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## Tsvetaeva's Briusov, Mozart, and Salieri<sup>1</sup>

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In a poem addressed to Valerii Briusov, Sofia Parnok asks:

Кого вы ищете, Сальери?  
Кто среди юных Моцарт ваш?<sup>2</sup>

The question was prompted by a concrete event: On November 24, 1913, the poet Nadezhda L'vova killed herself with a revolver given to her by Briusov—that very Browning that some eight years earlier his then paramour Nina Petrovskaia fired at Andrei Belyi.<sup>3</sup> L'vova was an aspiring poet Briusov ushered onto the literary arena with his forward to her first collection of lyric verse, *Старая сказка*, which came out in 1913. While mentoring L'vova, Briusov had an affair with her in the course of which, as Khodasevich claims, “Брюсов систематически приучал ее к мысли о смерти, о самоубийстве.”<sup>4</sup> Whether or not Khodasevich's account is strictly factual, Briusov was widely held responsible for his protégée's untimely death, and L'vova came to be seen as the tragic victim not of ill-starred love, but of her mentor's envy.

The question Parnok's poem addresses to Briusov in the wake of L'vova's suicide reflects the literary gossip of the day. At the same time, however, the ready association of Briusov with Salieri is rooted in a broader cultural context—one in which two competing images of the creative artist, emblemized by Mozart and Salieri, were debated in connection with how the Russian poetic tradition was to be construed and perpetuated. At issue were the questions of how much conscious control an artist exercises over his creative powers and of whether it is possible to *become* a poet of one's own volition rather than to *be* a poet according to dictates of a power beyond human sway.

For those who did not concur with Briusov's post-Symbolist

image of the poet, there could scarcely be a more fertile literary space from which to launch resistance to his ideas than Pushkin's *Mozart and Salieri*. Briusov's ideas coincided to a significant extent with those espoused by Salieri. Thus, for example, Darskii's summary of Salieri's position in a book of 1915 devoted to the "Little Tragedies" aptly described the views held by Briusov as well: "Раз и навсегда надо покончить с самим принципом вдохновенности. Надо забыть о неподвластных человеку возможностях."<sup>5</sup> Indeed, in the period we are considering, readings of *Mozart and Salieri* were influenced by Briusov's platform, even as the "Little Tragedy" was instrumental in shaping responses to that platform. Drawing attention to the similarity of Briusov's views to those espoused by Salieri was a way to question Briusov's position. For Briusov's detractors, L'vova's suicide did not trigger the comparison with Salieri; it corroborated its validity.

In an inspired essay on *Mozart and Salieri*, Monika Greenleaf speaks of Pushkin's transformation of "the vulgar rumor of Mozart's poisoning by Salieri into < . . . > 'an elevating deception' [nas vozvyshaiushchii obman] by whose light the Russian public could be taught to read Pushkin himself."<sup>6</sup> Parnok's treatment of the rumors precipitated by L'vova's suicide is a transformation of the same order. The negative image of Briusov projected in the 1913 lyric she addressed to him found elaboration in subsequent critical essays, most pointedly in "По поводу последних произведений Валерия Брюсова,"<sup>7</sup> a review written in 1917 of *Семь цветов радуги* and the completion of Pushkin's *Египетские ночи*. In this review Parnok focuses on Briusov's concerted efforts to become a poet: "С великим терпением, с маниакальным упорством, в течение всей своей долгой литературной деятельности, стремился он сделаться поэтом."<sup>8</sup> The comparison with Salieri is not long in coming: "Музыку он разъял, как труп. И мастерство поставил он подножием искусства" (78). But rather than dwell on what were by then the obvious parallels between Salieri's and Briusov's views on art, Parnok goes on to consider Briusov as he might appear to future generations of poets:

И — кто знает? — быть может, Брюсов, сам столь скупо одаренный вдохновением, станет вдохновительным образом для чьего-нибудь творческого воображения. Кто знает, — может быть будет написан новый Сальери, не тот великий Сальери, у которого был свой Моцарт, а Сальери — вечный жид, для которого Моцарт — опасность гения — скрыт даже в футуристе. (78)

The debased image of Salieri as Ahasuerus—isolated from the Mozart who lends him tragic grandeur, and hostile to all possible signs of genius—is a grim one that denies Briusov agency even as it styles him as a threat to the unfolding poetic tradition.

