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Poetry as Bargaining in Osip Mandelstam's and Marina Tsvetaeva's Moscow Texts

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The paper concerns metaphorical representations of the image of Moscow in Osip Mandelstam's and Marina Tsvetaeva's poetry and prose where themes of the open market bargaining play a significant role. Mandelstam's negative view on Tsvetaeva's poetry collection "Mileposts. Vol. 1" is driven by his desire to distance himself from the chaotic and frightening city, personified in Tsvetaeva's poetic person. Mandelstam's essay "Sukharevka" is closely analyzed (in the context of Baudelaire's poem "The Flowers of Evil") in which the poet interprets this space as a precedent one ("a market in the middle of the city"), and bargaining itself is presented as permanent violence. While Mandelstam's narrative voice is frightened by the crowded Russian market, Tsvetaeva's lyrical self immerses in the market crowd and makes poetry, her only goods, a subject of commerce. Tsvetaeva's poetic space is universalized, but the composition of imaginative complex that is important for the poetics of the book "Mileposts. Vol. 1" (black art – khlysts – market bargaining) is localized in the space of the Sukharevsky market.

Keywords: Moscow texts, Tsvetaeva, Mandelstam, Russian theme.

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Research area: philology.

The collection "Mileposts. Vol. 1", which was published in December 1922, without any doubts refers to the heights of M. Tsvetaeva's poetic creativity, and it was it that included such a canonical text as a cycle of "Poems about Moscow". The first review that preceded publication of this collection of poems was the negatory article "Literary Moscow" by Osip Mandelstam, published in the September issue of the "Russia" journal in 1922:

"The saddest sign for Moscow is Marian handiwork by Marina Tsvetaeva that is correlated

to the dubious solemnity of St. Petersburg poetess Anna Radlova. The worst thing in the literary Moscow is women's poetry. Experience of the recent years has shown that the only woman that entered into the circle of poetry as the new muse is the science of Russian poetry brought to life by Potebnya and Andrei Bely and got stronger in the formal school of Eikhenbaum, Shklovsky and Zhirmunsky" (Mandelstam, 2010, Vol. 2, 102).

Irina Shevelenko, Tsvetaeva's creativity researcher, is inclined to consider Mandelstam's attack in the general context – as a response to

the outgoing cultural pattern of "the poetess of the 1910s" (Shevelenko, 2002, 215-216). Let us suppose that the reasons for rejection of Tsvetaeva's "Moscow style" by Osip Mandelstam are connected with the association of his Moscow poems, included in the collection of verses "Tristia" with Tsvetaeva's "Poems about Moscow", from which he wants to get rid of, and complicated personal relationships between the two poets, that probably became even worse in the spring of 1922.

In "Sukharevka", the essay published in 1923, a lot of Mandelstam's orientations and phobias related to Moscow became clear, and with hindsight, they enable us to understand the essence of claims to the author of "Mileposts I". At that, orientations of the Petersburg, who came to the "barbaric capital", are found in the exposition of the essay:

"Sukharevka is horticultural land. Never mind that it is covered by stone, underneath you can feel stingy and evil Moscow clay loam, and trade crushes through the ground, as a product of the soil itself.

It is a barbarous scene – a market place in the middle of the city: here a person can be torn apart for a stolen pie and he/she will be thrown as a rubber doll – up to the bloody foam; people here are dough and things are yeast, and whether you want it or not, but you will be kneaded by someone's itching palms.

Sukharevka will jostle against you as a big country woman – for a good reason Moscow is famous for "its markets that are as big as country women"; evil shallow bargaining is splashing in the yellow-green shores of taverns; empty Sheremetievsky courtyard lies on the left as a horseshoe, the building is light, winged like a white

maiden's foot" (Mandelstam, 2011, vol. 3, 31).

Precedent case of Moscow Sukharevka is created by Mandelstam by comparison with the Saint Petersburg text that was perceived as an absolute norm. "Clay loam", "dry" and mainland of Moscow as an Asian capital, horrors of the market / Moscow democracy that absorbs "I" of the poet by its collective body / the "test" of the market place, as well as assessed by him as "a barbarous scene" – "a market place in the middle of the city" become abnormal qualities of Moscow space from the viewpoint of the Petersburg.

