MARKETING LITERATURE AND POSTHUMOUS LEGACIES

THE SYMBOLIC CAPITAL OF LEONID ANDREEV AND VLADIMIR NABOKOV

YURI LEVING AND FREDERICK H. WHITE

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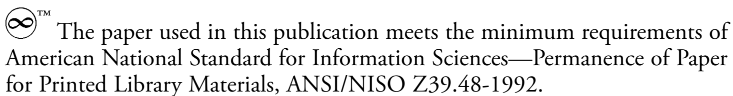
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This book is dedicated to:

Ella Leving and Jaclyn White—

without whom it would be difficult to
navigate the market, let alone to l
eave a lasting legacy

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Acknowledgments

This project was born from several conversations regarding the present state of scholarship on Leonid Andreev and Vladimir Nabokov. We soon realized that very similar practices had been employed to create and maintain the literary legacies of these two authors. Of course, the authors' families were responsible for some of this marketing effort, but there also existed an entire network of secondary actors, including our own colleagues in academia, who had based a portion of their careers on the sustained relevancy of these literary figures. The positive side of these efforts is one of preservation—making sure that future generations will be able to read and enjoy these literary works, and to better understand the authors and appreciate their cultural relevancy. At the same time, there exists another side that is much more mercantile in nature: the economic realities of literary production and the maintenance of a posthumous legacy for the sustained benefit of family members and cultural merchants. It was this economic side that interested us the most.

As a result, we began researching the economics of culture, disseminating our findings each year at national conferences. One of our first efforts was to organize two sessions at the AATSEEL (American Association of Teachers of Slavic and East European Languages) annual conference in San Francisco in 2008 under the title "Marketing Literature and Posthumous Legacies," which later lent itself to this joint monograph. Along with our papers, presentations were made by Lada Panova (University of Southern California), Dennis Ioffe (Ghent University, Belgium), William Nickell (University of Chicago), and Galina Rylkova (University of Florida). Henryk Baran (State University of New York, Albany) and Alexander Zholkovsky (University of Southern California) served as discussants for these panels and provided expert scholarly insights. We are very grateful to the panel participants and discussants for the stimulating dialogue that took place before, during, and even after the conference, which helped us to sharpen our critical language and the theoretical foundation

for the present book. From this effort, our two papers, along with a third by Oleg Minin (Bard College) were published as a special cluster on the economics of culture in *The Russian Review* (vol. 70, no. 2, April 2011): “Marketing Strategies: Vadim Andreev in Dialogue with the Soviet Union” and “Interpreting Voids: Vladimir Nabokov’s Last Incomplete Novel *The Original of Laura*.”

Reflecting upon this project it becomes quite clear that without the input of many fine colleagues, this volume would have been less engaging. We particularly appreciate the lively academic exchange that took place in January 2011, when we presented some of our latest research at the AATSEEL conference in Pasadena, Los Angeles, along with Oleg Minin, Thomas Seifrid (University of Southern California), and Gabriella Safran (Stanford University). The panel’s objective was to continue a dialogue with our colleagues on issues relevant to all types of cultural production. From our presentations, the following publication resulted: “Creating Posthumous Legacies: The power to consecrate and to blaspheme. Vadim Andreev’s memories of childhood,” *Russian Literature* (Elsevier Science BV), LXXII–III/IV (2012).

Finally, in November of 2012 we again organized a panel at the ASEEES (Association for Slavic, East European, and Eurasian Studies) convention in New Orleans with the participation of Anne Eakin Moss (Johns Hopkins University) and Julia Vaingurt (University of Illinois at Chicago). Here we presented our last chapters for this project, and among those who contributed to the discussion we would like to particularly thank Birgitte Pristed (Johannes Gutenberg-University of Mainz) for her insightful comments. We also sought advice and input from our colleagues, both from those who actually attended the panels and from those who peer-reviewed our submissions to leading academic journals. “The Role of the Scholar in the Consecration of Leonid Andreev (1950s to present),” appeared in *New Zealand Slavonic Journal*, vol. 44 (2010) and greatly benefited from the important criticism of our colleagues. An earlier Russian-language version of Yuri Leving’s “‘Nabokov-7’: Russian Postmodernism in the Search of a National Identity” appeared in the volume *Empire* N. *Nabokov and his Heirs* (Ed. by Y. Leving and E. Soshkin. Moscow: New Literary Observer, 2006).

The search for a publisher only further strengthened our conviction that the dissemination of culture is a business. Cultural merchants have their own economic considerations, and we wish to thank our publisher, Lexington Books, who read our proposal and actually responded to us about the manuscript we had written rather than the book we *should* have written. We are very appreciative of their professionalism and confidence in the topic, which some of our colleagues might find controversial. As a result of this research project we are even more convinced that there is a large scholarly space available for a discussion of the practices, behaviors, and methods of cultural merchants in the production and maintenance of art, literature, film, etc. Many of the underlying mechanisms that we discuss in the following chapters in relationship to the Andreevs and the Nabokovs are certainly functioning for other cultural figures as well—otherwise, they would no longer be considered *cul-*

turally relevant. We, therefore, invite you to pursue in a similar fashion many of the economic concerns that inform the marketing of culture and posthumous legacies.

Part of this research was conducted with the help of a grant from the *Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council* of Canada (SSHRC), as well as Memorial University's *SSHRC Vice-President's Research Grant*, and we would like to express our deepest appreciation for this financial support. We also would like to extend a thank you to Meghan Vicks, our editor, who helped bring the two sections of this book together seamlessly. For all the other friends and colleagues who supported us during this process, too many to name here, it was greatly appreciated—thank you!

Yuri Leving &
Frederick H. White
January 2013

Introduction

Marketing Literature and Posthumous Legacies

Literature is not only about aesthetics, but also almost equally about economics. The successful marketing of an author and his literary works is more dependent on the activities of *cultural merchants* than on the particular words and phrases found in the author's prose. While alive, the author must work with these cultural merchants in order to sustain his place within the literary market. Once the author is dead, maintaining a posthumous legacy becomes a literary industry of its own as friends, family, scholars, and publishers strive to continually profit from the deceased's creative works. Relying on the critical theory of Pierre Bourdieu, Marcel Danesi, and others in the chapters that follow, we put forth the argument that the real work begins once the creative process ends. The labor of trying to convince an agent, an editor, and a publisher to look at a manuscript is the first step in an economic process that determines whether an author will be read and remembered or not. Once accepted, the manuscript will be rewritten, edited, and sometimes mutilated by censors, copyeditors, and others in the publication business before being offered to an audience of potential customers. At some point, the author will deal with a myriad of issues concerning design, placement, marketing, advertising, and more. Once it has been published, critics will be courted to review the literary work. Booksellers, book fairs, translations, audio-recordings, and such influence a work's distribution. Eventually, scholars and graduate students might become involved in this process of consecration, writing and presenting conference papers on the author's—or his work's—cultural relevance. After the author's death, libraries might collect the deceased's working papers, diaries, letters, and other elements of material culture in order to immortalize the individual. His childhood home might be turned into a memorial museum, proudly displaying his original writing desk and several family photographs to heighten authenticity. All of this that goes beyond the actual creative gesture produces symbolic capital: the belief that literature has worth and that this

value can be realized in a paying customer. The symbolic value then, if successful, takes on monetary value when the literary work results in a purchase. This transfer of symbolic capital into financial capital is what is used to support, at first, the author, editor, and publisher; later, if very successful, it also supports the author's family, literary scholars, booksellers, censors, and many others who were not involved in the actual creative process. In the widening circle of actors within this literary market, there is one author and an ever-increasing number of cultural merchants. Using Bourdieu's terminology, these cultural merchants consecrate the author, testify to his value as a literary figure, collude with one another to increase the value of the author's works, and help to convert that symbolic capital into money.

Some might argue that this is a rather cynical approach, that if the author is terrible, then no matter the efforts of the cultural merchants the work will not sustain the test of time. This may be true, although we certainly can point to many movies that make it to the screen that probably should never have been released. In the case of cinema, there are always so many people invested in a project that a film can be an obvious flop, but will still be released in order to regain some of the original investment. DVDs are packaged and sold, and these flops are distributed abroad in order to mitigate the studio's financial loss. Aesthetics do not play as large a role in the distribution of a film as the desire to make (or recover) money. Occasionally, the most awful film can become a *cult-classic*, simply because it is so terrible. The $45 million *Showgirls* (1995) is an example of the phenomenon. This film was critically derided, but has since given rise to its own cult following, making over $100 million in the video market. Given the great sums of money at stake, the commercialization of film is an example we can readily understand, but literature is undeniably also driven by similar economic factors. Certainly, Fyodor Dostoevsky and Leo Tolstoy had real talent and their works contributed greatly to the intellectual discourse of humankind, but there is still an industry that profits from their literary works, which were written over one hundred years ago. Memorial museums, symposia, conference panels, audiobooks, limited and revised additions, film and TV adaptations, academic articles, and monographs dedicated to the two authors employ people, advance careers, and turn symbolic capital into real money. The literary market created by the Tolstoyans extends even to Ben H. Winters' mash up *Android Karenina*, which has sold well internationally, has been translated into Russian, and has recently been published in Tolstoy's native land.

The tendency is to regard the creative process and the final product of this personal expression in a positive light, while profit margins, advertising placements, marketing strategies, copyright issues, and business features are necessary, but negative, aspects of *art*. In this book, we do not subscribe to the notion that *creation* is positive and *dissemination* is negative, as though they are separate from one another. To visit the Getty Center to see Vincent van Gogh's *Irises* while listening to the professional commentary of an art historian about the painting's meaning and relevance, yet without contemplating the process by which an unknown, mentally disturbed individual created a picture in 1889 that is now hanging in a massive, stone museum

high above Los Angeles with poster reproductions for sale in the lobby, is to avoid acknowledging the symbiotic relationship between the creative process and its business aspects. Van Gogh may not have benefited from his artistic endeavors, but an entire industry of art sellers, dealers, museum curators, and art historians certainly has.

The relationship between art and economic drivers is not limited to capitalist countries. The necessary relationship of creator, disseminator, seller, buyer, collector, and scholar has existed throughout time. Symbolic capital is not always exchanged directly for money, but can also be traded for influence, power, and consecration. For example, in order for a literary work to be published in either Moscow or New York during the 1930s, certain powerful individuals had to be convinced that the publication of that work would be profitable for monetary or ideological reasons. The resulting *profits* (monetary or ideological) were of secondary importance for those involved in the consecration process.

The following anecdote regarding Vladimir Mayakovsky illustrates how an entire cultural industry can instantaneously materialize from an off-hand comment by a powerful person. The Soviet press angrily greeted Vladimir Mayakovsky's suicide, and work on a collected edition of his writings was temporarily suspended. However, a chance remark of Joseph Stalin to the effect that Mayakovsky was *the best and most talented poet of the Soviet epoch* led to his complete rehabilitation. A statue depicting him as an arrogant man of bronze was erected in the center of Moscow next to a metro station bearing his name. His approved works were dutifully taught in schools throughout the Soviet Union. The Soviet canonization of selected poems from Mayakovsky's Soviet period completely distorted the true image of the man and poet.

How many cultural merchants profited from Mayakovsky's poetry after his death? Who participated in his Soviet consecration? Many of those involved might seem, at first glance, beyond reproach when it comes to economic concerns, but are they? As will be discussed in chapter 3, a university scholar spends her entire career researching and writing about a certain poet—possibly even Mayakovsky. This scholar will promote the poet's work, while also advancing her own career. Her conference presentations will be turned into journal articles, which will become book chapters. This work will result in the scholar's advancement from assistant, to associate, to full professor, each with an appropriate pay raise and elevation of status within the university hierarchy. This scholar will trade on her specific knowledge to win grants that will pay for her travel to libraries and archives, to support the parallel work of her graduate students, and to attend conferences to disseminate this research. In this process, the poet's original work will not directly provide the scholar with money, but the scholar will trade on the poet's symbolic capital to advance her own career and to engage in scholarship, which does, ultimately, provide financial rewards. One day, the scholar may even become director of the archive that holds all of the poet's important papers, memorabilia, and material history. The scholar-director will be able to control access for future scholars wanting to use these materials. She might block certain individuals from using the archive or give others unlimited access, thereby increasing her own symbolic capital among her clique of specialists. This process of

academic advancement happens in both capitalist and communist countries alike. It has occurred in the Soviet Union and post-Soviet Russia, England and the United States.

More specific to this study is the industry that arises around a particularly successful literary figure—in particular, the industry that involves the author's family and associates. Let us not forget that symbolic capital is realized in numerous ways: for example, the wife who manages her husband's literary affairs long after his death or the son who trades on his father's reputation to more easily publish his own literary works. What is the value of the author's adolescent letters to his mother? How much is a publisher willing to pay for the memoirs of the author's daughter? The moniker "granddaughter of" or "first wife of" or "favorite nephew of" can be traded for influence, money, or power in certain situations. This is not a one-way relationship, however. We must not think that the son of the author is solely profiting from this relationship; undoubtedly, the deceased author also gains as his posthumous legacy is perpetuated. Scholars and students use the son's book of recollections to write new academic articles. The love letters of the author to his wife are collected, annotated, and sold to interested readers who wish to better understand the author. Each of these efforts reminds readers that the author's works still exist and should be read again and again. Consider, for example, the following case regarding Ernest Hemingway's *True at First Light*. Hemmingway died in 1961. *True at First Light* was released posthumously in 1999. It is based on the author's East African safari with his fourth wife. The author's son, Patrick, appeared on the *Today Show* to promote the book on the day of its publication. *True at First Light* became the main selection for *The New Yorker's* Book of the Month Club. Rights were sold for translations into Danish, French, German, Icelandic, Italian, Norwegian, Polish, Spanish, and Swedish. An audiobook version was released in 2007. Although Hemingway had been dead for over thirty years, the new publication rekindled an interest in the author's earlier works among the reading public. His son edited the manuscript and vouched for its veracity on a popular morning television show. The Hemingway foundation profited from this publicity, and from the translations and audiobooks that followed. In this example alone, we see how family members and cultural merchants manipulate a long-deceased author's posthumous legacy to generate symbolic capital. This process of collusion and consecration is extremely important in the cases of both Leonid Andreev and Vladimir Nabokov.

THE ANDREEVS AND THE NABOKOVS

Vladimir Dmitrievich Nabokov (1870–1922) was a progressive statesman during the last days of the Russian Empire. He led the Constitutional Democrats (CD) in the First Duma, and at the age of thirty-five was named as a possible minister of justice within the shadow CD cabinet.[1] After the pogroms in the city of Kishinyov in April 1903, Nabokov accused the authorities of sanctioning anti-Semitism, which

thrived under the connivance of the tsarist regime (his article in *The Law* [*Pravo*] was unequivocally titled "The Bloodbath of Kishinyov" ["Krovavaya Kishinevskaya banya"]). From 1904–1917, Nabokov was the editor of the liberal newspaper *Speech* (*Rech*). Besides political acumen, he also possessed intimate knowledge of the European literary tradition (he published articles on Tolstoy and Charles Dickens, and also hosted a dinner for H. G. Wells during the latter's visit to St. Petersburg in February of 1914); more importantly, he passed on this passion to his son, the future writer. During this time, Leonid Nikolaevich Andreev (1871–1919) was the leading literary figure in Russia. His stories and plays reflected the political and social turmoil of the last days of the Romanov dynasty. More will be said about Andreev's literary career in chapter 1. After the February Revolution, Nabokov was the secretary of the Provisional Government, while Andreev was first courted as a propagandist and then rebuffed by the Whites. In 1919 Andreev died of a brain hemorrhage in Finland while preparing for a lecture tour of the United States. At the same time, the Nabokovs fled Russia, first for England and then on to Berlin, Germany.

Vladimir Vladimirovich Nabokov (1899–1977) and Vadim Leonidovich Andreev (1902–1976) both grew up in emigration. Their lives became intertwined although there is no evidence that they knew each other personally, only professionally. In 1928 Nabokov unconditionally praised Andreev's poetic endeavors, especially in comparison with the numerous poets of his generation, including Anna Prismanova and Boris Poplavsky whom Nabokov mainly derided ("Two poems by Vadim Andreev. The first one is wonderful. 'The light is dimed, the fire is not bright, and the Northern lyre's language is difficult. . . .' ['Ne zvuchen svet, ogon ne yarok, i truden liry severnoy yazyk. . . .'] What a pity that it is impossible to quote it [here] entirely" [2]). Both authors published in the same emigration publications, and Vadim Andreev wrote two reviews of Nabokov's novels, *The Luzhin Defense* and *Invitation to a Beheading*.[3] What is even more significant is that Vadim recognized in his contemporary's major work some traits of his late father:

> Now, once the novel [*Invitation to a Beheading*] is finally published as a whole in book form, its main parodic scheme becomes more apparent and the topics touched upon by Sirin seem clearer—a doppelganger; the opposition of an individual and a collective; the illusory nature of human life; the fantastic quality of everything that surrounds us and where we have long failed to notice any fantasy (due to habit or indolence of mind). Even more so—maybe for the very first time one can establish the clear-cut hereditary lines connecting Sirin with Russian literature (till now Sirin tended to be perceived as a distinctly Westernized writer), in particular with Gogol's "The Nose" and Leonid Andreev's *My Notes* (*Moi zapiski*).[4]

From quite early on, literary critics, not only Vadim Andreev, noted and drew parallels between the prosaic style of the recently deceased Leonid Andreev and the promising author Sirin (Nabokov's pen name), who had just started his literary career in exile. When Nabokov's collection of short stories entitled *The Return of Chorb* (*Vozvrashchenie Chorba*) was published in Berlin in 1930, Pyotr Pilsky, the

literary reviewer of the Riga newspaper *Today* (*Segodnya*), remarked: "In Sirin there exists a slight wave of anguish; one can discern [in his writings] a heightened nervous perceptiveness, some sort of internal instability. He is a nocturnal talent, he projects the trembling of Garshin, Andreev, and Hoffman. . . ."[5] Mikhail Tsetlin, a respected émigré critic, articulated his sense of aesthetic proximity between the two authors in more elaborate terms: in *Contemporary Annals* (*Sovremennye zapiski*), the leading thick journal of the Russian émigré community, Tsetlin noted, "similarly to Andreev, Sirin has been attracted to the tragic abominations of life and drawn to the strange and singular events"; he added, "like Andreev, Sirin possesses a rare nowadays gift of fabula":

> Akin to Andreev, he often produces an effect of artificiality. We cannot compare their talents because usually a young writer's degree of giftedness is not immediately apparent, and Sirin's talent is still in its growth period. Nonetheless, one should emphasize that Sirin treats his talent carefully and thoroughly, and that this is something that saves him from the very breakdowns and failures which ultimately ruined Leonid Andreev.[6]

These early remarks pointed to more than merely haphazard comparisons, as evidenced by Vladislav Khodasevich's 1936 review of Nabokov's *Invitation to a Beheading*. Here, Khodasevich mentions Tolstoy's evaluation of the nightmarish qualities of Leonid Andreev's prose:

> The life which Sirin shows to us might become a reality one day or might not—and most probably it will not, at least in the shape he envisages it. Therefore, it boils down to what Leo Tolstoi once said of Leonid Andreev: "he [attempts to] frighten, but I am not afraid" More precisely: I am, possibly, frightened indeed, however, not *so much*, or not with that fear which Sirin induces into me.[7]

The evocation of Tolstoy's ironic assessment is an almost verbatim quote from an article entitled "Sirin" published two years earlier by another prominent Russian émigré critic, Georgy Adamovich: "In Sirin's defense one can only say that he does not even intend to 'frighten' [like Andreev in Tolstoy's famous phrase]. He slides, glistens, threads passage onto passage, scene onto scene—and, at the very best—he reflects all these passions and horrors as if in a mirror, where one can only look at them"[8]).

Critics' comparison of his prose with that of Leonid Andreev did not escape Nabokov's attention. In response, he delivered a light-hearted tribute to Andreev in a cameo appearance in *The Luzhin Defense* (1930): Andreev, who had resided in the Finnish village of Vammelsu since 1907, is featured in the childhood memories of Luzhin's sensitive fiancée:[9] "In this Finland, which was still vacation land, still part of St. Petersburg life, she saw several times from afar a celebrated writer, a very pale man with a very conspicuous goatee who kept glancing up at the sky, which enemy airplanes had begun to haunt."[10]

At one point in the narrative, Luzhin is reading Andreev's *The Ocean* (*Okean*), a play that provides several thematic reverberations for Nabokov's plot. As Norah

Buhks points out, the finale of *The Luzhin Defense* corresponds to the climactic scene of Andreev's short story "Grand Slam" ("Bolshoy shlem") about a card game; the aptness of Andreev's psychiatric case and suicidal tendencies in the context of a novel about a chess player gone mad is more or less obvious.[11] When Nabokov's play *The Event* (*Sobytiye*) came out to mixed reviews in 1938, one Parisian critic tried to assemble the work's artistic genealogy, listing among possible sources not only Hoffman and Pirandello, but also Leonid Andreev's 1908 play *Black Maskers* (*Chernye maski*).[12]

Nabokov, whom Vadim Andreev tried to defend from accusations of foreign literary influences, eventually moved to the United States and began writing in English, scoring a sensational success with his novel *Lolita.* At the same time, Vadim Andreev dialogued with Soviet officials and scholars to both rehabilitate his father's literary reputation and also publish his own poems, memoir, and novel in the Soviet Union. By the time of their deaths within a year of each other (both in Switzerland), Nabokov was an international bestseller in the West, and Andreev had been successful in both restoring his father's posthumous legacy and becoming a member of the Union of Soviet Writers.

Dmitri Nabokov (1934–2012) translated his father's work and, eventually, became the executor of his father's literary estate. Beginning in the 1980s, he took upon himself "the huge and ever growing management of his father's posthumous publishing enterprise and of the scrupulous protection of his rights as an author and his honour as a man."[13] Apparently Dmitri also wrote—but did not dare to publish—a large and complex novel. According to those who knew him well, he was constantly guided by an "impulse to be a good son":

> That impulse is writ in the Nabokov translations he undertook with his father, and later his mother. He would outlive her by nearly 21 years, and that impulse would keep him on his feet even as he was confined to hospitals and wheelchairs. He would complete what she had undertaken: he sent the Montreux archives, sealed and unsealed, to the New York Public Library; collected, annotated and translated the balance of the Nabokov stories—behind schedule, they appeared late in the year to become Book # 11 on the *New York Times*' list of the ten best books of the year. He would do what she would never have done: she'd elected to open the archives to Brian Boyd, resulting in the magisterial two-volume biography of her husband; Dmitri opened the archives to Stacy Schiff, who won a Pulitzer Prize for her biography of his self-effacing mother.[14]

Olga Andreyev Carlisle (b. 1934) also embraced her literary ancestry. She is the author of *Voices in the Snow*, a memoir of her visit to the Soviet Union in the 1960s; *Solzhenitsyn and the Secret Circle*, an account of her dealings with the Nobel Prize-winning novelist; and *Under A New Sky*, a telling of her experiences among Soviet cultural figures during the *glasnost* period. Carlisle also translated and published a collection of Leonid Andreev's short stories in 1987 under the title *Visions: Stories and Photographs.* Both Dmitri Nabokov and Carlisle worked diligently to maintain the posthumous legacies of their family members.

The lives and literary legacies of the Andreevs and the Nabokovs have run parallel since the beginning of the twentieth century. During this time, both Leonid Andreev and Vladimir Nabokov were the leading writers of their generations. The sons of both these literary figures worked to sustain that literary success. By examining both families and the cultural merchants who were involved in marketing their literature and maintaining their posthumous legacies, we reveal many of the same economic factors involved in the consecration of these two literary legacies. The differences in their stories only further underscore the notion that economic drivers are universal and are not limited to a certain country, to a specific decade, or to one political system. Although this book broadly covers the entire twentieth century, the main focus is on the literary activities of the last fifty years in both the United States and the Soviet Union/Russia.

It is interesting to compare articles written in the *Los Angeles Times* for both Dmitri Nabokov and Olga Andreyev Carlisle in order to see how the two are positioned in relation to their literary ancestry, and how both identified themselves as such for symbolic reasons. Carlisle was featured in a 1993 article concerning the publication of her latest book, *Under A New Sky*:

> Granddaughter of literary lion Leonid Andreyev, writer and painter Olga Carlisle, 62, has spent her life in France and the United States, but she was reared in a world of Russian literature. Marina Tsvetayeva and Isaac Babel visited her family's Paris apartment. She was nurtured on the poetry of Boris Pasternak, Nadezhda Mandelstam and Alexander Blok.
>
> Her grandfather Andreyev, a confidant of Maxim Gorky and friend of Leo Tolstoy, opposed Bolshevik terror and died in exile in 1919 in Finland, despondent and isolated. Though considered one of the great Russian writers during his life, Soviet authorities suppressed his works from 1917 until his "rehabilitation" in the late 1950s during the Khrushchev thaw.
>
> Carlisle's father, belletrist Vadim Andreyev, and mother, Olga Chernov, were non-Marxist socialists. Both fled the Soviet Union and probable execution during the Red Terror of 1919-23, before meeting and marrying in France.
>
> They were allowed to return to Russia in 1957, and continued to visit for the rest of their lives. Carlisle went to the Soviet Union for the first time in 1960, but her *entre* was short lived. She was barred from re-entry in 1967 because of her involvement with Soviet dissenters. Twenty-two years later, during Gorbechev's [sic] *glasnost*, Carlisle returned. She records the adventures of her trips to Russia in 1989 and 1990 in her recent memoir, "Under a New Sky: A Reunion With Russia."[15]

In this article, Carlisle trades on her literary heritage to substantiate her own publishing efforts. In reality, Carlisle's greatest contribution to Russian literature may be the part she played in Solzhenitsyn's clandestine publications abroad, although this relationship ended acrimoniously. Yet, it is her descent from a grandfather whom she never met, and from a father whose best-known work is a childhood memoir about his famous father, that provides Carlisle the symbolic capital to write and publish her own memoirs.

Similarly, Dmitri Nabokov's obituary attempts to provide a depth of character and an element of professional accomplishment separate from his famous father, but ultimately fails to do so, as Dmitri's life was closely intertwined with his father's:

> Dmitri Nabokov, the only child of acclaimed novelist Vladimir Nabokov who helped protect and translate his father's work while pursuing careers as an opera singer and race car driver, has died. He was 77. [. . .]
>
> But Dmitri always returned to protecting his father's literary legacy, translating and editing his father's plays, poems, stories, the novella *The Enchanter* and *Selected Letters*.
>
> "My father is gradually marching—with his two favorite writers, Pushkin and Joyce—arm in arm into the pantheon to join the greatest of all, Shakespeare, who is waiting for them," Dmitri told the Associated Press in 2009. "I like to think that I did my bit to keep things on track."
>
> After the success of *Lolita*, he translated his father's *Invitation to a Beheading* from Russian and wrote the memoir "On Revisiting Father's Room" after his father died in 1977. After his mother died in 1991, he sold the remainder of his father's archive to the New York Public Library and attended conferences dedicated to him.
>
> In 2009, Dmitri decided to publish his father's final, fragmentary novel, *The Original of Laura*, written on index cards during the last years of Vladimir's life. It was a controversial act that his son said went against the wishes of his father, who had asked that *Laura* be burned.[16]

Here, Dmitri Nabokov admits that he helped to keep his father's posthumous literary legacy "on track." As noted earlier, beyond simply acting as the executor of his father's literary estate, Dmitri also wrote a memoir, and auctioned parts of his father's literary archive to public depositaries and private collectors—economic decisions for sure. As we will discuss in the following chapters, Vadim Andreev acted similarly in publishing his memoirs and providing select materials to archives in the Soviet Union and England.

The point of this introduction and the chapters that follow is that the underlying economic factors of marketing literature and posthumous legacies are real. An émigré critic, using the works of his contemporaries Nabokov and Andreev, illustrated just this idea in his discussion of *artistic endurance* within the literary market. In this article written in 1930, Andreev's namesake examines how to produce a work of art that will endure:

> "existential" durability is hidden in a hard-to-detect inner harmony between the inception, theme, contents, form of the work, and the spirit of an epoch in which a writer lives. *By outgrowing* his historical time, he transcends into immortality. *By coinciding* with it, he will remain vitally relevant for a certain period. (In Russian literature, Leonid Andreev presents such a typical example.) *Being late*, he will cause either a fleeting regret or a compassionate sigh of his ideological contemporary, or merely an unpleasant feeling of doom. From this point of view . . . Sirin seems to us a writer, in whose creativity, if compared to other young artists, there is enough material that might continue feeding Russian literature in exile. [. . .][17]

In examining the case studies of Leonid Andreev and Vladimir Nabokov, we can only begin to appreciate the many actors that participate in the process of consecrating and maintaining literary legacies. We, however, intend to change the discourse around this issue and eliminate the notion that this is the *negative* side of art in order to discuss more fully (possibly more honestly) the canonization of certain figures, works, and artistic traditions. The Andreevs and the Nabokovs are only case studies for a potentially much greater discussion about the role of economics in the creation of culture.

CONTENTS

This book is divided into two case studies. The first, written by Frederick H. White, examines, on the one hand, the marketing strategies employed by Leonid Andreev in the early part of his career; on the other hand, it deals mainly with how Vadim Andreev, the writer's son, marketed his father's posthumous legacy in such a way so as to return both Leonid Andreev's works and his own to the Soviet literary market. The second case study, written by Yuri Leving, concentrates on Vladimir Nabokov and how, during the author's life and, more intensely, after his death, his literary works were marketed and sold to audiences in the West and then in post-Soviet Russia. It puts forward the controversial claim that Vladimir Nabokov shaped, to a great extent, his own marketing strategies by taking a proactive role and positioning himself in the contemporary literary marketplace. Even before *Lolita* was written, he confided to his friend, the American writer Edmund Wilson: "I have decided to welcome all kind and manner of publicity from now on, I am sick of having my books muffled up in silence like gems in cotton wool. The letters from private individuals I get are, in their wild enthusiasm, ridiculously incommensurable with the lack of interest my inane and inept publishers take in my books."[18] Twenty years later, already an author of international stature, he harshly chastised his publisher: "I am not very happy, as you may have guessed, about the sales of my books in England. And the more I think of it the more convinced I become that this is in a large measure due to a lack of publicity. ADA, for instance, was practically hushed down by your advertising department."[19] After listing a number of other books printed by the same firm, and specifically demanding that they regularly update him on the status of his publications (beyond simply informing him of publicity budget figures in contracts), Nabokov concludes: "I am royally indifferent to nincompoop reviews in the British papers but am commercially sensitive to publicity supplied by my publishers."[20]

Chapter 1 examines how the young Leonid Andreev created a visual brand image that suggested lower-class, youthful rebellion. These visual images were supported with his membership in the Wednesday literary circle, and by publishing with Maxim Gorky's *Znanie* (Knowledge) publishing house, which allowed him to co-opt an anti-establishment position and turn it into a signifier of his own personal and literary rebellion. This then became his literary persona, the brand that he marketed to a potential reading audience.

Turning to Leonid Andreev's descendants, chapter 2 explores how Vadim Andreev spent much of his life reviving his father's posthumous literary legacy, first within the Russian émigré community and later in the Soviet Union. By controlling the dissemination of information about his father, Vadim was able to provide literary scholars with the narrative they needed to make Leonid Andreev's life and works acceptable for Soviet groupthink. Part of this strategy involved linking Andreev to Gorky and highlighting his "revolutionary" stories, plays, and political activities. This rebranding effort attempted to minimize Andreev's anti-Soviet rhetoric, and to depict him as a passionate individual whose emotions sometimes clouded his better judgment. As such, by the 1970s Leonid Andreev was afforded all the literary celebrations, exhibitions, and, most importantly, publications enjoyed by mainstream authors of the pre-Soviet canon, securing his posthumous and literary legacy for the foreseeable future.

Vadim's rebranding of his father's posthumous legacy in a way that appealed to Soviet scholars allowed for Leonid Andreev's reintroduction into the Soviet literary market. Once Leonid Andreev had appeared, responsibility fell to literary critics and scholars to continue the consecration process. Without positive reviews of and academic debates about his works, the author might once again fade into oblivion. Therefore, chapter 3 focuses on the role of the Soviet scholar within the literary marketplace: here, the scholar must interact with both actual and potential reading audiences, while also in silent collusion with the managers, publishers, and heirs in marketing Leonid Andreev's posthumous legacy.

Vadim's memoir *Childhood* (*Detstvo*) was arguably the most influential text in the rebranding of Leonid Andreev for the Soviet literary market in the 1960 and 1970s. In this intriguing psychological description, Vadim privileges the role played by his mother in the life of his father, while minimizing the role of his stepmother, Anna Ilyinichna Andreeva. This was complicated by the author's lone daughter, Vera Andreeva, and in particular by her attempts to counter these claims in her own memoir *A House on the Black Rivulet* (*Dom na chernoy rechke*), published a decade after her brother's. Using the critical vocabulary of Pierre Bourdieu, chapter 4 argues that there are two compelling reasons why Vadim essentially erases Anna Ilyinichna from his memoir. One is personal. Vadim's experience with his stepmother was one of alienation, and he isolates her in turn. The second is economic. By dividing Andreev's life into two halves in which relative values are given to each based on family and locale, Vadim positions himself as the only remaining representative of his father's posthumous legacy. *Childhood* was meant to increase his own symbolic capital beyond that of his living relatives. In the phraseology of Bourdieu, Vadim wished to be the lone *creator of the creator*.

A secondary benefit of Vadim's efforts was that his own artistic endeavors were published in the Soviet Union. Chapter 5 focuses on the incomplete narrative arch of Vadim's memoir *The History of One Journey* (*Istoriya odnogo puteshestviya*). The first section describes Vadim's realization that his ideal Russia no longer exists. As a result, in the second section Vadim recovers elements of his ideal Russia at the

cultural crossroads of Berlin. It would be expected, accordingly, that the memoir's third section would describe how Vadim's attempt to reintroduce his father's literary endeavors into the Soviet literary market, as well as publish his own works, constituted the completion of a journey from the Russian fin de siècle to the period of the Soviet thaw. Yet, this clearly-articulated narrative trajectory is abandoned. At issue are the ways in which Vadim's memoirist intentions give way to market pressures from Soviet cultural merchants.

Chapter 6 begins the case study of Vladimir Nabokov, and explores the author's own dealings with the publishing industry and how he played the role of a protective literary agent. A cosmopolitan Russian-born émigré whose linguistic facility, erudite style, and eloquent prose helped to establish him as one of the most brilliant and respected literary figures of the twentieth century, Nabokov produced literature and scholarship in both Russian and English. Today, Nabokov's works are a part of both the American and European literary canons, in no small measure because the author was able to imitate and manipulate these very same literary traditions. An examination of Nabokov's strategies for success and his means of self-promotion illustrates how it happened that an obscure émigré professor was able to market himself as a celebrated and provocative author.

The canonization of Nabokov's legacy in post-Soviet Russia was impetuous and unprecedented. Did it happen because the late writer was imported from the West with a set of ready-made biographic stamps? Chapter 7 argues that Nabokov's brand embraced stable components that circulated within post-Soviet society, creating an acceptable public image for the author. As a result, Nabokov's works were included in school dictations and expositions, and his personages were cataloged in popular guidebooks and dictionaries for educational reading programs.

Once officially recognized by both the Western and post-Soviet literary markets, Nabokov's *Lolita* was doomed to struggle with ever-evolving marketing strategies and the changing preferences of reading audiences. Chapter 8 concentrates on the visual aspects of the novel's Russian-language editions and its controversial place in the contemporary Russian literary market. Most telling is how publishing houses have (mis)understood the very product they have been marketing. Russian entrepreneurs have been in the process of both reclaiming a formerly prohibited writer, and blazing a path of self-discovery in dealing with new economic policies, free trade, and uninhibited book design.

Nabokov returned to Russia as a modernist author at the same time that many of his contemporaries disappeared from the literary market. Chapter 9 provides an assessment of Nabokov's role as an intermediary in the development of post-Soviet Russian literature. It is argued that Nabokov's works legitimized the pastiche genre: a poetics of fragmentation and a stylistic renewal of the Russian language, freed from the limits of Socialist Realist discourse. In so doing, however, Nabokov also had a stultifying effect on the market, giving contemporary Russian authors reason to pause in their own creative process.

Finally, chapter 10 examines the economic and cultural dilemmas generated by the publication of *The Original of Laura*. The scandal and public debate over the

unfinished novel—captured on index cards and destined for the incinerator—raised Nabokov's literary stock. As a result, one might view the publication as a well-organized marketing plan, especially for Nabokov's early Russian and minor English-language works, not to mention his private correspondence.

These two case studies offer an approach to understanding the marketing of literature and posthumous legacies in a Russian context, with comparative excursuses into Western literary fields. Traditional Russian-language scholarship has dealt with similar topics in great detail, but mainly within the nineteenth-century literary tradition—it is sufficient to mention here the pioneering works by Boris Dubin, Lev Gudkov, and Abram Reitblat, or the latest research by Guido Karpi devoted to Pushkin, Dostoevsky, Bulgarin, Gogol, and others.[21] These studies treat the literary process as a complex system with differentiated and institutionalized social roles, wherein a *writer* professionally produces texts, a *publisher* transfers the manuscript into a print format and disseminates it for profit, and a *bookseller* distributes the final product and brings it to a readership. In fact, the *reader* occupies a special social role in the literary field: on the one hand, he is shaped by literary socialization within a family and at school, or by reading critical surveys and interpretative analyses; on the other hand, the reader effectively interacts with, and thereby influences, the literary process by exercising his purchasing power, through memberships in book clubs, and by articulating his predilections in public opinion polls. In doing so, the reader influences the range and scope of published fiction and, ultimately, the very kind of literary output produced by many authors.[22] There is no doubt that the theoretical ideas and methodology of Pierre Bourdieu and those associated with his school of thought have found followers among contemporary post-Soviet scholars (e.g., Mikhail Berg), although specific case studies involving twentieth-century Russian writers have yet to be produced.[23] The present study intends to compensate in part for this unfortunate scholarly lacuna by examining a wide range of strategies applied by Andreev and Nabokov—and later their sons and agents—to market their work, fashion themselves as artists and celebrities, promote and advertise their writings, manipulate their own publishers and readers, instigate and direct the visual representations of their published work, orchestrate distribution campaigns, control their public image, and, finally, to bridge the gap between an elite intellectual reader and the mass readership of fiction.[24]

Yuri Leving
Frederick H. White

NOTES

1. Boyd, *Vladimir Nabokov*, 61; 66.

2. Vladimir Nabokov, "Tri knigi stikhov," *Rul,* 23 May 1928. Reprinted in: Vladimir Nabokov, *Sobranie Sochinenii*, 654–57; both poems, singled out by Nabokov, are being reprinted in Roman Timenchik's commentary to Nabokov's review in the same edition of Nabokov's *Collected Works* (Vladimir Nabokov, *Sobranie Sochinenii*, 770–71).

3. Vadim Andreev praised highly Nabokov's *The Defense* in his review titled "The Novel about a Player" ("Roman o igroke"), *Novaya gazeta*, no. 1 (1 March 1931), 5.

4. Sergei Osokin (Vadim Andreev), Review of *Invitation to a Beheading* (Paris: Dom Knigi, 1938) in *Russkie zapiski*, no. 13 (January 1939), 198–99.

5. *Segodnya*, (12 January 1930), 5. Quoted in: Melnikov, ed., *Klassik bez retushi*, 45.

6. *Sovremennye zapiski*, no. 37 (1929), 537–38. Quoted in: Melnikov, ed., *Klassik bez retushi*, 46. Gleb Struve disagreed with Tsetlin (*cf*.: "One can add to this list Hoffman, Gogol, Pushkin, Tolstoi, Chekhov, and even—horrible dictum! For the author—Andrei Bely, although I would exclude Leonid Andreev, to whom M. Tsetlin links Sirin in his recent review article") in his "Sirin's Creativity" (Tvorchestvo Sirina), *Rossiya i slavyanstvo*, no. 77 (17 May 1930), 3. Quoted in: Melnikov, ed., *Klassik bez retushi*, 183.

7. *Vozrozhdenie*, no. 3935 (12 March 1936), 3–4. Quoted in: Melnikov, ed., *Klassik bez retushi*, 139.

8. *Poslednie novosti*, no. 4670 (4 January 1934), 3. Quoted in: Melnikov, ed., *Klassik bez retushi*, 198.

9. The episodic hero was identified as the writer Leonid Andreev by Olga Skonechnaya in the commentary to the novel (see Vladimir Nabokov, *Sobranie Sochinenii*, 711).

10. Vladimir Nabokov, *The Luzhin Defense*, 89–90.

11. Buhks, "Nabokov i psikhiatriia. Sluchai Luzhina," in N. Buhks, ed., *Semiotika bezumiia*, 185, and also notes 35–36 on p. 193.

12. I. S. "'Sobytie,' p'esa Sirina," *Vozrozhdenie* (11 March 1938), 12.

13. Barabtarlo, "Dmitri Nabokov."

14. Nikki Smith, "Dmitri Nabokov."

15. Boudreau, "A Soviet Reunion."

16. Staff Writers, "Obituaries: Dmitri Nabokov."

17. Nikolai Andreev, "Sirin," *Nov'* (Tallinn), *Sbornik proizvedenii i statei russkoi molodezhi*, no. 3 (October 1930), 6. Quoted in: Melnikov, ed., *Klassik bez retushi*, 188. Italics added.

18. Nabokov to Wilson (13 June 1951). See Karlinsky (ed.) *Dear Bunny, Dear Volodya*, 292.

19. Nabokov to George Weidenfeld of Weidenfeld & Nicolson publishing house (30 June 1971). See Vladimir Nabokov, *Selected Letters 1940–1977*, 489.

20. Ibid.

21. Dubin and Gudkov, *Literatura kak sotsial'nyi institut*; Reitblat, *Kak Pushkin vyshel v genii*; Karpi, *Dostoevskii-ekonomist*. See also: Christa, "Dostoevsky and Money," 93–110.

22. Reitblat, *Kak Pushkin vyshel v genii*, 6.

23. The leading Russian journal in humanities, *Novoe literaturnoe obozrenie*, has twice devoted special clusters of articles to Bourdieu (No. 45, 2000; No. 60, 2003); the latter features Alexander Dmitriev's introductory article on Bourdieu's social analysis, and Russian intellectuals' reflections on it.

24. For similar methodological agenda, see "Marketing Modernisms" by Dettmar and Wattn (eds.), in *Marketing Modernisms*, 8–10.

I

THE ANDREEVS

1

The Early Visual Marketing of Leonid Andreev

At the beginning of the twentieth century, industrialization and capitalism brought to Russia a commercial culture that had not previously existed.[1] In this process, an emerging middle class was introduced to new habits of consumption by the commercialization and mass distribution of products. This budding consumerism had a direct impact on the production and marketing of culture itself. Theater, cinema, and literature all became leisure activities of a mass-oriented society, and were sold via a mass-circulation media in a period of rapid urbanization.[2] In this new commercialized culture, the popular press played an important role in the circulation of news and photographs featuring the celebrities of stage, screen, and literature. These pictures and stories were often distributed nationally and could greatly aid or hinder an individual's personage. Postcards played a similarly important role in the mass marketing of actresses, performers, and poets. Louise McReynolds understands these "icons of the secular age" as representational fetishes for larger social issues, which appealed to a fan base that now demanded a *relationship* with the celebrity. This relationship was then cultivated by the celebrity to attract a mass audience and to establish a public persona.[3]

In the case of Leonid Andreev, the young writer sought to create a brand image after his introduction to the Wednesday (*Sreda*) literary circle, which counted among its membership Maxim Gorky and Fyodor Shalyapin. Like these two celebrities, Andreev soon began to wear the traditional peasant blouse, high boots, and long-waisted coat (*poddevka*) favored by university students, insinuating lower-class and youthful rebellion. Identification with the Wednesday circle, publishing with Gorky's *Znanie* (Knowledge) publishing house, and posing for mass-produced picture postcards in stylized dress implied a certain social status (urbanized peasant working class), political attitude (liberalism), and literary allegiance (neo-realism). It could be argued that Andreev co-opted this anti-establishment position and turned

it into a signifier of his own personal and literary rebellion. This then became his literary persona, the brand that he marketed to a potential reading audience.

Linda Haverty Rugg suggests that photographs at the beginning of the twentieth century were successful on many levels in society because they had a positive reputation as dependable truth-tellers: *What you see is what you get*. In reality, photographs could be and often were "splendid liars," becoming instruments by which autobiographical elements were presented to a public, which often lacked the means to test the veracity of the assertions made in the visual text.[4] As Pierre Bourdieu corroborates, realistic photographs simply conform to the rules of their social syntax, as society has conferred upon photography a guarantee of realism. "[S]ociety is merely confirming itself in the tautological certainty that an image of the real which is true to its representation of objectivity is really objective."[5] The viewing audience's certitude in the visual image allowed for a great deal of manipulation by the marketer. As Rugg notes, "Celebrity images promote the body as a product, the self as a marketable commodity."[6] In this case, the commodity was *Leonid Andreev*.

Visual marketing is defined as the use of "visual signs and symbols [strategically utilized] to deliver desirable and/or useful messages and experiences to consumers."[7] These visual signs are meant to sway and influence the opinions, attitudes, and behaviors of a potential audience. If effective, the visual marketing of a certain author becomes part of a persuasive discourse, which is primarily intended to influence how an audience perceives the buying and consumption of that author and his literary works.[8] We might argue, therefore, that Andreev intended to use the picture postcard as one aspect of a signification system in order to sell the literary brand *Leonid Andreev*. This brand required visual images that would provide the author connotative importance. Andreev's dress and literary allegiances, captured in these photographs, generated a connotative chain of meaning, suggesting to audiences that he was "rebellious" = "defiant" = "dangerous" and that this might, in fact, reveal truths about Andreev's role in society: that he and his kind were "disobedient" = "decadent" = "challenging" the status quo. As Marcel Danesi notes, a cluster of connotative meanings in visual messaging is the fundamental characteristic of a product's marketing that, in turn, makes it "semiotically powerful," and, by extension, semantically powerful.[9] This signification system is created from Andreev's implementation of photography's social codes, his published literary works, the public debates ignited by his stories, and his literary association with the defiant Moscow artistic scene of *raznochinets* writers, poets, painters, and musicians—all of which contributed to his public persona as a defiant and decadent writer. Andreev maintained this marketing effort until 1906, when it became no longer necessary, or even desirable, to brand himself as a rebel in opposition to imperial Russia.

Andreev first came to the attention of Gorky after publishing the sentimental short story "Bargamot and Garaska" ("Bargamot i Garaska") in a Moscow daily in 1898. Gorky was so impressed with the story that he befriended the young writer, and soon began to offer him literary advice. The young, impoverished journalist and aspiring writer made a lasting impression on his soon-to-be mentor and friend:

> In the autumn, on the way to the Crimea, at the Kursk train station in Moscow, someone introduced me to Leonid Andreev. Dressed in an old sheepskin coat, in a shaggy sheepskin hat tilted to one side, he reminded me of a young actor from a Ukrainian troupe. His handsome face struck me as not very mobile, but in the attentive gaze of his dark eyes gleamed the smile that shone so nicely through his stories and feuilletons.[10]

This rather unpolished version of Andreev was captured in a very early studio photograph (Figure 1.1). Through the influence of Gorky and others, the young man would soon understand that he needed to strike a more refined pose. Andreev did not want to be confused with a Ukrainian actor, and instead aspired to become a member of the socially and politically progressive Moscow artistic scene.

Gorky soon invited Andreev to participate in the Wednesday literary circle. The original purpose of the circle was to provide an environment where young authors could read their latest works and received constructive criticism. Among this group were Ivan Belousov, Ivan Bunin, Evgeny Chirikov, Sergei Goloushev, Alexander Kuprin, Viktor Mirolyubov, Shalyapin, Skitalets (Stepan Petrov), Nikolai Teleshov, Nikolai Timkovsky, Vikenty Veresaev, Boris Zaitsev, and others.

Andreev quickly became an active participant in the circle and offered most of his early works for critique. His first real literary success came with the publication of "Once There Was" ("Zhili-byli") in 1901—Dmitry Merezhkovsky asked whether it was Anton Chekhov or Gorky who was hiding behind the name of Leonid Andreev. By the spring of 1901, several of Andreev's stories had been published in *Courier* (*Kurier*) and *A Journal for Everyone* (*Zhurnal dlya vsekh*). After this initial success, Andreev became interested in publishing a separate volume of his stories and hastily sold the collection to a publisher, who placed it on reserve as Andreev was little known outside of his literary circle. One might argue that because the publisher was not convinced he could sell this *unknown* writer's collection of stories, Andreev's brand was not yet fully developed. Gorky, however, had recently formed the cooperative publishing house *Znanie*, and was willing to publish Andreev's volume. With the help of his friends from the Wednesday literary circle, Andreev bought back this collection and sent it directly to *Znanie* in St. Petersburg, where it was printed and offered immediately to readers.

Figure 1.1. An early studio portrait of Leonid Andreev sold as a postcard.

Even in Andreev's seeming haste for literary recognition, there is evidence that he, in fact, understood the necessity to properly market himself. Rugg has argued that photographs are only a part of the process in creating an autobiographical narrative for the reading public. The chosen name of the writer, whether a pseudonym or not, is also important in branding the writer's image so as to "establish a product that [is] readily identifiable."[11] We must remember that his good friend, Alexei Peshkov, wrote under the pseudonym *Maxim Bitter* (Gorky = Bitter), so Andreev most certainly wanted a similarly marketable name and, by extension, image. Teleshov remembers when Andreev was deciding on a possible pseudonym, unhappy with his rather generic last name:

> I remember at some point that his proper name "Andreev" began to embarrass him. "I want to take a pseudonym," he said. "But I can't think of one. It comes out either contrived or stupid. And that's why the publisher will not publish my book, because my name expresses absolutely nothing. 'Andreev'—what on earth is Andreev? You can't even remember it. It is a completely indifferent name, completely nondescript. 'L. Andreev'—now *there's* an author's name for you!"
>
> "Well, you know there is a writer Nikitin" we challenged him. "Everyone knows him and no one confuses him with anyone else. Why couldn't there be a writer named Andreev?"

This search for a pseudonym ended in bringing the book out with the name "Leonid Andreev," instead of just "L. Andreev." This seemed to him less impersonal.[12]

Marcel Danesi notes that the author's name has both a denotative function (identification of Leonid Andreev and not Ivan Bunin) as well as a connotative function (Andreev means decadent and defiant literature).[13] It is significant that on all of his postcards, *Leonid Andreev* or *L. Andreev* is prominently displayed, linking the name with the visual image. Andreev understood that he was fashioning a brand with his first published book, and needed to market his literary persona in order to better capture the interest of the reading public. On 17 September 1901 the first volume of Andreev's short stories was released, and was met with unexpected popular success. Within a year, it went through four editions. Literary critics also praised his stories; even the well-respected dean of critics, Nikolai Mikhailovsky, wrote a favorable article about Andreev's work.

The book originally cost eighty kopecks and contained ten stories: "Grand Slam," "Little Angel" ("Angelochek"), "Silence" ("Molchanie"), "Valia," "The Story of Sergei Petrovich" ("Rasskaz o Sergee Petroviche"), "On the River" ("Na reke"), "The Lie" ("Lozh"), "By the Window" ("U okna"), "Once There Was," and "Into the Dark Distance" ("V temnuyu dal"). In the first year of this book's publication, Andreev received over 6,000 rubles in royalties, a very large sum for the formerly impoverished author. The second edition included six more new stories, and thrust Andreev into a higher realm of literary celebrity: "The Alarm" ("Nabat"), "The Abyss" ("Bezdna"), "In the Basement" ("V podvale"), "The Wall" ("Stena"), "Petka at the Dacha" ("Petka na dache"), and "Laughter" ("Smekh"). An explosive public debate erupted in the daily newspapers and journals surrounding "The Abyss" and "In the Fog" ("V tumane"). In these two stories, the characters' deviant sexual behavior leads to rape and murder. The response to these stories was immediate and virulent, and many

claimed that Andreev himself was a deviant *erotomaniac*. However harsh the critics, Andreev found defenders as well, especially among the younger generation. University students wrote to newspapers and argued that Andreev benefited the reader by showing the brute that exists in mankind. Andreev was also defended by such literary figures as Chekhov and Gorky, who congratulated the author on presenting the moral agonies of sexual life to the reading public. This firestorm of controversy propelled Andreev to the forefront of Russia's literary and cultural scene.

The public scandal created by Andreev's first collection of stories resulted in enormous sales, especially of those publications that included the shocking sex stories. For an author who had experienced severe poverty in his youth and adolescence, this rapid rise to literary stardom and its financial rewards was unprecedented. In a letter of early December 1901, Gorky warned his friend not to become too enamored with this initial literary success. Aware of the fickle behavior of the reading public, Gorky cautioned Andreev that despite his dark stories' current popularity with young readers, "In the coming days, [the youth] will demand [something] cheerful, heroic, with romance (in equal measure). And, I am speaking seriously, you need to write something in that tone."[14] Gorky realized that the market would eventually demand something from Andreev that he might not be ready or able to produce. The young author would soon enough experience the difficulty of managing his literary success and the intrusive media attention that came with it. Yet, Andreev would never again be treated as an *unknown* writer.

For better or worse, literary critics bolstered Andreev's literary persona as a defiant and decadent author. Naum Gekker saw in Andreev's stories a depiction of contemporary society in which people had lost their moral compass, having fallen into the "black abyss" of individualism and decadence.[15] Prince Alexander Urusov suggested that Andreev reflected the "sick soul of our generation."[16] In 1903 Vladimir Botsyanovsky said that Andreev captured the animalistic quality of his characters with particular clarity, and that it was this bestial excess that was at the root of the majority of his works.[17] Platon Krasnov wrote a review, "Nightmarish Writer" ("Kashmarny pisatel"), of Andreev's first collection of stories. He suggested that Andreev's "decadent-morose" works had an overall negative impact on Russian society, and reflected the decadent trend of both Russian and European literature. A year later Alexander Amfiteatrov called Andreev a gladiator, alluding to the artistic brutality of Roman decadence, comfortable with "publicly ripping out the stomach of one of his own heroines and then continuing on to commit still worse to another."[18] In 1906 Dmitry Ovsyaniko-Kulikovsky criticized Andreev's play *Savva* for its psychology of anarchy.[19] In 1908 T. Ganzhulevich wrote that Andreev had been the first Russian writer to speak about decadence and degeneration.[20]

Evidently, an author who had marketed himself as a youthful rebel challenging the status quo was read and depicted by critics as a decadent author who captured the bestial excess and anarchy of the last days of imperial Russia. This messaging was found in his literary works, and was further supported by the visual messaging found in picture postcards for sale to the general public. Andreev cultivated this particular visual image—that of the lower-class student *raznochinets*. One of the early picture postcards that became synonymous with the Wednesday circle includes Andreev, Gorky, Skitalets, Bunin, Shalyapin, Teleshov, and Chirikov (Figure 1.2).

Figure 1.2. A photograph of members of the Wednesday Circle from December 1902 sold as a postcard.

Upon first glance, one notes in this postcard that Bunin, Teleshov, and Chirikov are all in suits, while the other four are in stylized peasant dress. Their positions in relationship to one another are also significant: the three in suits and those in peasant dress each form their own separate groupings. This is not only an issue of style and physical location, but also one of socioeconomic background. Shalyapin, Gorky, Skitalets, and Andreev all came from the lower class, experienced severe poverty as well as near starvation as young men, and were now part of the growing number of performers, writers, and artists who had risen from the *lower depths* to bring tales of Russian society's gritty underbelly to their audiences.

It is important to note that Andreev, Shalyapin, Gorky, and Skitalets were trying to co-opt the rebellious and revolutionary tenor of the times through their visual imaging. By their dress, these cultural figures posed a radical challenge to the ideological values of mainstream imperial culture, which they wished to overthrow. Their counterculture fashion soon became mainstream, just as their countercultural literary positions soon came to represent a popular social mindset—their audience felt like symbolic participants in this rebellion against an oppressive government. Clearly, Andreev and his colleagues employed visual messages that identified them as anti-establishment. Their literary positions also suggested this, as well as the interpretations of their works by literary critics. As a result, a new marketing lexicon was established for these Wednesday writers ("hooligans in Gorky-esque rags" as Zinaida Gippius would slander them), allowing their audience to believe that they too were transformed into revolutionaries without having to pay the actual social price of being a non-conformist.[21] This branding was captured in picture postcards and studio portraits that were made available to their reading public. In photographs similar to (Figure 1.4), we usually find Andreev with another member of the Wednesday circle. We do not find similar photographs of Andreev with Fyodor Sologub, Valery Bryusov, or Konstantin Balmont—members of the modernist artistic movement.

An examination of these portraits of "hooligans" helps us to understand what it was about these figures that seemed so unsavory for someone like Gippius, a leading member of the quasi-religious symbolists in St. Petersburg. These Muscovite realist authors look directly into the camera (Figure 1.3; Figure 1.6), which was not always typical (e.g. Figure 1.5), challenging the viewer to acknowledge their new status and social mobility. In many photographs such as (Figure 1.4), Andreev is in his stylized peasant dress, and there are few props and decoration that would typically suggest an exotic locale or a well-appointed study. In similar photographs, the camaraderie of the Wednesday circle writers is evident, articulating a clear visual message that they do not stand alone in their defiance. Notably, many of the photographs of Andreev were taken in 1902 during the first blush of his literary success, when he was most involved with the Wednesday circle, and was still learning to market himself as a writer. In photographs of Andreev's contemporaries, we see a very different aesthetic; the symbolist poet Balmont is featured in profile, well-dressed in a suit, and sitting on a chair with decorative fringe (Figure 1.5); the pianist and composer Sergei Rachmaninov is captured in a three-piece suit striking a rather confident pose with his hands

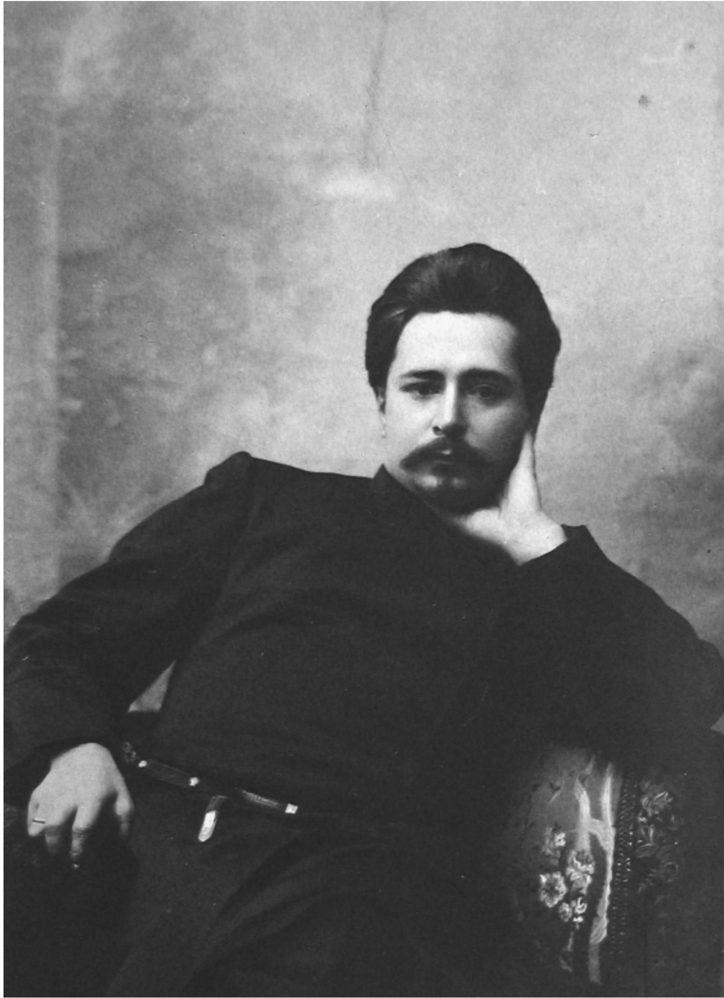

Figure 1.3. Andreev in his signature coat (1902)

in his pockets, the backdrop of a stone entrance emphasizing his self-assurance and the boldness of his musical compositions; the actor and theater director Konstantin Stanislavsky is photographed in a three-piece suit while reclining in an ornate chair, and looking comfortably to the left of the photographer.[22] These sharply contrast the typical photograph of Andreev: in his signature coat closed at the throat as if he had just been pulled off of the chilly streets of Nizhny Novgorod, his heavy workman hands folded in his lap, staring directly at the photographer, Maxim Dmitriev, and appearing almost annoyed with the studio chair and backdrop that seem ill-suited for him (Figure 1.6). Andreev was from a different class and background than Balmont, Rachmaninov, and Stanislavsky. This is evident in the photographs. It is also evident that the persona he wished to project was someone more defiant than self-satisfied, more at home in the provinces than with polite society in the capital.

Figure 1.4. Veresaev and Andreev (1903/4)

These pictures suggest that Andreev's early identity was closely associated with the Wednesday literary circle, which had been formed in the fall of 1899 by Teleshov and soon established itself as a leading cultural voice for political and social change. Although the purpose of the circle had been to provide an environment where young authors could receive constructive criticism, politics and social causes soon became just as relevant for the circle. Even though the members did not represent one political group or ideology, almost all were in some way politically active.[23] Many members were arrested for political reasons and spent time in jail. Gorky was the most notorious political activist of the group. Although less politically focused than Gorky, in 1902 Andreev organized a charity evening to aid female students that resulted in a conflict with the authorities. Readings included Andreev's "The Foreigner" ("Inostranets"), a scene from Sergei Naidenov's play *The Lodgers* (*Zhitsy*), Bunin's "Edge of the World" ("Na kray sveta"), Teleshov's "About Three Youths" ("O trekh yunoshakh"), and some verse from Skitalets. The event sold out due to the Wednesday writers' rapidly growing popularity. At the end of the program, Skitalets took the stage in a workman's

Figure 1.5. **Konstantin Balmont**

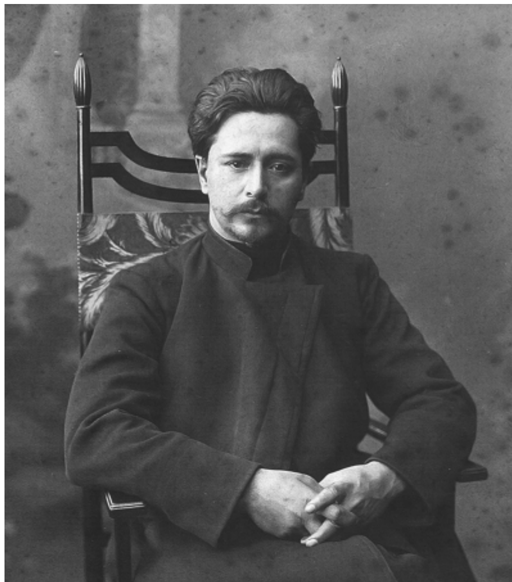

Figure 1.6. **Leonid Andreev (1902)**

blouse and hurled rebellious verses at the audience, causing the police to quickly bring the evening to a close. In response, the audience stormed the stage to shake Skitalets' hand. The police turned out the lights in the hall to force the people onto the streets. Teleshov writes:

> The end of it all was that Skitalets left for the Volga, the society for the aid of female students got a good sum out of the evening, and Leonid Andreev, as the official organizer of the evening, having signed the announcements, suddenly was called in to answer to the criminal code for not hindering Skitalets from reading poems that prophesized the revolution and the anger of the masses.[24]

Andreev was fined twenty-five rubles for "disturbing the peace," and the other participants escaped without punishment.[25] The picture postcards thereafter provided a visual image of these defiant, young literary figures who incited riots and led political protests. The connotative chain that Andreev and his friends were

Figure 1.7. Portrait by K. Fisher Studio (1902)

"rebellious" = "defiant" = "dangerous" was only confirmed by their clashes with the police. Certainly, these writers were "disobedient" = "decadent" = "challenging" the status-quo, which the mass-circulation press confirmed.

In fact, this was not false advertising. At some of the first Wednesday circle meetings, Yuly Bunin lectured on revolutionary movements and leaders. In 1900 an anthology was published and the proceeds were given to Jews suffering from a poor harvest. In 1901 the Wednesday circle defended university students in Kiev who were drafted into the army after taking part in political activities. In 1904 its members produced a petition that condemned the police brutality that took place during the 5–6 December demonstrations. It was at a Wednesday meeting that Skitalets and Andreev first learned of "Bloody Sunday," the attack by government soldiers on peaceful demonstrators in the capital.[26] After the revolution of 1905, politics gained even more currency among its members. That year, the Wednesday circle published a volume of stories and gave the profits to striking postal workers. Members often made petitions and public protests against the government, and they participated in most of the social causes of the day. That same year, circle members published an anthology of stories and the proceeds went to the children of teachers in the Nizhegorodsky province. These and other political initiatives became part of the group's public image that was marketed to an audience. Their studio portraits and picture postcards corroborated the group's political activism, depicting them in modest, practical garb, staring defiantly and intensely at the camera (and the viewer), challenging bourgeois society to recognize the degenerate nature of imperial Russian society.

The image of a student political agitator was further cultivated with Andreev's adoption of the peasant-workman's blouse, high-boots, and the long waistcoat. Zaitsev remembers: "[Andreev] dressed in an undercoat and later went about in a velvet jacket. Among the 'progressive' writers it was fashionable to dress outrageously, so that our appearance would negate everything bourgeois."[27] More to the point, Teleshov recalls how Andreev's dress and behavior were covered in the press and how this impacted the young writer:

> About this time, Leonid Nikolaevich began to appear everywhere—at parties, at homes, at the theater—in an undercoat and high boots. This gave the minor newspapers reason to scoff. They began to ridicule Andreev's undercoat and to print all kinds of cock-and-bull stories about him, often very wicked and offensive ones. They said that Leonid Nikolaevich would drink a "yard of vodka;" meaning that he would place shot glass after shot glass the length of an entire yard and drink them without interruption, one after the other. In another paper they wrote that the writer Andreev, "this modern celebrity," at birthday celebrations for Zlatovratskii[28] asked haughtily and in surprise, "Is there really such a writer, Zlatovratskii? Never heard of him. . . ." And all this nonsense was said about a man who not only constantly met with Zlatovratskii at the Wednesday circle but also wrote one of the first birthday greetings to him. . . . The rapid and wide success of Andreev made many people hostile and jealous; and on various pretexts and under various pseudonyms these people would take potshots at him. Leonid Nikolaevich often replied with a joke, but some gibes affected and offended him. But there were also amusing and witty jokes that he himself found genuinely funny.[29]

On a trip to Nizhny Novgorod in 1902 to visit Gorky, Andreev was photographed by the well-known photographer Maxim Dmitriev. In one photograph, Andreev sat on a chair, holding a smoldering cigarette in his big, rugged hand, and wearing a peasant-workman's blouse with his coat rakishly slung over his shoulder. This studio photograph was soon after cropped and sold as a postcard (Figure 1.8). The underlying message of the photograph is that Andreev went to Nizhny Novgorod because Gorky was in internal exile and could no longer live in either Moscow or St. Petersburg. The fact that Dmitriev was known for his photographs of peasant poverty and Old Believers further radicalized the subtext of his studio sessions with Andreev in 1901 and 1902.

Andreev's brand identity was further influenced by his association with Gorky's *Znanie* publishing house. At the beginning of the twentieth century, literary allegiances were determined by the journal where an author's stories appeared, and by the publishing house that distributed his works. Realizing this, the Wednesday circle provided commercial publishing opportunities for its members. In March 1903

Figure 1.8. Dmitriev portrait (1902) sold as a postcard

Gorky, as a representative of the *Znanie* publishing house, and Teleshov began negotiations to publish Wednesday writers. This proved beneficial for both because *Znanie* wished to expand its literary section.[30] These negotiations led to the publication of an anthology for 1903 of Wednesday writers under the banner of *Znanie*. This began nearly a decade of cooperation between *Znanie* and the literary circle, during which *Znanie* issued many anthologies and monographs of Wednesday circle writers. This representation with the *Znanie* publishing house further distinguished these writers from their modernist counterparts who published with *Scorpion* (*Skorpion*), and in journals like *Northern Flowers* (*Severny Tsvety*) and *The Scales* (*Vesy*).

Wednesday circle writers could publish together their socially and politically progressive stories in *Znanie* anthologies. The reading audience knew what to expect when they purchased these anthologies, and the authors used these publications to extend their literary brand. Gorky was resolute in publishing almanacs of "democratic literature" that was intended to *liberate people* "from dependence on and the bondage of society, [and] the government."[31] Undoubtedly, Gorky positioned his publishing house and its almanacs to represent a rather radical element of political and social discourse. Through *positioning*, Danesi notes, a marketer creates for the brand an image or identity in the minds of the target audience. "In a phrase, creating an image for a product inheres in fashioning a 'personality' for it so that it can be positioned for specific market populations." For those associated with *Znanie*, the goal was not to target everyone, but rather to address a *particular segment* of the reading audience, thereby establishing a brand expectation for *Znanie* and its authors in an attempt to satisfy the desires of that politically progressive target audience.[32]

Figure 1.9. A caricature from *Dragonfly* (*Strekoza*), no. 4 (4 May 1903). Re-published in Anisimov, *Literaturnoe nasledstvo,* 179.

These social and political distinctions, depicted through visual markers, can be found in a caricature published in *Dragonfly* (*Strekoza*) in May 1903 (Figure 1.9). Under the title "The types of our belletrists" (*Tipy nashikh belletristov*), Gorky, Skitalets, and Andreev are represented in peasant dress *below* the European-dressed, mainstream writers Pyotr Boborykin, Vladimir Nemirovich-Danchenko, and Alexei Potekhen. The caption "formerly" ("prezhde") for those at the top, and "now" ("teper") for Gorky, Skitalets, and Andreev, undercuts the notion that the peasant writers might become respectable urban cultural figures and highlights the trend towards a more radical Russian literature. Most likely, this visual messaging was welcome by the authors who had come from the lower-depths of society, and who intended to tell stories that writers with top-hats and umbrellas could never tell. Undoubtedly, the visual imaging that was sold to the reading public was quite successful, and was now being repeated in the popular press.

It is clear that Andreev originally associated his literary brand with that of Gorky, *Znanie*, and the writers of the Wednesday circle. In a letter of early January 1903, Andreev questioned Gorky's friendship beyond literary concerns, and admitted that he was willing to "serve honorably *under your banner*" without expectations of a deep friendship; he went on to elucidate: "[. . .] for me you are the spirit of freedom, and one way or another I want to serve this holy spirit." He argued that for him serving the people was too abstract, and that it was the notion of individual freedom he knew, loved, and understood. More to the point, Andreev admitted that his real self was not found in the lacquered boots (i.e., his public persona), but in the stories that he told. "I say this for one reason: I need you to know of this poor duality, so that you do not confuse my lacquer boots with [my] real *I*." Andreev stated this because the previous time the two met, he felt that Gorky was only maintaining the appearance of a personal friendship in order to encourage Andreev's literary output. "I need only one thing," argued Andreev, "that you love my stories, and I hope, that is how it will be." While the authors' relationship was indeed very turbulent and Andreev's feelings were often injured by Gorky's personal aloofness, we must not discount the core themes displayed in this correspondence. Andreev was willing to strike the pose of a freedom fighter in lacquer boots in order to win Gorky's support and approval, but the real Andreev was to be found in his literary works—not necessarily in his public persona. This duality had clearly started to weigh upon Andreev. He felt that he had become "false" before his reading audience. This sense of speciousness that he confessed to Gorky had begun to paralyze his creative process, as he was more concerned with what his audience might say and no longer believed in his own literary instincts. Moreover, Andreev remembered the process by which he had been able to leave behind the difficult life of a newspaper reporter to become a "fashionable" writer and yet, was now "a lonely, desperate man who is afraid of people and life." Gorky's response a week later was less than supportive: he blamed Andreev's self-doubt on the "empty and insignificant people" who surrounded him.[33] Gorky seemed to miss the point that Andreev had begun to chafe under the literary persona that Gorky himself had helped to formulate for the young author. The more

that Andreev began to see himself as a unique literary persona, someone who could possibly lose his status as a “fashionable” writer, the more he began to disassociate himself from the *literary banner* of Gorky.

In June 1904, the daily newspaper where Andreev worked ceased to exist after a prolonged period of financial difficulties. This meant that Andreev now had to earn his livelihood solely as a creative writer. The heady times of his initial success gave way to a period of significant political upheaval and personal difficulties. The literary brand that had initially propelled him to the forefront of social and political debates quickly became a liability for the young author. Andreev’s political plays *To the Stars* (*K zvezdam*) and *Savva*, as well as his anti-war story “Red Laugh” (“Krasny smekh”) about the horrors of the Russo-Japanese war, further solidified his anti-establishment voice of rebellion, but also drew the ire of those who supported the monarchy. Boris Zaitsev remembers this period in the writer’s life:

> Hence the hubbub that at times turned into a howl that surrounded Andreev from the very beginning. He somehow immediately amazed everyone, arousing admiration and irritation; and only three or four years after our acquaintance his name became known all over Russia. Fame yielded to him immediately. But it did him a disservice at the same time—dragged him roughly onto the market square and began to push and pull, to taunt and poison him in every way.[34]

On 9 February 1905, Andreev was arrested for allowing a meeting of the Social Democratic Labor Party to be held in his apartment. Even though he was sick in bed with the flu, when the police raided the apartment Andreev was sent to the Taganka jail along with the participants of the political meeting. Once released from prison, Andreev felt threatened by the Black Hundreds—loyalist gangs supporting the autocracy—due to his revolutionary works. For a time, students protected him from a possible attack by these loyalist thugs. Soon, however, Andreev, his wife, and their son left the country and finally settled in Berlin, hoping to avoid violent political reprisals. At this point, Andreev’s marketing strategy had begun to imperil both his personal and professional lives, so much so that he had to flee from his own literary reputation.

Evidence of Andreev’s success in branding his early literary image can be found in a caricature published in the satirical journal *The Sprite* (*Leshy*) in 1906 (Figure 1.11). In this caricature, we find Andreev in his now *typical* garb—high boots and long waistcoat. No other words are present in the cartoon, nor any apparent action. The brand is so complete that Andreev in this stylized dress *says it all*. Not surprisingly, according to Teleshov, Andreev gave up his waistcoat and signature dress when he went to Germany in 1906.[35] This may be a coincidence, but it is more likely the case that Andreev no longer needed to reinforce this particular visual image.

By that time, Andreev was well established as a writer, and had begun to move away from the Wednesday literary circle. No longer did he need his literary brand to be closely tied to Gorky, Shalyapin, or any of the other members of the Moscow artistic scene. After the death of his first wife following the birth of their second child

Figure 1.10. At Ilya Repin's in peasant blouse, 27 May 1905. Andreev and his first wife Alexandra Mikhailovna.

in Berlin, Andreev moved to St. Petersburg and then to Vammelsuu in Finland, and rarely returned to Moscow. His move to the publishing house *Sweetbriar* (*Shipovnik*) caused further problems as the Wednesday circle had been closely linked to *Znanie*.

Gorky also left Russia at nearly the same time, eventually reaching the shores of the United States in 1906. Significantly, in the photographs from that time of Gorky and his common-law wife Maria Andreeva, he wears very contemporary and fashionable

Figure 1.11. A caricature of Leonid Andreev from *Sprite* (*Leshy*), no. 2 (1906): 12.

clothing. One might infer that this was simply the effect of Andreeva's good taste and influence, but more realistically, the peasant blouse and workman boots probably did not produce the same symbolic capital in America that they did in Russia. A Russian caricature, however, depicts Gorky arriving in the United States in his peasant blouse, coat, and floppy hat—signature dress from an earlier period.[36] For Gorky, as for Andreev, the time had passed when he needed to mark himself so distinctly as an agent of rebellion against imperial Russia. Gorky's mission in the United States had little to do with the literary persona that he wished to project within Russia at the beginning of the century.

As previously noted, visual marketing involves strategically utilizing pictorial signs to deliver a specific brand message to potential consumers. Important is not only the visual text presented, but also the connotations of that image. In the case of Andreev, picture postcards and studio portraits provided pictorial images to accompany his marketing efforts. The young author adopted the stylized dress of his literary colleagues, promoted his association with the Wednesday literary circle, and created a connotative chain of meaning for his audience that suggested he was *rebellious* and willing to *challenge* the status quo. He co-opted a counterculture style, which soon became part of mainstream political and social discontent that challenged the imperial government.

Andreev's early transgressive style and literary allegiances further strengthened his brand as a defiant voice of rebellion. Critics read his works in this context, and also provided their own independent assessment of his stories and plays that further supported this brand. Yet, it was the pictorial images that provided visual evidence of the close relationship Andreev had with the Wednesday circle writers, and that allowed him to employ powerful visual connotations of rebellion and defiance. It is significant that this concerted marketing effort lasted until 1906. By that time, Andreev's literary brand was well established, and he no longer needed to sustain this visual messaging. In fact, Andreev fled with his family to Germany because of a perceived threat from the Black Hundreds, precisely for his literary persona as a rebellious challenger of the status quo.

Although picture postcards of Andreev exist post-1906, there are far fewer examples and they are of a very different tenor and visual messaging (Figure 1.12; Figure 1.13). Gone are the rebellious overtones, replaced by images of inner contemplation and, possibly, literary success. It is clear from these examples that Andreev was now an established author who longer needed to strike the pose of a defiant writer seeking to undermine the government.

The early pictorial images of Leonid Andreev evince the marketing of a young, unknown author. His gaze in those earlier images is directed right at his audience, challenging them with a haughty pose of youthful confidence. In contrast, the author's gaze in the photographs of the post-1906 period is mostly directed away from his audience, suggesting that Andreev is contemplative (hand on his chin) and, possibly, a bit exhausted. He is poised and calm, no longer an agitated, rebellious youth.

