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# Feeding Upon the Double-Headed Eagle: A Zhivovian Reading of Kheraskov's *Rossiada*

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## Thinking Back to Russia's Once Greatest Poet

Mikhail Kheraskov's (1733–1807) reputation has suffered a singular reversal—perhaps the most extreme and unfortunate peripety in Russian literary history. Toward the end of his life, Kheraskov's place at the very center of the national canon, in the minds of authors like Nikolai Karamzin and Andrei Turgenev, was beyond dispute.<sup>1</sup> Today not even scholars of eighteenth-century Russian literature have a deep familiarity with his works; the *Rossiada*, Kheraskov's chef-d'oeuvre, was last reprinted in 1895.<sup>2</sup>

There is more than one reason for the extraordinarily high regard in which Kheraskov's work was once held. He was unique among Russian eighteenth-century writers in that he contributed to all the major literary genres, including tragedy and varieties of the ode, fable, and the novel. Most importantly, however, Kheraskov was the first and arguably only Russian poet who attained the summit of the classical hierarchy of poetic forms, succeeding in the writing of epics. The only massive composition in verse that preceded Kheraskov's epics was Vasily Trediakovskii's *Telemachid*; that poem, however, was a translation (of Fénelon's *Les aventures de Télémaque*) and used unrhymed hexameters, in contrast to Kheraskov's rhymed couplets. Both Antiokh Kantemir and Mikhail Lomonosov failed to complete their epics (on Peter the Great), and Gavriil Derzhavin never attempted one. Against this background, Kheraskov's long narrative poems—most importantly, the *Rossiada* (first published in 1779) and *Vladimir* (first published in 1785)—were virtuoso achievements indeed.

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<sup>1</sup> For an overview of Kheraskov's reception see N. D. Kochetkova's article in *Slovar' russkikh pisatelei XVIII veka*, 3 vols. (St. Petersburg, 1988–2010), 3:344–61. Notable treatments of Kheraskov's work can be found in Grigorii Gukovskii, *Ocherki po istorii russkoi literatury i obshchestvennoi mysli XVIII veka* (Leningrad, 1938), 238–51; A. N. Sokolov, *Ocherki po istorii russkoi poemy XVIII i pervoi poloviny XIX veka* (Moscow, 1955), 153–87; Alina Orłowska, *Poemat klasy-cystyczny Michala Chieraskowa* (Lublin, 1987); A. I. Liubzhin, "'Rossiada' M. M. Kheraskova i antichnaia epicheskaia traditsiia," *Acta Linguistica Petropolitana* 4, no. 1 (2008): 415–52; A. I. Liubzhin, "Novoevropeiskii epos v 'Rossiade' Kheraskova," *Russkaia literatura*, no. 1 (2010): 3–25.

<sup>2</sup> Kheraskov revised the text of the poem twice (Gukovskii, *Ocherki*, 241–42). The most frequently reprinted edition, quoted in this paper, is the third one (1796); thanks to the new electronic edition by Aleksei Liubzhin it is now accessible online: *Rossiada, epicheskaia poema* (Moscow, 1807), at [https://imwerden.de/pdf/kheraskov\\_rossiada.pdf](https://imwerden.de/pdf/kheraskov_rossiada.pdf) (accessed June 16, 2024). On the earlier publication history of the poem see Peter Thiergen, *Studien zu M. M. Cherskovs Versepos Rossijada: Materialien und Beobachtungen* (Doctoral Diss. Bonn University, 1970), 11–13.

In the nineteenth century, even after the “Golden Age” of Russian poetry had completely reconfigured the national canon, the admiration that the *Rossiad* once evoked seemed worthy, at the very least, of fond remembrance. The young protagonist of Sergei Aksakov’s *Childhood Years of Bagrov Grandson* (1858), who grew up at the very end of the eighteenth century, describes a precocious encounter with this poem:

Most of all I loved reading aloud the *Rossiad* to her [the narrator’s mother] and obtaining various glosses on words and whole expressions that I did not understand. I usually read with such heart-felt sympathy and my imagination reproduced the faces of my favorite heroes—Mstislavskii, Count Kurbskii, and Paetskii—so vividly that I appeared to myself to have seen and known them for a long time; I added what seemed lacking in their images, filled in [the missing details in] their lives, and enthusiastically described their looks; I recounted in detail what they did before and after the battle, how the tsar took counsel with them, how he thanked them for their brave exploits, etc, etc.<sup>3</sup>

The young Bagrov reads the *Rossiad* reductively, as a depiction of the siege of Kazan—the subject matter of the poem’s last books (10.377–12). It is nevertheless notable that the figure that stands at the center of the poem—Ivan the Fourth, known as the “Terrible”—is not on the list of Bagrov’s favorites. The foregrounding of a plurality of noblemen, with Andrei Kurbskii prominent among them, is a reflection of Kheraskov’s republican-spirited poetics that becomes particularly overt in the battle sequences. As Ilya Serman has demonstrated, Kheraskov not only makes Kurbskii one of the poem’s central characters but relies on Kurbskii’s narrative of Ivan’s reign.<sup>4</sup> Whereas the main historical source behind the *Rossiad*, the sixteenth-century fictionalized tale *Istoriia o kazanskom tsarstve* (A History of the Kazan Empire), ascribes almost no agency to Ivan’s generals, Kheraskov draws on Kurbskii to reveal the extent of boyar consultation and its positive influence on the ill-tempered tsar.

Kheraskov remained on the reading list of Russian writers whose education fell in the first decades of the nineteenth century, such as Aleksandr Herzen and Ivan Turgenev. In Herzen’s early novella *Elena* (1836–38), set in the last years of Catherine’s reign, Ivan Sergeevich, a man noted for exceptional honesty and a sincere lover of “Racine and Kheraskov,” is called upon to mitigate the catastrophic outcomes of a passionate affair of an aristocratic acquaintance of his, a quasi-Byronic hero who ends his life as a Gogolian madman.<sup>5</sup> Another, and far more significant reflection on Kheraskov’s legacy is Turgenev’s late work *Punin and Baburin* (1874), whose narrator, similarly to Aksakov’s, is about the same age as the author. In this novella, Punin, staying at the house of the narrator’s tyrannical grandmother in the notable year of 1830, gives the enthusiastic child a course in eighteenth-century Russian literature. The most exciting text on the syllabus was Kheraskov’s *Rossiad*.<sup>6</sup>

To speak the truth, it was that very *Rossiad* that particularly fascinated me. Among other things, a valorous Tatar woman acted there, a giant-heroine; now I cannot even remember her name, but back then my hands and feet would grow ice-cold the moment it was mentioned!

“Indeed,” Punin would often say, nodding his head significantly, “Kheraskov is not a man to let you off scot-free. At times he thrusts out such a verse that it just hits you . . .

<sup>3</sup> S. T. Aksakov, *Sobranie sochinenii*, 4 vols. (Moscow, 1955), 1:400.

<sup>4</sup> I. Z. Serman, “Kheraskov i Kurbskii,” *Trudy otdela drevnerusskoi literatury*, no. 24 (1969): 353–56.

<sup>5</sup> Aleksandr Herzen, *Sobranie sochinenii*, 30 vols. (Moscow, 1954–1966), 1:142. In his third “Letter” from France (1847), Herzen lauds Racine as an important influence on the French Enlightenment (Herzen, *Sobranie sochinenii*, 5:50–51).

<sup>6</sup> The scene is modelled on Turgenev’s own childhood experiences. See D. P. Ivinskii, “Turgenev, Kheraskov, Pushkin (Iz kommentarii k povesti ‘Punin i Baburin’),” *Literaturovedcheskii zhurnal*, no. 44 (2018), 41–58.

Just watch out! . . . You want to comprehend him, but he is way ahead, trumpeting and bellowing, like unto a high-sounding cymbal! That's why he got a name that says it all: Kherraskov!" Punin rebuked Lomonosov for his excessively plain and free style, and had an almost hostile attitude to Derzhavin, saying that he was more of a courtier than a poet.<sup>7</sup>

When Punin leaves the estate after his friend Baburin attempted to intervene on behalf of an unjustly punished peasant, he spends the tearful last minutes reading from the *Rossiad* with his pupil. Two decades later, on his deathbed, Punin recites memorized verses from the poem.

The narrator's stupefaction at the mention of figures such as Ramida (the "valorous Tatar woman") and Sumbeka, the queen of Kazan, suggests that Kheraskov's eroticized representations of imperial power anticipate Turgenev's uses of potent feminine characters as political allegories in works like *Spring Torrents* and *Smoke*. In contrast to the boy's, Punin's preference for Kheraskov is rationalized: he favors Kheraskov over Lomonosov for stylistic, and over Derzhavin, for political reasons.<sup>8</sup> Yet the ultimate contest, as in Herzen's *Elena*, is that between "classicism" and Romanticism, or between Kheraskov and Pushkin.

Turgenev correlates Baburin's republicanism with Punin's fondness for Kheraskov's epic; both friends belong to the age of Enlightenment, when reasoned discourse and universal values aligned one's behavior with the common good. By contrast, Pushkin is associated with self-willed, passion-driven individuality; Punin calls him a "snake, concealed in green branches and endowed with the voice of a nightingale."<sup>9</sup> The Slavonic phrasing of this rebuke implies that overcoming the Pushkinian temptation would demand a kind of linguistic, as well as moral-political, reformation. In one of the central scenes of the novella, the narrator reads Pushkin's *Gypsies* to Punin to hint at the futility of keeping a young girl chained to an unloved husband. Refusing to listen to Zemfira's song, Punin flees in horror.

