REVERSE SATISFACTION OF AESTHETIC SIGNALS
IN PUŠKIN'S *EGYPTIAN NIGHTS*

Paul M.Waszink

I n this article we will discuss the question some features of an incomplete text. Regarding a literary text as a secondary modelling system in Lotman's sense, we will see that the more the incomplete character of a literary text is stylized, the less it will bear a mere accidental character. This manifests itself if we have to do with a text containing another text which is embedded into it. If such an embedded text is in its turn fragmentary, this quality will seem to be the result of a literary procedure. Puškin's story *Egipetskie noči (Egyptian Nights)* is illustrative in so far as the literary procedure used for its realization is that of duplication. Before discussing this problem in somewhat more detail, we should pay more attention to the implications of Lotman's distinction between primary and secondary modelling systems.

In the latter's view, the first indicate all sign-systems (which presuppose an addresser and an addressee), and which are constructed as a language-system in its ideal form. Secondary systems are constructed after the model of primary systems; in them one or more aspects of an ideal language-system is realized. They can, in their turn, be refined. For instance, in a language-system a clear language-code should be identifiable (this is the case in natural and scientific language-systems). In its turn a text is a refined sign-system because it should be written in a language the code of which is known to the perceivers. Similarly art is a sign-system as it presupposes a general code identifiable to viewers. A work of art is in its turn a refined system of signs containing a code of its own (Lotman 1981: 23). Lotman's system is based on the idea that there exist hierarchical relationships between the constituent parts of primary and secondary modelling systems. He demonstrates that the more of these parts are realized the more concrete a whole system becomes. The hierarchical

relationship existing between a concrete language and a text written in that language manifests itself in so far as a mere language-code which is known but which is not realized in any text, is unthinkable. To put it bluntly, an ideal language system in its quality of a primary-modelling system does not exist at all. On the other hand, oral or verbal texts the language-code of which is unknown, do exist. It is their fate to remain unidentified as long as their code remains unriddled.

Following Lotman's reasoning consistently one is, in one's quest for an ideal primary-modelling system, confronted with the problem concerning the difference of being *versus* non-being. Aristotle, in his *Metaphysics*, has given a key for the solution of this problem by his distinction between 'the unreal' and the 'real.' He uses the qualifications 'potency' (*dunamis*) versus 'energy' (*energeia*), or 'entelechy' (*entelecheia*). Between these, in his view, the 'possible' (*dunaton*) functions as the intermediary as it may either indicate something which is real and something which is not (*Met.* 1050 b 12ff. and 1051 a 6-17). This intermediary form is rooted in 'matter' (*hulè*) (*Met.* 1032 a 20ff., 1039 b 29f.). The essence of 'matter' consists in the fact that it is completely open, i. e. it may be realized in all directions (*Met.* 1032 a 20ff.). The Aristotelian concept of the unreal ('potency') *versus* the real ('energy'), with the 'possible' as their intermediary has been realized in language-systems in elements with a signalling, or deictic, function and those without one. By the first we should understand interrogative and negative statements as well as statements with an illocutionary force. The definition of the latter is based on the assumption that the meaning of language-utterances is less important than the actions which their producer or perceiver carry out in the process of producing or perceiving respectively. All statements with a signalling, or deictic, function presuppose an answer to a question which is implicit to them. Consequently, they condition the continuation of the text in which thy occur.

The hierarchical character of the relation between statements with a deictic function and without one is evident as soon as it becomes clear that the actions which the first elicit from the perceiver have been carried out. At that moment the statement has passed from a statement with an illocutionary force, or, generally, with a deictic function, into one without it. The answers to such statements emit a clear signal that the addressee has carried out one or more actions, thus enabling the continuation of the linguistic text. Whether this is continued, and, if so, how it looks like, is conditioned by the character of the addressee's reaction.

In the difference between statements with and without a deictic function the Aristotelian difference between the 'unreal' and the 'real' manifests itself. Thus the first kind of statements has a range of merely potential meanings which have not yet been realized. Whereas statements with a deictic function bear an ideal i. e. potential, character, the character of sentences without that function is more concrete. Reference should be made, in this regard, to Aristotle's observation that the 'possible' (*dunaton*) is maximally open, and may be realized in all directions. Summarizing, the hierarchical relationship existing between statements with and without a deictic function is of the same kind as that which exists between secondary and primary modelling systems because both can be said to be based on Aristotle's definition of the 'possible' (*dunaton*) which serves as an intermediary between 'potency' and 'energy'. 'Possible' elements in a literary work manifest themselves in open or white spaces. Spatially determined elements in a literary texts (such as drawings) and temporally-determined ones in paintings (such as letters and words) bring about what has been called a secondary illusion.[1] The potential character of open spaces in a text and letters in a painting and a sculpture results in the fact that more light is thrown on their producer or perceiver and that, consequently, a contact is established between them and the representation. Thus a coincidence takes place in it of the perceiver's standpoint with that of the modelled world. The procedure of inserting white spaces in a text, when applied consistently, leads to a total absence of verbal signs.[2]

This definition also gives a key for Aristotle's interpretation of a literary work as such. His conception of a literary work is based on the idea that an author or artist should introduce elements with a mimetic character as much as possible, avoiding those with a narrative, or signalling, function (*Poet.* 60a 5-11). Homer is illustrative in this regard as he approaches the epic as a dramatist rather than as a narrator.[3] Also Paul Valéry's conception of the work of art reflects Aristo-

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[1] This phenomenon was already studied in the eighteenth century by Lessing as well as F. Hemsterhuis. See the latter's *Lettre sur la sculpture a Monsieur De Smeth, ancien Prés. de la Ville d'Amsterdam*, Amsterdam. See also J. Kestner 1981.

[2] Elsewhere I discussed in somwhat more detail the implications of the procedure by which signs originating from a system obeying a code different from the standard code of the work under discussion are inserted in that work (see Waszink 1994).

