. Not long before, he had travelled in other lands, seeking distraction. Now he was home again. But it was plain that foreign climes had failed to make him heart-whole. In conversation he astounded people with his rare knowledge of the world. With meaning quip and cutting word he penetrated deep into others' hearts." Cp. L. 67. "That brow in furrowed lines had fixed at last and spake of passions, but of passions past... Coldness of mien and

his habitual gloom might have been given by almost any one of Byron's heroes¹⁵⁰. The epilogue, with which the poem ends, is in character: it is a necrologue, whose gloom is broken by rare flashes of a cynical humour. As an artistic device it is Byronic.

The Gypsy Girl (1829), Boratynsky's third metrical narrative, is very largely a dramatic poem. The divisions of the dialogue, headed with the speakers' names, seem to have been imitated from Pushkin's *Gypsies*. It is the longest poem of the three and divided into eight cantos. Its style is deliberately "prosaic", the lyric element being as little obtruded as in *The Ball*. The setting is equally "prosaic", for the scene of the story is laid in the Moscow of Boratynsky's time. The whole atmosphere, in fact, is thoroughly "modern" and unromantic. In theme, *The Gypsy Girl* resembles its immediate predecessor: it is a tragedy of blighted affection. As in *The Ball*, the love interest is very strong, and poison plays a decisive part in bringing about the catastrophe. The fable is as commonplace as Boratynsky could have wished for. Elets koy, a dissipated young man, keeps a Gypsy concubine in a Moscow suburb. The girl's name is Sara. A respectable young woman called Vera inspires him with a purer love. He plans to elope with her and get married clandestinely. Sara, who discovers his intentions, makes him drink a lovephiltre as a farewell draught. Elets koy dies of poisoning, and Sara goes mad with grief.

The three characters in this poem are little more than the characters of *The Ball*, and ultimately of *The Corsair*, in a new guise. They are placed in exactly the same relation to one another as Nina, Arseny and Olga, or as Gulnare, Conrad and Medora. But the catastrophe that ends the drama in which they participate is

carelessness of pose... and that sarcastic levity to tongue... all these were his." L. 25. "And Lara left in youth his fatherland." L. 11. "The chief of Lara is returned again." L. 72. "A glance that took their thoughts from others."

(b) "He was a shrewd judge of music and understood the merits of brush and chisel." Cp. B. 31. "He knew music... and knew the niceties of sock and buskin."

(c) "And although he was habitually cold and curt in his remarks, it seemed as if, at the bottom of his heart, he had a great wealth of feeling." Cp. L. 83. "And some deep feeling, it were vain to trace, at moments lightened o'er his livid face."

¹⁵⁰ "My soul's darkness is involuntary: it is the legacy of miserable errors and of passions that are past." Cp. L. 67, cited above.

different in each case. The virago dies in *The Ball*, the European heroine in *The Corsair*, and the hero in *The Gypsy Girl*. Elets koy, the hero of the last, has the same points of affinity with Childe Harold as Arseny has with Lara. He is a debauchee capable of better things than the gratification of his senses. Sara, "the Gypsy girl", is a black-eyed, fiery "oriental" beauty. Vera is the fair "European". All three seem to have stepped out of the Tales to put on alien dress and take part in another tragedy.

As a piece of literary construction, *The Gypsy Girl* has a close parallel in *The Ball*. But it is also very different from that poem, not only in the preponderance of the dramatic element over the narrative, which brings it nearer to the Tales, but in the rare echoes of Byron that occur in it. It begins *ex abrupto* without an overture. A realistic picture of a night-and-morning debauch, a long *Vorgeschichte* which occupies the second canto, an animated description of an Easter holiday in Moscow, pictorial interludes, one describing the coming of autumn, and a masquerade tableau are some of its more striking passages. The biographica and the banquet remind one of the first few Spenserians of *Childe Harold*, where similar characters and scenes are sketched. The picture of the masquerade contains an evident reminiscence of *Beppo*¹⁵¹. In the *Vorgeschichte*, which tells how Elets koy and Sara became acquainted, we have the hero harbouring in his mind thoughts worthy of Lara. The "false" close of the poem is very like the epilogue to *The Bride of Abydos*, although there are no verbal resemblances to reinforce the likeness. As a Byronic epilogue, it contains a description of Elets koy's grave. The real close, where the effect of Elets koy's death on the two heroines is shown, does not represent a fresh departure as an artistic device. Biographical epilogues as sequels to obituaries occur in *Lara* and *Parisina*. It is possible that the *finale* to *Lara* inspired it.

¹⁵¹ "Lively music is being played; couples are circling to its notes in a quadrille; the chequered masquerade is in full swing. Apparitions of all times and nations flit here and there: fairies, viziers, polichinelles, savages — all tormented by the imp of mystification." Cp. B. 3. "Masks of all times and nations, Turks and Jews, and harlequins and clowns with feats gymnastical, Greeks, Romans, Yankee-doodles and Hindoos."

5.

From Boratynsky to the next writer whom we have to consider is a far cry. Boratynsky was a considerable poet, one of the intimate Pushkin group, who wrote many admirable pieces, among them the only poem that Lev Tolstoy allowed to be a work of art. Podolinsky was a very minor writer, who never advanced beyond the imitative stage. His verse, indeed, is always fluent and never once incurred hostile criticism on grounds of pure technique. But it lacks personality and permanence. Podolinsky began his more ambitious work with light variations on the oriental "angelic" poetry which Thomas Moore represented in England. From *Div and Peri*, which was written in 1827, he proceeded to a Byronic romance, possibly suggested as much by Kozlov's *Monk* and Boratynsky's realistic essays as by the *Oriental Tales*. This poem was entitled *Borsky* and appeared in 1829. In the following year Podolinsky ended his Byronic phase with another lyric romance called *The Beggar* (1830). After that he returned to the supernatural imagery of his first narrative in *The Death of the Peri* (1837) and closed his career as a writer of verse-tales with a long ballad or, as he called it, a "legend" (*Pan Burlay*, 1840), of his native Ukraine.

Borsky and *The Beggar* differ in two points from Podolinsky's other poems. First, they deal with incidents in the lives of contemporaries, and in the second place, they are Byronic poems, contributions of the author to the body of Russian lyric romance. It may also be observed that they closely resemble each other in style and, as we shall see later, approach Kozlov's narratives at certain points.

Borsky was the earlier and is the longer and perhaps the better of the two. It is a tragic story of a misunderstanding. The fable is very melodramatic, in spite of the "modern" atmosphere and "prosaic" setting. The action proceeds along unaccustomed lines. Vladimir Borsky is a young man of gentle family, who loves and is loved by the less illustriously descended Elena. His father is opposed to their match on purely family grounds. Vladimir, in a rage, goes off on a European tour and returns home to Kiyev only after his father's death. He immediately renews his suit and marries Elena. But the marriage is not happy because Borsky suspects his wife's fidelity. Elena's only fault is that she has been a sleep-

walker from childhood. Once, when the fit comes over her, Borsky follows and kills her. Remorse drives him to confess his guilt to a priest. Years afterwards his body is found on his wife's grave in a coppice.

Of the three characters in this story, the hero and the heroine are Byronic, the priest being very little different from Kozlov's holy father in *Natalya*. To be sure there are father-confessors in the *Oriental Tales*, but they are never more than silent witnesses. Vladimir Borsky is one of those innumerable Russians who aspired to the mantle of Childe Harold. His temper, his disenchantment, his travels and dissipations are all of a piece and consistent with the character he desires, perhaps unconsciously, to simulate. Elena, who plays the heroine's part, is a sweet, harmless creature, as docile, clinging and unimproving as Medora.

Borsky begins, unpreluded, in *mediis rebus*. The hero's return home to find the house lonely and deserted is like Childe Harold's unwelcomed home-coming. There is novelty in the device of putting the *Vorgeschichte* in the hero's own mouth. As subject-matter it strongly resembles the chronicle of the Childe's debaucheries in the early stanzas of *Childe Harold*, and the record of travel in Switzerland recalls *Manfred*. The dialogue between the hero and the priest on the morning after the former's return shows verbal analogies with *The Giaour*¹⁵². Borsky's behaviour at the marriage ceremony is, doubtless, a recollection of what in Podolinsky's day must have been a memorable passage in *The Dream* (Sect. vi). Up to this point, indeed, the entire poem (Canto I) seems to be a development of the following lines from *The Dream*: "The wanderer was returned — I saw him stand before an altar . . . A moment o'er his face the tablet of unutterable thoughts was traced." The second canto begins with a lyric overture, in the Byronic manner, on the transience of happiness¹⁵³. The scene in the bedroom reads like a variant of an

¹⁵² "Father, I have lived! But do not judge me by my looks! You have lived long and in peace, and life has been a joy to you. You cannot know the agitations of an impotent mind. But you may unhesitatingly reprove me, for I richly deserve censure." Cp. G. 971. "Father, thy days have passed in peace . . . thyself without a crime or care . . . My days, though few have passed below in much of Joy but more of woe."

¹⁵³ Cp. the pictorial interlude in *Lara* I. x.

identical situation in *Parisina*¹⁵⁴. The necrology at the end of the poem, with its picture of Elena's grave, follows Byron in the epilogue to *The Bride of Abydos*. And in the closing verses, where peasants find Borsky's frozen corpse, there is evidence of an only too obvious imitation of *Voynarovsky*.

As a poem, *The Beggar* (1830) is slightly inferior to *Borsky* and, at the same time, it is under a greater indebtedness to Byron. Like *The Prisoner of Chillon*, it takes the form of a "public", or literary, confession. The person confessing, however, is not, like Bonnivard, a victim of human injustice, but a self-exiled fratricide. The poem is written in octosyllabic verse with iambic endings throughout; which alone is proof of the influence of *The Prisoner of Chillon*¹⁵⁵. The setting, as in *Parisina*, is Italian. As a story, *The Beggar* tells of the havoc caused by a violent passion. The hero, subsequently the Beggar, meets a pretty girl called Agnola at a country dance and falls passionately in love with her. Before long he is enraged to find that she already has a lover. Not knowing that his rival is his own brother, he pushes him over a cliff. He is imprisoned for fratricide. Release comes to him after years of captivity, when the French revolutionary army invades Lombardy. His mother, who had visited him in prison, and Agnola have both died. He goes to the cemetery where they and his brother are buried. His "victims" appear to him in a vision and entreat him to go away. He leaves Italy to live in penury abroad.

Not one of the four characters, unless an exception is made for the hero, can be called Byronic. Most of them live and move in another's narrative. The brother, the mother and the heroine are faintly drawn. They give the impression of veiled portraits. The mother is a pathetic figure, without a counterpart in Byron's poetry.

¹⁵⁴ "Elena's is not a placid slumber: her dreams are troubled, and once, in seeming despair, she stretches out her arms towards her husband, as if she were seeking his protection." Cp. P. 69. "But fevered in her sleep she seems, and red her cheek with troubled dreams, and mutters she in her unrest a name she dare not breathe by day, and clasps her Lord unto the breast which pants for one away."

¹⁵⁵ It should be borne in mind that after about 1825 Byron's indirect influence (through Zhukovsky, Kozlov and Pushkin) far exceeded his direct influence. Podolinsky probably knew *The Prisoner of Chillon* only in Zhukovsky's translation.

Agnola is too much a child to be a Byronic heroine. The brother and rival is without personality. As for the hero, the only character in the Tales at all like him, in his latter years, is Bonnivard. I have already pointed out the difference between them. What they have in common is their prison experiences, which have made them indifferent to life.

The eulogy of Italy, with which *The Beggar* begins, has the lyric march of Byron's overtures. It may be, however, that it was inspired by Goethe's *Mignon*¹⁵⁶. The hero's love for Agnola embodies a measure of the ecstasy and violence of the Giaour's great love for Leila; his habit of walking out alone in the moonlight, "thinking unutterable things", recalls some mocking lines in *Don Juan* (I, 90—94); and the manner in which he murders his rival may have been suggested by Lara's disposal of Ezzelin (cp. L. II, xxiv). In his account of his prison life one comes across several verbal analogies to *The Prisoner of Chillon*, which must have served Podolinsky as a model¹⁵⁷. The epilogue is little more than a paraphrase of the memorial lines on Zuleika in *The Bride*¹⁵⁸. A final parallel

¹⁵⁶ It is only fair to point out here that by about 1830 such eulogies were a commonplace in Russian poetry.

¹⁵⁷ (a) "From that time no one came to see me in my cell. I dragged on a weary existence that was like a horrible dream. Many years passed. It seemed as if all the world had forgotten me. The same keeper continued to bring me my bread and water. I did not know whether it was night or day in my cell. It was as if I had never seen the sun in my life." Cp. P. C. 240. "It was not night, it was not day; it was not even the dungeon light..." 366. "It may be months or years or days — I kept no count, I took no note."

(b) "What does life hold for me? And why must I again look on the mountains and valleys, the forests and the dome of the unclouded sky?" Cp. P. C. xiii—xiv *passim*.

¹⁵⁸ "Whether it was a thought, I do not know. But it seemed to me that their perfume was not of earthly roses: it seemed as if an angel had brought them from paradise and that they were bright, not with dew, but with tears. A dark cypress hung its funereal greenery over my brother's grave and bent mournfully over the rose as if it were weeping." Cp. B. A. 1148. "Dark above, the sad but living cypress glooms and withers not... A single rose is shedding there its lustre, mute and pale... The stalk some Spirit gently rears and waters with celestial tears; for well may maids of Helle deem that it can be no earthly flower."

This species of epilogue appears to be a favourite with Levantine poets.

with the Tales is presented by the description of the Beggar's "declining" attitude on the gravestone when he sees his vision. Both the attitude and the vision are probably recollections of *The Siege of Corinth*¹⁵⁹.

6.

Polezhayev's contribution to the Byronic romance was a modest one. This is all the more surprising as Byron to him was one of the great figures in the literature of the world. His translations from Byron are neither numerous nor good, and he displayed little taste in choosing them¹⁶⁰. But there are many allusions to Byron in his poetry, which show that he "reverenced" the English poet and envied him his genius. "O singer of Gulnare! why am I not your peer in the art of singing?" he wrote in *A Wreath for Pushkin's Tomb*. "For if I were your peer I should touch men's hearts by the power of a sublime and immortal art."

Polezhayev wrote three verse-tales, of which two are nearly unintelligible fragments. The complete one is called *Coriolanus*, and was written in 1834, when the first wave of Byronism had broken¹⁶¹. *Coriolanus* is not, strictly speaking, a lyric romance. It is a piece of history. But the structure of the poem exhibits a certain affinity to the Tales, and there are corroborative verbal analogies with that group of poems. *Coriolanus* is divided into four cantos. The first canto (*Rome*) is occupied by an overture, in which the writer describes the grandeur and decadence of the *urbs aeterna*. Such a contrast is, as we have seen, an essential part of the Byronic prelude.

A variation on it occurs in some elegiac verses by the modern Greek lyricist, Georgios Zalakostas. The final stanza of his poem reads: —

Στό μνήμα τό ζευγαρωτό δύο δένδρα φυτεμμένα
Τό χῶμα ἰσκιόνουν μυστικά,
καί ὅπότεν ἄνεμος βογκᾷ,
φιλιούνται ἀδελφομένα.

Cp. also the concluding paragraphs of Joseph Conrad's *The Rover* (1923) for a modern revival of the *procédé*.

¹⁵⁹ "He sat down on a stone and fell into a trance." Cp. S. C. 507, cited above.

¹⁶⁰ They include *Oscar of Alva* and *The Vision of Belshazzar*.

¹⁶¹ By about 1830 the immediate influence of the Oriental Tales began to decline and to make way for the growth of the "Byron legend" and its influence.

Later, in the second canto, which tells of the voluntary exile of Marcus, there is another parallel to the Tales. As Lanciotto forsakes Venice to embrace Islam, so Coriolanus leaves Rome to go over to the Volscians. The sameness is due entirely to coincidence because Polezhayev, in recording Coriolanus' actions, is merely following in the steps of the Roman historians. But there are further analogies, which cannot be explained in this way. The concluding cantos of the poem were undoubtedly inspired by *The Siege of Corinth*. The description of the siege of Rome by the Volscians strongly resembles, down to the words used in it, Byron's account of the storming of Corinth by Ali Kumurgi. We shall notice the verbal parallels elsewhere¹⁶². Coriolanus himself presents an undoubted likeness to the Byronic heroes. He has all the authority with the Volscian soldiery which Conrad enjoys among "the fiercest of his crew"¹⁶³. His mood, a deep, passionate brooding, on the eve of the attack on Rome, and his self-justification are decidedly Alp's¹⁶⁴.

¹⁶² (a) "The sun was shining brightly out of a cloudless sky when Coriolanus, the leader of the enemy forces, appeared like the spirit of war before the eyes of the citizens." Cp. S. C. 678. "And shines the sun as if that morn were a jocund one... Alp (stood) at their (the Janissaries') head, his right arm bare."

(b) "Who has seen torrents rushing from cliff and crag to scour broad valleys for themselves in the forests and steppes and to destroy everything in their course with their impetuous flood? For so the bold sons of war and liberty went forth to the attack." Cp. S. C. 739. "As the spring tides with heavy plash from the cliffs, invading, dash huge fragments... thus, at length, Corinth's sons were downward borne."

(c) "Who is the man of foreign aspect who seems to be everywhere at once in the forefront of battle?" Cp. S. C. 830. "Alp is but known by his white arm bare; look through the thick of the fight, 'tis there."

¹⁶³ "One motion of his hand, one glance of his eye make the warriors tremble." Cp. C. 175. Conrad's "name appals the fiercest of his crew, and tints each swarthy cheek with sallower hue."

¹⁶⁴ (a) "In the night when the silent camp slept, his mind was often filled with bitter thoughts, and he would gaze with involuntary grief at the dark walls of the city." Cp. S. C. 346. "He could not rest, he could not stay within his tent to wait for day, but walked him forth... He wandered on... till within range... of the leaguered wall."

(b) "The unjust decree of his fellow citizens, the call of honour and a sense of shame filled his self-loving heart; and he grew contemptuous of laws, rights, even of destiny itself, and vowed that he would always be the enemy and destroyer of Rome." Cp. S. C. 132. "Unnamed accusers... had placed a

In one point only does a difference appear between them. Coriolanus yields to the prayers of a woman, while Alp courts perdition, in spite of the entreaties of a lovely wraith. For the likeness in the situations, in which the two heroes are placed, history, and not Byron's influence, must be held accountable. But the monumental epilogue is in entire keeping with Byronic usage.

Polezhayev was the latest of the talented Byronists of the Age of Pushkin. We have noticed that he stood aloof from, as much as he resembled, his contemporaries. Though undoubtedly influenced by Byron, as they were, he did not wholly yield to his influence. *Coriolanus*, Polezhayev's one narrative poem, belongs little more than in part to the tradition of the Tales. There is in it perhaps as much historic fact as invention, and its structure only imperfectly reproduces the composition of the lyric romance.

Critics have described Polezhayev as the herald or precursor of Lermontov. This must be taken to mean that the new "singing" romanticism of the younger poet had its source in Polezhayev's "broken melodies". If the touchstone of Byron's influence were applied to them, we should discover that they are profoundly different. Polezhayev's Byronism was episodic; Lermontov is the Russian Byron.

CHAPTER VI

"Juanesques".

1.

There were two sides to Byron's poetry: a romantic side, which was, and is still, regarded on the continent as specifically his, and a comic side, which had its origin in a richly developed sense of humour, leavened by romantic disillusionment. This second side has until recently suffered neglect. Indeed, if it had been realised

charge against him, uneffaced: he fled... to waste his future years in strife, that taught his land how great her loss in him who... battled to avenge or die."

(c) "I am a citizen, exiled and dishonoured. Fire and sword are the only rights I have. I will carry them with bloody hand into the presence of tyrants and judges; and neither groans nor lamentations, nor even the inviolability of altars shall avail them, once they are brought low." Cp. S. C. 667. "Whate'er my fate, I am no changeling... What Venice made me I must be, her foe in all."

soon enough that the "Juanesque" (to call it so) was as characteristic of the mature Byron as the "Laraesque" was of the youthful, the books written about his *Weltschmerz* would probably have been fewer and shorter. At the outset, indeed, he regarded "poetry" as a solemn, but for him an inevitable, pose. His letters prove that he was conscious of attitudinising when he addressed himself to write it. Later in life, after having read Pulci, Berni and Casti, he found a more adequate medium of expression for his ideas and emotions. The constricting octave, which he had learnt from them, felt paradoxically somehow freer than the earlier fluid measures. In 1817 he abandoned the old lyric convention, at least in so far as his narrative poetry was concerned¹⁶⁵ with, we may fancy, some elation. *Mazeppa*¹⁶⁶, the last of the Tales, was begun in that year and seems to have undergone a transformation. So much so, that it bears the stamp of novelty. But the real achievement of 1817 was *Beppo*, an apparently naughty piece of carnival fooling. *Beppo* was a premonition and a promise of finer things: it was the first step towards *Don Juan* and *The Vision of Judgment*. The new poetry (it was so fresh in England, in spite of Frere's creditable performances with the octave, that it deserves to be called new) was very different from the older romantic kind. Not only is its measure different, but its spirit, "atmosphere" and style, its themes and construction are quite alien to the Oriental Tales. Byron had made an almost Columbian discovery when he wrote *Beppo* in the Italian manner and metre. What he did had been done well before in Italy, but not so well in England.

The differences between the comic and the lyric manner are fundamental. The new species of poem, whether long or short, is conceived not as a romantic, but as an ironic or satirical whole. The manner is sustainedly playful. Lapses into a more serious mood are relatively few, and in a short work like *Beppo* they do not occur at all. The subject-matter is as varied as the mosaic of invention, ranging from the salacious anecdote to themes of epic dimensions. *Don Juan*, with its mass and material riches, has been called an epic. But the word "epic", if it is used in this connection, must be understood not as capable of being qualified by adjectives

¹⁶⁵ *The Island* (1823) has already been alluded to as an exception.

¹⁶⁶ This poem was finished late in 1818.

like "heroic" or "classical", but as a vast burlesque of the old narrative manner and fables. Strictly speaking, it is not an epic at all, and cannot, therefore, be an epic burlesque. It is really a picaresque novel, like *Gil Blas* or *Tom Jones*, written in verse. The picaresque novel was epic in its proportions, but it was not heroic in theme and portraiture, or solemn and pompous in exposition. This is equally true of *Don Juan*. The subject of the poem, like that of the picaresque novel, is simply the adventures of a commonplace hero in a succession of more or less picturesque places. The hero is anything but a titan or superman: he is more like Tom Jones or Candide than Conrad or Manfred. He has nothing on his conscience, he has no personality, and he is a healthy young animal, to whom life is as marvellous and sweet as an April day. His appetites are his only law. The rest is left indifferently to destiny or Providence. The adventures he goes through are "endless": he is danced and tossed about like a corked bottle at sea or a marionette by the wirepuller, and his excitement has a way of leaving him as unaffected either bodily or mentally as the violent and physically exhausting motions leave the bottle or the puppets unaffected. The numerous heroines are less puppets than the hero: Julia and Haidée, Gulbeyaz, Lady Adeline, even the Empress of Russia, are human beings, each with a personality of her own. The remaining characters, and they are as numerous as in real life, are also distinguished from one another. No one could confound Don Alphonso with Lambro or Suwarrow, but one might easily mistake Hassan for Giaffir or Seyd. In the shorter poem the characters are strictly limited in numbers, and the triangular grouping of the Tales is repeated. But as characters, Beppo, Laura and the Count are very different from those of the romances: they have little life, and are interesting, like puppets, not in themselves, but by their actions.

The setting of *Don Juan* is the continent of Europe. Its story begins in Spain, continues in Greece, Turkey and Russia, and ends, temporarily, in England. A vast mobile theatre is set, like a film studio, for a multitude of actions and situations. War and tempest and other momentous things must have an imposing stage suited to their "heroic" magnitude. Intrigues can be more easily and appropriately housed in a glittering court or at a nobleman's country residence. In *Beppo* the incidents take place against a background of Venetian Shrove Tuesday gaiety.

Unlike the Oriental Tale, the verse-anecdote and verse-novel begin at the beginning. Sometimes the writer, as in *Don Juan*, explores his hero's genealogy. This is characteristic of the picaresque novel. It is also a peculiarity of that unclassifiable book — Laurence Sterne's *Tristram Shandy*. Usually, the separate cantos of the verse-novel begin with overtures of an extremely colloquial, inelaborate kind. And their subject-matter is diverse. Thus the third canto of *Don Juan* opens with a digression on love, the seventh on the vanity of earthly things, the thirteenth on feminine beauty, the sixteenth on ghosts, and the seventeenth and last on orphans. The preliminary digression is more or less connected with the subject-matter. The story advances slowly, its course being often interrupted by digressions, which have little connection with the narrative and are in the nature of reminiscences inspired by the force of association. A deliberate choice of dramatic moments is not noticeable, as it is in the Tales. Heroic episodes, like the storming of Izmail or the sinking of a ship, have their place, but ordinary, "prosaic" occurrences are also reported. The close of each canto, as a rule, assumes the form of a digressive epilogue: those to the first two cantos are, for example, literary and anatomical respectively. The cantos vary in length. Ordinarily they cover a hundred octaves or thereabouts, like *Beppo*; but the first two are twice as long. One other point should be mentioned, namely that in *Don Juan* there are interpolated songs, as in *Childe Harold* and the Tales: *The Isles of Greece* will be found in the third canto, and the ballad of *The Black Friar* in the sixteenth. Unlike the matter, among which they are embedded, these are serious in intention. By their contrast to the rest of the poem (and this applies equally to the rare passages of lyric eloquence, like the Ave Maria and the Hesperian apostrophe in the third canto) they accentuate its comic character, its frolic humour, its banter and parody.

In style, both *Don Juan* and *Beppo* have more affinities with the epic than with the romance. The lyrical manner, which is so characteristic of the latter, never obtrudes itself in them. It is there, but it does not pall by the iteration of its favourite *procédés*. Digressions are exceedingly common: they must, on a rough calculation, occupy a quarter, if not a third, of the poem. They are as typical of the Juanesque, as lyric effusions are of the "oriental", poetry. Their origin must be sought in the writer's habit of taking

the reader into his confidence and treating his hero as a puppet or plaything. It is a disconcerting habit, which leads to things being said that the reader might take, and indeed *did* take, in a more squeamish age than this, to be unpardonably rude. The familiarities express themselves in a multitude of ways. The writer indulges in puns and parenthetical commentary; he apostrophises the reader and discusses personalities without scruple; he knows the comic potentialities of the condensed sentence; he is richly and variedly allusive; he even repeats certain of the favourite devices of the Tales — question, exclamation (largely humorous), verbal sequence and what might be called the “logical chain”¹⁶⁷. The style of *Don Juan* and *Beppo* is, in three words, digressive, facetious and familiar. There are moments, however, when the writer becomes serious, even pathetic (cp. D. J. I, 124), but he generally parodies himself afterwards and restores equilibrium by blotting out all recollection of gravity.

The metre of the poems coincides with their matter and manner. It is a very elastic, but a very difficult, medium. At one moment it has the long, billowy march of the sea, at another it becomes alert and thrilling with tumult and the noise of battle, then, by and by, it drops into the softer language of love, or chatters away brightly and *staccato* like some tropical bird. The rhymes are often extraordinary *tours de force*. They leave one with the impression of immense difficulties overcome. They are, one might say, a blithe expression of the spirit and manner of the octave poetry.

2.

Pushkin, the first Russian to be influenced by *Don Juan*, was familiar almost from the outset with both the romantic and the satiric aspect of Byron's poetry. Some years before he had finished the last of his Southern Poems, he began his “novel in verse”, *Evgeny Onegin*. In a letter, which he sent to Vyazemsky from Odessa in 1823¹⁶⁸, Pushkin says: “I am now writing, not a novel, but a novel in verse — a deuce of a difference! It is of the Don

¹⁶⁷ The following is an example of this. “For glances beget ogles, ogles sighs, sighs wishes, wishes words, and words a letter.” (B. 16.)

¹⁶⁸ November 4, 1823.

Juan kind." By December two cantos of it were ready¹⁶⁹. "It's my best work", he informed his brother at the beginning of the next year¹⁷⁰. "Don't believe Rayevsky, who abuses it. He expected something romantic, but found satire and cynicism instead." Ryleyev and Bestuzhev were of the same mind as Rayevsky. To Bestuzhev Pushkin wrote in self-justification at some length from Mikhaylovskoye on March 24, 1825. "You are wrong... *Onegin* is my best work! You compare the first canto with *Don Juan*. No one admires *Don Juan* more than I¹⁷¹ (the first five cantos, — the others I haven't read), but it has nothing in common with *Onegin*. You talk of Byron's satire and compare it with mine and want me to write satire like it. No, my dear fellow, you are asking too much. Where is *my* satire, by the bye? There isn't even a hint of it in *Onegin*... The very word satire should not occur at all in the preface. Wait until you see the other cantos. If *Onegin* is to be compared to *Don Juan* it must be after this fashion: Who is more charming and *gracieuse*, Tatyana or Julia? The first canto is merely a rapid introduction, and I am satisfied with it — a rare thing with me!"

We have discovered from these extracts that Pushkin at first described his *Onegin* as a Juanesque poem and then denied that it had any resemblance to *Don Juan*. At first sight it seems as if he had contradicted himself, but, in point of fact and paradoxically, he was right each time. If we examine the history of *Onegin* we shall find that it was begun in Bessarabia in May, 1823, and completed at Boldino in September, 1830. It took over seven years to write and must have grown as the poet grew. There were bound to be differences between the earlier and the later cantos. The Pushkin of 1823 was not fully mature; the Pushkin of 1830 was anything if he was not that. The earlier cantos, especially the first two, *do* betray the influence of *Don Juan* more than the later, and they also contain a clear indication that Pushkin had *Childe Harold* in mind when he wrote them. As a matter of fact, the influence of

¹⁶⁹ See the letter to A. Turgenev, Odessa, December 1, 1823.

¹⁷⁰ Odessa, January, 1824.

¹⁷¹ Cp. the following extract from the letter which Pushkin sent to Vyazemsky from Mikhaylovskoye in September, 1825. "What a marvellous thing *Don Juan* is! I know only the first five cantos. Having read through the first two, I said to Rayevsky that it is Byron's masterpiece, and I was pleased to learn afterwards that Scott is of my opinion."

Childe Harold outlasted the influence of *Don Juan*: the eighth canto, which deals with Onegin's travels, was omitted, not only because it was considered to be irrelevant to the story, but because Pushkin thought that, as it was "a playful parody", it might be construed as irreverence to "the great and sacred memory" of Byron.

Written with easy grace and an elegant simplicity, *Onegin* is a "verse-novel" divided into eight cantos, of which the present eighth was originally the ninth. It is in octosyllables, but, unlike the verse of the Southern Poems, the lines are collected into stanzas of fourteen lines, held together by a regular pattern of rhyme. Many stanzas in the body of the poem were either omitted or never written, and are represented merely by an appropriate number and rows of dots. The stanzas in themselves are evidence of the influence of the stanzaic structure of *Childe Harold* and *Don Juan*¹⁷². Other external or formal evidences of such influence may be found in the interpolated lyric, a folk-ballad called *The Maidens' Song*, in canto three; the letters of Tatyana and Evgeny in cantos three and eight respectively¹⁷³, lyrical effusions scattered through the poem; the parodial function of the closing couplet of each stanza; the foreign terms and expressions; the copious notes, and the purposely unfinished story¹⁷⁴. In one formal respect, however, *Onegin* differs *ab exordio* from *Don Juan*, and that is in the marvellous accuracy of its rhyming. Both *Don Juan* and *Childe Harold* often sin in this particular.