It should be noted that, paradoxically, in the latter case, Mandelstam affirms a cultural norm for the vast majority of European cities as a precedent (marker is "savagery") – with almost mandatory market place in the middle. For example, in Saint Petersburg, Mandelstam's home town, there were several market places in the center of the city (from the democratic Sennyi Market to the aristocratic Shchukin yard where only fruit were sold). The explanation of this orientation can be found in one of the earlier texts. In the essay "The Fur Coat" ("Shuba") (1922), the visionary poet, as synthetic projection of the favorite loci, connected by the poetic "sledding", will recreate a virtual "inner city", from which perspective in the "Sukharevka" he will look at the Moscow market place that struck him:

"My fur coat does not give me rest, pulling me on the road to Moscow and to Kiev – that's too bad to miss the winter, the new thing will be wasted. I feel like going to Arbat, to Khreshchatyk, to Prechistenka. I feel like going to Kharkov, to Sumskaya Street, and to Petersburg to Bolshoy Prospekt, to some Podrezova Street. All the Russian cities are mingled in my memory and merged into one large unprecedented

city with an eternal sledding, where Khreshchatyk leads to Arbat and Sumskaya Street to Bolshoy Prospekt.

I love this unprecedented city more than real cities separately, I love it as if I was born in it and have never left it (Mandelstam, 2011, vol. 3, 23).

In the essay “Sukharevka” a notion of Moscow as a territory of permanent metaphorical violence is reflected: from the market bargaining in the terms of kneading human dough / “bloody foam” that clearly hints to the famous **Khodynka**, to sexual violence by Sukharevka, embodied in a “big country woman”. Existential horror of the poet towards the “ferocious crowd” of the Russian market in metapoetic projection is well associated not only with understandable apprehension of the aristocrat Petersburger towards the demos of Moscow, but as well as ambivalent fear / curiosity / attraction of the appolonist to the spontaneous (invariants – Dionysian / female / Khlystyian) aspect of creativity, poet civilizer to the spontaneous disorder of life:

“Sukharevka is swinging slowly, becomes obsessed, getting drunk from shouts, from the Khlystyian ritual of the act of purchase and sale. A person is already thrown from side to side, at the moment he got out of hands hustle, pursued by dubious two-legged stalls as he is carried away by one of the rifted talkative streams and washed ashore to a dead end and deafened by gramophones, he is already stepping over burning kerosene stoves, over hardware goods scattered on the ground, over books ...” (Mandelstam, 2011, vol. 3, 32).

In Mandelstam's poem dated 1918 “Everything is Alien to Us in the Capital Obscene ...”, which already contained Sukharevka's locus

with anthropomorphic metaphor “with markets as big as country women”, unravelling of lyrical plot happens in the direction of the indexing of Moscow as a nomadic Asian capital with “millions of creaking arbas” on “callous dry land” (Mandelstam, 2009, vol. 1, 299). However, in 1923, the recognized modernists plot of the poet's going into the abyss of “market bargaining” will be embodied not in the expected poetic form (see Lekmanov for Baudelaire's intertextual background), but in the principle non-fiction genre of physiological essay. An obvious source of this plot in the Modernist metapoetic thesaurus is Baudelaire's poem “Le Vin des Chiffonniers”, or “The Rag-Pickers Wine” translated by Ellis (Baudelaire, 2011, 347).

Mandelstam's contemporary, German philosopher-Marxist B. Benjamin, devoted his large work “Charles Baudelaire. A Lyric **Poet in the Era of High Capitalism**” to comprehension of the phenomena of crowd of market bargaining in the “The Flowers of Evil” (Benjamin, 2004, 47-234). In particular, describing the character of relationship of Baudelaire's poet and the crowd, Benjamin notes his ability to symbiosis, what in the historical retrospection is prepared by the horror towards the natural component of the crowd in a romantic discourse and curiosity of the writer-flaneur, that is dissolved in the crowd of a big city in countless physiological essays of the middle of the 19th century.