Parnok's suggestion that Briusov might inspire the creation of a new Salieri was realized some seven years later by Marina Tsvetaeva in "Герой труда," an essay she wrote on the occasion of Briusov's death in 1924. I have considered elsewhere the role of "anti-muse" Briusov assumed in Tsvetaeva's early poetic development as she frames it in that essay.<sup>9</sup> The focus of the present article is on how Tsvetaeva engages Mozart and Salieri in complex defiance of Briusov that operates on a variety of distinct but analogically construed levels. In "Герой труда" Mozart and Salieri figure in Tsvetaeva's efforts 1) to reject Briusov's influence both on her own poetic development and on that of the Russian tradition as a whole; 2) to deny Briusov authority specifically over Pushkin and, more broadly, over how the poetic enterprise is to be defined; and 3) to move beyond the unyielding binary emblemized by Mozart and Salieri in which poetic discourse of the time was mired. Invoking Mozart and Salieri to depose Briusov, Tsvetaeva interacts creatively with Pushkin, whom she treats not as a nationally acclaimed monumental authority, but as a dynamic, personally energizing poetic equal. As she draws Pushkin into her own creative sphere, Tsvetaeva loosens Briusov's hold on the Golden Age poet. At stake here, as we will see, is not simply the appropriation of Pushkinian authority, but the need to subsume oppositions that leached the unfolding tradition of its vitality. Like all of Tsvetaeva's essays, "Герой труда" is a text rich with densely interwoven images, motifs, patterns, and ideas. Making no claims to do justice to this inexhaustible essay, I will briefly introduce Tsvetaeva's project and then explore the significance invested in the three explicit references she makes to Mozart and Salieri in the course of her essay.

In private correspondence Tsvetaeva had harsh words for Briusov: “Брюсов — *гад*, существо продажное (уж и покупать перестали, — *должно* > *быть* > дешево просит!) и жалкое, всюду лезет, все издеваются.”<sup>10</sup> In “Герой труда” — following Pushkin who created a noble figure to play opposite his Mozart—Tsvetaeva casts Briusov as a worthy opponent. “Задача была трудная,” she explains upon completing the essay, “дать идею его своеобразного величия. Судить, не осудив, хотя приговор — казалось — готов.”<sup>11</sup> The primary function of her essay was, she insisted, evaluative: “вместо анекдотических записей о Брюсове-человеке — оценка его поэтической и человеческой фигуры с множеством сопутствующих мыслей.”<sup>12</sup> The framework in which Tsvetaeva considers Briusov abounds with subtle allusions to Pushkin, but it is Tsvetaeva’s *enactment* of her essential ties with the Golden Age poet that carries her argument. *Her* Pushkin and the poetic discourse into which she draws him in this essay are qualitatively different from Briusov’s, and “Герой труда” stands not simply as a counter-argument but as a counter-example to the poet whose authority Tsvetaeva challenges. Tsvetaeva’s genre (an emphatically idiosyncratic memoir that develops not logically but analogically) and her vocabulary (expressly non-technical) are crucial for this counter-example. Like Pushkin’s Mozart, she does not anatomize the creative act, and her ideas about poetry find expression not through logical analysis, but through the practice of her art.

Tsvetaeva’s counter-example is launched in the form of a self-presentation, and Irina Shevelenko has good cause to observe: “записями о недавно скончавшемся поэте Цветаева исподволь вычертила историю своего пути в литературе.”<sup>13</sup> Tsvetaeva’s self-presentation in the essay is couched expressly in terms of opposition to Briusov that sharply distinguishes her from aspiring poets of her time. The position is a bold one for it is scarcely possible to exaggerate the control Briusov exercised over Russian literary practice. Thus, for example, Khodasevich, writing about Nadezhda L’vova in 1913, notes: “Сказать, что г-жа Львова, озаглавившая свой сборник *Старая сказка*, принадлежит к числу поэтов брюсовской школы, значило бы ничем не отличить ее от всех наших поэтов последнего десятилетия.”<sup>14</sup> Asserting her own independence from Briusov, Tsvetaeva describes her early poetic develop-

ment as energized by her hostile relations with him and defined by fierce resistance to his attempts to direct the Russian literary tradition in general and the feminine line of poetry in particular. Pointedly distancing herself from the cohort of Briusov’s protégées, who in her essay never rise above the designation *poetesses*, Tsvetaeva the *poet* subtly but unequivocally aligns herself with an emphatically de-Briusovized Pushkin.<sup>15</sup>

