THE CONCEPT OF LOVE IN THE POETRY OF
ANNA AXMATOVA

DISSERTATION

Presented in Partial Fulfilment of the Requirements for
the Degree Doctor of Philosophy in the Graduate
School of the Ohio State University

By

Youngjoong Seog, B.A., M.A.

* * * * *

The Ohio State University
1987

Dissertation Committee:                  Approved By
Dr. Mateja Matejic                          [Signature]
Dr. Hongor Oulanoff
Dr. Frank Silbajoris

Adviser,
Department of Slavic and
East European Languages
and Literatures
Copyright by
Youngjoong Seog
1987
To My Mother
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I should like to express my deepest gratitude to my adviser Dr. Frank Silbajoris, without whose critical suggestions and personal encouragements this dissertation could not have been written. He has read the manuscript at every stage of its preparation from the very inception to the completion and has given me extremely valuable, detailed criticism. Especially during the most difficult periods of writing, I was greatly encouraged by his unshakable faith in me.

Thanks go to the other members of my reading committee, Drs. Mateja Matejic and Mongor Oulanoff, for their suggestions and ideas. I also thank Dr. Anelya Rugaleva for her encouragements and serious interest in my topic. I owe a great deal to my colleague Mr. Jim Philips who proofread part of the manuscript, and to Mrs. Elena Duzs who helped my translation of the original texts. To the Slavic bibliographer Mr. George Klim, I give special thanks for his help during the period of my research.

iii
VITA

March 24, 1959 ............ Born-Seoul, Korea

1981 ...................... B.A., Korea University, Seoul, Korea

1981-1982 ................. University Fellow, Department of Slavic Languages and Literatures, The Ohio State University, Columbus, Ohio

1983 ...................... M.A., Russian Literature and Linguistics, The Ohio State University

1983 ...................... Intensive Russian Language Workshop, Indiana University, Bloomington, Indiana

1985 ...................... Graduate Research Associate for Individualized Serbo-Croatian Project, The Ohio State University

1982- ..................... Graduate Teaching Associate, Department of Slavic Languages and Literatures, The Ohio State University

FIELDS OF STUDY

Major Field: Russian Literature

Studies in Russian Poetry and Poetics

Dr. Frank Silbajoris, Dr. Mateja Matejic
# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ACKNOWLEDGMENTS</td>
<td>iii</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VITA</td>
<td>iv</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>INTRODUCTION</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NOTES TO INTRODUCTION</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CHAPTER</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I. THE CONCEPT OF LOVE AS A &quot;DOMINANTA&quot;</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NOTES TO CHAPTER I</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>II. THE &quot;I&quot; AND THE WORLD</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NOTES TO CHAPTER II</td>
<td>73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>III. PROBLEMS OF DISCOURSE</td>
<td>76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NOTES TO CHAPTER III</td>
<td>119</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IV. SOME ASPECTS OF TIME</td>
<td>123</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NOTES TO CHAPTER IV</td>
<td>154</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>V. POÈMA BEZ GEROJA: THE 'ACME' OF CREATION</td>
<td>157</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NOTES TO CHAPTER V</td>
<td>187</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CONCLUSION</td>
<td>191</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NOTES TO CONCLUSION</td>
<td>193</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>APPENDIX</td>
<td>194</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BIBLIOGRAPHY</td>
<td>220</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
INTRODUCTION

The King of Heaven healed my soul
With icy peace of non-love.
Axmatova

This study is intended to focus on the significance of the topic of love as a dominant poetic mode in Axmatova's poetry. As has been repeatedly suggested by the majority of scholars, the concept of love is the single, most pervasive poetic principle which lies at the very heart of Axmatova's entire opus. Speaking of her early poetry, thus, Leonid Grossman singles out love as "dominanta":

1) Tvorčestvo Axmatovoj, o kotorom neredko govorili, kak o sliškom tesno očerčenom, uzkom krugu motivov s pristrastiem k odnoj dominante "nerazdelenoj ljubvi," javljaet široko mnogoobrazie liriceskix tem i poëtičeskix priemov... Dominanta ljubvi tol'ko uglubljaet ėtot ton, i kažetsja, čto golos Ifigenii ili Fedry snova zvučit v korotkix strokax ětix liričeskix fragmentov.

Similarly, Aleksej Pavlovskij, in the concluding remarks of his study of Axmatova's poetry, considers her love lyrics as the major achievement:
2) Титулованная когда-то званием "Сафо XX столетия", она действительно вписала в великую книгу Любви новые страницы. Ее художественным открытием была прежде всего любовная лирика.

Although these and other similar statements clearly point to the significance of the concept of love, precisely in what respect this particular concept dominates the poetic system of the ахматовской текста has not been sufficiently elaborated. In most studies, the topic of love as such has been rather overlooked or at best touched upon merely as one of the universal themes of poetry in general. The goal of the present study is to closely examine this important but often overlooked aspect of her poetry and to demonstrate its function and significance by analysis of her major poems.

First, we will define in concrete terms the concept of love as a principal structural modality rather than a theme through examining individual texts with divergent themes and motifs. After establishing the concept of love as a dominant mode, we will investigate several structural traits of Ахматова's poetry which have immediate bearing upon that mode. This means that this study will be in principle an investigation of the constituent elements of Ахматова's poetic work in terms of their relationship with each other and with the artistic whole of her poetry in the context of love as
the dominant modality. By selecting and examining the distinctive features of those constituent elements, we intend to answer two fundamental questions: "how Axmatova's poetic work is constructed and why it is constructed in such a fashion." In this respect, the best term for the methodology of our approach would be structural in the sense that structural poetics involves to a greater or lesser extent the consideration of a literary text in terms of the functions of its constituent elements. The objects of our investigation will be as follows.

1) We will re-examine the notion of the poetic "I" and her various voices in connection with the poet's integral vision of life as manifested in the principal mode of love. Then, we will determine what all the different voices of the "I" taken together amount to, in other words, what the total picture of the poetic reality created by the multi-voiced "I" is.

2) We will discuss issues pertaining to discourse: the nature of the recurrent pattern of discourse in general and that of dialogue in particular, and the interrelationship between the unique pattern of discourse and the poet's notion of love. Here, the focus will be given to the problem of human communication as a fundamental aspect of love.
3) Finally, we will investigate the spatial and temporal scheme of the text as one of the structural factors which serve to realize the concept of love as a dominant modality.

These are basically the three major categories under which we will develop our initial contention that the topic of love is of primary import in Axmatova's poetics. There can be other factors which are relevant to the present topic but they will fall beyond the scope of this study. We do not claim that our investigation will be a fundamentally new discovery but we do hope that it will contribute some new perspectives to understanding, what Valerian Čudovskij calls, "the narrow, but tangled labyrinth" of Axmatova's poetic world.³
NOTES TO INTRODUCTION


CHAPTER I. THE CONCEPT OF LOVE AS A "DOMINANTA"

Love is the final purpose of world history—the amen of the universe. Novalis

It has often been pointed out that the theme of love dominates the poetry of Axmatova, especially in the early period. The word "theme" is, of course, a rather ambiguous term, and even more so in the modern critical parlance, since critics tend to use the term to refer to formal as well as conceptual aspect of a work. However, when the scholars speak of the theme of love in the poetry of Axmatova, the term "theme" is understood more or less in its traditional sense, that is, as a recurrent element of subject-matter. Typical in this respect is the comment by Viktor Žirmunskij:

3) Osnovnoe mesto v lirike Axmatovoj bessporno zanimает ljubovnaja tema—kak v narodnoj pesne i v sonetax Petrarki, v lirike Gete i Puškina i vo vsej mirovoj poezii voobšče. Ljubov' v stixotvorenijax Axmatovoj—eto čuvstvo živoe i podlinnoe, glubokoe i čelovečnoe, xotja v silu real'nyx žiznennyx pričin obyčno tronutoj pečat'ju oblagoraživajuščego stradanija.
Also Pavlovskij contends to similar effect:

4) Lirika Axmatovoj--èto, po preimuščestvu, a esli imet' v viду rannee tvorčestvo, to i isključitel'no--lirika ljubvi. Nedarom poëtessu srazu že i v odin golos, edva tol'ko vyšli "Večer" i "Četki", titulovali zvaniem "Safo novogo vremen". Ee novatorstvo kak xudožnika projavilos' pervonačal'no imenno v ètoj tradicionno-večnoj, mnogokratno i, kazalos' by, do konca razygrannoj teme.

Aleksandr Tvardovskij sounds much the same, when he writes that: "Dejstvitel'no, tema ljubvi v raznoobraznyx, bol'šej čast'ju dramatičeskix ottenkax--naibolee razvitaja tema stixov Axmatovoj." 4

4

Similarly, listing the different shades and nuances of love in her poems, Sam Driver claims that: "The major constant which unites the five collections is the almost exclusively dominant theme: love." 5

5

True, in the collections of Axmatova, a number of poems are about the poetic "I"'s tragic experience of love and emotions related to love such as passion, suffering, jealousy, remorse, etc. However, there are certain poems which involve themes other than love, for example, themes of religion, patriotism, and artistic creation, and their number greatly increases in the later period. Thus, we can say that purely in terms of quantity, love in Axmatova's poetry is not the only major theme. Even in the early period her lyrics can hardly be
called "exclusively love lyrics." The reason why this theme seems to dominate her poetry is to be found elsewhere.

As the above mentioned scholars have rightly observed, the concept of love has played a preponderant role in the lyrics of the world's major poets: from Sappho to the medieval troubadours, to the romantic poets, to the symbolists and to the contemporary lyricists. Thus, there is nothing new about love per se, which has been sung over and over by mankind perhaps from the very beginning of the world to the present. Due to this fact, the topic of love in Axmatova's poetry has been often overlooked or at best explored without sufficient depth. However, the concept of love is one of the most important factors in shaping the contours of her poetry, and consequently, it requires a proper study. From this point of view, what makes Axmatova's poetry so peculiarly 'axmatovian' is not just that she is singing about love, which she does, but rather that she is employing the concept of love as a mode of expressing some deeper meaning. The reason why we need to explore her concept of love is that it is inextricably bound up with her personal and artistic quest for an inner vision of reality.
The concept of love constitutes a principal modality in Axmatova's poetics: it is an essential property in whose terms she perceives the ultimate meaning of human existence. Nikolaj Nedobrovo, who the poet believed understood her poetry better than anybody else, made an accurate observation about the concept of love in her poetry: "Ona[axmatovskaja ljubov']--tvorčeskij priem proniknovenija v čeloveka i izobraženija neutolimoj k nemu žaždy." Over and above Nedobrovo's perceptive statement, we may also claim that for Axmatova, love is not simply a feeling she can sing about, but something far beyond any intellectual or emotional definition, some mysterious, inexplicable force which transforms human existence and engenders a new infinitely intricate pattern of reality as perceived by the imagination. It is, in a sense, reminiscent of what Goethe's young Werther said: "the sacred, life-giving power with which I created worlds around me." It is a power which can transfigure the world and the self, and without which the entire meaning of existence may disappear. In this regard, Jeanne Rude's definition of love in Axmatova's poetry seems appropriate:

5)L'amour est un moyen d'atteindre un état de transe poétique qui métamorphose le monde...Chez elle l'amour est une mesure de l'individu, un "service", une "obligation" irremplaçable et sublime du coeur humain.
Love, experienced from the essence of being, is for her the only way in which the world can be grasped ultimately and in which the most fundamental human problem, that is to say, the problem of solitude can be solved, and finally, in which the desire for immortality can be fulfilled. Thus, love for Axsatova, has far greater scope and depth than a mere theme: whatever she may write about, it turns out to have some amorous coloring, amorous context, or amorous frame. In this way, love becomes the medium through which the actual incorporation of various ideas into the very texture of her poems is carried out and further, by which her integral field of vision is defined. Put in this perspective, love in her poetry, while remaining as concept, functions as a mode, and thus acquires a completely different artistic significance. Consequently, Axsatova's verse governed by this enormously amplified notion of love differs from conventional love lyrics. We may understand the implication of Jurij Tynjanov's statement in this context, when he says that: "No ljubopytno, što kogda Axsatova načinila, ona byla nova i cenna ne svoimi temami, a nesmotrja na svoi temy." Here, we will discuss the difference in some detail.

First of all, the conventional formula "I Love X" fits only to a certain degree those of her lyrics whose
theme is obviously love, because the significance of the third component, that is, the object of love, is minimized, while the emphasis is given to the first and the second component. Or more accurately, the object of love is subordinated to the subject and the subject's integral field of vision to such an extent that the whole phrase "I Love x" becomes one word. Here, Roland Barthes' notion of the generalized utterance "I-Love-You" may be relevant: "...the subject and object come to the word even as it is uttered, and I-love-you must be understood in the Hungarian fashion, for instance, for Hungarian uses a single word, szeretlek." Similarly, we understand the formula "I-Love(or do not love)-x" in Axmatova's poetry as a single word, a single unified vision of life of the poet. As a matter of fact, her poetry involves almost without exception a presence of an amorous object which is sometimes called simply an unidentified "You" or "He" and other times called a king, a husband, a fiance, or a secret lover, to name only a few examples:

6) Mne s toboju p'janym veselo--
Smysla net v tvoix rasskazax.

..........

On snova tronul moi koleni
Počti ne drognavšej rukoj.

............
A za oknom šelestjat topolja:
"Net na zemle tvoego korolja"....
...........

A! Èto snova ty. Ne otrokom vljublennym
No mužem derzostnym, surovym, nepreklonnym
...........

Ja gadaju. Kto tam?--ne Ženix li,
Ne Ženix li èto moj?...

This constantly changing disguise of the object of love as in these examples indicates that Axmatova describes love not as interaction but as her own state of perception. To say "Net na zemle tvoego korolja" really means to talk only to oneself, and not to the "king" in question. Similarly, to say "I smysla net v tvoix rasskazax" is by no means the same thing as to feel for the person in question or to imagine anything of his feelings, of his inner world of any sort. Thus, the object of love without any fixed identity or semantic weight plays only an ancillary role, if not entirely insignificant. Apropos of the object of love, some critics have made an attempt to identify it within the framework of the poet's biography. For instance, Evgenij Aniškov identifies the "You" in the poems of her first collection Večer with her first husband N. Gumilev,¹⁴ and Amanda Haight, in her biographical study of Axmatova, refers to various real people of the poet's life as they are directly or indirectly mentioned in her poems.¹⁵

Likewise, Renato Poggioli suggests a possibility of
identifying the amorous object by claiming that "the scholars of the future will probably be able to refer each one of her poems to a precise event within her biography." It is, however, not our major concern in the present study to judge whether these notions are adequate or not, or to decide to what extent the poet's biography is useful; of primary importance here is the fact that the poet tries to envisage the reality through the prism of love and by doing so transform it into her inner reality. In this respect, Wendy Rosslyn's observation on the object of love—which she calls "hero"—is profoundly appropriate:

The lover functions as a mirror. The heroine, we begin to suspect, seeks out not individuals, valuable for their own unique essence, but love itself, the means of self-affirmation. Hence the anonymity of her friends, their diffuseness, and her refusal of ultimate commitment to them. Her lovers are used, and quickly discarded.  

A similar observation about the diffuseness of the amorous object has been made by Éliane Bickert: "L'aimé est un et multiple à la fois. Toujours un autre, jamais le même. Toujours le même, jamais un autre." It is then love itself which is the object of the poet's love. This broad, pervasive nature of love in her poetry is again pointed out by Bickert:
7) Elle pressent l'amour avant de le croiser, le devine avant de le connaître, le redoute avant d'en souffrir, le trouve avant de le chercher. Elle aime l'amour avant d'aimer quelqu'un... Apparent ou latent, l'amour est là. Partout. Toujours. Entre les êtres, au fond des choses, derrière les phrases.

From these observations, it follows that what the "I" loves is not a particular individual, but love itself, and, the love lyrics are not so much about love as they are, metaphorically speaking, in love. In short, love for Aksmatova transcends any particular individual emotion and thereby obtains a dimension tantamount to the poet's vision of life. Consequently, her poems become intrinsically philosophical.

What we have discussed so far is that the concept of love in Aksmatova's poetry, by being so amplified and pervasive, functions as a mode in which the poet envisages her inner reality. Then, our next step will be logically to explore what the inner reality is and how it is actually realized in her poetry through the modality of love. The underlying theme of Aksmatova's work in general may be summarized as that of profound solitude, which may explain the excruciatingly acute sense of tragedy, despair, doom, and anxiety characteristic of her verse as a whole. It is a kind of solitude that might be called "cosmic" as Aksmatova put it in one of her poems: "I mnitsja mne, čto ucelela/Pod ētim nebom ja odna,--".
For Aksenova, it is an existential solitude, an inevitable and ineluctable condition of human life. This overwhelming reality of existential solitude as an underlying theme of the body of her poetry finds its most seminal expression in the poem written in 1909:

8)Xoroni, xoroni menja, vete!
Rodnye moi ne prišli,
Nado mnoju bluždajuščij večer
I dyxan'e tixoj zemli.

Ja byla, kak i ty, svobodnoj,
No ja sliškom xotela žit'.
Vidiš', vete, moj trup xolodnyj,
I nekomu ruki složit'.

Zakroj ètu černuju ranu
Pokrovom večernej t'omy
I veli golubomu tumanu
Nado mnoju čitat' psalmy.

Čtoby mne legko, odinokoj,
Otojti k poslednemu snu,
Prošumi vysokoj osokoj
Pro vesnu, pro moju vesnu. (I, 53)²₀

The uniqueness of this poem lies not in that the "I" is speaking from the nether world, but rather that the "I" is totally separated from the world by the abyssal chasms of death. The total separateness is articulated in the second line of the first stanza and the fourth line of the second stanza which intimate the conspicuous absence of the "I"'s human relationship before the imaginary death: "Rodnye moi ne prišli," "I nekomu ruki složit'." The "I"'s lack of any kind of human relationship is emphasized in the third stanza when the
"I" invokes an element of nature instead of a human to perform the funeral rites for her: "Veli golubomu tumanu/Nado mnoju čitat' psalmy." The process of representing the "I"'s loneliness and its attendant void of heart is completed, when the two half-rhymed epithets in the second stanza, "svobodnoj" and "xolodnyj" resound and coalesce into one, "odinokoj" in the last stanza.

This poem presents a symbolic picture of reality which is reigned over by absolute solitude, in which the "I" has to live as if she were incarcerated alone in the grave. Written at the very early stage of her career, this poem prefigures the constantly recurring theme of her later work. As we will see later, Axmatova almost without fail evokes the sense of immeasurable solitude in her poetry. The poet experienced terrible solitude already at the age of seventeen, as she wrote in a letter to some von Štein:

9)....bolee odinokoj, čem ja, daže byt' nel'zja...Xorošie minuty byvajut tol'ko togda, kogda vse uxdijat užinat' v kabak ili edut v teatr, i ja slušaju tišinu v temnoj gostinoj...v golove takaja xolodnaja pustota. Daže plakat' ne mogu.

Characteristically, the sense of profound solitude in her poetry is realized through the medium of love. In other words, love for Axmatova figures as a mode of experiencing solitude. There is certainly some interrelation between love and solitude, as it has been
expressed by different people in different contexts. For instance, according to Erich Fromm:

Man--of all ages and cultures--is confronted with the solution of one and the same question: the question of how to overcome separation, how to achieve union, how to transcend one's own individual life and find at-onement...The question is the same, for it springs from the same ground: the human situation, the conditions of human existence...The full answer lies in the achievement of interpersonal union, of fusion with another person, in love...Love is an active power in man; a power which breaks through the walls which separate man from his fellow men, which unites him with others: love makes him overcome the sense of isolation and separateness.\(^2\)

A similar notion of love as an aspiration for spiritual union as opposed to isolation constitutes the core of Plato's Symposium:

In the intense passion of Eros it is not merely sexual intercourse that is sought but a permanent fusing into one: for love is "the pursuit of wholeness."\(^3\)

As the Greek philosopher and the contemporary sociopsychologist cogently postulate, the act of loving is related to man's desire to break the prison of solitude. However, in the poetry of Axmatova, at least in the early period, the overcoming of solitude through love is not realized. On the contrary, however the "I" may try to overcome the solitude through the act of loving and thus to impart some meaning to her existence, solitude is always overwhelmingly there. Solitude as both human
condition and aspiration for love are in a constant tension, but the former is always more powerful. Whatever her effort to extricate herself from the confinement of loneliness might be, loneliness is given as an a priori fact. Thus, the canvas, on whose surface the poet draws the dim outline of solitude-laden reality is not so much that of love as that of failure of love. The mournful tone, negative lexicon and privative semantics which characterize her poetics in general—all these are the result of the "I"'s failure in love. We may define those frequently used forms of absence of love in her poetry—loss of love resulting from the death of the beloved, his or the "I"'s infidelity, or the "I"'s renunciation of love, etc.—as non-love. Non-love in her poetry functions as a background into which the poet projects the reality of existential solitude. Thus, though an opposite of love in terms of semantics, non-love here figures as a variation of love when it is transferred from the realm of a theme to that of a modality. As we have observed earlier, love for Axmatova is more a state of the subject's perception than an actual interaction. We may define love and non-love in
Axmatova's poetics as two different modulations of the same state of perception. The poet's own words may testify to this:

10) No stranno: takie sil'nye v žizni, takie čutkie ko vsem ljubovnym očarovanijam ženščiny, kogda načinajut pisat', znajut tol'ko odnu ljubov', mučitel'nuju, bolezpnennuju, prozorlivuju i beznadežnuju.

We find a number of poems where non-love provides the background against which the "I"'s existential solitude is perceived. For example:

11) Pamjat' o solnce v serdce slabeet. Želtej trava. 
Veter snežnikami rannimi veet
Edva-edva.

V uzkix kanalax uže ne struitsja--
Stynet voda.
Zdes' nikogda ničego ne slučitsja,--
O, nikogda.

Iva na nebe pustom rasplastala
Veer skvoznoj.
Možet byt' lučše, čto ja ne stala
Vašej ženoj.

Pamjat' o solnce v serdce slabeet 
Čto 'eto? T'ma? 
Možet byt'! Za noč' prijti uspeet
Zima.  

(I, 65)

In this poem, the sense of solitude is conveyed primarily through the bleak, unpeopled landscape: sallow grass, frozen water, empty sky, and the willow in the shape of a bare-boned fan. This type of landscape is usually found in the poetry of Romanticism and Sentimentalism; for a
romantic poet, landscape functions as a code to represent his emotion—love, sorrow, passion, etc. The romantic landscape is intercepted by sudden introduction of the plain, almost prosaic statement in the third stanza: "Možet byt' lučše, čto ja ne stala/Vašej ženoj." This statement about personal tragedy disrupts the linear logic of description in the previous stanzas and yields an impression that in the grip of insuperable solitude the subject fails to sustain logic. While in the lyrics of Romanticism the somber melancholy landscape reflects the loss of love and grief, in this poem the reverse holds true. The point here is not that the poet creates a bleak landscape to communicate the non-love implied in that statement, but rather that she creates a context of non-love to convey the sense of solitude immanent in reality. In this regard the third stanza is of particular interest. On the lexico-semantic level, it is divided into two halves: the first half refers to the emptiness in nature and the second to non-love on the part of the "I." The sense of void in the first half conveyed through the central semantic elements "pustom" and "skvoznoj" is reinforced in the second half by means of a peculiar rhyme scheme. The rhyming word "stala" of the third line is an exact repetition of the second half of the word "rasplastala" like its distant echo. The
verb "stala" here is of cardinal import not only because it retains the consonantal combination "st" repeated in "pustom" and "rasplastala" but also because its perfective aspect along with that of "rasplastala" serves to render the impression of completion, irrevocability. Similar echo-like rhyme is found in the rhymed pair "skvoznoj"-"ženoj." On one hand, this echo-rhyme emphasizes the sense of emptiness.\(^{25}\) On the other hand, it lends a special semantic density to the epithet "skvoznoj," creating an impression of cold and grim finality that goes beyond the ambiance of Romanticism. What we perceive from the semantics of non-love condensed in the two lines is immediacy and tangibility of the profound solitude.

We may find a similar example in the poem "Menja pokinul v novolun'e."

12)Menja pokinul v novolun'e
Moj drug ljubimyj. Nu, tak čto ž!
Sutil: "Kanatnaja pljasun'ja!
Kak ty do maja doživeš'?

...........

Orkestr veseloe igraet,
I ulybajutsja usta.
No serdce znaet, serdce znaet,
Čto loža pjataja pusta!

(I, 79)

The "I"'s isolation from the rest of the world indicated in her position as a rope-dancer is emphasized by the quite distinctively perceived semantic parallelism. The
"I" is separated from the world, dancing a dangerous, lonely dance, while the people remain on the ground smiling, playing noisy music. The isolation of the "I", her impossibility of contact with the world of other people again can be interpreted within the Romantic tradition. Usually in the romantic system, a crowd's "vanity fair" with bustling mind is sharply counterpointed with the "I"s lofty and also precarious isolation. The "I"s isolation in this poem is again presented in the context of non-love. Non-love functions here in such a way that the first two lines and the last two lines constitute the contextual framework within which the "I"s sense of solitude is perceived.

Similarly, the poem "Razluka" written in 1914 is governed by the context of non-love.

13) Večernij i naklonnyj
Peredo mnoju put'.
Včera ešće, vljublennyj,
Molil: "Ne pozabud".
A nynče tol'ko vetry
Da krikı pastuxov,
Vzvolnovannyı kedry
U čistyı rodnıkov.  (I, 127)

Again, the "I"s solitary state of mind which we can conjecture from the lonely landscape is set in the context of non-love. This poem is constructed so that all the elements of landscape--the crepuscular road, the voice of wind, the disturbed cedar and the contrasting
indifference of the clear spring--converge toward the single semantic focus of non-love and engender a silent picture of solitude. Against this unifying factor, the semantic significance of the third and fourth lines stands out in several ways. First, these two lines constitute a short narrative while the rest of the poem is descriptive. Second, they contain two verbs "molit'" and "pozabyt'" in this otherwise verbless poem. Third, the tense of the third and fourth lines is past, while the rest is sustained in present tense. One important factor which makes it possible for the whole text to maintain unity over and above the effect of these marked lines is the phonological similarity between these two lines and the rest:

Cf. v-č-r-n-n-k-l-n-n: 1st line
f-č-r-š-č-v-l-b-l-n-n: 3rd line
v-z-v-l-n-v-n-n-k-d-r: 7th line

The "I"'s solitude is perceived with particular acuteness when it is projected against the contrast between narrative action and static description of landscape re-echoed in the contrast between the disturbed cedar and the clear spring. The non-love which defines the mode of these poems is also found in "Večerom":

14) Žvenela muzyka v sadu
Takim nevyrazimym gorem.
Svežo i ostro paxli morem
Na bljude ustricy vo l'du.

On mne skazal: "Ja vernoj drug!"
I moego kosnulsja plat'ja.
Kak ne poxoži na ob'jat'ja
Prikosnovena etix ruk.

Tak gladjet košek ili ptic,
Tak na naezdnic smotrijat strojnyx
Liš' smex v glazax ego spokojnyx
Pod legkim zolotom resnic.

A skorbnyx skripok golosa
Pojut za steljuščimsja dymom:
"Blagoslovči Že nebesa--
Ty pervyj raz odna s ljubimym". (I, 99)

The first stanza immediately sets the mood of this poem in sensory terms: lugubrious sound of music and the helplessness created by the image of oyster exposed on a plate. Further, the somber mood is reinforced in the last stanza by the "doleful voice of violins." On the level of association, the first stanza creates also a painful sense of irony with which the entire text is imbued. The irony of this stanza arises mainly from a series of contrasts. First, the "hot" emotional romantic music of sorrow is sharply contrasted with the "cool" emotionless eternal presence of the sea. Paradoxically, the two rhymed words "gorem" and "morem" emphasizes this contrast. The fourth line includes another, perhaps more "hidden" contrast. The image of oyster is associated with the birth of Venus, goddess of love, carried to shore on a seashell in all the paintings representing
mythological themes. However, the association of birth, and by extention, of life and love is disturbed by the contrasting sense of coldness, isolation, and death conveyed through the image of ice. Moreover, the trivialization of the carriers of the images—oyster on a plate, music which one might hear in a restaurant, etc—strengthens the context of non-love of the entire text. The irony of this stanza becomes extremely meaningful when it is related to the context of non-love presented in the following stanzas.

The context of non-love is given here not as physical absence of the beloved but as absence of communication between the "I" and her beloved. The absence of communication is realized through a dual ellipsis of logic. There is no logical link between the beloved's utterance "I am your faithful friend" and his unfeeling touch, his cold glance and his laughter of terrible indifference. Second, the "I"'s detached description of her lover is not logically related to her perceptive mind. In a sense, the "I" and her beloved are confronted on two different communicative planes. The beloved's language is that of non-love and the "I"'s is that of the deliberate refusal to understand the beloved's language. The "I" is playing with her own state of perception enveloped in solitude. In the grip of
solitude, the fundamental aspect of love, i.e. communication may require reverse value, as it is articulated in the sad irony of the last two lines: "Thank heaven, you are with your beloved for the first time."

So far we have discussed how the mode of love in Axmatova's love lyrics set mainly in the context of non-love, functions as a means to render a reality permeated with solitude. Earlier we observed that the concept of love for Axmatova is a power without which the entire meaning of existence may disappear. Thus the poet, in order to find some meaning, to overcome the solitude, turns to spiritual, transcendental love, i.e. religion. Hence the increasing number of religious poems after the first book Večer. Especially her second book Četki (as the title itself indicates) and Belaja staja are permeated with religious themes and motifs, and words related to Orthodox liturgy. In general, her poetry maintains a measure of dark asceticism hidden behind the surface, whatever that surface might be. Apropos of her religious inclination, scholars have various views. For example, Boris Řejkenbaum interprets the introduction of the religious motifs as one phase of the "I"'s development:

15) Pojavlenie cerkovnyx i biblejskix motivov bylo vosprinjato nami ne kak prosto...
rasširenje liričeskih tem, a toža kak razvitie sjužeta—kak dal'nejšaja sud'ba geroini.  

In his comparative study of Axmatova and Majakovskij, Kornej Čukovskij defines her religious poems in terms of their intrinsically Russian quality:

She is our only remaining Orthodox poet...If there had been no mention of God in her books, we could still easily surmise that she is a deeply religious poet...The eternal Russian attraction to self-effacement, humility, martyrdom, meekness, which had such allure for Turgenev, Tolstoy, and Dostoevsky fascinates her also.  

It is not at issue here what the "further fate of the heroine" might be—finding meaning in God or anything else. What concerns us is that even her lyrics of religious themes retain the same modality of love lyrics. She sings about God, Christ, eternity, heaven and hell, etc. through the mouth of a woman in love. Thus, her religious poems are characterized by the intertwine of sacred themes with the modality of love. In this respect, the infamous statement of Ždanov, if we for a moment forget all the self-serving pretense at morality and just focus on the basic concept, may tell something about the nature of her religious poems. To quote him:

Axmatova's subject matter is utterly individualistic. The range of her poetry is miserably limited: it is the poetry of an overwrought upper-class lady who frantically races back and forth between boudoir and chapel. She is mainly concerned with
amorous-erotic themes which are intertwined with elements of sadness, nostalgia, death, mysticism and doom... A nun or a whore--or rather both a nun and a whore who combines harlotry with prayer....