“In a posture of dedicating time to such pleasure Baudelaire immersed in the contemplation of crowd. The most profound charm of this show was not trying to hide from the terrible social reality in the intoxication that it gave him. Baudelaire held it in his mind, however, in the way the drunk “still” continue to be conscious of the reality. Therefore, Baudelaire's large city almost never appears in the direct

representation of its dwellers. Frankness and bitterness with which such writer as Shelley, depicted London through the image of its inhabitants, would not suit for Paris, seen by Baudelaire" (Benjamin 2004, 113) – says Benjamin.

At that, fundamental differences in the romantic and modernist exploration of the city, according to the philosopher, lies in the following: "For the flaneur this image (London as a "resemblance of hell" in the poem by Shelley. – S.K.) as if drawn by veil. And the veil is formed by the crowd; it undulates "in the turns of gloomy ancient cities". For the flaneur it turns terror into charm. Only when this veil becomes torn and the flaneur sees "one of the crowded squares", deserted during street fights, he also starts seeing the city in its true light" (Benjamin, 2004, 113-114). In a brief review, dated 1913, of the book by J.-K. Huysmans "Paris Arabesques" Mandelstam analyzes it in the same field of social tensions as Benjamin, though not in an explicated form and with different conclusions:

"Paris is hell. Even Balzac agrees with this axiom. Baudelaire and Huysmans made the final conclusions from it. For both poets living in hell is a great honor, such an extreme misfortune is royal lot. <...> Decadents did not like reality, but they knew it, and by this they differed from the romantics. They needed it as the shore, to push off from it" (Mandelstam, 2011, vol. 3, 89).

It is difficult not to agree with the judgment of O. Lekmanov about some kind of hackneyed presentation of Baudelaire's creativity in this short review. Let us note, however, that Mandelstam's estimated characteristic of the Baudelaire's city as an "extreme misery" is represented only once, and then, without any mentioning of Baudelaire we will see Moscow's Sukharevsky market in a developed phantasmagoria – the Hell on Earth

that evolves "active bargaining in its fierce funnel" (Mandelstam, 2011, vol. 3, 30).

The author of "Sukharevka" is more frightened than attracted by the Moscow version of the Baudelaire's crowds as "the game of elements". Like Dante's Virgil, the poet is of different nature and is alien to the "fierce crowd" of market; at that, his poetic "I" is afraid of physical disappearance of the process of "Khlystyian ritual of purchase and sale". Perhaps with regard to Mandelstam's attitude to such a form of manifestation of spontaneous aspect of creativity, one should also look for the reason for the well-known maxim "I am antitsvetaevets" (Akhmatova, 2001, v. 5, 22).

The lyrical heroine of "Mileposts I", and this is her difference from Mandelstam-lyric poet, fearlessly goes into the thick of the crowd, and at that, the crowd itself modifies: from the metaphorical "wave" / human festive sea, where lyric "I" bathes joyfully ("The Eve of the Annunciation ...") – to the people's market place where the poet goes with his "golden goods" – his poems ("For Sale! For Sale! For Sale! ..." People shouted in the market...). In "Mileposts I" presyllabic folk verses are repeatedly cleverly imitated, at that, rhythmic variations are created with the help of different diametrical metres. Thus, poem "For Sale! For Sale! For Sale! ..." is written in the form of raeshnik, at that, alternation of two- or tree-accent verses reminds recitatives of the market vendors who tout their "goods" with bywords and riddles, and residual components of the classic metres disappear in the element of parnational speech. This poem becomes no less important in terms of metapoetic development. The poet not only fearlessly disappears in the thick of the market crowd, but settles in it as well, challenging traders – "Hold on, Peddlers!", in the process of competition with whom, qualities of the unique intangible "goods" that

he came to the bargaining with – his poetry, are revealed consistently:

Продаю! продаю! продаю!
 Поспешайте, господа хорошие!
Золотой товар продаю,
Чистый товар, не ношенный,
Не сквозной, не крашеный, –
 Не запрашиваю!
Мой товар – на всякий лад, на всякий вкус.
 – Держись, корабейники! –
 Не дорожусь! не дорожусь! не дорожусь!
 Во что оцените.
Носи – не сносишь!
Бросай – не сбросишь!