Figure 1.12. Photographs of D. Zdobnov (1908)

Figure 1.13. Portrait sold as postcard

In the early postcards, Andreev stands or sits on a concrete bench; he is a man of the streets with somewhere to go in his coat and hat. In the later postcards, Andreev sits on an ornate chair and the chain from a pocket watch is clearly evident, suggesting that he now enjoys the finer things in life while relaxing at home. When the earlier postcards were sold, reading audiences were titillated by Andreev's sexual stories of rape and murder. By the time that the later postcards were sold, audiences were being invited to Andreev's symbolic-allegorical plays that left many confused and disappointed—*Life of Man* (*Zhizn cheloveka*), *Anathema* (*Anatema*), and *Tsar Hunger* (*Tsar Golod*).

The youthful Andreev is "rebellious" = "defiant" = "dangerous," and his early literary works support this assertion. Andreev's relationship with the Wednesday literary circle and the *Znanie* publishing house—and all that this meant semiotically—is transferred visually via picture postcards and studio portraits that were made available to the general public. The stylized dress and physical attitude portrayed in these early images effectively supported the connotative chain that Andreev wished to associate with his literary brand. As noted, Andreev was so successful in establishing this brand image that he actually had to flee from it during a period of radical political upheaval in Russia. The Andreev who returned to Russia in 1907 was much different, as was the visual marketing that accompanied his return.

Figure 1.14. Studio portraits sold as postcard (1901/2)

NOTES

1. I would like to note the help and advice that Nancy Pedri (Memorial University, Newfoundland) gave me while researching and writing this article. Dr Pedri's scholarly work on the visual image and her reading of an early draft of this article were invaluable. I also want to note my indebtedness to Brent Seavers (Digital Archivist at Utah Valley University) for providing his expertise in preparing the photographs in this chapter for publication.

2. McReynolds, *Russia at Play*, 4–6.

3. Ibid., 114–15.

4. Rugg, *Picturing Ourselves*, 32–33. The truth claims of photography have been theorized as either part of a social history (Tagg and Solomon-Godeau) or due to their mechanical production (summary offered by Phillipe Dubois).

5. Bourdieu, et al, *Photography*, 77.

6. Rugg, *Picturing Ourselves,* 42.

7. Wedel and Pieters, *Visual Marketing*, 1–2.

8. Danesi, *Understanding Media Semiotics*, 179.

9. Ibid., 184–88.

10. Gorky, *Kniga o Leonide Andreeve*, 8; in English, see White, *Memoirs and Madness,* 12.

11. Rugg, *Picturing Ourselves,* 36.

12. Teleshov, *Kniga o Leonide Andreeve*, 152–53; in English, see White, *Memoirs and Madness*, 111.

13. Danesi, *Understanding Media Semiotics,* 185–86.

14. Anisimov, ed., *Literaturnoe nasledstvo*, 113.

15. Gekker, *Leonid Andreev i ego proizvedenie*.

16. Urusov, *Bezsil'nye liudi v izobrazhenii Leonida Andreeva*, 11.

17. Botsianovskii, *Leonid Andreev*, 32; 46–47.

18. Amfiteatrov, *Literaturnyi al'bom*, 69–70.

19. Anisimov, *Literaturnoe nasledstvo*, 274.

20. Ganzhulevich, *Russkaia zhizn' i ee techeniia v tvorchestve L. Andreev*, 6; 13; 48–51.

21. Danesi, *Understanding Media Semiotics,* 196–97; reference to Gippius is from Krainii, "Bratskaia mogila," 59.

22. At the request of the publisher the number of published photographs was limited. As a result, there are references in the text to photographs that do not appear in this chapter.

23. Ibid., 136–37.

24. Teleshov, *Zapiski pisatelia*, 62.

25. Skitalets, *Povesti i rasskazy*, 430.

26. Skitalets, "Vstrechi. L. Andreev," 166.

27. Zaitsev, *Kniga o Leonide Andreeve,* 131; in English, see White, *Memoirs and Madness*, 96.

28. Nikolai Nikolaevich Zlatovratskii (1845–1911), author, public affairs writer, and memoirist.

29. Teleshov, *Kinga o Leonide Andreeve*, 158; in English, see White, *Memoirs and Madness*, 114-15.

30. Keldysh, "Sborniki tovarishchestva 'Znanie,'" 228–32.

31. Anisimov, *Literaturnoe nasledstvo*, 288.

32. Danesi, *Why It Sells*, 40–41.

33. Ibid., 173–77.

34. Zaitsev, *Kniga o Leonide Andreeve,* 128–29; in English, see White, *Memoirs and Madness*, 94.

35. Teleshov, *Kniga o Leonide Andreeve*, 161; in English, see White, *Memoirs and Madness*, 116.

36. See endnote 22.

2

Marketing Strategies

Vadim Andreev in Dialogue with the Soviet Union

As discussed in the previous chapter, Leonid Andreev was one of Russia's most famous literary figures at the turn of the century. Because he had both supported revolution in his early years and reviled the Bolsheviks at the end of his life, Andreev found no defenders among the Russian émigrés living abroad or the literary critics within the Soviet Union. For roughly thirty years following his death, Andreev's literary works were largely ignored.

Vadim Andreev, however, actively managed his father's posthumous literary legacy, at first within the Russian émigré community and later in the Soviet Union. He published "A Tale about Father" ("Povest ob ottse") in Paris in 1938, and *Childhood* (*Detstvo*) in the Soviet Union in 1963 and 1968. Not surprisingly, this later publication coincided with a renewed scholarly interest in Leonid Andreev and his literary works among Soviet academics during the 1960s–70s. Vadim was instrumental in providing select documents for safe keeping in Soviet archives and for publication in Soviet literary journals, thereby fanning the flames of Soviet curiosity.

Involved in this process was a complicated web of competing narratives and marketing strategies. Vadim employed these strategies to rebrand Leonid Andreev within the Soviet Union in order to make him more palatable for Soviet literary and cultural markets. Here, cultural relationships are understood as transactions of tangible and intangible products within an economic framework of markets, exchange value, price, and other such concepts.[1] These economic exchanges of culture result in what Pierre Bourdieu calls symbolic capital, which confers upon an individual artist a reputation of competence and an image of respectability.[2]

Symbolic capital is bestowed upon a writer by agents and institutions possessing the economic and cultural capital necessary to confer relative value to the creative gesture. Economics, therefore, plays an underlying role in the relationship between these interested parties.[3] In this particular case, marketing is associated with the proliferation

of a brand message in the public domain. Relying on *placement*, marketers attempt to insert products into the general cultural activities of a society, and into unconscious social groupthink.[4] Although the economic incentives in the Soviet Union were not the same as those in the West, one might argue that many of the same market pressures were involved in securing a publisher, eliciting positive reviews, and promoting the author's works. Arguably, within the Soviet Union money played a *secondary* role in relation to the symbolic capital (in this case, *good will*) needed to secure the support of those in positions of power. As such, a consideration of cultural and symbolic, instead of financial, capital may be much more relevant in a government-controlled literary market where profit is of less importance than the correct ideological message.

In this specific instance, Vadim deftly managed the remaining biographical and literary documents available to him in order to elicit further study of his father's oeuvre and to reintroduce these works into the pre-Soviet literary canon. One might suggest that Vadim also endeavored to reposition his father's literary legacy via his own personal memoirs. In other words, Vadim's marketing strategies rebranded Leonid Andreev's posthumous legacy in a way that appealed to Soviet critics (and the Party), thereby successfully reintroducing his father's works into the Soviet literary market and scholarly discourse during a period of rehabilitation and return for many Russian artists. Important in this process was the acquiescence of Soviet scholars, critics, and institutions (cultural and political), which all played some role in consecrating the new brand image and guaranteeing its symbolic capital.

After reading the short story "Bargamot and Garaska" ("Bargamot i Garaska") in the Moscow daily *Courier* (*Kurier*) in 1898, Gorky introduced Andreev to Moscow literary society and eventually helped him publish a collection of short stories in 1901, which made the author an instant success both with literary critics and the reading public. For the next several years, Andreev published short stories relevant to social and political debates, and frequented with elements of the Moscow cultural scene that advocated revolutionary change in Russia.

In February 1905 Andreev was arrested for permitting the Social Democratic Labor Party to hold a meeting in his apartment. Shortly after being released from the Taganka jail, he took his wife, Alexandra, and their son, Vadim, to Berlin to avoid a perceived threat from the Black Hundreds, loyalist gangs supporting the autocracy. Just as Andreev was completing his play *Life of Man*, Alexandra died of a postnatal infection after giving birth to their second son, Daniil. Extremely distraught, Andreev sent the newborn to Alexandra's sister in Moscow, and went to the island of Capri in December 1906 to seek refuge and solace with his friend Gorky, who was himself in self-imposed exile from Russia.

The stay on Capri was disastrous for the authors' friendship and did little to relieve Andreev's grief. Andreev sought emotional catharsis, but Gorky was willing to provide only literary encouragement. In the spring of 1907 Andreev returned to St. Petersburg to be near the capital's literary and theatrical circles. Although he was still writing short stories, Andreev became increasingly interested in developing plays

for the stage. After the success of *Life of Man*, Andreev wrote several more symbolic dramas including *Tsar Hunger* (1908) and *Anathema* (1909). Additionally, he wrote realistic dramatic works such as *Days of our Life* (*Dni nashey zhizni*, 1908) and *Gaudeamus* (1910), which raised questions about his artistic allegiance among his colleagues and critics. At this time Andreev still enjoyed popular success, but began to draw ever-sharper criticism from literary critics.

In 1908 Andreev built an enormous villa close to the Gulf of Finland in Vammelsuu and married Anna Ilyinichna Denisevich. Some perceived this new residence as an ostentatious display of wealth and success. Here, Andreev brought together his mother, siblings, Vadim, Anna's daughter Nina from a previous marriage, and their three children: Savva, Vera, and Valentin. Although Andreev still participated in the literary society of St. Petersburg and Moscow, he confined himself mainly to his villa where he engaged in various hobbies, including photography and boating.

This tranquility was interrupted by the First World War, which stirred Andreev's feelings of patriotism. His literary and dramatic works soon reflected these emotions. Unfortunately, during this Finnish period Andreev's literary works were met with diminishing critical success and his overall production declined, leading to dire financial problems. Consequently, in 1916 Andreev was forced to join the editorial staff of a large Petrograd daily newspaper, *The Russian Will* (*Russkaya volya*), but it was sold on the eve of the October Revolution and Andreev lost his position.

At this point, Andreev was decidedly against the Bolsheviks, blaming them for the collapse of the military's morale. As such, he eventually turned his attention to a political tract entitled "S.O.S.," which was directed at the West. He believed that once it was published in Paris and London, the civilized world would come to the aid of Russian society.[5] Andreev advocated intervention by Entente forces even if it meant national humiliation. Having offered his services to the Whites but receiving a rebuff, Andreev set his sights on a lecture tour of the United States in order to awaken in Americans sympathy for the Russian people.

In this dire time of war and revolution, Andreev could no longer afford his villa in Vammelsuu, and moved his family to a friend's while he organized his lecture tour of America. This lecture tour, however, never materialized. Since 1914 Andreev's health had been compromised, and in December 1918 he suffered a prolonged heart attack. Nine months later on 12 September 1919, Andreev died of a brain hemorrhage in Finland at the age of forty-eight, leaving his family in complete poverty.

Following Andreev's death, Daniil remained in Russia with his mother's relatives, and the rest of the family went into emigration. Andreev's wife, Anna, eventually moved to the United States and lived on a Tolstoyan farm. Savva became a ballet dancer, and after 1940 lived in Buenos Ares. Vera returned to the Soviet Union from emigration in 1960, and lived first in Orel and then in Moscow. Valentin spent his entire adult life in France. Left utterly destitute at the age of sixteen, Vadim spent some time in France, but re-entered to fight in the civil war, which took him to the Caucasus Mountains where he skirmished with Georgian Socialists against the Red Army. Facing defeat, Vadim was evacuated to Constantinople and ultimately made

it to Berlin, where he studied art history for two years at the university. In 1923 Vadim moved to Paris, where he married and began to raise a family. During the mid-1930s, he received a shipment of his father's belongings from Finland, including a vast collection of photographic glass plates.[6] Leonid Andreev had been an avid photographer and these plates captured the image of a young Vadim as the child of a successful and wealthy literary figure.

The little boy captured in those photographs, however, was a far cry from the émigré that Vadim had become while living in Paris. It is difficult to determine if these mementos were the impetus for his marketing plan, but it is certain that while working various menial jobs Vadim began to reclaim his father's posthumous legacy, first by publishing "A Tale about Father" in a leading émigré journal. From the start, he planned a memoiristic trilogy that would provide meaning for both his past and present.[7] These texts were envisioned as a narrative prelude to Vadim's eventual return to Russia—both physical and literary.[8] It was with this in mind that he began discussions with the Soviet Union after the Second World War (he gained Soviet citizenship in 1947), and then again following the death of Stalin. Vadim finally returned for a visit in 1957, and met his brother Daniil—now a poet and religious philosopher—for the first time in more than twenty-five years. It was during this visit that Vadim also made the acquaintance of several literary scholars who were beginning to study his father's life and literary works.

Already within this first meeting between Vadim and Soviet scholars was the basis for an economic relationship. After all, "the essence of marketing [is] a mutually satisfying exchange relationship."[9] In this case, Vadim had made the acquaintance of literary scholars who were in need of documentary evidence to establish Leonid Andreev's official biography and literary works. In exchange, Vadim could both return his father's legacy to its rightful place in the literary cannon, and gain access to Soviet publishing houses and their reading public for his own memoirs, poems, and novel.[10] I am not suggesting that Vadim did anything unethical—that he intended to profit in some illegal or morally-reprehensible way by engaging in this relationship. On the contrary, he made it possible to study the life and works of Leonid Andreev. I *am* highlighting the economic aspect of this relationship, however, to suggest that cultural production can be as much an exchange commodity with relative values as, for example, are diamonds or gold. Vadim's commodity that only he could provide was documents and personal information relating to Leonid Andreev.

At the time, this commodity had actual value in the Soviet Union. Mikhail Berg argues that the thaw period allowed for and legitimized new players within Soviet social space while the authorities attempted to restructure ideology, economics, politics, and culture. This cultural boom in the 1960s enhanced the role of literature in society. In many cases, government authorities were interested in exchanging cultural capital for economic and social capital. The works of repressed Russian, émigré, and international literary figures all benefited from this new investment in symbolic capital.[11]

In this new, *liberal* environment, Vadim found a willing partner in the Soviet scholar Leonid Afonin. After a successful military career, Afonin returned to his hometown (and that of Andreev) to work in the Orel regional natural history museum. From 1959 to 1967 he was the director of the State I. S. Turgenev Museum, and was active in promoting literary activities associated with Orel. In 1967 he defended his doctoral dissertation on Leonid Andreev.[12] Through Afonin's efforts, Andreev's childhood house in Orel was turned into a museum. He also collected any remaining materials from Andreev's relatives, friends, and acquaintances within the Soviet Union and abroad for a literary archive dedicated to the author's memory. Most importantly, his work and that of another Soviet scholar, Vadim Chuvakov, nurtured an entire generation of Soviet literary scholars who were dedicated to reviving the life and works of Andreev.

Afonin's biography of the author, published in 1959, was the first Soviet effort to conceptualize Andreev since the 1930s.[13] This book highlights elements of Andreev's life and works that would appeal to Soviet ideology, while suppressing or at least explaining the elements that might be contradictory. From the very beginning of this biography, Afonin connects Andreev's legacy with the realist literary trends of Gorky and the *Znanie* publishing house, which were both already part of the Soviet literary pantheon. It claims that Andreev's works reflect the spirit of the revolution, show his love for the insulted and humiliated, and express his "passionate hope for the liberation of mankind from societal and spiritual oppression."[14] Afonin connects Andreev with the heroic struggle against the autocracy, landowners, and capitalism, but notes that at the crucial moment Andreev did not accept the October Revolution, and ultimately died alone, separated from his homeland. Even so, the fact that his works describe the ugliness of societal exploitation and a love for mankind underscores the "necessity for subsequent Marxist-Leninist scholarly research on L. Andreev's works" in order to determine his place in the history of twentieth-century Russian literature.[15] This call for scholarly research should be understood as the beginning of the consecration process, signaling that Andreev could again be studied and written about within the Soviet Union.[16]

Almost immediately after his visit in 1957, Vadim began to receive requests from literary scholars regarding his father's remaining documents.[17] In October his younger brother Valentin also received a letter from the director of the National Archive in Moscow in conjunction with the Soviet Consulate in Paris, requesting information about the family archive and asking what the family would be willing to transfer to the Soviet Union. Valentin provided a list, but wrote to Vadim: "Clearly, there are a lot of things that I have, which were not included on the list—in part the letters of papa to grandma and mom, there is the portrait of [Repin] and other drawings (and a few other things, minor, but dear to my heart)."[18]

The economist David Throsby suggests that there is both tangible and intangible *cultural capital*. Both have their own quantifiable economic and cultural values.[19] In this case, Vadim was not only offering a tangible commodity in the form of letters, manuscripts, and photographs; he was also dealing in intangible information. As the

oldest child who had spent the most time with Leonid Andreev before his death in 1919, Vadim was the only one who could offer insight into questions both mundane and factual. For example, Daniil (the second oldest) was contacted by a representative of the *Great Soviet Encyclopedia* (Bolshaya Sovetskaya Entsiklopedia), but was forced to defer to Vadim on dates of birth and death, and on place of death for their father.[20] Consequently, Soviet literary scholars began to ask Vadim if he could remember anything about Andreev's reproductions of Francisco Goya's paintings; which play it was that Gorky recommended should be destroyed; where was it that a certain picture hung in his father's office in Vammelsuu; and many more important, or seemingly important, questions about Leonid Andreev's life and works.[21]

This exchange of information quickly resulted in a realized product: a memorial evening dedicated to the memory of Leonid Andreev was held on 12 December 1958 in Moscow. The literary critic Korney Chukovsky and the actress Yelena Polevitskaya were both in attendance, and Chuvakov, one of the leading Andreev scholars, gave the evening's introduction. Various people spoke about meeting Leonid Andreev or performing in one of his plays. An unpublished letter to the theater producer Vladimir Nemirovich-Danchenko was read. Some musicians played the polka from Andreev's *Life of Man*, and a recording of a monologue performed by Vasily Kachalov from Andreev's *Anathema* was also played. Most importantly, however, for thirty minutes selected passages from Vadim's memoir about his father were read. These passages came from the émigré text that would not be published in the Soviet Union for another five years.[22]

Following the war, Vadim worked as a translator in the publishing section of the United Nations in New York, and then was employed in the same capacity in Geneva beginning in 1959. While on vacation in October-November 1960, Vadim and his wife spent seven weeks in the Soviet Union visiting friends and literary colleagues in Moscow, Leningrad, and Orel. At that time, Vadim gave some of his father's documents and photographs to the Institute of Russian Literature (Pushkinsky Dom). While in Orel, Vadim hung a memorial plaque on the house in which his father grew up (now a literary museum through Afonin's efforts). Shortly after returning from the trip, Vadim wrote to the literary scholar Marc Slonim who was teaching at Sarah Lawrence College in New York, and asked that a planned publication of his father's diary be delayed. After talking to Soviet literary scholars, Vadim felt that some of his father's comments should be edited out of the diary. The reason for this, he explained, was that he did not want to infuriate Soviet officials who were only now allowing his father's works to be republished. As one Soviet scholar said to him: "[Leonid Andreev] after twenty years of 'oblivion' ceased to exist for Soviet readers. A new generation knows nothing about him. And now a new unknown writer has appeared on the face of the earth—Leonid Andreev—and it is not necessary to compromise him in the eyes of the censor."[23]

Slonim responded that publication of the diary could be delayed, but found rather comical the Soviet scholar's recommendation. Vadim took offense at this comment and explained in his following letter that the point was not that the censors had

forgotten about or did not know who Andreev was, but that there was no reason to undermine the work of Soviet literary scholars by communicating Andreev's anti-Bolshevik position. Vadim emphasized that his singular goal was to ensure that the present generation of Russian readers knew the works of Anna Akhmatova, Marina Tsvetaeva, Nikolai Zabolotsky, Leonid Andreev, and others.[24]

There are several significant issues apparent in this exchange: 1) Vadim was willing to manipulate (edit) his father's documents to conform to the prevailing political requirements in the Soviet Union; 2) in order to get his product to market, Vadim was willing to work with Soviet scholars to publish a version of his father's posthumous and literary legacy that was acceptable to Soviet censors; 3) in delaying the publication of his father's diary in the West, Vadim favored Soviet scholars and selected the Soviet over the émigré literary market.[25] Vadim's actions are not surprising, as the Russian reading audience outside of the Soviet Union was rather limited, and the only way to truly gain a significant readership (beyond academics and émigrés in the West) was to satisfy the demands of the Soviet literary market.

These three issues underscore the main focus of this chapter: Vadim rebranded his father's posthumous and literary legacy for Soviet audiences. The intent of branding is to tap into social trends and systems, or to be regarded by society not simply as a brand, but as something much more.[26] The most effective ad campaign is the one that co-opts social themes. This is done when advertising and marketing appropriate symbols of a society, and adapt or recycle them as their own.[27] In this case, Vadim was willing to work with Soviet scholars to diminish his father's anti-Bolshevik rhetoric, and to cast him instead as one of the many Russian radicals who simply did not completely understand the significance of the October Revolution as it was happening. His father's untimely death made it impossible for a change of opinion or a better understanding to arise. For this he could be forgiven, especially when juxtaposed with his early revolutionary activities and friendship with Gorky.

It has already been intimated that there was a level of collusion in this struggle for legitimacy, which is not uncommon in cultural markets. Although critics and scholars' polemical arguments about a work of art sometimes seem ruthless, these conflicts safeguard the overall investment made in the artist by these same people. This invisible collusion results in permanent production and reproduction of the author's work, enhancing its symbolic capital and raising its relative *value*. The artist is not the only one to benefit; the entire collection of people who have consecrated the artist's work profits as well.[28] This relationship extends from the scholar to even the editorial board that accepts texts for publication. Collusion is particularly evident when the majority of scholarly articles about an author under consecration appears in one specific journal or from a single publishing house. This suggests that the consecration process goes beyond just the author and the literary experts, and includes even the editors and editorial boards in the broader validation of symbolic capital.[29] In this case, Vadim and Soviet scholars, critics, and editors contributed to the consecration of Leonid Andreev by returning him to a known and distinguished existence within Soviet literary society, thereby assuring the publication of his literary works and guaranteeing their symbolic capital.

This partnership, in turn, resulted in a mutually beneficial exchange. Soviet scholars received documents and information about Leonid Andreev, while Vadim ensured that his father remained in Soviet literary discourse. Many of these same scholars supported the publication of Vadim's memoir, and later of his poems and novel. For example, it was Afonin who provided the first review of Vadim's memoir, *Childhood*, and recommended it for publication.[30] It was Afonin again who offered to write a positive review of the memoir once it was published.[31]

After 1963 *Childhood* became a canonical text about Leonid Andreev, especially concerning his life in Finland from 1908–1919. Vadim's daughter, Olga Andreyev Carlisle, claims, "[The memoir] is about my father's relationship with his celebrated father, whom he worshiped at a distance. It is elegant and restrained and absolutely true."[32] It is not the goal of this study to evaluate the veracity of this memoir, but to note that it is *a* truth (one of many possible truths) that Vadim wished to disseminate in order to gain control over his father's literary legacy.

By publishing *Childhood* in the Soviet Union, Vadim not only gave a compelling description of his father's self-indulgence, but also offered an alternative understanding of Leonid Andreev's political activities and opinion of the October Revolution:

> It was not by chance that father was incapable of understanding the significance of the October Revolution, being too attracted to the fortunes of the Russian intelligentsia at the beginning of the twentieth century. [. . .] All of his life, father was impassioned by Russia, seeing her like a believer sees God, but when Russia revealed herself in October, he was unable to recognize that aspect of her, and was overwhelmed by mental chaos.[33]

Vadim argues that his father no longer had the physical or mental strength necessary for the revolutionary struggle. He further reveals that his father supported the Reds in the battle for Finland and was disappointed that the Whites had won—signaling the end of the revolution.[34] Finally, Vadim remembers that contrary to his father's harsh words published as "S.O.S." (his plea to the West to save Russia from the Bolsheviks), his father admitted that "there are moments when you see two truths of two distinct worlds, placed side by side in conflict."[35] In these moments of recovered past, Andreev is no longer an enemy of the Bolsheviks, but a man who understood the immediate complexities of revolution and political change—yet was too weary to participate, and too close to events to have a clear perspective on the lasting historical significance of such radical political transformations.

To further humanize his father, Vadim provided letters and documents for public consumption. The first group of letters was published in *Literary Heritage. Gorky and Leonid Andreev, an unpublished correspondence* (*Literaturnoe nasledstvo. Gorky i Leonid Andreev neizdannaya perepiska*), which strategically highlighted his father's friendship with and allegiance to Gorky.[36] Vadim also underscored the romantic and impulsive side of his father in a publication entitled "Letters to a fiancé: From the unpublished correspondence of Leonid Andreev" ("Pisma k neveste: Iz neizdannoy perepiski Leonida Andreeva"), which appeared in the journal *The Star* (*Zvezda*).[37] In the introduction to these letters it is stated, "One may say that Leonid Andreev, as

an artist, is experiencing now a second birth."[38] This clearly was the main goal: to return Andreev to the Soviet reading public, as Vadim had stated to Slonim eight years earlier. Vadim also made possible the publication "Letters from the Taganka jail" ("Pisma iz Taganskoy tyurmy: K stoletiyu s dnya rozhdeniya Leonida Andreeva").[39] Once again, these letters sent the correct political message: the fact that Leonid Andreev was jailed for allowing a meeting of the Social Democratic Labor Party to be held in his apartment proved that the author was a supporter of political change and had suffered for these activities.

These publications were important not only for the message that they carried (establishing Andreev as a friend of Gorky and a political activist), but also for *where* they were published. Placement in journals such as *The Star* and the *Literary Gazette* (*Literaturnaya gazeta*) effectively transferred what the scholarly public associated with these publications to Leonid Andreev. These journals provided what Marcel Danesi calls a "*coded* membership entry card" into Soviet literary society.[40] This membership, in turn, legitimized Vadim and his literary activities—a fact that is corroborated by his relationship with literary scholars and Soviet writers. For example, Vadim provided positive responses (otzyvy) for the dissertation abstracts of Valery Bezzubov and Ludmila Iezuitova—the leading young Andreev scholars of the era.[41] He also became a member of the Union of Soviet Writers, and presented himself as a *Soviet* writer even while living in Geneva.

Leonid Andreev's "second birth" culminated in the hundredth anniversary of his birth. This event was the result of Vadim's efforts to rebrand his father's posthumous legacy in a way that was acceptable to Soviet authorities. By 1971 Vadim, along with Afonin, Chuvakov, and others, had successfully reintroduced the author's life and literary works into the Soviet literary market. Leonid Andreev's stories were easily bought and read, his plays were again being produced on Soviet stages, and scholarly research was being conducted on all aspects of his life and creative works.

At the Turgenev Museum in Orel, an exhibition was held to celebrate the 100-year anniversary; this exhibition featured Andreev's manuscripts, photographs, biographical materials, personal possessions from his house on the Black rivulet, old pictures of Orel (which were connected to his childhood), and his individual stories published in journals and newspapers.[42] The full material iconography of Leonid Andreev was available for public viewing—a type of veneration reserved for Russia's greatest literary figures.

By this time, the rebranding effort had been accepted within the marketplace and was part of the standard presentation to the general public. In an announcement in the newspaper *News* (*Izvestiya*) about the publication of a new two-volume collection of Andreev's stories, the reporter writes, "It is well-known that Leonid Andreev did not accept and did not understand the October Revolution. This is tragically reflected in his creative work: torn from his homeland, during the years of emigration the writer could not create a single meaningful work. [. . .]"[43] Even so, Andreev's earlier stories, as well as a couple works previously unpublished in Russia, were soon available in Soviet bookstores. The point is that Vadim and the Soviet cultural merchants who had rebranded Andreev could not completely rehabilitate him politically,

but had done enough in this new Soviet cultural marketplace to contextualize his life and highlight relevant aspects of his works to ensure that Andreev would be sold to and disseminated among Soviet citizens.

In July 1971 the *Literary Gazette* (*Literaturnaya gazetta*) asked Vadim if he would write something for the paper for the 100th anniversary of his father's birthday: "Knowing you as a writer, poet and memoirist, as a person, who knows superbly everything that is connected with your father, we extend an offer [to you] to write something for us."[44] In response, Vadim offered a cycle of poems entitled "Childhood" ("Detstvo") and a chapter from his unfinished book *The Childhood of Leonid Andreev* (*Detstvo Leonida Andreeva*).[45]

At the end of September 1971, a conference was held in Orel commemorating one hundred years of Leonid Andreev. Scholars from Moscow, Leningrad, Orel, Vologda, Penza, Tartu, Tomsk, Tula, Odessa, and other cities gave academic papers; clearly, interest in Andreev was not limited to one faculty or university, but was quite widespread throughout the Soviet Union. While attending the conference, Vadim gifted the original letters of Gorky and some of his father's manuscripts to the Central State Archive of Literature and Art.[46] Significantly, Vadim also provided the archive with manuscript copies of his own works *Five Senses* (*Pyat chuvstv*) and *100 lines* (*100 strok*).[47]

This celebration did not mark the end of Vadim's activities, but it did attest to the success of his rebranding effort. For Soviet scholars and readers in 1971, Leonid Andreev was a friend of Gorky and a radical revolutionary who simply did not have the opportunity to weigh the full meaning of the October Revolution before his untimely death in 1919; nevertheless, Andreev's literary works seemingly opened a window to the intelligentsia's revolutionary movement and activities at the beginning of the twentieth century. Of course, as a secondary benefit of this marketing plan Vadim was able to publish his own works, contributing in his own way to the Soviet literary market.

Evidence of Andreev's rebranded image as one consecrated by Soviet institutions can be found in various publications dedicated to the author during the 1970s. For example, in the introduction to a 1977 collection of Andreev's short stories, Oleg Mikhailov states that among the realist writers of the pre-revolutionary period, only Andreev could compare to Gorky in his influence over the general readership. Mikhailov then provides Andreev with a biography worthy of a revolutionary: "Grandson of an Orel marshal of the nobility and a peasant girl, son of an impoverished land appraiser, he came to know the terror of the city's outskirts, the half-starved existence of a student, the tortuous discord within himself, the hatred for the meaningless existence of the 'masses.'"[48] Gorky's influence on Andreev's literary development is emphasized, and the socio-political relevance of each story is underscored. The problems of the oppressed individual in a capitalistic world and the inevitability of organized revolution are clear themes in Andreev's works from 1904–1919. According to Mikhailov, Andreev's best stories were "composed under the impression of the Russian people's heroic struggle for freedom."[49] Here, undoubtedly, is evidence of the Soviet establishment's collusion in the amalgamation of Andreev and his works within the pervasive culture and political ideology of the Soviet Union.

It is an essential characteristic of relationship marketing to create and maintain a mutually satisfying exchange, which is often explained in terms of a "win-win situation."[50] This is the relationship that Vadim had with literary scholars and Soviet officials who were interested in both the documents he possessed and the information he could provide. In the end, Vadim achieved more than he might have expected: he restored his father's posthumous legacy and was able to publish many of his own works in the Soviet Union. This success might even be measured by the fact that on 23 March 1983, seven years after his death, a conference was held at the Viborg Regional Museum (Viborgsky kraevedchecky muzey) celebrating what would have been Vadim's eightieth birthday. The program included presentations about Vadim's poetic legacy, his childhood memoirs, and his literary relationship with the journal *The Star*. The panel participants included two of the younger Andreev specialists—Iezuitova and Ludmila Ken.[51]

Although we tend to think of the humanities and business as far removed from one another, both disciplines employ similar strategies. Stereotypes of the tradesman and the gentleman scholar probably play a role in this division, distinguishing art and literature from the everyday exchange of goods. However, there is a large amount of business involved in maintaining an author's literary legacy. After all, works of art receive value only from a collective belief in a particular artist, and from a shared willingness to produce and reproduce his literary works.[52]

The rebranding of Leonid Andreev for the Soviet literary market is only one representative example of the larger forces at play in marketing literature and posthumous legacies. In this specific case, Vadim was willing to work with Soviet literary scholars to create a narrative about his father's life and works that would be accepted into official Soviet groupthink. Part of this strategy involved linking Andreev to Gorky and highlighting his "revolutionary" stories, plays, and political activities. This rebranding effort attempted to minimize Andreev's anti-Soviet rhetoric, and to depict him as a passionate individual whose emotions sometimes clouded his better judgment. Ultimately, Andreev was afforded all of the literary celebrations, exhibitions, and, most importantly, publications enjoyed by mainstream authors of the pre-Soviet canon, thereby securing his posthumous and literary legacy. Equally important in this relationship was the invisible collusion of Soviet scholars, publishers, and government officials who were willing to consecrate Leonid Andreev and guarantee his symbolic capital for the foreseeable future.

NOTES

1. Throsby, *Economics and Culture*, 10.
2. Bourdieu, The Rules of Art, 141–48; *The Field of Cultural Production*, 75–76.
3. Bourdieu, The Rules of Art, 215–16.
4. Danesi, *Why It Sells,* 155–57.
5. Kaun, *Leonid Andreyev*, 165.
6. Carlisle, *Far from Russia*, 5–6.

7. In 1938 Vadim wrote to Vladimir Semichev about his plans for a trilogy. See Leeds Russian Archive MS 1350 / 1669. In the Soviet Union, "Istoriia odnogo puteshestviia" was first published in the journal *Moskva* (no. 5, 1966) and "Vozvrashchenie v zhizn'" was first published in the journal *Zvezda* (nos. 5–6, 1969). These two memoirs, along with a third "Cherez dvadtsat' let" were all published as one book entitled *Istoriia odnogo puteshestviia* (Moscow, 1974).

8. Carlisle, *Far from Russia*, 168–71.

9. Baker, *Marketing: Theory and Practice*, 4.

10. Vadim published his novel *Dikoe pole* in the journal *Zvezda* (nos.7–9, 1965), and some poems in the journals *Zvezda* (no. 1, 1966; no. 12, 1967) and *Neva* (no. 12, 1968).

11. Berg, *Literaturokratkiia*, 75–81.

12. Afonin, *Rasskazy literaturoveda*, 3–6. Also information was found on the following website on 11 December 2008: http://www.orel-story.ru/land_afonin.php

13. Vadim writes to Afonin in 1960 that he is happy that someone is now studying his father and his place in Russian literature. Vadim has been told by his sister, Vera, that the book accurately captures Andreev's life and works. "Your book appears to be a valuable contribution to the history [of Russian literature] and in absentia I extend to you [my] deepest gratitude." Ob"edinennogo Gosudarstvenogo Literaturnogo Muzei I.S. Turgeneva (OGLMT), f. 42, no. 15578/21 of. Letter of 22 February 1960 to L. Afonin.

14. Afonin, *Leonid Andreev*, 3.

15. Ibid., 4.

16. There were several collections of Andreev's stories published in the 1950s prior to Afonin's biography, but undoubtedly his biography was the first to attempt to contextualize Andreev's life and works specifically for the Soviet marketplace. See Chuvakov, *Leonid Nikolaevich Andreev*, 24–25.

17. LRA, MS. 1350 / 1400. Letter of 7 September 1957.

18. LRA, MS 1350 / 1199. Letter of 29 October 1957.

19. Throsby, *Economics and Culture*, 46.

20. LRA, MS. 1350 / 1169. Letter of 8 April 1958. In a letter of 17 January 1964, Valentin says that he could not write a similar memoir as he was only seven years old when his father died. See LRA, MS 1350 / 1201.

21. LRA, MS. 1350 / 1401. Letter of 20 June 1958, from V. Chuvakov; MS. 1350 / 1127. Letter of 22 December 1960, from L. Afonin; MS. 1350 / 1403. Letter of 27 January 1961, from Chuvakov; MS. 1350 / 1280. Letter of 17 March 1961, from V. Bezzubov; MS 1350 / 1130. Letter of 24 February 1964, from L. Afonin; MS 1350 / 1281. Letter of 31 March 1964, from Bezzubov; MS 1350 / 1133. Letter of 18 October 1964, from Bezzubov; MS 1350 / 1265. Letter of 12 May 1967, from Iu. Babicheva.

22. LRA, MS. 1350 / 1237. Letter of 13 December 1958.

23. LRA, MS. 1350 / 1690. Letter of 6 December 1960.

24. LRA, MS. 1350 / 1691 and 1692. Letters of 16 December 1960 and 8 January 1961.

25. Leonid Andreev's Finnish diary was eventually published and sold in Russia and the West in 1994. See Andreev, *S. O. S.*

26. Danesi, *Why it sells*, 171.

27. Ibid., 165.

28. Bourdieu, The Rules of Art, 166–69.

29. Lang, "Mass, Class, and the Reviewer," 193–99.

30. LRA, MS. 1350 / 1128. Letter of 25 February 1961; MS. 1350 / 1581. Letter of 17 June 1961.
31. LRA, MS 1350 / 1130. Letter of 24 February 1964.
32. Carlisle, *Far from Russia*, 181.
33. Vadim Andreev, *Detstvo*, 202.
34. Ibid., 220.
35. Ibid., 254.
36. Anisimov, *Literaturnoe nasledstvo*.
37. Iezuitova and Vadim Andreev, “Pis’ma k neveste: Iz neizdannoi perepiski Leonida Andreeva,” 179–207.
38. Ibid., 179.
39. Afonin, “Pis’ma iz Taganskoi tiur’my,” 163–83.
40. Ibid., 173.
41. LRA, MS 1350 / 1466. Letter of 15 October 1968; MS. 1350 / 1405. Letter of 30 November 1968; MS. 1350 / 1285. Letter of 11 January 1969.
42. Klekovkina, “Pisateliu-orlovtsu posveshchaetsia.”
43. Mendelevich, “Na knizhnoi polke,” 5.
44. LRA, MS. 1350 / 1682. Letter of 16 July 1971.
45. LRA, MS 1350 / 1684. Letter of 28 July 1971.
46. LRA, MS. 1350 / 1277. Letter of 16 November 1971.
47. LRA, MS 1350 / 1852. Letter of 1 October 1971.
48. Leonid Andreev, *Rasskazy*, 5.
49. Ibid., 17.
50. Baker, *Marketing*, 14.
51. OGLMT, f. 12, op. 1, no. 305 (KP 17988/1 of).
52. Bourdieu, The Rules of Art, 172.

3

The Role of the Scholar in the Consecration of Leonid Andreev (1950s to Present)

> No one has ever completely extracted all the implications of the fact that the writer, the artist, or even the scientist writes not only for a public, but for a public of equals who are competitors. Few people depend as much as artists and intellectuals do for their self-image upon the image others, and particularly other writers and artists, have of them.
>
> —Pierre Bourdieu, *The Field of Cultural Production* (116)

It is difficult to address all of the factors that contributed to Leonid Andreev's disappearance from both the Russian émigré and Soviet literary markets within a decade after his death. Some general points, however, can be elucidated as a partial explanation. In 1919 a representative of the Soviet Union offered two million rubles to buy Andreev's literary rights (and to offer aid to the Bolshevik cause), but Andreev rejected this overture out of hand. The offer was most probably an act of kindness on behalf of Gorky, and Andreev's negative reaction did little to secure his literary reputation within the Soviet Union. After all, he had written many political tracts against the Bolsheviks and had provided his services to the Whites; once Gorky was no longer in a position to protect his friend's literary interests, Andreev's political allegiances became a liability. Following the 1930 publication of *Requiem: A collection in memory of Leonid Andreev* (*Rekviem: Sbornik pamyati Leonida Andreeva*), he disappeared like many others from Soviet literary discourse until the 1960s. As for the émigré community in France, Dmitry Merezhkovsky and Zinaida Gippius had long ago done damage to Andreev's literary reputation, and certainly did nothing to champion his posthumous legacy. Vadim writes in *Childhood* that most of Andreev's best works at the end of his life were published posthumously in the émigré press, "but did not merit one, not even one review. In general, they did not like Andreev in emigration—if they did write about him then it was in the style

of Merezhkovsky-Gippius and without fail reminded [readers] that Andreev was a bitter drunk." During this time, Andreev's widow Anna supported herself and her family mainly through translations of Andreev's works into European languages and through foreign productions of his plays. It is doubtful that émigré publications offered agreeable financial enticements to republish Andreev's works in Russian and, therefore, were probably of little interest to her once all of his unpublished works had appeared in print.[1]

As discussed in the previous chapter, Vadim Andreev actively managed his father's posthumous literary legacy in order to elicit further study of his father's oeuvre by scholars in the Soviet Union—often by repositioning his father's literary legacy via his own personal memoirs. In other words, Vadim's marketing strategies rebranded Leonid Andreev's posthumous legacy in a way that appealed to Soviet scholars in the 1960s. Important in this process was the acquiescence of Soviet scholars, critics, and institutions (cultural and political), which all played some role in consecrating the new brand image and guaranteeing its symbolic capital.

Involved in this process were competing marketing strategies to rebrand Leonid Andreev in such a way as to make him more palatable for Soviet markets. Although the economic incentives in the Soviet Union were not the same as those in the West, Soviet publishers, booksellers, and scholars were certainly conscious of the ideological requirements imposed by literary censors, the board of the Writers' Union, and the Central Party of the Soviet Union. As such, influence was needed to secure the necessary support of those in positions of power.

With this in mind, the concentration of this chapter is not on Western models of profit margins, unit sales, and other factors that Bourdieu at times employs, but on the specific role that scholars play in securing for an artist the *privilege* to be published. Bourdieu identifies the silent collusion that occurs among various individuals who provide or create *value* for a work of art through a process he calls *consecration*. Here, Bourdieu's theory is applied to both the Soviet and post-Soviet periods, with only a slight shift in focus to account for evolving economic and political factors. During the Soviet period, symbolic capital was created to satisfy individuals and organizations that controlled access to publishing houses and administered academic institutions. In the post-Soviet period, the literary market begins to include publishers, booksellers, and readers, who all play a dynamic role in the marketplace. Although the market membership expands over time, Bourdieu's basic principles still apply to both periods during which scholars brand and rebrand authors according to *market pressures*, rather than according to the aesthetic qualities of literary works. Even as the members of the marketplace increase, the same marketing mechanisms are employed in the guise of literary scholarship. Using this theoretical vocabulary, this chapter explores how scholars manipulated Leonid Andreev's literary legacy from the 1950s to the present in order to ensure that his life and works retained their symbolic capital for (or elicited the good will of) those who decided the author's access to the marketplace.

This chapter also explores factors that influence the writing of literary histories in (post-) Soviet Russia.[2] Here Andreev functions as a representative example of what happened to many of the literary figures rehabilitated during the thaw, *perestroika*, and in the post-Soviet period. As such, it asks contemporary scholars to acknowledge and reassess the economic pressures that established certain earlier academic positions. In this context, there are significant similarities between Western and Soviet literary practices. Although some might argue that applying Western economic theories to a Soviet system driven by political ideology is problematic, it is necessary to underscore that Bourdieu and other critics concentrate less on a marketplace driven by actual money and more on one organized by influence, power, collusion, and consecration. In order for an artist's work to see the light of day in Moscow, New York, or Paris, certain individuals must be convinced that the work's publication will be either monetarily or ideologically profitable. Furthermore, the actual resulting *profits* (monetary or ideological) are often of secondary importance for those involved in the consecration process. After all, profit is realized for scholars in their salaries, grants, and research stipends—not in book sales. Even Soviet scholars climbed the ranks of university hierarchies and profited financially from the consecration of specific authors. It is from articles, books, conference papers, and lectures—which are all part of the process of career advancement within academia—that symbolic capital is turned into real money for the scholar. Far from acting as objective evaluators of aesthetic beauty, scholars in both the West and the Soviet Union participate in the cultural production and ritualization of literary authors for their own profit.

In this case, once Leonid Andreev's literary works were reintroduced into the Soviet literary market, responsibility fell to literary scholars to continue the consecration process. Without academic debates about his works, the author might once again fade into oblivion. Therefore, this chapter focuses on the Soviet scholar's role within the literary marketplace, and how scholars had to act in silent collusion with the managers, publishers, and heirs in marketing Andreev's posthumous legacy. In order to reap the rewards of this literary process, scholars were induced to provide a product that appealed to Soviet censors and political decision-makers. With the emergence of a post-Soviet literary market, scholarly promotion of this product was forced to change as well. As such, we might regard past scholarship on Andreev less as objective truth and more as part of the rehabilitation (or for Bourdieu—consecration) of the author within Soviet and post-Soviet realities.[3]

The literary scholar's role in this situation is complex. Howard S. Becker states that critics "do not simply intend to classify things into useful categories, as we might classify species of plants, but rather to separate the deserving from the undeserving, and do it definitively." As a result, some artists are excluded from distributors, audiences, and other elements of the artistic world.[4] Barbara Herrnstein Smith suggests that value is assigned to literary works by including them in collected anthologies, reading lists, or in citations by professors, scholars, and critics—"for all these acts have the effect of drawing the work into the orbit of attention of potential readers

and, by making the work more likely to be experienced by all, they make it more likely to be experienced as *valuable*."[5]

The scholar's role is ostensibly to make judgments, while also to materially and symbolically conserve works of art. Scholars and critics work in conjunction with museums, archives, publishing houses, and universities to define and produce value for the work in question. The only way the author, publisher, and critic can accrue economic profits is to make sure that the author becomes a recognized name, which gives value in the form of symbolic capital that can be appropriated as profit. This economic enterprise is, in turn, disavowed in most cases.[6] While critics and scholars' sometimes-testy exchanges about a work of art might seem hardnosed, these conflicts safeguard the overall investment made in the artist by these same people. This invisible collusion results in permanent production and reproduction of the author's work, enhancing its symbolic capital and raising its relative *value*.[7] In this study we concentrate on academics who, under the guise of literary scholarship, actually market the author in order to enhance the value of his life and works.

There are indeed many scholars who made their careers by consecrating Leonid Andreev. As noted in the previous chapter, the Soviet scholar Leonid Afonin was one of the most important. As director of the State I. S. Turgenev Museum, he worked diligently to turn the Andreev's childhood house into a literary museum, and organized a collection of the author's remaining literary and biographical materials within the Soviet Union and abroad. Most notably, Afonin and the Soviet scholar Vadim Chuvakov nurtured an entire generation of literary scholars who were dedicated to reviving the life and works of Leonid Andreev.

As noted previously, it was Afonin's 1959 biography of the author that acted as the first Soviet effort since the 1930s to conceptualize Andreev artistically and biographically. Afonin connects Andreev's legacy with the realist literary trends of Gorky and the *Znanie* publishing house, which had already been consecrated for the Soviet literary market. Significantly, Afonin argues that Andreev's works reflect the spirit of the revolution, show his love for the insulted and humiliated, and express his "passionate hope for the liberation of mankind from societal and spiritual oppression."[8] Andreev struggled heroically against the autocracy, landowners, and capitalism, but at the crucial moment did not accept the October Revolution, and ultimately died alone, separated from his homeland. Even so, the fact that his works describe the ugliness of societal exploitation and a love for mankind underscores the "necessity for subsequent Marxist-Leninist scholarly research on L. Andreev's works" in order to determine his place in the history of twentieth-century Russian literature.[9] This call for scholarly research should be understood as the beginning of the consecration process, signaling that Andreev could again be studied and written about in the Soviet Union.[10]

In addition to his many publications and efforts in reestablishing Andreev's posthumous legacy, Afonin also played a major role in organizing a conference held in Orel in September 1971 to commemorate Andreev's 100th birthday. The resulting collection of scholarly materials was published and dedicated to Afonin's memory

shortly after his death. A survey of the contents reveals how successful Afonin had been since his first call for scholarly research in 1959. Afonin's two agendas are obvious in this collection, which both highlights Andreev's positive connections to current Soviet ideology, and contextualizes him within twentieth-century literary traditions: "A.V. Lunacharsky about the works of L. Andreev"; "Early L. Andreev and the tradition of 19th century democratic literature"; "Leonid Andreev and German expressionism"; "*The Confession* of A. Apollov as one source for Leonid Andreev's novella *The Life of Vasily Fiveisky*"; "Principles of the artistic expression of reality in the novella *Red Laugh*"; "Expressive and esthetic functions of the idiom in L. Andreev's *The Seven Who Were Hanged*"; "Leonid Andreev's *Waltz of the Dog.* An attempt to analyze a 'panpsyche' drama."[11] It is clear that Afonin both reintroduced Andreev for scholarly discussion within Soviet academia, and profited from his connection with one of Orel's most successful authors. He was one of the primogenitors for Soviet scholarship on Andreev and this particular process of consecration.

If Afonin reintroduced Andreev for discussion within the Soviet Union, then Ludmila Iezuitova of Leningrad State University provided the first reading of him in 1976 with her study *The Works of Leonid Andreev (1892–1906)* (*Tvorchestvo Leonida Andreeva [1892–1906]*). By limiting her book to this timeframe, Iezuitova strategically avoided the more confounding issues of Andreev's life and oeuvre such as his flirtation with decadent literary trends, his disillusionment with the revolutionary movement, the diminished influence of Gorky and the *Znanie* publishing house in Andreev's life and works after 1906, as well as the author's emotional devastation following the death of his first wife. As Andreev's friend and literary contemporary Boris Zaitsev suggested in his memoir, the beginning of Andreev's literary life was an exciting period of love, friendships, and enormous popular success. In many ways, Iezuitova repeated this rather naïve and simplistic interpretation of the *first half* of Andreev's literary life, while avoiding what Zaitsev calls the broken and suffering Andreev of the *second half* of his life (post-1906).[12]

Attempts to avoid (or at least *explain*) the unpleasant aspects of the Andreev's life were nothing new. After all, Soviet scholars regularly *sanitized* the lives of their subjects. Afonin also skirted many of these controversial issues in his biography, suggesting that Andreev's destructive adolescent behavior reflected the *sign of the times*: "the confusion and panic that seized the sensitive Russian people at the beginning of the [18]90s, when the old was irrevocably rejected and the new gleamed faintly through a predawn fog, tormented by uncertainty."[13] Afonin also took a similar position regarding Andreev's "pathological inclination toward drinking," arguing that this was common behavior among students in the 1890s.[14] He does acknowledge that Andreev's father had been a heavy drinker and that the author, too, abused alcohol while at the gymnasium and at the university in St. Petersburg, but he blames this on Andreev's poverty and the resulting pressures. As would be expected, Iezuitova accepted and reinforced Afonin's explanations of Andreev's adolescent behavior.

Like Afonin, Iezuitova also avoided delving too deeply into the difficult issues of Andreev's adolescence filled with poverty, depression, alcohol, and suicide attempts.

The formal Marxist-Leninist approach paid little attention to the psychological side of a subject's life. Consequently, Iezuitova merely alluded to a troubled youth caused by an interest in the pessimistic philosophy of Arthur Schopenhauer, and by the zeitgeist of the impending revolution.[15] Iezuitova's analysis resulted in the following explanation: "Acute subjectivism, a gravitation towards ideological questions, towards the difficult, dark condition of a lonely soul and a sharp desire to overcome loneliness, to conquer the surrounding darkness, to obtain the desired answers to the painful questions of life, characterize the immature quest of the future writer."[16]

More interesting than her attempts to sanitize Andreev's biography is the marketing ploy that Iezuitova used to *sell* Andreev. From the outset, Iezuitova asserted that there existed a "boisterous polemic" among literary scholars concerning the inconsistencies within Andreev's works that called for serious in-depth analysis. Her study was meant to address the demands of contemporary readers and Soviet literary scholars.[17] Iezuitova therefore conferred symbolic value on Andreev's works by suggesting a level of excitement and a heated debate among experts and general readers. Thus, her analysis addressed this need for a scholarly interpretation of the author's early literary works.

The bulk of Iezuitova's study provided a reading of Andreev's texts for the Soviet period (specifically Andreev's early intellectual formation, his work as a journalist, and his creative writing up to 1906), accentuating appropriate themes and literary influences desired by the Soviet marketplace. The final chapter, "Before the face of history and the revolution," further solidified Andreev's commitment to the revolution. "Almost everything about the great French revolution that was published in Russia from 1870 until the beginning of the 1900s, was in Andreev's library [. . .]," claimed Iezuitova to establish the correct literary and political lineage.[18] Iezuitova argued that such felicity to the revolutionary movement indicated "Andreev's understanding of the 'folk' is quite vast, universal," as was his understanding of the revolutionary proletariat, the revolutionary common man, and simple working people. With references to his literary works, Iezuitova claimed it was his connection to the common people that united him with the revolution.[19] As such, it is difficult to read this book today as anything more than a marketing effort. This study claimed excitement among the reading public and scholars alike, provided a sanitized biography of the author, and established a politically correct reading of his works—all of which met the requirements of the Soviet literary market.[20] This should not diminish Iezuitova's efforts, as it took an element of risk to write about Andreev in the 1960s to 1970s; yet an honest appraisal of this seminal work necessarily acknowledges that Iezuitova's critical reading of Andreev's stories was almost completely dictated by the political requirements of her day.

Although Iezuitova claimed that Andreev was a great sympathizer of the revolutionary proletariat, the reality was that following a brief infatuation with the February Revolution, the author was decidedly against the Bolsheviks, blaming them for the collapse of the military's morale during the First World War. As noted, he eventually wrote a political tract "S.O.S.," which he believed would convince the

West to come to the aid of Russian society.[21] Andreev advocated intervention by Entente forces even if it meant national humiliation. He intended to go on a lecture tour of the United States after his offer to become a propagandist for the Whites was rebuffed, but died before making this trip. Still, "S.O.S." was published around the world in all major foreign languages. These biographical facts would seem to have posed an insurmountable hurdle for Soviet scholars to overcome, however Afonin managed to explain away this issue by stating that Andreev did not accept the October Revolution in part because he did not have any remaining strength for the final revolutionary struggle, and had distanced himself from all political activities by moving to his villa in Finland.[22] Strategically, Iezuitova avoided the issue by limiting the scope of her study (until 1906). Andreev's dubious political background ultimately forced Afonin, Iezuitova, and others to pay special attention to the author's earlier participation in radical political activities, and to focus on the author's works that could be read in a positive, Soviet light. This meant that some works, which had been much more popular during Andreev's lifetime, were given less attention or ignored completely.

It is evident that scholars and critics play an important role that the author himself cannot fulfill: the author cannot consecrate his own literary objects by himself, and the value of a creative work is not determined solely by its production costs. Critics and scholars, or what Bourdieu calls *cultural merchants*, exploit the work of an author and trade on its sacred value after it has been published. This is even more important for dated or classic works that can be rediscovered or reread and whose authors are long deceased. The less tangible the actual product, the more productive it is as a symbol—which requires of the cultural merchant both promotion and publicity. Bourdieu explains that entering the field of literature is like entering a selective club. The publisher, critic, and literary scholar all must effusively recommend their candidate for membership.[23] In this case, Andreev was reread by a selective club of scholars who made their careers by providing a positive (post-)Soviet interpretation of his life and works.

By looking at the introductions written by these scholars for individual collections of Andreev's works, we find evidence of this evolving literary recommendation. In 1971 Chuvakov, a research fellow at the Institute of Modern Literature in Moscow, wrote one of the first Soviet introductions to a two-volume collection of Andreev's stories. Since 1956 Chuvakov had been instrumental in editing Andreev's works and correspondence, had contributed greatly to the *Literary Heritage* (*Literaturnaya nasledstvo*) volume on the Gorky-Andreev correspondence, and had organized the aforementioned centenary edition of stories—to name only a few of his contributions to Andreev studies. As with Afonin, Chuvakov's introduction to the two-volume collection first referenced Gorky and his literary impressions of Andreev, and subsequently referenced Anton Chekhov and Leo Tolstoy. Chuvakov also highlighted elements of the collection's works that would satisfy the demands of the Soviet marketplace: the anti-church message of "The Life of Vasily Fiveisky"; the anti-military message of "Red Laugh"; Andreev's opposition to the death penalty

and his positive portrayal of the revolutionaries in "The Seven Who Were Hanged"; and the depiction of the satiated bourgeoisie in contrast to the starving masses in *Tsar Hunger*. Chuvakov also attempted to create an acceptable political biography for Andreev:

> He was born the same year that the workers of Paris skirmished at the barricades under the red flag of the Commune and died two years after the victory of the October Revolution. His entire psychological make-up belonged to that part of the Russian intelligentsia, who fitfully thrashed about within the environment of a gathering revolutionary storm, in search of an escape from a societal dead end.[24]

Even though Andreev passionately disliked the bourgeois world, Chuvakov was forced to admit that the author was not able to connect with the proletariat, nor could he accept the transformation of a capitalist society into a socialist one.

Even so, the symbolic value of this collection was supported by references to the actual economic success that these same works had enjoyed in their first publication. Chuvakov noted that Andreev's first volume of stories went through twelve press runs, which was unheard of for its time, and that his plays were performed in the best theaters in Moscow and St. Petersburg. However, classifying these works proved problematic: while some extend the humanistic tradition of nineteenth-century Russian classics, others display the "deadly influence of bourgeois decadent art and its aesthetic."[25] It turned out to be difficult to designate Andreev as a realist or a symbolist, a problem that also dogged the author during his lifetime.[26]

For Chuvakov and other Soviet scholars, Andreev's life is captured in his stories. A meta-text therefore emerges in which the author's biography is augmented by fictional characters and situations. Hence, the critic is the author of the writer's life story, and the posthumous legacy is a construct by which the scholar can make the author and his oeuvre palatable for the literary market. Certain works are grouped together, literary influences of other consecrated authors are noted, and thus, the reader already knows how he should read the texts before even setting his eyes upon them. In this way the scholar asserts himself into the author's biography, provides meaning for both the factual and fictional elements, and vouches for a particular text's value while clearly ignoring others.

The British scholar Richard Davies at Leeds University identified many of these issues in his article, "Leonid Andreev in Soviet Criticism, 1956–1982." Noting that Andreev's works had been largely published and discussed without accompanying or supporting biographical documents, Davies writes, "The chief reason for this clearly contradictory state of affairs lies in the ideological restraints under which Soviet literary studies labour." Davies specifies that there existed in Soviet scholarship an "ideologically determined scale of values" that ranked from highest to lowest Gorky, his literary colleagues within the realist movement, and those who supported the revolutions of 1905 and 1917. One's degree of closeness to Gorky, one's brand of realism, and one's participation in the revolutions determined one's value as an author. Because Andreev moved from being Gorky's friend to his enemy over many years (he

also abandoned his allegiances to realism and the revolutions), he presented specific problems for scholars trying to conform to this scale. Davies claims that it would be

> churlish to dwell on the shortcomings in [Chuvakov's] introductory essays to selected editions (a sometimes uncritical acceptance of ideological clichés), or the omission of certain key works from the canon which he has established (e.g., *Bezdna, Moi zapiski, T'ma*). However, these are characteristic indications of the limitations within which Soviet scholars work and should at least be noted.

For the most part, Davies commends Afonin, Iezuitova, Valery Bezzubov (University of Tartu), Julia Babicheva (Pedagogical Institute of Vologda), and other scholars for their work on Andreev given the political limitations. Davies also notes that 1971 was the 100th anniversary of Andreev's birth, marked by conferences, exhibitions, and publications; following this jubilee year, there emerged a "second generation of Andreev scholars" who pushed the ideological boundaries further than had previous scholars. From the perspective of the early eighties, Davies could not have envisioned the complete collapse of the Soviet Union, but did sense that Andreev had been accepted within an evolving Soviet literary market.[27] Nearly three decades of scholarship since Davies' study has once again reformulated Andreev's life and works. As ideological pressures diminished with the collapse of the Soviet Union, new market forces obliged post-Soviet scholarship to reposition the author's posthumous legacy, while often still paying homage to the original Soviet scholarship and the primogenitors of the consecration process.

With the Soviet Union at the height of stagnation, the demands of the literary market began to change. This was evident in the new ways Andreev's works were contextualized. In 1984 Chuvakov again provided an expert introduction for a collection of stories highlighting Andreev's immense popular success, but was much less concerned with creating an acceptable political biography. Gorky and Korney Chukovsky were still used to substantiate Andreev's literary worth, but gone were references to the French revolution and the struggle between the satiated and starving classes. Now, the psychological factors of Andreev's works were given more attention, while the issue of classification still lingered in the background—Andreev was a realist who, at times, imitated the decadents.[28]

As the market continued to evolve, less attention was paid to Andreev's political credentials and more to the philosophical and psychological elements of his works and biography. Andreev still presented scholars with a difficult life of severe poverty as a child and amazing wealth as an adult, bouts of depression that led to drinking binges and multiple suicide attempts as an adolescent, and extreme emotional behavior that played itself out in both his personal and literary relationships. These biographical oddities began to command a larger role in the consecration of the author. As V. A. Bogdanov writes:

> It is impossible to ignore "the fetter on his soul," which imposed itself on his childhood and adolescence: this was both a hereditary predilection for vodka from his father, destructively manifesting itself within his unbalanced psyche (in 1894 he even attempted

suicide), and a devotion to the philosophy of Arthur Schopenhauer, which presented life as a chain of endless suffering—in life there can be no happiness not for the individual, not for humanity.[29]

As would be expected, a complete break with Soviet scholarly ideology was apparent in the 1994 publication of *Give Back Russia!* (*Vernite Rossiyu!*). This book is a collection of Andreev's articles written between 1916 and 1919 that opposed the Bolsheviks, as well as letters and diary entries from this period, with commentary offered by Chuvakov. By this point writers and literature in post-Soviet Russia had to be promoted in ways similar to those employed in Western literary markets. *Give Back Russia!* featured the anti-Bolshevik rhetoric that Afonin, Iezuitova, and other scholars had avoided at the beginning of the consecration process. The times were still changing, however, and the marketing of Leonid Andreev continued to evolve to meet the new needs (and economic power) of publishers, booksellers, and readers. Now it became important that potential distributors and consumers knew that Andreev had *not misunderstood* the October Revolution, but had eventually come to oppose the Bolsheviks. His stories no longer represented a struggle for the liberation of the toiling masses, and instead ominously predicted the political and social destruction to come. In her introduction, Irina Andreeva, the Andreevs' granddaughter, writes: "Leonid Andreev knew already the future. He knew that the Russia he loved and understood was no longer. Another one exists. And there will be still another—an unrecognizable, cruel, bloody, destructive, starving and unfortunate Russia."[30] Here, it turns out that Andreev was sounding a warning that was not heeded, and post-Soviet society consequently suffered. This was undoubtedly a relevant marketing message for the Russian literary and intellectual audiences of the 1990s.

Responding to the post-Soviet cultural market's new demands, in 1998 Mikhail Kozmenko of the Institute of Modern Literature wrote an introduction for a collection of Andreev's works. Vanished completely were the consecrating quotes of Gorky and references to the October Revolution. Andreev's life was brought to the fore and was now a symbol of the turmoil surrounding the Russian fin de siècle. The focus shifted to the difficulty of classifying Andreev's works: he could easily be included in the list of symbolists or among the realists. Instead of highlighting the author's supposed affinity for the unwashed masses, Kozmenko now claimed that Andreev was "the first to begin to speak about the painful question of gender, of situations when a person simultaneously appears in the guise of an angel and a beast (the stories "The Abyss" and "In the Fog"—1903)."[31] Kozmenko highlighted many of the same stories that in 1971 Chuvakov had connected to the revolutionary struggle, but now they reflected the general restlessness of the turn of the century, and the influence of German pessimistic thought on the author. Kozmenko went so far as to call Andreev the "Russian continuer of Nietzsche," since many of the themes and ideas of the German philosophic tradition could be found in Andreev's works. This was certainly an attractive marketing approach as symbolist and decadent literary trends, and long forbidden thinkers like Friedrich Nietzsche, were once again fashionable in post-Soviet society. Now Andreev was "a genius receiver, mediator, capacitor of the pain of Russia and her fear before an ominous and unknown future."[32]

Andreev's diaries from his Finnish period (1914–1919), which express his anti-Bolshevik sentiments, had recently been published (1994) by European scholars Richard Davies and Ben Hellman (University of Helsinki), and were repeatedly referenced in Kozmenko's introduction. Andreev's life provided an intriguing framework on which to hang his literary and dramatic works, although there were still unattractive elements of his biography that would need to be explained. Previously scholars connected Andreev's drinking, attempts at suicide, depression, and illness with the political and social chaos of early twentieth-century Russia, and now this approach seemed even more plausible as post-Soviet society experienced a similar level of instability. Andreev might now be understood as a representative of a generation that had been pulled in different directions by a complex desire for revolution and political change that was ultimately disappointed by war and betrayed by the Bolshevik seizure of power. For Kozmenko it was Andreev's "Russian nature" that explained the author's symbolism and realism, the unattractive qualities of his biography, his desire for revolutionary change, and his eventual anti-Bolshevik vehemence.[33]

Individual collections of plays and short stories, like those just noted, are only the first layer of consecration in Russian academic culture. Editions of collected works (Sobranie sochinenii) further elevate artists, and the complete collected works (Polnoe sobranie sochinenii) is the ultimate form of recognition conferred upon an author. Andreev was afforded a collected works in six volumes, published from 1990 to 1996. This six-volume collection might be seen as the realization of Afonin's original project. The introduction to volume one, written by Alexei Bogdanov who had done his graduate work at the Institute of Modern Literature, confirms as such: it begins with Andreev's death and the memoirs that were published about him, and then turns to the long period of his literary non-existence that lasted until the 1950s.

As discussed earlier, the focus had shifted to Andreev's life and an understanding of his texts as an extension of the author himself. Bogdanov, therefore, followed the author's life in chronological order and noted early intellectual influences such as Schopenhauer and Nietzsche, while also skirting Andreev's volatile adolescent behavior by alluding to his failed romances and the impact of his father's death. Bogdanov quickly moved to Andreev's literary biography, noting which stories came from what part of the author's life: "Andreev scarcely invented the plots—he simply was able to separate them from what was going on around [him]."[34] Bogdanov's approach was quite safe as it amounted to no more than an exercise in list-making: e.g. these three stories are similar, as are these four, and each grouping can be associated with this or that time in Andreev's life.

Bogdanov admitted as much when he stated that recent publications of Andreev's letters and diaries, as well as memoirs about him, provided concrete sources for deciphering the author's gloomy metaphysical and psychological experiences.[35] Unfortunately, Bogdanov did not go beyond simple identification and categorization to posit a more comprehensive analysis of how Andreev's works interacted with and were influenced by his own life, and by popular discourse within Russian society. Instead, Bogdanov's mention of previous scholarly work was simply recognition of

the efforts undertaken by his professors and colleagues, which had been completed as part of the consecration process.

Andreev's collected works in six volumes must be understood as a major confirmation of the author's symbolic value. At the time there were no such collected works for the likes of Ivan Bunin, who had won the Nobel Prize for Literature in 1933, or Andrei Bely, one of the major theoreticians of the modernist movement, or many other deserving Russian cultural figures. Andreev, like Tolstoy, Dostoevsky, and Chekhov, was deemed worthy of such veneration, and the scholarly activities of many scholars confirmed this status. It is beyond the scope of this study to examine why Andreev, and not Bunin or Bely, was consecrated in this fashion and at this time, but it should be noted that the activities of Andreev's descendants both at home and abroad assisted greatly in the rehabilitation of the author, and were certainly an important factor.

This symbolic capital was further confirmed with the publication of the first volume of the complete collected works of Andreev in 2007. The first volume of a planned twenty-three begins the final stage in the consecration process. Unlike previous collections, there is no attempt to provide a contextual narrative for Andreev's life and works at the beginning of the volume. The first volume *does* offer an explanation for the early works of Andreev, but it is placed at the *end* of the volume as part of the commentary, which is standard.[36] This is a significant development, considering that almost all previous collections provided an introduction as the first text. The fact that the reader of this volume is allowed to first read and digest Andreev's early stories and uncompleted drafts *before* reading the editor's comments is a positive evolution in the consecration process. Power is ceded to the non-expert by not imposing a scholar's interpretation at the collection's beginning. Perhaps, too, the complete collected works of Andreev speaks for itself and signifies the final and ultimate consecration, thereby alleviating the need for some sort of scholarly testimony.

With the final consecration in sight, what does the future hold for the posthumous legacy of Leonid Andreev? What will be the role of the literary scholar? Once the author's symbolic capital has been secured, the posthumous legacy must still be maintained and protected to ensure sustained revenue. Established scholars, journals, graduate students, and academic presses are all intertwined within a complicated power dynamic. In order to succeed as a scholar, one often must participate in cultural production and ritualization of the literary author. Established scholars must be properly cited and the consecration process duly followed since article submissions and book manuscripts will be vetted by these same reputable academics who have made their careers as *specialists* on certain literary movements and/or authors. Edward W. Said calls this cult of professional expertise "pernicious," suggesting that academics are compelled to validate the status quo in order to join "a priestly caste of acolytes and dogmatic metaphysicians."[37]

Such a discussion eventually calls into question the function of the literary scholar and the role of literary scholarship. Is the scholar bound to provide an objective evaluation of the work? Is the role of the scholar to communicate to students and society

the intrinsic value of an author's work? Does an author's work maintain meaning and value without or beyond the opinions of the scholar? One might rightfully question the role that scholars play in consecrating the author while simultaneously claiming the exclusive authority to do so. This often results in a small clique of *experts* on a certain author who guard their superior status within the academic community, and support each other with invitations to participate in a wide range of scholarly activities. To be outside the clique means to be denied the consecrating power, and to have one's symbolic value as a scholar diminished. The only options then are to forgo research on this specific author, to acquiesce to the clique, or to undermine and eventually overthrow the established experts. Most importantly, the value of the author must never be diminished as, ultimately, the author's life and works act as the goose that lays the golden egg for its possessor.

It is, therefore, less the universal or transcendent value of a work and more the continuity of its circulation within the evolving literary market that provides symbolic capital for the author's literary endeavors. Once a work is repeatedly cited, translated, taught, and imitated, it becomes a representative text of a canonical period or movement's high culture.[38] In the case of Leonid Andreev, there have been clear changes in the marketing of the author within the (post-)Soviet literary markets. Beginning in the 1950s and into the 1980s, Andreev and his works were obliged to exhibit affinities with, if not devotion to, the revolutionary movement, and with Bolshevik icons like Gorky and Chukovsky who guaranteed Andreev's political credentials.

As the political situation changed within (post-)Soviet Russia, Andreev became more a weathervane of the chaos surrounding the Russian fin de siècle, reflecting the trepidation with which the Russian intelligentsia met the Bolshevik takeover. Psychological and philosophical themes in his literary and dramatic works received more attention, and the question of literary allegiances became a relevant topic for scholarly attention.

At the beginning of the twenty-first century, the majority of Andreev scholars are now concentrating on the publication of his complete collected works in twenty-three volumes to conclude the consecration process. The lack of a contextualizing preface to this publication indicates that the marketplace might be evolving once again, and new perspectives might eventually be deemed acceptable for intellectual discussion. Arguably, the present discourse cannot maintain the author's *value* into the twenty-first century if scholars continue to only debate the realist/symbolist dilemma. The marketplace demands new points of view that will keep audiences interested, promote book sales, and validate the need for special conferences and commemorative celebrations. Established scholars and scholarship will need to give way to new ideas if the monument is to be maintained, if the place for Andreev in the literary marketplace is to be assured once again.

One question remains: will contemporary Andreev scholars evolve to answer the new market pressures, or will they doggedly cling to the consecrating interpretations of the past? The eventual publication of the author's complete collected works, along

with electronic sharing of documents once held (or hidden) in archives, invites new scholarship and interpretations of Andreev's life and works. On the one hand, this new attention adds to the author's symbolic capital, but on the other hand it possibly threatens the positions of established scholars. As we have discussed, and as Bourdieu emphasizes in the epigraph that began this chapter, the level of collusion or competition between scholars is vital to their own career advancement. Scholars greatly depend upon other scholars for their professional reputations. It will indeed be interesting to once again witness the evolution of scholarly discourse on Andreev's posthumous legacy, dictated by twenty-first century economic pressures.

NOTES

1. See: Afonin, *Leonid Andreev*; Daniil Andreev and Beklemisheva, *Rekviem*; Leonid Andreev, *SOS*; Vadim Andreev, *Detstvo*, quote: 124; Vera Andreeva, *Ekho proshedshego*, 228, 322, 343; Kaun, *Leonid Andreyev,* 76, 131–76; Woodward, *Leonid Andreyev*, 273–74.
2. For a discussion of Russian literary criticism, one might consult the Russian series "Library of Russian Criticism" ("Biblioteka russkoi kritiki"). On the reception of *problematic* authors, one might consult the Russian series *Pro et Contra* that examines such literary figures as Ivan Bunin, Vasily Rozanov, Zinaida Gippius, Vladimir Nabokov, and many more.
3. The critic and the scholar are both involved in evaluative recommendations. Barbara Herrnstein Smith has already engaged this question in her study on the subject. I will note, however, that in (post-)Soviet Russia, there is a difference between literary scholarship, usually found in edited and collected volumes, and literary criticism, often found in newspapers and magazines. This study pays particular attention to literary scholarship.
4. Becker, *Art World*, 137.
5. Smith, *Contingencies of Value*, 10.
6. Bourdieu, *The Field of Cultural Production*, 36–37; 75–76.
7. Bourdieu, *The Rules of Art*, 166–69.
8. Afonin, *Leonid Andreev*, 3.
9. Ibid., 4.
10. There were several collections of Andreev's stories published in the 1950s prior to Afonin's biography, but undoubtedly his biography was the first to attempt to contextualize Andreev's life and works specifically for the Soviet marketplace. See Chuvakov, *Leonid Nikolaevich Andreev,* 24–25.
11. Afonin, *Andreevskii sbornik*.
12. Boris Zaitsev's memoir was originally published in *Kniga o Leonide Andreeve,* 125–47. For a discussion of Zaitsev's interpretation of Andreev's life story see White, *Memoirs and Madness*, 163–79.
13. Afonin, *Leonid Andreev*, 32-33.
14. Ibid., 38. Reference to Andreev's "pathological inclination toward drinking" is found in Fatov, *Molodye gody Leonida Andreeva,* 87.
15. Iezuitova, *Tvorchestvo Leonida Andreeva*, 8–16.
16. Ibid., 16.
17. Ibid., 3.
18. Ibid., 215.

19. Ibid., 238.

20. In 1982 Richard Davies offered a different assessment of this text and Iezuitova's efforts: "Iezuitova has broken much new ground and her work is distinguished by its solid factual basis and deep commitment to establishing the truth, which given the circumstances of Soviet literary studies are its best recommendations." Davies, "Leonid Andreev in Soviet Criticism," 36.

21. Kaun, *Leonid Andreyev*, 165.

22. Afonin, *Leonid Andreev*, 214–25.

23. Bourdieu, *The Rules of Art*, 76–77.

24. Andreev, *Povesti i rasskazy v dvukh tomakh*, Vol. 1, 5.

25. Ibid., 7.

26. One only has to remember the often quoted statement that Andreev made to Gorky, "Who am I? For the noble-born decadents I am a contemptible realist. For the hereditary realists I am a suspicious symbolist." See Anisimov, *Literaturnoe nasledstvo*, 351.

27. Davies, "Leonid Andreev in Soviet Criticism," 33–43.

28. Andreev, *Izbrannoe* (1984), 3–12.

29. Andreev, *Izbrannoe* (1988), 8.

30. Andreev, *Vernite Rossiiu!*, 4.

31. Andreev, *Strannaia chelovecheskaia zvezda…*, 7.

32. Ibid., 8.

33. Ibid., 16.

34. Andreev, *Sobranie sochinenii v shesti tomakh*, Vol. 1, 11.

35. Ibid., 14.

36. "Rannie rasskazy Leonida Andreeva" is in a section clearly marked as commentary for the first volume. Andreev, *Polnoe sobranie sochinenii i pisem v dvadtsati trekh tomakh*, vol. 1, 693–707.

37. Said, *The World, the Text and the Critic*, 2–5.

38. Smith, *Contingencies of Value*, 52–53.

4

Creating Posthumous Legacies

The Power to Consecrate and to Blaspheme Vadim Andreev's *Memories of Childhood*

As discussed in the previous chapters, Vadim Andreev spent much of his life reviving his father's posthumous literary legacy, first within the Russian émigré community and later in the Soviet Union. He published his memoir "A Tale about Father" in Paris in 1938, and again as *Childhood* in the Soviet Union in 1963 and 1968. This Soviet publication coincided with a renewed interest in Leonid Andreev among Soviet scholars during the 1960s and 1970s, and became one of the most influential texts in the rebranding of the author for the Soviet literary market.

By controlling the dissemination of information about his father, Vadim was able to provide literary scholars with a narrative that would appeal to Soviet groupthink. Linking Andreev to Gorky and highlighting his "revolutionary" works, he depicted his father as a passionate individual whose emotions sometimes clouded his better judgment. The success of this rebranding effort is unmistakable: by the 1970s Leonid Andreev was afforded all of the literary celebrations, exhibitions, and, most importantly, publications enjoyed by mainstream authors of the pre-Soviet canon.

As has been noted, many of these same scholars who consecrated Andreev supported the publication of Vadim's memoirs, poems, and novel. Consequently, we must be aware of the intended marketing messages embedded in Vadim's texts. His memoir tells of his difficult childhood and how, at the end of his father's life, Vadim was finally able to sustain a meaningful relationship with a man who had been self-involved and distant for most of his early life. In this intriguing psychological description, Vadim privileges the roles played by his mother and grandmother in the life of his father, while minimizing the role of his stepmother, Anna Ilyinichna. In so doing, Vadim establishes himself as the legitimate representative of Andreev's posthumous legacy, denying others in his family the credibility to speak on his father's behalf.

Vera Andreeva, Leonid Andreev's only daughter, published her own memories of childhood, *A House on the Black Rivulet* (*Dom na Chernoy rechke*), a decade after her brother's memoir.[1] Her memoir counters some of Vadim's negative claims about her mother, and puts forward the notion that Anna Ilyinichna was a good wife consumed by the demands of her husband. According to Vera, Anna Ilyinichna not only satisfied Andreev's every whim, but also greatly aided him in his creative process. The death of her husband was a great tragedy for Anna Ilyinichna, leaving her a shell of her former self. Hence, in Vera and Vadim's differing depictions of the same person, we find more than what Vadim termed a *sibling rivalry*.[2] There is a clear struggle over the posthumous legacy of not only their father, but also his two wives. In the balance was the right to consecrate, to establish a posthumous legacy for Leonid Andreev, and to reap the benefits of this relationship with the author.