The plot of the novella vindicates pre-Romantic values. Baburin's fiancée, after eloping with a young nobleman, is soon abandoned by him, to be rescued from destitution by her "old husband" to whom she meekly returns. Baburin himself undergoes a disillusionment with a politics that rests on the Romantic sensibility; rejecting the tradition of revolutionary violence that goes back to the Decembrists, Baburin celebrates the 1861 abolition of serfdom, brought about by the enlightened tsar.

At the heart of the novella is a conflict between two worldviews—one resting on concepts and shared values, the other on affects and personal yearnings. Inviting the reader to inhabit the mind of Punin, Turgenev both ironizes his inability to appreciate Pushkin and ponders the moral and political implications of such a principled devaluation of Russia's newly established greatest poet. In *Gypsies*, Pushkin does not, of course, celebrate Romantic individualism; yet, while ringing an alarm bell, he points no way out. The nobleman who murders Zemfira is himself a slave to passions whose ubiquity is proclaimed in the poem's famous last lines. From the perspective of 1874, the affect-ridden discourse of Romanticism appeared to provide no solid foundation for either action or speech. Still worse, Pushkin's post-Decembrist work demonstrated how easily the legitimation of personal willfulness could slide into a reactionary political ideology. In *Poltava*, the sublime figure of Peter as the royal modernizer excites the same kind of irrational fascination with which Russian Romantic poets cultivated the image of Napoleon. As late as 1841, Mikhail Lermontov criticized the petty Frenchmen for betraying their emperor, "like a woman betrays a man," even as he remained unchanged "in Egyptian steppes, next to the walls of obedient Vienna, in the

<sup>7</sup> Ivan Turgenev, *Polnoe sobranie sochinenii*, 12 vols. (Moscow, 1978–1986), 9:18.

<sup>8</sup> In Derzhavin's case, Punin makes a notable exception for the ode "To rulers and judges" (Властителям и судиям), which castigates corruption among the powerful—and which he recites aloud as his and his friend's carriage departs from the house of the narrator's grandmother.

<sup>9</sup> Turgenev, *Polnoe sobranie*, 9:31. "Пушкин есть змея, скрытно в зеленых ветвях сидящая, которой дан глас соловьиный!" The reference is to Ivan Krylov's fable "The snake" published in 1830; see Ivinskii, "Turgenev, Kheraskov, Pushkin," 50–52.

snows of burning Moscow.”<sup>10</sup> In the assessment of Baburin and Punin, Romanticism promised nothing but myopic endorsement of individual whim.

Taking its cue from Turgenev, this article attends to the political potential of Kheraskov’s *Rossiad*. It is not my intention to analyze this unduly neglected work as a direct attack on Catherine’s reign; nor will I argue that Kheraskov was a self-consciously oppositional figure. Instead, I read the *Rossiad* as a specimen of epic, a genre that places individual moral agency in relation to the history of the nation. Kheraskov succeeded as an epic poet because, in his own way, he was a political thinker who engaged with the Russian legacy of extremist autocracy and incipient republicanism.<sup>11</sup> To uncover this dimension of the *Rossiad*, I approach it with a methodology that combines conceptual history, or historical semantics, with form-oriented literary history, or historical poetics. The former attends to changes in a given thought-world that are reflected in linguistic usage, often irrespective of the intention of particular speakers; the latter traces how literary forms evolve in time, conveying elements of social form (generally known as “content”), such as affective dispositions and political attitudes.

### Kheraskov’s Morality Epics

Admittedly, the revisionist stance of Turgenev’s Punin seems counter-intuitive. Can Kheraskov furnish a viable political alternative to Pushkin or Lermontov? Was the epic genre not rejected by the Romantics precisely because it was imbricated in the illiberal past of various *anciens régimes*?

In the transformative period between 1750 and 1850, termed by Reinhart Koselleck the *Sattelzeit* (saddle period) of European modernity, political and literary history were poorly synchronized. The period, as most would agree, was defined by the American and French revolutions and their many repercussions. Romanticism, which supersedes classicism in the prevalent literary-historical narrative, was one such repercussion. In particular, while claiming all that is modern and revolutionary for itself, Romanticism in many ways represented a backlash against the Enlightenment. In the name of the individual subject, it pretended to liberate affect, which classicism had sought to discipline, and presumed that new bourgeois nation states can be founded on a peculiar antiquarian passion, a love for the collective past. In these respects, Romanticism undermined the Enlightenment belief in universal concepts, shared moral values, and *sensus communis*.

In *Critique and Crisis* (1959), his first book inspired by Carl Schmitt’s ideas, Reinhart Koselleck blamed the Enlightenment spirit of critique for all subsequent crises of European history.<sup>12</sup> He faulted the Enlightenment for importing an ethical dimension into politics, which transformed it into an arena of unceasing contestation of values. Had Koselleck dwelled on the tension between the Enlightenment and Romanticism, the shared ground for debate, not its dangers, would perhaps emerge as the eighteenth century’s most long-lived legacy. The dilemma, formulated more trenchantly by Hannah Arendt in *On Revolution*, is whether a politics based on shared concepts (which she derived from Roman republicanism) or a politics rooted in affect (such as the feeling of commiseration for the poor) is more likely to produce a lasting commonwealth. For Arendt, the former inspired the American, the latter, the French (and Russian) revolutions.<sup>13</sup>

<sup>10</sup> Mikhail Lermontov, *Sobranie sochinenii*, 4 vols. (Moscow, 1961–62), 1:516.

<sup>11</sup> For a recent discussion of this legacy, with particular attention to Ivan’s reign of terror and Kurbskii’s expressly Ciceronian counter-arguments, see Oleg Kharkhordin, “Authority and Power in Russia” *Slavic Review* 80, no. 3 (Fall 2021): 469–88, and Nancy Shields Kollmann, “The Third Rome and Russian Republicanism: A Comment on Oleg Kharkhordin ‘Power and Authority in Russia,’” *Slavic Review* 80, no. 3 (Fall 2021): 492–97.

<sup>12</sup> Reinhart Koselleck, *Critique and Crisis: Enlightenment and the Pathogenesis of Modern Society* (Cambridge, Mass., 1998), 1.

<sup>13</sup> Hannah Arendt, *On Revolution* (London, 1963). On the importance of affect to the historical experience of the French Revolution, see William M. Reddy, *The Navigation of Feeling: A Framework for the History of Emotions* (Cambridge, 2001), 173–256.

Seen in this perspective, Russian intellectual history appears curiously one-sided. Not only has Pushkin completely overshadowed Kheraskov, and Vissarion Belinskii eclipsed Nikolai Novikov, even such a choice is rarely pondered—in the sense in which one may ponder the choice between Mozart and Beethoven, or Kant and Hegel. The relative weakness of the Enlightenment in Russia was one of the central concerns in the work of Viktor Zhivov, who pointed, by way of explanation, to the dominant and nefarious role of the state. In light of this, Zhivov even cast Aleksandr Radishchev's *Liberty*, the most radical repudiation of autocracy to emerge in Russia in the eighteenth century, as a product of an insane mind.<sup>14</sup> Kheraskov's is, however, a very different case. A thoroughly respectable figure who contributed to the government-sponsored Enlightenment as a long-standing curator of Moscow University, in his epics he developed an allegorical poetics that relied on various uses of personification to ponder the moral pitfalls of monarchy.<sup>15</sup> True to Koselleck's critical account of the Enlightenment, Kheraskov's societal ideal is a thoroughly ethicized one, with no exceptions granted: the autocratic rulers in *Vladimir* and the *Rossiad*, weakened by vices, are always on the verge of failing in their missions. Yet one may well wonder whether it was this kind of ethics-infused politics or the subsequent "Napoleonic" phenomena (which Koselleck, in his later work, attributed to sociocultural regress) that led to modernity's worst downfalls.<sup>16</sup>

Kheraskov's moralizing poetics was by no means unusual in Russia in his time. François Fénelon's *Telemaque* was widely read as a critique of absolutism.<sup>17</sup> As Kirill Ospovat has recently demonstrated, the spectacle of the moral degradation of sovereigns was at the heart of Aleksandr Sumarokov's dramas.<sup>18</sup> More generally, as Punin's appreciative comment on Derzhavin's "To rulers and judges" and indeed Catherine's own moralistic writings remind us, criticism of the vices of the powerful was mainstream rhetoric.<sup>19</sup> As a token of what was permitted in print, in 1762 Ivan Barkov, famous for his Priapic verse, translated the following statements on Antiokh Kantemir's "politics" from the poet's biography originally published in French in western Europe:

when Sovereigns procure calm and security for themselves with the blood of their subjects, regarding it as a means to satisfy their ambition, they break the laws of nature and of governance. On these rules Count Kantemir founded his politics. Nations would indeed be fortunate were these rules observed in all Sovereigns' counsels.<sup>20</sup>

<sup>14</sup> Viktor Zhivov, "Apokalipsis svobody. Zametki ob ode 'Vol'nost' A. N. Radishcheva," in Guido Carpi, Lazar Fleishman, and Bianca Sulpasso, eds., *Venok: Studia slavica Stefano Garzonio sexagenario oblata* (Stanford, 2012), 75–87.

<sup>15</sup> Beginning in the eighteenth century the term "allegory" tended to be monopolized by its one, explicit variety: personification, or *prosopopoeia*. The former is best retained in its broader meaning, as an invitation to "read otherwise," uncovering the text's covert signification; see Thomas E. Maresca, "Personification vs. Allegory," in Kevin Lee Cope, ed., *Enlightening Allegory: Theory, Practice, and Contexts of Allegory in the Late Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries* (New York, 1993), 21–39.

<sup>16</sup> Reinhart Koselleck, *Futures Past: On the Semantics of Historical Time*, trans. Keith Tribe (New York, 2004), 24–25 (German orig. publ. in 1979).