There is no question about the injustice of this statement, but we may draw a parallel between it and our notion of amorous mode in her religious poems. The intermingling of religiosity with eroticism characteristic of Axmatova's religious poems may find its most subtle expression in the short poem "Ispoved":

16) Umolk prostivšij mne grexi.
Lilovyi sumrak gasit sveči,
I temnaja epitraxil'
Nakryla golovu i pleči,
Ne tot li golos: "Deva! vstan!".
Udary serdca čaščе, čaščе....
Prikosnovenie skvoz' tkan'
Ruki, rasjejanno krestjaščej. (I, 87)

Here, the image of Christ is identified with that of the priest. The identification is recognized first of all by the Orthodox idea of penance. That is, although it is understood that the actual forgiveness of the sin comes from God, not from the priest, the priest absolves in the first person: "proščaju i razrešaju te." The fifth line affirms the identity by incorporating the words of Christ from the Gospel, lending the text another possible level of interpretation--that of resurrection. Thus, what is established up to the fifth line is a solemn, pious, nun-like image of the "I" facing Christ-priest. However,
the "I"'s pious image set in the atmosphere of sober righteousness symbolized by the black stole is changed in the sixth line which is unfittingly sensuous. Her heart beats, as if she is passionately in love. The theme of the soul's resurrection through confession is realized in the mode of erotic love. Earlier, we spoke of Axmatova's love lyrics as characterized by the mode of non-love, a minus mode. Here again, we encounter that peculiarly axmatovian minus mode. This poem is built upon two texts: one--that of presence, the other--that of absence. In one text, the "I" is in the presence of the "He," Christ-priest-lover, and her reaction is that of a woman in love. However, hidden underneath this text is the unfathomable void which engulfs everything except for the "I"'s perception. In the first four lines the "He"'s presence is physically nullified by the three verbs: "umolk," "gasit," and "nakryla." These three verbs share the common semantic core of elimination: the "He"'s voice lapses into silence and his presence is shrouded by cosmic darkness. What resounds in this darkness is the voice of Christ, but between him and the "I" lies an enormous and inevitable temporal distance. The final two lines enhance the sense of spatial and emotional distance: "a touch through the cloth" and "the hand, absent-mindedly crossing." The "I," being
unable to contact the "He" because of the temporal, spatial, and emotional distance, perceives only her own state of feeling: "Udary serdca čašće, čašće...."

A similar example of intertwinement of religiosity and eroticism is found in the poem "I kogda druga druga proklnali" in which the image of Christ is fused with the "I"'s beloved:

17)I kogda druga druga proklnali
V strasti, raskalennoj dobeli
Oba my ešće ne ponimali,
Kak zemlja dlia dvux ljudej mala,
I čto pamjat' jarostnaja mučit,
Pytka sil'nyx--ognennyj nedug!--
I v noći bezdonnoj serđce učit
Sprašivat': o, gde ušedšij drug?
A kogda skvoz' volny fimiama
Xor gremit, likuja i grozja,
Smotraj v dušu strogo i uprijamo
Te že neizbežnye glaza. (I, 53)

Here, the final two lines immediately evoke in our mind the image of Christ or a saint in an icon, perhaps the stern glance of Christ of the famous icon "Spas: jaroe oko." Our association is justified by the preceding two lines which describe the liturgy in process. However, the underlying context for the "I"'s facing the icon in the church is again her separation from her lover. Even the inescapable eyes of the icon seem to be those of her lover, as the phrase "te že" indicates. In fact, the eyes of an icon confused with those of a lover is one of the recurrent motifs in her later work.
Besides the religious themes, Axmatova's poetry involves to a large extent meditation on artistic creation, especially poetry. The recurrence of themes and motifs pertaining to art and their increasing gravity in her later work may also be understood in connection with the poet's solitude. That is, like religion, art may offer to her an alternative avenue to extrication of the self from the prison of solitude.\textsuperscript{32} This aspect of creative activity has been observed by E. Fromm:

\begin{quote}
In any kind of creative work the creating person unites himself with his material, which represents the world outside of himself...In all types of creative work the worker and his object become one, man unites himself with the world in the process of creation.\textsuperscript{33}
\end{quote}

In Axmatova's poems, her obsessive concern with creative work, i.e. writing poetry, is presented as an alternative to love, and often the permanence of art is sharply contrasted with failure in transient love. For example, in the poem "Ja naučilas' prosto, mudro žit'," the "I"'s solitude drives her to write verse:

\begin{quote}
\textit{Kogda šuršat v ovrage lopuxi}
I niknet grozd' rjabiny želto-krasnoj,
Slagaju ja veselye stixi
O žizni tlennoj, tlennoj i prekrasnoj.\textsuperscript{(I, 89)}
\end{quote}

In the last stanza, the "I" refuses her lover for the sake of poetry: "I esli v dver' moju ty postučis',/Mne kažetsja, ja dažе ne uslyšu." Frequently, the "I" is
represented as a poet and her faith in the value of art is affirmed within the framework of self-imposed renunciation of love. Pertaining to the poet's affirmation of the value of art within the framework of non-love, Kees Verheul has noted:

Characteristically in these early poems the motif of the permanence of the heroine's art usually occurs in the context of the dispute with her beloved that forms the central subject-matter of most of Axmatova's earlier verse.

Indeed, in a number of her early poems the "I"'s resignation from earthly love and happiness serves as a backdrop against which her affirmation of art is projected. For instance:

19) Sliškom sladko zemnje pit' e,
Sliškom plotno ljubovnje seti.
Pust' kogda-nibud' imja moe
Pročitajut v učebnike deti,

I, pečal'nuju povest' uznau,
Pust' oni ulybnuutsja lukavo....
Mne ljubvi i pokoj na dav,
Podari menja gor'koju slavoj. (I, 103)

In the poem "Muze," the "I" calmly accepts deprivation of love by her Muse:

20) Muza-sestra zagljanula v lico,
Vzgljaj ee jasen i jarok,
I otnjala zolote kol'co,
Pervyj vesennjy podarok.

.......... 

Zavtra mne skažut, smejas', zerkala:
"Vzor tvoj ne jasen, ne jarok...."
Written early in 1911, this poem prophesies the "I"'s fate: the "I" is doomed to be a poet as a result of the loss of love here symbolized by "golden ring," "first spring gift," and "divine gift." Characteristically, these two poems whose central organizing idea is that of art retain the minus mode of the love lyrics.

Earlier in this chapter we have spoken of the "I"'s state of perception as an important concept in understanding Axmatova's various poems. We may make a similar point about the poet's increasing concern with art: for her, solitude may be tamed by turning perception into art in general and poetry in particular. Thus, the theme of art in her poetry is a focusing on the issue of the poetic text itself. For her, the topic of art involves not only the value of poetry in philosophical and moral terms, but also its actual making. In this regard, her own remark on poetry is revealing:

21) Ved' vse i bez poezii znajut, cto nado ljubit' dobro--no chto dobro potrjasalo chelovecheskuye dušu do trepeta, nuzna poezija, a poezija bez tehniki ne suschestvuet.

As we will discuss in next chapters, the issue of building an artistic text more and more frequently occupies a thematic center in the poet's later work.
So far we have discussed how and why the concept of love functions in Axmatova's poetry having various themes and motifs. As we have examined, what makes her poems "axmatovian" is not any particular theme but rather the concept of love functioning as a predominant mode. In this respect, we may define the concept of love in her poetry as a "dominanta" in Roman Jakobson's terms. To quote him:

The dominant may be defined as the focusing component of a work of art: it rules, determines, and transforms the remaining components. It is the dominant which guarantees the integrity of the structure. 36

Indeed, her poems, whether they are love lyrics, religious poems, or poems about poems, maintain some "integrity" due to the common denominator of amorous mode. Our next step is, then, to examine how other structural elements are "ruled, determined, and transformed" by this dominant mode.
NOTES TO CHAPTER I

1 Here, we will follow the conventional classification of the poet's creative life into three periods approved by most of the scholars: the early period (1919-1925), the period of silence (1925-1940), and the late period (1940-1966). During the early period, five collections of her verse appeared: Večer (1912), Četki (1914), Belaja staja (1917), Podorožnik (1921), and Anno Domini (1922).


3 Pavlovskij, p. 23.


6 In this respect, Nadežda Mandel'štam makes an interesting observation, saying "How have people managed to overlook the main and best strand in Akhmatova's poetry, failing to notice that she is a poet of renunciation, not of love?" See, Nadezhda Mandelstam, Hope Abandoned, trans. Max Hayward (New York: Atheneum, 1974), p. 227.


11. Parenthetically, this inclination to write everything in the language of love is reflected even in her translation of Korean classical verse. Song Gang's "Samjongok" is the case in point. In original, this poem is about loyalty and devotion to the king written by his subject in exile. However, in Axmatova's translation, the poetic "I" is transformed into a woman passionately in love and the entire text is imbued with erotic love. See, Anna Axmatova, trans., *Korejskaja klassičeskaja poezija* (Moskva: Gosizdat'stvo xudožestvennoj literatury, 1958), pp. 44-48.


Unless otherwise indicated, all the quotations of Axmatova's individual poems will be made from the Struve and Fillipov edition of Sočinenija, volumes I, II, and III. Volume and page numbers will be indicated by roman and arabic numeral respectively in a parenthesis.

Sočinenija, III, 321.


Jurij Lotman summarizes the isolation of the poetic "I" in the poetic system of Romanticism as follows: "the romantic conception of man proceeds from the representation of his singularity, his isolation and his divorcement from all earthly ties." See, Yury Lotman, Analysis of the Poetic Text, ed. and trans. D. B. Johnson (Ann Arbor: Ardis, 1976), p. 171.

For instance, the lexical items related to church architecture—bell-tower, altar, etc—recur, and also words such as Angel, God, Christ, cross, and prayer are frequently used in different contexts.


31 In his "Blagoveščen'e," Blok does a very similar thing, achieving also a very similar emotional ambiance. This is, perhaps, one of the secret threads that link Symbolism and Acmeism.

32 Axmatova's own statement testifies to the existential significance of writing poetry: "I umerla by, kogda by ne pisala stixov." See, Nedobrovo, p. 482.

33 Fromm, p. 17.


CHAPTER II. THE "I" AND THE WORLD

The stars and seas are filled by
Precious I. Milosz

Perhaps one of the most characteristic structural
traits of Axmatova's poetry is the image of the lyrical
"I." Although the interpretation of this "I" varies
according to the scholars, the fact that it plays a
central role has been constantly pointed out. For
example, as early as the 1920's, Efjzenbaum sharply noted
the peculiar role of the "I" in the body of her poetry.
Listing a convincing number of the novel or novella form
present in the early lyrics of Axmatova, he puts the "I"
or, what he calls, the "heroine," in the center of the
so-called "liričeskij roman":

22) V itoge vsego etogo pered nami vstaet
jarkij obraz glavnoj geroini etogo liričeskogo
romana...Geroinja Axmatovoj, ob"edinjujuščaja
soboj vsju cep' sobytij, scen i oščuščenij,
est' "oksjumoron". Liričeskij sjužet, v centre
kotorogo ona stoit, dvižetsja antitezami,
paradoksami, uskol'zaet ot psixologičeskix
formulirovok, ostranjaetsja nevrazkoj duševnyx
sostojanij. Obraz delaetsja zagadočnym,
bespokojuščim...dvoitsja i množitsja.
With his strictly formalist view, he goes on to consider the "I" with a strong autobiographical coloring as an aesthetic device:

23) Pridat' stixotvorenijam konkretno-biografičeskij i sjužetnyj xarakter—èto xudožestvennyj priem, kontrastirujuščij s abstraktnoj lirikoj simvolistov...Lico poèta v poèzij--maska. Čem men'še na ĵem grima, tem rezče oščuščenie kontrasta.

While this formalist critic warns against the identification of the "I" with Axmatova herself, some scholars interpret the "I" as identifiable with the poet. For example, without making any distinction between the poetic "I" and the poet, Pavlovskij contends that the tragic quality of Axmatova's poetry arises in the main from her turbulent life:

24) Konečno, lirika--èto prežde vsegio biografija. Ljubovnyj roman, vyrazivšijsia v stixe, javljaetsja v konečnom sčete, posle celogo rjada transformirovavšišego literaturnymy uslovnostej, otrazieniem real'noj žiznennoj istorii, kotoraja byla tragičnoj.

Similarly, Rosslyn's psychological study of Axmatova's heroine is based upon the assumption that the "I" reflects to a large degree the poet's personality:

Just as it is indefensible to confuse the creating poet with the created image, it is also perverse to isolate the image so completely from the personal experience of the poet...The biography of the young Akhmatova has much in common with the image created in her
poems...Although the heroines of Evening are many, the underlying spirit can safely be identified as that of Akhmatova herself.

True, the internal dynamics of a literary work are not entirely separated from the external world, and usually the literary person reflects to a certain degree its creator. Thus, it goes without saying that the knowledge of the author's biography is not only relevant to the study of the image created by him but also may add an extra dimension to our perception of it. It is more so in the case of Axmatova's poetry, since she constantly interweaves episodes from her personal life with those from imaginary reality, as a result of which her poems read like a page from her diary.

However, we cannot take the approach of those biography-oriented scholars at its face value for several reasons. First, the fact that her poetry has a strong biographical aspect does not necessarily mean that the "I" of her poetry is a direct expression of Axmatova herself. Poetry is first and foremost a product of the procedure of turning reality into the text and the rendering of the "I" by any poet must be understood in terms of this procedure. Second, the identification of the "I" with the poet, although it might be true, does not lead us to a better understanding of her poetry, unless it is provided in connection with other meaningful
elements of her poetic system. Third, it is not a really unique phenomenon in the history of poetry that a poet builds a text around the image of the "I" which resembles himself, and therefore the biographical interpretation of Axmatova's "I" for itself is not of great value for analyzing 'sui generis' axmatovian structure. To support our contention that the "I" should not be identified with Axmatova, we may quote Mixail Baxtin's view of the "I" in literature in general:

Even had he [the author--Y.S.] created an autobiography or a confession of the most astonishing truthfulness, all the same he, as its creator, remains outside the world he has represented in his work... It is just as impossible to forge an identity between myself, my own "I," and that "I" that is the subject of my stories as it is to lift myself up by my own hair... The "image of the author"--if we are to understand by that the author-creator--is a contradiction in terms: every image is a created, and not a creating thing.

Meanwhile, although we do agree with Êjxenbaum in the upshot, his notion of the "I" as a mask strikes us as insufficient and perhaps a bit overdone. First of all, his claim that the use of concrete autobiographical details in Axmatova's poetry is a stylistic device opposed to the abstract poetry of the Symbolists fails to convince us, if we pay close attention to the symbolist poet Blok's poems, which are, in Boris Tomaševskij's terms, "lyrical episodes about himself."8 In Blok's
poetic world, the elements of intimate confession and biographical allusion, which Tomaševskij rightly points out, play as significant a role as in Axmatova's poetry, and consequently the central role of the "I" cannot be a major stylistic factor distinguishing the acmeist poet from her symbolist contemporary. Moreover, although the "I" standing in the center might be a significant stylistic device, the formalist critic does not develop his notion far enough to show how and why this particular device is employed in her poetry.

To summarize what we have discussed so far, the "I" in Axmatova's poetry is not identical with the poet, nor is it a set of hollow artistic devices merely to be used vis-à-vis Symbolist prosody. What is at issue, then, is not so much what the "I" is (or is not) as how the "I"'s semantic role can be properly understood in relation to other structural elements of Axmatova's poetic system. In other words, our task is to investigate what Tomaševskij calls the "structural role" of the "I."

Here, his general remark about the biography in literature is revealing:

Indeed, in the works themselves, the juxtaposition of the texts and the author's biography plays a structural role. The literary work plays on the potential reality of the author's subjective outpourings and confessions. Thus the biography that is useful to the literary historian is not the author's
curriculum vitae or the investigator's account of his life. What the literary historian really needs is the biographical legend created by the author himself. Only such a legend is a literary fact.

In the preceding chapter we noted that the concept of love in Axmatova's poetry functions as a dominant mode which determines other structural elements. This notion, we believe, provides a point of departure for our investigation of the structural role of the "I." That is, the recurrence of the "I" is an integral part of Axmatova's verse and has immediate bearing upon the dominant mode. What we are to examine is precisely the interrelationship between the "I" standing in the center of a given text and the poet's integral vision of reality manifested in the principal poetic mode of love. Only if put in this perspective can the meaning of the controversial status of the "I" be correctly understood. We will take the poem "Cabaret artistique" of 1913 as an example to discuss how the autobiographical persona is governed by the dominant mode and is transferred into the realm of the poet's unique reality.

25) Vse my brašniki zdes', blušnicy,
Kak neveselo vmeste nam.
Na stenax cvety i pticy
Tomjatsja po oblakam.

Ty kuriš' černuju trubku,
Kak stranej dymok nad nej.
Ja nadela uzkuju jubku,
Čtoby kazat'sja ešće strojnej.
Navsegda zabitny okoshki:  
Chto tam, izmorozy, il' groza?  
Na glaza ostorozeno koSki  
Poxozi tvoi glaza.

O, kak serdce moe toskuet!  
Ne smertnogo l' Casa zdru?  
A ta, chto sejchas tancuet,  
Nepremenno budet v adu. (I, 97)

To those who are familiar with the literary ambience of the pre-war Petersburg, this poem presents a vivid picture of the famous salon "Brodjacaja sobaka" which was at that time frequented by poets including Axmatova, and various artists. In her biography of Axmatova, Haight describes the salon as follows:

The year 1913 was the heyday of the poets' night club, the 'Wandering Dog', the haunt of all bohemian Petersburg: a cellar with the windows blocked up and the walls painted vivid colors by the artist Sergey Sudeykin, which Akhmatova recalls not only in the 'Poem without a Hero', but also in her poems 'We are all revellers here' and 'Yes, I loved them, those gatherings at night'.

Driver also gives a detailed account of the poet's frequent appearance in that literary salon:

Akhmatova and Gumilyov also attended the literary salons and receptions of St. Petersburg, and the especially fashionable "evenings" of Sergey Gorodetsky. The meeting place of poets, painters, Bohemians, and the late-hour-society of the city was the Brodyachaya sobaka(The Roving Dog). This fabulous cave was a low, dark basement, its windows sealed against the world outside, and its walls painted with fantastic birds and flowers...Akhmatova would sit until the early hours of the morning, and here she wrote one of
her most famous poems, "Cabaret artistique," on New Year's Eve, 1913."

From these external circumstances, it is easy to identify the "I" with Axmatova, the "We" with those decadent artists and the "You" with Gumilev who would usually accompany her. However, the autobiographical "I" is here transferred from the biographical sphere into a multi-layered poetic reality.

The image of the "I" in this text is realized in terms of a subtle interplay of romantic illusion of love and its disillusion, yearning and frustration, intimacy and alienation. All the different levels of reality here coalesce to create a complex mirror-like backdrop into which the "I"'s perception is to be projected. On one level, the text entails two separate realities which are clearly demarked by the two opposite space indicators: "zdes" in the first stanza and "tam" in the third stanza. The reality defined by "zdes" is real and concrete in that it directly refers to the decadent atmosphere of night gatherings to which the young Axmatova physically belongs. As opposed to this palpable reality, the "I" perceives another reality which exists beyond the "sealed off" windows. That the adverb "tam" refers to unreachable higher reality, "realiora" is characteristic of the Romantic, and still to a larger extent, of the Symbolist poetic idiom. In this text,
however, the reality designated by "tam" lacks the positive idiom of "realiora": it is not the eternal world of the "Beautiful Lady" but the ominous world of a thunderstorm. Thus, instead of an opposition, we have a relationship of a mirror-text between the two realities: the line "Čto tam, izmoroz' il' groza?" reads like an image-explanation, an enrichment, of the palpable reality of "zdes'." This line symbolically summarizes the chaotic, sinful ambience of Decadence doomed to retribution.

A similar mirror-recurrence(razdvoenie) operates in the first stanza which presents a description of the gathering in the cabaret characterized by eroticism and moral decay. In the Romantic tradition, love is not something the poet finds in reality, but something he creates, and eventually it is doomed to lead the poet to frustration. In other words, love always figures as yearning and illusion. The second half of the first stanza on one level conveys this sense of yearning which resembles love and beauty. However, on the deeper level, the second two lines function as a mirror-text of the first two and, thus, reinforce the sense of disillusion and fruitlessness of love conveyed by the images in the first two lines. In the "I"'s perception, the lovers are de-romanticised: they are nothing but drunkards and
harlots. These images of drunkards and harlots are repeated in those of flowers and birds of the third line and transform the third and fourth lines from a symbolic description of love, beauty, and yearning into that of the crude paintings on the walls of a whorehouse. Precisely in terms of this yearning-frustration interplay about love is to be understood the poetic "I."

Yet, there is another interplay which is crucial to understand the "I," that is, the interplay of intimacy and alienation. As the pronoun "We" in the first stanza immediately indicates, the "I" belongs to the world of "drunkards and harlots." Moreover, the second half of the second stanza suggests that the "I" is intimately related to the "You." At the same time, however, she feels alien to the entire situation in which the lover's eyes resemble those of a wicked cat and even the smoke from his pipe seems strange. The "I"'s sense of alienation is reinforced by the exclamatory sentence in the final stanza: "O kak serdce moe toskuet!"

To summarize our discussion of this poem, the factual, autobiographical reality of Axmatova the person is in the text transformed into a much more complicated poetic reality, and, consequently, the "I" should be perceived within this poetic reality built around the yearning-frustration, illusion-disillusion interplay about love.
At this point, we may take a close look at the various aspects of the "I" in Axmatova's poetry and the world created by them. Throughout her entire oeuvre, Axmatova shows a remarkable variety of the lyrical "I": the image of the "I" is, as Èjxenbaum aptly put, "doubled and multiplied." This constantly changing image of the "I" has been noted and explained in different terms by different scholars. For example, listing the six different types of the "I," Efim Dobin defines the ever-changing nature of the "I" as "mnogolikost":

26) V stixax Axmatovoj togo vremeni ne bylo, odnako, edinstvennoj liričeskoj geroini. Oni--raznye i nepokožie...Èto odna-prostonarodnaja, bujnaja golovuška... Èto drugaja--sosredotočennaja, meštatel'no-poëtičeskaja...Pered nami tret'ja, tože prostonarodnaja, no prostuška...Četvertaja truženica...Pjataja bezdel'nica...Zatesalas' šestaja,nečego obščego ne imejuščaja. A stixo-
tvorenija stojat rjadom, pokazyvaja mnogolikost' preobraženij poëta.

A similar point is made by Driver:

The fact is, of course, that there are many personae in Axmatova's poems....Some seem almost identifiable with the poet herself, while others can be quite remote from the real person...She may be haughty or humble, forgiving or malicious, austere or frivolous--and to attempt to reconcile the many poetic persons is both unnecessary and misleading.

Contrary to these scholars, however, Poggioli contends that the voice of Axmatova's "I" lacks variety:
Akhmatova...cannot express her experience except personally and directly, by means of poems which read like fragments from a private diary...Akhmatova speaks only with the voice of a fiancee, bride, or mistress....

We do not agree with Poggioli, since in Axmatova's poetry the sense of limited intimacy is usually rendered by diverse voices of the "I." The multi-dimensionality spoken of by Dobin and Driver is definitely found in the axmatovian text, but it is there in a way that creates a perception of direct intimacy for the reader, due to the particular sets of images through which the complexity, double-and-multiple face of the "I," embodies itself, simultaneously creating and reflecting a world outside. Indeed, the "I" in her poetry runs the whole gamut of voices, from that of a jilted lover, to that of a lamenting mother to that of a judge of history. The variety of the "I"'s voices is an artistic manifestation of the poet's attempt to explore the labyrinth of her inner reality. Although Dobin and Driver see all the different images of the "I" as separate entities with nothing in common, their vision of life are much the same since they are defined by the same dominant mode. For example, we hear the voice of a jilted lover:

27) i)Zadyxajas', ja kriknula:"Šutka Vse, čto bylo. Ujdeš', ja umru". Ulybnul'sja spokojno i žutko I skazal mne:"Ne stoj na vetru".(I, 64)
That of an unhappy wife:

ii) Ne ljubil, kogda plačut deti,
    Ne ljubil čaja s malinoj
    I ženskoj isteriki.
    ...A ja byla ego ženoj.  

That of a mother:

iii) Mladšij syn byl rostom s pal'čik,
    Kak tebja unjat',
    Spi, moj tixij, spi moj mal'čik,
    Ja durnaja mat'.  

That of a patriot:

iv) Ne s temi ja, kto brosil zemlju
    Na rasterzanie vragam.
    Ix gruboj lesti ja ne vnemlju,
    Im pesen ja svoix ne dam.  

What is in common for these four different voices of the "I" is that each voice is uttered in the minus-mode which we discussed in the preceding chapter. In the example i), the "I"'s reality is that of alienation which is projected against the background of the parting with her lover. The "I" in the example ii) is also alienated from ordinary reality, since she is the wife in the house where everything domestic is rejected. The example iii), a stanza from the poem "Lullaby" presents an image of a mother. Although the "I" is supposedly singing for her child, she is more talking to herself than to the child. By saying that "I am an evil mother," the "I" asserts her alienation from motherhood. The Example iv) is one of
those poems which, in terms of Verheul, have a "public theme." The "I" in this poem is certainly different from the previous ones in that her voice is resentful, judgmental and firm. However, here again, her voice is defined by a similar kind of minus-mode. The sense of alienation is perceived by the triple rejection: she rejects being with "them," she rejects listening to them, and rejects writing for them.

Apropos of the voice of the "I," some scholars have paid attention not only to her identity but also to her gradual development throughout Axmatova's poetic career. Curiously enough, however, their opinions are sharply divided into two opposite categories: some view the voice of the "I" in the later period as more detached and others view it the other way round. Driver, for instance, claims that nothing personal remains in the "I" of the later works:

The shift from direct lyrical expression to a more indirect method was to develop in some later poems to the almost complete supression of the lyrical "I" to the almost complete detachment of the persona from herself.

Rosslyn's contention is just the opposite in that she views the heroine in Axmatova's later poems as the poet herself:

....Some of the poems demand that we identify the players of these parts, and so from Anno
Domini onwards it will often be necessary to speak not of "hero" and "heroine" but of Akhmatova and the people around her.

Similarly, after defining the nature of the "I" of Akhmatova's early lyrics as "multi-faced," Dobin goes on to point out that the "I" of later works becomes the poet:

28) S tridcatyx godov liričeskih geroj
Akhmatovoj polnost'ju slivaetsja s avtorom. 
Ja--eto sam poēt. Meždu "ja" avtora i "ja" liričeskoj geroini prežde neredko namečalas' distancija.

The issue, around which these two views center, is whether or not the created image of the "I" becomes closer to Akhmatova the person in her later work. If we consider the two major works of the later period, "Rekviem" and Poëma bez geroja, we find ourselves lost somewhere in the middle of these two seemingly opposite notions. We may agree with Driver in that these two narrative poems lack the tone of subjective lyricism of the early period. On the other hand, though, the second view also has a point, because both "Rekviem" and Poëma deal with clearly personal real-life situations and the "I" is very much recognized as Akhmatova who is actually present in those situations. For example, as the following lines indicate, the voice of the "I" in "Rekviem" is directly from Axmatova who has lost her husband and has her son in the prison: "Muž v mogile,
syn v tjur' me / Pomolites' obo mne." In spite of this directness, however, the poem as a whole seems to be expressed in a tone which is far from that of lyricism. To solve this contradictoriness, we may have to touch upon the issue from a different angle.

As we previously observed, while the multiple images of the "I" prevail in her early lyrics, the tone is paradoxically such as to create the illusion of simple and direct intimacy to be expected not in multiple but in a single-image relationship with the reader. Conversely, when a particular single complex of relationships begins to stand for the "I," the tone is one of distance, one of having framed the issue of the "I" in a context of realities much greater than the intimate personal universe. Then, it is not really the point whether the "I" becomes detached from Axmatova. Rather, the question is what is the central presence of the "I" into which her various images are integrated. The answer to this question may be that the image of the "I" as a poet becomes predominant, and this explains both the detachment and the directness of the later poems. The sense of the "I"'s detachment is due to the subjugation of the other voices. While in the early period, Axmatova is referred to as a woman-poet with the stress on the first word as Nedobrevo pointed out, in the later
period the stress is to a larger extent given to the second word. The sense of complete merge between the "I" and Axmatova is achieved mainly because the "I" is Axmatova-poet. Here we have to remember that the poet Axmatova is only one aspect of Axmatova herself. What Keats once wrote is to be understood in this regard:

The character of the poet is to have no self: it is everything and nothing...A poet is the most unpoetical of anything in existence, because he has no Identity—he is continually informing and filling some other body.  

In the beginning of "Rekviem" the "I"'s stance as a poet is literally stated:

29)....Togda stojaščaja za mnoj ženščina s golubym gubami, kotoraja, Konečno, nikogda ne slyxala moego imeni, Očnulas' ot svojstvennogo nam vsem Ocepenenija i sprosila menja na uxo (Tam vse govorili šepotom):
--A etso vy možete opisat'?
I ja skazala
--Mogu. (I, 361)

What the "I" can and must do is to describe and perhaps "re-create" the reality of horror with the gift of the poet. As we discussed in the preceding chapter, the theme of artistic creation occupies larger and larger place in the poetry of Axmatova's later period. In accordance with that, the "I"'s stance as a poet is more firmly and directly established and, as we will discuss later, finally reaches its culmination in Poema bez geroja.
As we briefly mentioned earlier in this chapter, we can attribute the recurrent image of the "I" and her varying voice to the poet's obsessive concern with exploring the self and creating inner poetic world of her own. We may understand Lev Ozerov's statement on Axmatova as a "poet-thinker" in this context. To quote him:


In order to attribute some meaning to her existence, to make some sense out of the senseless phenomenal reality, the poet has to construct her own reality. In her later period the image of the poet facing alone the world gets much more vivid and explicit, but we can trace her struggle with reality from the very beginning. In seeing the world from all conceivable perspectives, in enlarging the circumsference of her expansive consciousness, she uses certain structural elements repeatedly. Here we are to discuss, at least briefly, those recurrent structural elements.

A number of her poems include a dream, or states related to a dream such as nightmare, reverie, hallucination, and delirium. Dream in poetry is, broadly speaking, a device of substitution to be understood in
the context of other substitutionary devices, such as metaphors, tropes, and symbols. In a sense, poetry as a whole can be considered as a system of recurrences in specific sets of relationships to a system of substitutions. Thus, what we must do is to investigate how the poet relates the independent rules by which a dream functions with those of ordinary logic in some fashion that would convey to the reader information about a poem's ultimate message.