[3] In other words, for him a poet is 'maker' (*poein*) in the process of artistic imita-

tle's viewpoint that in a literary work its creator should give a mere initial signal after which the work progresses on its own. In his observations concerning what he calls the aesthetic infinite Valéry develops the idea that the satisfaction of aesthetic stimuli takes place in a manner contrary to that of ordinary, purely physical stimuli. For instance, hunger and thirst can be satisfied in the ordinary way if the recipient just takes food and drink. However, in aesthetic matters, a recipient does not merely want to quench his aesthetic thirst. He also wants to *continue* the feeling that he enjoys the taste of the food. He will, consequently, postpone the moment of the complete satiation of his hunger as long as possible. In aesthetic matters, otherwise than in ordinary ones, the relationship between a stimulus originating from a need and its satisfaction mutually condition each other. Thus from the satisfaction of an aesthetic need a different need will originate. This, in its turn, wants to be satisfied. As soon it is another stimulus will arise and so on (Valéry 1964: 81). Valéry's idea of beauty as being marked by a complete absence of either iconic or verbal signs can be said to be based on Aristotle's distinction between 'potence' (*dunamis*) and 'energy' (*energeia*), with the 'possible' (*dunaton*) serving as their intermediary. Reference should be made to the latter's observation that an artist or writer should represent his represented figures as both similar to and greater than living people (*Poet.* 48a 4-7). This implies that any perceiver should, in order to get an insight in the development of a literary figure firstly receive a stimulus originating from the fact that he *recognizes* him or her. This stimulus, however, does not stand alone because it also conditions the continuation of the text and how it looks like if it is continued. Thus the Aristotelian *dunaton*, enabling the cognition by the perceiver of *new* elements in a text, manifests itself.

A parallel should be drawn between the earlier-mentioned deictic statements and primitive narrative genres such as the epos (particularly in Aristotle's conception) on the one hand, and Valéry's idea of the satisfaction of aesthetic stimuli on the other. It was seen that in a primary modelling system like a language deictic statements are mar-

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tion (*mimèsis*) rather than a man who merely occupies himself with speech (*legein*). Consequently, he argues that a poet should merely put his figures on the stage, suggesting that they should be able to develop *themselves* within the framework of the plot, on their own will. See also G. Else Else, *Aristotle's Poetics: the Argument*, Boston 1956. ·

ked by a maximal openness and that no clear meaning is expressed in
them. This maximal openness implies a certain negative character. Ac-
cordingly, in a secondary modelling system like literature, the Rus-
sian folk-epos is illustrative of a genre in which, due to its primitive
character, elements with a deictic function play a a key role. These
derive their function from their open, or negative character. By the
use of elements with a deictic function a reciter brings about a double
effect. On the one hand he one-sidedly introduces an inventory of the
world by evoking constituent parts of reality. On the other hand, by
denying them or leaving their realization undecided he enables *other*
parts of reality to realize themselves. By using this procedure the
reciter guarantees his own as well as the perceiver's freedom. Thus
the motif 'freedom' is evidently associated with that of 'negation'.
Reference should again be made to Homer who introduces a narra-
tive, developing itself according to an *invariable* plot (*muthos*), as
well as literary figures, but then withdraws himself from the scene
(see note 3). The same freedom is expressed in Valery's image of a
hungry person who may either immediately eat his food neglecting its
excellent taste by so doing, or forgetting the *unpleasant* feeling of
hunger for a moment in order to enjoy the food better. Actually the
feeling of joy of a person who enjoys the taste of food is maximal at
the beginning of his meal, i. e. when he has *not* eaten anything at all
as yet. At that moment the food still has a maximally signalling
function. Valéry has continued his idea of a hungry person whose
taste of food is maximal at the beginning of a meal in his conception
of beauty. Man experiences this in its optimal form at the moment he
still expects it. Valéry's idea of beauty implies that it is maximal in a
work with a fragmentary character.

What has all this to do with Puškin? Essentially a fragmentary
character is distinctive of many works written during the period of
Romanticism.[4] In Russia this is the period from about 1820 to about
1850. Puškin is a typically transitional figure in Russian literature as
his works show neoclassical as well as romantic traits. Their often

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[4] See, in this regard, M. A. Abrams, *The Mirror and the Lamp: Romantic Theory
and the Critical Tradition*, 1958, 134 ff. This fragmentary character often manifests
itself in its concrete form in the phenomenon of silence, which is applied as a literary
procedure (see, for instance, Puskin's letter to Vjazemskij of February 6, 1823 in
which he defends its use in *The Prisoner of the Caucasus*, as well as the verses *Osen'* of
1833).

fragmentary character bears testimony to the latter. Thus in the neo-classical conception a work of art should always be complete. In this regard in the latter a clear distinction is made between a producer and a perceiver. As far as the creative process was considered, the artist was considered absolutely superior to the perceiver (Blagoy 1982: 169). In the romanticists conception, however, this clear border-line is blurred. A romantic work of art is suggested to have come about as a result of a free interaction between a producer and a perceiver. Consequently, in the romantic conception, the more possibilities a work of art offers its perceivers to realize it according to his own wishes, the more it is ideal. In other words, an ideally romantic work is fragmentary.[5]

Puškin's works are exemplary in this regard. It may occur that their fragmentary character is introduced as a literary procedure. Thus the author may intentionally leave a reader free to fill an open space in a work in accordance with his own wishes. For instance, he may simply leave his work, allegedly not knowing its ending. In *Evgenij Onegin* the author uses different procedures to leave something he cannot say (Blagoy 1982: 174). First of all we are confronted there with many 'empty stanzas' bearing a number only. Furthermore, it contains unfinished text parts, as well as all kinds of word-plays, enabling the author to 'escape' from the work, in the above-mentioned way.[6] The suggestion of the fragmentary character of Evgenij Onegin is raised in degrees. Originally it was the author's intention to

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[5] For the ideal character of the fragment in the romantic conception as being both complete and unfinished, see C. Rosen, H. Zerner, *Romanticism and Realism. The mythology of Nineteenth-Century Art.* New York 1984, 25.