<sup>17</sup> Mikhail Kiselev, "Adaptatsiia antiabsolutistskogo monarkhizma v Rossii v pervye dve treti XVIII veka," in S.V. Pol'skoi and V. S. Rzhetskii, eds., *Laboratoriia poniatii: Perevod i iazyki politiki v Rossii XVIII veka* (Moscow, 2022), 207–26.

<sup>18</sup> See Kirill Ospovat, *Terror and Pity: Aleksandr Sumarokov and the Theater of Power in Elizabethan Russia* (Brighton, Mass., 2016).

<sup>19</sup> For an overview of the evidence, see Cynthia H. Whittaker, *Russian Monarchy: Eighteenth-Century Rulers and Writers in Political Dialogue* (DeKalb, 2003), 141–81.

<sup>20</sup> Antiokh Kantemir, *Satiry i drugia stikhotvorcheskiiia sochineniia* (St. Petersburg, 1762), 10; the French original, most likely by Octavien de Guasco: *Satyres de monsieur le prince Cantemir avec l'histoire de sa vie* (London, 1749), 111–12 (the place of publication is a falsification; see N. A. Kopanev, "O pervykh izdaniiax satir A. Kantemira," *XVIII vek*, 15 [1986]: 140–54). Our knowledge of Barkov's authorship of the Russian version of the biography rests on Novikov's testimony; see G. N. Moiseeva, "Ivan Barkov i izdanie satir Antiokha Kantemira 1762 goda," *Russkaia literatura*, no. 2 (1967): 102–15.



The moral discourse of the Russian Enlightenment also had significant blind spots: as Konstantin Bugrov and Mikhail Kiselev point out, the spread of the contractual idea of monarchical rule left thinkers like Vasilii Tatishchev and Vasilii Trediakovskii struggling with the (generally unmentionable) problem of the people's right to depose a tyrant.<sup>21</sup> Kheraskov's own novels, in particular *Numa Pompilius* (1768) and *Cadmus and Harmonia* (1787), exemplify a prevailing concern, inherited from Fénelon, with the monarch's character as a precondition of the state's well-being, most visible in abstention from war and luxury.<sup>22</sup>

In Kheraskov's *Rossiad*, three elements, all deriving from his creative use of the epic genre, give a distinct aspect to the repudiation of tyrannical tendencies inherent in autocracy: he foregrounds aristocratic agents, such as Kurbskii, de-centering the narrative of war; he places the tsar's moral failures in the context of the long history of the Russian state; and he develops new poetic means for representing the empire allegorically.

The vagaries of the reception of epic in the Romantic period can explain much in the oblivion that has shrouded Kheraskov's work. It was then that Virgil's *Aeneid* lost the highest standing that it had enjoyed for centuries, not just as a literary masterpiece but as a template for telling any empire's triumphant history.<sup>23</sup> As the Homeric poems, by contrast, gained in stature, because they were thought to give access to a historically distant, resolutely alien world, verse epic ceased to be a form that *could* be imitated. This relegation of heroic epic to the past informs the notion, familiar from Georg Lukács and Mikhail Bakhtin, that there is a fundamental incompatibility between epic and the novel.

The construal of epic as a closed form, one that rehearses age-old, myth-like truths and ideologies, makes it into a convenient foil to the free, open, and individual-centered novelistic discourse.<sup>24</sup> Yet even a quick glance at eighteenth-century uses of epic narrative is sufficient to disprove this view. Voltaire's *Henriad* is a work that is more interested in the conflict between moral forces, represented by elaborate allegories, than in heroic action. Klopstock's *Der Messias* is a religious poem in the Miltonic vein, Trediakovskii's *Telemachid*, a didactic work. Similarly, Kheraskov's epic poems merge stories of national becoming with examinations of moral values put to the test in the life of an individual. Kheraskov's first epic, *The Fruits of Studies* (*Plody nauk*), was expressly didactic; in the case of *Vladimir*, Kheraskov himself clarified the poem's meaning as a moral allegory presenting "the wandering of an attentive person along the path of truth."<sup>25</sup>

Triumphant validation of community is the province of the solemn ode (*torzhestvennaia oda*), a subgenre of the Pindaric. The epic tells stories of success impeded by loss and suffering; tragedy shows the utter undoing of the hero. In Greek tragedy, Agamemnon (in the *Oresteia*) and Oedipus (in *Oedipus Rex*) are individuals that fail completely, the former for his own faults, the latter because he was destined to fail. Both are quintessential tragic figures: they lose everything. By contrast, Odysseus and Aeneas succeed in spite of many hindrances,

<sup>21</sup> K. D. Bugrov and M. A. Kiselev, *Estestvennoe pravo i dobrodetel': Integratsiia evropeiskogo vlianiia v rossiiskuiu politicheskuiu kul'turu XVIII v.* (Ekaterinburg, 2016), 189–206.

<sup>22</sup> *Ibid.*, 241–43, 253–54, 268. Cynthia Whittaker notes Kheraskov's preference for constitutional or limited monarchy based on quotations from his novels and the *Rossiad* (*Russian Monarchy*, 157, 168–72).

<sup>23</sup> Sergej Averintsev, "Dauer im Wechsel. Krise und Identität der abendländischen Vergil-Tradition," in Joachim Jürgen Slomka and Wolfgang Tschmeier, eds., *Zum Problem der Geschichtlichkeit ästhetischer Normen: Die Antike im Wandel des Urteils des 19. Jahrhunderts* (Berlin, 1986), 39–45.

<sup>24</sup> The most significant comparative study of epic available, David Quint's *Epic and Empire: Politics and Generic Form from Virgil to Milton* (Princeton, 1993), in spite of its appreciation for nuance, perpetuates the notions that epic celebrates identity, serves power, and is intrinsically nationalistic.

<sup>25</sup> The preface to the 3<sup>rd</sup> edition (quoted in Kochetkova, "Kheraskov," 354). This moral turn in the history of epic was not just an Enlightenment reflex. In Virgil's *Aeneid*, the protagonist struggles to retain his *pietas* when initiating a war in the putative interest of the collective; the poem ends with Aeneas burning a defenseless city and killing an antagonist who appeals for mercy. Lucan's *De Bello Civili* goes further by foregrounding the immoral figure of Caesar; Kheraskov's interest in this work is stated in the prose preface to the *Rossiad* and confirmed by a number of reminiscences (Liubzhin, "'Rossiada' M. M. Kheraskova," 445–49).

the former due to his ingenuity, the latter because he was fated to succeed. These are epic heroes: they lose *almost* everything. The same holds for the protagonists of Kheraskov's two most important works. Like Odysseus and Aeneas, Ivan the Terrible and Vladimir survive in spite of seemingly insuperable challenges. In contrast to the two ancient heroes, however, at the story's beginning they are not political nobodies but moral invalids; what is demanded from them is not valor and acumen, but moral reformation.

One may ask why epic was so decisively depreciated, even though it concerned itself with individual self-constitution, as did the later genres of the Romantic longer poem and the realist novel. The dethronement of epic, as well as the decline of the panegyric ode, was entailed by the crisis of classicizing poetic language, the rhetorical culture that subtended it, and ultimately the social system that extended the privilege of education to an elite trained to speak differently from the people. From a stylistic point of view, these two genres were conflated, but whereas the ode survived in Romantic greater lyric as a pocket of elevated diction, longer narratives now aimed to be demotic and accessible, obviating the need for the kind of glossing that Bagrov demanded from his mother as well as eschewing the comic effects evoked by Punin's archaisms. As new forms of extended narrative had to assert themselves against their direct ancestor, epic was denigrated as extended, unsalvageable ode.

In Russia, Kheraskov, along with much of the eighteenth-century literature, fell victim to this revolution of poetic language, inaugurated by Karamzin and effectuated by Pushkin. As a result, all subsequent literary developments relied principally on the legacy of Romanticism. The Russian realist novel foregrounded passions and desultory revelations of self-willed individuals, while spurning western novelistic plots of continuous *Bildung* and social integration; in particular, society as a site of positive, character-building habituation is often replaced by allegories of the intrusive, paternalistic state.<sup>26</sup>

As the life story of Turgenev's Baburin suggests, however, the state could be viewed not as a form of autocratic domination but as the best available conduit for realizing the Enlightenment vision of holding a life in common. From the perspective of 1874, a monarchy responding to calls for social reform could appear to be the closest Russia ever got to being a republic. Admittedly, such a republic would be an oddly quietist one, to the point of being almost completely rid of political discord, division, and debate. Itself in part a response to the French Revolution, Kheraskov's poetics was—providently, from the viewpoint of Koselleck's *Critique and Crisis*—both preoccupied with morality and wary of strife. Instead of anticipating, like Radishchev, the people's violent entry into an apocalyptically colored future, Kheraskov weighed the possibility of autocracy's divinely sanctioned transformation into a force for good, locked in a continuous struggle with manifold allegories of vice. In the *Rossiad*, as a closer look at the poem will show, such a transformation is denied by a withering imperial climate.

### Viktor Zhivov and the Ethical Turn in the Study of the History of Concepts

Koselleck proposed to define modernity in terms of a distinct transformation of the structure of concepts. In particular, history came to be understood as a homogenous process of change oriented toward the future, resulting in the temporalization of concepts that previously existed as fixed values; "collective singulars" replaced pluralities grounded in estate society.<sup>27</sup> The relevance of Koselleck's ideas to the study of concepts in Russian history has

<sup>26</sup> Ilya Kliger, "Scenarios of Power in Turgenev's *First Love*: Russian Realism and the Allegory of the State," *Comparative Literature* 70, no. 1 (2018): 25–45 and Ilya Kliger, *Sovereign Fictions: Poetics and Politics in the Age of Russian Realism* (Chicago, 2024).