Memoir is defined as some portion of a life that is described by its author, and tends to focus on a time in the writer's life that was unusually vivid, such as childhood or adolescence, or that was framed by war, public service, or contact with famous people and important historical events.[3] A specific quality of Vadim's memoir is the relationship between a famous father and his son, himself an aspiring poet and writer. One might argue that this memoir is also about the relationship between the son and his stepmother. Vladimir Barakhov, a leading Soviet scholar in the study of memoir literature, states, "The object and subject in a literary portrait are always interconnected, and to a significant degree this obvious connection completely determines the scope of the portrait, its composition, the arrangement of material, the style."[4] Most certainly, Vadim realized that his memoir would establish a set of references (a posthumous legacy) for Andreev that would be accepted, rejected, and repeated by readers and scholars. This was his opportunity to negotiate his relationships with both his father and Anna Ilyinichna, and present them in the way he wanted them publicly remembered.

As such, there are at least two significant narrative intentions in *Childhood*. The first is that Vadim must depict his relationship with Andreev in a way that will rehabilitate his father's reputation. He must therefore account for Andreev's rapid rise to literary fame and precipitous descent into mediocrity at the end of his life. The second is that in order to maintain control of his father's posthumous legacy, Vadim must position himself as the most credible source of information. If Vadim's siblings or relatives were to appear equally credible, then his power to consecrate would be ceded to others. Realistically, Vadim's only significant competition in this area was his stepmother. Only Anna Ilyinichna and Vadim could speak with first-hand knowledge about Andreev's creative process after 1906, and about his personal life (and struggles) in Vammelsuu and St. Petersburg/Petrograd.

In light of these authorial intentions, we might argue that in assuming this power to consecrate, Vadim also claims the power to blaspheme: he establishes a posthumous legacy for his father that includes his mother, the author's first wife, while excluding as much as possible his stepmother, the author's second wife. He thereby associates his father's successes with his mother, Alexandra Mikhailovna, and, more significantly, pins Andreev's failures at the end of his life on Anna Ilyinichna. Such a claim goes beyond

simple family politics and points to the internal struggles that occur in fashioning and maintaining an author's posthumous legacy for public dissemination.

Bourdieu argues that the symbolic capital of the "creator of the creator" is inscribed in the relationship of the critic and the painter, the agent and the poet, or the son and his famous literary father. The creator's own symbolic value as scholar, critic, or even son is defined by the relationship with the artist, and in opposition to any rivals.[5] The more the artist's reputation is associated with, if not reliant upon, "the creator," the less powerful the symbolic capital of potential rivals. In this sense, we might regard *Childhood* as Vadim's attempt to undercut potential competition in the process of consecration. By undermining Anna Ilyinichna's relationship with her husband, Vadim's own relationship with his father is inscribed with the highest symbolic value. In turn, Vera disputes her brother's claims and attempts to recover a bit of that capital in order to bolster the worth of her mother's efforts. At stake is how Leonid Andreev's domestic life will be remembered, discussed, and reproduced in the future, who will be depicted as positive and negative contributors to his life, and who has the right to manage this posthumous literary legacy.

In this chapter I argue that Vadim essentially erases and discredits Anna Ilyinichna in his memoir for two reasons. First, Vadim's experience with his stepmother was one of alienation, and he isolates her in turn. Second, by dividing Andreev's life into two halves in which relative values are given to each based on family and locale, Vadim positions himself as the only legitimate remaining representative of his father's posthumous legacy. By 1963 Vadim was the sole living heir of the *positive* time in Andreev's life, as well as the only child who could *competently* comment on the second half of his father's life. With this in mind, we might look at his reaction to Vera as a prime example of his desire to eliminate rivals in the process of consecration.

In order to understand the family dynamics that are enacted in the memoir, it is necessary to first appreciate that Andreev did have two clearly defined families. On 10 February 1902 Leonid Andreev and Alexandra Mikhailovna Veligorskaya were married. After Gorky, she is said to have had the largest influence on Andreev's earliest literary works. It is believed that she brought a measure of stability to his daily existence, and, as a result, Andreev "worked hard and well, and consolidated his literary reputation" during this period.[6] After his marriage, Andreev published short stories that reflected his new personal and professional fulfillment, and soon achieved amazing literary fame and financial success. At the end of 1902, the couple welcomed their first child, Vadim.

The Andreevs were living in Berlin when Alexandra Mikhailovna gave birth to their second son, Daniil. She died soon after of a postnatal infection, which was an unexpected blow for her husband. When Andreev returned to Russia, he discovered he could not live in Moscow where he had courted and lived with Alexandra Mikhailovna. He therefore moved to St. Petersburg. The change of locale also meant that Andreev left behind the majority of his friends and literary colleagues—a sacrifice he was willing to make as St. Petersburg was the center of literary activities, and he wanted to be near its theaters and publishing houses.[7]

At this time Andreev met Anna Ilyinichna Denisevich, and after a five-month courtship she became his literary secretary in March 1908. Almost a month later the two were married. Anna Ilyinichna was twenty-five and divorced with a daughter, Nina. She was well educated, spoke several foreign languages, and was very attractive—although disliked by many of Andreev's friends.[8]

On 26 May 1908 the Andreevs moved from St. Petersburg to the Finnish village of Vammelsuu, where Andreev had built a huge villa. There, he was content with his new house and blended family. Anna Ilyinichna played an important role in his literary life, typing as Andreev dictated his literary works well into the early morning. Out of this production came his novel *Sashka Zhegulev* and many short stories, although he mainly concentrated on works for the stage. During the last five years of his life, Andreev's literary fame declined and critics became increasingly harsh. Suffering as many did from the privations of revolution and war, Andreev died in 1919 completely impoverished.

Many of his friends and critics have viewed Andreev's life as comprised of two clearly defined halves. The first half is associated with Moscow, good friends, literary success, and Alexandra Mikhailovna. St. Petersburg and Finland, isolation, failing health, limited literary success, and Anna Ilyinichna represent the second half. Boris Zaitsev, in his 1922 memoir of the author, was one of the first to organize Andreev's life into these two distinct phases categorized by locale and family.[9] Vadim's own memoir adopts this approach, and he thereby ascribes to himself the characteristics of the first, *positive* phase of his father's life. After all, Vadim was the son of Alexandra Mikhailovna, and he had also tried to facilitate his father's creative process, which often required as much emotional support as actual editorial assistance.

I have argued elsewhere, however, that this is not a completely accurate depiction of Andreev's life.[10] We must keep in mind that Andreev experienced extreme poverty while struggling to support his family after his father's unexpected death, suffered from bouts of severe depression, was a binge drinker, and tried to commit suicide more than once during this *first half* of his life. It was during 1901–1906 that Andreev grew incredibly wealthy and famous, yet Sergei Elpatevsky writes that Andreev was not genuinely happy during these years.[11] After marrying for the second time, Andreev built his dream home in the country and spent much of his time engaged with hobbies—photography, painting, and boating. He did stay at the forefront of artistic trends, but most of his attempts at symbolism were unsuccessful, and literary critics grew increasingly negative towards his works. Unfortunately, few Russians lived well during this time of war and revolution, so it is not unusual that Andreev's final years are considered a tragic end to a once brilliant career—although these last five years do not represent his entire Finnish experience.

It is the second half of Andreev's life (1906–1919) that Vadim describes in his memoir, interspersing it with documents or recollections (often not his own) from earlier times. Throughout his memoir Vadim almost completely eliminates discussion of Anna Ilyinichna while interjecting memories of his deceased mother at every possible opportunity. Tellingly, *Childhood* begins with Vadim's description of

his mother: "I have no recollection of my mother's face. She died before I reached the age of four. I cannot remember her, blurred among the first images of early childhood, when I was deprived of her face, eyes and voice. Yet the sensation of my mother runs like a thread through all of my memories."[12] He then states that all of his early memories of his father are also bound up with his mother's presence.

According to Vadim, Andreev's marriage to Anna Ilyinichna did not reestablish a loving family unit. In fact, Vadim experienced his cruelest disappointment when he was not allowed into the newlyweds' bedroom shortly after their arrival home from their honeymoon; Anna Ilyinichna's daughter Nina, however, *was* given this privilege. Vadim realized at this moment that he would no longer be allowed to spend mornings with his father, a pleasure that his stepmother denied him. This first experience of alienation became Vadim's strongest association with his stepmother, and helps explain why she is absent from most of his memoir.

It was with such a negative domestic dynamic that the Andreevs moved into a newly constructed villa in Vammelsuu on the Gulf of Finland. Vadim claims that after the incident when he was banned from his father's bedroom, he began to avoid Anna Ilyinichna. He blames this negative relationship for his sullen and malicious behavior as a child, and argues that it was his stepmother who made him mistrustful and guarded: "Everything about her made me suffer: her voice, her inability to show tenderness and the brusqueness of her movements." According to Vadim, this relationship grew worse after the birth of the couple's first child together, Savva, at which time Anna Ilyinichna began to completely disregard both Vadim and Nina.[13]

From his earliest childhood, Vadim had limited contact with his father and spent only brief moments with him before Andreev would retire either into himself or elsewhere, regarding Vadim as an irritation. It was the knowledge that he was unnecessary to his father that urged Vadim to try to get closer to him.[14] Andreev, however, took special interest in his new son Savva, and this further isolated Vadim. In the absence of a tangible relationship, Vadim awoke early each morning and perused the literary efforts of his father from the preceding night. Andreev preferred to work late into the night, leaving his office quite empty in the early morning. There, Vadim often found half-smoked cigarettes, partially-drunken glasses of dark tea, the remains of a late snack, and his father's unfinished manuscript still in the typewriter. By examining these miscellanies Vadim felt he could share a certain level of intimacy with his father: "Losing the feeling of solitude to which I had become accustomed since infancy, I began to understand that my separation from father was only temporary, and that, sooner or later, I would join him not through feeble and shadowy fantasies but in the real and solid world of adults when I would become unalterably linked to him."[15]

After spending three years at school in St. Petersburg and Moscow, Vadim moved back to Vammelsuu. This move allowed Vadim to once again visit his father's study each morning and read the literary efforts of the night before. Such experiences are important both for a son wanting to connect with his father, and for the representative of Leonid Andreev's posthumous legacy. Vadim claims that he read the complete

evolution of many of his father's works from this period, and gained knowledge that his younger siblings did not. For example, Vadim writes that when a public reading of *Samson in Chains* (*Samson v okovakh*) was organized, he was allowed to attend: "I already knew the play no worse than father. I remembered all of the discarded variations and recognized new scenes."[16] In this way Vadim claims his role as literary executor for his father. After all, the only other person who could have had this kind of access to Andreev's literary efforts was Anna Ilyinichna.

The following summer, Andreev took Vadim with him to Moscow while on business. From Moscow they went to Butovo, a vacation area outside of the city, where Andreev and Alexandra Mikhailovna had spent several summers. Memories of this trip with his father are once again accompanied by recollections of his mother. There, together with Vadim's brother Daniil, Andreev shared stories of their mother and of his own youth.[17]

In order to support his own vague memories of his mother, Vadim recalls positive anecdotes written about her in the memoirs of his father's literary colleagues—Gorky, Vikenty Veresaev, Nikolai Teleshov, Zaitsev, and others. By directly quoting some of these memoirs, Vadim lends support to his own hazy and reclaimed memories. Importantly, Vadim also knew that none of these memoirs afforded a kind word for his stepmother.[18]

In the fall of 1916 Vadim wanted to live with his father, who was working in St. Petersburg for the newspaper *Russian Will* (*Russkaya volya*). Instead, Vadim returned to a boarding house because his father's apartment was supposedly not ready. Vadim writes, "I took this news with extreme mental anguish, made all the worse in that I saw the real reason for this departure from my life. My father, under the influence of Anna Ilyinichna, was growing more and more estranged from me, feeling no sense of kinship or intimacy."[19] This memory of alienation from his own father and stepmother draws Vadim again to positive memories of his mother.

During the summer following the Revolution, Andreev began to pay more attention to Vadim, often taking him boating or cycling in the Finnish countryside. On these trips, Vadim listened to his father's stories—intimate information that would become part of his intangible cultural capital. Vadim was allowed to live with his father in St. Petersburg that academic year, and their relationship developed into what Vadim calls "a friendship, which was broken only with his death."[20] It was almost always on solitary outings, either on skis or in a sleigh, that this friendship between father and son grew. In these reminiscences there is no mention of Anna Ilyinichna or of the couple's children, Vadim's own younger siblings (Savva, Valentin, and Vera). Indeed, most of Vadim's memories of his final two years in Vammelsuu involve solely his father—as if no one else lived with them.

Following his father's death, Vadim graduated from the gymnasium in Helsinki, and then spent only a few months with his family in Finland before leaving to study in France. In France Vadim did not maintain contact with Anna Ilyinichna because he wanted to prove he could live on his own.[21] On one occasion he did stay with her for a few days in Germany, and there he signed over to her his rights to his father's

creative works.[22] Retrospectively, we might suggest that Vadim turned over the financial proceeds of his father's literary legacy to Anna Ilyinichna in the short term, but then took back as much, if not more, symbolic capital from his father's posthumous legacy in the following years at her expense.

In those years shortly after Andreev's death, Anna Ilyinichna was given the opportunity to influence her husband's posthumous legacy in her interviews with Alexander Kaun, who wrote his dissertation on Andreev and published the first English-language biography of the author in 1924.[23] In this study Kaun frequently quotes Anna Ilyinichna as the only person who could give insights into Andreev's life and literary works.[24] It is here that Anna Ilyinichna succeeds in solidifying her place in Andreev's life for all time. Kaun writes:

> By the time of his second marriage Andreyev had become tired of his fellow men, and keenly aware of his solitude among contemporary writers. In his wife, Anna, he found the friendship which gives unreservedly, asking in return nothing but the joy of being able to give more. "My ears," he called her in a letter to his brother, Andrey. He needed her sympathetic ears, her fine response, her delicate sensitiveness, her unflagging alertness, and her constant watchful presence, in order to overcome the depression of his black solitude, and to be in a position to create. With the selfishness of a genius or a child (he possessed the elements of both) he monopolized all her time, all her attention and interest, all her strength and energy. During his creative periods he would dictate his productions to her all night long, striding up and down his huge study, smoking incessantly, consuming quantities of strong tea from the always active samovar, and utterly oblivious of the fatigue and exhaustion of "his ears." Yet though indifferent to her physical weariness, he was exceedingly sensitive about her inner reaction to his dictations, and would stop in the middle of a passage on becoming suspicious concerning the sympathy of his audience.[25]

It is just such a characterization that Vadim seems to want to undermine in *Childhood* some forty years later. Vadim was unwilling to accept the notion that his stepmother contributed to his father's literary production, and wished to dispel the idea that she devoted herself to serving Andreev's every caprice. For Vadim the most egregious statement might have been one of Kaun's footnotes that reads, "Needless to say, Andreyev was able to create in this fashion because his wife enjoyed his tyranny not as the bearing of a cross, but as a great happiness, infinitely proud of her lot, and responding to the beats of his talent's wings with all the fibres of her soul."[26] This footnote suggests that despite the dearth of positive remarks about her in the memoirs of Andreev's contemporaries, Anna Ilyinichna gained access into her husband's posthumous legacy through Kaun.

Many decades later Vadim sent a copy of Kaun's book to the Soviet scholar Afonin, stating that Kaun came to Finland in 1922 specifically to meet with Anna Ilyinichna. Vadim writes, "A. I. behaved jealously towards me upon his arrival. You might say she 'pushed me aside.' With Kaun I was able to exchange only a few phrases." Vadim undermines Kaun's biography, noting that Anna Ilyinichna's faulty

impressions are reflected there. He shares with Afonin his opinion that the book leaves "an unpleasant aftertaste," and is full of biographical and factual mistakes. Again, Vadim discounts the notion that his stepmother influenced or augmented his father's writing, and steers Afonin towards proof (provided by Vadim, of course) of the positive influence of his own mother on Andreev's work.[27]

Evidence of the effectiveness of Vadim's efforts can be found in the next major English-language biography of Andreev by James B. Woodward, which was published in 1969. Throughout his biography Woodward quotes extensively from Vadim's émigré text, and his depiction of Anna Ilyinichna is quite different from Kaun's. Woodward writes, "Memoirists make surprisingly few references to [Anna Ilyinichna], and the impression is given that it was not quite the idyllic partnership of Andreyev's first marriage. [. . .] Nevertheless, Anna Il'inichna seems to have been a woman of singularly strong character and this strength was of inestimable value to him during his arduous last years."[28] Woodward ignores Kaun's assertion that Anna Ilyinichna gained great happiness from Andreev's tyranny and provided him with invaluable literary assistance during his creative periods. In fact, in Woodward's biography of 279 pages, Anna Ilyinichna receives scant mention—much like in Vadim's own memoirs of childhood. It is clear that Vadim influenced the presentation of his father's life and literary works in one of the more important English-language biographies of Andreev.

In 1968 Vadim's sister Vera published her own memoirs in the journal *The Star*.[29] They were republished in 1974 and in 1980 by the publishing house *Soviet Writer* (*Sovetsky pisatel*). In these, Vera almost immediately addresses the bad blood between Vadim and her mother. She remembers that Vadim visited Vammelsuu only during the summers and for the holidays, and points out that he was much older than the rest of the children, and was even asked to tutor them in Russian. Vera understood that Anna Ilyinichna was Vadim's stepmother, but did not give it much thought until one day when Vadim ran sobbing into the room and slammed the door, shouting "Stepmother!" Vera writes, "Such a cold, cruel word! The echo [of this word] spread throughout the entire house and I, for the first time, thought that Vadim might be unhappy, somehow [feel] inferior, the same as if he did not have all of his arms and legs."[30]

Vera admits that tension existed between Anna Ilyinichna and her husband's family. She suggests that the family wanted Anna Ilyinichna to play a larger role in their lives, but that she was too busy taking care of her husband.[31] Not only did she not have time for her husband's family, she did not even have time for her own children (except for Savva). For all of her excuses in defense of her mother, however, Vera does reveal that she herself was uncomfortable in her mother's presence. Anna Ilyinichna was not good at hiding her emotions—especially her disappointment—which often came across as egotism, pride, and ill will towards Andreev's family. Vera insinuates that her mother was too erudite to take part in the Andreevs' petty gossip, and was much better suited to conversations with her husband's literary colleagues—the same who seemingly disliked her.

It is therefore interesting that in a letter to her brother from 17 February 1971, Vera claims that it was Vadim who divided the family into two "clans." One clan included Vadim, Daniil, their grandmother, Alexandra Mikhailovna, and even Leonid Andreev's brothers and sisters. The other clan consisted of Anna Ilyinichna and her children. Andreev himself seemed to be located just outside these two clans. Vera admits that she subconsciously felt these divisions since childhood and had learned to accept them as simple fact, but Vadim's memoir brought these issues into an uncomfortable light. She dislikes the fact that Vadim was very critical of people in his memoirs, speaking about things best left unsaid.[32]

Vadim responds to his sister that if one were to write only positively about the deceased, as she has intimated, then "instead of the living people, about whom we are discussing, one gets only little gold-relief angels, embellished little figures that do not resemble the people, who actually existed."[33] Vadim does not address the issue of clans, but does take his sister to task for her own memoir. Vadim points out that most of her memories are not those of an eight-year-old girl, but of a nearly sixty-year-old woman who has had many of these stories told to her by others. He suggests that his sister should have been more objective in her estimations and memories of people. In this response, Vadim devalues Vera's own potential capital. He argues that she took the memories of others as her own, and then presented them in a subjective way, thereby negating their value. As such, her own memories of their father are irrelevant compared to Vadim's. Vadim also intimates that Vera's depiction of her mother is similarly flawed.

Vadim, who conversed extensively with both Soviet and Western scholars, undermined Vera's position for those researching their father's life and works, and even within his own family.[34] In a letter to his nephew Alexander Vagin, Vadim argues that Anna Ilyinichna is falsely remembered as the victim of Andreev's demands and negative behavior.[35] Vadim states, "everything that Vera writes about [her mother] is so absurd." The problem with Anna Ilyinichna, argues Vadim, was that she was unkind and intellectually limited, yet lived with a person who was strong-willed and original. Anna Ilyinichna might have appeared the victim, but there was no victimization on Andreev's part. Instead of condemning her for her own faults, Vadim asserts, people have tended to feel sorry for Anna Ilyinichna.[36] Such comments are critical of Vagin's own aunt Vera. This response must be interpreted as more than just evidence of a family squabble, and as a real effort by Vadim to stake claim to Andreev's posthumous legacy within the family by undermining alternative interpretations.[37]

A decade after Vadim's death in 1976, Vera published a second memoir, *Echo of the Past* (*Ekho proshedshego),* recalling how her family lived in Vammelsuu, and then in European emigration in the 1920s. Vera describes how distraught Anna Ilyinichna was after Andreev's death—how she lost her reason for living and had a difficult time regaining her sense of self. To support these assertions, Vera published several pages from Anna Ilyinichna's diary. It is possible to read these pages as Vera's attempt to give her mother the *last word* in this family dialogue. Indeed, it is difficult to see Anna Ilyinichna as unkind or cold after reading these entries, at least in her relationship with her husband.[38] Lyudmila Ken and Leonid Rogov write of these memoirs,

"Vera Leonidovna sought, as one of the main goals of [her memoirs], to tell the truth about [her] mother, whose image, in her opinion, had been greatly distorted in the memoirs of contemporaries."[39] Unfortunately for Vera, this publication came too late (1986) to have much of an impact. As with her first memoir, these memories lacked the type of pertinent information that might change the minds of scholars who had already successfully consecrated Leonid Andreev for the Soviet literary market a decade before.[40]

By publishing *Childhood* Vadim established himself as the primary representative of his father's literary reputation. He also depicted his mother's positive influence on her husband's life and works. In the rebranding effort, Vadim constructed Andreev's biography in such a way that Alexandra Mikhailovna received full credit for bringing order to her husband's life and aiding him in his creative endeavors during his rapid rise to literary fame. Alternatively, Vadim argued that Andreev's second wife impeded his father's career and alienated his friends and family. According to Vadim, Anna Ilyinichna's efforts were actually counter-productive, and ultimately damaged Andreev's output and literary reputation.

Vadim was successful in championing these opinions to scholars and family alike. In a letter offering opinions about a French scholar's dissertation on Andreev, Vadim makes sure to underscore the "immense role" that Alexandra Mikhailovna played in the life of her husband. Vadim directs the scholar to what Gorky, Veresaev, Teleshov, and Zaitsev wrote about his mother. He writes, "I personally believe that if my mother had remained living, then the works of L. A. would have developed even further."[41] In a letter to his brother Daniil ca. 1959, Vadim argues this exact point. He rhetorically asks why it was that after the play *Life of Man*—the last work written while Alexandra Mikhailovna was alive—their father did not write anything of great substance. Vadim argues it is because their mother played an important, positive role in Andreev's literary life. She was able to open the potential that lay within their father, in contrast to Anna Ilyinichna: "Anna Ilyinichna as it turns out was the most unsuccessful, fatal traveling companion." Vadim argues that unlike their mother, Anna Ilyinichna had no understanding of literature or art: "She was entirely a person of the earth, exactly that weight, which for eleven years pulled father down." Vadim admits that he might be harsh in his judgment, "but I cannot get away from the idea that with another person father would have been different."[42]

Vadim was not alone in his use of the memoir as a tool to gain control over the posthumous legacy of a famous writer. Charles Isenberg has written cogently about how Nadezhda Mandelstam's *Hope Against Hope* (*Vospominaniya*) and *Hope Abandoned* (*Vtoraya kniga*) are not only aimed at preserving the memory of the poet Osip Mandelstam, but are also concerned with canon formation. Nadezhda positions herself within the memoir as the sole individual who might give meaning and a sense of order to her husband's poetry, and marginalizes other close friends and colleagues such as Anna Akhmatova and Lydia Chukovskaya. She reimagines her husband by turning him into a representative figure of a certain generation of poets, and establishes a philosophy for him—how he lived his life and how he met

his fate. Ultimately, Nadezhda constructs a canonical image of Mandelstam to match her own ordering of his poetry. Her success in this endeavor is evident by looking at the organization of Mandelstam's *Collected Works* (*Sobranie sochinenii*): it follows the prescriptions she set down in her memoirs.[43]

Vadim's efforts have also been rewarded: *Childhood* became an iconic text in the rebranding of Leonid Andreev. Vera tried to counter this in her own memoirs of childhood, but as Vadim accurately noted, her memories were often too vague to effectively challenge Vadim's rebranding efforts. It is important to examine this family conflict because, as Bourdieu might argue, it was a struggle to legitimate the capital of consecration. In *Childhood* Vadim assumes the power to consecrate his father's legacy and to construct his official biography. Vadim also establishes his own relationship with the author, and therefore his own symbolic value as a disseminator of tangible and intangible culture in relation to his competition—other family members who might offer an alternative version or act as the executor of Andreev's literary legacy. As discussed throughout this chapter, there are two main reasons why Vadim denied Anna Ilyinichna an important role in his father's posthumous legacy. One is personal, caused by Vadim's difficult relationship with his stepmother. The second is *economic*, by which Vadim positions himself as the only legitimate remaining representative of his father's posthumous legacy.

Once one gets beyond the personal aspect of their conflict, it is apparent that both Vadim and Vera attempted to transform intangible memories into tangible texts with relative values. The resulting texts were created in order to reestablish Andreev's posthumous legacy within the Soviet cultural market place. Both Vadim and Vera wished to ensure that their mothers were also part of that literary legacy and consecrated alongside the author. In this case, however, Vadim's memories of childhood were perceived as more *valuable*, and therefore gained greater currency in the codification of Andreev's official biography. Vera's memoirs possibly came too late, and lacked the valuable biographical details that scholars coveted. Because Vadim's text retained more symbolic value, it exercised a greater influence on his father's posthumous legacy. As a result, the relative positive and negative *values* for the two halves of Leonid Andreev's life persist to the present day. Alexandra Mikhailovna has been consecrated along with her husband, while Anna Ilyinichna's influence and contribution, not surprisingly, remains in doubt.

NOTES

1. Vera Andreeva, *Dom na Chernoi rechke*.
2. OGLMT, f. 49, no. 7903/17 of. Letter of 1 August 1966 to L. Afonin.
3. Zinsser, "Introduction," in *Inventing the Truth*, 14-15.
4. Barakhov, *Iskusstvo literaturnogo portreta*, 13.
5. Bourdieu, *The Rules of Art*, 168–69. Bourdieu writes: "The only legitimate accumulation, for the author as for the critic, for the art dealer as for the publisher or the theatre director, consists

in making a name for oneself, a name that is known and recognized, the capital of consecration—implying a power to consecrate objects (this is the effect of a signature or trademark) or people (by publication, exhibition, etc.), and hence of giving them value, and of making profits from this operation" (148).

6. Teleshov, *Kniga o Leonide Andreeve*, 157.

7. Leonid Andreev, *SOS*, 38.

8. Chukovsky states that no one could stand Andreev's new wife and that they had begun to "boycott" her. See Chukovsky, *Dnevnik 1901–1929*, 39.

9. Zaitsev, *Kniga o Leonide Andreeve,* 125–47.

10. White, *Memoirs and Madness*, 163–79.

11. Elpat'evskii, "Leonid Nikolaevich Andreev," 276.

12. Vadim Andreev, *Detstvo*, 5.

13. Ibid., 46–47. This section was added to the Soviet version.

14. Ibid., 22.

15. Ibid., 69.

16. Ibid., 118.

17. Dr. Filipp Aleksandrovich Dobrov was married to the older sister of Vadim's mother, Elizaveta Mikhalovna. Daniil was raised by the Dobrovs in Moscow following Alexandra Mikhailovna's death.

18. One can speculate as to why that is, but when asked by Kaun, Anna Ilyinichna responded: "Strange as it may perhaps seem, during the ten years of his life with me [Andreev] drifted apart from his former chums and colleagues. He continued to love them tenderly, but as one loves one's childhood playmates or one's old couch. . . ." See Kaun, *Leonid Andreyev*, 85.

19. Vadim Andreev, *Detstvo*, 152.

20. Ibid., 189.

21. Vadim Andreev, *Istoriia odnogo puteshestviia*, 237.

22. Ibid., 246.

23. Kaun, *Leonid Andreyev*. In her memoirs Vera mentions interviews that took place in France. See Vera Andreeva, *Ekho proshedshego*, 356.

24. Kaun, *Leonid Andreyev,* 22–23; 26; 32; 53; 65; 77; 79; 82; 84–86; 89; 118; 131; 138; 144; 160; 163; 169; 180; 215; 264; 299–300.

25. Ibid., 85–86.

26. Ibid., 86.

27. OGLMT, f. 49, no. 7903/7 of. Letter of 7 February 1968 to L. Afonin.

28. Woodward, *Leonid Andreyev*, 190.

29. Vera Andreeva, *Dom na Chernoi rechke*, 31–123. A fragment of her memoir was published two years earlier as "When I was little" ("Kogda ia byla malen'koi"), 55–60.

30. Vera Andreeva, *Ekho proshedshego*, 21.

31. Ibid., 46.

32. LRA, MS. 1350 / 1259. Letter of 17 February 1971. For all of her assertions that Vadim had brought certain unattractive issues to light, Vera does support some of her brother's claims in her own memoir. "They said that [grandmother] was much more attached to Aleksandra Mikhailovna, father's first wife." See Vera Andreeva, *Ekho proshedshego*, 47.

33. LRA, MS. 1350 / 1260. Letter of 24 February 1971.

34. In a letter to Afonin of 1966, Vadim intimated that Vera was jealous of his literary success and suggested that it might be something akin to sibling rivalry. See: OGLMT, f. 49, no. 7903/17 of. Letter of 1 August 1966 to L. Afonin. Vadim continued to undermine Vera's

memoir to other Andreev scholars. On 13 September 1968, he wrote to the Soviet literary scholar Valery Bezzubov that his sister's memoir suffered from the fact that she was born in 1911 and this accounts for the "confusion in chronology of events and the lack of self-reliance in the memoir." See LRA, 1370 / 37. Letter of 13 September 1968 to V. Bezzubov.

35. Alexander Vagin was the grandson of Andrei Nikolaevich Andreev (Leonid's younger brother) and son of Irina Andreevna Andreeva (Vadim's cousin).

36. LRA, MS. 1350 / 1823. Letter of 21 October 1971.

37. Of some interest is how Anna Ilyinichna's own children reacted to Vadim's memoir of childhood. Savva wrote to his brother in 1947 claiming that Vadim was blinded by jealousy, and that it seemed in the memoir that Vadim did not even love his own father. Vadim answered in a draft letter that there were several sides to every story, and that Savva was too young to remember most of what happened. Specifically to Savva's charge that he was "blinded by jealousy," Vadim stated that he was never jealous of his stepmother, but was jealous of Andreev's love for him, Savva, although this had not negatively influenced their relationship. Vadim also claimed that Anna Ilyinichna had read the émigré version and corrected only one minor fact. "About other mistakes mama never said anything to me." Vadim wrote that it was in fact Anna Ilyinichna who had a faulty memory and it was for this reason that he had left her out of most of his memoir, so that he did not have to argue with her over his own memories. See LRA, MS. 1350 / 1196. Draft letter to Savva Andreev. In the letter to Valentin quoted below (MS. 1350 / 1236), Vadim claims that Savva wrote to him in 1947.

Nearly two decades later, Valentin commended his brother for writing a book that only he could write, as the rest of the children were too young to remember much. Valentin, however, did note that his mother was barely mentioned in the course of the ten years covered in the memoir. See LRA, MS. 1350 / 1201. Letter of 17 January 1964. Vadim answered Valentin, arguing that Anna Ilyinichna appeared little in his memoir because she was still alive when he originally wrote the text—"to write about a living person is always difficult." Even so, Vadim claimed that she suggested: "about me you had the right to write [something] worse." Vadim noted Savva's letter from 1947, suggesting that it must have been sent on Anna Ilyinichna's behest. Specifically, Savva had asked why Vadim had not mentioned their parents' co-authorship of *Samson in Chains* and other works. Vadim stated to Valentin that it was because Anna Ilyinichna had loved her husband too much to be a good judge and critic. She only agreed and supported him, even when Andreev was mistaken in his aesthetic judgments. The second reason offered by Vadim was that their relationship was complex and would have demanded too many pages to disentangle their misunderstandings of each other. Vadim suggested that Anna Ilyinichna never understood him, and that until her death was afraid he would read Andreev's diaries in which there were harsh characterizations of her, her family, and even of Savva—and that he would quote them in his memoirs. Anna Ilyinichna supposedly also worried about the influence that Vadim, as the eldest male, would have on Valentin and Savva. The third reason was Vadim believed that the situation between Anna Ilyinichna and Andreev was not completely clear. Again, he noted that Valentin (like Vera and Savva) was too young, but he, Vadim, had witnessed their problems. He had, therefore, wanted to avoid for the most part a discussion in his memoirs of their difficult relationship. It was for these reasons and many more that Vadim was unable to provide a full portrait of his stepmother. "If I were to begin to write the entire book—completely—now, maybe I would write it differently, but [write it] better—I do not know." See LRA, MS. 1350 / 1236. No date is given for this letter, but it is seemingly in response to the letter just noted.

38. Vera Andreeva, *Ekho proshedshego*, 210-13.

39. Ken and Rogov, *Zhizn' Leonida Andreeva*, 365.

40. Vera says as much in a letter to Kornei Chukovsky from 1961, when she asked the author and family friend to read the manuscript of her *House on the Black Rivulet*. She states that she did not write it with her father's literary works in mind, but in order to give her impression of the "strange atmosphere of our home." She admits that in the text there is "nothing new or interesting" about her father. See OGLMT, F. 12, op. 2, no. 212 (KP 34325 of). Letter of 2 March 1961 to Kornei Chukovsky. She admits as much again in a letter to Mr. Iushchenko when inquiring about the possibility of publishing some fragments from her memoirs in his journal. She admits also that Leonid Afonin argued that the memoir did not "give a clear picture of the writer's character and even reduced his significance." She disagrees with this opinion, but emphasizes that these are her childhood impressions. See OGLMT, F. 12, op. 2, no. 213 (KP 34331 of). Letter of 15 March 1961 to Mr. Iushchenko.

41. See LRA, MS. 1350 / 1935. To whom this letter is written and the date are unknown.

42. LRA, MS. 1350 / 1175.

43. Isenberg, "The Rhetoric of Nadezhda Mandelstam's *Hope Against Hope*," 168–82.

5

Market Pressures

Vadim Andreev's Incomplete Memoiristic Journey

> I was and [still] am a representative of the pre-revolutionary Russian intelligentsia. In 1962, while I was sitting in the Pushkin House [archive] deciphering father's manuscripts, the literary scholars-staff began to drop into the room where I was working. The entire day, they would drop by, look around and leave. My cousin, who was working in those days in the Pushkin House [archive], told me: "Muratova (professor of literature, a specialist in the twentieth century), told the students that if they wanted to look at a real member of the Russian intelligentsia, then they should take a look at the son of Leonid Andreev."
>
> —Vadim Andreev to Nikolai Braun, 5 December 1972.[1]

In the preceding chapters, I discussed how Vadim Andreev managed his father's posthumous literary legacy by deftly dispersing the remaining biographical and literary documents available to him in order to elicit further study of his father's oeuvre by scholars in the Soviet Union. A secondary benefit of this enterprise was that Vadim himself was also given access to Soviet publishers for his own artistic endeavors. In addition to poems and a novel, Vadim was particularly interested in publishing within the Soviet Union his personal memoirs about his European exile. However, the publication of these memoirs posed a dilemma: how to tell this story without alienating those who had supported his artistic efforts (and the rebranding of his father)? Vadim's solution to this dilemma was to alter his initial plans: the complete journey he originally intended to tell is not realized in his memoir. This chapter argues that the incomplete narrative arc of Vadim's *The History of One Journey* (*Istoriya odnogo puteshestviya*) is a consequence of market pressures applied, implicitly and explicitly, by Soviet cultural merchants. It speaks to the economic pressures inherent in marketing literature and posthumous legacies.

As early as 1937, Vadim had written to Sergei Rittenberg about his plans for a memoiristic trilogy: *Childhood and Father, Civil War,* and *Berlin 1923 and Poetry.*[2] The following year he wrote to Vladimir Semichev about his plans for a trilogy that would provide meaning for both his past and present.[3] At that same time, he published "A Tale about Father" in a leading Paris émigré journal. This text eventually appeared as *Childhood* within the Soviet Union in 1963 and in 1968. Vadim further realized his dreams with "The History of One Journey" ("Istoriya odnogo puteshestviya") in the journal *Moscow* (*Moskva*) in 1966, and "A Return to Life" ("Vozvrashcheniye v zhizn") in *The Star* in 1969. These two memoirs, along with a third "After Twenty Years" ("Cherez dvadtsat let"), were all published as one book entitled *The History of One Journey* in 1974.

In reading these memoirs, special attention must be paid to the way in which Vadim describes his exile from and eventual return to the Soviet Union. Unlike other émigré writers, Vadim continued to write only in Russian and did, eventually, publish his works in his homeland. Vadim's marketing strategy, therefore, was much different than that of Vladimir Nabokov, who wrote exclusively in English after 1940 (Nabokov's strategies will be discussed in detail in the following chapters). As Vadim notes:

> What concerned me from the very beginning of my life abroad was that I knew for sure that I could not and would not become a German or any other type of writer—only a Russian [writer]. The longer I lived abroad, the more boundless became my Russianness, the more unreservedly I cherished the Russian language, becoming deaf to the language spoken around me.[4]

Relevant is Vadim's depiction of his experience in exile, his understanding of Russia, and especially how he made this marketable in the Soviet Union. Vadim had grown up the son of a literary celebrity, had lived most of his adult life in emigration, and had developed a very different concept of the *ideal* Russia than most of his intended (or potential) Soviet audience. Even when so many émigrés had created new lives for themselves abroad, especially following World War II, Vadim did not abandon the Russian language in his poetry and prose for French or English. He did not try to focus his energies on the Paris, New York, or Geneva literary scenes. Vadim's intention always was to write in Russian, and for a Russian audience within the Soviet Union. Yet, the question was, how could this be done when access to the Soviet literary market was strictly regulated by government ideology and, especially, when Vadim's own life was so different from the Soviet *ideal*?

In economic environments, cultural relationships are understood as transactions within a framework of markets, exchange value, price, and other such concepts.[5] Within the Soviet Union money played a secondary role in relation to the *good will* needed to secure the support of those in positions of power. In a government-controlled literary market, political influence and the correct ideological message are more important than profit margins and distribution rights. Power, collusion, and consecration all played significant factors in both the rehabilitation of Leonid

Andreev's literary reputation and in the publication of Vadim's memoirs of life in emigration. Therefore, it was not monetary *profits* that Vadim gained from his efforts, but access to Soviet publishers for his own creative works not directly related to his father. The money was insignificant, while entrée into the Soviet literary market was very valuable.

Berg argues that the thaw period allowed for and legitimized new players within Soviet social space, which enhanced the role of literature in society. Repressed Russian, émigré, and international literary figures benefited from this new investment in symbolic capital.[6] When discussing the Soviet literary marketplace, we are not drawing comparisons to Western models of profit margins and unit sales, but are instead exploring the specific roles that scholars, editorial boards, censors, publishers, and Soviet bureaucrats in charge of culture played in securing for Vadim Andreev the *privilege* to be published. Here, Bourdieu's theory can be appropriately applied to the Soviet thaw period because during that time symbolic (rather than real financial) capital was created in order to satisfy individuals and organizations, and a centralized censorship mechanism controlled access to journals, publishing houses, and bookstores.

Within such an economic framework, the specific focus of this chapter will be the incomplete narrative arc of Vadim's *The History of One Journey*, interrupted by Soviet market forces. After establishing his literary and biographical lineage in *Childhood*, Vadim attempts to position himself as part of a cultural continuum that outlasted war, revolution, and emigration in order to unite fin de siècle Russia with the Soviet Union of the thaw period. "The History of One Journey" establishes the idea that Vadim knew only an idealized Russia, and that returning to fight the Bolsheviks would not help to realize that ideal. As a result, "A Return to Life" suggests that Vadim might act as a cultural bridge that could unite elements of imperial Russia with its new Soviet version—Vadim would work as a conduit for those ideal qualities to be presented through poetry and literature. Vadim's background and upbringing, as well as his specific émigré experience, seemed to prepare him for this purpose. Yet, in "After Twenty Years" Vadim disrupts this narrative arc and writes of his work with the French resistance to undermine the Nazis. Instead of this wartime experience, one expects that Vadim would write about how he championed the work of his father, Anna Akhmatova, Nikolai Zabolotsky, and others, and thus completed the expected arc by reuniting elements of the Russia he knew as a child with the Soviet Union of his adulthood.[7] This chapter offers possible reasons for Vadim's retreat from this message, and suggests that the narrative arc is actually realized in his daughter's memoirs published in the West. Once again, these conclusions point to hidden factors controlling literary markets and posthumous legacies.

The scholar Lydia Ginzburg argues that the memoirist must harness the latent energy found in historical, philosophical, and psychological elements of the human experience, and combine this with aesthetic considerations to create form, image, and representation in order to provide meaning for an event. For Ginzburg, documentary literature (autobiography, biography, memoir, etc.) thrives on this tension

between fact and fiction. The special quality of documentary literature lies in an orientation toward authenticity, of which the reader never ceases to be aware, but which is far from being the same as factual exactitude. Inherent in the genre is a kind of *unreliability*. Only pure information (e.g., names, dates) can be verified; beyond this, selection, judgment, and point of view are creative decisions made by the author.

Yet factual deviations, according to Ginzburg, do not interfere with the authenticity of the work's structural principle. After all, the issue is not the invention of facts, but rather the organization of them—the selection and creative combination of events. Ginzburg suggests that even these factual deviations may result in a higher truth. The memoir, consequently, is accurate as a historical document, as a depiction of people and events that shaped the political and social discourse of an era. Ginzburg also argues that personalized depictions of events tell us something on a psychological level about the memoirist himself, as well as about his contemporaries. How he created himself as the main character of the memoir, how he constructed his life as a struggle with historical forces, how he succumbed to the plot structures of his era—these tell as much or more about the memoirist than the actual words in his text.[8]

Besides keeping the pressures of the Soviet marketplace in mind, when examining Vadim's memoirs we must also acknowledge that a tale of exile and return has its own very specific demands. How can one depict exile from Russia and return to the Soviet Union in a way that would resonate with audiences, but still satisfy the cultural merchants (government officials, publishers, censors, editors, critics)? As Edward Said notes, the modern period was anxious, estranged, and alienated—an age of the refugee displaced by Fascism, Communism, and other forms of oppression.[9] Unlike most exiles, however, Vadim did not have to forgo his mother tongue, was eventually able to share with his countrymen his literary endeavors and memoirs, and did enjoy a return of sorts to his homeland. Yet, the country to which Vadim returned as an adult was not the same country he left as an adolescent. In this psychological space between an imperial Russian past and a Soviet present, Vadim was forced to create his own particular exilic experience.

Vadim was born on 7 January 1903 (new style) in Moscow to Leonid Andreev and Alexandra Mikhailovna (née Veligorskaya). They were living in Berlin in 1906 when Alexandra Mikhailovna gave birth to their second son, Daniil; she died soon after of a postnatal infection. When Andreev returned to Russia still quite distraught, he decided to live in St. Petersburg, where Vadim attended the Lentovskaya gymnasium. In March 1908 Andreev married Anna Ilyinichna Denisevich. Soon after, the Andreevs moved from St. Petersburg to the Finnish village of Vammelsuu, where Andreev had built a huge villa. It is here that Vadim concentrates most of his memoir *Childhood*, in which he tells of his father's self-indulgence and emotional isolation. With Anna Ilyinichna, Andreev had three more children (Savva, Vera, Valentin), which further isolated Vadim from his father. Only in the final years of the author's life did their relationship evolve into what Vadim calls a genuine friendship. Following the death of his father in 1919, Vadim graduated from the gymnasium in

Helsinki, and then spent only a few months with his family in Finland before leaving to study in France.

The History of One Journey begins with Vadim's military training in France, and his return to Russia to fight against the Bolsheviks. He and his comrades arrive in a newly independent Georgia, but without the proper entry visas. Their problematic citizenship is remedied when it is learned that Vadim is the son of Leonid Andreev. After befriending and then fighting alongside Georgian Socialists against the Red Army, Vadim and his companions become disenchanted and abandon their military exploits.

For much of the first half of the memoir, the question arises of what *Russia* represents for these men and, thus, for what are they fighting. In one discussion it is suggested that their contradictory notions of what constitutes Russia are largely idyllic. One companion responds, "Russia is a geographical understanding. With our will, we can make it how we want it." Vadim, however, disagrees, sensing that their collective will is not enough to reconstitute this perfect Russia.[10] During another discussion, it becomes apparent that Russia is something different for each man:

- Do you notice that we talk less about Russia?
- That is because the closer we get, the less we need to speak.
- Do you think that we are like "raskolniki"—fighting over symbols?
- Just like an intellectual, you don't understand that the change is within, not just because Nikon changed the words in the bible. I don't accept Communism because it is not a Russian influence.
- What is Russian? What makes one Russian? This is not the first time that Russia has reheated a meal and made it Russian—the battle on the ice, at the river Kalka, at Borodino, still Russia has not been wiped off the face of the earth.
- Be careful where you are going. Those are long-ago battles.

Vadim then closes his eyes and starts to think about Orel, where his father was born, and other places in Russia he has never seen. Tellingly, he cannot bring forward any real images.[11] Vadim's nostalgic retreat to and understanding of Russia is mediated by his father's life, and not by his own. As we will see, Vadim positions himself as a transitional figure uniting the waning period of imperial Russia with the Soviet Union of the 1960s by functioning as singular cultural continuum.

After their disappointing military campaign, Vadim and his companions live in a refugee camp for a time before going to Constantinople. It is there that Vadim learns of the death of the poet Alexander Blok, and with this news begins to write poetry once again. He realizes that the Russia he created for himself no longer exists. The journey, therefore, is a symbolic one in which Vadim never reaches his destination because the homeland of his father—a Russia he barely knew—has vanished. Within this idea are notions of class and culture that are always implicit, if not particularly explicit, in Vadim's memoir.

Bourdieu argues that the human *habitus* is a socially acquired system of dispositions. This is manifest in such diverse characteristics as opinions, deportment,

and posture—all of which have a direct relationship with behavior and persona. For example, a wealthy banker who enters a longshoremen's club will most likely immediately alienate the patrons if he does not adopt some of the habitus of the dockworkers. This might mean not only modulating about what he speaks, but also changing his physical comportment and mannerisms—the drink he orders and how he conducts himself at the bar. Habitus is a result of the upbringing and education that influence the individual's perception. It is a product of a collective history organized by objective principles such as language and economy that are reproduced as durable dispositions. In this case, Vadim was raised the son of a famous literary figure during the Russian fin de siècle, and therefore perceives himself as not only this, but also as an exiled poet from that imperial time and space.

Bourdieu argues that the struggle for social distinction is a fundamental dimension of all social life. In modern societies, there are two distinct systems of social hierarchy: economic and cultural. As already noted, intellectuals often function as specialists of cultural production and creators of symbolic power. Culture can be used to legitimate social differences, thereby securing the habitus of the dominant class. Bourdieu argues that aesthetic disposition, as formed by the bourgeois habitus, acts as cultural capital that the dominant class exploits to naturalize its dominant status. *The History of One Journey* reflects the trajectory and strategies of Vadim's habitus within the field of cultural production—that of a poet and the son of Leonid Andreev, both of which Vadim invests with symbolic power.[12]

During one drunken discussion about the revolution and civil war, recriminations are made between Vadim and his comrades: "You want to conduct a civil war in white gloves, like the Socialist-Revolutionaries in [19]17 wanted to have a revolution. The Revolution turned out to be stronger than the revolutionaries, the civil war destroyed the volunteerism. . . ." Vadim argues that the revolution died because the volunteerism was not selfless. In turn, he is compared to Don Quixote.[13] Among these men, Vadim is perceived as weak and ineffective. It is only when he returns to his own natural habitus that he finds personal satisfaction. He begins to attend a Russian school in Constantinople, "I understood that without Russian literature, without the Russian language and greater yet, without Russia, I would never be able to find myself."[14] It is there among other intellectuals that the poetic Russia of Anna Akhmatova, Konstantin Balmont, and others returns Vadim to life (as this section of the memoir is titled). For Vadim, his habitus is the product of history—a system of dispositions based on a past that survives into the present and future by the perpetuation of certain past practices.[15] Hence, the reader of this memoir expects that Vadim's journey will lead him back to his homeland, allowing him to unite the past with the present via the cultural continuum of Anna Akhmatova, Leonid Andreev, and other similar figures.

This raises several issues that will be examined further in this chapter: 1) Vadim's self-perception and his knowledge of Russia are both mediated through his famous literary father. 2) Vadim's habitus is, in part, a poetic Russia of the fin de siècle. 3) The memoir confers symbolic power on his status as a representative of an *ideal*

Russia. As noted, it is just this personalized depiction of events that is compelling because it tells us something about Vadim on a psychological level. 4) It is fascinating to view this memoir in light of Vadim's greater desire to return his own works (and the works of his father) to the Soviet literary market. In negotiating the demands of the Soviet literary market, Vadim is not able to unify the themes noted above with the Soviet realities of the 1960 and 1970s, leaving the memoir seemingly incomplete. Vadim is simply unable to reconcile his habitus with the norms of the present-day Soviet Union, and thus, it turns out to be impossible to create a cultural continuum between his ideal Russian fin de siècle and his Soviet present.

This assertion that Vadim wanted to create such a continuum is supported by his willingness to fashion a Soviet version of his father that would appeal to censors, scholars, and critics in the Soviet Union. Evidence suggests that Vadim was willing to manipulate (edit) his father's documents to conform to the prevailing political requirements of the Soviet Union, he was willing to work with Soviet scholars to publish a version of his father's posthumous and literary legacy that was acceptable to Soviet censors, and he sided with Soviet scholars in delaying the publication of his father's diary in the West, favoring the Soviet over the émigré literary market. Vadim's actions are not surprising, considering the Russian reading audience outside of the Soviet Union was rather limited, and the only way to truly gain a significant readership (beyond academics and émigrés in the West) was to satisfy the demands of the Soviet literary market. Furthermore, Vadim's efforts were rewarded when *Childhood* became an iconic text in the rebranding of Leonid Andreev. In this memoir, Vadim assumed the power to consecrate his father's legacy and to construct his official biography; he also established his own relationship with the author, and therefore solidified his role as *creator* in contrast to his competition—other family members who might offer an alternative version or act as the executor of Andreev's literary legacy within the Soviet marketplace. These actions suggest that Vadim was intent on reuniting elements of Russia's cultural past with its Soviet present.

Cultural capital can be inherited as social class from one's family, but is not exclusively based on economic standing. The cultural surroundings of childhood—the books read, the music played, and the poetry recited—all constitute an individual's cultural capital. This is then combined with academic capital to inform one's habitus as a member of a social class. As David Swartz notes, "Habitus is fairly resistant to change, since primary socialization in Bourdieu's view is more formative of internal dispositions than subsequent socialization experiences. There is an ongoing adaptation process as habitus encounters new situations, but this process tends to be slow, unconscious and tends to elaborate rather than alter fundamentally the primary dispositions."[16] This internal disposition is apparent in Vadim's own self-representation: although Vadim depicts himself as reluctant to use his father's name, he chooses to describe numerous situations when being the son of Leonid Andreev had real value.

In one instance, because of his father's literary reputation Vadim is asked to help write a movie script.[17] In another, his lineage gains him and his comrades release from a Georgian prison. Vadim states it is difficult for him to use his father's name

in order to elicit aid or special treatment, yet he does exactly this. When his famous name saves him from prison, the ensuing discussion is comical as the Georgian official confuses the work and reputation of Leonid Andreev with that of Maxim Gorky, thereby further enhancing Vadim's social capital.[18] Another time, Vadim is admitted to the Russian Lyceum in Constantinople, and once there is accepted into a poetic circle because of his father's literary reputation.[19] He rarely himself offers this information, but since it is written that he is the son of Leonid Andreev under *occupation* in his passport, his social origins are a significant part of his official, documented self.

On another occasion, Vadim is asked by Andrei Bely to sign an open letter in support of Gorky, but he is unable to sign his own name as it holds no real symbolic value. Vadim is even more uncomfortable with signing it as the son of Leonid Andreev, which does carry significantly more capital given his father's complicated relationship with Gorky.[20] Clearly, being the son of Leonid Andreev was not always an advantage. For example, after Vadim published some of his poems in emigration, Vladimir Gessen claimed that the son of Leonid Andreev, the author of the anti-Bolshevik "S.O.S.," had changed sides and betrayed the ideals of the White movement. Gessen read Vadim's poems as an extension of Leonid Andreev's own late political views during the last years of his life. Vadim took offense and challenged Gessen to a duel, but the challenge was ignored.[21] Still, despite such negative aspects of being associated with Leonid Andreev, Vadim is unable (and possibly unwilling) to escape the designation "son of" as it provides him with the social capital necessary to liberate himself from Georgian prisons, fraternize with famous literary figures like Bely, and even publish his memoirs in the Soviet Union.

It is this moniker that not only marks him as other, but also provides Vadim with a type of informal academic capital (even though he received little formal education). Vadim recalls how he saw in a gentleman's coat pocket Innokenty Annensky's *Cypress Box* (*Kiparisovy larets*) while eating in a cafeteria for refugees. He recognized the book of poetry that had once been in his father's library. Vadim begins a conversation with the gentleman, who is surprised by Vadim's knowledge of poetry and shows his own cultural elitism by asking if one can really talk about poetry in a cafeteria. Of this Vadim states, "I was a little bemused by his remark. In my opinion, one could talk about poetry always and everywhere, as long as there is someone with whom to speak." The man retorts that for him, poetry is like a religious ceremony.[22]

Bourdieu argues that artistic taste often acts as a marker of social class: "Taste classifies, and it classifies the classifier."[23] Although in the above anecdote Vadim articulates a more democratic understanding of poetry and education than the man, there is still a sense here, and in other parts of the memoir, that poetry does indeed have cultural and academic value, which elevates individuals to a higher intellectual realm. This is apparent when Vadim's interlocutor argues that one needs a university education to truly understand poetry. Vadim, however, proves with his knowledge of Nikolai Nekrasov's poetry that this is not so. He also exhibits a great deal of inherited cultural capital, if not exactly academic capital. This impresses the gentleman, who later admits to having read some of Vadim's poetry.[24] Vadim asserts that as the son of

a successful literary figure, he has received an education that equals or surpasses that of some intellectuals. His present status as a refugee and an exile does not diminish his overall social capital.

Vadim's academic capital further increases when he is invited to attend the Russian gymnasium in Sofia, Bulgaria. Here, as in the Lyceum, Vadim's formal education is supplemented with informal discussions about the poetry of Russian Silver Age poets. Said notes, "Exile is predicated on the existence of, love for, and bond with, one's native place; what is true of all exiles is not that home and love of home are lost, but that loss is inherent in the very existence of both."[25] In the poetry of Akhmatova, Blok, and others are found elements of Vadim's ideal Russia; their poetry therefore provides a level of cultural continuity for those Russians living abroad, functioning as a common point of reference for all Russian intellectuals. As Said notes, the sense of loss makes the poems of the past all the more dear to exiles. Vadim suggests that his own poetry also continues this tradition. As such, Vadim asserts a type of cultural continuity, a lasting element of habitus that integrates past experiences in a "matrix of perceptions, appreciations, and actions" unaffected by existing Soviet reality.[26]

Hana Pichova argues that members of the first wave of Russian emigration were particularly determined to preserve their cultural heritage and not allow it to be confiscated by the new Soviet government. She points to the many Russian publishing houses that appeared in European cities such as Prague, Berlin, and Paris during the 1920s, and that allowed authors to maintain the artistic and scholarly dialogues that had been initiated in Russia. In exile, intellectuals tried to carry the past into the present, and hoped to engender some cultural continuity even into the future.[27]

This notion of cultural continuity is particularly evident when Vadim argues that art develops from generation to generation: from Evgeny Baratynsky, to Alexander Pushkin, to Mikhail Lermontov, to Blok, and to Boris Pasternak. "Like a baton, Russian poetry is passed from hand to hand." According to Vadim, the poetry of Blok had an enormous influence on his own early poetry, and on that of Bely and Vladislav Khodasevich.[28] Vadim therefore rejects the Russian Futurist notion that their work could survive without Pushkin or the poetic tradition of the nineteenth century. He explains how he once believed that Russian Symbolism was the most radical form of artistic expression, but how under the influence of Bely and Alexei Remizov he was able to "leave the literary backwoods" and understand the evolution of Russia's poetic discourse.[29] For Vadim, poetry provides a link to his past, while also informing his present. Although exiled from Russia, his cultural education continues.[30]

All of these themes unite when Vadim visits a respected American scholar in hopes of advancing his education. When Vadim impresses the scholar with his knowledge of Byzantine art, he is invited to apply for university admission. As Vadim explains his plight as a refugee with no permanent residence, the scholar asks if Vadim is not the son of Leonid Andreev: as it turns out, Vadim has long been on a list providing student stipends. Not surprisingly, the scholar admits he has even read some of Vadim's poetry.[31] This is a very important moment as it is here that Vadim sheds his

designation as a refugee to become a university student. His social status, therefore, begins to mirror more closely his class ethos. As in those other instances when his lineage proved a useful intangible commodity, here too his education, family background, social class, and possibly even his status as a poet play an essential role in securing admission to the university in Berlin.

Once in Berlin, Vadim learns that not only is he afforded the opportunity of a university education, but he is also part of a massive Russian émigré community that includes many leading cultural figures. For example, important Soviet poets such as Pasternak, Vladimir Mayakovsky, and Sergei Yesenin visit Berlin during this period and give public readings. Ivan Ladyzhnikov and Zinovy Grzhebin control Russian publishing houses, and therefore one can buy the works of Osip Mandelstam and Marina Tsvetaeva, among others, as well as Russian daily newspapers and journals. The Moscow Art Theater offers performances in Berlin for the 1922-23 winter season, and even one of his father's plays, *Professor Storitsyn*, is produced at an influential theater.[32] Thus, Vadim's arrival in Berlin unexpectedly reunites him with cultural Russia—here he finds a crossroads uniting the imperial past with the Soviet future. This reunion with cultural Russia is apparent in a letter of 16 October 1922, wherein Vadim writes to a friend that he has made the acquaintance of Bely, and that he has begun to attend functions at the House of the Arts (Dom Isskustv), "and there I have had the opportunity to listen to I. Ehrenburg, V. Khodasevich, Tolstoy, Minsky, Aikhenvald, Pasternak [. . .] and others."[33]

Of this period Brian Boyd writes, "Russian Berlin, 1921-1924, was a cultural supernova without equal in the annals of refugee humanity. A few hundred thousand very temporary settlers in a Berlin already well supplied with its own books and periodicals published more in three years than most countries could publish in a decade." As prices rose in Europe, Berlin became the center of Russian emigration: Germany was still paying heavy, punitive war reparations, and therefore remained a relatively inexpensive place to live. Meanwhile, the New Economic Policy (NEP) reversed the Soviet Union's economic isolation, resulting in partnerships between the two countries: "Not only were émigrés arriving in Berlin from other centers, but the Soviet citizens allowed under NEP conditions to travel more freely abroad also gravitated there."[34]

Implicit in Vadim's assertions throughout his memoir are several relevant claims about his social status and cultural education. Russian culture continues to exist even if the geographical boundaries and political concepts change. Vadim is part of that cultural tradition, especially in Berlin, where the habitus of the Russian fin de siècle continues to develop. Vadim's class ethos, therefore, is legitimated in aesthetic discourse and conveyed as a universal norm. As the son of Leonid Andreev, he has entrée into these important cultural circles, almost acting as a link in this period of transition from the Russia of Leonid Andreev to the Soviet Union of the 1960 and 1970s. Vadim quotes an inscription from Remizov that echoes these sentiments: "With the old [Russia] I took my leave, its majesty, but with the new [Soviet Union] I lived, live and will live."[35] The problem that arises for Vadim is how to unify all

of these themes into his Soviet reality. How can the son of Leonid Andreev, with his cultural and academic capital, actually act as the continuum? One might suggest that in his memoir, Vadim cannot complete his journey; only in restoring his father's literary legacy can he accomplish this task.

Walking a delicate line, Vadim is careful not to alienate himself from his Soviet reading audience or their cultural merchants (censors, scholars, publishers, critics, etc.). Vadim explains that he never actually left Russia; rather, the Finnish army reclaimed the territory around the Gulf of Finland where his home was located. It is actually through reading the poetry of Akhmatova that Vadim realizes that he never chose to go abroad—that he was an exile by circumstance, not by choice.[36] At the memoir's outset he asserts that he was not a monarchist and did not fight with the Whites for any particular reason. His only hope was that the Bolsheviks would fall from power so that he could return to Russia.[37]

In one section of the memoir, Vadim briefly discusses the relationship of Isadora Duncan and Sergei Yesenin. Duncan was an American dancer who married the Russian poet Yesenin after a visit to Russia. Duncan could not speak Russian and Yesenin could not speak English, which doomed their relationship from the very start. Vadim comes to the conclusion that Yesenin's trips to Germany, France, and America with Duncan were unnecessary, and he quotes from the poet, "I so want to get out of this nightmarish Europe, back to Russia."[38] Vadim suggests that as a poet, Yesenin needed to be connected to Russia in order to be artistically productive. In the next section, Vadim echoes similar ideas about his own creative needs: "In the beginning of 1923, I often published poems in the newspaper *Days* (*Dni*). At the same time, I felt ever more clearly that I could no longer live without Russia."[39] Accordingly, Vadim attempts to gain Soviet citizenship, which he receives only in 1947.

As already mentioned in the incident with Gessen, Vadim wanted to make it clear that he did not share his father's political views. He realized that by publishing in the newspaper *On the Eve* (*Nakanune*), he might alienate himself from many in the émigré community, and might even jeopardize his university stipend. Boyd explains why Vadim's fears were valid:

> The Soviet government took a lively interest in the bustle of émigré culture. One émigré movement, known as Smena Vekh (Change of Landmarks), found philosophical justifications for a return to Russia and was eagerly encouraged by Moscow, anxious to entice intellectuals back. A daily newspaper, *Nakanune* (*On the Eve*), was established with Soviet funding and soon became a servile party organ. Enticed by the comfortable prospects awaiting him for return, the historical novelist Aleksy Tolstoy began to write for *Nakanune* in the spring of 1922. His "defection" from the emigration caused a scandal, and he was excluded from the Union of Russian Writers and Journalists in Berlin. By 1923 lines between opposed political camps were being dug deeper; schisms and regroupings proliferated. [40]

Vadim's fidelity to Russia is encouraged, however, by his academic benefactor, who argues that Russian students are supported and educated not to live in exile, but to

return to and benefit their homeland. This support strengthens Vadim's own convictions to return one day.[41] It also provides a rationale for Vadim's eventual return to the Soviet Union—a justification for Soviet cultural merchants to introduce Vadim to the Soviet literary market.

Yet again, external factors force Vadim to move farther from Russia, not closer. The economic and political situation in Germany obliges him to leave, and without a Soviet passport, Vadim follows many Russian émigrés into exile in Paris. The last section of Vadim's memoir is sparse on details, especially dealing with his life in France. His wartime experience on the island of Oléron constitutes the final, short third section of his memoiristic project. It is on Oléron that Vadim comes into contact with Soviet soldiers, and his desire to return home is enflamed once again. It is fair to suggest that his fight alongside Russian prisoners of war against Nazi occupation was much more acceptable to Soviet cultural merchants than tales of life in émigré Paris during the 1930s.

It is on Oléron that Vadim becomes part of the underground resistance, working with French Communists, as well as with Russians serving in the German army. In Vadim's version, he downplays the soldiers' original complicity with the Germans, although his daughter's memoir of the same period suggests that Vadim was initially apprehensive of these men.[42] It was decided, however, to include them in resistance activities since their status in the German army offered greater possibilities for sabotage. As the soldiers supply Vadim with information, his involvement with French partisans grows.

After an act of sabotage against one of the German batteries, most of the men on Oléron, including Vadim, are arrested. Following a month of imprisonment, Vadim is part of a prisoner exchange between the Germans and the French resistance. Several years after the war, Vadim receives a letter from one of the Russians from Oléron that reads: "I am reporting that on this paper, which you now hold before your eyes, I write in a state of utter happiness, joy, cheerfulness and freedom."[43] With this, Vadim concludes his memoir stating that more than twenty years after receiving this letter, he reunited with its author in Moscow, and remains friends with him to the present day.

This final section of the memoir is unexpected, given the two that preceded it. The first section describes Vadim's realization that his ideal Russia was different from that of others, and that his efforts to liberate his ideal Russia were in vain because it did not exist. As such, in the second section Vadim discovers his ideal Russia at the cultural crossroads of Berlin. The fact that he is the son of Leonid Andreev and an aspiring poet gives him entrée into circles, readings, and conversations with cultural icons of the imperial past and Soviet present. Following the trajectory of the first and second sections, it is therefore anticipated that the memoir's third section describes how Vadim's efforts to reintroduce his father's literary endeavors into the Soviet literary market, as well as his attempts to publish his own works, constituted the completion of this cultural continuum. He would have fulfilled the role for which he prepared, providing a bridge between the Russian fin de siècle and the Soviet

thaw. After all, this is indeed what the memoir is leading to until Vadim veers off in another direction to tell how he collaborated with Russian soldiers and the French resistance to defeat Nazi Fascism.

What went wrong? One could argue that in general, the closer the author of a memoir gets to the present, the more difficult it is to maintain perspective and a coherent line of narrative discourse. This is evident, for example, in Gorky's own autobiographical trilogy: the clear message and cosmology of *Childhood* (*Detstvo*) become much more diffuse and impressionistic by *My Universities* (*Moi universitety*). This is certainly the case in Vadim's ill-conceived third section, "After Twenty Years," that is significantly shorter than the previous two sections (pages: 178; 173; 16). It also breaks the chronology that was established in the previous two sections. Vadim completely avoids discussing his life in Paris during the 1930s to instead tell about a period of five years on Oléron, and then ignores his time in New York and Geneva following the war. Some of the war years are covered in his novel *Wild Fields* (*Dikoe pole*), but not enough to maintain his narrative about a cultural continuum that he suggests at his memoir's outset.

In a letter to his daughter from October 1968, Vadim states that his Soviet publisher requires he add an "epilogue" about his participation in the French resistance to the book version of his memoirs. Vadim's original intention was to publish together only "The History of One Journey" and "A Return to Life." "After Twenty Years," it seems, is written simply to appease his Soviet publisher. Additionally, in the same letter Vadim explains how he was also forced by the editor of *The Star* to rewrite sections of "A Return to Life" before it could be published. In this case, the editor does not want to be the first to mention suppressed writers such as Remizov and Khodasevich in his journal. Vadim agrees to make changes to his text to ensure publication. In both cases, the political pressures of the moment clearly influence access to the literary market.[44]

Because Vadim was still not assured that his father's posthumous literary legacy was secure, these publishers' demands were significant. There is also the possibility that Vadim did not want to alienate himself from his readers when writers like Akhmatova, Nadezheda Mandelstam, and others would represent the same historical period, having weathered the storm from within the Soviet Union. Akhmatova and Mandelstam detailed life during Joseph Stalin's great terror, while Vadim presented himself as a child of privilege whose exilic experience was filled with hunger, economic woes, and uncertainty; still, this exilic experience also provided him with the freedom to travel the world—Constantinople, Berlin, Paris, New York, and Geneva—and easily meet with Russian cultural icons. This was hardly the experience of many intellectuals within the Soviet Union during the 1930s, and maybe it is just for this reason that Vadim goes silent about this period.

Vadim's daughter Olga Andreyev Carlisle addresses in her own memoirs this delicate role that one in the West must play when dealing with the cultural merchants of a repressive regime. In an interview with Pasternak in 1960, he reportedly said to her: "Someone with your background must tell the truth about us. Remember that

one of the goals of the Terror was to make us forget what truth is—truth is especially elusive in a dictatorial world. Of course, you'll also have to be careful about how you speak of us, since we live in a police state."[45] This is the dilemma for Vadim: how much of the truth is permitted, and at what point does the truth begin to undermine the symbolic capital he gained with Soviet cultural merchants? In this case, the third section is a red herring, obliterating the natural lines of discourse that emerge from the first two sections—lines that probably could not be fully articulated at that time. If this is indeed what happened, then we can suggest that market forces specific to the Soviet field of artistic production influenced the publication of Vadim's memoir.

Hence, this role as the final link in the cultural continuum passes to his daughter, who is then able to publish her experiences in the West. In fact, *Under A New Sky: A Reunion with Russia* begins at the very point where Vadim's memoirs end: "Before World War II, as a child, I lived with my parents in a small, modern apartment in a remote suburb of Paris."[46] The goals of Carlisle's book are the same as those that Vadim stated in a 1960 letter to Marc Slonim: to give voice to authors long silenced. As such, Carlisle enjoys the *freedom* to write about Pasternak, Alexander Askoldov, Daniil Andreev, and others. And yet, she too is aware of the dangers: "Like Boris Pasternak, my younger Russian friends were counting on my reporting about them in ways that would not compromise them in the eyes of the authorities."[47]

One final possibility is that, as Ginzburg notes, the author of a memoir is not always cognizant of what he is revealing about himself. In this slippage between what is intended and what is revealed in a memoir or autobiography is the psychological aspect that Ginzburg and others find so very tantalizing. For example, Jean-Jacques Rousseau wished to defend his reputation against the gossip of his contemporaries, and in the process left a sometimes painful and humiliating portrait of himself for history. In a similar vein, Vadim may have been unable to rationalize how the experience of the first two sections of his memoir were relevant to his desires to return his father's works—as well as those of Akhmatova, Tsvetaeva, and Zabolotsky—to the Soviet literary market.[48] Indeed, Vadim *does* complete the narrative arc begun in his memoir if we are willing to ignore its third section and in its place put the final results of his and his daughter's actions. In a letter of 1972, Vadim seems to relish his cultural and intellectual heritage when he tells an acquaintance how in 1962, as he sat in the Pushkin House archive in St. Petersburg reading his father's manuscripts, he noticed that people came and went from the reading room without any particular purpose. It soon became clear to him (and confirmed by his cousin who worked at the archive) why he seemed to be on display: Professor Kseniya Muratova "had said to the students that if they wanted to see a real member of the Russian intelligentsia, then [they should] take a glance at the son of Leonid Andreev."[49] In certain ways, then, Vadim does provide cultural continuity between the Russian fin de siècle and the Soviet thaw. This cultural continuity is just not realized in his memoristic trilogy, but also *is* his own life: it is manifest in his return to Russia, and in his work with Soviet scholars and publishers to rehabilitate Russian fin de siècle cultural figures. The narrative arc, therefore, is left to his daughter to articulate in her own works. Vadim

is, as he himself states, a living representative of the Russian pre-Revolutionary intelligentsia who in 1962 can revel in his return home and his now *notable* significance as the "son of Leonid Andreev."

In this specific example we find in Vadim's actions, in his memoir *The History of One Journey*, and in the later works of his daughter a desire to culturally unite an idealized Russia, as articulated in Silver Age poetry, with the Soviet thaw (and later *glasnost* with Carlisle). Arguably, this clearly-articulated narrative trajectory is abandoned by Vadim because of market pressures: Soviet editors were neither able nor willing to permit such a connection between late-imperial Russia and the Soviet thaw, and instead asked that discussion of certain authors be removed and that an "epilogue" be added that would concentrate on Vadim's work with the French Resistance against Nazi Fascism—concessions that he was willing to make. At issue are the ways in which Vadim's memoiristic intentions acquiesce to the market pressures applied by Soviet cultural merchants. Yielding to such market pressures leaves Vadim's journey incomplete—that is until his daughter fulfills the narrative arc several decades later, and then only with the help of a Western publisher.

NOTES

1. Leeds Russian Archive (LRA), MS. 1350 / 1313.
2. LRA MS. 1350 / 1645.
3. LRA MS. 1350 / 1669.
4. Vadim Andreev, *Istoriia odnogo puteshestviia*, 329.
5. Thorsby, *Economics and Culture*, 10.
6. Berg, *Literaturokratkiia*, 75–81.
7. Vadim wrote to Marc Slonim in 1960/1 that his singular goal was to ensure that the present generation of Russian readers knew the works of Anna Akhmatova, Marina Tsvetaeva, Nikolai Zabolotsky, Leonid Andreev, and others. LRA, MS. 1350 / 1691 and 1692. Letters of 16 December 1960 and 8 January 1961.
8. Ginzburg, *On Psychological Prose*, 3–24; 195–217.
9. Said, "Reflections on Exile," 173–74.
10. Vadim Andreev, *Istoriia odnogo puteshestviia,* 37.
11. Ibid., 88–89.
12. Bourdieu, *Outline of a Theory of Practice*, 72–95. Also see Lane, *Pierre Bourdieu,* 51–57.
13. Vadim Andreev, *Istoriia odnogo puteshestviia*, 63–64.
14. Ibid., 210.
15. Bourdieu, *Outline of a Theory of Practice*, 82.
16. Swartz, *Culture and Power*, 107.
17. Vadim Andreev, *Istoriia odnogo puteshestviia*, 52–53.
18. Ibid., 102–5.
19. Ibid., 197–98; 202.
20. Ibid., 263–64.
21. Ibid., 337. According to Vadim's daughter, Olga Andreyev Carlisle, this difference in political views was quite accurate. She writes: "The new society developing in place of the old was

my parents' central concern. My father was possessed by a longing to return to Russia. But when would the time be right? We read Blok's *The Twelve* aloud. The poet's vision of Christ crowned with roses leading the twelve men of the Revolutionary Army through frozen Petrograd seemed holy. I understand that my father embraced Blok's view. But even as a child I discovered that [Leonid] Andreyev had not shared the vision of the Bolsheviks' ultimate vindication. Political editorials he had written at the time of the October coup d'état had culminated in SOS, his appeal to the Allies to intervene in Russia and drive the Bolsheviks out. I knew that this publication dismayed my parents. They detested the Bolsheviks, but they found the notion of calling for foreign intervention against one's own country unacceptable." Carlisle, *Under a New Sky*, 2.

22. Ibid., 232.
23. Bourdieu, *Distinction*, 6.
24. Vadim Andreev, *Istoriia odnogo puteshestviia*, 234–35.
25. Said, "Reflections on Exile," 185.
26. Bourdieu, *Outline of a Theory of Practice*, 83.
27. Pichova, *The Art of Memory in Exile*, 69.
28. Vadim Andreev, *Istoriia odnogo puteshestviia*, 266.
29. Ibid., 295–96.
30. Vadim consistently argues this point not just for poetry, but also for all types of cultural production. In a section of his memoir dedicated to Remizov, Vadim refutes the perception that Remizov's works were not typically Russian. He states that Remizov's prose style comes directly from the works of Nikolai Gogol, Fyodor Dostoevsky, and Nikolai Leskov. Vadim Andreev, *Istoriia odnogo puteshestviia*, 296–303.
31. Vadim Andreev, *Istoriia odnogo puteshestviia*, 240–43.
32. Ibid., 247–49.
33. Ken, "Pis'ma Vadima Andreeva Vladimiru Sosinskomu i Daniilu Reznikovu (1922–1923)," 128.
34. Boyd, *Vladimir Nabokov*, 197–98.
35. Vadim Andreev, *Istoriia odnogo puteshestviia*, 303.
36. Ibid., 215–16.
37. Ibid., 8; 120; 185; 244.
38. Ibid., 335.
39. Ibid.
40. Boyd, *Vladimir Nabokov*, 199.
41. Vadim Andreev, *Istoriia odnogo puteshestviia*, 337–38.
42. Ibid., 363–65; Carlisle, *Island in Time*, 159–69.
43. Vadim Andreev, *Istoriia odnogo puteshestviia*, 373.
44. Letter of 3 October 1968 to Olga Andreyev Carlisle, *Olga Andreyev Carlisle papers, 1901–2003*, box 64, file 1, Hoover Institute Archives.
45. Carlisle, *Under a New Sky*, 14.
46. Ibid., 1.
47. Ibid., 15.
48. Vadim was also a source of information for many Soviet scholars who wanted to learn more about the Russian cultural scene in Berlin in the early 1920s. For example, Sergei Grechishkin wrote to Vadim several times asking about Andrei Bely's activities in Berlin, specifically about his relationship with Asia Turgeneva, his literary lectures in Berlin, and his relationships with other symbolist writers. See LRA, MS. 1350 / 1450. Letter of 15 November 1970. Vadim provided similar information about Marina Tsvetaeva in answer to Valery Bezzubov's queries six year earlier. See LRA, MS. 1350 / 35. Letter of 28 April 1964 to V. Bezzubov.
49. LRA, MS. 1350 \ 1313. Letter to Nikolai Braun of 5 December 1972.

II

THE NABOKOVS

6

Nabokov and the Publishing Business

The Writer as His Own Literary Agent

After all, literature is not only fun, it is also business.

—Vladimir Nabokov to James Laughlin,
the founder of New Directions Publishers (27 April 1950)

A cosmopolitan Russian-born émigré whose linguistic facility, erudite style, and eloquent prose helped to establish him as one of the most brilliant and respected literary figures of the twentieth century, Vladimir Nabokov (1899–1977) produced literature and scholarship in both Russian and English. His reputation has never been higher than now, judging by recent "best book" polls and the attention given to the publication of his last incomplete novel, *The Original of Laura*. Today his books are continually in print and enjoy stable economic success both in academic and commercial markets. His works are part of both the American and European literary canons, in no small measure because he was able to imitate and manipulate these very same literary traditions. An examination of Nabokov's strategies for success and his means of self-promotion reveals how it was that an obscure émigré professor was able to market himself as a celebrated and provocative author. The aim of this chapter is to explore a particular aspect of Nabokov's self-promotion: his dealings with the publishing industry in the role of a protective literary agent.

