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THE GOLDEN AGE AND GENRE POETICS: "IMPLICIT PROPHECY" IN VERGIL'S *FOURTH ECLOGUE* AND PUSHKIN'S *BORIS GODUNOV*
Two Variations on the Auto-Creation of the Poetic Self

INTRODUCTION
IMPLICIT PROPHECY AND GENRE POETICS

The present article[1] will focus upon a question I believe any attentive reader of either Vergil's *Fourth Eclogue (Eclogue 4)* or Pushkin's *Boris Godunov* (or both) will inevitably come to face: what (if any) link can be supposed between "factual" history and what we normally (yet somewhat vaguely) call "the history of literature"? Submitting these two literary texts to a close and thorough examination will perhaps take us nearer to finding an adequate answer to this question; the interpretation we are to pursue in the following pages will, as a rule, lead us onto the field of genre poetics. There are a number of common features shared by *Eclogue 4* and the *Boris* drama that invite, if not incite, a joint investigation into the texts of these works. These, I believe, will provide satisfactory munition for the kind of interpretation I am to offer. Although the eclogue and the drama were each composed in a relatively

early period in their respective author's literary career,[2] they have both turned out to represent an unusually high degree of poetical maturity. Vergil's poem, as we advance in the text, gradually establishes its genre, the Vergilian pastoral poem, by poetically "undermining" the traditionally understood (mostly Theocritean) concept of pastoral poetry, constituting another, entirely new type of pastoral genre with a poetic character and preference essentially different from the old tradition.[3] In an intriguing approach to pastoral poetry, John B. Van Sickle's monography on the poetics and the mythopoetic features of Vergil's *Eclogues,* the *Bucolics* are placed in the context of genre poetics.[4] Van Sickle argues for an intrinsic and generic connection between the pastoral and the Hesiodic (and, in lesser part, the Homeric) epic tradition,[5] seeing "heroic epic in the Homeric mode" emerge in *Eclogue 4,* 54 ("tua dicere facta", "to tell your deeds"),[6] and goes on to say that "the bucolic mode not only is traced back to an Arcadian origin, but also is imagined as the original mode of *epos* itself, more authoritative than the Orphic hymn. Victory over Pan thus comes to imply, in terms of poetics, a new beginning in the entire tradition of *epos.*"[7] In this paper, I will perform two textual analyses, one of *Eclogue 4,* the other of the "Monastery Scene" of *Boris Godunov,* in both cases concentrating on the process of the poetic composition: i.e. how *the respective text generates the genre.* If we have a close look at Pushkin's poetical achievement as the author of *Boris Godunov,* we will have the impression that this achievement "takes after" Vergil's in terms of *genre innovation*: the Russian poet, too, intransigently undermines the traditional dramatic form inherited from his predecessors, and this, likewise, eventually leads to the establishment of a new genre — in Pushkin's case, a new

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[2] *Eclogue 4* was most probably published around 41 or 40 B.C. See: Coleman R. (ed.) 1977. *Vergil, Eclogues.* Cambridge, 14–21. Havas L. (ed.) 1989. *Vergil's Eclogues — Vergilii Eclogae* (= Auctores Latini XIV). Budapest, 71, insists on November or December of 40 B.C. At any rate, Asinius Pollio's consulship is taken as an orientation point for establishing the correct date of composition/publication. *Boris Godunov* was composed in 1825, yet publication took place only six years later. It is the "censored version" of 1831 that has been accepted by most scholars. In a recent article, Chester Dunning argues for the original version of 1825 to be taken as the authentic text: Dunning, Ch. 2001. Rethinking the Canonical Text of Puškin's *Boris Godunov. Russian Review* 60 (4, October), 569–91. Vergil, 30, and Pushkin, 26, both have the mature section of their careers ahead of them.

[3] A reliable outline of the echoes of earlier pastoral in Vergil's *Eclogues* can be found in Clausen W. 1994. *A Commentary on Virgil Eclogues.* Oxford, xv–xxx. On Hellenistic pastoral poetry as the background for the Vergilian *Bucolics* see: Coleman 1977: 1–14. For traces of the presence of Theocritus' *Idylls* in Vergilian pastoral, see the line-to-line commentaries to the individual eclogues in these two editions.

[4] Van Sickle J. B. 2004. *The Design of Virgil's Bucolics.* Bristol.

[5] Ibid. 101–18.

[6] Ibid. 136.

[7] Ibid. 137.

type of drama.[8] Pushkin's demythologizing of history has much in common with the way Vergil handles myth and history[9]: both *Eclogue 4* and *Boris Godunov* offer insight into their own *genre in the making,* i.e. how a specific literary genre is born: first the traditional — generic — form is dismantled, then, as a rule, the new genre is (re-)established within the course of the poetical work, hence *the new genre is generated by the new artefact itself.* Finally, both texts convey unmistakable reference(s) to the idea of "eternal recurrence"; the difference between the two lies in the fact that in Vergil's case this is displayed via a direct reference, appearing right at the beginning of his text in a semi-explicit form, whereas in the Pushkin play, although no explicit reference can be spotted within the dramatic text itself, the notion of "eternal recurrence" is pertinently kept alive via various poetic devices until it finally emerges as one of the main poetical notions of the drama.[10]

In Vergil's prophecy, two layers may be identified predicting the arrival of the child in *Eclogue 4*: one speaking about the birth of the child and its growing up to become a man, the other foretelling the "Golden Age" that will arrive with this birth and reach its peak as the child reaches manhood. The major part of the eclogue is devoted to the theme of the child (lines 4–45); and this prophecy, too, lies at the bottom of the supplication in lines 48–52, addressed to the child whose birth has been predicted. On the other hand, we find in *Eclogue 4* another kind of prophecy which, as we shall see, plays a no less crucial role, but is different in its function and the way it is made to operate: instead of thematizing a particular event or a series of events to come, it serves as a vehicle for anticipating the very poetical structure of the eclogue.[11] I will call this latter kind of prediction "implicit prophecy" as opposed

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[8]   See note 13.