<sup>27</sup> For example, the singular Liberty, superseding the multiple liberties and privileges claimed by particular social groups, was reconceived as a dynamic force of emancipation that concerns all citizens (Koselleck, *Futures Past*, 35).

been amply demonstrated in recent work.<sup>28</sup> Admittedly, these processes began later in Russia than in western Europe, but in the twentieth century, they had even more far-reaching implications.

In the introduction to a 2009 edited volume that made an early case for Koselleckan methodology, Viktor Zhivov sounded a note of caution.<sup>29</sup> In particular, he suggested that Russianists interested in *Begriffsgeschichte* should shift their focus away from the *Sattelzeit* (the period between 1750 and 1850) to the first decades of the eighteenth century, since it was during the Petrine reforms that Russian culture was actively absorbing new institutions, ideas, and sentiments imported from the west. More generally, the history of Russian culture was set in its course during that time: following Peter's reforms, which were characterized by "maximum intensity and, one should add, compulsion,"<sup>30</sup> leaving a lasting trauma on Russian society, Enlightenment under Catherine the Great was nothing but a state-sanctioned fiction; to describe this mirage, Zhivov put forward the term "state Enlightenment" (*gosudarstvennoe Prosveshchenie*).<sup>31</sup> In contrast to European Enlightenment, which mapped out a common future through reasoned debate, violent modernization pushed a fragmented and disoriented Russian educated class to pursue "civic sabotage" (*obshchestvennyi sabotazh*) of the state.<sup>32</sup>

On these grounds, Zhivov proposed to look beyond socio-political concepts directly impacted by the dynamic of modernization that was overseen by the state. This move is showcased by one of Zhivov's own contributions to the 2009 volume: his article "Time and its proprietor in early modern Russia" is dedicated to how Russians learned to abort the state's attempt to impinge on and control private time.<sup>33</sup> It is a study of the concept of leisure as a cultural institution, not a Koselleckan analysis of how history was conceived or future competitively constructed.

More broadly, Zhivov's interest in historical semantics, which he developed in the early 2000s, was linked to his changing views on the object of historical and philological knowledge. Zhivov was looking for a way to think beyond the contextualist hegemony of the 1990s, which asserted the primacy of the ideological conditioning of cultural production, toward a method which would make it possible to study "the space of symbolic forms" (*prostranstvo simvolicheskikh form*), in which history and literature trade plots and narratives, and ultimately, the "dispositions that define human experience" (*ustanovki, kotorye opredeliaiut chelovecheskii opyt*).<sup>34</sup> Whereas the focus of the 1996 book was on the "state Enlightenment," Zhivov's last monograph, which he planned at the time of his death in 2013, was to explore the notions of morality, sin, and salvation in those societal strata that escaped the state's

<sup>28</sup> A. I. Miller, D. A. Sdvizhkov, Ingrid Schierle, eds., "Poniatiiia o Rossii": *K istoricheskoi semantike imperskogo perioda* (Moscow, 2012); Yurii Kagarlitskii, Dmitrii Kalugin, Boris Maslov, eds., *Poniatiiia, idei, konstruktii: Ocherki sravnitel'noi istoricheskoi semantiki* (Moscow, 2019); Oleg Kharkhordin, ed., *Zhit' s dostoinstvom: Sbornik statei* (St. Petersburg, 2019).

<sup>29</sup> Viktor Zhivov, "Istoriia poniatii, istoriia kul'tury, istoriia obshchestva," in Viktor Zhivov, ed., *Ocherki istoricheskoi semantiki russkogo iazyka rannego Novogo vremeni* (Moscow, 2009), 5–26. (Conceptual History, Cultural History, Social History, *Vivliofika* 2 [2014]: 1–14.) <https://iopn.library.illinois.edu/journals/vivliofika/article/view/746>, accessed June 17, 2024).

<sup>30</sup> Zhivov, "Istoriia poniatii," 12.

<sup>31</sup> Viktor Zhivov, *Iazyk i kul'tura v Rossii XVIII veka* (Moscow, 1996). (*Language and Culture in Eighteenth-Century Russia*, trans. Marcus C. Levitt, Boston, 2009.)

<sup>32</sup> Viktor Zhivov, "Vremia i ego sobstvennik v Rossii rannego Novogo vremeni (XVII–XVIII veka)," in *Ocherki istoricheskoi semantiki*, 27–101, esp. 57–62.

<sup>33</sup> Zhivov, "Vremia i ego sobstvennik." Building on Zhivov's analysis, Joachim Klein explores how concepts of unoccupied time were put to work by members of the Russian nobility who sought to carve out a space free from the state (Joachim Klein, "Sluzhba, len' i 'sladostnyi dosug' v russkoi dvorianskoi kul'ture XVIII veka," *XVIII vek* 29 (2017): 156–75).

<sup>34</sup> Viktor Zhivov, "Dvuglavnyi orel v dialoge s literaturoi," *Novyi mir*, no. 2 (2002): 174–83, here 176; the second quotation is based on Viktor Zhivov, personal communication, 2013.



modernizing efforts.<sup>35</sup> An early premonition of this change of tack can be found in his 1998 study of the rise of the intelligentsia out of the marginalized older religious culture as a revolt against the state-sponsored modernization of Russian society.<sup>36</sup> In sum, as Zhivov puts it, “for the Russian history of concepts, the Enlightenment can in no way serve as a turning point,” because what in western Europe was a process of society’s coming into its own, in Russia was another phase of the undignified treatment of the educated class at the hands of the state.<sup>37</sup>

For the same reason, Russian cultural historians should not restrict themselves to studying the ways in which literature and culture nourished state ideology. To borrow a formulation from Zhivov’s review of Andrei Zorin’s book *Feeding the Double-headed Eagle* (2001), we can do better than study “the diet of this creature.”<sup>38</sup> An interest in state ideology inevitably leads us to the central figures of this or that reign, to the projects and penchants of tsars and empresses. We should not forget, however, that a focus on representations that had autocratic support occludes structures and processes that, in the *longue durée*, are of far greater moment. Granting that Zorin “has a right not to speak” of the Decembrist uprising “inasmuch as it embodies an anti-state (*antigosudarstvennuiu*) idea,” Zhivov pointedly takes issue with Zorin’s relegation of literature “to the periphery, like an outbuilding in which the metaphorical dishes of ideological projects are fried and boiled.”<sup>39</sup> In the method of *Begriffsgeschichte*, Zhivov found a way to rewrite Russia’s history with a difference: as history of a culture common to all speakers of the language. That was not, however, a history of linguistic usage *sensu stricto* but of practices that are made sense of, admired, or repudiated by these speakers by means of words and concepts.<sup>40</sup>

Developing Zhivov’s insights, one might envision an ethical turn for Russian historical semantics. Needless to say, ethics was also a domain targeted by the Enlightening state; under Catherine the Great, church penance became a form of correction for suspected and convicted criminals, the compilation “On the duties of man and citizen” (*O dolzhnostiakh cheloveka i grazhdanina*) was widely propagated, and the Empress herself dabbled in moralizing allegoresis.<sup>41</sup> Nevertheless, it appears that in the competition for control over ethical concepts the state lost its major bets; as with the ownership of *dosug*, the concepts of *dobrodetel’* ‘virtue, good act,’ *dolg* ‘duty’ and *delo* ‘life’s work’ eventually slipped out of the reach of state ideology. The former was deflated and ridiculed, while the latter two came to be associated with social duty that was often at odds with the government’s demands.<sup>42</sup> Similarly, the concept of *dostoinstvo* ‘dignity’ or ‘worth,’ which, due to its association with rank and prestige, could have been the state’s mainstay, became instead a rallying point for aspirants

<sup>35</sup> For the former: Viktor Zhivov, “Pokaianaia distsiplina i individual’noe blagochestie v istorii russkogo pravoslavia,” in Konstantin Sigov, ed. *Druzhba: Ee formy, ispytaniia i dary* (Kyiv, 2008), 303–43; Viktor Zhivov, “Imperator Traian, devitsa Fal’konilla i provoniavshii monakh: ikh priklucheniia v Rossii XVIII veka,” *Fakty i znaki: Issledovaniia po semiotike istorii* 1 (2008): 245–68; Viktor Zhivov, “Sueverii i zabobony,” in Viktor Zhivov and Yurii Kagarlitskii, eds., *Evolutsiia poniatii v svete istorii russkoi kul’tury* (Moscow, 2012), 130–50.

<sup>36</sup> Viktor Zhivov, “Marginal’naia kul’tura v Rossii i rozhdenie intelligentsii,” in his *Razyskaniia v oblasti istorii i predystorii russkoi kul’tury* (Moscow, 2002), 685–704.

<sup>37</sup> Zhivov, “Istoriia poniatii,” 12.

<sup>38</sup> Andrei Zorin, *Kormia dvuglavogo orla: Literatura i gosudarstvennaia ideologiia v Rossii v poslednei treti XVIII-pervoi treti XIX veka* (Moscow, 2001). English translation: *By Fables Alone: Literature and State Ideology in Late-Eighteenth–Early Nineteenth-Century Russia*, trans. Marcus C. Levitt, Boston, 2014.

<sup>39</sup> Zhivov, “Dvuglavyi orel,” 182, 175.

<sup>40</sup> This history of the Russian language proper is the subject of Zhivov’s *Istoriia iazyka russkoi pis’mennosti*, 2 vols. (Moscow, 2017).

<sup>41</sup> Elena Marasina, “Zakon” i “grazhdanin” v Rossii vtoroi poloviny XVIII veka: *Ocherki istorii obshchestvennogo soznaniia* (Moscow, 2017), 120–204.