The position that Briusov takes and that Tsvetaeva opposes is well described by what Darskii writes of Salieri’s intent: “намеренность основать искусство всецело на человеческом усилии.”<sup>16</sup> Tsvetaeva responds by promoting a creative sphere in which the artist’s individual volition is crucial, but not sufficient in and of itself to the task of poetry. Thus from the very outset she zeroes in on an irredeemable lack: “Да, ибо мастерство — не все. Нужен слух. Его не было у Брюсова. Антимзыкальность Брюсова.”<sup>17</sup> On the grounds of this lack, Tsvetaeva relegates Briusov to a qualified category: поэт, “но не Божьей милостью” (4/1:16). Like Parnok, she draws attention to Briusov’s extraordinary efforts to make himself a poet. In doing so, she underscores the limitations of the self within which Briusov is forced to work and yet also pays homage to his undeniable achievements, summarizing her argument in characteristically aphoristic terms: “Вдохновение + воловий труд, вот поэт, воловий труд + воловий труд, вот Брюсов: вол везущий воз. Этот вол не лишен величия” (4/1:16–17).

Even as she acknowledges Briusov’s accomplishments, Tsvetaeva represents his authority over the Russian poetic tradition in extremely negative terms. The initial suggestion that Briusov seeks glory quickly leads her to the more ominous conclusion that it is power that he desires above all else: “Кто так властвовал над живыми людьми и судьбами, как Брюсов? < . . . > Нечто от каменного гостя было в его появлениях на пирах молодой поэзии — Жуана” (4/1:17). Briusov’s widely-publicized affairs notwithstanding, he appears in Tsvetaeva’s text not as the high-spirited Don Juan, but as a monumental death-dealing figure. Throughout “Герой труда” Tsvetaeva describes Briusov in terms of a heaviness, rigidity, and absence of spontaneity (“отсутствие случайности,”

4/1:52) that contrasts sharply with Pushkin's and her own creative vivacity.

Tsvetaeva's explicit alignment of Briusov with Salieri takes on far-reaching, multifaceted significance within the framework of her text and the cultural climate in which it arose. In the three direct references to Pushkin's "Little Tragedy," the constant is Briusov, whom she casts in the role of Salieri opposite three different "Mozarts," thus providing a fruitful variety of perspectives on Briusov's position and her own opposition to it. The first two allusions reflect commonly-held views of the time that Tsvetaeva uses to advance her argument and to substantiate the powerful assertion of her own poetic authority at which she arrives in the third.

In the first instance Tsvetaeva cites an observation purportedly made by Sergei Efron, who suggests that Briusov is the Salieri vis-à-vis Pushkin-Mozart (4/1:27). By ascribing the remark to her husband, Tsvetaeva underscores that such matching of actual poets to the characters of the "Little Tragedy" was not unique to her. Just as Pushkin himself was widely seen in the Mozart he created, so too were various poets suggested for comparison with Salieri. Thus, for example, Gershenzon detected Salieri-like qualities in Katenin,<sup>18</sup> Shcheglov suggested Baratynskii as Salieri's prototype (a suggestion Briusov refuted),<sup>19</sup> while Bal'mont and Briusov, as will be discussed below, were frequently cast in the roles of Mozart and Salieri respectively.<sup>20</sup> The specific comparison of Briusov with Salieri was, as has been discussed, fairly common at the time. Yet within Tsvetaeva's carefully constructed argument, what she presents as a casual remark made by her husband serves to indicate the cultural setting out of which her own challenge to Briusov develops.

Briusov, who according to Zhirmunskii was the first to bring the Golden Age poet into the Symbolists' orbit,<sup>21</sup> proclaimed himself Pushkin's apprentice and closely linked his own creative identity with that of his great predecessor. With her juxtaposition of Pushkin and Briusov *qua* Mozart and Salieri, Tsvetaeva invokes Briusov's ties to Pushkin only to underscore the essential differences between them. Briusov was sensible to the tremendous prestige and authority that alignment with Pushkin gained him. Within a Symbolist culture

that was infused with the notions of Nietzschean eternal return and of "жизнетворчество," Briusov could fashion himself as an instantiation of Pushkin himself. In post-revolutionary Russia, he could present himself as the master of Pushkinian poetic technique that could be taught to rising generations of Soviet poets in institutes of poetry founded and headed by Briusov.