[9]   This is true despite the fact that the process relating "myth" ("demythologizing" and "mythification") apparently runs in the opposite direction in the two works.

[10]   For the making of the notion *eternal recurrence* in *Boris Godunov* through the recurrent use of certain motifs within the microstructure of the dramatic text*,* see: Mezősi M. 1997. History and the Political Ethos Represented on Puškin's Stage: the Dramatic Poet and the Historian. *Studia Russica* XVI, 247–65; and Id. 2004. "It was from Love he blabbed to me!" Re-constructing Puškin's Romantic Tragedy: The Poetics and Poesis of Provocation. *Slavica* XXXIII, 153–60.

[11]   In this eclogue, regard references to the invocational gestures as forms of anticipation within the whole of the Vergilian bucolic corpus. For recent scholarship on anticipation in the literary work see the following works: Cooper D. 1974. *Presupposition.* Mouton; Culler J. 1976. Presupposition and Intertextuality. *Modern Language Notes* 91, 1380–96; van der Sandt R. A. 1988. *Context and Presupposition.* New York; Kroó K. 1994. The Structure of the Anticipation and Unfolding of a Semantic Model in Tolstoy's *Anna Karenina. Semiotische Berichte 18(1–4).* Wien, 105–24; Id. 1999. Az irodalmi szöveg mint saját "próféciájának" beteljesítője és értelmezője (A szemantikai előreutalás költői szerkezete) [The Literary Text as Fulfilling and Interpreting its Own "Prophesy". The Poetic Structure of Semantic Anticipation]. In: Kovács Á. — Nagy I. (ed.). *A szótól a szövegig és tovább… Tanulmányok az orosz irodalom és költészettan köréből.* Budapest, 67–114.

to the explicitly expressed prognostication about the advent of the divine child. It should be stressed that "implicit prophecy" is no less responsible for indicating the coming of an important *event* than its "explicit" counterpart; rather, the difference between the two lies in the nature of the event(s) that are referred to. Explicit prophecy points to future (outer) events that are to be understood in the "physical" sense (the birth of the child and the arrival of the Golden Age) whereas implicit prophecy bears reference to something which can be interpreted as an inner event. This event, to which clear reference is made (sc. it is prophesied) in both texts selected for analysis, takes place as the literary history of the text evolves. The interpretations to be offered in this paper might provide the reader with further insight into the hows and whys that drive, or put and keep in motion, the process we call literary history. By presenting these two instances of "a genre in the making" alongside one another, I hope to contribute to our better understanding of the notion of the history of literature, or the literary process.[12]

In *Boris Godunov,* which is Pushkin's one and only "History" as understood in the Shakespearean sense,[13] we encounter what we may call "poetic prophecy" working very much the same way it works in Vergil's *Eclogue 4.* What is common in both Vergil's and Pushkin's prophecies is that, first, both carry a reference — as defined above — to some physical, or outside, event(s). If, in Vergil, the physical event is the arrival of the child,[14] in Pushkin it is the return, or "re-arrival", of the new sovereign (in fact a usurper who cleverly exploits the extraordinary historical situation and who, *as a child,* is believed to have miraculously escaped the attempt

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[12] Nietzsche's lectures on Greek literature, delivered by the young professor during his internship at the University of Basel, present a historical modelling of the Greeks' original oral culture transforming into written literature. (Nietzsche Fr. 1912. *Unveröffentlichtes zur Litteraturgeschichte, Rhetorik und Rhythmik.* In: *Nietzsche's Werke.* XVIII, Philologica, Bd. 2). Nietzsche's idea was later picked up and arranged into a coherent concept of the literary process by O. Freydenberg (1936) in her *Поэтика сюжета и жанра* (cf. Freydenberg 1972) a landmark in 20th century literary scholarship. In Freydenberg's concept, it is not (the specific) genre that gives birth to a specific literary artefact but the other way round: literary works generate genres and thus constitute "literary history" as such. For a poetical interpretation of *Boris Godunov* (jointly with that of the Musorgsky opera *Khovanshchina*) akin to the Nietzsche — Frejdenberg concept, see Part I of my recently published book (Mezősi M. 2006. *Zene, szó, dráma — színjátékok és szín(e)változások. A történelem szemantkája Puskin és Muszorgszkij mûvészi szkepsziséhen* [*Music, Word, Drama — Stagecraft and Transfigurations. The Semantics of History in the Artistic Skepticism of Puškin and Musorgsky*]. Budapest.)]

[13] Strictly speaking, *Boris Godunov* is a "chronicle play" *par excellence* as in this case the status of the chronicle itself and the making of the *author* of this chronicle are at stake.