In Axmatova's poetry, the substitution by the dream is made in such a way that the elements of ordinary logic are to a certain degree maintained. In her poetic world, thus, two different levels of reality coexist and quite often the borderline between the dream and a waking life is blurred. The final stanza of "Večernjaja komnata" may illustrate this point:

31) Poslednij luč, i želtyj, i tjaželyj,
Zastyl v bukete jarkix georgin,
I kak vo sne ja slyšu zvuk violy
I redkie akkordy klavesin.  (I, 55)

In the first line, a relationship of similarity is established between "želtyj" and "tjaželyj" on the phonetic level: the same phonetic cluster "žel" in "želtyj" is repeated in "tjaželyj." Consequently, the meanings of these two adjectives begin to relate to each other on a newly established semantic plane of
similarity. Belonging to two different semantic fields, they now acquire a similar emotional coloring: the sense of heavy languardness. This emotional impact of the two adjectives emphasizes the metaphoric meaning of fading love implied in "poslednij luč." From the "last beam of the Sun" we expect darkness, night, and by association, termination of love. However, the verb "zastyl" in the second line destroys our expectation, since it means stopping the flow of time; instead of night and darkness, there is now continued light of the frozen ray. As long as the "I" holds on to light, there is at least the illusion(a dream) that the night will not come, i.e., love will not be terminated. In this way, the perception of the flowers and the Sun can be read as a description of both the determination and the helplessness of love. Thus, the first two lines become endowed with dream quality, without entirely losing their literal meaning. In the "I"'s extremely subjective and expansive frame of mind, reality is substituted by a dream.

The sound images of the second half of the stanza can be considered also as substitutions for a dream, although the statement led by "kak vo sne," we expect, must be made from the perspective of one who is now awake. The "I" wishes to describe the quality of her
perception of the sound as something one might hear in sleep. Thus, the sound together with the light and the flowers becomes a substitution for the reality of non-love. Perhaps even the room itself does not exist in reality at all, but merely a reflection of the "I"'s state of mind, as it is alluded in the second stanza of this poem: "I komnata, gde okna sliškom uzki,/Xranit ljubov' i pomnит starinu."

In this text, through the interplay of the illusion of love and non-love, the two levels of reality merge into one complex whole—the "I"'s inner world. While maintaining their literal meaning, or in Tynjanov's terms, "the principal sign," the words of the text carry a secondary meaning and create a world which assumes a new dimension of reality.

The complexity caused by correlation and opposition of different levels of reality acquires an extra significance when there are layers of dreams. Mention has been already made by Bickert of the complexity of Axmatova's dream world. Defining the dream in Axmatova's poetry as a substitute for reality, she goes on to observe that:

32) Le rêve est le substitut, ou le complément, de la réalité...Le poète peut aussi rêver qu'il rêve. Ce deuxième rêve, intérieur au premier, s'insère dans celui-ci. Un troisième, un quatrième, puis d'autres à leur
suite, peuvent ainsi s'entremêler et, finalement, se neutraliser pour créer une réalité nouvelle et déconcertante. Anna Akhmatova a constamment recours au rêve et à la rêverie.2

The multi-leveled dream world is found, among others, in the third poem of the cycle "Šipovnik cvetet":

33) Černuju i pročnuju razluku
Ja nesu s toboju naravne,
Čto že ty plačes'! Daj mne lučše ruku,
Obeščaj opjat' priji vo sne. (I, 289)

This short text requires multiple interpretation like most of her other poems. As the title "Vo sne" indicates, the "I" is addressing the "You" in the dream. In her dream, she is separated from the "You" because of her own death implied by the "dark, lasting separation" in the first line and the image of the weeping "You" in the third line. However, due to the word "naravne," there arises another possibility of reading the first two lines. That is, the first two lines may be not only about the "I"'s death but also about the "You"'s. In this particular context, then, death means not so much a specific event but a human condition, for we all carry our death inside us. We are the womb of our oblivion. "To cry," consequently, becomes a response to that condition, and only dream is an escape from it. On the other hand, it is also possible that it is only the "You" who is dead but that the "I" is also carrying that same
mortality. Thus, for the "I," dream is the only dimension where she can evoke the "You." Within the framework of this dream, the "I"'s vision is further stretched to another dream in which she expects to see the "You" again. Here, the lovers' parting and the "I"'s yearning for the reunion through dreams provide a medium in whose terms the poet's philosophical meditation on mortality is realized. As we will discuss more later, the awareness of mortality is a significant part of Axmatova's thematics and it is usually expressed in the mode of love.

A similar world of the "dream within a dream" is presented in the poem "Son":

34) Ja znala, ja snjus' tebe,
Ottogo ne mogla zasnut'.
Mutnyj fonar' golubel
I mne ukazyval put'.

.........

I v žestkom svete skudnogo dnja
Prosnuvšis', ty zastonal
I v pervyj raz menja
Po imeni gromko nazval. (I, 139-140)

Here again the complex multiple dream situation serves to create another dream(illusion) of love and intimacy. First of all, the "You" has a dream about the "I": in his dream he is looking for her. Instead of finding her, however, he is woken up by crude day light. His search for the "I" in his dream and his waking up
from that dream are in turn elements of the "I"'s dream from which she does not wake up. What seems to result from this is in essence an illusion of love, a substitution of real love.²⁶

It is noteworthy that in all these "dream poems," Axmatova's awareness of reality is expressed in the mode of love lyrics: love as the "I"'s state of perception serves to transform reality into a unique inner poetic world. The world of the "I" created in this manner is never static. It goes through a constant self-renewal and expansion, and by doing so, constantly generates meanings. It is this huge, over-inflated universe of the self into which the poet's quest for the vision of inner reality is projected. In this respect, Pavlovskij's view on the dreams in Axmatova's poetry as related to her eternal journey into the world of the self is convincing:


Another conscious part of Axmatova's creative method for exploring the self and the world is "mirroring."

According to Boris Filippov's enumeration, the image of
the mirror combined with the candle is mentioned five times in Večer, twice in Belaja staja, once in Podorožnik, twice in Četki, twice in Anno Domini, once in Trostnik, three times in Sed'maja kniga, four times in others.28 Listing a number of occasions in which the image of mirror appears, Dobin also points out:

36) V stixax Axmatovoj často vstrebčaetsja slovo "zerkalo"...Pomestiv sebjja sredi personažej kartiny, xudožnik okazalsja kak by v dvux mirax odnovremenno. I vne kartiny. I vnutri nee, rjadom so svoimi sozdannijami. I v mire, real'no suščestvujuščem. I v počtičeskom, sozdannom im samim. Zerkalom staja vsja kartina, vse v nej izobražennoe.29

From the very early poem "Muze" to the mirrored hall of Poema bez geroja the image of a mirror, the "I" looking at herself in the mirror, or reality reflected in the mirror recur. In the early poems, mirrors function mainly for the purpose of reflecting the image of the poetic "I." It is in the mirror, for example, that the "I" of the poem "Muze" is confronted with herself:

37) Muza-sestra zagljanula v lico,
Vzgljad ee jasen i jarok,
I otnjala zolote kol'co,
Pervyj vesennij podarok.
...........

Zavtra mne skažut, smejas', zerkala:
"Vzor tvoj ne jasen, ne jarok..."
Tixo otveču: "Ona otnjala
Božij podarok".      (I, 77)
Here, what strikes us is not merely the image of the mirror as such, but also the mirror-relationship between the first and the last stanza, and between the different images. The Muse-"I" relationship in the first stanza repeats itself in the Mirror-"I" relationship in the last stanza. In the first stanza, it is the image of the "Muse-sister" into which the "I" projects her self image. The "I"'s image reflected in that of the Muse is again reflected in the "laughing mirrors." Thus, we may relate those three images--the Muse, the "I," and the mirror--in terms of oblique "inter-mirroring." The "I" does not identify the Muse as her alter ego, but they may resemble each other, since they are "sisters." When the "I" is reflected in the mirrors, the reflection refers back to the image of the Muse: cf. "Vzgljad ee jasen i jarok" and "Vzor tvoj ne jasen, ne jarok..." As we discussed briefly in the preceding chapter, this poem presents the significance of art in the mode of non-love: it is the deprivation of love which relates the "I" to the Muse, the personified figure of art. In this respect, what the mirrors reflect is not precisely any single image of the "I," but rather two dominant features by which the image of the "I" is defined: love and art. Apropos of the recurrent image of the mirror, Bickert also relates it to the poet's lonely search for the self:
38) Anna Akhmatova se regarde dans la glace. Elle est seule. Plus seule qu'une autre femme, peut-être. Plus seule qu'un autre poète, sans doute... Elle se regarde parce qu'elle se cherche, et se cherche parce qu'elle a besoin de se trouver.

Similarly, A. Sedakova interprets the mirror image in terms of the poet's double:

39) Zerkalo zdes'--bolee vsego dvojnik, vnešnee, otdelivšeesa ot vnutrennego i vstrečajušeesa s nim...Pered zerkalom sozdaetsja kanoničeskij obraz poëtessy v naprjažennoj i affektirovannoj poze...Geroinja vidit sebja v inter'ere, so storonyj1 tam gde govoritsja "ja", my vidim "ona"....

True, the image of the mirror is intrinsically related to the "I" standing in the center" and the "I"'s looking at herself in the mirror can be understood as a symbolic gesture of introspection. However, in later period, mirrors function not only to reflect the image of the self but also to create a unique pattern of chaotic reality perceived by the poet's imagination. Akhmatova's mirrors, in other words, do not exactly reflect reality nor reverse it as in Lewis Carroll's Through the Looking-Glass where people do everything backwards and the simplest sequences of temporal events occur in reverse order; they deflect reality. Her perception of reality is enormously complex due to the multiple mirrors, intertwined and reflected upon each other. We often encounter an abyss of mirrors. For example:
40) Vse uneslos' prozračnym dymom,
Istlelo v grubine zerkal....
I vot už o nevozvratimom
Skripč beznosyj zaigral. (I, 232)

Written in 1929, this poem "Tot gorod, mnoj ljubimyj
s detstva" presents the chaotic world of Axmatova's
poetry. This is a world which offers no opportunities of
logical manipulation: here nothing makes sense and
reality is irreparably disfigured like "the noseless
violinist." Further, being noseless, the violinist is a
skull, thus, by association, a player for the 'dance
macabre' that our life may well be. This chilling
perception of reality is projected against the abyssmal
world of mirrors.

The "I"'s perception of reality is effectively
articulated through the multiple mirroring also in the
hermetic poem "Najavu" from the cycle "Šipovnik cvetet"
of 1946:

41) I vremja proč', i prostranstvo proč',
Ja vse razgljadela skvoz' belju noč':
I narciss v xrustale u tebj na stole,
I sigary sinij dymok,
I to zerkalo, gde, kak v čistoj vode,
Ty sejčas otrazit'sja mog.
I vremja proč', i prostranstvo proč'...
No i ty mne ne možeš' pomoč'. (I, 289)

First, the "I"'s act of making things out is done
through the white night in the second line, and the
impression here is that the abstractness of night is
concretized as something like a looking-glass. Thus, the objects in lines three through six figure as reflections of real things. Characteristically, these items—the cutting glass, the narcissus, the mirror—themselves have a reflective quality. The immediate association which the narcissus evokes is the Greek myth about a lovely young man metamorphosed out of longing for his own reflection. The narcissus which is associated with the idea of reflection is in turn a reflection on the cutting glass. Or, at least, it is not clearly revealed to us whether the flower is actually in the glassware or is reflected on its surface. Our visual perception is further obscured by the dim smoke from a cigar. The lines five and six are subject to more than one interpretation. One possibility is that the elements of reality which the "I" sees through the looking-glass-like night are reflected in the mirror. Another possibility is that these two lines are reverberation of the line three "Narciss v xrustale." The young lad of the Greek mythology is now transformed into the "I"'s lover and the spring where the Greek lad saw his own reflection now figures as a mirror. The phrase "kak v čistoj vode" may be interpreted in this connection. The two opposite sorts of reflectors—liquid and hard, and their symbolic equivalents, liquidity as time and mirror as
eternity—are combined into one "mirror-like water."
Narcissus looks at water, thus life is transformed into
myth. The past of the ancient Greece can be telescoped
into the present in this disconnected reality since time
and space have lost meaning. It is the mode of non-love
we discussed in the preceding chapter which links the
past of Greece and the present of the "I," and transforms
the reality of things into that of multiple reflection.
In the myth, Narcissus declines the love of Echo and in
the poem no contact exists between the "I" and her "You."

Later on, this world of mirrors obtains even greater
complexity. The mirrors themselves start to dream:
"tol'ko zerkalo zerkalu snitsja," and the "I" doubts even
her own being as in the poem of 1963 "V zazerkal'e":

42) My čto-to znaem drug o druge
Užasnoe. My v adskom kruge,
A možet, ěto i ne my. (I, 305)

Another essential element which constitutes the
semantics of the "I"'s vision of reality is the image of
a shadow. As we have discussed earlier, the world of the
"I" in Axmatova's poetry is constructed on the
interpenetration of different levels of reality.
Naturally in this world of multiple dimensions, the
poet's perception of the self and others is modulated in
diverse ways. Here, human figures are often deprived of
their palpable substance and reduced to shadows, or beings similar to shadows, such as ghosts and phantoms. Shadows appear with increasing frequency and her poetic world of the later period seems to have become a "kingdom of shadows." Although her poetry is interspersed with shadows, it is difficult to define a particular single function of the shadow in her poetics. Sometimes, shadows point clearly to the nether world as in the final two lines of the poem "Vnov' podaren mne dremotoj": "I otkuda v carstvo teni/ Ty ušel, utesnyj moj." Other times, the "I"'s obsessive concern with her past memory is made articulate in the hovering figures of the shadows: "ved' pod arkoj na Galernoj/ Naši teni navsegda." We will discuss this particular use in some detail later in connection with the issue of time. Here, we will focus the role of shadow as the "I"'s double. Frequently, the "I" is confronted with her own shadow as in the poem "Vse duši milyx na vysokix zvezdax" of 1944:

43) U berega serebrjanaja iva
Kasaetsja sentjabr'skix jarkix vod.
Iz prošlogo vosstavši, molčalivo
Ko mne navstreču ten' moja idet. (I, 281)

Combined with the shadow image, the principle of "mirroring" we discussed in the previous texts is here expanded and enriched. Several planes of images are interlocked and new associations arise at each level and
at the points of their interrelationship. First of all, the willow tree in Axmatova's poetry always figures as a reflection, as Aleksis Rannit describes:

This tree is for Akhmatova, as for Far Eastern and Art Nouveau artists, a symbol of ease, grace, and of the peculiar delicate line, which is fluid and produces a subtle languor. In addition, the branch of the willow tree may be considered—just as the slender frame is a mirror-image of a gliding, fleeting form.

In the first two lines, the reflection of the willow tree on the water is reminiscent of the Narcissus theme, indeed expanding upon it, and thus the tree functions as a mirror-image of the "I." The tree looks down, and in the distant past, Narcissus looks down. What the "I" and her substitution see is the "I" in time, since the river is running, like the flowing time. Thus a reflection is really a shadow of one’s past, and this is translated into the next image—the shadow walking up to meet. The juxtaposition of shadow and reflection, combining the mirror motif and the shadow motif—provides a time-space continuum into which the various images and reflections of the "I" is projected.

The shadow as the "I"’s image is again encountered in the poem "Tam ten' moja ostalas' i toskuet":

44) Tam ten' moja ostalas' i toskuet
Vse v toj že sinej komnate živet,
Gostej iz goroda za polncč' ždet
I obrazok èmalevyj celuet. (I, 167)

In this text, the "I"'s perception of reality is modulated in terms of her own shadow and the world around it. All the semantic items here point to something unreal, something ghastly: the shadow, the sense of dream symbolized by color blue, and the magic hour of "midnight." The guests for whom the shadow is waiting may be, then, also shadows and phantoms, and the fourth line intimates a chilling picture of kiss of death. Perhaps our life itself is a banquet of shadows where nothing is real except for the ultimate reality of death. In the given poem, the shadow and its world function as a substitution for the "I" and her perception of reality.

We may understand Axtatova's poetry in general as a force which she offers in response to this chilling perception of reality. Her poetry does not present a reflection of reality, but rather a force, standing, like the Muse, in front of the mirror of other power called reality. It is a time-space continuum that warps reality into various shapes, literary and biographical references, individuals, to relate them on the principle of the Symbolist "correspondences" with each other. The poetic reality perceived and articulated by the poet acquires reality to which her work itself testifies.
So far we have examined the various aspects of the "I" and the essential elements which constitute the "I"'s world. In accordance with the central role of the "I," all the elements of her poetic world--dream, mirror, shadow--directly and indirectly function as substitutions for the multiple image of the "I." The interplays of different levels of reality, the multiple reflections of the images, and their internal relatedness--all these contribute to create a unique poetic world in Axmatova's text. As we will discuss more in the fifth chapter, it is a world in which nothing is real, and nothing matters but the "I"--the poet and her subjective perception defined by the concept of love. To conclude our discussion, we may quote I. Smirnov's remark on the extreme subjectivity of Axmatova's poetic world:

45) Pripisyvaja vnešnim javlenijam isključitel'no sledstvennju rol', Axmatova tem samym vdvigaet vnešniju dejstvitel'nost' v svoj čuvstvennyj mir. V poezii Axmatovoj zapečatlena tol'ko vnutrennjaja real'nost', vnešnjaja že propuščena skvoz' vosprijatie geroini; mir poëtessy--pereživaemyj, a ne dejstvennyj...pered nami voznikaet ne dejstvie, a ego vosprijatie i osoznanie.
NOTES TO CHAPTER II

1 According to N. Mandel'stam, Axmatova was not only conscious of her frequent use of the "I" but also somehow proud of it: "She had asked me to look up one of her poems in the first-line index, noting quite innocently that many of her things began with 'I'." See, N. Mandel'stam, p. 5.

2 Èjzenbaum, pp. 129-30.

3 Èjzenbaum, pp. 131-32.

4 Pavlovskij, p. 38.

5 Rosslyn, p. 21, p. 88.

6 In this regard, Wellek and Warren's general remark on the relationship between the author and his creation sounds appropriate: "The whole view that art is self-expression pure and simple, the transcript of personal feelings and experiences, is demonstrably false. Even when there is a close relationship between the work of art and the life of an author, this must never be construed as meaning that the work of art is a mere copy of life." See, Rene Wellek and Austin Warren, Theory of Literature (New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1977), p. 78.


9 Parenthetically, Jerzy Faryno makes it clear that the poetic "I" plays an equally important role in various other poets, such as Blok, Majakovskij, Cvetaeva, Pasternak, etc. See, Jerzy Faryno, "Some Aspects of Cvetaeva's Poetics," trans. A. Cyganski, in his Mifologizm i teologizm Cvetaevoj (Wien: Wiener Slawistischer Almanach, 1985), pp. 393-408.
Tomaševskij, p. 55.

Haight, p. 29.


Driver, *Akhmatova*, p. 84.


Driver, p. 61.

Rosslyn, p. 176.

Dobin, p. 140.

Nedobrovo, p. 485.

Quoted by Wellek and Warren in *Theory of Literature*, p. 90.


The overall effect here is very much like the effect in Mandel'štam's poem "Sestry--tjažest' i nežnost'." In fact, it seems likely that Mandel'štam was conscious of Axmatova's poem, since Axmatova's "yellowness" and "heaviness" form a pair of equivalent images which would correspond to his "tenderness" and "heaviness."


Bickert, p. 35.

We find an interesting structural correspondence between this poem and Lermontov's "Pervoe janvarja." Not only is the entire "dream-within-a-dream" principle cardinal one in Lermontov's poetry, but also the final
lines of Lermontov reverberate at the end of Axmatova's poem:

cf. Lermontov:

I derzko im v glaza brosat' železnyj stix
Oblityj goreč'ju i zlost'ju!

Axmatova:

I v pervyj raz menja
Po imeni gromko nazval
...........

27 Pavlovskij, p. 98.


29 Dobin, pp. 199-201.

30 Bickert, p. 57.


Incidentally, the element of external reality as a consequence rather than as a cause reminds us of Dostoevskij's novels in which the external events are subordinated to the inner reality of the characters. Moreover, Axmatova's concept of love is much similar to that of Dostoevskian love as "a cognitive power." Although the comparison of Axmatova and Dostoevskij falls beyond the scope of our study, it is certainly an interesting topic for the future scholarship on Axmatova.
CHAPTER III. PROBLEMS OF DISCOURSE

How will the heart express itself?
How will another understand you?
Tjutčev

One of the factors which distinguish Acmeists from Symbolists is their attitude toward poetic creation in general and verse language in particular. Even though Acmeism was short-lived and not very influential, it was certainly a literary movement opposing the already declining Symbolism in terms of the poetic vision of the world and manipulation of language. Although the leading Acmeist poets including Akmatova, Mandel'štam, and Gumilev, widely differed in their selection of subject matter and style, they started their career with a common literary tenet: liberation of the poetic language from "des forêts de symboles." As was repeatedly expressed in their manifestoes, such as "Utro akmeizma" and "Nasledie simvolizma i akmeizm," the Acmeists were keenly aware of the primary significance of the "word as such" and tended to restore the equilibrium between the sign and the referent, between the referential and the
figurative function of the word, which was in the main destroyed by the Symbolists. Against the Symbolists' obscure, mystical, vague poetry with a philosophical bent, the Acmeists claimed verse composed in the language of clarity, precision, and palpability. Victor Erlich summarizes the Acmeist poetics as follows:

One of these trends was so called Acmeism. A group of young poets gathered about the literary magazine Apollon, such as Nikolai Gumilyov, Anna Akhmatova, and Osip Mandelshtam, set out to chart a new course in Russian poetry. The acmeists dispensed with the mystical vagueness of Symbolism, with its vaunted "spirit of music." They strove for "Apollonian" clarity and for graphic sharpness of outline...And, as they sought to bring the poet's subject closer to earth, the Acmeists tended to reduce the gap between poetic idiom and cognitive speech. An attempt was made to restore to the poet's word unequivocal, precise meaning.

Thus, already in the inceptive period of Acmeism, Mixail Kuzmin defined the nature of the new trend in the Russian poetry as "beautiful clarity." Later on, Osip Mandel'shtam, the leading exponent of Acmeist theory, developed his notion of art as craftmanship rather than inspiration on the basis of the Acmeists' shared respect for the word, its concrete material value. Concluding his essay "On the Nature of the Word," he wrote:

Instead of the romantic, the idealist, or the aristocrat dreaming about the pure symbols, about the abstract esthetics of the word, instead of Symbolism, Futurism and Imaginism,
there has arisen a living poetry of the object-word; its creator is not Mozart, the idealist dreamer, but Salieri, the stern and strict craftsman, extending a hand to the master craftsman of things and material values, to the builder and creator of the word of things.⁴

Composed in this direction, the Acmeist poetry demonstrated to a greater or lesser degree lexical simplicity and semantic precision, and therefore the general effect conveyed by their verse was that of directness and compactness. However, in spite of the scarce use of symbols and the "beautiful clarity" so eagerly hailed by non-symbolist critics, their poetry, especially that of Mandel'ştam, is by no means easy to grasp. Certainly, then, the Acmeist simplicity hides their highly complex craftsmanship and in that sense reminds us of Lotman's famous statement about artistic simplicity: "artistic simplicity is more complex than artistic complexity for it arises as the simplification of the latter and against its background."⁵

Several stylistic aspects of Axsatova's poetry, such as extra-textual allusions, heavy semantic loads on each word, and the principle of "nedogovorennost'" make her verse complicated and difficult to understand in spite of its surface lexical and syntactic simplicity. However, if we single out the most fundamental and pervasive structural element which is directly related to the
complexity of her poetry, it will be her use of particular pattern of discourse. Although in contemporary criticism, critics use the term "discourse" in widely divergent ways, we shall use the term in the broad sense of any kind of verbal interaction or communication present in the text. (We will discuss in concrete terms the different forms of this interaction later.) The issue of discourse in Axmatova's poetics is of paramount importance not only because a particular type of discourse recurs as an essential element of her complex poetic system but also because it has immediate bearing upon the dominant mode of non-love. Her poetry, when defined by the mode of non-love, requires a study of communication which is a fundamental aspect of love. The importance of the issue of communication in the study of Axmatova's poetry has been noted by Ju. Levin:

46) Ometim poputno, što kommunikacija (čeloveka s čelovekom, čeloveka s prirodoj i.t.d.) javljaetsja odnoj iz naibolee rasprostranennyx javnyx tem liriki-dostatočno napomnit' o lirike Feta, Pasternaka ili, osobenno, Axmatovoj.

Further, he noted, though incidentally and briefly, that the relationship between the difficulty of a text and complex discourse pattern (in his terms "inter-textual communicative structure"), supporting our contention that the ambiguity of Axmatova's poetry is to a large degree due to her complex use of discourse:
Having this in mind, we will discuss in this chapter, first, what the recurrent pattern of discourse is and how it is related to the dominant mode of non-love and, further, how it is incorporated into the complex communicative network of the poetic text. Second, we will pay special attention to one particular aspect of the discourse--dialogue. We will examine the nature of dialogue in Aхматова's poetry, its status, and its relationship with the mode of love. Dialogue is of special significance in the discourse of love, and in this regard we may recall Barthes' statement on "lover's discourse":

Whether philosophical, gnomic, lyric, or novelistic, there is always in the discourse upon love, a person whom one addresses though this person may have shifted to the condition of a phantom or a creature still to come.

Third, it has been suggested by majority of scholars that the source of Aхматова's poetry is to be found in the tradition of 19th century Russian prose rather than that
of poetry, though the reason for that has not yet been fully explained. We will be able to assess the validity of their contention by examining the issue of prose affinity from the viewpoint of the pattern of discourse.

1. Dislocation of Discourse

In his study of discourse typology, Baxtin defines discourse in poetry in general terms as being unified(single-type) and claims that with very few exceptional cases the coexistence of different types of discourse within the dimensions of a single work is possible only in prose. Establishing three basic types of discourse, he observes:

The speech of poetry in the narrow sense requires a unified usage of all words, their reduction to a common denominator of intention, that denominator either being discourse of the 1st type[direct un-mediated discourse—Y.S.] or belonging to certain watered-down varieties of the other types. Of course, poetic works in which not all the speech material is reduced to a common denominator are possible, but these are rare occurrences, such as, for example, the "prosaic" lyrics of Heine, Barbier, Nekrasov, and others. One of the essential peculiarities of prose fiction is the possibility it allows of using different types of discourse, with their distinct expressiveness intact, on the plane of a single work without reduction to a common denominator. Here resides the profound difference between style in prose and style in poetry. Yet even in poetry a whole series of crucial problems cannot be solved without considering the system of investigation
here proposed, because different types of discourse requires a different stylists

treatment in poetry.

Again in his essay on the novelistic prose, he reaffirms his view, saying:

The unity and singularity of language are the indispensable prerequisites for a realization
of the direct (but not objectively typifying)
intentional individuality of poetic style and
its monologic steadfastness.

However, Axmatova's poetry, whether it is a short
lyric or a long narrative poem, usually does contain the
multiple types of discourse that Baxtin attributes to
prose texts and in this sense her poetry belongs among
what Baxtin says are "rare occurrences." It is
characteristic of Axmatova's poetry that it often
includes a subtle interplay of various levels of the type
of discourse which form recurrent patterns. We may
define this pattern as "disintegrated" because the
different levels intersect and intertwine without
apparent linear logical connection within a given poem.
Since this disintegrated pattern reveals so much of
Axmatova's poetic style, it is well to consider it at
some length.

Scholars and critics have paid some attention to the
discourse type in poetry in general, though in different
terms and different contexts. Speaking of three voices
of poetry, for example, T.S. Eliot classifies poetic
discourse into three categories: 1) the voice of the poet talking to himself or to nobody, 2) poet addressing an audience, 3) the voice of the poet when he attempts to create a dramatic character addressing another imaginary character. Using different terminology, Lotman also suggests a basic scheme of speaking voices in a lyric:

The plot (sjužhetnyj) basis of a lyric poem is formulated as a translation of the entire diversity of biographical situation into a specific artistic language in which the entire wealth of potential elements is reduced to three basic possibilities:
1) the one who speaks—the "I"
2) the one who is addressed—the "Thou"
3) the one who is neither the first nor the second—the "He"

Insofar as each of these elements can be used in the singular or the plural we have before us the personal pronoun system. Lyric plots are biographical situations translated into the pronominal system of a natural language.

Similarly, dividing a lyric text into two types, "egotive" and "appellative" on the basis of the speaking personae, Levin makes a subdivision of each type. According to him, egotive text may have a personal first person, non-personal first person, or generalized first person. Appellative text may have personal second person, non-personal second person, generalized second person, or auto-communicative second person. He further contends that the communicative status of a lyric is defined by the selection or various possible combination of above-listed speaking voices.
With these classifications in mind as a frame of reference, we may establish in our own way the types of discourse frequently used to constitute Axmatova's poetic text from the viewpoint of speaking personae.

1) the poet addressing
   i) the reader
   ii) herself
   iii) unidentified "You"

2) the poetic "I" addressing
   i) the reader
   ii) herself
   iii) unidentified "You"

3) the poetic "I" and the unidentified someone else addressing each other.

Often all these types of discourse coexist in a single poem, the result of which is usually a particularly acute sense of emotional tension. Here we will take the poem "Sžala ruki pod temnoj vual'ju..." for an example to discuss the way these types of discourse are combined and the function of the dislocation of discourse.

48) Sžala ruki pod temnoj vual'ju...
   "Otčego ty segodnja bledna?"
   Ottogo čto ja terpkoj pečal'ju
   Napoila ego dop'jana.
Kak zabudu? On vyšel, šatajas',
Ja sbežala, peril ne kasajas',
Ja bežala za nim do vorot.

Zadyxajas', ja kriknula: "Šutka
Vse, čto bylo. Ujdeš', ja umru".
Ulybnulsja spokojno i Šutko
I skazal mne: "Ne stoj na vetro". (I, 64)

In this poem, the addresser (the "I") finds herself situated on several different planes of discourse, and the pronominal structure of the text is chaotic. The sender of the message (or the bearer of the utterance) in the first line is the "I" but it is not clear whether it is identical with the subject of the message, and the receiver is not clear either. Since the verb "sžala" indicates only a singular feminine, it can be the "I" or unidentified "She." The rest of the stanza is constructed in a question-rejoinder situation. The person who poses the question is not indicated, and we do not know whether the "I" is addressing herself or someone else is addressing the "I" or the "She." It is possible, then, to understand the situation in one of the following ways: 1) it is the "I" who talks about herself, poses a question to herself, and answers the question, 2) it is the "I" who talks about the "She" and hears someone else asking a question of the "She" and the "She" answering the question, 3) it is the "I" who talks about herself and retells the conversation between herself and someone else.
The second stanza is a typical Ich-dichtung, and the fixed Ich-Erzähler to a certain degree clarifies the subject of the first line. The "I" as a subject of the two actions "sbežala" and "bežala" can be very likely the subject of the action "sžala". The similarity of the phonetic construct of the three verbs reinforces the identity of the subject.

In the third stanza the Ich-Erzählung continues, but there is inserted a quoted speech between the "I" and the "He." Thus, the types of discourse which compose the communicative structure of this text are sequentially summarized as follows:

```
  <addresser>          <addressee>
  1) the "I"------------"Unidentified"
  2) "Unidentified"-------the "I"
  3) the "I"------------"Unidentified"
  4) the "I"------------"He"
  5) the "He"------------the "I"
```

These types of discourse are presented on a single plane of the text without any logical or syntactic link, and the shift from one to another is always abrupt. The abrupt shift of discourse, tone, syntax, phrase, which is characteristic of Axmatova has been noted by Èjxenbaum. Taking the poem at hand as an example, Èjxenbaum writes:

49) Stremlenie k lakoničeskoy ènergiy vyràžaetsja także v rezkix sintaksičeskix
The sense of disconnectedness conveyed by the shifting discourse is also created by non-verbal discourse of the text, i.e. gesture of the "I" and the "He." The verbs defining the "I"'s action -- sžat', sbežat', bežat', kriknut', zadyxat'sja -- contain a sense of deep disturbance, desperation, and frustration, which is felt especially in the striking contrast of the vertical and horizontal movement expressed by the two verb "sbežat'" and "bežat'." If the inner movement of the "I"'s mind is externalized primarily by a series of verbs of sharp, heavy, abrupt motion, the "He"'s is externalized by verbs of facial expression as in the second line of the second stanza and the third line of the third stanza. The contrast between the "I"'s dynamic movement and the "He"'s static movement, combined with the displaced conversation in the third stanza creates the sense of finality of their parting.