Considered as a whole, *Onegin* is a dual story of unreturned or ungranted love. The story takes the form of a turning of the tables. First the heroine loves the hero hopelessly; then the hero loves the heroine with equal fortune. Such a state of things occurs

¹⁷² The metrical influence of eighteenth-century Russian burlesque poetry (e. g. the *Aeneids* of Osipov and Kotlyarevsky) must not, however, be overlooked in this connection.

¹⁷³ Cp. Julia's letter to Juan D. J. I, 192—197.

¹⁷⁴ Cp. *Beppo* and *Don Juan*. Viktor Shiklovsky (see his article "Pushkin and Sterne") reads the influence of Sterne into some of these formal peculiarities. His argument is ingenious, but unconvincing. Pushkin said definitely that he was writing his poem in the style, not of *Tristram Shandy*, but of *Don Juan*. The allusion to "poor Yorick", which may or may not have started this argument, is, in any case, an unreliable clue.

in *Orlando furioso*, in *A Midsummer Night's Dream* and in Pushkin's own *Ruslan and Lyudmila* (Fin and Naina). The fable of *Onegin*, like that of *Don Juan*, is of minor importance compared with the manner of its treatment. It is used as a lay figure on which to hang one's motley, or a shop-window in which to display one's wares. The motley or the wares are the new Juanesque manner. But although it is subordinated to the manner, the fable is interesting in itself and also as a divergence from *Don Juan*. It is simple. Evgeny Onegin is a young Russian of good family. He was born in St. Petersburg, where he passed his early life from a boyhood moulded by the influence of an obscure *monsieur l'abbé* to a young manhood of pleasure-seeking and eventual satiety. At the moment when his disillusionment with life is at its height he is called to the death-bed of a rich uncle in the country. The uncle is dead when he arrives, but has made him heir to his estates and petty debts. Onegin settles down to a life of idleness. Shortly after his arrival he meets a former acquaintance called Vladimir Lensky, a romantic young philosopher, who has just returned home from a German university. Lensky introduces him to the girls of the neighbouring Larin family. The younger daughter, Olga, is his *fiancée*. Tatyana, the elder, a dreamy, affectionate, novel-reading young lady, is disengaged at the time. She falls in love with Onegin and writes him a letter. It is a *confessio amantis*. Onegin is touched, but as he feels himself unable to return her love, he reads her a lecture on good behaviour. Tatyana begins to pine. Some time after, there is a ball at the Larins'. It is Tatyana's saint's day. Lensky persuades Onegin, who has shunned his neighbours since the "lecture", to go. But the sight of Tatyana, lovesick and tearful, works on his nerves and drives him into offending Lensky by flirting with Olga. Lensky is furious, and sends him his second. Onegin accepts the challenge; a duel is fought, and Lensky is killed. Onegin leaves the village to obliterate the immediate past with impressions of travel. In the meantime, Olga comforts herself by getting married to an uhlán officer, and Tatyana is taken to Moscow, where she is quickly disposed of to an elderly general with a title. She becomes a fine lady. Onegin returns from his travels. He meets Tatyana and falls hopelessly in love with her. He visits her as her husband's guest, writes letters, but all in vain. At last he becomes desperate and pays her an unexpected call. He finds her in tears, reading one

of his letters. To his protestations and prayers she answers with a return "lecture": although she loves him still, she intends to remain faithful to her husband. Onegin is thunderstruck. Then the general comes in with a jingle of spurs.

The many characters in *Onegin* are as varied as in real life. The mother of the two girls, the gambler and drunkard Zaretsky, who acts as Lensky's second, the old general who marries Tatyana, Tatyana's nurse, and the numerous guests at the Larin dance are all different, individual, instinct with life and possessing personalities of their own. This variety of character is the "Shakespearean variety" of *Don Juan*, which had so astonished and delighted Pushkin. The four leading figures are as individual as the rest. Onegin is a "Moscovite in Harold's mantle", who has been spoiled by a pernicious training and whom excesses have made stale. He has nothing in common with the virile heroes of the Tales or even with the single-minded, innocuous Don Juan. His pattern in all his vagaries was Childe Harold, whom he resembles at many points. They were both brought up badly, led undisciplined lives in their youth, became sick and jaded with pleasure, travelled extensively in quest of distraction, and were never able to settle down. These are all external resemblances, which many others — Arseny, Eletskey, Borsky — share with them. Nearer resemblances flow from certain common passages in their lives. Onegin is as bored, *blasé* and misanthropical as his model. He assumes Childe Harold's mien and gestures to repel others, he reads Byron assiduously, and has a portrait of him in his bedroom. He becomes himself only when he is on his knees before Tatyana. The other characters are less caricatures than he. Lensky and Tatyana are romantic young people in their several ways. German poetry and philosophy have made the former a kind of minor Schiller. French sentimental fiction and Russian dream-books have turned Tatyana's head. Olga is an animated doll, chubby and foolish like the cherubs of Italian religious painting. The setting throughout is Russian. At first it is the new capital, then a Russian village and last of all Moscow. The scene shifts often, as it does in *Don Juan*.

In construction, as well as in style, *Onegin* offers interesting parallels to *Don Juan*. Each canto has a Juanesque overture, either descriptive or personal, except the first, third and sixth, which begin *in mediis rebus*. The first parallel with Byron is a parallel with

the Tales, not with *Don Juan*. *Don Juan* begins at the beginning, but *Onegin*, like the Tales and like *Tristram Shandy*, starts with a middle passage. The true beginning follows as a sort of *Vorgesichte*, which, unlike those of the Southern Poems, is very long. The first canto contains several expressions, the counterparts of which must be sought in Byron's poetry¹⁷⁵. Especially interesting is the account which Pushkin gives of his Evgeny's education. Like Byron's description of Juan's upbringing, it contains much autobiography. The resemblances are general. The story of Onegin's youth is a sort of summary-replica of the opening stanzas of *Childe Harold I*. Onegin's undutiful thoughts in regard to his uncle recall a stanza in *Don Juan*, in which Byron speaks of "the passing sweetness of the death of some gentleman of seventy years complete" (I, 125). There are many references to Byron¹⁷⁶. The stanzas on the literary celebrities of the near past (I, 8) had numerous pattern octaves in the first canto of *Don Juan*. *Beppo* is suggested in the poet's half-jocular, half-apologetic lines on the poverty of his vocabulary and in the "fine compliment to Russian ladies"¹⁷⁷. The apostrophe of the Adriatic is probably a recollection of the Venetian

¹⁷⁵ (a) "Alas! I wasted much of my life on various pleasures." Cp. D. J. I, 123. "I squandered my whole summer while 'twas May."

(b) "In my pleasure-loving days I was crazy on balls." Cp. B. 83. "I've seen some balls and revels in my time."

(c) "But what of my Onegin?" Cp. C. H. II, 15. "But where is Harold?"

(d) "Onegin's feelings soon grew cold... friends and friendship became nauseous... and spleen took possession of him." Cp. C. H. I, 7. "And now Childe Harold was sore sick at heart and from his fellow bacchanals would flee."

(e) "Whoever has lived and thought cannot but despise humanity. Whoever has felt deeply is agitated by the vision of days that will never return. There is no disenchantment for such a man, but the serpent of memory gnaws him." Cp. L. 313. "There was in him a vital scorn of all..." L. 23. "That corroding secrecy which gnaws the heart."

(f) "The light feet of pretty ladies flit about the room pursued by passionate glances." Cp. L. 399. "His eyes followed fast each fluttering fair whose steps of lightness woke no echo there."

¹⁷⁶ E. O. I, 38, 49, 56; III, 12; IV, 37, 44; V, 22; VII, 19, 22, 24; VIII, 8; IX, 1.

¹⁷⁷ "Why are they so irreproachable, so stately, so wise, so devout, so decorous, so precise, so unapproachable to men that the mere sight of them rouses one's spleen." Cp. B. 49. "Our chilly women."

stanzas in *Childe Harold IV*. At the end of the canto Pushkin is plainly thinking of the closing lines of *Don Juan* (I and III)¹⁷⁸.

The succeeding two cantos of *Onegin* are less sparkling than the first, and they present fewer similarities to *Don Juan*. In the second canto there is not even an allusion to Byron, while the third contains only one. There is a general resemblance between the description of Onegin's country house (II, 2) and Byron's picture of Newstead Abbey in *Childe Harold* and the Newstead elegies. The portrait of Mme. Larina (II, 30—33) is not dissimilar to that of Doña Inez. Both characters are true, in their different ways, to the soil. But Pushkin describes his old folks affectionately, while Byron is undisguisedly sarcastic, except when he is speaking of Don José. The description of Olga (II, 23) as the typical heroine of "any novel you may care to pick up" recalls what Byron wrote of the "fair *She*" in *Beppo*¹⁷⁹. In the third canto the initial stanzas of rapid dialogue have all the naturalness of real conversation as reported in numerous stanzas of *Don Juan*. Byron clearly influenced Pushkin here. The heroine's letter to the hero is an expedient learnt from *Don Juan*. The song of the village girls is another Byronic device¹⁸⁰. The butterfly simile in a later stanza (III, 40) presumably derives from the elaborate imagery of the passage on the "insect queen" in *The Giaour* (388). More interesting are the lines: "Perhaps, by the will of Heaven, I shall cease to be a poet and, disregarding the menaces of Phoebus, drop down to humble prose." Byron had written in *Beppo*: "I've half a mind to tumble down to prose."

In the next three cantos there are even fewer reminiscences of Byron. The passage on wines (II, 45—46) recalls Byron on the flesh of animals in *Don Juan* (II, 154f.) and the stanzas in a later

¹⁷⁸ "I have already thought out the plan of this work and decided by what name I shall call the hero. Meanwhile I have finished the first canto of my novel, I have looked through it critically and found very many contradictions, but I have no mind to correct them... Go, then, my new-born creation, to the Neva's banks." Cp. D. J. II, 216. "In the meantime... I have finished now two hundred and odd stanzas as before." Also D. J. I, 220. "Go, little book, from this my solitude."

¹⁷⁹ Cp. B. 84. "Yet if you like to find out this fair *She*, at the next London or Parisian ball you still may mark her cheek outblossoming all."

¹⁸⁰ Cp. the Greek poet's song in D. J. III.

canto on a banquet menu. In canto five Pushkin, like Byron, alludes to the works of his fellow poets. The description of the guests and the table at the Larins' saint's day dance (V, 36) is remarkably like Byron's account of the guests and bill of fare at Norman Abbey. Pushkin, however, expressly says, in a letter which I have already quoted, that in 1825 he was familiar only with the first five cantos of *Don Juan*. The Norman Abbey passage is in the fifteenth canto (63—74), and the fifth canto of *Onegin* was written in 1826. We must regard the resemblance as a pure, if astonishing, coincidence. The sixth canto of *Onegin* has two interesting parallels with Byron's poetry. The description of Lensky's grave is evidently a reminiscence of the obituary finales to the Tales. More notable, however, are the autobiographica in the closing stanzas. Pushkin talks brightly of his advancing years (he was twenty-seven at the time). Byron has a similar passage written when he was a slightly older man (cp. D. J., I, 213). Pushkin is gratefully sentimental; Byron ruefully jocular.

The seventh canto of *Onegin* offers no analogies to Byron as it now stands. But originally it contained pages from Onegin's autograph album (after stanza 22), some of which disclose resemblances in expression to *Childe Harold*¹⁸¹.

The last canto, like the supplementary ninth, (originally the eighth), is full of recollections of Byron. After the first canto it is perhaps the most Byronic in the poem. It is one of Pushkin's last tributes to the author of *Don Juan*. The opening couplet of *Fare Thee Well* serves it as a motto. It begins with several stanzas of childhood memories¹⁸². Onegin's return resembles Lara's. The stormy past of the two men, their travels, strange aspect and sombre frame of mind, even their pose at the ball (in Lara's case "the festival") are the same¹⁸³. Attention is directed to Onegin, as it often

¹⁸¹ (a) "Will the relentless world abate the edge of its prejudices and overlook the errors of my past." Cp. C. H. I.

(b) "Sometimes a memory crosses my mind like a shadow... and gnaws my heart." Cp. L. 23, cited above. Also C. H. I, G. and Manfred *passim*.

¹⁸² Cp. the autobiographica in D. J. XI, 55f. and D. J. I, cited above.

¹⁸³ "Who stands there, silent and sullen, in the company of the elect? He seems a stranger to everybody. Faces flash past him like a procession of phantoms. What? Is it spleen or injured pride that reflects itself in his face?"

is to the Byron heroes, by a question. The authors that Onegin reads after he falls in love are enumerated by Pushkin in four rhyming verses with an obvious enjoyment of the pleasantness of the exercise. Byron did the same kind of thing in exactly the same way¹⁸⁴. The eminent people the hero meets at the house of Tatyana's husband are described more briefly than Byron describes the guests at Norman Abbey (D. J. XIII, 79), but in a similar vein. As the eighth canto of his poem was written in 1829—30, it is probable that Pushkin had read beyond the fifth canto of *Don Juan* by that time. The familiar apostrophe of the reader at the end of the canto is Byronic¹⁸⁵.

Of the thirty stanzas of the omitted eighth canto (the supplementary ninth) I need say only that they appear to be modelled on *Childe Harold*. Pushkin's remarks on it have already been given: he omitted the canto mainly because he was afraid it might be taken for an ungenerous parody of that poem. It is a travel-sketch. Onegin moves from place to place, a prey to grief and *ennui*. He listens to the boatmen on the Volga as Harold had listened to the singing of the Albanians. And like Harold, or Lara, he returns home, sick at

Why is he here? Who is he?" Cp. L. 314. "He stood a stranger in this breathing world... a thing of dark imaginings..." L. 417. "'Tis he! — 'Tis who?... What doth he here?"

¹⁸⁴ E. O. VIII, 35. "He read through Gibbon and Rousseau, Manzoni, Herder and Chamfort, Mme. de Staël, Biche, Tissot. He read the sceptica of Beyle; he read the works of Fontenelle." Also E. O. VIII (an omitted quatrain): "Hume, Robertson, Rousseau, Mably, Baron d'Holbach, Voltaire, Helvetius, Locke, Fontenelle, Diderot, Parny, Horatius, Cicero, Lucretius." Cp. D. J. I, 2. "Vernon, the butcher Cumberland, Wolfe, Hawke, Prince Ferdinand, Granby, Burgoyne, Keppel, Howe..." Also D. J. I, 3. "Barnave, Brissot, Condorcet, Mirabeau, Pétion, Cloutz, Danton, Marat, Lafayette..., Joubert, Hoche, Marceau, Lannes, Desaix, Moreau."

¹⁸⁵ (a) "And here, dear reader, we will leave my hero... for a long time, for ever... Hurrah! it's high time, isn't it?" Cp. B. 99. "'Tis to be wished it had been sooner done."

(b) "Farewell!... Whatever, dear reader, you may have sought in my careless staves... God grant you found it, even if it were only a single grain... And now we part. Farewell!" Cp. C. H. IV, 186. "Farewell!... Ye who have traced the pilgrim to the scene which is his last — if in your memory dwell a thought which once was his — not in vain he wore his sandal-shoon and scallop shell." Also D. J. I, 221. "But for the present, gentle reader... I must, with permission, shake you by the hand."

heart. The *procédés* in this canto, as in the first and eighth, are facetiously familiar. "Now where's that disconnected tale of mine?" and "Ah, yes, I was saying it was in Odessa, *etc.*" are in the approved Juanesque style.

3.

After *Onegin* Pushkin wrote a comic poem which stands in the same relation to his masterpiece as *Beppo* stands to *Don Juan*¹⁸⁶. It is called *The Cottage in Kolomna* (1830). Gogol', writing to A. Danilevsky in the following year, says: "Pushkin has a story in octaves, in which Kolomna and the scenery round St. Petersburg are vividly pictured." Unlike *Count Nulin*, this story was much praised by the poet's critics and friends. Its origins, ingeniously discussed by V. Khodasevich (see *The Shaking Tripod*) show that, as a narrative, it owes nothing at all to Byron. On the other hand, it is easily the most Juanesque poem, in manner, that Pushkin wrote. Gogol' has pointed out that it is in octaves¹⁸⁷. It is not only written in octaves, but possesses all the peculiarities associated with the octave style. It is an exercise in what to Pushkin was a new literary manner. The fable serves the double purpose of a reason for writing the poem and a means of giving it the appearance of unity. In this it differs radically from *Count Nulin*, which is a pure anecdote told for its own sake. The story is amusing.

A widow lives in the Kolomna quarter of St. Petersburg with a pretty daughter called Parasha. They have an old cook, who

¹⁸⁶ *Count Nulin* (1825), which Pushkin described as "a story in the Beppo vein", is not really a Byronic poem at all, but belongs to the older French tradition of Voltaire, Parly and others.

¹⁸⁷ Pushkin's first attempt to write a poem in octaves was *Autumn* (1830), a fragment consisting of twelve stanzas and part of a thirteenth. It is reflective in theme. The influence of Byron shows itself in the eleventh octave, which reads like an expansion of a well-known passage in *Beppo*: "Armed knights, stern sultans, monks, dwarfs, negro kings, Greek girls with rosaries, corsairs, Chinese monarchs, Spaniards in cloaks, Jews, champions, captive princesses, countesses and giants." Cp. B. 3. "Masks of all times and nations, Turks and Jews, and harlequins and clowns with feats gymnastical, Greeks, Romans, Yankee-doodles and Hindoos."

In the twelfth stanza there is an example of the "logical chain" which Pushkin borrowed from Byron. "And your fingers itch for a quill, the quill for paper." Cp. B. 16. "For glances beget oggles, oggles sighs, *etc.*"

dies. Parasha quickly engages another. The new cook, whose name is Mavra, is a muddler. Parasha's mother becomes suspicious. In the middle of a Sunday service at church she hurries home to see if everything is as it should be. She is shocked to find Mavra shaving in her daughter's room, and faints. Mavra takes to his heels as soon as he is found out. Parasha comes home from mass and feigns ignorance of Mavra's masculinity. There is a moral to the story. "It is not safe to engage a cook without paying her a wage, and if one is born a man, it is ridiculous to put on petticoats because sooner or later one has to shave, and shaving is contrary to a woman's nature."

The analogies with *Beppo* are entirely analogies of style and construction. Like Byron, Pushkin uses a trivial story as a means of exhibiting his newly acquired literary manner. The most important thing about this manner is a studied familiarity, expressing itself in a multitude of intimate digressions on a variety of topics. The writer is always in high spirits; he is delightfully personal; he takes the reader into his confidence. Byron sprinkles his digressions all over his poem; Pushkin is more methodical and collects them all together into an introduction of twenty stanzas¹⁸⁸. He also differs from his model in limiting his choice of subjects to literature. His digressive introduction is as irrelevant to his story as the epilogues are in the Southern Poems. Byron's digressions, too, have at best a remote connection with the fable.

The other *procédés* that Pushkin borrowed from Byron are not many. The parenthetic comment, which is invariably of a witty turn, and the anticlimatic comparison are the chief of them. There are, besides, a few resemblances in topic and expression. Particularly interesting is the literary and prosodic tattle, which reminds one of Byron's much longer excursions into literary polemics (D. J. II and B. 51). But the resemblances here are vaguely general, or at best too subtle to define by simple comparison. It is almost impossible to point to analogous phrases, not to say twin stanzas. At the end of the introduction Pushkin uses a number of devices and locutions that seem to have come directly from *Don Juan*¹⁸⁹.

¹⁸⁸ We may observe, as a matter of curiosity, that both Pushkin in *The Cottage* and Byron in *Beppo* begin their stories at the twenty-first stanza.

¹⁸⁹ "However, it is time to begin! I had a tale to tell and have been jesting

Even in the narrative portion of the poem, though not in the fable, there are a few parallels to that work and to *Beppo*. Pushkin compares his old widow woman to Rembrandt's crones and gossips; Byron compared Italian women to Titian's Venuses and Giorgione's portrait of his wife (B. 11). Parasha herself is like those Venuses, with their "black eyes and arched brows".

Pushkin wrote no other poems in the Juanesque manner after *The Cottage*. But the tradition had been established, and was continued by Lermontov in *Sashka* and by the poets of the eighteenth-forties in their octave poetry.

CHAPTER VII

The Russian Byron.

1.

Lermontov was very different from his fellow Byronists. *They* were Byronists only, poets in whose artistic development Byronism was a phase; and they formed a company or fellowship with common standards of poetic technique. *He* was a "second Byron" in a deeper and truer sense than any of those on whom this title has been bestowed, and he stood alone. His life might be a summary of Byron's larger life; his biography reads like an abstract of the *Letters and Journals*. This is not merely fanciful. When Lermontov in his youth read Moore's book on Byron, he was astonished at the strikingly similar, almost identical, passages in their lives. From the outset of his career he took Byron for his pattern and deliberately and consistently copied him. He was able to do this all the more successfully as there was a strong likeness between their respective temperaments and imaginative gifts. Later in his life, when the creative instinct in him had matured and he had begun to feel himself a power, he was more inclined to deny than to welcome comparison with the English poet. "I am not Byron" he wrote in 1831. "I am another of the elect, though still unknown

at large and letting you wait without cause. My tongue is my enemy: everything is within its compass, and it has grown accustomed to chatter about all sorts of things." Cp. B. 50. "But to my tale of Laura — for I find digression is a sin, that by degrees becomes exceeding tedious to my mind and, therefore, may the reader too displease." Also B. 63 and D. J. I and II *passim*.

— a wanderer persecuted by the world, as he was, but at heart a Russian." Byron helped him to find himself.

Unlike Pushkin, Lermontov grew up in romantic surroundings. His earliest shining impressions were of the Caucasian mountains. The Pushkin of the Southern Poems, Zhukovsky and Kozlov were the poets he often read as a child. He had tutors who taught him English and German and introduced him to the romantic literature which had been written in those languages. His English tutor, Vinson, read Byron with him; and recollections of his reading flit through his earliest attempts to write poetry. Naturally the Russian Byronic influences were stronger at first than Byron's, but, as one reads on, it becomes increasingly evident that Byron is the ultimate source of his inspiration. Lermontov's young mind was as permeable and retentive as Byron's. He was an eclectic, who absorbed such elements from the poetry of others as would blend with his own imaginative sympathies. His poetry, at least in its earlier forms, is like a patchwork or mosaic. Pushkin, Zhukovsky, Kozlov, Boratynsky, Bestuzhev and Podolinsky are all represented in it by a phrase or a line, or even a batch of verses. The opening verse of *The Sail*¹⁹⁰, for example, is taken unchanged from Bestuzhev's *Prince Andrey*. Synthesis is the bedrock of Lermontov's poetry.

2.

Byron's influence on Lermontov can plainly be traced in the latter's lyrics and verse-narratives. Some critics have also pointed out that, as the character of Pechorin resembles that of Childe Harold or Lara, Byron's poetry must have influenced *A Hero of Our Time*. But this work is a novel and cannot be considered here.

In Lermontov's lyrics we find several Byronic *motifs* of the eighteen-twenties. Moreover, almost every lyric contains a reverberation or a reminiscence of Byron. Some of these reminiscences are faint, others quite obvious.

¹⁹⁰ The first stanza of this poem reads:

"A white sail flutters faint and lonely,
A flake curled on an azure sea,
In quest of alien shores, or only
Eager to shake its whiteness free."

The *motif* of the Orient, Byron's "land of the East", occurs in the *Turk's Lament*, which was written in 1829. It begins with an imitation of the favourite Mignonesque formula. The usual contrast between the loveliness of nature and the savagery of man, to which the *Bride* overture has accustomed us, is absent for once, and the young poet tries to harmonise the natural background with the evil passions of the inhabitants. This is an instance of the "pathetic fallacy". There are autobiographical elements in the poem. It shows Lermontov as a rebel. But the opening line and the last are clearly Byronic¹⁹¹. More "oriental" are the *Georgian Song* (1829) and *Two Odaliskes* (1830), in which the Leila tragedy is re-enacted. In the first poem, a Georgian girl, pining in an Armenian's harem, falls in love with a *giaour*. Her infidelity is discovered by her husband, who, after murdering her, throws her corpse into a river. The coincidences in story and detail are rather with Pushkin's *Black Shawl* than with *The Giaour*. *Two Odaliskes* is a longer story about a "Spanish" beauty, curiously named Gulnare, and another unnamed slave, who suffer the fate of Leila. It seems to have been suggested to Lermontov by either *The Fountain in Bakhchisaray* or *The Giaour*, or by both. The name Gulnare is significant.

There is a picture of Venice in an early poem of Lermontov's (*Venice*, 1829), which contains a recollection of *Childe Harold IV*. "The cool wave murmurs under the strokes of the oar and echoes the music of a barcarolle", wrote Lermontov. One remembers the lines on the Venetian gondoliers and on Tasso in *Childe Harold* and elsewhere. There are no closer resemblances, however, which could lead one to suppose that there was influence here, and the measure offers no clue.

The Hesperian apostrophe, about which I have spoken, is to be found in a short poem called *The Star* (1830). This is nothing more than a slight expansion of Byron's *Sun of the Sleepless*. The expressions are so much the same that one can hardly regard it as more than a paraphrase. The childish close is inconsistent with the maturity of the rest.

¹⁹¹ (a) "Do you know the wild land, where parched groves and meadows flourish under the sun's hot rays?" (b) "Man groans there in slavery and chains." Cp. G. and B. A. overtures.

Parting was a favourite theme with Lermontov as it was with Byron. In 1830 he had translated the four lines from Burns' *Farewell to Nancy*, which Byron uses as a motto for *The Bride of Abydos*. His *Romance* is written round the same *motif*. That this poem was influenced by Byron is at once evident from an image it contains. A marine cliff is split by a thunderbolt. The crevasse becomes the bed of a torrent. The two sides of the cliff can never meet again, but still show the marks of their former union. This image occurs in the third canto of *Childe Harold*¹⁹². Its ultimate source, however, is Coleridge's *Christabel*. Besides *Romance*, Lermontov wrote a series of other lyrics on the subject of parting. They are invariably autobiographical. Resemblances to Byron's lyrics on the same theme, though discernible, are superficial. Now and then one catches a familiar phrase. But there is no instance of *motif*, measure and expression being found together to make out a valid case for influence.

Of Napoleon, Lermontov was always a fervent admirer. Among his juvenilia we find no less than four poems about the emperor. Two are simply headed *Napoleon*, the third is called *An Epitaph*, and the fourth *St. Helena*. They are all written in a spirit of commiseration. There is no rebuke, no pardonable anger to be found in them. Napoleon is invariably discovered pacing the shore of his "sullen island"; an image which serves as a kind of introduction to the contemplative portion of each poem. Lermontov regards Napoleon as the "victim of perjury and of the caprice of unseeing fate". The contrast between the splendour of his triumphs and the pitifulness of his downfall offers an occasion for moving verse. In later years Lermontov translated *Napoleon's Farewell* from Byron into literal prose and produced a version of Zeidlitz's *Das Gespensterschiff*. His one other Napoleonic poem was *The Last Resting Place* (1841). It is animated by an unrepressed fury at "the vanity and worthlessness" of the French, who, after having

¹⁹² Cp. C. H. III, 94.

"Now where the swift Rhône cleaves her way between
Heights which appear as lovers to have parted
In hate, whose mining depths so intervene,
That they can meet no more, though broken-hearted."

This is a fair example of Byron's slovenly language.

left Napoleon to his fate, welcomed his remains to les Invalides "with shouts of joy". There is something Byronic in the passionate mood of this poem¹⁹³. The admiration which Lermontov entertained for Napoleon may have been inspired, or at least stimulated, by Byron, whose many Napoleonic poems he must have known well. This attitude to the Man of Destiny, however, was not new in Russian literature. Pushkin's change of opinion will be remembered. And there were others, also, who had lavished their sympathy on the fallen emperor. But one can hardly doubt that Byron, in spite of his occasionally expressed contempt for the Napoleon of the last phase, played a large part in fostering a sympathetic attitude to Napoleon in Russia.

Several other Byronic *motifs* occur in Lermontov's juvenilia. The *Childe Harold* theme of disenchantment is extremely common. As early as 1829, when Lermontov was only fifteen, he wrote a short poem addressed *To Friends*, which, considering his youth, is hardly an expression of his own feelings, but rather an imitation of *Childe Harold*¹⁹⁴. There are other such lyrics of disillusionment and despair, but these owe nothing to Byron. On the other hand, there is a poem of 1840, called *To a Babe*, which is both autobiographical and Byronic. The child to which the lyric is addressed was Varvara Lopukhina's, a lady whom Lermontov loved. The verbal parallels with *Well! thou art happy* and the *Epistle to a Friend* are noteworthy and convincing¹⁹⁵. Similar analogies may be observed between

¹⁹³ (a) "And you (the French) grew strong again in the shadow of his sceptre, and the trembling world beheld with awe the wonderful robe of might with which he invested you." Cp. *Napoleon's Farewell*. "Farewell to thee, France! when thy diadem crowned me I made thee the gem and the wonder of earth."

(b) "They loaded the hero with shameful chains and took him away from his weeping armies." Cp. *From the French*. "Must thou go, my glorious Chief, severed from thy faithful few? Who can tell thy warriors' grief maddening o'er that long adieu?"

¹⁹⁴ "Sometimes in the midst of gaiety my soul is filled with sorrow and pain, amid the noise of drunken orgies a brooding thought dwells in my heart." Cp. C. H. I, 8. "Yet oft-times in his maddest mirthful mood strange thoughts would flash along Childe Harold's brain."

¹⁹⁵ (a) "Lovely child . . . if you only knew how much I love you! How dear to me are your pretty smiles! . . . But do you love me? . . . Don't I kiss your little eyes a little too often?" Cp. *Well! thou art happy*. "When late I

Childe Harold and the longer verse-autobiographies Lermontov wrote in the early eighteen-thirties¹⁹⁶. Especially interesting is the one which is dated June 11, 1831. It is written in a stanza compounded of two quatrains. But the pentametric line, the semantic pauses in the middle of the verse and the arrangement of the rhymes, which, by the way, are monosyllabic throughout, are all evidence of Byron's metrical influence. And the matter is Byronic, too. A stanza like the sixteenth, for instance, might have been taken from the fourth canto of *Childe Harold* (178). It gives a fair idea of the measure and temper of the poem¹⁹⁷. The other autobiographical piece, dated July, 15, 1830, is interesting as one of Lermontov's earliest attempts to use *ottava rima*.

The theme of the captivity of Israel, dealt with in no less than three of Byron's *Hebrew Melodies*, occupied Lermontov in a lyric, which he inserted into his Schillerian play *The Spaniards* (1830). The lyric is called simply *A Hebrew Melody*. The theme and a number of expressions, as well as the anapestic metre, with

saw thy favourite child... (and) when the unconscious infant smiled, I kissed it for its mother's sake."

(b) "They say that you are like her, don't they?" Cp. "But then it had its mother's eyes".

¹⁹⁶ (a) "I feel within me the flame of aspiring passions, but I cannot find words to express what I feel, and I am ready in moments like these to give my life for the power of conveying to another even the shadow of what is in me." Cp. C. H. IV, 97. "Could I embody and unburden now that which is most within me — could I wreak my thoughts upon expression, I would speak... but as it is I live and die unheard."

(b) "There are moments when life is hateful to me and death seems terrible. I feel in myself the root of all my ills and cannot accuse heaven of anything." Cp. C. H. IV, 16. "The thorns which I have reaped are of the tree I planted — they have torn me — and I bleed."