[14] For a quick survey of the attempts to identify a specific historical personage as *Eclogue 4*'s "child", see Coleman 1977: 150–54; Clausen 1994: 126–29; and Havas 1989: 70–1. Although from the point of view of interpreting the poem as a literary work it is not at all essential to find out the "true identity" of the child, it seems very probable that Vergil did have a specific person in mind at the time he composed his eclogue.

at his life by Godunov's henchmen[15]). Secondly, each of the two works creates and operates a feature[16] termed above as "inner prophecy", which has strong relevance to the issue of genre poetics, as we shall see in the following pages of this paper. Pushkin himself has labelled *Boris Godunov* a "romantic tragedy", with an unmistakable indication of the specific genre this very play is to constitute. Whether or not this indication *was* actually intended by the poet, the authorial label of "romantic tragedy" undoubtedly seems to point towards a crucial aspect of the interpretation of this drama. To elucidate this, let us first try to explicate the Pushkinian definition itself, with the overt aim of providing a key to the close reading of the text of the play. The authorial definition, "romantic tragedy", may be read as an anticipative reference to what lies at the bottom of the play's poetics: first, what makes for the poetic structure and, second, which way this structure, markedly and strictly designed by what may be called a particular but relentless "poetical logic", is to move forth. In this context, the element *roman* in the Pushkinian definition ("romantic") may also bear clear reference to a narrative genre, the *novel,* indicating the eventual appearance of elements and features more characteristic of an epic than a dramatic genre.[17] Since *роман,* a loanword from French, is the Russian word for "novel", it seems right to assume that this authorial term has a definite bearing on *what in fact happens in the poetic structure* of *Boris Godunov.* By and large the same kind of reference is provided in the definition offered by Pushkin's contemporary, the critic Vissarion Belinsky, "an epic poem in the form of dialogues",[18] suggesting the shift from the pure dramatic form towards the appearance of narrative elements in the drama, marking the vital change in the poetics of genres which dramatic genres have been going through since the *chronicle* plays of Shakespeare. The loosening of the dramatic forms held thereto as "classic" lucidly speaks of the "novelification" of the drama, as though investing the dramatic work with a sort of narrative character.[19] Accordingly, although the length of our *Boris* play would far from imply this, the

[15]   For a compact yet lucid overview of the *"Boris* tale", see Emerson C. 1986. *Boris Godunov. Transpositions of a Russian Theme.* Bloomington — Indianapolis, 3–25.

[16]   I would quite willingly apply to this "feature" Viktor Shklovsky's notorious term *прием,* which was to introduce the literary program of the Russian Formalists into scholarship. Shklovsky entitled his article *Искусство, как прием,* which was published in the second edition of *Сборники по теории поэтического языка* in 1917 (Шкловский В 1929. *Теория прозы. Москва,* 7–23.

[17]   See: Pálfi Á. 1997. *Puskin-elemzések (vers és próza)* [*Pushkin Interpretations (Verse and Prose)*]. Budapest, 137. Pálfi's term "picaresque", which she applies to the dramatic syuzhet in her interpretation of *Boris Godunov* (ibid. 115–39), refers to the epic hero, as anticipated by Pushkin's "picaresque" hero, Grigory.

[18]   "Эпическая поэма в форме диалогов." Белинский В. Г. 1899. *Статьи В. Г. Белинского об А. С. Пушкине.* Москва, 250–95.

[19]   For an extensive discussion of "the crisis of the drama" as seen in *Boris Godunov,* see: Mezősi M. 2003. Puškin's Virtual Scene. Some Aspects of Puškin's Romantic Tragedy. *Boris Godunov*

dramatic time nevertheless hosts such a string of events that might as well make for a whole dramatic trilogy, thus definitely lending our play a perceptible touch of the — picaresque — novel. This seems to reflect Pushkin's own curriculum as a writer: his moving away, within a single work, from the canonized dramatic form by integrating in the drama features that are characteristic for an epic genre seems to be in full compliance with our author's literary career in so far as his whole oeuvre tends to move towards what we may call "novelification" (see, e. g., *Евгений Онегин,* defined by the poet as "novel in verse" or the Belkin-stories). Not unlike what had happened to the European drama in the 18th-century, forced to eventually give way to a *musical genre* (the Mozart opera), one of the paths opened up by 19th century Russian historical tragedy, named "dramatic chronicle" by the aforementioned, finally led to the musical drama (the Musorgsky opera), with another branch pointing to the dramas of Chekhov, and a third to the Russian grand epic, the novels of Tolstoy and Dostoevsky. The term "dramatic chronicle", as coined by Belinsky to define the literary genre of Pushkin's *Boris,* has proved highly and outspokenly paradigmatic: it conveys a double reference to the poetic structure of this play, alluding to both its *dramatic* and *narrative* dimensions (with *drama* meaning "act, action, performance" and *chronicle* denoting an old historiographical genre, the reference to the dichotomy, or duality, of the new genre thus made explicit in the definition itself).

PART 1

The Making of the Poetic Self and the Golden Age: Vergil and the Pastoral

We see both forms of prediction in Vergil's *Eclogue 4,* i.e. the "thematizing ones" (those foretelling the birth of the child) as well as the "anticipating ones" (those that will convey reference to the poetic structure of the poem) are to take effect simultaneously and will only achieve a complete state when the two stand in constellation with one another. This state will be reached near the end of the eclogue: the interpretation of the text will bring about our understanding that the Golden Age, the arrival of which has actually been indicated at the beginning of the poem, is to be conceived as a consummated form of the *poet's self-consciousness.* In Part 1 of this paper, I will dwell upon the fulfilment in the eclogue's poetic structure of what I have above called "implicit prophecy", adding that this structure brings about the *accomplishment of the poetical self,* with all its far-reaching consequences in terms of "literary history" (I am referring here to a consequence pertaining to the

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as the Trivium on the Way to the Polyphonic Novel. *Slavica* XXXII, 165–74; also Id. 2006, 77–93.

question of genre: possible, though not necessarily exclusive, pointing towards the new "heroic epic"). Thus *Eclogue 4* offers us the feasibility of being interpreted as the consummation of the "prophecy" made by the poet, this consummation becoming equivalent to the consciousness of the poetic self embodied in the innovation of a genre (sc. the renewed form of pastoral poetry). This explicit, or semi-explicit, prediction, placed by the poet near the end of his poem,[20] which *may* be regarded as pointing to the new heroic genre awaiting our poet at the moment, all the more seems to emphasize the poetic self-consciousness generated by the poetics of the "present" poem, *Eclogue 4.* In the second part of this study, I will be discussing some aspects of the poetic composition of Pushkin's "romantic tragedy" which I regard as relevant to a genre poetics-based interpetation of this play, hoping to locate the place and the role of *Boris Godunov* in the literary process that make it significant in what we define as "the history of literature". As we shall see, in this case, too, the question of genre poetics is strongly linked to the making of poetical consciousness in (and by) a specific work of art. To sum up, it is the poetic structure of both the Vergil eclogue and the Pushkinian drama that largely bears responsibility for the formation of the poetical self. In this paper, I offer a mapping of implicit prophecy through which the literary artefact is to poetically anticipate, or predict itself, fulfilling this prophecy and calling itself, the literary work, into existence.