The inexplicable discrepancy between the semantics of the "I" and that of the "He" can be explained within the context of non-love; the communication levels of the two personae do not converge. The correlation of different types of discourse without linear logic on a
single lyric plane becomes a meaningful form-shaping element in the text which is defined by the dominant mode of non-love. The not-so-novel episode of lover's parting is perceived with novelty here due to the dislocated discourse. This dislocated discourse appears constantly in the text of non-love. Here is another example:

50) Bez nazvanija

Sredi moroznoj prazdničnoj Moskvy,
Gde protekaet naše rasstavan'e
I gde, naverno, pročtete vy
Proščal'nyx pesen pervoe izdanie,
Nemnogo udivlenye glaza...
"Čto? Čto? Uže?....Ne možet byt'!"
-Konečno!
I svjatočnogo neba birjuza,
I vse krugom blajeno i bezgrešno.
Net, tak he rasstavalsja nikogda
Nikto ni s kem, i eto nam nagrada
Za podvig naš. (I, 298)

In this poem, the linear progression of the voice of the "I" addressing the "You" is interrupted by a sudden insertion of another's voice in lines six and seven. Being out of place, these two lines create the sense of dislocation: no clue is given to determine who is speaking to whom, and, moreover, the message itself is totally obscure. The conjunction "I" at the beginning of lines eight and nine, which would normally link two contiguous lexico-semantic units, paradoxically intensifies the sense of dislocation when used to link two different types of discourse.
The dislocated pattern of discourse is further complicated by an introduction of another text within the text of the given poem. The text of the given poem and the inserted text—the first edition of farewell songs (line 4) share the topic of parting in common, but the addressers of the two texts are not identical. While the addresser of the first text is the "I" and the addressee is the "You," the addresser of the second text (the author of the songs) is unknown and the addressee is the "You" as a reader of the songs. As a result of this, instead of a direct mutual communication between the "I" and the "You," a subtle disparity of communicative levels is established:

the "I"------------------------> the "You"
(addressing)

the "You"------------------------> the unidentified
(responding) someone else

Not only the pattern of discourse but also the "I"'s perception of landscape conveys certain dislocated communication, this time communication with non-human objects. The sense of impossibility and helplessness is created basically by semantic contrast and opposition. First, the semantics of the landscape against which the lovers' parting is projected is that of festivity and here two contrastive semantic fields are juxtaposed:
prazdničnyj
svjatočnyj vs. proščal'nyj
blažennyj
bezgrešnyj
(festivity) (grief)

In connection with this semantic parallelism, we can trace another set of opposition, frozen vs. flowing, and by extention, timeless vs. temporal. Moscow is "frosty" and the sky is like a turquoise with all its associations of deep blue, hard, cold surface. As opposed to this "frozen" background, the parting is "flowing": "protekaet naše rasstavan'e." Like all temporal events of human life, the lovers' parting is in the passage of flowing time, while nature is fixed, immovable, and indifferent to elapsing time.

Here again we have a text governed by the mode of non-love: the text's various constructional elements--dislocated discourse and semantics are organized in such a way that they realize poetically Axmatova's life-long concern with communication.

The dislocated pattern of discourse is employed also in "Rekviem" which has a poetic structure larger than her other lyrics. Written mainly between 1935-1940, "Rekviem" is regarded as the greatest achievement of mature Axmatova along with Poëma bez geroja and its
stylistic and thematic complexity has been pointed out by scholars who touch upon it in some detail. Having an unusual genre which is difficult to define in a single term, and a "public theme" not too often found in her poetry in general, "Rekviem" nevertheless retains certain stylistic traits of the short lyrics. In this respect, Driver's notion seems appropriate:

It is not so much a new experiment in Akhmatova's poetry as a culmination of a style perfected over the decades preceding; Akhmatova organizes her characteristic devices and techniques into an amazingly powerful statement which requires no elaboration or explanation.

In "Rekviem" the dislocated discourse as one of the distinctive features of her early lyrics serves to add artistic order and formal continuity to the ten lyrics of its main body which are linked loosely only by their common motif--suffering of the nation, and makes the whole cycle enormously complicated. Although "Rekviem" as a whole does require a detailed discussion from all possible angles of analysis, here we will focus upon only one aspect--discourse. We examine this particular aspect of the work, because the discourse pattern, among others, allows us to treat the cycle as a continuation of Axmatova's early lyric style. On the other hand, the pattern of discourse, we believe, is tightly intertwined
with the total meaning of the text and with the medium of its realization, the mode of non-love.

The translation of biographical situations into the pronominal system\textsuperscript{20} in "Requiem" is summarized as the lyrical "I" addressing the "You." However, the communicative structure of the text is extremely complex due to the remarkable variety of combinations of the "I" and the "You." In realizing the theme of suffering of the nation through her own personal tragedy, Axmatova places in the center of the lyric narrative the "I" whose voice runs the whole gamut from the most personal "I" to an extremely generalized first person. Thus, Verheul summarizes the "I" in "Requiem" as a "generalized composite figure":

It is characteristic of Requiem as a poetic whole, that it is almost constantly centered around the figure of a lyrical "I" who appears in various guises, and whose special relation to the fate of others forms one of the main themes of the cycle...The "I" of the central body of Requiem, the poems numbered from one to ten, is to be taken as a generalized composite figure rather than a reflection of the person of the author herself.\textsuperscript{21}

In accordance with the "various disguises" of the addresser "I," the addressee also varies from the intimate "You" to the reader in general, to the suffering women who have lost their beloved ones during the terror
of the Ežovščina. As in the short lyrics we discussed previously, in "Rekviem" also the shift from one type of discourse to another is quite abrupt and unpredicted. The types of discourse differ not only from one lyric to another, but also within a given lyric. Here, we will examine roughly what types of discourse are used in "Rekviem" and focus on one lyric which has a number of semblances with a love lyric.

"Rekviem" begins with a generalized description of sorrow on an epic scale: "Pered štim gorem gnutsja gory,/Ne tečet velikaja reka,"

(Posvjaščenie, I, 362). And, instead of speaking persona, nature is brought to foreground: "Tixo l'etsja tixij Don,/Želtyj mesjac vxođit v dom." (Lyric 2, I, 369). This broad generalized voice reappears intermittently throughout the whole work. For instance, as in the lyric 10: "Xor angelov velikij čas vosslovil,/I nebesa rasplavilis' v ogne." (I, 368)

Sometimes this type of discourse is replaced by a more specific one in which the addressee is the "We," in this case the suffering women with whom the poet shares the common tragedy and to whom she dedicates the poem. So, in the "Dedication" the epic discourse is suddenly changed into an intimate one:

51)My ne znaem, my povsjedu te že,
Slyšim liš’ ključej postulary skrežet
Da šagi tjaželye soldat.     

(I, 362)
A similar shift appears at the end of the "Introduction" where the sudden insertion of the "We" along with the mentioning of the black Maria provides a concrete contextual frame:

52) Zvezdy smerti stojali nad nami,
I bezvinnaja korčilas' Rus'
Poč krovavymi sapogami
I pod šinami černyx marus'.

(I, 363)

Another type of discourse, which turns out to be the predominant one in the whole "Rekviem", is found in the lyrical "I" addressing the "You." The addressee "You" figures sometimes as clearly discernable biographical personages such as her husband Nikolaj Punin or her son Lev Gumilev who were arrested during the time of terror. 22

53) Uvodili tebja na rassvete,
Za toboj, kak na vynose, šla,
............
(lyric 1, I, 363)

Semnadcat' mesjacev kriču,
Zovu tebja domoj.
Kidalas' v nogi palaču,
Ty syn i užas moj.
(lyric 5, I, 364)

At times, the "I"--"You" relationship becomes auto-communicative, in other words, the addressee is the "I"'s alter ego, or former self recast into the present. For example, in the lyric 4, the "You" is easily recognized as the poet herself in her youth:
54) Pokazat' by tebe, nasmesnice
   I ljubimice vsex druzej,
   Carskosel'skoj veseloj gresnice,
   Cto slucitsja s zizn'ju tvoej-- (I, 364)

Sometimes the "I"'s addressee is an unidentified, collective "You" which is presumably a group of people the poet knew intimately: "Opjat' pominal'nyj
pribilizilsja čas./Ja vižu, ja slyšu, ja čuvstvuju vas:"
(Epilogue II). Another type of the addressee is found in
the lyric 8 where the "I" addresses not a human but an
abstract concept--death: "Ty vse ravno prideš'--začem že
ne teper'/?Ja ždu tebja--mne očen' trudno."

Finally, the lyric 10 "Crucifixion" includes a
discourse which is a direct quote from the Holy
Scriptures: "Otcu skazal: 'Počto menja ostavil!'/A
Materi: 'O, ne rydaj Mene...'." To summarize, the types
of discourse used in "Rekviem" is as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Addresser</th>
<th>Addressee</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>the poet</td>
<td>------------------------&gt; the reader</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>------------------------&gt; the collective</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>&quot;You&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>the &quot;I&quot;</td>
<td>------------------------&gt; the &quot;You&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(personal, collective)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>------------------------&gt; herself</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>------------------------&gt; abstract concept</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
These various speaking voices coexist within the single flow of the narrative scheme and their combinations do not follow any unitary progression. In consequence, the whole structure of the poem becomes multi-dimensional and the message of the poet is conveyed far more powerfully through the multiple voices. For such a work as "Rekviem" that has a broad and at the same time specific theme, the comingling of diverse types of discourse is an effective medium through which the poet embodies the totality of consciousness of the generation. Here the poet's intention to extend her personal tragedy to a deeper level of suffering and, in turn, to embrace others' suffering as her own is modulated in a uniquely polyphonic orchestration of different voices. Moreover, the disconnected pattern of combination of those voices enhances the sense of acute pain and sorrow beyond any logical explanation. The pattern of dislocated discourse in "Rekviem" derives its meaning not only from its relationships with the theme but also with the mode of non-love. Characteristically, in this broad epico-lyric work with particular historical and political associations, we find—although not evenly strongly in all the lyrics—the mode of non-love. Singling out two lyrics from the cycle, Verheul also noted the echo of the style of her previous love lyrics and interpreted it as a disguise for censorship:
The stylistic similarity of Prigovor to her love poetry was exploited by the poet for a possibility of publishing in print a work with an at that time otherwise unprintable reference. By leaving out its title and by including the poem, as in her book Izbranno from 1943, among a group of love lyrics, the poet hid all traces of its real application and made it look like another treatment of the familiar theme of the razluka from the beloved.

Whatever the reason or purpose might be, the presence of the same mode of a love lyric in "Rekviem" strongly supports our initial contention that the mode is a dominanta in her poetic system in general. Here we may take a closer look at the first lyric from the cycle which is written apparently in the mode of non-love:

55) Uvodili tebja na rassvete,
Za toboj, kak na vynose, šla,
V temnoj gornice plakali deti,
U božnicy sveča opylala.
Na gubax tvoix xolod ikonki.
Smerntnj pot na čele... Ne zabyt'!--
Budu ja, kak streleckie ženki,
Pod kremlevskimy bašnjami vyt'. (I, 363)

This short text is composed of three narrative planes, and the lyric center, the "I" changes the scope and the nature of her voice according to each narrative. The first four lines definitely reverberate the well known axmatovian episode of the lovers' parting articulated in the simile of the death of the beloved. The "I"'s parting with her lover-husband--their intimate relationship is indicated by the crying children--is
perceived as final, since the lover's death is foreshadowed in the second line "kak na vynose." The following two lines are, on one hand, continuous to the previous lines in that the allusion to death becomes explicit. In addition, the lexical sequence of ecclesiastical terms, "vynos-božnica-ikonka," reinforces the sense of continuity. On the other hand, however, the lines five and six can be perceived as a separate, disconnected narrative for several reasons. First, these two lines describe the crucified Christ with utmost agony on the face perhaps as expressed in paintings and icons. And the "I" may be one of those who were at the scene of Crucifixion. The shift of tense from past in the lines one through four to present in lines five and six also disconnects the linear progression of narrative. On the lexico-semantic level of the text, a clearly recognizable semantic opposition between these two narrative units interrupts the sense of unity. The first unit contains semantics of motion in process as conveyed by a series of imperfective verbs "uvodit'--idti--plakat'" and the verbs with flowing, liquid quality such as "plakat'" and "oplyt'." As opposed to this semantics of motion, the second narrative is markedly motionless. Not only the verbless syntax but also the sense of fixedness created by the word "xolod" make the lines static. This semantic opposition of dynamic vs. static isolates the two
narrative planes and makes the sense of discontinuity highly perceptible. The exclamation "Ne zabyt'!!" at the end of the line six signals another discontinuity. It is not known who is speaking to whom in the sentence.

The third narrative is introduced into the final two lines where the historical account of the tragic event of the seventeenth century Russia is incorporated. By comparing herself to the lamenting wives of the executed strel'tsy, the "I" asserts that the loss of her beloved is not just her own personal misery but a common suffering inflicted upon humanity by history. Like Pasternak in his Dr. Živago, Axmatova here attempts to see personal experiences in the flow of history. The emperor Peter's bloody execution of the strel'tsy in the name of reformation is telescoped with a particular relevance into the destruction of innumerable individual lives caused by "Revolution" in this century. Here again the shift of tense from present to future disconnects the final two lines from the previous ones.

Although the point of view of the text is fixed around the "I," the speech consciousness of the "I" is split into three and the only factor cementing the three into one coherent artistic text is loss of love and ensuing grief. Retaining the same mode of non-love as in other lyrics, the text embodies a broader and deeper level of human sorrow by incorporating several
disconnected discourse types. It is difficult to pinpoint the major discourse type of the text. Perhaps it is the text itself which speaks to humanity in general.

To conclude our discussion on dislocated discourse, we may quote Smirnov's notion on the same issue:

56) Očen' často v stixax Axmatovoj prisutstvuet srazu neskol'ko perebivajuščixsja kommunikativnyx potokov, proisxodjat kommunikativnye slomy, perexody ot odnogo adresata soobščenija k drugomu: zdes' i slovo, napravlennoe otsutstvujuščemu na sceničeskoj ploščadke proizvedenija geroju, i dialog, i bezadresnoe iirišeskoе opisanie, i avtokommunikacija. Ėstetičeskij effekt polikommunikativnosti eščе predostoi vyjasnit'. Vo vsjakom slučае nesomnennо, čto, ustanavlivaja ob"ektы kommunikacii i otrošenija meždu nimi, my izučаem odin iz važnyx strukturoobrazujuščix faktorov stixotvornoj sistemy.

2. Toward a Dialogic Relationship

In this section we will discuss in some detail one particular type of discourse in Axmatova's poetry--dialogue. The term "dialogue" has been used by different critics and thinkers in rather diffuse way: especially in contemporary humanities dialogue or dialogism include far broader concept than its literal meaning. For example, for Baxtin dialogue is not so much a compositional form as an idiosyncracy inherent in all languages. Lotman uses the term in discussing the bipolarity of cerebral hemispheres, and V. Ivanov defines
the process of exchange of information within a given culture as dialogism. Thus before our discussion we need to define the term as we use it in the present chapter. By dialogue we mean a formal manifestation of any verbal interaction between two individuals as opposed to monologue which involves a single person. So far as there are two or more speaking personae, we count the discourse as a dialogue. This somehow dictionary-like definition of dialogue is inevitable in discussing Axmatova's poetry, since her poetry demonstrates a great degree of tension between the internal nature of discourse and its external manifestation.

From the very beginning of her poetic career, Axmatova has been known for her frequent use of dialogue. Consequently her propensity toward dialogue has led Viktor Vinogradov to spend a whole chapter discussing the roles of dialogue. Summing up the majority of her poems as "excerpts from monologues," he attributes the major role of dialogue to a means of overcoming monotony:

57). ...Odnako èmocional'nyj risunok xudožestvennogo proizvedenija, vyderžannogo v strogo monologičeskoi forme, pri ego kratkosti i pri uzosti kruga tem--mog pokazat'sja monotonnym... No ona prinjala protiv nee [opasnost' trafaret--Y.S.] odnu rešitel'nuju meru: obratilas' k pomoči "dialoga", kak osoboj raznovidnosti reči, vnedrenie kotoroj v
"povestovanie", v "monolog" moglo pestro rascvečivat' emocional'nuju kanvu xudožestvennogo proizvedeniya. Otkrylis' vozmožnosti emocional'nyx effektov, kotorye obusloveny otnošeniem stilja dialoga k obščemu tonu povestovaniya replik v dialoge, ego postroeniem.

Smirnov also points out the significance of dialogue in Axmatova's poetry, saying:

58) Kstati skazat', v lirike Axmatovoj proiznesennoe, živoe slovo, fragment dialoga--vsegda semantičeskij centr stixotvorenija, ego veršina, nečto, opredeljavajuščee ves' smysl liričeskoj kompoziciji.28

In a slightly different context and in a different sense Bickert views Axmatova's poetry as dialogue:

59) Le poète parle. Après le dialogue des yeux, celui des voix. Toute la poésie d'Anna Akhmatova est dialogue. Soliloque ou conversation. Avec un interlocuteur vivant ou mort, réel ou imaginaire, ombre ou spectre, profil ou portrait. Image ou double. En parlant, elle déguise sa solitude, comme elle masque son visage et chiffré ses poèmes.29

As all these remarks justly indicate, Axmatova's poetry contains abundance of dialogue as a compositional form. However, axmatovian dialogue usually lacks normal flow of verbal interaction. When there are the "I" and her interlocutor or two imaginary characters conversing, the two participants of the conversation do not speak on the same level of speech consciousness, and the result of such disjointed dialogue is a sense of non-communication. Sometimes dialogue becomes internal one, that is, the
participants are but two voices of the same "I" entering into an active interaction with each other, and thus the communicative status of the given text becomes auto-communicative. In consequence, dialogue in Axmatova's poetry is often perceived as an aesthetic disguise enveloping the deeply monologic nature of her poetry in general. This distortion of the genuine dialogic quality in her dialogue has been noted by Vinogradov. Since his analysis of the quasi-dialogic nature of Axmatova's early poetry is profoundly appropriate for our present topic, we may quote his rather lengthy discussion:

60) Inogda dialog opredeljaet kompoziciju stixotvorenenija, nizvodja "skaz" do opisanija obstanovočnych detaljej, "remarok." Odnako v takix slučajax často čeredovaniya lakoničeskix replik, preryvistogo "razgovora" v sobstvennom smysle net, a byvait črezvyčaino složnoe spletenie elementov monologičeskoj i dialogičeskoj reči, peresečenie v raznyx napravlenijax neskol'kix psixologičeskih i rečevykh ploskostej...

V drugoj gruppe stixotvorenenij "dialoga" tože net sovsem: "skaz"--často s obraščenijami i s liričeskimi vozvkanijami, no v nego vnedreny "čužie" slova.

I, nakonec, est' tret'ja gruppa stixotvorenenij, gde preryvistij dialog--s častym pereboem replik--jabljaetsja centrom xudožestvennych ustremlenij poëtessy...V etix stixotvorenenijax dialog, vxdjja organičeski v obščuju kompoziciju stixotvorenenija i osuščestvliaja formami svoego otnošenia k tonu i soderžaniju "skaza" složnye ėstetičeskie efekty, v to že vremja stroitsja po osobym, prisusčšim emu samomu sxeam i imeet svoi semantičeskie osobennosti.
He further points out the absence of semantic link between utterances in axmatovian dialogue:


Speaking of Axmatova's later tendencies, Dobin contends that her poetry as a whole is a long monologue in spite of her use of dialogical discourse:

62) Vplot' do poslednego dnja žizni stixi Axmatovoj vystraivajutsja v dlinnyj monolog. Monolog—avtoportret. Monolog, otkryvajuščij nam karakter ogromnogo duxovnogo potenciala... Odnovremenno iscezal prjamoj dramaturgičeskij dialog. No v inyj stixax tjanulsja ešče kak by dialog...Dialog nasil'stvenno prevratičilsja v monolog. I monolog uprijamo sžat v odnu točku—nesostojavšegosja razgovora...No i v stixax čisto monologičeskogo stroja tonkij slux možet ulovit' inogda otdalennyj, inogda ele slyšnyj dialogičeskij ton. 32

As these critics correctly observe, dialogue in Axmatova's poetry, being intertwined with the monologic text, becomes a significant form-shaping factor through which her notion of human communication is poetically realized. Here we will examine a few poems to discuss precisely how dialogue functions in the fundamentally monologic text. Our first example is the poem from 1911, "Xočeš' znat', kak vse èto bylo?:

63) Xočeš' znat', kak vse èto bylo?
Tri v stolovoj prohilo,
I proščajas', deržas' za perila,
Opa slovno s trudom govorila:
"Eto vse... Ax, net, ja zablya,
Ja ljublju vas, ja vas ljubila
Ešče togda!"--
"Da". (I, 67)

This text is built upon two types of discourse. The first half of the text provides a narrative frame for the second half in which two unidentified characters converse. In the first half, the "I" seems to speak to some unidentified "You" as the second person singular verb "xočeš" indicates. However, the presence of the "I"'s addressee is rather elusive: the rejoinder to the "I"'s question is not given, and the "I" without expecting an answer enters into her narration. Thus we get the impression that the "I"'s question is not directed to any particular "You" but rather toward her self and the following lines two through four form a sort of recollection which does not involve a listener. The second half presents a fragment of lover's dialogue at the scene of parting. Yet, there is something deeply disturbing in this dialogue. First, while the "She"'s utterance is heavily loaded with emotional charge as the staccato rhythm, ellipsis and exclamation convey, the "He"'s is conspicuously curt. Compared with the "She"'s tone of apparent desperation and emotional unstability, the "He"'s speech is almost tone-less, or at least we are unable to perceive it. Secondly, on the semantic level,
the "She"'s speech conveys last hope and expectation, while the "He"'s does not properly react to her speech. The rejoinder "Da" alone does not fit into the context. It can be his agreement with her "Èto vse" or "Ja vas ljubila" or "Ja vas ljublju." In any case, the "He"'s one word "Da" with its disquieting calmness and affirmation ironically destroys the "She"'s faint hope and assures the finality of their parting. On the other hand, the word "Da" presumably uttered by the "He" may not be his word at all. We simply assume that it is his utterance because of the compositional form, but the "He"'s actual presence is not indicated anywhere and we may assume that it is the "She"'s own voice reacting to her self. The effect of the rhyme 'togda--da' is that the utterance "Da" is nothing but the "She"'s own voice echoing in the hollow space of solitude. Thus, the fragment of lovers' dialogue turns out to be monologue placed within the monologue of the "I." Although this text includes on the surface diversity of pronominal relationships (the "I"--the "You", the "She"--the "He"), the actual speaking persona is only the "I" who yearns for a dialogic relationship.

A similar example of broken dialogue is found in the poem "Vse, kak ran'še: v okna stolovoj":

64) Vse kak ran'še: v okna stolovoj
B'etsja melkij metel'nyj sneg,
I sama ja ne stala novoj,
A ko mne prixodil čelovek.

Ja sprosila: "Čegu ty xočeš'?
On skazal: "Byt' s toboj v adu".
Ja smejalas': "Ax, naproročiš'!
Nam oboim, požaluj, bedu".

No podnjavši ruku suxuju,
On slegka potrogal cvety:
"Rasskaži, kak tebjja celujut,
Rasskaži, kak celueš' ty".

I glaza, gljadevšie tusklo,
Ne svodil s moego kol'ca.
Ni odin ne dvinulsja muskul
Prosvetlenno-zlogo lica.

O, ja znaju: ego otrada--
Napraženno i strastno znat',
Čto emu ničego ne nado,
Čto mne ne v čem emu otkazat'. (I, 113)

The series of the utterances exchanged between the "I" and the "He" does not form a coherent conversation, since there is no logical link cementing them together. The dialogic situation is a figment of the "I"'s imagination, and the disjointed utterances reflect the incoherent movement of the "I"'s subjective mind.

The disjointedness is found not only in their conversation but also in their non-verbal communication, gestures. Generally speaking, gesture is a highly significant part of Axmatova's poetic system. The function of gesture may vary according to the individual poem, but it is always inextricably connected with the communicative structure of the text. Smirnov points out
the frequency of gesture in relation to the "I"'s solitude, failure to communicate:

65) Geroinja postojanno ispytyvает odinočestvo, ona iščet svoi obraženija v neoduševlennoj srede; ona ne soveršaet postupkov, svjazyvajuščix ee s ljudskim sobščestvom. Otstuda, kstatı, takoe rasprostranennoe v stixax Axmatovoj javlenie, kak žest—odno iz modifikacij ob'eaktivirovannyh sledstvij. Žest zamykaet povedenie geroini, po sući dela on—sposob povedenia v bezljudnom mire.

Dobin also notes the abundance of gesture and contends that her poetry is similar to psychological drama:

66) Mne, voobšče, kažetsja, čto redko u kakogo liričeskogo poëta nabljudalos' takoe tjugotenie k žestu, takoe bogatstvo žesta, kak u Axmatovoj. I takoe tončajšee proniknowenie v duševnoe sostojanie čerez žest...žestom ili liričeskim dviženiem často oboznachen dramatičeskij porog v otnošenijax... Axmatovskaja lirika gorazdo bol'še tjugoteet k psixologičeskoj drame.

When words fail, gesture or facial expression communicates. Throughout her entire career, Axmatova built a poetic text saturated with non-verbal signs of communication. Subtle movement of hands, lips, and eyes recurs, sometimes complementing the spoken words, but mostly contradicting the words and thus creating acute sense of irony. The semiotic significance of recurrent gestures belongs to a field yet to be investigated from a proper perspective. In the given poem, there is a discrepancy between the "He"'s spoken words and his body language. His first utterance "Byt' s toboj v adu"
immediately conveys passion because of the conventional association of love—hell. His second utterance is more direct, blunt, perhaps too suggestive of sexuality: "Rasskaži, kak tebja celujut,/Rasskaži, kak cuegoš' ty." However, his gesture strongly suggests the opposite. His dry hand, emotionless eyes fixed upon the "I"'s ring not upon her face or eyes, his immobile face, light touch of flowers—all these clearly point to that his passionate words are nothing but irony. At this point we begin to suspect that the "He" is not even a real person but simply a phantom from the past evoked by the lonely mind of the "I." The dialogue is not one we would normally expect in the lovers' conversation, and by lacking the logical link it enhances the sense of non-communication and consequently emphasizes the "I"'s profound solitude. Paradoxically, Axiacova uses a highly communicative medium, dialogue, in order to convey a direct impression of non-communication deep seated in human experience.

The poem "Pesnja poslednej vstreči" provides us with another example of incomplete dialogue:

67) Tak bespomosčno grud' xolodela,
No šagë moi byli legki.
Ja na pravuju ruku nadela
Perčatku s levoj ruki.

Pokazalos', što mnogo stupnej,
A ja znala,—iš toliko tri!
Meždu klenov šepot czenij
Poprosil: "So mnoju umri!
Ja obmanut mojej unyloj,
Peremenčivoj, zloj sud'boj".
Ja otvetila: "Milyj, milyj!
I ja tože.--Umru s toboj...."

Èto pesnja poslednej vstreči.
Ja vzgljanula na temnyj dom.
Tol'ko v spal'ne goreli sveči
Ravnodušno-želtym ognem. (I, 67-68)

Pertaining to the monological nature of this poem, Dobin defines the dialogue as "fictitious":

Slova--neproizneseennye. Geroine ix tol'ko xotelos' by uslyšat', otvetit' na nix.
grud' xolodela---------------šagi legki
mnogo stupenej----------------tol'ko tri
temnyj dom-------------------goreli sveči
na pravu u ruku---------------s levoj ruki

Each counterbalanced pair does not contain exact antonyms, but rather the lexical items of the pair are juxtaposed to convey the interplay of the "I"'s emotions. Here again the explicit form of dialogue and the lexical items organized in the form of dialogue create a backdrop against which the monological state of the mind is sharply perceived.

As these examples demonstrate, Axmatova's poetry contains strong tendency toward a dialogue. However, the dialogic relationship between two interlocutors is usually frustrated: sometimes they speak on two disparate planes of consciousness forming two separate monological world. Other times the communicative scheme A--B (A and B are two individuals) is only an external one and is perceived as A--A* (A* is A's alter ego). The dialogue is nothing but a different modulation of auto-communication. In one sense, as Vinogradov pointed out, the employment of dialogue in Axmatova's work is a means to overcome a formal and stylistic monotony resulting from over-repetition of similar themes and motifs and to revive the stereotypical language of love. In another sense, dialogue is to be understood in
terms of its relationship to the dominant of non-love. If the entire meaning of love can be summed up as communication or 'dialogue' with others, then non-love is to involve failure of communication. Consequently unrealized dialogue is of particular significance in the poetry of non-love: the tension between the "I"'s yearning for a dialogic relationship and its constant unfulfillment serves as a backdrop against which the poet projects her notion of love and perception of reality permeated with profound solitude. In this respect, Vinogradov's comment on the relationship between the addresser and the addressee in her poetry is cogent:

69) Byvaet i tak, čto "licio," k kotoromu obraščena reč', nazvano obmančivo. Ėto--ne lico v sobstvennom smysle, a "predmet", veščnoe imja, i vozvanie k nemu vosprinimaetsja, kak emocional'nyj proryv v odinokom liričeskom razdum'e.

3. Prose Affinity

Ever since Èjxenbaum's short essay "Roman-lirika" appeared in 1921, it has received general notice and agreement that Axmatova's poetry is close to prose genre, particularly novel or novella. Pointing out the strong tendency toward narration, he characterizes her verse as "complex lyrical novel":

70) Poëziya Axmatovoj--složnyj liričeskij roman. My možem prosledit’ razrabotku obrazujuščix ego
povestovatel'nyx linij, možem govorit' ob ego kompozicii vplot' do sootnosheniya otdel'nyx personajeej...Kak v nastojaščem romane--sopostavleny kontrastnye emocii, kak by neztralizujuščie drug druga i sozdajuščie vpečatlenie svoeobraznogo épicheskogo lirizma. 39

Later in the book Anna Axmatova, he further elaborates this notion, saying:

71) Obrastanie liričeskoy emocii sjužetom--otličitel'naja čerta poezii Axmatovoj. Možno skazat', što v ee stixax sušchestvujut ne v otdel'nosti, ne kak samostojatel'nye liričeskie p'esy, a kak mozaičnye časticy, kotorye sepljavutsja i skladavajutsja v nečto poznejše na bol'soj roman. Ėtomu sposobstvuyut celyj rjad specifičeskix priemov, čuždyx obyknovennoj lirike. My imeem u Axmatovoj obyčno ne samuju liričeskiju emociju v ee uedinennom vyraženii, a povestovanie ili zapis' o tom, što proizošlo...Nedarom ona počti nikogda ne govorit o svoix čuvstvax prjamo--emocija peredaetsya opisaniem žesta ili divišenija, t.e. imeno tak, kak ēto delaetsja v novellax i romanax. 40

In the context of literary heritage, Mandel'stam also makes a point to the same effect in saying that Axmatova inherited much from 19th century Russian novelists. In the essay "On Contemporary Poetry" he notes the "subtlest psychologism" of Axmatova's poetry, 41 and then later in "A Letter about Russian Poetry" he goes on to observe:

Akhmatova introduced all the enormous complexity and wealth of nineteenth century novel into the Russian lyric. If not for Tolstoi's Anna Karenina, Turgenev's Nest of Gentlefolk (Dvorianskoe gnezdo), all of Dostoevsky and even some Leskov, there would
be no Akhmatova. Akhmatova's genesis lies entirely in the realm of Russian prose, not in poetry. She developed her poignant and unique poetic form with a backward glance at psychological prose.