The thirty-five years Briusov devoted to studying Pushkin's life and works yielded over eighty publications that provided powerful impetus to Pushkin scholarship and yet also shaped an image of Pushkin in Briusov's own likeness. In his voluminous Pushkin studies Briusov insistently supplanted the notion of genius with that of master craftsman. Briusov's biographical writings foregrounded Pushkin's (flawed) human nature, while his studies of Pushkin's manuscripts—styled as entryways to his "poetic laboratory"—highlighted the laborious revisions to which Pushkin subjected his lyrics. For Briusov, Pushkin's heavily inked drafts argued eloquently against the notion of inspired genius in favor of the poet's own consciously directed, concerted efforts. Free-wheeling Pegasus gave way to a harnessed ox pulling a plow at the poet's behest.<sup>22</sup>

Because Briusov's power to construct the poetic tradition derived in significant measure from the alliance he had forged with Pushkin, it was difficult to challenge Briusov's views on poetry without appearing to challenge Pushkin's as well. This circumstance made it especially difficult for aspiring poets to resist Briusov's influence or to enter the literary arena without his endorsement. The success of both Tsvetaeva's challenge to Briusov and the poetic self she constructed in "Герой труда" on the basis of that challenge was therefore predicated on wresting Pushkin from Briusov's authority. The elevation of technique over inspiration and of craftsman over genius that Briusov championed in Pushkin's name put him squarely in the role of Salieri and not of the Mozart with whom Pushkin himself was generally aligned. Thus with the first of her three references to *Mozart and Salieri* in "Герой труда," Tsvetaeva takes a widely recognized opportunity offered by the "Little Tragedy" to drive a wedge between Briusov and the Golden Age poet he sought to appropriate.<sup>23</sup>

In the second of her references to Mozart and Salieri, Tsvetaeva moves from the broad cultural issue of how Pushkin is figured within the tradition to focus on two competing guises of the poet specific to her time. This reference appears some twenty pages later, in part two of "Герой труда," where Tsvetaeva presents Briusov as the Salieri who plays opposite Bal'mont-Mozart: "Бальмонт и Брюсов. Об этом бы целую книгу, — поэма уже написана: Моцарт, Сальери" (4/1:51). As in the first reference to Mozart and Salieri, here too Tsvetaeva underscores that this pairing is not her invention: "Бальмонт, Брюсов. Росшие в те годы никогда не называли одного из них, не назвав (хотя бы мысленно) другого < . . . > Эти имена ходили в паре" (4/1:51). That this widely-practiced pairing of opposites was established along the lines of the juxtaposition of Mozart and Salieri is evident: Briusov insisted on learnable craft and labor, while Bal'mont championed the poet's surrender to inspiration. Thus it comes as no surprise that in an essay written the same year as "Герой труда," Khodasevich arrives at the same configuration of poets and fictional characters when he writes about Briusov: "Его неоднократно подчеркнутая любовь к Бальмонту вряд ли может быть названа любовью. В лучшем случае это было удивление Сальери перед Моцартом."<sup>24</sup>

Tsvetaeva devotes an entire section of "Герой труда" to a series of juxtapositions of Bal'mont and Briusov, their names, their approaches to poetry, and their creative personalities—all rallied to the cause of emphasizing the antinomy between the metaphysical dimensions of the Symbolist quest and the concrete reality of a post-Symbolist physical world and between self-effacing faith in inspiration and the self-asserting desire to seize control in the here-and-now. It is specifically the irreconcilability of these positions that she foregrounds:

В полярности этих двух имен — дарований — темпераментов, в предельной выявленности, в каждом, одного из двух основных родов творчества, в самой собой встающей сопоставляемости, во *взаимоисключаемости* их.

Все, что не Бальмонт — Брюсов, и все, что не Брюсов — Бальмонт.

Не два имени — два лагеря, две особы, две расы (4/1:52).