[6] The famous concluding-lines are, of course, illustrative. Thus in the forty-eighth stanza of the last section the writer says: "И здесь героя моего / В минуту злую для него, / Читатель, мы теперь оставим / Надолго, навсегда" ("And here my hero/ At an unkind minute for him,/ Reader, we shall now leave/ For long, for ever"; the translation is taken from Pushkin 1975: 307. This sudden farewell, in the middle of the text, is confirmed, in the concluding lines of the last stanza, by the image of a guest, leaving the feast of life: "Блажен кто праздник жизни рано / Оставил, не допив до дна / Бокала полного вина./ Кто не дочел ее романа/ И вдруг умел расстаться с ним, / Как я с Онегиным моим" ("Blest who life's banquet early/ Left, having not drained to the bottom/ The goblet full of wine;/ Who did not read life's novel to the end/ And all at once could part with it/ As I with my Onegin", *idem*, 309) From this image this passage derives a signalling function. Therefore, it gives the reader a send off from the text.

let his hero depart from the capital for a long journey after his last meeting with the heroine.[7] In other words, *Evgenij Onegin* ends, via several intermediate stages in the form of all kinds of all kinds of fragmentary parts and text-variants.[8]

We shall not discuss in detail the intricate problem here how Puškin's *Egyptian Nights* came about. The essential question can be raised why the definite version of the poem, dealing with Cleopatra had to wait ten years before it appeared and, when it did, why it was published within the framework of an incomplete prose text![9] We will follow the historical reconstruction of its development, which is given in Bondi (1931: 212). The latter distinguishes the following stages:

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[7] Summarizing, whereas the projected work as a whole shows the following sequence of chapters: 1-7, [Journey of Onegin], 9, [10], the realized work, however, shows the sequence 1-8, [9: Journey of Onegin], [10]. Summarizing, there are 8 devised and realized chapters, one merely devised chapter 10, and a partly realized, merely potential, chapter 9, although that chapter is not officially indicated as such. (See also Puškin 1937: t. 6, 661) In other words, whereas it is difficult to identify the exact content and nature of the chapters 8 and 9, there is a clearly projected chapter 10. This was devised in 1829, and burnt by the author in 1830. It was the author's intention that Onegin should either perish in the Caucasus, or turn up among the Decembrists (Puškin 1957: t. 5, 9-213, and 581-608; here: 604) Originally the 'Journey of Onegin' had been published independently, as an apart section, to be included in section 7, with information about its origin and a motivation of the strange succession of the sections [see Pushkin. 1975: vol. IV (Fragments of Onegin's Journey), as well as vol. III (Comm. on Chapters Six to Eight, 'Onegin's Journey' and Chapter Ten). As an autonomous eighth section it was reworked by the poet at Boldino in the autumn of 1830 (Puškin 1957: t. 5, 9-213; 581-608; here: 603) The present section 8 would have to be reworked and become section 9 (*idem*, 603).

[8] The fact that the censor forbade the printing of the 'Journey' did not prevent the author from realizing his work as a successful whole (Blagoy 1982). This fact endorses the idea that a decision not to realize a text, either originating from an author or from an external source, may be well used as an artistic procedure. From this fact the effect of the tsarist negative censorship could be explained as far as it did not prevent one of the greatest literatures, i.e. Russian nineteenth-century literature, to come about.

[9] The idea to realize the theme of Cleopatra in prose-form was brought up for the first time by the author in his fragmentary text entitled Повесть из римской жизни; begun in 1833. it contains translations of verses by Horace, Anacreon and Petronius. Apparently already then the poet felt that the poetical texts would be framed by a prose-text with a clear sujet. (see Kazanovič 1934: 187-204; here: 188).

1. the first edition of the poem *Kleopatra*, inserted into it, was written in 1824;

2. this edition was reworked in 1827;

3. the author decided to insert the poem into a prose-text, dealing with a contemporary subject, probably in 1835. This resulted in the incomplete short-story Мы проводили вечер на даче у княгини Д (*We passed the evening at Princess' D's dača*). In that story the theme of Cleopatra was realized in the form of a poem. The original, first as well as second editions of the poem were considerably reworked for that goal. The author motivated his need to insert a poem with this theme into a prose text dealing with a contemporary topic by the introduction of the historical figures of Napoleon and Madame De Staël allegedly discussing the question who should be considered the greatest woman on earth and why (Bondi 1931: 203).

4. Having decided not to complete the above-mentioned story, the author decided to write a new story, entitled *Egyptian Nights*. In this story the poem would have to be recited by an Italian improviser. Which version of the poem would be inserted, is unknown, as the story ends with the words: Импровизация началась (386) ('The improvisation had begun'). Summarizing, the gap between the time at which the prose-text and that at which the poem takes place is bridged by one of those foreign improvisers who often visited Moscow and St. Petersburg in the beginning-years of the nineteenth century (see Kazanovič 1934: 190; Gofman 1935: 13).

5. For the description of the protagonist Čarskij, in the first section of the story, the author made use of a fragment, written in 1830, entitled Отрывок (*Fragment*). This begins with the words: Несмотря на великие примущества... It contains a description of the place of a poet in the world, and has a highly autobiographical character (Bondi 1931: 203). Moreover, the story also includes the text of the improvisation which the improviser recites for Čarskij. This is a reworked version of two stanzas of an incomplete poem, written in 1832-33, called, after the name of its protagonist, Eżerskij (Bondi 1931: 193).[10] We will just take for granted that the story is incomplete, and, consequently, bears that fragmentary character which is illustrative of a romantic literary work.