(Tsvetaeva, 1990, p. 111)

The principal difference from Pushkin's solution of the dilemma of the poet as the bookseller becomes the fact that the object of sale is not a material book, but directly "unworn" and "unpainted" poetry, and at that, the poet himself, who joined the ranks of demotic market touts, starts direct bargaining, desperately dumping his goods ("not expensive ... how you evaluate it"). Let us note that there was a large secondhand book market in the real Sukharevka market, and the range of books impressed a lot of Tsvetaeva's contemporaries.

In another poem, "At the Market Place People Were Shouting..." (from "Akmatova" cycle) Tsvetaeva using "chastushka-like", according to B. Eikhenbaum's definition (Eikhenbaum, 1986, 386), way of organizing the poetic stanza – with thematic autonomy of couplets in the quatrain, creates space dichotomy (the market and the temple), expression and focus on the "...scarlet mouth / of the narrow-faced street singer". In addition, it is in this poem where the image of Khlystian Blessed Virgin appears, that clarifies genealogy of numerous images of the poetic book: from the already established in the literature

of modernity "Silver Doves" to originally more universal "apple trees", "chambers" and "turtledoves":

На базаре кричал народ,
 Пар вылетал из булочной,
 Я запомнила алый рот
 Узколицей певички уличной.

 В темном, с цветиками, платке,
 – Милости удостоиться –
 Ты, потупленная, в толпе
 Богомолка у Сергий-Троицы,

 Помолись за меня, краса
 Грустная и бесовская,
 Как поставят тебя леса
 Богородицею хлыстовскою.

(Tsvetaeva, 1990, p. 121).

The dialogue of Tsvetaeva and Mandelstam through the prism of various forms of national orthodoxy and religious heresy has frequently been the subject of both contrastive-comparative studies and local works. In the monograph by Shevelenko, the forms of nomenclature heresy manifestation in "Mileposts I" are considered; it is essential that the poem of the Petersburg Mandelstam "And on Mount Athos Even Now..." becomes the source of this imagery in Tsvetaeva's poetics (Shevelenko, 2002, pp. 119-128).

I. Shevelenko in his work rightly notes the obvious "pair" of Blok and Akmatova that worried not only literary environment of the two poets, but many philologists-contemporaries. Let us only note that ironic estrangement ("the reader knows better!"), with which help "Blok-Akmatova Idyll" was introduced to the essay entitled "The Poet on Criticism" (Tsvetaeva, 1998, vol. 5, book 1, pp. 290-291) rather alludes to forgery, from the viewpoint of the author of the essay, of this loving-poetic union. The fact that

Akhmatova, with all the love she demonstrated, is the obvious rival to Tsvetaeva in the fight for a place of “the first woman poet” is also important in this case. In 1921 Tsvetaeva retrospectively spoke out an unbeaten, compromise idea of poetic “duumvirate”, with division of “authorities” over the two capitals – Moscow and St. Petersburg, that in the second stanza are tactically compensated by loving-poetic conquest / at the metaphorical level by flooding of Akhmatova’s royal tent by Tsvetaeva’s poetic “wave”:

Блаженно так и бескорыстно
Мой гений твоему внимал
На каждый вздох твой рукописный
Дыхания вздымался вал.

Но вал моей гордыни польской –
Как пал он! С златозарных гор
Мои стихи как добровольцы
К тебе стекались под шатер...

(Tsvetaeva, 1997, p. 55).

In the poem “At the Market Place People Were Shouting...” the image of the “narrow-faced street singer” is represented with the help of cinematic by its nature “short influx” that reflects simultaneous nature of both the transform space (the market – the lavra – Khlystyian rejoicing), and the heroine, who manifested the aspects of her nature in each of them. This phenomenon is described in detail in Y. Tynyanov’s work “The Fundamentals of Cinema” (1927):

“This technique (influx – S.K.) is very strongly and, moreover, clearly motivated as “memory”, “vision” and “story”. But the technique of “short influx”, when the face of reminiscent person still shines through in the frame of “memories”, eliminates already external literary motivation of “memory” as alternating at the moment, and shifts the center of gravity to the *simultaneity*, *simultaneousness* of frames;

there is no “memory” or “story” in the literal sense – there is “memory” in which the face of a reminiscent person simultaneously continues; and in this, purely cinematic, its own sense, this method is close to the other ones: the influx of face to incomparable with him in size landscape or scene” (Tynyanov, 1977, 334).