¹⁹⁷ "My heart has always loved the wilderness,
The wind among bare hummocks straining loud,
The vulture's feathers set against its stress,
And, on the plains, the shadow-march of cloud.
The wild horse here knows neither curb nor rein,
The bird of prey picks white the mangled slain
Beneath the blue, and the cloud-caravan
Flies free, and is too bright for eye to scan."

its exclusively iambic endings, suggest that it was inspired and slightly affected by Byron's *In the Valley of Waters*¹⁹⁸.

More obvious is the influence of *The Dream* on Arbenin's poem in *The Strange Man*, a "romantic drama" written by Lermontov in 1831. "To a certain extent", says Zarutsky, a character in the play, "it is an imitation of Byron's Dream. Arbenin told me so himself." The poem is in blank verse. It is written as a vision, like Byron's poem, and is presumably autobiographical. There are a number of verbal parallels with *The Dream* and with some of the Oriental Tales, especially *The Giaour*¹⁹⁹, as well as with Pushkin's *Vadim* and Podolinsky's *Borsky*. The influence of *The Dream* is further discernible in a macabre poem appropriately entitled *Death*. "I suddenly awoke", says Lermontov. "But my awakening was also a dream. And thinking I had broken the chain of deceptive visions, I was doubly cheated by my imagination." In these verses there is also a recollection of the first line of *Darkness*: "I had a dream which was not all a dream." The blank verse of the poem corroborates the influence of the Byronic dream *motif*.

Darkness, to which I have just referred, is a poem that appears to have stirred Lermontov's morbid imagination more than any other of Byron's shorter works. I have pointed out that it is recalled in a verse of the poem entitled *Death*. But there is more than a recollection of it in two poems which came in 1830. They are both called *Night*, and their theme is physical dissolution. Both are in

¹⁹⁸ "Weep, Israel, weep! Your Salem is deserted... Your tribes are scattered in the deserts." Cp. "Oh weep for those... whose shrines are desolate... (whose) daughters were scattered all weeping away."

¹⁹⁹ (a) "I saw a youth mounted on a horse." Cp. D. II. "I saw two beings in the hues of youth."

(b) "He stood pale and speechless as marble." Cp. G. 239. "Pale as marble o'er the tomb his brow was bent."

(c) "Suddenly a deep groan broke from his breast as if his heart's best string had snapped." Cp. P. 344. "Yet seemed in that low hollow groan her whole heart gushing in the tone." Also C. H. III, 4. "Perchance my heart and harp have lost a string."

(d) "He leaped into the saddle and galloped headlong away." Cp. D. 3. "And mounting on his steed he went his way."

(e) "My dream changed suddenly." Cp. D. "A change came o'er the spirit of my dream."

From this point to the end, the poem is a paraphrase of *The Dream III*.

blank verse, and, although there are few verbal analogies, the general influence of *Darkness* is evident. The initial line of that poem is again echoed. There is also a reference to the "twilight of the soul", which is so often spoken of in Lermontov's early poetry.

We have seen, in our survey of Lermontov's lyrics, that the Byronic themes which recur in them most often are the personal and the morbid ones. With Boratynsky, Lermontov shared the influence of *The Dream* and *Darkness*. Like Pushkin and some others, he had a period of Napoleon-worship, during which his admiration for, and sympathy with, Napoleon were stimulated by Byron's example. But he was also influenced by autobiographica like the *Epistle to a Friend*, by the *Hebrew Melodies* and by the more intimate passages of *Childe Harold*. The influence of the last and of the *Domestic Pieces* will be found reflected in the poetry of the eighteen-forties.

3.

The lyric romance, which Pushkin had been largely responsible for naturalising in Russia, culminated in the work of Lermontov. No other poet, not even Pushkin himself, was so thoroughly imbued with its *procédés*. Many of his verse-narrative read like adaptations of the Oriental Tales, and there is hardly one of them which does not exhibit some vestige of Byron's influence. There was something in Lermontov's genius which made him peculiarly fitted to undertake the task of writing a Russian series of Oriental Tales. He had perfect sympathy with Byron. His imagination was as rich, as vividly coloured and as ardent. He wrote a language that has all the appearance of artlessness and spontaneity. And he was pre-eminently an egoist, like his prototype, with whom he shared a morbid self-consciousness and an acute sense of guilt, which gave him more than an inkling into the mysterious character of the Byronic hero.

The most important historical fact about Lermontov's romances is that, with the exception of *Hadji the Abrek* (1835) and *The Mtsiri* (1840), they were not published until some years after his death. Few of his contemporaries were aware of their existence. Fewer still had read them. The fastidious poet kept them in manuscript, unwilling to publish what he probably felt to be crude and immature

work. And, indeed, many of the verse-tales are extremely imperfect. His earliest essays, written when he was hardly more than fourteen, are simply childish imitations of the Southern Poems. They include *A Prisoner of the Caucasus*, Pushkin's poem in a revised and weakened form, *The Circassians*, *The Corsair*, *The Criminal* and *The Last Son of Liberty*. They constitute what I would call the Juvenile Group. The maturer narratives fall into three categories: the Vendetta Group, which includes *The Kally*, *The Aoul of Bastundji*, *Hadji the Abrek*, *Izmail Bey* and *The Lithuanian Girl*; the Confession Group, consisting of *The Confession*, *Orsha the Boyar* and *The Mtsiri*; and the Supernatural Romances, *Azrael*, *The Angel of Death* and *The Demon*. *Giulio*, a poem which Lermontov wrote in 1830, is not included in this list because it stands a little apart from the others. It is a poem of remorse, and must be allocated to a separate category.

The subject matter of all these narrative poems is very limited in range. Remorse, vengeance, liberty denied or thwarted, and the sorrows and sufferings of young love are the mainsprings of action, or the themes of the soliloquies of which some of the poems consist. The setting is usually as monotonous as the theme. Most of the stories are laid in the Caucasus. One or two, like *The Lithuanian Girl* and *Orsha*, have a West Russian background and an added flush of *couleur historique*. *The Confession* is a "Spanish" poem. *Giulio* has Italy and Sweden for its scene. The Supernatural Tales, *Azrael* and *The Angel of Death*, are concerned with countries and spirit-beings of the poet's imagination. In all these minutiae Lermontov's romances bear a strong resemblance to the Oriental Tales.

Lermontov's juvenilia exhibit a near acquaintance with both Byron and Pushkin. *The Circassians* (1828) is full of the boy-poet's romantic reading and fancies. It is too crude and vague to be examined closely with advantage, and the reflections in it of others' poetry are so tangled that it is hardly possible to disengage such phrases as Lermontov may have caught from Byron.

A Prisoner of the Caucasus (1828) is a puerile and imperfect *réchauffé* of Pushkin's identically named poem. The difference between the original and its namesake, apart from extended descriptive passages and an addition to the number of Caucasian captives, is at the close of the copy-poem, where the Circassian girl's father kills her Russian lover as he is trying to escape, and the

girl, in sheer despair, throws herself into the river Terek. This change in plot was presumably suggested by Kozlov's version of *The Bride of Abydos*. The last line supports the assumption.

The Corsair (1828), in spite of its Byronic title, is more indebted for its fable to *The Robber Brothers* than to its namesake. The influence of *The Bride of Abydos* touches the chronicle of Selim's adventures²⁰⁰. There are also some verses which must have been inspired by the "pirates' song" in the *Corsair*²⁰¹. *Childe Harold IV* (180) was laid under contribution for the picture of the tempest and the shipwreck²⁰². And there is an evident reminiscence of the opening passage of *The Prisoner of Chillon*, as translated by Zhukovsky, in the first few lines of the poem²⁰³.

The Criminal (1829), which I have included for convenience in the Juvenile Group, displays signs of maturity. It is a story of incestuous passion, founded on the example of *Don Carlos* and *Parisina*. There are three characters placed in exactly the same relation to one another as Hugo, Parisina and Azo. The background is

²⁰⁰ (a) "When I had found the corsairs I wanted to put to sea with them. So I bade farewell to the mournful shore and, with a skilled Moorish sailor for my pilot, directed my course among the islands that flower on the breast of the holy patriarch-ocean." Cp. B. A. 835. "The shallop of a trusty Moor conveyed me from this idle shore. I longed to see the isles that gem old Ocean's purple diadem." (The "holy patriarch-ocean" is a curious expression which probably arose through Lermontov's misconstruction of the following line in B. A. 870. "Aye! let me like the ocean-Patriarch roam.")

(b) "Often we came ashore and roamed the steppes, my black arab bounding under me as we flew across the broad plains. The distant shore vanished from our sight, and I and my jovial crew found ourselves in the waterless steppe that was like the sea." Cp. B. A. 872. "My tent on shore, my galley on the sea are more than cities and Serais to me: borne by my steed or wafted by my sail, across the desert or before the gale, bound where thou wilt, my barb! or glide my prow!"

²⁰¹ "The palaces of kings are not so glorious as the swell of the sea... What a joy it is, my friends, to abandon oneself to the waters and to glide over the waves!" Cp. C. 1 ff. "O'er the glad waters of the dark blue sea etc... these are our realms, no limits to their sway."

²⁰² "Then the ship of the corsairs was flung cloud-high, and the next moment it plunged down again with a noise of splintering." Cp. C. H, IV, 180, already cited.

²⁰³ "Look at me, friends, I am pale and haggard, and happiness has gone out of my eyes."

presumably Russian. The Criminal's father, a man of rank and affluence, dotes on his young wife as Falbowski and Azo dote on theirs. The son conceives an unlawful passion for his stepmother, who returns it. Their guilt is discovered. The Criminal flies, "howling back a curse" (cp. M.), and becomes a brigand. In after years he sets fire to his father's house and cuts his stepmother's throat.

The difference between *Parisina* and *The Criminal* is in the catastrophe. Hugo dies on the block, but the Criminal lives to murder his paramour. The brutality of the hero derives, no doubt, from the example of the elder brigand in *The Robber Brothers*, which, along with Schiller's *Die Räuber*, probably suggested the theme of brigandage. *Mazepa* seems to have contributed to the opening scene of the poem²⁰⁴.

The Last Son of Liberty is the semi-legendary Vadim of Novgorod. Lermontov wrote his poem in 1830. It is more virile than any of the works I have so far discussed. The story is a variant of the theme which Pushkin had used for his *Vadim* and reads like an attempt to finish that fragment. Vadim challenges Prince Ryurik, the Varangian ruler of Novgorod, to single combat for ravishing his betrothed, fights a duel with swords, and is killed. The Byronic touches in this poem, apart from structural affinities with the Tales, are two: Vadim's behaviour when he identifies Leda's corpse, copies *Parisina* and *Lara* (cp. also C. H. III, 4)²⁰⁵, and the epilogue, in which the hero's grave is described, goes back to *The Bride of Abydos*.

About the time when *The Last Son of Liberty* had been finished, Lermontov attempted something a little more ambitious — the poem *Giulio*. This "traveller's tale" is a story of misspent passions, betrayed love and edifying remorse. It is therefore thoroughly By-

²⁰⁴ "Tell us, hetman, how you lived in your native land. The fire of youth must still be unquenched in you. Here under the oak, in this waste place, come warm the hearts of these good fellows with your tale." Cp. M. 120. "Thou wilt tell this tale of thine..." M. 197. "With years, ye know, have not declined my strength, my courage, or my mind, or at this hour I should not be telling old tales beneath a tree."

²⁰⁵ "Vadim shuddered and grew pale, and the neighbouring rocks gave echo to a long cry which sounded like the last. And whoever had heard that cry would have said that his heart's best string had broken at that moment." Cp. P. 498. "Ne'er in madlier accents rose despair, and those who heard it, as it past, in mercy wished it were the last." Also C. H. III, 4, already cited.

ronic but for the passage of betrayal. The influence of Byron is further borne out by the evidence of the heroic measure, with its exclusively single rhymes, which Lermontov used in this poem. The introduction to the tale tells how the author met his friend Giulio in a Swedish mine and was given the manuscript of his confessions. Under the plain heading of *The Tale*, we have the story proper, which is supposed to be merely a versification of the manuscript.

Giulio loves Lora, a pretty Neapolitan girl, and then abandons her for a life of dissipation in Paris and Venice. Guided by a vision, he returns to Naples to find that Lora has died. In his remorse he leaves Italy and goes to Sweden. It is there that he meets the author.

Giulio has more points in common with Lara than with any other of Byron's heroes, for, like Lara, he combines the Giaour's passionateness with the sensuality of Childe Harold. The story of his life might be a page from some newly discovered record of Lara's past: whatever Lermontov's intention may have been when he wrote this poem, he certainly succeeded in throwing light on the early life of the Byronic hero. As definitely Byronic as the characterisation is the structure of the poem. The idealised Italy of the overture, with its emotional clear-obscure and melic fervour, is pictured in the true lyric manner. There is a long passage of *Vorgeschichte*, which draws a situation not unlike that in Boratynsky's *Eda* (the seduction *motif*). The picture of the carnival in Venice was presumably inspired by *Beppo*, the phantom *motif* and the *motif* of the swoon are from *Lara*, the obituary is a reminiscence of *The Bride of Abydos*, and there are verbal analogies with *The Corsair*²⁰⁶.

The vendetta poems are, with the single exception of *The Lithuanian Girl*, all of them stories of the Caucasus. They are distinctly bloodthirsty, but, as in the Oriental Tales, the picturesqueness of the surroundings seems, as it were, to mitigate the crimes of the *abreks*.

The first poem of the group was written in 1831. It is called, characteristically, *The Kally*, a Turanian word which means "mur-

²⁰⁶ "I could have borne a prying, cunning glance no more than I could have endured shame." Cp. C. 21. "Too close enquiry his stern glance would quell."

derer". The title and the motto from *The Bride* overture ("Tis the clime of the East etc.") are a sort of text to the narrative. The story of *The Kally* is one of revenge. A young Kabardian tribesman called Adji is instigated by a mullah to destroy the whole family of Akbulat, the supposed murderer of Adji's parents. Among the slain is a girl of seventeen. The crime inspires Adji with a loathing of himself and a detestation of the man who incited him to do it. He stabs the mullah to death and flies to the hills.

Adji is not a Byronic character, outside his passionateness and determined hand. On the other hand, the mullah, with his craft and cunning, is very like Byron's Turkish villains. He might be Giaffir under another name, and like Giaffir he first comes into the poem; for the opening situation, which discovers him squatting on a rug and smoking *kalyan*, is evidently a recollection of *The Bride of Abydos*, of which Lermontov was so fond. The groan which escapes Adji as he contemplates his handiwork is described in exactly the same words as Vadim's in *The Last Son of Liberty* and derives ultimately from *Parisina*. This is an instance of a very common phenomenon in Lermontov's poetry which Boris Eichenbaum²⁰⁷ has called "the migration of phrase". The epilogue to *The Kally* bears a close resemblance to that of *The Bride of Abydos*²⁰⁸.

It is curious that the next vendetta poem is written, not in octosyllabic verse, like the bulk of the others, but in *ottava rima*, a metrical form which the student of Byron does not associate with serious poetry. For all that, *The Aoul of Bastundji* (1832)²⁰⁹ as it is called, is a typical "oriental tale". The fable of the poem is an elaboration of the plot of *The Criminal* and therefore offers points of resemblance to *Parisina*. The subject is revenge. Akbulat and Selim are brothers. Selim, the younger of the two, falls in love with Akbulat's pretty Circassian wife, Zara, and tries to alienate her affections. Zara refuses to be unfaithful to her husband. Selim carries her off, murders her, and sends back her corpse, strapped to the

²⁰⁷ See his study "Lermontov" (1924).

²⁰⁸ "On the summit of a sacred hill a plain monument gleams white, a sort of rounded pillar with the likeness of a turban stamped on it and thorn-bushes growing round about." Cp. B. A. 1199. "There late was laid a marble stone... a deep-fixed pillar (on which) is seen a ghastly turbaned head."

²⁰⁹ *Aoul* is a Turanian word meaning "village".

back of Akbulat's favourite horse. The patient Akbulat vows to be revenged on his brother. But before he can carry out his intention, the village of Bastundji is burnt down, and he perishes with the rest of the inhabitants.

The three romantic figures in this tale might have stepped out of one of Byron's. Akbulat is like Alp or Conrad, except that he has been spared their wicked past. Zara is simply Leila with another name: she is described in the same glowing language as her prototype²¹⁰. Selim is what the Giaour must have been like in his youth: he is as obstinate, fiery and revengeful. The placing of the characters recalls the three-cornered situation in *The Criminal* and *Parisina*. The difference is that Zara is Selim's sister-in-law and that she refuses to become his paramour.

The Aoul is dedicated to the Caucasus. In the overture to the poem the Byronic contrast between former prosperity and present ruin is brought out with reference to Bastundji. There is a prelude nocturne to the first episode. The incident of Selim confessing his love for Zara to his brother has a storm-overture like that which introduces the second canto of *The Bride of Abydos*. Selim's flight from the aoul on horseback is told as a paraphrase of the fisherman's account of the first appearance of the Giaour. Like Byron, Lermontov puts this part of the story into the mouth of a humble personage, a horse-drover²¹¹. The death-ride *motif* was evidently taken from Mazeppa. The epilogue is a Byronic *procédé*.

²¹⁰ (a) "Her eyes, which were darker than those of the chamois, were filled with the light of her soul and promised happiness through their long lashes." Cp. G. 473. "Her eye's dark charm 'twere vain to tell, but gaze on that of the gazelle... As large (it was) and languishingly dark, but Soul beamed forth in every spark that darted from beneath the lid."

(b) "She was lovely to look upon at that moment, lovely in her free, wild simplicity, like southern fruit, golden, rosy and sprinkled with dew." Cp. G. 493. "On her fair cheek's unfading hue the young Pomegranate's blossoms strew their bloom in blushes ever new."

²¹¹ (a) "His horse's hoofs struck the damp earth with measured beat, and the defiles echoed the sound long after the horseman and his steed had disappeared as swiftly as the simoom." Cp. G. 282. "He came, he went, like the Simoom." G. 206. "And long upon my startled ear rung his dark courser's hoofs of fear."

(b) "There are many wonders in the world, Allah is great indeed. But the power of Shaytan is terrible. Who would tell me that the gloomy master

Izmail Bey is significantly called "an eastern tale". Lermontov finished it in 1832. It is one of the longest narratives he ever wrote in verse. The measure of the dedication and of the descriptive pre-ludes to each canto (heroic verse) and the epigraphs from *The Giaour* and *Lara* prepare us for a protracted chronicle of Byronic influences. *Izmail Bey* is really little more than an adaptation of *Lara*. The setting is Caucasian, the plot closely follows the *Lara* fable, the characters are nearly the same, and there are many passages which paraphrase lines and even sentences from the Tales. The only major differences between the two poems are that Izmail is not allowed to be so much in the foreground as his prototype and that he outlives the heroine. The story, as told by Lermontov, is complicated. I shall give only an epitome of it. Izmail Bey is a Circassian, who was brought up in Russia and has been absent from home for many years. On his return to Circassia he joins his brother Roslambek in a war against the Russians. Through all his campaigns he is followed about by a Lezghian girl called Zara, in a page's dress. He does not know that Selim, as the page is called, is a girl, until after a battle with the Cossacks, in which he is seriously wounded. He plights his troth with Zara. Two years later Zara mysteriously vanishes. In the end Izmail himself is shot dead by his brother.

All the characters in this poem have counterparts in *Lara*. Izmail is Lara himself, his brother Roslambek a sort of Ezzelin, and Zara another Kaled. The background against which they appear is exotic, like the *Lara* setting. The story is told in detached scenes; the tensest situations are isolated and emphasised; all the material parts of the Tales are reproduced. The glowing descriptive overture is coloured with personal recollections (cp. S. C. prelude)²¹². In it occurs the fiction or the fact that the story was told to the author by a Chechenian guide. The portrait of Zara is painted with the

of that horse is a son of the earth like me?" Cp. G. 203. "Like a Demon of the night he passed... (and) his aspect and his air impressed a troubled memory in my breast."

²¹² "There, in the Caucasus, kindness is repaid with kindness and blood with blood, and hatred, like love, is boundless." Cp. B. A. 3. "Where the rage of the vulture, the love of the turtle, now melt into sorrow, now madden to crime."

anaphoric richness of Zuleika's²¹³. In the second canto we have, besides a pictorial overture, a description of a Mohammedan festival and an interjected "Circassian song" (cp. Pushkin's *Prisoner of the Caucasus*, both of which may be compared to the ethnographic passages in *The Siege of Corinth* and *Childe Harold II*. Izmail's encounter with the Russian soldier contains the spectre *motif* in a rudimentary form. Zara in male disguise is simply Kaled dressed in a page's livery. In the third canto the resemblances to the Tales are even more numerous than in the first two. Selim's declaration of unswerving loyalty to Izmail recalls the ardent expressions which Kaled uses under identical circumstances²¹⁴. The fragment of biographical recollection, in which Lermontov expatiates on the warping of Izmail's character, has verbal analogies to a passage in *The Corsair*²¹⁵. Izmail's authority with his men is as great as Conrad's with *his*. The fight with the Cossacks is depicted in much the same way as the river battle in Lara: the *djigits*²¹⁶ begin to yield before the onslaught of the enemy, when Izmail comes to their aid and restores order. The issue of the struggle is identical with that of the Lara-Otto war: the hero's forces are defeated and he himself

²¹³ "She was as gentle as a young peri, a creature of earth and heaven, dear as the sound of one's native tongue in a foreign land, as comfortingly dear as the artless song of an uncaged bird to a captive." Cp. B. A. 886. "Soft — as the melody of youthful days... dear as the native song to exile's ears." Also the anaphorical passage in B. A. I, vi, and P. C. x.

²¹⁴ (a) "Oh, what is death to me?... I will forsake everything — life, the world, but I will never leave Izmail." Cp. L. 1002. "We will not part!... Farewell to life, but not Adieu to thee!"

(b) "None has ever heard murmur or reproach from his lips. If he grows frightened or weary, he has only to look at Izmail, and his fear vanishes, and his labour becomes a pleasure." Cp. L. 554. "If aught he loved 'twas Lara; but was shown his faith in reverence and in deeds alone; in mute attention." L. 544. "For hours on Lara would he fix his glance."

²¹⁵ "Often when he had tried not to deceive, he was himself deceived, and so he grew afraid of believing anything because at one time he had believed everything. And he came to abhor this contemptible world of men, where life is but a long series of deceptions." Cp. C. 253. "Warped by the world in Disappointment's school, in words too wise — in conduct *there* a fool... doomed by his very virtues for a dupe."

²¹⁶ *Djigit* means "a brave" in Turanian.

is desperately wounded²¹⁷. "Selim" (Zara) emulates Kaled in her attentions to her wounded lover. One point of divergence from *Lara* should be noted: Izmail recovers, loves Zara and survives her. But ultimately the end is the same. He is shot, and dies with the same physical symptoms as his prototype.

The remaining Caucasian vendetta poem, *Hadji the Abrek* (1833—34), is rather short, and owes less to the Tales than *Izmail Bey*. As its title suggests (*abrek* means "avenger" in Turanian) it is a story of revenge. Hadji is a Circassian *uzdene*, who volunteers to help an old Lezghian to punish Bey Bulat, the seducer of his daughter Leila. When he discovers that Leila is happy with her "seducer" husband, he kills her and brings back her head to her father, who dies from the shock of seeing it. Later, Hadji and Bey Bulat are found dead in a lonely defile.

The design of *Hadji the Abrek* is Byronic from its overture to its purple patches and gruesome close. Hadji, the hero, is Conrad divested of his nobler qualities. Leila is as lovely and unfortunate as her namesake. The manner of her death recalls the fate of Zara in *The Aoul of Bastundji* and of the faithless Greek girl in Pushkin's *Black Shawl*. At the end of the poem, where Lermontov describes the expression of rage on the faces of the dead combatants, one detects the influence of a couplet on the features of Hassan's "sullen corse" in *The Giaour*. This is the only verbal analogy with the Tales.

I have left the earliest of the vendetta poems till the end because it differs at many important points from the other romances of this category and bears an appreciable likeness to *Orsha*, a poem of the Confession Group. It is called *The Lithuanian Girl* (1830) and was written, like the contemporary *Giulio*, in heroic couplets. The action of the story springs from the heroine's initiative, as in *The Corsair* and the Southern Poems, although the hero is anything but weak and common. The plot turns on the conflict between an enamoured man and a determined woman. A Russian nobleman

²¹⁷ (a) "With the mark of death on his brow, he lies there, and the last beams of the sun play over his troubled features and flush his countenance." Cp. L. II, xix, where Lara is described dying with the sun shining on his face.

(b) "Something of life still lingers in his face: the last of his gloomy thoughts." Cp. L. 1121. "Yet sense seemed left."

called Arseny abandons his wife for the charms of Klara, a captive Lithuanian (really Polish) girl. Klara loathes him, although she hides her feelings, and when the opportunity comes to her, escapes with a former lover. War breaks out between Lithuania and Russia, in which Arseny and Klara participate on opposite sides. The boyar encounters Klara in battle and is killed by her band of gallants.

As in *Lara*, there are only two important characters in this poem. Arseny resembles Lara even in his baser parts, while Klara is another Gulnare but for the fact that she is a European and that her attitude to Arseny is Gulnare's attitude, not to Conrad, but to Seyd. The background is vague and unlocalised, but presumably West Russian. This is another example of the influence of *Lara's* "lunar" setting.

The structure of *The Lithuanian Girl* is closely modelled on that of the Tales, especially *Lara*. The descriptive overture is succeeded by a passage introducing the hero, who, like Conrad, is said to mingle with others "only to command". There is a scenic prelude to the first episode — a nocturne which exhibits certain resemblances in phrase to a similar piece in *The Corsair*. The description of Klara's chamber on the eve of her abduction has a parallel in a passage contained in the first canto of *Lara*²¹⁸. As in *Lara*, too, and almost at an identical hour, a sound is heard, which at first seems like a cry or a groan²¹⁹. The effect of Klara's disappearance on Arseny resembles the effect which the mysterious vision has on Lara²²⁰. Relief comes to both Arseny and his prototype

²¹⁸ "The moonbeams fall through the window, imparting a marvellous brilliance to the panes, idly flitting over the floor and lighting up the only ornament on the high walls — a Persian rug." Cp. L. 19. "The moonbeam shone through the lattice o'er the floors of stone."

²¹⁹ "What sound is that behind the wall — a prolonged moan wrung from the breast by sorrow, yet very like the note of a song?" Cp. L. 203. "Hark! there be murmurs heard in Lara's hall... a long loud shriek and silence."

²²⁰ "He wished to spring to his feet, but remained as motionless as a marble statue or a corpse... His unseeing eyes looked before him, flamboyant, yet as chill as ice. His clenched hand was upraised. Then words broke from his blue lips. They sounded like a curse, but none could make them out." Cp. L. 211. "Cold as marble... was Lara... His eye was almost sealed, but not forsook, even in its trance, the gladiator's look. His words are strung in terms that seem not of his native tongue." Also C. 234. "The upward eye, the clenched hand, the pause of agony."

with the outbreak of a war. The decisive battle takes place, in both poems, near a river. Arseny's very presence, like Lara's compels the opposing forces to recoil²²¹. Klara recognises her lover on the battlefield as quickly as Ezzelin identifies Lara at the festival, and with the same exclamation²²². The remainder of the poem — Klara's authority with her knights, and the necrology, which describes Arseny's resting-place and the effect of his death on his wife, who becomes a nun — is fully in accord with the design and *motifs* of the final canto of *Lara*.

The three poems of the Confession Group illustrate the gradual development of a theme which occupied Lermontov's attention, intermittently, for ten years. They constitute a sort of scale of progression from the first and weakest of them, which came in 1830, to the last and most perfect, published as *The Mtsiri*²²³ in 1840. A close parallel to this group is afforded by the five recensions of *The Demon*. But there is one important difference between the two groups as regards their evolution. The evolution of *The Demon* was in a straight line. The development of *The Mtsiri* can best be represented, graphically, by a triangle: it grew out of *The Confession*, through *Orsha* which represents, as it were, a step aside.

The Confession was written in 1830, and is founded on a structural device which Kozlov had made popular in Russia and which is derived, ultimately, from *The Giaour*, *The Bride of Abydos*

(b) "And though he could bear this blow of fate and did not wish to show that he could suffer as he had once suffered, the wound in his breast, which he despised, grew deeper." Cp. L. 268. "Lara could assume a seeming forgetfulness... Word nor look nor gesture betrayed a feeling that recalled... that fevered moment of his mind's disease... His breast had buried (both the cause and the effect) of that corroding secrecy which gnaws the heart."

²²¹ "Whose familiar voice has shaken every heart with such marvellous power?... A warrior has appeared: he wears a red mantle, is shieldless, and his helmet has fallen off his head. He is armed with a battle-axe. He comes — and a foe sinks to the ground, and then another. Terror seizes the Lithuanians." Cp. L. 1013. "Commanding — aiding — animating all... cheers Lara's voice and waves or strikes his steel... The foremost of the foe recoil before (his) look and blow... Now, almost alone, he foils their ranks."

²²² "It is he!... Warriors, advance! There is no hope until this haughty Russian falls." Cp. L. 415. "'Tis he!" also G. 610 and L. 1078. They think "their triumph naught till Lara too should yield."

²²³ *Mtsiri* is the Gruzian (Georgian) word for "a novice".

and *Parisina*. The influence of the first and the last of these Tales, as well as of *The Prisoner of Chillon*, is discernible in the poem. *The Confession* is short, and tells of human injustice. A young Spanish monk is condemned to death for a crime of which he is innocent. He makes no appeal against the sentence. On the eve of his execution he is shriven by an aged confessor. The remainder of the narrative is occupied by his story, in which he describes his longing for freedom from the trammels of monastic life and his love for a beautiful girl, who is now in a nunnery. He refuses to disclose his beloved's name and perishes, protesting his innocence. The nun dies when she hears his funeral bell.

As a piece of composition, this poem appears to be made up of three distinct fragments pieced together into a whole, namely a passage from *The Prisoner of Chillon*, another from *The Giaour* and a third from *Parisina*. There is first a picture-prologue, which contains a description of a monastery on the Guadalquivir, for the setting is Spanish. The situation discovering the hero (a confession) is borrowed from *The Giaour*. The hero himself is like Hugo²²⁴, and his glimpses of nature from the window of the convent tower recall Bonnivard's²²⁵. The image of the girl-nun is a fragment of impassioned eloquence, which paraphrases Byron's passage on Leila²²⁶, and her shriek and death-swoon are copied from *Parisina*²²⁷, from which the theme of the funeral bell is also taken.

²²⁴ "The grave has no terrors for me." Cp. P. 234. "It is not that I fear the death."

²²⁵ (a) "How my heart beat faster at the sight of the sun and the open country from the tall corner turret, where the air is fresh and where some grey pigeon, frightened by the storm, nestles at times, in a crevice in the wall." Cp. P. C. 263. "I saw the glimmer of the sun (and) through the crevice where it came that bird was perched."

(b) "See! in my damp prison there are no sunbeams, but once, long ago, one fell on the darkened window." Cp. P. C. 30, already cited.

(c) "But you cannot share my transports; you are old and blind, and have outlived your desires... You have lived, old man." Cp. G. 97, already cited.

²²⁶ "And you, O passionless old man, if you had seen her heavenly face only in a dream, you would have envied me... I do not pray for salvation. I fear neither heaven nor hell. Let me be eternally damned. It is no great matter, for I shall never see her again. And if the gates of paradise were to open before my eyes... I swear that before entering I would ask whether I should find there the lost paradise of my hopes... What are earth and heaven without her? Alas! give back to me her smile, her sweet face; give

Orsha the Boyar (1835) represents an attempt to fuse *The Confession* and *The Lithuanian Girl* into a single poem. It is patently a romance of the Confession Group, but its Russian background, historical colour, numerous characters and well-developed action distinguish it from the other two. As a story, it is a conglomerate of portions of *The Giaour*, *The Bride* and *Parisina*. The action springs from the initiative of Arseny, the hero, whose passions and purposes clash with those of the villain, Orsha, the leading character in the poem. This is in contrast to the Tales, in which the hero is never eclipsed by another character. As in *The Giaour* and the Tales generally, we have in *Orsha* the inevitable Byronic triangle. There is also the confession *motif*, which Lermontov may have derived either directly from Byron or through Kozlov. And last, there is the essence of Byronic tragedy, where an elderly villain wrecks the happiness of the young hero and heroine (cp. B. A., P.).