Èjzenbaum's and Mandel'štam's remarks on the prose affinity of Axmatova's poetry have been repeated and affirmed by later critics, though without much qualification. Thus, Žirmunskij uses the same term "novella" in characterizing her poetry:

72) Celyj rjad stixotvorenij Axmatovoj možet byt' nazvan malen'kimi povestjami, novellami; obyknovenno, každoe stixotvorenie—eto novella v izvlečenii, izobražennaja v samoj ostroj moment svoego razvitiia, otkuda otkryvaetsja vozmožnost' obozret' vse predšestvovavšee tečenie faktov.

Similarly, after quoting Mandel'štam, Dobin also comments on the psychologism of Axmatovian verse:

73) Na moy vzgljad, prežde vsego v otxode ot psixologičeskoi odnoznačnosti Axmatovskaja lirika kruto zamešena na otnošenijax osložnennyx i žestkix...Proza raspolagaet obširnymi prostranstvami, ogromnymi territorijami dlja psixologičeskix issledovanij, dlja izobraženija duševnogo processa, nasloenij, vibracij. Axmatova raskryvala "dialektiku čeloveceskoj duši" v kroxotnom liričeskom stixotvorenii. Inogda v odnoj strofe, daze stroške.

Ozerov also refers to Mandel'štam in pointing out the psychological depth of Axmatova's poetry:

74) U Anny Axmatovoj plotnaja tkan' obrazov perebrošena čerez bezdu podteksta, čerez nedoskazannost' i tainstvennost' pereživanija. S godami vse bolee i bolee uglubljalas' psixologičeskaja osnova ětogo
lirizma. I Osip Mandel’štam pronicatel’nog na osnovanii rannix stixov Anny Aksamatoj, svjazyval ee s tradiciei russkoj klassičeskoj prozy.

If these critics repeat basically the same notion of Èjxenbaum and Mandel’štam, Smirnov casts a doubt upon the notion in his study of cause-effect relationship in Aksamatoj's work, saying:

75) Častye slučai stolknovenija dvux sledstvennych planov, neozhidannye razrešenija konflikov, ustanavlivajusčie ložnost' odnogo iz sledstvi, vse što sozdaet illuziju novellistichnosti stixotvornogo proizvedenija. My imeem zdes' delo imenno s kvazinovellistichnost'ju. Nužno utočnit' široko rasprostranivšeesja mnenie, što v poezii Aksamatoj "prijutulis' elementy novelly ili romana, ostavšiesja bez upotrebljenija v èpoxu rascveta simvoličeskoj liriki."

Smirnov's argument on the "illusion of the novel-likeness" against the previous critics' "novel-likeness" is based upon the notion that Aksamatoj's poetic world is static, deterministic, and closed, while a real novel involves dynamic development. Thus, we suspect that Smirnov and other critics are not in the same realm of investigation. If Smirnov's contention needs some qualification, then the notion of prose affinity also requires some more detailed validation, since it is susceptible of widely divergent interpretations.

We do not disagree with Èjxenbaum or Mandel'štam, since Aksamatoj's poetry definitely shows somewhat
different nature from an ordinary lyric, and often includes extraordinary psychological depth and intensity. However, psychologism alone is not sufficient to characterize her poetry as a novel. Generally speaking, there are a number of factors which have to be considered to call a poem "prosaic" in the neutral sense of the word, such as style, manipulation of words and sounds, rhythm, discourse, etc. Avoiding the often abused term "prosaic," Ezra Pound suggests several elements which contribute to what he calls "prose tradition in verse": 1) particular not abstract 2) substantive not verbal 3) non-metaphorical 4) non-syntactical. Measured by Pound's suggestions, Aksmatova's poetry certainly belongs to the prose tradition. The unusual accuracy of concrete details, scarce use of symbols and metaphors, strong propensity toward colloquialism which, incidentally, were time and again noted and hailed by scholars, fit into the above-mentioned prosaic poetry. Besides, compared with some symbolist poets like Balmont or Brjusov, Aksmatova rarely turns to a phonetic structure for purely euphonic effect alone. The sound organization in her poetry is without exception tightly interrelated with semantics. All these taken together clearly points to the deviation of her poetry from conventional lyrics. There is another factor, however, which has been often overlooked, but all the same has made her verse close to
prose genre—discourse. As we discussed in some detail previously in this chapter, Axmatova's poetry contains multiple types of discourse which coexist in a disjointed way. In spite of the deeply monologic nature of her lyrics, the monological steadiness characteristic of lyric poetry in general is constantly interrupted by disconnected multi-layered discourse, and the result is that her poems read like fragments or excerpts from a prose writing. Axmatova the poet is much similar to the author of a novel in Baxtinian sense. According to Baxtin:

....there is no unitary language or style in the novel. But at the same time there does exist a center of language(a verbal-ideological center) for the novel. The author(as a creator of the novelistic whole) cannot be found at any one of the novel's language levels: he is to be found at the center of organization where all levels intersect. The different levels are to varying degrees distant from this authorial center.

Previously we discussed the multiple types of discourse mainly from a semantic point of view and we established a close relationship between the disconnected discourse and the mode of non-love. From a compositional point of view, this type of discourse, we may contend, enables Axmatova to build a poetic text which is somehow beyond the confines of lyric poetry. Without destroying the small form of a short lyric, she weaves a complicated communicative network usually found in a larger art form
like novel in its complexity and depth. Here perhaps lies one of the "mysteries of craftsmanship" of her poetry.
NOTES TO CHAPTER III


2 Victor Erlich, "Russian Poets in Search of a Poetics," Comparative Literature, 4 (1952), 64.


5 Lotman, Analysis, p. 25.

6 For instance, Robert Scholes gives us various possible meanings of discourse: "Discourse. This word is used in a number of related but far from identical ways. It can refer to the words or text of a narrative as opposed to the story or diegesis. It can also refer more precisely to those aspects of a text which are appraisive, evaluative, persuasive, or rhetorical, as opposed to those which simply name, locate, and recount. We also speak of 'forms of discourse' as generic models for utterances of particular sorts." See, Robert Scholes, Semiotics and Interpretation (New Haven: Yale Univ. Press, 1982), p. 144.


8 Levin, p.186.

9 Barthes, p.74.


Baxtin, Dialogic Imagination, p. 286.


Lotman, Analysis, p. 229.

Levin, pp. 177-196.

Èjxenbaum, p. 39.


Parenthetically, "Rekviem" was published for the first time in the Soviet Union this year. The March issue of Oktjabr' includes the complete text of this previously banned work with introductory notes by Zoja Tomaševskaja. Later, it turned out that Oktjabr' doublecrossed Neva which had the official right to publish the work. The June issue of Neva includes the same text of "Rekviem." For more information about the publication of this work, see, Russkaja Mysl', 1-2 (May, 1987).

Driver, Akhmatova, p. 125.

Lotman, Analysis, p. 229.


Both Punin and Lev Gumilev were arrested in 1935. See, Haight, pp. 91-92.

We are to understand Axmatova's answer to Solženicyn in this regard. According to Čukovskaja's memoir: "A. I. Solženicyn, vyslušav 'Rekviem', skazal Anne Andreevně: 'Zal', čto v vašix stixax reč' idet vsego liš' ob odnoj sud'be'. A.A. sama rasskazala mne ob etix slovax Aleksandra Isaevica, divjas' im i ne soglašajas' s nimi. 'Razve odnoju sud'boj nel'zija peredat' sud'bu millionov?'--govorila ona." See, Zapiski, II, 474.

Smirnov, p. 217.


Viktor Vinogradov, O poezii A. Axmatovoi (Stilistitcheskie nabroski) (Leningrad, 1925), pp. 149-50.

Smirnov, p. 216.

Bickert, p. 58.

Vinogradov, O poezii, pp. 150-52, pp. 156-57.

Vinogradov, O poezii, p. 161.

Dobin, pp. 141-42.

Smirnov, p. 218.

Dobin, pp. 69-73.

Rosslyn also mentions the conventional imagery of love as hell. See, Rosslyn, p. 84.

Dobin, p. 74.


Vinogradov, O poezii, p. 128.

Èjxenbaum, "Roman-lirika," Vestnik literatury, No. 6-7 (1921), p. 8.

Èjxenbaum, Axmatova, pp. 120-21.


Žirmunskij, "Preodolevšie simvolizm," in Voprosy

44 Dobin, p. 78.

45 Ozerov, Neobxodimost' prekrasnogo (Leningrad: Sovetskiy pisatel'), p. 236.

46 Smirnov, P. 223.


48 Baxtin, Dialogic Imagination, pp. 48-49.
CHAPTER IV. SOME ASPECTS OF TIME

The river of time in its current
Bears away all the affairs of men,
And drowns nations, kingdoms, and kings
In the abyss of oblivion. Deržavin

As is often pointed out,¹ the contemporary mind has
been preoccupied with the issue of time in art and
science, and the scholars have expressed the aspects of
time, using different terminology. For example, V. V.
Ivanov discusses the significance of time in the
twentieth century art from three perspectives:

76)....pri ètom možno ustanovit' izvestnyj
parallelizm v podxode ko vremeni v nauke i v
ìskusstve XXv., gde vremja priobretaet osoboe
značenie i kak tema, i kak princip konstrukcii
proizvedenija, i kak kategorija, vne kotoroj
nevozmožno voplošenje xudožestvennogo
zamysla.

Similarly, B.F. Egorov clarifies the set of concepts by
which the term "time" means in literature:

77)Vremja v literature možet byt' rassmotreno
kaž: 1)otraženie filosofskix predstavlenij
xudožnika; 2)dilitel'nost'(sjužeta, teksta,
vosprijatija i.t.d.); 3)vid strukturnyx
funkcional'nyx vzaimosvjazej v
tekste(vremennaja svjaz' sobytij, geröev,
avtora i.t.d.).

123
As these two scholars maintain, the topic of time in an artistic text may involve several different aspects, but, broadly speaking, they belong to either philosophical or stylistic categories. By a philosophical aspect of time we mean the artist's meditation upon the concept of time, and by a stylistic aspect we mean his technical manipulation of temporal structure of the text. In the artistic text, these two aspects are often interrelated and the author's subjective experience of time is to be understood in terms of their interrelationship.

It is characteristic that the scholarship on Axmatova up until the present study almost without exception includes to a greater or lesser degree the issue of time, and scholars use the term "time" in either philosophical or stylistic sense. For instance, when Viktor Frank mentions time in Axmatova's poetry as a "mysterious, metaphysical process," he uses the term in a philosophical sense:

78)Net, požalуй, v novoj russkoj poëzii poèta, krome Annenskogo, kotoryj vosprinimal by vremja s takoj otçetlivost'ju i oстрorоj, kak Anna Axmatova. Ja imeju v vidu vremja i v istoričeskom smysle, i v smysle togo tainstvennogo metafizičeskogo processa, v kotoryj pogruženy čelovek i mir.

In his excellent study on time in Axmatova's poetry, Verheul also investigates mainly the philosophical aspect of time. Defining time as "one of the most essential
thematic aspects of the work of Anna Axmatova," he goes on to observe that: "an acute awareness of the intricacies of time as the stuff of human experience is characteristic of Axmatova's poetry from the very beginning."

While these scholars discuss time from a philosophical point of view, there exist a series of studies which include the notion of time as a stylistic medium. It is Vinogradov who first noted this aspect of time. Focusing upon Axmatova's peculiar arrangement of verbal tense and aspect, he maintains:

79) Kogda kompoziciya stixotvoreniy obuslovena priemami neožidannyh sceplenij i peresečenij simvolov-predloženij, to otkryta vozmožnost' ispol'zovat' v ěstetičeskix cel'ax te emocional'nye ěffekty, kotorye sozdajutsja pomeščennost'ju tesno svjazannyx po smysly predloženij v raznye vremennye ploskosti.

If Vinogradov's observation on time in Axmatova's poetry is made mainly in order to investigate the interrelationship between the peculiar temporal structure and emotional effect, other scholars use the temporal structure in various other contexts as well. For example, Konstantin Močul'skij points out the fixity of time as one of the compositional principles of her concrete, "plastic" poetry:
80) Ne tol'ko prostranstvo i ego otnošenija, no i vremja oformljaetsja plastičeski. Fiksacija vremeni i vremennaja perspektiva služat fongm pocti vsec stixotvorenij Axtatovoij.

On the basis of all these observations, it may be concluded that time in Axtatova's work, whether a philosophical subject-matter or a stylistic medium, takes on a significance as an essential structural element. Generally speaking, the topic of time, in its application to an author's work, reveals a distinction between time in the philosophical, or thematic sense, and time as an organizational principle in a text. While in some authors (such as Deržavin and Mandel'štam) the thematics of time is so strongly marked that it will reward a sustained analysis as a separate issue, in Axtatova, often the theme of time is subordinated to time as a compositional principle, and this is in part what makes her "time poems" sui generis axmatovian. It is this "time as a compositional principle" par excellence which constantly appears throughout her entire opus and thus creates a unique temporal structure of the text. In this chapter, we will first observe what are the distinctive features of the shaping of temporal structure and then discuss how they enter into a special relationship with the mode of non-love in the individual text. Our investigation may be supported by Svetla Čmejkova's assertion that:
Vremennaya kompozicija predstavljaet soboj suščestvennuju otlisitel'nuju čertu teksta, svjazannuju s ego obščim funkcional'no-stilistikičeskim oblikom.

The temporal structure of Axmatova's poetry may be defined as dislocated. By dislocation we mean that the three different modalities of time—past, present, and future—often intersect and lose their discrete characteristics. The causal or any other sequential link which would normally combine the different temporal planes in a narrative is conspicuously absent. This feature of temporal dislocation is sharply noted by Vinogradov, when he writes about the "vremennyje pryžki":

I u Axmatovoj neredki vremennye "pryžki," kotorye delajut neosuščestviom proekcję ee stixov v odnu temporal'nuju ploskost'....Ved' bol'šinstvo stixotvoreniy Axmatovoj—eto liriceskie povesti o zastyvsem migie. I v eto edinstvo zamknutogo mgovenija vključeny emocional'no podobrannye rjady vosprinjatyx dvizhenij i oššuščenij, iz kotoryx odni predstavljajutsja, kak osuščestvieščesja v promel'ke migie, a druzhe—kak soprovodnoždajuščie vse ego tečenie. Pri etom sam etot mig zastyvšij odnovremenno, t.e. v celostnoj strukturi stixotvoreniy, risuetsja i kak vosproizvodimyj—v prošlom, i kak "ostanovlennyj" v moment ego tečenia. Proisxodit ne "razvertyvание" dejstvia, a "nalozenie" odnogo vosprijatiy nа drugoe (s emocional'nymi komentariyami—obyčno) iz dvux vremennych aspektov, kotorye perojlejajutsja.

Although Vinogradov's reference to the dislocated "frozen moment" is vital, it does not exhaust the matter. In an
axmatovian frozen moment there is a steady awareness of the co-presence of all three time modalities, as Verheul aptly points out:

Thus the peculiar "emotional" awareness of an intersection of various differing time levels, the characteristic "play" of time and tense in Axmatova's early poetry, forms an organic aspect of the general structure of her poetic world...a general characteristic of the category of time in Axmatova's early poetry is formed by the poet's use of a fusion of the contrasting time levels of past, present and future.

In the above quote, Verheul's observation is made only about Axmatova's early poems, but the same temporal principle holds true for her later work. Here we will select several poems from her early and later period and discuss in detail how the dislocation of time functions in modulating specific themes and also how it is related to the mode of non-love.

83) Serdce b'etsja rovno, merno.
Čto mne dolgie goda!
Veđ' pod arkoj na Galernoj
naši teni navsegda.

Skvoz' opuščennye veki
Vižu, vižu, ty so mnoj,
I v ruke tvoej naveki
Neraskrytyj veer moj.

Ottogo, čto stali rjadom
My v blažennyj mig Čudes,

V mig, kogda nad Letnim sadom
Mesjac rozovyj voskres,—
Mne ne nado očidanij
U postylogo okna
I tomitel'nyx svidanij.
Vsja ljubov' utolena.

Ty svoboden, ja svobodna,
Zavtra lučše, čem včera,
Nad Nevoju temnovodnoj
Pod ulybkoju xolodnoj
Imperatora Petra.

(I, 112)

The text presents an example of maximum saturation with temporality. Although the scheme of verbal tense of the text is simple alternation of present and past with predominance of present, on the deeper level the temporal scheme is extremely complex, and more so, since it is governed by the dominanta of non-love. As in her other poems, here time as an object of the poet's philosophical meditation is subordinated to time as a compositional principle.

Not only the shift from present to past and past to present is made without semantic sequentiality but also past and present are endowed with opposite qualities: discontinuity vs. continuum. First, all the semantic units demarcated by present tense are obliquely suggestive of past or future, or both, and create a sense of flowing time, a temporal continuum. The verb "b'etsja" in the first line alone is neutral but combined with the two adverbs "rovno" and "merno," it conveys the sense of action in slow and even process: the heart has been beating and will be beating. Thus, one temporal
category, the present, is extended backward and forward. The tense of the fourth line is also present, but due to "navsegda" it infinitely extended into future. The oxymoronic statement of causality "naši teni navsegda," however, makes the continuum(duration) an irrelevancy: what remains forever is those fleeting, ephemeral shadows, and therefore, heart measures nothing. As in many other axmatovian texts, here we are facing an auto-irony.

The tense of the second stanza is present, but the semantics of the whole stanza is again extended toward future due to "naveki" in the third line. The fourth stanza, uttered in present tense, includes by association temporal indicators of past and future: "utolena" and "ožidanij." The final stanza more directly includes the temporal indicators of past and future: "včera" and "zavtra." Composed from the perspective of present, all these stanzas are semantically related to past and future, and convey the sense of continuation of time.

In counterbalance to these, the third stanza is a description of the past, a frozen moment in the past. The two past perfective verbs "stali" and "voskres" and the reiteration of the word "mig" clearly point to that the event of the past is "fixed." The moment as complex duration in the other stanzas is counterpointed here by
the moment as complex instance; implicitly, a submerged narrative might be present in the duration, and a single event in the instance. This does, then, single out the moment powerfully, as soon as we perceive it, we remember that Axmatova called it "mig čudes." Isolated from the rest of the text in terms of the temporal scheme, this stanza is simply superimposed upon the "I"'s perception of present. The basic scheme of the text's temporal arrangement may be graphically described as follows (the arrow indicates the direction of extention):

```
past               present               future
[stanza I]
[stanza III]  <--------[stanza II]-------->
<--------[stanza IV]-------->
[stanza V]
```

On one hand the dislocated pattern of time—extention of present, superimposition of past, the temporal leaps—increases the emotional tension and emphasizes, what Vinogradov terms "ostrota vosprijatija." However, the dislocation of time emerges as an extremely meaningful structural element only when we relate it to the mode of non-love. The semantics of three different modalities of time presented in the text may be defined by non-love between the "I" and her "You." In the past
the "I" and her beloved were together as described in the
third stanza. But their togetherness is not happy
meeting of the lovers. They stand side by side like two
immovable wax figures, and there is something immensely
disturbing in the landscape of the lovers' togetherness:
the biblical associations brought in by "voskres" and
"mig Čudes" and the extreme sentimentality of "rosy moon"
somehow do not fit into each other. This grotesque
togetherness in the past is extended into future, in
which they will be together as "shadows," two ghosts, and
the second line of the last stanza "Zavtra lučše, čem
včera" is by no means an optimistic anticipation but a
cruel irony. The "I" is with her beloved in the
present("ty so mnoj") but their physical proximity
paradoxically emphasizes their non-love, as it is
verbalized in the fourth and fifth stanza. Here,
characteristically, the total negation of love is
modulated in temporal terms, in other words, the three
modalities of time--past, present, future--provide a
"modeling frame" into which the "I"'s awareness of
absolute solitude defined by non-love is to be molded.
First of all, the lovers' future is expressed in a series
of negative semantic items: "ne nado ožidanij," "postylyj," "tomitel'nyj" and the lovers' past is not
that of sweet memory but of cold finality: "vsja ljubov'
utolenya." Here, the verb "utolit'" carries the connotations of assuaging, of quenching, like a thirst, so that we may perceive the "ljubov'" as a process of pain and thirst, yearning, which was redeemed in that magic, frozen moment. The loving woman's standard image--standing by the window, waiting, is injurious to the pride of the poetic "I," and now she is free of it, as of the love.

Perceived from the perspective of non-love, the final stanza is of great significance. Without entirely losing their primary positive meaning, the semantic items of this stanza are endowed with secondary "negative" coloring and their interrelationship creates an enormously complicated poetic reality. In the third line, the traditional symbolism of the river with an association of flowing time\(^14\) is adumbrated by the epithet "temnovodnoj," and as a consequence, the dark, immovable stale water of Neva reminiscent of Styx conveys the opposite sense, frozen time. Similarly, due to the epithet "xolodnoj," "ulybka" in the fourth line creates something cruel, impersonal, chilling contrary to the warmth of smile. Thus, although these two adjectives "temnovodnyj" and "xolodnyj" belong to two separate semantic fields, they can be perceived as synonyms in terms of their common secondary coloring: frozen, cold,
motionless. Their phonetic structure—repetition of "o" and consonants "n" and "d" reinforces their semantic similarity. Perceived against the background of temporal and spatial motionlessness, the adjective "svobodnyj" of the first line may deliver not the positive meaning of freedom, free movement, but rather "emotionlessness," absence of contact, non-love. It is also noticeable that this adjective includes a similar group of consonants "n" and "d" and the vowel "o". From these observations it follows that non-love hidden underneath the statement "Ty svoboden, ja svobodna" and temporal fixity are in a state of mutual interaction.

In connection with the temporal extension and superimposition, the text's spatial structure plays a significant role. The space of the text in the narrow sense of the word is, as the title of the text "Stixi o Peterburge" is St. Petersburg with its river Neva, streets, Summer Garden, the Emperor Peter's statue. Verheul interprets the space of the Petersburg in the text in terms of stability, "a timeless continuum" as opposed to the "disruptive properties of time".

Here she imagined the continuation of time as its SUSPENSION, an infinite extension (navsegda...naveki) of the present moment, in which objects(neraskrytyj veer moj) and the architectonic details of the capital retain their reality, but in which personal existence
is reduced to a reflected semi-life... Thus in Stixi o Peterburge the sense of the history of a city or a nation as a timeless continuum--of which the living quality of Peter's statue and architectonic details of his city serve as a symbol--is brought into relation with the sense of a timeless extention of significant moments across the linear differentiation of time in subjective experience.

Similarly, Sharon Leiter relates the city Petersburg as a thematic center to the "I"'s spiritual love:

The fixed, unchanging future belongs to the love affair, the free, dynamic future to the mortal man and woman who survive that love. The consolation the speaker proposes is that their love has been part of the history of the city and as such lives on. She explicitly denies the need for "long years" of actual love, in favor of this spiritual alliance with the city. The "immortality" of their love is based upon the couple's having stood together during a"blessed moment of miracles."

True, the cityscape of St. Petersburg provides a spatial background into which the shifting pattern of time is contrastingly projected, but on a deeper level, the city of Peter has another, extremely significant function. Here Akmatova intentionally evokes Puškin's "Mednyj vsadnik" in which the poor Evgenij's love and dream are destroyed by the river Neva and the ruthless autocrat Peter. Unfulfilled love, constant tension between energetic elemental force of love and of nature("temnovodnaja Neva" also intimates unpredictability and danger), and the Emperor Peter playing the role of fate--all these bring the two texts
closer together. Within the context of the given poem, thus, the selection of St. Petersburg as a specific space of the text bears a subtextual significance. If the city of Peter symbolically conveys the idea of nation and history in its time-space continuum, it also provides a space of non-love, cruelty, artificiality. In this respect, the final line "Imperatora Petra" which breaks the unity of four-line stanza form emphasizes the text's semantic organization.

Another characteristic of the space in the present text is that it also demonstrates a pattern of dislocatedness in accordance with the temporal dislocation. The specific locales—Galernaja street, Summer Garden, Neva—are randomly arranged, creating a sense of "spatial leaps." The dislocation of space is found not only in this horizontal axis, but also in the vertical axis. The spatial structure of the text in the vertical axis is summarized as a constant shift from downward to upward and vice versa:

Pod arkoj vs. Na Galernoj
Pod ulybkoju Nad Letnim Sdom
Nad Nevoju

Combined with the disjointed time, this spatial scheme creates a unique poetic background against which the
lyric "I"'s awareness of non-love is most acutely perceived. This is not an exalted hymn for eternity of love, nor for permanence of the city.

The "transformation of moment to eternity" is only a lyric pose on the "I"'s part, and recollection of the past and anticipation of future are nothing but a part of the "I"'s perception of present, present of non-love, despair and solitude. The spatio-temporal scheme of the text functions as a modeling frame for the "I"'s perception of the solitude-laden reality.

Our next example is the poem "Xorošo zdes': i šelest i xrust;" from 1922:

84)Xorošo zdes': i šelest i xrust;
   S každym utrom sil'nee moroz,
   V belom plameni klonitsja kust
   Ledjanyx oslepitel'nyx roz.
   I na pyšnyx paradnyx snegax
   Lyžnyj sled, slovno pamjat' o tom,
   Čto v kakix-to dalekix vekax
   Zdes' s toboju prošli my vdvoem. (I, 225)

In this text the motif of solitude is modulated in a subtle interplay of temporal planes. Although the constant temporal shift from one modality to another which we observed in the previous example is absent here, the temporal scheme of the text in a sense demonstrates a dislocated pattern. The dislocation of time finds its expression in the lack of semantic link between the present, the temporal category of the "I"'s perception and the past, that of the "I"'s recollection. In other
words, although the text includes two temporal categories, the narration is not unfolded in a linear movement, whether progressive or retrogressive. The memory of the past as described in the final two lines is of little significance as a memory per se, but becomes meaningful when it is superimposed upon the "I"'s perception of the present solitude. In this regard, Tamara Sil'man's observation about the meaning of the past in Axmatova's poetry in general is revealing:

85) V protivovese Fetu, s ego nastroennost'ju na plan nastrojashchego, tjaigteniem k planu proshlogo otmechena lirika A. Axmatovoj.
O sbornike "Belaja staja" B. M. Zirmunskij pisal: "kniga vsja v proshedsem, vsja v vospominanii". Dlja nas v dannom sluuchae vazno i interesno to, chto, soobshchaja o sobytijax proshlogo, poetessa chashe vsego napominaet nam, chto chto ne prosto rasskaz o proshlom,--inache govorja, chto liricheskoe "ja", vospominajuische o tex ili inyx sobytijax, prisutstvuet tut ze v nastrojashchem vremenii, a sobytija, o kotoryx povestvuetza, dajutsja opjat'taki liish v kachestve proekcii-izmerenii etogo "ja".18

The "I"'s present solitude is expressed by the frozen landscape and by the absence of the "You." The "I"'s recollection of her past with the "You" here functions as a counterpoint to the solitude, the permanent state of the "I"'s existence. The words "slovno" and "v kakix-to dalekix vekax" nullify the factual significance of the memory. Thus the final two lines form a quasi-memory, and the text's two temporal
categories, present and past, lose their discrete characteristics. As the contrast between love and absence of love merely intensifies the "I"'s solitude, the distinction between the present and the past here contributes to the creation of a sense of timelessness. The "I"'s present and past merge in the timeless space of "zdes".

All the opposite concepts, time and timelessness, past and present, proximity and distance, love and non-love are superimposed upon each other and interactive with each other. This principle of interaction of opposites is manifested on the semantic level of the text. Here we may take a close look at the third and fourth line which are most explicitly organized by semantic opposition. The third line includes a basic opposition of white and red, cold and hot: "v belom plameni." Further, on a symbolic level, the color white and the flame represent death and love respectively.\(^{19}\) The fourth line includes a similar opposition of the color red and white, hot and cold, love and death. The conventional symbol of love, the rose is here endowed with the feature of death conveyed by the epithet "ledjanyx." Underneath all these oppositions lies the hidden identity of love and death which transcend the flow of time.\(^{20}\) The dislocation of time and its result,
timelessness should be understood in connection with the "thematic complex"\textsuperscript{21} of solitude-love-death. In this respect, Bickert's notion of temporal dislocation in Axmatova's verse in general is relevant to the given text:

86)La course du temps--titre du dernier recueil d'Anna Akhmatova--, ne va pas seulement en avant mais en arrière. Un mouvement perpétuel de balancier, d'aller et retour, anime passé, présent, avenir, estompant leurs frontières. ...Disloqués, le temps et l'espace reculent alors devant les incantations du poète... La distance est abolie. Les époques se rejoignent et se fondent. Peu à peu, libéré de leurs entraves, le poète s'achemine vers une zone de non-espace, vers un climat de non-temps, où rien ne le séparera plus de ce qu'il aime.\textsuperscript{22}

Our next example is the first lyric of the cycle "Cinque" from 1945:

87)Kak u oblaka na kraju, 
Vspominaju ja reč' tvoju,

A tebe ot reči mojej
Stali noči svetlee dnej.

Tak, ottorgnutye ot zemli,
Vysoko my, kak zvezdy, šli.

Ni otčajan'ja, ni styda
Ni teper', ni potom, ni togda.

No živogo i najau,
Slyšiš' ty, kak tebja zovu.

I tu dver', čto ty priotkryl,
Mne zaxlopnut' ne xvavit sil. \textsuperscript{(I, 283)}
Apparently, the verbal tense of this text retains a similar "temporal leap" which we observed in the previous texts: the alternation of present and past, and the brusque insertion of future in the final line do not follow any logical sequentiality or linear (progressive or retrogressive) order. While the normal flow of time is disturbed by the seemingly random arrangement of tense on the syntactic level, the semantics of each temporal category expresses a peculiar sense of timelessness, as it is verbalized in the eighth line: "Ni teper', ni potom, ni togda." More precisely, the "I"'s perception of reality is expressed by intersection of the three temporal categories of past, present, and future.