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[10] Puškin corrected and adapted the stanza for *Egyptian Nights*. For the draft of these adapted texts, see Puškin 1940: 854-857.

Duplication is an effective procedure to give a text a romantic character as it suggests that a text is complete even when it seems to be fragmentary (Rževskij 1976: 133)! Thus, incomplete as the text is, the introduction in it of a completely new heroine (Cleopatra), prolongs and illustrates the prose-text; it completes the text as a whole (Rževskij 1976: 133).[11] Thus it is evident that the procedure of duplication when applied consistently, ultimately leads to a moment at which the reading-process is concluded. At the same time Valéry's earlier-mentioned observation concerning the reverse satisfaction of aesthetic signals is confirmed by the fact that the poetic text dealing with Cleopatra, is left incomplete. In other words, this feature gives the text the quality of a question, which must be answered. This answer, however, is not given because we are at the end of the text.

The heading *Egipetskie noči* bears a highly potential (or signalling) character. Thus it evokes in the reader an expectation as to the content of the story. This expectation may either be confirmed or not. The heading postpones the moment the text is fully identified in the manner outlined by Valéry. Thus the first sentences of the first chapter do not show any links with the heading. Reference must again be made to the Aristotelian concept of a work of art as coming about as a result of a combination of processes of recognition and cognition. Thus the sense of the words 'Egyptian Nights is 'kept removed' from the reader as long as possible. Thus only at the end of the story, where we are confronted with the poem embedded into it, the content of the title re-appears, in the poem's heading: *Cleopatra e i suoi amanti*. In other words, during the progress of the narrative the sense of the heading becomes clear. Thus the suggestion is raised of a circle which more and more closes itself in the course of the reading-process until finally the poem and the story's heading meet. The parallel with deictic statements presents itself again. In the same way as these leave a perceiver free to carry out the action implied by the statement, a heading in a literary text which bears no semantic links with the following text-parts leaves a reader free to realize the following text according to the expectation evoked by the heading.

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[11] As far as the poem on Cleopatra continues and illustrates the prose-text, Tynjanov's observations concerning illustrations in a verbal text are essential, in so far as these should be unrelated to the text-fragments, i. e prolong them rather than that they should repeat them. This problem has been discussed in more detail in Waszink 1994.

The process of postponing the moment of aesthetic recognition which should precede that of cognition is particularly realized by means of duplication. Generally speaking all motifs are presented as being split up. The procedure of negation plays a key role in this regard. Reference should again be made to the essence of the first chapter which lies in the fact that, for the time being, the reader's expectation evoked by the heading is *not* honoured. For instance, the heading evokes the suggestion of a Southern setting whereas the story takes place in a Northern capital. Then, in the story a poem appears. In other words, the phenomenon of duplication is realized by the opposite genres of prose and poetry. The introduction of poetry into the prose-text is motivated as at its beginning a poet is operative. The realization of this motif is postponed as the latter is *not* the maker of the poem on Cleopatra which concludes the text. The realization of opposite motifs is continued as Čarskij presents himself as a normal person whereas the public continuously claims its rights over him as a poet. Čarskij in other words, is regarded by the public as a poet in the Horatian sense as he serves, in their view, for their profit and delight (372). Čarskij himself covers all symptoms from which his poetical activities might become manifest. Thus he passes himself off as a dandy, his study is always well-cleaned and so on. The postponement of the image of a poet arising in this way, is in its turn confirmed by the fact that the public *nevertheless* goes on asking him for more information about his poetical activities: 'Didn't you write something new?' it asks (373).[12]

Particular attention should be paid to the language-codes as they also manifest how in the procedure of duplication the opposition 'positive'/'negative' plays a key-role. Firstly the motif of 'the poet' realized as it is in the improviser is linked with that of a double language-code. Thus as soon as the improviser is introduced the language is shifted from Russian to French and then to Italian. This shift of language codes takes place in an intricate manner. Thus the report of Čarskij's confrontation with the Italian runs as follows:

— Что Вам надобно? спросил его Чарский на французском языке [to which the latter answers] – Signor, – отвечал иностранец с низкими поклонами, — Lei voglia perdonarmi se... (374).

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[12] The texts are taken from Puškin 1958, the translation from Pushkin 1983. When no page-numbers are mentioned behind the latter, the translations are mine as I considered the translations of those passages not literal enough.

"What do you want?" Charskii asked him *in French.* 'Signor', answered the foreigner with low bows, "Iei voglia perdonarmi se..." (251 - Italics mine, PMW)

It is illustrative that the narrator does not bring about a complete shift of the attention from an external to an internal viewpoint. The signalling function of the non-Russian text-parts resides in the fact that they alternate with text-parts in which the original code (Russian) is restored. Thus Čarskij's question is reported, by the external narrator, to be posed in French, but the text of that question itself is rendered in the narrator's norm-language, i. e. Russian. Something similar occurs in the following passage where the improviser who is supposed to speak Italian only, informs Čarskij as follows:

Я неаполитанский художник, — говорил незнакомый, — обстоятельства принудили меня оставить отечество (375).

"I am a Neapolitan artist", said the stranger, "Circumstances forced me to leave my country" (251).

Here again the words by the artist who is supposed to speak Italian only, are nevertheless rendered in Russian. Also in this passage it is evident that the alternation of Italian and Russian as language codes is used as a literary procedure. From this alternation the passages written in Russian and Italian derive their signalling function. Thus the introduction of Italian as a language-code does not imply that from that moment in the text on Italian will be the norm-language. Firstly in the above-mentioned passage the improviser is introduced as consistently speaking Italian only. Then, however, the situation changes; see his words to Čarskij in which he implores his help:

Надеюсь, сигнор, что вы сделаете дружеское вспоможение своему собрату...'Вы ошибаетесь, сигнор, прервал его Чарский (375).