This is the story of *Orsha the Boyar*. Arseny, an orphan serf purchased from monks by the nobleman, Orsha, loves his master's daughter and is loved by her. The nobleman discovers their mutual love, is furious, and separates them by confining his daughter in her room and delivering Arseny to the monks for punishment. Arseny is tried and condemned to death, but escapes from his cell with the help of outlaw friends. War subsequently breaks out between Russia and Poland, and master and serf meet on the battlefield. Orsha dies in Arseny's arms, and the latter then gallops to the Orsha manor, where he finds that his beloved has died of starvation in her room.

The three characters, Orsha, his daughter and Arseny, are all Byronic figures. Orsha is simply Hassan or Giaffir in a boyar's costume: he has their passionate temperament and cruelty. Arseny begins his career as a kind of Selim or Hugo and ends it as the Giaour. The heroine might be any one of the fair and delicate

back to me her fresh lips and her voice that was as soft as a dream." Cp. G. 1202. "But talk no more of penitence... When thou can'st bid my Leila live then will I sue thee to forgive." Also G. *passim*.

²²⁷ "Anyone hearing (it) would have said that such a cry cannot escape twice from the same breast. It took away both life and love." Cp. P. 344, already cited; also P. 498. "It was a woman's shriek and those who heard it... in mercy wished it were the last."

European girls of the Tales. The background, as in *The Lithuanian Girl*, is West Russian.

Orsha the Boyar is full of structural and verbal analogies to the Tales. The poem begins, in contrast to its models, *ab origine*, as it were, with a piece of what should have been related as *Vorgeschichte*. It tells of Orsha's faithful services to the Tsar and his retirement with the Tsar's permission to his feudal manor on the Dnepr. The first incident is heralded by a nocturne (cp. L., I, x), which is immediately followed by a picture of Orsha's chamber, evidently imitated from *Lara*²²⁸. Orsha's command that his serf Sokol shall tell him a story to beguile the time and dispel his gloomy thoughts reiterates King Charles's request that the old hetman entertain him with his life-story in *Mazeppa*²²⁹. Arseny's account of his manner of life among the outlaws is taken, theme and expressions, from *The Bride of Abydos*²³⁰. The situation, indeed, in which he and the heroine are placed when Orsha finds them, is exactly the same, even in details, as that in which Giaffir discovers Selim and Zuleika²³¹. The effect on the heroine of her father's entry into her room and the scream she utters are a transcript from *The Confession* and *The Lithuanian Girl*, which borrowed the *motif* from *Parisina*²³². In the second canto we have the trial scene and the

²²⁸ "A half-burnt candle . . . floods all the objects in the room with a strange twilight. Icons hang on the wall over the bed. The draperies of the saints glitter, and their staring eyes fill suddenly with light." Cp. L. 191. "The moonbeam shone . . . o'er the . . . high fretted roof, and saints that there o'er Gothic windows knelt in pictured prayer reflected in fantastic figures grew."

²²⁹ "It wearies me: dark thoughts and no end to them! Sit down beside me on that bench and dispel my sadness with your talk. You may begin a tale of the old golden days, and I, recalling the past, may perhaps find sleep." Cp. M. 120. "Thou wilt tell this tale of thine, and I may reap, perchance, from this the boon of sleep."

²³⁰ "I soon discovered bold, fearless companions in the woods: they were strong as steel, held no human laws sacred, and thought war a blessing and peace a calamity." Cp. B. A. 845. "'Tis true they are a lawless brood, but rough in form nor mild of mood . . . but open speech and ready hand, obedience . . . a soul for every enterprise, have made them fitting instruments."

²³¹ "Oh wait, Arseny dear! Yesterday you were so different." Cp. B. A. 384. "My Selim, thou art sadly changed: this morn I saw thee gentlest, dearest."

²³² "Her scream was a dreadful, agonising scream . . . which whoever had heard would have said that it could not twice escape from the same breast." Cp. P., already cited.

hero's story of his early life, which is taken bodily from *The Confession*. The spectre *motif* from *The Giaour* occurs in it also as an addition²³³. The third and last canto represents an adaptation of the fable of *The Lithuanian Girl*. Arseny in Polish dress, mounted on a black horse, recalls the Giaour as he appears for the first time in the poem²³⁴. Orsha's death pangs and Arseny's attentions to the dying man re-enact a scene at the end of *Lara*²³⁵. And Arseny's despairing soliloquy might have been spoken by the Giaour.

²³³ "Yesterday I went to sleep in my cell. All at once, in my sleep, I heard an approaching sound — the sound of a dear and familiar voice, and it seemed to me that I saw a pair of bright eyes. And waking, I sought that sound, those eyes, in the darkness. Alas! they were only in my bosom... They are stamped on my heart that I may not forget them, and they scorch it and refresh it." Cp. G. 1260, already cited.

²³⁴ (a) "Who is he? For he is neither a Russian nor a Pole, although he wears Polish attire that glitters with silver piping, and a sabre that, clanking, strikes his black charger's flank... He is neither young nor old. But carefully scanning his features — and they are not without an ineffable beauty, to which constant thought has given a melancholy cast, a beauty that reflects all the good and evil of a mind fettered to the earth, — one would say that he has lived less than he has suffered." Cp. G. 180. "Who thundering comes on blackest steed?... Beneath the clattering iron's sound the caverned echoes wake around... I know thee not, but in thy lineaments I trace what Time shall strengthen, not efface: though young and pale, that sallow front is scarred by fiery Passion's brunt."

(b) "It is he!" exclaims Arseny at the sight of Orsha lying wounded under a tree. "And I know you, too", answers the old man. "I know you! Neither time nor foreign garb can change that ominous look and that pale brow, on which evil has left its mark." Cp. G. 610. "'Tis he, 'tis he! I know him now; I know him by his pallid brow; I know him by his jet-black barb, though now arrayed in Arnaut garb." Also G. 180, already cited.

(c) "I will not turn away my eyes, though you, traitor Lyakh (Pole), should wish to read in them the terror of approaching death." G. 1093. "Oh what had vengeance given to trace Despair upon his dying face?"

²³⁵ (a) "He (Orsha) strove to speak further, but suddenly his tongue grew palsied; he wished to make a sign with his hand, but his fingers clove to one another. The shadow of death in a band of darkness rushed across his brow. He turned his face to the ground and then stretched himself out with a sudden convulsion; the death-rattle sounded in his throat; and his spirit abandoned his body." Cp. L. 1135. "But gasping heaved the breath that Lara drew, and dull the film along his dim eye grew; his limbs stretched fluttering, and his head dropped o'er (Kaled's) knee." L. 1120. "All grew night on Lara's brow."

In *The Mtsiri* we see the perfection and fruition of the Byronic theme, which had prompted Lermontov to write *The Confession*²³⁶. It is like an old canvas touched up and reframed. As a story it resembles *The Confession*, although the subject of the young monk's eloquence is not this time the love of woman, but the love of liberty and of the free air of the mountains. It is a story which might have been told by Bonnivard's second brother in the words of the Giaour. There is hardly any action in the poem. What little there is, is reported. And there is only one character, the *mtsiri* or novice, who tells his tale as a death-bed confession to one of the brethren. The story, like the Spanish monk's in *The Confession* and Arseny's in *Orsha*, is much influenced by *The Giaour* and especially by *Parisina*, as well as by Kozlov's *Monk*. It is related against a beautiful Caucasian background of wild mountains. It is a brief story. A captured Circassian boy is brought to Tiflis by a Russian general. The boy is very ill. He is put in the care of monks, and grows up in a monastery. But he has lived among active, freedom-loving hillmen and cannot accustom himself to the seclusion and quiet of conventual life. At the first opportunity to escape that presents itself, he disappears from the monastery. Three days later he is found and brought back, dying from exposure and exhaustion. In confession he tells of his adventures in the hills and woods. There is a bright aureole of romance about these adventures, although with one exception, namely his fight with a panther, they are all commonplace. The poem is a despairing hymn to liberty.

Points of affinity in structure and language between *The Mtsiri* and Byron's confession poems may be found almost from the initial line of the former. A most gorgeous descriptive prelude, founded on sharp contrasts, like Byron's overtures, precedes the opening situation. The novice's story is told with lyric pauses, as it were, from the beginning (cp. M., P. C.). Describing his native

L. 1105. "Lara's voice, though low at first, was clear and calm, till murmuring Death gasped hoarsely near."

(b) "And the youth stood over him (Orsha) a long time, and then he gently undid the caftan at his breast and put his hand over his heart." Cp. L. 1140. "Kaled will not part with the cold grasp (of Lara's hand), but feels... for that faint throb which answers not again."

²³⁶ Long passages from the *Confession* were transferred almost unaltered to *The Mtsiri*.

mountains, he uses an image which occurs in one of Lermontov's lyrics (see above) and which finally goes back to *Childe Harold* and *Christabel*²³⁷. Of the dying panther's convulsions he speaks with something of Byron's romantic realism²³⁸. He accounts for his physical condition, after his exhausting adventures, by an argument that sounds truer from the lips of Bonnivard²³⁹. His implicit admission of a belief in the immortality of the soul recalls a verse in *The Giaour*²⁴⁰. Like the Giaour, too, he gives directions on the manner of his interment²⁴¹. There is no epilogue: the closing lines of the confession are in themselves an obituary.

The group of poems, which I have called the Supernatural Romances, is less uniform and compact than the other two. It really consists of two sub-groups, one including *Azrael* and *The Angel of Death*, and the other the five drafts of *The Demon*. All these poems have this in common, that they were influenced, not only by Byron, but by the peri poems of Moore (*The Loves of the Angels*) and Podolinsky and by Vigny's *Eloa*. The influence of the peri poetry is especially evident in the first two. *Eloa* is recalled by the theme and certain *motifs* of *The Demon*. Byron's influence operates only through his Scriptural dramas, *Cain* and *Heaven and Earth*. But in the final recension of *The Demon*, the structure of the Oriental Tales is faithfully reproduced, and there are *motifs* and expressions in the poem, which could have come only from *them*.

²³⁷ "Their rocky arms have long been outstretched to embrace each other... but days and years pass and they never meet." Cp. C. H. III, 94. "Heights which appear as lovers to have parted in hate *etc.*" See above.

²³⁸ "Blood flowed from his wound in a thick black wave." Cp. L. 1065. "The tides that rush with each convulsion in a blacker gush."

²³⁹ "My prison has left its mark on me." Cp. P. C. 7. "My limbs... have been the dungeon's spoil."

²⁴⁰ "The flame in me has burned through its prison-house and will return to Him who gives us suffering and peace." Cp. G. 1027. "Then let life go to Him who gave."

²⁴¹ (a) "When I die — and, believe me, you ave not long to wait — tell them to take me into the garden to the place where the two white acacias grow... there bury me." Cp. G. "Then lay me with the humble dead." Also the epilogue in B. A. II, cited above.

(b) "Perhaps, before I die, I shall catch the sound of a familiar voice, and then, maybe, I shall think that my friend or brother is bending over me, to wipe the cold perspiration of death from my brow." Cp. G. 1218.

Azrael and *The Angel of Death* were both written in 1831. The first is an unfinished miniature drama in prose and verse. Whether it would have remained a *chantefable*, if it had been completed, is doubtful because Lermontov often wrote his poems out in prose first and then versified them. It is the story of the love of a fallen angel for a woman. The theme is romantic. Coleridge had eerily hinted at it in his *Kubla Khan*²⁴², but it was left for Moore to develop in his *Loves of the Angels* and for Byron to use in a Biblical drama. There is nothing specifically Byronic, however, in the theme because it is not characteristic of him. In *Azrael* there are no sure signs of his influence. Certainly, long monologues occur, as in *Heaven and Earth* and *Manfred*, and the poem has something in common with those dramas as regards theme and characterisation. But as no closer parallels in design and expression are forthcoming, it is impossible to speak here with certainty of Lermontov's indebtedness to Byron.

The Angel of Death is an "eastern tale", written in octosyllabic verse like most of Lermontov's romances. The theme seems to have been suggested by Podolinsky's *Div and Peri*. It is a story of how Azrael, the angel of death, animates the lifeless body of Ada, the beloved of Zoraim, with his own soul. Zoraim is subsequently slain in battle. Then Azrael abandons Ada's body and vows that humanity shall atone for the loss he has sustained by Zoraim's death.

Both Zoraim and Ada are Byronic characters²⁴³. The first in an immature Lara, whilst Ada is as peri-like as Zuleika. The setting in which the drama is enacted is an oriental limbo. Structurally the poem offers a number of analogies to the Tales. Its rhapsodic overture merely expands the prelude to *The Bride of Abydos*²⁴⁴.

²⁴² This does not mean that Coleridge was the first to write about the subject, which is as old as the Book of Genesis. Lermontov may have discovered it in Cazotte, before he read either Byron or Moore.

²⁴³ It will have been observed that Lermontov often gives his characters names taken from Byron. Ada is from *Cain*, Selim from *The Bride of Abydos* and Leila from *The Giaour*. The name Zara was probably suggested by Pushkin's Z-names, Zarema and Zemfira.

²⁴⁴ "O golden east! O land of wonders, of love and passion! where the roses blow, and where everything but happiness is abundant, where clouds fly freer, where the stream flows clearer, where sunsets are more gorgeous, where

Zoraim is represented as a young man who, having drunk the cup of pleasure, recants his aberrations and seeks happiness in close communion with nature²⁴⁵. The background of the picture, which shows Ada dying in the arms of her lover (cp. *Atala*), reminds one of the scene between Selim and Zuleika in the grotto (B. A. II). Zoraim's death in battle resembles Lara's²⁴⁶. The closing part of the poem, however, consists of a brief epilogue, which is Byronic only as an artistic device.

The Demon in its finished form is the most ambitious romance that Lermontov wrote. It took him longer to write than any other poem: he conceived it in 1829 and did not complete it until 1840. In the course of those eleven years *The Demon* underwent four separate revisions with the natural result that the puerility of the first draft stands in pointed contrast to the maturity of the last. The influence of Moore and Vigny on the theme of the poem is stronger than Byron's, but it is plain that Byron, as well as they, inspired Lermontov to write it. Besides, in composition, it is undeniably of the order of the Tales.

Demon I (1829) is very immature and fragmentary, and written partly in prose. The fable relates how a demon finds out that an angel loves a nun and then seduces her²⁴⁷. The ravished girl dies and descends into hell. The demon comes upon the angel weeping for his love and "reproaches him with a malicious smile".

Demon II was written the year after, in Moscow. It shows a distinct advance on the first draft in amplitude of conception and execution. The fable is complete, and may be regarded as the

the earth has all its pristine loveliness. I love you, O land of the east! He who knows you forgets his native country; he who has seen your beautiful daughters can never forget the proud fire in their eyes." Cp. B. A. overture.

²⁴⁵ "He was but a wanderer on earth, persecuted by man and God. He might have been happy, but he sought happiness in trivial pleasures. He sought perfection in men, yet was himself no better than they. He loved night, freedom, the hills — everything in nature and in men, but these he shunned." Cp. C. H. IV, 178f.

²⁴⁶ "The young man wished in vain to return Ada's caresses, and all that he could say was sorrowful and gloomy, though dispassionate... His cheeks were ice-cold; the blood trickled, drop by drop, from his wound... He rose... shuddered — heaved a sigh — and died." Cp. L. II, xvii, already cited.

²⁴⁷ The love of an angel for a woman is a rudimentary *motif*, which was taken either from *Heaven and Earth* or Moore's *Loves of the Angels*, or possibly from both.

earliest sketch of *Demon V*; the characters are clearer drawn, and there is a song. The Demon is captivated by the beauty of a Spanish nun and falls in love with her, but by doing so he offends Satan and is exiled from the underworld. He visits the nun again in her cell and finds her with her guardian angel, who has come down in answer to an invocation, which may be compared to a passage in *Heaven and Earth*²⁴⁸. The presence of the angel exercises the same effect on the Demon as the presence of Raphael on Azazel and Samiasa (cp. H. E. I, iii). When next the Demon visits the convent he reveals his presence to the nun. The dialogue that passes between them is based partly on some verses in *Cain*²⁴⁹. The nun, although a little frightened and mistrustful of the Demon, is overwhelmed by his eloquence, yields herself to him and, as in the first draft of the poem, perishes. She is interred on a tempestuous night (cp. B. A. II, overture). This scene is followed, first by a piece of biography describing the nun's last hours, then by a picture of the convent in ruins (cp. G.) and an epilogue, which contains a description of the nun's grave (cp. B. A., L.). The close of the poem, or true epilogue, repeats the last scene in *Demon I*.

The third recension of *The Demon* is an imperfectly written fragment in seven octaves and contains part of the subject-matter of the first draft (sections 1 and 2). The poem was evidently giving Lermontov much trouble, for it ends with this note: "I wanted to write my poem in verse; but no! prose is better."

The fourth draft of the poem (1833) represents a slight expansion and modification of *Demon II*. It incorporates long passages from that recension and therefore presents an instance of the "migration of phrase" on a large scale. Where there are changes, whether omissions or interpolations, the touch of a maturer hand could hardly have been plainer. Among the interpolations is a:

²⁴⁸ "Thee only, O Creator, have I loved from the days of my infancy till now, but my soul has found at last that it was destined for other things too. I cannot be guilty: I burn with a love that is not earthly, that is as pure as my angel, and my thoughts of him are inseparable from thoughts of Thee." Cp. H. E. I, i. "But, Aholibamah, I love our God less since his angel loved me: this cannot be good; though I know not that I do wrong, I feel a thousand fears which are not ominous of right."

²⁴⁹ "Oh, who are you? — I am the Demon!" Cp. Cain I, i. "Who art thou? — Master of Spirits!"

apostrophe of the sea, which recalls the rhapsodic sea-poetry of *Childe Harold*. The descriptions are better done, fuller, more glowing and vivid. The dialogue shows improvement in the direction of naturalness. And, side by side with these changes, echoes of Byron acquire a greater distinctness than before. The Demon tries to overcome his incipient passion for the nun by mingling in human affairs. But he soon "forsakes the immoral world and makes his dwelling on a chain of desert mountains". This attitude to humanity is characteristic of *Childe Harold* and *Manfred*. Especially interesting is the similarity to *Manfred*. "Often, in a sombre mood, the Demon would sit silent on some frozen peak between heaven and earth, while the white-maned blizzards roared at his feet like lions." The lines sound like reverberations of that drama. And last, when the Demon comes to the nun in her cell and reveals himself, she says: "Leave me, O cunning spirit"; which is very much what Ada says to Lucifer.

The final recension of *The Demon (Demon V)* was completed in 1840. It is over a thousand lines long and divided into two parts. There is a great deal of the subject-matter of previous recensions, especially of *Demon IV*, incorporated in it, but there is also much that is new,²⁵⁰ and the whole poem, like *The Mtsiri*, is relatively mature. It reads like a revision of *Demon IV* under the influence of *The Giaour*. As a story, it is more complicated than the earlier drafts: there is a great deal more plot, and the characters are more numerous.

The Demon, flying over the castle of the Georgian prince Gudal, sees his daughter Tamara and falls in love with her. To woo her the more successfully, he lays an ambush for her future husband, the lord of Sinodal, and kills him. When Tamara's grief for Sinodal's death is at its height, the Demon comes to her and with spells quickens her sorrow into love. Tamara mistrusts the purity of her new passion and takes refuge in a nunnery. But even there she finds herself persecuted by the Demon's attentions. Confident of success, he pleads his suit, and kisses her. The kiss kills Tamara. But her soul is borne to heaven by her guardian angel, and the Demon is

²⁵⁰ One of the differences between the earlier and the final drafts of both *The Mtsiri* and *The Demon* is the introduction of Caucasian landscape into the latter. *The Confession* may be regarded as a first sketch of *The Mtsiri*.

ultimately foiled. The story ends with a description of Prince Gudal's ruined castle and the beauties of the natural scenery in the midst of which it stands.

The characters in *The Demon* are distributed as in *The Bride of Abydos*. There are only two principals, however, for Prince Gudal and the lord of Sinodal are secondary personages. The Demon is a Lucifer in the flesh. He is therefore less than Lucifer because he is subject to the temptations of the flesh. He is not a Byronic hero. As for Tamara, she is all lovely constancy. Like Leila and Zuleika, she cannot be described without superlatives.

There is no overture to *The Demon* (cp. P. C.). The principal personage is introduced at once, and his *Vorgeschichte* is given in detail. Then follows a scenic interlude. The description of the Caucasus is in Lermontov's finished style. Something of Byron's enthusiasm for the Isles of Greece seems to have been caught and crystallised in this fervid panorama. Nor is Tamara's portrait inferior to it. What is wonderful about these descriptions is that they are almost never absurd. Zuleika, as drawn by Byron, in his anaphoric description of her, is not a woman but a picture. Tamara, on the contrary, is as living and as fascinating as Doña Blanca in Chateaubriand's *Le dernier Abencérage*. Byron's intra-structural influence on the poem is limited to a few *motifs* and phrases. The description of Sinodal's camel-caravan is a recollection of *The Giaour*²⁵¹. The bridegroom and his retinue are described much as are Hassan and his vassals²⁵², and the menacing situation in which the former finds himself very nearly resembles that of the latter. Both Sinodal and Hassan are set upon in ambush and slain, the one by robbers with the Demon's connivance, the other by the Giaour. And as the fainting Tartar brings news of Hassan's death to his aged mother, so the spent horse bears the body of Tamara's affianced to Gudal's house, where, when the terrible tidings are learned, "there is weeping and the voice of moan"²⁵³. The Demon's

²⁵¹ "The camel-bells are tinkling, and the great beasts move in slow and ordered march." Cp. G. 689. "The browsing camels' bells are tinkling."

²⁵² Sinodal's "waist was clasped with a belt. The chasing on his sword and dagger flashed in the sunlight. Behind his back was a damascened rifle." Cp. G. 529. "The pistols which his girdle bore were those that once a Pasha wore." Also G. 523. "The chief before, as decked for war, bears in his belt the scimitar."

²⁵³ Cp. B. A. 1103. "By Helle's stream there is a voice of wail."

proud boast that he is "the god of his earthly slaves" is an echo of Lucifer's words to Cain: "Thou art my worshipper." When Tamara falls dead she utters "a terrible, torturing shriek... in which love, suffering and reproach are mingled with a last prayer for grace and a hopeless adieu to a young life" (cp. P. above). Tamara on her bier is depicted as Byron shows the dead Medora: many of the expressions seem to have been taken from *The Corsair*²⁵⁴. And the story ends with an epilogue-picture of a ruined castle, which bears some likeness to Hassan's decaying halls²⁵⁵.

Something has already been said about the splendour of Lermontov's descriptions. It must not be assumed from this, however, that they are anything so lyrical, so idealised and so overdone as are some of Byron's. At the bottom of the wildest of them (and they are not often that) there is a foundation of common-sense, exactitude and restraint. There is little bad grammar in Lermontov's verse; also very little that is ambiguous. He never writes that species of absurdity, which occasionally obtrudes itself in the *Oriental Tales*. His terseness contrasts vividly with Byron's verbiage. Perhaps this is partly due to the immanent verbal economy of the Russian idiom, which is the complement of its polysyllabism, and partly to the precocious maturity of this young poet. In any case Lermontov's language, as compared with Byron's, is almost laconic. Only when it is confronted with the chastity and simplicity of Pushkin's Russian does it seem at all gorgeous. In this comparative opulence of style Lermontov diverges

²⁵⁴ "Lovely as a sleeping peri, she lay in the coffin; the languid hue of her brow was whiter and purer than her shroud. Her eyelashes were for ever cast down. But who would not have said that, beneath them, her wondrous eyes were only slumbering in expectation of the unsealing kiss or of the dawn." Cp. C. 1771. "In life she was so still and fair, that Death with gentler aspect withered there... The long dark lashes fringed her lids of snow, and veiled — Thought shrinks from all that lurked below... The white shroud and each extended tress... became the bier."

²⁵⁵ "Its invisible inhabitants wait only for the rising of the moon: then it is their holiday, their spell of freedom. They buzz and scamper into every corner. The grey spider spins his web; a family of green lizards sports happily on the roof, and the cautious snake creeps out of a crevice on to the stone of the old porch." Cp. G. 290. "The lonely spider's thin grey pall waves slowly widening o'er the wall; the Bat builds in his Harem bower, and in the fortress of his power the Owl usurps the beacon-tower."

from the other Byronists and comes nearer to Byron. But he never writes like Byron.

4.

The comic vein of Byron's poetry was known to Lermontov as early and nearly as thoroughly as the more serious. But because Lermontov's gift of humour was limited, he produced nothing to compare with *Evgeny Onegin* or *The Cottage in Kolomna*. Lermontov's comic poetry owes much more to *Don Juan* than to *Beppo*. It is not anecdotal, but satirical, and the satire has a sensible tang of bitterness. But besides being satirical, Lermontov is also romantic. "The soul which had sought the marvellous from its infancy" could not abide the triviality and greyness of commonplace things. It must touch these with fancy to make them tolerable. Lermontov's realistic essays are either uncommon stories with richly coloured backgrounds like the poem *Valerik* and the *nouvelles* embodied in *A Hero of Our Time*, or they are simply exercises in military obscenity, which is also an uncommon or, at least, an unconventional subject²⁵⁶. Any approach to the ordinary, as in *Sashka*, *The Treasurer's Wife* or *A Tale for Children* is combated with whimsical writing, with piquancy, or with a misty romanticism. The whimsical manner was partly of Byronic provenance. It had been suggested to Lermontov, along with the ingenious *ottava rima*, by *Don Juan* and *Beppo*. It is odd, however, that the boy, who had used the octave for serious poetry, abandoned this stanza when it came to comic writing. His three comic poems are either in octosyllables, like *The Treasurer's Wife*, or in hendecasyllables, which appear to have been obtained by expanding the Spenserian stanza. Perhaps the resemblance of Lermontov's ponderous strophe to the Spenserians of *Childe Harold* is not entirely fortuitous. I am rather inclined to see in it a symbol of the poet's invincible romanticism.

The style of Lermontov's comic poetry is, as I have said, an attempt to imitate the *Don Juan* manner. It was not a successful attempt. One looks in vain for the truly humorous in the style, although it employs all those media which are known to be peculiar

²⁵⁶ The obscene *Junker* Poems written at the cadet-school in the eighteenthirties are: *The Uhlan's Mistress* (1834), *The Hospital* (1834), *A Peterhof Holiday* (1834) and *Mongo* (1836).

to Byron's work in the Italian measure. Especially evident is the digression, which in Lermontov's hands is even more effective than in Byron's in distracting the writer's attention from his story and retarding action. The more romantic devices, like the abstract simile and the lyrical effusion, are only less noticeable. Wedded to this capricious style with its tricks and capers and to the march of the hendecasyllables, are themes which Lermontov derived from forerunners like Vasily Pushkin (*A Dangerous Neighbour*) and Polezhayev (*Sashka*). They are improper themes mostly, but they can be disgusting only when incompetently handled.

Lermontov's first comic poem was written soon after he had attained his majority (1835—36). It is called *Sashka: a Moral Story*. Fortunately or unfortunately, opinion being divided, it was never finished. It seems to have been modelled on both the *ottava rima* poetry and the Oriental Tales. Lermontov begins his poem, after a more or less digressive overture, with an effective situation, out of which he constructs over a score of stanzas. This is characteristic of the Oriental Tales, but not of *Don Juan*. We are told of Juan's parentage and infancy before we are introduced to his disreputable adventures: Byron lets his hero grow up first. Lermontov, however, prefixes his biographical sketch of Sashka to a large and elaborate picture of him in an infamous house. The sequel to the narrative, which follows the *Vorgeschichte*, is broken by digressions, mostly personal, but sometimes, like Byron's, allusive to contemporary events. Some of these digressions are cynical, not a few are polemical, but there are not many which take rank with most of Byron's as humorous. The story of *Sashka* is a chronicle of youthful debauchery. Sashka is the name of the hero. He is the son of a retired army officer and of a lady with a romantic turn of mind. As a child he was very pretty, with fair hair and blue eyes. When he reached his teens he began to show signs of naughtiness by teasing the dog and the parrot. Youth found him unable to control his appetites. Unrestrained by his tutor, the marquis de Tess, the boy started an affair with Mavrusha, the butler's daughter. His father, who had unwittingly led him astray by personal example²⁵⁷, discovered it and packed him off to Moscow.

²⁵⁷ When Sashka saw his father with Mavrusha "in the shade of a cherry-tree" he stopped dead and "stood with unmoving eyes, pale and cold and silent as marble." Cp. G., already cited.

where he was left in the care of an aunt. In Moscow, Sashka spent some time at a fashionable preparatory school, where he learnt nothing, and then a few years at the university, where he perfected the bad habits he had acquired in the village. These habits led him into a "labyrinth of debauchery", in which the Jewess Thyrsa was his guide. Whether he would ultimately have "felt the fullness of satiety" we can only guess. Lermontov does not tell us.

The influence of *Don Juan* on *Sashka* makes itself felt in a series of *motifs* and expressions²⁵⁸. Sashka's infant beauty and mischief-making boyhood and the troubles of his adolescence are all like Juan's²⁵⁹. Tess teaches him practically the same abstruse lore as the tutors taught Juan at Doña Inez' instance, and with

²⁵⁸ (a) "He (Sashka) was elegantly groomed... *et cetera*." Cp. D. J. III, i. "Hail Muse! *et cetera*."

(b) "And he, my Sashka (not the moon), hears someone softly breathing." Cp. D. J. 191. "He, Juan (and not Wordsworth) so pursued his self-communion."

(c) "But I have an eye for modesty and will pass over a whole hour in silence." Cp. D. J. I, 105. "And even if I knew, I should not tell."

(d) "The immodest moon was hidden by a cloud." Cp. D. J. 113. "The Devil's in the moon for mischief."

(e) "And now, while he is slumbering, I will tell you where he comes from, who his father and mother were, how he came into the world, and, finally, how he got into this infamous house, and who were his valet and his tutor." This passage is partly imitated from Sterne's *Tristram Shandy* and partly from Byron. Cp. especially D. J. I, 7, which "narrates somewhat of Don Juan's father, and also of his mother."

(i) "His father — a gentleman from Simbirsk, Ivan Ilyich N. N., a corpulent person *etc.*" Cp. D. J. I, 9. "His father's name was José — *Don*, of course." Also D. J. I, 19.

²⁵⁹ (a) "The child grew prettier daily; his lively eyes, little white hands and flaxen hair in ringlets charmed all who saw him." Cp. D. J. I, 25. "A little, curly headed good-for-nothing." D. J. I, 49. "Young Juan waxed in goodness and grace; at six a charming child."

(b) "He began to play his first pranks by teasing the dogs and the parrot. Years rolled on, and Sashka grew, and began, at five, to understand the meaning of good and evil." Cp. D. J. I, 25. "A mischief-making monkey from his birth... the most unquiet imp on earth... in infancy a little wild."