As she enlarges—insistently and to excess—on myriad signs of the mutually exclusive creative spheres that Briusov and Bal'mont embody, Tsvetaeva upholds the paradigmatic opposition that Mozart and Salieri had come to emblemize. Yet this gesture, as we come to see, reflects not her own views on poetry and the creative personality, but rather the impasse at which literary debates had arrived and beyond which it is her intention to advance poetic discourse. By the end of the section "Брюсов и Бальмонт," Tsvetaeva leaves the binary opposition completely exhausted, and this exhaustion demands that the confines of mere antinomy be left behind.<sup>25</sup>

Her long-standing friendship with Bal'mont<sup>26</sup> and her enduring antagonism toward Briusov notwithstanding, Tsvetaeva does not elevate Bal'mont to that position of "the Pushkin of the time" that she denied Briusov. Having framed the series of contrasts between her two contemporaries along the lines in which Mozart and Salieri had come to be generally considered, Tsvetaeva disassociates Pushkin from the Bal'mont she aligned with his Mozart. The elaborately worked juxtapositions of Briusov and Bal'mont point the way toward the conclusion at which she arrives in the third and final casting of Briusov in the role of Salieri, which occurs in "Последние слова," the final section of the essay. It is here that Tsvetaeva's realization of Parnok's suggestion that Briusov serve to inspire a new Salieri is made manifest: "Брюсов в мире останется, но не как поэт, а как герой поэмы. Так же как Сальери остался — творческой волей Пушкина" (4/1:62). With this statement Tsvetaeva foregrounds those ties with Pushkin that she has worked to establish in this essay. With these ties in place, the Briusov of her essay emerges not simply as a Salieri who plays opposite a Tsvetaeva-Mozart, but as a new Salieri whom Tsvetaeva brings into being in the course of defining her poetic self and inscribing that self into the Pushkinian tradition. The point is unmistakable: like Pushkin's Salieri, so too Tsvetaeva's Briusov will endure only on the strength of the poetic text she has created. Ultimately Tsvetaeva comes to bury Briusov, not to praise him, and "Герой труда" is her only work devoted to a deceased poet that stands as a monument reaffirming his death and not as a creative effort to counter it.

Yet beyond the new Salieri that Briusov inspired, Tsvetaeva recognized the imperative to reestablish the congruity of poetic values that in the clash between Symbolist and post-Symbolist views had been framed as antithetical. The image of hard-working poet who controls his text authenticated by Pushkin's voluminous drafts had to be rejoined with the self-surrender in terms of which he described inspiration in lyrics like "Поэт." How she might best do this continued to occupy a prominent place in Tsvetaeva's definitions of her art and its practitioners, stimulating her thinking about the course her own poetic development and that of the Russian poetic tradition could take. Thus, for example, the question of how inspiration might figure in a modern, humanized world leads Tsvetaeva to move from metaphysics to psychology. Accordingly in "Мать и музыка" she describes what an artist has to gain from construing talent as a divinely bestowed gift. She recalls her mother's words: "Впрочем, ты ни при чем. Слух — от Бога," and goes on to describe the positive effect they had on her own poetic development: "Так это у меня навсегда и осталось, что я — ни при чем, что слух — от Бога. Это меня охранило и от самомнения, и от само-сомнения, от всякого, в искусстве, самолюбия, — раз слух от Бога." Hard on the heels of this liberation from the self comes the responsibility that this divinely bestowed gift entails: "Твое — только старание, потому что каждый Божий дар можно загубить, говорила мать..." (5/1:10–11). In this light, Pushkin's intense work over his manuscripts indicates not the insignificance of inspiration, as Briusov would have it, but the responsibility the poet must assume in response to it.

For Tsvetaeva it is ultimately the poet himself who must subsume the inadequate binaries that polarized poetic discourse in the first decades of the twentieth century when Briusov reigned over the Russian poetic scene. She insists above all on the breadth of the poet's capacious, all-embracing genius. Thus in "Искусство при свете совести" she asks: "А есть ли для поэта — чужое? Пушкин в Скупом Рыцаре даже скупость присвоил, в Сальери — даже без-дарность" (5/2: 46). This reading of Pushkin suggests also how the Mozart and Salieri Pushkin created might be read. In light of the assimilative capacity that defines poetic genius for Tsvetaeva,