"I hope *signor,* that you'll do a brotherly favour to your fellow-artist..." (251) "You are mistaken, *signor*", Charskii interrupted him (252).

Thus the use of the word 'signor' indicates that the speaker is an Italian. However, in the progress of the text use is again made of Russian. Consequently, it is suggested that either the Italian speaks Russian, or that he speaks Italian only, which is, however, translated by the narrator on behalf of his readers. Similarly Čarskij is presented as speaking both Italian and Russian. His speech is, in its turn, rendered in Russian apparently on behalf of the same readers. In other words, here the phenomenon is seen at work that the viewpoint shifts from an external perceiver (speaking Russian) to an internal one who

speaks and understands Italian in the same way as the improviser does.

The play with the language-codes is made more complicated at the end of the story. This moment is anticipated at the end of section 1, when Čarskij has convinced the improviser to appear before the St. Petersburg high society. Originally the latter resists to do so under the pretext that his performance will hardly be acceptable for his audience because its members do not master the Italian language. But Čarskij thinks that they will come anyhow as they will regard the appearance of the Italian as a social event. At the beginning of the evening itself described in section 3, the improviser reads out the subjects which have been set to him. The first of these is is presented in its Russian version first, followed by its Italian one: Семейство Ченчи (La famiglia dei Cenci). The following ones are given in Italian only: *L'ultimo giorno di Pompei*, *Cleopatra e i suoi amanti*, *La primavera veduta da una prigione* and *Il trionfo di Tasso* (384). These subjects should, in other words, be considered as being translated for the improviser from Russian into his vernacular as the reader has been informed beforehand that the audience does not speak Italian. The man turns to a pretty girl in the audience asking her to make a choice from these subjects; she reads aloud the paper on which the subject 'Cleopatra' has been written. The pretty girl, apparently, speaks Italian, as she understands what the improviser wants from her. But not only *she* understands him. Thus, the Italian asks the audience to specify which lover is meant, adding the words: 'perché la grande regina n'aveva molto..' (386). The gentlemen react to these words with a thundering laughter; in other words, they apparently do understand Italian very well. Summarizing, in the last section the subtle play with language codes is elaborated consistently. This play is used as an effective means to postpone the moment at which the perceiver identifies the aesthetic stimulus. Thus each time the perceiver seems to have found the code for its correct interpretation it appears to have run away under his fingers. Consequently, it is evident how in the intricate play with language-codes the opposition 'positive' *versus* 'negative' is associated with that of 'norm-language' *versus* 'deviant language' (not *this*, but *that* language).

The phenomenon of duplication also manifests itself in the realization of the theme of 'inspiration'. The procedure of duplication is particularly used to demonstrate the processes of recognition and cognition taking place in the producer and the perceiver. Puškin rejects the idea that by inspiration a work of art can be created which is a

mere result of imitation of an existant model. If this were the case it would imply that the new work would bear just one code, i. e. the code of the original work.[13] The processes of recognition and cognition combined as they are in the motif of 'inspiration' is described as follows at the morning the improviser is introduced. Then Čarskij is presented as follows:

> Однажды утром Чарский чувствовал то благодатное расположение духа, когда мечтания явственно рисуются перед вами и вы обретаете живые, неожиданные слова для воплощения видений ваших, когда стихи легко ложатся под перо ваше и звучные рифмы бегут навстречу стройной мысли. Чарский погружен был душою в сладостное забвение... и свет, и мнения света, и его собственные причуды для него не существовали. Он писал стихи (373).

One morning Charskii felt he was in that exuberant state of mind when fantasies arise before you in clear outline, when you find *vivid*, unexpected *words* in which to incarnate your visions, when verses *readily lie down* under your pen, and when resonant rhymes *run up* to meet well-ordered thoughts. His spirit was immersed in sweet *oblivion*... The

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[13] For instance, in his review *O zapiskach Sansona*, written at the occasion of the publication of Sanson's *Mémoires pour servir à l'histoire de la Révolution Française* he criticizes Victor Hugo, who, in his novel *Le dernier jour d'un condamné*, from 1829, had sought inspiration in the memoirs of the French police-spy Vidocq. In other words, by his criticism he stressed the danger of merely copying the writings of this man. See Puškin 1958: t. 7, 104-106; here: 105, as well as 674. Puškin particularly loathed Vidocq as the latter reminded him of the Russian second-rate writer and police-spy F. F. Bulgarin. See in this regard his *O zapiskach Vidoka* in Puškin 1958: t. 7, 147-148, and, in part. the note on 697. Rather should, in Puškin's view, the creative moment, evoked by a process of cognition taking place in the perceiver, clearly manifest itself in an artistic work. This should be evident from the fact that the work is the result of inspiration which can be identified by a *few* initiated persons only, i. e. not just *recognized* by *all* people. See his verse-lines entitled Žukovskomu dating from 1818: "Когда сменяются виденья / Перед тобой в волшебной мгле / И быстрый холод вдохновенья / Власы подъемлет на челе, - / Ты прав, творишь ты для немногих, / Не для завистливых судей, / Не для сбирателей убогих / Чужих суждений и вестей / Но для друзей таланта строгих / Священной истины друзей" ('When visions succeed each other/ Before you in an enchanting haze/ And the swift cold of *inspiration*/ Will make your hairs stand on end./ You are right; you are creating for *just a few./* Not for envious criticasters./ Not for the wretched collectors/ Of others' criticisms and gossip./ But for the strict friends of talent./ The friends of sacred truth (Puškin 1956: I, 336).

world, the opinions of the world and his own conceits *did not exist* for him. He was writing verses (250).