Let us begin by performing this act of mapping for the text of *Eclogue 4.* The child, who is not merely the "protagonist" but in fact constitutes the very focal point of the poem, is exposed as early as in line 8 ("puero"). Any interpretation of this pastoral poem of extraordinary beauty, itself bearing a particular touch of extraordinariness,[21] can hardly avoid putting the question: *"Who is this child?"* I should like to stress it here that when seeking to identify Vergil's child, I do not at all aim to reveal some historical personage that might stand behind this enigmatic figure. Rather, the only viable path to follow in identifying this figure clearly seems the one that leads towards a reconstruction of the poetic structure of the Vergilian text woven around this figure, and which re-focuses on this central point. Yet we cannot, in the meantime, lose sight of the Vergilian pastoral's vital link with history, as this genre is a vivid example of what may be called the "poetization of history".[22] I will concentrate on the role of the child's figure in Eclogue 4, which as a central element in the poem's composition generates, forms and keeps alive the poetic structure of the eclogue.

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[20] Lines 53–7.
[21] None of the typical, or "ordinary" features that are wont to mark "pastoral", or bucolic, poetry can be found in this poem. What, then, makes it "bucolic"? This is the question to be answered in the first half of the present study.
[22] For the concept of the "poetization of history" see: Mezősi 2006.

Composition and Structure in Eclogue 4[23]

The first three lines expose the theme of the eclogue as something *extraordinary* and "grand-scale". Even the mere *act* of this exposition appears to be *unusual*: as early as in line 1 the poet invokes the "Sicilian Muses" — a beginning, as it is, fairly uncommon for the rest of the Vergilian bucolic corpus — as though to make the poem "outdo", in some way, the rest of this corpus. Apart from *Eclogue 4,* it is only in *Eclogues 6* and *8* where a Muse is put forward in the exposition part, yet in neither instance is the Muse invoked by the poet as it would be "due" for a goddess. In *Eclogue 8,* the word "Muse" ("Musam") is taken as a metonymy for "music", while in *Eclogue 6,* Thalea is mentioned in the third person, together with the adjectival locution "Syracosio ... versu" ("Sicilian measures", line 1[24]). In addition, we also encounter an invocation form in *Eclogue 10,* where the nymph Arethusa is being invoked (line 1); that this invocation is invested with some weight can hardly be disputed (it is the closing piece in the collection of pastoral poems, and on the poet's behalf it certainly is a declaration of farewell to the bucolic genre). Yet Arethusa can neither be regarded here as a "Muse" *per definitionem* nor as one in a metaphorical sense, just as Thalea in *Eclogue 6* cannot be taken to be allotted the role of the Muses as invoked in the first line of *Eclogue 4.* In those pieces of the Vergilian bucolic corpus where in the exposition of an eclogue a Muse (or some other deity) that carries reference to the Muses is put forward by the poet, the very act of invoking a superhuman being undoubtedly serves to induce and intone what may perhaps be called the formation of meaning in and by the poetic text. However, solely in the case of *Eclogue 4* will this "expositional intonation" bring about those consequences that are to necessarily prove as decisive in both the formation of the poetic structure and the process of genre formation.

Line 2 of *Eclogue 4* — "non omnis arbusta iuvant humilesque myricae" ("Orchards and humble tamarisks don't please everyone") — offers a revival of the *Rome* idea,[25] explicated in *Eclogue 1,* 22–25:

> sic canibus catulos similis, sic matribus haedos
> noram, sic paruis componere magna solebam.

[23] For my interpretation of the eclogue I have used Mynors' Oxford text (Mynors R. A. B. [ed.] 1969. *P. Vergili Maronis Opera.* Oxford). I also consulted the following commentaries: Coleman 1977, Havas 1989 and Clausen 1994.

[24] The literary meaning of this phrase is "[to play in] Syracusan verse". The English translations from the *Eclogues*, except where stated otherwise, are by Kline A. S. 2001. Poetry in Translation — A. S. Kline's Free Archive, http://www.tonykline.co.uk/index.html.

[25] The idea of the "revived Rome" is seen as a link between *Eclogue 4* and *Eclogue 1* in Putnam M. C. J. 1970. *Virgil's Pastoral Art. Studies in the Eclogues.* Princeton, 64–5.