At that, real Akhmatova is visible in Moscow’s “street singer” by only two features – “narrow face” and inaccurate textual reference – “scarlet mouth”. Tsvetaeva poetically “kidnaps” her rival (and, perhaps, metonymically only some of her features) from the native St. Petersburg space and absorbs by visionary hallucination of her text, bringing it to the foreground in a kaleidoscope of visions of the lyric “I”. Thus, already in the second stanza, the heroine wears demotic babushka with “little flowers”, and at the end of the poem is modified to the Khlystyian Blessed Virgin.

In Tsvetaeva’s poem, in contrast to the prosaic “Sukharevka” by Mandelstam, the market space, especially against the background of locus that replaces it – “Trinity Lavra of St. Sergius” is poetically universalized and deprived of “the earth marks”. At that, in Moscow topography local consolidation of the topical for Tsvetaeva images complex (black magic – Khlystyism – bargaining) takes place notably in the space of the Sukharevsky market due to the dominance of the famous Sukharev tower over the square and the complex of urban legends associated with it. There was a laboratory and a library of the famous warlock James Bruce in this tower, where “he was involved in making up the elixir of life-giving and dead water” and also “kept the black book guarded by 12 spirits and after that it was set into the wall, where it was nailed by nickel nails” (Snegirev, 1863, 12).

The complex of cultural signs (the tower with warlock Bruce, Khlystyian “Jerusalem chambers” coupled with the spontaneous market)

transforms real Sukharev square into a kind of poetic universum, attractive for the poet-modernist of "German" genealogy (according to the typology by A. Bely) and repulsive for a Parnassian-appollonist. We will leave the question what aspects of the mythology of Moscow locus Mandelstam knew for sure, and that may reflect the most common knowledge about this "ecstatic sect" open. Indeed, "Khlystyian ritual of sale" in "Sukharevka" by Mandelstam may be a metaphor connected only by chance with the holy place of Moscow Khlysts, where the comparison of

passion and furiousness of market bargaining with the state of ecstatic "spiritual bath" in rejoicing is encapsulated. On the other hand, as specified bargaining, and even personalized as a "big country woman" who jostles against the poet, directly refers to the "sinister folklore", which accumulated rumors that accompanied the closed world of "ships": from ritual sacrifices, "cannibalism coupled with infanticide" to "promiscuity", which allegedly, Khlysts meeting often ended with (Panchenko, 2004, pp. 158-166).

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Поэзия как торг в московских текстах

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Статья посвящена метафорическим презентациям образа Москвы в поэзии и прозе Осипа Мандельштама и Марины Цветаевой, среди которых заметное место занимает базарный торг. Негативное представление Мандельштамом сборника М. Цветаевой «Версты. Вып. I» связывается с желанием дистанцироваться от стихийного и пугающего города, персонифицированного в цветаевской поэтической личности. Подробно анализируется (в контексте бодлеровского стихотворения «Вино тряпичников») эссе Мандельштама «Сухаревка», в котором поэт осмысляет это пространство как прецедентное («базар посреди города»), а сам базарный торг представлен в виде перманентного насилия. Если мандельштамовский повествовательный голос испытывает страх перед многолюдием русского базара, то цветаевское лирическое я скрывается в базарной толпе и выносит на торг свой уникальный товар – свою поэзию. Цветаевское поэтическое пространство универсализировано, но соединение актуального для поэтики сборника «Версты. Вып. I» образного комплекса (чернокнижие – хлыстовство – базарный торг) локально закрепляется в пространстве Сухаревского рынка.

Ключевые слова: Московский текст, Мандельштам, Цветаева, русская тема.

Научная специальность: 10.00.00 – филологические науки.