Thus the fact that inspiration is conditioned by the recognition of a model from reality is expressed by the language-code which the thoughts of the poet should obey. The latter finds *words* (which are, by definition, recognizable to all people) to express his thoughts. But these are subject to his own, strictly personal, will. The motif of 'obeying' is also expressed by the idea that the words 'readily lay down under the pen'. The process of cognition of *new* ideas, evoked by the words, on the other hand, is emphasized as the thoughts (recognizable as they are because they are expressed in *generally* understandable words), are identified by the perceiver as original, *living* organisms. This appears from the use of the words 'vivid' and 'unexpected'. The motif 'oblivion', as being distinctive of them, should also be mentioned in this regard, because the theme 'inspiration' is often associated with it. The motif 'oblivion' is also expressed by the words 'did not exist'. Generally speaking the suggestion that the ordinary world does not exist is presented as being distinctive of a poet. Summarizing, the motif of 'oblivion' postpones the correct identification of the text in the manner explained by Valéry. Thus in the above-mentioned passage it is evident that a poetic text is supposed to come about as a result of a process in which a question is raised which evokes a stimulus in a perceiver ("you"). It was seen that the answer to this question and the question itself in their turn mutually condition each other. In the above-mentioned example the signalling function of the question and the answer is evident as the stimulus evoked by the moment of inspiration ends in a void which is expressed by the motif of 'oblivion'. This void, in its turn, transforms itself in the result of a *creative* activity: 'He wrote *verses*'. The realization of the theme of 'inspiration' as being the result of processes of recognition and cognition is elaborated in the person of the improviser. The motif of 'oblivion', i. e. non-existence plays an important role within the text of the improvisation too. The figure of the poet is introduced there as being blind, not perceiving anything of the world surrounding him:

Поэт идет — открыты вежды,
Но он не видит никого (379)

The poet walks; his lids are open,
But he does *not* see *anybody*

And later on, ordinary man says to him:

На стройный мир ты смотришь смутно
Your view of the *orderly* world is *blurred*.

The motif "oblivion" also shatters the border of this text, thus entering that of the embedding prose-text:

Итальянец умолк... Чарский молчал, изумленный и растроганный (380).

The Italian grew *silent*... Čarskij was *silent*, astonished and moved.

The motif of 'oblivion' is also realized in that of 'freedom', expressed in the prose-text in which the improvisation is embedded:

Вот они, вольно переданные одним из наших приятелей со слов, сохранившихся в памяти Чарского (379).

Here they [i.e. the verses of the improviser] follow, – a *free* translation by a friend of what Charskii could *recall* (254).

The motif 'freedom' is, of course, opposed to that of 'constraint'. See the improviser's reaction to the theme which is set to him:

Глаза итальянца засверкали, он взял несколько аккордов, гордо поднял голову и пылкие строфы, выражение мгновенного чувства, стройно излетели из уст его (379).

The Italian's eyes flashed, he played a few chords, proudly raised his head, and *ardent, passionate* stanzas, the expression of a *momentary* feeling, rose from his lips (254).

The use of the word 'orderly' is again illustrative; see the image of the verses Čarskij writes which are presented as running-up to meet 'well-ordered thoughts'. In the latter passage the motif of 'freedom' is realized by that of 'life', and 'running-up', that of 'constraint' — by that of 'orderliness'. In this passage, however, that of 'freedom' is realized in the image of 'fire' (see the words 'flashed', 'ardent', 'passionate'). Summarizing, the improvisation results from a combination of the opposed processes of recognition and cognition, realized by the motifs of 'freedom' and 'constraint.' The motif 'inspiration' is again illustrative in this regard; see the theme, set by Čarskij to the improviser: 'A poet chooses the subjects of his songs himself; the crowd has no right to command his inspiration' (254). On the one hand inspiration is presented here as being the result of a poet's own *free* choice. However, exactly the fact that in this passage this theme is set by a force external to the improviser contradicts its content. In other words, an intricate play of the motif of 'inspiration' as being

the result of a combination of the processes of cognition and recognition takes place. The processes are presented as mutually conditioning each other. Thus on the one hand Čarskij sets the theme to the improviser in his quality of an external force but this quality contradicts the other aspect of his personality as he is a *poet* too. See the discussion on the nature of inspiration following the improvisation:

Как! Чужая мысль чуть коснулась вашего слуха и уже стала вашею собственною, как будто вы с нею носились, лелеяли, развивали ее беспрестанно (380).

How can it be, [Čarskij wonders] that someone else's idea, which has only just reached your ear, immediately became your own property, as if you had carried, fostered, and nurtured it continuously?

The Italian's answer is:

Всякий талант неизъясним. Каким образом Ваятель в куске каррарского мрамора видит сокрытого Юпитера и выводит его на свет, резцом и молотом раздробляя его оболочку? (381)

Every talent is inexplicable. How can a sculptor see a Jupiter hidden in a slab of Carrara marble and bring it to light, chipping off its shell with chisel and hammer? (255).[14]

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[14] The improviser's words concerning the sculptor refer to Michelangelo's verses, devoted to Vittoria Colonna, starting as follows: Non ha l'ottimo artista alcun concetto/ c'un marmo solo in sé non circonscriva/ Col superchio, e solo a quello arriva/ la man che ubbidisce all'intelletto ('No block of marble but it does not hide/ The concept of a living in the artist's mind-/ Pursuing it inside that form, he'll guide/ His hand to shape what reason has defined'). The translation originates from: *Michelangelo: Life, Letters, and Poetry*. Sel. and tr. with an Introduction by G. Bull. Poems tr. by G. Bull and P. Porter. Oxford 1987, p. 153. (*The World's Classics*). As far as the combination of recognition and cognition, expressed in this manner is concerned, reference should also be made to E. A. Baratynskij's poem entitled *Skul'ptor* (*The sculptor*). Baratynskij was indirectly, through his friends Odoevskij and I. Kireevskij, influenced by German Idealistic philosophy, particularly that of Schelling, although it is unclear as yet how far this influence went. (see, in this regard: G. Kjetsaa, *Evgenij Baratynskij. Žizn' i tvorčestvo*, Oslo 1973, p. 136, and 168; see also S. Pratt, *Russian Metaphysical Romanticism: the Poetry of Tiutchev and Boratynskii*. Stanford 1984, p. 20 (Studies of the Russian Institute, Columbia University). Baratynskij's verses deal with the Greek myth on the nymph Galathea who, after having carved by by Pygmalion, is inspired with life, and subsequently becomes the latter's mistress. The first lines run as follows: Глубокий взор вперив на камень, / Художник нимфу в нем прозрел, / И пробежал по жилам