<sup>42</sup> Bugrov and Kiselev, *Estestvennoe pravo*, 207–34, 272–73 (on *dobrodetel’*); Boris Maslov, “Ot dolgov khristianina k grazhdanskomu dolgu (ocherk istorii kontseptual’noi metafory),” in Zhivov, ed., *Ocherki istoricheskoi semantiki*, 201–70; Dmitrii Kalugin and Natal’ia Movnina, “Slovo—mysl’—delo: Opyt issledovaniia istoricheskoi semantiki poniatii ‘delo,’” *Die Welt der Slaven: Internationale Halbjahresschrift für Slavistik* 67, no. 2 (2022): 259–70.

to republican liberty and a sore spot for those left out of the system of rewards administered by the state.<sup>43</sup>

Literature, due to its general investment in the *longue durée*, furnishes significant testimony on the history of ethical concepts. In *Punin and Baburin*, Turgenev insightfully *emplots* dignity's place in the opposition between "classical" shared values and Romantic affects. The aristocrat who will seduce and then abandon Baburin's fiancée speaks of him as follows: "Inside he has nothing, in fact; not a single thought in his head—only the sense of his own dignity." When the narrator interposes with the words "That in itself is something that commands respect,"<sup>44</sup> he proves, over the long term, to have correct intuition: in modern Russian "the sense of one's dignity" (*chuvstvo sobstvennogo dostoinstva*), always under risk of being impugned or denied, developed into a central moral concept.<sup>45</sup>

When we turn our attention to the domain of ethics, we gain a new perspective on the efficacy of Enlightenment discourse, which itself could be used to "sabotage" the state's policies of violent modernization. In the last quarter of the eighteenth century, writers did not have to feed the double-headed eagle; they could ignore it or even appropriate some of its fodder. There also existed a still more quixotic possibility. Political concepts and historical narratives associated with the state could themselves become fodder for intellectual and literary work that was polemical toward nefarious forms of autocracy. Seen in this light, the Russian Enlightenment acquires a new density, far beyond that of a mere mirage.

### Kheraskov's Images of Autocracy: The Pandemonic Catalogue

Kheraskov's *Rossiad* is a poem ostensibly dedicated to Ivan's victory over Kazan; this is how the boy narrators of Aksakov and Turgenev read it. As Olga Goncharova has argued, however, such an interpretation misses the mark; in fact, Kheraskov, a prominent member of the Russian masonic community, intended the work as an allegory of the individual's moral "resurrection."<sup>46</sup> Admittedly, Goncharova's discussion of Kheraskov's epics draws mostly on *Vladimir*; the plot of the *Rossiad* can hardly be read as a story of ascent to truth.<sup>47</sup> In contrast to the Ivans of Nikolai Karamzin and Sergei Eisenstein, who begin well and end badly (or to the Ivan of *Kazanskaia istoriia* who is a paragon of Christian virtues throughout), Kheraskov's begins badly, improves, and then relapses into vice. Furthermore, the image of the protagonist, as I will argue, must be read allegorically not only on the moral but also on the meta-historical plane, in keeping with the tradition of heroic epic reaching back to the *Aeneid*.

The prose preface to the poem, dedicated to Catherine, informs the reader that the slavery of "the dreary yoke of rapacious Hordes" was caused by "the land's lack of unity and the

<sup>43</sup> Dmitrii Kalugin, "Dostoinstvo stikhotvortsia: formirovanie statusa avtora vo vtoroi polovine XVIII veka," *Russian Literature* 119 (2021): 103–30. On *dostoinstvo* in Fedor Dostoevskii see Oleg Kharkhordin, "Nedavniaia politicheskaia istoriia poniatia 'dostoinstvo,'" in Kharkhordin, ed., *Zhit' s dostoinstvom*, 89–141, esp. 112–23. Examples of concepts that, by and large, served to buttress state ideology are *obiazannost'*, *sluzhba*, *chin*, and *zakon* (on the latter two see Marasinova, "Zakon" i "grazhdanin," 34–36, 207–321).

<sup>44</sup> Turgenev, *Polnoe sobranie*, 9:41.

<sup>45</sup> See Kharkhordin, ed., *Zhit' s dostoinstvom*, *passim*.

<sup>46</sup> Olga M. Goncharova, *Vlast' traditsii i "novaia Rossiia" v literaturnom soznanii vtoroi poloviny XVIII veka* (St. Petersburg, 2004), 74. On masonic themes in Kheraskov's poetry: Alexander Levitsky, "Masonic Elements in Russian Eighteenth-century Religious Poetry," in Robert P. Bartlett, Anthony G. Cross, and Karen Rasmussen, eds., *Russia and the World of the Eighteenth Century: Proceedings of the Third International Conference Organized by the Study Group on Eighteenth-Century Russia* (Columbus, 1986), 419–36. For Kheraskov's preoccupation with moral philosophy predating his masonic initiation in 1775, see E. D. Kukushkina, "Poeziia M. M. Kheraskova. Poiski smysla zhizni," *XVIII vek* 22 (2002): 96–110.

<sup>47</sup> For a rare reading of the poem that stresses its polyvalence see Marina Grishakova, "Simvolicheskaia struktura poem M. Kheraskova," in V. Besprozvannyi, M. Grishakova, E. Permiakov, I. Pil'shchikov, and E. Pogolian, eds., *V chest' 70-letii professora Iu. M. Lotmana* (Tartu, 1992), 30–48.

love for power on the part of multiplied princes.”<sup>48</sup> It fell to Ivan’s lot to mend this piteous condition of the imperial *oikoumene*. The overcoming of vice is emblemized by his triumph over Kazan. According to this largely ceremonial preamble, “inordinately severe acts of the Tsar” (*bezmernye Tsarskie strogosti*) do not belong in the narrative of the *Rossiada* since they occurred after his wife’s death and “much later than the capture of Kazan.”<sup>49</sup>

It was no secret, however, that an indirect outcome of Ivan’s reign was the Time of Troubles, brought to an end by the installation of the Romanov dynasty. Both historical veracity and ideological expediency demanded that Ivan never become a perfect human being, even after Kazan is overcome. In the climactic scene, modelled on Aeneas’s vision of the future of Rome in Book 6 of the *Aeneid*, Ivan beholds Catherine the Great, recognizing himself not as a prefiguration but as an inferior forerunner. In the text of the poem, Kheraskov goes further than that; he establishes a direct link between the struggle with Kazan and Ivan’s eventual degradation. In particular, Ivan’s murder of his son, the vile act that led to the eventual dynastic crisis (anticipating Peter’s analogous blow to the male line of the Romanov dynasty), finds its etiology in the incursion into Tatar.

In Book 8, Ivan sees a seductive image in his sleep: a “wondrous vision” with a sword in his hands and the moon on his forehead, which tells him of “milk-flowing Tigris and dulcet Euphrates.” Upon the vision’s invitation to convert to Islam, Ivan is ready “to incline his head”—at which point a magical object comes to the rescue: a shield received from a mysterious elder in Book 7. Whereas the shields of Achilles and of Aeneas provide divine sanction for their heroic feats, Ivan’s shield is a different sort of instrument, in part modelled on Rinaldo’s mirror-shield in Tasso’s *Jerusalem Liberated* (Bk 14–15); it is a diagnostic tool, which darkens when “a heavy sin sows weed” in Ivan’s heart (7.259–60). Observing that his shield grew darker while he lent his ear to the tempting words, Ivan is roused, assaults the vision with a sword and strikes, thereby transforming it into a full-fledged personification allegory (8.109–26):

A hideous monster to the tsar appearing  
 Floated upborne, clothed in grisly cloud;  
 Like unto a horrid snake, thrice circling round,  
 Breathing vengeance! ’T was Impiety,  
 Who to the monarch trumpeted harsh words:  
 Vain are your hopes of fleeing me. Now moan!  
 I know the weapon that subdues the monarchs.  
 Though dreary Destiny your penalty postpones,  
 The more it shall disturb your soul and thoughts.  
 The sweet quiet no more shall you enjoy,  
 Nor with conjugal love console yourself;  
 Your realm, transformed, a horror shall become  
 And you shall fear your subjects and your kith;  
 You shall your honest, guiltless slaves destroy,  
 The universe make shudder at your name.  
 The nobles and the people shall abhor you,  
 A tyrant deem, as enemy regard.  
 Your son you’ll slay! . . . The thunder struck again,  
 Whereat the monster, groaning, disappeared.  
 To subterranean caves it steered its flight,  
 Whilst quivering seized the heart of the brave tsar.<sup>50</sup>

<sup>48</sup> Liubzhin, ed. *Rossiada*, 3.

<sup>49</sup> Ibid.