(c) "He built for himself an airy world, where he lost himself in thought." Cp. D. J. I, 90. "Young Juan wandered... thinking unutterable things."

about the same success²⁶⁰. Sashka's aunt is a Russian Doña Inez, or so we are given to understand, and his evasions of her vigilance are comparable to Don Juan's escapades. The scene, in which Ivan Ilyich finds his son and Mavrusha together, is a rather unvivacious and inelegant reproduction of the scene in *Don Juan*, where Alphonso discovers an intruder in his wife's bedroom. Lermontov's personal digressions have a savour of Byron's in *Childe Harold*.

After *Sashka*, Lermontov wrote two other comic poems. The first of them was *The Treasurer's Wife* (1836), of which Zhukovsky thought so well that he persuaded the poet to publish it. The second was *A Tale for Children*, which was left unfinished in 1841. *The Treasurer's Wife* is a piquant *conte* in verse, admirably told, with few digressions, like Pushkin's *Count Nulin*. It is a story of intrigue, which tells, among other things, how a card-sharper stakes his property and his wife on a card and loses all to an uhlan officer. There is nothing to suggest Byron in this poem, but Byron might easily have written one like it in octaves. The anecdote is worthy of *Beppo*.

A Tale for Children is, superficially, a poem in the *Beppo* vein. It is in the same hendecasyllables as *Sashka* and contains an abundance of digressions, as well as most of the *procédés* of the Juanesque style. The *Tale* has a "mysterio-magical" plot. There is a woman in it, who might be the fair Byronic heroine as a respectable young lady, and a devil who has acquired something of Mephistopheles' polished guile. But the story, as far as it goes, is so hazy that one can make very little of it. There is hardly a trace of borrowing from Byron, beyond a very doubtful parallel with *Lara*. If the epithet "Byronical" is to be applied to the poem, it can be understood only in a general way. Structurally, to be sure, and in the matter of style, *A Tale for Children* does exhibit points of affinity with *Beppo*. But its plot is a new romantic departure.

Lermontov's romantic temperament and lack of humour gave Russian Beppoesque poetry an entirely new face. There were now

²⁶⁰ "He spent a long year over note-books, history text-books, grammars, books on geography and philosophical treatises... Tess had five distinct systems of philosophy... Sashka did not listen to what he said." Cp. D. J. I, 47. "Sermons he read, and lectures he endured etc."

two varieties of comic poetry: the anecdotal or nonsensical, represented by *The Cottage in Kolomna*, and the romantic, of which *A Tale for Children* is typical. We shall see later that both these species had a more or less long line of descendants.

CHAPTER VIII

Afterglow.

1.

In the later eighteen-thirties Byron was already a Russian classic. By the forties he had become so securely established in this position that he ceased almost altogether to be a living force in Russian literature. His name was still on everybody's lips; his poetry had become a source of mottoes and quotations; he was frequently and copiously translated; and the critics, whenever they had occasion to speak of him, expressed unconditional approval. It was no doubt a very enviable position to be in, but it was not that of a man who exercises a vital influence over his fellows.

Russian lyrical poetry in the eighteen-forties and fifties shows few vestiges of Byronism. It is a clear enough mirror of the contemporary mind, and what it has to show is not encouraging. A species of grey, charmless melancholy seems to permeate and pervade it. The age of revolutionary romanticism had passed. The new romanticism was German, philosophical and contemplative. The generation of men and women, who lived in this attenuated speculative atmosphere, although it was probably the most brilliant that Russia has yet witnessed, had all the defects one associates with the purely intellectual. It was a generation of Hamlets. Lermontov had pilloried it in some of his bitterest verse (*Meditation*). Lermontov was the last, as he was also the greatest, of the Byronists.

It is evident that Byron could have very little to say in such circumstances. His combativeness was no longer admired as Lermontov had admired it. The *Oriental Tales* could not possibly satisfy people who had risen above such childishness. If there really was anything in Byron that had an appeal for them it must have been the long-suffering of his *Domestic Pieces*. I use this term broadly

to include all Byron's lyrics which have any connection with the causes and circumstances of his separation. These Domestic Pieces and, of course, the maturer and more "philosophical" cantos of *Childe Harold*, as well as *Manfred*, attracted many translators. Most of the leading poets of the eighteen-forties and fifties wrote their versions of favourite stanzas in *Childe Harold*, or translated one or more of the intimate lyrics. The works of Pavlova, Rostopchina, the Slavophil critic Grigoryev and Ogarev include such translations. Of Byron's "lyrical" influence over them it is hardly possible to speak. Ogarev's reconciliatory poem addressed to his first wife, from whom he had separated, is possibly the only lyric of the eighteen-forties which shows it. The theme is that of *Fare Thee Well*, to which it is also indebted in verbal detail²⁶¹.

2.

Even in Lermontov's time the Byronic romance had become an outworn thing. Pushkin, Kozlov and Zhukovsky, who had established its tradition in the eighteen-twenties, had either turned to new measures or become silent. Only the small fry, the proto-Maydanovs and the Russian Letitia Landons, wrote and published busily. Lermontov, with an unyouthful fastidiousness, kept his efforts undivulged. His one published lyric romance of any importance, *The Mtsiri*, came in 1840, when the first wave of Byronism had spent itself. One may reasonably doubt whether Lermontov would have been able to rehabilitate the Byronic tradition, if he had chosen to print all his vendetta poems as they were written²⁶². They were

²⁶¹ (a) "I am ready to bear your rebukes, although they may be as bitter as gall." Cp. *Fare Thee Well*. "E'en though unforgiving, never 'gainst thee shall my heart rebel."

(b) "Certainly I had my faults, certainly I was wrong in many things I did." Cp. "Though my many faults defaced me..."

(c) "I am grateful for those moments when I trusted and loved." Cp. "Think of him thy love hath blessed!"

(d) "Oh, I am not against you. Give me your hand." Cp. "Think of him whose prayers shall bless thee."

(e) "Thoughts of the past are like the thoughts that surge in you when you are standing by the graveside of a child that has died in pain." Cp. "There are words of deeper sorrow than the wail above the dead."

²⁶² *Hadji the Abrek* (1835), the only one that he published, passed almost unnoticed.

mostly of insignificant value. And one may suppose that not even *The Demon* and *The Mtsiri*, if they had come earlier, could have restored the lyric romance to its former eminence. After Lermontov's death in 1841 scarcely more than a half-dozen Byronic poems were written. It is even doubtful if there were so many. Only two have come to my notice. They are both readable and interesting because, for one thing, they are so different from the monotonously similar verse-tales of the eighteen-thirties. They stand in the same relation to these as the mid-Victorian verse-narratives (e. g. Tennyson's *Enoch Arden*) stand to the Oriental Tales. They have a perceptibly "modern" savour and are less conventional in language. This applies more particularly to the later and the better of the two, namely, Polonsky's *Celliote*, which, if setting is made the exclusive test, is the most Byronic of all the metrical romances in Russian.

One could divide the Russian verse-tales into groups or categories according to the criteria of theme and setting. If the first were chosen, the groups would be numerous and ill-defined: a narrative poem like *The Gypsies*, for instance, might be a tragedy of jealousy, a drama of unfaithfulness, or a story of marital tyranny, according to the point of view. It is, therefore, safer and simpler to take the background as our touchstone. It will help us to divide the Russian romances into five distinct categories: the Levantine (*The Fountain in Bakhchisaray*) the Russian (*Poltava*), the Baltic (*Eda*), the Mediterranean (*The Beggar*) and the uncharted (*The Angel of Death*). Applying this test to the romances of the Byronic aftermath, we shall discover that Sluchevsky's *Heresearch* is a Baltic poem and that Polonsky's *Celliote* is Levantine.

The Heresearch belongs to the cycle of semi-historical verse-narratives, of which poems like *Prince Andrey*, *Vadim* and *Natalya* are representative. It is a work of considerable length, much longer than any of the romances of the eighteen-thirties, and contains a few purely external departures from the conventional type. It has extensive dialogues in blank verse, and these, as in *The Gypsies* and in certain other tales, are headed with the speakers' names. Nothing could be more melodramatic than *The Heresearch*. Its subject-matter invites comparison with the themes of Bestuzhev's violently romantic *nouvelles*, *Castle Eisen* and *Castle Neuhausen*. The background of the story is the background of these *nouvelles*.

There are four characters: the bloody and lustful Barons Schreckenbad, father and son, Irina, their Russian captive, and the Orthodox priest, who is later to be known as Brother Irinarkh. Father and son are rivals in their love for Irina. Irina loathes them both, but her captivity has taught her to humour them as well as she can (cp. Klara in *The Lithuanian Girl*). The priest, an implacable enemy of all heretics, stands by like a doctor at a duel, acts as the heroine's spiritual adviser, and witnesses the terrible tragedy that ends the story. The love interest is subordinated to the larger religious interest, which resolves itself into a justification of murder done in the cause of faith. Because of this, the title of the story is neither Baron Schreckenbad nor Irina, but *The Hereseach*. If we take only the love story, we can draw a parallel between it and *Parisina*, where the characters are similarly placed. But apart from this barely convincing analogy and lyrical *procédés* like the descriptive overture, biographica, scenic interludes and a retrospective obituary epilogue, the poem offers nothing to make one think that Byron influenced it more than superficially.

The case is different with *The Celliote*. Its author, the parnasian poet Polonsky, was evidently inspired by the Tales when he wrote it. As a poem, it is probably one of the longest in Russian. It is a double story of remorse. The Celliote is a monk of Athos, named Kiril, who has been rescued from drowning by a band of Greek corsairs. On the island, to which they take him along with their loot, he makes the acquaintance of a drunken bully called Despo. Despo comes to him to confess a crime, which he has on his conscience, namely responsibility for the death of Zuleika, the wife of a merchant of Beyrut, whom he had kidnapped. The Celliote also unburdens himself of "a crime" to Despo. While at Athos he had promised to help a girl in distress, but had been prevented by circumstances from keeping his promise. He had taken this broken promise so much to heart that he had escaped from the convent and put to sea without provisions in a small boat. Despo and the Celliote become good friends, and their friendship is cemented by a comforting prophetic vision which the latter has of their "victims". When news comes to the island that the monks of Athos are ripe for revolt against the Turk, they are both sent there with arms and instructions. But they never reach Athos. On their way, a Turkish frigate intercepts them, and they are killed.

The two principal characters in this story without a love interest are replicas of the Giaour and Kozlov's Monk. Despo, for all his degradation, is a sort of Giaour, and Kiril strongly resembles the Monk. The heroines are dream-women, like Francesca and Leila. The other characters — the clephts, the islanders, the captain — are not endowed with personalities of their own. They are as much pawns or counters as are the pirates in *The Corsair*, or the serfs in *Lara*. The setting of the story is Aegean.

As a piece of poetic architecture, *The Celliote* has a surface likeness to Byron's Tales. But there are *motifs* and phrases in it, too, which show that it was constructed on their pattern. The brief overture recalls the prelude to *The Siege of Corinth*. After it, comes a long descriptive passage, which is succeeded by the panorama of a sea-fight (cp. C. II). The arrival of the clephts at the pirate island is paralleled in Byron by Lambro's home-coming (cp. D. J. III) and by Conrad's last visit to Medora before the naval battle in the Bay of Coron (C. I). Despo, as he first appears in the story, is a character of Byronic proportions. Like Lara, he is tortured by pangs of conscience; like the Giaour, he eases his soul by confessing his guilt. The attack of the Turks on the island resembles Conrad's on Seyd (C. II). In describing Kiril's vision, the writer seems to have drawn upon *The Siege* and *The Corsair*²⁶³. Zuleika is a second Francesca²⁶⁴. A campanal epilogue, like those which Kozlov and Lermon-tov used in their confession poems, closes *The Celliote*.

We have discovered many things in *The Celliote* which point to its having been influenced by the Oriental Tales. The confession and spectre *motifs* were suggested by *The Giaour* and *The Siege of Corinth*; the local colour could not be more Byronic: Despo is a Byro-

²⁶³ (a) Zuleika's "face glimmers with an immovable, silent, languid beauty". Cp. S. C. 546, cited above.

(b) "Kiril is filled with dread... he stares, and thinks that he is asleep and that he is having a bad dream. His thoughts grow confused and he wants to ask: What is this? — but (he cannot and stands there) pale, motionless and inarticulate." Cp. S. C. 535. "God of my fathers! What is here? ... His trembling hands refused to sign the Cross." Also C. 1039, M. 796, S. C. 533.

²⁶⁴ "The outlines of her oriental face dissolved, and the edge of the shaggy carpet, behind, showed through the haze. The mysterious stars of her eyes were extinguished; her arm rose slowly; and, like a diaphanous mist, she disappeared." Cp. S. C. 558, already cited.

nic hero; and the structure of the poem — prelude, *Vorgeschichte*, descriptive passages, epilogue — is that of the Tales. But with all these points of resemblance to the Byron romances, *The Celliote* is different from the average Russian verse-narrative. The lyrical element in it almost in abeyance; the narrative is realistic; the fable has a marked originality of its own; and the mode of treatment is predominantly objective. Besides, the stamp of a relative modernity is on the whole work.

3.

I have pointed out in an earlier chapter that *The Cottage in Kolomna* and *A Tale for Children* are the prototypes of a succession of Russian Beppoesque poems. These poems are almost all written in *ottava rima*. Pushkin's *Cottage in Kolomna* is the type and begetter of the purely comic poem, of which there were few specimens in the eighteen-forties and after, while Lermontov's *Tale* represents a group of romantic or fantastic poems. But beside these two varieties, there were others, namely the realistic tales in octaves, which derive from *Sashka*, and the emotional chronicle, a product of the *Zeitgeist*. Of these two, the emotional chronicle is the least Beppoesque. It wants humour. It is a meditative poem like *Childe Harold*, but it is even more personal and introspective. In lacking humour, however, the emotional chronicle is not alone. Much of the Beppoesque or Juanesque poetry of the mid-century possessed little of it to neutralise the prevailing melancholy of its tone. It was largely of the rueful romantic sort, which gives no scope for an exhibition of high spirits. Lermontov's work, rather than Pushkin's, was the pattern that the mid-nineteenth century poets mostly followed. But we have seen that there was also a small body of poems, in which pure laughter was the authors' Muse and theme. These shall be examined presently.

Before I attempt to trace the history of the *Cottage in Kolomna* and *Tale for Children* groups, it will be as well, in order to secure the contemporary atmosphere, to deal shortly with what I have called the emotional chronicle and the essays in everyday realism.

The emotional chronicle is represented at the beginning and at the end of its history by Ogarev's *Humour* and Merezhkovsky's *Octaves du passé*. *Humour* was written in 1841 as one of a large body of narrative and reflective poems, of which it is by far the

most considerable. It is in eight-syllabled octaves, exceedingly long, and divided into three parts, of which the last was added after a lapse of some twenty-seven years. It is autobiographical, plotless and meditative. It is saturated with mirthless reflections. Digressions abound, and the familiar apostrophe and the foreign tag are much in evidence. All these and other *procédés* of style are taken in part from *Don Juan*²⁶⁵. But it would be misleading to fancy that Ogarev unburdens himself with a Byronic ease and nonchalance. His bearing is generally as grave as it is melancholy and depressing. The second canto of the poem is a record of travel, encumbered by a mass of introspection. The last canto is the shortest and perhaps the least humorous. It gives the impression that Ogarev has lost his laughter altogether. And the title itself seems a sad misnomer.

Humour is a kind of *Childe Harold* in octaves, and yet it is different from *Childe Harold* through the preponderance of reflection over description. In fact there is very little description. The chronicle of travel becomes a chronicle of dead feelings and future fears. *Humour* is eminently an introspective and serious poem, for all that it has just a touch — it is only a touch — of *Don Juan* to vary the minor key in which it is largely written.

Merezhkovsky's *Octaves du passé* is autobiography in verse. The poet "lays bare a live heart". He describes in minute detail his home life as a child, the haunts and habits of his boyhood, his intellectual growth and his feelings and sensations. The narrative is varied with digressions, which, like Pushkin's in *The Cottage in Kolomna*, are chiefly concerned with literary topics. Now and then there is a sparkle of real humour. Mostly, however, the *Octaves* is a despondent record.

Realistic essays in the *Sashka* vein were numerous in the eighteen-forties and continued to be written down to the eighties. Most

²⁶⁵ (a) "You will begin to abuse me for interpolating pathetic lines." Cp. D. J. "But I grow pathetic."

(b) "O, friends! at thirty we are but the ghosts of ourselves." Cp. D. J. I, 213. "At thirty my hair is gray."

(c) "It is intolerable to discuss niceties of phrase with a blue-stocking. Shun her, my friends, as you would fly a foul infection." Cp. D. J. X, 50. "The blues, that tender tribe who sigh o'er sonnets *etc.*", 64. "My Juan, whom I left in deadly peril among live poets and blue ladies."

of the leading poets of the time wrote at least one. As a rule they are in *ottava rima*, for it seems to have been a habit or a fashion to try one's hand at a poem in that measure. Not one of them is indelicate, like *Sashka*, or deals frankly with an immodest subject. To the eighteen-forties belong, *The Coevals* by Ogarev and the verse-novels of Turgenev. Later, especially in the eighteen-seventies, Maykov, Fet and Polonsky each wrote his contribution to the common stock of realistic tales.

When exactly Ogarev wrote his *Coevals* it is difficult to say, but the poem apparently came rather later than the first two cantos of *Humour*. Ogarev did not finish it; he hardly began it, indeed, for it consists of a preface in decasyllabic verse, followed by only one full canto of twenty-six stanzas and three stanzas of another. It is plainly a poem of the *Beppo* series, a clever piece of work as far as it goes, and more truly humorous than *Humour*. "I am unused to prefaces", says the author, "so without further ceremony I will solemnly begin my tale" (cp. D. J. I, *passim*). The fable is related in this manner throughout. Unfortunately, there is very little of it: Ogarev succeeds only in introducing us to his "melodramatic" Vas'ka Ponurin, whose name gave his parents as much trouble to choose as Tristram's had given the Shandies, and to his "coeval", the peasant-boy Ivan. The Beppoesque style is consistently imitated²⁶⁶.

Before Turgenev began to write his poetical novels he had exercised himself in writing poetry. This poetry is made up of lyrics and love idylls. He has left us two novelettes in verse, both of which illustrate the Beppoesque manner, with this difference that they contain an appreciable admixture of every-day realism. One recalls that most of Turgenev's novels deal with unhappy love: this was Turgenev's speciality. But oddly enough his first novelette in verse is a story of *happy* love. The novelette is called *Parasha* after the heroine, and was written in 1843. As a story, it is simply *Evgeny*

²⁶⁶ (a) "My hero is not the only character in this tale. I have asked many to accept the office. Friends, foes, come along! — but not in a body — and I'll show you a becoming path to follow." Cp. D. J. I, i. "I want a hero *etc.*"

(b) "But here I am going to end my first chapter because I think it would be foolish of me to prolong it any further." Cp. D. J. III, cxi. "I feel this tediousness will never do... and I must cut down (in copying) this long canto into two."

Onegin with an ending. The novel-reading young lady wins and marries her masher neighbour, and, as the story-books say, they live happily ever after. It is a very unpretentious narrative, but it is told so cleverly that one is kept in suspense almost to the end, and the *dénouement* comes with startling suddenness. The tone of the poem is light and melancholy, like the more pathetic passages in *Don Juan*; but all the tricks of the Beppoesque manner are in it, although metrically it is not Beppoesque, being written, not in octaves, but in stanzas of thirteen lines, rhyming like those of *Evgeny Onegin*.

Andrey (1845) is the name of Turgenev's other verse-tale and the name of its hero. It was entitled *Love* in manuscript, and already reveals the novelist. More serious than *Parasha*, it has for its theme what with Turgenev was to become an obsession — the sorrows and sufferings of love. It is in *ottava rima*. The beginning is characteristically Byronic. "To begin anything, I have heard say more than once, is difficult. And when one comes to think of it, is there anyone who really cares to be for ever explaining? I, at least, am not one to do this and so begin my story straight away²⁶⁷." The story tells how a young man, who has never loved before, falls in love with his neighbour's wife, but from scruples of conscience disdains an intrigue and, like Insarov in *On the Eve*, runs away.

The verse-tales of Maykov, Fet and Polonsky can hardly be described as Beppoesque. They have only their measures and an odd mannerism in common with *Beppo*. Maykov's *Princess* (1877) is explicitly "a tragedy". It is a serious story of a brilliant lady, who dies of grief at her daughter's waywardness. The almost actionless fable is related in a vast number of octaves, half of which consist of digressions. The digressions, though reinforced by other "comic" devices, do not amuse.

Polonsky's *Ignoramus* (*Neuch*) is not, properly speaking, a poem in octaves. The stanza is a septet with the lines varying in length, the last being always an alexandrine. It is a peculiar and rather clumsy form, but the acoustic impression one receives from it resembles that of *ottava rima*. The tone of the poem is volatile; the language at times almost colloquial, as in *Beppo*, and the figures such as are peculiar to poems of the *Beppo* group. The story is

²⁶⁷ Cp. D. J. IV, i. "Nothing so difficult as a beginning in poesy."

trivial and uninteresting, and contains a plethora of realistic commonplace.

Fet's essays in *ottava rima* are fairly numerous but, whether finished or unfinished, they are all extremely short, never exceeding two score stanzas and a half. They are pre-eminently realistic stories. In some of them, however, the romantic touch which one associates with Lermontov's *Tale for Children* is appreciable. There are four in all. One is a story of young love called *The Talisman*, through which runs a streak of fantasy. The scene and characters, except the hero's, remind one of *Onegin*. The hero is a sort of new Endymion. In *Captain Losev's Dream* the romantic element is more prominent. The story is told in the first person and concerns a gruesome dream which the officer has while stationed at Yuryev. The dancing skeletons in it might have stepped out of Pushkin's short story, *The Undertaker*. The hero talks like the Giaour when he protests that it is neither a dream nor a fancy. The awakening and its cause are delightfully absurd, but its consequences are grave. Like the hero of Aleksey Tolstoy's *Portrait*, of whom I shall speak presently, he falls ill through his dream.

Two Little Limes is a distressing story of a lady who shares Pul'kheriya Ivanovna's²⁶⁸ belief in presentiments. The seriousness of the story, its grey, Chekhov-like melancholy and the style in which it is narrated contrast to the point of incongruity with its flippant measure.

The last of the group is called *The Student*, which represents, in some sort, a fresh departure. It is an autobiographical piece (cp. *Octaves du passé*) supposed to be related by the author as a story to a young person who is unwell. The theme is a curious love-affair between a student and an institute girl, who reveals her passion to him on the day of her marriage to another. Like Fet's other tales, *The Student* is too earnest and unfrivolous to be placed in company with *Beppo*, although its measure and mannerisms are the same.

The romantic tradition, which was inaugurated by Lermontov's torso, *A Tale for Children*, and reflections of which have been noticed in the work of Fet, produced two really remarkable poems:

²⁶⁸ The heroine of Gogol's *Old fashioned Gentry* (1835).

The Portrait by Aleksey Tolstoy, probably written in the eighteenth-seventies, and Vladimir Solovyev's *Three Encounters* which belongs to the concluding years of last century.

The Portrait is a romantic poem with a comic undercurrent. It descends from *Beppo* through *A Tale for Children*, but is different from the former in as much as the romantic and facetious elements of which it is composed do not clash, but run parallel courses. Tolstoy never parodies himself, as Byron does. *The Portrait* covers just over eighty fluent octaves, some of which have ingenious rhymes that challenge, if they do not surpass, Byron's. The style is the Beppoesque style, but with touches in it of a pleasing originality. There are digressions on all kinds of subjects, ranging from yellow colour-wash to German philosophy. The story is told in the first person and begins, after the Juanesque manner, at the beginning. A lonely little boy with a romantic imagination, who has been left much to himself by his parents, falls in love with the portrait of a pretty but mischievous young lady. He has an adventure with her in the small hours of an eventful morning. The consequence of the incident is that he falls ill of "brain fever". All this is very cleverly told with not too many digressions.

Vladimir Solovyev's *Three Encounters* (1898) is a Beppoesque poem only by courtesy. The very "elegiac" quatrain in which it is written is a sufficient reason for excluding it from present consideration. But there is something in the tone and style of the poem — in the delicate humour and the Juanesque figures — which causes one to think that it belongs, if only in manner, to the *ottava rima* poetry. There is no vestige in it, however, of Byron's direct influence. Lermontov and Tolstoy, if anyone at all, must have served the writer for his models. His poem is romantic, like theirs. The "encounters" are with an ideal "she", first in the flesh, then in the spirit. The first part of the poem records the author's meeting with "her" in a church in Moscow (1862); the second, a vision of "her" in the British Museum (1875); and the third, another and final vision of "her", in the perfection of her beauty, on the plains of Egypt.

I have said that purely comic poems like *Beppo* and *The Cottage in Kolomna* are rare in Russian. After the eighteen-thirties, when the latter was written, I have been able to find only two: Tolstoy's *Dream of State-Counsellor Popov* and an anecdote en-

titled *Also Morality* by Slucevsky. Of these two poems only the first deserves to be called comic. The fun of *Also Morality* is vitiated by its irony.

The Dream of State-Counsellor Popov, which Tolstoy described as "a satiric poem", is one of the most amusing pieces of verse in Russian literature. In its own province it represents a supreme achievement. The story is thin, like the *Beppo* fable, but it differs from this in being the drollest of anecdotes. It concerns a horrible dream. A minor civil servant of humble origin dreams that he goes in full uniform to offer saint's day congratulations to his chief and finds, only when it is too late, that he has forgotten to put on his trousers. The minister is shocked by the disorder in his dress and gives instructions for his removal to the headquarters of the Third Section on a charge of corrupting morals. He is paternally admonished by the head of the Section and induced to write down the names of all those who have compassed his "fall". He writes down as many names as occur to him until the list grows so long that he awakes, trembling and perspiring, only to discover, to his indescribable relief, that his trousers are hanging on a chair beside his bed. *The Dream* is written with all the verve and virtuosity of *Beppo* down to the use of clever rhymes and archaic turns of speech. If it is intended as satire, the force of this is lost in the laughter it provokes. Possibly it is as much and as successful a satire as *Beppo*.

Slucevsky's *Also Morality* is a vivacious little poem, which might have been charming but for the too obvious sarcasm. It is an anecdote in the usual vein, told without digressions in pseudo-octaves, the lines being, not decasyllabic, but alexandrine. The style is tolerably facetious. Byron's influence appears to be stronger here than in most Russian stories in *ottava rima*: it is so obvious, indeed, that *Also Morality* has many of the characteristics of a *pastiche*. The scene of the story is significantly England, "the land of decorum", as Slucevsky calls it; the hero is an operatic bass, and the heroine — the Dowager Duchess of Mongomedy. The dowager is a merry widow, who contrives to hide her *liaison* with the "low-born" hero and to remain "immaculate", as the world goes, by lavish donations to charity, an enchanting manner and other delightful blandishments. But one day the couple make up their minds to marry. No sooner is their intention noised abroad than

the lady's friends begin to cut her. Her life becomes so unpleasant in England that she and her lover are obliged in the end to cross over to France and marry there. La Mongomedy is another Laura, or Lady Adeline, with just a dash of the Duchess of FitzFulke's *diablerie*. Her lover's personality is as elusive as the Count's in *Beppo*: he is at best only a lay-figure. The story itself resembles *Beppo* in a general way. But for the absence of a third party, it might have been nearly the same. It also has some points in common with the Norman Abbey scenes and incidents in the later cantos of *Don Juan* (D. J. XIII f.). Perhaps Sluchevsky found his inspiration there.

Our survey of Russian Byronic poetry has shown us three things. It has shown that Byronism was a phase of the European romantic movement, which, in the natural sequence of events, spread to Russia after she had become a constituent part of literary Europe. It has shown that this Byronism had two aspects — a romantic and a comic, of which the first was the more influential and the last the more enduring. It has shown that Byron exercised his influence over the bulk of Russian writers not directly, but through a group of three poets, one of whom had learnt English specially to read him.

4.

To ensure that this study shall be complete, let us glance at what Russian readers, translators and critics were doing with Byron's poetry after the eighteen-thirties. I have already pointed out that Byron ceased to be a living influence in Russia when Lermontov died. He had been "canonised" even before 1841: he had become a Russian classic. From that time on, it was considered to be the mark of a literary education to have read him and to be able to talk about him intelligently. Diarists still continued to record their impressions of his works. We read, for example, in Herzen's *Letters on the Study of Nature* (VIII, *Realism*), that in the writer's opinion Byron was "the Hume of poetry". Many Russian lyrics and longer poems written between the eighteen-forties and the close of the century have mottoes taken from his writings. The censorship itself tacitly recognised his "canonisation" by abating its rigour and allowing translations to be made even from *Don Juan*. This poem was twice translated, in excerpt, by Gendre and Lyubich-Roma-

novich as early as the eighteen-forties. But it was the sixties — astonishing as it may seem to those who know that decade to have been an age when pure literature was persecuted by radical criticism — that were especially productive of Byron translations. In 1869 the poet Gerbel' compiled a large and informative anthology of Byron's works, which bears all the marks of a labour of love. Later, at the beginning of our own century, Professor S. Vengerov essayed a more ambitious compilation by bringing out the complete works of Byron in Russian (complete to the most trivial *jeu d'esprit*) in a magnificently illustrated edition of four large volumes.

Criticism, after the youthful passions of the eighteen-twenties had simmered down, treated Byron with a deference that was sometimes akin to worship. Nadezhdin's pupil and Russia's arch-critic, Vissarion Belinsky, wrote of the poet with profound awe. "On reading Byron's poetry", he said²⁶⁹, "one is filled with horrified amazement at the colossal personality of the man and the titanic courage and pride of his thoughts and feelings." A few pages farther we read that "Byron wrote of Europe and for Europe" and that he "strove not so much to depict the life of his time as to pass judgement on it."

After Belinsky, Byron rarely engaged the attention of critics, but whenever these had occasion to speak of him, as for instance in their articles on his Russian "school", it was always in a tone of either unconscious or studied respect. Dobrolyubov laughed Podolinsky to shame over *Borsky*, and yet said nothing offensive about the *Oriental Tales*. Even Pisarev, who never had much patience with poetry, declared, in a study called *Pushkin and Belinsky* (1865), that to rank Pushkin and Mickiewicz with Byron, as Belinsky had done, and to speak of them as "great" was like raising Kaydanov and Smaragdov, writers of scientific text-books, to Schlosser's level.

With the revival of interest in Pushkin towards the end of the century, after years of undeserved neglect, the interest in Byron revived too, and academic critics (I use the term generally) like Włodzimierz Spasowicz and Professors Orest Müller and Aleksey Veselovsky published studies of him and his poetry and his influence on Russian literature. That interest has grown steadily ever since²⁷⁰.

²⁶⁹ See the article entitled "The Works of Pushkin", chap. V (1846).

²⁷⁰ Cp. V. Zhirmunsky's work "Byron and Pushkin" (1924).

Bairona ietekme krievu dzejā.

V. Metjūss.

KOPSAVILKUMS.

1.