And he concludes his argumentation with the words:

> Так никто кроме самого импровизатора не может понять эту
> быстроту впечатлений, эту тесную связь между собственным
> вдохновением и чуждой внешнею волею... (381)

> Similarly, no one except the improvisatore himself can comprehend this
> alacrity of impressions, this close tie between one's *own inspiration* and
> another's *external will...* (255).

In the words 'inspiration' and 'external will' the processes of 'cognition' and 'recognition' are presented as opposed elements.

The conception of the work of art as being the result of a combination of by themselves opposed processes 'recognition' and 'cognition' was developed by several Russian romantic writers. Generally speaking, the conviction that mere imitation does not only imply the death of art, but of the artist too, was prevalent in Romanticism. In other words, an art which presupposes nothing more but a process of recognition going on in the perceiver, should be rejected.[15] Puškin's

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пламень, / И к ней он сердцем полетел ('Fastening a deep glance on the stone,/ The artist began to see a nymph in it;/ A flame ran across his veins,/ And his heart dashed toward it', 1841 - E. A. Baratynskij, *Polnoe sobranie sočinenij*, Leningrad 1957, p.187). In these lines the process of cognition on the side of the artist is associated with the motif of 'passion', which was, in Puškin's lines on the improviser, expressed by the image of fire. Then, in the remaining lines, the process of recognition plays a key role. This is, again, associated with the motif of 'constraint' in a way similar to that used by Puškin. Thus the second stanza runs as follows: Но бесконечно вожделенный, /Уже он властвует собой: / Неторопливый, постепенный / Резец с богини сокровенной / Кору снимает за корой... Покуда, страсть уразумея / под лаской вкрадчивой резца, / Ответным взором Галатея / Не увлечет, желаньем рдея, / К победе неги мудреца ('But, endlessly full of desire as he is,/ He already *masters himself/* Unhurriedly, gradually/ The chisel removes from the concealed goddess/ Crust after crust...Until, comprehending his passion,/ Under the ingratiating caress of the chisel,/ Galatea, with an answering look,/ Allures, glowing with desire,/ The artist toward the victory of voluptuousness' - *idem*, 187). The word 'answering' is essential as this marks the moment at which the combination of the processes of recognition and cognition are completed. It is, of course, no coincidence that this word is found in the last sentence of the poem.

[15] This was clearly explained in Gogol's story *The Portrait*. The author emphasizes that an inscrutable idea is hidden in everything; consequently an author should be considered a creator than a mere copier of nature. This conception also originates in German Idealistic thought, whose most champion in Russia was Belinskij. (See, in

own poem *To a painter* dating from 1815 is illustrative. Having invited the addressee to paint his beloved the poet concludes his verses with the following stanzas:

Прозрачны волны покрывала
Накинь на трепетную грудь.
Чтоб и под ним она дышала,
Хотела тайно воздохнуть.

Представь мечту любви стыдливой.
И той которою дышу,
Рукой любовника счастливой
Внизу я имя подпишу.

The limpid, transparent waves of the shawl ·
Throw them on the shivering bosom,
In order that it languishes under it,
Itching to sigh in secret.

Submit the dream of a bashful love.
And then I will write under the portrait the name of her,
through whom I breathe,
With the hand of a happy lover (Puškin 1956: I, 183).

The concluding word 'name' is essential, as the combination of the processes of recognition and cognition, manifests itself in it. Use is again made of a procedure of duplication, as the addresser presents himself as 'breathing' in the described figure. Thus the personal element of cognition is expressed. On the other hand, the process of recognition is expressed as the represented person is supposed to be recognizable for other persons too. The painter, i.e. the addressee, is considered to be the person enabling the addresser to carry out the combination of the two processes of recognition and cognition. Having done this, the latter writes the *name* of the represented person under the portrait.[16] In other words, this poem again confirms Puškin's

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this regard, the detailed discussion in R. Peace, *The Enigma of Gogol. An Examination of the Writings of N. V. Gogol and their Place in the Russian Literary Tradition,* Cambridge 1981, p. 116, and the notes on 321, as well as R. Fanger, *The Creation of Nikolaj Gogol,* Cambridge 1979, p. 114 and n. 36 on p. 278.

[16] Names, as is well known, belong to the deictic words, i. e. those words, the primary task of which resides in the fact that they draw the perceiver's attention to the person of the speaker as well as the time and place of the utterance.

conviction that a work of art should not come about as a mere result of copying external reality.

To conclude, attention should be paid to the phenomenon of duplication as it manifests itself in the representation of the literary figures. Reference was already made to Čarskij, who, at the outset, is presented as the figure to whom the poet's task is *not* reserved. Exactly this task is to be fulfilled by the person who is reported to *disturb* him at the moment inspiration comes over him, i.e. the Italian improviser. In this feature that Čarskij does not function as the real poet his signalling function resides. The realization of the motif of 'the poet' in the story takes place gradually. In other words, the procedure of duplication is used as an effective means to postpone the moment of its identification by the perceiver in the manner indicated by Valéry. This gradual realization takes place in such a way that in each of the succeeding phases of the narrative the range of reference of this motif is further limited. This also holds for the world in which the poet is operative. Again, at the beginning Čarskij is introduced as the person who constantly denies his poetic activities. Then we are confronted with the improviser who is to bear poetic qualities. However, firstly, he is presented as playing *different* roles in society:

> Встретясь с этим человеком в лесу, вы бы приняли бы его за разбойника; в обществе — за политического заговорщика; в передней — за шарлатана, торгующего эликсирами и мышьяком (374).