<sup>50</sup> И страшное Царю чудовище явилось, / Во мрачномъ облакъ на воздухъ поднялось; / Какъ страшный змій, оно въ три круга извилось; / Дышало мщениемъ! Безбожіе то было; / И грозныя слова Монарху

By joining battle with Kazan, Ivan, his philosophical shield notwithstanding, is infected with evil; all of his life to follow would be marred by sin. Yet Kheraskov's hero was also preconditioned for becoming a tyrant and his own son's murderer. In Book 1, we see him in the fallen state, overcome by flattery, falsehood, and sloth (analogously, in *Vladimir*, the prince is mastered by lust, a vice that will pursue him to the end of the poem). His awakening to moral life takes place in Book 2, in which he addresses the boyars with a speech on their joint high calling (2.63–66):

Nobles and tsars are their fatherland's guardians!  
We slumber like slack shepherds by their flock.  
'Tis marred not by Kazan, nor by Crimea—  
we are our people's first and foremost foes.<sup>51</sup>

The recognition of his duty is enabled by an elaborate chain of visions, which include his heroic forebears and the allegorical image of suffering and moaning Russia. Adashev, the tsar's good-natured counsellor (a figure borrowed from Kurbskii's narrative<sup>52</sup>), refers back to this image (2.235–40):

And you, the government's esteem'd mainstays,  
Nobles, forget even now all factions past.  
Lo! With moans, our fatherland appears.  
It bids us counsel among ourselves like friends.  
In sobs, its sons addressing, it proclaims:  
My foe is he who venges not my tears.<sup>53</sup>

The country's rulers, a group that includes the tsar as *primus inter pares*, must agree with each other, for discord leads to the country's subjugation to an external force, represented by the Golden Horde. This meta-historical narrative, both moralistic and republican-minded, warps the autocratic reality of Ivan's rule.<sup>54</sup>

Discord (*Razdor*), the chief allegorical antagonist of good, assumes an anthropomorphic shape when it comes to Kazan's rescue in Book 9. Following the ancient tradition (*Il.* 20.48, *Aen.* 8.702), Kheraskov treats it as a structural evil that sets the epic plot in motion (9.228–40):

Under the pale of moon a dismal Spirit dwells,  
That day and night flies over every land,

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возтрубило: / Напрасно отъ меня ты чаешь избѣжать; / Стени! я знаю чѣмъ Монарховъ поражать; / Хотя нынѣ казнь твою свирѣпый рокъ отложить, / Но душу онъ твою и мысли востревожить; / Спокойства сладкаго не будешь ты вкушать, / Ни брачною себя любовью утѣшать; / Владѣніе твое во ужасъ превратится, / И будешь ближнихъ ты и подданныхъ страшиться; / Ты искреннихъ рабовъ безвинно умертвишь; / Своимъ ты именемъ вселенну устрашишь; / Вельможи и народъ тебя возненавидятъ, / Тираномъ нарекутъ, въ тебѣ врага увидятъ; / Ты сына умертвишь! . . . Ударилъ паки громъ, / Сокрылось возстенавъ чудовище по томъ; / Оно въ подземныя пещеры отлетало, / А сердце храбраго Царя вострепетало.

<sup>51</sup> Вельможи и Цари отечества ограда! / Мы спимъ, какъ пастыри безпечные у стада; / Не Крымъ, и не Казань губители его, / Мы первые враги народа своего.

<sup>52</sup> Serman, "Kheraskov i Kurbskii," 355.

<sup>53</sup> А вы, правленія почтенныя подпоры, / Вельможи! прежніе забудьте днесъ раздоры. / Се! намъ отечество стѣная предстоить; / Оно друзьями намъ въ совѣтахъ быть велить; / Оно рыдаючи сынамъ своимъ вѣщаетъ: / Тотъ врагъ мой, за мои кто слезы не отмщаетъ;

<sup>54</sup> On the positive evaluation of aristocracy in the *Rossiad* cf. Gukovskii, *Ocherki*, 240–42, Orłowska, *Poemat*, 49–51. In Book 11, Paletskii, in imitation of the incidental entry of Turnus into the Trojan campus in the *Aeneid* (9.727–818), finds himself within Kazan's walls. Yet whereas Turnus goes on a rampage and then flees the city, Paletskii is captured, imprisoned, and confronted by the "tyrant" Ediger who threatens him with torture and demands acceptance of Islam; Paletskii keeps his honor intact because Gidromir, a hero who fights on the Tatar side yet "honors worthy knights above the throne," rebukes the Ediger for "ignoring the knights' holy rights" (11.72–75) and liberates Paletskii by force. Aristocratic dignity triumphs because it is a value shared by everyone except the tyrant.

Engendering feuds amid the worldly princes;  
 Engendering riots and ruptures between friends.  
 He fire and sword admits to nature's laws;  
 Spills civic blood and shakes the thrones of tsars;  
 Disquiets hearts and breaks conjugal bonds;  
 Torments all, ruins all. Discord his name.  
 This Spirit did exist when heaven was made;  
 The only son of Erebus and Night,  
 In darkness hid, he stole away the shine;  
 Turned into tempest, silent peace disturbed;  
 Concealed in frost, embarked on war with warmth;  
 And armed the air to battle compact water.<sup>55</sup>

Discord's superior is Impiety (*Bezbozhie*), who appears in the scene of Ivan's failed conversion to Islam. It is to Discord that Impiety turns for assistance (9.279–82):

Impiety musters Discord for the crime:  
 The torch from her own hands entrusts to him,  
 gnashes her teeth and speaks: Go to Kazan,  
 there sow Feud, Riot, Perfidy and War.<sup>56</sup>

The genealogy of Discord in epic poetry begins with the bad Strife (*ἔρις*) in the opening of Hesiod's *Works and Days* and leads to the *Aeneid* (discussed below); in Voltaire's *Henriad*, *La Discorde* is a sister of Love, a morally ambivalent force. In Kheraskov, *Razdor* is accompanied by minor allies, listed in mini-catalogues such as "Feud, Riot, Perfidy and War" or the description of Ivan's initial illumination in the beginning of Book 2 (2.9–19):

Having expelled from the tsar's residence  
 Debaucheries, Slander, Guile, Flattery, Deceit;<sup>57</sup>

In the use of this device in Russian poetry, Kheraskov had Trediakovskii's precedent. In the *Telemachid*, hexameters filled with malignant concepts occur in Book 12 in the lists of troubles that issue from excessive drinking, of the various passions that trample upon the "hostile power" of a bad king, and in the pacifist passage that condemns "Murder, Confusion, Fear, Trembling, Horror, / All kinds of Disease, Hunger, and Despair that is more bitter than Death," which all attend on military action.<sup>58</sup> Punishments of unjust monarchs take the personified form of "Spiteful Suspicions, Vain Fears, and Distrusts" that fly around their victims "like night owls."<sup>59</sup> The moralistic and anti-tyrannical orientation of these catalogues is retained in Kheraskov.

<sup>55</sup> Подъ лунною чертой Духъ темный обитаетъ, / Который день и ночь по всѣмъ странамъ летаетъ, / Раждаетъ онъ вражды между земныхъ Князей; / Раждаетъ мятежи, разрывы межъ друзей, / Онъ вносить огонь и мечъ въ естественны законы; / Гражданску точить кровь, колеблетъ Царски троны; / Сердца тревожитъ онъ, супружни узы рветъ; / Всѣхъ мучить, всѣхъ крушить, Раздоромъ онъ слыветъ. / Сей Духъ существовалъ при сотвореньи неба; / Единородный сынъ и Нощи и Ереба, / Во мракѣ утаясь, сіянье похищаль, / Молчащу тишину, ставъ бурей, возмущаль, / Во мразѣ кроясь, сражался съ теплотою, / Онъ воздухъ воружаль на брань съ водой густою.

<sup>56</sup> Безбожіе Раздоръ къ злодѣйству ополчаетъ, / И пламенникъ ему изъ рукъ своихъ вручаетъ. / Со скрежетомъ сказавъ: Гряди, гряди въ Казань, / И тамо сѣй вражду, мятежъ, измѣну, брань!

<sup>57</sup> Изгнавъ изъ Царскаго жилища Іоаннъ / Развраты, клевету, коварство, лестъ, обманъ;

<sup>58</sup> Bk 12 in Trediakovskii, *Sochineniia Tred' iakovskago*, vol. 2, part. 1 (St. Petersburg, 1849), 388–89, 386.

<sup>59</sup> Ibid., Bk 18, 580–81.



The catalogue from Book 2 is extended into the description of Impiety's associates who take part in the war on Kazan's side (7.484–94):

Out of the gloom his ministers convene:  
Breathing forth flames, black Vengeance has appeared;  
In serpent's form, despicable Flattery crawls;  
Pride with her scepter in his presence enters,  
Raising her eyes, contemptuous, to the skies.  
Slyness, her savage look humbly downcast,  
Lost in her thoughts, before Impiety stands.  
Enmity, full of venom ever boiling,  
Dismays all hell with her confounding gaze;  
From Despair's eyes pour forth torrents of tears.  
This multitude of Crimes Impiety hosts.<sup>60</sup>

Catalogues of personified vices go back to ancient epic. In Book 6 of the *Aeneid*, Virgil describes the creatures that reside at the gates of Hades (6.273–81):

Just in the gate and in the jaws of hell,  
Revengeful Cares and sullen Sorrows dwell,  
And pale Diseases, and repining Age,  
Fear, *ill-counseling Famine and demeaning Want*;  
Here Toils, and Death, and Death's half-brother, Sleep,  
Forms terrible to view, their sentry keep;  
With *evil Pleasures of a willful mind*,  
*Next to the threshold, War that deals in death*;  
The Furies' iron rooms; *Mad Strife* that shakes  
Her *gory tresses* and unfolds her snakes. (Dryden's translation, with changes in italics)

Already in antiquity, readers of Virgil interpreted some items on this list as ethical concepts.<sup>61</sup> Yet such mini-catalogues of malicious entities include not only negative characteristics or vices, but also undesirable conditions for which the person is in no way responsible, such as Old Age or Labor. Collectively, they can be kinsfolk who inhabit a distinctive hellish chronotope, as the children of Night in Hesiod's *Theogony*, neighbors in the underworld in Virgil, "infernal sisters" of the Fury Allecto who are also "children of Night" in the opening of Claudian's *Against Rufinus*, associates of Chaos and his consort Night in Milton, underlings gathered under the throne of Pluto in Trediakovskii's *Telemachid* (and in Fénelon's original), residents at the court of Love in Voltaire's *Henriade* (9.50–54), and officers of a commanding evil, such as Kheraskov's Impiety in the *Rossiad* or *Suesviatstvo* (Superstition/Paganism) in *Vladimir*.<sup>62</sup> Invariably, they are single-hearted collaborators. The evil is conceptualized as a

<sup>60</sup> Изъ тмы къ нему его клеветы прибѣгають: / Огнями дышуща предстала черна Мечь; / Имѣя видъ змиѣ, ползеть презрѣнна Лестъ; / Гордыня предъ него со скипетромъ приходитъ, / Съ презрѣньемъ мрачный взоръ на небеса возводитъ; / Лукавство, яростный потуя въ землю видъ, / Передъ Безбожіемъ задумавшись стоитъ; / Вражда, исполненна всегда кипящимъ ядомъ, / Во трепеть тартаръ весь приводитъ смутнымъ взглядомъ; / Изъ глазъ Отчаянья слезъ токи полились; / Злодѣйствы многія къ Безбожію сошлись.