The business correspondence between Nabokov and his publishers is part of the Nabokov papers at the Berg collection in the New York Public Library and in the Library of Congress. It demonstrates that early in his career Nabokov began to take interest in the way publishers marketed his works. As his literary success grew, Nabokov became ever more concerned with the publishing industry's formulation of his literary brand. Conscious of the benefits of publicity, Nabokov managed his extra-literary appearances in such a way as to heighten public interest in himself and

his works. All of this was done, ironically, while he promoted his image as a champion of "pure art."[1]

Not only was Nabokov a great writer and an accomplished stylist, but he also possessed a charm and intellectual breadth of which he was well aware, and which he used to impress (or "seduce") his intended business partners during their personal communication. Nabokov's notorious charm is perhaps best illustrated in the following anecdote. After discussing some issues pertaining to the serial publication of *Ada* in *Playboy*, the magazine's senior editor, Robie Macauley (1966–1977), concluded his letter to Nabokov with a personal touch: "I have several times intended—but failed—to write to thank you for our very pleasant conversation that afternoon on the terrace of the Grand Hotel des Salines. It was so delightful that it changed one of my basic maxims, which is: one should make sure never to meet in person the author of one's favourite novels."[2] The published and unpublished business correspondence testifies that over the years both Vladimir and Véra Nabokov acquired and mastered great negotiating skills. Especially after *Lolita* became an international bestseller, Nabokov required and ultimately received the maximum book deal from his publishers, demonstrating an iron will and a distinct understanding of the modern literary market's economic realities. What is more, Nabokov advised his own publishers on various advertising techniques and strategies that, he insisted, they should use in branding his printed matter. There is little doubt that Nabokov was an excellent writer, and may very well have become the canonical literary figure he is today without driving such a hard bargain; however, it is significant that the Nabokovs were also very successful literary agents who skillfully negotiated with other respected cultural merchants. To only focus on the aesthetic and literary elements of Nabokov's work is to turn a blind eye to the author's significant economic efforts in the publication process.

THE STORY OF AN OUTSIDER

The path to commercial success was not smooth for Nabokov. In the Library of Congress collection there are nearly a hundred unpublished letters from various American publishers rejecting Nabokov's novels during the 1930s. Standard forms of rejection included "we are not interested," "this is not our type of prose," "unfortunately, we could see no way to fit it in with our schedule of coming fiction," and so on. Most ironic is a statement from 1937 by an agent for Random House, which today holds the rights to all of Nabokov's works in the USA and Canada: "We are sorry to report that [the book] does not fit the special needs of the Random House list, and we are therefore obliged to forgo its publication. [. . .] We will hold it here for you."[3] In February of the same year an agent for Metro-Goldwin-Mayer Pictures returned a copy of Nabokov's *Invitation to a Beheading* with the following comment: "I am afraid that it is *decidedly not the sort of material we could utilize for production*" (emphasis added).[4] Three decades later in 1968 the asking price for the movie rights

for the yet unfinished *Ada* would stand at $1,000,000. By this time, heads of Hollywood studios were visiting Nabokov in Switzerland to read the manuscript (Paramount, CBS, Twentieth Century-Fox, and Columbia). According to one biographer, each of the studio heads, before leaving, had to "send the bids [for the typescript] up to the Nabokovs' floor, like petty princes offering tribute to an emperor."[5]

What happened during this critical period—the two decades that passed between these flat refusals and the explosion caused by *Lolita* in the mid-1950s? Did Nabokov change his manner of writing, or was it that the American market dramatically changed? What compelled Nabokov to keep besieging the impregnable fortress of the "American publisher"? It is remarkable that Nabokov, when preparing his archive for donation to the Library of Congress, opted not to destroy the rather bulky and potentially humiliating folder containing his rejection letters, thus preserving it for posterity. Nabokov possibly intended for this folder to bear witness to his eventual triumph over cultural deafness and the immaturity of the American audience, or to act as a lesson of perseverance for aspiring authors. Or, even more likely, perhaps this folder was Nabokov's sweet revenge to the vanished cultural merchants representing Random House, Alfred Knopf, Henry Holt and Company, Bobbs-Merrill, Simon and Schuster, Charles Scribner's Sons, G. P. Putnam's Sons, and others.

PUBLICITY—A WAY TO SUCCESS

In order to offer some preliminary answers to the complex questions posed above, I will survey a few representative cases from Nabokov's history of cooperation with the American publishing industry during the late-1940s through the 1960s. Since Nabokov was deeply convinced of the first-rate quality of his fiction, the only element beyond his control was its promotion and distribution—or in other words, the consecration of his works by literary merchants. Nabokov eventually learned to pressure publishers for a specific publicity budget that he knew was a key for good sales.

In this respect Nabokov's case is not unique among the European or American modernists of the twentieth century, although certainly he was a self-taught émigré maverick who virtually sensed the market with a gut instinct and learned to navigate it by trial and error. Other literary giants also courted self-promotion; the principle of allying with a clearly defined group of first-rate artists, for instance, guided Ezra Pound's dealings with the periodicals in which literary modernism developed.[6] Neither Pound nor Nabokov, of course, could match the resources that the imagist poetess Amy Lowell "put into play when she invited a writer like D. H. Lawrence to dine at her first-class hotel and offer[ed] to pay him for a contribution to a new anthology."[7] But if one examines Nabokov's close circles from the early stages of his professional career, the presence of literary heavyweights such as Sasha Cherny, Ivan Bunin, and Vladislav Khodasevich will also come into focus. Like Lowell, Nabokov was an aspiring author surrounded by accomplished writers, but whereas Nabokov (writing under the pseudonym Sirin) soon outgrew and even eclipsed his former

mentors, Lowell never did. Like James Joyce—who Marysa Demoor calls "possibly the most creative, certainly the most successful of self-creators,"[8] who expertly succeeded in acquiring both cultural and real capital, and who took advantage of the turn-of-the-century liberal climate and figured out how to sell his writerly persona together with his work—Nabokov discovered how to self-create himself to appeal to various market and cultural pressures. On one occasion Nabokov did dine with Joyce at a friend's home (without intending to recruit the author of *Ulysses* to advance his own literary affairs), and despite the fact that his plans to translate Joyce's magnum opus into Russian failed, Joyce's example clearly taught Nabokov that failure is only temporary and can be used as a springboard toward success. Indeed, failure can even become a milestone in a writer's biography. Joyce, for instance, trumpeted his rejection: whereas most writers, as Edward Bishop observes, would accentuate their successes, Joyce introduced himself to his publishers with his failures. In a letter providing biographical information to his American publisher, he notes how his *Dubliners* stories were rejected by the *Irish Homestead*; to an important patron he even specifies the number: apparently it was "rejected by 40 publishers; three times setup, and once burnt."[9] However, Joyce "was writing to posterity" and "posterity listened."[10] Likewise, Nabokov's own myths have persisted: while he never highlighted his failures, he carefully filed his rejection letters and made sure that they were deposited as part of his literary archive at the Library of Congress.

Joyce, like many authors, felt that his work would sell better if only better promoted; to his publisher Elkin Mathews he complained: "I am very much surprised at the fewness of the copies [of *Chamber Music*] sold and think the book could have been pushed more in view of the good notices it got on all sides."[11] This resentment is echoed decades later in Nabokov's letter to George Weidenfeld:

> I am not very happy, as you may have guessed, about the sales of my books in England. And the more I think of it the more convinced I become that this is in a large measure due to a lack of publicity. ADA, for instance, was practically hushed down by your advertising department. MARY, which sold sweetly in the US and is now a bestseller in Italy, was never given a fair start in England.[12]

In the case of Joyce, Nabokov, Andreev, or any beloved writer, self-promotion is necessary—an issue that is often left out of scholars' canonization of famous authors.

Before signing a contract over the publication of *Conclusive Evidence*, Nabokov wrote to John Fischer, the editor of Harper and Brothers: "I conclude with satisfaction that you intend to provide the book with an adequate publicity budget,—which I deem most essential."[13] At the final signing stage he reminded Fischer again: "I would very much appreciate your including a publicity budget in [our] agreement."[14] Fischer replied that "it is hardly possible to draw up a definitive budget for our advertising, promotion and publicity campaign until the book is completed," citing the need to consult the salesmen about the probable scope of the market and the particular groups of readers who were likely to be most interested in the work. Yet, Fischer reassured Nabokov:

> We would plan, however, to set aside an initial advertising and promotion budget equivalent to 10 percent of our total receipts from advance sales before [the] publication date. This would be supplemented by additional appropriations after publication of approximately 10 percent of the continuing trade sale. This budget might be increased substantially, of course, if we should be fortunate enough to have a book club selection or other revenue from subsidiary sources. This is the kind of problem we would like to discuss with you in detail shortly after the manuscript is finished.[15]

Just as Nabokov is notorious for giving well-prepared interviews, his interest in public engagement, and his ability to manipulate journalists so as to reach his readership, should hardly be underestimated. We must also keep in mind that the Nabokov of the early American period differs significantly from the author of later years—an author who had accrued a large amount of symbolic capital, but projected the literary persona of an aesthete secluded in an ivory tower within a luxurious Swiss hotel. For example, shortly after the publication of his memoir in 1951, Nabokov inquired of Harpers and Brothers: "[. . .] Miss Herdman of your publicity department was planning to arrange some newspaper interviews etc. for me on the occasion of the Academy award. . . . I would appreciate hearing now of any such plans, so that I can arrange the schedule of my short visit to New York accordingly."[16] An interview was indeed soon scheduled, although not with a newspaper, and instead with the Mary Margaret McBride radio program. The format of the program was informal interviews with no set questions or answers. Usually McBride's assistant would call the guests the day before the broadcast and decide what subjects an interviewee was willing to discuss. Nabokov agreed to participate, although he noted that he had never listened to the radio program. He therefore hastened to check on the program with Ramona Herdman of the publishing house's publicity department. What he learned from Herdman obviously satisfied him: McBride's audience at NBC numbered in the millions during the 1950s, and she was sometimes referred to as "The First Lady of Radio."[17] The result pleased Nabokov: "I had a most pleasant interview with McBride and thank you for bringing us together. I also hope that you have been successful in your generous attempts to increase the publicity given to *Conclusive Evidence.*"[18]

A brilliant actor, Nabokov used interviews to orchestrate his advertising campaigns. He took pleasure in staging these performances, and in encouraging the act of consecration. Nabokov made sure that the interviews were perfectly scripted and never spontaneous—a fact that he did not hide, and in which he even seemed to take some delight in *Strong Opinions*. This control served multiple purposes: it protected his privacy by letting him define the terms of the discussion; it allowed him to shape his public image outside of his literary works; and it promoted further curiosity about the "man behind the mystification." The fact that each interview in this consecration process of self-marketing was both entertaining *and* distinct allowed him to collect and publish several as a book of its own (along with other pieces of his critical and scientific prose). One must ignore Nabokov's assertion that his interviews could not "encourage the sales" of his books,[19] and that he had more

confidence in pure advertising. In fact, this strategy of self-promotion was a very efficient way of turning a marketing campaign into its own marketable product. These scripted interviews gave Nabokov a venue in which to demonstrate and discuss his scientific *alter ego*, the lepidopterist. It was by these same means that he might also reveal the yet undiscovered Russian part of his legacy.

MONEY

As far as selling his own works, Nabokov's business philosophy was astonishingly simple: *whatever the agent or publisher offers, you should ask for more.* In 1935 Capital Film Productions considered acquiring the screen rights for the novel *Camera Obscura*. Still mainly known only in Russian émigré circles as the aspiring author Sirin, Nabokov cabled to the London firm A. M. Heath & Company, Ltd. concerning the matter: "I accept your offer, but to be quite frank the sum of 600 to 700 [pounds] which you think your clients might pay in case they take up their option seems to me a bit low and I would do with another hundred pounds or so. However, as you and I are equally interested in this deal I trust you will do your best to obtain the highest price possible."[20] Although nothing resulted from these negotiations, it was definitely the film industry's initial interest in the novel's German edition that prompted Nabokov to publish an English translation soon after.[21]

Although in the 1930s Nabokov could only lament what seemed to him inadequate remuneration, he would appear much firmer two decades later. The Nabokovs had been traumatized by their near-destitute émigré existence in Europe before World War II. Therefore, following the war, Nabokov was intent on negotiating literary deals that would secure the future material interests of Véra and his son Dmitri. His salary at Cornell University, as Nabokov admitted once to an interviewer who asked about his university teaching experience, "was not exactly a princely one."[22] Another time, while discussing the financial implications of certain contractual terms for a deal under question in 1967, Nabokov made a specific point regarding the financial security of his family in a letter to Peter Kemeny: "life plus some years for [Nabokov's] wife's protection."[23]

Nabokov compared the honorariums offered by various American periodicals, and tried to maintain his rather high rates. This is evident from a short exchange with John Fischer of *Harper's*. "All of our magazine editors have now had a chance to read the piece you sent me some days ago," starts Fischer. "I'm delighted to report that they found it just as charming as I did." Fischer proceeds with the more tricky part of their discussion:

> They would like to use it in one of the early summer issues—probably July—and have asked me to inquire whether $250 would seem to you a suitable fee. This is $50 more than we normally pay for articles, but the editors feel that this is far better than the usual piece, and they are well aware that your customary magazine rates are considerably above our level. (You are familiar, I assume, with the reasons why *Harper's* cannot pay for material on the same scale as, say, the *New Yorker*.)[24]

To this reasoning Nabokov replies callously, dismissing Fischer's sentimental introduction: "The fee of $250 is surprisingly low. Of course I do not expect you to pay me on the same scale as *The New Yorker*, but I believe that your scale should be comparable to, say, that of *The Atlantic Monthly*, which pays me a minimum of $400. I would be grateful if you could talk this matter over with Mr. F. L. Allen once more" (Frederick Lewis Allen was the editor of the journal).[25]

When discussing the possible sale of the short story "The Vane Sisters" to the French magazine *Lettres Nouvelles*, Nabokov consulted with his Paris literary agent Doussia Ergaz: "Is Frs. 20.000 actually an adequate price for a short story such as 'Vane sisters'? I received $100 from Bonnier's review for this story (they offered $50, I asked for $100, and they agreed). Frs. 20.000 seems very meager, indeed. Is this actually the price French reviews pay to authors in my category?"[26] Here, the problem does not seem to be a matter of just money, but that the monetary value does not seem to match Nabokov's symbolic capital—the measure of his own value as a literary commodity on the open market.[27] Whereas Vadim Andreev was most concerned with accruing symbolic capital in order to return his father (and himself) to the Soviet literary market, Nabokov had immediate material needs, which required that his symbolic capital be converted to financial capital as soon as possible—but only at the highest going rate. Nabokov insisted that he be recognized as the leading author of his generation, and that the literary market respond to, if not reflect, this symbolic capital. For Nabokov, his royalties had to match his soaring reputation as an accurate indication of his market share.

All of this contradicts Nabokov's own aesthetic claims: he repeatedly insisted that he wrote only for himself and for reflections of himself in the reader, that he did not think of "letters as a career" or "a source of income," and that a "work of art has no importance whatever to society."[28] Walter Cohen, who was the first to pay attention to this incongruity in Nabokov's denial of the utilitarian quality of art, explains that such "an attitude was perhaps shaped in part by the limited audience for émigré literature, by a sense of 'working in an absolute void,'"[29] but notes that the implications of such a paradox are far more general:

> In denying social significance, Nabokov's fiction therefore paradoxically acquires its most profound social significance. This is only partly the unconscious meaning that any cultural endeavor may legitimately take on in the eyes of the critic. It is also a conscious effort to forge a satisfactory relationship between artistic production and consumption in the twentieth-century West. Yet ambiguities of a disturbing kind also lurk in this theory of art. What is the point of a literary producer who lacks consumers? And if Nabokov never takes this position to its logical extreme, does he not then run the risk of succumbing to the worst aspects of the very commodity relations his writing is designed to oppose?[30]

As for the publication venues, Nabokov chose not only highbrow magazines like *The New Republic* and *The New Yorker*, but even the provocative *Playboy*. As Marcel Danesi notes, brand placement's main objective is to unite brand identity with the

pervasive culture.[31] In effect, these periodicals were both a communication network among the influential and an avenue of access to a wider cultural readership. The elite who wrote in these journals largely determined which books would be discussed and upon whom symbolic capital would be conferred. This silent collusion among cultural merchants determined what literary works were to be kept alive, circulated, and discussed into the future.[32] In fact, the absorption of popular culture into elitist discourse began almost as soon as the advent of monopoly capitalism and with the emergence of the advertising industry (crucial to planned marketing), which employed mass-circulation magazines as the main vehicle of national brand advertising.[33] Nabokov's selection of these periodicals was not a haphazard but rather a premeditated decision to amalgamate his literary works with specific brand identities.

While always polite, Nabokov maintained the needed distance that allowed him to assume a neutral, if not somewhat cold, relationship with his correspondents. This professional distance granted Nabokov a firm business position that he exploited when necessary. Such is evident in Nabokov's response to Fischer regarding the proposed postponement of his memoir's publication. One should also note that the shrewd Fischer perfectly understood what was important to the author and, therefore, reasoned for a delay to benefit the "promotion campaign." Fischer argued that too many memoirs and autobiographies were scheduled for release around the "pre-Christmas rush,"[34] alleging that this might reduce the potential sales of *Conclusive Evidence*. To this Nabokov vehemently objected:

> January and February as publication are not at all tempting. I would like you to publish the book either in the fall or just before Christmas 1950. Let me point out too that a profusion of memoirs and autobiographies by generals, politicians, musicians, rat-catchers, farmers, etc., can hardly have any bearing on the sales of my book, since it is primarily a work of literature and the fact of its being an autobiography is really quite inessential. And anyway if the reading public is expected to be surfeited with memoirs before Christmas, there is no reason for expecting a revival of interest in the beginning of 1951.[35]

To strengthen his position, Nabokov quoted from a letter he had received from Katharine White of *The New Yorker* regarding *Harper's* postponement of *Conclusive Evidence*: "I had planned to give it to all sorts of people as Christmas presents." This citation from a personal correspondence with an influential figure in the literary field had many implications. On the one hand, it underscored that there was an immediate market for the publication. One the other hand, it suggested that among relevant cultural merchants, *Harper's* indecision appeared weak. Both implications added leverage to Nabokov's demands for an immediate release of his memoir, which the publisher had been delaying due to its own market considerations ("There would be no more certain way of killing your book—or any book for that matter—than to publish it in December. Virtually all book-sellers complete their buying for the Christmas season in September and October"[36]).

Whether or not Nabokov was correct in his evaluation of the book market, it is clear that he claimed to understand the economic laws of the market no less than

his publisher. Did it help Nabokov in this particular case? Not really: he had not yet authored *Lolita*, hence his symbolic capital was limited.[37] However, even though his memoir appeared later than he had hoped, Katharine White's wishes for a holiday gift were granted—the publisher agreed to preprint a number of copies for Nabokov's friends and colleagues as a special order, and to deliver them per his request.

THE ART OF NEGOTIATING

Nabokov was well aware that sometimes his symbolic capital was not accurately reflected in his market value determined by publishers. Vladimir and Véra Nabokov's business letters often anticipate this miscalculation between perceived and real value. It wasn't until the summer of 1967 that Nabokov's symbolic capital finally seemed to be adequately assessed in an offer from Edward Booher, the President of McGraw-Hill Book Company. The offer came after intensive courting of Nabokov, which included dispatching a special envoy, Peter Kemney, for face-to-face talks in Europe.

Booher did not conceal his excitement over the prospect of "becoming the publisher of such a distinguished literary figure."[38] More importantly, Booher added what Nabokov wanted to hear: "Further, we believe that we at McGraw-Hill have much to offer *from the standpoint of promotion and distribution*, and hope therefore that we can soon reach an agreement that will be satisfactory to both you and us."[39] Booher outlined the terms of the generous agreement he had in mind:

> As stated earlier, we had planned to pay into a special corporation or fund $250,000 which would be charged against all author's earnings under the terms of the agreement. Presumably you would prefer to have this money paid out in monthly installments over a period of approximately five years with the amount of monthly acquired payments adjusted to meet your special requirements.
>
> We are also aware that you are interested in receiving for the eleven books that have been discussed a maximum royalty and one which is an improvement over your past royalty scale. Accordingly, we propose to pay a royalty of 17 ½ percent of the list price on all copies of the publisher's regular edition sold in the United States, less returns. Hence, your maximum royalty of 17 ½ percent begin with the first book sold and any sliding scale arrangement would thereby be eliminated.
>
> We would also propose a more generous payment on all copies sold in inexpensive paperback editions issued under a contract with a reprint publisher. In brief, we would propose that on each title sold you receive 65 percent of the first $10,000 of such income, 70 percent of the next $5,000, 75 percent on the next $10,000, and finally 80 percent on all such income over $25,000 derived from each title.[40]

Nabokov wisely understood that this offer was more in line with the symbolic capital he had accrued through his own self-promotion and branding efforts. Although flattering statements played some role, Nabokov realized that to increase his present status (and therefore his market price), he needed a powerful American publisher who was willing to place all of its resources in service of the author; in this specific

case, these resources included designers and a production staff, twenty-seven bookstore salesmen, twenty library salesmen, over one-hundred college travellers, and publicity and advertising personnel. From that point on, this entire machine would design, print, promote, and distribute Nabokov's writings, thereby increasing his overall symbolic capital.

In a similar fashion, Leonid Andreev often received financial advances from leading Russian publishers, negotiating a fair market price for stories not yet written. Because Andreev had accrued a significant amount of symbolic capital by the early 1900s, he could trade on that capital to receive money in hand, even as his newest literary works were ever more harshly received by the critics. His entire villa in Finland was paid for in this manner, and Andreev would later take much pride in calling it his "Villa Advance." This ability to realize his literary success in financial terms annoyed many of his literary contemporaries, which resulted in envious statements after his death, such as those made by Boris Zaitsev:

> Andreev hungered eagerly for [success, fame, and applause]. He could no longer live unless he was still being written about, praised, applauded. I do not even know if he could have been able to write for himself, out of the public eye. He hated the crowd and worshipped it. He despised the newspapermen and could not free himself from them. To promote his fame he needed these little people, who would arrive in swarms and he told them about his life, his plans, his writing.[41]

Similarly, Nabokov's financial success possibly caught off-guard his colleagues at Cornell University (according to Stacey Schiff, "many in Ithaca saw *Lolita* as a cunning act of currency conversion"[42]), but Véra knew well how to handle Vladimir's sudden fortune. When McGraw-Hill made its generous offer, she responded with an unorthodox demand, shocking both her own lawyers and the publisher: a cost-of-living, Véra insisted, should be inserted into the contract. In a confidential letter she explained that she and her husband had lived through two inflations during which, in the course of a single day, the amount of money that would buy half a dozen pairs of stockings in the morning would not buy one needle in the evening. Schiff defends Véra—her adamant heroine—and reports that the same lawyers "who believed Véra bizarrely preoccupied with her cost-of-living increases in 1967 thought her positively clairvoyant several years later," when in the mid-1970s the economy of the United States plunged into a deep recession with soaring inflation: "Véra knew she had been ridiculed, and felt vindicated when she learned that her husband's publisher was laughing less loudly."[43]

Although there was a significant degree of consecration and collusion among the cultural merchants promoting Nabokov and his works, it is rather obvious why the Nabokovs decided to eliminate the intermediary function of a literary agent, who usually has the advantage of looking after a versatile author's entire business and handling his subsidiary rights (magazine serialization, newspaper syndication, translations, adaptations for the theater, film, radio, television, and often book club and paperback reprint rights as well). Roger Shugg writes that after the depression of the 1930s,

> the trade book publisher came to rely on his half-share of all rights income for his whole net profit, and the sale of these rights was largely in the hands of authors' agents. [. . .] The literary agent prospered not because publishers had been cheating authors, but rather because publishers stuck to the book trade and were not versatile enough to look after all the potential sources of income for an author that developed with the revolution in mass communications. For the most widely read writers, and these are the only writers an agent likes to represent, the literary agent has done much to lessen the tension between author and publisher.[44]

Véra Nabokov neither trusted the best lawyers in the country, nor believed that they could do a better job than she could. Additionally, the issue of control was at stake: by exercising full command over their small literary business, the Nabokovs turned it into an industry with its own popular brand[45]—an industry that later would become closely intertwined with a new branch of scholarship known today as "Nabokov studies." As Stephen Blackwell rightly observes, the main theme that emerges from an overview of Nabokov's publishing career is "not one of money, but rather one of control. Control of his image, his texts, his privacy, his scholarly reputation—these are the features that strike us when we examine the various ways he participated in the production and marketing of his books."[46] In the activities of the Nabokovs and the Andreevs, there is a clear concern with what is necessary to promote the author not only in the short term, but also in the long term—a focus on what will solidify the author's literary legacy for the foreseeable future. For Vladimir Nabokov and Leonid Andreev, controlling the literary market around their respective brands was a financial concern for their families, and also a method of influencing and securing their reputations after death. For Vadim Andreev, it was a means of returning his father's works to the Soviet literary market, and a way to guarantee the publication of his own poetry, memoirs, and novel. For all involved in this process of consecration, negotiations went beyond a consideration of immediate financial rewards and were made with the future literary market in mind.

DESIGN, CONTROL, AND LANGUAGE AS MECHANISMS OF POWER

Nabokov's concern for marketing his works extended to the design and production of books, the price to be charged, the number of free copies to be sent out for comment or review, the amount and kind of advertising, and other such matters. Like George Bernard Shaw, Nabokov exerted uncommon control over the marketing of his books. It should be noted that few authors went so far as Shaw, who wielded near-total control over his British editions—from his books' conceptions to their incarnation in print. He would pay for his book's own printing and binding, and then present the finished product to his publisher who was permitted only to market it and transfer its proceeds to Shaw.[47] One might assume that publishers would not accept this usurpation of their

prerogatives from an author of less than Shaw's stature, but Nabokov made similar demands and often received significant concessions. In one of his communications with John Fischer, Nabokov insisted, "I am very much interested in the physical aspects of the book and hope to come to New York for a day or two to go over these matters with you."[48] He repeated the same request a few weeks later: "Jacket design. I would be very much interested to know any plans you may have in this connection."[49]

Art and design considerations arose over nearly all of Nabokov's books, and often several times as publishers reprinted them.[50] In the same spirit, Nabokov routinely edited and approved his publishers' blurbs and promotional material, so as to guarantee they did not distort or misrepresent his books. He even provided criticism about the lettering: "The coloration of the word ADA recalls at first blush the nacre inner layer of a dejected shellfish. [. . .] At six paces the D of the title looks like a badly deformed O."[51] Chapter 8 of this book will examine in greater detail various aspects of designing Nabokov's novels, so the particular link between the cover design, provocative contents, and economics will only be briefly mentioned here. Even though Nabokov would vehemently protest any indication that *Lolita* or *Ada* fell in the category of erotic fiction, his commercial publishers were well aware of the extreme profitability of this particular genre. In the key legal decisions that permitted *Ulysses* and *Lady Chatterley's Lover* "to be sold openly, courts accepted the argument that artistic necessity justified obscenity,"[52] and Nabokov aimed at the very same logic that would drive the sales of his own writings. As Joyce Wexler observes, by turning the period's contradictory ideologies to their economic advantage, many modernists disavowed financial interests while gaining material benefits from the implicit eroticism of their works: "Once sex was aligned with art against commercial ends, it provided the money serious writers could not admit they wanted. Censorship advertised the work of Joyce and Lawrence far beyond the avant-garde audience."[53]

Nabokov's unquestionably popular status should be viewed in the complex context of authorial aesthetic views, social framework, and literary techniques aimed at composing an "ideal" work of art designed to equally satisfy the demands of refined critics and please the tastes of paperback readers. Pushkin's famous maxim states that although an artist should not trade inspiration, he is certainly free to sell his manuscripts.[54] Nabokov understood the intricate issues that dominate social discussions of literary fame, the politics of marketing a bestseller, and the debates around prize distribution. As such, we might view what transpired in all of Nabokov's dealings with the publishing industry as a premeditated attempt to manipulate the cultural merchants while also reaching the broadest audience in order to provoke the most attention for his literary works. This might seem contradictory when considered alongside Nabokov's repeated assertion that he was devoted to the ivory tower, and to writing to please one reader alone—himself. In an interview with Alvin Toffler for *Playboy* in 1964, Nabokov claimed that he wrote mainly for artists: fellow-artists, and follow-artists. This must be understood as part of his self-marketing: Nabokov was actually quite aware of his readers' responses, while trying to model and control them.

This chapter has touched only briefly on Nabokov's attempts to act as his own literary agent and to manipulate the marketing of his own literary works. Nabo-

kov's outward expressions of aesthetic snobbery do not accurately reflect his intense marketing efforts made on his own behalf in order to appeal to the largest possible audience. Nabokov engaged in all layers of marketing and self-promotion, knowing that the greater his symbolic capital the more he could demand from his publishers in actual profit. This is not to diminish his substantial literary talents, but it does underscore the market realities for even a literary great such as Vladimir Nabokov.

NOTES

1. Blackwell, "Knigoizdatel' Nabokov," 75.
2. 20 November 1968; NYPL.
3. Cited from the original correspondence in VNA.
4. Ibid.
5. Boyd, *American Years*, 534.
6. Materer, "Make It Sell!", 20.
7. Ibid., 19.
8. Demoor, "Introduction," 13.
9. Edward Bishop, "Perpetuating Joyce," 186–87.
10. Ibid., 194.
11. Quoted in Edward Bishop, "Perpetuating Joyce," 189.
12. VN to George Weidenfeld; 20 June 1971 (Vladimir Nabokov, *Selected Letters*, 489).
13. 26 March 1949. Here and elsewhere the correspondence pertaining to this publisher is cited from the original correspondence files (NYPL).
14. 25 April 1949.
15. 6 May 1949.
16. VN to Frank MacGregor; 15 May 1951.
17. For an account of her career, see Ware, *It's One O'clock and Here is Mary Margaret McBride.*
18. VN to MacGregor; 10 June 1951.
19. Vladimir Nabokov, *Strong Opinions*, 158.
20. 11 May 1935.
21. The first attempt made by Winifred Roy (London, 1936) was a flop, so Nabokov undertook his own adaptation, which appeared two years later as *Laughter in the Dark*.
22. An Interview with Nabokov by Herbert Gold; quoted in Pifer, *Vladimir Nabokov's* Lolita, 204.
23. 27 June 1967 (VN to the editor of McGraw-Hill).
24. 18 May 1950.
25. 20 May 1950.
26. 18 May 1959; VNA.
27. In the very same manner, eighty year earlier, Fyodor Dostoevsky complained to his wife that he receives only 250 rubles per page from the journal's publisher while Tolstoy is get paid at the rate of 500 rubles for the same amount of words; although Dostoevsky was indeed in greater financial need than the count Leo Tolstoy, he was offended more by the publisher's alleged insinuation about his prose being inferior to that of his literary rival (Saraskina, *Dostoevsky*, 614).
28. Vladimir Nabokov, *Strong Opinions*, 32; 46; 183.

29. Vladimir Nabokov, *Speak, Memory*, 280.

30. Cohen, "The Making of Nabokov's Fiction," 337.

31. Danesi, *Why It Sells*, 172.

32. According to Pierre Bourdieu the role of the scholar and critic is extremely important in determining the value of a creative work. What Bourdieu calls *cultural merchants* exploit the work and trade on its sacred value when it is published. Bourdieu explains that entering the field of literature is like entering a selective club. The publisher, critic and literary scholar all must effusively recommend their candidate for membership (Bourdieu, *The Rules of Art*, 76–77).

33. Ohmann, "The Shaping of a Canon," 206.

34. J. Fischer to VN; 5 April 1950.

35. 21 April 1950.

36. 1 June 1950.

37. Nabokov's disappointing reply (once he realizes that it is too late for Fischer to change his mind) is reprinted in: Vladimir Nabokov, *Selected Letters*, 100–101.

38. Quoted in Booher's letter to VN; 26 July 1967.

39. Ibid.; italics added.

40. 26 July 1967.

41. Zaitsev, *Kniga o Leonide Andreeve*, 140–41. In English, see White, *Memoirs and Madness*, 101–2.

42. Schiff, *Véra*, 244.

43. Ibid., 318–19.

44. Shugg, "Author versus Publisher," 8.

45. When one Nabokov scholar attempted to create a playlist of songs that had the name "Lolita" in the title in 2012, he gave up adding tracks after compiling nearly 100 (over five hours of music); the diversity seems to be great and there are a surprising number of German-language tracks (Matthew Roth, NABOKV-L Archive, 24 August 2012).

46. Blackwell, "Knigoizdatel' Nabokov," 83.

47. Shugg, "Author versus Publisher," 4.

48. 16 June 1950.

49. 25 July 1950.

50. See Maliszewski, "Paperback Nabokov."

51. Vladimir Nabokov, *Selected Letters*, 440.

52. Wexler, "Selling Sex as Art," 92.

53. Ibid., 91.

54. Cf.: "Ne prodaetsia vdokhnoven'e, / No mozhno rukopis' prodat'? ("Razgovor knigoprodavtsa s poetom," 1824).

7

Plaster, Marble, Prize

Construction of the Nabokov Canon in Post-Soviet Russia

THE GOLDEN TRAPEZE DILEMMA

After examining the ways in which the Nabokovs toiled to transform Vladimir Nabokov into a leading American writer, we turn our attention to issues surrounding the author's consideration for a Nobel Prize, and his literary return to Russia in the 1990s. In this context, we cannot avoid the complicated relationship that Vladimir Nabokov had with Boris Pasternak, the winner of the 1958 prize (which he was forced to reject). The nature of this relationship can be observed in Nabokov's inquiry concerning whether or not the literary critic Gleb Struve intended to review the "incredibly rubbish Pasternak 'translations' of Shakespeare." Nabokov explained his own inability to do so by pointing to a conflict of interest: "we still hang together on the golden trapeze of the bestseller list."[1] Unfortunately, we do not know Pasternak's opinion of his émigré peer, although he did turn down the idea of Nabokov as translator of the *Zhivago* poems.[2] An examination of this relationship, especially in the context of literary prizes, leads to questions concerning the marketing of each author's posthumous legacy in relation to the Nobel Prize in Literature. Following the collapse of the Soviet Union, Nabokov's works returned to the post-Soviet literary market as a half-legal and ambiguous commodity with heightened market value due to his status as a formerly banned author; posthumously, he became a bestseller in his native country. This chapter charts the evolution of Nabokov's image in Russian culture since the 1960s through the prism of one daring poetic text written in part as a polemic against Boris Pasternak—a writer whom Nabokov considered his rival not only in an aesthetic and/or ideological sense (he regarded *Doctor Zhivago* as a "corpselike, mediocre, false" novel[3]), but also as a close competitor in the realm of literary marketing. Here, the chronology of events are first outlined in order to contextualize the issues surrounding Pasternak's rejection of the Nobel Prize in Literature and Nabokov's responses to the

publication of Pasternak's *Doctor Zhivago*. In particular, focus is put on the implicit Pasternak-Nabokov rivalry through the lens of Bourdieu's theories on cultural production, which includes the work's composition, dissemination, and promotion, in addition to the politics of canon building and prize distribution. We must be mindful that the initial negative publicity for both *Lolita* and *Doctor Zhivago* ultimately became these works' greatest economic attribute, which was converted into record sales, popular film adaptations, and world fame for the authors.

In order to understand another aspect of this complicated literary relationship and the competing issues surrounding awards, monuments, and posthumous legacies, I provide a reading of a poem Nabokov wrote in 1959, in which he imagines his own statue erected in recognition of his contribution to Russian literature. In so doing, I establish a context for Nabokov's post-Soviet *and* posthumous return to his native land, which was, in reality, accompanied by the construction of a physical monument. Since *perestroika*, the Russian readership has evaluated and re-evaluated the relative symbolic values of both the émigré Nabokov and the ostracized Soviet poet Pasternak, whose novel was banned from publication in the USSR for as many years as Nabokov's own masterpiece *Lolita*. In this poem, which has been perceived as blatantly anti-Pasternakian, Nabokov hides an allusion to the poetess Marina Tsvetaeva—Pasternak's correspondent, and the lyric heroine of his unrealized romantic expectations. Through this analysis, I hope to demonstrate how competition for recognition and literary awards is economic by nature, and that the impact of such monuments, whether cast in bronze or written in record books, has lasting ramifications for an author's symbolic capital.

THE PASTERNAK AFFAIR

In 1946 the Communist party official Andrei Zhdanov, who was responsible for ensuring that Soviet ideology dictated cultural policies, attacked the "cosmopolitan" nature of a handful of writers who were suspected of not adhering to the doctrine of socialist realism. The list of targeted artists included Anna Akhmatova, Mikhail Zoshchenko, and Pasternak, and imposed a renewed silence upon these victims. However, Pasternak did not cease to write, and instead directed his creative energy into his first novel (the poet did compose short prose earlier in his career). His labor of several years—the complex novel *Doctor Zhivago*—was completed soon after Stalin's death in 1953. The death of Stalin was followed by a period of thaws (the loosening of the party's controls over cultural production) and freezes (the renewing of political and cultural repression) as the Soviet Union tried to come to terms with the new political and cultural landscape under Nikita Khrushchev. Pasternak was not so naïve to think that in this new literary market his novel might be published without controversy. After deliberations, however, it was rejected and flatly condemned by the State Publishing House. The manuscript subsequently made its way to an Italian editor and was published outside the Soviet Union in 1957.[4] Once it appeared in the West, the non-Soviet readership greeted both the plot and style of the novel

as a fresh and non-orthodox kind of prose, drastically different from official Soviet literary production.

On 23 October 1958 Pasternak received a telegram from the Nobel committee secretary Anders Esterling announcing him as the winner of the Nobel Prize in Literature. When the Nobel committee decided to award Pasternak the prize, it was clear that he "was perhaps the most exclusive of contemporary Russian writers, that is, the least accessible to the average reader"; yet the official text of the Nobel Foundation stated that the award went to the Soviet writer "for his notable achievement in both contemporary poetry and the field of the great Russian narrative tradition."[5] Pasternak's humble and happy telegram of acceptance ("Thankful, glad, proud, confused") was soon to become a major reason for worry. Within days Pasternak was forced to refuse the award and to submit the following explanation to the Swedish Academy: "[I]n view of the meaning given to this honor in the community in which I belong, I should abstain from the undeserved prize that has been awarded me." The Soviet Union denounced the Western judges and condemned the committee's decision to honor Pasternak with the prize as a "hostile political act for recognizing a work withheld from Russian readers which was counter-revolutionary and slanderous."[6] As a result of the uproar, and contrary to Pasternak's expectations (who had miscalculated that declining the prestigious prize would save him and his family from further woes), the persecuted poet was expelled from the Soviet Union of Writers and deprived of the title "Soviet writer." The emotional rift and, possibly, regrets over his poor-spirited decision to refuse the Nobel compelled Pasternak to compose the following poem around December 1958 (an additional strophe was added in late January 1959):

Nobel Prize

I am lost like a beast in an enclosure.
Somewhere are people, freedom, and light,
And behind me is the noise of pursuit
There is no escape for me.

Dark forest and a pond's bank
A stump of a fallen fir tree
Here I am cut off from everything
Whatever shall be is all the same to me.

But what wicked thing have I done?
Am I a murderer or a villain?
I who forced the whole world
To cry over the beauty of my land.

But in any case I am near my grave
And I believe the time will come
When the spirit of good
Will conquer wickedness and infamy.

Contrary to Pasternak's intentions, this poem made its way to the Western media and, like a boomerang, ricocheted back to the Soviet Union, instigating additional domestic troubles. Pasternak tried to minimize the negative effects of the publication, calling it "unauthorized" and explaining it was a private poem he wrote in a "black, pessimistic mood."[7] He claimed that the journalist, Anthony Brown, had volunteered during an interview to deliver the poem as "an autograph" in Pasternak's hand to a friend, Jaquelline de Moyart, curator of the Tolstoy Museum in Paris. Instead, Brown translated and printed the poem in the *Daily Mail* as proof that Pasternak's struggle with the Soviet government and with the Soviet Writers' Union was in full swing.[8] Pasternak's own remorseful comments did not alleviate the problem: he was summoned to the chief prosecutor of the Soviet Union, Roman Rudenko. The poet was accused of state treason, and threatened with arrest should he meet in the future with any foreigners.[9] He would have been exiled straight away, but India's Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru phoned Nikita Khrushchev and said he would head the committee for Pasternak's protection. According to the memoirs of Pasternak's son Evgeny, to end it all quietly Pasternak signed party-written petitions to *Pravda* and personally wrote to Khrushchev. In Evgeny's own words, "It doesn't matter if their texts are good or bad, and what dominates there—repentance or self-affirmation. [. . .] what matters is that Pasternak did not write them, but was forced to sign. And this humiliation, torment to his will, was especially injurious because he realized that no one needed that [explanation]."[10]

NABOKOV'S RESPONSE TO PASTERNAK'S NOBEL PRIZE

Boris Pasternak was highly regarded in the émigré literary community. In January 1959 his autobiographical essay was printed in installments in *New Russian Word* (*Novoe Russkoe Slovo*), the oldest and most influential Russian-language newspaper in the USA. Nabokov always appreciated Pasternak as a major poet, but believed that his latest prose was both an aesthetic and ideological fiasco. Nabokov's poetic response to the Soviet Nobel scandal employs Pasternak's poem "The Nobel Prize" as a canvas upon which layers of new meaning are added. In his poem that begins "What is the evil deed I have committed?"—echoing the first line of the third stanza in Pasternak's poem ("But what wicked thing have I done?")—Nabokov ostensibly mocks Pasternak's genuine pain over his dramatic faith in *Doctor Zhivago* by shifting it into a melodramatic key. A master of literary parody, Nabokov debunks the poem's pathos with references to his own novel *Lolita*, which presumably in Nabokov's opinion, had no less an (un)lucky publication history, and had likewise been abused by numerous cultural merchants and puritan ideologists (ironically, by Western officials—not the Soviet ones). The finale of Nabokov's response seemingly has nothing to do with Pasternak; rather, it transcends the idea of a literary and aesthetic competition by moving the debate into another sphere through a prophetic pronouncement about his unrecognized fame and the future of his legacy in Russia:

What is the evil deed I have committed?
Seducer, criminal—is this the word
For me who set the entire world dreaming
Of my poor girl?

Oh, I know well that I am feared by people:
They burn the likes of me for wizard wiles
And as of poison in a hollow smaragd
Of my art die.

Amusing, though, that at the last indention,
despite proofreaders and my age's ban,
a Russian branch's shadow shall be playing
upon the marble of my hand.[11]

According to Robert P. Hughes, Nabokov's 1970 Pasternak epigram follows Pasternak's own poetic manner quite faithfully: "It is thus not only an epigram, but also a successful parody. Nabokov's other poetic response to Boris Pasternak is his reply in verse to the latter's 1959 poem 'The Nobel Prize.'"[12] Simon Karlinsky, who sums up the scholarly debate over the Nabokov-Pasternak rivalry, points out that Nabokov's text was written in 1959, "at the time when *Lolita* and *Doctor Zhivago* kept vying for first place on the American list of best-sellers, but published only in 1961, after Pasternak's death."[13] Karlinsky points out that Nabokov's poem has been read by many as not only a parody but also a mockery of Pasternak's suffering, and only D. Barton Johnson has defended the poem as "a tribute to Pasternak, the poet."[14] A tribute it was certainly not.

Most probably Nabokov's Russian-language poetic response was initially composed immediately after reading the *English version* of Pasternak's poem translated from the Russian original, which was then not yet publicly available. The date of the earliest draft of Nabokov's "What is the evil deed I have committed?" as recorded in an autograph on an index card (now at the Berg Collection) is 26 February 1959.[15] Pasternak's poem was printed in the West just two weeks prior—on 11 February 1959.

In her 1972 essay in the *New York Review of Books*, Mary McCarthy openly challenged Nabokov over his alleged jealousy:

> Nabokov insists that he is indifferent to current Russian events, but that is only his way of snubbing the Soviet Union, just as his pose of being indifferent to politics is a snub to engage literature. [. . .] More peculiar is his malice toward Pasternak, whom he half admired as a poet and who was dead too, and disgraced when *Ada* came out, in which Nabokov cites, among other repellent tides, *Les Amours du Docteur Merivago*—i.e., merte (death plus merde). This must be a case of [the] novelist's jealousy. Nabokov, an exile, envied Pasternak, an "internal émigré"—a Soviet term of abuse often applied to Pasternak and meaning something like an internal expatriate, if that can be conceived.[16]

McCarthy argues that Nabokov and Pasternak were in rivalry as novelists for "the Russian land"—a legacy they had from Tolstoy and Sergei Aksakov—since

they belonged to the same educated milieu (which, for the record, is not particularly true in the case of the aristocratic Nabokovs and the Jewish bohemian family of Pasternak). The American critic does not evoke the poetic exchange started by the 1958 Nobel Prize drama, although Nabokov's "Russian branch" and Pasternak's words about "the beauty of my land" corroborate her point that the real object of this competition is Russia itself. McCarthy goes further and even suggests that this sense of rivalry could be mutual: "In *Dr. Zhivago* (page 312 of the English edition) Pasternak appears to be emitting a signal of some kind to the other writer. 'Folding and unfolding like a scrap of coloured stuff, a brown speckled butterfly' flies in and out of the story for the length of a paragraph, giving rise to some reflections on mimicry and protective coloring," and possibly referencing Nabokov, who, as a professional lepidopterist, "has published on protective mimicry—a fact probably known to Pasternak, who certainly was aware of him as a butterfly-hunter. Yet if the passage was intended as a fraternal greeting, it got a cold response."[17] Nabokov's biographer Brian Boyd raises a reasonable question in defense of his subject: "What was there for Nabokov to envy? Not Pasternak's gifts as a lyric poet, which he happily acknowledged—he called Pasternak 'a kind of masculine Emily Dickinson,' no mean compliment. [. . .] And certainly not Pasternak's limited talent as a novelist."[18] So was it really about the still swinging "golden trapeze of the bestseller list"? In mid-September 1958, *Lolita* was number four on the bestseller list when the English translation of *Doctor Zhivago* came out. By the end of September *Lolita* had climbed to the top, but after seven weeks in that position it was knocked down to number two by Pasternak's novel.[19]

THE REAL TARGET: TSVETAEVA BEHIND PASTERNAK?

The fact that Nabokov did not receive the Nobel Prize is a delicate topic. Many of the writer's devotees choose to avoid discussion of this, but once the matter is raised they tend to agree that Nabokov was deprived of fair consideration. The poem "What is the evil deed I have committed?" has traditionally been regarded as an answer to Pasternak, and it was Nabokov himself who suggested this understanding.[20] Nevertheless, the allusion to Pasternak is only one of many within the three densely packed stanzas.[21] The function of Nabokov's frontal quotation of Pasternak is to lead astray the reader's attention. The émigré critics' emotional overreaction that accompanied its publication serves as expressive evidence of Nabokov reaching his goal.[22]

As suggested at the beginning of this chapter, Nabokov's poem may hide an allusion to Marina Tsvetaeva, Pasternak's correspondent and the lyric heroine of his unrealized romantic expectations. Nabokov weaves into Tsvetaeva's 1924 poem "An Attempt at Jealousy" ("Popytka revnosti") a prophetic vision of the situation in the late 1950s, but rewrites Tsvetaeva's declaration of love into an attempt at literary

envy. Imitating an outburst of jealousy towards the Nobel laureate, Nabokov shifts the emphasis without changing Pasternak's name[23]—the original addressee (though not the only one) of Tsvetaeva's piece:[24]

> How's life with goods
> From the market? Is the tax steep?
> After the marbles of Carrara
> How's life with the dust
>
> From plaster? (A god is cut out of a boulder—
> And broken into smithereens!)
> How's life with the hundredth-thousandth woman—
> You, who have known Lilith![25]

Nabokov's artistic ideology seems to have played a pragmatic role in the composition of "What is the evil deed I have committed?" First, the attempt to devalue the Nobel Prize reflects his general non-recognition and dismissal of literary prizes as meaningful indications of a laureate's oeuvre and aesthetic worth. It can also be interpreted as a manifestation of giving the "hundredth-thousandth" up in favor of a "*poor girl*" ("For me who set the entire world dreaming / Of my poor girl?")—Lilith-Dolores. In other words, Nabokov asserts that he would readily exchange the immediacy of "marketable goods" for the immortality of art.[26] This would be a significant revelation if found to be true, especially considering the findings of the previous chapter which examines how Nabokov exploited his literary reputation for maximum real (and not merely symbolic) capital. The question of whether or not Nabokov was really indifferent to the Prize should be readdressed to psychologists. What is more important is that Nabokov identifies certain signals in Tsvetaeva's poem that were not there three decades earlier. In some oracular way they resonate now with his poetic world: the combination of *The Other Shores* and *Speak, Memory* ("By way of the shore's line / Did memory go away quickly" ["Liniei beregovoiu / Skoro l' pamiat' otoshla"]); homonymic derivation of Lilith/Lolita; the theme of *poshlost'* or platitude ("With the immortal tax of banality / How are you coming to terms, my poor man?" ["S poshlinoi bessmertnoi poshlosti / Kak spravliaetes', bedniak?"]).

Tsvetaeva's work is dated 19 November 1924. Earlier on January 24 of the same year, the two poets Tsvetaeva and Nabokov-Sirin (who was seven years younger) stepped out for a "lyrical stroll" on the hills above Prague.[27] Such proximity of dates could not escape Nabokov's attention, and if his assumption is correct that Tsvetaeva's poem was indeed dedicated to Pasternak,[28] then in retrospect the author of *Doctor Zhivago* once again appears as Nabokov's indirect rival. Tsvetaeva's poem, with its "marbles of Carrara" and thoughts about an artist's place in a volatile market of ideas, neatly fits the metaphoric transformation of the *Nabokov brand* from plaster to marble in modern Russian popular culture (to be discussed in the second half of this chapter).

READERS AGAINST NABOKOV'S "MALICIOUS" ATTACK ON PASTERNAK

Vladimir Nabokov's "What is the evil deed I have committed?" appeared along with another poem in the second issue of the almanac *Aerial Ways* (*Vozdyshnye Puti*) in 1961. It was received with undisguised annoyance by the émigré readership. Nabokov's former close friend Gleb Struve called it a "malicious" [*gnusnoe*] poem in his letter to the American scholar and Slavist by training, Vladimir Markov.[29] Olga Emelyanova (Mozhayskaya) qualified it as a shameless parody in her letter to Roman Grinberg, editor-in-chief of the *Aerial Ways*:

> We, as well as Terapiano[30] in his article, were surprised that Nabokov and Yung's poems were put in the almanac.[31] They fall out of the ensemble of the whole book. Nabokov's What is the evil deed I have committed?
>
> Seducer, criminal . . . strongly resembles Pasternak (I don't remember the words exactly), who asks the same question and adds that he "has made the whole world weep" over *Doctor Zhivago*.[32] Nabokov, after all, is a good lyrical poet and how shameful it is to steal both the rhythm and the theme (literally) from others. . . .[33]

Gennady Khomyakov,[34] then the editor of the European almanac *Bridges* (*Mosty*), made an even more cutting remark:

> I have already finished *Mosty* (*Bridges*) number 7, it is already being stitched and will come out in about a couple of weeks. We will send it to you.
>
> Nabokov is surely a peculiar person, but his second poem (the first one is very good) is definitely impudent. Have you got an epigram on him? If not, here it is:
>
> Nabokov, you are a good shot, as always:
> The swinging of a Russian branch awaits you.
> But you are not a prophet:
> There will be no marble, Nabokov.[35]
>
> Wonderful! My fingers were itching to put [it] into the seventh issue, but alas! He would certainly get hurt. Though it's keen and powerful—it should be appreciated. They lost the art of cracking a real joke.[36]

The Russian émigrés were not the only ones who were offended. Even Edmund Wilson, Nabokov's long-time friend and patron in the American literary market, feuded with him over Pasternak's controversial book:

> [W]hen, according to Mr. Nabokov, 'a black cat came between us'—Boris Pasternak's novel *Doctor Zhivago* [. . .] Mr. Nabokov called the book third-rate and clumsy while Mr. Wilson praised it. 'He started the quarrel,' Mr. Nabokov said, and it was exacerbated in 1963 when Mr. Nabokov published his annotated English version of *Eugene Onegin*, Alexander Pushkin's romantic novel in verse form.[37]

Contemporary Western critics tend to side with Wilson rather than with Nabokov ("Where a potential rival looms, the mechanisms of defensive denigration are almost instantaneous. Nabokov on Pasternak does not make for pleasant reading"[38]).

Pasternak, though suffering from his sudden international fame, may still have had access to foreign presses and literature despite the imposed restrictions on external communication. But what were the chances for an ordinary Soviet Russian reader to discover the banned author Vladimir Nabokov? Nabokov's émigré contemporaries underestimated *samizdat*—an underground network that disseminated illegal literature in the Soviet Union—when they stated, "There will be no marble, Nabokov." Both a statue to Nabokov and even a state-funded museum would eventually appear in the wake of his hundredth birthday anniversary, but first came the readership.

As early as 1969 in Leningrad, it cost six rubles to have *Lolita* for one night—under the assumption that the reader would not make copies of the borrowed book. Making a photocopy cost ten rubles. By 1980 the price for *The Gift* (a paperback edition) and *Lolita* amounted to 80 rubles each (or 120 US dollars) on the black market.[39] This sum approximated the average monthly salary of a Soviet employee, who might also read Nabokov in *samizdat*.[40] Despite the fact that Nabokov's works were clearly prized as valuable illegal goods in the Soviet Union, even Western critics at the time were skeptical about the prophecy coming true—that Nabokov would be given a monument in his homeland. Analyzing Nabokov's poem "What is the evil deed I have committed?", Kees Veerheul was the first to note its genre interrelationship with the poetic tradition of "Exegi monumentum,"[41] adding that Nabokov would never be given the honor of getting a marble monument in the USSR.[42]

Forty years after the first publication of the poem "What is the evil deed I have committed?" and in spite of Nabokov's self-ironic remark at the end of his life—"N is a remarkable writer, snob and athlete, having great aplomb"[43]—his crowd of admirers became quite conspicuous. The cult did not mind memorializing its hero in bronze, and by the hundredth anniversary of the writer's birth the long-awaited monument had materialized. The statue (Nabokov in knickerbockers) was created by the sculptors Alexander and Phillip Rukavishnikov, but erected not in Russia and instead near the Montreux Palace Hotel.[44] The hotel owners, in their own act of consecration, skillfully usurped the symbolic capital of their former star residents to benefit their own business.[45]

THE NOBEL PRIZE AGAIN— NABOKOV AND HIS (MUCH DESERVED) STATUE

While Pasternak literally declined the Nobel Prize in Literature, Nabokov's loyal readers wished to believe that their favorite author had symbolically rejected it. Indeed, Nabokov never publicly admitted that getting one was his goal, although like many he recognized Ivan Bunin's Nobel Prize (1933) as an achievement for émigré culture, and celebrated this accomplishment along with the Russian-speaking community. Bunin continued to write in Russian after he left the Soviet Union in 1920, and was translated by D. H. Lawrence and others. The Nobel citation stressed his link with Russia before the Bolshevik takeover, suggesting that Bunin was preserving the great pre-Bolshevik tradition. Even by the time of Bunin's award, however,

"Nabokov was often considered the best Russian émigré writer [. . .] Nabokov never won—he seems to *hold the record as the writer who should have won a Nobel in either or both of two different languages*."[46]

As mentioned earlier, Boris Pasternak's formal refusal of the Nobel Prize was forced by Soviet cultural merchants. When Nabokov parodied his Soviet counterpart by composing "What is the evil deed I have committed?", he was probably not yet fully aware of the trouble Pasternak experienced in the aftermath of the imposed rejection. But Nabokov was certainly aware of Pasternak's troubles at the time of the poem's publication, after Pasternak had already been dead for a year (he passed away in 1960). Pasternak's *Doctor Zhivago* was at last published in the Soviet Union in 1988, a mere year before Nabokov's *Lolita*.

In his late professional career Nabokov consistently turned down all honorary doctorates and memberships offered to him, but it is safe to assume that the Nobel Prize would have been the ultimate recognition that he would have accepted unequivocally. Boyd records the following anecdote: in 1969 Nabokov's selection as the next Nobel recipient seemed particularly likely (in fact, he had been regularly nominated since the early 1960s, and both the *New York Times* and *Life* magazine anticipated the award going soon to the author of *Lolita*). One day in late October, when the laureate's name is usually announced, the Nabokovs received a call from Sweden:

> "Stockholm calling. . . . Stockholm calling," they heard—and the connection broke. After moments of mounting expectation, the call came through again: a woman who wanted help with her thesis.
>
> After the Nobel Prize went to Solzhenitsyn in 1970, Solzhenitsyn wrote to Nabokov that *he* was far more deserving of the award, and acting on that conviction he nominated Nabokov himself. But whatever other writers, reviewers, and readers may have thought, the Swedish Academy never managed to agree on Nabokov.[47]

Considering that the source of the anecdote must have been an insider, it seems obvious that Nabokov himself treated this episode with a degree of irony. Besides, Nabokov could always soothe himself with the fact that the first to be rejected was none other than his great predecessor Tolstoy (some claim that the author of *War and Peace* and *Anna Karenina* was not chosen because of his conservative viewpoint on what great literature should be, while others state that the Swedish committee of the freshly-founded award did not want to embarrass itself with Tolstoy's possible refusal—reportedly, the Russian novelist said that he did not want to be elected because he would not know what to do with the money or the fame). As Richard Jewell suggests in "The Nobel Prize: History and Canonicity," part of the answer to the question concerning whether or not the Nobels in literature are fair (that is, are winners chosen justly to represent the best of world literature?) lies in determining what is the literary canon:

> In fact, one can argue that the history of the Nobels in literature is to some extent a history of how the literary canon has been—and will be—determined. In recent years in the awarding of the prize, it is quite clear that there has developed a greater effort

> not only to include nonwhite and female authors, but also to redefine the meaning of good—canonical—literature in accordance with the literatures of nonwhite and female authors whose writings differ from the traditional canon.[48]

Moreover, the history of the Nobel Prize in Literature has been closely connected to political and aesthetic judgments made in the process of deliberations; indeed, the majority of the Russian-speaking laureates of the twentieth century prove the thesis, including the most recent case of Joseph Brodsky, a genius who dared to challenge a Goliath of the Soviet totalitarian machine. Nabokov—who loosened his ties with the Russian émigré literary establishment throughout the later period of his career, and who no longer could be identified with one particular literary tradition—did not fit any political niche. While a champion of pure art, he still cared about publicity (his orientation towards Western mass readership engaged in bestseller lists is evident to anyone who closely reads his or Véra's business correspondence). After the Iron Curtain fell, Nabokov became a bestseller, though posthumously, in his native country as well. Had he imitated nineteenth-century Russian prose, creating like Bunin a specific nostalgia for a lost Russia, or had he published a book illegally abroad, thereby embarrassing Soviet officials as Pasternak had done, or had he fought against the Soviet regime and been expelled like Solzhenitsyn and Brodsky, then Nabokov might have been seriously considered for the literary prize. Because Nabokov was scoring literary (and financial) successes from the relatively safe (and politically free) confines of Europe and the United States, he possessed little political capital with those who determined the award.

An additional dimension to consider is the monetary award attached to the Nobel Prize, as it goes hand in hand with the undeniable symbolic capital gained by Nobel winners. It is especially interesting that Nabokov sincerely believed that Soviet opposition to the publication of *Doctor Zhivago* "was only a ruse to boost its foreign sales and earn much-sought-after foreign currency."[49] Nabokov confessed in his diary that he believed the Soviets staged such a fabrication in order to make a profit; years later he reiterates this conspiracy theory in the postscript to the Russian translation of *Lolita* (money made off of *Zhivago* helped the Soviet Union to "eventually pocket and spend [the currency] on propaganda abroad").[50] In reality, Pasternak could hardly make ends meet (his prospects for publishing original works and translations had faded as a direct result of the state's assault), but the honoraria from the sales of his book in the West were quite sizeable. Indeed, in January 1959 Pasternak compiled a list of people to whom he wanted to send monetary gifts, and addressed it to his Italian editor and financial executor Feltrinelli. At least 120,000 dollars were subsequently shared between the various translators of the novel, Pasternak's sisters who resided in England, and several friends with whom he kept intensive correspondence.[51]

Pasternak could not have access to the Nobel Prize money because the Foundation's protocol dictates that once refused, it cannot be reclaimed. But Pasternak's refusal was politically motivated—quite different from, for instance, Jean-Paul Sartre's voluntary decline in 1964. In 1989 at a reception held the day before the prize ceremony, the Nobel Foundation paid formal tribute to Pasternak by presenting the medal intended

for him to his son. According to an eyewitness account of Michael Bishop, a laureate in physiology/medicine for the same year, Evgeny Pasternak "wryly asked whether the monetary award was also forthcoming—it was not."[52] Thirty years prior, Pasternak's wife Zinaida instinctively warned her husband that various people, especially journalists—referencing the misfortunate episode involving the inadvertent release of his poem "The Nobel Prize"—are "only exploiting you for personal gain."[53] As a matter of fact, newspaper reports about the millions of dollars that Pasternak was about to receive from his Nobel revenues sparked various exotic messages: chain letters, American parents arranging 'showers' for their daughters, money requests from individuals and charities, invitations to lecture, etc.[54] When Pasternak charged foreigners with harming his reputation, he used explicitly economic language, accusing them of "trying to cash in on his name with 'all sorts of adventures' about which he knew nothing."[55] With equal zeal, Nabokov's wife Véra protected her husband's interests:

> When fame and wealth came, overnight as it were, [the Nabokovs] left in their wake decades of misery, of non-recognition outside a small circle, of academic jobbery. Now resplendent vengeance lay to hand and the role of Nabokov's wife, Véra, was of the very first importance. It is doubtful whether he could have endured either the long years of material and psychological constraint or the sun-burst of high fortune without the magic of a 52-year marriage to an utterly remarkable woman.[56]

Even more consciously than Pasternak's son Evgeny (1923–2012), Dmitri Nabokov (1934–2012) was extremely attuned to financial schemes surrounding his father's posthumous legacy both in Russia and abroad. In the mid-1990s he lamented the fact that Russians still did not have access to biographical and critical sources "other than venomous Zinaïdas, benighted Struves, the still-smoldering remains of Andrew Field,"[57] while people like Mr. Boris Nosik, a self-appointed biographer "whose crimes are more against the Russian language than against Nabokov," cashed in on his father's status.[58] "It is a pity that the publishers who got rich on megapiracy balk at the economics of the superb Boyd biography, which is almost fully translated and ready to dispel the rot," concludes Dmitri's diatribe. Worth mentioning, however, is the way that Dmitri's belligerent speech ends: "For some years Monomakh's hat kept bumping against the Petersburg gate. Now that I have made it through I shall be back on a Russian-Christmas visit, to see how things are going, and *shall traverse Rozhdestveno with sleigh and troika, straight out of some fifth-rate novel like Dr. Zhivago*."[59] Hence, it seems Dmitri inherited the Pasternak-Nabokov rivalry—although judging by the dashing imagery Dmitri evokes, the *Zhivago* theme in his memory was more akin to the racy 1965 Hollywood screen adaptation starring Omar Sharif than to Pasternak's actual narrative.

CONSTRUCTING THE CANON

This chapter has thus far outlined the process of Nabokov's "solidification": the evolution of his image from malleable plaster to bronze and marble, or to use the terms of Vladimir Paperny's architectural rhetoric, Nabokov's transformation from

the state of "Culture One" into "Culture Two."[60] If one had asked in 1968 who would dominate the international literary market in years to come—Pasternak or Nabokov—many would have certainly selected Pasternak. Yet over time, the Nabokov brand was cultivated and marketed in ways that were not possible for Pasternak and his relatives in the West. Even more complex is the way in which Nabokov returned to post-Soviet Russia, and quickly outstripped Pasternak's literary market share. This process of crystallizing Nabokov's contraband heritage into an object of heightened market value echoes Bourdieu's fundamental question of "who creates the 'creator'?"—in other words, who is "the true producer of the value of the work—the painter or the dealer, the writer or the publisher, the playwright or the theatre manager?"[61] Nabokov, somewhat contrary to Bourdieu's claim, became his own leading business representative while Véra acted as his "impresario"; as a team the Nabokovs proclaimed the value of the author "Nabokov" whom they defended, invested in his prestige, and served "as a 'symbolic banker' who offers as security all the symbolic capital he has accumulated."[62] In the words of her biographer, Véra was "thrilled to see her husband positively 'lionized'—photographed, sought after, recognized on the street and in stores."[63] This loud fame, however, was backed and nurtured by Véra's silent diligence and devotion. For example, when business required that she—functioning as Nabokov's representative—put in an appearance overseas, she made the trip (in 1966, 1967, and 1968 she flew from Montreux to New York exclusively "to attend to 1,000,000 business matters," meeting mostly with publishers and lawyers).[64] Such redistribution of assignments within the family allowed Nabokov to do what he knew and loved best—create more literary products for the market. The direct result of this bifurcation of the Nabokov persona was the detachment of his public image from any of the monetary nitty-gritty.

In contemporary post-Soviet perception, Nabokov is the "forever young" and underpaid genius sitting on a pan in sweater and trousers, and was unfairly denied his Nobel Prize. This image comes from a contemporary poet who, during a celebration honoring Nabokov's birthday, described an imaginary statue of "Nabokov, Vladimir Vladimirovich, professor of pity and beauty, the Nobel non-laureate." His version of Nabokov's sculpture would bear no name or date. It would just be a figure of a thin young man in a light sweater, bent over the granite slate on his knees:

> [. . .]Approaching the monument a passer-by would suddenly stop
> not believing his eyes. He would turn around
> looking for a guide,
> or a tablet informing
> of an avant-garde exhibition,—
> or a film crew, giggling behind the bushes.
> Then, forgetting his burger,
> or lowering the cornflower bouquet,
> in case a passer-by is a female,
> would do the last step and make sure
> that the writing person is sitting on a w.c. pan.
> He is sitting on a pan

in a sweater and trousers,
forever young,
when he was writing *The Gift*.
A poet on a pan is not a pun,
not a trite challenge to a crowd.
With his bent head he is above
an angel on a column.
The birch shadow falls on a Carrara page
and moves up the hand.
A raven burrs, and the day goes on.
He is writing *The Gift* on a pan.[65]

Besides featuring an obvious quotation from Nabokov's infamous poem, the text blends a number of archetypes from the modern Russian poetic canon: the Alexandriysky column in St. Petersburg's Palace Square (topped with an angel figure) in front of the tsar's residence, and Pushkin's poem "I erected a monument . . ." (1836). Pushkin's text, also known as "Monument" ("Pamyatnik"), was inspired by a quotation from Horace (*Exegi monumentum*), and mentions the same Alexandriysky column in the context of a poet's literary posterity.

The opening lines of Nabokov's parody about an unknown committed evil, which struck contemporary readers as extremely immodest, became some of Nabokov's most popular a few decades later.[66] The poet and queer activist Yaroslav Mogutin (b. 1974) copies the very same punch line, capitalizing it:

I can't imagine myself being pasternak or
mandelstam or khodasevich or georgii ivanov
even nabokov who had been exclaiming perplexedly WHAT
IS THE EVIL DEED I
HAVE COMMITTED AND IS IT ME
SEDUCER AND CRIMINAL ME WHO SET
THE ENTIRE WORLD A-DREAMING OF MY POOR
VIRGIN?!
I imagine myself
Humbert Humbert
craving for a sweaty perineum of some
teenage chick who crippled his
entire life
because of this all-consuming passion
I imagine myself a lascivious nymphet
with iron braces and
it is itchy between legs
my virginity irks me and I can't wait to give it away
to anyone for
example to my stepfather
the one whom one can blackmail and! use
and ruin and then abandon
bringing to the point of absolute insanity
and why not.[67]

A literal confession to the committed "deed" in the poet and literary critic Danila Davydov's (b. 1977) playful stylization sounds like a rogue song (*cf.* from the notorious criminal song—"A grey suit, squeaking shoes" ["Kostiumchik seren'kii, botinochki so skripom"]). Lofty poetry with criminal folklore is embroidered on the Nabokov-Pasternak theme. Davydov enriches this intellectual mixture with Yesenin's hooligan lyrics, and with patterns from quasi-pedagogical hits of Soviet children's literature by Mayakovsky, Gorky,[68] and others:

what is the evil deed he has committed
so evil a deed indeed he has committed
thought for a while and was looking around
thought for a while and then couldn't do it

in the new shoes along the native street
he heads to the home of his beloved one
he writes the non-
truth in the non-Russian language
he has a bluish vein on his temple
he has a passport he is a non-Russian citizen
he keeps in his pocket glasses and medicine
he invented some rubbish he wrote some book
he pulled out a heart out of chest and slashed with a knife

so evil deed indeed he has committed
so evil deed indeed he has committed
get away darling while you are safe
get away dear before they figure you out[69]

Nabokov's posthumous legacy is topical and provokes dialogue, even in today's Russia. There is, in part, a literary-historical explanation for this: having changed the audience and authorial strategies, Nabokov once again achieved literary success that had, for the first time, a financial dimension as well. Nabokov is presently able to compete with Pushkin, the heart of Russian literature,[70] and has also become a character of anecdotes—a more important barometer of recognition in popular culture.[71]

Unable to return to his native land, Nabokov asks and answers the question "and when will we return to Russia?" by placing it in the mouth of his programmatic hero, Fyodor Godunov-Cherdyntsev.[72] The author fantasizes (without much confidence) that the comeback is destined to happen, "no matter when, in a hundred, two hundred years." Nabokov's poem "What is the evil deed I have committed?" was allowed to return during the Soviet regime, much earlier than the century or two that was predicted: it was performed in musical form by Alexander Gradsky, a state-approved bard. Gradsky's album, containing eight poetic texts by Nabokov, was recorded during Andropov's term (1982–1984), although its release took place only in the late eighties, after Gorbachev came to power in 1985. Probably as a precaution, its title exposed the émigré composer of lyrics as one who could not avoid some clichéd sentimentality: *Nostalgia* (Vocal Suite, text by V. Nabokov).[73]

NABOKOV'S VINDICATION IN POST-SOVIET RUSSIA

Even though Nabokov's ritual comeback to his native land took place much earlier than he predicted (just slightly over a decade after his death), the question remains: would the exiled author himself be satisfied with such swift cultural vindication? Nabokov's status in modern Russia is painfully ambivalent. On the one hand, his work is so well known that even DJs freely quote the terse theses of Nabokov's philosophy,[74] and a provincial radio anchor assumes the writer's full name[75]—which is also exploited by a certain Moscow lawyer.[76] Not only marginal artists but also those who are clearly within the artistic mainstream employ Nabokov as a new cultural icon—first in the West,[77] and later in Russia.[78] For example, the popular rock-diva Zemfira (b. 1976), whose cult status in Russia can be compared with that of top Western female rockstars such as Janis Joplin or Courtney Love, admits in a song that she often reads Nabokov on the metro. Channeling the Hollywood fashion of her American coevals,[79] the popular starlet and honored artist of Tatarstan Alsou (b. 1983, real name Alsou Safina) shot a video clip based on *Lolita*.[80] Lolita is also idolized by the heroine of one of Yuri Shevchuk's songs (Shevchuk is the leader of the popular Russian rock band DDT that has been active since the early 1980s, and is notorious for his anti-Putin political stance):

> Reconciling Lolitas with Joanna d'Arc,
> You sweep the offered lunch.
> Park is struggling at the benches,
> But you don't need an old ensign.[81]

A favorite TV personality of Russian middle-class families pompously announced the start of "the Nabokov century,"[82] while the performance poet Lev Rubinshtein subtly reproduced Nabokov's creative routine by constructing his own texts on index cards—a method Nabokov invented in the 1960s.[83]

On the other hand, Nabokov and Rubinshtein both represent a part of that very abstract and archaic "they" rejected in the digitalized-script era by the post-Soviet literary generation of the 1990s: "*They* won't get through. We won't get through either. Probably, only L. S. Rubinshtein will get through because he is writing on index-cards—this is cool. But it became old-fashioned. Credit cards are much more elegant. There you are, L.S."[84] Nabokov's writing technique has become part and parcel of a modern Russian author's cultural "thesaurus, and even, the subject matter for comparative analysis":

> He was writing in aphorisms, as any Russian thinker who respects himself should. He was writing down these aphorisms, sentences or phrases on separate cards. And after that he was assembling the text of his novel or novelette from hundreds of such cards and that montage appeared ideally smooth. [. . .] No wonder this man could not stand Dostoevsky's stylistic manner, careless and chaotic. [. . .] Rozanov destroyed discourse completely eliminating a partition between a reader and a writer. Nabokov, on the contrary, brought the divider to a complex, but lucid perfection.[85]

Of course, Nabokov's accessibility is imaginary, and is almost identical to Pasternak's semantic opaqueness—yet Nabokov's marketing practices produced an accessible and compelling brand image in a way that Pasternak could not. The deceptive effect of equating Nabokov's works with "stylistic transparence" translates into factual statistics (in 1990–1991 the total number of pirated paperback *Lolita*s in Russia amounted to three million copies[86]). This widening gap between the Nabokov associated with elitist art and the Nabokov beloved by mass readership has hardly gone unnoticed among intellectuals and in the literary bohemian milieu. Now the former "men of the sixties" (and even 1970s and 1980s—*shesti-, semi-, vosmidesyatniki*) take their revenge on Nabokov for his role as a black sheep, as well as for his ironic popularity in that very social strata against which Nabokov himself systematically fought in his writings, particularly in his essays on banality (*poshlost'*).

Alexander Kushner's writings present a rare case of unreserved acceptance of Nabokov. Kushner (b. 1936), Anna Akhmatova's disciple and Joseph Brodsky's friend (who both, by the way, had serious reservations regarding Nabokov-the-poet), is an adherent of a sentimental current in new Russian poetry;[87] however, contrary to the younger literary generation, he wittingly distances himself from *Lolita:*

> O, if only in our lifetime any novel could once again
> Captivate our hearts like Verter or *The Gift*,
> O, if only I could embrace the happy image,
> No matter whether he is young and you are old and sullen.[88]

The 1990s generation of Russian writers softened the problem of an elitist artist consumed by a mass readership: Nabokov was transformed into a shining myth of a dissident and an aesthete whose subversive discourse undermined socialist realism. Hence were the fables about smuggling Nabokov into the USSR: "A few decades after [World War II], Russian-language books were transported to the wild depths under the CIA control. The parachutes, loaded with *The Luzhin Defense,* were landing on snow."[89]

In highbrow literature, however, Nabokov became a target of acute parodies. In Sergei Gandlevsky's *Trepanation of the Skull,* a philosophic dialogue unfolds at a cemetery. Two male heroes split a bottle of beer, incarnating the idea of a merry postmortem triumph over the literary classics: "I opened beer using the neighboring fence, each of us took a sip. *The rest was poured out on the grave*. We had a smoke. Then we left an empty bottle in a visible spot, at the roadside of the alley number 10. [. . .] I also said that Nabokov is closer to Sophocles, for example, because the Fate's steps can be heard in each of his novels. You spoke wide in response. . . ."[90]

The symbolic "discharge" (akin to Gandlevsky's "pouring out" above) goes on in Andrei Voznesensky's and Timur Kibirov's poetry. In Voznesensky's "A Schoolgirl," a lavatory serves as a counterpoint to Sirin's traditionally exalted entomological symbolism:

> You fly away from our mean truths,
> Away from the lavatory cistern—
> The celestial snow-bird,
> Nabokov's butterfly![91]

The famous finale of *The Gift* with its paraphrase of the *Onegin* stanza casts a shadow on the ending of Kibirov's long poem "Johns" ("Sortiry"):

> The water washes down miserable sheets.
> Like mortal eyes, imagined ones must close some day—
>
> The lyrical hero rises from a w.c. pan,
> But the author retires. You can't squeeze out
> Even a single line.[92]

Compare this with Nabokov's, "Onegin from his knees will rise—but his creator strolls away [. . .] nor does this terminate the phrase."[93]

Restoring historical and literary justice by transforming the "straightened" prose back to poetic meter, Kibirov deflates an entire tradition and brings its semantics to naught. Beginning in the late 1980s, Nabokov's status in the semi-dissident circles became less significant. For example, his name is mentioned in one work as a bookmark put into an album,[94] and in another as an object of childish prattle akin to an imprudent call prompted by Osip Mandelstam:[95]

> Just to read the children books!
> No, I mean literally—not *Ada* or *Ulysses,*
> But, for instance, *The Magic Winter in Mumi-Doll...*[96]

The same mockery continues when Nabokov's name is featured in parodying a choice between what is alien and also forbidden because of its association with the West, and the home-made jingoism of the 1990s: "'Lyokha, fuck, Shifer, won't be on his knees!! By Gad, / I haven't written anything, it was / Like Nabokov made up everything / Just in order to tease Fyodor Mikhailovich to death / Unfair and maliciously . . .'" ("Epistles to Lenka and Other Writings"[97]).