Mozart does not stand opposite Salieri; nor do these two fictionalized characters simply represent two distinct aspects of Pushkin's own creative personality.<sup>27</sup> Instead, Tsvetaeva insists on the imaginative power that enables the poet to inhabit even that which is alien to his creative self. It is in this capacity to go beyond the boundaries of the self that she establishes the contested notion of "genius," and it is this capacity that is perhaps the most compelling counter-argument to Salieri's amputation of music from life and his analytic dissection of music. The difference between Mozart and Salieri is quickly summarized: Mozart's creative sphere is capacious enough to embrace Salieri; Salieri's world allows for no Mozart. For Mozart, the "and" that links him to Salieri in Pushkin's title is conjunctive; for Salieri the conjunction "and" functions in its disjunctive capacity. Thus Briusov, as Tsvetaeva vividly describes in "Герой труда," can only exclude her from his narrow poetic sphere, while she, like Pushkin (and his Mozart), comprehends this new Salieri in the expanse of her own creative world.

Tsvetaeva's understanding of genius as openness to the other is consonant with Pushkin's own. Like her Golden Age predecessor, she too recognizes the exceptional vulnerability this openness entails. In embracing Salieri, Mozart leaves himself open to the death Salieri prepares for him. The *Requiem* he composes comprises both life and death. The true creative genius is prepared to assume grave risks in order to ward off the determinism that Salieri and Briusov court in their bid for control and power. Perhaps the greatest of these risks lies in the fearful proximity of the creative and the destructive, of "сотворить" and "отравить." What holds for the individual artist holds for the tradition as a whole and obtains also in the making of each poem: the blank white sheet of creative potential and the heavily inked "черновик" that documents the realization of that potential give way to the completed poem's embrace of both what was destroyed and what was created in the course of its being brought into being.

## NOTES

<sup>1</sup>I would like to thank Katherine Hasty for incisive critical observations that led me to revise an earlier draft of this article.

<sup>2</sup>София Парнок. *Собрание стихотворений* (Ann Arbor: Ardis, 1979), 166.

<sup>3</sup>Владислав Ходасевич. *Некрополь. Воспоминания. Литература и власть. Письма Б.А. Садовскому* (Москва: СС, 1996), 42. See also Joan Delaney Grossman, "Introduction," *The Diary of Valery Bryusov (1893–1905)* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1980), 17–20.

<sup>4</sup>Ходасевич. *Некрополь*, 42. S. Poliakova provides additional information about Briusov's relations with L'vova in her commentary to the Ardis edition of Parnok's poetry. See also: София Парнок. *Собрание стихотворений*. Вступительная статья, подготовка текста и примечания С. Поляковой (С.-Петербург: Инапресс, 1998), 483.

<sup>5</sup>Д. Дарский. *Маленькие трагедии Пушкина* (Москва, 1915), cited in "Моцарт и Сальери," *трагедия Пушкина. Движение во времени 1840–е–1990-е гг.* (Москва: Наследие, 1997), 110.

<sup>6</sup>Monika Greenleaf, "Feasting on Genius," in *Alexander Pushkin's Little Tragedies: The Poetics of Brevity*, ed. Svetlana Evdokimova (Madison: The University of Wisconsin Press, 2003), 179.

<sup>7</sup>София Парнок. *Сверстники* (Москва: Глагол, 1999), 73–84.

<sup>8</sup>*Сверстники* 77.

<sup>9</sup>Olga Hasty, "Valerii Briusov as Marina Tsvetaeva's Anti-Muse," in *Vieldeutiges Nicht-zu-Ende-Sprechen*, Arja Rosenholm and Frank Göpfert, eds. (Fichtenwalde: Verlag F. K. Göpfert, 2002), 191–204.

<sup>10</sup>This is what she writes about Briusov to Voloshin in a letter of 1921. The text of this letter appears in: Марина Цветаева. *Неизданное. Семья: История в письмах* (Москва: Эллис Лак, 1999), 285.

<sup>11</sup>Марина Цветаева. *Письма к А. Тесковой* (Иерусалим: Изд. Версты, 1982), 32.

<sup>12</sup>*Письма к А. Тесковой*, 32.

<sup>13</sup>Ирина Шевеленко. *Литературный путь Цветаевой: Идеология — поэтика — идентичность автора в контексте эпохи* (Москва: Новое литературное обозрение, 2002), 312.

<sup>14</sup>Владислав Ходасевич. *Собрание сочинений* (Ann Arbor: Ardis, 1990), 129. Along the same lines, Parnok, writing about Esenin's collection *Радунца*, applauds the exceptional absence of an introduction by Briusov: "Радунца вышла, слава Богу, без предисловия Брюсова" — София Парнок. *Сверстники* (Москва: Глагол, 1999), 68.