<sup>61</sup> Servius (ad loc.) interpreted *ultrices Curae* ("Revengeful Cares") as the biting, or the remorse, of conscience. In the curious phrase *mala mentis gaudia* "evil joys of the mind," Seneca detected a moral paradox (*Mor.* 59.3): it may happen, of course, that we are pleased by harm suffered by others, but can this properly be called a joy? Seneca rules that out, construing *gaudia* here as pleasures.

<sup>62</sup> John Milton, *Paradise Lost* 2:960–67 (Orcus, Ades, Demogorgon, Chance, Tumult, Confusion, Discord are listed); *Telemachid*, Bk. 18, in Trediakovskii, *Sochineniia Tred'iakovskago*, 567; *Henriad* 9:50–54; *Vladimir*, Bk. 13 in *Epicheskie tvoreniia M. M. Kheraskova*, part 2 (Moscow, 1820), 191–92. In a fragment of Kantemir's *Petrída* the analogous list

pandemonium of hostile forces, some of which assault the person from without, as old age does, while others infiltrate the soul. To struggle with such a demonic host requires constant effort; and even with divine aid, of which there is plenty in the *Rossiad*, they cannot be quite overcome.

The device of mini-catalogue can be contrasted with that of personification allegory. An extended allegory describes a vice as an anthropomorphic creature that pursues particular goals; one can speak to it and fight with it (as Ivan does when confronted by Impiety). The pandemonium invoked in epic catalogues represents a collective, even cosmic image of evil.

Herzen's *My Past and Thoughts* contains a likely covert reference to Kheraskov's *Rossiad*, presented (and reconceived) as an evocation of the epic technique of the pandemonic catalogue:

As in the old epics, even as the hero is calmly resting on his laurels, feasting or asleep, Discord, Vengeance, Envy, all dressed for parade, congregate amid thunder clouds of some sort; Vengeance joins Envy in boiling poison and forging daggers, while Discord is blowing the bellows and sharpening the spikes. This is also what happened now, in a transposition that befits our peacefully-meek ways. In our times all of that is being done simply by people, not allegories; they congregate in brightly-lit halls, not "in the gloom of night," with no disheveled furies, but with powdered footmen . . .<sup>63</sup>

Artfully embedding one epic device within another (simile), Herzen is describing the machinations that brought about Garibaldi's early departure from England in 1864. While the figure of Discord/Strife, among other "decorations and horrors of classical poems," most likely originates from Kheraskov, the phrase "in the gloom of night" ("во тьме ночной") refers to the scene in Pushkin's *Poltava* where Mazeppa, spurred on by a "plenipotentiary Jesuit," is plotting to betray Peter: "in the gloom of night, like thieves, they conduct their interviews" (во тьме ночной они как воры / Ведут свои переговоры).

This Herzen passage can be read not only as a token of the continued utility of Kheraskov's device for making sense of insurmountable evil, but as an implicit commentary on Pushkin's somewhat mechanical reliance on quasi-epic imagery. Representing Mazeppa as a Romantic self burning with "untiring criminal heat" ("В нем . . . / Неутомим преступный жар"), Pushkin merely demonizes an individual. Herzen, by contrast, marshals the conceptual force of the pandemic catalogue to capture the invisible workings of class antagonism.

In 1863, Herzen's *Kolokol* included five installments of a rubric entitled "*Rossiada*," which comprised miscellaneous reports on the "degradation of the officialdom-, barracks-, chancellery-, emperor-, Guards-, military-, German-, palace-, police-Russia." The "Kheraskovian title" seems apropos to the task of exposing the sheer multiplicity of crimes being committed under Nicolas's regime. In a gesture that may be both a slip of the pen and a sleight of hand, Herzen's "*Rossiad*" bears the epigraph that mocks militaristic rhetoric ("Russia, the warrior realm!" [Россия, бранная держава!]) and is taken from Pushkin's "Napoleon," but attributed to Derzhavin.<sup>64</sup> While creating a collage of elements drawn from poetic works that pledged allegiance to the state, Herzen retains Kheraskov's association of the empire with wicked plurality.

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of monsters even includes an abstraction representing Peter's disease, personified as male Stangurio (see L. V. Pumpianskii, "Ocherki po literature pervoi poloviny XVIII veka," *XVIII vek* 1 [1935]: 85–86). On Kheraskov's possible engagement with Claudian, see R. L. Shmarakov, *Poeziia Klavdiana v russkoi literature: Epokha klassitsizma* (Moscow, 2015), 174–84, Liubzhin, "'Rossiada' M. M. Kheraskova," 450–51.

<sup>63</sup> Herzen, *Sobranie*, 11:281. As a further token of the significance of this poem for Herzen's generation, he reminisces that his cousin D. P. Golokhvastov in his adolescence translated the entire *Rossiad* into French as a stylistic exercise (Gerzen, *Sobranie*, 9:185).

<sup>64</sup> Herzen, *Sobranie*, 17:149.

### Kheraskov's Images of Empire: The Reigning Winter

In light of Kheraskov's interest in the prevalence of evil, Ivan's struggle with Kazan cannot be reduced to a masonic version of "pilgrim's progress." The *Rossiad* is rather a meta-historical allegory: the story of enlightened reason that fails to suppress its Other (glossed as the archaic, the heathen, the Oriental) because it is itself corrupted. The opposites of light and dark, good and evil, civilized and barbaric cannot be mapped on particular agents familiar from historiography. Instead, the plot of Moscow's struggle with a Tatar citadel, in which the historical roles of the oppressor and the oppressed are shared by both antagonists, allows Kheraskov to cast imperialism *tout court* as a manifestation of tyranny. The attempt to destroy the evil that threatens the imperial *oikoumene* cannot succeed because that evil is endemic to empire. Worst of all, the putative agent of the Enlightenment, the tsar, has succumbed to it.

If any rhetoric of modernity depends on the image of that which is—or should be made—the past, in the *Rossiad* the archaic other is, unquestionably, tyranny. In Book 4, the Tatar princes betake themselves to hell in order to observe the posthumous fate of "proud tsars" abused by the people and viewed with disgust by the descendants (4.565–78).

Haste thee to dreary Hell and even now  
Set eyes on what proud Tsars must needs endure  
In darkness: there they bear disgraceful chains,  
The most abject of slaves rebuke their Pride,  
Mean flatterers, the authors in this world  
Of their ill-fortune, heap abuse upon them;  
Their crowns they see downtrodden by the People,  
Descendants with disgust their thrones regard;  
There tyrants such afflictions undergo  
That would to verses give a monstrous look.<sup>65</sup>

The scenes of torture that tyrants endure in hell are beyond the powers of poetic representation. Yet tyranny cannot be consigned to the past: it is Ivan's and therefore Russia's future. The plot of Ivan's incomplete, foiled ascent to morality enables Kheraskov to reflect (on) the insufficiency of a state-driven Enlightenment and the impossibility of living virtuously under a nefarious autocracy even when it parades commitment to the good. To suggest the perception of absolutism as a conceptual regime inimical to morality, which the *Rossiad* shares with Radishchev's and Shcherbatov's denunciations of Catherine's reign, Kheraskov lays aside the topos of Discord, the analogously constructed image of Impiety, and his favored device of the pandemonium of concepts.

A new kind of allegorical figure is called for to represent a deficiency distinctive to Catherine's rule—the evil not as a malicious agent or a commander-in-chief of demonic forces but as an ontological condition, a state of being that insidiously undermines life itself, a climate to which each organism must adapt. This idea is conveyed by the allegory of Winter, Kheraskov's poetic tour de force (12.1–43):

Hid in the bowels of Caucasus' icy mounts,  
Which the daring gaze of mortals could not reach,  
Where Frosts support a lucid, eternal Vault,  
Blunting the beams descending from the sun,

<sup>65</sup> Спѣши во мрачный адъ, и тамо нынѣ зри, / Что должны гордые во тмѣ терпѣть Цари! / Они позорныя оковы тамо носятъ, / Послѣдніе рабы за гордость ихъ поносятъ, / И ихъ нещастія во свѣтѣ семъ творцы, / Надъ ними подлые ругаются льстецы; / Они поруганны народомъ зрятъ короны, / Потомки съ мерзостью на ихъ взирають троны; / Тираны бѣдствія такія терпятъ тамъ, / Которыя дадутъ ужасный видъ стихамъ.