Images of drunken intellectuals and drug-addicted schoolgirls, in accordance with the rules of the developing literary situation, infiltrate the low spheres of Internet poetry.[98] Voznesensky's "w.c. pan"[99] ("tualetnyi bochok") turns out to be the corner-stone and—literally—the monument to Nabokov's myth-making. Sergei Bolmat's novel *By Themselves* (*Sami po sebe*, 2000) can be added to Oleg Dorman's text quoted in the beginning of this section (where Voznesensky's pan rhymes with toilet sink ["tolchok"] by Kibirov). Bolmat's character, a dissident librarian, burns a manuscript of his own unfinished novel in the lavatory just because it seems to be written "à la Nabokov."[100]

As the family legend goes, Nabokov was often forced to seclude himself in the bathroom in order to work, due to the lack of space in the rented émigré apartments.[101] A fixation on hygiene has indeed become Nabokov's trademark. The "new Russians"' fashionable infatuation with all that is Western is connected with the well-known Anglophile traditions of the Nabokovs (including his trademark hiegene) in Victor Pelevin's novel *The Numbers* (*Chisla*). These traditions are redistributed and appropriated by the "new Russian" culture:

> Stepa regarded the Anglophile trend as respectable and even, to a certain extent, patriotic cultural elegance—as if it established a sort of kinship *between himself and the Nabokovs of the Petersburg period*. Those Nabokovs were merrily *splashing in inflatable rubber tubs* in their granite mansion on Morskaya Street, discussing the relationship between the teen-age erection and Count Tolstoy's death in their Oxford dialect.[102]

Here, Pelevin parodies the commercial jargon that has recently developed among Russian businessmen in which products are marketed via references to classical Russian literature. An example of this phenomenon can be found in a Muscovite catalogue that advertises an inflatable rubber tub[103] by associating it with a similar tub owned by Nabokov. Nabokov's tub can be traced back to *Speak, Memory*, and to the publication of "V. D. Nabokov's letters to his wife from Kresty" in *Aerial Ways* (Kresty, translated as "Crosses," refers to the state prison on the Neva river embankment in St. Petersburg). In these texts Nabokov's father Vladimir Dmitrievich elaborates on various hygienic details during his imprisonment. His messages, smuggled with the help of A. I. Kaminka, were written on bathroom tissue. In *Aerial Ways* Véra Nabokov added some colorful touches based on her husband's words to this anecdote ("[V. D. Nabokov] bathing in a round rubber tub which [he] always carried with himself"). The tub appears again in the following anecdote about the arrest of Nabokov Sr. during the days of the Bolshevik revolt, but this did not make its way into the final print version of *Aerial Ways*. It did, however, survive in the galley sent to the almanac's editor, Roman Grinberg. Véra Nabokov had used a pen to cross out the now-restored deletion:

> After the Bolsheviks had dispersed the Constituent Assembly in 1918, [V. D. Nabokov] was jailed at the Che-Ka[104] facilities on Gorokhovaia Street. And even there he bathed daily in his *tub* [this word is in English in the original—*Y. L.*] which he set up in the corridor to the great bewilderment of the Red Army prison guards. The jail conditions, however, were different [this time].[105]

Thus, Pelevin subjects real facts (known from primary sources or publications in mass media) to artistic recasting by shifting and adorning certain details. In the same excerpt quoted earlier from Pelevin's *The Numbers* that describes Stepa's Anglophile passion, one can discern the following palimpsest strata of the biographical nature: (1) V. D. Nabokov wrote Leo Tolstoy's obituary for the newspaper *Pravo*;[106] (2) Praskovya Nikolayevna Kozlova (Tarnovskaya), the writer Vladimir Nabokov's grandmother, authored scientific papers on sexuality and venereal diseases; (3) the dialect, most likely, should have been labeled Cambridge (and not Oxford), after the place of Vladimir Nabokov's studies. Pelevin, however, is not particularly interested in the authenticity of these hackneyed associations, but rather is drawn to them because they have already become part of the reader's collective cultural memory. This is evidence that Nabokov, who appeared on the Russian book market simultaneously with leaders of Russian postmodernist fiction around 1990, has in fact left most of those writers behind.

The canonization process of Nabokov's legacy in Russia was impetuous and unprecedented. Did it happen because the late writer was imported from the West with a set of readymade biographic stamps? In Pavel Peppershtein's opinion, the highest achievement for Nabokov would be the inclusion of his writings in an anthology. Until this happens, literature is still within the market framework where the success of a book depends on the fluctuation of readers' tastes and critics' changeable biases. His own authorial goal, explains Peppershtein, is to be admitted onto school syllabi. Only after being included in an educational program (i.e. a system of obligatory reading), can fiction be extracted from the caprice of desires and demand. Then it becomes canonized, and acquires a ceremonial status:

> The very quality of works is not extremely important; it is nonsense to discuss it at all. The main thing is canonization, falling out of the mechanism of fortuitousness, Brodsky belongs to this axis, Sorokin does, too, balance is significant—a little bit of spirituality, and a little bit of shit. Brodsky, Sorokin, and we [the writers of the literary circle "Medical Hermeneutics"] highly value a clear-cut orientation on the state use of language and literature. It doesn't matter in what forms—sublime or wild and falling apart—the appropriation of speech takes place. Even in Sorokin's scatological incantations one can hear the jingling power of a state machine. . . .[107]

More space will be allocated for a discussion of Pelevin's and Sorokin's dialogue with Nabokov in chapter 9 of this study, where I will focus on Nabokov and Russian postmodernism. In the inverted optics of postmodernism Nabokov and Sorokin turn out to be paradoxically close. The writer and scholar Mikhail Berg asserts that the postmodernist technique of approaching authoritative discourse, as well as the manipulation of mass consciousness, transpired in Nabokov's late Russian novels (*The Gift*), and were fully crystallized in his American writings (*Lolita* and, especially, *Ada*).[108] Peppershtein's programmatic statement is applicable to Nabokov with one major reservation: having become part of official discourse, he remains a dynamic commodity in the market of active readers.

A clear indication of a writer's recognition is the non-literary sphere of his influence. Lolita-mania manifests internationally, and a few examples should be sufficient to illustrate this phenomenon. A popular Japanese teenage quartet is named "Lolita No. 18"; tequila "Lolita" is bottled in Mexico and bears an image of a racy Creole. In Russia during the 1990s biscuits, earrings, underwear, curtains, a bed, and even a variety of eggplant were all marketed under the Lolita brand. One can be served the sunny cocktail "Lolita" at bars in the United States, and Lana Del Rey's most recent success typifies the ongoing expansion of Lolita-mania in contemporary pop music. Lana Del Rey (real name Lizzy Grant, b. 1986), a gifted American singer-songwriter, carefully constructs her public image as a combination of nymphet and 1950s and 1960s femme fatale. Two of her songs "Off to the Races" and "Lolita" (the former is from the 2012 album *Born to Die* that has sold over three million copies worldwide as of November 2012) are clear homages to Vladimir Nabokov.

It was noted earlier that from the perspective of mass readership, Nabokov is not just a writer but "the last nobleman of Russian literature."[109] In this respect, he has been erroneously identified as longing for the culture of a lost state.[110] Nabokov's affiliation with an aristocratic St. Petersburg partly explains his popularity in post-Soviet Russia.[111] Moscow, now overloaded with commercial advertisements, resembles more and more a Western megapolis in contrast to dying St. Petersburg, which reinforces associations with the pre-revolutionary (read: authentic) Russia. Hence the rebirth of a paradigm: Moscow yields to St. Petersburg its status as the native Russian cultural center.[112]

Post-Soviet Russian culture can be perceived as a jigsaw puzzle reassembled from elements of pre-revolutionary, émigré, dissident, and Westernized influences, in addition to its socialist legacy and original cultural developments. This mixture is metaphorically rendered by a culinary curiosity acquired in summer 2003 on Nevsky Boulevard by one of the coauthors. Like a deconstructed text, "Lolita" is offered here as fantasized by St. Petersburg confectioners. The ingredients of this purchase are reprinted from the manufacturer's label on the packaging:

Flower "Paridzhata"
Cake "Lolita"
OST 10-068-95 Weight 650 g
Producer: OOO "Lucia". Russia, St. Petersburg, Bumazhnaia Str., 7
Ingredients: enriched flour, condensed milk, butter, starch, canned peaches, ascorbic acid, sugar, dried apricots jam, household soda, citric acid, vanillin, dried milk.
In 100 g of product: Protein—16.0 g, Fat—22.10 g, Carbohydrate—60.70 g; Percent Daily Value—472,50 calories Store at temp.: –2 to +9
Good for: 120 hours
Date of production: see on the top

Can it be argued that the Nabokov-Pasternak rivalry has been finally settled in the twenty-first century, almost fifty years after the deaths of these two authors? The answer is *no*. There is a "Lolita" cake but no "Nabokov" café yet; on the other hand, in Perm's downtown—the location in the Urals that served as the model for the fictitious world of *Doctor Zhivago*'s Yuryatin—the restaurant "Pasternak" was launched in 2011. Its lavish period interiors, decorated with bookshelves and candelabras, are inspired by vintage photographs of the poet's real home. A bronze bust of Pasternak crowns a human-sized marble pedestal standing in the middle of a cozy courtyard; however, no cake named "Zhivago" is offered on the restaurant's dessert menu. A Café Pasternak can also be found in Berlin. Such cases testify to the ways in which the symbolic capital of canonical authors can be realized in ventures other than literature.

The Nabokov myth features many stable components—the author of the nymphet image, a fighter against banality, a hunter for butterflies, and a lover of chess and crosswords (and an inventor of its Russian equivalent *krestoslovitsa*). Each of these has been more or less convincingly debunked at various times.[113] Nevertheless,

these clichés contrive to circulate peacefully (according to the very laws of myth) as constant constituents of Nabokov's public image and posthumous legacy. Writings by the author, formerly outlawed in the Soviet Union, are now included in school dictations and expositions,[114] and his characters are cataloged in popular guidebooks and encyclopedias in school and college reading programs.[115] His prose works are regularly adapted for the stage by the leading theaters in Moscow and St. Petersburg, including the most complex of his Russian novels, *The Gift*, which premiered in the Peter Fomenko Studio in fall 2012.[116] The deceased editor of the journal *Mosty*, mostly remembered as no more than a petty émigré literary functionary, today finds that his name has made its way back from nonexistence thanks to a slender line in one of his letters ("But you are not a prophet: / There will be no marble, Nabokov").

There can be no ultimate conclusions drawn from this discussion as the Pasternak brand continues to create revenue with the forty-fifth anniversary edition of the film *Doctor Zhivago* re-released on DVD and Blu-ray, and with similar reenactments of his most famous novel in other venues. What can be suggested, however, is that the Nobel Prize in Literature was not enough to sustain Pasternak's literary reputation in post-Soviet literary discourse. Nabokov, on the other hand, never enjoyed such official literary recognition, but was much more effective as a marketer of his own literary brand, and even today enjoys a measure of economic sustainability that most classical Russian authors (and their literary estates) can only envy. As this discussion will continue in the ninth chapter that concentrates on postmodern Russian literature, suffice it to say that among Bunin, Pasternak, Solzhenitsyn, and Brodsky, Nabokov's market share and, therefore, his symbolic capital is much more desirable in the post-Soviet literary market than that of these internationally recognized laureates. This suggests that literary prizes and bronze statues are less meaningful than actual market share when sustaining a posthumous literary legacy.

NOTES

1. Vladimir Nabokov, *Selected Letters*, 289.
2. Barnes, *Boris Pasternak*, 432.
3. Vladimir Nabokov to Struve; 3 June 1959 (Vladimir Nabokov, *Selected Letters*, 288).
4. When the Italian publisher Giangiacomo Feltrinelli visited Moscow, Pasternak readily gave him a copy of the book for publication in Italy because he believed it would be brought out simultaneously with the Soviet edition. See the obituary by the Associated Press: "Pasternak Is Dead; Wrote *Dr. Zhivago*," 1960.
5. [No editorial credit], *Nobel Prize Library*, 291; 375.
6. Green and Karolides, *The Encyclopedia of Censorship*, 152.
7. [No authorial credit], "Publication of Private Poem Irks Pasternaks," 30.
8. Ibid.
9. Evgeny Pasternak, *Boris Pasternak*, 713–15.
10. Evgeny Pasternak, "Nobelevskaia premiia."
11. Vladimir Nabokov, *Poems and Problems*, 147.

12. Hughes, "Nabokov Reading Pasternak," 153–70.
13. See Karlinsky, "Nabokov and Some Poets of Russian Modernism."
14. Johnson, "Pasternak's *Zhivago* and Nabokov's *Lolita*," 20–23.
15. See Maria Malikova's commentary in Vladimir Nabokov, *Stikhotvoreniia*, 576.
16. See McCarthy, "A Guide to Exiles, Expatriates, and Internal Emigrés."
17. Ibid.
18. Boyd, *Russian Years*, 371.
19. Ibid., 370.
20. In *Poems and Problems* (New York, 1971) Nabokov inserts this footnote: "Lines 1–4. The first strophe imitates the beginning of Boris Pasternak's poem in which he points out that his notorious novel 'made the whole world shed tears over the beauty of [his] native land'" (147). For an example of the Pasternak-oriented interpretation prevalent among Nabokov scholars until very recently, see Scherr, "Nabokov as poet," 110–11.
21. Scholars have already noted many traces. See Levin, *Izbrannye trudy*, 281; also Kats, "'Exegi monumentum' Vladimira Nabokova," 72–76.
22. Malikova points out the readers' bewilderment in her extensive commentary to the poem in the "Novaia biblioteka poeta" edition (Vladimir Nabokov, *Stikhotvoreniia*, 576–77).
23. On Pasternak as the poem's addressee, see Aizenshtein, "Borisu Pasternaku—navstrechu!", 252–56.
24. Despite the fact that this text was addressed to more than one person, (among the real addressees are M. Slonim [Slonim, "O Marine Tsvetaevoi," 113] and K. Rodzevich [Tsvetaeva, *Stikhi i poemy* III, 464; Tsvetaeva, *Sobranie sochinenii* II, 513; Saakiants, *Marina Tsvetaeva*, 387]), Nabokov, of course, could not have known of the details of Tsvetaeva's ménage a trios, and thought Pasternak the only possible figure.
25. Translated in Wachtel, *The Cambridge Introduction to Russian Poetry*, 104. Original: "Kak zhivetsia vam s tovarom / Rynochnym? Obrok—krutoi? / Posle mramorov Karrary / Kak zhivetsia vam s trukhoi // Gipsovoi? (Iz glyby vysechen / Bog—i nachisto razbit!) / Kak zhivetsia vam s stotysiachnoi—/ Vam, poznavshemu Lilit!" (Tsvetaeva, *Sobranie sochinenii* II, 242–43).
26. Such an interpretation is reinforced by the allusion to Tiutchev's "Mikhailu Petrovichu Pogodinu" (pointed out by Omry Ronen; quoted in Kats, "'Exegi monumentum' Vladimira Nabokova," 73): "V nash vek stikhi zhivut dva-tri mgnoven'ia, / Rodilis' utrom, k vecheru umrut . . . / O chem zhe khlopotat'? Ruka zabven'ia / Kak raz svershit svoi korrekturnyi trud."
27. Boyd, *Russian Years*, 221.
28. Cf. her letter to Pasternak (14 February 1925): "Boris, do you remember Lilith? Boris, was there anyone before Adam?"; also: "Your longing for me—is Adam's longing for Lilith, who was *before* the first and, therefore,—uncountable (That's why I hate Eve!)" (Tsvetaeva, *Sobranie sochinenii* VI, 244).
29. Sheron, "Vash Gleb Struve," 133–34.
30. Yuri K. Terapiano (1892–1980)—a Russian émigré poet and literary critic.
31. Four of Nikolai Yung's poems appeared in the almanac (*Vozdushnye Puti*, 258–60), one beginning with the following line: "There were times when being loved used to be shameful . . ." ("Kogda-to stydno bylo byt' liubimym . . ."). Cf. with Nabokov's conjecture in a subsequent manuscript: "O, I know: people don't love me" ("O znaiu ia: menia ne liubiat liudi"; 26 December 1963) instead of "O, I know: people are afraid of me" ("O znaiu ia: menia *boiatsia* liudi"; 27 December 1959). The original journal version is preserved in Nabokov's collection of poems issued in the series "Novaia biblioteka poeta" (Vladimir Nabokov, *Stikhotvoreniia*,

227). Quoted in D. Zimmer's *Vladimir Nabokov. Bibliographie des Gesamstwerk* (Hamburg, Rowholt, 1963), reproduced in Nabokov's library catalogue (Tajan, 101).

32. The quote refers to Pasternak's 1959 poem "The Nobel Prize," whose third stanza reads as follows: "Is there some ill I have committed? / Am I a murderer, miscreant? / For I have made the whole world weep / Over the beauty of my land" (Pasternak Boris, *In the Interlude*, 219).

33. From O. Emelianova's letter to R. N. Grinberg (Paris, 26 July 1961; in VP Collection. Box 3).

34. G. A. Khomyakov (1909–1984)—a journalist who published his works under the pseudonym "Andreyev." After graduating from high school (1926) he worked for the Tsaritsyn newspaper; he was in jail from 1927–1935, and then taken prisoner by the Nazis in Crimea in 1942. Khomyakov lived in Germany and edited the almanac *Bridges* (Munich, 1958–1970), and later immigrated to the USA.

35. Original: "Nabokov, kak vsegda vy metki: / Vas zhdet kachan'e russkoi vetki. / No vy ne iz chisla prorokov: / Ne budet mramora, Nabokov." This alludes, probably, to the beginning of a well-known E. A. Boratynsky epigram: "Toshchev the poet cuts out his verses a la Pushkin, but he will never win fame" ("Svoi stishki Toshchev-piit / Pokroem Pushkina kroit, / No slavy gromkoi ne poluchit." Boratynsky, *Stikhotvoreniia*, 282).

36. From Khomyakov's letter to R. N. Grinberg (Munich, 6 July 1961; VP Collection. Box 3). Quoted with errors and the incorrect date in: Yangirov, "Druz'ia, babochki i monstry," 529, note.

37. Whitman, "Vladimir Nabokov, Author of *Lolita* and *Ada*, Is Dead."

38. Steiner, "Nabokov was miserable and poor."

39. Paperno and Hagopian, "Official and Unofficial Responses to Nabokov in the Soviet Union," 113.

40. See M. Kolerov's interview with E. Dyogot': "[In the 1970s] one could be, let's say, a mid-level party functionary attending political briefings, coming back home and opening the Xeroxed copy of *The Gift*. And that was the main thing. [. . .] Cultural icons of the 1970s were really eclectic: Soloukhin could be right next to Nabokov" (Kolerov, "Esli sistema vozroditsia, eiforiia prinadlezhnosti k vlasti proidet," 81; 83).

41. Nabokov began his own book of translations with Pushkin's "Pamiatnik" (Vladimir Nabokov, *Three Russian Poets*, 5), using a quotation from Horace as his version's title. See Proskurina, "Nabokov's *Exegi monumentum*," 27-39.

42. Veerheul, "Malyi korifei russkoi poezii," 144.

43. "Ah, ugoniat ikh v step', Arlekinov moikh . . ." (1974).

44. Concerns about the artistic value of the monument were raised, however. For instance, in the program aired by the Russian TV-channel "Kul'tura": "A. Rukavsihnikov has also created Fyodor Dostoevsky's monument in front of the Lenin Library main entrance. A clumsy composition made of a stool and the master of Russian literature working off it is an object of the Muscovites' quite ironic attitude. *By the way, the Rukavishnikovs have another monument in stock, the one of the writer Nabokov, which has a similar issue with furniture*" ("At Full Scale," 1 April 2004). See: http://www.cultcorp.ru/doc.html?id=966&sid=122&date=12-05-2004.

45. The 1999 hotel brochure, the "center point of beauty, dreams, and surprises," narrates the stories of its tenants: the movie "Lady L" featuring Sophia Loren was shot here in 1970, while V. Nabokov, "an American novelist of the Russian origin, spent the last 16 years of his life [here]" (*Le Montreux Palace*. Switzerland. Concept & design WIDE. p. 1–2).

46. Feldman, *The Nobel Prize*, 106. Italics added.

47. Boyd, *American Years*, 573. Italics are in the original.
48. Jewell, "The Nobel Prize: History and Canonicity," 97; 104 (on Tolstoy).
49. Boyd, *Russian Years*, 372.
50. Ibid. One of the sources listed by Boyd is Nabokov's Page-a-Day Diary, VNA.
51. Evgeny Pasternak, *Boris Pasternak*, 712.
52. Michael Bishop, *How to Win the Nobel Prize*, 18.
53. [No authorial credit], "Publication of Private Poem Irks Pasternaks," 30.
54. Barnes, *Boris Pasternak*, 350.
55. [No authorial credit], "Publication of Private Poem Irks Pasternaks," 30.
56. Steiner, "Nabokov was miserable and poor."
57. The persons mentioned are Zinaida Shakhovskaya, Nikita Struve, and Andrew Field—all three have published research on Nabokov that was found to be factually incorrect.
58. Dmitri Nabokov, "White nights."
59. Ibid. Italics added.
60. Paperny, *Architecture in the Age of Stalin*, 1–6.
61. Bourdieu, *The Field of Cultural Production*, 76–77.
62. Ibid., 77.
63. Schiff, *Véra*, 288.
64. Ibid., 296. Quoted from Véra's postcard to Elena Levin in 1967.
65. See Dorman, "If only I was asked to project a monument . . ." Original: "Priblizhaias' k pamiatniku, prokhozhii vnezapno by ostanavlivalsia, / ne veria svoim glazam. Oborachivalsia / v poiskakh ekskursovoda / ili tablichki, preduprezhdaiushchei / o vystavke avangarda,—/ ili s'emochnoi gruppy, khikhikaiushchei v kustakh. / Zatem, zabyvaia o svoem gamburgere / ili vniz opuskaia venchikami / vasil'ki—esli eto prokhozhaia, / *delal poslednii shag i ubezhdalsia by, / chto pishushchii sidit na tolchke. / On sidit na tolchke—na ochke, ne bachke*, / v briukakh i svitere, molod, ne star, / naveki v mgnovenii, kak v sachke, / kogda on pisal 'Dar'. / Poet na tolchke—ne oksiumoron, / ne grubyi vyzov tolpe, / sklonennoi glavoiu voznessia on / vyshe angela na stolpe. / *Po karrarskoi stranitse struitsia ten' / ot berezy i vverkh po ruke*. / Voron kartavit, i dlitsia den'. / On pishet 'Dar' na tolchke."
66. See the title of the regional research, *Ten' russkoi vetki*, devoted to Nabokov family estate in Vyra. The same line was borrowed for the title of Nabokov's book of poems. Nina Berberova quotes the poem's finale in her autobiography *Italics Are Mine*, claiming that these lines convey a sense of "the poet's personal. . . and artistic crisis" (Berberova, *Kursiv moi*, 373–74).
67. Mogutin, *Termoiadernyi muskul*, 153. Original: "ne predstavliaiu sebia pasternakom ili / mandel'shtamom khodasevichem i georgiem ivanovym / dazhe nabokovym nedoumenno vosklitsavshim KAKOE / SDELAL IA DURNOE DELO I IA LI / RAZVRATITEL' I ZLODEI IA ZASTAV- / LIAIUSHCHII MECHTAT' MIR TSELYI O BEDNOI / TSELOCHKE MOEI?! / predstavliaiu sebia gumbertom gumbertom / vozhdeleiushchim po potnoi pipis'ke kakoi-to / nesovershennoletnei sykukhi iskalechivshim sebe vsiu / zhizn' iz-za etoi vsepogloshchaiushchei strasti / predstavliaiu sebia pokhotlivoi nimfetkoi s / zhelezkami na zubakh u menia zuditsia mezhdu nog / moia devstvennost' menia tiagotit i mne ne terpitsia komu- / nibud' otdat'sia naprimer moemu priemnomu ottsu / kotorogo potom mozhno shantazhirovat' ispol'zovat' / i brosit' razoriv i dovedia do polnogo bezumiia / pochemu by i net"
68. In *The Life of Klim Samgin*: "But a girl pushed him away, frowned her mealy face, and hastily uttered: 'Yesterday my dad put his hat on / And he looks like a white mushroom, / I simply couldn't recognize him. . .' [*Vchera nadel moi papa shliapu / I stal pokhozh na belyi grib, / Ia prosto ne uznala papu* . . .] [. . .] Varya was even more boring than her sister, and not as good-looking as her.

She had bluish whiskeys, her sad eyes reminded that of an owl, flabby movements were awkward" (Cf. with Davydov's "he has a bluish vein on his whisky") (Gorky, Vol. XIX, 33).

69. Davydov, *Dobro*, 37. Original: "kakoe sdelal durnoe delo / takoe sdelal durnoe delo / dumal dolgo smotrel po storonam / dumal dolgo a potom ne smog // v noven'kikh botinochkakh po ulochke rodnoi / on idiot k liubimoi on idiot domoi / on pishet nepravdu na nerusskom iazyke / u nego est' sinen'kaia zhilka na viske // u nego est' pasport on nerusskii grazhdanin / on derzhit v karmane ochki i anal'gin / on fignjiu pridumal on knizhku napisal / vynul serdtse iz grudi nozhichkom polosnul // takoe sdelal durnoe delo / takoe sdelal durnoe delo / ubegai rodnoi pokuda tselyi / ubegai rodimyi poka ne prosekli"

70. "One shouldn't expect a special euphoria in the mass media [for] Nabokov's anniversary. At best they will run a couple pieces of reporting on TV (may be a bit longer on the "Kul'tura" channel) and will air the recent adaptation of *Lolita*. And who is to blame. . . . It is always Pushkin! . . . So Nabokov will never be made of chocolate, but isn't it what he wanted himself? Smiling, he imagined himself made of marble" (Borisov, "V teni shokoladnogo Pushkina."

71. "I love proposing a riddle to my friends and acquaintances: his name is Vladimir Vladimirovich, he was born in Piter, and he was nicknamed Putia in childhood—who is he? You think the answer is obvious, but you feel a sort of dirty trick. Do you want a hint? Not a problem. For example, he spent a few years in Germany. You think it is very hot. But here is one nuance: the incognito has never been to Moscow. . ." (Borisov, "V teni shokoladnogo Pushkina").

72. Vladimir Nabokov, *The Gift*, 362.

73. "What is the evil deed I have committed. . ." (Track No. 5; Recording studio "Melodiia," LP 1988). Gradsky's other music compositions that use the lyrics by artists not loyal to the Soviet authorities were similarly delayed. Among these were vocal suites based on Sasha Chernyi's poem "Satiry" (recorded in 1980, release date: 2 LP 1987), B. Pasternak and V. Mayakovsky (recorded in 1983, release date: LP 1988), all under the Melodiia state label.

74. Nikolai Fomenko, a popular Russian showman, paraphrases freely: "When [the respectable actor] Smoktunovsky takes his pants off on the stage, no one exclaims: 'O, my God! How vulgar!' Nabokov wrote in his article on *poshlost'* that vulgarity is akin to sanctimony, absence of organics, and never-ending suppression" (Sokolovskaia, "Nikolai Fomenko," 55).

75. DJ "Vladimir Nabokov" has appeared on the waves of Russia's *Love Radio* (104.2 MHz FM) in Irkutsk (Sergei Karpukhin's report on NABOKV-L Archive, 11 March 2004).

76. A person with this respectable name is registered on the board of lawyers of the Russian Federation Ministry of Justice (see: "The Governing Statute of the local organs of Ministry of Justice, Russian Federation": http://www.ruslawyer.ru/50/_13.shtml; also the Internet site, "The Law Office Nabokov": http://www.lawyer-nabokov.com/help.html). I cannot judge the authenticity of this name but suspect that "Vladimir Nabokov" is doomed for psychological and commercial success (The writer's grandfather, D. N. Nabokov, served in the Minister of Justice in 1878–1885).

77. Nick Cave, Australian rock star and poet, collects biographical data and criticism about Nabokov (see Sturges, "Just in the time of Nick."). Cave's album "Abattoir Blues / The Lyre of Orpheus" (2004) includes the lyrics: "And Nabokov wrote on index cards / On a lectern in his socks." The writer's last name is pronounced in a typical (and incorrect) American way with the stress on the first syllabus—Nah-ba-koff.

78. From the song "Dokazano" ("Proved") (album "P.M.M.L.," 2000): "She is reading Nabokov in metro, / I am sitting next by, the knots are tied, / I proved to mom the most important thing. . ." According to Gleb Shulpiakov, "Zemfira has been portraying herself in her songs, but instead she made a universal image of a young city girl, the one who is reading Nabokov in metro, listening to an iPod and thinking over her own independence" (Shulpiakov, "V chem sekret uspeha Zemfiry?").

79. Famous Nabokov fan Natalie Portman (*Star Wars*, *V for Vendetta, Black Swan*) stated, "If I were a person on the street, I wouldn't [want] my autograph, you know? Whereas if I had Nabokov's signature, I'd be reeling" (Picture, "Cam the dancing fool").

80. The video clip "Winter Dream" ("Zimnii son") was shot in January of 1999 at a Moscow suburb dacha that once belonged to L. Orlova and G. Alexandrov, the celebrated Soviet cinema couple (one can only imagine Nabokov's opinion of them). In this clip, after reading *Lolita* a girl dreams of a love affair with her mother's boyfriend (starring S. Makovetsky and E. Yakovleva). In one shot the singer holds a volume from the 1990 Russian edition (which, ironically, does not feature *Lolita* at all) with the title inscribed in bright colors on the cover. The singer Alsou revealed that she read Nabokov's novel only after the filming was completed.

81. From the song "Noch'-Liudmila" ("Night Liudmila") on the album *The August Blizzard* (*Metel' avgusta*, 2000): "Sovmeshchaia Lolit s Zhannoi D'Ark, / Ty smetaesh' predlozhennyi uzhin. / Na skameikakh srazhaetsia park, / No tebe staryi prapor ne nuzhen." Nabokov's Lolita (Liudmila in Shevchuk's version) is part and parcel of the pantheon of female characters from Russian classics, residing right next to Karamzin's Liza and Pushkin's Larina: "Ty mechtaesh' s'est' glavnuiu rol'—/ Na khudoi konets bednuiu Lizu. / Dlia tebia—ili kaif, ili bol', / I guliaesh' vsiu noch' po karnizu. // Doma skuchno, kak v starcheskom sne, / Khotia papa nedeliu ne p'ianyi. / Sochiniaesh' pis'mo, kak Tat'iana, / Ty v pod'ezde na griaznoi stene."

82. The title of Leonid Parfenov's documentary shot for NTV on Nabokov's hundredth birthday.

83. Mikhail Berg traces Rubenshtein's "card index genre" via Nabokov back to V. Rozanov's *Opavshie list'ia* (*Fallen Leaves*), whose notes on separate sheets are very close to the index card concept (Berg, *Literaturokratiia*, 118).

84. Shostakovskaya, "B.n.," 359.

85. See Galkovsky, *Beskonechnyi tupik*.

86. Quoted in: Martynov, *Vladimir Nabokov*, 89-90. According to my estimate, this number has at least doubled during the past decade.

87. Olga Sedakova belongs to the same category: she responded to Nabokov's death with verses that played on the word "gift," referencing Nabokov's novel of the same title ("In Memory of Nabokov," 166).

88. Kushner, "Stikhotvoreniia," 3. Original: "O, esli by pri nas kakoi-nibud' eshshe raz / Privlek serdtsa roman, kak 'Verter' ili 'Dar', / O, esli by k grudi prizhat' schastlivyi obraz, / Ne vazhno, pust' on iun, a ty ugrium i star."

89. Meklina, "Bony i babochki," 138–39.

90. Gandlevsky, *Trepanatsiia cherepa*, 40.

91. Voznesensky, *www.Devochka s pirsingom.ru*, 279. Original: "Letish' ot nashikh nizkikh istin, / ot tualetnogo bochka—/ nebesnaia kokainistka, / nabokovskaia babochka!"

92. Original: "Voda smyvaet zhalkie listochki. / I dlia videnii tozhe net otsrochki—/ liricheskii geroi vstaet s tolchka, / no avtor udaliaetsia. Ni strochki / uzhe ne vyzhmesh'."

93. Vladimir Nabokov, *The Gift*, 378.

94. Cf.: "Blagoslovi zhe, Gospodi, Rossiu! [. . .] i Turkina, i Gugoleva sil'nogo, / sestrenku, papu, mamu i pokoinikov, // i babushku, i Alika s Nabokovym. . ." ("Skvoz' proshchal'nye slezy" (Through Farewell Tears..., 1987; Kibirov, "Kto kuda—a ia v Rossiyu. . .", 59).

95. In the 1908 poem: "To read as children read, / to think as children think. . ." (32).

96. Kibirov, "Kto kuda—a ia v Rossiyu. . .", 422. Original: "Tol'ko detskie knizhki chitat'! / Net, bukval'no—ne 'Adu's 'Ulissom', / A, k primeru, 'Volshebnuju zimu / V Mumi-dole'. . ."

97. Kibirov, "Kto kuda—a ia v Rossiyu. . .", 156.

98. Cf. Kira Subotina's "Christmas without Lolita" in the book of poems by the conceptualist poets from Samara entitled Christmas with Lolita [Rozhdestvo u Lolity]: "Kuda zhe

ostyla zima? / Dekabr' moroz zariadil, / Lolita ushla ot menia, / Tuda kem ia ran'she byl" http://kiraart.by.ru/liter/rojdestvo.htm.

99. There is no such a word as "bochok" in Russian (not to confuse with "bochonok") denoting the diminutive form of "bak" (from a French "bac"—vessel). Voznesensky used instead of the diminutive "bak" ("bachok") its homonym ("bochok").

100. The father of the protagonist, Tyoma, recalls how he once longed to become a man of letters: "Most of all I adored Nabokov. . . I compared myself to him, and even managed with tricks to convince myself that I am not a looser yet. So just imagine to yourself a sort of 35-years-old Nabokov in sleeve-protectors. . ." Tyoma asks his father to share with him the manuscript of an unfinished novel kept under a bushel for a quarter of a century, but it turns out that the father burnt it just a week before in their lavatory (Bolmat, *Sami po sebe*, 150).

101. Field, Nabokov, 224.

102. Pelevin, *Chisla*, in *Dialektika*, 112-113. Translation and italics are mine.

103. Cf. the Muscovite catalogue of "the quality furniture" *Nasha Mebel'*: "A rubber tub. The famous Russian writer V. Nabokov lost all his assets including a few estates in the years of revolution. But he succeeded to save one item which later served him during his years in exile: a small folding rubber tub. Being a man of aristocratic nature, Nabokov couldn't live without daily showers—and he used this tub anywhere, even in the train lavatory." http://www.nashamebel.ru. On the pseudo-Nabokovian advertising, see Leving, "Zametki opozdavshih," 226–32.

104. Che-Ka stands for "Chrezvychainaia Komissia" (Extraordinary Commission); it was a predecessor of NKVD/KGB secret services in Russia.

105. Véra Nabokov's letter to Roman Grinberg (28 November 1964; VP, Box 4).

106. Vladimir Dmitrievich Nabokov, "Lev Nikolaevich Tolstoy," 2750–2751.

107. Peppershtein, "Kollektivnoe inspektirovanie Peppershteina," 81.

108. Berg, *Literaturokratiia*, 126.

109. Bavilsky, "Poslednii dvorjanin v russkoj literature," 12.

110. Cf. Andrei Voznesensky's poem "The Feeling": "Za granitsei shepchem, kak molitvu, / nash netsenzurirovannyi slovar'. / Dvorianin, sudimyi za Lolitu, / Skvoz' nee usad'bu tseloval" (Voznesensky, *Zhutkii Crisis Super star*, 44).

111. Rylkova, "'O chitatele, tele i slave' Vladimira Nabokova," 375.

112. Ibid., 376.

113. Rashit Yangirov proved that, contrary to popular opinion, Nabokov was *not* the first to use the word "krestoslovitsa" in a Russian newspaper (Yangirov, "Iz nabliudenii ob opytakh," 436–440). However, the mass readership does not give up (as in the article on crosswords history: *A. G.* "Gimnastika uma," *Evropa-tsentr*, 19, 11–24 September 2000).

114. "Diktanty i izlozheniia po V. Nabokovu: 'Zashchita Luzhina': Teksty," Russkii iazyk: Ezhened. prilozh. k gazete *Pervoe sentiabria* 14 (182), April 1999, pp. 9–11. Cf. recommendations in the schoolbook: "Proizvedeniia V. Nabokova, predlagaemye dlia izucheniia v 5–11-kh klassakh, podobrany po mere vozrastaiushchei slozhnosti pravil igry" (Dmitrienko, *Voskhozhdenie k Nabokovu*, 128).

115. See Seversky, *Russkie romany*, 435-445; Meshcheriakov, *Slovar' literaturnykh personazhei*, 44–74.

116. Dir. Evgeny Kamen'kovich (Teatr-masterskaia Petra Fomenko, 2012). Among other of Nabokov's works staged in post-Soviet Russia are *King, Queen, Knave* (Teatr imeni Lensoveta, Dir. A. Getman, 1997), *Invitation to a Beheading* (Rossiiskii akademicheskii molodezhnyi teatr, Dir. P. Safonov, 2009), *Event* (MKhT, Dir. K. Bogomolov, 2011), as well as numerous adaptations of *Lolita* in both central and provincial theaters in Russia and Ukraine.

8

The Visual Marketing of Nabokov

Who is the Face of the Russian Lolita?

In chapter 6 I argued that Nabokov learned and mastered the business of dealing with publishers beginning in the 1930s and continuing throughout his artistic career, which peaked in the 1960s. Using rare unpublished archival materials, I aimed to demonstrate how the writer defined and defended his symbolic capital and, eventually, converted it into monetary payments at the highest end of the literary wage scale. Several decades later "Nabokov" had become a proven brand, largely thanks to Vladimir Nabokov himself, as well as to his able executors—his son Dmitri and the Smith/Skolnik literary agency, which has expertly handled the writer's literary legacy in the West. This chapter continues to discuss the evolution of Nabokov's posthumous legacy by examining how shrewd post-Soviet publishers exploited the author's legacy by means of a clever marketing campaign, resulting in millions of illegally printed copies of *Lolita* sold to a mass readership. The following focuses on the visual aspects of the Russian-language editions of Nabokov's *Lolita*, surveying its controversial place in the contemporary Russian literary market. Conceptually, this chapter mirrors a similar case concerning Leonid Andreev, whose visual self-representations are closely studied in relation to the writer's literary reputation in the first chapter of our book.

In 1958, despite his well-known reluctance to autograph his own books, Nabokov gladly signed a copy of *Lolita* for Mrs. Anita Loos.[1] Loos was not the average autograph-seeker: she herself was an acclaimed writer, having authored a runaway bestseller, *Gentlemen Prefer Blondes*, the same year Nabokov published his debut novel, *Mary* (1925). A musical film version of Loos' book staring Marilyn Monroe was produced in 1953. Loos believed Monroe was an inspired casting; it is difficult to say for sure what Nabokov thought about the iconic blonde, or whether he would have approved of her as Hugh Hefner's choice for the inaugural cover of *Playboy* (a magazine he read

with pleasure since the early 1960s), but the look of *his* cover girl certainly mattered for Nabokov.[2]

How should Lolita, the heroine of Nabokov's most cherished novel, appear in a visualized rendering? Is there a precise description of her appearance anywhere in the novel? Why is her visual representation important? In partial answer to this last question, we should begin by acknowledging that the jacket manipulates the reader's perception: the cover picture, as Peter Sinnema claims, affects the reader not only at the time of purchase, but also during the process of reading.[3] These and other questions naturally lead to more fundamental issues concerning the visual design and the politics of illustrating Nabokov's *Lolita*; however, for the purposes of the present chapter I will limit the discussion to the visual aspects of the novel's marketing strategies as treated specifically by Russian publishers during the past two decades. Using materials from my personal collection—close to thirty editions of Nabokov's novel in Russian—I demonstrate the most important stages in the evolution of Lolita's visual representation in Russia. This study explores how *Lolita* was commercialized for post-Soviet audiences; it also touches upon some aesthetic differences between the Russian and American versions of the text, and the branding of the Russian *Lolita*.

Most of the cover art decorating Nabokov's cult novel in the Soviet Union and Russia has hardly been original; it usually relies on borrowed paintings or photographs with unclear provenance, and the logic of their selection is not always immediately apparent. The visual representations of *Lolita* in Russia can be classified into four distinct groups of imagery.

The first category of visuals consists of direct reproductions of existing works of art; the common denominator for these cover images is the depiction of a young girl, often in a seductive pose and/or with an intense gaze directed at the reader. As the understanding of Nabokov and his prose subsequently evolved in Russia, publishers adapted to attract new potential audiences, often envisioned as refined connoisseurs of an intricate but frolicsome prose. Consequently, book designers opted for imagery that middle-class consumers of mass culture are familiar with through postcards and office poster art (such as clichéd works by Gustave Klimt and Edgar Degas).

The second category appeals to an indiscriminate audience as it triggers the latent erotic messages embedded in the novel. These covers feature semi-nude or topless models of approximately the title heroine's age; that is to say—barely legal.

The third category absorbs and capitalizes on the success of the latest screen adaptation of *Lolita* by Adrian Lyne. Publishers rely on the recognizable faces of the two lead actors, thus ensuring that buyers readily establish a connection to a product that has already been widely distributed and received its portion of *success de scandale*.

The final and rarest category comprises cover art that attempts to employ an original artistic work. This is something less typical for *Lolita* published by the post-Soviet book industry, and primarily manifests in the realm of illustrations inside the book rather than on its cover.

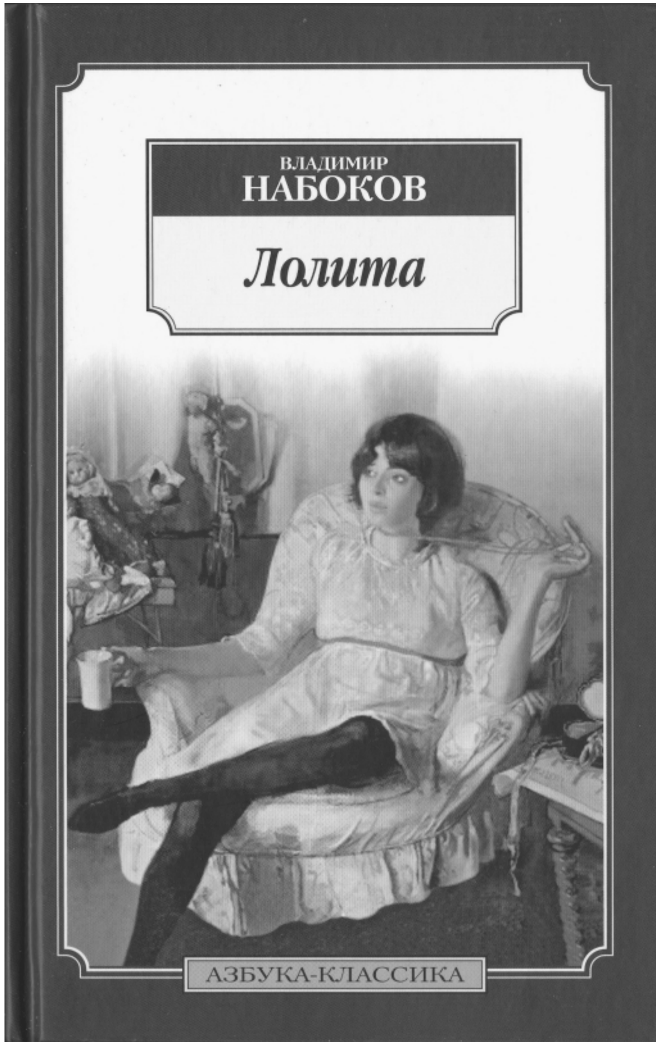

Figure 8.1. Vladimir Nabokov. *Lolita*. St. Petersburg: Azbooka-klassika, 2009. [Design by Ilya Kuchma and Vadim Pozhidaev. 415 pp., 7,000 copies; hardcover]

JUDGING A BOOK BY ITS COVER: NABOKOV'S IDEAL DESIGN FOR LOLITA

At the core of *Lolita*'s plot is a girl with a graphic (pun intended) biography and face. This sensational, if not sensual, quality has continued to resonate with reading audiences ever since its initial publication. As a result, Nabokov belongs to both

American and Russian literary canons. However, while much has been written about *Lolita*'s Western cover design and its public reception in the West, the Russian book market's relationship with *Lolita* has yet to be analyzed.[4] Prior to examining specific examples and illustrations, a few general remarks will help contextualize the problem.

The longstanding connection between covers and marketing is a topic that has come to scholarly attention only fairly recently.[5] Contemporary critics argue that book covers are instrumental in shaping the response of readers, markets, and booksellers to the texts within them. In the nineteenth century, if not even earlier, styles of bindings, fonts, and cover illustrations influenced the allocation of cultural value to literary works, and helped to shape the popularity of those texts.[6] Covers enjoyed even greater influence over book sales during and after the 1820s, when publishers began to employ cloth bindings that were both cheaper and more easily decorated than leather. Even at this early stage, covers were sometimes used for advertising purposes.[7] Some dust jackets, for example, originally conceived as entirely disposable and minimally decorated protective devices, were also used for advertising purposes, although this was not done consistently until the 1890s.[8] As Nicole Matthews points out, "If jackets and covers had a role to play in the marketing of books during the nineteenth century, they came to have new forms of significance in the twentieth. Undoubtedly one of the critical shifts in the marketing of books in the twentieth century was the development of the paperback."[9]

Even before becoming a bestselling author, Nabokov was genuinely interested in the promotional aspects of publishing his own works. *Lolita* is a near-ideal case study to test how Nabokov balanced concepts of successful market campaigning with his own well-known high demands regarding ethics and aesthetics in the field of literary production. When *Lolita* appeared on the literary market during the 1950s, bookshops "were changing their displays such that the front covers, rather than simply book spines, were visible to the browser. Publishers labored to encourage booksellers to display their publications with the appealing front covers clearly visible."[10] Moreover, publishers devoted "significant portions of their promotion budget to shelving which would enable arresting displays of the front covers of their own publications."[11] Nabokov was keenly aware of this trend, and attempted to influence the design of his books in general, and of *Lolita* in particular. "A hasty piece of cover art might mislead a reader to imagine Dolores Haze as a platinum blond or, at worst, steer a reader away from a book," writes Paul Maliszewski, insisting that illustrating demands "that artists create a pictorial representation of a book; translating words into an image. [. . .] Both cover artist and translator had to be responsible to and respectful of the original book."[12]

In September 1955 *Lolita* was published in France in the now-famous plain green soft cover. After reviewing a few proposed designs for Putnam's American hardcover edition of *Lolita* in 1958, Nabokov demanded that "no girls" be featured on it:[13]

> Who would be capable of creating a romantic, delicately drawn, non-Freudian and non-juvenile, picture of LOLITA (a dissolving remoteness, a soft American landscape, a nostalgic highway—that sort of thing)? *There is one subject which I am emphatically opposed to: any kind of representation of a little girl.*[14]

The first American edition, issued by G. P. Putnam's Sons in August 1958, bore no images at all. Weidenfeld and Nicholson followed suit in 1959 with the same modest cover featuring only the author's name and the novel's title. On 23 April 1958 Nabokov instructed Walter Minton, "If we cannot find that kind of artistic and virile painting [referring to "melting clouds" and a "receding road"—Y. L.], let us settle for an immaculate white jacket (rough texture paper instead of the usual glossy kind), with LOLITA in bold black lettering."[15] This raises the question: why did Nabokov—who was concerned with the marketing aspects of his writing during a time of changing attitudes towards promotional strategies that increasingly favored the clear visibility of front covers—insist, in this particular instance, on the most minimalist solution possible: "bold black lettering"? To keep Nabokov's request in perspective, one should recall the cultural context—especially the realities of the literary market of the period. The Penguin Books trend of purely typographic covers was firmly established in the mid-1950s: at that time, the most familiar feature of the Penguin look was the avoidance of pictorial covers. This was in stark contrast with the general practice of publishers in the United States. In America the lurid cover was "considered essential for securing mass sales of paper backed books"; it had often been suggested that Penguin might commercially succeed if it conformed to this general practice, but "the decision [had] been made, as a matter of taste, to reject the American kind of cover."[16] Penguin, instead, maintained a lucid and restrained typography: the early "Penguin look" implied high literacy but low graphic response in the reader. As Adrian Wilson inquired wittily, "when every vivid paperback cover is outscreaming its neighbor, might not the greatest impact be made by the severely reticent?"[17]

Nabokov obviously wanted to draw a line between highbrow and lowbrow products, and before issuing *Lolita* in paperback—a medium that, at the time, was still strongly associated with crime fiction and modern romance dramas[18]—he wanted its artistic and literary merits to achieve recognition; hence the "Penguin paradox" possibly served as one of his earlier marketing models. To be sure, starting in the early 1960s Nabokov stopped objecting to pictorial depictions of Lolita on the front covers of international editions of the novel (except the Russian ones), and amusingly commented on the designers' and publishers' incongruities or blunt goofs.[19] Partially this was allowed out of growing frustration, but also because Nabokov probably felt he had achieved his initial objective.

LOLITA'S ADVENTURES IN RUSSIA AND BEYOND: FROM THE 1960S TO THE EARLY 1990S

The history of *Lolita* in Russia is mainly a story of curiosities. Firmly believing that there was no candidate capable of adequately translating his most precious English novel, Nabokov decided to personally embark on the task of adapting his American masterpiece to his "docile" native language.[20] He translated *Lolita* into Russian and published it in 1967, twelve years after the book's maiden voyage in English, and twenty years prior to his official comeback in his native land.

While Nabokov could ensure the best possible quality of translation, exercising actual power over the front matter, however, turned out to be a slippery slope. Even in the West, Nabokov's control of the front cover imagery rarely extended over the American paperbacks (except, as noted above, the Parisian Olympia and several first US editions). At a time when all English-language and foreign publications of the novel were adorned with girls of all types (including an edition in Arabic), the two early Russian *Lolita*s are striking for their modest appearance. At Nabokov's insistence, the émigré Russian versions offered plain letters: black on white (Figure 8.3), and a rainbow-colored title with its reflection (a reversed mirror image) on the New York edition issued by Phaedra Publishers (Figure 8.2).

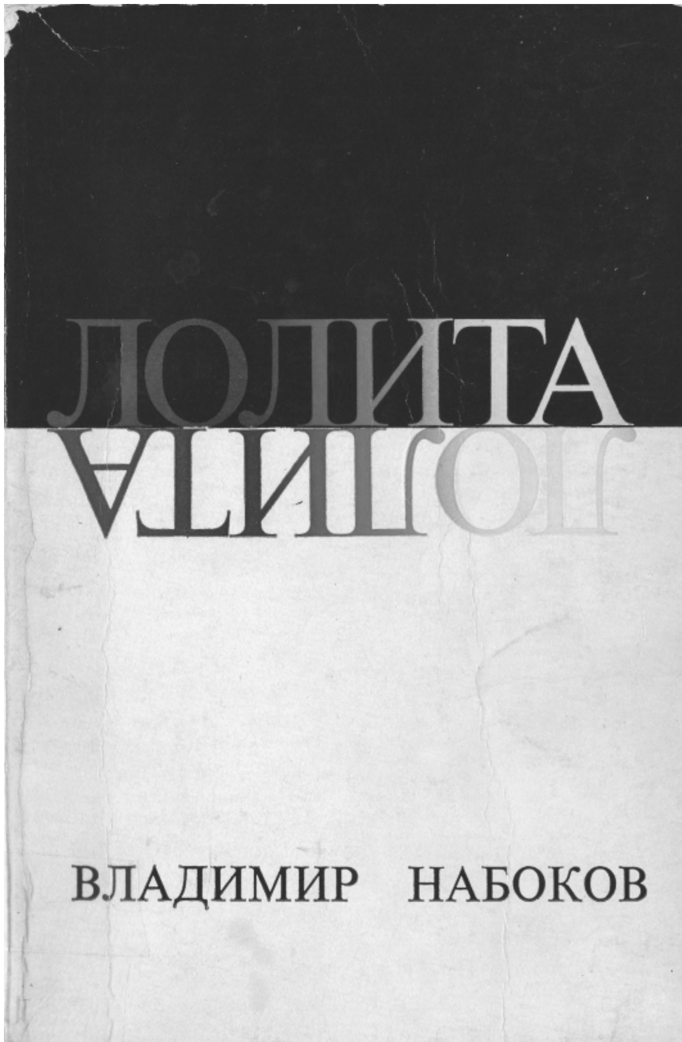

Figure 8.2. Vladimir Nabokov. *Lolita*. New York: Phaedra Publishers, 1967. [304 pp., paper]

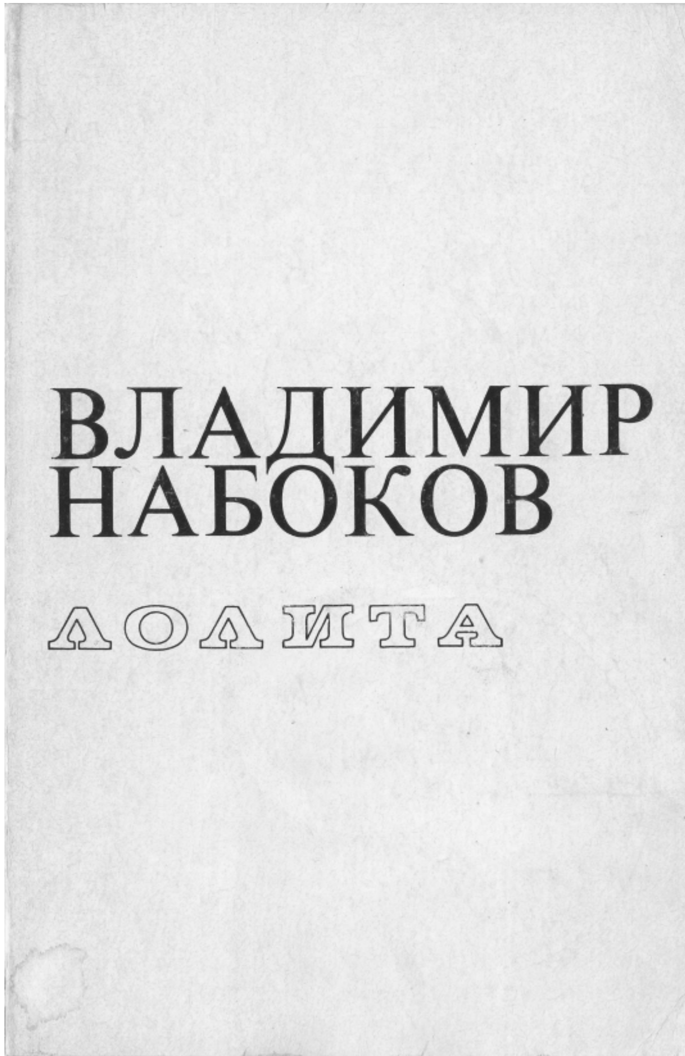

Figure 8.3. Vladimir Nabokov. *Lolita*. Ann Arbor: Ardis, 1976. [2nd Russian edition of the novel. 304 pp., paper]

In the years during and immediately after the Khrushchev thaw, Nabokov hoped to broaden his Russian-language readership beyond the émigré audience, possibly counting on Soviet readers as well. In fact, fans of the illegal author had already obtained Xeroxed copies of the book and had smuggled it into the USSR; such *samizdat* circulation of Nabokov's writings perhaps explains Nabokov's insistence on publishing more copies of *Lolita* in Russian even as the Phaedra edition was selling poorly (some of the naturalized Russian Americans could also read his novel in the original English). At a certain point Nabokov even tried to interest Grove Press in a joint publication of the Russian version with Phaedra Inc., which needed an influx

of five thousand dollars to continue the advertising campaign and to add more copies to the 5,000 Russian-language jackets that were printed initially.[21]

The inaugural book release of Nabokov's formally banned novel did not happen in Russia until 1989 in what was still the USSR. During that critical year, the total print run of three separate publications of the novel amounted to 600,000 copies. Russian publishers printed twice as many *Lolita*s as in the previous annum in 1990 and 1991.[22] The maximum one-time print run of *Lolita* in Russia reached a record figure of half a million;[23] the minimum—a "mere" hundred thousand copies. The landing party of Nabokov's previously outlawed novel was evenly distributed across the Russian-speaking empire under the official rule of the Communist party: in 1991, the book came out privately in cities ranging from Moscow and Kazan to provincial Voronezh, from the southern town of Krasnodar to the large industrial port of Khabarovsk in Russia's Far East. Compare these stunning figures with the typical output of the late 1990s, when a standard print run of such a commercially low-risk enterprise like *Lolita* would be no more than 5-7 thousand copies in Russia. With almost three million copies sold in Russia during 1990 to 1991 alone, Nabokov's *Lolita* became a national bestseller in the late writer's home.

Even after the socialist publishing system collapsed along with the state that supported it, the novel was aggressively sold as a paperback in response to readers' unprecedented demand. *Lolita* was published in post-Soviet Russia by book pirates of all stripes, from small local hackers to big publishing cooperatives. This business naturally thrived without any consent on the part of the Vladimir Nabokov Estate. In the virtual absence of control by Nabokov's heirs or any self-restraining ethical considerations (not to mention the abandoned censorship mechanisms), Nabokov's serious and tragic novel was sold in the post-Soviet marketplace under the "pulp fiction" category, mostly in paperbacks placed on shelves alongside works of fantasy and detective fiction. Another consequence of this temporary anarchy was the inauspicious shaping of the book's reception: the Russian readership during the last decade of the twentieth century mainly perceived *Lolita* as a semi-erotic thriller. The early publishing entrepreneurs in Russia issued numerous sleek editions of *Lolita* to appeal to the mass readership, hungry for former "forbidden fruits." In an unregulated market, such fruits were frequently misidentified as frivolous fiction (if not hardcore pornography), or mistaken for dissident anti-Soviet émigré pamphlets (such as those by Alexander Solzhenitsyn or Vladimir Voinovich). Nabokov's writings were neither.

How did this state of affairs of a publishing industry in disarray affect the visual representations of Nabokov's novel? The early days of *Lolita* in Russia proved to be somewhat artistically fruitful: ideas were daring and inventive, but execution, as a rule, was often poor. Many of the creative solutions for cover design inevitably resulted from the limitations in polygraph printing technologies of struggling post-socialist publishing manufacturing, but an unintentional austerity, ironically, often came closest to the late author's original vision as expressed to his American publishers.

Several of the earliest post-Soviet editions are grim but remarkable as they retain a degree of mystery, which Nabokov probably would have appreciated. In the begin-

ning, the "Russian Lolita" only had a hint of a face—the back of her head—and a gown unbuttoned from behind. This 1990 edition of the novel features a contrast silhouette against an oppressing, empty black background (Figure I, see in Captions).

While this edition conceals Lolita's face, it emphasizes her name. A simple font chosen for the title features a disproportionately-enlarged letter "O": the circle of perfection, and the vortex of misery and all-consuming passion. The girl leans her head slightly forward, exposing a vulnerable neck; the upper part of her dress is reminiscent of a hospital gown, which might either evoke the central scene of the novel at the Elphinstone facility, or, once again, allude to Lolita as a victim of the predator protagonist. The cover concept serves, therefore, as a kind of *invitation to a beheading* of a character who suffers physically and emotionally; it invites readers, faced with the difficult moral dilemmas of the novel, to suffer *with* Lolita.

The 1991 Lesinvest edition's flowery cover (Figure II see in Captions) ironically echoes both its publishing firm's title (literally translated from the Russian as "Investor in a Forest"), and the "Enchanted Hunters" motif from the novel. It depicts a semi-naked forest nymph playing a trumpet.

Its title font evokes the chic pre-revolutionary publications produced by the Russian Silver Age journal *The World of Art* (*Mir Iskusstva*), or later by the Leningrad-Moscow publisher *Academia* during the 1920s and 1930s. Lolita on the cover (presumably, this is she) is completely out of tune with the ordinary look of an American teenage girl; instead, the cover offers something closer to a mythopoetic incarnation of her spirit from Clare Quilty's play, in which Lo performs the role of the farmer's daughter confronting the Poet.

Another 1991 edition features only an oval contour of one half of Lolita's face (Figure III, see in Captions); compare this with a similar technique used fifteen years later for a Russian *Lolita* cover (Figure 8.4). The later 2006 edition deploys the same graphic device but applies it to the naked body instead of to her face. This shift reflects the audacity—if not the indecency—of the twenty-first century's approach to visually challenging illustration.

The 2006 cover, featuring a bodily-shape figurine in a black ink line, was released by the Azbooka publishing house. Since the early 2000s the same publisher has officially held the Russian publication rights to Nabokov. In the duration between these two modest (at first glance) covers, Russian consumers have seen a score of much more offensive images. However, the laconic suggestiveness of the early distribution days of the émigré and Russian *Lolita* editions seems to be gradually returning. It is likely that this will be the case as long as copyright control over Nabokov's writings continues to be managed by the Nabokov Estate and its legal representatives in Russia, or unless the sales of Nabokov drop dramatically, forcing the publisher to reinvigorate the market with stimulating covers once again.

Many interesting black-and-white issues of *Lolita* appeared during the collapse of the Soviet Union. A dark green hard cover edition offers elegant calligraphy in the novel's title (Figure IV, see in Captions); the same calligraphic approach is featured in other cover art of the same period, either as an abstract graphic sketch or by rendering

Figure 8.4. Vladimir Nabokov. *Lolita*. St. Petersburg: Azbooka-klassika, 2006. [447 pp., 7,000 copies; hardcover]

the bilingual initials "V. N." in such a way that they resemble a butterfly (Figure V and Figure VI, see in Captions). A soft cover (Figure 8.5) depicts a metaphoric entrapment of Lolita, whose unseen body and face are suggested by a pair of legs in fish-net nylons. The cover's eeriness is insinuated through its Kafkaesque motif: a fantastically gigantic bug of the Hexapoda family climbs up the girl's lower limbs, which asymmetrically lean toward the left margin of the cover. Finally, the profile and bare shoulders of an unknown and sad-looking model (slightly older than Lolita's age) is delivered by means of high-contrast photography (Figure VII, see in Captions).

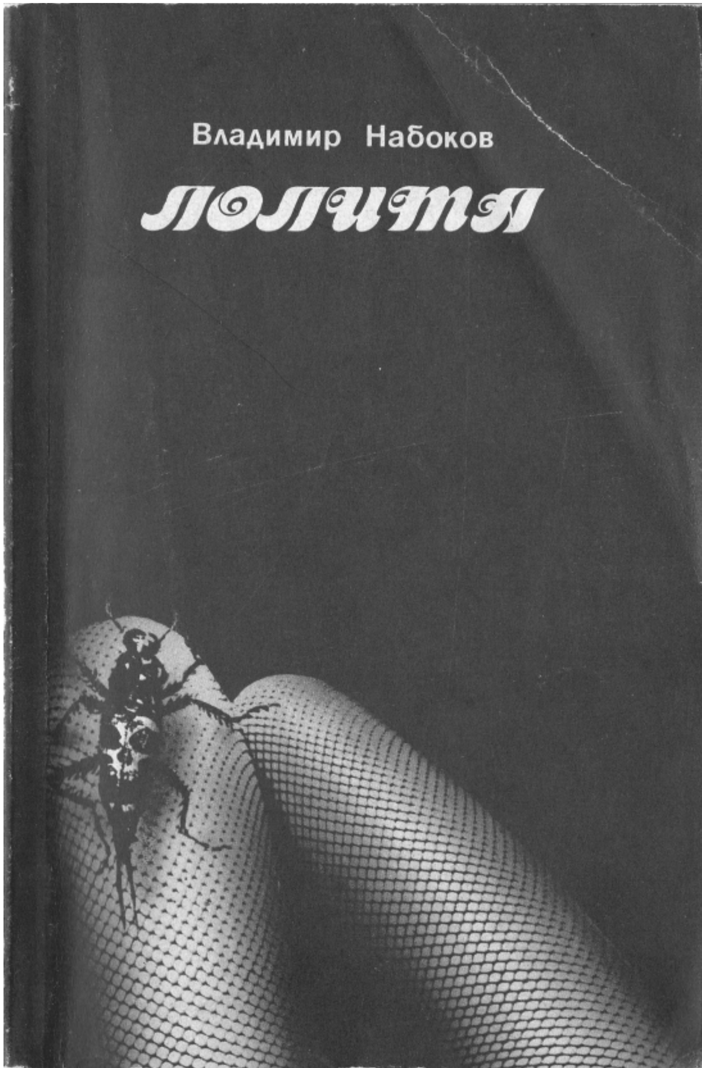

Figure 8.5. Vladimir Nabokov. *Lolita*. Moscow: Prometei, 1990 [1991] [Design by Aleksandr Kolomatskii. 284 pp., 300,000 copies printed in 1990; plus an additional run of 70,000 in 1991, paper]

FROM HOLLYWOOD WITH LUST: "A HORRIBLE YOUNG WHORE INSTEAD OF MY NYMPHET"

As soon as Nabokov's scandalous fame gained international dimensions in the mid-twentieth century, a dense collection of intertexts and paratexts began to

surround *Lolita*. Modern readers approach Nabokov's iconic text with a sense of who/what Lolita/*Lolita* is. This Lolita phenomenon functions in the same way as the legendary British spy James Bond—a figure who exists across films, books, merchandise, and ads. The James Bond case is an example of a particularly successful para-/inter-textual network: each of the Agent 007 manifestations works as "textual meteorites, highly condensed and materialised chunks of meaning."[24] Following Tony Bennett and Janet Woollacott's theoretical premise, Jonathan Gray asserts that these cultural and textual "meteorites" influence any interaction we might have with another Bond text via the preexisting para-/inter-textual network, so that "we will always arrive at any new Bond text with a sense of what to

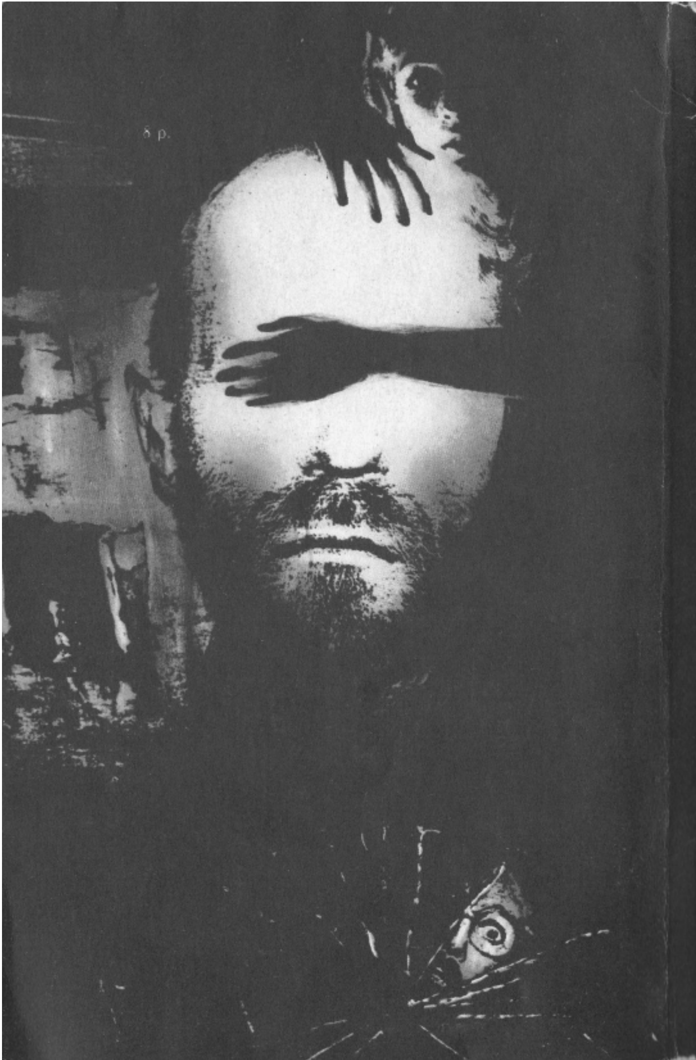

Figure 8.6. Same as Image 8.13, back cover.

expect, and with the interpretation process already well under way."[25] In a similar way, the Lolita effect spreads far beyond the narrative.[26] Even the Nabokovs humorously accepted this "paratextuality" of Vladimir's creation; on one occasion in 1966 during a prearranged photo shoot, as if playing up to expectations a sunbathing Véra sported a pair of plastic heart-shaped sunglasses—they are almost identical to the pair Sue Lyon wears in the promotional poster for Stanley Kubrick's film version of *Lolita*.

Unhappy with the Swedish edition of *Lolita*, Nabokov once commented on its cover to a prospective UK publisher in this way: "[the cover] has a horrible young whore instead of my nymphet."[27] Several of the Russian editions have outdone even this assessment, although one could argue that the post-Soviet "young whore" looks "pretty" rather than "horrible" on the back cover of a 1998 edition of *Lolita* printed in Moscow (Figure 8.7), the city where more than a thousand children were involved in prostitution in 1993. According to data released by the Russian police, children accounted for 25 percent of all prostitutes taken into custody in 2000. This proportion increased to around 27 percent in 2001, and "fresh supplies" are always in high demand.[28] In the decade that followed, Russia's national government demonstrated limited efforts to raise awareness and prevent child sex trafficking; [29] it is hard to imagine the appearance of a cover such as the one published in 1998 in a catalogue of any reputable publishing house in the West.

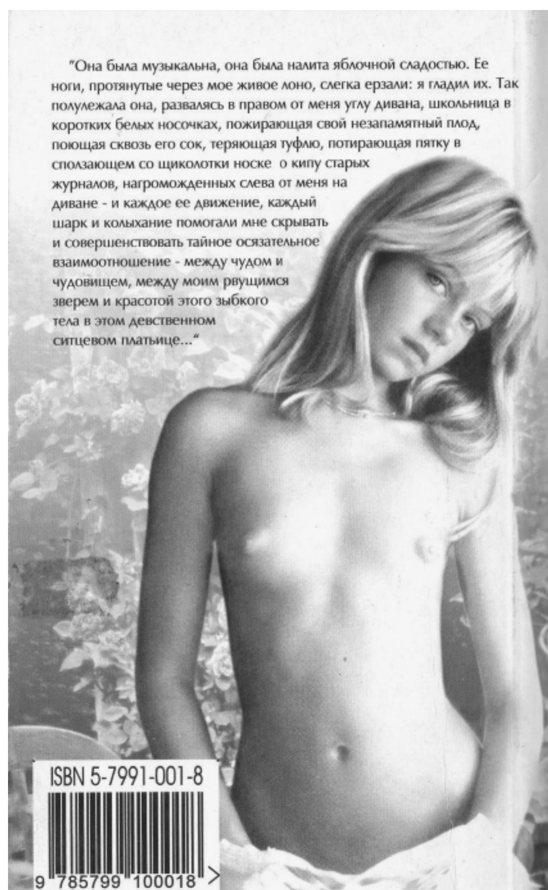

Figure 8.7. Vladimir Nabokov. *Lolita*. Moscow: TF-Progress, 1998. [458 pp.; the print run is unknown; paper; back cover image]

Considering *Lolita*'s paratexts based on the two Western screen adaptations by Kubrick and Lyne, it may be argued that such sexual imagery radiates a special allure and hints at certain connections between the Russian *Lolitas*' covers and Hollywood mainstream production.

To explore further this connection, first the nature of the relationship between a book cover and promotional visual and print materials (e.g., posters, ads, and cards) associated with marketing films needs to be established. Cover images often perform the same role for books as trailers for movies.[30] As Andrew Wernick explains, "a promotional message is a complex of significations which at once represents (moves in place of), advocates (moves on behalf of), and anticipates (moves ahead of) the circulating entities to which it refers."[31] On the other hand, according to Gray, a significant part of that representation, advocacy, and anticipation is "genred by nature."[32] *Lolita* is not an exception and, therefore, it has been—and most likely will continue to be—sexually exploited by publishers and book cover designers who overemphasize only one of many themes found in Nabokov's novel with crudely enticing imagery or elaborately provocative hints. The latter include close-ups of sensuous lips, the depiction of underage girls in mini-skirts, and wet colorful lollipops. In contrast to their Russian counterparts, the portrayal of a naturalistically drawn or photographed naked woman under the age of 18 on a book cover is a taboo in the United States, United Kingdom, and Australia; however, the aforementioned synecdoche of underage sexuality is the norm on many Western covers of *Lolita*, including those by major publishers such as Random House/Vintage International and Penguin.[33] When designers dare to challenge cultural norms, the results are poor: a number of popular Penguin classics, including Nabokov's *Lolita*, were pulled from the shelves of Australia Post retail outlets as recently as 2009.

The influence of the Hollywood productions of *Lolita* on the design of Nabokov's Russian version has been lopsided. Except for a few cineastes, the post-Soviet audience was virtually unaware of Kubrick's 1962 *Lolita*-based film. Both the novel and its Western screen adaptation were banned in the USSR until the very late 1980s. Therefore, when marketing Nabokov's work to audiences of the 1990s, Kubrick's imagery lacked any cultural significance and could not serve as a frame of reference. Publishers have successfully made use of, however, the more recent cinematic cast types from Adrian Lyne's 1997 film based on Nabokov's novel. The release of Lyne's movie was heavily promoted in Russia and, contrary to its controversial fate in the US, enjoyed wide distribution and press.[34] As a result, most of the *Lolita* paperback editions published shortly after the highly publicized release of Lyne's screen adaptation have utilized the recognizable features of the actors.

There are at least five known editions that incorporate Jeremy Irons and Dominique Swain into their cover design. These covers commonly project innocence and peaceful love between the protagonists; the pain, rift, and dramatic tension remain hidden deep in the text behind a deceptively romanticized façade (Figure 8.8; Figure 8.9; Figure 8.10; Figure 8.11; Figure 8.12; Figure VIII, see in Captions).

The back cover featured in Figure 8.12 is a comic example of crude image manipulation by a designer who could not find a suitable static image in Lyne's movie. A head-shot of Dominique Swain is attached to the body of an adolescent model (there is no such outfit worn by the actress in the movie; a closer look at

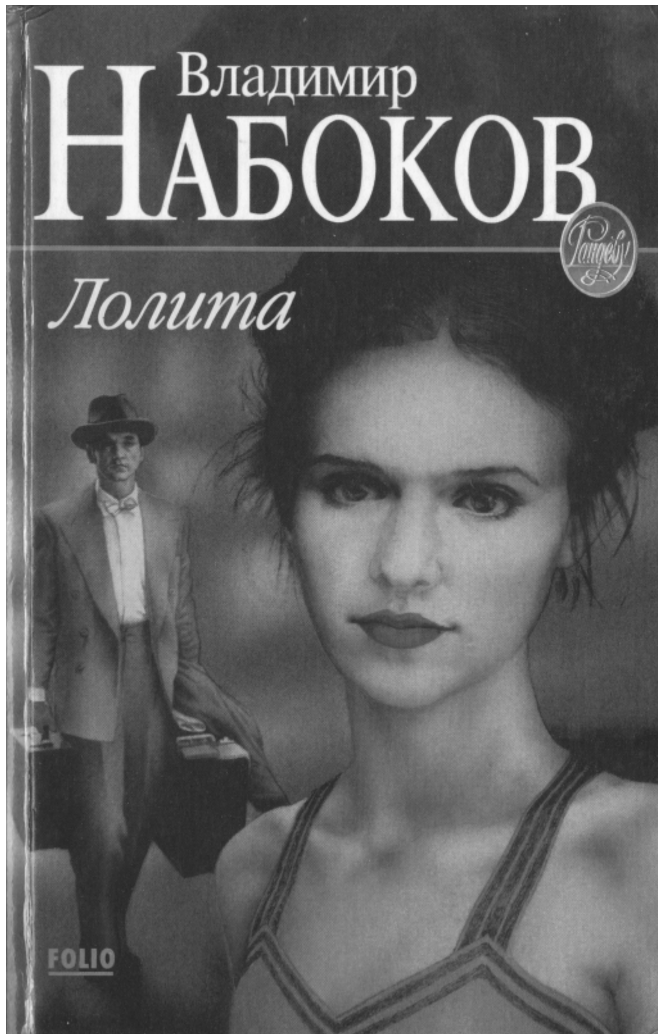

Figure 8.8. Vladimir Nabokov. *Lolita*. Kharkov: Folio; Moscow: AST (The Rendezvous series), 1998. [Computer rendering and cover design by A. Kozhanov; 430 pp., 15,000 copies; hardcover]

the area of the girl's neck exposes a rather unsophisticated splice). The secret of the relative success and popularity of Swain's face among publishers, readers, and viewers can also be explained in psychological terms: there is ample research suggesting that people attribute a variety of characteristics to others on the basis of physical attractiveness. In general these studies suggest that people ascribe positive characteristics—intelligence, competence, leadership skills, etc.,—to nice-looking

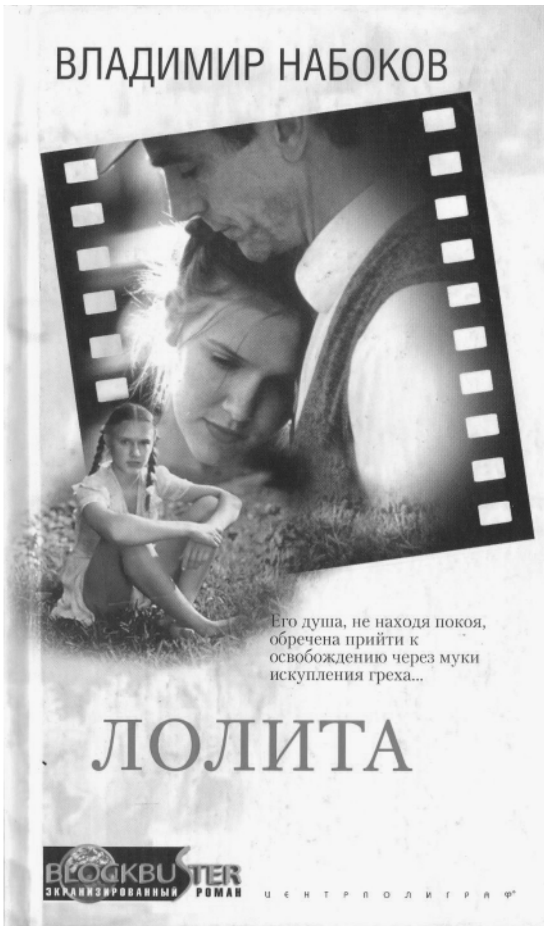

Figure 8.9. Vladimir Nabokov. *Lolita*. Moscow: Tsentrpoligraf, 2002. [478 pp., 7,000 copies; hardcover]

people.[35] Despite the consensus that judging a book by its cover seems a risky strategy, people still rely on deliberate signs like smiles, or the signaling properties of characteristics such as gender, age, race, and ethnicity of those depicted on covers. Attractiveness indicates trustworthiness, both in real life and in our judgments of products, books in particular—especially those book covers that bear a design incorporating human features.