<sup>15</sup>In a review of her book on Tsvetaeva, Bogomolov takes Anna Saakiant

to task for not treating Tsvetaeva's account of her relations with Briusov in "Герой труда" more skeptically. I am interested here in the self-image Tsvetaeva fashions for herself vis-à-vis Briusov in "Герой труда," and not in whether her description of her poetic debut is strictly factual. Tsvetaeva's manipulation of the facts of her debut is discussed *inter alia* by Irina Shevelenko in *Литературный путь Цветаевой*.

<sup>16</sup>Cited in "Моцарт и Сальери," *трагедия Пушкина*, 109.

<sup>17</sup>Марина Цветаева. *Собрание сочинений в семи томах* (Москва: Терра, 1997), 4/1:12. Unless otherwise noted, all subsequent references to Tsvetaeva's works will be from this edition. Volume and page numbers will appear in the text.

<sup>18</sup>"Может быть Пушкин вспоминал Катенина (в Сальери решительно есть черты Катенина)," Gershenzon writes in *Мудрость Пушкина* (1919). See "Моцарт и Сальери," *трагедия Пушкина*, 116.

<sup>19</sup>See Э. С. Литвин, "В. Я. Брюсов о Пушкине," *Брюсовские чтения, 1963 год* (Ереван: Айастан, 1964), 206 and Joan Delaney Grossman. *Valery Bryusov and the Riddle of Russian Decadence* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1985), 180.

<sup>20</sup>Ходасевич. *Некрополь*, 36. Марина Цветаева. *Собрание сочинений в семи томах*, 4/1:51.

<sup>21</sup>В. М. Жирмунский. *Валерий Брюсов и наследие Пушкина* (Петербург: Эльзевир, 1922).

<sup>22</sup>For a comprehensive overview of Briusov's relations to Pushkin see: Joan Delaney Grossman, "Moi Pushkin: Briusov's Search for the Real Aleksandr Sergeevich," in *Cultural Mythologies of Russian Modernism from the Golden Age to the Silver Age*, eds. V. Gasparov, R. P. Hughes, and I. Paperno (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1992), 73–87; and Э. Полоцкая, "Комментарий к Статьям о Пушкине," Валерий Брюсов. *Собрание сочинений в семи томах* (Москва: Художественная литература, 1975), 7: 442–456. For a superb essay on the cultural significance Pushkin assumed in the Silver Age, see Ирина Паперно, "Пушкин в жизни человека Серебряного века," in *Cultural Mythologies of Russian Modernism*, 19–51.

<sup>23</sup>Briusov's own scant remarks on *Mozart and Salieri* could only support this. The "Я знаю, я" tone of his essay "Маленькие драмы Пушкина," written in 1915 in anticipation of an МХАТ production of "Пир во время чумы," "Каменный гость" and "Моцарт и Сальери" and Briusov's assertion that Pushkin's sole purpose in writing "The Little Tragedies" was to study dramatic form underscored the Salierian cast of his approach to Pushkin's art. Citing the opening lines of the "Little Tragedy" (Salieri's "Все говорят: нет правды на земле. / Но правды нет и выше...") Briusov

insists: "Основная идея пьесы выражена в первых двух стихах," but, side-stepping the question of how the creative artist is construed, goes on to say only that with these lines Pushkin issues a challenge to the formal demands of theater: "Это ли не нарушение, не попрание всех 'требований сцены!'" — Валерий Брюсов. *Собрание сочинений в семи томах* (Москва: Художественная литература, 1975), 7:102.

<sup>24</sup>Ходасевич. *Некрополь*, 36.

<sup>25</sup>I am grateful to Monika Greenleaf for posing the question that led me to this understanding of Tsvetaeva's intent.

<sup>26</sup>On Tsvetaeva's relations with Bal'mont, see Константин Азадовский, "Цветаева и Бальмонт (К истории знакомства)," *Звезда*, 1992, № 10, с. 180–187.

<sup>27</sup>Prominent among readers contemporary to Tsvetaeva who take this position are Gershenzon (1919) and Ermakov (1923). Their essays devoted to *Mozart and Salieri* can be found in "*Моцарт и Сальери*," трагедия Пушкина, pp. 115–122 and 132–158.