The "I"'s utterance in the first couplet is in the present tense, but due to the verb "vspominaju," it is endowed with past. The second couplet, in spite of the perfective past "stali," contains a sense of duration, since the twice repeated word "reč'" combines the first and the second couplet. Besides, "reč'" in Axmatova's poetry belongs to the same semantic field as "reka" with a strong implication of flowing time. For example, in her early poem "Čitaja Gamleta," "reč'" and "reka" are tightly interrelated with the passage of time: "No ja štu zapomnila reč', --/Pust' struitsja ona sto vekov podrjad."(I, 52) On the other hand, as Farino sharply
pointed out, "reč'" belongs to the category of the 
"artistic text" with other recurrent words, such as 
"slovo, stixi, povest', pis'mo, pesnja, and kniga." 24
The significance of the motif of building an artistic 
text which we discussed in the first chapter acquires a 
new dimension here: art remains beyond the time's 
inexorable march toward death. 25 Thus, in Aхматова's 
poetic text the word "reč'" is given a unique temporal 
characteristic: it functions as a symbol of constant, 
even flow of time and at the same time it is suggestive 
of transcending of time. If the syntactic structure of 
these two couplets present a temporal discontinuity, 
their lexico-semantic structure intimates continuity. 
In other words, the present of the first couplet and the 
past of the second couplet somehow lose their discrete 
features and dynamically intermingle with each other.

The space indicator of the first couplet "u oblaka" 
with the implication of high, distant, celestial reality 
is repeated in the semantic items of the third couplet: 
"ottorgnutye ot zemli," "vysoko," "kak zvezdy." Thus, 
the third couplet, which is about the past event, is 
again related to the present of the first couplet. The 
semantics of the fifth couplet also creates a 
continuation of past into present, although the tense is 
simple present. The "I"'s and the "You"'s speech of the
past is now reverberating in the act of calling and hearing: "Slyšiš' ty, kak tebja zovu." Finally, the intersection and fusion of temporal modalities are reinforced in the image of a door in the last couplet. The door as a symbol of spatial disjunction\textsuperscript{26} in this text functions also as a temporal juncture between past and future: the door opened by the "You" in the past will remain ajar.

So far we have examined the basic temporal scheme of the text in the light of the verbal tense and semantics. In this respect, it is not accidental that Verheul selects the cycle "Cinque," when he discusses mature Axmatova's "preoccupation with the expression of a singular 'timeless' vision of the intersection of different planes of reality":

\[\ldots\text{this comes to the foreground in a number of individual lyrics, and more especially in the larger works of these years: the cyclic Cinque, Šipovnik cvetet and Polnočnye stixi and the poetical fragments from the second version of the tragedy Prolog, ili Son vo sne. Even though we still come across the various recurrent temporal motifs of, for instance, memory and the past of the I, her partner and their mutual relationship, the late world of Axmatova forms as it were a kind of no man's land without a clear distinction between the present, the past and the future.}\]

As Nadežda Mandel'štam once correctly remarked, Axmatova's poetry almost always includes to a greater or
lesser degree the motif of resignation. Indeed, resignation, solitude, and dark asceticism saturate the thematic structure of her verse. Perhaps it is resignation resulting from the acute awareness of solitude which prompts her to write poetry, and her poetry itself is in a sense a manifestation of resignation. In the given text, the motif of resignation is first and foremost expressed in the mode of non-love and to a certain degree in the interrelationship of love and time.

Here the non-love between the "I" and the "You" provides a frame for the "I"'s resignation as articulated in the fourth couplet, and all the temporal and spatial indicators of the text intimate the distance between the two lovers. Presumably, the distance between the "I" and the "You" is the result of the "I"'s own death. As the space indicators "u oblaka" and "na kraju" doubly emphasize, the "I" is separated from the "You," the earth, the life. In the nether world, she evokes the memory of the "You" who apparently belongs to this world: "No živogo i najavu,/Slyšiš' ty, kak tebja zovu." On the surface, past and present seem to be contrasted as time of togetherness and that of separation. However, when the "I" and the "You" were together in the past, their proximity was rather an illusive one. The second line of
the third couplet, "Vysoko my, kak zvezdy, sli" implies the distance between them, like the infinite cosmic distance between stars. Perceived from this perspective, then, the "I"'s act of recollection and evocation of the past love becomes meaningless, and what is meaningful is only her statement of resignation in the fourth couplet. The five times repeated negative particle "ni" may be extensively true for other temporal things, love, passion, and even death. In the "I"'s subjective state of mind, time is deranged from its course and all the temporal things are suspended in a timeless present. In this regard, St. Augustine's perception of time sounds remarkably similar to Axmatova's:

At any rate it is now quite clear that neither future nor past actually exists. Nor is it right to say these are three times, past, present and future. Perhaps it could be more correct to say: there are three times, a present of things past, a present of things present, a present of things future. For these three exist in the mind, and I find them nowhere else: the present of things past is memory, the present of things present is sight, the present of things future is expectation.

While St. Augustine's perception of time is directly expressed on the philosophical plane, Axmatova's philosophy of time is conveyed to us through her unique manipulation of temporal structure of the text. Her meditation upon time shapes the stylistics of the text, and the style emerges as a philosophy-generating element.
We find a similar example of the fusion of temporal modalities and its ensuing timelessness in the tenth lyric of "Šipovnik cvetet" from 1957:

88) Pust' kto-to ešče otdyxaet na juge
I nežitsja v rajskom sadu.
Zdes' severno očen'--i osen' v podrugi
Ja vybrala v ètom godu.

Živu, kak v čužom, mne prinsivšemsja dome,
Gde, možet byt', ja umerla.
Gde strannoe čto-to v večernej istome
Xranjat dlja sebja zerkala.

Idu meždu černyx prizemistyx elok,
Tam veresk na vter pokož,
I svetitsja mesjaca tusklyj oskolok
Kak staryj zazubrennyj nož.

Sjuda prinesla ja blažennuju pamjat'  
Poslednej nevstreči s toboj--
Xolodnoe, čistoe, legkoe plamja
Pobedy moej nad sud'boj. (I, 293)

In this text the motif of resignation is realized by a spatio-temporal disintegration. The space indicators in the first stanza are clearly divided into two opposite categories: proximity vs. distance. The "I" is here, in the north, while somebody else is there, in the south. This spatial opposition is de-emphasized in the second stanza and "here" and "there" intersect in one single locale, "the house" in which the "I" lives now. Here the spatial opposition is replaced by a temporal one: the "I" lives now in the house which appeared in her dream and in which she died. In a sense the space of the house is temporalized: past and present coexist. Here, the
past participle, which is a trope, acquires the value of reality. The "I" no longer lives in such a manner that it could be compared with being in a strange house seen in a dream, but the "I" lives in that house, and, thus, the relationship between the past and the present becomes one of correlation, not opposition. Underneath these temporal and spatial oppositions and correlations, we find another, implicit opposition, that of this world vs. nether world. And the house of the "I" figures as a timeless and spaceless inner world where this world and the nether world are copresent. The "I"'s present site is "here" as opposed to there, "the heaven," as the phrase "v rajskom sadu" implies. However, her "here" is more like a place of death than of life in that there is no single living soul except for the "friend-Autumn."

The complex intersection of the "here-now" and the "there-then" finds its most explicit expression in the image of the mirror in the second stanza: reality has disappeared and what is left is nothing but reflection, "something strange."

The sense of timelessness created by the fusion of different temporal categories is reinforced in the final stanza. The three semantic items, "pamijat'," "poslednej," and "nevstreči" are maximally saturated with temporality: memory is a linking element of past and
present, and the temporality of the adjective "last" is self-explanatory. The concept of "non-meeting" may indicate three different things: temporal disjunction (the "I" and the "You" couldn't meet because of wrong timing), spatial disjunction (the "I" and the "You" couldn't meet because they were in separate places), and emotional disjunction (they were physically together without being really together). In any case, the "non-meeting" makes memory irrelevant, and they cancel out the temporality of each other. The significance of the a-temporality in the "I"'s consciousness is symbolically explained in the final two lines. Timelessness means not absence of time, but rather overcoming the tyranny of time. These two lines form an affirmation of the "I"'s overcoming of time and temporality. The word "plamja," without losing its primary meaning of love, passion, and power, are now endowed with a secondary coloring of transcendence by the three modifiers: "xolodnoe" (cold, emotionless), "čistoe" (pure, ascetic, clear of emotion), and "legkoe" (airy, lofty, bodiless). To summarize, this is a poem in which the motif of renunciation of reality is modulated mainly in terms of deformation: time, space, and love are deformed on the single axis of the projection of the "I"'s perception.
As has been pointed out by critics, memory and its various synonyms recur throughout Axmatova's entire opus to such an extent that her poetry is often characterized as "lyricism of memory." As a conclusion to our discussion of time in Axmatova's poetry, we may examine the poetic significance of memory in some detail. In her early poems, memory serves to create an illusion of love between the "I" and her beloved as a counterpoint to the "I"'s solitude. On the syntactic level, by being introduced into the narrative of present, the memory of past helps to build a dislocated temporal structure and increases the emotional tension. In mature Axmatova, memory acquires a broader and more complicated function especially since the poet more and more frequently interweaves the episodes of her personal past and the historical past of Russia. Speaking of the mature Axmatova, thus, Dobin attributes a central significance to memory:

89) "Pamjat' stala u Axmatovoj, ja by skazal, filosofskoj veličinoj... Poetičeskaja formula pamjati s ee neožidanno raskryvajuščimija daljami v kakoj-to mere približena k večnym kategorijam: žizn', smert', ljubov', ja i mir, ja i my. Š toj formuloj vysokoj proby Axmatova vyšla daleko za predely neposredstvenno vidimogo gorizonta, xarakternogo dlja stixov pervogo desjatiletija ee tvorčestva. I oxvatila obširnye prostranstva pereživaniž zagljanuv v nevedomye kraja čuvstv."
Dobin's notion of axmatovian memory, however, sounds a bit oversimplified, if we consider the function of memory in the context of her timeless vision of reality. It seems that Axmatova is always preoccupied not so much with the evocation of the distant past as with the self's liberation from memory, from the flow of time. Thus, although not a professional critic, Mrs. Mandel'štam shows more insight, when she says:

When she set out to talk about memory, Akhmatova was more concerned with forgetting... If a recollection is really fading away, it must relate to something that was very short-lived, a chance event which invaded one's life for no particular reason.

Here we will discuss the poem from 1940, "Podval pamjati," to more closely examine the function and significance of memory in relation to temporal structure of her poetic world:

90) Podval pamjati

No suščii vzdor, čto ja živu grustja
I čto menja vospominan'e točit.
Ne často ja u pamjati v gostjax,
Da i ona menja vsegda moročit.
Kogda spuskajus' s fonarem v podval,
Mne kažetsja--opjet' gluxoj obval
Uže po uzkoj lestnice groxočest.
Čadit fonar', vernut'sja ne mogu,
A znaju, čto i du tuda, k vragu.
I ja prošu, kak milosti...No tam
Temno i tixo. Moj okončen prazdnik!
Už tridcat' let, kak provodili dam,
Ot starosti skończalsja tot prokaznik....
Ja opozdala. Èkaja beda!
Nel'zja mne pokazat'sja nikuda.
No ja kasajus' živopisi sten
I u kamina grejus'. Čto za čudo!
Skvoz' ètu plesen', ètot čad i tlen
Sverknuli dva zelenyx izumru,da.
I kot mjauknul. Nu, idem domoj!

No gde moj dom i gde rassudok moj? (III, 53)

In this text the "I"'s preoccupation with forgetting is realized by a dislocated time perception both in syntactic and lexico-semantic terms. In a sense, the text's semantic organization may be summed up as a tension between the haunting memory of past and the "I"'s attempt at an escape from it. In her consciousness neither past nor present preserves its temporal reality and she is suspended in the "narrow stairway" of time.

The motion verbs "spuskajus'" in the fifth line and "idu" in the ninth indicate in spatial terms the "I"'s backward journey to past, but the distance between present and past seems abyssmal. The depth of memory is repeatedly expressed in a negative semantics. It is unreachable, light-less, and sound-less. And the "I"'s visit to the memory is like one "to the enemy."

Personified as "she," memory itself is nothing but hostile to the "I": she cheats. However, the "I" is unable to return to present, as it is articulated in the lines eight, fourteen, and fifteen. The "I"'s illusion that she is safely back to present, to the familiar surroundings is destroyed in the final line: she cannot
find her house. Time is lost and the "I" is suspended in the timeless "no man's land." The constant shift of temporal perspectives, from past to present and vice versa expressed by the shifting pattern of verbal tense increases this sense of timelessness. Apropos of the timelessness of this text, we may quote Verheul's view to support our contention:

Generally speaking, the emotional tone of the heroine's speech in this poem constantly moves from moments of intense and unbearable panic to a contrastive--but fruitless--search for consolation and a certain ironic distance. Thus the original purpose of the speaker's return to the past, the descent, was formed by her desire to recover the lost idyll of her youth. However, as she has told us at the beginning, memory will always "cheat" her, and instead of regaining the longed-for idyllic world of the time before the outbreak of the first World War she is confronted in the depth of her memory mere nothingness, a void...

As a matter of fact, the timelessness of reality realized through the loss of memory is found in her other poems, especially in her later ones. The final lines of the poem "Est' tri epoxi u vospominanij," for instance, illustrates that:

91) My soznam, čto ne mogli b vnesti
To prošloe v granicy našej žizni,
I nam ono počti čto tak že čuždo,
Kak nasem sosedu po kvartire,
Čto tex, kto umer, my by ne uznali,
A te, s kem nam razluku Bog poslal,
Prekrasno obošlis' bez nas--i daže
Vse k lučšemu.... (I, 313)
The loss of memory, and by extension, of time as poetically expressed in the dislocated pattern of time may be understood as the "I"'s yearning for something durable. By distancing the self from the cruel march of time, the "I" paradoxically transcends the tyranny of time: perceived from the timeless vision of the "I," all the temporal things, love, passion, and grief, lose their temporality and transferred into the realm of eternity. In this sense, Hans Meyerhoff's definition of eternity is extremely relevant: "Eternity, therefore, means timelessness, not infinite time—a quality of experience which is beyond and outside physical time." 33

In this chapter we have discussed Axmatova's subjective experience of time and its poetic realization in connection with the mode of non-love. As we examined through several different texts, a-temporality in the poetic "I"'s consciousness emerges as a different modulation of eternity. To summarize, we may quote Filippov whose notion of apocalyptic time in axmatovian text is revealing:

92)I zdes' daže ne Bergsonovskaja dljaščest': vremja Axmatovoj ne prosto dlitsja: prošloe, nstojjaščee i buduščee soprebyvajut, dany-- v moment tvorčeskogo ozarenija, v moment soprikosnovenija s Večnost'ju, kak nečto triedinog. Ėto blizko k ponjatiju vremen Lejbnica, a ešče bliže k apokaliptičeskomu: Vremeni bol'še ne budet.
NOTES TO CHAPTER IV

1 For instance, See, Dobin, pp. 173-74, and Verheul, Theme of Time, p. 1.


4 Parenthetically, Pavlovskij uses the term "time" in his discussion of Axmatova's poetry in the conventional journalistic-essayistic, historical sense: "Svoeeobrazie Axmatovoj zaključalos' v tom čto ona umela poëticheški peredat' samo pričutstvie živogo duha vremeni, istorii v segodnjašnej žizni ljudej." See, Pavlovskij, p. 129.


6 Verheul, Theme of Time, p. 3.

7 Vinogradov, O poëzii, pp. 107-108.

8 One of the interesting discussions of time as a mode is made by Sonia Ketchian. See, Sonia Ketchian, "Metempsychosis in the verse of Anna Axmatova," SEEJ, 25, 1 (1981), 44-60.


11 Vinogradov, O poëzii, p. 108.

12 Verheul, Theme of Time, p. 5.
13 In the preceding part of this poem, there is also a restless tension between the Peter's horse and the timeless "litoe serebro" of the temple.

14 Perhaps, Ivo Andrić's The Bridge on the Drina is one of the best examples of twentieth century literature in which the author conveys his perception of time through the symbol of river.

15 Verheul, Theme of Time, p. 11.


17 In a different reading of the same text, Ju. Ščegolov considers precisely this "transformation of moment into eternity" as the theme of this poem. See, Ju. Ščegolov, "Poëtika obezbolivaniya," in Mir Avtora i Struktura Teksta, ed. A. Žolkovskij (Tenafly: Hermitage, 1986), p. 180.


19 For a more detailed discussion of Axmatova's use of conventional color symbolism (especially red and white), See, Sedakova, pp. 106-108.

20 The relatedness of love and death in the semantic structure of Axmatova's text in general has been discussed by Vinogradov in some detail. See, Vinogradov, "O simvolike A. Axmatovoj," in Literaturnaja mys'l (Petrograd: Mys'l', 1922), pp. 124-35.

21 This term "thematic complex" is used by Ščegolov in a different context. See, Ščegolov, p. 176.

22 Bickert, pp. 42-43.

23 Smirnov, p. 216.


25 Verheul also views the significance of art in Axmatova's poetry in terms of "changeless continuum transcending the linear progress of time." See, Verheul, Theme of Time, p. 45, p. 174.

27 Verheul, Theme of Time, p. 200.


29 Baxtin, Dialogic Imagination, pp. 97-98.

30 Dobin, p. 188.


32 Verheul, Theme of Time, p. 102.


34 Filippov, "Poema bez geroja," Sočinenija, II, 84. His contention that Axtatova's time is not even Bergsonian "durée" is an interesting observation, since Acmeism in general is considered to have been influenced by time philosophy of Henri Bergson. See, Elaine Rusinko, "Acmeism, Post-symbolism, and Henri Bergson," Slavic Review, 41 (Fall 1982), 494-510.
CHAPTER V. **POÈMA BEZ GEROJA**: THE 'ACME' OF CREATION

...our life is a tale
without a plot, or a hero,
made out of emptiness and
glass.... Mandel'stam

The multiple thematic levels and complex narrative structure of Axmatova's *Poème bez geroja* have caused critics to develop diverse approaches to the study of its meaning. In spite of these various different approaches, critics seem to agree upon two basic features of *Poème*: synthetic quality and impenetrable obscurity. By synthetic quality it meant that *Poème* includes within a single work virtually all the major poetic elements found in the body of Axmatova's poetry. Consequently, being a work much larger and far more complicated than her previous lyrics, *Poème* nevertheless is to be viewed in terms of continuum, rather than of a new development.

Thus, Pavlovskij, not disregarding the relatively new elements in *Poème* though, contends that:

93) "Poème bez geroja" poëtessa pridavala principal'noe značenie. Éto proizvedenie, po zamyslu Axmatovoj, dolžno bylo stat'(i stalo) svoego roda sintezom važnejšix tem i obrazov vsego ee tvorčestva...Nekotorye xarakternejšie...
Much the same point is made by Verheul, when he speaks of the specific theme of time in Axmatova's early poetry and in Poëma:

In a broader sense the work may even be seen as a crowning, all-encompassing statement of all the essential features of her whole oeuvre...broadly speaking, we do not meet in Axmatova's most ambitious poetical structure with essentially new elements of her temporal awareness other than those with which we are already familiar.

Next to this synthetic quality of Poëma, its extremely complicated, multi-layered structure has been most frequently pointed out by scholars. For example, Čukovskaja characterizes its structure as "sloj na sloe, sloj na sloe," and Žirmunskij also mentions "vremennaja i tematičeskaja mnogoplanovost'." To a similar effect Haight contends:

It is a work written on so many levels and so rich in reference and quotation both to the poet's life and times and to the literature of Western Europe that interpretation is difficult.

The incomprehensibility resulting from the extreme complexity and obscurity is also discussed in some detail by T. Civ'jan:
Axmatova zašifrovvает avtorskij uровень', sbivaja čitateljja ložnymi ukazanijami, psevdo-komentariami i pr. No, zadavaja zagadki bez razгадok, Axmatova prilagaet osoby usiliya k tomu, čtoby čitatel' očuščal semantičeskuiu mnogoplanovost' poemy i stremsija k ee razrešeniju. Axmatova kak budto boitsja, čto poemu "pojmut'" sliškom poverxnostno i bukval'no, i počti navjazvает čitatelju zadaču, blizkiju k dešifrovke(pri čtom "istinnaja interpretacija" ostaetsja neizvestnoj)..."Neponjatnost"' poemy prežde vsego v opredelennoj kompozicionnoj složnosti: preryvnost' posledovatel'nogo razvitija dejstvija vo vremenii, zybkost' granic, otdeljajuščixs plan opisanija real'nosti ot plana vospominanija, "smazannost'" geroev(nejjasno, skol'ko geroev, gde končaetsja odin i načinaetsja drugoj), zapret nazyvanija imeni geroja--on oprodeljaetsja čerez kompleks priznakov, menjajuščixsja ot situacion k situaci; čto zatrydnjaet otoždestvlenie v predelax poemy....

Axmatova herself, in her notes on Poèma, admits this incomprehensibility, but refuses to give any explanation:

To summarize all these observations, Poèma is an extremely complex poetic work with multiple thematic layers which is made still more difficult to understand by the abundance of obscure biographical and extra-textual associations and sub-textual references. Thus, most of the critical works about Poèma usually turn
out to be mere exegeses to the text. In this chapter, we will discuss Poëma mainly in terms of a poetic synthesis; in other words, we will examine how all the significant structural elements we discussed in the preceding chapters are combined together to form an integral, unified work of art, which is justly called a poetic summary. This approach, on one hand, may prove in concrete terms the validity of the well-established notion of Poëma as an organic development from Axmatova's earlier poetic system. On the other hand, by examining the principal compositional elements, we may go a step further than a mere exegesis or a commentary and obtain a better perspective to understand Poëma. The reason we select Poëma for a summary of our previous discussion may be very well explained by Driver's view:

In style as well as theme, there is also a marked consistency. There is development, of course, or shift in emphasis, further experimentation—but it is difficult to find a poem from the later years which is not, in some important ways, prefigured by the poetry of 1912-22...It is clear that Akhmatova herself felt the body of her work to be a unity. She did not hesitate to incorporate poems of an early date into collections of later poems, to remove poems from one collection and include them in another, or to rearrange excerpts from some works, written many years apart, into new ones. She even suggested that a study of her entire production could profitably be undertaken through an analysis of The Poem without a Hero, completed only in 1962.
1. The Mode of Non-love in Poèma

As non-love functions as a dominanta in her early lyrics, in Poèma also it plays a significant structural role. Before we discuss the function of non-love in Poèma in some detail, we may briefly survey its thematic structure. The genre of Poèma is defined by its own title: poema—a long narrative poem, or a verse epic, whose tradition goes back to eighteenth century Russian writers, such as Lomonosov, Bogdanovič, and Knjažnin. Traditionally, poema as a genre includes a narrative, 'sjužet,' although in twentieth century this genre definition is no longer required and as a matter of fact a number of poemas are written without any discernible narrative.13 Axtamova's Poèma consists of three parts, and only the first part has a narrative. The first part, subtitled as "Devja't'sot trinadcatyj god: Peterburgskaja povest'," is basically the poetic "I"s recollection of the past tragic love story which involved her close friends. The main text of the first part is preceded by a series of Rahmenerzählung("frames"). Originally, it begins with "Iz pis'ma k N.," a prose remark, in which the author discusses reader's reaction toward her Poèma. Later, for reasons yet unknown, Axtamova decided to exclude it from the final text14, and the final version claimed by Haight starts with "Vmesto predislovija," the
author's own statements about the origin and the various
creative stages of Poèma. This section is followed by
three dedications and "Vstuplenie." The first part is
not written in a stanzaic form, but instead, divided into
four chapters, an intermezzo, and afterword. The second
part "Reška," much shorter than the first part, is in a
sense a "metapoetic" part15, in which the "I" argues with
an imaginary editor over the issues pertaining to the
first part and meditates upon her art. Unlike the first
part, "Reška" consists of twenty four 6-line stanzas with
a relatively consistent rhythmic structure. The third
part "Epilog" subtitled as "K moemu gorodu" is built
around the "public" motifs, such as Stalin's terror,
exile, World War II, and the evacuation of Leningrad. It
is still shorter than the second part, and like the first
part, has no stanzaic division.

As this short survey clearly demonstrates, the three
parts of the triptych do not seem to be unified to form
an integral whole. This aspect of the work has been also
pointed out by Civ'jan, among others:
i svjazi projavljajutsja na bolee prodvinutoj stupeni. Vo vsjakom slučae možno skazat', što vse tri časti napisany v raznom ključe ili obладajut raznoj tembrovoj okraskoj (čto približitel'no i sootvetstvuet mene tonal'nostej i ladcov). 16

As Civ'jan correctly notes, the linkage between the three parts must be found not on the thematic or rhythmic level, and precisely in this regard is of particular interest the significance of non-love. The mode of non-love not only makes it plausible to study Poèma in the light of previous lyrics but also adds a shape and coherence to the seemingly disparate parts of the work. 17

In Poèma, like in her lyrics, non-love functions as a mode in whose terms the multiple thematic structure is to be understood. However, non-love in Poèma gains much broader implication than in the early lyrics, in other words, non-love implies not just antithesis of love but also by extention antithesis of life, reality, and the world. Thus, the poetic world of Poèma built upon the principle of antithesis emerges as an "anti-world." One of the most recurrent elements of this anti-world is death, an antithesis of life: it is death, often indissolubly tied up with non-love and separation, which saturates the whole Poèma.

To begin with, the three dedications immediately set the general tone of the entire triptych by their
inclusion of death or semantic items related to death.
The first dedication has three references to death:
Antinous, Penelope's suitor killed by Odysseus, the image
of a grave, and the funeral march:

97) I temnye resnicy Antinoja
evdrug podnjalis'-i tam zelenyj dym,
...........
Net, èto tol'ko xvoja
mogil'naja, i v nakipan'i pen
vse bliže, bliže....
Marche funèbre....
Šopen..... (II, 101)

In the second dedication, the death of the dedicatee is
conveyed by the image of Lethe and the grave:

98)xočeš' mne skazat' po sekretu,
Čto uže minovala Letu
I inoju dyšiš' vesnoj.
...........
Esli xočeš', otdam na pamjet',
Slojno v gline čistoe plamja
Il' podsnežnik v mogil'nom rvu. (II, 101-2)

The dedicatee of the third dedication figures as a
carrier of death, and his relationship with the "I" is
consistently expressed in a minus mode:

99) on ne stanet mne milym mužem,
...........
On ko mne vo dvorec Fontannyj
opozdaet noč'ju tumannoj
novogodnee pit' vino.
...........
on pogibel' mne prineset. (II, 102-3)
Further, the juxtaposition of wedding candles and the deadly flight ("klen v okne, venčal'nye sveči/i poemy smertnyj polet....") becomes meaningful only if we perceive it in the general context of love and death. In a sense these three dedications prefigure the narrative of the first part: the two dedicatees appear as 'dramatis personae' of the tragic love story and the third one as a mysterious "guest from future." And more significantly, the reference to death foreshadows the end of the story, the death of one of the lovers' triangle.

The semantics of the first part is interspersed with the "I"'s acute sense of death and doom. For instance, in chapter 1:

100) Do doliny Iosafata
Snova vstretit'sja ne xoču.... (II, 106)
..........  

Strašnyj prazdnik mertvoj 
Listvy. (II, 107)  
..........  

V uzkix oknax zvezdy ne vidno,
Gibel' gde-to zdes', očevidno, (II, 108)  
..........  

Smerti net--êto vsem izvestno, 
Povtorjat' êto stalo presno, (II, 109)  
..........  

In the following intermezzo:

101)I, uvy, sodomskie loty
Smertnosnyj probujut sok, (II, 110)  
..........
Similarly, chapter 2 begins with the epigraph of
death("Il' togo ty vidiš' u svoix kolen,/kto dlja beloj
smeri tvoj pokinul plen?") and includes a number of
allusions to death, impending doom, and hell:

102) Vse ravno podxodit rasplata-- (II, 112)
............
Pjatym aktom iz Letnego sada
Paxnet....Prizrak cusimskogo
ada
............ (II, 113)

S mertvym serdcem i mertvym vzorom,
On li vstretilsja s komandorom, (II, 114)

Chapter 3 is also heavily charged with semantics of
death:

103) I ves' traurnyj gorod płył
Po nevedomomu naznačen'ju
Po Neve il' protiv tečen'ja--
Tol'ko proč' ot svoix mogil.
............
I kladbiščem paxla siren'. (II, 117)
............
Kak pred kazn'ju bil baraban.... (II, 118)

Beginning with an epigraph in which non-love and death
are juxtaposed("Ljubov' prošla i stali jasny/I blizki
smerjnič čerty"), chapter 4 presents the image of the
lover doomed to die:

104) Komu žit' ostalos' nemnogo,
Kto liš' smerti prosit u Boga
I kto budet naveki zabyt. (II, 119)
I dragunskij kornet so stixami
I s bessmyslennoj smert'ju v grudi (II, 120)
...........

The first part ends with an afterword which conveys death in visual and auditory terms:

105)I otkliknetsja izdaleka
Na prizvyv etot strashnyj zvuk--
Klokonanie, ston i klekot,
I vidin'e skreshennyx ruk.... 18 (II, 121)

The semantics of death also permeates the second part which is dissimilar from the first part in terms of thematics and rhythmics. In her discussion of the first part and her art in general, the "I" constantly speaks in the language of death. For instance, her "seventh book" of poetry is called "half-dead"("I so mnoju moja 'Sedmaja'/Polumertvaja i nemaja"), and when she recalls the literary theme of her previous years, it is expressed in connection with a funeral:

106)I byla dlja menja ta tema,
Kak razdavlennaja xrizantema
Na polu, kogda grob nesut. (II, 125)

For her, even the subtextual references are characterized by death(Soft embalmer, mertvyj Selii, etc) and in general she perceives reality as that of death: "Smert' povsjuju--gorod v ogne."

The lexicosemantic structure of the third part strikes the familiar cord of early love lyrics in which non-love between the poetic "I" and her beloved provides
the contextual frame. Here, the "I"'s farewell to the evacuated city Leningrad is conveyed in terms of her parting with her "You." This part bears a clear resemblance to the "razluka" poems, and often the image of the city and that of the "I"'s lover inseparably merge:

107) Ty ne vyp'eš', tol'ko prigubiš'
    Êto našej razluki vest'.  (II, 130)
    ..........

    Ten' moja na stenax tvoix,
    Otražen'e moe v kanalax,  (II, 131)

Characteristically, as in the preceding parts, here semantic items related to death dominate: "černaja pustota," "Devka beznosaja," "mošila," "nadgrobnij," "pogrebal'nyj," etc. Also, the "I"'s separation from the "You" is explained by the latter's death: "Ty, čto tam pogibat' ostalsja/v bleske špilej, v otbleske vod."

The poet's obsessive use of words and phrases denoting death in particular and non-love in general may be understood in several different ways. On one hand, the pervasive imagery of death functions as one of the unifying factors which link the three parts of Poëma. On the other hand, the death imagery combined with other recurrent elements creates a unique inner world, an anti-world. In the following sections we will examine other poetic components of this anti-world.
2. The Ultimate Stance of the "I"

In the second chapter of the present study we discussed the central role played by the lyric "I" and her ever-changing "masks" in Axmatova's verse from various periods. In Poèma also, the "I" is placed in the center of the thematic development, although she is presented in a more complicated manner in keeping with the multiple narrative structure. Pertaining to the multiple role played by the "I," Van der Eng-Liedmeier notes:

It is this multiplicity of approach—and the related multiplicity of the author's image—that makes Devyat'sot Trinadcatyj God such a complicated poem. In view of this is first of all necessary to investigate the different masks the author wears, to analyse her changing narrative attitudes. Then it will be possible to expose the principal elements of the narrative structure and, finally, to obtain a clear insight in the diverse thematic levels of which the poem consists.20

She goes on to single out three major roles of the "I" in Poèma (narrator, author, lyrical heroine), and further examines the intertwining of the three different roles:

Of these three roles, the role of the witness is the one to be adopted most frequently; the entire drama of 1913 is recounted from this perspective. But it is only at the beginning and the end of the poem or in the clearly indicated lyrical digressions that she presents herself as the author or lyrical heroine, as might be expected; the witness's report, too, is interspersed with authorial and personal comments. This has a shock-effect—the illusion of the past she created as a witness is disturbed by these contrasting observations.21
As Van der Eng-Liedmeier correctly points out, the role of the "I" differs according to each part, and, further, the role within the given part is not fixed but intertwined with other roles. However, underneath the ever-changing multiple role is found a constant image of the "I": the "I" as a poet and especially the author of Poëma. This image is present throughout the entire triptych and in a way the three parts are unified and governed by the ubiquitous presence of the "I"-author. The "I"'s stance as a poet which is frequently alluded in the previous lyrics gains here an ultimate dimension and the poet herself emerges as the hero of the 'tale without a hero.'