> uerum haec tantum alias inter caput extulit urbes
> quantum lenta solent inter uiburna cupressi.[26]

The intertextual allusions right at the beginning of *Eclogue 4* (the second half of line 1, "paulo maiora canamus",[27] and all of line 2) recall the second part of line 24 in *Eclogue 1,* thus creating a joint anticipation of what actually stands in the epicentre of line 26: "Romam". The contrast in *Eclogue 4,* lines 2–3, "arbusta", "myricae" (trees, heather) ↔ "silvas", "silvae" (woods) refers the reader back to yet another contrast in *Eclogue 1,* line 25: "cupressi" (cypresses) ↔ "viburna" (willows), with "paulo maiora" (somewhat greater) in *Eclogue IV,* with line 1 further reinforcing this intertextual bridge stretching out between the two poems. The way the *Rome* idea is being developed in *Eclogue 4*, anticipated via intertextual references as seen above, bears considerable resemblance to how a musical theme, for example in a Mozart piano concerto, is built up and developed, with the intoned phrase, after repeated recursions with various ornaments applied, turning up as a motif to eventually unfold in the orchestral or the solo part into the theme that will mark the whole piece. A similar process can be observed in Vergil: in the exposition of the eclogue, intoned as if it were a starting (musical) phrase, the following three elements constitute the main theme, which may be thus perceived and interpreted: 1. the thematic reference to the Theocritean bucolic tradition (line 1); 2. the poetic (authorial) prophecy mobilizing the intertexts (line 2); and, finally, 3. the "novel" pastoral poetry and the consul's magistracy (again bearing reference to Rome; line 3). As we advance in the poem, snatches of the *Rome* motif emerge one after another, serving to decorate, interpret or just shade the anticipated theme ("consul", "Pollio", "gens aurea", "facta parentis iam legere ... poteris"[28]), all pointing towards the advent and consummation of the golden age, at the same time anticipating the making of a new genre, as if prophesying the advent and consummation of a great epic poem. (It should again be stressed that when prophecy is mentioned in this paper, poetic and not historical prophecy is meant, with special relevance to genre poetics.) By rallying the motif "...inter caput extulit urbes..." from *Eclogue 1,* the poet of *Eclogue 4,* simultaneously with the invocation, creates a horizon of expectation above the exposition supported by the frequent occurrence of the epithet *magnus.* The abundance of various forms of the adjective *magnus* in the eclogue is conspicuous, not to mention the various connotations that bear allusions to it.[29]

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26 "So I considered pups like dogs, kids like their mothers, / so I used to compare the great with the small. / But this city indeed has lifted her head as high among others, / as cypress trees are accustomed to do among the weeping willows."

27 "Let me sing a little more grandly".

28 "golden race", "you will read both of heroic glories, and your father's deeds".

29 See: "maiora" — line 1, "magnus" — 3, "magni" — 12, "magnos" (leones) — 22, "magnus"

"What is meant by this *grandeur*?" — the reader might ask after the exposition. The theme of grandeur then passes into anticipating the great work (lines 53–4), then the poet envisions himself winning over the great mythical poets Orpheus and Linus ("non me carminibus uincet nec Thracius Orpheus / nec Linus, huic mater quamuis atque huic pater adsit, / Orphei Calliopea, Lino formosus Apollo"[30]), finally invoking the child to be born. With this he picks up the beginning line: "Sicelides Musae ... canamus". The subject of lines 54–9 is "singing": "singing about the (great) deeds" ("tua dicere facta"), with the song and the singers' contest being thematized throughout this section. Then the collocation "parue puer ... matrem [sc. tuam]" ("Little child ... [your] mother ...") in line 60 picks up line 54 ("tua [sc. facta]", "deeds"), linking the "song-motif" (54–9) to the theme of the child. Thus line 54–9 and 60–3 resp. jointly recall not only line 1 ("Musae" and "canamus") but 3 as well: "*si canimus* ... sint consule dignae"; the actual force of the allusion is provided not so much by the identical verbal usage as the poet's wish explicated from line 53 and onwards. By mentioning the names of Orpheus, Linus and Pan, a *conditional* situation is being drawn up: "*if* I am to live (to see), I will sing your deeds", "and in this case neither Orpheus, nor Linus, nor even Pan will be able to win me over". By making the statement "if (I) am to sing [si canimus], I will defeat everyone, even Pan himself", the poet seems to make a "promise" of sorts *to leave the bucolean paradigm*. The positioning of "consule dignae" ("fit for a consul", right after "si canimus") in line 3 and the closing lines ("parve puer" etc.) that follow the expounding of "si canimus" (lines 53–9) each serve to provide a link between the "consul" and the child, "puer" (who, according to the prediction in line 12, will be born under the "consul's" magistracy), suggesting that *it is the singing about the birth of the child that is "fit for a consul".* As a result, we can see *Eclogue 4* as being *organized as an integrated narrative of the themes intoned in the exposition.* Nothing that comes after the three-line exposition carries any further information in addition to what has already been learnt from these three lines — "si canimus silvas" ("that is, if we are to compose a pastoral verse"), "let then the pastoral be worthy of the consul". Vergil no doubt makes his "pastoral verse" fulfil this "requirement" as the subject of *Eclogue 4* is the course of the wonderful child's life from birth to full manhood; in other words, the Golden Age. The "pastoral verse" ("silvae"), via the accomplishment of its poet, performs the task it has set for itself: the eclogue makes itself worthy of the consul by retrospectively reinforcing its own starting-point. The narrative of the eclogue, by resuscitating the speech mode of "if we are to compose a pastoral verse, let it be worthy of a consul", which has originally been suspended, meets the expectations set by itself. The tool used is fairly simple: the subjunctives are

(Achilles) — 36, "magnos" — 48, "magnum" — 49.

[30] "Thracian Orpheus and Linus will not overcome me in song, / though his mother helps the one, his father the other, Calliope Orpheus, and lovely Apollo Linus."

changed for the indicative: "canamus" ("let us sing") will turn into "canimus" ("we are singing, we are about to sing") — meant not so much literally but symbolically; instead of *sint* and *canamus* the poem turns into the indicative: "will be" and "I will sing" (53–9) are to determine the poetic text. The motif of *great(ness)* will dissolve in the anticipation of the "grand" work to come; by the end of the eclogue we are led back to the child who is to be born, and invokes him (offering an allusion to line 1), thus rounding off the retrospective-invocational poetic structure, the formation of which was launched by this very anticipation.