Dolores Quine makes her New York debut in *Never Talk to Strangers* and Humbert later repeats the same fatherly advice to Lolita,[36] but scientists prove that we turn a deaf ear to our parents' warnings: "Subjects not only trust strangers, but also they choose to trust based on a stranger's appearance."[37] Average features are also found to be attractive. With respect to facial attractiveness, according to Rick Wilson and Catherine Eckel, this does not mean a commonplace visage, but rather a face that carries the average features for the population. Numerous studies have shown that "blended" faces (those that are compiled from many different images) are more attractive than single faces.[38] Attractiveness remains an important marker, but is largely a function of clear skin, clear eyes, shiny hair, and symmetry; as a fabricated reincarnation of Nabokov's Lolita, a rather plain teen Dominique Swain conforms to all these cultural and social expectations.

In partial defense of the cover designs based on Lyne's film, it should be admitted that to a certain extent they do encapsulate Nabokov's desire for "pure colors, melt-

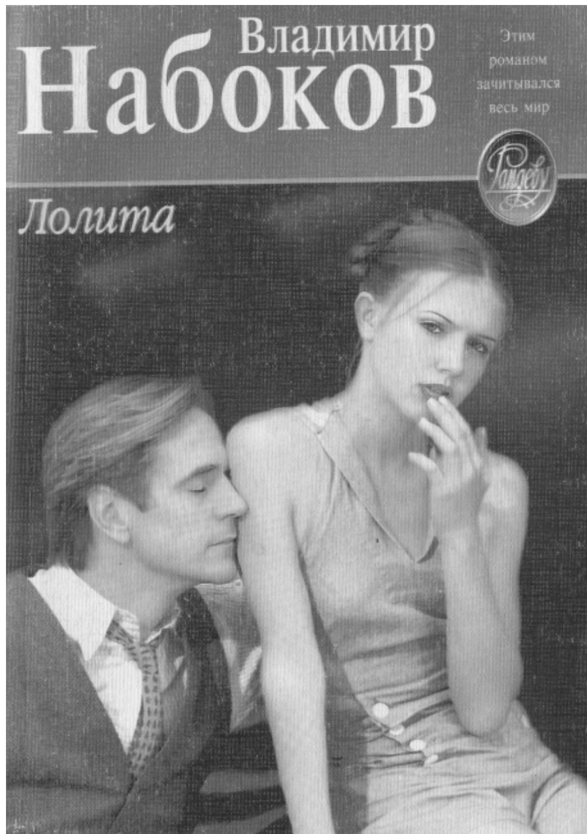

Figure 8.10. Vladimir Nabokov. *Lolita*. Moscow: AST, 1999. [478 pp., 10,000 copies; paper]

ing clouds, accurately drawn detils, a sunburst above a receding road with the light reflected in furrows and ruts, after rain" on the cover of *Lolita*[39]—with the notable exception, of course, that they feature a girl and her predator, both pensively looking in the same direction somewhere beyond the horizon.

Comparing three different editions of the novel, we find that the size of the fonts used for the author's name and the novel's title vary within a brief timespan, indicating the evolving cultural significance that publishers assign to either of these two essential cover elements. In 1999 "Nabokov" rendered in golden lettering is still much larger than the title *Lolita* (Figure IX, see in Captions); soon, however, it is *Lolita* that draws the eye's attention (Figure 8.13). Finally, everything comes to a relative balance on the Eksmo edition five years later (Figure X, see in Captions). Although the font size achieves a degree of proportionality, the

Figure 8.11. Vladimir Nabokov. *Lolita*. Moscow: Eksmo-Press, 1999. [Design by E. Shamrai; 462 pp., 10,100 copies; paper]

screaming colors now explode any sensible typographic palette. Of course, for a Byzantium-oriented Russian mentality, it is hard to compromise on anything that has to do with decorative gold and, fittingly, the Eksmo cover with its radiant circle inscribed within a square is more reminiscent of a glazed Orthodox icon than a screenshot from a Hollywood film.

As Russian spectators have increasingly absorbed international art house cinema in general, along with the Hollywood black-and-white legacy in particular, their cultural thesaurus and the range of potential visual associations have expanded accordingly. Once this happened it became possible to count on allusions to Kubrick's film appearing among the stock of acceptable marketing strategies for *Lolita* in print. A 2010 edition (Figure XI, see in Captions) presents Nabokov's film script for *Lolita* translated into Russian for the first time. The cover image, employing

Figure 8.12. Same as Image 8.21, back cover.

a still from the 1962 movie, is factually correct. However, the screenplay, as is well known, was heavily rewritten by Kubrick.[40] The validity of the image of Sue Lyon and James Mason on *Nabokov's* script is, therefore, doubtful. The designer also could not help adding color to the original screenshot (probably bowing to the trend of colorizing old black-and-white films that was fashionable in Vladimir Putin's Russia of the 2000s).

The cover that attempts to capitalize on the already-proven commercial success of a movie thus presents a curious case of duplicating the same mechanism into an adjacent medium, or essentially bringing it back to the literary sphere from where it was borrowed for screen adaptation. This effect has significant consequences for a reader, especially for new readers who buy the novel in this "fresh old" packaging; the image dictates the novel's reception and can shape the mental image of the characters—in this case, of Lolita.

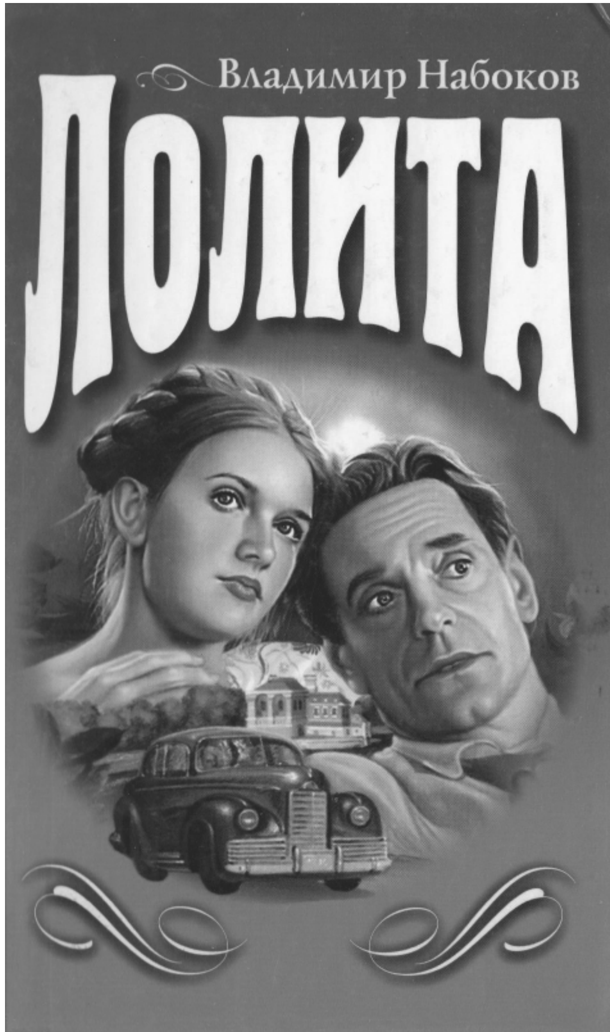

Figure 8.13. Vladimir Nabokov. *Lolita. Mashen'ka. Zashchita Luzhina. Kamera obskura. Priglashenie na kazn': Romany*. Moscow: EKSMO-Press, 1999. [Designed by A. Yaakovlev (Series Russin Classics); 800 pp., 10,000 copies; hardcover]

MARKETING THE RUSSIAN *LOLITA* WITHIN A VENERABLE CULTURAL CANON: THE MID-1990S

After the initial wave of massive distribution of Nabokov's "morally dubious" book had subsided, Russian publishers focused their attention on a few specific target groups. The segment of readership most suited for Nabokov's prose turned out to be the "intelligentsia," whose members maintain high standards of cultural self-identification and

demanding reading interests. To be adapted to the needs of this intellectual market, *Lolita* required some repackaging—or rebranding—in the second half of the 1990s.

A fragment of Sandro Botticelli's 1486 painting *The Birth of Venus* strikes one as a poor choice for the cover of a 1998 edition of *Lolita* (Figure 8.14). It depicts the naked goddess Venus, who emerges from the sea as a fully-grown woman.

Botticelli's tall and slightly plump model is visually quite remote from the mental image of Nabokov's nymphet, which the average reader forms while reading the novel. Botticelli's Venus is, however, in the text itself—although the fleeting comparison of petite Lo to the Renaissance beauty is hard to remember, and will offer no direct clue to the layperson.[41] However, the cover surely puts Nabokov's novel on the level of a great work of art with the help of Botticelli's widely-acclaimed classical painting.

For a visual representation of Lolita, the Eksmo-Classics edition features Gustav Klimt's *Portrait of Mäda Primavesi* (1912) (Figure 8.15; Figure XII, see in Captions).[42] Awkwardly positioned on the front cover beneath the title, the girl's figure is not reproduced in full, and the lower part of her legs is cut off by the bottom frame (the deep purple background above the girl's head appears to be artificially attached as it is not part of the original; cf. Figure XII, see in Captions). The publishing firm's logo is thoughtlessly placed over Mäda's dress between her thighs.

Figure 8.14. Vladimir Nabokov. *Lolita*. Moscow: Tekst, 1998. [448 pp.; 7,000 copies; paper; with credit to Sandro Botticelli's *The Birth of Venus* in the cover art]

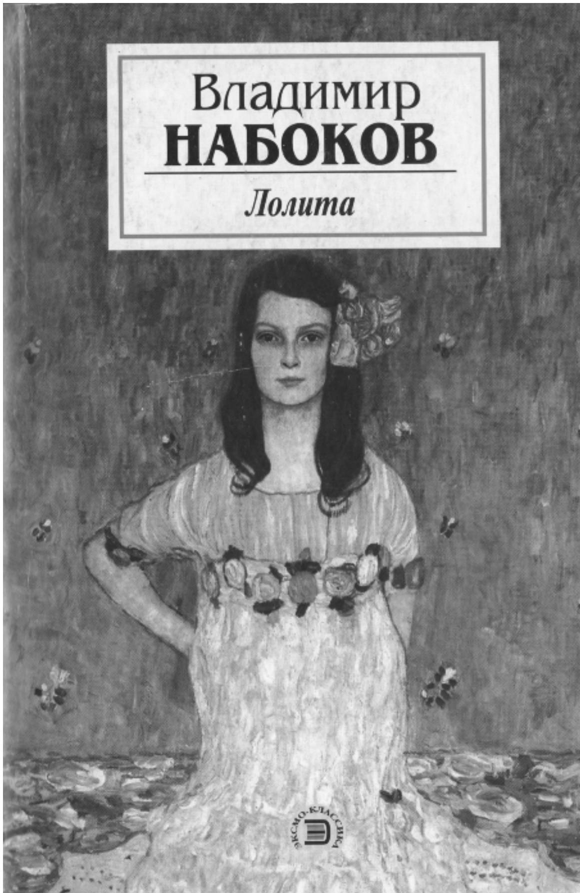

Figure 8.15. Vladimir Nabokov. *Lolita*. Moscow: EKSMO-Press; EKSMO-Market, 2000. [Design by A. Saukov, with credit to G. Klimt; 384 pp.; 7,000 copies; paper. This edition omits the introductory article by Nabokov's fictitious editor and publisher John Ray Jr.]

When Klimt painted her portrait, the real Mäda (1903–2000; Figure XIII, see in Captions), daughter of the banker and industrialist Otto Primavesi, was of a pre-nymphet age, according to Nabokov's own definition. Contemporary interpreters perceive this nine- or ten-year-old girl as being "on the verge of womanhood":

> The arm posed determinedly against the hip, the dead on expression of neither offering a smile nor soliciting one. These are poses that work on us in the way advertising works on us—they make a nominal elicitation of the subject's personal strength but with their stereotyped poses, their glitzy, meaningless decorative backgrounds . . . they seem to be more about the sexual fantasies of the viewer than the viewed (Klimt was an avid Freudist).[43]

What makes Mäda different from other feminine portrayals by Klimt and his peers is her advertisement-like solicitation of her viewers. This direct appeal transforms the process of scanning a young woman's image into a complex psychological experience involving the gazer's self-reflection. Combined with the fact that it is placed on a book cover for *Lolita*, the classical portrait nolens volens endorses Humbert's provocative diary, inciting additional ethical considerations in the reader's experience of Nabokov's novel.

Designers of post-Soviet *Lolita* covers often felt obliged to use pictures of girls who, if not entirely lecherous, then at least promised *promiscuity*—a quality that would be exposed or hinted at through the peculiarity of a pose, the ambivalence of a facial expression, or the setting. A number of Russian editions of *Lolita* have been inspired by—or simply copied—the painting *In Bed* (1876) by Federico Zandomeneghi (1841–1917). In his many paintings, Zandomeneghi depicts women in their domestic routines; this one shows a sleeping girl in a brightly lit room exposing, unbeknownst to her, a sparsely red-haired armpit (Figure XIV, see in Captions).

Four editions of *Lolita* reproduce the same sensuous painting (Figure XV and Figure XVI see in Captions; Figure 8.16; Figure 8.17). One cover (Figure 8.16) provokes an undesired effect: due to the direction of the head in the photographic insert (a Nabokov in his late thirties), there emerges a strange voyeuristic impression of the man in the portrait spying on the sleeping beauty below him.

A picture of a girl in bed purportedly embodies the nymphet concept. One of these covers (Figure 8.17), however, places Zandomeneghi's image in a stylized mirror with a red rose aside. In contrast to the crude depictions of "young whores" used a few years earlier, a flower and an old-fashioned frame signify that *Lolita* is part and parcel of a venerable cultural and literary tradition (two of the editions featuring Zandomeneghi's painting were released as part of two different series, *Classical and Modern Prose* and *World Classics*).

The 2003 Ast cover (Figure 8.18) is an interesting case of the sublimation of two themes from classical paintings—the cover's upper half depicts the already-familiar image of Zandomeneghi's sleeping girl; the lower half presents a view of a serene village.

This is a landscape by Edgar Degas entitled *Houses on the Cliff Edge at Villers-Sur-Mer* (1869) (Figure XVII, see in Captions). It is unclear why someone decided to conflate *In Bed* and the countryside scene, apart from the possible reason that Zandomeneghi, whose style of painting was similar to that of the impressionists, was Degas' close friend. The red-bricked roofs of the French village might also evoke the description of the landscape in the finale of *Lolita*: "The road now stretched across open country [. . .] One could make out the geometry of the streets between blocks of red and gray roofs, and green puffs of trees, and a serpentine stream [. . .]"[44] While it is doubtful that such subtle literary allusiveness was done on purpose, perhaps this possibility should not be dismissed altogether.

A real "period" photograph was used for an Azbooka edition of the novel depicting a naked girl warming herself by a wood stove (Figure 8.19). As Patrick Cramsie suggests, the camera's un-posed, snap-shot effect, in addition to its potential for a penetrating degree of detail, harkened back to traditional forms of book illustration:

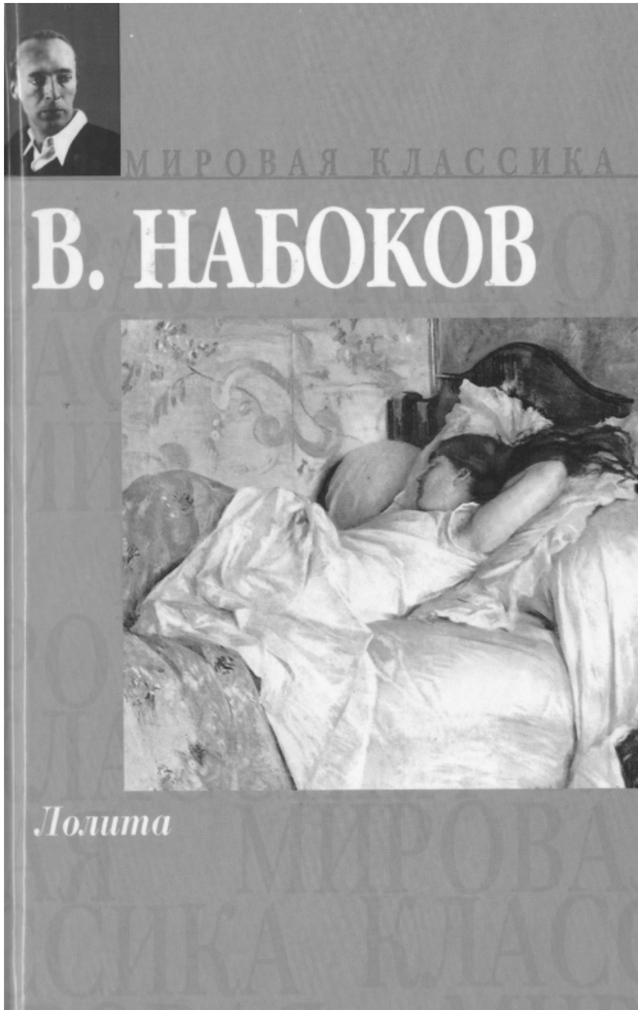

Figure 8.16. Vladimir Nabokov. *Lolita*. Moscow: AST, 2004 [the print run is unknown; 427 pp.; hardcover. This edition omits the introductory article by Nabokov's fictitious editor and publisher John Ray Jr.]

"Realistically painted illustrations had remained popular in America, as elsewhere, despite the compelling novelty of the photograph and the exotic glamour associated with Modernist forms of abstraction."[45] Hence, an American device took root in Russia. This image's erotic beauty derives from the fact that although the subject wears no clothes except high heals, no private parts are actually exposed. Another obvious tension this image provokes is the contrast between the girl's nakedness and the coldness of the darkly-lit room.

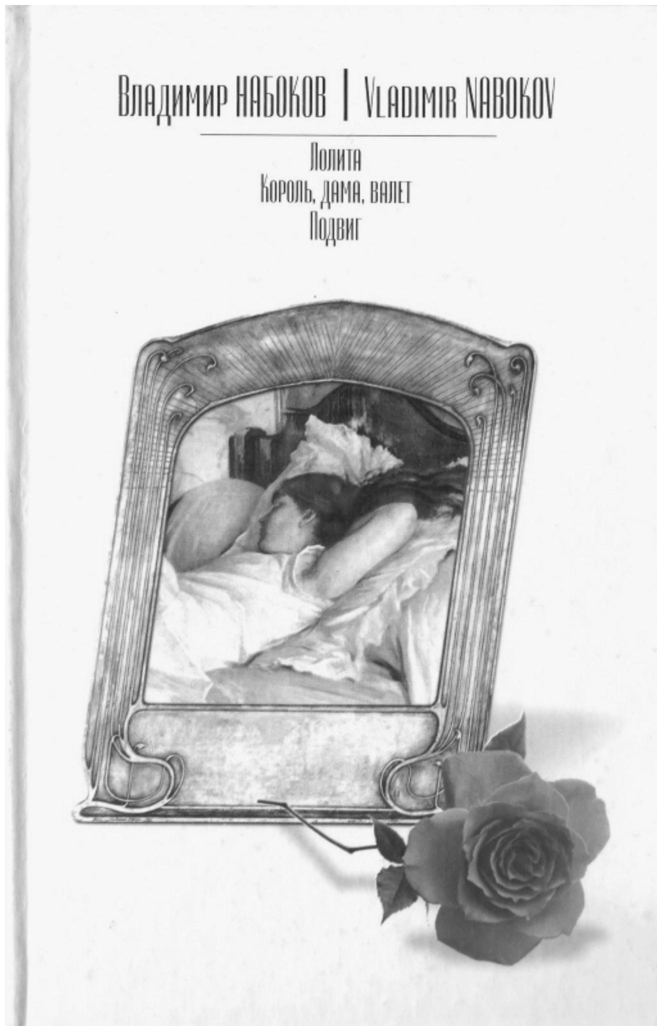

Figure 8.17. Vladimir Nabokov. *Lolita*. Moscow: AST; Ermak, 2004 [702 pp.; 4,000 copies; hardcover. This edition also includes Nabokov's novels *The Exploit* and *King, Queen, Knave*; *Lolita* omits the introductory article by Nabokov's fictitious editor and publisher John Ray Jr.]

The source of this cover (as usual with the piratical editions in Russia of that period, unacknowledged) is James Abbe's photograph entitled *Bessie Love* (1928; Figure XVIII, see in Captions).

Bessie Love (1898–1986), born a year before Nabokov, was an American motion picture actress who achieved prominence mainly in silent films and early talkies. She was nominated for an Oscar in 1930, and a star bearing her name

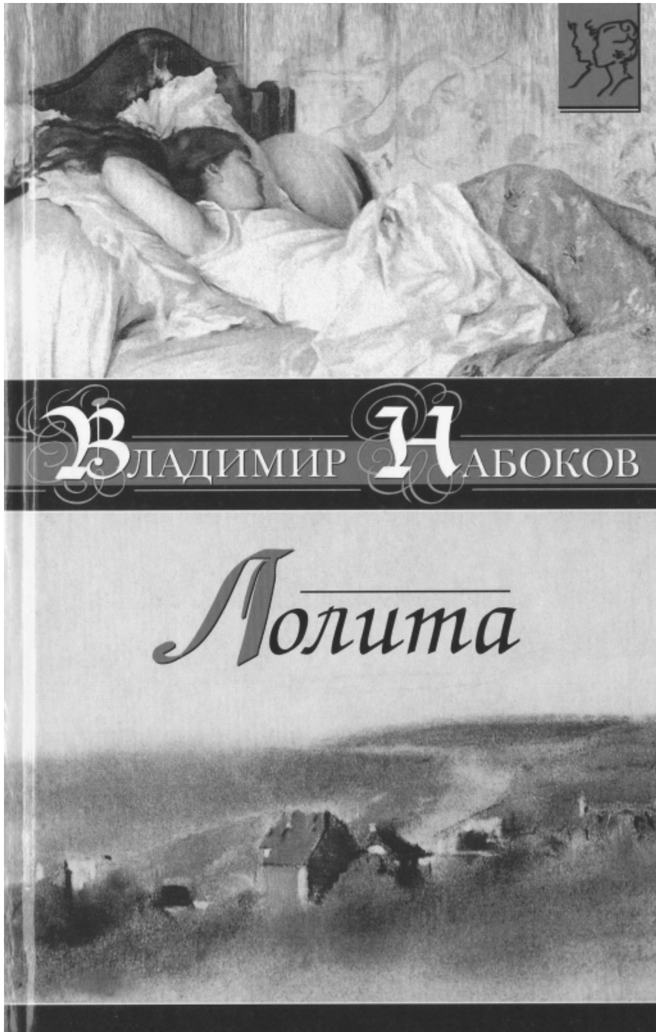

Figure 8.18. Vladimir Nabokov. *Lolita*. Moscow: AST, 2003 [the print run is unknown; 427 pp.; hardcover. This edition omits the introductory article by Nabokov's fictitious editor and publisher John Ray Jr.]

rests on the Hollywood Walk of Fame. When *Lolita* was published, the actress was taking part in movies with quite suggestive titles: *Young and Willing* (1954), *The Barefoot Contessa* (1954), and *Touch and Go* (1955). Nabokov's contemporary James Abbe (1883–1973) was an American photographer with interest in Russia, although Nabokov would have definitely disapproved of Abbe's Soviet voyage (Abbe's book *I Photograph Russia* appeared in 1934, and included one of the first officially sanctioned Western photographs of the dictator Joseph Stalin).

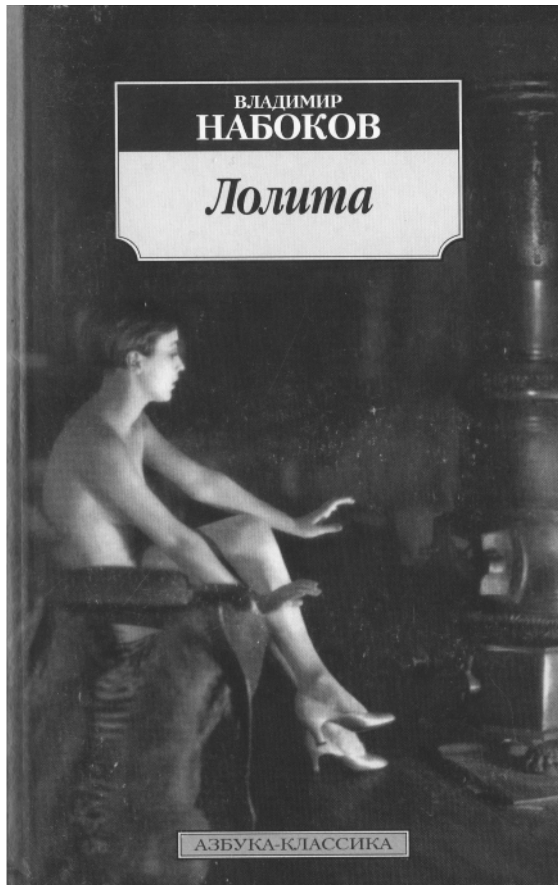

Figure 8.19. Vladimir Nabokov. *Lolita*. St. Petersburg: Azbooka-klassika, 2002. [446 pp.; 7,000 copies; paper]

According to a now-legendary account, during costume changes "while Abbe set up the lighting for the next shot, Bessie Love would sit and warm herself at the iron stove in Abbe's studio. And there, in a moment, Abbe saw an image that would become one of his most famous."[46] For the cover of the Russian *Lolita*, the picture is cropped on the sides but compensates this loss on the vertical axis: by using retouch computer software, the iron stove's chimney is extended and the room's dark ceiling elevated.

Another Art Nouveau-inspired Russian *Lolita* cover that takes advantage of a preexisting work of art features a close up of a young woman's profile (Figure 8.20).

This edition of Nabokov's novel is published in the series suggestively titled *Light Breath* (taken from Ivan Bunin's famous short story of the same title), with the subtitle "Russian Love Prose of the Twentieth Century." "Russianness" notwithstanding, the image on this allegedly quintessential domestic prose is of a clear

Figure 8.20. Vladimir Nabokov. *Lolita*. Moscow: Infoserv; Forum, 1997. [446 pp.; 5,000 copies; hardcover. This edition omits the introductory article by Nabokov's fictitious editor and publisher John Ray Jr.]

Western origin: it is actually taken from a poster by Leyendecker (Figure 8.21). Joseph Christian Leyendecker was born in Germany in 1874, and immigrated with his parents to America in 1882. He took art lessons at the Chicago Art Institute, and after developing a distinct personal style, created over 400 magazine covers between 1896 and 1950. The peak of Leyendecker's career was in the 1920s, and he became a chief source of inspiration for—and a friend of—Norman Rockwell.

Nabokov did not particularly praise Rockwell's artistic merits, and his opinion of Leyendecker, this decorator of middle-class coffee tables covered with illustrated magazines (the epitome of *poshlost'* or banality in Nabokov's view), was probably no more appreciative. Further irony derives from the fact that Leyendecker was a homosexual who "attempted to conceal his sexual orientation in his work, which was often characterized by heterosexual female adoration for handsome males depicted in overtly erotic poses."[47] The girl's head found on this cover (Figure 8.20) is actually a fragment from an advertisement promoting the image of a stately and stylishly

Figure 8.21. J. C. Leyendecker. Poster for Arrow Collars and Shirts. From Sean Adams' blog: http://www.burningsettlerscabin.com/?tag=illustration Accessed 8 August 2012.

dressed young man. Leyendecker's style, featured in advertisements for detachable shirt collars manufactured by Cluett Peabody & Company (Troy, New York), "established the beau ideal for the sartorially savvy American male."[48] The decision of an ignorant post-Soviet publisher thus succeeds in connecting "the most manifest homosexual artist of the early twentieth century"[49] and the novel about the pedophile Humbert Humbert.

WHAT'S IN A FACE: "A TYPICALLY RUSSIAN GIRL"?

Ekphrasis is usually defined as "the verbal representation of visual representation."[50] In the case of illustrating *Lolita*, we are essentially dealing with a reversed process that constructs visual representation based on a fictional verbal account. If one were to try and recreate Lolita's face in full accordance with Nabokov's artistic vision through identikit principles (composite sketch methods used by police), it would prove to be an onerous task. First of all, despite the fact that she is the central character of the novel, Lolita is most often shown through the prism of Humbert Humbert's perception. The narrator frequently stresses the importance of his mental image of his little nymphet over her appearance in flesh.[51] Secondly, when Lolita does appear in certain descriptive passages, her physical features seem elusively disjointed; hence the reader must resort to accumulating her characteristics as they are described throughout the narrative, which may shed some light on Lolita's true portrait. If nonetheless one were to embark on this venture, it would turn out that Lolita's bare legs and knees (or even "narrow white buttocks"[52]) are mentioned much more frequently than her facial features. Whenever the text refers to Lolita's face, it often limits itself to highlighting either her freckles or dimples instead of giving a crystalline portrait in the familiar manner of the classical nineteenth-century novel. Because Lolita is largely seen through Humbert's romanticizing and aestheticizing perspective, covers that employ renowned artworks actually capture Humbert's own perspective of Lolita (e.g. the Venus); the fact that in the novel we only see Lolita in pieces—rarely (if ever) as a whole—is conveyed brilliantly in the covers that employ synecdoche or fragments of a girl's body.

All this is in contrast to Lolita's abuser, whose portrait has recently been rendered using a contemporary take on Smith & Wesson's 1960s-era "Identi-Kit"—a collection of mix-and-match cards showing various types of facial features and hair styles. In *Lolita* Humbert Humbert is described in a much more generous and detailed way, which allowed the Brooklyn-based artist, Brian Davis, to include the character's simulated face in a gallery of other unconventional portraits that comprise his project, "The Composites." To create these portraits Davis employs the software "Faces," which is a higher-tech, software-based version of the methods investigators use while questioning witnesses to create an image of a suspect.[53] Of Lolita's face we do know that it is "snub-nosed" and looks "almost plain, in a rustic, German, *Mägdlein*-like way"; that her eyes are "gray" and curls range from "brown" to "sunny-brown."[54] But is there enough data for a reliable portrait?

This rhetorical question should be rephrased in a more productive way: why do cover designers opt for certain types of facial features and not others in recreating their hypothetical Lolitas? Obviously, their implicit and explicit goal is to produce a visual message that would emphasize the cover girl's attractiveness. According to contemporary psychologists who study human aesthetic preferences, only a brief glance at a face is necessary for attractiveness judgments to occur:

> When people rated the attractiveness of faces they had seen for less than a quarter of a second, their judgments showed strong agreement with those made by others whose viewing time was not constrained. The consensus on attractiveness holds true regardless of the sex or race or age of those being judged. People show agreement on which face is more attractive whether they are judging males or females, people from their own or a different racial background, infants, children, teenagers, young adults, or old adults. [. . .] People also make more distinctions regarding the attractiveness of female than male faces, and they give more extreme ratings to female faces. This tendency to be more responsive to variations in attractiveness among women is particularly.[55]

A consumer's brief glance at a cover in a bookstore, especially if he or she is not familiar with either the author or the contents of the novel, is a decisive factor for further browsing the book and, ultimately, for making the purchasing decision; this explains the clear attempt to maximize the cover's attractiveness.[56] Zebrowitz emphasizes the importance of the perceived *youthfulness* projected by a female face in judging attractiveness: youthfulness provides a possible explanation for the greater appeal of some faces over others, and if "younger looking people are more attractive, babyfaceness should enhance attractiveness."[57] Important when considering publishers' depictions of Lolita is the argument that specific "babyish" features have been linked to attractiveness: "Among these are *large eyes, large pupils, and a small nose. Eyes are particularly influential, typically showing moderate-to-large effects on attractiveness,* although these effects are more reliable for judgments of female than male faces."[58] It has also been established that men find youthfulness of the opposite sex more attractive than women do: this is because males' reproductive success is more dependent on the age of a partner than is females' reproductive success. This international study of sex differences in human mate preferences is also applicable to the Humbert-Lolita paradigm, since it reveals "a large and universal tendency for men to prefer younger mates than women do. Although this sex difference in human mate preferences is consistent with the evolutionary hypothesis that men will find youthfulness more attractive than women do, *it does not implicate perceived fertility as the most important determinant of attractiveness.*"[59] If it were, Zebrowitz maintains, one would expect men to prefer women younger than twenty-five years of age, since peak fertility in women occurs in the early rather than the mid-twenties. Even if men really do prefer younger women, this alone does not establish perceived fertility as the causal factor, nor does it prove that variations in physical attractiveness are crucial to the choice of partners.[60] Bearing in mind these scientific findings, let us examine the cover of a *Lolita* published in 1998 (Figure 8.22).

Figure 8.22. Vladimir Nabokov. *Lolita*. Moscow: TF-Progress, 1998. [458 pp., the print run is unknown; paper; back cover image]

The structure, proportions, configurations, colors, angles of lighting, perspective, and many other components in the picture conform to an "ideal" image of the fictional heroine, who combines suggested puberty with implied innocence; this implied innocence is undermined, however, by the bold color of the girl's lipstick and the décolleté of her dress. The placement of the girl's face in such a way as to fill the entire space of the cover brings to mind a similar practice used in popular illustrated magazines, which make their revenues by reporting celebrities' shocking and intimate news. Cramsie, the author of a book on the history of graphic design, claims that the editors of picture magazines understand the importance of an "image" in the wider sense of the word: "An important element in defining the image of the magazine to the potential buyer was the photograph that appeared on the cover."[61] Initially picture magazines showed a variety of subjects, but soon publishers "realized the pulling-power of a recognizable or attractive face, or ideally one in which both characteristics were combined."[62] The preferred cover image evokes female beauty and youth, and these priorities have remained more or less constant (as Richard Stolly, the first editor of *People* magazine, put it, "Young is better than old. Pretty is better than ugly. Rich is better than poor. TV is better than music. Music is better than movies. Movies are better than sports. Anything is better than politics. And nothing is better than the celebrity dead"[63]). The feature that makes the face so very compelling is the eyes, and indeed Lolita's viewpoint on this cover (Figure 8.22) succeeds in establishing direct eye contact with the onlooker (a potential cus-

tomer). Altogether it is reminiscent of the identikit approach discussed earlier—not only because the angle is *en face*, but also due to the fact that the fake Lolita's face is constructed of "compound" features comprising a set of cultural clichés. And if the buyer of the book with the brazen cover will bother reading the novel till the very end, he will also be gratified to discover that the pretty cover girl is no longer alive—"nothing is better than the celebrity dead."

The image of the girl sporting a short haircut on this cover is not an original photograph commissioned by the Russian publisher. The source of this picture is the website of a Japanese modeling agency (Figure XIX, see in Captions).[64] When compared with the image on the book cover, it becomes obvious that the original face was slightly retouched: the red color of the pseudo-Lolita's lips is intensified, and her eyes are color-corrected (ironically, from gray—which would have been true to Nabokov's text—they were adjusted to deep blue, as if to conform to a fashionable stock beauty ideal). A modern designer has also erased the real girl's "uncomfortable" traces of either acne or birthmarks in her upper chest area, visible in the original shot.

As seen from the sample illustrations, Lolita is most often represented as a blonde girl with light-colored eyes. This hardly establishes her as belonging to any ethnicity or cultural tradition, but there is a tendency among Russian publishers to use either girls with distinctively Slavic features, or reproductions of works made by Russian artists. A Russian model (although actually belonging to a small ethnicity called Komi) served, for example, for a 2005 cover (Figure 8.23). This is a slightly truncated image taken from a *Portrait of Ria (Portrait of A.A. Kholopova)* by the avant-garde artist Kuzma Petrov-Vodkin (1878–1939) (Figure XX, see in Captions), which can represent either Lolita or Mary—the heroines of Nabokov's novels of the same names that are, in this case, reproduced in a single edition.

The painting was completed in 1915 when the girl named Ariadna (nicknamed Ria) was between ten and eleven years old, which makes her, in Humbert's terminology, almost a nymphet. Curiously, this painting was done in Petrograd when Nabokov was still living in the city. To make his young subject sit quietly, Petrov-Vodkin not only used a large box of chocolates (which the painter placed in front of the girl), but also told her adventure stories in installments, ending each episode at the climactic moment in order to make Ria want to return and pose for him again.[65] According to Ria, the overlooking sculpture-like face in the blue background was not there at the outset; it was added later to possibly emphasize her antique name (Ariadna), or her slanting eyes and prominent cheekbones, considered indigenous Komi facial features. To underscore the girl's sensuality, as many of his colleagues working on covers for *Lolita* have done, the designer of this particular edition intensified the redness of her cheeks and lips. The painter's signature has been cropped out—it obviously was not needed in an era of unobserved copyright in Russia.

Based on his readerly experience, Sergei Dovlatov, a prominent prose writer of the third émigré wave and a favorite of *The New Yorker* magazine, once claimed that "all of Nabokov's Russian personages look alive, while his foreign ones are predictable and decorative. His only live foreigner is Lolita, but even she, judging by her personality,

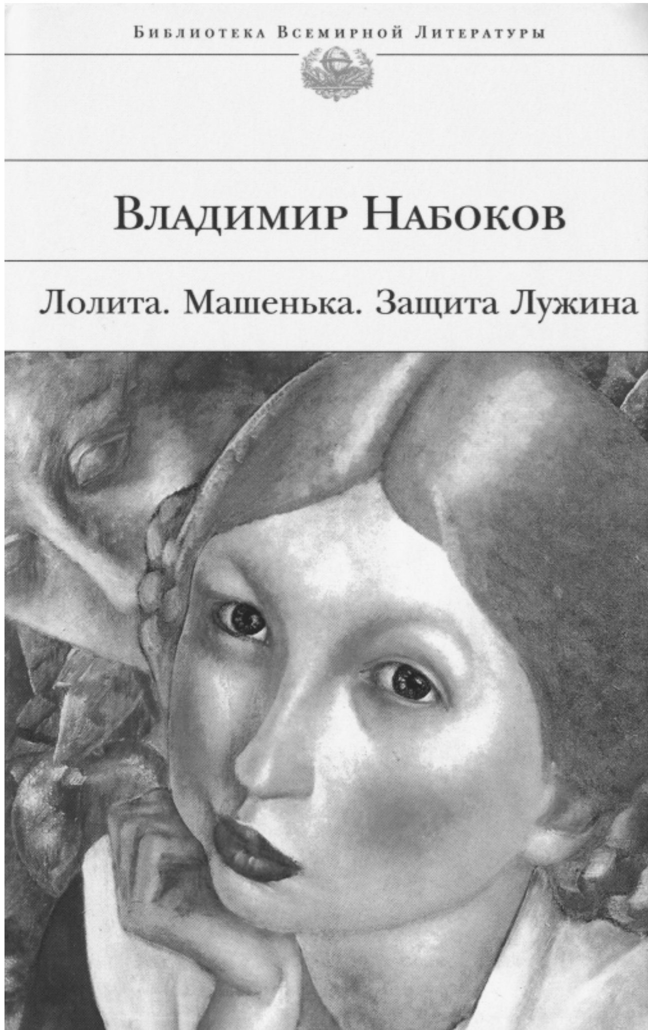

Figure 8.23. Vladimir Nabokov. *Lolita*. Moscow: Eksmo, 2005 [800 pp.; 4,000 copies; hardcover; also includes *Mary* and *The Luzhin Defense*]

is a typically Russian miss."[66] As if concurring with this definition, another Russian publisher put a teenage schoolgirl with typical Slavic facial features and dressed-up as a cheap harlot on the cover of *Lolita* (Figure 8.24).

In addition to faces of a certain type (dubious and subjective criteria), other signs of "Russianness" can be suggested via clothing. For instance, a Lolita in a stylized sailor's jacket (Figure 8.25) echoes Nabokov's own pre-revolutionary childhood (Figure XXI, see in Captions). On the one hand, there is something innocent in her

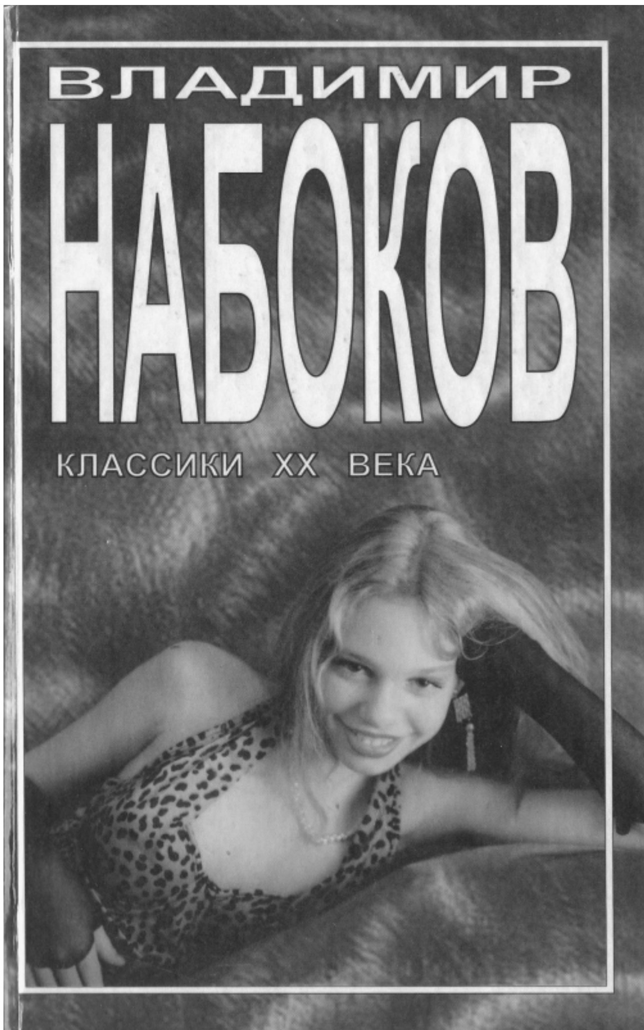

Figure 8.24. Vladimir Nabokov. *Lolita*. Rostov-na-Donu: Feniks, 2000. [Design by Iu. Kalinchenko. 448 pp. (Series: Classics of the 20th century); 10,000 copies; hardcover]

inquisitive gaze; on the other hand, the look of a boyish girl holding a flower right next to her lips is also undeniably tempting.

Nabokov, by the way, probably would not welcome this semblance with his own outfit because of the Freudian twist inherent in such transgender photographic conversion (Figure XXI; Figure 8.25).

Among those Russian editions that attempt to recalibrate the commonly perceived image of Lolita as an American teenager by representing her as a young *Russian*

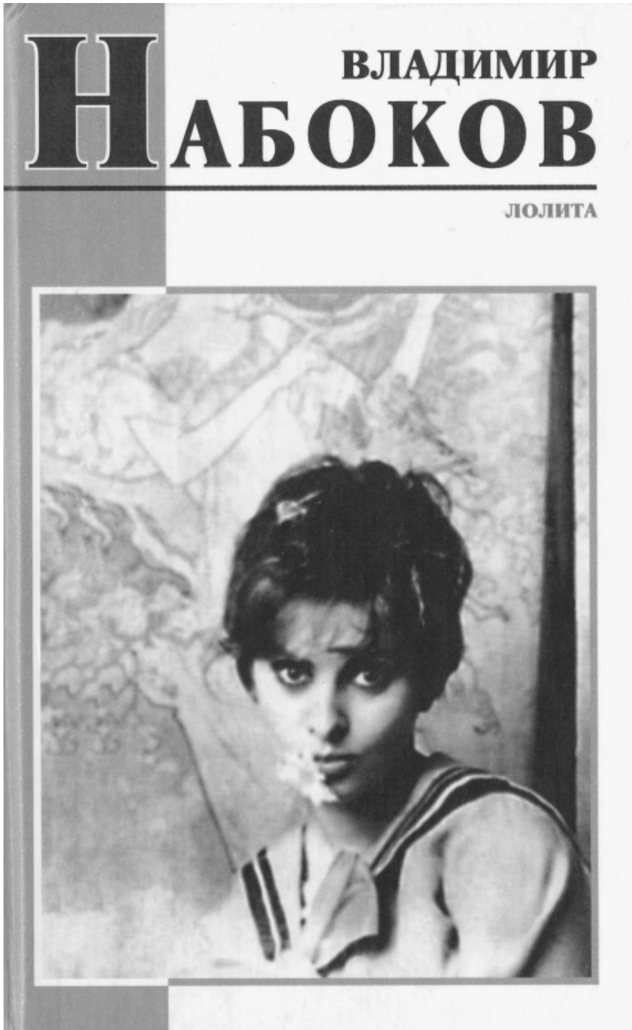

Figure 8.25. Vladimir Nabokov. *Lolita*. St. Petersburg: Kristall, 2001. [Design by I. Mosin. 352 pp.; 10,000 copies; hardcover]

lady is a 2001 edition of the novel, jointly published by St. Petersburg and Moscow presses (Figure 8.26; Figure 8.27). As a rare exception, this publisher actually listed the hired illustrator's name in the bibliographic record. The artist A. Vassiliev places a Slavic-looking face under the Russian title *Lolita*; the head tilted to the left continues one visual line formed by the large branch of a birch tree protruding at an angle from the cover's upper left corner.

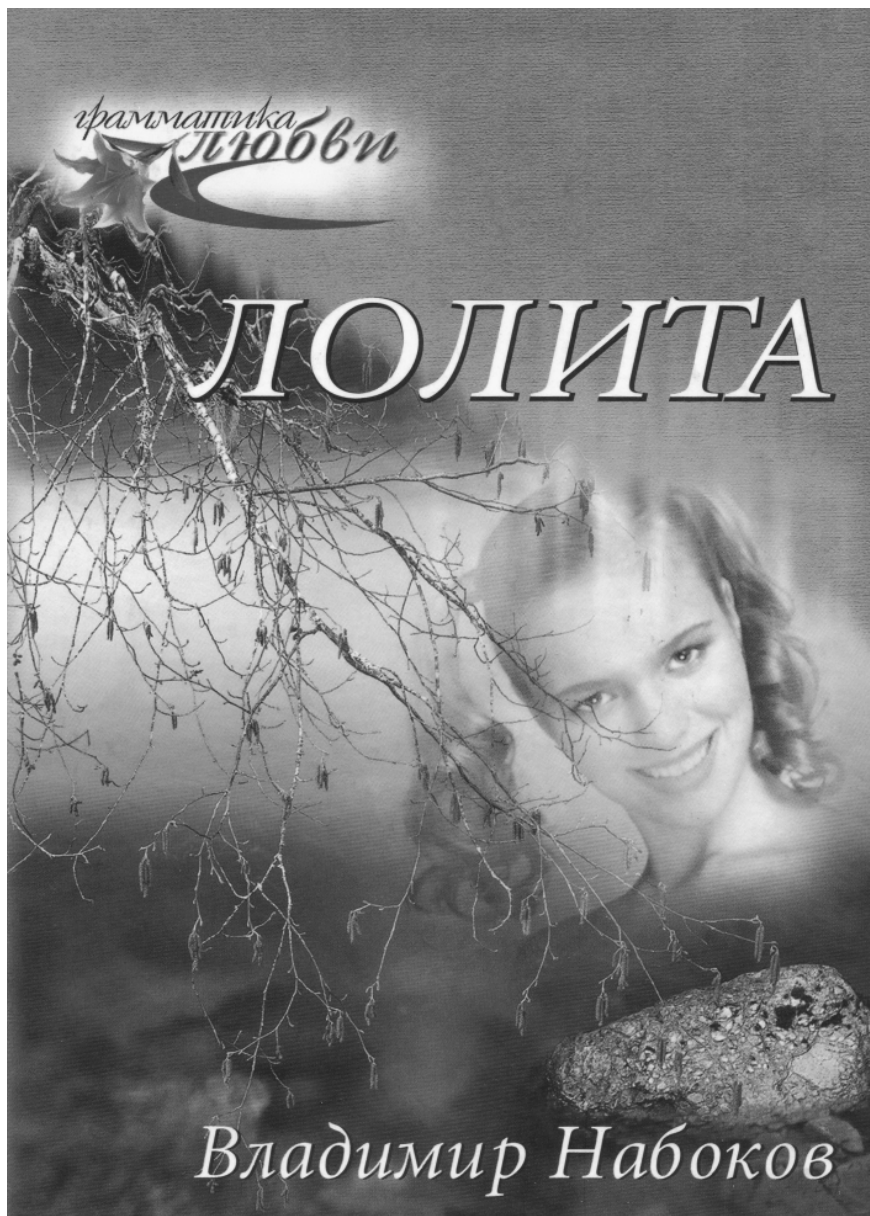

Figure 8.26. **Vladimir Nabokov. *Lolita*. St. Petersburg: Izdatel′skii Dom "Neva"; Moscow: Olma press, 2001. [Design by A.Vasil′ev. 383 pp. (Series *Grammatika liubvi*); 5,000 copies; hardcover]**

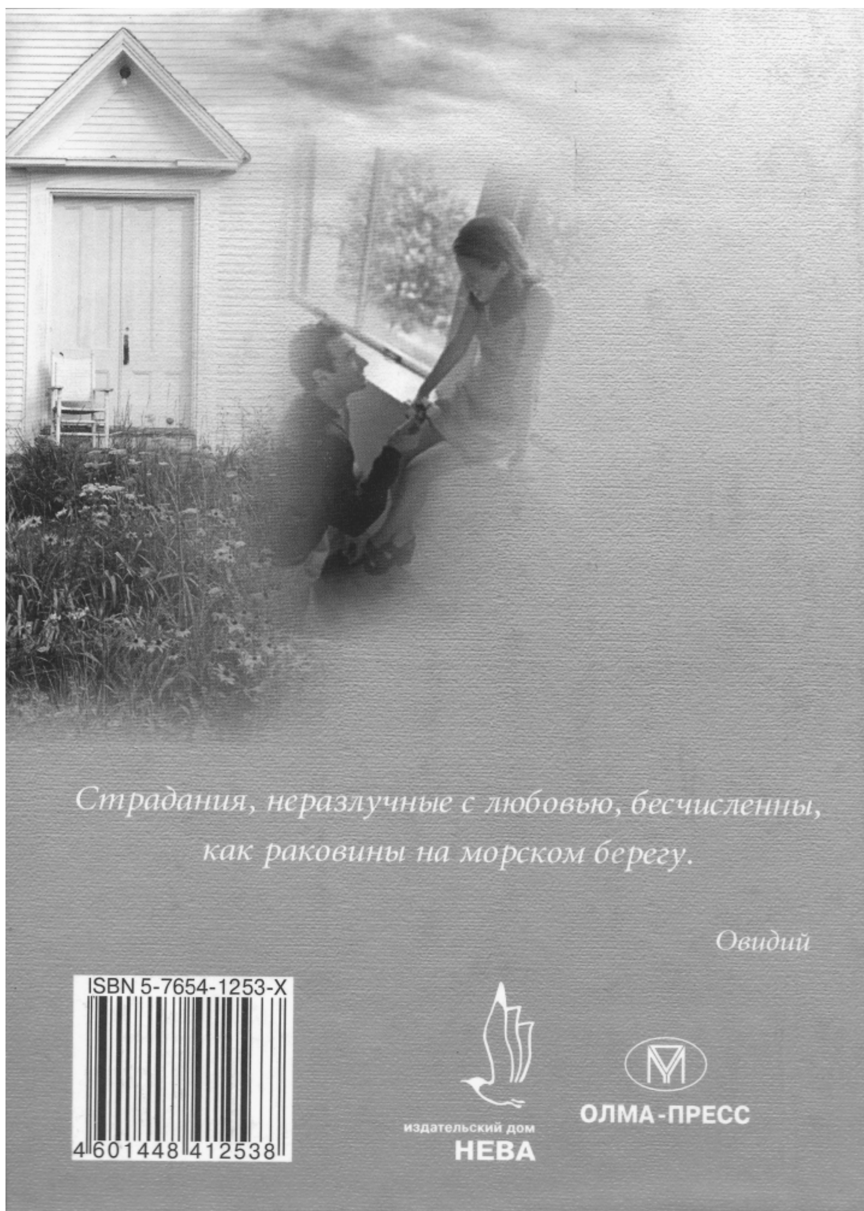

Figure 8.27. Same as Image 8.49, back cover.

The birch serves as an unmistakable symbol of Mother Russia; the smiling girl with "sunny-brown curls" (in full agreement with Nabokov's verbal portrait) fading into the background is also of a recognizable Slavonic pedigree. The concept of "Russianness" is reinforced by the back cover image, which depicts a typical landscape of an un-mowed lawn in front of a Chekhovian-style dacha. It features a middle-aged man offering a small gift box to a girl in a mini-skirt who sits above him on a windowsill. Presumably the couple is Humbert Humbert and Lolita; most probably this is from a staged photo shoot, made especially for the needs of the Russian publication of Nabokov's novel.

Another allegedly typical "Russian" floral motif surfaces on the *Lolita* cover of an edition issued in the *Ladies' Album* [*Zhenskii albom*] series (Figure 8.28). An impressionistic

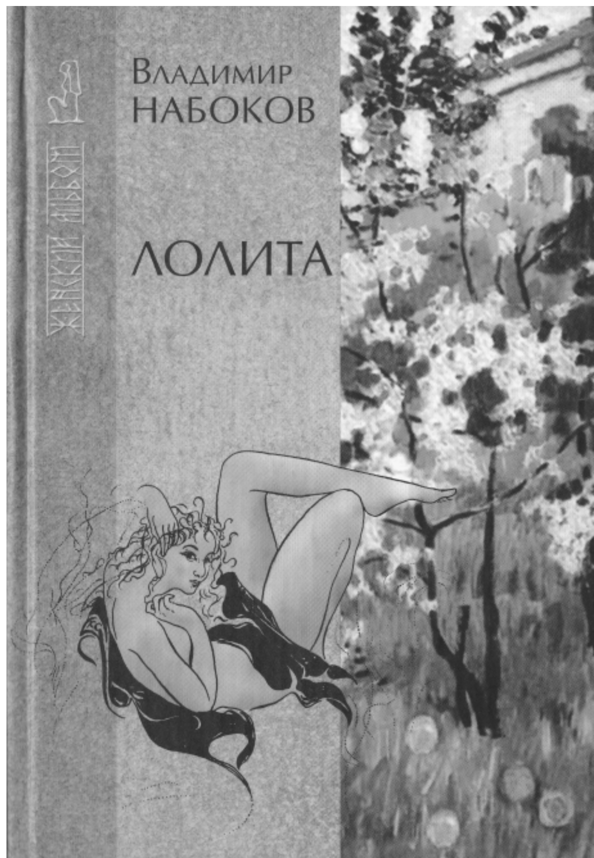

Figure 8.28. Vladimir Nabokov. *Lolita*. Moscow: Ripol Klassik, 2002. [Design by K. Salina and V. Borisov-Musatov. 448 pp.; (Series *Zhenskii al'bom* / Ladies' Album); 5,000 copies; hardcover. This edition omits the introductory article by Nabokov's fictitious editor and publisher John Ray Jr.]

image of a lilac bush is positioned on the right half of the cover (the source is Victor Borisov-Musatov's *Spring*, painted in 1898–1901; Figure XXII, see in Captions);[67] a graphic vignette of a naked woman lying with her legs crossed, executed in the style of an ancient Greek vase, is on the left (instead of Borisov-Musatov's old-fashioned chaste young lady).

The flyleafs in a Neva–Olma edition continue the "Garden of Eden" theme, suggesting the loss of childhood (virginity) via an empty rocking chair and an abandoned doll in the grass (Figure 8.29). The second illustration from the same edition (Figure 8.30) shows a close-up of Humbert reclining over his sleeping Lolita (the male's profile, in point of fact, closely resembles Jeremy Irons, the actor from the 1997 screen adaptation of the novel).

The back cover also bears a quote from Ovid devoted to suffering from love,[68] and the novel is printed in a series called *The Grammar of Love*. However I. Burova, the author of the introductory note, demonstrates her phenomenal ignorance on the subject. After a brisk paragraph summarizing Nabokov's biography she announces: "The most famous of Nabokov's novels, *Lolita*, was published in English in 1947, and then in the author's translation into Russian in 1955." The sad truth is that Ms. Burova has not even bothered to peek into Nabokov's postscript to *Lolita* included in the same edition—this would have at least spared her from the factual errors. Her wild interpretations would have also benefited from a little bit of restraint: "The novel is structured as the monologue of a hero, whose tumultuous and aggressive passion for a twelve-years-old Lolita pushed him to an abduction. But the girl is far from being irreproachable; in spite of her tender age, she is already marked by vice. It is she who seduces Humbert, and therefore it comes as no surprise that later she escapes to join another lover, mature and impetuously dissolute."[69] Nabokov's afterword attached to the novel's text is, however, a generous gesture considering the fact that some early editions of the Russian *Lolita* did not even include the "Foreword" by "John Ray, Jr., Ph.D." Inattentive and hasty publishers did not regard it as an integral part of Nabokov's narrative and omitted it as unnecessary! Such misreadings, omissions, and factual errors imply that certain Russian publishers did not understand the product they were marketing.

Though Nabokov's inimitable style invites bombastic discourse that smacks of a flowery and pathetic style, the cover blurbs found on the Russian *Lolita* conform to the general trend of adding promotional value to printed matter. The cover blurb is a relatively recent innovation in publishing; according to Gerard Genette, it came into widespread use during the 1960s when enormous paperback print runs made the earlier review slip costly and impractical.[70] At the same time, the cover blurb highlights the book's status as a commodity: as Alan Powers observes, "a book jacket or cover is a selling device, close to advertising in its form and purpose."[71] The cover blurb thus "represents a key element of the process of the desacralisation of the book, which caused a storm of controversy amongst French intellectuals in the early to mid-1960s in a debate which became known as the '*querelle du poche*.'"[72] In a similar vein, cinema is also considered a perfect promotional vehicle for prose, as demonstrated by a publisher of *Lolita* in a blurb that references Lyne's film before even introducing the novel: "Adrian Lyne's famous erotic

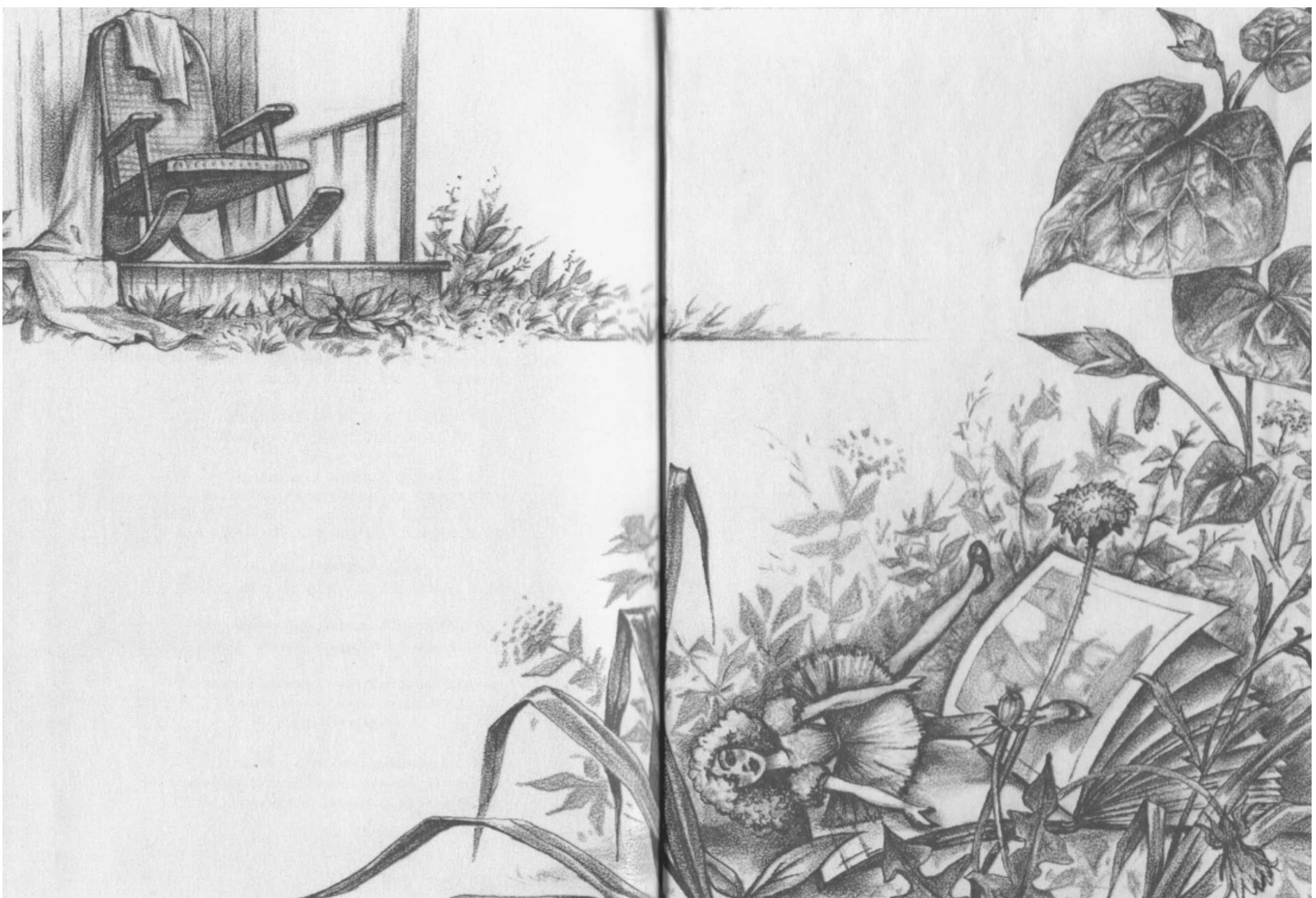

Figure 8.29. **Vladimir Nabokov. *Lolita*. St. Petersburg: Izdatel'skii Dom "Neva"; Moscow: Olma press, 2001.**

Figure 8.30. Same as Image 8.53.

masterpiece *Nine 1/2 Weeks* was watched by a record number of viewers despite the censorship bans [. . .] Ancient Eros knows no morality laws [. . .] Humbert's soul has died in the days of his youth along with Annabel. But his feeling did not vanish."[73] A 1998 edition of *Lolita* entices the reader with the following blurb on the back cover: "This is the book that many have dubbed the most scandalous novel of the twentieth century. . . . This is Lolita. The book that once stirred an incomparable commotion and, still continues to do so. The book which people hate and admire, the book you can't afford not to read [. . .]"[74] And while the blurb is not an invention of the Russian publishing industry, one can certainly credit it for adjusting Nabokov's émigré prose with its dazzling style and vocabulary to the

norms of Soviet parlance, disfigured during the years of Bolshevik rule; after all, the same edition bears a warning: "The book, *in general*, follows the punctuation and orthography of the author" (italics added).

Among the few covers that feature original graphic art is a 1998 edition made by the artists V. Bublik and S. Ovcharenko. Here, Lolita is stylized as a doll trapped in the cage of her own crinoline dress (Figure 8.31; Figure XXIII, see in Captions).

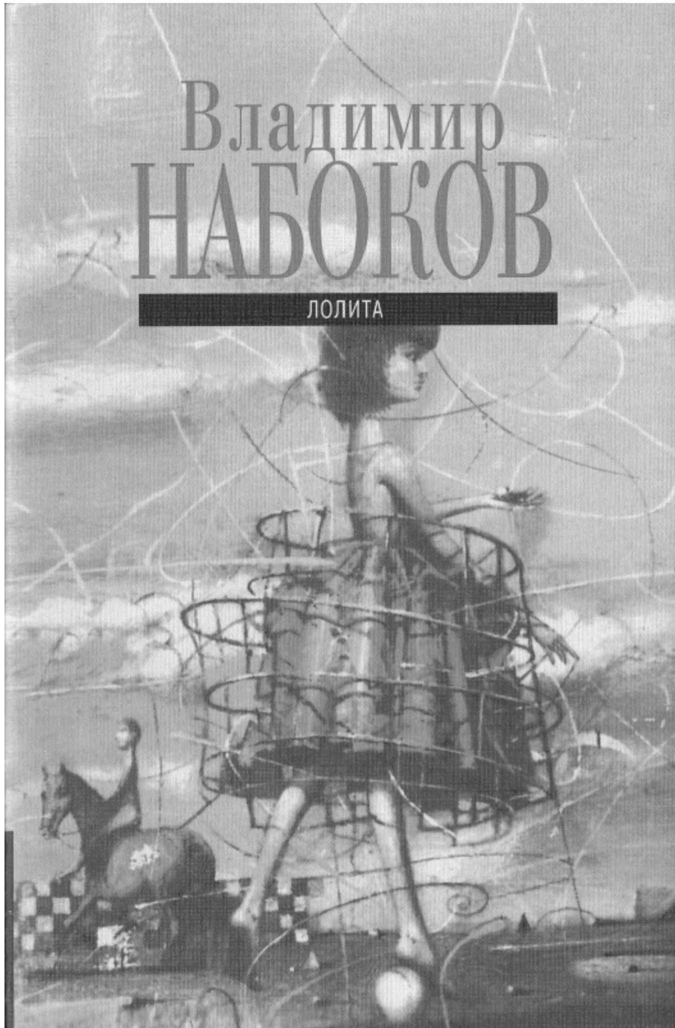

Figure 8.31. Vladimir Nabokov. *Lolita*. Kharkov: Folio; Moscow: AST (The Rendezvous series), 1998. [Design by B. Bublik, the cover art by S. Ovcharenko; frontispiece by T. Zelenchenko. 432 pp.; 15,000 copies; hardcover. This edition omits the introductory article by Nabokov's fictitious editor and publisher John Ray Jr.]

This cover makes a significant statement regarding the nature of Lolita's entrapment: she is trapped by a kind of bodily cage (rather than by a cage distinct from her body), as though Humbert's desires have turned Lolita herself into her own prison; indeed, if she could be someone else, she wouldn't attract Humbert's gaze and therefore be trapped by it. These are also much less realistic depictions of Lolita, which therefore demand interpretation via metaphor to understand their meaning.[75]

One of the only known Russian covers of *Lolita* that depicts a butterfly is an austere Symposium edition (Figure 8.32). Like its earlier prototype (Figure XXIV, see in Captions), it takes into consideration Nabokov's own passion for lepidoptery,[76] but can also be interpreted as a metaphor of Lolita captured by Humbert the hunter.[77]

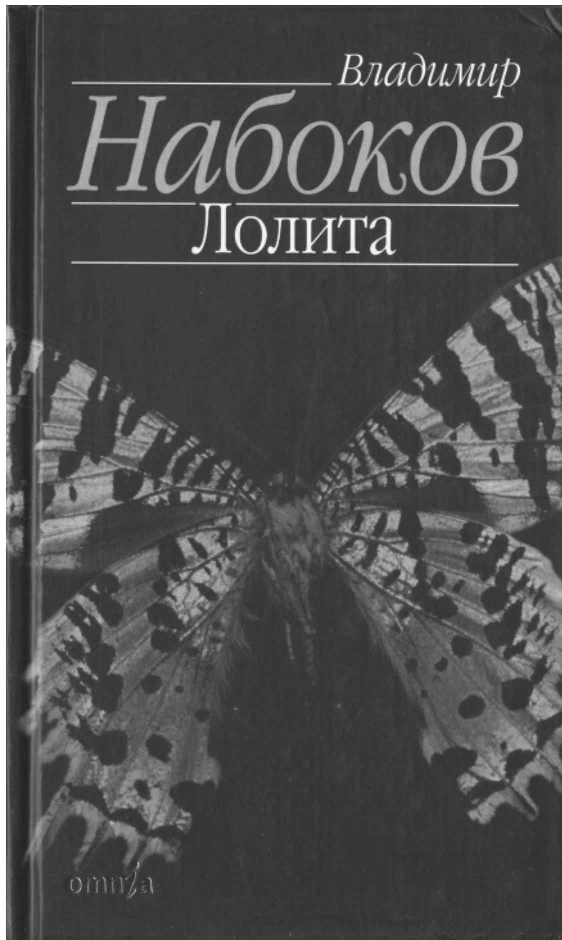

Figure 8.32. Vladimir Nabokov. *Lolita*. St. Petersburg: Symposium, 2001. [Cover design by Andrei Rybakov. 496 pp.; 10,000 copies; hardcover]

LOLITA AS THE RUSSIAN BRAND AND TREND: THE TWENTY-FIRST CENTURY

Every book has a cover, but behind every successful cover there is an even more successful brand. Even today e-books are marketed to emphasize their generic proximity to their paper prototypes. Literary works whose brand value gains a cult status frequently become exploited as *objets d'art*. In Russia *Lolita* has undergone a transformation throughout the history of its reception by its readership: from a forbidden book it has evolved into an acceptable and then a desirable item in one's personal library. If found among one's belongings in the 1970s and 1980s, *Lolita* could have meant a prison term for its owner. Owning an illegal copy during the years of Leonid Brezhnev's stagnation signified its owner's political audacity and liberal aspirations; in the early 1990s, having the formerly forbidden novel was regarded as a sign of refined taste and being up-to-date with popular fiction; in the 2000s, owning the novel is both a sign of sophistication and a classy choice. But today, what makes the real difference in status is the actual quality of the material book one possesses, especially considering the vast selection of paperback editions available.

An emerging trend in publishing *Lolita* for "New Russians" (*novye russkie*)—wealthy oligarchs and passionate collectors—is the printing of limited editions of the novel. In 2006 the boutique Moscow publishing house Deitsch issued a special "VIP edition" (an exact quote from the promotional booklet) of the novel as part of its exclusive series *Temptation* (*Iskushenie*; Figure XXV, see in Captions). Adorned with an innocuous floral design and baby-faced dragons, this edition should attract any book connoisseur by the quality of its binding and print. Described as a "sumptuously illustrated edition in a compound binding, hand-made of leather and silk with 24 carat gold lettering, and encrusted etching" it is truly impressive—including the cost.[78] The price of this luxury edition stands at three thousand US dollars.[79] Compare this with the asking price of "just" 115 USD for the first American edition of *Lolita*, hardcover with near fine dust jacket, available on the market (New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1958).[80]

This spsecial edition of *Lolita* includes over one hundred black and white pictures printed on an Italian chalk overlay paper, "Gardapat"; the binding is made of goat leather, "Bibliofile Ziegen Leder." All books by the Deitsch publishing house are printed in either Austria or Italy. The official website clearly positions them as collectable items for a select few.[81] Every edition is limited and final (just 99 copies), and each book is assigned an individual number. Those who believe that this Russian-language *Lolita* designed for rich Nabokophiles would not find enough interested buyers might be disappointed: this mammoth edition weighing 1680 g is no longer available in stock, and can be considered a bibliographic rarity.

Deitsch's is not the only deluxe edition of *Lolita* published in Putin's Russia. In the first decade of the twenty-first century an emerging bourgeoisie class may have not yet mastered the habits of fine reading, but it certainly learned to appreciate the aesthetic beauty of a bookshelf complete with solid bindings behind a corporate office desk or next to a fireplace at home. Ideally, these shelves contain special editions

such as the Deitsch publication discussed above, or an even-rarer publication (Figure XXVI, see in Captions) such as the 2008 edition released by the St. Petersburg publishing house Vita Nova. This edition is indeed hard to obtain and has no price tag, although it is advertised through the major Russian Internet vendor Ozon.ru, an equivalent of Amazon.com; those interested in this rare and expensive purchase are encouraged to contact the publisher directly.

Four artists have labored on this hand-made edition of *Lolita*: Olga Lavrukhina is the author of the general concept; S. Lotov and E. Nikolaeva crafted the marocain binding, which was specially imported from Germany, as well as the moiré silk flyleafs; and Yuri Panchenko is the edition's goldsmith who worked on the silver inlay. The book also contains an original etching by Klim Li.[82] Such a collective enterprise in high-standard book design is an interesting example of the cooperation between publisher, editor, production manager, and craftsmen. In order to realistically exercise his imagination, the contemporary book designer no longer needs working knowledge of the hundreds of typefaces, but still must have "a familiarity, or even better, a practical skill, with the techniques of book printing, photography, and art; and the ability to render on paper an anticipation of the final appearance of the book. His layouts must be attractive enough to convince the publisher that the design will enhance the text, that it will be appealing in the bookstore as well as satisfying in the reader's hand."[83]

The success of the Vita Nova model is evident, especially considering that this was not its first experience publishing *Lolita*. The same Vita Nova issued Nabokov's novel four years prior in 2004 (Figure XXVII, see in Captions). The artist Klim Li contributed his graphic sheets, watercolors, and pastels to this relatively less expensive edition (Figure 8.33; Figure 8.34). The print run of this 2004 edition stood at 1,500 copies and, in addition to Li's sixty reproductions (forty of which are color plates), it included extensive academic commentary by Professor Alexander Dolinin. This edition is also bound in natural leather (the "Cabra Tumble" type), and sells for approximately 60 US dollars.

Li's pastels present an interesting take on the problem of illustrating Nabokov's complex work. On the one hand, Li's pictures seem to be overly staged, and Lolita-the-girl in the artist's interpretation hardly captures the essence of Nabokov's nymphet. On the other hand, it has been stated that "any illustration either interacts with the text or interferes with it. The impact of an illustrated story differs from that of the same story without illustration. Different illustrations for one and the same text result in changed moods and appeals."[84] Whether it be simply decorative, or descriptive (in the sense that it repeats what the text tells), or narrative (in the sense that it interprets, as Joseph and Chava Schwarcz maintain), an illustration reaches beyond the text and may even contradict it.[85] In this case, Li's pictures work on a descriptive level rather than on a narrative one (in the sense that they do not offer any specific interpretation), but they do affect the reader's perception by imposing a reflective, romanticized, and languishing mood on Nabokov's novel.

Figure 8.33. Vladimir Nabokov. *Lolita*. [Designer and illustrator Klim Li. St. Petersburg: Vita Nova, 2004. 576 pp.; 1,500 copies; hardcover].

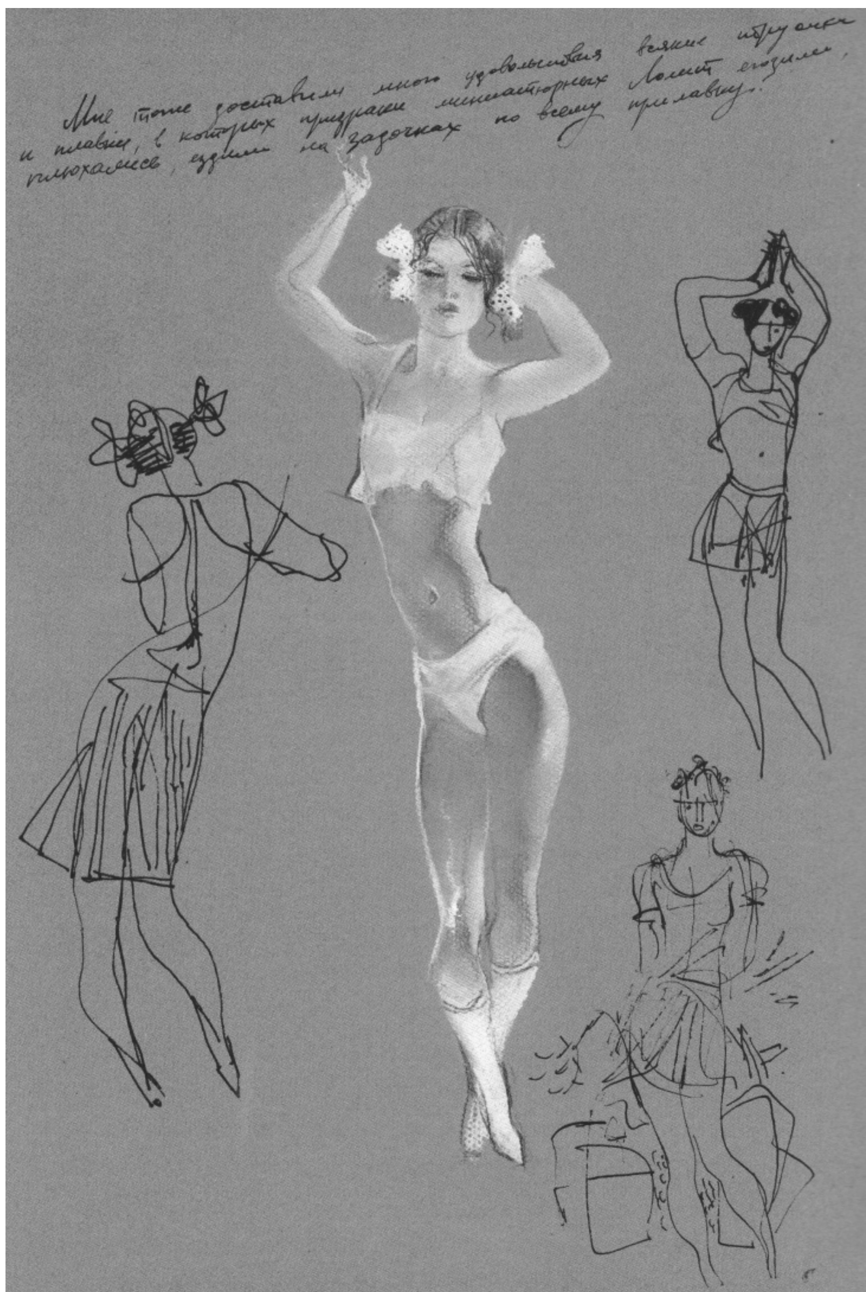

Figure 8.34. Vladimir Nabokov. *Lolita*. [Designer and illustrator Klim Li. St. Petersburg: Vita Nova, 2004. 576 pp.; 1,500 copies; hardcover].

Figure 8.35. Vladimir Nabokov. *Lolita*. [Designer and illustrator Klim Li. St. Petersburg: Vita Nova, 2004. 576 pp.; 1,500 copies; hardcover].

The graphic plates in the Vita Nova edition are definitely more successful, and exemplify how illustrations of various types mix in the same book to produce a versatile effect. Li's expressive lines, executed in a quick, seemingly unfinished manner, render visible the implied eroticism of the novel. His plastic vignettes mixed with overlaid handwritten notes (presumably, these are samples of Humbert's diary or Nabokov's writing) fittingly complement the overarching concept of a "manuscript" (the latter is the title of the series in which Vita Nova published *Lolita* in 2004).