Where fiery Bolt is dead and Thunder numb—  
 Grav'n of ice, a spacious House there stands.  
 There Storms and Cold, and Snowy Drifts and Winds,  
 There year-devouring Winter reigns supreme.  
 Amid the other Seasons Sister cruel,  
 Covered with Hoar, yet agile and alert;  
 Competitor with Spring, Summer, and Fall,  
 And clothed in porphyry garment wov'n of Snow.  
 For finest linen frozen Steam she plies;  
 Her throne is like a diamond mountain;  
 Gigantic columns that are built with Ice  
 Cast a silv'ry Glare when lighted by the beams;  
 And when Sun's brilliance traces the Concave  
 'Twould seem the Mass of Ice is set ablaze;  
 No element is granted leave to move;  
 Air dares not stir, nor Fire become aglow;  
 There are no motley fields—mere perspirations  
 of flowers, frozen, shine amidst the bergs.  
 Water molten by shafts beneath the Vault  
 O'erhangs in wavy strata, petrified.  
 There words one speaks are visible mid-air,  
 Yet seized with Cold, Nature entire is dead;  
 Trembling, Shiver, Freeze sole partake of life;  
 Rinds roam about, while Zephyrs there grow mute,  
 There snowstorms whirl and circle, gaining speed,  
 Frosts reign, displacing Summer's pleasantries;  
 There icy masses Urban Ruins depict,  
 At whose mere glance one's blood runs cold.  
 Condensed by Frosts, snow-drifts have constituted  
 Many a silvery hillock or diamond lea.  
 Thence Winter her empire extends to us,  
 Devouring grass in fields and flowers in vales,  
 Sucking from Plants and Trees their vital sap.  
 On her cold Wings she carries Frosts to us,  
 Expels the day, prolongs the dismal Nights,  
 And bids the Sun avert his shining eyes;  
 With quiv'ring, rivers and woods her do expect,  
 While Colds spin for her tapis of white wool;  
 Nature entire she strikes with Sleep and Fear.<sup>66</sup>

<sup>66</sup> Въ пещерахъ внутреннихъ Кавказскихъ льдистыхъ горъ, / Куда не досягалъ отважный смертныхъ взоръ, / Гдѣ мразы вѣчный сводъ прозрачный составляютъ, / И солнечныхъ лучей паденье притупляютъ; / Гдѣ молнія мертва, гдѣ цѣпенѣтъ громъ, / Изсѣченъ изо льда стоитъ обширный домъ: / Тамъ бури, тамо хладъ, тамъ вьюги, непогоды, / Тамъ царствуетъ Зима, снѣдающая годы. / Сія жестокая другихъ временъ сестра, / Покрыта сѣдиной, проворна и бодра; / Соперница весны, и осени, и лѣта, / Изъ снѣга сотканной порфиною одѣта; / Виссономъ служатъ ей замерзлые пары; / Престолъ имѣетъ видъ алмазныя горы; / Великіе столпы, изъ льда сооруженны, / Сребристый мещутъ блескъ лучами озаренны; / По сводамъ солнечно сіяніе скользитъ, / И кажется тогда, громада льдовъ горитъ; / Стихія каждая движенія не имѣетъ: / Ни воздухъ тронуться, ни огонь пылать не смѣетъ; / Тамъ пестрыхъ нѣтъ полей, сіяютъ между льдовъ / Одни замерзлыя испарины цвѣтовъ; / Вода растопленна надъ сводами лучами, / Окаменѣвъ виситъ волнистыми слоями. / Тамъ зрими въ воздухѣ вѣщаемы слова, / Но все застужено, натура вся мертва; / Единый трепеть, дрожъ и знобы жизнь имѣютъ; / Гуляютъ иніи, зефиры тамъ нѣмѣютъ, / Мятели вьются вокругъ и производятъ бѣгъ, / Морозы царствуютъ на мѣсто лѣтнихъ нѣгъ; / Развалины градовъ тамъ льды

Kheraskov's elaborate personification lacks obvious precedents in Russian literature.<sup>67</sup> It may have been inspired by James Thomson's image of Winter in *Seasons* as a "grim tyrant" whose reign reaches "eastward to the Tartar's coast." Notably, Thomson's poem ends with a panegyric to Peter, "the frantic Alexander of the north," whose effect on what used to be a "huge neglected empire" was such that "Sloth flies the land, and Ignorance, and Vice." While tacitly accepting Thomson's political reading of the geography of Winter, Kheraskov does not foresee a thaw and a spring; Winter for him is not the period of storms that "quickly pass," but a static regime, not easily dislodged.

Winter is Kazan's last and ultimate hope; "an impious magician," Nigrin, appeals to her using a striking genealogical metaphor (12.55–56):

Chaos your Father, Nothingness your child;  
Ally with Hell, achieve what cannot be.<sup>68</sup>

"The impossibility" consists in freezing the dynamic technological reason, manifested in the saltpeter placed in a mine excavated underneath the city. On the eve of the final assault on the city, the metaphorical Winter that has installed herself within is oxymoronically juxtaposed with the extreme temperature of the bomb about to explode (12.109): Подъ градомъ адъ лежитъ; во градъ мразъ и хладъ! (Beneath lies Hell, in Town are Frost and Cold). Rhythmically and stylistically, this line evokes early Lomonosov, but omits the militaristic triumphalism of the solemn ode. The equation between the two thermal extremes unambiguously indicates that to be victorious in this struggle one has to bring hell and be hell.<sup>69</sup>

Kheraskov's poem invites the reader to extend the conventional criticism of tyranny into a critique of imperialism. The conceptual regime of empire is faulty precisely because of its inherent militarism; empire (from Lat. *imperium*) is a "power" that only knows the law of force. In a sense, it embodies the very principle of Discord. Instead of bringing light to darkness, the modern empire counteracts inertia with hellish heat or—in its unenlightened, archaic hypostasis—extends its destructive frost wherever it can reach.

Kheraskov's epic implicitly denies imperious autocracy a moral legitimacy, thus undermining the Petrine ideology of enforced Enlightenment. Instead of passively "sabotaging" the state, however, Kheraskov makes a case for aristocratic dignity, collective decision-making, and a penitential recognition of the monarch's failure to envision and realize an ethically superior future. In *Vladimir*, the evil inherent in autocratic power is counterbalanced by the Orthodox Church. In the last books of the *Rossiada*, a kind of heroic togetherness draws attention away from the tsar, whose vices have doomed the country to disaster.

In nineteenth-century Russian literature, Pushkin, similarly to Kheraskov, imputes an intrinsic, infanticidal immorality to solitary rule in *Boris Godunov*, relating the cancerous growth of a criminal "stain" in the ruler's conscience to the onset of the Time of Troubles.

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изображаютъ, / Единымъ видомъ кровь которы застужаютъ; / Стѣсненны мразами, составили снѣга / Сребристые бугры, алмазные луга; / Оттолѣ къ намъ Зима державу простираетъ, Въ поляхъ траву, цвѣты въ долинахъ пожираетъ, / И соки жизненны древесные сосетъ; / На холодныхъ крыліяхъ морозы къ намъ несетъ, / День гонитъ прочь отъ насъ, печальная длитъ ночи, / И солнцу отвращать велитъ свѣтѣщи очи; / Ее со трепетомъ лѣса и рѣки ждуть, / И стужи ей ковры изъ бѣлыхъ волнъ прядутъ; / На всю натуру сонъ и страхъ она наводитъ.

<sup>67</sup> In Lomonosov and Popovskii, the image of winter/frost is occasionally used to suggest political duress resulting from disgrace (*opala*). See I.Z. Serman, *Poeticheskii stil' Lomonosova* (Leningrad, 1966), 165. As Serman notes, both Karamzin and Derzhavin celebrated Alexander's ascension to power as the overcoming of "winter's gloomy horrors" and the silencing of "Nord's hoarse roar"—images of Paul's reign (166)—yet these poems may already be indebted to Kheraskov.

<sup>68</sup> Хаосъ тебѣ отецъ, и дщерь твоя Ничтожность! / Поборствуй тартару, и сдѣлай невозможность.

<sup>69</sup> From his reading of *Paradise Lost*, Kheraskov could have retained not only the notion that "parching air burns froze"—that high temperature has an effect equivalent to frost—but that damned souls in hell shuttle back and forth between extreme heat and freezing cold (2.594–603).



Another important text that likely responds to the *Rossiad* is Fedor Tiutchev's "December 14, 1825." Tiutchev's ambivalent image of "iron Winter," which "breathed" on the Decembrists, who were themselves "corrupted" or "debauched" by "Autocracy," is probably inspired by Kheraskov's allegory of Winter.<sup>70</sup> While decrying the absurd hope that one's blood would suffice to unfreeze a "north pole," Tiutchev hardly celebrates the status quo. Like Kheraskov's, his Winter is a paralyzing force to which those who live under an empire must submit.

In "December 14, 1825" Tiutchev offers no prospect of a thaw and no plot of overcoming. The *Rossiad* adumbrates such a plot by welding together two intellectual strands: a quietist Masonic and a Roman republican one. It is this dual legacy that Turgenev explores in *Punin and Baburin*. The rejection both of Pushkin's Romantic poetics and unreasonable revolutionary zeal marks the novella's two characters not as political conservatives, such as Tiutchev was (in his journalism and part of his poetic output), but as unflinching believers in a eighteenth-century vision of a moral republic.<sup>71</sup> That vision furnished a seemingly impractical, paradoxical challenge to the violent modernization initiated by the Petrine reforms. With no public sphere to support their aspirations, Baburin and Punin inhabit a phantasmatic modernity that is of their own making. And yet the contours of republicanism in Kheraskov, Herzen, and Turgenev bear telling similarities. In favoring morality over imperialism, dignity over autocratic will, and universally shared concepts over the passions of the self, these works offer well-considered responses to the wintry conditions of Romanov rule.

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<sup>70</sup> Tiutchev also associated Petersburg with despotic north in poems "Глядел я стоя над Невой" and "О Север, Север-чародей"; see Roman Leibov, "Liricheskii fragment" Tiutcheva: *Zhanr i kontekst* (Tartu, 2000), 55. Russia's associations with North are discussed in Otto Boele, *The North in Russian Romantic Literature* (Amsterdam, 1996).

<sup>71</sup> Tiutchev's poem is an almost word-by-word repudiation of Pushkin's epistle to Chaadaev "Любви, надежды, тихой славы" (Leibov, "Liricheskii fragment" Tiutcheva, 55–57).