> If you had met this man in the woods, you would have taken him for a robber; in society, for a political conspirator, and in an anteroom, for a charlatan, peddling elixirs and arsenic (251).

Thus he is a mere intruder here from the external world. In the next phase, however, he appears to belong to the category of artists (Я неаполитанский художник — говорил незнакомый, 374; "I am an Neapolitan artist", said the stranger, 251). This category is, in its turn, refined as explicit reference is made to musicians. Thus originally Čarskij thinks that the man is a cello-player who gave to St. Petersburg to give concertos. But the process of refining is continued as the intruder appears to be a *poet*; i.e. he appears to belong to the *same* class as Čarskij:

> — Нет, eccelenza! — отвечал итальянец, — я бедный импровизатор.
> — Импровизатор! — воскликнул Чарский, почувствовав всю жестокость своего обхождения (376).

> No, eccelenza! answered the Italian. "I am a penniless improviser" "An
> improviser!" exclaimed Charskii realizing the cruelty of his conduct.
> (252).

The above-mentioned duplication of the literary figures is consi-
stently maintained in the whole text. Consequently, all extra frames in
the narrative are shattered. Thus the figures occurring into the verse-
lines which are inserted in the prose-text mirror those of the latter.
Reference was already made to the Čarskij who 'returns' in the impro-
viser. The latter, in his turn, 'returns' in the poem as it is made by
him. Then, the procedure of 'splitting up' of the figures appears as
Čarskij does not only re-appear in the persons of the improviser, but
also in that of Tasso who is mentioned as one of the subjects set to
the improviser. In his turn, the improviser does not only re-appear in
Čarskij, but in other persons too. Cleopatra, for instance, is similar to
the improviser in his quality of a poet. Thus by her attitude she defies
the bourgeois world. In the embedding prose-text this attitude is per-
sonified in the improviser. The procedure of supplication bears a
special kind as literary figures are presented as being placed in a jux-
taposition with their counterparts. The motif of 'avarice' is illustrative
in this regard. Thus, immediately after his first performance for Čar-
skij, the Italian begins to worry about the price he should ask for his
appearance in front of such a fashionable public. The motif is depic-
ted as opposite to that of 'poetic talent':

> Неприятно было Чарскому с высоты поэзии вдруг упасть под
> лавку конторщика... Итальянец... обнаружил такую дикую жад-
> ность... что он опротивел Часркому... (381) .

> It was unpleasant for Charskii to fall so suddenly from the height of poe-
> try into the bookkeeper's office... The occasion revealed so much unbrid-
> led greed in the Italian... that Charskii became disgusted with him... (255)

This motif of 'greed' and 'avarice', in its turn, re-appears in Cleo-
patra, the figure who, according to Aurelius Victor, in his *Liber de
Viris Illustribus*, prostituted herself in exchange of the life of her
lovers. The opposition between Cleopatra and the ordinary world
manifests itself in the fact that Cleopatra's audience recoils after ter-
rible words that she will have her lover executed (Рекла — и ужас
всех объемлет/ И страстью дрогнули сердца, 388; Thus she.
All hearts are set aflutter/ By passion blent with dreadful qualm,

259).[17] Summarizing, Cleopatra combines the motifs 'avarice' (realized in her prostitute-like tendency) and 'poetic talent', present in the improviser too.

The improviser's a-social attitude manifests itself during his first improvisation before Čarskij, as long as he presents himself as obsessed by poetry. However, his socially conditioned attitude is evident from the fact that he is also a representative of the crowd, which is obsessed by greed of vile recreation. Thus he appears in public as a man obsessed by lust for money. The same motif of 'lust' appears in all subjects which are set to the improviser by his audience as none of these deal with the theme of art (Matlaw 1954: 115). Moreover, the motif of 'lust', which is, besides those of 'poetry' and 'avarice', personified in Cleopatra, also manifests itself in the figure of the young lady who sets the subject 'Cleopatra and her lovers'. It is no coincidence that she is depicted as ugly. The procedure of duplication results in the fact that she is the counterpart of the beautiful Egyptian queen, operative within the frame of the poem. However, the quality of beauty is not reserved to the queen only. There is another female who is described as being pretty and intrepid as well. She is operative outside the framework of the poem. She shares the quality of beauty with the queen; it was observed that the latter defies all young men present in her palace to share her bed for one night in exchange for their life. The girl, after having got up, self-confidently reads aloud the content of the scrap of paper:

> Она встала безо всякого смущения и со всеможною простотою опустила в урну аристократическую ручку... (385).

> She rose *without the slightest embarrassment,* put her small aristocratic hand into the urn with the most natural gesture . . .

After she has read the subject 'Cleopatra e i suoi amanti', the improviser reacts as follows:

> Импровизатор низко поклонился прекрасной даме... (385).

> The improvisatore bowed deeply, with a look of profound gratitude, to the *beautiful* lady ... (257).

Whereas, in her turn, the pretty girl is presented as sharing the above-mentioned qualities with the queen, she is also presented as being different from her as she is not marked by lust. It was observed

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[17] See also Matlaw 1954: 113.

that this feature is distinctive of the ugly girl, who is also operative outside the frame of the poetic text. All qualities, occurring in the literary figures, positive as well as negative, are combined in the person of Cleopatra, who is presented in the poem which concludes the story, even it is taken in account that this is not complete.

It may be concluded from the above-mentioned examples, taken from *Egyptian nights* that the procedure of duplication is effective to suggest that an even incomplete text is complete. This observation is valuable for the analysis of romantic texts given the fact that their fragmentary character often hardly bears an incidental character, but is the result of a consistently used literary procedure.

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