First of all, the predominant role of the "I"-author is prefigured in the series of the frames. As Axmatova explains in a conversation with Čukovskaja, "Iz Pis'ma k N." is a self-addressed statement of the author, "one of the author's plays." While "Vmesto predislovija" undoubtedly presents the "I" as the author, in the first and second dedications the image of the "I"-author is conveyed through subtle allusions to her writing:

108) ...a tak kak mne bumagi ne xvatilo, ja na tvom pišu černovike. (II, 101)
...........
Ne diktuj mne, sama ja slyšu (II, 102)
The first part begins with the "I"'s reference to herself as an author who is visited by the phantoms of past instead of the waited-for New Year's Eve guest: "K avtoru, v mestu togo, kogo ždali, prišodjat teni trinadcatogo goda pod vidom rjaženyx."23 This part is interspersed with similar prose statements in which the "I" refers to herself as the author:

109) Fakely gasnut, potolok opuskaetsja. Belyj zerkal'nyj zal snova delaetsja komnatoj avtora. (II, 109)
Gde-to vokrug ètogo mesta...brodili ešče takie stroki, no ja ne pustila ih v osnovnoj tekst: (II, 110)

In the main text, the "I"'s role is that of a narrator, by whom the event of 1913 is evoked from past. However, the story narrated by her does not form a coherent narrative in the conventional sense of the word: it lacks any kind of sjužet development and the proportion of the lyrical digressions is overwhelmingly bigger than the story per se. According to Van der Eng-Liedmeier:

The events described in the poem do not constitute a coherent narrative, for the usual causal and chronological links are lacking. The four sections are composed of a series of strange dreams which relate to two entirely different New Year's Eves, in the Petersburg of 1913 and in the Leningrad of 1940. A connection is only to be found in the identity of place and date and in the dominating role of the author.
The portrayal of the main characters does not fit into the normal flow of narrative either. Although some scholars have repeatedly identified the actual prototypes of the three principal characters (heroine: Olga Glebova-Sudejkina, her lover: Aleksandr Blok, the hero: Vsevolod Knjazev)²⁵, their names are not mentioned anywhere in the text. They are shadows, phantoms, masks "without names," and their "unreal" presence is constantly emphasized by the author. The heroine is non-being, merely an image from a portrait, someone "who does not hear, nor breathe":

110) Vsex narjadnee i vsex vyše,
Xot' ne vidit ona i ne slyšit--
Ne kljanet, ne molit, ne dyšit,
Golova Madame de Lamballe,
A zatejlica i krasotka,
............

Ty sbežaia sjuda s portreta,
I pустaja rama do sveta
na stene tebjja budet źdat'.

Even the "I" doubts about the actual existence of the heroine:

111) Neuželi
Ty kogda-to žila v samom dele
I toptala torcy ploščadej
Oslepitel'noi nožkoj svoej?...

The hero Knjazev's name is not given either, and instead he is referred to as the fairy tale character "Ivanuska." The third person of the triangle is also portrayed as a shadow without face or name:
Thus, the characters do not play any active role in the narrative but function as symbols, compositional elements of the anti-world rendered through the "I"'s extremely subjective perception. This aspect of characterization has been also pointed out by Van der Eng-Liedmeier, though in a different context:

The characters are not portrayed in a subtle psychological fashion, neither do they develop in a dynamic plot. There is not even a discernible change in their relationship to one another. Therefore, in spite of the fact that they are explicitly called 'hero' and 'heroine,' they are not heroes in the conventional sense, they are not the centre of the narrative, but they are reduced to types and shown in relationship to their time.

From these observations it follows that the story which does not have real characters and no coherent narrative development begins to generate meaning only when it is transferred into the realm of the "I"'s poetic vision. It is the "I" who stands in the center of the text, constantly shifting from one thematic level to another and interweaving various motifs and images into a singular poetic vision of the world. The "I" is, characteristically, the only real, living figure and all the rest are merely puppets, and the "I" often compares their world to the make-believe world of the theater, masquerade, and fantastic dream. Her presence in this
'unreal' world is not as one of the participants but as its creator. In a number of places of the text, the "I" intimates the distance between her and the rest in various terms:

113) Iz goda sorokovogo,
Kak s bašni, na vse gljažu.  (II, 103)
...........
Čto mne postup' zeležnoj
Maski!
Ja sama pozeležnej tex....
...........
Ne dlja nix zdes' gotovilsja užin,
I ne im so mnoj po puti.
...........
Tol'ko kak 'ze moglo slučit'sja,
Čto odna ja iz nix živa?  (II, 106)

In "Reška" the "I"'s stance as the author becomes explicit and through the mouth of the imaginary figures--the editor, the Muse, she touches upon one of the major themes of Poëma, that of poetry²⁸: she admits her elusive way of writing and defends her poetry against possible criticism. In the seventeenth stanza she discloses the two aspects of the mystery of her art--craftsmanship and inspiration:

114) No soznajuš', čto primenila
Simpatičeskie černila,
Čto zerkal'nym pis'mom pišu,
I drugoj mne dorogi netu,--
Čudom ja nabrela na ětu
I rasstat'sja s nej ne spešu.  (II, 126)
The final two stanzas form the "I"'s affirmation of the originality and immortality of her own poetry. Her alter ego, "stoletnjaja carcvnica" speaks:

115) No ona tverdila uprjamo:
"Ja ne ta anglijskaja dama
I sovsem ne Klara Gazul',
Vovse net u menja rodoslovnoj
Krome solnečnoj i basnoslovnoj,
I privel menja sam i jul'.

...........

My s toboj ešće popiruem,
I ja carskim moim poceluem
Zlju polnoč' tvoju nagražu." (II, 128)

This metapoetic aspect of Poèma in general and "Reška" in particular has been noted by some critics. For instance, Van der Eng-Liedmeier summarizes the final stanzas of "Reška" as follows:

In the final stanzas the author suggests that she has at least freed herself from the obsession of the past and is now entering a new phase of poetic creation. Apparently she considers her work as a triumph of her art over the most difficult subject she ever treated. The muse, that she introduces here, proudly declares that she has no ancestors and she promises her—after twenty years of official disgrace—not only future fame but also future inspiration.29

In the epilogue, the "I"'s dominating, all-embracing image as the author is emphatically projected against the background of war, death, and ruin: "V storone Kronštata uzajut tjaželye orudija. No v obščem tixo. Golos
avtorja, naxodjaščegosja za sem' tysjač kilometrov, proiznosit." Amidst the cataclysmic events, the "I" hears her own voice resounding:

116) I ja slyšu daže otsjuda--
Neuželi eto ne čudo!--
Zvuki golosa svoego: (II, 130)

The "I"'s role predominantly as an author is tightly bound up with the theme of poetry which constitutes to a large extent the multi-layered thematic structure of Poema. As Leiter justly claims, in a sense, Poema is "about literature itself." In more elaborate terms, Verheul also points out the importance of the theme of poetry:

This theme occupies as such a place of primary importance in Axmatova's conception of her poem, and it is in various ways organically connected with other thematical elements in her work... The importance of the theme of poetry in Poema bez geroja is also reflected in the peculiarly "literary" conception of this work. The mysteriously polyphonic quality of the text is to a great extent determined by a large number of quotations from the work of other poets and the author herself, and also by a seemingly endless quantity of various more "hidden" poetical echoes and allusions... In Poema bez geroja, too, the theme of poetry is regularly envisaged from the contrasting viewpoints of transience and timelessness.

Thus, the "I"-author becomes extremely meaningful in relation to the theme of poetry, and some other significant structural elements are to be perceived in
terms of the relationship of the "I" and the theme of poetry. Here we will discuss the issues pertaining to discourse mainly in this respect.

3. Discourse

In the third chapter of this study we investigated in some detail the nature of discourse in the lyrics of Axmatova and defined it as dislocated in accordance with the dislocated communication resulting from non-love. A similar pattern of dislocated discourse is found in Poêma, and the obscurity and complexity of the work are to a large degree due to the discourse pattern.

Virtually all the types of discourse we previously discussed coexist in various narrative levels of the text, and here again the shift from one to another is made without causal or logical connection. This multiple type of discourse often leads the critics to characterize the triptych as "polyphonic" or "symphonic." For instance, Pavlovskij calls it "a literary symphony":

117) "Poêma bez geroja"--èto literaturnaja simfonija, vključajuščaja v sebja množestvo golosov i instrumentov, sredi kotoryx avtorskij golos to terjaetsja, to beret na sebja objazannosti antičnogo xora; glavnaja tema, odнако, provedena s neukosnitel'noj posledovatel'nost'ju,--èto dissonirujuščij motiv miatuščejsja tragičeskoj, prestupno-prazdnoj i ëgoističeskoj èpoxi, dlja kotoroj nastupilo vosmezdie.
The addresser varies from the auctorial "I" to a
dramatis personae, and in keeping with the shifting voice
of the addresser, the addressee also changes from the
reader to the unidentified "You." In the first part,
although the "I" constantly addresses someone, the
addressee does not seem to matter. First of all, the
addressee changes from the heroine or the hero of the
story to the "I"'s lover, to the generalized plural "You"
to such an extent that the addressee as such becomes not
only obscure but also almost meaningless:

\[118\) Čto ž vy vse ubegaete vmeste,
Slovno každyj našel po neveste. \quad (II, 108)

\[\ldots\ldots\ldots\]

\[\text{Ne serdis' na menja, Golubka,}
Čto kosnus' ja ètogo kubka:}
\[\text{Ne tebja, a sebja kaznu.} \quad \text{\quad (II, 112)}

\[\ldots\ldots\ldots\]

\[Gde vse devjat' mne budut rady,}
Kak byval ty kogda-to rad. \quad \text{\quad (II, 118)}

Besides, the "I"'s attitude toward her addressees varies
from sympathy to sarcasm, not according to the individual
addressee but according to her own changing perception
and mood. For instance, at the end of the first part,
the hero is referred to as "foolish little boy" who died
"a senseless death" and the tragic sentiment the "I"
initially created around him is suddenly destroyed. The
various addressees of the first part do not function as
the "I"'s interlocutors, for their rejoinder is not
expected from the very start. They form a kind of "background" against which the "I" freely projects her own voice. When the "I"'s voice is replaced by other voices, they often do not form a coherent conversation nor fit into the flow of the narrative and further, who is speaking to whom is not known:

119) "Uverjaju, èto ne novo...
Vy ditja, sin'or Kazanova..."
"Na isak'evskoj rovno v šest'...."
"Kak-nibud' pobredem po mraku,
My otšuda ešče v "Sobaku"

"Vy otšuda kuda?"--
"Bog vest'!!" (II, 110)

In spite of the dramatised narration, thus, the first part includes only one speaking voice, that of the "I," and the rest is nothing but different echoes of the "I"'s voice. In a sense, the addressees are 'paradigmatic' substitutions of the "I," as she calls the "You" one of her doubles: "Peterburgskaja kukla, akterka,/Ty--odin iz moix dvojnikov."

In the second part also the three speaking voices--the editor's, the "I"'s, and the Muse's--do not serve to create an interlocution but present three different modulations of the auctorial voice. They are again doubles of the "I" reflected in the "mirrored" space of the text, which is alluded in the prose section: "O tom, čto mereščitsja v zerkalax, lučše ne dumat'.'' While the author's apprehension about the reader's
reaction is conveyed through the confused editor, her affirmation of her art is uttered by the Muse. Like the "I"'s beloved in the love lyrics, these two figures are used to create a quasi-dialogical situation with which the essentially auto-communicative world of the "I" is always in tension.

The epilogue includes three addressees: the evacuated city Leningrad, the "I"'s beloved, and the generalized "You," presumably the "I"'s fellow countrymen. These answerless addressees are identified only obliquely—by the subtitle "K moemu gorodu," and by subtle autobiographical associations, and the inanimate city and the "I"'s lover often intermingle in such a way that we suspect that actually whom the "I" speaks to is of little significance. Against these speechless, obscure addressees, the "I"'s own voice alone stands out and the text becomes again auto-communicative. The "I" hears her own voice, which is in turn addressed to her "double":

120) Moj dvojnik na dopros idet.  
A potom on idet s doprosa,  
..........  
I ja slyšu daže otsjuda--  
Neuželi eto ne čudo!--  
Zvuki golosa svoego:  
Za tebja ja zaplatila  
Čistogănom,  
..........  

(II, 130)
From this brief survey, we may conclude that despite the complex multiple type of discourse on the surface, the triptych can be in essence regarded as a long monologue of the "I"-author. This conclusion is supported by Žirmunskij:

121) Podobno "Leningradskim èlegijam", cna [Poèma--Y.S.] predstavljaet monolog avtora, svidetelja i učastnika izobražaemyx sobytij, -monolog, okrašennyj glubokim liričeskim čuvstvom, emocional'no vzvolnovannyj i v to že vremja inscenirovannyj dramatičeski.

Combined with the dominant image of the author, her auto-communicative voice, now explicit, now hidden underneath the chaotic discourse pattern, constitutes the poet's anti-world in its ultimate stage. It is an overinflated inner world of the self in which nothing seems to exist except for the "I" and her poetry.

4. Time

Finally, we will discuss the temporal structure of Poèma, since it, together with the dominant role of the "I" and the monological discourse, defines the anti-world of the "I." Generally speaking, the topic of time in Poèma is of an extreme importance, and most critics have without fail touched upon it in some way or other. For instance, after eulogizing Axmatova as "master
istoričeskoi živopisi," Čukovskij focuses upon the presence of the "historical time" in Poèma:


While Čukovskij views time in Poèma primarily as epoch, Civ'jan contends that time must be investigated in terms of a compositional element, apparently refuting Čukovskij's view:

123) Kategorija vremeni v poeme zasluzivaet osobogo rassmotrenija... Ljuboe sobytie--proixošlo li ono, proisxodit v nastojaščij moment, proizojdet v buduščem ili ne proixošlo/ne proizojdet voobšče,--zanimaet mesto na vremennoj osi, sozdannoj avtorom... Togda ěta vremennaja os' dolžna rassmatrivat'sja ne vne poemy kak nekotoryj kommentarij, a vnutri ee kak ělement kompozicionnoj struktury.

Meanwhile, Van der Eng-Liedmeier perceives time as the principal theme of the entire triptych:

Thus three aspects of time, past, present and future, are closely interwoven and the basic theme of the triptych can be regarded as the poet's relationship to time. In whatever way the critics may interpret time in Poèma, it is clear that the topic of time as an essential structural element deserves a close examination. By examining the temporal structure of the text and relating
it to the larger structure of meaning, we may obtain a better understanding of this cryptic work. Characteristically, the basic temporal structure of Poëma is much similar to that of the early lyrics as we discussed in the preceding chapter. That is, the three modalities of time--past, present, and future--are not arranged in a linear chronological order, and the shift from one to another modality is made without any semantic explanation. This dislocated temporal structure stands out with a particular force in the first part where three temporal frames coexist: the narrative of the event of 1913, the authorial present of 1940, and the "I"'s anticipation of "the guest from future." Not only these three frames intersect and overlap but also within each frame different modalities of time alternate. First of all, the "I"'s memory about the past event is narrated from a freely shifting time perspective, as the verbal tense of the narrative demonstrates:

124) I doždalsja on. Strojnaja maska
Na obratnom "Puti iz Damaska"
Vozvratilas' domoj.... ne odna! (II, 119)
...........

Na ploščadke paxnet duxami,
I dragunskij kornet so stixami
I s besmyslennoj smert'ju v grudi
Pozvonit, esli smelosti xvatit.... (II, 120)

Similarly, the authorial "I"'s reference to herself is expressed in changing verbal tense:
125) Ja zažgla zavetnye sveči,
Čtoby ětot svetilsja večer, (II, 104)
...........
I ja slyšu zvonok protjažnyj,
I ja čuvstvujo xolod vlaznyj, (II, 105)
...........
Zavtra utro menja razbudit,
I nikto menja ne osudit, (II, 106)
...........

The guest who belongs to future is also described in past and present tense:

126) I vo vsex zerkalax otrazilsja
Čelovek, čto ne pojavilsja
I proniknut' v tot zal ne mog.
On ne lučše drugix i ne xuže,
No ne veet Letejskoj stuţej, (II, 107)

This intersection of different temporal modalities serves to express the "I"'s subjective experience of time. In her subjective state of mind time loses its objective linear progress and the three modalities of time fuse to render a unique timeless poetic space. In several places of the text, the "I" intimates this temporal fusion:

127) Kak v prošedšem grjadašče zreet,
Tak v grjadaščem prošloe tleet. (II, 107)
...........
My future is in my past. (II, 122)

More over, the "I"'s standing beyond the flow of time is alluded by the peculiar space-indicators, such as tower and threshold:
What counts in the first part, then, is not the veritable recapture of the historical past as Čukovskij claims, but the transformation of the historical time into the subjective, extra-historical time of the "I." In this regard, Van der Eng-Liedmeier's view of time in the first part is extremely cogent:

Indeed, the experiences she refers to cannot be dated exclusively 1913, 1940 or any other date—they point to past, present and future alike. The author links her memory of her past to her expectation of the future. Hence it is not a reality that is bound to limits of space and time that she deals with, but a mysterious inner world.

Similarly, Verheul notes the timelessness of the text:

Thus the narrative movement is as if it were suspended in a temporal vacuum, and the author's whole attention is concentrated upon the expression of the dramatic tension as such. This kind of "a-temporality" is not only characteristic of the narration of the "love story" in the first part of the poem....

The fusion of different temporal modalities and its ensuing sense of timelessness are also encountered in "Reška" and "Epilog." In "Reška," the temporal frame is fixed in present, but the "I"'s perspective is extended both backward and forward. In keeping with the theme of poetry in this part, the reawakened past and the
anticipated future are in the main literary ones, more specifically, the "I''s literary past and her future fame as a poet. In "Epilog," the "I''s timeless perception is clearly stated, when time stops forever in her watch: "Pust' navek ostanovitsja vremja/Na toboju dannyx časax."

So far we have examined the principal feature of the temporal structure of Poëma and defined it as a-temporality. Our view may be supported by Pavlovskij's contention that:

129) Vremja dejstvija Poëmy, takim obrazom, razdvijaetsja, ono slovno by isčezaet--kak v knige odnogo iz biblejskich prorokov; v kakoj-to moment Poëma ostanavlivaetsja, ona zastyvaet i kak by povisaet v nekoem strannom, prizračnom inqbytii--vne vremen i prostranstva.

As we previously observed, Poëma is permeated with references to death and similar verbal items related to the semantics of death. The a-temporality of the text obtains a specific meaning when we perceive it in relation to the "I''s obsessive awareness of mortality. Time stands still and so does death. The "I'' has conquered time and its unrelenting march toward death, and her art remains indestructible amidst chain of changes and decay. Although the text does not contain any direct reference to eternity, the text itself may be regarded as Axmatova's single statement about the timeless value of art. Through Poëma, the poet achieved, in Pavlovskij's terms, "lyric monumentality."
NOTES TO CHAPTER V

1 Since Axmatova continued to revise the text of Poëma after completing it in 1942, and each time she claimed that "that" was the final version, it is still a question whether there exists a final version of Poëma at all, and if so, which one is it. In 1967, Amanda Haight reproduced, so called, "the final version," which was confirmed by the author herself during her visit to Oxford. (See, A. Haight, "Poema bez geroya." Slavonic and East European Review, No. 105 (July, 1967), pp. 475-96.) However, Haight's text has not yet been verified by the scholarship on Axmatova. For the present study, we will use the text in Sočinenija, II, which is basically the same as Haight's text, except that the latter does not include "Iz pis'ma k N." and lacks one stanza in the intermezzo.

2 In this respect, Leiter's definition of the work as "a poetic summary" and Žirmunskij's "a creative synthesis" sound appropriate. See, Leiter, p. 145, and also, Žirmunskij, p. 143.

3 Contrary to our contention, Sinjavskij views Poëma and her later works as "quite out of keeping with our long-established view of her character as a poet." He continues to maintain that: "This new Akhmatova forces us to discard the established image of her as merely a prerevolutionary poet, narrow in scope and set in her ways." See, A. Sinjavskij, "The Unshackled Voice," in Major Soviet Writers, p.54.

4 Pavlovskij, p. 148.
5 Verheul, Theme of Time, p. 180.
6 Zapiski, p. 173.
7 Žirmunskij, p. 173.
8 Haight, 148.
9 T. Civ'jan, "Zametki k dešifrovke 'Poème bez

10 A. Axmatova, "Zametki k 'Poème bez geroja'," Sočinenija, III, 161.

11 C'iv'jan also notes this, saying that "Primečatel'no, čto suščestvujuščie--i teper' uže mnogočislennye-- raboty, posvjaščennye poème, vol'no ili nevol'no svodjatsja k ee kommentirovaniju v uzkom i širokom smysle." See, C'iv'jan, p. 256.


14 According to Çukovskaja's memoir, Axmatova considered the "Pis'mo" as an essential part of the text, but from 1960 on, she, without any explanation, excluded it from the "final version."


17 There are some recurrent images--the maple tree, the mirror, etc., but they do not seem to be major elements to cement the three parts of the work.

18 As we will discuss more later, Poèma has a number of subtextual references to her literary predecessors and contemporaries. Here, we have an obvious echo of Çukovskij's ballad "Svetlana":

> Vdrug...v ustax somknutyx ston
> Slitsja razdvinut' on
> Ruki oxladely...

Also the epigraph of the third dedication "Raz v kreščenskij večerok" is from the first line of "Svetlana."

19 It is likely that Axmatova had Garšin, her lover, in mind, when she wrote this part. He remained in Leningrad during the blockade and married another woman without telling her. See, Haight, p. 136.

21 Van der Eng-Liedmeier, p. 72.

22 *Zapiski*, II, 92.

23 As a matter of fact, this device of "ghosts from the past" has been used by various other authors before Axmatova. One of the most famous examples is Goethe's *Faust*. In the Dedication, Goethe describes the thought that runs through his mind as he starts to work on *Faust*. He sees the ghosts and shadows floating in the air. Also in Puškin's poem "Osen'," a striking similarity is found in the tenth stanza:

I tut ko mne idet nezrmyj roj gostej  
Znakomcy davnje, plody mečty moej.

Axmatova was certainly aware of these predecessors and used these and other subtextual references to place herself in this poetic-historical context. Some more references to Goethe, Puškin, and many other poets and artists in *Poêma* may testify to this.

According to some contemporary views, any artistic text is really a system containing (consciously or unconsciously) a literary dialogue with numerous antecedents. Axmatova here makes explicitly perceptible this dialogue to a greater extent that some others would do. This is in a sense true in all her other poetry.

24 Van der Eng-Liedmeier, p. 67.

25 Žirmunskij, p. 145.

26 Van der Eng-Liedmeier, p. 74.

27 Here again Axmatova directly evokes Blok's play "Balaganščik" where the conventional triangle, Columbine-Pierrot-Harlequin of "Commedia dell'arte" and other characters are nothing but puppets and marionettes.

28 This conversation between the poet and the critic, the publisher, etc. is also found in other authors, from Puškin to Majakovskij. As this and other subtextual devices indicate, Axmatova seems to constantly converse with her literary "fellows." She evokes not so much any particular period in the past as literary past in general, and, thus, affirms the timeless value of
artistic creation.

29 Van der Eng-Liedmeier, p. 104.
30 Leiter, p. 147.
31 Verheul, Theme of Time, p. 188.
32 Pavlovskij, p. 166.
33 Žirmunskij, p. 177.
35 Civ'jan, "Zametki," p. 258.
36 Van der Eng-Liedmeier, p. 66.
37 Čukovskij, pp. 200-201.
38 Van der Eng-liedmeier, p. 86.
39 Verheul, Theme of Time, p. 194.
40 Pavlovskij, p. 161.
41 Pavlovskij, p. 174.
CONCLUSION

Art always meditates on death
And thus always creates life.
Pasternak

In the present study we have discussed Axmatova's
poetry in terms of the interrelationship between the
dominant mode of love (non-love) and other essential
structural elements, such as the image of the poetic "I,"
the communicative status of the text, and the
configuration of time and space. We believe that our
notion of axmatovian love as a poetic mode has enabled us
to perceive a number of Axmatova's stylistic traits which
the conventional view of love as a theme overlooked. As
our analysis of the various individual texts clearly
demonstrates, non-love in axmatovian text functions as a
governing principle from the early lyrics to the last
magnum opus Poëma bez geroja. Not only are the recurrent
themes and motifs realized in the mode of non-love but
also many formal peculiarities become truly meaningful
only when they are perceived in connection with this
principal mode. With all its form-shaping and
meaning-generating power, love transforms and models the poet's entire vision of reality.

For Axmatova, love has become, in Joseph Brodsky's terms, "a language, a code" through which she encodes all her perceptions of life, death, and art.¹ Her acute sense of profound solitude and death as an ultimate reality is poetically conveyed through the language of unfulfilled love. The ultimate achievement of Axmatova as a poet, however, lies not simply in expressing solitude and death but in creating a meaningful poetic text which transcends all the temporal things, including love, solitude, and death. Her poetry itself documents her life-long quest for meaning, for the infinite through the finite.
NOTES TO CONCLUSION

APPENDIX

TRANSLATION OF QUOTATIONS

[The number before each translation refers to the reference number assigned to the beginning of each quote within the body of this dissertation. All translations are mine except for "Rekviem" and Poema bez gero'la. For "Rekviem," I used Robin Kemball's translation in Anna Akhmatova: Selected Poems, ed. Walter Arndt (Ann Arbor: Ardis, 1976), pp. 143-53, and for Poema, I used Anna Akhmatova: A Poem without a Hero, trans. Carl Proffer and Assyra Humesky (Ann Arbor: Ardis, 1973).]

1) The work of Axmatova, which was frequently discussed in terms of too intimately outlined, narrow circle of motifs with a predilection for one dominant of "unfulfilled love," shows wide variety of lyric themes and poetic devices...The dominant of love simply deepens the tone, and it seems that the voice of Iphigenia or Phaedra resounds in the short lines of these lyrical fragments.

2) Titled once as "Sapho of 20th century," she has indeed written new pages in the great Book of Love. Her creative discovery is attributed more than anything to her love lyrics.

3) The theme of love undoubtedly plays a principal role in the lyrics of Axmatova, as in the folk songs, Petrarchan sonnets, lyrics of Goethe and Puškin, and in the world poetry in general. Love in Axmatova's poetry is a feeling which is living, genuine, deep and humane, although for realistic reasons it is usually touched with a noble stamp of suffering.

4) Lyrics of Axmatova--they are in the main, and if we consider the early ones, then exclusively, lyrics of love. It is not without reason that immediately after the publication of Evening and Rosary, people unanimously called her "Sapho of the new era." Her novelty as a poet
was from the very outset manifested precisely in this conventional, eternally repeated, and worn-out theme.

5) Love is a medium to attain a trans-poetic stage which metamorphoses the world...For her, love is a measure of an individual, a "service," an irreplaceable, sublime obligation of the human heart.

6) It is my pleasure to be drunk with you--
Your stories make no sense.

       He touched my knees again
With his hardly trembling hand.

       And the poplars are rustling outside the window:
"Your king is no longer in the earth"....

       Ah! It is again you. Not as the beloved lad,
But as a daring, stern, and adamant husband.

       I am guessing. Who is there? Isn't that fiance,
Isn't that my fiance?

7) She suppresses love before crossing it, predicts it before experiencing it, fears it before suffering from it, finds it before looking for it. She loves love before loving somebody...Whether apparent or latent, love is there. Everywhere. Always. Among the beings, at the bottom of things, and behind the phrases.

8) Bury, bury me, wind!
My relatives didn't come.
Above me is the wandering evening
And the silent breath of the earth.

       I was free, like you,
But I wanted to live too much.
See, wind, my corpse is cold,
And nobody will put my hands together.

       Cover this black wound
With the shroud of evening darkness
And order the blue mist
To read the Psalms for me.
So that it will be easy for me, a lonely soul,
To depart to the final sleep.
Roar! Like tall sledge,
About Spring, about my Spring.

9) ....It is even impossible to be more lonely than I am...The best moments for me are when everybody else goes out to the cafe to dine or to the theater, and I listen to the silence in the dark drawing-room...There is such a cold emptiness in my head. I can't even cry.

10) However, curiously enough, when women--so strong in reality and so sensitive to all charms of love--start to write, they know only one love, torturing, painful, perspicacious, and hopeless.

11) The memory of sun is fading in the heart.
The grass is more sallow.
The wind is blowing early snow flakes
Scarcely, scarcely.

In the narrow canals, water is no longer flowing--
It is frozen.
Here nothing ever happens,--
O, Never!

The willow spread in the empty sky
The bare-boned fan.
Perhaps it is better that I didn't become your wife.

The memory of sun is fading in the heart.
What is this? Darkness?
Maybe! Winter will come
After tonight.

12) My beloved friend abandoned me
At the new moon. Well, so what!
He babbled: "Rope-dancer!
How will you survive until may?"

..........

The orchestra plays cheerful music
And the mouthes are smiling.
But my heart knows, my heart knows,
That the fifth box is empty!

13) Before me there is a road
Crepuscular and sloping.
Still yesterday, my lover
prayed: "Don't forget."
But today, nothing but wind
And the screaming of the shepherds,
The disturbed cedar
At the clear springs.

14) The music sounded in the garden
With such inexpressible sorrow.
The oysters in ice on the plate
Smelt of sea, freshly and sharply.

He said to me "I'm your faithful friend!"
And touched my clothes.
How little similar to embrace
The touch of those hands is.

People stroke cats or birds like that
They look at the shapely horse back rider like that.
Just the laughter in his calm eyes
Under the light golden eye lashes.

And the doleful voice of violins
Sings above the spreading smoke:
"Thank heaven,
You are with your beloved for the first time."

15) The appearance of the ecclesiastical and biblical
motifs was perceived by us not merely as an expansion of
lyrical themes, but also as a development of sijuze, as a
further fate of the heroine.

16) He who had forgiven my sins fell silent.
The lilac dusk puts out the candles,
And the dark stole
Covered my head and shoulders.
Isn't this the same voice: "Damsel, arise."
My heart beats faster and faster.
And through the cloth the touch
Of the hand absent-mindedly crossing.

17) And when we cursed each other
In a white-hot rage,
Both of us still didn't understand,
How small the earth is for two people,
And that the frenzied memory tortures,
The torture of the strong--fiery disease!--
And in the abyssmal night, the heart teaches
To ask: O, where is the friend who's gone?
And when through the waves of incense
The choir thunders, rejoicing and threatening,
Into my soul are looking, sternly and firmly,  
The same inescapable eyes.