To sum up what has been said, the exposition of the poem provides the contours of the space to be filled by the poetic text. The special relevance of *Eclogue 4* to genre poetics within the Vergilian bucolic corpus is granted by the formation of the poetic structure that serves to establish a new type of pastoral. This marks the importance of the poet's refraining from the traditional form of pastoral declared in the exposition of the eclogu.[31] Nevertheless, this refraining serves to develop the genre on a *grander* scale ("maiora canamus"), thus pledging (anticipating) to stay *within* the pastoral genre. The intonation of "Sicelides Musae" is a reference pointing to the Theocritean tradition, yet by leaving this behind as well as his own mode of pastoral (alluding to some of his own texts), Vergil, in the closing line of his exposition, makes explicit the *Rome* idea, lending it a certain personal touch. Thus the conditional sentence in line 3 picks up line 1 ("canimus" → "canamus"), the insistence and urging carried by the hortative subjunctive dropped and the indicative, with its "static", "established" status conveying a promise on the behalf of the poet to occupy his position as the establisher of the "old-new genre". Simultaneously, and in accordance with this, the twofold occurrence of the word "silva" (woods) in line 3 puts a stamp on the poet's determination to carry out his "*grand* enterprise".

In *Eclogue 4,* the child who is to be born will bring about the golden age; or, if the critic wishes to stick to the principles followed throughout the above interpretation, it may perhaps sound more authentic to say that the child is to found, or *create,* this golden age. This means that the inner development of the poem is semantically equivalent to the growth of the child. This is not to say that *Eclogue 4* directly or even indirectly "anticipates" the later heroic epic, the *Aeneid*; rather, this piece in the series of Vergil's bucolic poems — perhaps the most mature one — seems to perfectly meet the challenge presented to the pastoral by what is generally called "literary history" but for which "poetics of genres"[32] could perhaps be a more appropriate term. The poetic performance in *Eclogue 4* so revives and re-generates the pastoral genre that while none of the elements that traditionally

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[31] "It is part of the teasing nature of these poems that Virgil should proclaim his adherence to a literary ancestry at the very moments when he is most moving away from it." Jenkyns R. 1989. Virgil and Arcadia. *The Journal of Roman Studies* 79, 26–39; 34.

[32] In the sense of "the making of genres".

marked this genre (shepherd, love etc.) appear in this poem, the bucolic character is assured solely by the autoreferentialities that make for the formation of the poetic structure. The function of the invocation is to launch an anticipation — to stress again: on the level of poetic composition and NOT on some "autobiographical" plane — that lays down the path leading us to a poetically structured comprehension of what goes on in the eclogue, which makes its reader face the question: What is a pastoral poem like which lacks shepherds? As if the basic intention of this text lay in prying apart the boundaries of its own genre —resulting in the birth of a novel kind of poetry different from the old pastoral verse, the apparently "typical" traits of which the poet now keeps outside his text, at the same time putting his poem on a new track that will designate *Eclogue 4* to re-create the pastoral on the plane of genre poetics.[33] The text thus constituted is an autoreferential realization of this innovative intention: the poetic innovation displays itself, making us witness the "making of literary history". The triple metaphor of the newborn child — Golden Age — text can here be seen in operation.

As far as the Golden Age is concerned, it will *never* come. However, it is still to come (vss. 53–9). Can this antinomy ever be dissolved? To answer this question, let us examine yet another instance of poetic autoreference that in some way points to, and generates, a novel Golden Age — needless to say that in this case the act of prediction, or anticipation, is also performed in the course of literary (and not "factual") history.

PART 2

Towards the Golden Age: an Author in the Making. Skepticism, Language, Poetics in Pushkin's "Romantic Tragedy"

The particular way the syuzhet ("сюжет") structure of Pushkin's *Boris Godunov* is organized systematically de-constructs, dissembles the *historical pathos* which had served to cement the narrative structure of the praetext, or "foretext", to this drama, Nikolai Karamzin's grand historiographical work.[34] The pathos in the diction of the characters who take part in the political struggle becomes feigned in the perspective of the poetic structure of the play. Of all the dramatic scenes, there is but one

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[33] See: Putnam 1970: 136–65. Putnam defines *Eclogue 4* as a "magic carmen", leaving no doubts that it belongs to the pastoral: "Broad as the vistas, and stimulating as the ideas are, the point of *Eclogue 4* is still only a higher version of pastoral. It is an escapist, idealized world, powerful enough to presume a victory of *otium,* after a final purgation of time's processes. It is also, ultimately, a very un-Roman, unrealistic one. But Virgil acknowledges the full meaning of this distinction in his next two works." Ibid. 165.

[34] Карамзин Н. 1993. *История государства российского I-IV.* Калуга.

that is deconstructed *on a different plane*: the monastery scene, with Grigory the novice and Pimen the chronicler-monk. One has the impression as if Pushkin, in Pimen's figure, were paying hommage to the historiographer and to the historian[35] — the question is whether the hommage is paid to Karamzin or his predecessors referred to passim on the pages of *История*. It is probable that our poet here is paying hommage to *historiography as a genre.* My distinctive use of the two terms "historiographer" and "historian" indicate an immanent divergence which refers to the demarcation line running between the two different ways of handling the *Boris Godunov* syuzhet, viz. Karamzin's narrative and Pushkin's historical drama. The famous Tacitean principle of *sine ira et studio,*[36] once regarded as the historian's *profession de foi,* which, however, actually falls victim to the sombre passion of the Roman historian, is later to be resuscitated in the Pushkinian historical tragedy, emerging in Grigory's monologue as an important poetic allusion:

> Ни на челе высоком, ни во взорах
> Нельзя прочесть его сокрытых дум;
> Всё тот же вид смиренный, величавый.
> Так точно дьяк в приказах поседелый
> *Спокойно зрит на правых и виновных,*
> *Добру и злу внимая равнодушно,*
> *Не ведая ни жалости, ни гнева.*[37]

Pushkin appears to draw an analogy between Karamzin and Pimen: both historiographers, spoken or unspoken, confess themselves to be adherents of Tacitus. The poet will make an especially apt use of this situation in the way he builds Pimen's character: he will, at the same time, deconstruct and re-assemble the figure he had previously launched in the "Tacitean" direction, now decomposing and conducting it in another way.