Par Bairona reputāciju Krievijā stāsta daudzi privātu vēstulu krājumi (piem., Ostafjevas archīvs), tulkojumi no viņa dzejas, žurnālu raksti (piem., Veņevitina un Poļevoja), vēstules avīzēm (piem., D. P. Runiča), dienas grāmatas un cenzūras piezīmes. Bairons pirmo reizi minēts 1814. g. kādā krievu diplomata S. Uvarova jūsmīgā vēstulē Žukovskim. Par viņu jūsmo arī kņazs Pjotrs Vjazemskis un pēdējā draugs Andrejs Turgeņevs. No viņa ietekmes turpretim vairās Žukovskis, kas tomēr pārtulko „Šijonas gūstekni“. Kritisku nostāju pret Baironu pēc samērā neilgas vergošanas ieņem Puškina savās vēstulēs un literārās piezīmēs. Daži dzejnieki, to starpā Ivans Kozlovs, mācās angļiski, lai lasītu Bairona dzeju oriģinālā. Bet sākumā gan viņa dzeju tulko no franču valodas. Viņa populārākie darbi — „Čailda Harolda svētceļojums“, „Džaurš“, „Korsārs“, „Manfreds“ un „Ebrēju melodijas“. Pirmajiem tulkojumiem seko apcerējumi par Bairona dzeju laikrakstos. Pirmie apcerējumi tulkoti no franču valodas, vēlāk oriģināli. Oriģinālo apcerējumu skaitā izceļas N. Poļevoja raksti Maskavas Telegrafā. Poļevojs ieņem romantisma aizstāvja viedokli un cildina Baironu. Negatīvu pieeju — Eiropas Vēstnesī — uzrāda klasicisma pārstāvis profesors Nadeždins, kas atkārtoti Augusta Šlēgeļa domas. Sīva pretestība Bairona ietekmei sastopama D. P. Runiča vēstulē Krievu Invalidam 1820. gadā. Bairons vietām minēts arī 1820. gadu dienas grāmatās. Viņu daudzina Puškina bērnības draugs N. Vulfs, kas ar Baironu iepazīstas Tomasa Mūra sarakstītajā biografijā, un A. V. Nikitenko (vēlāk akadēmiķis), kas dzied viņam romantiski izjustas slavas dziesmas. Iekšlietu ministrijas cenzūras komisija tik viegli nepadodas Bairona dzejas ietekmei. Tās ziņojumi aprāda, ka

daži Bairaona darbi (piem., „Kains“, „Don Žuans“, „Marino Faliero“ un „Pārvērstais kroplis“) politisku vai tikumisku iemeslu dēļ bija aizliegti, daži atkal atļauti izvilukumos vai ar pienācīgiem izgriezumiem.

2.

Bairaona ietekme izpaužas 1) lirikas motīvos un 2) stāstītājas dzejas kompozīcijā, stilā un metrikā.

Vairāki baironiski motīvi atkārtojas krievu lirikā, sevišķi Puškina dzejā, starp 1820. un 1830. g. a) Lakstīgalas un rozes mīlestības motīvu sastopam vairākkārt Puškina lirikā, kā arī „Bachčisaraņas strūklakā“. b) Sekodams Bairaona dzejolim „Bezmiega acu saulīte“, Puškina „Tauridas zvaigznē“ (1824.) uzrunā rietekli. c) Jūsmošana par grieķu dumpi pret Turciju saistīta pa daļai ar Bairaona ietekmi. Te spīlgtus piemērus sniedz Puškina un sevišķi Venevitinova dzeja. d) „Nekrievisko“ jūras motīvu krievu romantīki gūst no Bairaona. Piem., 1820. g. Puškina uzraksta divus dzejoļus par jūru, arī ļoti baironisko „Dienas spīdeklis ir izdzisis“. Žukovska „Jūrā“ (1822.) turpretim Bairaona ietekme pavirša. e) Napoleona cildināšanas motīvu Puškina patapina no Bairaona „Odas Napoleonam“. f) Vilšanās motīvs Puškinam patstāvīgs, bet dažas variācijas (piem., dzejoļi „Dzīres, mīlākās un draugi“, 1821.) smel iedvesmu no Bairaona. g) Pasaules bojā ejas skati Boratinska poēmā „Pēdējā nāve“ atgādina Bairaona pareģojumu poēmā „Tumsa“. Bairaona ietekmi uz Boratinski te apliecina arī daudzas paralēles izteiksmē.

Krievu liriku ar motīviem apgādājusi nevien Bairaona lirika, bet arī viņa poēma „Čailds Harolds“, kas Krievijā bijusi viņa visiemīļotākais darbs pēc t. s. Austrumu stāstiem.

3.

1820. gados, aplūkodami Puškina un citu dzejnieku stāstītāju dzeju, krievu kritiķi bieži norāda, ka tā esot parādā Bairaonam. Līdztekus tie pēti un precīzē tās īpatnības. Kopā šis reprezentē Bairaona Austrumu stāstu struktūrālos variantus. Austrumu stāstu analīze tā nu sniegtu krievu romantisma stāstītājas dzejas pamatplānu.

Austrumu stāsti atvasināti no Koulridža (Coleridge) un Skota (Scott) stāstītājas dzejas un angļu šausmu romāna, bet atšķiras no šiem ar savu Levantes kolorītu un emfazi uz varoņa personību, t. i. ar savu lielāko subjektivitāti. Stāstu grupā ietilpst sekojošās poēmas:

„Džaurš“, „Līgava no Abidas“, „Korsārs“, „Lara“, „Korintas aplenkšana“, „Parizina“, „Šijonas gūsteknis“ un „Mazepa“. Dienvidjūras stāsts „Sala“ (1823.) nepieder pie Austrumu stāstiem.

No citiem stāstītājas dzejas paveidiem, piem., no klasiskā epa Austrumu stāsti atšķiras nevien valdošajā noskaņā, bet arī tematikā, motīvos, kompozīcijā, stilā un metrikā. Noskaņa — emocionāla, liriska, drāmatiski spriega. Tematika — mīlas un naida traģēdija, kas izriet no t. s. mīlas trīsstūra afektu spiediena. Galvenie motīvi, kas bieži vien melodramātiski un lēti, — pavešana, pārgērbšanās, slepkavība, tiesāšana un sods, grēku sūdzēšana, divkauja, hallūcinācija, mīlētāju satikšanās, uzbrukums, bēgšana, pīrātērija, jāšana u. c. Bairaona raksturu tēlojumi uzsvērti, vienpusīgi, bez nianšēm. Viņa stāstu ievērojamākās personas: varonis, varoņa ļaunais sāncensis (villain) un varone. Jo sevišķi izceļas pirmais, kas iemieso kādu Bairaona rakstura vilcienu vai vilcienus. Viņš parasti drūms, lepns, kaislīgs, vientuļš un noslēpumains. Viņa egoisms spilgti izpaužas neapzinīgi teātrālās pozēs. Tas arī kāpināts līdz pārcilvēcības vai titānisma pakāpei. Varoņa sāncensis — parastais romantisma teātra blēdis vai ļaundaris dažādās maskās: viņš ir gados vecāks cilvēks, bieži vien austrumnieks. Varone viengabalaināka par savu partneru. Viņai vismaz nav dalīta dvēsele. Viņa „sievišķīgi“ maiga, bet dažkārt arī kaislīga. Izšķīrāmi divi tipi: blondais eiropiskais un brunetais austrumnieciskais.

Austrumu stāstu vairuma fons — Levante vai vismaz Vidusjūras apgabals. Pēdējo divu stāstu („Šijonas gūstekņa“ un „Mazepas“) fons nav „orientāls“. Fons vienmēr gleznots spilgtās krāsās un ar lirisku iejūtu.

Austrumu stāstu kompozīcija fragmentāra. Fragmentu virkne sākas ar „priekšspēli“, kas rada poēmai vajadzīgo noskaņu. Parasti šāda priekšspēle satur dabas ainas, bet reizēm tā meditātīva, vai kavējas pie vēsturiskiem faktiem, vai arī tērpjas dziesmas formā. Pēc priekšspēles stāstījums sākas *in mediis rebus* ar efektīgu epizodi. Tai seko t. s. *Vorgeschichte*, kur kopsavilkumā atstāstīta tā fābulas daļa, kas notikusi pirms ievada epizodes. Pārējā fābulas daļa sadalīta fragmentārās epizodēs, kas saistītas ar dabas ainavu tēlojumiem, raksturu uzmetumiem, liriskiem izplūdumiem un dzejnieka pārdomām. Poēmu beigās — epilogs, kas saturā tikpat dažāds kā priekšspēle.

Stiliski Austrumu stāsti ir epa, drāmas un lirikas sinteze. Uz-

svērts drāmatiskais un liriskais, kādēļ stāstījumam trūkst epa nepārtrauktības un mierīgās plūsmas. Drāmatiskais izpaužas monologos un divrunās, bet liriskais — stilistikas figūrās (piem., jautājumos, izsaukumos, uzrunās, anaforās, salīdzinājumos, tekstā iespraustās dziesmās un lietvārdu virknējumos).

Metriski Austrumu stāsti divējādi: astoņzilbīgā divrindī ar samērā vaļīgu atskaņu schēmu un desmitzilbīgā (t. s. hēroiskā) divrindī. Rītms lielāko tiesu jambisks.

4.

Austrumu stāstu uzbūvi un detaļas atspoguļo krievu stāstītāja dzeja 1820.—1830. g. Te pirmkārt jāmin Puškina t. s. Dienvidu poēmas, kas sastādās no 3 pabeigtiem darbiem („Kaukaza gūsteknis“, „Bachčisarajas strūklaka“ un „Čigāni“) un 2 nepabeigtiem („Brāļi laupītāji“ un „Vadims“). Jāmin arī poēma „Poltava“ (1828.) un fragments „Galubs“ (1833.), kur Bairaona ietekme atslābusi, un beidzot poēma „Bronzas jātnieks“ (1833.), kas paturējusi vienīgi baironisko poēmu tradicionālo schēmu. No Bairaona Puškina aizguvis savas stāstītājas dzejas noskaņu un kompozīciju, daudzus motīvus un dažus raksturošanas paņēmienus. Arī viņa poēmām spilgti „orientāls“ fons, izņemot „Poltavu“, „Brāļus laupītājus“ un „Vadimu“, kuŗu darbība norisinās uz ziemeļiem no Krievijas „orienta“ (Krimas un Kaukaza). Metriski Puškina īstenībā nav pielāgojies Bairaonam. Astoņzilbinieku ar pārmīšus atskaņām sastopam jau „Ruslanā un Lūdmiļā“ (1820.). Tomēr Bairaona ietekme droši vien pamudina Puškina lietot to arī turpmāk. Atšķirību starp Austrumu stāstiem un Dienvidu poēmām diezgan daudz. Puškina dzejas temats vienmēr mīlas vai greizsirdības traģēdija. Varoņa personība neizceļas un nedominē kā Bairaona stāstos. Viņš drīzāk līdzīgs Haroldam nekā Bairaona stāstu varoņiem; viņš ir caurmēra cilvēks, ne pārcilvēks. Izskatā viņš dažkārt atgādina Bairaona ļaundārus (sal. chanu Gireju ar Bairaona Džafiru). Varones, tāpat kā Bairaona dzejā, divējādas: eiropiskas un austrumnieciskas. Puškina dzejā tās vada darbību. Dienvidu poēmu uzbūve mazāk fragmentāra, jo stāstītājs elements stiprāks, un iespraustie tēlojumi īsāki. Salīdzinot ar Bairaona neapvaldīto mākslu, Puškina māksla disciplinēta un precīza. Tāpat kā Flobērs, Puškina meklē *mot juste*, viņa izteiksme allaž sedzas ar izteicamo. Viņa mākslas attīstībai ir trīs posmi, kuŗus illūstrē Dienvidu poēmas,

„Poltava“ un „Bronzas jātnieks“ šai kārtībā. Pēdējā poēmā Puškina māksla kulminē un līdztekus atbrīvojas no baironisma.

5.

Romantisku stāstītāju dzeju krievu literātūrā ievieš Puškina „Kaukaza gūsteknis“ un Žukovska tulkotā poēma „Šijonas gūsteknis“ (1821.). Drīz vien sāk parādīties un vairoties atdarinājumi. Līdz 1830. g. tādu jau sakrājies liels skaits. Pat 1830. un 1840. gados sastopamas baironiskas poēmas, kuŗu autori lielāko tiesu baironisma epigoni (piem., Ivana Turgeņeva novelē „Pirmā mīlestība“ minētais Maidanovs). Ar nedaudziem izņēmumiem šīm poēmām nav literāras vērtības. 1820. gadu izcilāko baironistu starpā jāmin Ivans Kozlovs, Kondratījs Riļejevs, Aleksandrs Bestuževs, Jevgeņijs Boratinskis, Andrejs Podoljinskis un Aleksandrs Poļežajevs.

Kozlovs lasīja Bairaona dzeju oriģinālā, pārtulkoja „Līgavu no Abidas“ un garākus fragmentus no „Laras“ un „Korintas aplenkšanas“ un sacerēja trīs baironiskas poēmas — „Mūks“ (1825.), „Nataļa Dolgorukaja“ (1828.) un „Vājprātīgā“ (1830.). Pirmajā vērojama Bairaona „Džaura“ stipra ietekme, tomēr poēmai netrūkst oriģinālītes. Kozlova oriģinālīte lielāka pārējās poēmās, kas vienīgi atdarina Austrumu stāstu schēmu un atbalso dažus Bairaona motīvus.

Kozlova pēdējās poēmas krieviskais kolorīts sastopams arī Riļejeva poēmā „Voinarovskis“ (1825.) un fragmentos „Naļivaiko“ un „Chmeļnickis“. Pirmo Puškina draugs Nikolajs Raļevskis apzīmē kā „un ouvrage en mosaïque composé de fragments de Byron et de Pouchkine“. Poēma un fragmenti smēlas motīvus no Bairaona „Mazepas“. Bet vēsturiskā elementa uzsvēršana drīzāk atgādina Skotu.

Skota stāstītāju dzeju atgādina arī Bestuževa nepabeigtā poēma „Kņazs Andrejs“ (1828.), kuŗā Bairaona ietekme aprobežojas ar nedaudziem motīviem. Poēmas uzbūve gan atbilst Austrumu stāstu schēmai, bet Bestuževs varēja to patapināt arī no Skota.

Savās baironiskajās poēmās „Eda“ (1824.), „Balle“ (1826.—28.) un „Čigāniete“ (1829.—30.) Boratinskis apzinīgi cenšas izvairīties no Bairaona un Puškina dzejas ietekmes. „Je ne voulais pas suivre le chemin battu“, viņš 1829. g. atzīstas Kozlovam. Bet viņam neizdodas pilnīgi atbrīvoties no savu paraugu burvības. Visās Boratinska poēmās vērojama Austrumu stāstu struktūra, kā arī vairāki

motīvi. Pat raksturi pa daļai baironiski. Toties fons un gaisotne reālistiski un laikmetīgi.

Podoljinska dzejnieka gaitas sākas Žukovska un Tomasa Mūra orientālisma ietekmē (sk. poēmu „Divs un perija“), tad viņš pievēršas baironiskajai dzejai un, Kozlova un Boratinska ietekmēs, saraksta poēmas „Borskis“ (1829.) un „Ubags“ (1830.), kuŗām laikmetīgs fons un personas. Viņa varoņiem ir pa baironiskam vilcienam. Otrā poēma sevišķi skaidri uzrāda Bairona ietekmi — pat metrikā, kas aizgūta no „Šijonas gūstekņa“ Žukovska versijā. Jādama, ka pēc apm. 1825. g. Bairona tiešā ietekme atvietoja ar viņa netiešo ietekmi, t. i. ar Žukovska, Puškina un Kozlova starpniecību.

Poležajeva baironiskā dzeja aprobežojas ar vēsturisko poēmu „Koriolāns“ (1834.) un diviem fragmentiem. Poēma dažuviet līdzīga „Korintas aplenkšanai“. Šī līdzība tomēr nav nejauša sagādīšanās, jo sastopamas vairākas parallēles izteiksmē. Kā „Koriolāna“ autors Poležajevs jāuzskata kā „pēdējais“ Puškina laikmeta baironists. Viņam seko „krievu Bairons“ — Ļermontovs.

6.

Baironismam — šim pēckara psīchozes īpatajam izpaudumam — pa laikam trūkst humora; tas saistīts visnotaļ ar „Čailda Harolda“ un Austrumu stāstu patosu un „Manfreda“ traģisko izjūtu. Tie dzejnieki (piem., Puškins), kuŗu literārā dzīvē baironisms bija tikai īslaicīga aizraušanās, bieži vien ar paša Bairona palīdzību atsvabinājās no tā ietekmes. Bairons pats apkaŗo baironismu, izsmiedams „Don Žuanā“ savu teātrālo pozēšanu un savās vēstulēs uzrādīdams savu īsto seju. „Don Žuans“ ievērojams Bairona dzejas mākslā kā tās kulminācija, kā Bairona personības vispusīgs izpaudums. Tas ievērojams arī kā viņa satiriskā stila izcilākais paraugs. Šis stils būtiski atšķiras no Austrumu stāstu stila un izpaužas tematiski vai nu triviālā anekdotā (piem., „Bepo“), vai arī veselā stāstītājā poēmā (piem., „Don Žuanā“), bet metriski — atlēcīgās oktāvās, kas aizgūtas no itaļu burleskā dzejas un labi piemērotas bezbēdīgai un piedauzīgai noskaņai. „Don Žuanu“ Bairons nosaucis par „episku satīru“. Abi elementi — kā episkais, tā satiriskais — ir klāt, bet poēma nav ne eps, ne satīra. To drīzāk varētu salīdzināt ar angļu 18. gs. pikaresko romānu (piem., ar Fildingā „Tomu Džounzu“) vai ar Voltēra noveli „Kandids“. Temats sastādās no kāda caurmēra

varoņa (Don Žuana) daudzajām dēkām visās Eiropas malās, no Spānijas līdz Turcijai un no Krievijas līdz Anglijai. Arī kompozīcijā „Don Žuans“ līdzinās pikareskajam romānam: stāstījums sākas ar varoņa dzimšanu un attīstās laika secībā. Bet stāstījumu, tāpat kā „Toma Džounza“ fābulu, vietām pārtrauc autora garās asprātīgās piezīmes, kuŗas Bairaona satiriskai dzejai tikpat raksturīgas, kā liriski izplūdumi viņa romantiskajai dzejai.

Bairaona dzejas satiriski komisko pusi Krievijā vislabāk pazina un atdarināja Puškina. 1823. g. kādā vēstulē viņš atzīstas, ka „Jevgeņijs Ņegins“ esot romāns pantos „Don Žuana“ stilā. Vēlāk viņš to gan atsauc, bet, salīdzinot abas poēmas, izrādās, ka Puškina Baironam tomēr ir zināmā mērā parādā par „Jevgeņija Ņegina“ noskaņu, kompozīciju, dažādiem stila vilcieniem un pat metriku. Puškina noskaņā vairāk sentimentālītes un vieglprātības nekā Bairaona noskaņā, un satiras pilnīgi trūkst. Vērojama angļu sentimentālisma — sevišķi Lorensa Stērna (Sterne) — vispārīgā ietekme. Kompozīcijā un stiliskos sīkumos turpretim Baironam lielāka nošķiršana. Puškina seko nevien „Don Žuana“, bet arī „Čailda Harolda“ paraugam. „Jevgeņijs Ņegins“ sadalīts deviņos dziedājumos, no kuŗiem pieci sākas ar priekšspēli. Poēma sacerēta četrpadsmit rindu strofās (sal. „Čailda Harolda“ deviņrindi un „Don Žuana“ oktāvas), un katra rinda, līdzīgi Puškina un Bairaona romantiskās stāstītājas dzejas caurmēra rindai — astoņzilbīga. Citas formālas līdzības: iespraustā dziesma (3. dziedājumā), vēstules (sal. „Don Žuanu“), liriski izplūdumi, svešvārdi, piezīmes, ar nolūku nepabeigta fābula. Pēdējā sākas stāstījuma vidū līdzīgi „Čaildam Haroldam“, bet pretstatā „Don Žuanam“. Tā visai oriģināla. Arī romāna personāls ņemts no dzīves. Vienīgi baironiskā persona — varonis, kas atgādina Čaildu Haroldu.

Pēc „Jevgeņija Ņegina“ Puškina sacerē vēl vienu „baironisku“ poēmu — „Mājiņu Kolomnā“ (1830.). Sižetā poēma oriģināla, bet stilā un metrikā to manāmi ietekmējis Bairaona anekdots „Bepo“. Bairaona satiriski komiskā stila paņēmieni sastopami lielā daudzumā, sākot ar autora brīvo, pat uzbāzīgo nostāju pret lasītājiem un beidzot ar poēmas metriku — oktāvām — kas norāda uz baironisku avotu. „Mājiņa Kolomnā“ ir Puškina „Bepo“, viņa *jeu d'esprit* Bairaona garā. Vērojamas arī nedaudzas paralēles izteiksmē starp „Mājiņu Kolomnā“ un „Don Žuanu“. Ar šo poēmu Puškina nodibina

krievu komisko poēmu tradīciju, kurai seko pat autori ar vāji attīstītu humora sajūtu (piem., Ļermontovs).

7.

Michails Ļermontovs atšķiras no citiem izcilākiem krievu baironistiem ar to, ka viņš allaž palika Bairona ietekmes aplokā. Viņa baironisma „ilgumu“ izskaidro viņa „baironiskais“ temperaments, dzīves apstākļi un priekšlaicīgā nāve. Baironisms viņam nebija literāra mode vien, bet viņa paša ģenija dabiskais izpaudums. Bairona dzeja viņam palīdzēja atrast ceļu uz sevi. Bairona ietekme uz Ļermontovu vērojama lirikā, stāstītājā dzejā un romānā. Ļermontova 1820. gadu lirikā sastopam vairākus baironiskus motīvus. Tie tomēr tikai daļai aizgūti no Bairona. Mināmi šādi: Orients vai Austrumzeme („Turka raudās“, „Grūziešu dziesmā“, „Divās odaliskās“), Venēcija („Venecijā“), rietekļa uzruna („Zvaigznē“), atvadišanās („Romancē“), Napoleons (četros dzejoļos ar šādu nosaukumu, jo tāpat kā Puškinam, Bairons Ļermontovam iedvesa simpatijas pret Napoleonu), vilšanās (dzejā „Draugiem“, ko dzejnieks sacerē 15 gadu vecumā), nelaimīga mīlestība (dzejā „Bērnam“, kur autobiogrāfija savijusies ar Bairona iedvesmu), Izraēļa gūstniecība („Ebrēju melodijā“), drūmas vīzijas (Arbeņina dzejā; „Nāvē“) un pastardiena (divās dzejās ar virsrakstu „Nakts“). Visbiežāk Ļermontova lirikā sastopami Bairona dzejas personīgie un slimīgie motīvi. Līdzīgi Boratinskim Ļermontovs padodas Bairona poēmu „Sapnis“ un „Tumsa“ ietekmei. Līdzīgi Puškinam un citiem viņš pārdzīvo Napoleona pielūgšanas posmu. Viņu ietekmē arī Bairona intimā lirika (t. s. „Domestic Pieces“), „Ebrēju melodijas“ un „Čailda Harolda“ personīgās daļas.

Ļermontova stāstītāju dzeju stipri iespaidojis nevien Bairons, bet sākumā arī Puškina, Žukovskis un Kozlovš. No viņa baironiskajām poēmām līdz 1841. g. iznāca tikai divas: „Abreks Hadži“ (1835.) un „Mciri“ (1840.). Pārējās parādījās pēc viņa nāves. Šīs poēmas var sadalīt trijās grupās: a) grupā, kurā ietilpst „Kaukaza gūsteknis“, „Čerkesi“, „Korsārs“, „Noziedznieks“ un „Brīvības pēdējais dēls“; b) atreibības grupā, kas satur sekojošos darbus: „Kalli“, „Bastundžijas auls“, „Abreks Hadži“, „Izmails Bejs“ un „Lieta-viete“; c) grēku sūdzēšanas grupā, kurai pieskaitāmas poēmas: „Grēku sūdzēšana“, „Bajārs Orša“ un „Mciri“; d) „pārdabīgajā“

grupā, kurā ietilpst „Azraēls“, „Nāves eņģelis“ un „Dēmona“ pieci varianti; un e) nožēlas grupā ar poēmu „Džulio“. Ļermontova stāstītāju poēmu tematika (nožēla, atreibība, brīvības alkas, mīlestības ciešanas) aprobežota. Fons galvenā kārtā — Kaukazs. Šai ziņā Ļermontova poēmas atgādina Austrumu stāstus. Bairaona ietekmi apstiprina vēl daudzas verbālas paralēles. Tomēr līdzīgi Puškinam Ļermontovs raksta ar mākslinieka rūpību un stila izjūtu, nekad pavirši kā Bairons.

Bairaona satiriskā dzeja arī atstājusi pēdas Ļermontova darbos. Bet tos ietekmējusi vēl Puškina „Jevgeņijs Oņegins“ un „Mājiņa Kolonnā“. Ļermontova satira kodīgāka par Bairaona un Puškina satiru, jo viņam trūkst humora. Tomēr Ļermontovs cenšas vismaz stilā atdarināt Baironu. Šāda cenšanās vērojama sevišķi nepabeigtajā poēmā „Saška“ (1835.—36.). Baironiskā stila paņēmienus sastopam vēl otrā nepabeigtajā poēmā „Stāsts bērniem“ (1841.). Abu poēmu kompozīcijā krustojas „Don Žuana“ un Austrumu stāstu iestrāvojums. Tematikā abas oriģinālas, jo sevišķi pēdējā, kurās romantiskā fābula plaši ietekmējusi turpmāko krievu stāstītāju dzeju.

8.

1830. gadu beigās Bairons jau bija kļuvis par krievu klasiķi, un viņa ietekme bija gandrīz pilnīgi izsikusi. Par viņu gan vēl daudz tika runāts un pat rakstīts, bet viņa dzeju reti kāds atdarināja. Krievu lirikā 1840.—50. gados atrodam itin maz baironiska. To laiku intelektuālos dzejniekus nepievelk viņa brāzmainais patoss un caurspīdīgā pozēšana. Viņa ietekmi turpmāk pauž vienīgi „Čailda Harolda“ pēdējie dziedājumi, „Manfreds“, un īpaši viņa personīgā lirika, t. i. tās dzejas, kurām kāds sakars ar viņa šķiršanos no lēdijas Bairones.

Jau Ļermontova laikā baironiskā poēma stāv ārpus literārās modes. Ļoti zīmīgi, ka Ļermontovs pats laiž klajā tikai divas („Abreks Hadži“ un „Mciri“). Pēc viņa nāves 1841. g. iznāk kādas divas poēmas — Slučevska „Herezearchs“, kas pieder vēsturisko poēmu (piem., Puškina „Vadima“) ciklam, un Polonska „Celliots“. Kompozīcijā un stilā poēmas uzrāda baironiskus vilcienus. Sastopamas arī līdzības izteiksmē.

Pēc apm. 1840. g. Bairaona komiski satiriskajai dzejai ar Puškina un Ļermontova starpniecību bija zināmi panākumi. Izšķīrāmi kādi

četri tipi: jūtu chronika vai autobiografisks monologs, Puškina „Mājiņas Kolomnā“ tips, Ļermontova „Saškas“ tips un Ļermontova „Stāsta bērniem“ tips. Jūtu chroniku illūstrē Ogaņova „Humors“ (1841.) un Merežkovska autobiografiskā poēma „Octaves du passé“. Abas poēmas sacerētas oktāvās, pirmā astoņzilbīgās. Stila vilcieni atgādina „Don Žuanu“, bet noskaņa — „Čaildu Haroldu“. Ogaņova poēma uzrāda dažas parallēles izteiksmē ar „Don Žuanu“. „Saškas“ tipa poēmu 1840. gados — daudz, lielāko tiesu baironiskās oktāvās. Galvenie piemēri: Ogaņova „Laika biedri“, Ivana Turgeņeva „Paraša“ (1843.) un „Andrejs“ (1845.), Maikova „Kņaze“ (1877.), Polonska „Neprašā“, Feta „Talismans“, „Kapteiņa Loseva sapnis“, „Divas liepiņas“ un „Students“. Ļermontova fragmenta „Stāsts bērniem“ romantiskajai tradīcijai sekojuši Aleksejs Tolstojs „Portretā“ un Vladimirs Solovjovs poēmā kvartās „Trīs satikšanās“ (1898.). „Mājiņas Kolomnā“ tipam pieder A. Tolstoja „Valsts padomnieka Popova sapnis“ un Slučevska „Arī tikumā“. Bairona ietekme augšminētās poēmās izpaužas netieši un vispārīgos vilcienos.

Pēc 1840. gada Bairons Krievijā tiek it kā kanonizēts. Turpmāk viņa darbu pazišanu uzskata kā augstākās izglītības pazīmi. Dienas grāmatās vietām sastopamas cildinātājas atsauksmes. Piem., A. Gercena „Vēstulēs par dabas pētīšanu“ Bairons apzīmēts kā „dzejas Hjūms“ (Hume). Arī cenzūra atzīst viņa kanonizāciju un pamazām atļauj tulkot un iespiest viņa agrāk aizliegtos darbus. Jau 1869. g. Gerbelis sastāda plašu un reprezentatīvu Bairona dzejas izlasi. Bet viņa dzejas pilnīgs izdevums iznāk tikai 1906. g. S. Vengerova redakcijā. Pēc 1820. gadiem krievu kritiķi pa laikam atzinīgi atsaucas par Baironu. Beļinskis, Dobroļubovs un Pisarevs uzskata viņu kā neapstrīdami ģeniālu rakstnieku. Pēdējais pat apgalvojis, ka salīdzināt Puškinu un Mickieviču ar Baironu esot gluži tas pats kā salīdzināt skolas grāmatu autorus Kaidavovu un Smaragdovu ar Šloseru (Schlosser).

Kad interese par Puškinu atdzimst 19. gs. beigās, atdzimst arī interese par Baironu. Vairāki pētnieki (piem., Spasovičs, Orests Millers, Aleksejs Veselovskis) publicē rakstus par viņa dzeju un tās ietekmi krievu literatūrā. Šiem pētniekiem mūsu laikos pievienojies vēl V. Žirmunskis ar plašu, sīkumos izstrādātu pētījumu „Bairons un Puškins“ (1924.).

An Essay on Latvian Psychology.

By *P. Jurevičs*.

Every attempt to characterize a people meets with considerable difficulties from the methodological point of view. Indeed, how can one put into a formula a definition of millions of human beings — each with his own peculiarities of character — that form a nation? It seems such an attempt would invariably lead to failure even if we were to proceed in opposite directions, for, on the one hand, a description of national character reduced to only one type is arbitrary and subjective, on the other hand, an attempt to take into consideration all variations of character found in a nation results in chaos, in the denial of any kind of national character whatsoever, as every nation has representatives of types opposed in character to the others. In spite of all this there can be no doubt that every nation has its own spirit which reveals itself in direct intercourse with representatives of this nation and finds its expression in productions of art, literature, and science. If we do not wish to ignore the existence of such a national spirit, we must risk and attempt to grasp it with the means in our power. Indeed, the science of national psychology still lacks precise methods of investigation. Moreover, if we take into consideration the difficulties of individual characterology, we may even doubt, whether such methods are possible at all, and so the chief means of characterizing a nation remains intuition, which results from a close acquaintance with it and is continually supplemented and improved upon by confronting it with fact.

As regards my own attempt to characterize the soul of the Latvian people, I find it necessary to state that I have taken into consideration not so much the nation as a whole as its "avant-garde", its leading and creative group, which has generally re-

presented the whole nation and so given the word "Latvian" its peculiar flavour and created the idea of a typical Latvian.

We can presume that this leading group which has been mainly responsible for the fate of our nation is also the most perfect embodiment of its national genius, whereas the remaining members of the nation are more or less specific variations of the same type, endowed with the same inner structure, but different and even contrasting among themselves in their expression.

Before embarking, however, on a "static" analysis of Latvian consciousness I should like to make clear the exact moment of historical development they have now arrived at. More than one description of this is possible. On the one hand, the Latvians are one of the oldest of European nations — e. g. Latvian is closer related to the parent Indo-European language than the languages of many other nations — and in this respect the Latvian nation is older than e. g. the French or the English. As has also been proved by recent archaeological excavations the Latvians possessed a high and independent culture as early as 1000 A. D., which was equal to the independent culture of other northern peoples. However, historical events of the following centuries checked the development of Latvian culture and also prevented their taking an active part in the common development of culture.