Kim Li's illustrations can be traced back to the work of Barbara Nessim, an internationally-renowned artist, illustrator, and educator, whose graphic nude was used in a 1997 Russian edition of *Lolita* (Figure 8.36). Nessim began by supporting herself as a freelance fashion illustrator in the Garment Center and, over the past several decades, became an influential trendsetter in the art world.

Her image reprinted in the Russian version of *Lolita* has nothing to do with Nabokov, and is taken from her *Sketchbook* (a self-published series of pen and ink drawings made in the 1970s, which also included the sexually provocative *WomanGirl* series rendered mainly in watercolor, pen, and ink). *Lolita* is not the type of book that should contain only decorative, descriptive, or narrative illustrations. It is likely that future illustrations that accompany Nabokov's novel will evolve into a complex and exciting art form, combining both realistic and abstract approaches, while striving to "overcome cultural boundaries" and "to offer entertainment and enlightenment in a metanational framework."[86]

CONCLUSION

Text and jacket images are interrelated, especially when considering selling strategies and the social positioning of a book through its intellectual legacy. Nabokov's *Lolita* is doomed to struggle with both, caught not so much between lowbrow and highbrow literary genres, but rather at the mercy of mutating marketing strategies and the changing preferences of reading audiences. As a result of marketing aimed at increasing profit margins and dealing with a totally unexplored industrial niche, editions of *Lolita* were produced that often represented the exact opposite of what Nabokov himself desired (a non-commercialized version of his literary nymphet). By focusing on the visual aspects of Russian-language editions of Nabokov's *Lolita*, and by surveying its controversial place in the contemporary Russian book market, it has been demonstrated here that Russian publishing institutions often misunderstand the very product they market, especially in the case of the Russian *Lolita*. But this is not a mere ethical or aesthetic fallacy: unlike their Western counterparts in the publishing business who have consciously tried to engage audiences through provocative cover statements, Russian entrepreneurs are both in the process of reclaiming a formerly prohibited writer, as well as on the path of self-discovery in areas of new economic policies, free trade, and unrepressed book design.

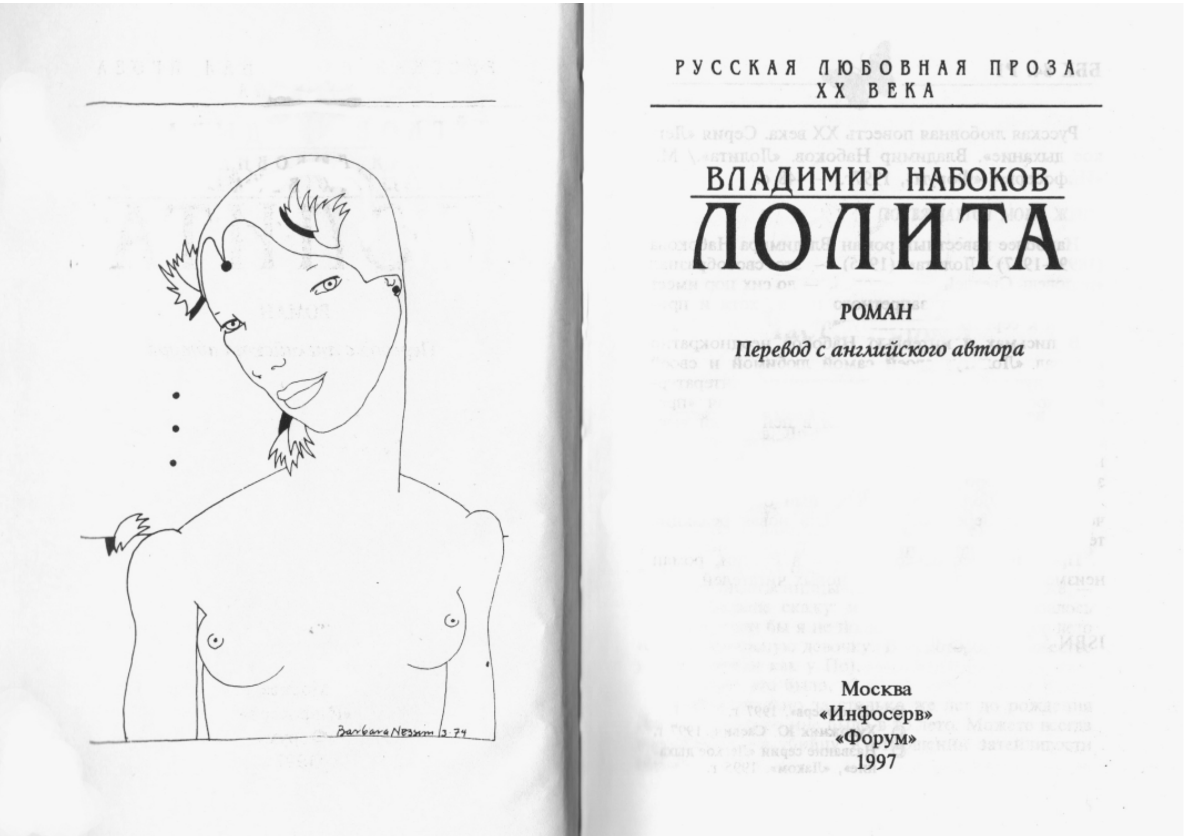

Figure 8.36. **Vladimir Nabokov. *Lolita*. Moscow: Infoserv; Forum, 1997. [446 pp.; 5,000 copies; hardcover. This edition omits the introductory article by Nabokov's fictitious editor and publisher John Ray Jr.]**

NOTES

1. Vladimir Nabokov, *Selected Letters*, 256.

2. On Vladimir Nabokov and *Playboy*, see: Leving, "Nabokov, *Playboy*, and the America of the 1960s," (forthcoming).

3. Sinnema, *Dynamics of the Pictured Page*, 30.

4. On Nabokov and cover art in the West, see: Maliszewski, "Paperback Nabokov"; Duncan White, "Dy(e)ing Lolita." About reflections on Nabokov in popular art, including Russian culture and modern literature, see: Leving, *Imperiia N*, 125–80.

5. See, for example, extensive discussion in a collection of articles titled appropriately, *Judging a Book by Its Cover* (Matthews & Moody).

6. Groves, "Judging literary books by their covers"; McAleer, *Popular Reading and Publishing in Britain 1914–1950*, 85.

7. Schmoller, "The Paperback Revolution," 288; Tanselle, "Book Jackets, Blurbs and Bibliographers," 1971; Matthews & Moody, *Judging a Book by its Cover*, xii.

8. Tanselle, "Book Jackets, Blurbs and Bibliographers," 102–3.

9. Matthews & Moody, *Judging a Book by its Cover*, xii.

10. Aynsley, "Fifty Years of Penguin Design," 120.

11. Matthews & Moody, *Judging a Book by its Cover*, xiii.

12. Maliszewski, "Paperback Nabokov," 2001.

13. Vladimir Nabokov, *Selected Letters*, 256.

14. Vladimir Nabokov to Walter J. Minton, March 1958 (Vladimir Nabokov, *Selected Letters*, 250; italics added).

15. Ibid., 256.

16. Wilson, *The Design of Books*, 106.

17. Ibid.

18. Cf.: "In spite of indications both in the United States and in Europe of a considerable increase in well made, well laid-out paperbacks, the bulk of the books are still for the *roman policier* and the blood and sex markets. Once again we revert to packaging and find some very lively, good looking covers, standing out like flowers amongst all the corn. The use of display letters with no illustrations is still a rarity" (Lewis, *The Twentieth Century Book, Its Illustration and Design*, 253).

19. See, for example, one such documented instance filmed with the interviewer Robert Hughes for a show called "USA Arts: USA The Novel" (NET National Educational Television, New York. Date of broadcast: 3 February 1965).

20. See in his Afterword to the Russian edition.

21. Véra Nabokov to Fred Jordan; 13 November 1966 (the business correspondence files at the Vladimir Nabokov archive, Berg Collection, NYPL).

22. Martynov, *Vladimir Nabokov*, 89–90.

23. Vladimir Nabokov, *Lolita*, (Moscow: ANS-Print, 1991), 256 pp.

24. Bennett & Woollacott, *Bond and Beyond*, 44.

25. Gray, *Show Sold Separately*, 34.

26. See Durham, *The Lolita Effect*.

27. Vladimir Nabokov, *Selected Letters*, 274.

28. These and other alarming facts are quoted from "Child prostitution becomes global problem, with Russia no exception," *Pravda.ru*. 11 October 2006 http://english.pravda.ru/society/stories/11-10-2006/84991-child_prostitution-0/ (Accessed 12 June 2012)

29. This is according to a report by the United States Department of State: "2011 Trafficking in Persons Report—Russia" (Publication date: 27 June 2011). Available at: http://www.unhcr.org/refworld/docid/4e12ee50c.html (Accessed 12 June 2012)

30. One cannot underestimate the importance of a trailer to the film industry; Gray asserts that most Hollywood films make over a third of their box office earnings in their opening week, and that "high opening-week box office figures have a compounding effect, giving rise to further hype to bring audiences for the rest of the film's run" (Gray, *Show Sold Separately*, 49).

31. Wernick, *Promotional Culture*, 12.

32. Gray, *Show Sold Separately*, 52.

33. *The History of Sexuality*, *The Delta of Venus* and *Lolita* were delivered to some of the 4500 Australia Post stores nationwide, but all were sent back. Most did not make it as far as the shelves. Penguin Australia's sales director, Peter Blake, said: "I guess there have been complaints from customers and they have reacted by removing them from sale. Retailers can do what they like" (Hawkins and Harvey, "Penguin classics prove too risque for Australia Post").

34. About Nabokov's screen adaptations and their reception, see Vickers, *Chasing Lolita*, 55–92; Wyllie, *Nabokov at the Movies*, 2003.

35. Wilson and Eckel, "Judging a Book by Its Cover," 191.

36. Vladimir Nabokov, *Lolita*, 32; 138; 309.

37. Wilson and Eckel, "Judging a Book by Its Cover," 199.

38. Ibid., 200.

39. Vladimir Nabokov, *Selected Letters*, 437.

40. Trubikhina, "Struggle for the Narrative."

41. When Humbert meets the now-married Lolita after his long searches, he comments: "I definitely realized, so hopelessly late in the day, how much she looked—had always looked—like Botticelli's russet Venus—the same soft nose, the same blurred beauty" (Vladimir Nabokov, *Lolita*, 270).

42. Oil on canvas, 1912, (oil on canvas, 150 × 110 cm), Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York City.

43. Tórrez, "A Painter's Progress."

44. Vladimir Nabokov, *Lolita*, 306–7.

45. Cramsie, *The Story of Graphic Design*, 224.

46. See Winship, "Bessie Love, James Abbe."

47. Cutler & Cutler, *J. C. Leyendecker*, 55.

48. The biographical essay devoted to J. C. Leyendecker (1874-1951) is available at the Haggin Museum: http://www.hagginmuseum.org/leyendecker/biography.shtml (Accessed 15 March 2012).

49. Cutler & Cutler, *J. C. Leyendecker*, 55.

50. Heffernan, *Museum of Words*, 3.

51. Cf.: ". . .I see Annabel in such general terms. . . with shut eyes, on the dark innerside of your eyelids, the objective, *absolutely optical replica of a beloved face*, a little ghost in natural colors (and this is how I see Lolita)" (Vladimir Nabokov, *Lolita*, 11); "She was thinner and taller, and for a second it seemed to me her face was less pretty than *the mental imprint* I had cherished for more than a month. . ." (111); emphasis added.

52. Vladimir Nabokov, *Lolita*, 137.

53. See Edward Moyer, "Police-sketch software puts faces on fiction characters," *CNET* TV news report dated 15 February 2012: http://news.cnet.com/8301-17938_105-57377131-1/police-sketch-software-puts-faces-on-fiction-characters/ ; also on the personal blog of artist Brian Joseph Davis: http://thecomposites.tumblr.com/ (Accessed 18 May 2012)

54. Vladimir Nabokov, *Lolita*, 48; 120; 162; 180.

55. Zebrowitz, *Reading Faces*, 118.

56. The owner of a book store T. Schmitz likens the process of choosing new titles to speed dating, where singles move from one prospective date to another, trying to analyze each one's

potential in a few short minutes: "When I meet with the publishers' sales representatives, they have a limited amount of time to present all of their company's new offerings. Each title is reduced to a few sound bites: title, author, print run, marketing plans, brief plot summary, intended audience. I must size up the contenders for space on my shelves and decide on the spot whether to purchase or skip a title. Just like speed dating participants, I have to make my decision based on first impressions and gut instincts. Am I picking a winner, or is this book going to be as disappointing as a bad date?" (Schmitz, "Judging a Book by Its Cover," 616).

57. Zebrowitz, *Reading Faces*, 127.

58. Ibid., emphasis added.

59. Ibid., 129.

60. Ibid.

61. Cramsie, *The Story of Graphic Design*, 225.

62. Ibid., 226.

63. Quoted in Cramsie, *The Story of Graphic Design*, 226; the source is: Colacello.

64. Source: http://www.faxingw.cn/liuxingfaxing/333_2_detail.html

65. An excerpt from the memoirs of Ria—Ariadna Shmidt (1905–198?)—describing the modeling for Petrov-Vodkin is reproduced in Malysheva, "Portret Rii."

66. In the original: "Dazhe u Nabokova, zamet'te, russkie personazhi—zhivye, a inostrantsy—uslovno-dekorativnye. Edinstvennaia zhivaia inostranka u nego—Lolita, no i ona po kharakteru—tipichno russkaia baryshnia" (Dovlatov, *Sobranie sochinenii*, 384).

67. On the importance of lilac as a quintessentially Russian flower see: on a lilac in the Russian poetry of the Silver Age (Belousov, "Akklimatizatsiia sireni v russkoi poezii," 311–22) and in the paintings of the same period (Vlasov, *Novyi entsiklopedicheskii slovar' izobrazitel'nogo iskusstva*). The appearance of the lilac's painting on the cover of the Russian *Lolita* can also be regarded as a possible synesthetic evocation of Nabokov's pen name, Sirin: *cf.* Russian "siren'" (*lilac*; German "Sirene"; from Latin, "Syringe").

68. In Russian: "Stradaniia, nerazluchnye s lyubov'iu, beschislenny, kak rakoviny na morskom beregu" ("Suffering is inseparable from love and countless as conches on the sea shore").

69. Vladimir Nabokov, *Lolita* (St. Petersburg: Neva; Moscow: Olma-press, 2001), 5–6.

70. Genette, "Les livres vus de dos," 38.

71. Powers, *Front Cover*, 6.

72. Pickford, "Jerome K. Jerome and the Paratextual Staging of Anti-Elitism," 88.

73. On the cover of the following edition: Vladimir Nabokov, *Lolita* (Moscow: Tsentrpoligraf, 2002).

74. Vladimir Nabokov, *Lolita* (Kharkov: Folio; Moscow: AST [The Rendezvous series], 1998).

75. I am grateful to Meghan Vicks for this insightful comment.

76. As the note on the back of the edition explains, this is the depiction of *Madeleinea lolita* (Madeleinea is a butterfly genus in the family Lycaenidae living in the Amazon rainforest), named by Zsolt Bálint in 1993 after the protagonist of Nabokov's novel.

77. *Collected Works* in 5 volumes of Nabokov, also published by Symposium, has the portrait of the author on all the books comprising the edition, including vol. 2 where *Lolita* is printed (V. V. Nabokov, *Sobranie sochinenii v 5 tomah* (*Lolita*, T. 2). St. Petersburg: Symposium, 1997. 672 pp. Design by M. G. Zan'ko).

78. Deitsch, 2006: Designed by M. Oreshina, A. Bondarchenko, D. Chernogaev (162 × 248 mm; 423 pp.). *Cf.* "Roskoshno illiustrirovannoe izdanie v sostavnom pereplete ruchnoi raboty iz kozhi i shelka s tisneniem zolotom 24 karata, inkrustirovano ofortom!"

79. USD 2,995.46, according to the exchange rates at the publication date of 2006, and as they still are in early 2012 at the time of the writing of the present chapter: 1 USD = 29.0440 RUB.

80. See, for instance, on sale here: http://www.abebooks.com/servlet/BookDetailsPL?bi=6539158445&searchurl=an%3Dnabokov%26fe%3Don%26pics%3Don%26tn%3Dlolita (Accessed on 28 March 2012)

81. The gift of the Deitsch book is "the best souvenir for VIP, business partners and foreign guests," proclaims the main page of the publisher's web site. Also: "Books in leather binding with artful design mean a return to antique values when the printed matter cost a lot and was made to be durable and beautiful. [. . .] To own such a library means to possess both a valuable item and an object of pride that is not within reach to many." *Cf.* "Knigi v kozhanykh perepletakh s iskusnym oformleniem—eto vozvrashchenie k starinnym tsennostiam, kogda pechatnye izdaniia stoili dorogo i delalis' ne tol'ko dolgovechnymi, no i ochen' krasivymi. [. . .] Obladat' podobnoij bibliotekoi—oznachaet obladat' cennost'iu i predmetom gordosti, dostupnym daleko ne kazhdomu." Source: http://www.deich.ru/books_cat.html (Accessed 12 June 2012)

82. According to Birgitte Pristed, despite the obvious kitsch of its the luxury editions, Vita Nova actually plays an important role by securing Petersburg book artists some sort of income and frequently arranges exhibitions of book illustrations. In Moscow, Arkady Troianker (a legendary experimental book artist of the 1970s) now survives by designing the leather volumes of Deitsch, while most of his former colleagues (Anikst, Zhukov) have emigrated and now work for upper-end Western publishing houses, which also produce designs to furnish the bookshelves of a wealthy elite who is looking for some "classic education" (Birgitte Pristed, personal communication with the author, 23 November 2012).

83. Wilson, *The Design of Books*. 7–8.

84. Schwarcz & Schwarcz, *The Picture Book Comes of Age*, 5.

85. Ibid.

86. Ibid.

9

"Nabokov-7" Posthumously

Russian Postmodernism in Search of a National Identity

Turning to post-Soviet literary discourse, this chapter provides an expert assessment of Nabokov's literary legacy's influence on the development of contemporary Russian literature. As discussed in previous chapters, Nabokov came to post-Soviet Russia as a Western writer with a well-conceptualized and thoroughly-marketed posthumous legacy. While Russian cultural merchants manipulated that legacy to meet the needs of their own literary market, contemporary post-Soviet writers interacted with the consecrated author hoping to position themselves as the natural literary continuation of his work. In essence, the marketing of Nabokov in post-Soviet Russia became confused with the marketing of Russia's postmodernist literati. Here I analyze the Nabokovian imitations and pastiches written by leading post-Soviet prose writers, including Victor Pelevin and Vladimir Sorokin among others, thereby examining how the Nabokov legacy continues to influence the contemporary Russian literary market.

A POST(MODERN)MORTEM LIFE

The schism of Russian literature into Soviet and émigré halves forced most writers abroad to remain somehow frozen in time—the evolution of their art was cut short, and their reception by readers remained unchanged.[1] On the other hand, some writers were "drawn forward" by this process: Nabokov returned to Russia as a consecrated modernist author with a well-established literary reputation, in contrast to many of his contemporaries who remained frozen relics in the literary realm, managing less-successful marketing attempts.[2]

Two decades after Nabokov's authorized return to Russia, today's pressing issue is to provide an assessment of his role as an intermediary in the development of

Russian literature in the post-Soviet period. Arguably, Nabokov has given the Russian writer a great deal: the legitimization of the pastiche genre,[3] skillful examples of elegant trickery (e.g., his fabricated letters and poems supposedly sent by him to the poet Vladimir Gandelsman in 1972[4]), a poetics of fragmentation (it was Nabokov who ultimately applied the symbolist-acmeist idea of total citationality to the prose text, and it was he who raised this to a level of principle and made it a driving axel), a feeling of stylistic renewal of the Russian language[5] freed from the limits of socialist realist discourse, and, at the very least, lessons in mastery of composition. At issue here is how contemporary post-Soviet writers co-opted elements of Nabokov's style and symbolic capital to further market their own literary efforts to cultural merchants.

The general cultural movement towards awareness of the intertextuality of culture, which has become a dominant idea in the postmodern era, had its inception long before the philosophy of postmodernism was formulated. Nabokov, with his "cicada-like" intertextuality (in Osip Mandelstam's terms) and his insistence on literary utilitarianism, became a convenient target for postmodernist games. As Nabokov has been fitted for a postmodern suit and the corresponding arsenal of extraliterary behaviors (Nabokov as a "PR genius"; Nabokov as a "literary politician"; Nabokov as the "king of trash culture"—film and comics), cultural merchants who desire to market the author for contemporary audiences have viewed him either as the forerunner of Russian postmodernism or as one of its first representatives.[6]

We can observe the process of pinpointing Nabokov's location in Russian-language literary culture beginning at the end of the 1970s (provided we do not assume that Mark Liudvigovich Levi's 1934 *Romance with Cocaine* [*Roman s kokainom*] is the first successful "Nabokovian" pastiche in the history of twentieth-century Russian literature).[7] At first this took the form of provocative attempts to deny Nabokov's influence on the work of certain authors (particularly in the case of Andrei Bitov and Vasily Aksenov); this was followed, at the opposite extreme, by a sharp focus on Nabokov's personality and works, which were thought to inspire "influential" anxiety (to evoke Harold Bloom's theory on "the anxiety of influence") on the part of such authors as Vladimir Voinovich and Sergei Dovlatov.

VLADIMIR VOINOVICH

During the stagnation era at the end of the 1970s, Vladimir Voinovich, like any literary non-conformist, could not help but react to the growing circulation of *samizdat* photocopies and microfilms of Nabokov's works (in the mid 1980s, as Garry Kasparov recalls, an Ardis edition of *Lolita* was taken from him by Soviet customs officials upon his return to the USSR after a chess tournament in Sweden). In his story "Etude" ("Etiud"; started in 1979 in Moscow and completed in 1981 in Stockdorf), Voinovich's main character wakes up in the middle of the night believing that he is Nabokov. In an onslaught of drunken ramblings, he exclaims:

> Did I really not leave Petersburg as a boy; did I really not take shelter in an attic in Berlin, suffering from cold and hunger, obscurity and humiliation, subsisting on chess exhibitions and tennis lessons, and was it not I who chased butterflies in Wyoming? Where else should I go? Butterflies, tennis, and chess were all tied up with a single string; it was enough just to pull one end, and then I remembered everything at once: I'm an old man, everything hurts, I have accomplished something in my life, but why, please tell me, why did I write *Lolita*?[8]

Voinovich inserts a cruel motivation into the fictional Nabokov's justification for writing *Lolita*. In addition to an ideological subtext, the joke takes on a tone of ethical blame:

> I was lying motionless and crying silently with tears flowing from under my half-closed eyelids down my cheeks, falling toward my chin but, not reaching it, rolling down onto my neck. *I was crying and thinking that I wrote* Lolita *to gratify the reader* and his sick and perverse taste, because I was tired of being poor, I wanted fame and the money that they would pay for it, and the independence that could be bought with that money.

His hallucination is shattered by the bold sounds of the morning radio broadcasting the Soviet national anthem. The hero, hungover, slowly realizes he is lying on a sofa in a hotel room in Sochi with his wife. Everything comes into place: he "is not in Lyon and not in Dijon, had never [. . .] played tennis, or chased butterflies in Wyoming"; most importantly, he did not write *Lolita*. Voinovich's insinuation that *Lolita* was written for money underscores a mercantile motivation driving Nabokov's literary effort ("I wanted fame and the money"), and disregards its aesthetic merits.[9]

SERGEI DOVLATOV

The next attempt to map the consciousness of the "chief writer" of Russian emigration was Sergei Dovlatov's psychological sketch *Life is Short* (*Zhizn korotka*).[10] Dovlatov's parody makes use of the rumors about Nabokov as an elderly eccentric that circulated among intellectuals in the émigré community, and that often corresponded to reality (e.g., Nabokov's extreme reluctance to give out autographs, or his ever-increasing insistence on privacy[11]). According to Dovlatov's confidant Alexander Genis, Nabokov valued art as his grandmother valued silk embroidery: "as a reservoir of useless labor."[12]

The action of Dovlatov's story unfolds on the seventieth birthday of the main character Ivan Vladimirovich Levitsky (his surname is that of a famous Russian eighteenth-century court artist, which adds an aristocratic touch to Dovlatov's character). Levitsky is a major Russian émigré writer whose novels circulate in *samizdat* and whose name "was even mentioned in the Soviet Literary Encyclopedia," although,

Dovlatov hastens to add, not without pejorative epithets. His biography is familiar to all, even to those without recourse to encyclopedias:

> He was the son of a well-known Menshevik public figure. He graduated from the Mining Institute in St. Petersburg. He published a book of poetry called *Awakening*, which has long been a very scarce book. He emigrated with his parents in 1919. He studied in a literary history department in Prague. He lived in France. He was an avid collector of butterflies. His first novel was published in *Contemporary Annals*. He trained boxers for a year in the Paris factory district. He gave the cynical Georgii Ivanov a thrashing at Khodasevich's funeral. And this was literally at the edge of the grave.[13]

Dovlatov's description delivers a series of familiar yet slightly veiled details. The reader finds out that Levitsky hated Hitler and even more so Stalin, and that he referred to Lenin as a "rabble-rouser in a little cap." Just before the occupation of France, Levitsky made it to the United States and began to write prose in English, a language he had known since childhood: "All his life he hated boorishness, anti-Semitism, and censorship. Three years before his 70th birthday he had also begun to hate the Nobel Committee." Everyone knows about Levitsky's "eccentricities": for example, the chalk line traced across three rooms of his Swiss hotel suite that designated the border across which his wife and chef were forbidden from stepping, or the incident with the famous Swiss author who desired to set up a meeting with Levitsky who, in response to this request, replied on the phone: "Stop by after two—in about six years. . . ." These are largely based on well-documented sources concerning Nabokov's own idiosyncrasies.[14]

Levitsky's tranquil birthday celebration is disrupted by Regina Gasparian, a fan of his work. This sophisticated thirty-year-old émigré woman writes poetry, and has long dreamed of having an audience with the literary guru. While awaiting the appointed time for the meeting in a hotel lobby, Regina recalls her many efforts to make contact with Levitsky. For example, while still living in the Soviet Union she heard that Levitsky did not have a copy of his first book of poetry *Awakening*, which had been published in Petrograd in 1916. During an interview on the "Voice of America" radio program he had spoken of these poems: "These were sketches for my own later novels. They no longer exist. Some well-known hillbilly used the last copy to fuel the stove at his dacha in Kuntsev." Just before leaving for the West, Regina set out to acquire the "incunabulae" from book traders. She succeeded in procuring Levitsky's thin volume in a three-way trade whose "last stage involved the four-volume set of Mandelstam edited by Filippov and Struve."[15]

There are sources for this amusing story in the correspondence of Nabokov's sister Elena Sikorskaya with her brother: in 1945 she shared the happy news that in a library in Europe she had found Nabokov's first book published in 1916, *Poems* (*Stikhi*).[16] Sikorskaya proposed she rewrite the poems, but Nabokov never responded to this suggestion.

After going abroad, Regina fails to find out where Levitsky lives. When the meeting with the great writer finally materializes (she procured his address through some

publisher), Regina begins by confessing that while still in Russia she had read and come to highly value his novels *Distant Shore, Sphere,* and *Origin of the Tango*. Regina is extremely ill at ease while the writer, far from being grateful, somewhat dismissively jokes, "Thank you for remembering. . . . It's a nice surprise—seventy years." Then, breaking into a whisper, he says, "Remember the most important thing: life is short" (an abbreviated version of Hippocrates' aphorism, *Ars longa, Vita brevis*). As they part, the flustered Regina presents her idol with the gift she has prepared: a small, aged book and her own manuscript that includes a request to send her a few words to the address on the last page after he has read it. Levitsky thanks her for both packages ("I'm afraid my youthful poetry was not worthy of the troubles you went to") and apologizes that he must leave his guest to have a "procedure."[17]

At the threshold of his room, Levitsky stops short and tears out the piece of the page with Regina's address. The epilogue presents a classic example of Dovlatov's narrative technique, and here Nabokov's hyper-aestheticism finds an outlet in an unexpected way. Instead of a writer who has devoted himself to Mnemosyne, the reader sees a sly, elderly genius who has grown somewhat tired of his role; the situation is resolved in a single motion:

> [Levitsky] lifted the nickel-plated plumb line of the garbage chute slightly. He held the little book in his palm and then triumphantly dropped it into the resonant blackness. Brushing against the walls of the chute, the manuscript flew down to the same place. He managed to make out the title, *Summer in Carlsbad*. A text was born in an instant:
>
> "I have read your warm, clear *Summer*—twice. There is a real sense of life and death in it. And a presentiment of the fall as well. I congratulate you. . . ."
>
> He went into his room. He immediately called the cook and said: "Shall we play Old Maid?"[18]

The garbage chute's "resonant blackness" swallows up the past (the aged book containing his first poems) and the present (Regina's manuscript); yet in that "resonant blackness" the future manifests as well: the mythologized birth of a new plot comes about from contact with another person's text (the title *Summer in Carlsbad* functions as a microcosmic novel). Each scrupulous detail is carefully selected by Dovlatov and contains the potential to unfurl an entire web of literary allusions (e.g., Chernyshevsky writes to his wife about Carlsbad in *The Gift*; cf. the title of Alain Robbe-Grillet's novel, *Last Year at Marienbad*, which Nabokov liked; in Herman Hesse's *The Glass Bead Game*, the characters sort through glass beads in a remote Swiss Shambala, and so on).

The narrative's ability to generate a phantom consciousness (the destruction of Logos in a vortex of other texts) illustrates a typical postmodernist approach. In the opinion of one theorist, such textual games are no more complicated than a simple game of cards, and represent squandered talent—the wasting of a large amount of intellectual and spiritual energy.[19] But to play for real, a person must become a child again.

Based on such circumstantial evidence, it seems that Dovlatov was attracted to the playful Nabokov, although if we are to believe the memoirs of his first wife Asia

Pekurovskaya, he felt something close to dislike for Nabokov. In Pekurovskaya's construction of the literary pantheon, Nabokov becomes an infantile dilettante failure when compared to the giant Dovlatov:

> Say what you will, but against the background of Nabokov, Sergei shines in different shades, scales of a different freshness, a palate with a different consistency, maybe pastels, maybe free-flowing, but who knows? *He was born a giant after all*, and he emerged in a small genre, marched almost half as many miles as Nabokov, which is important, but he outdid Nabokov in terms of love and popularity in his homeland. Is that a joke? And anyway, Nabokov settled his scores with that homeland, *old scores, from the time of his rosy childhood*, but all the beads from the abacus came at once to Sergei's rosary. One movement of millions of hands.[20]

In her memoirs on Dovlatov, Pekurovskaya devotes an entire chapter to Nabokov, diverging so far from her main subject that her book, at times, reads like a lobotomy of Nabokov's success (not a terribly convincing operation, given the author's unconcealed annoyance).[21] In this critique of Nabokov, we might find the beginnings of a marketing effort made on Dovlatov's behalf. By presenting the already consecrated Nabokov in such a light, it seems that Pekurovskaya wishes to convert Nabokov's symbolic capital into Dovlatov's. In contrast to Pekurovskaya's memoirs, the collection of essays and memoirs compiled by Elena Dovlatova, the author's widow, for the anniversary of Dovlatov's sixtieth birthday shows a certain piety towards Nabokov.[22] This too may function as the mining of Nabokov's symbolic capital for the benefit of her husband's own posthumous legacy—but it is done with a little more tact than Pekurovskaya's efforts.

For Dovlatov, "Nabokov" is just another rich character wearing the mask of a famous name, an embodiment of a certain personality rather than a real historical figure. Absurd characters such as "Khachaturian," "Neizvestnyi," and "Baryshnikov," who populate the world of Dovlatov's notebooks, accept into their midst Professor Pnin.[23] It appears that Dovlatov acknowledged the role Nabokov played in his literary development, even if he did not especially like him. Dovlatov learned a great deal from his émigré predecessor, and while he seemed to have accepted the opposition between *bestsellers* and *classics* as defined by Bourdieu, like Nabokov he still wanted to turn classics into bestsellers.[24] Nabokov stood out against the rest of the émigré community as someone who combined material success with high literary status, mobilizing publishers to distribute his bestsellers by printing further impressions and encouraging critics to participate in the economy of his cultural production. In the mid-1980s Dovlatov also successfully penetrated the reputable English-speaking cultural field (his short stories in translation appeared in *The New Yorker* and were praised by critics[25]), but the momentum toward true international fame was diminished by his premature death.

VICTOR PELEVIN

In its review of Victor Pelevin's collection of short stories, *Time* magazine called the writer "a psychedelic Nabokov for the cyber age. [. . .] The brightest star of the post-

Soviet generation."[26] If Dovlatov's Nabokov uses the garbage chute as a reliable black hole that provides an escape from the works of intrusive pulp writers, then in one of Pelevin's works the main character himself incarnates the idea of complete emptiness devouring space, time, and texts (*Chapaev i Pustota*, 1996; literally *Chapaev and Void*; translated into English as *Buddha's Little Finger* [US] and *The Clay Machine Gun* [UK]). The main character, Pyotr Pustota (literally "Peter Emptiness," or "Peter Null" in the UK edition [published in 1998], and "Pyotr Voyd" in the US edition [New York, 1999]), remembers Nabokov while in a hypnotic trance. In the "real" world of 1991, Pustota is a patient in a mental hospital; in his hallucinated reality he is a decadent poet and a commissar in the legendary Chapaev regiment during the year 1919. The goal of the hero's quest is to "be released from the hospital"—that is, to leave the reality of 1991 for the reality of 1919, which he identifies as the true present. The metaphysical dialogue between Pustota and his psychiatrist Timur Timurovich explores the theme of childhood, and in a playful way is reminiscent of Dovlatov's discourse. While discussing the various metamorphoses that transpire throughout time (of people, of countries, of culture), Timur Timurovich references the Chinese worldview, which is "constructed on the principle that the world is degenerating as it moves from a golden age towards darkness and stagnation."[27] He believes that when a person embodies this type of awareness, he begins to think of childhood as a lost paradise—a "classic example of the endless reflection on the first years of life," he says, citing Nabokov. Nabokov, though he was also sick with nostalgia, managed to reorient his consciousness to the real world: "counter-sublimation, which he practiced like a master, turning his longing for the inaccessible paradise, which perhaps never even existed, into a simple, earthy, and slightly sinful passion for a little girl." Pustota, believing that he is being held captive in a prison during the Russian Civil War, has his interest piqued:

> "Excuse me," I interrupted, "but which Nabokov are you talking about? The leader of the Constitutional Democrats?"
>
> Timur Timurovich smiled with emphatic politeness. "No," he said, "his son."
>
> "Little Vovka from the Tenishevsky school? You mean you have picked him up as well? But he's in the Crimea! And what kind of nonsense is all this about little girls?"
>
> "Very well, very well. He's in the Crimea," Timur Timurovich replied briskly. "In the Crimea. But we were talking about China. . . ."[28]

The situation is complicated by the fact that Timur Timurovich treats Pustota with a new "patient indulgence technique," which supposes that if one does not violate the imagined world of the deranged person, he will find a way to destroy that fictional world on his own. Pustota's consciousness operates in a compressed-time mode that synchronizes events from the revolutionary and post-Soviet eras, and thereby renders Nabokov a contemporary of Pustota. The novel is constructed upon the delicate interplay between one reality and the other, while from a discursive point of view the two bear a remarkable resemblance to one another.

In Pelevin's novel *Generation "P"* advertising agents discuss why, during a political and economic crisis in Moscow, only two brands are selling with the same profitability as before: Tampax tampons and Parliament Lights cigarettes. The PR man

Tatarsky suggests a slogan to his colleagues: "Tampax ultra safe: the Reds won't get past!" Then, musing that the red menace could be personified by using the communist Ziuganov's surname, he continues: "We could bring up the theme of the white movement as well. Imagine it: an officer in a beige service jacket on a hill-side in the Crimea, something out of Nabokov. [. . .]"[29]

"Nabokov with tampons"; "Nabokov the madman"; "Nabokov on the pot"; "a cokehead is Nabokov's butterfly"—such are the labels that were applied to Nabokov not only in literature, but also in literary scholarship. For example, when attempting during the mid-1980s to attribute *Romance with Cocaine* to Sirin, professor Nikita Struve in all seriousness cited the influence of supposed drug experimentation on Nabokov's prose.[30] Incidents such as these indicate that Nabokov was still seen as an unfinished object even in the 1980s. But this situation abruptly changed. By the middle of the 1990s there accumulated a set of texts and canonical photographs of Nabokov that were ratified by a "proper" biography, and by a semi-academic edition of his collected works (the function of which is absolutely myth-making in contemporary culture). In essence, cultural merchants had completed the consecration of Nabokov, and an established posthumous legacy could be disseminated for use in the literary market—in the West as well as in post-Soviet Russia. No longer pulling the works of other writers (or his own newly discovered works) into its orbit, Nabokov's creative output became a collective space—from then on it belonged simultaneously to everyone and no one.

Precisely this sort of redistribution[31] of the text happens in Pelevin's novel *Omon Ra*—the verses "about the Moon" appear in his novel without mention of their author, Nabokov:

> On one occasion Comrade Kondratiev came on the radio to talk to me and began declaiming poetry about the moon. I was wondering how to ask him to stop without being offensive, when he began reading a poem that I recognized from the very first lines as a photographic image of my soul:
>
> *Life's vital bonds we took for lasting truth,*
> *But as I turn my head to glance at you,*
> *How strangely changed you are, my early youth,*
> *Your colors are not mine, and not one line is true.*
> *And in my mind, moonglow is what I see*
> *Between us two, the drowning man and shallow place;*
> *Your semi-racer bears you off from me*
> *Along the miles towards the moon's bright face,*
> *How long now since . . .*
>
> I gave a quiet sob, and Comrade Kondratiev immediately stopped.
> "What comes next?" I asked.
> "I've forgotten," said Comrade Kondratiev. "It's gone clean out of my head."
> I didn't believe him, but I knew it was pointless to argue or plead.[32]

Since it is not difficult for any educated Russian reader to identify these lines as Nabokov's, it can hardly be said that this simple montage—as a device involving

the contortion of the source text—is included in Pelevin's work solely to give the reader the pleasure of guessing the allusion.[33] To understand the true function of the Nabokov quotation within Pelevin's text, one must know the history of the poem's publication. Written in Paris in 1938, Nabokov's poem first appeared in the émigré press under the pen name "Vasiliy Shishkov." Its publication initiated a notorious spoof, as Sirin made fun of his long-time literary opponent Grigory Adamovich. Thus, drawing on the repertoire of postmodern practice, Pelevin takes a "used" text and turns it into a tertiary quotation (i.e. Pelevin quotes Nabokov who writes under the name Vasiliy Shishkov), at which point the polysemous sunsets and mystical shadows of modernism begin to operate automatically in the starry-urbane thematics of *Omon Ra*. In other words, it is not the excerpted poem itself, but its literary and historical contexts that provide Pelevin's pastiche not only with a motivation but also with a justification to perform the "copy-paste" procedure.

The heroine of Pelevin's short story "Vera Pavlovna's Ninth Dream," a sexless creature of an ambiguous age, works as a janitor in a men's bathroom where her soul undergoes an intense search for the meaning of life. The social geography of the Soviet Union is reduced to the model of a bathroom, or perhaps the opposite: the bathroom model is expanded to the point where it becomes an all-encompassing metaphor for post-*perestroika* existence in Russia. In Vera's hallucinations, the era of restructuring undergoes a semantic reconfiguration: "signified" things (clothing, shoes, and other material items) become experiments, and this turns out to be the secret to the "metaphysical function" of objects: "'I seem to remember,' Vera thought vaguely, 'that somewhere Freud compares excrement to gold. He was certainly no fool, that's for sure—Why do people hate him so much? And then, that Nabokov. . . .'"[34]

Vera's unhurried contemplations while cleaning bathrooms culminate in a flooding of Moscow: as at the end of *Invitation to a Beheading*, Pelevin's world turns into a "gigantic monstrous theater." In an allegory of the Biblical flood, a sea of excrement washes away the Soviet Union (and all memory of it) from the face of the earth. At the Final Judgment, the heroine is found guilty of solipsism and is sentenced to eternal imprisonment in socialist realist prose; however, it turns out that there is no room left there for her. "What's to be done?!" Vera cries in despair, and at that point they find a place for her in Chernyshevsky's novel of that name. Chernyshevsky, of course, is also the protagonist of the novel written by Godunov-Cherdyntsev in *The Gift*, and the text-within-a-text therefore points to Nabokov. "Vera Pavlovna's Ninth Dream" concludes with a quotation presented in emphasized font and in prerevolutionary Russian orthography. The visual device reinforces the metamorphosis of a modern heroine into her nineteenth-century textual template. Life is a text, and the afterlife only amounts to a life in a different text. For Pelevin, essential being is a constant migration among texts, and the quality of the text in which one lands in the next life does not depend on the person's behavior in this life/text.

Pelevin's short story "Nika" presents a cocktail of styles from works of early twentieth-century Russian literature (from Ivan Bunin's "Light Breath" to Gaito Gazdanov's *An Evening with Claire*), but its primary framework is borrowed from Nabokov's "Spring in Fialta." Nabokov's plot is updated and transferred to post-*perestroika* reality,

complete with "New Russians" and a cooperative Lada automobile. The story's final paragraph, which narrates the death of the lover in an automobile accident, remains intact.

Pelevin's narrator recalls his romance with the late Nika—their conversations, periods of separation, and life together. While discussing the relationship between art and reality, he presents a summary of Nabokov's artistic and aesthetic system:

> Always confusing myself with my own image, I think that I am dealing with something external, but the world around me is only a system of mirrors with various curvatures. We are arranged in a strange fashion, I pondered, we only see what we intend to see, but we see it in the most minute detail (including faces and positions) in place of what we are actually witnessing—like Humbert Humbert, taking the fat social-democratic elbow in the window next door for the knee of his motionless nymphette.[35]

Trying to penetrate the essence of the heroine Nika's mysterious nature, the narrator states his view that the smarter and more subtle the artist is, the more insoluble the riddle: "All that was left of even the brilliant Vladimir Nabokov, who managed at the final moment to take shelter behind his lyrical hero, were two sad eyes and a phallus a foot long (I explained the latter by the fact that he wrote his famous novel a long way from Mother Russia with its metric system)."[36] What is unique about Pelevin's pastiches is that they are each based on a specific episode from a source text, and yet they do not alter the original material but rather paraphrase it in such a way that it appears slightly veiled.[37]

Of course, with only one elegant imitation of the Nabokov-Bunin style Pelevin would in no way stand out in the constellation of "Nabokovesque" writers. His post-modern flourish is saved for the last sentence of the story where, after some abstract meditations, a description of Nika after the car accident is presented in photographic precision: she is lying on the asphalt, "dark backside helplessly thrown," in all her "Siamese beauty," amid a rapidly growing crowd of onlookers. Pelevin pronounces the key sentence at the end, lamenting the fact that the narrator would never again stand by the window holding in his hands another *cat*. Upon rereading the text, the reader not only appreciates the psychological trick, but also the skill with which Pelevin handles the flexibility of Russian syntax and the vagueness of Russian grammar. Pelevin links together a chain of ambiguous situations in which human and animal are interchangeable by virtue of semiotics and default grammatical gender.[38] For example:

> That evening I was particularly gentle with Nika, and yet I couldn't rid myself of the thought that for her there was little difference between my hands running over her body and the branches which caressed her sides when we were out walking in the woods. At that time we still took our walks together. We were together every day, but I was sober-minded enough to realize that we could never be genuinely close."[39]

In recent years Pelevin has not worked with Nabokov material in as much detail as he did during the mid-1990s, but he continues to arrange certain identifiable "Nabokovian" signals in his novels. Thus, despite a shift in the age (12 to 13 years

in *Lolita*[40]), Pelevin forces an association between his heroine and the image of nymphets: "She was 27 years old, which was outside of the 19 to 25 age bracket from which Stepa selected his nymphets"[41] (regarding Mius, the girlfriend of the businessman Mikhailov in the novel *Numbers*).[42]

Pelevin's work recycles low culture of the post-Soviet period, from the familiar Chapaev jokes and the deconstruction of cosmic myths to the "no man's discourse" of street ads. Pelevin's prose can be categorized according to the familiar Bakhtinian schematic of the social and the bodily, although if post-Soviet postmodernism has anything in common with the carnivalesque, it is that this new, terrifying Russian world is presented by Pelevin (in *The Dialectics of the Transition Period [from Nowhere to No Place]*) and Sorokin (in *The Feast* and *Ice*) in holiday gift wrap. But of course Nabokov's own late work was also embellished with buffoonery (*Look at the Harlequins!*).

VLADIMIR SOROKIN

Sorokin rarely says anything about Nabokov outside of his texts. One gets the impression that this silence is the result of a consciously applied policy, although the author occasionally lets a comparison slip out. For example, an interviewer once questioned Sorokin about whether he, a father of twin daughters, had ever been struck by the theme of doubles and twins in literature and film. Sorokin answered, "No, strangely enough. Probably because they have always been right here for 16 years. I once saw my double, and this really did make a strong impression. But I can't say that I was really enchanted with the topic—like Nabokov, for example."[43] And yet, in the 2004 film *4* based on a screenplay by Sorokin (directed by Ilya Khrzhanovsky), the theme of twins and doubles plays a central role.

Nabokov is the target of Sorokin's expansive parody in the novel *Blue Lard* (1999), where a monster with the codename Nabokov-7 generates a text product obtained by "biophilological methods." The novel, observing the typological conventions of the fantastic thriller, features characters from various worlds (e.g., a technologically advanced future that is in the process of implementing a project for total orthopedics for the human race, a sect of Siberian Zoroastrians, and a post-Stalin empire of 1954). The characters seek the mysterious blue lard that is produced by cloning the remains of Russian writers. In addition to Nabokov, the clones include Dostoevsky-2 ("Count Reshetovsky"), Akhmatova-2 ("Three Nights"), Platonov-3 ("Prescript"), Chekhov-3 ("The Burial of Attis"), Pasternak-1 ("C--t"), and Tolstoy-4 (an unnamed text).

The lard is an unprecedented source of energy, but no one knows how to use it. In the end, the lard—for whose sake a huge number of incidental characters are annihilated—is used as a drug, which brings about the collapse of the virtual world. *Blue Lard* is characterized by a discourse that is traditional for Sorokin—"dead" (meaning devoid of subject and referent), but still self-replicating and "inflated."[44]

Introducing the Nabokov segment ("By Way of Cordoso"), Sorokin informs us that during the creative "process," the *object* (i.e. Nabokov's clone) wrote with a splinter from a table, which he dipped into his left arm as though it were an inkwell.

Thus "the whole text was written in blood. Which, unfortunately, was not the case with the original."[45] Evidently, Sorokin's aesthetic accusation points to the aristocrat Nabokov's perceived artificiality, his alleged preference for art and mimicry over the so-called "human condition," which, of course, is underscored by his artistic nemesis Dostoevsky who was preoccupied with people's pain, vices, and miserable existences.

Critics considered Sorokin's imitation of Nabokov to be unsuccessful. In the opinion of Verbitsky, the parody of Nabokov

> both stylistically and tonally differs very little from the rest of Sorokin's text—one gets the impression that the Nabokov egg that Sorokin swallowed to write the parody grew out of control and swallowed the bearer. On the other hand, of course, the rest of the text is much less restrained, and from the Nabokov-like Berg it often simply collapses into Marinina and into Sorokin's disgraceful piece on Russian shchi.[46]

There are indeed a few points of commonality between Sorokin's parody and Nabokov, and while difficult to decipher they can be found in certain stylistic constructions,[47] thematic parallels,[48] and possible biographical/bibliographical references (e.g., the appearance of a certain "Luka Vadimovich" combines a reference to "Luka Mudishchev" [an obscene long poem anonymously composed in nineteenth-century Russia] with "Vadim Vadimovich," the narrator of Nabokov's *Look at the Harlequins!*; the combination in one phrase ["Svetlana had mountain crystal for dessert. . ."] of the name of Nabokov's fiancée and the title of a collection by Sirin [*Mountain Path*], which contained poems dedicated to her, and so on). The photos of the elegantly-dressed Nabokovs at a journalists' reception in the lobby of the Swiss Montreux Palace Hotel evoke, it seems, the following image in Sorokin's text, created by a ferocious gourmet obsessed with soccer: "The spouses never betrayed their gastronomical preferences, ordering the eternal Tokyo 1889, a marsh grass salad, the roots of the wisdom teeth of elderly proletarians, lapdog Marengo, scab with toad caviar, and meniscus of third division Belorussian soccer players topped by chunks of vomit."[49]

Given Sorokin's aptitude for mimicry, his parody of Nabokov could have been much more comparable if he had so desired; we must therefore discover the reasons for this "unsuccessful" parody not in a lack of ability for stylistic imitation (Sorokin long ago demonstrated that he has this ability), but in the use of a fundamentally different strategy: the minus-device, *a refusal to imitate*. This move can be read as a kind of protest against the nascent Nabokov-mania and blind worship of Nabokov that took place during the 1990s, and that combined with the still incomplete post-Soviet myth of Nabokov's induction into the pantheon of deconstructed Russian literary idols from Tolstoy to Pasternak.

For Sorokin, Nabokov is an oxymoronic phantom containing a number of opposing features: an *aristocrat*, but not a Bohemian; *elitist*, but accessible; *tolerant*, but not shy about his homophobia, and so on. In the novel's epilogue, the blue lard that has directly derived from Nabokov turns into a cloak on the graceful shoulders of Stalin's capricious lover, a young courtesan. In this way, the title *Blue Lard* becomes not only an encoded combination launching the script for a computer game ("reader/text"), but is also a postmodern oxymoron—somewhat like *Blednoe plamia*, the Russian

title of Nabokov's *Pale Fire*, in which the word for "ice" (*led*, also the title of Sorokin's next novel) is contained in the word for "pale" (*bLEDnoe*).

As the web of connections comprising culture multiply exponentially in the postmodern era, Nabokov becomes just another piece in the literary game of textual allusions. In fact, it is through Nabokovian clichés that Sorokin arrived at the idea of paper pop art:

> In my first pieces there was a lot of literary pretense, but even then I was using certain literary clichés that were post-Nabokovian, not Soviet. [. . .] [Then] I suddenly saw the formula: everything can be made into pop art. You can find material in *Pravda*, in Shevtsov, in Joyce, and in Nabokov. Any utterance written down on paper already becomes some thing that you can manipulate however you want.[50]

However, in the post-*perestroika* 1990s Sorokin himself became the image of a "ready made" construction, used successfully by masters of pop-art related genres: for example, in Timur Kibirov's retrograde picture of contemporary culture (the 1999 cycle entitled *Notations*: "From Fellini to Tarantino / from Nabokov to Sorokin / from Mumi-trol to Mumi-trol /—the road is direct"[51]); or in political performances as with demonstrations of the party youth loyal to the Kremlin (public burnings of Sorokin's books by the "Going together" [*Idushchie vmeste*] group, as well as by cultish groups of young people ["everything can be made into pop art"]).[52]

Desperately refusing to become an inert figure in a literary wax museum, Nabokov's texts continue to play a vital role in the literary process: they are assimilated, adapted, and struggled with. It even seems that Nabokov himself encoded into them an affinity for posthumous manipulation.

SERGEI BOLMAT / YURI BUIDA

In Sergei Bolmat's novel *By Themselves* (*Sami po sebe*), Nabokov appears alongside "New Russians" during the bloody infighting of the privatization period—the great redistribution of property that, in reverse perspective, echoes the experience of Nabokov's family during the Bolshevik revolution. When the novel was published, most critics noted its "Nabokovian style."[53] Gleb Shulpiakov summarizes the bestseller as follows:

> In the process of developing his identity, the young man Tema abandons the girl Marina in month nine. A bandit falls in love with the girl, but he must kill her because she found the cell phone that was used to take orders. After checking the C drive in his own noggin, Tema sees the light and decides to return to Marina, but not before smothering the criminal from whose amorous solicitations there is no salvation. Which is what happens. To absolve himself of responsibility, *the author lowers the curtain by enacting a farce a la* Invitation to a Beheading*: it was all just a dream*, and "not every boat hits land hull forward." That's it. Roll the credits. For a detective story from the life of Petersburg princes, the novel is too nebulous; for a postmodern collage from the bohemian life of the same princes in the provinces it is rushed: the quotes and allusions also need to be

> assembled with the mind, while simply tossing bits of stream of consciousness onto the page is somehow unseemly—by today's standards!"[54]

Nabokov is not merely neutralized in Bolmat's text; he appears in the guise of a harmless student (an assistant to the businesswoman Ksenia Petrovna, who herself is a victim of blackmail), who is symbolically executed by the mafia:

> At first Ksenia Petrovna had determined that it was a bluff. By that time they were working with Valentin Viktorovich and they formally asked him for advice. He offered the entirely reasonable suggestion to acquire an automatic weapon and give the racketeers a worthy rebuff. He even spent some time at the shooting range and shot a pistol there, invariably hitting the neighboring target. She decided to hold off.
>
> Three days later her secretary, *a university graduate, smart and erudite, a future Nabokov*, who knew better than anyone else how to accompany her chivalrously to a regional conference or a symposium on credit problems, *was taken to the forest and had his head sawn off with a chainsaw.* After this she did all that they demanded of her, and did it precisely and promptly.[55]

The tribute to Nabokov's gnoseological novel can clearly be seen in the cruel method of decapitation, but few prose writers of the 1990s chose violence as the only blueprint for shocking the readership. In his novel *Ermo*,[56] Yuri Buida couples Nabokov with Ivan Bunin, not only referencing the similarity of the two authors' styles, but also assigning them an almost official status as the "chief authors of emigration." The novel focuses on the émigré writer George Ermo (whose real name is Georgy Ermo-Nikolaev), who is always either being compared to Nabokov and Bunin or resisting them. The novel's portrait of Ermo is a mosaic comprised of slightly distorted pieces from real biographies. Let us follow Nabokov's tracks throughout Ermo's biography: Ermo was born in St. Petersburg in an old, distinguished family (his father often traveled to England, where he represented the interests of the Russian military industry); during the revolution, the family fled through Finland to Berlin, and from there to London; Ermo emigrated to America, and later moved to Europe—although he ended up in Venice rather than Montreux. Likely familiar with Nabokov's stance on Andrei Bely, Buida inserts the surname Ableukhov (from Bely's novel *Petersburg*) into the genealogy of one of Ermo's grandmothers. However, these Nabokovian roots break down on the principle of denial and convergence (or as the game of "nonnons" in *Invitation to a Beheading*): one of Ermo's relatives, a senator, denies the Tatar heritage of his family, while another, his brother, is the minister of justice (both the senator and the brother have an affinity with the legendary Prince Nabokov and Nabokov's grandfather as described in *Speak, Memory*). Ermo does not consider himself a Russian writer; "unlike Nabokov and Bunin, with whom he is most often juxtaposed, he did not take with him any reminiscences and impressions—no first love, no light breathing, no sun stroke, no sweet childhood fear before the midday shooting of the cannon at the Peter and Paul Fortress. [. . .]" Here unattributed titles of Bunin's works (e.g., the short stories "First Love," "Light Breath," and "Sun

Stroke") and a reference to an episode from Nabokov's autobiography together form a chain of allusions that a reader of the 1990s would easily recognize.

Like *The Gift*, *Ermo* is a text about the artistic process, but while the former is itself the meta-novel by Fyodor Godunov-Cherdyntsev, Buida's character has already written his book *Als ob* (*What If*). The work *Ermo* is constructed such that the reader is gradually made aware of the thin line dividing the novel as presented and the hypertext. At a certain moment it seems as though the novel being recounted (*What If*) is the same novel we are reading (*Ermo*), with the conscious inclusion of authorial digressions. We witness the destruction of the narrative frame, the "erosion" of the framing text by the inserted text, the deconstruction of the outer frame by expanding the inner one, until the two completely coincide—these techniques call to mind the blending of narratives in *The Real Life of Sebastian Knight* and *Pale Fire*. However, Ermo's style is reminiscent not only of Nabokov's; it also somewhat resembles the styles of Joyce, Marcel Proust, Umberto Eco, and Jorge Luis Borges, and yet he approached Bunin and Nabokov with "particular jealousy." For example, he praises Nabokov's excessive commentary to *Eugene Onegin*, yet he is "annoyed by the superfluous attention to style" of *The Gift* and *Lolita*.[57] When the conversation drifts to Bunin and Nabokov, Ermo reflects on aesthetic incompatibility: outside of Russia these authors' works "degenerated into style" and remained there; their whole lives amounted to literary style.

The action of the novel unfolds in a labyrinthine Venetian estate that formerly belonged to the Italian fascist and romantic Giancarlo Sanseverino, who had helped Jews escape from World War II Germany to Palestine. When the Germans discovered this betrayal and issued an order for his arrest, Sanseverino committed suicide. Ermo, while working on a book about Sanseverino's fate, becomes close with Sanseverino's young and beautiful widow, Liz. After marrying the widow, he remains to live in the enormous palazzo:

> Neither Bunin nor Nabokov had ever owned their own house in emigration. They had both been homeless, and both—each in his way—had lived with only earth below and sky above. The author of *Dark Alleys* had no desire to "grow into a foreign place," and he breathed Russia and only Russia; the creator of *Lolita* perhaps wanted to "grow in," but was unable to and he converted this impossibility into his style: a weakness into strength. Ermo had a home.[58]

The mystery of St. Sophia's cup serves as the motif that fuels *Ermo*'s episodic plot. However, after a few years of marriage and of searching for this mystical cup that is supposedly hidden in the house, Ermo happens on a secret room. Here he finds the unharmed Giancarlo Sanseverino, whom Liz has been diligently hiding from her new husband and from the public all these years. In the end, during the Brezhnev stagnation era the cup is stolen by Soviet artists who are restoring an enormous canvas in the Ermo-Sanseverino house, but Ermo returns the cup to its place through the power of his imagination during a spiritual séance.

The novel is full of typical Nabokovian themes (e.g., reflections, doubling, and chess) that function on both ornamental and functional levels, and in such a way that they bear witness more to the leanings of Ermo than of his author, Buida. Ermo himself states that contemporary literature is impossible to imagine “without mirrors, chess, labyrinths, clocks, and dreams.” Like Nabokov, he loves cinema and writes a screenplay for a film based on his own works. His first wife dies in a car accident and his second wife ends up in a psychiatric clinic reminiscent of Humbert’s hospital. With a Nabokovian work ethic (“at six in the morning he would already be sitting at the desk—the morning hours were the most productive”), Ermo wins a Nobel Prize, and a 700-page biography about him is published in 1974. During a stylized interview with a Soviet correspondent for *The Literary Gazette* (*Literaturnaya gazeta*), Ermo is questioned about the “recently deceased Vladimir Nabokov”:

> *Literary Gazette*: The great Russian writer and Nobel laureate Vladimir Nabokov has died. . . . What is your relationship with the work of this complicated author and person?
>
> Ermo: I was saddened by the news of his death. We never met and, to be honest, I have no regret about this: what would we have talked about? But he was a real *home de plume*. He wrote several marvelous works—*The Gift, Ada*, *Lolita*—and so he lived a happy life. . . .
>
> *LG*: But in another interview you had stated that Nabokov underwent defeat after defeat. . . .
>
> Ermo: And this is exactly why he was a true writer. A true writer goes from defeat to defeat, and there is no other fate for him. The people who win are called something else—generals, engineers, politicians, but not writers. The difference between an artist and everyone else is probably that the artist challenges eternity, while the rest merely try to overcome time.[59]

The interviewee does not conceal his complicated attitude towards Nabokov who, he believes, substituted chess for living passions: finding himself between Russian and English, Nabokov chose a “false,” artificial language as an intermediary, since “chess, from the standpoint of linguistics, is a quasi-language, because the content and expression in them do not differ.” For Ermo, chess is a metaphor for the new reality in which Nabokov traveled completely alone. This reality was the author’s home, his motherland, and his grave.

The fact that a fictional Soviet journalist writing during the seventies calls Nabokov a “great Russian writer” speaks to the Nabokovs’ concerted efforts to fashion an international literary brand, but even more so it testifies to the ways in which the Nabokov brand infiltrated the USSR in reality.

> “?”
> I want to be understood by my country,
> But if I fail to be understood—
> What then? I shall pass through my native land
> To one side, like a shower of slanting rain.
> Vladimir Mayakovsky

Except those few who had access to and were willing to risk handling the *samizdat* copies in the 1970s, the majority of Russia's intellectual avant-garde discovered Nabokov at the beginning of the 1980s—yet the average reader did not discover him until much later. Judging by pirated editions of his works, this boom in awareness of the writer continues to this day. Nabokov's belief in his eventual triumph in Russia was far from strong; he called it "a historical hope, a literary-historical one."[60] The questions regarding the direction of Russian literary culture and Nabokov's influence on it remain open to debate, due to the fact that this process is not yet finished. In the 1960s Western Slavists were embroiled in serious discussions concerning the legitimacy of including an author of American bestsellers in courses on post-revolution Russian literature.[61] Eventually, due to a number of factors—particularly the warming of the international geopolitical climate and the fact that Nabokov was granted the status of a contemporary classic in the English-speaking world—the cosmopolitan approach was victorious. The scandalous reception of *Lolita* set in motion the mechanisms of commercial distribution that created favorable conditions for the creation not only of a *Nabokov studies institute*, but also of a pseudo-scientific body of "para-Nabokoviana." We can perhaps see an early example of this in Umberto Eco's miniature "Nonita" (1959), published shortly after *Lolita*.[62] Here, Humbert's fixation is inverted and made into the story of the main character's passion for an elderly woman.[63]

Among Russian authors, such parodies were provoked not by *Lolita* but by another text, the short story "Spring in Fialta" (Igor Klekh's "Murder in Fialta" and "Nika" by Pelevin). The feeling that it is impossible and, moreover, undesirable to resist the magic of Nabokov's style was expressed with discouraging candor by the author of the first such Russian-language experiment, Alexander Zholkovsky: "Additionally, I (like many others, probably) *have long wanted to write* 'Spring in Fialta.' I present it to you."[64] Zholkovsky's parody subsequently initiated pseudo-"Nabokovian" discourses such as A. Zorin's "Vignettes a la Zholkovsky."[65] Sergei Gandlevsky experimented with the publication of a poem in two versions: one version formed a sort of photographic image of a landscape, and the other version functioned as a map of the area photographed. Whether to "ease" the labor of the literary scholar or to issue a general challenge to the intertextual method, Gandlevsky used capital letters and marked lines throughout the text to indicate from where particular images were taken. The quoted lyric "negative" is built on references to "Spring in Fialta" (the dropped "outside" of the pairing corresponds entirely to that which is reproduced below, with the exception that this other version omits the words printed here in capital letters.)

> ***
>
> so that faces right up to the platform TRAINS AND PLATFORMS
> absolutely so that the lilac SIRIN[66]
> from which for a week then two
> daily with brains askew
> and the universe most assuredly
> on the road home from a bender

opens up like a momentary secret
SPRING IN FIALTA BEGINNING
over another garden head
for complete happiness it would be
nice to have the smell of oil paint
and let the foul city weather make its noise
and so on and so forth by heart
MAYAKOVSKY-ESENIN
one wants some kind of sadness
for laughter's sake in broad daylight
so that folly youth arises from the tomb
BAGRITSKII
and happens upon me on earth
and plays with me that game
that wasn't worth the candles
and a Chinese trinket clinked
an essentially useless thing
FERDINAND'S INKWELL[67]

Nabokov appears again as a result of the "bender," and this second appearance is also no accident. Based on the Russian formalists' theory, the above observations can be expressed as a law: one must resort to the Nabokov conflict (e.g., one must forcefully collide with Nabokov) when one needs to create an artificial resistance—a feeling of roughness in the text either on a stylistic level, or on a mental level—that disrupts the reader's aesthetic expectations by failing to meet them. The imitation of Nabokovian discourse (initiated by Voinovich) has an intentional lack of smoothness, with stylistic gaps purposely inserted to create a debasing effect, as when a polished *Nabokovian phrase* is suddenly "collapsed" by contact with some colloquialism not permitted in polite company.[68] But the most important thing is that Nabokov, while managing to avoid becoming a "sacred cow" on the dissident hit parade, also met with opposition among Russian writers: from the cautious Solzhenitsyn (the story of his "non-meeting" with Nabokov in Switzerland, apparently canceled by Solzhenitsyn, remains a mystery) and the chilly Joseph Brodsky (whose translation of one of Nabokov's poems in the *Kenyon Review* contained comments regarding the poem's "very low quality," the author being an "undeveloped poet," and the poem "now sounding a little bit better than in Russian. A little less banal"[69]) to the open hostility toward Nabokov shown by young talented writers in the Soviet Union (with the exception of Bella Akhmadulina's ecstatic reaction, who repeatedly and melodramatically described in detail her meeting with Nabokov).[70]

Dmitri Galkovsky provided more serious commentary on Nabokov. Borrowing from Andrei Sinyavsky's phrase about Soviet power, he proceeds from an assumption that the differences he has with Nabokov are stylistic rather than ideological:

> In Nabokov Russian culture cooled and turned to stone. [. . .] Nabokov took the art of narrative to such heights of perfection that *that he forever cut the thread that connected to the poor, naïve Russian reader*, a reader for whom, as we know, "what is written with

> the pen can't be cut down with the axe," and who reads books in an entirely different way than in the West. The essence of Nabokov is his fundamental refusal to be a craft writer, to write for a reader.[71]

Time and the number of books in print, as well as the number of society columns in which Nabokov's name turns up, seem to indicate otherwise: Nabokov *did*, in fact, write for readers. However, considering the changing market and cultural realities new Russian writers were trying to negotiate during the wave of *perestroika*, it is no wonder they were worried about losing "the poor, naïve Russian reader" in the struggle for success and for a place in the pantheon. Meanwhile, once fully absorbed by post-totalitarian Russian culture at the dawn of the 1990s, Nabokov became an active part of the literary process during the last decade of the twentieth century. As Lyudmila Ulitskaya characteristically put it in an interview following her receipt of the Booker Prize for *The Case of Kukotsky*, she had a "complicated relationship" with Nabokov who represented *a different literature*—different not because it was written abroad, but in its essence.[72] It is precisely the potentially shattering force of Nabokov's discourse that stops in their tracks writers who encounter him. Nabokov either "crushes" another text, turning it into a likeness of his own (as in the works of Alexander Kushner, Igor Klekh, and—somewhat knowingly—Zholkovsky),[73] or causes a Russian writer to minimize any risk of contact by distancing (with intentional irony; e.g., Buida), counterattacking (e.g., Voinovich, Dovlatov), or subverting Nabokov's style and themes (e.g., Sorokin, Pelevin).

Given the economic incentives for publishers, booksellers, critics, and scholars, it is likely that the Nabokov brand will continue to be packaged, re-packaged, and sold again and again—as long as the post-Soviet reading audience is willing to buy this literary product. What remains to be seen is how contemporary Russian writers will interact with this literary brand. Will they continue to co-opt elements of Nabokov's literary style, denigrate his overt sexuality, or place him in their works in order to increase their own symbolic capital; or will, at some point, the Nabokov brand become passé? As is evident from the 2010 publication of the Russian translation of *The Original of Laura*, there are still many who are eager to purchase anything associated with the brand—even though their purchase may turn out to disappoint. Indeed, some devoted Russian readers of Nabokov have greeted Gennady Barabtarlo's first stylized translation of the "new old" novel with great irony. For example, Vyacheslav Kuritsyn, (the leading Russian literary critic of the 1990s, who later became a writer of modest success), wrote a playful review disguised as a parodic pastiche in which *Laura* and the famous opening lines of *Lolita* are mixed together. Kuritsyn's "*A Little Fake of Laurochka*" ("Poddelochka Lorochki") begins:

> Barabtranslated from English instead of a review:
>
> Laur-ra! Little lord of my loins, laureate of my nobel prize, lorca of my kafka! Laur-ra![74]

Future scholars will be able to better chart the duration and strength of the brand within the post-Soviet literary market, but at this current moment it is evident that

Nabokov continues to interact with contemporary writers who desire to transfer some of his symbolic capital to their own works.

The final chapter of this monograph will follow the most recent uproar in Nabokovina—the publication of the unfinished novel *The Original of Laura*. The commercial success of the Russian translation of this work testifies to the fact that despite the "complicated relationships" discussed in this chapter, Nabokov's new publications are met with constant demand by the major part of contemporary Russian readership. Using the case of *Laura* and applying to it the general methodology of Bourdieu, I explore the economic issues that reside at the very foundation of Nabokov's posthumous legacy.

NOTES

1. Terras, "Diachrony and synchrony in writing Russian literary history," 271–91.

2. Alexander Goldshtein believes that Nabokov functions as a link between the traditional classics of Russian literature and contemporary Russian literature, citing Lidia Ginzburg's statement that *Lolita* is a "very Russian novel" (Goldshtein, *Rasstavanie s Nartsissom*, 325).

3. Vladislav Khodasevich's "The Life of Vasilii Travnikov" might represent a more striking example, but it is of little consequence in the current literary situation.

4. Gandelsman, "Neizvestnoe pis'mo V. V. Nabokova," 183–86.

5. Paying tribute to Humbert's passion, Vera Pavlova calls on old men "to look for nymphets on porn sites," assuring them that she is not fit for the role of a new Susanna/Lolita ("They appear, raunchy, sugary, prim . . .") (Pavlova, "Iaviatsia, sal'ny, slashchavy, zhemanny . . .").

6. On Nabokov and postmodernism, see Couturier, "Nabokov in Postmodernist Land"; Lipovetsky, "Paralogiia russkogo postmodernizma," 289; Russel, "The Modernist tradition," 227.

7. The book signed under the name "M. Ageev" was written by an émigré debutant Mark Levi (1898–1973) who later returned to the USSR and did not publish any other substantial literary work; it was suggested in the mid-1980s that the novel might have been written, in fact, by Nabokov who chose to publish it under the pseudonym. This theory was ridiculed by both Nabokov's widow and his son Dmitri, and the true authorship was subsequently firmly established.

8. Quoted from the text of the story on the author's official web site: http://www.voinovich.ru.

9. At the same time, as Meghan Vicks suggests, one might be able to argue that Voinovich's character's hallucination takes a page from Nabokov's "reality" in quotation marks, as it plays upon a confusion of "fiction" and "real life," or even a confusion of "self" (the character) and "other" (Nabokov)—which is also a common theme in Nabokov's oeuvre. However, unlike Nabokov, Voinovich seems to suggest that the division between fiction and real life (or between self and other) is clearly delineated (M. Vicks in private communication with the author, 22 January 2013).

10. The first publication was in the journal *Vremia i my* (1988. No. 102), and it was republished in *Ogonek* (1, 1997: 42–45).

11. According to Arieh Levavi, who visited the Nabokovs several times at their hotel in Montreux Palace, he observed the following scene in 1972: a local couple that Nabokov was most likely acquainted with approached him and requested he autograph the books they

owned by him. Nabokov, who gave out autographs only to those who were very close to him, after some hesitation signed his name on the nicest of the three editions they presented. He categorically refused to sign the two other paperback books (Leving, "Vstrechi s Nabokovym," 10–12).

12. Genis, *Tri*, III, 342–43.

13. Dovlatov, *Sobranie sochinenii*, I, 220.

14. Ibid. Dovlatov takes the joke from the publication *Perepiska s sestroi* (*Correspondence with His Sister*), published by Ardis in 1985, which includes a picture from a letter written by Nabokov to E. V. Sikorskaia with a description of the "Rules of Behavior for Guests" at the Nabokovs' hotel room.

15. Ibid., 222. Nabokov had this very edition in his own library. See his letter to Gleb Struve (Vladimir Nabokov, *Selected Letters*, 378).

16. Vladimir Nabokov, *Perepiska s sestroi*, 10.

17. It is possible that the model for this Dovlatov character was the writer Liudmila Shtern (pointed out by E. Rein). See her reminiscences of Sergei Dovlatov (Shtern, "Dovlatov, dobryi moi priiatel'," 161–77).

18. Dovlatov, *Sobranie sochinenii*, I, 225–26.

19. Huizinga, *Homo Ludens*, 189.

20. Pekurovskaia, *Kogda sluchilos' pet' S. D. i mne*. 311–12; italics added.

21. Dovlatov himself left a different type of declaration: "One can make fun of the victors—Lev Tolstoy, Vladimir Nabokov. . ." ("Poslednii chudak. Istoriia odnoi perepiski." Dovlatov, *Sobranie sochinenii*, IV, 308).

22. A company called "Drugie Berega," Ltd. ("Other Shores," Ltd.) was created specially for the release of the book, and the title page contained an illustration with a butterfly and the inscription "Russkoe zarubezh'e" ("The Russian Émigré Community") (Dovlatova). In other words, the reader is presented with a rather successful attempt to represent Dovlatov as the last member of the classical pantheon of Russian émigré literature and the legitimate heir to the tradition.

23. Dovlatov here reproduces an actual occurrence involving Nabokov's would-be attempt to acquire a position as a professor at Harvard (Dovlatov could have learned this episode from A. Field's biography of Nabokov); the role of the person trying to deny him in this story is, of course, played by Roman Jakobson, who responded to the appeals of his colleagues by stating that Nabokov was indeed "important author" but this was not a good enough reason to let an elephant become the chair of the zoology department (see the fictional presentation of this episode in *Zapisnye knizhki*, ch. II: "Solo na IBM" in Dovlatov, *Sobranie sochinenii*, IV, 214–15).

24. Bourdieu, *The Field of Cultural Production*, 100–101.

25. Cf.: "Sergei Dovlatov, a leading Soviet émigré writer noted for the laconic irony and graceful irreverence of his stories about his homeland [...] Since glasnost, his novels have been published in the Soviet Union and become extremely popular. In New York, his detached, ironic tone appealed to *The New Yorker*, which published several of his short stories" (Roger Cohen, "Sergei Dovlatov, 48, Soviet Émigré Who Wrote About His Homeland").

26. See the blurb on the back cover of the edition: Pelevin, *4 by Pelevin*.

27. Pelevin, *Buddha's Little Finger*, 34.

28. Pelevin, *Buddha's Little Finger*, 34–35.

29. Pelevin, *Homo Zapiens*, 211.

30. First published in *Vestnik RKhD* (1985–1986, No. 144 and No. 146), and later in the afterword to *Roman-zagadka* in Ageev, *Roman s kokainom*, 200–221.

31. The literary game is placed directly in the title, which is an anagram of the words "Roman o . . ." ("A novel about . . . ," which in some sense presumes a dialog with another metatextual construction—V. Sorokin's *Roman*).

32. Pelevin, *Omon Ra*, 128.

33. The deviation from the original (from the poem "You and I believed so much in the connection of existence . . .") is indicated in italics: "You and I believed so much in the connection of existence, / But now *I've looked back*, and I'm amazed / at how much my youth seems to me / in its colors not mine, *in its features* not real. / If one thinks deeply, it's *like the haze of a wave*. . . as you ride *into the sunset* on your half-racer." And the stanza "forgotten" by Comrade Kondrat'ev: "For a long time *you have not been me, you work in progress, hero / of every first chapter, but how long did we believe / that the path was continuous from the hollows of the damp / to the heather on the hills.*"

34. Pelevin, *4 by Pelevin*, 67.

35. Pelevin, *The Blue Lantern*, 102.

36. Ibid., 99.

37. There are clearly recognizable sources of this case in excerpts from, respectively, John Ray's Foreword to *Lolita* and in chapter 5 of the novel.

38. The default Russian word for "cat" (*koshka*) is grammatically feminine.

39. Pelevin, *The Blue Lantern*, 93.

40. Cf.: "Her passion for Pokemon made Mius unbelievably sexy, adding something of the forbidden delight of nymphets to her cocktail of attributes" (Pelevin, *Dialektika Perekhodnogo Perioda*, 77).

41. Ibid., 64.

42. Many direct references to Nabokov are also found in Pelevin's *The Sacred Book of the Werewolf* (the most obvious parallel is the heroine, who is associated with Lolita.)

43. See Voskovskaia, "Interview with Vladimir Sorokin."

44. See Samorukova, "Zaglavie kak indeks diskursivnoi strategii proizvedeniia."

45. Sorokin, *Sobranie sochinenii*, III, 74.

46. Verbitsky brushes aside the accusations of Sorokin as a writer of "pretentious second-hand pornography" based on the fact that "both Berg and Sasha Sokolov wrung everything out of Nabokov's *Ada*—which is fair. And Nabokov is dead and can't sue anyone. And surely his copyright has run out. There is no happiness in life. Incidentally, there are places where Sorokin plagiarizes himself rather than Berg and Nabokov, and there it comes out even more disgusting" (Verbitsky, "Predatel'stvo Vladimira Sorokina"). Alexandra Marinina is a bestselling Russian writer of detective stories; Mikhail Berg is a Russian author belonging to the Russian postmodernist faction.

47. Cf., for example, the structure of the following phrases: "A blue twenty-pfennig pencil stuck out of Alexander's hand, dry as a phrase from a Berlin postmaster. . . ." (Sorokin, *Sobranie sochinenii*, III, 74); "The color of the moon flowed unobstructed along her too sloping shoulders, slipped along her too thin neck, along her shamelessly straight back, giving way only to the vague ovals of her collarbone dimples" (Ibid.); and "After nine months of woolen silence that recalled the profile of a young Roosevelt. . . ." (Ibid., 80).

48. Though it may be stretching the point, this could be seen as an echo of the finale of *Invitation to a Beheading*: "Afanasii waved with his stick. From the blow, the pale yellow-emerald bank of the river, hanging over the greasy water of the hump-backed giantess, cracked and began to slowly and frighteningly crumble downwards. Svetlana's nimble hands entered the child's body. Afanasii laughed, carefully winking at his shadow. The wind carried the smallest bits of Alexander's brain over the evening field" (Ibid.).