18) When the burdocks crackle in the ravine  
And the cluster of the yellowish-red rowanberry droops  
I compose cheerful verse  
About this perishable life, perishable and beautiful.

19) Too sweet is the earthly drink,  
Too dense is the love’s net.  
Let the children read my name  
Sometime in the text book,  
And, let them smile slyly  
After recognizing the sad story....  
Don’t give me love and peace,  
Rather, bestow a bitter fame upon me.

20) The Muse-sister looked into my face,  
Her glance is clear and bright,  
And she took the golden ring,  
The first Spring gift.  
...........

Tomorrow the mirrors will tell me, laughing:  
"Your glance is not clear, not bright"....  
I'll answer quietly: "She took  
The divine gift."

21) After all, we all know without poetry that we must love the good, but in order that our soul is shaken by the good to the point of trepidation, we need poetry. And poetry without technique does not exist.

22) As a result of all this, a vivid image of the main heroine of this lyrical novel emerges before us. The heroine of Avmatova, who links herself with the entire chain of events, scenes, and perceptions, figures as an oxymorone. The lyric sjužet, in whose center she is standing, moves by antitheses, paradoxes, slips away from the psychological formulation, and becomes estranged by the discrepancy of the emotional state. The image becomes mysterious, disturbing...doubled and multiplied.

23) To give a concrete biographical and narrative nature to poetry—this is an artistic device, contrasting with the abstract lyrics of the Symbolists...The face of the poet in poetry is a mask. The less there is grimace on it, the more sharply the contrast is perceived.
24) Of course, a lyric poem is first of all a biography. The novel of love, written in verse, appears in the end (after a series of literary conventions transforming it) as a reflection of a real life story which was tragic.

25) We are all drunkards and harlots here,
How unpleasant it is for us to be together.
Flowers and birds on the walls
Languish for clouds.

You are smoking a black pipe,
How strange the smoke is.
I put on a tight skirt,
To look still more shapely.

The windows are for ever sealed off:
What is there, frost or thunderstorm?
Your eyes resemble
The eyes of a cautious cat.

O, how my heart yearns!
Ain't I waiting for the hour of death?
And she, who is dancing now
Will definitely go to hell.

26) However, in the verses of Axmatova at that time, there was not a singular heroine. They are various and dissimilar...We have now a wild wench of a common origin...The second is an attentive, dreamy-poetic image...Before us appears the third one, again of a common origin but a simpleton...The fourth is a working woman...The fifth is an idler...Now there appears the sixth one, having nothing in common with the previous ones. And the poems stand side by side, showing the "multi-facedness" of the transformed poet.

27) i) Panting, I screamed: "It Was all joke. If you go away, I'll die."
He smiled a calm and terrible smile
And told me: "Don't stand in the wind."

ii) He didn't like when children cried,
He didn't like tea with jam
And women's hysteria.
....And I was his wife.

iii) The youngest son was of the height of a thumb,— How to soothe you,
Sleep, my quiet son, sleep my baby,
I am an evil mother.

iv) I'm not with those who deserted our land
To the enemies for its destruction.
I don't listen to their flattery.
I don't give my songs to them.

28) From the 30's on, the lyric heroine of Axmatova
entirely merges with the author. The "I" is the author
herself. Before a distance was frequently noted between
the I-Author and the I-Lyric heroine.

29) ....Then a woman standing behind me, whose lips were
blue with cold, and who, naturally enough, had never even
heard my name, emerged from that state of torpor common
to us all and, putting her lips close to my ear(there,
everyone spoke in whispers), asked me:
    --And could you describe this?
    And I answered her:
    --I can.

30) There is nothing in a mature artist. Nothing but he
and the world. Neither metaphor, nor epithet, nor all
the wisdom of the centuries, nor skill, nor knowledge.
Just he and the world.

31) The last ray, yellow and heavy,
    Froze in the bouquet of bright dahlias,
    And like in a dream I hear the sound of viola
    And rare cords of harpschord.

32) Dream is a substitution for or the complement of
reality... The poet can also dream what he dreams. The
second dream, interior to the first, fits in to the
latter. A third, a fourth, then others in turn may also
intermingle and finally, neutralise to create a new and
disconcerting reality. Anna Axmatova constantly turns to
dream and reverie.

33) I carry the dark, lasting separation
equally with you.
    Why do you cry? You'd better give me your hand
    And promise to come again in my dream.

34) I knew that I was in your dream,
    So I could not wake up.
The turbid lantern turned blue
And they showed me the road.
----------
And in the crude light of a barren day
You woke up, moaned,
And for the first time
Called my name loudly.

35) But, in any case, the love lyrics of Axmatova in 20's and 30's are, to an incomparably greater degree than before, oriented toward the inner, mysterious, spiritual life. The dreams, being one of her favorite artistic media of comprehending the mysterious, hidden, intimate life of the soul, bear witness to the poet's orientation toward the inner world, toward the self, the secret of secrets of the eternally mysterious human feeling.

36) We often encounter the word "mirror" in the poems of Axmatova...Having placed herself among the personae of the picture, the artist turned out as if to be in two worlds simultaneously. She is outside the picture and at the same time inside it together with the images created by her. She is in the world which really exists and also in the poetic world created by herself. The whole picture became a mirror and everything is represented in it.

37) same as 20;

38) Anna Axmatova looks at herself in the mirror. She is lonely. Perhaps more lonely than another woman. Undoubtedly more lonely than other poets...She looks at herself, because she is seeking for the self, and she is seeking for the self because she has to find herself.

39) The mirror here is more than anything a double, an external being, separated from the internal one, and meeting with it...What is created in front of the mirror is the canonic image of the poetess in a strained and affected pose...The heroine sees herself in the interior, from the side: where there is spoken of the "I," we see "Her,"....

40) Everything passed away like transparent smoke,
Decayed in the abyss of mirrors....
And the noseless violinist has
Already played the tune of the irrevocable.

41) Time is away, and space is away too.
I made everything out through the white night:
And the narcissus in the cutting glass in your table
And that mirror, on which
You could be now reflected, like on clear water.
Time is away, and space is away too....
But even you cannot help me.

42) We know something aweful
   About each other. We are in the circle of hell,
   But, perhaps, this is not even we.

43) The silver willow on the shore
   Touches the clear water of September.
   Having arisen from the past,
   My shadow is silently walking up to me.

44) My shadow is left there and yearns,
    Still living in the same blue room,
    Waiting for guests from town after midnight
    And kissing the enamel figurine.

45) By attributing an exclusively subordinate role to the
    external events, Axmatova transfers the external reality
    into her own world of perception. In Axmatova's poetry,
    only the inner world is registered, and the external
    reality is left out through the perception of the
    heroine; the poet's world is not real, but rather
    experienced...Before us emerges not reality, but its
    perception and realization.

46) Incidentally, communication(between one person and
    another, a person and nature, etc.) is one of the most
    widely used and obvious themes of a lyric. Suffice it to
    remember the lyrics of Fet, Pasternak, and especially,
    Axmatova.

47) Let us note that the multiplicity and to a still
    greater degree, the ambiguity of the characters' status
    are apparently correlated with the difficulty of
    perceiving a poetic text. That is, the
    difficulty(incomprehensibility) of this or that poem(or
    the entire poetic system) is often related to complexity
    and ambiguity of its inter-textual communicative
    structure.(Cf. From this point of view, for instance,
    early and later lyrics of Axmatova.)

48) I wrung my hands under the dark veil...
   "Why are you so pale today?"
   Because I got him drunk
   With painful sorrow.

   How shall I forget? He went out, staggering,
   I ran down, not touching the rail,
   I ran after him to the gate.
Panting, I screamed: "Everything
Was a joke. If you go away, I will die."
He smiled a calm and terrible smile
And told me: "Don't stand in the wind."

49) The orientation toward the laconic energy is
expressed also in the sharp syntactic transition.
Phrases move very rarely in a sequential and coherent
order; links are mostly absent and sharp verbal leaps
are formed to make the poetic speech of Axmatova
convulsive and tense...This condensed and interrupted
speech makes the syntactic movement of the phrases
extraordinarily distinctive and perceptible.

50) Without Title

Amidst the frosty and festive Moscow,
Where flows our parting
And where, perhaps, You'll read
The first edition of farewell songs,
I see the eyes, a bit surprised....
"What? What? Already?....Impossible!"
--Of course!

And the turquoise of the Christmas sky,
And everything around is blessed, sinless.
No, nobody ever parted with
Anyone like that, and this is a reward
For our victory.

51) We know nothing, we, together facing,
Still the sickening clank of keys, the pacing
Of the centuries with their heavy steps.

52) Stars of death stood above us, and Russia,
In her innocence, twisted in pain
Under blood-spattered boots, and the shudder
Of the Black Marias in their train.

53) It was dawn when they took you. I followed,
As a widow walks after the bier.
.......... 

For seventeen long months my pleas,
My cries have called you home.
I've begged the hangman on my knees,
My son, my dread, my own.

54) You, my mocking one, pet of society,
And gay sinner of Tsarskoe Selo:
Had you dreamt, in your sweet notoriety, 
Of the future that lay in store--

55) It was dawn when they took you. I followed, 
As a widow walks after the bier. 
By the icons—a candle, burnt hollow; 
In the bed-room—the children in tears. 
Your lips—cool from the kiss of the icon, 
Still to think—the cold sweat on your brow....
Like the wives of the Streltsy, now I come 
To wail under the Kremlin's gaunt towers.

56) Several broken communicative flows often coexist in 
the verses of Akmatova. The communicative dislocation, 
transference from one addressee of communication to 
another occur: here we also have words, directed toward 
the hero absent in the scenic background, dialogue, 
addressee-less lyrical description, and 
auto-communication. The aesthetic effect of this 
poly-communicativeness is yet to be clarified. In any 
case, it is obvious that by establishing the objects of 
communication and relationships among them, we learn one 
of the most significant structure-rendering factors pf 
poetic system.

57) ....However, the emotional picture of the artistic 
work, sustained in a strictly monologic form, could seem 
monotonous, because of its conciseness and narrow circle 
of themes...But she took one definite measure against the 
danger of cliche: she turned to the help of "dialogue," 
as a special variety of speech. The introduction of 
dialogue into the "narrative," into the "monologue," 
could adorn in diverse colors the emotional canvas of the 
artistic work. Possibilities of emotional effects were 
opened, which were conditioned by the relationship of the 
style of dialogue with the general tone of the narrative 
of the rejoinders in the dialogue, and by its 
construction.

58) Incidentally, in the lyrics of Akmatova, spoken, 
colloquial speech, a fragment of dialogue is always the 
semantic center of the poem, its culmination, something 
that defines the entire meaning of the lyric composition. 
59) The poet speaks. After the dialogue of the eyes, 
there comes that of the voices. The entire poetry of 
Anna Akmatova is dialogue. Soliloquy or conversation. 
With an interlocutor, alive or dead, real or imaginary, 
human or spectral, profile or portrait. Image or double. 
While speaking, she disguises her solitude, as she masks her face and counts her poems.
60) Sometimes dialogue defines the composition of the poem, reducing the "story" to a description of the details of atmosphere, "stage direction." However, in such cases, the alternations of laconic rejoinders, disconnected "conversation" in the true sense of the word often do not exist, but rather there exists an extremely complicated interweaving of elements of monologic and dialogic speech, intersection of several psychological and verbal planes in various directions. In another group of poems, dialogue is also absent at all: the "story" often includes addressees and lyrical appeals, but "somebody else's" words are introduced into the story. And finally, there is a third group of poems, where broken dialogue—with occasional interruption of rejoinders—becomes the center of the artistic aspiration of the poetess. In these poems, dialogue, entering organically into the general composition of the poem and realizing complex aesthetic effects by the forms of its relation to the tone and the content of the "story," is at the same time constructed according to the special outlines inherent to it and has its own semantic peculiarity.

61) Dialogue is built in such a way that the laconic rejoinders do not match with each other in tone. The semantic link between them is disjointed, or rather, the link is contrasting and contradictory from a logical point of view.

62) Until the very last day of her life, Akhmatova's poetry is built in the form of a long monologue. Monologue is an auto-portrait. Monologue opens up the nature of enormous spiritual potential before us... At the same time, the direct dramatized dialogue disappeared. In some other poems, however, there was still quasi-dialogue... Dialogue was forcibly transformed into a monologue. And monologue was firmly condensed to one point of unoccurred conversation... However, even in the poems of purely monologic system, a fine ear can perceive now distant, now barely audible dialogic tone.

63) Do you want to know, how all this was?
It struck three in the dining room,
And when parting, she said
As if with difficulty, holding the rail:
"This is it... Ah, no, I forgot,
I love you, I loved you
Still then!"
"Yes."
64) Everything is like before: in the dining room
Fine snow flakes of blizzard are beating,
And I didn't become different,
And somebody came to me.

I asked: "What do you want?"
He said: "To be with you in the hell."
I laughed: "Ah, perhaps
You will predict misery to both of us."

But he raised his dry hand
And lightly touched the flowers:
"Tell me how people kiss you,
Tell me how you kiss."

And he didn't take off
His dim eyes from my ring.
Not a single muscle of the lucid
And evil face moved.

O, I know: his joy is....
To know tensely and passionately
That he does not need anything,
That I cannot refuse him anything.

65) The heroine constantly experiences solitude; she
seeks for her own reflection in the inanimate
surroundings. She does not accomplish any action which
would relate her to human communication. Incidentally,
this is why the poems of Akmatova include such wide
spread phenomenon as gesture— one of the modifications of
objectified effects. Gesture locks the heroine's action.
It is in essence a medium of action in the uninhabited
world.

66) Generally speaking, it seems to me that hardly any
lyric poet shows such a strong bent for gesture, such
abundance of gestures as Akmatova does. And such a
subtlest penetration into the emotional state through
gestures...The dramatic turning point in attitudes is
often marked by gesture or lyric movement...Akmatovian
lyrics are oriented far more toward a psychological
drama.

67) My heart turned cold helplessly,
   But my gaits were light.
   I put the glove on my right hand
   From the left hand.
It seemed that there were many stairs
But I knew that they were only three!
Autumnal whisper between the maples
Asked: "Die with me!

I am deceived by my gloomy
Transitory, evil fate."
I answered: "My dear, my dear!
So am I. I will die with you...."

This is the song of the last meeting.
I looked at the dark house.
Only in the bedroom were the candles burning
With indifferent, yellow fire.

68) We are facing a lyric in the most full, unconditional sense of the word. Conversation with the self, interior monologue. Dialogue—as we easily guess—is fictitious. The words are not pronounced. The heroine simply wanted to hear them and answer to them.

69) It also happens that the "persona" whom the speech is addressed is called deceptively. It is not persona in the true sense of the word, but a "thing," a name of things, and appeal to it is perceived as an emotional break in the lonely lyrical meditation.

70) Poetry of Axmatova is a complex lyrical novel. We can trace the narrative lines forming it, and we can speak of its composition, the interrelationship of the separate personages...Like in the real novel, contrasting emotions are juxtaposed as if neutralizing each other and creating impressions of peculiar epic lyricism.

71) The accumulation of lyrical emotion by sjuzet—this is the distinctive feature of Axmatova's poetry. We may say that what exists in Axmatova's poems is not individual emotion nor independent lyrical play, but mosaic parts which are entwined and formed into something similar to a long novel. A series of devices alien to ordinary lyric makes this possible. What we have in Axmatova is usually not the very lyric emotion in its separate expression, but narrative or record of what happened...It is not without reason that she hardly ever speaks of her feeling directly: The emotion is conveyed by description of gesture or movement, etc., precisely as it is done in novellas or novels.

72) A series of Axmatova's poems can be called as short stories, novellas; each poem is as usual a novella in
the form of an excerpt represented at the sharpest moment of its development, and consequently it becomes possible to view the entire preceding flow of facts.

73) In my opinion, first of all, Axmatova's lyrics are deviated from the psychological monosemanticity and drastically mixed up in complex and strict relations...Prose disposes of wide space, enormous territories for psychological exploration, for representation of emotional process, layers, vibrations. Axmatova discloses "dialectics of human soul" in minute lyric poems. Sometimes in one stanza, even in one line.

74) In Axmatova, the dense texture of images is transmitted through abyssmal subtext, through unspoken words and mystery of experience. The psychological basis of this lyricism became deeper and deeper as years went by. And Osip Mandel'stam insightfully related Axmatova to the tradition of Russian classical prose on the basis of her early poems.

75) The frequent occasions of clash between two consequential planes, sudden resolution of the conflicts, establishing the falsity of one of the consequences—all these create the illusion of the novel-likeness of the poetic work. Here we are dealing with precisely this quasi-novel-likeness. We must elaborate the widespread notion that in the poetry of Axmatova "elements of novella or novel are included, which were not used during the heydays of the Symbolist lyrics."

76) ....For this, we may establish well-known parallelism in the approach to time in science and art of 20th century, where time acquires special significance as a theme, as a principle of construction, as a category, without which the realization of artistic idea is impossible.

77) Time in literature may be viewed as: 1)reflection of the artist's philosophical notions; 2)continuity(of sjuzet, text, perception, etc); 3)aspect of structural and functional interconnections in the text(temporal connection of events, characters, the author, etc.)

78) perhaps in the new Russian poetry there is no poet except for Annenskij, who perceived time with such precision and acuteness as Axmatova did. I consider time in historical sense as well as in the sense of the mysterious metaphysical process in which man and the world are immersed.
79) When the composition of a poem is conditioned by
devices of unexpected intertwinements and intersections
of symbol-sentences, it becomes possible to utilize for
aesthetic purpose those emotional effects which are
created by putting together the sentences closely related
semantically in various temporal planes.

80) Not only space and its relations but also time takes
shape plastically. The fixation of time and temporal
perspective serves as a background for almost all the
poems of Axmatova.

81) The temporal composition constitutes an essential
distinctive feature of a text, linked with its general
functional-stylistic aspect.

82) And in Axmatova, temporal leaps are frequent, which
make the projection of her verse into one temporal plane
unrealizable... As we know, the majority of Axmatova's
poems are lyrical stories about a frozen moment. And
into this unity of closed moment enter emotionally
selected series of perceived movements and feelings.
Some of them are presented as realized in the flash of
moment and others are presented as accompanying all its
flow. Therefore, this moment itself froze
simultaneously, that is, in the entire structure of the
poem, it is drawn as reproduced in the past and as
"stopped" at the moment of its flow. What happens is not
"unfolding" of action, but "superimposition" of one
perception onto another (usually with emotional comments)
from the two interwoven temporal aspects.

83) The heart is beating evenly, rhythmically.
What are the long years for me!
Under the arch on the Galernaja
Our shadows are forever.

Through the lowered eyelashes
I see, I see, that you are with me,
And in your hand
My unspread fan is forever.

Because we stood side by side
At the blessed moment of miracles,
At the moment when over the Summer Garden
The pink moon was resurrected,—

I don't need expectations
At the repellent windows
And painful meetings.
All the love has meen quenched.
You are free, I am free
Tomorrow is better than yesterday,—
Over the dark-watered Neva,
Under the cold smile
Of Emperor Peter.

84) It's good here: rustle and crackle;
Frost becomes stronger each morning,
In the white flame bends the bush
of the icy dazzling roses.
And on the fluffy, splendid snow
There is a trace of ski, like memory
About you and me together here
In some distant centuries.

85) As opposed to Fet with his predilection for the plane
of present, the lyrics of Axmatova is marked by
inclination for the plane of past. B.M. Žirmunskij wrote
about the collection "White Flock": "The entire book is
written in past, in reminiscences." What is important
and interesting for us in this case is that speaking of
the past events, the poetess very often reminds us of
that it is not simply a story about the past. In other
words, the lyric "I," reminiscing about these or those
events, is all the same present in the present, but the
events she talks about are given again only in the
quality of the "I"'s projection-measurement.

86) The course of time--the title of the last collection
of Axmatova--does not go simply forward but also
backward. The perpetual movement of the pendulum,
forward and backward, animates past, present, future and
blurs their boundaries...Being dislocated, time and space
recede, then before the incantations of the poet...The
distance is abolished. The epochs are rejoined and
merge. Little by little, liberated from their fetters,
the poet marches toward a zone of non-space, toward a
place of non-time, where nothing will separate her from
her beloved.

87) Like on the edge of cloud,
I recall your speech,

And because of my speech
Your nights became lighter than days.

Thus, separated from the earth,
We were walking high, like two stars.
Neither despair nor shame  
Neither present, nor future, nor past.

But alive and awake,  
You hear me calling you.

And that door, which you left ajar,  
I have no strength to slam.

88) Let somebody still rest in the south  
And luxuriate in the heavenly garden.  
It is very northern here—and this year  
I chose Autumn as my friend.

I live as if in a strange house I saw in my dream,  
Where, maybe, I died.  
Where mirrors preserve something strange  
For themselves in the evening languor.

I am walking among the black stocky fir trees,  
There the heather is similar to wind,  
And the dim splinter of the moon shines,  
Like an old, serrated knife.

I brought here the blessed memory  
Of the last non-meeting with you—  
Cold, pure and airy flame  
Of my victory over the fate.

89) I would say that memory became for Axmatova a philosophical magnitude...The poetic formula of memory with its abruptly opened distances is to a certain degree close to eternal categories: life, death, love, I and the world, I and we. With this formula of the high test, Axmatova went far beyond the limit of a direct, visible horizon, characteristic of her work for the first ten years. And, having looked at the unfathomable territory of feelings, she covered a vast space of experiences.

90) The basement of Memory

It is a downright nonsense that I am living in sorrow  
And that recollection is gnawing me.  
I don't visit memory often,  
And she always cheats me.  
When I go down to the basement with a lantern,  
It seems to me that again the deaf crumbling  
Roars already along the narrow stairway.  
The lantern is fuming, I can't go back,  
But I know that I'm going there to the enemy.
And I pray, good gracious, but it is
Dark and quiet there. My holiday is over!
It is already 30 years, since they sent off the ladies,
And that young rascal passed away out of old age....
I'm late. What a misery!
I'm not allowed to be seen anywhere.
But I touch the picture on the walls
And warm myself at the fire place. What a miracle!
Through this mould, this fume and decay
Two green emeralds sparkled.
And the cat mewed. Well, let's go home!

But where is my home and where is my reason?

91) We admit that we couldn't include
That past within the boundary of our life.
And it is almost alien to us,
As it is to our neighbor.
We wouldn't recognize those who died,
And those whom God separated from us
Wonderfully managed without us--and
Even all the better....

92) And here it is not even Bergsonian duree: Axmatova's
time does not simply last: past, present, and future
coexist and are given at the moment of creative
illumination, at the moment of the contact with Eternity,
like something triune. This is close to Leibnitz's
concept of time, or still closer to apocalyptic time:
time will no longer exist.

93) The poet attached a principal significance to "Tale
without a Hero." This work, according to Axmatova's
intention, was to become (and became) a synthesis of the
most significant themes and images of her entire opus in
its own way....Some of the characteristic peculiarities of
her lyrical manner are preserved entirely in "Tale." As
in her love lyrics, she widely uses, for example, her
favorite devices of the unspoken words, obscure
statements and the flexible ellipsis of the whole
narrative....Also she uses the semi-mysterious, nervously
pulsating subtext shot through with personal
associations, which is meant for the reader's emotional
responsiveness and conjecture.

94) Axmatova codifies the authorial level, confusing the
reader by false instructions, pseudo-commentaries, etc.
However, setting riddles without answers, Axmatova makes
special efforts in order that the reader perceives the
semantic multi-layeredness of the tale and tries to
iresolve it. Aymatova is as if afraid that the reader might "understand" the tale too superficially and literally, and imposes upon the reader a task similar to decipherment (the "true" interpretation remains yet unknown)....The "incomprehensibility" of the tale lies first of all in certain compositional complexity: the interruption of the sequential development of the event in time, obscurity of boundaries separating the plane of description of reality from that of recollection, "flexibility" of the heroes (it is not clear how many heroes there are, where one ends and another begins), the impossibility to identify the hero—he is defined through a complex of signs, changing from one situation to another, which makes it difficult to identify him within the confines of the tale.

95) There is still another interesting point: I noticed that the more I explain the tale, the more mysterious and incomprehensible it becomes. As it is clear to everybody, I cannot and do not want (and don't dare) to explain it to the core. All my explanations (for all their elaborateness and inventiveness) entangle the matter: it came from nowhere and went away to nowhere, it explained nothing....

96) The tale is composed of three parts and each part is independent. This made it possible for Aymatova during her life to publish each part separately (the order of the publication is not identical with the order of the parts). All the three parts, among which the second is especially demarked, are so dissimilar that even the rhythmic similarity does not serve as a sufficient unifying factor, and the unifying factors are revealed on a more advanced level. In any case, we may contend that the three parts are written in different keys or possess different colorings (which correspond approximately to the change of tonalities and keys).

97) And the dusky lashes of Antinous
Abruptly rose, and inside—green smoke,
............... 
No, only the pine needles
On a grave, the foaming waves
Ever nearer, ever nearer....
Marche Funebre....
Chopin....

98) Do you want to tell me in secret
That Lethe you've already passed
And you breathe of a different Spring.
...........

If you wish, give it to you as a momento
Like a pure flame in clay
Or a snowdrop in a grave.

99) He will not become my dear husband,
...........

He is late to see me
in the Fontanka Palace on a foggy night,
to drink the New Year's wine.
...........

he will bring me doom.

100) Before the valley of Jehoshaphat,
I have no wish to meet again....
...........

Terrible festival of lifeless
Foliage.
...........

Through the slender windows the stars are unseen
Doom lurks here somewhere, it would seem,
...........

There is no death--everyone knows that,
It is insipid to repeat;
...........

101) And, alas, the Lots of Sodom
Sample the fatal juice,
...........

102) No matter what, retribution draws near--
...........

The Summer Garden smells of
Act five....The phantoms of the hell of Tsushima
Is here too.
...........

With lifeless heart and lifeless eyes,
Was it he who met the commendatore,
103) And the whole funereal city swam
Toward some enigmatic goal,
Along the Neva's current or against it--
Anything to head away from its graves.
...........

And the lilac smelled of the cemetery.
...........

A drum rolled as if before an execution....

104) Who has only a short time to live,
Who is just asking God for death,
And who will be forgotten forever,
...........

And a dragoon cornet with poetry
And senseless death in his breast
...........

105) And, from afar, in answer to this challenge,
A terrible sound resounds--
Gurgling, and moaning, and screaming,
And a vision of crossed arms....

106) And for me that theme
Was like a crushed chrysanthemum
On the floor as a coffin is being carried out.

107) You won't drink up, you'll just take a sip
Of this grief from the very depths--
The news of this our parting.
...........

My shadow is on your walls,
My reflection in your canals,

108) ....and because I ran out of paper,
I am writing this on your rough draft.
...........

No dictation--I can hear it myself.

109) The torches go out, the ceiling descends.
The white (mirrored) hall becomes the author's room again.

110) Best-dressed and tallest of all,
Though she doesn't hear and doesn't see,
Nor does she curse, nor beg, nor breathe,
Is the head of Madame de Lamballe,
And you, a cut-up and beauty,

You came down here from the painting
And the empty frame on the wall
Will wait for you till dawn

111) Can it be
That you really did live once,
And tapped the bricks of public squares
With your bedazzling foot?....

112) That a certain superfluous shade,
Among them "without face or name,"
Interloped....

113) From the year nineteen-forty
As from a tower I look over all.

What are the footsteps of the Iron Mask to me!
I myself am more iron that all of them....

Not for them was this supper prepared,
And it's not for them to walk my path with me.

But how could it happen
That of all of them only I am alive?

114) But I confess that I used
Sympathetic inks,
And there is no other road for me--
I was given this one by a miracle,
And I am in no hurry to part with it.

115) But she repeated firmly:
"I am not that English lady,
And not at all Clara Gazoul,
I have absolutely no genealogy
Except a sunny and fantastic one,
And July itself brought me here.

You and I will still have this feast,
And with my royal kiss
I will reward your evil midnight."
116) And even from here I can hear--
    Isn't this a miracle!--
    The sounds of my own voice:

117) "Tale without a hero" is a literary symphony,
    including a number of voices and instruments, among which
    the authorial voice now disappears, now sounds like an
    ancient choir: the main theme is, however, carried out
    with a strict consistency--this is a discordant motif of
    the disturbed, tragic, sinful, idle, and egoistic epoch,
    to which retribution befell.

118) Why are you all running away together,
    As if each had found a fiancée.
    ...........
    Don't be angry with me, my Dove,
    For touching this goblet too:
    I'm punishing myself, not you.
    ...........
    Where all nine will be glad to see me,
    As you were one time glad.

119) "I assure you that's not new....
    You are a child, senor Casanova...."
    "On St. Isaac's Square at six o'clock sharp."
    "Somehow we'll still manage to get
    Through the dark from here to The Dog."
    "Where are you going from here?"--
    "God knows!"

120) My double goes to the interrogation;
    And then he goes back from interrogation
    ...........
    And even from here I can hear--
    Isn't this a miracle!--
    The sounds of my own voice:
    I paid for you
    In cash....

121) Like the "Leningrad Elegies," the tale presents a
    monologue of the author as the witness and participant of
    the represented events--monologue which is elaborated by
    profound lyrical feeling, emotionally disturbed and at
    the same time dramatically adapted.

122) That's why I can affirm that in "Tale without a
    Hero," there is a most real hero and this hero is again
Time. More correctly, there are two heroes, two times. There are two epoches, diametrically opposed and hostile to each other. Each epoch is remarkable in that it displays the eve of the unusual event.

123) The category of time in the tale deserves a special investigation...Any event--whether it happened in past, happening in present, will happen in future or not happened, will not happen in general--has a place on the temporal axis created by the author...Then this temporal axis should be investigated not outside the tale as some sort of commentary but within it as an element of compositional structure.

124) And he finds what he waited for. The shapely mask
    On the return "Journey from Damascus"
    Returned home....Not alone!
    ..........

    It smells of perfume on the landing,
    And a dragoon cornet with poetry
    And senseless death in his breast
    Will ring, if he is brave enough....

125) I have lit the cherished candles,
    To make the evening shine,
    ..........

    And I hear a protracted ring at the door,
    And I feel a clammy cold,
    ..........

    Tomorrow morning will wake me up,
    And no one will condemn me,

126) And all the mirrors reflect
    A man who has not come
    And could not penetrate this hall.
    He's no better than others, nor worse,
    But he breathes not of Lethe's chill,

127) As in the past the future ripens,
    So in the future the past decays.

128) From the year nineteen-forty
    As from a tower I look over all,
    ..........

    Like a shadow on the threshold,
Thus, the time of action in the tale is doubled. It seems that time disappears as in the book of one of the biblical prophets; at some moment the tale stops, it is frozen and as if suspended in some strange, spectral, alien territory--beyond time and space.
BIBLIOGRAPHY

PRIMARY SOURCES


Vinogradov, Viktor. O poëzii A. Axmatovoj (Stilističeskie nabroski). Leningrad, 1925.

SECONDARY SOURCES


Èjxenbaum, B. "Roman-lirika." Vestnik literatury, No. 6-7 (1921), pp. 8-9.


---------, "Russian Poets in Search of a Poetics." Comparative Literature, 4 (1952), 54-74.


Verheul, k. "Public Themes in the Poetry of Anna
Achmatova." Russian Literature, 1 (1971), pp. 73-112.