Only about a hundred years ago the Latvians awakened again to a cultural life of their own and because of this the modern urban culture of our nation is still comparatively new, and from this point of view the Latvians belong to the youngest of European nations. This fact has left its impress on the psychology of the whole nation. The mental and spiritual forces of our people for centuries deprived of any possibility of development are still unspent and in no way constricted by conventions and traditions. This, on the one hand, makes life more difficult and dangerous for us, we have not many definitively fixed rules laid down by the past and not many precedents to follow. On the other hand again, this leaves us more freedom and opportunities of success; we are not hampered by traditions and a stabilized mode of living from seeking new paths and solving problems which older nations are incapable of doing, even if they sometimes feel that their life has entered a blind alley and that the finding and following of new paths is of vital importance to their existence. Indeed, not so much the finding but the

following of new paths presents the greatest difficulties to older nations; the breaking up of old forms of life in order to cast them aside or to change them is far too difficult to undertake, for the interests of so many human beings are involved in these old forms that their breaking up would nearly cause a complete change of society, the powers of inertia of which are tremendous.

As has been said before, conditions here are entirely different. The forms of our life have not yet reached a stage of rigidity and much of it is still fluid and in a stage of constant development. As is generally the case with youth, the past has little hold on us, and life seems broad and full of possibilities; unlike the future of older nations ours has not yet been decided by the past. All paths seem open to us, we have courage enough to follow even rather steep paths; in this respect older nations seem to be more tired or more "sensible", which is perhaps the same thing. Anyhow we are turned towards the future, and enthusiasm, "fling", and a sense of "rush" are characteristic of our lives. The dynamic side of our life — the one of desires, volitions and emotions — which seeks for ways of expressing itself in vivid experience, creation and action outweighs the static, which finds its expression not only in clearness and precision but also in a certain rigidity of forms.

In this description of the present cultural situation we have to a certain extent characterized also the mental and spiritual structure of the possessors of this culture — the Latvian people. We have characterized its spirit as dynamic in its inclination, impetuously tending towards the future, and towards the creating of a new life, but little looking back at the past and also comparatively little — and then only for a short time — directed towards the present. This gives rise to the following questions: does this characterization describe the spirit of the nation at the present moment only, or does it express some permanent national quality? The last question seems to require an answer in the affirmative. Impetuosity, the wish to create, to shape, to advance, the striving for something still more perfect, seem to be not only expressions of the youth of our nation, but characters peculiar to them, a fact which is revealed by comparing the Latvians with their neighbours or in analysing the various typical features of Latvian life.

One of these characteristic features is a striving to advance. The existence of this quality — denied by neither the friends nor

the enemies of the Latvians — has been proved by history, for in a hundred years' time the Latvians have risen from the oppressed class of farm-labourers to the heights of a nation possessing supreme power. That events took such a turn can be explained only by the unquenchable aspiration of our people — like a plant in a cellar — towards something higher and more perfect and for more light.

“Strivers” have always been popular with the Latvians and representatives of this type are often found in Latvian literature. Intellectual and moral strivers are represented in works of literature by means of symbolic figures, the most common of which are the “mountain-climber” and the “sun-seeker”. These symbols have been used so often as to become almost hackneyed, but in spite of their naiveté and triteness they are still liked by many of our readers. It has always been sufficient for a young man to be looked upon as a “striver” (especially if he strove for higher education) in order to get credit from the local savings-bank, to gain access to the drawing-rooms of the wealthiest citizens, and to the hearts of sensitive girls. A striver was the pride of his district or town only because he longed for “higher things”. But also examples taken from everyday life prove that a Latvian is, whatever his work or position, not content with his condition, but has always the wish to progress and to improve upon something. He aims either at rationalizing his work, or extending his farm, or simply at making his home cosier and more comfortable. Absorbed by ideas of progress and perfection a Latvian never takes into consideration norms of work and time and does not think either of sparing himself or others in order to attain the end he has set himself. Because of this quality of theirs Latvians were very popular in pre-war Russia as landowners' stewards, organizers, inspectors of works etc.

However, all that has just been said does not give us reason enough merely to rejoice in this quality of ours and to be proud of it. On the one hand there can be no doubt that only thanks to our endeavour and our will we have broken away by force and irresistably from the unfavourable circumstances we were forced into, and to become what we are now. On the other hand, we must not forget that all external conditions of life change and that one and the same way of acting can have favourable results in one case and unfavourable results in another. In the days when Latvia was not

yet an independent state the only way of rising personally and raising the entire nation was by breaking away from the peasant class, from the so-called "black work" to desk work, thus in a certain way approaching the ruling class. This tendency which was once of such great advantage to us nowadays does us more harm than good. Already because of the reasons mentioned above, i. e. because of the youth of our nation, life in a certain way lacks stability and many things in it are still fluid, in a stage of constant change and development. Under these circumstances and because of this innate tendency of ours nobody seems content with the position he has attained: farmers are anxious to exchange country life for town life, tradespeople want to be clerks, officials to be merchants, and even teachers and professors have higher aspirations. There is reason to think that this zeal of ours has ceased to be a means of attaining greater perfection in life, but has become degraded to an activity directed towards attaining easier conditions of life, "easier life" in general. If this be so, then there is little reason to be proud of this tendency. Striving to advance is beginning to threaten the existence of our nation: for the sake of a life easier, more comfortable, more luxurious and free from material cares we often sacrifice even our natural tendency to have descendents. The retaining of this quality in circumstances to which it is not adapted seems to prove the hypothesis set up before that endeavour is the specification of some more general quality; the process of specification took place in circumstances which existed for a long time, but have suddenly changed now. Indeed, endeavour may be looked upon as an expression of a certain exaggeration, or at least a very strong development of the life of desires that is at the root of our natures. In general Latvians may be looked upon as having very strongly developed the life of desires; they are always longing for something, craving for values, and Plato would perhaps have called them "erotic", for, as we know Plato uses the word "Eros" in the sense of "desire"; desire for something we now would call "value". As there are values of a higher and of a lower degree so there are also different kinds of "erotics"; and they are also able to progress and rise in life, but also to regress. However, even Eros of a lower quality is full of promise, it is, so to say, capable of sublimation, for the same person who one day has devoted himself to saving money or objects of material

value may some other day develop into an admirer and collector of works of art, science or ethics. In order to explain certain contradictory qualities of the Latvian character we shall have to take into consideration this tendency of the desires to metamorphosis. First, however, we shall consider some more general consequences which result from the whole of our spiritual life being centred in the sphere of desires.

Every person who is so centred seems to live beyond the boundaries of real life, he lives, to a certain degree, in an unreal world. This is the result of the structure of desire; "desire" means striving for something that is not yet there, pursuing something that does not exist; it means the thinking, feeling and wishing of things that are only yet a thought, a dream, a fancy. A man of desires is, therefore, a person who seems to live outside himself, whose centre of gravity is outside his own person and who seems to be constantly losing his balance. A person so constituted is always rushing forward in order to keep his balance. The life of a man of desires is an incessant running after himself, after a projection of his own thoughts. This gives rise to the following question: as desires are so often satisfied is there no standstill, no stability when the desired aim has been attained? Yes, there are types, pleasure-seekers, for instance, and some other types perhaps whose life is centred in the present, and desire is for them only a means of realising the future in the present. The life of the "desire" type, however, realises itself in the act of desiring, in the process of wishing and attaining something longed for, but less in enjoying the results of this striving. The pleasure of having achieved is only a short moment of respite and then begins anew the rushing after some object of desire that the thoughts have had time to project during their interval of rest. In this way every person, the action and fulfilment of whose life is "desiring" and not the achievement of what he desires, lives in the future and not in the present, or, to be more precise, in his thoughts of the future.

It would be too much to say that a Latvian personifies the type of a radical and extreme man of desires. Altogether it is even difficult to imagine the existence of a pure desire type; we can only look upon it as an ideal which is, however, approached by many concrete natures, and my own opinion is that the Latvians too — at least at the present stage of their development — belong to

to those natures who orientate in that direction. Latvians can be looked upon as a "people of the future" in that sense of the expression that they live less in the present than in plans and problems of the future, and in the fulfilment of these problems which are immediately exchanged for problems the moment the first have been solved, or set aside, or forgotten. Endeavour with all its positive and negative qualities was really only a peculiar expression of the disposition of this "man of desires", whose life has been transferred from the present to the future.

As he is a person whose life is centred in the future, a Latvian is a typical European. According to the opinions of some psychologists, the three chief human races may be shortly characterized in the following way: the yellow race — meaning the Chinese — live in the past, the black race in the present, but the thoughts and plans of the Europeans are directed towards the future. Because of this bent of their mentality the Chinese, who attained a high level of culture in the past, no longer progress, for they cast their glances back at the past; representatives of the black race, unable to look ahead and to foresee the future are in general said to be little capable of culture; in that way the only real creators of modern culture are the Europeans who constantly look ahead, apprehensive of future dangers and preoccupied with thoughts of how to evade them and how again to profit by the favourable conditions they anticipate. Since the time of Count Gobineau the long-limbed and dolichocephalic Nordic race, rich in violent desires, enterprising and energetic, but inwardly unstable and often fantastic in its undertakings is looked upon by some as the real pioneer of European culture. Pure representatives of this race are not to be found among the nations of our days (and probably also not among those of the past), but on the other hand there can be no doubt that the Latvians, as well as some other nations, are closely related to it: this is implied by our geographical position and by the significant number, especially in the past, of dolichocephalics, also by our more than average height, which makes us one of the tallest nations in Europe, as well as by the fact that the majority of Latvians are blond and light-eyed. Without going into a discussion as to the extent to which this theory of race has a scientific basis, we must admit that the conclusions arrived at correspond with what has been previously said about the Latvian mental structure: a certain

exaltation of the life of desires — which seemed to us to be characteristic of the Latvian nature — would seem to be characteristic of the Nordic race.

This exaltation of the life of desires agrees, it appears to us, with the attempt of modern characterology to distinguish two groups of human beings: the one comprising corpulent, the other slender human beings. Characteristic of the first group is a certain inner calm and a concentration on life itself; whereas the members of the second group reveal a constant dissatisfaction, impetuosity, inner conflicts, and an incessant struggle with themselves and the world. It has been further pointed out that in cases of mental disease stout people are more liable to suffer from cyclophrenia — i. e. the rhythmic change of abnormal exaltation alternating with dejection, whereas human beings of slender build are often victims of schizophrenia — a splitting up of the individuality (a result of the hypertrophy of conflicting desires) and a mania of persecution. Types of the first kind, which in general corresponds to the pycnic structure, are called, cyclothymic by the German characterologist Kretschmer, types of the other kind schizothymic. The Latvians who like the English are a nation of tall people would accordingly be nearer the schizothymic than the cyclothymic type. We shall again leave undiscussed the question of the validity of this somewhat too simple theory, but merely state that if we accept this point of view, the Latvians would, in general, be nearer the schizothymic than the cyclothymic type; experience seems to prove this.

This would perhaps explain some negative features of Latvian life that are so often criticized by our moralists: i. e. disagreement, distrust, an attitude of opposition towards everything and everybody (often found among us), the conviction of being the object of universal persecution and in general a tendency to strangeness and oddities of different kinds; these are all signs of a schizothymic character, which again is something that pertains to the whole of the North European race and is connected with a certain hypertrophy of desires and the development of a certain inner instability.

The Latvians, as schizothymic northerners, as typical "people of the future", possess a spirit of unrest and from the standpoint of enjoying happiness the prognosis is not promising. On the other hand, however, for just this reason, perhaps, they belong to that

group of people who — because of their continual striving — could be the real creators, or at least the cultivators and spreaders of cultural values. The Latvians are, from this point of view, akin to the Germans who also easily lose their inner balance in that they are orientated towards the future, but they are farther from the Russians and Slavs in general, from peoples who are more absorbed by the present. The Latvians are also farther from the harmonious French who without rejecting the past, are apprehensive of the future, but do not forget the present. We can assume, therefore, that all that has been said above gives credence to the supposition that on the whole the Latvians belong to that group of human beings whose mental structure has its centre in the life of desires; it would therefore be reasonable to assume they also possess other qualities implied by this structure.

It is clear, however, that these qualities would give us only a rather general idea of the Latvian character in so far as the Latvians belong to groups of people much larger than the Latvians, i. e. to all Europeans, or all northerners. How are we to find the qualities that are specifically Latvian and that distinguish the Latvian people from representatives of other nations spiritually related to it? We have already endeavoured to do this to a certain extent by trying to show that the general preponderance of the life of desires in the Latvian nature and the conditions of Latvian life has found its expression in the already mentioned fact of striving. But there can be no doubt that this striving is here not only an expression of the life of desires, but a more complicated fact comprising many intellectual and emotional factors. Therefore, before turning our attention to the Latvian spiritual structure with all its complications, we shall try to characterize its simplest elements. Every peculiar character can be explained as a rule in such a way that it comprises some function of consciousness, not in its general, but rather in a decidedly specific shape, and every character has at least one of these elements (in so far as we can in general speak of elements here, for every part is determined by the structure of the whole, which, however, does not exclude the dependence of the structure on its part) differently specified than in some other character. This then already suffices for all the qualities of a character and for the character as a whole to take upon itself a new meaning and now and again to cause a completely different effect, even if the

elements are more or less similar, or, but for some trifling difference, identical. The same applies also to nations: a specification of separate qualities and their combination can result in the development of an individual phenomenon against a common background. It is, therefore, not sufficient to say that it is characteristic of the Latvian mental structure that it centres in the life of desires; rather we must try to show what is peculiar to this life of desires.

Here it seems necessary to point out first of all that from the standpoint of dynamics the affective life of the Latvians is characterized by not too violent desires, but by desires of average strength, perhaps even below average, which are lasting, tenacious, persistent and regularly active. As the affective life of southern nations is like their rivers, capable at times of destroying all obstacles that come in their way, at times again of drying up entirely, so also the affective life of Latvians reminds us of their rivers, which flow calmly and quietly, but never dry up; if their force is not always very great, still their volume can perhaps appear to be surprisingly great. It is possible that such dynamics of the affective life can be associated with certain northern conditions of life. A southerner in order to be able to live has only now and then to exert himself — even then not very much, — after that he can again relax and fall back into idleness and carelessness. A northerner, however, must divide his store of energy more or less equally over the whole year (or, if he concentrates it, over the summer) he must be provident, must look ahead, he dare not relax and fall into complete idleness, and his activity must never dry up. But it is clear that in such a case the force of his energy cannot continually be of the highest degree. The secret of the success of Latvians has always been their ability to devote themselves to some thing quietly and without any noise, but with much persistence and endurance. Our affective life is not loud and often little noticed on the outside; a superficial observer may also fail to notice it at all. But like a silent underground spring it is still our desires that with their constant active presence and the persistency of their pressure determine our life, having become its real axis, more even than the violent storms of passion determine the life of many other nations.

It is our misfortune only — if it can be called a misfortune —

that this desire of ours has to a certain extent perhaps grown insatiable (the cause of this is either heredity or the external circumstances of life), it does not stop at any achievements, it is always smouldering in us, finding its expression as an inner and outer unrest, in some cases even depriving our life of an inner richness, harmony and completeness that it could otherwise perhaps have had. A Latvian is so far from being a man of pleasure that he is not even a man of rest; our cafés and boulevards are always full of Jews, Russians, Germans, but the Latvians there are always in the minority. A Latvian is a man of work, or to be more precise a man of action, and he cannot live without work. The best kind of rest for him is, "to do something", as the saying is.

Still these positive as well as negative consequences of the dynamics of Latvian desire do not sufficiently explain this side of the Latvian psyche. For the sake of a fuller characterization we must try to examine the aims towards which we direct our desires. Would it be possible to point out at least one central object towards which these desires gravitate? Taking into consideration all reserves of method expressed above we can at least try to do this. We sometimes hear the opinion expressed that one of the chief objects of our desire is property. This sounds quite credible if we remember that our nation was for ages a suppressed nation that was forced to live in poverty, and even the freedom it was granted was only the "freedom of a bird", for after serfdom was abolished the Latvians were set free, but the land was taken away from them. Elementary values such as property are also the most indispensable and before thinking of acquiring any other we must secure these. This naturally explains the tendency of the Latvian peasant "to work himself to death for the sake of property", also his inclination to save, his stinginess, his relative insensibility to other values. This, however, does not mean that property is the highest aim of all his aspirations — certainly, we must exclude here all cases of the so-called heterogony of aims when that which a person strives for, at first only as a means of attaining some aim, later on becomes the aim itself. As a rule, however, a Latvian has never been completely "possessed" by his property. In this he is related to the Slavs and he often stakes everything he has and is capable of destroying the results of his life's work with one stroke. Sufficient examples of this could be found during the years of war and

"the days of the refugees". Property for a Latvian is not the highest value, for the sake of which he would be ready to sacrifice everything; it is for him only a means to something else. But to what? Our literature and also many cases in real life represent types of people who expect and even demand more honour and greater respect because of their wealth; this might lead us to the belief that the object of Latvian desires is the craving for honour or power. Still, that would be taking a too narrow view — it would be a special expression of some more extensive and deeper desire. This is revealed to us in observing the almost abnormal attachment of a Latvian to his landed property, to the ideal of "one's own little house, one's own little plot of ground" (as we say) which is found not only among farmers, but also among the intelligentsia and among the middle and even lowest class of officials who often take upon themselves the greatest difficulties and lead ascetic lives in order to obtain their own little plot of ground in spite of their small means. It seems that an analysis of this stubborn desire could show us that its basis is a desire either for real or only imagined independence, for which we long again in order to find the possibility of expressing our personality more or less freely. In this case the centre of Latvian striving would be a desire for ascertaining their personality, for individual independence, a wish to be what they really are, we could here say, a wish to make the most of their personality during their lifetime, to realize themselves.

Many facts, some of which have been mentioned before and some of which will again be mentioned later, might well agree with the placing of the wish for self-completion in the centre of the Latvian affective life. So, for instance, the love of honour and power just mentioned, which often finds its expression in a Latvian, would be only a special and intensified way of asserting or displaying his personality. It is also clear that because of this urge to assert his personality and to determine its limits a Latvian often pursues wealth, one of the first conditions for ascertaining one's personality. This would also explain the "careerism" sometimes found among Latvians and in general their tendency to break away from a lower social class and to force their way into a higher, their desire to enter the "class of masters". That this tendency really exists among Latvians is proved by their

achievements in this direction: formerly and perhaps even now the Latvians who settled in Russia, however poor they were when they first arrived, were always able to rise to a more or less higher stratum of society. Those Latvians who were in the army were nearly never privates; they were, if not always officers, at least instructors; in factories they were either engineers or foremen, and on estates they were liked and honoured bailiffs, sometimes the real rulers of entire latifundia. In this way the Latvians as leaders and organisers played in Russia a role somewhat analogous to the famous role played in that country by the Varangians.

The Latvians differ from the Germanic Varangians in that they, as it seems, were generally not aggressive; at least so far as we know from our ancient history, they were less occupied in attacking than in resisting attacks as compared to their neighbours. This does not mean that a Latvian would not make a good soldier. On the contrary, because of other qualities (which we shall discuss later on) his constancy of will, his ability to act upon the knowledge and ideas he has, and his sense of duty — a Latvian has always been one of the most valued representatives of the soldier type and as such he has been appreciated for ages.

It would be enough to recall here the numerous evidences of the distinguished soldierly qualities displayed by the Latvian troops which are found in the reports of the Russian General Staff during the World War: had the successes of the Latvian troops been sufficiently backed up by other units of the army, events would perhaps have taken a different turn than they did. Anyhow, during the revolution, when the collapse of the Russian army had already begun the Latvian troops were the only disciplined military units. Deprived of their country (by the Treaty of Brest-Litovsk the larger part of Latvia was surrendered to the enemy) they thought themselves to be the victims of treachery; deeply humiliated and desperate they allowed the leaders of the revolution to turn the despair of the Latvians to their own account; they fought furiously and almost all of them died on the vast Sarmatian steppes, and in the end it was still the Latvians who decided the fate of the Russian revolution. Without the Latvian soldiers the history of Russia and also that of Europe would have been different.

That the Latvian remained a lover of peace in spite of his soldierly abilities can perhaps be explained by his orientation, as we have tried to show, towards "securing" his own personality, and thus he instinctively transfers "the respect for personality" to the personality of other people. In any case, whatever the reasons, in spite of Brencis' famous aphorism in the popular Latvian novel "The Days of Surveyors", that the world cannot exist without fighting, the statistics of crime show that the Latvians are not brawlers: although the inhabitants of Latvia are nearly all Latvians, the "fighters" are generally members of some other nationality.

We shall now, in continuing our characteristic of the Latvian mentality, point out that the Latvian desire for independence and freedom, the first condition of the development of a personality, is closely associated with the main object of Latvian desire, i. e. with the "securing" of space and development for their personality. Some short time ago one of our writers tried to characterize the Latvians in the leading article of a newspaper, pointing out that not humility, which has been repeatedly ascribed to it, is inherent in the nature of the Latvians, but the desire for something magnificent and imposing. We can agree with this up to the point that, indeed, the dreams of Latvians, whenever circumstances permit, can become very far-reaching, and they desire things that are beyond the sphere of everyday necessity, but it is not clear to us who praised the Latvians as humble. The former lords and masters of this country, so far as I know, did not do this; on the contrary, they tried to accentuate the so-called bad qualities of the Latvians — their disobedience, obstinacy, and spite, in order to justify their own severity; probably this characterization of theirs was not far from the truth; at least that the Latvians were such in their behaviour towards their masters is proved by innumerable peasant riots, harshly suppressed in their time. There were some perhaps who advised the Latvians to be humble; just this, however, proves that the Latvians were never really so. Everybody who knows anything at all of the pre-war conditions of Riga industry is aware that in those days manufacturers thought highly of Latvian workmen because they were conscientious, attentive and in general worked excellently, but they were even more afraid of them, as the Latvians did not allow the manufacturers to treat them as they liked and

were always ready to protest and to defend their own rights. These qualities of the Latvian workmen were so unpleasant to some industrialists that because of these they even decided to do without good workmen and invited worse — but more obedient — work-people of other nationalities from foreign countries in their place. The Latvians, so far as history allows us to look back, have always had a rebellious spirit — evidently as a result of an intensified personality consciousness. If the Latvians were ever humble, it was always only a stratagem in the struggle with a too powerful enemy. By nature — as a dissatisfied man of desires — the Latvian had always a spirit of unrest and was a revolutionary, he demanded freedom for the expression of his personality and was always against everything that could restrict him. We all know that the Latvians were irreconcilable revolutionaries in the Russia of the Czar, and in this respect perhaps the denunciations of the former masters of the land were not really wrong. This shall, therefore, not detain us any longer, but we shall only point out that this quality of the Latvians is nothing other than an expression of their consciousness of personal rights. Still, all this would not be enough for a person to call himself a revolutionary fighter: a Latvian, sensitive of the transgression of his rights, aware of a certain legitimacy of his desires — as his desires are not so violent as to fog the vision of his clear mind — is sensitive also of the rights of others and comes in this way upon the idea of justice, to the knowledge that not only he, but everybody else has the right of realising certain desires, and that a denial of these rights is injustice. This then has made of a Latvian an able fighter not only for his own, but also for the rights of other members of his oppressed nation, and this intense consciousness of justice and the readiness to stand up and to fight for what has been acknowledged as justice we should like to point out as something peculiarly Latvian, that finds its expression even now in cases of internal and external conflicts.

Dependent upon this intensified personality consciousness is a whole series of positive and negative qualities. For example, one such quality is stubbornness, which was much complained of by the former gentry as being characteristic of the Latvian peasant: this stubbornness is nothing other than simply an unwillingness to give up an opinion which, though wrong, has already been accepted

and come to be approved, for this is understood as an abandonment of personality. To this quality may be added spite, which is a poor means of "securing" personality (therefore found most often in women and children) keeping more or less within the limits of legality — often only passively — in acting against an alien will.

We must here mention another quality often found in the Latvian: the moment he has gained considerable success and sometimes also before that — haughtiness, or to be more precise, pride, which is nothing other than a complacent assertion of personal worth and the acquisition of such a conduct as would correspond to it. This haughtiness is very often found among the wealthy farmers, especially those of Zemgale, and our most expansive writers like to accentuate it, for they rightly see in it the intensified consciousness of our worth (in contrast to the depressing sense of inferiority) the necessary condition for the setting up and attaining of further larger aims.

It is perhaps owing to this quality that the Latvian peasant has a strong class feeling and a tendency towards aristocratism, e. g. the farmers keep strictly apart from the farm-hands; a rich farmer feels nearer to a poor farmer than to a rich servant. If a member of the farmer class marries anybody of the servant class this is looked upon as a disgrace to the whole family: our literature has often used conflicts of this kind for its dramatic works.

That this intensified self-assertiveness of ours is rather often felt is testified, for instance, by the mockery of our neighbouring nations who very often laugh at our exaggerated self-assertiveness, certainly, in its negative and comic aspect, i. e. as boastfulness which is nothing other than an unjustified or tactless expression of pride.

If it is true to say that the Latvians are a people of an often exaggerated self-assertiveness, this would also explain a quality which is often mentioned and condemned by the Latvians themselves, i. e. disagreement. It is clear that as very self-assertive people who do not wish to smooth out the angles of their character, i. e. either give up various qualities which disturb others or part with some of their own peculiar beliefs (for the giving up of these qualities is looked upon by them as restraining or even surrendering their personality) the Latvians are a people who easily come into conflict or even start a quarrel with others.

This has led us to the negative pole of an otherwise positive Latvian quality (the respect for their own personality): — the Latvians seem to be a rather unsociable people. It is rather difficult to say whether this unsociability is the result of certain historical conditions, i. e. of life on isolated homesteads, or, whether these historical conditions were rather caused by the innate psychological factors mentioned above, nevertheless it seems to me that the stimulating moment was a psychological factor — a peculiar mental constitution. Without doubt, this unsociability can also be brought into connection with the general psychology of the peasant class — being more dependent on nature and on general cosmic conditions than on society (at least it was so till recently) the peasants feel independent, not bound to others and, therefore, not much interested in others: they are used to expecting everything from themselves only and not from others. That the Latvians have been unsociable for ages seems to me to be proved by their history: had their personal qualities possessed more of the spirit of fellowship, they would not, perhaps, have come to be subjected to alien nations, or would, perhaps, have shaken off this dependence earlier; though, of course, this cannot be maintained as absolutely certain, for various other circumstances have played a role here.

In summing up all that has been said up to now we can state that, in so far as we can judge, a Latvian has always been a great individualist, who — because of his mental structure — has always been firmly rooted in the life of desires and has applied himself, most of all to the reinforcement of his personality and to finding scope for it in action. As a result of this he has, as a rule, been more interested in himself than in others, has willingly lived apart and tried to find his own fortune alone. Because of his individualism a Latvian very often grows adventurous, for his desires, as we have tried to show, are, though not too violent, still rather insatiable; in this he is perhaps near to the type of the Viking. This is still more credible if we take into consideration that there is much seafaring blood in us; the old Scandinavian sagas tell us about our seafarers and their adventures in strange lands.

But if a strong tendency to individualism is already inherent in our natures, how are we to explain it that these tendencies have not taken the upper hand entirely, but that in spite of them the

Latvians have still always kept together and that especially in recent times the spirit of fellowship has become particularly strong? Here, without doubt, an important factor has been "the call of the blood", an innate consciousness of a common fate that has become still more intense during the difficult lessons taught us by history. However, for this consciousness of "communion" to find its expression and "have its say", it was necessary that there should be favourable factors in the structure of each individual soul which would make such a common expression possible. Such favourable factors do really exist in the structure of our soul and they must be looked for in the peculiar relation of our mind — to a characterization of which we now turn — to our life of desires in which, according to my opinion, we are centred. Of importance here is the fact that the desires dominating in the structure of our soul are not too violent; they dominate not so much by their high tension as by their continual and incessant pressure. Because of this character of theirs our desires do not darken and overwhelm our clear and logically-thinking mind, but ally themselves to it and thus impress a rather strong character of rationality on to the whole of our psychic structure, in spite of its being "anchored" in desires. Thus the rationality of our mind overcomes the danger of extreme individualism by revealing it.

Nevertheless, this influencing takes place from both sides, for, on the one hand our mind influences and coordinates our desires, on the other hand, these desires give our mind its peculiar character. Being to a great extent at the service of aims of life determined by desires, our mind is not absolutely free and our thought as well as our imagination avoid excesses and an aimless roving that is characteristic of southerners, but proceed more in a definite direction. The Latvians are, therefore, fairly often inclined to be one-sided, and the structure of their mind urges them to be "party men", towards which they have a tendency also for the reasons that we examined above. But exactly this coalition of the desires and the mind forms also the basis of Latvian idealism, which is nothing other than the ability to follow the conceptions of some aim — ideals, projected by the desires, but treated by the mind, generalized and raised above one's own personality. It is characteristic of the Latvians (and in this they are like the French) that they can be carried away by abstract ideas too, can become

attached to aims and problems that are above their own personal interests. This is an interesting phenomenon: its foundation, without doubt, is the "anchoring" of life in innate natural desires, but thanks to the influence of the mind these desires deviate to a certain degree from their original egocentric orientation (this happens easier if the desires are not too violent), they become, so to say, sublimated and tend towards a very important change of the whole mental structure, which, it would seem, is capable of making a nation that possesses this a valuable factor of progress. Proof of this thesis is not wanting. That the Latvians were carried away by revolutionary ideas of their time (often only in order to stand up for justice and not allow injustice to get the upper hand) is only one striking instance of idealism. This has revealed itself more strikingly perhaps in the recent past as readiness to sacrifice themselves for the liberating of their nation and the founding of their state — and in recent times for the reorganization of the state and its rebuilding on more perfect lines.

Without doubt, as there can be no positive phenomena without certain negative effects, so also the idealism of the Latvian struggle for independence had such: it often made the people onesided, narrowed their sphere of interests and at the same time the understanding for other people, which can result in an unjust and sometimes even a heartless behaviour towards them.

Still dwelling on the positive sides of the structure of this idealistic spirit, we must here note that it is also the real basis of the Latvian's highly developed sense of duty and in general of precision, conscientiousness and perseverance in the performing of any kind of work: duty is really nothing other than the submitting of all personal interests to some moral idea, but consistency in work — the ability not to lose sight of the idea of the aim. Let us point out once more that all these faculties could develop in a Latvian because his desires are not too violent and his mind is able to co-operate with and lead them. It is significant, therefore, that idealism is much more characteristic of northerners than of southerners who are much oftener given to the alternation of moments of violent desire and moments of complete languor. The mind of a northerner (on the one hand) and especially that of a Latvian, puts order and rank into the life of desires, coordinating them with his judgment of values and in this way diminishing

their direct and spontaneous influence; on the other hand, he can sometimes intensify his weak and smouldering desires and transform them into bright flames by adding the fuel of lofty ideas. We can also explain the Latvian will, strong and persistent as a rule, by this coalition of the desires and the mind; the Latvians showed this will of theirs strikingly by working their way up from the dependent class of agriculturists, deprived of the protection of the law, to wealth and the status of masters of their own country: therefore the Latvian will is now always looked upon as a model of strong will.

Its basis, as was said above, is a certain stability and constancy of desires. But desires alone do not call forth will, for alone they are blind, their stability is relative, and they are governed by a rhythm of ebb and flow. They change to will only when the mind perceives the aims suggested by them, formulates them into the shape of a certain conception and consciously agrees with them; the aim of an action is then not desire itself (this remains a hidden source of power only) but the conception accepted by the mind; this governs action also when the real pressure of desires has abated or when there is even counter-pressure — but exactly this means will. The coalition of the mind and desires can be looked upon as a fortunate gift of our natures, a great gain for our life of desires which in this way is coordinated, stabilized, harmonized, made capable of action, in brief — it is a great gain that warrants practical success in action.