49. Sorokin, *Sobranie sochinenii*, III, 78.

50. Ibid. I, 12.

51. Kibirov, "Kto kuda—a ia v Rossiyu . . .", 429.

52. For example, the title of the album by the group "Smyslovye galliutsinatsii" ("Conceptual Hallucinations")—*Led-9* (*Ice-9*, 2002)—refers to Sorokin's numbered text blocks and the novel *Led* (*Ice*), as well as to the chapter entitled "Ice-nine" in Kurt Vonnegut's *Cat's Cradle*.

53. Cf.: "As for the linguistic vignettes and sly metaphors strewn about the text of the novel, they in no way salvage this work; on the contrary, they graphically demonstrate the extent to which the verbal balancing acts that Nabokov introduced once upon a time have become petty and degraded. Bolmat proves that Nabokov's phrasing can now be used successfully even in an avowedly second-rate work of prose" (Olshansky, "Ubiitsy s zolotym serdtsem. Vyshel roman Sergeia Bolmata 'Sami po sebe'"); "By halfway through [the novel], it became clear that Bolmat was intentionally exaggerating the commonplaces of 1990s culture: drugs, cinematography, and bowing before the language of Nabokov. The overly heavy rotation of all sorts of fashionable material is this author's main device. Bolmat is not interested in being Nabokov or a contributor to *Ptiuch*, but the circumstances require fluency in all languages" (Danilikin, "Batiania Bolmat").

54. Shulpiakov, "Gonduras i gorzhetka."

55. Bolmat, *Sami po sebe*, 20; italics added.

56. First published in *Znamia* 8, 1996. Quotations are from Buida.

57. Buida, *Skoree oblako, chem ptitsa*, 69–70.

58. Ibid., 46.

59. Ibid., 143–44.

60. Vladimir Nabokov, *The Gift*, 350.

61. See the special concluding chapter in the highly influential work by Edward J. Brown, *Russian Literature Since the Revolution*, which was reprinted multiple times even into the 1980s (first edition: London: Collier Books, 1963), which is tellingly titled "On Émigré Literature: Nabokov as a Russian Writer."

62. Eco, "Nonita," 27–28.

63. The title in English was translated as "Granita" (the pun is that in Italian the word *nonna* means "grandmother"; cf. English "Granny"). Eco's sense of humor cannot be denied. The Italian translation of the novel calls Humbert Humbert "Umberto."

64. Zholkovsky, "Philosophy of Composition," 56.

65. See his "Gumbert" ("Humbert"): "A person with the same name as the protagonist of *Lolita* was the husband of a teacher of Russian, whose surname Rubl would also have fit nicely with her colleague from some American novel by Nabokov" (Zorin, "Vin'etki").

66. The Russian word for lilac, *siren'*, clearly resembles Nabokov's pen name, Sirin.

67. Gandlevsky, "Dva stikhotvoreniia."

68. See the italicized phrases, for example: "I awoke in the middle of the night at God knows what time and looked at *something vague and white* before me, trying to determine where I was and who I was.

Someone's noisy breathing flowed in waves from my left, and someone's quiet breathing echoed from the right. I lay there, trying not to stir, looking at the white thing in front of me. It was evidently the ceiling. Yes, it appears to be the ceiling, white, with the *shadows of the window frames crookedly smeared over it*.

I *slanted my eyes* to the left: the light of the streetlamps trickled in through the half open window. A soft wind rustled the curtains drawn to the edges. The sound of the surf rolled over in waves (which meant the sea was outside the window). I turned my glance to the right

and saw that lying next to me, *wheezing in sleep* was some creature with a bare shoulder: some sort of woman, perhaps even my wife. But, not remembering who I was, I could also not remember who she was, what her name was, how old she was, when we were married, and whether we had any children."

69. On the history of this publication, see Volkova, *Iosif Brodskii v Niu-Iorke*. Certain parallels between Brodsky's poetics and Nabokov's work are addressed in a chapter of David Bethea's book (Bethea, *Joseph Brodsky and the Creation of Exile*).

70. See Akhmadulina, "Robkii put' k Nabokovu"; this was also published in her *Collected Works in Three Volumes* (1997), in the collections entitled *Stikhi. Poemy. Perevody. Rasskazy. Esse. Vystupleniia* (2000), *Stikhotvoreniia. Esse* (2000), and in a number of other publications.

71. See Galkovsky, *Beskonechnyi tupik*.

72. From an interview by Ilya Kukulin with Liudmila Ulitskaia: "I remember the feeling of pleasure I experienced when I read Nabokov's *Invitation to a Beheading*. I discovered that there was another literature. . . . For me Nabokov was the mark of discovering a new culture. Then my relationship with Nabokov developed further and became more complicated. I simply do not like *Ada*. But then not long ago I reread *Laughter in the Dark* several times and fell madly in love with the novel" (Kukulin, "'Nikakikh khimicheskikh vozdeistvii').

73. In the critic Shubinsky's point of view, *Ada* is "the most dubious novel. . . by the great writer" which "became a terrible source of temptation for Russian postmodernists." It turns out, according to him, that "although *Ada* was harder to read than *Lolita* or *The Defense*, it was far easier to imitate it. The postmodern novel, born in the wilds of Amerussia, simplified by the Pavićes, can be utilized further and hybridized with the fantasy novel. And this is what is being done by the long-time publisher of just such novels, Mr. Nazarov (the Amfora publishing house, Petersburg), as well as the philosopher Mr. Sekatsky and a group of like-minded prose writers. First among these is Pavel Krusanov. *Ukus angela* (*Angel's Bite*) is the same as *Putin After Reading* Ada" (Shubinsky, "V epokhu pozdnei bronzy," 308–9).

74. In the original Russian, the words are transliterated from English into a kind of pseudo-intellectual gibberish ridiculing G. Barabtarlo's old-fashioned Russian: "Perebarabtarlano s ángliiskogo zamesto retsenzii: Lor-ra! Littl lord of mai loinz, loriet of mai nobel praiz, lorka of mai kafka! Lor-ra!" See Kuritsyn, "Poddelochka Lorochki."

10

Interpreting Voids

Vladimir Nabokov's Last Incomplete Novel, *The Original of Laura*

Vladimir Nabokov of the post-*Lolita* period claimed that the small émigré audience and the absence of a literary field for his works created a sense of "working in an absolute void."[1] During his American period, this declaration acquired a distinctly aesthetic value as the author maintained that his writing lacked readers and social referents, his chess problems excluded "the participation of other persons," and his scientific concerns did not have technological applications.[2] This private enactment of a utopian vision, however, has been debunked in Walter Cohen's largely forgotten article, published a few years after Nabokov's death. Cohen cunningly suggests that "in denying social significance, Nabokov's fiction therefore paradoxically acquires its most profound social significance. This is only partly the unconscious meaning that any cultural endeavour may legitimately take on in the eyes of the critic. It is also a conscious effort to forge a satisfactory relationship between artistic production and consumption in the twentieth-century West."[3] According to Cohen, these disturbing ambiguities also lurk at the core of Nabokov's theory of art, raising the question: what is the point of a literary product without consumers? And if Nabokov takes this position to its logical extreme, does he not then run the risk of succumbing to the worst aspects of the very economic relationships his writing is designed to oppose? Recently, Alexander Dolinin revived this provocative point of view and argued that in his American period Nabokov consciously reconstructed his émigré past and manipulated his own retrospective image. By downplaying his involvement in the contemporary literary process, Nabokov devised a mythologem of a self-sustained maverick.[4] Dolinin's argumentation was fiercely debated, and the whole discussion stimulated interesting pros and cons.[5]

Using the case of *The Original of Laura*, I will explore some of the economic issues that lay at the foundation of Nabokov's posthumous legacy.[6] Nabokov was writing *The Original of Laura* at the time of his death in 1977. For three decades, the unpublished

novel and its contents were viewed only by Nabokov's son, wife, and a few scholars. Although Nabokov requested that upon his death the work be destroyed, his family hesitated to eradicate this incomplete but perhaps important literary work. In early 2008, Dmitri Nabokov, the writer's only heir, announced plans to make the work public.[7]

Far more intriguing than the meager fragments of an unfinished novel is the dynamic relationship that exists between the principal decision makers (the Nabokov Estate), the intermediaries (literary agencies, scholars), the lobbying groups (mass media, bloggers, the writer's fans, and so on), and the general readership (consumers). In this case, most compelling and important is the public discussion prior to and then after Dmitri Nabokov's announced intention to publish the manuscript, and it is on this issue that this chapter will focus. I will analyze the consequences of this critical discourse as well as its impact on the market value of Vladimir Nabokov's *already published* oeuvre. The result was a net gain in Nabokov's symbolic capital, positively impacting his posthumous legacy.

In contrast to many readers, I neither see anything wrong with selling one's manuscript for a maximum profit, nor have any interest in a discussion of the (im)moral aspects of the issue. In addition to being an undeniable genius, Nabokov may also be viewed as a self-promoting literary agent, whose own marketing strategies largely shaped the posthumous marketing campaign of *The Original of Laura* by his son Dmitri.

HISTORY IN BRIEF

Nabokov first mentioned this project in his diary on 1 December 1974, under the title *Dying Is Fun*. A year later he returned to "the abyss of [his] new novel" tentatively entitled *A Passing Fashion*.[8] By the summer of 1976 he claimed that the story was complete in his mind, but his situation was complicated by the fact that his physical health had deteriorated. Prior to his death, the novel-in-progress was retitled *The Opposite of Laura* and, finally, *The Original of Laura*. Sometimes it is also referred to as *TOOL*—the abbreviation may be a deliberate reference to the writer's tool, in Nabokov's case, the pencil. The incomplete manuscript consists of Nabokov's own handwritten passages across 138 index cards, the equivalent of about fifty manuscript pages.

Rather than recounting the actual plot of *The Original of Laura*, my interest here is in the often-incorrect plot summaries that proliferated prior to the novel's publication, as well as readers' interest in them. According to a 2006 account of *TOOL* by Lara Delage-Toriel, the narrator/protagonist of Nabokov's book receives a novel titled *My Laura* from a painter. The narrator realizes that the novel is in fact about his own wife Flora, whom the painter had once pursued. In this novel within the novel, the character Laura is "destroyed" by the first-person narrator of the book. Delage-Toriel also notes that the names "Laura" and "Flora" possibly refer to well-known High Renaissance portraits of women by Titian and Giorgione, both evoking the Italian sonneteer Petrarch's unconsummated obsession with a woman named

Laura.[9] Delage-Toriel admitted that the meaning of *TOOL* was obscure. It is not clear whether she had access to the entire set of index cards or in which order she read them. A writer in *The Times* delivered a widely differing plot description after discussions with unidentified scholars:

> Philip Wild, an enormously corpulent scholar, is married to a slender, flighty and wildly promiscuous woman called Flora. Flora initially appealed to Wild because of another woman that he'd been in love with, Aurora Lee. Death and what lies beyond it, a theme which fascinated Nabokov from a very young age, are central. The book opens at a party and there follow four continuous scenes, after which the novel becomes more fragmented. It is not clear how old Wild is, but he is preoccupied with his own death and sets about obliterating himself from the toes upwards through meditation. A sort of deliberate self-inflicted self-erasure.[10]

Different renditions of the same plot added to the overall confusion. Until 2008, Dmitri Nabokov rejected the validity of these plot outlines. He did not specify which one was truer to the spirit of the book and even offered a third possible insight, enticing readers even more to the secret text that granted only limited access to a select few.[11] Combined with what was already known, this additional clue only complicated the coherence of the already available pieces of the puzzle.

INJECTING MYSTERY

The primary goal of these often-conflicting statements, issued regularly since the late 1990s, was to ensure continued public interest in Nabokov's uncompleted project. Nabokov thus appeared not yet fully canonized, but was still evolving as a dynamic author with, potentially, a rising literary market value.

Close to his father's centennial, Dmitri Nabokov was still undecided about what to do with the incomplete manuscript. *The New York Times* quoted Dmitri as saying that it would have been "a brilliant, original and potentially totally radical book, in the literary sense, very different from the rest of his oeuvre." Despite the fact that his father was against publishing anything that was unfinished, Dmitri felt uncertain: "If I burn it, it's gone forever. If I don't and don't publish it, eventually it will fall into somebody's hands. Probably the right thing to do would be to make a rare contravention of my father's wishes and make what there is available to scholars."[12] Seven years later during the fall of 2005, *The Times* reported that Nabokov's last novel would be destroyed unread, a rumor Dmitri carefully approved in a conversation with the Russian newspaper *Izvestiya*.[13] Although no action followed, the informational vacuum was interrupted by vague reports and denials of requests for additional clarification (which itself is a significant act in the pragmatics of communication). Above all, dramatic tension was sustained by particularly elegant descriptions of the novel ("the distillation of [Nabokov's] art") by either Dmitri or a few loyal Nabokovians who allegedly had read or heard parts of *TOOL*.

What existed, then, was a constructed metalinguistic domain in which a text was withheld and enveloped within a "discourse of absence," which strangely enough allowed for the legitimate circulation of (sometimes false) descriptions of the unpublished novel: the journalist Ron Rosenbaum quotes the scholar Zoran Kuzmanovich, who quotes Dmitri Nabokov, who allegedly provides quotes from his father's manuscript of *TOOL* during the Nabokov celebration at Cornell University in 1998. These very practices represent different facets of the brilliant tactics consciously or subconsciously employed by the Nabokov Estate—from simulated discourse that is to be assembled like a jig-saw puzzle, to implicit threats of the manuscript's annihilation.

Until 2009, discrepancies existed even in the physical description of the manuscript, in particular its length. In April 1976, Nabokov informed McGraw-Hill that "he had passed the hundred printed page mark, about half of the novel."[14] Based on Nabokov's diary, Rosenbaum estimated that Nabokov was proceeding at the rate of five or six index cards per day, but did a lot of rewriting. Quoting Dmitri, Rosenbaum suggested that "the text amounts to some 30 conventional manuscript pages," or approximately 50 index cards.[15] Later Dmitri himself corrected this figure to 138 cards.[16]

The mystery of the text also extended to its vague whereabouts. Official reports from the Nabokov Estate suggested that the manuscript of the incomplete novel was placed in a Swiss bank vault where it remained since the writer's death, although the first announcement of this kind was made only in 2003. In an interview with the Spanish journal *Joyce*, Dmitri Nabokov revealed that

> *The Original of Laura* reposes in a bank vault. I have attentively examined the index cards on which it is written. In many cases, I have deciphered the script or the sense of difficult passages. In some cases, I have been stumped. A transcript of the book, as coherent as it has been possible to make given its unfinished state, is stored together with the original of the Original. The fate of the handwritten cards, and especially of the text itself, is a thorny question that must be pondered further.[17]

Later, according to other accounts, the original text of *TOOL* was transferred to an alternative location and access was given to Dmitri's unnamed trustee. Evidently there was no urgent need to store the text in a bank, but by depositing it in a place where money or valuables are usually safeguarded, the manuscript's aesthetic and artistic worth is presumed. The very mention of the storage location—especially with the Swiss bank's clichéd connotations of secrecy and heightened security—imposes on *TOOL* a symbolic value quite different from that of a text discovered in grandma's attic.

Even though Dmitri had his understandable hesitations, the executor's dilemma is a myth, subsequently created, which justifies the existence of the manuscript to the present day. Judging by his own claims, Dmitri Nabokov struggled not so much with the question "to publish or not to publish," but rather how to announce his decision *to publish* in the most decisive and unequivocal manner.[18] As I will demonstrate

below, Dmitri manipulated the situation with virtuosity similar to his father's. In so doing, he risked his reputation as an obedient son in order to win fame and fortune in the long run. The debate over *TOOL*'s fate, along with the inevitable negative publicity, propelled Nabokov's posthumous literary legacy to heights of popularity beyond what could have been expected had the novel been published thirty years earlier (which would have also involved a considerable amount of international pre-publication drama).[19]

Dmitri manipulated the market with his own judgments on his father's works, often by withholding the most vital information, and thereby creating a situation in which he controlled the dissemination of (or lack of) information. This *information asymmetry* in turn created a market wherein Dmitri knew more than his customers. In cultural economics, readers, scholars, and critics (customers) are willing to pay for information that the expert can provide.[20] In turn, this intangible cultural capital (information about Vladimir Nabokov) receives a market value based on preexisting demand and on pre-established forms. Pierre Bourdieu calls this activity "enterprises with a *long production cycle*, founded on the acceptance of the risk inherent in cultural investments and above all on submission to the specific laws of the art trade."[21] Having no market in the present, the product must be developed with an eye toward the future. If we accept Bourdieu's theory, it becomes evident that Nabokov's last work was destined to be published in order to maintain the author's symbolic capital. Possibly this is why Dmitri Nabokov preferred a commercial Swiss bank to an institutional archive.[22] The marketing campaign for Nabokov's last novel is unique in that the dramatic *story* behind its posthumous publication prolongs the novel's career beyond the initial stage of distribution and assures immediate profit. The advance publicity creates demand well before anyone can judge the novel on its own merits, and thus minimizes risk. And prior to the actual appearance of the work in print, the estate receives direct returns as well as auxiliary rights for translations, paperback editions, and television or cinema adaptations.

How is one to reconcile the various statements by stakeholders and critics when the text represents the ultimate void? Turning from the theory of information asymmetry employed by economists and social anthropologists, literary theory notes that a narrative "gap" indicates a deliberately withheld piece of information within the text itself. Usually this is a missing link in a series of events, an absent motive, a contradiction that challenges the audience's understanding of the narrative, or an unexplained departure from standard form and structure. In the case of *TOOL* there was an essential expression of an empty space (that still, by the way, manifests in *TOOL* today even though it has been published). It was Nabokov who exorcised memory to speak, but it became the reader's task to activate and construct the unread *TOOL*, basing this construct on the combination of Nabokov's published works.[23]

As mentioned earlier, the operative question for Dmitri Nabokov was not whether the text should be published, but rather *how* it would be presented to the literary market. Several media reports mentioned Dmitri toying with the idea of mechanically reproducing the 138 index cards on which *TOOL* is recorded.[24] These reports

proved to be correct, and this conceptual presentation of the material object became an aesthetic statement in itself regardless of the quality of the narrative contained within. Indeed, the very nature of reproduction defies the notion of completeness and a traditional narrative. Predecessors include B. S. Johnson's 1969 book-in-a-box, *The Unfortunates*, notorious for its presentation rather than its content. Nabokov's own method—a shoebox used to hold the index cards of his manuscripts in progress—precedes both Julio Cortázar and B. S. Johnson. Before him this method was, in fact, professionally employed by the Symbolist author Fyodor Sologub, whose celebrated novel *Petty Demon* (1902–1907) Nabokov knew well; the novel was recorded on 246 cards and kept in a small filing cabinet.[25]

THE POWER OF EMPTY SPACES

Writing about "the rights of the reader," Lisa Block de Behar asserts that the text is regarded as a work of interpretation, the operation of actualization through which literary discourse is produced. The textual event takes place through reciprocity, a mutual dependence between the reader (who supposes a reality) and the work (which proposes a reality).[26] In this sense the case of *TOOL* missed the most crucial element—reciprocity. Paradoxically, the reciprocity was amply compensated by what I propose to call the *discourse of absence*.

Public discussion prior to Dmitri's announced decision in April 2008 to publish *TOOL* centered mainly on the question of whether his father's clearly expressed wishes should be carried out (or, according to some, *should have been* carried out). The leeway for maneuvering, however, was the actual *clarity* of that expression, and the contradictory nature of the will (more of a volition than a last-will-and-testament) became part and parcel of the *Laura* dilemma from the outset. To release tensions and find a way out of the deadlock, some creative decisions were required on Dmitri's part (as one of the British bloggers wittily suggested: "Photocopy it, and burn the original as requested . . . no problem").

A literary work, even if it appears to be new, does not present itself as something absolutely new in an informational vacuum, but rather, as Hans Robert Jauss says, predisposes its audience to a very specific kind of reception by announcements, overt and covert signals, familiar characteristics, or implicit allusions: "It awakens memories of that which was already read, brings the reader to a specific emotional attitude, and with its beginning arouses expectations for the 'middle and end,' which can be maintained intact or altered, reoriented, or even fulfilled ironically in the course of the reading according to specific rules of the genre or type of text."[27] *TOOL* evoked the horizon of expectations—borrowing Jauss' terminology again—for the reader and seemed familiar from Nabokov's earlier texts. The interpretative reception of a text presupposes the experience of aesthetic perception, and its result can be verified once the text under discussion becomes a part of public domain. Until this was done, the only way to determine the context and contents of *TOOL* was by mean-

ingful negation: between 1976 and 2008 readers knew that Nabokov's last novel was *not* like any other he had written before; it was *not* inspired by either Petrarch or Otto Preminger; it did *not* draw from *Pale Fire*; it was *not* entitled *TOOL*, and so on (reminding one of the strange and grotesque game called "nonnons" [*netki*] in *Invitation to a Beheading*, whose doomed protagonist was also struggling with his never-to-be-finished novel). Furthermore, it seems that the pattern of negation was imbedded into the *Laura* dilemma from its very inception—as mentioned earlier, one working title of the novel was *The Opposite of Laura*.

Thus not only did *TOOL* trigger a discourse of its own, which substituted the actual text, but it was largely assumed that the unpublished piece belonged to Nabokov's refined masterpieces. To understand how an absent work was able to achieve such status and value, one would need to resort to the notion of "heteronomy," which implies that the way we rank something varies with our assumptions and aims. Observing shifts in judgment and taste, Paul Armstrong argues that the value of any piece of writing is "heteronomous" to its judge—both dependent on and independent of his or her interests, purposes, and beliefs. The value of a text is not simply a reflection of our wishes and needs. Judgment is always judgment of something, not merely the unresisting and untested play of the evaluator's faculties because, first, "literature" is constantly shifting. Moreover, preservation is the ultimate criterion of value and of literariness. Preservation is a historical activity that does not create timeless monuments, for what a community decides to regard as valuable can change, but it is also an object-related process in which the ability of a text to perform continued services and the capacity of a community's beliefs to make new sense of the tradition it inherits are constantly testing each other.[28] Therefore, preserving *TOOL* was essential regardless of contemporary critics' (re) views following its publication: its value will be re-evaluated and shifted as a result of a historical process of reading, rereading, and re-rereading by future generations. Even unpublished and virtually unread, a "new" old Nabokov novel projected power upon its readers and critics, while every party was participating in the production of belief.

His estate, loyal critics, and scholars *nolens volens* all contributed to raising the value of Nabokov by bringing him into a known and renowned existence. By means of this invisible collusion, Nabokov was consecrated and his works were rarefied. Nabokov was increasingly venerated in exhibitions, prestigious collections, and museums, and validated in record-breaking auction prices. Without interviews on National Public Radio, the British Broadcasting Corporation, the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation, and the Australian Broadcasting Corporation; without Dmitri's infamous ALL-CAPITAL-LETTERED EMAILS; without the extensive blog commentary in respected online publications worldwide—without all this the whole *Laura* dilemma "would be nothing but a crazy or insignificant gesture without the universe of celebrants and believers who are ready to produce it as endowed with meaning and value by reference to the entire tradition which produced their categories of perception and appreciation."[29]

Nabokov's unpublished manuscript, like a religious object, received value not only from belief in its "literary value" but also as a part of the canonized body of an already known oeuvre. The assessment of the Nabokov Estate was quite obvious: even if the text is not widely read as a novel due to its fragmentary nature, it will still be deemed valuable within academic discourse due to its history of production and reception. It has been claimed that the university is a locus of real power for the distribution of cultural capital, and therefore a good place for a political praxis to define its object. John Guillroy recognizes that the university belongs to an educational system, inclusive of every level and every kind of school, higher and lower, public and private.[30] The fact that Professor Nabokov was part of an educational system for almost a decade himself should not be overlooked.

READERS' RESPONSES AND SHAPING PUBLIC OPINION

The surprise announcement, seemingly Dmitri Nabokov's own decision, was made on an Australian literary talk show on 15 February 2008.[31] "I have decided," Ramona Koval quoted Dmitri, "that my father, with a wry and fond smile, might well have contradicted himself upon seeing me in my present situation and said, 'Well, why don't you mix the useful with the pleasurable? That is, say or do what you like but why not make some money on the damn thing?'"[32] Dmitri Nabokov's verdict was a climactic moment in the *Laura* saga, but public opinion was also instrumental in its pronouncement. While journalists have been on the offensive and academics remain spellbound, a general readership has watched the public debate closely.[33]

Evidence of the consecration process and especially the creation of interest among future consumers can be found in the blogosphere.[34] Most of the respondents in the blogosphere testified to their mixed feelings and uncertainty about the publication of Nabokov's unfinished novel:

> "As a devout Nabokov fan, I, like Mr. Dmitri Nabokov, am torn. Torn between following one of the 20th century's, if not one of the all-time, greatest writer's wishes, and incinerating, or otherwise disposing of the text, or going against his wishes and publishing the text in question. From what I gather from the numerous articles, is that Nabokov simply told his son to burn the manuscript. Did he ever say he couldn't publish it? Publish it, then burn it." (Will, Boulder, CO);
>
> "One argument for saving it is that if the cards were photographed and reproduced exactly as they are and transcribed as well, no one could claim representation other than archival." (Elan Durham, Santa Monica, CA)

Intellectuals and writers seemed to be equally divided on the issue of "burning" or "not burning."[35] The user named "ihatethenewlogin" posted his comment in January 2008:

> "Now we're going to start taking orders from dead people? [. . .] Sure, we respect a lot of ghostly stuff—the Bible, the Constitution, the Magna Carta. But this is a case of here and now. If D[mitri] sets fire to the ms, he goes down in history as a book-burning pin-

> head. If he sets the ms free, then the literary world gets to ooh and ah and deconstruct for years, decades, centuries. VN is dead, it wouldn't hurt him. Reputation? Everyone knows this is a totally unfinished piece, a protobook, raw, unpolished. It's not going to hurt his reputation. So—it can't hurt him, it can't hurt his reputation. Anybody see any potential foul here? I don't." [36]

"Respect the dead," the reader "peterahon" replied on the same blog. "I wonder how many people will disregard a will and testament of an inheritance? Besides he made that will when he [was] alive, and not a ghost. Burn it."

Dmitri's inventive pronouncement, "imagining my father, with a wry smile, in a calmer and happier moment, saying, 'Well you're in a real mess here—go ahead and publish. Have some fun,'" left many bloggers particularly intrigued by this description of a conversation with his ghostly father.[37] "How appropriate for VN to appear to his son as a ghost, when ghosts play such an important role in the novels," noted Mickey Bitsko on 24 April 2008, while William O'Connor added the next day that "Nabokov was a wonderful writer and one of my very favourites. What a shame that he didn't dictate his final novel. Perhaps a tape still exists somewhere? I suspect his ghost is enjoying all this tremendously."[38] In the pages of the *Guardian*, meanwhile, Kathryn Hughes commented that "if it were anyone else but Vladimir Nabokov, I'd suggest doing the decent, respectful thing and letting *The Original of Laura* go up in smoke. But given that we're talking about the trickiest literary jester who ever lived, I think we can assume that the whole thing is a kind of Nabokovian practical joke from beyond the grave."[39]

Still, others who were disappointed by Dmitri's disobedience protested. "This is a shame," declared Christian Kolouch on 28 April 2008. "This is against the wishes of a man who already gave us so much. He asked for this not to be published, to transgress those wishes is indicative of the treatment of artistry." A few days earlier on 25 April, Kas Salawu similarly pointed out that "I once read that, during one of those 'formal' interviews that Professor Nabokov (I graduated from Cornell in engineering in the sixties) granted, where questions were usually submitted ahead of time, the learned professor declined to show the interviewer any work-in-progress because he said it was as private and as unglamorous as one's morning sputum." James Harris's suggestion of 28 April bordered on cynicism, mocking the monetary aspect of the Nabokov Estate's decision: "If 'tool' is an anagram, how about 'loot'? There should be some in the cards for Dmitri."[40]

Supporters of Dmitri's decision expressed themselves mostly emotionally.[41] Others appealed to common sense, such as Rodney Welch of Columbia, SC, who on 25 November 2005 posted on NABOKV-L that "if people really want to commit suicide, they commit suicide. If they don't really want to commit suicide, they announce their intentions to friends, with the unconscious hope that they'll be stopped. I think the same goes for book burning." And on 23 April 2008, Gregory Cowles announced, "I think I'm in favour of that decision [to publish]: I'd rather have more Nabokov than less in the world, and clearly he was too conflicted about the manuscript's value to destroy it himself."[42] Intelligent readers found it hard to avoid references to Nabokov's other literary works in justifying their case: "There's a curious parallel between

this [*Laura*] story and Nabokov's novel *Pale Fire*, which purports to be a posthumous edition of the last work of the fictional poet John Shade, also assembled on index cards," observed "Peterv" on 22 January 2008. He continued, "Nabokov is dead, so his intentions are now surely irrelevant. Who cares what he would have wanted!" Practical suggestions were numerous as well, such as that from David Cory who, on 26 April 2008, asked: "So who decides how the cards will be shuffled and dealt now that Nabokov is not around? Maybe the publisher should just sell copies of the 50 cards so readers can rearrange them to suit themselves."

Most Russian readers were unequivocal and less sympathetic than their English-language counterparts. "Our view is surprisingly simple, considering," wrote Serge Romanov of Moscow, in response to Stephanie Marsh's first article in *The Times*:

> It's a hoax in a very characteristic "Nabokovian" style that the snob was so fond of all his life. No manuscript or cards exist, stories of nurses hearing the text read metamorphose themselves from "witness accounts" to ravings of the writer in his deathbed, there was a previous hoax "by a librarian," and pronouncements of the most urgent kind pop up with uncanny regularity. Stop flogging a dead horse. There is no Laura. Do not publish the pranksters.

Members of the Russian-language community "nabokov_ru" in LiveJournal also actively discussed the issue: "I believe," commented one of them, "that Nabokov is laughing at us. As a writer, I think, he, of course, wanted *TOOL* to be published. But not immediately. Maybe in thirty years or so."

Doubtless, the decisive factor in the shaping of public opinion was the partial revelation of the text prior to an announced "final decision." Indeed, a few carefully selected quotes accompanied several of Dmitri's interviews, and immediately provoked responses.[43]

Attempts to install the *Laura* paradigm into a larger ideological context have also been pursued. It is hard to tell whether the following post is a hoax or not, but even as a possibly fraudulent attempt to articulate a "model reader" from a region undergoing major cultural shock therapy, it definitely demonstrates how the politics of interpretation influence contemporary critical discourse on Nabokov. Signed by a certain Adnan Tofiq, the message was posted in response to Dmitri's interview on *Vanity Fair*'s website: "Dear sir, I was fascinated with *Lolita* and I expect to be more fascinated with *Laura*, so I think Dimitri [sic] had done the best thing in his life to save and publish it but our problem in Iraq is that we are disappointed with Americans as we expected an overwhelming flow of books to our country however I am glad *Laura* that one day I will able to read it."[44]

Last but not least, the journalist Ron Rosenbaum's role in molding public opinion should also be addressed. Between 2005 and 2008 Rosenbaum published half a dozen pieces on *TOOL* in the mainstream press. Yet Rosenbaum, who once clearly profited from receiving exclusive information concerning the novel as Dmitri's confidante, now feels deceived: "In Dmitri's ALL-CAPITAL-LETTERED EMAIL, he said that my column calling on him to end the suspense and to make a decision one

way or another had complicated his life as literary executor of the Nabokov Estate by drawing too much media attention to him."[45] Others repeated this sentiment: Dmitri "concedes that public pressure, notably from the 'impatient' journalist Ron Rosenbaum (Dmitri's description, not mine), is what pushed him to announce his decision."[46] By launching a public plea to save *Laura*, Rosenbaum's columns generated widespread publicity for the Nabokov Estate during a period when, apparently, undisclosed negotiations regarding the publication of the manuscript were already taking place—unbeknownst to readers and to Rosenbaum.[47] When the decision to save the manuscript was finally announced (and, probably, made long before that), Rosenbaum publicly admitted that he was not sure he had made the right call.[48] In fact, it was Dmitri Nabokov himself who shared with Rosenbaum an excerpt about *TOOL* from an unpublished interview given to the *Nabokov Online Journal*, thus reigniting the critical discussion around the manuscript.[49] Once the relationship had exhausted itself, Dmitri withdrew his cooperation with the journalist, but only *after* the key announcement.[50] Rosenbaum realized that he had fallen into a trap and had become a *tool* himself.

MARKETING "NOTHING": BETWEEN FIRE AND A BID

The price of Nabokov's unread manuscript was set regardless of its artistic quality. After its publication, the novel was a disappointment for some, but for others it was a unique glimpse into the writer's creative laboratory. The envisaged conditions of reception are, therefore, part of the conditions of production, and anticipation of a market's sanctions helps to determine the direction of the discourse. According to Bourdieu, most authors unwittingly try to maximize the symbolic profit they can obtain from practices that are inseparably oriented toward communication and exposed to evaluation, while it is the market that fixes the price for a linguistic product.[51]

Journalists were the first to state publicly that the *Laura* dilemma could be viewed in terms of a marketing ploy:

> So this is a story about the demands of the literary world versus the posthumous rights of an author over his art. Or it's a story about a son caught between a powerful urge to go against his late father's wishes and an equally powerful urge to carry them out. Or, less likely but still a possibility, *it is a story about money*. [. . .] Dmitri, what are you saying? Why are you playing with us? Is this constant public vacillation on Laura *an attempt to push up its market value*? Or is it a sincere wringing of hands?[52]

Kathryn Hughes mused over the psychological aspects of what she calls "the peculiar attitude of Nabokov's son Dmitri": "For the past 30 years apparently he's been dropping tantalizing hints about the quality of *Laura* while sounding like he was only five minutes away from taking a match to it. If you ask me, it sounds like he loves the attention."[53] Readers, too, continued this trend.[54]

Possibly foreseeing such accusations, Dmitri Nabokov preemptively raised the issue of money himself and presented the publication of *TOOL* as a fun business deal. Even Rosenbaum admitted that selling *Laura* might be best for the manuscript: "I'm sure there are respectable scholarly institutions, museums, and foundations that would pay considerable sums to take on the guardianship of the last fictional creation of the greatest novelist of the past century, perhaps limiting access to scholars and—alas—probably excluding the 'sleuths and stirrers' responsible for their windfall."[55] However, Rosenbaum overestimated the monetary resources of these "respectable institutions." According to some internal sources, *TOOL* had already been offered to New York Public Library some years ago (its Berg Collection houses one of the largest institutional archives of Nabokoviana in the world), but it rejected the offer precisely because of the prodigious price tag, a sum that would allow for the acquisition of two or three minor American writers' archives in toto.

Hardly coincidentally, the announcement of the forthcoming publication of *TOOL* was made just after Dmitri Nabokov decided to leave the literary agency that had represented the Nabokov Estate for the previous twenty years. The newly hired literary agent, Andrew Wylie, is famous for his expert handling of the posthumous works of such heavyweights as Saul Bellow, Lionel Trilling, Richard Yates, Norman Mailer, Italo Calvino, and Jorge Luis Borges. He is also infamous for his tendency to lure high-profile clients away from less powerful agents.[56] His stable of living writers includes Salman Rushdie, Philip Roth, and Martin Amis. What makes this agent an often-reviled figure (other favored epithets include "evil madman" and "monster") is his prowess at extracting huge advances on his clients' behalves. The nickname "Jackal" reportedly stuck to Wylie after he secured a then-unprecedented $750,000 advance for the British novelist Amis, who retained Wylie several years ago after dumping his long-time agent, the wife of his best friend. Wylie has said he divides literary agents into two categories: the establishment types who expect clients to come in search of them, and the go-getters like himself. Key to his success is flattering authors and wooing them in person. Other tactics include employing an author's family members (the agent reportedly hired a cousin of Amis before signing him), representing authors who might impress future clients (he acknowledged signing the late Benazir Bhutto in pursuit of Rushdie), and promising huge advances if a prospective client signs with him.[57]

Wylie's grand business plan was a complex orchestration of *TOOL* releases worldwide. The operation was logistically complicated because it involved simultaneous negotiations with publishers, translators, and media, while taking care of all these arrangements under the veil of secrecy. Dmitri Nabokov's responsibilities (as were his late father's in similar deals) included, among other things, quality control over the translations and endorsement of the jacket designs. Dmitri also personally selected translators and authors of prefaces. The English publication of the novel was issued by Knopf; in Germany, by the publishing house Rowohlt; the copyright for the Russian edition of *TOOL* was granted to the leading St. Petersburg publisher Azbooka, provided that the translator was chosen by Dmitri.[58] This meticulous process was

not something unusual for Nabokov's posthumous legacy. It is enough to recall the case of the Italian novelist Pia Pera's radical retelling of *Lolita* (1995, Italian edition). The book retells Nabokov's story not from Humbert Humbert's perspective, but instead from that of the young girl. When Farrar, Straus & Giroux announced an English translation of Pera's book, Dmitri Nabokov, as a literary executor of the estate, filed suit for copyright violation. Threats were fired back and forth until a unique out-of-court settlement was reached: Dmitri agreed to the publication of an English translation of the novel on the condition that it be accompanied by a preface—written by himself.[59]

The issue of *Who is in charge?* in the relationship between text and reader, publisher and interpreter is, among other things, a question about the distribution of power. Nabokov alluded to these same questions in his own *Pale Fire*, a novel mocking an interpreter's dream of unrestrained power and unchallenged authority—a dream that turns out to be an epistemological nightmare because such hermeneutic hegemony quickly degenerates into the blindness of self-validating belief. Thus *TOOL* evokes not only questions of ethics but also a complex array of power relations between the publication of a work of art and the acts of translation, introduction, and interpretation. Interpretation, as noted by Armstrong, is "an intrinsically political activity because power is present in the act of understanding in many forms." [60]

And while it may look like Dmitri Nabokov was marketing "nothing" and selling a virtual text, some early returns are already evident. A fresh anthology of Russian poetry, *Verses and Versions*, which Nabokov translated into English, is now available from Houghton Mifflin-Harcourt. Other previously unpublished Nabokov materials that will appear in the near future include a volume of letters he wrote to his wife "which are marvellously lyrical and full of acute observation," a couple of his plays, and a compilation of interview transcripts and book reviews he wrote early in his career for New York papers like *The Sun* and magazines like *The New Republic*.[61] The poetry collection will be the third and final book in a three-book deal the Nabokov Estate signed with Harcourt. Among the rediscovered treasures is one of Nabokov's earliest short stories, written in Berlin around 1924, called "Natasha." As part of the Library of Congress's Nabokov archive, "Natasha" has been translated by Dmitri Nabokov and was published in English for the first time in *The New Yorker* magazine—shortly after the announced plans for *TOOL*. [62]

According to the economist David Throsby, cultural capital is defined as an asset that embodies, stores, or gives rise to cultural value in addition to whatever economic value it may possess. Cultural capital may deteriorate over time, necessitating investment in its maintenance or refurbishment.[63] The effect of the *Laura* dilemma can be measured in both economic and cultural terms. The scandal and public debate over an unfinished novel written on index cards and destined for the incinerator will raise the value of Nabokov's literary stock. To meet the demands of the reading public, Nabokov's new and old titles will also be reprinted with redesigned jackets. *Lolita* and *Pale Fire*, meanwhile, are being read, reread, and re-reread, with more paperback editions in the offing. It is hard to imagine such a massive and well-organized marketing

plan, especially for Nabokov's early Russian and so-called "minor" English-language works, or even for much cherished private correspondence, were it not for the genuine excitement generated by *TOOL*. Nabokov has been rebranded—until the next tool is needed.

NOTES

1. Vladimir Nabokov, *Speak, Memory*, 282.
2. Vladimir Nabokov, *Strong Opinions*, 117.
3. Walter Cohen, "The Making of Nabokov's Fiction," 337.
4. Dolinin, "Nabokov as a Russian Writer," 53.
5. Gavriel Shapiro called Dolinin's "presentation of Nabokov's shift from Russian to English a carefully calculated opportunistic move . . . a cruel and truth-bending attack on the writer" in NABOKV-L Archive (7 September 2005). Brian Boyd analyzed Nabokov's "myth-making" self-portrayal as "a born cosmopolitan" who "had always stood apart from literary battles and discussions" vis-à-vis Dolinin's thesis in his paper "Nabokov as a Formerly Russian Writer: Transitions between Traditions" (see Norman and White, "Conference Overview: Transitional Nabokov").
6. This chapter was devoted to a developing story, therefore the author would like to preface that this text was completed in December 2008, and first appeared, under the same title, in *The Russian Review* 70, no. 2 (April 2011): 198–214.
7. See Stringer-Hye, "*Laura* Is Not Even the Original's Name".
8. Boyd, *American Years*, 663; 653.
9. "On close observation of the manuscript, one notices that the name contains in fact two capital letters, 'F' and 'L,' as though Nabokov had been loath to give precedence to either name and had instead opted for some typographical monster, a bicephalous cipher of sorts" (See Delage-Toriel, "Brushing through 'veiled values and translucent undertones'").
10. Marsh, "Vladimir Nabokov, his masterpiece."
11. In his interview with *Vanity Fair*: "Dmitri can't reveal who is publishing the novel, when it will be available, or what the plot is about, but what he can tell me is that the protagonist is 'a brilliant scholar. Very, very fat. Comically fat. Comically unattractive'" (Ahlborn, "Dmitri Nabokov Says His Father's Last Novel Will Be Published"). The correspondent for the fashion magazine comments: "These details are in line with what Dmitri has said about the book in past interviews. 'It contains some of the most original imagery, some of the most unbelievable turns of phrase that we don't find elsewhere in his work,' he claims. 'The writer's craft is taken to a new high.'" He refused, however, to disclose any details to another reporter: "What is the book about, Dmitri? 'THAT WOULD BE TANTAMOUNT TO A PIECEMEAL PUBLICATION. SORRY'" (Marsh, "Vladimir Nabokov, his masterpiece and the burning question").
12. See Gussow, "Toasting (and Analyzing) Nabokov."
13. Bone, "Nabokov's last novel will be destroyed unread, says son"; Kovalenko, "Recent Events have strengthened my decision to burn *The Original of Laura.*"
14. Boyd, *American Years*, 654.
15. Rosenbaum, "Dmitri's Choice."
16. See Norris, "Nabokov Novel to Be Published, Against Dying Wish."

17. Dmitri Nabokov, excerpt from an interview with *Joyce* (Spain), NABOKV-L Archive, 12 October 2003.

18. Cf.: "'There was never any back and forth, and I've not changed my mind since my father's death,' he insists. 'I have spoken of the problem, and I've said that it was a difficult matter to decide, but my decision has never wavered.' So why tease the public and let the question linger? 'I've never teased really. One can be clever, one can try to reveal a little bit without revealing everything, one can write with a sense of humour, but I don't think that I can be accused of deliberately teasing anyone.'" (Ahlborn, "Dmitri Nabokov Says").

19. "One of the most divisive literary manuscripts on earth" (Marsh, "Vladimir Nabokov, his masterpiece and the burning question").

20. Levitt and Dubner, *Freakonomics*, 61.

21. Bourdieu, *The Rules of Art*, 142–43.

22. In a 1999 interview with *Salon* magazine, Dmitri seriously considered preserving the manuscript for a limited circle of selected scholars (Offman, "Dmitri Nabokov on his father's unfinished novel").

23. According to Gary Taylor, memories are emotive while the gap between representation and reality is filled with artifice, imagination, and feeling (Taylor, *Cultural Selection*, 37).

24. While Western media coverage was limited to print reports and radio broadcasts (except the BBC Newsnight report, "Nabokov's final work saved," 18 November 2008), at least two Russian TV crews visited and filmed Dmitri Nabokov in his home at Palm Beach, Florida. See the videos Sergei Morozov, "Syn Nabokova narushil voliu ottsa," Programma *Segodnia*, Telekanal NTV, 25. April 2008, http://news.ntv.ru/131051/; and Nikita Korzun, "Taina Nabokova: Sud'ba *Podlinnika Laury*," Novosti, Telekanal Zvezda, 2 April 2008, http://zvezdanews.ru/video/0001638/.

25. Pavlova, *Pisatel'-inspektor*, 313.

26. Behar, *A Rhetoric of Silence*, 133.

27. Jauss, *Toward an Aesthetic of Reception*, 23.

28. Armstrong, *Conflicting Readings*, 111.

29. Bourdieu, *Rules of Art*, 169. Dmitri's signature brief style in his occasional communications with subscribers of the electronic list Nabokov-L and, especially, with journalists (one of them, Marsh, called these comments "coquettish one-sentence comebacks"; see Marsh, "Vladimir Nabokov, his masterpiece and the burning question").

30. Guillory, *Cultural Capital*, 37.

31. Ramona Koval, the host of the ABC program, spent half an hour eliciting opinions from Brian Boyd (who was in favor of saving *Laura*), Harvard scholar Leland de la Durantaye (in favor of burning), and Ron Rosenbaum (conflicted), after which she quoted an email from Dmitri Nabokov. Dmitri said he held an imagined ghostly conversation with his dead father. Transcript at www.abc.net.au/rn/bookshow/stories/2008/2157977.htm.

32. As Rosenbaum sardonically comments: "And so the imagined shade of V.N., demonstrating indulgent and affectionate fondness for his son's 'present situation' (it's not clear what exactly this means, but it could refer to financial or heath problems or just the worldwide outcry to save Laura), gave him ghostly permission to raise some funds with it" (Rosenbaum, "The Fate of Nabokov's Laura, Part II").

33. Curiously, a panel at AATSEEL had been announced on NABOKV-L in mid-February 2008, but then was abruptly and mysteriously withdrawn, claiming that it was "the wrong call for papers." The initial announcement read: "Special Topic for Nabokov Society session at the MLA convention in San Francisco, CA, 27-30 December 2008: The debate over *The Originals*

[sic] *of Laura*, contextualized with Nabokov's strategies of revision, treatment of unfinished works, or concerns with editors, annotators, executors (either real or fictional) and the like. Send proposals to [. . .]"

34. Before presenting sample opinions, a short methodological preamble is necessary. For this study of the reception instigated by the discussion of the *TOOL* dilemma, I used readers' responses as recorded on the Internet and accessed during October 2008. I narrowed my selection to the months immediately preceding and following Dmitri's announcement of his decision (January-March 2008). The following is based on the analysis of much wider commentary to different news pieces in both English- and Russian-language media related to the publication of the novel. Quoted excerpts are usually left unedited, and emphasis is added whenever I deemed it necessary; the informant's geographic origin is included if it was mentioned in a written response. Although far from ideal, the span and spontaneity of the comments contributed to the representativeness of this approach.

35. The readers of *The Times* were invited to support one of the two opposite opinions by leading contemporary literati: John Banville, who suggested "SAVE IT," and Tom Stoppard, who said "BURN IT" (14 February 2008).

36. The same blogger reassures that he does not "like [Nabokov's] stuff," thinking the writer is vastly overrated, a fact that supposedly empowers him with some objectivity. He philosophically resumes: "Literature is one of the most human of human endeavours. People eat, people have sex, people make houses. SO do dogs, cats, and ants. But no one else, no other species, takes thoughts and puts them down on paper for others to read. Whales might be smart, but not one could write *Moby Dick*." See http://fray.slate.com/discuss/forums/thread/724981.aspx?ArticleID=2181859 (Accessed 19 October 2008).

37. Norris, "Nabokov Novel to Be Published, Against Dying Wish."

38. See http://papercuts.blogs.nytimes.com/2008/04/23/saving-laura/.

39. Kathryn Hughes, "Saving an author's papers from themselves."

40. See www.vanityfair.com/ontheweb/blogs/daily/2008/04/dmitri-nabokov.html.

41. Cf.: "How wonderful that we will have one more Nabokov" (Elizabeth R. DeGeorge, 20 May 2008), http://papercuts.blogs.nytimes.com/2008/04/23/saving-laura/).

42. The same blogger continues: "If [the novel] doesn't live up to [Nabokov's] gratifyingly perfectionist standards—well, it arrives with bucketloads of context, and if nothing else it will give scholars another decoder ring to evaluate the cryptic Nabokovian oeuvre. Lord knows, every piece of that puzzle helps."

43. Akin to this, Lyn LeJeune wrote on 24 April 2008, "if Laura, the book, is as moving as the last paragraph presented above, then I am already in love" (www.beatitudesinneworleans.blogspot.com).

44. 25 April 2008, www.vanityfair.com/ontheweb/blogs/daily/2008/04/dmitri-nabokov.html.

45. Rosenbaum, "The Fate of Nabokov's Laura, Part II."

46. Ahlborn, "Dmitri Nabokov Says."

47. "Dmitri, with all due respect, I think the time has come to make a decision. Tell us what you want to tell us about *Laura* (including the 'real' name of the original). . . . Or give us *Laura* and let us tie ourselves into knots deciding. Or put us out of our misery, and tell us that you intend to preserve the mystery forever by destroying *Laura*. But please don't continue to tease us. . . . And *Slate* readers: You're a literate bunch. Even if you're not Nabokov aficionados, you must have an opinion on the larger issue raised about the final wishes of an artist for an

unfinished work of art he didn't want the world to see: Should Dmitri burn *Laura*? Record your advice here" (Rosenbaum, "Dmitri's Choice").

48. "It's probably too late, but I'm now thinking of calling for Dmitri to change his mind and carry out his father's wishes. Don't authorize a bootleg; burn it, Dmitri!" (Rosenbaum, "Shakespeare's Bootlegger" and "I Helped Save Nabokov's *Laura*."

49. As Rosenbaum admitted on his private blog, "I know this because a week before the official announcement, he passed word on to our mutual friend Deb Friedman through Dmitri's friend Sandy Klein, that '*Laura* will be read' and that he'd include Deb in the acknowledgments. In part, I think because it was Deb who (at Dmitri's suggestion) passed on to me a pre-publication version of his interview in the April '08 issue of the *Nabokov Online Journal* in which Dmitri brings up Laura, threatening to destroy it as his father wished, then has some kind words for me (though disputing my thematic speculations about Laura)" (Rosenbaum, "I Helped Save Nabokov's *Laura*").

50. The same pattern is recognizable in the British journalist's case. Both of Marsh's published articles are so biased, however, that one can hardly feel sympathy for her lamentations: "In February *The Times* joined the debate in an article I wrote; it so enraged Dmitri that he fired off several incandescent e-mails, capped-up for emphasis in Dmitri's trademark style. . . . Luckily, I'd been primed. 'Dmitri loves drama,' two of his associates had warned me. His missives became so violent that we ceased communication" (Marsh, "Dmitri Nabokov decides").

51. Bourdieu, *Language and Symbolic Power*, 76–77.

52. Marsh, "Vladimir Nabokov, his masterpiece and the burning question" (emphasis added).

53. Kathryn Hughes, "Saving an author's papers from themselves."

54. As blogger Tomas Sancio noted on 25 April 2008, "The 'To Burn Or Not To Burn' 30-year ordeal is one of the most clever marketing campaigns I've ever seen. Too bad old Vlad won't have any part of it" (www.vanityfair.com/ontheweb/blogs/daily/2008/04/dmitri-nabokov.html).

55. Rosenbaum, "The Fate of Nabokov's Laura: A *Slate* critic helps."

56. Neyfakh, "Wylie Agency Adds Nabokov Estate."

57. See Eisenberg, "Literary agent Andrew Wylie lures another big writer—posthumously."

58. "Last Novel by Nabokov to Be Published Next Year," 21 August 2008, http://www.russia-ic.com/news/show/6929/. Knopf Publishing Group is part of Random House, which currently holds the exclusive rights of Nabokov's writings in North America.

59. See Durantaye, "The Original of Lolita."

60. Armstrong, *Conflicting Readings*, 134.

61. Boyd as quoted in Neyfakh, "Who Will Publish Nabokov's *The Original of Laura*?"

62. As one journalist described it, "for those used to Nabokov's naturalized English-language writing, 'Natasha' is, refreshingly, almost Tolstoyan in its pacing and diction, not to mention in its theme, while the access to the psychology of childhood is closer to Henry James" (Dammann, "Nabokov returns to the *New Yorker*").

63. Throsby, "Cultural Capital," 168.

Conclusion

When discussing a consumer culture, scholars regularly examine the mass production of goods, manufacturing and transportation issues, the relationship of the commercial sector to the municipal, state and federal players and institutions, the development of a retail marketplace, and the promotion of consumerist values. From this standpoint, much of the discussion is actually about consumer *consumption* (desired or real). The primary focus of this book, however, has been on the theoretical issues embedded in establishing an exchange culture for literature. Rather than the actual consumption of culture, we have concentrated on the creation of symbolic capital by cultural merchants—capital that can eventually be exchanged for financial or ideological profit. Instead of discussing purchasers and their personal interaction with a product through media coverage, retail store environments, and consumerist values, we have discussed the ways in which cultural merchants create symbolic meaning for certain cultural items through a process of collusion, consecration, and the marketing of tangible and intangible products that leads to some sort of transaction.

We have borrowed from the theoretical language of Bourdieu, Danesi, Thorsby, and a few other scholars who have presented general theories on the economics of culture, but have not focused their lenses to examine a single author's legacy, the efforts of his family, and the never-ending work of a specific group of cultural merchants. At issue is the promotion and maintenance of posthumous legacies, the intricate network of personal interests that drives the preservation of literary reputations (for the benefit of all involved). Such a position might distress some scholars, curators, publishers, art dealers, and booksellers who would rather focus on the aesthetics of the product. These experts might denigrate our approach as simply distasteful *samokritika* (self-criticism) and might want to divert the discussion away from the issues of self-interest. We feel that there is more room for this *samokritika* than many cultural merchants are willing to accept, which then puts us at odds with

these same experts. We invite such disagreement and, especially, the discussion that will follow. After all, this book addresses examples of the intellectual and professional imperialism that is prevalent in academia and in the cultural market, of the myth-making and silent collusion of those in our profession that keep us all employed. Some might find this distasteful, while others might find such an open discussion rather refreshing. Those who find this approach stimulating will take the theory even further in an attempt to strip away the hypocrisy that often parades as expert professional opinions.

We believe that the ground is fertile for more *samokritika.* These case studies simply intend to set the table for further discussions about the self-interest that permeates the cultural market and allows for the professional imperialism that favors one book of poetry over another, that suggests the academic candidate with a book review is "a better fit for the department" than the candidate with several peer reviewed articles, that creates a situation in which access to a gallery may be denied because of a difference of opinions, that makes decisions about what to include in a collection of stories by putting more importance on personal relationships than literary competence, and that gives the Nobel Prize in Literature to Ivan Bunin, Boris Pasternak, Alexander Solzhenitsyn, and Joseph Brodsky for both literary accomplishment and in order to embarrass the Soviet Union. In a market in which professional capital is mainly symbolic, individual *competence* is more difficult to quantify for a non-expert. As a result, the less intimidating candidate for those on the committee is hired at the research university, the former student of a gallery owner gets the space to display his work, and the literary figures most likely to shame a government receive the award.

One manifestation of professional imperialism that most academics confront occurs when an editor tells a scholar what the press publishes. What *sells* according to editors is something with an appeal for numerous scholarly audiences, with a name that many recognize and a topic that is relevant. Unfortunately, not every scholar can research and publish on fashionable topics involving Leo Tolstoy, Fyodor Dostoevsky, or Anton Chekhov. Similarly, academics confront a peer review process that is often less about what is written and more about what the reviewer wanted to read. It is not uncommon to find in a reader's response confusing remarks such as "a great deal to the economics of culture beyond Bourdieu and this scholarship should be engaged accordingly" with no further specifics. These statements, although authoritative-sounding at first blush, pale upon further reflection without specifics, requiring the author to guess what the expert intended. Frustrated, the scholar wonders if the reviewer cannot distinguish between critical thinking and simply being critical in order to maintain this symbolic designation as an expert. Unwilling to provide something academically trendy, we have offered case studies of two families who engaged in the consecration process in order to secure the literary reputations of their relatives. The Andreevs and the Nabokovs left detailed records of their efforts in libraries and archives, making such studies possible. Also, Leonid Andreev and Vladimir Nabokov were leading literary figures of their representative times, and their families' lives and literary endeavors run parallel without being dependent on

each other. As a result, the two sections tell similar stories about the ways in which a posthumous literary reputation was created and then maintained. We apologize if you were expecting another study of Alexander Pushkin.

Today, most literary scholars would not place Leonid Andreev in the same class as Vladimir Nabokov and yet, Andreev was honored with a collected works edition before Ivan Bunin, Andrei Bely, or even Nabokov himself. Arguably, Nabokov quite consciously alluded to Andreev's prose and even experimented with certain narrative models employed in his senior peer's successful fiction. Maria Malikova, for example, believes that the famous finale of Nabokov's great short story "The Return of Chorb" (1925)—"'They don't speak,' whispered the lackey, and put his finger to his lips"[1]—evokes the ending of Andreev's short story "Silence" ("Molchanie," 1900) and his play *The Life of Man* (*Zhizn cheloveka*, 1907).[2] As noted in the introduction to this book, Nabokov commemorated Andreev's image in *The Luzhin Defense*—an episodic figure bears a portrait resemblance to the iconic writer, and the novel itself functions as an homage to the previous generation of fiction writers whose importance Nabokov recognizes, but whose influence no longer greatly impacts him. T. S. Eliot, in a similar vein, distanced himself from earlier writers. Scholarship has demonstrated the brilliance of Harold Bloom's paradigm and, as Leonard Diepeveen puts it, "Eliot creates space for himself by separating himself from earlier writers, by rewriting them."[3] But for Nabokov this positioning himself vis-à-vis his literary predecessors is something more than an 'anxiety of influence' (Andreev was not Bely, and Bely was not Tolstoy); it is the urge for a metaliterary dialogue and for a sense of cultural continuity that compels Nabokov to engage in any intertextual activity. He is not interested in merely parodying Andreev's appearance in *The Luzhin Defense*, but uses fiction as a vehicle to link literary traditions; in that passage (quoted in the introduction to the present book), the emergence of the "Andreev"-like personage is intertwined—via the aviation motif—with memories of Luzhin's fiancé. The female observer's gaze is focused on the subject's face, and following his eyes she looks up at the sky, "which enemy airplanes had begun to haunt."[4] Here Nabokov resorts to a typical ellipsis—the scene is described through the mechanism of a ricochet, via the point of view of another person (writer); the phrase's style makes it clear that the description of the airplanes belongs to the unsophisticated young woman who is not well-versed in technical terminology.[5] Andreev is, of course, the author of the short story "Flight" (Polet, 1914), which Nabokov obviously targets here:

> In the sky there was not a single cloud to be seen. . . . According to books, this was the air, the atmosphere, but to the human senses this was also the eternal goal of every aspiration, of every quest and hope that always remains in the sky. "Every man is afraid to die and who would want to fly if there was only some kind of air?" thought Iurii Mikhailovich [the main hero of the story, aviator Pushkarev], not taking his eyes from the bottomless, mysterious, sparkling blue. . . .[6]

The reason for Andreev's literary and market success during his lifetime and even more so after his death can be found in the silent collusion between Andreev's

family, literary scholars, and the Soviet government, who desired to gain political capital through the rehabilitation of certain cultural figures. The first case study tells this story. Leonid Andreev's efforts to create a literary brand that associated him and his works with radical political positions that challenged the status quo, with cultural figures like Maxim Gorky and Fyodor Shalyapin, and with the Wednesday literary circle were again exploited by his son, Vadim, when he tried to reintroduce this brand into the Soviet literary market in the 1960s. Professional imperialism (and possibly opportunism) was on display as literary scholars helped in that process of consecration. Several generations of *Andreevedy* have since held important posts and furthered their university careers in Russia, England, and the United States. An examination of the leading text—Vadim's memoir about his father and his childhood—uncovers both personal and practical reasons why Andreev's second wife was discredited and blasphemed in this process. In this text, Vadim consolidates his reputation as the creator of his father-creator. Finally, this project to reintroduce his father's brand into the Soviet Union is realized (and interpreted) in Vadim's own memoir about himself, only to be interrupted by Soviet cultural merchants in order to regulate the literary market once again.

As for the case study of Vladimir Nabokov, it also follows a logical chronology from the inception of Nabokov's literary brand to the present-day publication of his incomplete novel. Beginning in the 1930s and peaking in the 1960s, Nabokov learned the art of dealing with his publishers, mastering and refining this skill throughout his artistic career. In this way, he defined and defended his symbolic capital and made sure to convert it into a relevant market value, in accordance with his own understanding of the literary pay scale. Long after his literary reputation was established in the West, Nabokov's posthumous legacy had to be introduced into new, emerging literary markets. After the fall of the Iron Curtain, during the 1990s Nabokov's heritage metamorphosed from half-legal and ambiguous intellectual goods into a product with a heightened post-Soviet market value. Posthumously, Nabokov became a bestseller in his native land, and his consecrated image was introduced to modern Russian culture. Shrewd publishers exploited Nabokov's legacy by means of clever marketing campaigns, resulting, in one case, in millions of illegally printed copies of *Lolita* sold to a mass readership. Once well established in post-Soviet literary discourse, Nabokov's posthumous literary legacy influenced the development of Russian literature and inspired imitations and pastiches by leading writers including Victor Pelevin and Vladimir Sorokin. Even with Nabokov's triumph in the post-Soviet Russian cultural scene, there was still the need to maintain his reputation in the West. The most recent uproar in Nabokovina was the publication of his unfinished novel, *The Original of Laura*. Reading audiences were not only offered one last glimpse into Nabokov's literary imagination, but also encouraged to buy his earlier works and to reread the literary master, thereby creating new symbolic and financial capital for the Nabokov Estate. Some especially harsh critics saw in this process a clear drive for profit on the part of Nabokov's son Dmitri and the self-interest of

> the cottage industry of academics who make their living off Nabokov studies and in whose interest it would be to publish *Laura*; the thousands of everyday Nabokovians who worship the ground the great man walked on and will never countenance any notion of refuting his wishes; the fellow novelists, Edmund White, for example, whose first book, *Forgetting Elena*, Nabokov famously endorsed, and who feels deeply divided about the fate of *Laura*.[7]

While neither denouncing such claims nor endorsing them, in our book we hope to underscore the fact that cultural capital's production of cultural goods and services provides, as Throsby writes, both material and non-material benefits for people as individuals and as members of society: "A means of identifying the value of those benefits is provided by the specification of economic and cultural value as their twin components. A first criterion for judging sustainability, then, is the production of *material* benefits in the form of direct utility to consumers, deriving from these economic and cultural value sources."[8] Throsby also identifies a more general class of *non-material* benefits stemming from cultural capital: non-market cultural goods whose value can also be estimated in economic and cultural terms.[9]

As noted, there will be those who find this theoretical approach controversial and might bristle at being called a cultural merchant. There will be those interested in how the Nabokov legacy was fashioned and maintained. Still others might be intrigued by the efforts of the Andreevs to reintroduce their famous (grand)father into the Soviet literary market. No matter the initial interest, we hope that the lasting impression of this book is a serious consideration of the economic drivers that make art, culture, and literature a business.

NOTES

1. Vladimir Nabokov, *The Stories of Vladimir Nabokov*, 154.
2. See Malikova's commentary in Vladimir Nabokov, *Sobranie Sochinenii* I, 764.
3. Diepeveen, "'I Can Have More That Enough Power to Satisfy Me,'" 39.
4. Vladimir Nabokov, *The Luzhin Defense*, 90.
5. Leving, *Vokzal*, 305.
6. Leonid Andreev, *Sobranie Sochinenii* IV, 304.
7. Marsh, "Vladimir Nabokov, his masterpiece and the burning question." See also Gilbert Cruz, "A Brief History of Posthumous Literature" (*Time*: 10 March 2009). http://www.time.com/time/arts/article/0,8599,1883896,00.html. (Accessed 30 August 2012.)
8. Throsby, "Cultural sustainability," 184.
9. Ibid.

Captions

CHAPTER 1

1.1. An early studio portrait of Leonid Andreev sold as a postcard.

1.2. A photograph of members of the Wednesday Circle from December 1902 sold as a postcard.

1.3. Andreev in his signature coat (1902)

1.4. Veresaev and Andreev (1903/4)

1.5. Konstantin Balmont

1.6. Leonid Andreev (1902)

1.7. Portrait by K. Fisher Studio (1902)

1.8. Dmitriev portrait (1902) sold as a postcard

1.9. A caricature from *Dragonfly* (*Strekoza*), no. 4 (4 May 1903). Re-published in Anisimov, *Literaturnoe nasledstvo,* 179.

1.10. At Ilya Repin's in peasant blouse, 27 May 1905. Andreev and his first wife Alexandra Mikhailovna.

1.11. A caricature of Leonid Andreev from *Sprite* (*Leshy*), no. 2 (1906): 12.

1.12. Photographs of D. Zdobnov (1908)

1.13. Portrait sold as postcard

1.14. Studio portraits sold as postcard (1901/2)

CHAPTER 8

8.1. Vladimir Nabokov. *Lolita*. St. Petersburg: Azbooka-klassika, 2009. [Design by Ilya Kuchma and Vadim Pozhidaev. 415 pp., 7,000 copies; hardcover]

8.2. Vladimir Nabokov. *Lolita*. New York: Phaedra Publishers, 1967. [304 pp., paper]

8.3. Vladimir Nabokov. *Lolita*. Ann Arbor: Ardis, 1976. [2nd Russian edition of the novel. 304 pp., paper]

8.4. Vladimir Nabokov. *Lolita*. St. Petersburg: Azbooka-klassika, 2006. [447 pp., 7,000 copies; hardcover]

8.5. Vladimir Nabokov. *Lolita*. Moscow: Prometei, 1990 [1991] [Design by Aleksandr Kolomatskii. 284 pp., 300,000 copies printed in 1990; plus an additional run of 70,000 in 1991, paper]

8.6. Same as Image 8.13, back cover.

8.7. Vladimir Nabokov. *Lolita*. Moscow: TF-Progress, 1998. [458 pp.; the print run is unknown; paper; back cover image]

8.8. Vladimir Nabokov. *Lolita*. Kharkov: Folio; Moscow: AST (The Rendezvous series), 1998. [Computer rendering and cover design by A. Kozhanov; 430 pp., 15,000 copies; hardcover]

8.9. Vladimir Nabokov. *Lolita*. Moscow: Tsentrpoligraf, 2002. [478 pp., 7,000 copies; hardcover]

8.10. Vladimir Nabokov. *Lolita*. Moscow: AST, 1999. [478 pp., 10,000 copies; paper]

8.11. Vladimir Nabokov. *Lolita*. Moscow: Eksmo-Press, 1999. [Design by E. Shamrai; 462 pp., 10,100 copies; paper]

8.12. Same as Image 8.21, back cover.

8.13. Vladimir Nabokov. *Lolita. Mashen'ka. Zashchita Luzhina. Kamera obskura. Priglashenie na kazn': Romany*. Moscow: EKSMO-Press, 1999. [Designed by A. Yaakovlev (Series Russin Classics); 800 pp., 10,000 copies; hardcover]

8.14. Vladimir Nabokov. *Lolita*. Moscow: Tekst, 1998. [448 pp.; 7,000 copies; paper; with credit to Sandro Botticelli's *The Birth of Venus* in the cover art]

8.15. Vladimir Nabokov. *Lolita*. Moscow: EKSMO-Press; EKSMO-Market, 2000. [Design by A. Saukov, with credit to G. Klimt; 384 pp.; 7,000 copies; paper. This edition omits the introductory article by Nabokov's fictitious editor and publisher John Ray Jr.]

8.16. Vladimir Nabokov. *Lolita*. Moscow: AST, 2004 [the print run is unknown; 427 pp.; hardcover. This edition omits the introductory article by Nabokov's fictitious editor and publisher John Ray Jr.]

8.17. Vladimir Nabokov. *Lolita*. Moscow: AST; Ermak, 2004 [702 pp.; 4,000 copies; hardcover. This edition also includes Nabokov's novels *The Exploit* and *King, Queen, Knave*; *Lolita* omits the introductory article by Nabokov's fictitious editor and publisher John Ray Jr.]

8.18. Vladimir Nabokov. *Lolita*. Moscow: AST, 2003 [the print run is unknown; 427 pp.; hardcover. This edition omits the introductory article by Nabokov's fictitious editor and publisher John Ray Jr.]

8.19. Vladimir Nabokov. *Lolita*. St. Petersburg: Azbooka-klassika, 2002. [446 pp.; 7,000 copies; paper]

8.20. Vladimir Nabokov. *Lolita*. Moscow: Infoserv; Forum, 1997. [446 pp.; 5,000 copies; hardcover. This edition omits the introductory article by Nabokov's fictitious editor and publisher John Ray Jr.]

8.21. J. C. Leyendecker. Poster for Arrow Collars and Shirts. From Sean Adams' blog: http://www.burningsettlerscabin.com/?tag=illustration Accessed 8 August 2012.

8.22. Vladimir Nabokov. *Lolita*. Moscow: TF-Progress, 1998. [458 pp., the print run is unknown; paper; back cover image]

8.23. Vladimir Nabokov. *Lolita*. Moscow: Eksmo, 2005 [800 pp.; 4,000 copies; hardcover; also includes *Mary* and *The Luzhin Defense*]

8.24. Vladimir Nabokov. *Lolita*. Rostov-na-Donu: Feniks, 2000. [Design by Iu. Kalinchenko. 448 pp. (Series: Classics of the 20th century); 10,000 copies; hardcover]

8.25. Vladimir Nabokov. *Lolita*. St. Petersburg: Kristall, 2001. [Design by I. Mosin. 352 pp.; 10,000 copies; hardcover]

8.26. Vladimir Nabokov. *Lolita*. St. Petersburg: Izdatel'skii Dom "Neva"; Moscow: Olma press, 2001. [Design by A.Vasil'ev. 383 pp. (Series *Grammatika liubvi*); 5,000 copies; hardcover]

8.27. Same as Image 8.49, back cover.

8.28. Vladimir Nabokov. *Lolita*. Moscow: Ripol Klassik, 2002. [Design by K. Salina and V. Borisov-Musatov. 448 pp.; (Series *Zhenskii al'bom* / Ladies' Album); 5,000 copies; hardcover. This edition omits the introductory article by Nabokov's fictitious editor and publisher John Ray Jr.]

8.29. Vladimir Nabokov. *Lolita*. St. Petersburg: Izdatel'skii Dom "Neva"; Moscow: Olma press, 2001.

8.30. Same as Image 8.53.

8.31. Vladimir Nabokov. *Lolita*. Kharkov: Folio; Moscow: AST (The Rendezvous series), 1998. [Design by B. Bublik, the cover art by S. Ovcharenko; frontispiece by T. Zelenchenko. 432 pp.; 15,000 copies; hardcover. This edition omits the introductory article by Nabokov's fictitious editor and publisher John Ray Jr.]

8.32. Vladimir Nabokov. *Lolita*. St. Petersburg: Symposium, 2001. [Cover design by Andrei Rybakov. 496 pp.; 10,000 copies; hardcover]

8.33., 8.34., 8.35. Vladimir Nabokov. *Lolita*. [Designer and illustrator Klim Li. St. Petersburg: Vita Nova, 2004. 576 pp.; 1,500 copies; hardcover].

8.36. Vladimir Nabokov. *Lolita*. Moscow: Infoserv; Forum, 1997. [446 pp.; 5,000 copies; hardcover. This edition omits the introductory article by Nabokov's fictitious editor and publisher John Ray Jr.]

IMAGES OR EDITIONS THAT ARE DISCUSSED IN THE TEXT BUT ARE NOT BEING REPRODUCED HERE

I. Vladimir Nabokov. *Lolita*. Leningrad: Smart, Perspektiva, 1990. [318 pp., 100,000 copies, paper]

II. Vladimir Nabokov. *Lolita*. Krasnodar: Lesinvest, LTD, 1991. [304 pp. 84, 100,000 copies, paper]

III. Vladimir Nabokov. *Lolita*. Moscow: ANS-Print, 1991. [256 pp.; 500,000 copies; paper]

IV. Vladimir Nabokov. *Lolita*. Moscow: Vodolei, 1991. [Design by V. I. Kharlamov. 317 pp., 300.000 copies printed; hardcover]

V. Vladimir Nabokov. *Lolita*. Moscow: Khudozhestvennaia literatura, 1991 [416 pp., 100,000 copies; hardcover/paper]

VI. Vladimir Nabokov. *Lolita*. Moscow: Izvestiia (series: Biblioteka zhurnala Inostrannaia literatura), 1989. [368 pp., 100,000 copies, paper]

VII. Vladimir Nabokov. *Lolita*. Minsk, Belorussya: Moka, 1991. [320 pp., 150,000 copies; hardcover]

VIII. Vladimir Nabokov. *Lolita*. Kharkov: Folio; Moscow: AST (The Rendezvous series), 1998. [430 pp., 15,000 copies; hardcover; the image on the flyleaf]

IX. Vladimir Nabokov. *Lolita*. Kharkov: Folio; Moscow: AST, 1999. [430 pp., 6,000 copies; hardcover]

X. Vladimir Nabokov. *Lolita*. Moscow: EKSMO-Press, 2006 [544 pp.; 5,100 copies; hardcover]

XI. Vladimir Nabokov. *Lolita: A Screenplay*. Moscow: Azbooka-klassika, 2010. [256 pp.; 10,000 copies; hardcover]

XII. “Portrait of Mäda Primavesi” (1912), Oil on canvas (150 × 110 cm). Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York City. Source: <https://pixbank.wordpress.com/category/cool-paintings/page/13/> Accessed 22 August, 2012.

XIII. Photograph of Mäda Primavesi. From Daniel Tórrez’s blog http://unmodernpainting.blogspot.ca/2011/04/mada-primavesi-by-gustav-klimt.html Accessed 8 August 2012.

XIV. F. Zandomeneghi, *In Bed* (1876), 23 7/8 x 7/8 inches, Galleria d’Arte Moderna, Florence, Italy. © Bridgeman Art Library.

XV. Vladimir Nabokov. *Lolita*. Moscow: AST, 2000 [Series design by A. Kudriavtsev; 368 pp.; 10,000 copies; paper]

XVI. Vladimir Nabokov. *Lolita*. Moscow: AST, 2003.

XVII. E. Degas, *Houses on the Cliff Edge at Villers-Sur-Mer* (1869) <http://www.worldgallery.co.uk/art-print/Houses-On-The-Cliff-Edge-At-Villers-SurMer,-1869-25246.html> Accessed 8 August 2012.

XVIII. James Abbe's photograph entitled "Bessie Love" (1928). Source: Winship, Kihm. "Bessie Love and James Abbe," *Faithful Readers* (April 29, 2012) http://faithfulreaders.com/2012/04/29/bessie-love-and-james-abbe/ Accessed 8 August 2012.

XIX. Japanese Modelling Agency Faxingnet, http://www.faxingnet.com/liuxingfaxing/20100314/2428.html Accessed 8 August 2012.

XX. K. Petrov-Vodkin, "Portrait of Ria (Portrait of A.A. Kholopova)" Source: WikiPaintings: Visual Art Encyclopaedia <http://www.wikipaintings.org/ru/kuzma-petrov-vodkin/portrait-of-ria-portrait-of-a-a-kholopova-1915> Accessed 8 August 2012.

XXI. Vladimir Nabokov (St. Petersburg, 1906). In: *Vladimir Nabokov: A Pictorial Biography*. Completed and Edited by Ellendea Proffer. Ardis: Ann Arbor, 1991.

XXII. Victor Boris-Musatov, "Spring." Collection of the Spring Landscapes in Art http://www.artap.ru/spring.htm Accessed 8 August 2012.

XXIII. 8.56 *Caption missing*

XXIV. Vladimir Nabokov. *Lolita*. Moscow: Izvestiia, 1990. [Series *Biblioteka zhurnala* Inostrannaia Literatura / *The Library of* The Foreign Literature *magazine*. 368 pp.; 300,000 copies; paper]

XXV. Vladimir Nabokov. *Lolita*. Moscow: Izdatel'skii dom Deitsch, 2006 [Designed by M. Oreshina, A. Bondarchenko, D. Chernogaev; 423 pp.; 99 copies; leather binding].

XXVI. Vladimir Nabokov. *Lolita*. [Designer and illustrator Klim Li. St. Petersburg: Vita Nova, 2008. 576 pp.; leather binding].

XXVII. Vladimir Nabokov. *Lolita*. [Designer and illustrator Klim Li. St. Petersburg: Vita Nova, 2004. 576 pp.; 1,500 copies; hardcover].

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Literary History • Cultural History

"This engaging, highly accessible study examines the role of marketing in shaping the legacies of Leonid Andreev and Vladimir Nabokov. Yuri Leving and Frederick H. White take an original approach to literary study by focusing on how these two writers and their friends, family, contemporaries, and rival writers publicized their works, reframing them for diverse audiences while profiting from them economically and professionally. Rather than marginalize these mercantile issues as unworthy of interest in relation to a writer's aesthetic value, Leving and White convincingly demonstrate that the establishment of what Pierre Bourdieu calls symbolic capital is essential to our appreciation and understanding of literature."

—**Alexander Burry**, The Ohio State University

"Applying concepts from Pierre Bourdieu's sociology of culture to the careers and posthumous legacies of Andreev and Nabokov, the authors show how the actual business of culture works: by bypassing aesthetics, the authors aim to show how literary reputations are made by authors, publishers, booksellers, literary executors, academics, and even readers seeking to maximize their 'capital,' either financial or symbolic. The careers of Nabokov and Andreev, two central names in the history of Russian literature of the twentieth century, the publication history of their books, and the roles played by their literary executors make for a fascinating and highly enlightening story about an aspect of the culture business that is usually ignored by general readers and academics alike. Highly recommended for anyone interested in modern Russian literature as well as the economics of literature."

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Literature is not only about aesthetics, but also almost equally about economics. The successful marketing of an author and his literary works is more dependent on the activities of *cultural merchants* than on the particular words and phrases found in the author's prose. *Marketing Literature and Posthumous Legacies* focuses on the creation of symbolic capital for the literary legacies of Leonid Andreev and Vladimir Nabokov that was eventually exchanged by cultural merchants for financial and ideological profit. Yuri Leving and Frederick H. White discuss the ways in which certain cultural merchants created symbolic meaning for these two authors through a process of collusion, consecration, and the marketing of tangible and intangible products that lead to some sort of transaction. The promotion and maintenance of posthumous legacies involves an intricate network of personal interests that drive the preservation of literary reputations.

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