However, the coalition of mind and desires reflects differently on the theoretical activity of the mind. On the one hand there can be no doubt that theoretical thinking profits when a thought is governed by desires — this gives it a certain direction in which to proceed and an axis round which it can revolve and finally crystallize. A thought governed by certain desires advances with greater tension and arrives at some positive result quicker than a thought that roams about without any other desire than that of finding truth and so loses its way in the labyrinths of antinomies and the deserts of scepticism. However, on the other hand again, there can be no doubt that a thought governed by desires has its faults: such a thought tends towards one-sided theories, it is schematic, and it has the tendency towards system; it does not always adapt itself to all the unexpected turns of reality, but is often constructed

on hard and sharp lines as something that is connected with concrete reality only in so far as this leads, in a seemingly logical way, to the result that was dictated by the desires and that in some way can be of use to the action. Nor does a thought governed by desires lead, as would seem at first sight, to greater depths. In reality it is different, except in some special cases: a desire already dictating the required solution of a problem hurries towards its aim and has neither time nor interest to linger over various "trifles", which in the end perhaps would have shown that the desired aim was out of reach. Therefore thinking governed by desires, however suited it might be for the attaining of certain concrete aims, is not an ideal instrument of solving purely theoretical problems — if in general it ever attempts the solving of such problems — and only a strong critical mind, which the Latvians fortunately generally possess, would be able avoid too serious errors.

It is interesting to note that the practical orientation of desires influences the life of emotions in a similar way. On the one hand, there can be no doubt that the Latvians as a people of desires are usually very sensitive, emotional. They are very thin-skinned and inwardly their emotions react easily and sharply to the appearances of the outer world, especially to the actions of other people. A Latvian is, for instance, rather easily offended and does not forget an offence soon. Pretty often he even reacts to it, indifferent to the dangers to his own life: there are numerous instances of Latvians, who did not allow others to treat them roughly, being punished by courts martial of the former Russian army. On the other hand a Latvian is easily carried away and delights in various new and pleasant things — also in ideas — this seems explicable by a split-up emotional life; a Latvian is more capable of being many-sided and expansive than of being one-sided and deep. Emotionality, i. e. reacting to many things and in many directions is, therefore, more characteristic of a Latvian than passion, which means concentrating in one direction: a Latvian as a man of desires is rather "multipolar" than "unipolar", if we may say so. Which of these structures is of greater value is difficult to say: "unipolarity", passion, one-sidedness makes us concentrate all our faculties in one direction only and so by intensifying the ability to act permits us to achieve great things; "multipolarity", which means also that the soul is open to the receiving of all

values, creates a greater atmosphere of humanity, furthers the expression of life, the richness of life, determines a conduct more just and in this sense it is socially of greater value.

Be this as it may, we must distinguish this Latvian emotionality, this ability to yield quickly and acutely to experiences of emotion, from the ability to express these emotions quickly and spontaneously, especially if they are of a positive nature. In expressing positive emotions the Latvians are heavy and slow; they "interiorize" their feelings more than they "exteriorize" them: it seems that the main cause of this would be the tendency towards individualism, towards "shutting oneself up", — a certain unsociability, but often also simply shyness, the lack of habit and practice; — but we shall return to this later.

Finally we must distinguish a third way of characterizing the life of emotions — a differentiation of the emotions, i. e. refinement. In this sense Latvian emotionality has not progressed very far perhaps. An active man of desires who is always in a state of activity has not the time nor the wish to plunge into emotional experiences and to register all their nuances and remoter or nearer relation to different stages of our perception. It is the same with young people: they are very sensitive, but the life of their emotions is not differentiated. It would not be surprising, therefore, if the emotional life of a Latvian who is actively orientated, like active members of other nations, were not too refined and intellectual in spite of the Latvian emotionality already mentioned. I think there will be many who will not agree with me and will point out that the lyric is the most flourishing kind of our poetry and that the number of our lyrical poets, not to mention the anonymous authors of the thousands of folk-songs, is especially large. Here we must take into consideration that poets are people who have specialized in a direction which is contrary to that of a practical person, they have, so to say, disactualized, turned from actions towards themselves and their emotions. The large number of lyric poets can be looked upon perhaps as a complementary phenomenon, which could be explained as a certain self-defence of our nation; for the more intensively the majority of our people turns its back on the contemplative life, the greater — for the sake of balance — the need for those who would devote themselves to it. (This implies, indeed, that also the souls of men of action have

retained some particle of the soul that does not find satisfaction in action alone and that requires poets and their works; however, we shall return to this later.) Still, a certain inner dynamic self-restraint in the expression of the life of emotions is characteristic of even those members of our nation who have devoted themselves to this life; there remains a certain characteristic inner dynamic "temperance" in its expression: characteristic of our lyric in general is a certain clarity, sense of proportion, restraint of impulse. It seems to me that this again is connected with the coalition of the desires and the mind, which I mentioned before. This rational element coordinates our desires and at the same time harmonizes and moderates them and their expression. In this respect it is characteristic of the Latvians that they have little tendency towards sombre mysticism; even their religious experiences are irradiated by clarity and a certain rationality — both in the ancient beliefs, and in Christianity — in the perception of the people.

The God of the Latvian folk-songs is a being very close to man and well understood by him; he is the powerful Master of the Heavens, resembling a wealthy farmer. He is usually represented as a man dressed in a broad loose coat, girded with a sword; he is either on horseback or he drives a carriage or sleigh; his horses have golden saddles and silver bridles and they are covered with star-studded cloths. He is the protector of ethical and legal principles; his characteristics, besides his great physical strength, are kindness and wisdom. When the Latvian nation was oppressed and became impoverished, God in the imagination of the people often took the shape of an old man with a long white beard; sometimes he even assumed the aspect of a poor man who went from house to house unrecognized by the people, studying people's actions and meting out rewards and punishments. The people called him "The White Father". The Devil of the Latvian fairy-tales is also very human; it is true, he is wicked, though he is not so much a wicked being as a half-witted fool. He is endowed with much power and strength, but he does not know how to use them. Therefore, God always gets the upper hand of him, not so much through his strength as with his cleverness and even cunning. Certainly God — the Master of the Heavens — was not the only deity of the ancient Latvians, who, besides him and others like him, imagined the world to be full of various rather more mystical female spirits

("Mothers") and other lower spirits. However, the chief deity was always God — the bright Giver of Light. Long after the introduction of Christianity the people still kept to their ancient gods, for Christianity was introduced by foreigners who did not speak the language of the people and who were, therefore, able to acquaint the Latvians only with the outer shell of this new religion. It seems that only in the 18th and 19th centuries with the spread of Moravianism, which having become a movement of the masses carried away a great part of the nation, the Latvians grew to be deeply and intimately acquainted with Christianity. As opposed to Lutheranism, which had already become rigid in its orthodoxy, this teaching exercised such a great influence on the Latvians because of its aim, which was the revival of a truly Christian view of life — one which appealed to the heart and to the emotions. The Latvians liked the sincerity, simplicity and unselfishness taught by Moravianism. An important asset of this teaching was that it furthered self-activity, for the chief organisers and preachers of this congregation came from the people. In this way the nation was stirred, and this period may be looked upon as the beginning of the Latvian national revival. Ethically, too, it greatly disciplined the people: the strict Puritan virtue which is even now often to be found among the country people of Latvia is a result of the Moravian teaching. The development of Moravianism was later checked by repressions on the part of official institutions, but it exists even now. Now, however, there are various other Protestant sects, and the Latvians seem to have a rather great inclination to join these sects. Most Latvians still keep to Lutheranism (although nearly a quarter of them are either Catholics or members of the Orthodox Church), which shows a tendency to revive owing to the necessity of fighting the sects; in this respect it seems to be successful, for the churches latterly are better attended. Various literary groups are trying to revive the peculiar religion of the ancient Latvians — however, they do not seem to have much success, the mind of the people does not find it acceptable to return to beliefs whose naiveté and lack of criticism are too rudimentary. This is taken into consideration by our official church, which tries to avoid everything that could be the cause of a justified mental criticism and therefore it appeals more to religious

experience towards which, as towards a fact, the mind can have no objections.

At any rate violent, unrestrained passion attributed to southerners is, as a rule, strange to us: our mind is too strong, and the dynamics of our desires not so unrestrained — perhaps because it is usually “multipolar”. As a result of this moderate dynamics of our desires and their dependence upon the supremacy of the mind we are not, as a rule, subject to deep and tragic inner conflicts — in spite of some schizoid moments in our constitution — the psychology of the Slav Dostoyevsky’s types is not characteristic of us. Because of the greater strength of their character the Latvians do not like to waver infinitely in uncertainty, therefore their inner conflicts end in some heroic resolution, by which one desire is sacrificed for another, and an inner unity, capable of life and action is arrived at. A Latvian, therefore, master of his desires, self-restrained and engaged in pursuing a definite recognized aim can leave the impression of a cold, somewhat dry and even harsh person. A similar description of the Latvian character is given even by those observers who try to be objective, e. g. Count Kaiserling in his book “Das Spektrum Europas” describes the nature of the inhabitants of the Baltic countries (the Latvians included) as rather dry and harsh — and this characterization seems to correspond with the impression, at least of first contacts, which we leave on foreigners. This, it seems to us, is because we are slow in creating ties of affection with strange people: we seem to be cold towards them; if they are our subordinates, we are, as a rule, exacting: a Latvian as a principal is just, but not very gentle.

At any rate we are self-contained, reserved and not expansive, and this is felt at social gatherings, where we are in general parsimonious in our display of approval and sympathy — either towards statesmen or towards artists. Still, as has been said before, this does not mean that we are really insensitive in all these cases and incapable of emotions of sympathy. But not being interested in other people and not having practised the expression of the emotion of sympathy which we have for others, we seem to have grown a crust round ourselves and this gives us the appearance of dryness and harshness. We need a certain warming up, a “pulling ourselves together”, in order to overcome our reserve

(which is fairly often simply shyness), to break the hard crust and to disclose underneath it a wealth and even opulence of emotional warmth; our hospitality, for instance, gives more and is heartier than that of other peoples, even so as to completely bewilder those foreigners who come under its spell. Our insensibility towards others can be explained, not so much by a lack of emotions, as chiefly by the "non-exercise" of these emotions, by the concentrating of our interests in another sphere: therefore, our aspect could change considerably under favourable circumstances.

This reserve of ours and lack of expansiveness is connected with the fact that our lives are real lives of strife and are turned towards success and the future and not towards the present. Therefore, as has been said before, we are not a pleasure-loving people; this does not mean, however, that we are not capable of pleasure. This is easily proved by pointing out that we keep more holidays, celebrate more jubilees, arrange banquets more often than the people of other countries. But here we can state again that our banquets are by no means the banquets of refined men of pleasure, at which everything is directed towards the present, the precise moment of pleasure. Refined men of pleasure, for instance, drink wines of a high quality and fragrant cognacs, sipping them slowly, enjoying the act of drinking itself, — we often drink hurriedly in large quantities, preoccupied by thoughts of how to arrive quicker at the results we long for — i. e. intoxication, the liberation of our life from the oppression of struggle and toil; our banquets are a release of tension, a reducing of high pressure, which is not an aim in itself, but is really only a way to the tension of later activity; we do nothing else at these banquets than gather strength for future struggle and activity; by remembering the past and recollecting successes of the past we stimulate ourselves in picturing the future we desire for ourselves. This explains the large number of speeches at our banquets, their real object being mass suggestion, an inciting towards further action. On the contrary, refined men of pleasure speak little at such banquets, — the minimum of what is required by the conventions of politeness. Our banquets resemble those of the ancient vikings (at least as we imagine them to have been), who on returning from their wanderings celebrated their victories and prepared for new wanderings. That our pleasures are closely

connected with action is shown by the bad habit of drinking rather too much indulged in by our people whether it is, as usual at such banquets, an expression of the necessity to relax from the tension of hard work (even with the help of artificial means), or more often an expression of the desire to pass over into the world of illusions, in which one's own strength seems greater and the obstacles easier to overcome; this is most often the case with people of weak character whose activity in the concrete world is not very successful and who have met with obstacles. The same holds good of the habit of singing: we still sing much at parties and various social gatherings; this habit has already disappeared among the intellectualized nations of Western Europe; it is really a similar but innocent and more noble means of auto-suggestion and of forgetting reality; also singing with its rhythm, its sounds, words, its atmosphere of sociability, transfers one, like any other art, into the world of illusory perception in which there is much more harmony and success is easier attained than in the concrete world. Still, a certain freshness and youth which disappears with the progress of culture is needed in order to yield to this kind of suggestion.

Be this as it may, our pleasures and the good and bad habits connected with them seem to testify once more to our youthfulness, our nature of desires orientated towards the future and action. As people of desires we are in no sense pessimists, but on the contrary, the affective key-note of our life is light and optimistic, in spite of our harshness as fighters, our incessant impetuosity and dissatisfaction, life and its struggle, attract us and we are full of hope. This optimism is an indispensable and active element of our mental structure. How could we possibly be strivers and fighters if life and its promises had no attractions for us? We can easily bring this into concordance with the psychology of desires in general. Inherent to desire is, on the one hand, a dissatisfaction with what is given — and that this side of desires is sufficiently represented in us has been proved. But on the other hand the desires contain a conception that can satisfy the desires (an ideal!), and it is not possible to imagine this and still less to strive for it if we do not to a certain degree anticipate it, i. e. imagine it realised and feel it as such. But it is impossible to imagine and to feel it realised if we do not at the same time ex-

perience joy and satisfaction. This explains the sweetness of longing and dreams: thanks to them we experience beforehand the perfection and pleasure of an unrealised idea. Therefore it seems quite natural that the type of a dreamer is one of the main types found in Latvian literature. Though realistically-inclined critics protest against the cultivation of this type, still, it is in no case only an invention of certain writer, but an essentially important variant of a man of desires, only in these types the accent has been shifted from a feeling of want to a feeling of fulfilment, often as a result of outward circumstances that are too difficult, that do not permit of any concrete approach to the ideal, and the soul, therefore, seemingly with the intention of self-defence concentrates on the plane of imagining the fulfilment of the desired. However, also in a normal life of desires the thing desired for in the future is always anticipated beforehand and experienced in the present, and this is the moment which permits a tone of optimism to resound in the psyche of desires, that is indispensable to it as a stimulant and a "supporter" of the tension of life. *Joie de vivre*, briskness, ingenuity will naturally and indispensably sparkle in the language of Latvians and will find its expression in their works and thus level out certain heavier sides of their character, for instance their relation towards other people: joy makes one like other people, makes one benevolent towards them and helps to break the hard crust of one's soul which other powers and their configurations try to develop. This tone of joy and optimism deprives Latvian society in a certain measure of its heaviness, makes it comparatively responsive, easier to stimulate and, therefore, causes it to be full of life, joy and tension.

In drawing these last features of the Latvian character we have approached an understanding of a Latvian that seems to be antithetical to the one given above, but which was approved of and often treated by our best writers, such as Poruks, Fr. Bārda, Saulietis, Skalbe, partly also by Rainis, Brigadere and others. As I have said before they represent a type of Latvian that they look upon to a certain degree as an ideal in two different ways: the first variation reveals him as a dreamer, a romanticist, endowed with a soul so sensitive and gentle that everything in the world of concrete things wounds him and he can find consolation only in nature by trying to immerse himself in it and fuse with it. The

second variation, incidentally, is rather near to the first, reveals a sincere personality, turned to all the world and infinitely favourably inclined to all life, but especially to all human beings. This type represents a person of so little cunning, so reliable, that the world cannot call him anything other than "simpleton", the type of "Antiņš", so popular in Latvian folk-tales.

One of our best poets, Rainis, has used the folk-tales about Antiņš to write one of his most beautiful dramatic works "The Golden Horse". Antiņš is the youngest of three brothers: he is a fool, whereas his brothers are "clever", i. e. their sharp wits serve their own interests only. When their father dies the elder brothers not only take possession of all his property, but even make Antiņš dress himself in his Sunday clothes; Antiņš does this with pleasure for he has always been very fond of his father. Then the brothers drive Antiņš out of his father's house. It is winter, and very frosty, but that does not prevent Antiņš from giving his gloves, jacket, boots and cap to the first beggar who asks him for them. He does not care about his own life; he wishes only to watch some prince ascend the steep hill of ice and glass and wake the inexpressibly gentle and beautiful little princess who lies there in a trance. Antiņš has seen the princess from afar in something like a dream and he has fallen in love with her fragility and delicacy. Later on it turns out that the beggar to whom Antiņš gave all he had was the "White Father" — God himself — who sends Antiņš wonderful horses, and Antiņš, having now attained a stage of absolute self-denial, reaches the summit of the ice and glass hill on a golden horse and restores the princess back to life: he does not think himself worthy of her and so, though deeply in love with her, disappears again. But when the life of the princess is in danger (she feels the loss of a magic ring that she gave to Antiņš after he awakened her) he allows, his fingers, into which the ring has grown, to be cut off, in order to save her. When that, too, does not help he at last ventures to go to her and to take her to wife. There can be no doubt that in this work of Rainis Antiņš symbolizes that spiritual perfection and heroism that the man must possess who wants to free his nation, personified in the figure of the entranced princess.

However, this type as well as the type of the unbalanced romantic mentioned above are not the most usual of types; this

is proved already by the writers who describe them, for they represent them as exception, as contrasts to the rest of the world. Still, perhaps, every Latvian soul possesses something of this romanticist, whose love of nature is somewhat exaggerated, of Antiņš: innumerable folk-songs with their diminutives referring to nature, with their warm and naive relation towards the world and their great inner sincerity point to this. I think that these features of the Latvian soul do not contradict those that were mentioned before, but can be looked upon as consistent with them. I have pointed out already that the man of desires, ready for action and strife, was consistent with a dreamer. Every man of desires is really always a dreamer, but we do not notice this because all the potency of his soul changes to action. It is enough for this action to be impeded that the psychic forces should become independent and express themselves separately. Under these conditions the desires can lose their egoism and turn towards some object above personal interests, especially nature, which is then looked upon as a deep being full of life, as the giver and creator of everything, as a mother who gives shelter to those who come and look for it. Every active person of desires has moments that bring him near to the type of such a romanticist: continuous egoism is not possible, for it wearies, and therefore moments of rest, when a person turns from himself and rests from himself, are necessary. Therefore, nearly all Latvians without exception are great lovers of nature and travel. We can even say that in a certain sense nature is nearer to them than human beings. This can be explained partly by the fact that all these people of desires and emotions are in their hearts very sensitive and easily offended and therefore they do not like to reveal themselves. In society they generally wear armour, a shell consisting of will-power and insensibility which has often thistles of mockery and irony. Special circumstances are needed for them to take off this armour, either a circle of trustworthy friends, or a lull in the activity of the mind, or a change of direction: he must not think about the evil world, he must know nothing about possible harm and wounds, or he must not be capable of feeling these wounds — in a word, he must be a fool from the point of view of the world. But after all the enthusiastic romanticist as well as the sincere Antiņš is the same Latvian man of desires, only here he has grown out of the egoism

and one of these types has overcome his desires more completely, the other one less completely. In this way the concrete expression of a Latvian wavers between two poles. On the one hand we find the self-contained and harsh man of action and strife with all his spiritual powers converted into activity, on the other, a dreamer and simpleton, intuitively turned to everything; the majority of Latvians are between these two poles, but at the present historical moment the greater number is nearer the first extreme than the second. But every Latvian has something also of the second type and he has always some notion about the independent life of the mind and its values even though circumstances had carried him far away from this life. That this is so is shown by the enormous number of folk-songs that are still often sung and also by the large number of lyric poets and the respect people feel for them, as, in general, for any creators of spiritual values. Taking into consideration that we have, not only many poets, but also a large number of other artists — painters, sculptors, musicians — we understand why some observers and judges come to the conclusion that the Latvians have a special craving for beauty and that therefore the real call of the Latvians could be activity in the realm of art. However, for the time being we must ascertain the fact that the Latvians have turned their attention to the shaping of their concrete life and reveal in that activity the qualities indispensable to such builders.

We can now look upon our attempt to sketch the psychology of the Latvian people as finished. The result of our attempt we could perhaps summarize in the following way: the Latvians appear to us as a youthful nation which looks towards the future and is endowed with a spirit of endeavour that makes it strive constantly towards ever greater achievements. The basis of this spirit of endeavour appears to us to be the general desirous nature of the Latvian which shifts the centre of life from the present to the future and make it, if we may use this expression, "excentric". We looked upon the possibility of "realizing" one's personality as the central object of the Latvian's desires; moreover, characteristic of the Latvian is the coalition of his desires with the rationality of his mind which levels and harmonizes the disequilibrium of his affective life. Various features of the Latvian character result from this: dissatisfaction, revolutionarism, the spirit of freedom, idealism,

will-power, the sense of duty, the cult of justice, and — in less favourable cases — materialism, haughtiness, boastfulness, envy, unsociability, individualism. Because of its coalescing with desires, the thought of a Latvian is characterized by its proceeding towards a certain aim, by logicality, system, practicality, and at times a tendency towards doctrinairism and onesidedness. The predominance of desires and of the mind reflects itself in the affective life in such a way that the Latvian nature is free from tragic conflicts, the dynamics of the emotions is restrained, which leads on the one hand to their being self-contained, to the narrowing of expansiveness and spontaneity, to the weakening of the ties of affection with the surroundings and as a result of this to a certain "dryness" and harshness; on the other hand this leads to clarity of emotions, to lyricism, romanticism and even a certain panpsychism. Finally we pointed out that the vitality of the Latvian people expresses itself naturally in joy and optimism, by which it is accompanied.

There can be no doubt that our survey does not exhaust everything that could be said about the soul of our nation; only certain lines of it have been traced here, and these too, can be questioned, especially if we take into consideration the exceptionally large number of individual varieties of peculiarities which, because of this, can never, so to say, be put into one boat.

It is especially difficult to determine the mental creative powers of certain nations, for these are to a great extent dependent on certain specific conditions of life. We could perhaps regard the following conclusion as being a general rule: the more people devote themselves to action which is successful, the less they develop their "pure" mental life, and again, if something hinders the outer activity from developing then the inner spiritual activity is more intensive, so that we can agree with the expression that the spirit or perception is really an impeded action. This circumstance must be taken into consideration when estimating the Latvian nation and its individual members: those moments when the nation has turned towards an outer activity are less productive in the sense of spiritual refinement, the same applies also to separate individuals. The same nation, however, at another period of time, and those of her members that live in peculiar circumstances will have other qualities that will seemingly not agree with

those displayed in another age and in different circumstances, but are still actually an expression of the same forces.

Therefore we should not look upon it as a reproach if someone were to point out those qualities mentioned in our sketch as contradictory. We must first of all remember that the character of one person, not to speak of that of a whole nation, is not a logical construction: it often contains contradictions bestowed by nature itself, secondly, in the characterization of some nation we must always take into consideration the variations of the main character — which depend on various secondary circumstances — that can express themselves antithetically when we try to explain it. Only in this way can we explain that a Latvian can be at the same time an individualist, a materialist, a romanticist, a lyrist, a rigid and dry organiser, an everlastingly dissatisfied striver and a friendly optimist full of joie de vivre. Let us not forget that the Latvian nation has not yet expressed itself, it is still full of various potentialities: to determine its character as unalterable and to foresee a course of development ordained by fate is quite impossible: the nation knows itself to be a young nation to whom all paths are open.

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It is especially difficult to determine the inner creative powers of certain nations for these are to a great extent dependent on a certain specific condition of life. We could perhaps regard the Latvian nation as being a general rule; the more powerful and successful the inner activity which is developed, the more they develop their "pure" mental and spiritual activity; the more intensive the inner spiritual activity is, the more intensive the expression of the spirit or perception is really an impeded action. This circumstance must be taken into consideration when estimating the Latvian nation and its individual members: those moments when the nation has turned towards an outer activity are less productive in the sense of spiritual refinement to us, than the same moments in other nations. However, at another period of time, and for her members that live in peculiar circumstances, we can not agree that

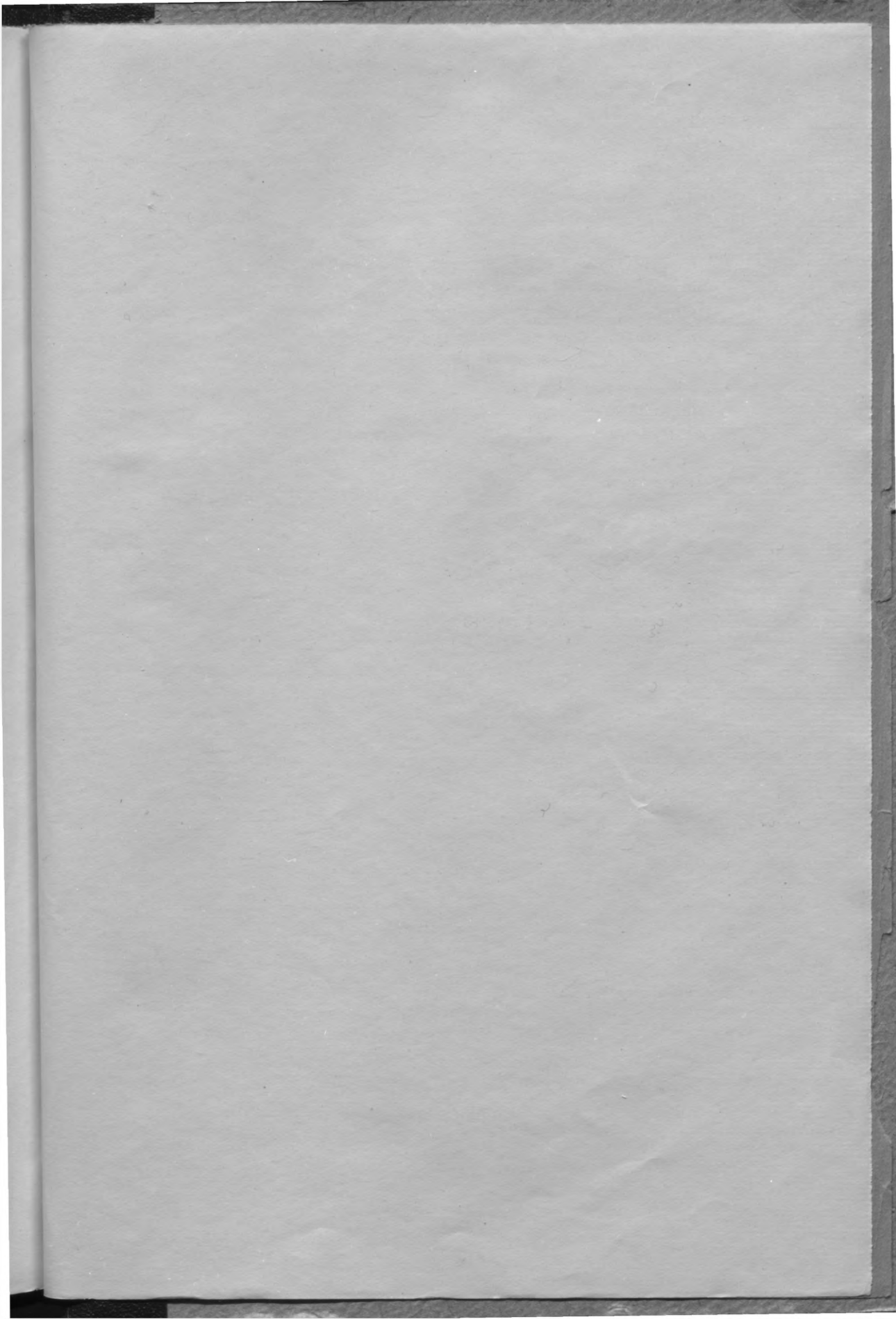
Latviešu psiholoģija.

P. Jurevičs.

(Angliskā teksta kopsavilkums.)

Pēc dažiem metodoloģiskiem apsvērumiem vispirms tiek uz-
mests jautājums, vai latviešu psiholoģija acumirkīgā momentā
nav zināmā mērā atkarīga no vietas, kādu šis moments ieņem vis-
pārīgā tautas augšanas un veidošanās procesā. Uz šo jautājumu
tiek atbildēts, ka zināmā mērā tas tiešām tā ir. Latvieši, kā nesen
patstāvību atguvusi tauta, uzskatāmi par jauneklīgu, uz nākotni
ievirzītu tautu, kuras attīstību nekavē sastingušas tradīcijas, un
kas tāpēc dažkārt iedrošinās arī iet pilnīgi jaunus ceļus, lai gan
arī no otras puses tas būtu saistīts ar zināmām briesmām. Tomēr
latviešu trauksmaino progresu gan nevar izskaidrot vienīgi ar tau-
tas jauneklību, bet tam, ja vēro faktus, šķiet esam arī dziļāks pa-
mats pašā konstantā tautas raksturā. Latviešiem šķiet vispāri
raksturīgs centības gars, un tas tiem liek nemitīgi censties pēc vien-
mēr lielākiem panākumiem. Šī centības gara pamatā mums at-
klājas latviskās dabas vispārīgā tieksmainība, kas, kaut arī tās
dīnamika nav brāzmaina, novirza dzīves centru no tagadnes uz
nākotni un tā padara to zināmā mērā „ekscentrisku“. Kā latvisko
tieksmju centrālo objektu var uzlūkot realizācijas iespēju sagādā-
šanu pašu personībai, — pie kam latvietim īpatnēja kļūst viņa
tieksmju koalīcija ar vienmēr skaidrā prāta racionalitāti, kas
stipri izlīdzina un harmonizē viņa tieksmainās dabas nelīdzsvarotību.
No šejienes tad izriet dažādas latvieša rakstura īpatnības:
neapmierinātība, revolucionarisms, idealisms, brīvības gars, gribas
spēks, pienākuma apziņa, taisnības kults, bet nelabvēlīgos gadī-
jumos — materialisms, lepnība, lielība, skaudība, nesabiedriskums,
individualisms. Atkarībā no saauguma ar tieksmēm, latvieša domai
ir raksturīga stingra virzīšanās uz noteiktu mērķi, uz loģismu,
sistematiskumu, praktiskumu, bet reizē arī tendences uz doktrīnari-
smu un vienpusību. Tieksmju un prāta predominance atbalsojas

afektivitātes dzīvē tādā kārtā, ka ar to latvieša dabā tiek izlīdzināti traģiski konflikti, kā jūtu dinamika kļūst apvaldīta, kas bieži ved pie zināmas ieslēgtības sevī, pie ekspansivitātes un spontānitātes sašaurināšanās, pie afektīvu saišu ar apkārtni pavājināšanās un, līdz ar to, pie zināma sausuma un skarbuma, bet no otras puses tā var vest arī pie tikumiskās apskaidrotības, pie lirisma, pie romantisma, kas izpaužas dabas mīlestībā un tieksmē apvienoties ar kādu plašāku relatīvu. Beidzot tiek atzīmēts, ka latviešu tautas vitalitāte dabiski izpaužas dzīves priekā un optimismā, kas to visur pavada. Latviešu tauta vēl nav izteikusi sevi, tajā snauž vēl dažādas iespējamības: noteikt tai kādu negrozīgu raksturu un līdz ar to fatalu attīstības gaitu ir neiespējami. Jāatzīst tikai, ka tai no dabas ir līdzī dotas daudzas augsti vērtīgas spējas, un tāpēc, var teikt, ka tai vēl visi ceļi vaļā.



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