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[35] Cf. Caryl Emerson's comment on Karamzin's description of Dmitry the tsarevich's death: "From the later perspectives of Puškin and Musorgsky ... we might say that Karamzin as historical narrator prefigured the chronicler Pimen." Emerson — Oldani 1994: 19.

[36] "unmoved [...] by either hatred or partiality", Book I, p. 2. Translations from Tacitus' *Annals* are taken from the edition: *The Annals of Tacitus.* Books I–VI. An English Translation with Introduction, Notes and Maps by George Gilbert Ramsay. London 1904.

[37] "Not on his lofty brow, nor in his looks / May one peruse his secret thoughts; always / The same aspect; lowly at once, and lofty — / Like some state Minister grown grey in office, / Calmly alike he contemplates the just / And guilty, with indifference he hears / Evil and good, and knows not wrath nor pity."
Translated by Alfred Hayes. The Project Gutenberg EBook of *Boris Godunov,* by Alexander Pushkin. All translations of *Boris Godunov,* unless otherwise stated, are taken from this edition.

Composition and Structure in Boris Godunov. A Close Reading of the Monastery Scene[38]

A textual analysis of Pimen and Grigory's monologues that serve to expose the monastery scene will show that the poetic transformation of the Karamzinian historiography performed by Pushkin — in other words, the *poetization* of Karamzin's narrative — makes up for the *re-composed narrative* to emerge from beneath a work of historiography. The closing three lines in Grigory's monologue (italicized in the above citation) can be taken as an unambiguous allusion to Tacitus' memorable *sine ira et studio* from the beginning of Book I in *The Annals.* The poet makes Grigory evolve the Tacitean principle by setting up a brilliantly structured triple parallel: the pairs of antonyms (in the italicized portion of the citation) stand at the end of the verse in the first and third lines and in the middle of the verse in the second line. Both Pimen's character and his diction unmistakably echo the closing sentence from the First Chapter in Book I of *The Annals:*

Inde consilium mihi pauca de Augusto et extrema *tradere*, mox Tibery principatum et cetera, *sine ira et studio, quorum causas procul habeo.*[39]

Pimen's monologue appears to echo the first half of this sentence ("inde ... tradere"), with the last three lines of Grigory's speech reflecting the second half ("sine ... habeo"). In addition to the Tacitean reminiscence that emerges at the end of Grigory's speech, a further reference to the notorious prooemium of *The Annals* can be spotted in the Pushkin text. As if the relative clause "quorum causas procul habeo" (from any motives to which I am far removed) were, if in a hidden form, present in Pimen's philosophy of history — that is, his relation with the past events he is chronicling. Grigory makes a reference to Pimen's *impartiality* (explicitly mentioning his "indifference"), who "knows not wrath, nor pity", which unmistakably points to the Tacitean phrase *sine studio.* Pimen, as the person committed to record the past events, apparently stands far above the recorded events, thus securing for himself a position from which he can survey "... the past [that] unrolls before [him] ... Full of events, and troubled like the deep". The statement "the past [that] unrolls before me", a reference to Pimen's special status as a chronicler, is further stressed by the "Tacitean" ending of Grigory's monologue. However, the figure of Pimen is facing *the very same process*– the collocation *sine ira et studio* – that the historian's profession

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[38] The text I have used is from: Пушкин А. С. 1952–62. *Собрание сочинений в десяти томах.* Под общей редакцией Д. Благого; С. Бонди, В. Виноградова, Ю. Оксмана. Москва.

[39] Fisher C. D. (ed.) 1985. *Cornelii Taciti Annalium ab excessu divi Augusti libri.* Oxford, Liber I 1: "*I purpose, therefore, to write* shortly of Augustus and his end, and then narrate the reigns of Tiberius and his successors; *unmoved, as I have no reason to be moved, by either hatred or partiality.*" Italics are mine both in the original and the translation.

de foi faces in the first book of *The Annals.* In Tacitus, this condensed collocation, exposing impartiality and abstinence from wrath, is broken up by *hatred (wrath) and partiality,* viz. the *historian's* hatred and partiality. Just as in Pushkin: the chronicler's impartiality, first suggested by Pimen, then made explicit by Grigory's speech, is questioned by the keyword, "wrath", recurring at the end of Pimen's grand monologue ("we have *angered* God", (про*гнева*ли мы бога). This fine, almost ethereal, allusion comes as the first token of the very *wrath and impartiality* which Pimen, *the writer of a narrative,* actually bears toward the main figure, Boris, in his chronicle. The poetic force in the recurrence of this motif (*гнева* → про*гнева*ли мы бога), operating as an indirect semantic correlation between the two loci, is presumably granted by the "imperfectness" of the allusion. While Grigory speaks of Pimen's wrath (its absence), what Pimen mentions is not his own but God's wrath ("we have angered God"). The key importance of this motif recurrence is marked by its position in the dramatic text: the sentence starting with "Про*гнева*ли мы бога" closes Pimen's monologue, yet it is at the same time the first manifest sign of Grigory's incitement by Pimen. The primary semantics of Pimen's grand monologue is without doubt connected to his placating the perturbed novice. However, the narratives in this monologue, related by Pimen to soothe "[him], from boyhood up, a wretched monk, / Wander[ing] from cell to cell", "molested by the fiend", are all staged "in the quiet cloister [of] the Lord", yet the main character in each of them is a *terrestrial* "sovereign lord": "Think, my son, / On the great tsars" — thus Pimen introduces his "sacred" narratives, relating the initiation ceremonies of two "great tsars" to become a monk, those of Ivan the Terrible and his son Feodor. Instead of a narrative about *the third tsar,* which we would expect to follow at this point, comes a brief jeremiad glowing with *wrath*:

> Уж не видать такого нам царя.
> О страшное, невиданное горе!
> Прогневали мы бога, согрешили:
> Владыкою себе цареубийцу
> Мы нарекли.[40]

Grigory takes the hint: he straightaway inquires about "the death / Of young Dimitry, the tsarevich", to clear the way for the narrative of the initiation ceremony for the third tsar to become a monk. This story is not only not left out of the series of Pimen's narratives; on the contrary, it becomes by far the most important of all the stories (Pimen's "final record"[41]) — not merely in the chronicler's but in the poet's

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[40] "Never again shall we see such a tsar. / O, horrible, appalling woe! We have sinned, / We have angered God; we have chosen for our ruler / A tsar's assassin."

[41] Musorgsky will "forget" that this one is the last, i.e. the "final", among Pimen's records: in

hands as well. It should be noted that Grigory's instigation by Pimen has a further purport beyond the "mere" action of direct incitement, constituting a modeling of the whole of the syuzhet development of the play based upon a poetic system of motif parallels. According to Pimen's account, Boris Godunov's predecessors would, at the end of their lives, enter a monastery and become a monks, with miraculous events happening during the initiation ceremonies. The narrator, however, places a caesura here — a caesura that straightaway takes the role of a lacuna: instead of going on with the story to meet the "natural expectations" aroused by what has so far been told (and what from this point "ought to" be said about Boris Godunov), he stops for a moment, attributing no more than a rather insinuating hint to the tsar in turn. This hiatus induces tension and excitement in the audience, which is to say in Grigory, who now urges the lacuna to be filled: "what is going to happen?" — asks Grigory as do we, the actual audience, or readers of the play, who are following Pimen's (and Pushkin's) narrative. Pimen's admonition, "designed" to soothe the novice whose peace has been "disturbed by demon visions", calls attention to the ritual process of the Russian tsars entering the holy order before their death.[42] Accordingly, the present ruler on the throne is *once* to become a monk... Pimen thus does not simply incite Grigory to seize power as Pretender (Самозванец) but, what is even more intriguing poetically, by making a reference (indicating the swapping of personae that is to come) to what will become a model for the formation of the play's syuzhet, the dramaturgy of the tsar becoming monk and the monk becoming tsar to designate the "virtual scene"[43] for the characters of the play. All in all, it has by now become difficult to give full credit to Grigory's words in the last verse of his entry monologue (viz. that Pimen "knows not wrath nor pity"). The poet, although never explicitly undermining the chronicler-monk's impartiality, acts exactly the same way as Pimen in that he entirely leaves to us, the listeners (readers) of his story, how we handle this "information", which actually is an instigation to carry out a coup d'etat. What in Karamzin, and in Tacitus, has so far formed a constant and homogeneous unity — the equivalence of the narrator with the author-historian — is now separated in and by Pushkinian "historiography", with the chronicler losing his position as the omniscient narrator, ceding it to the author, who as a result straightaway becomes "the historian", *the authentic writer of the narrative* woven about Boris Godunov and the *smuta*. In Pushkin, the two voices — that of the chronicler (historiographer) on the one hand and of the author ("he who makes the narrative") on the other — are set apart: the principle of *sine ira et studio* ceases

the opera Pimen relates the story about the blind old man's wonderful healing. This is a true instance of forgetfulness, of the "Shakespearean kind".

[42] Pimen's account of Ivan IV's "bartering ... the golden crown for a cowl" refers to an historical tradition in old Russia: at the end of their lives the tsars, as a rule, took the monastic vow.

[43] For the concept of "virtual scene" in *Boris Godunov* see: Mezősi 2003.

to be attributed to the chronicler and is conferred over to the author-poet. By this particular poetic means the poet sets himself, instead of his chronicler-character, in a position that grants him a unique perspective wherefrom he is able to take an overall view of all characters and all events in the play.

Karamzin's ideologically determined way of "reading history" is manifestly echoed in Pimen's philosophy of history, articulated by the chronicler in a number of his utterances. Pushkin's transformative poetic act can be traced here: he neither "follows" nor "rejects" his historian-predecessor — actually his *fons maior* — but re-integrates him at a different level, at that of *poetic transformation,* into his "history" (in the Shakespearean sense, or, with Pushkin's own term, "romantic tragedy").

A thorough critical interpretation of the *Boris Godunov* suzhet can hardly avoid the concept of *Redemption* as all its three phases (Karamzin, Pushkin, Musorgsky) focus on the question of Salvation. In Pushkin's *Boris,* we can see an unfinished process of Salvation left in a *fragmented* state; this fragmentation makes the reader see in the play a demarcation line between "classic drama" and the novel. The Pushkin text creates a vast biblical field of connotations extending from the covenant between Abraham and God to the Gospels, underlining Pimen's authenticity as historiographer — but not as author-poet, i.e. not as the one who *makes the story.* To illustrate what has been said, let us have a close look at Grigory's description of his "accursed dream":

> Г р и г о р и й.
> Ты всё писал и сном не позабылся,
> А мой покой бесовское мечтанье
> Тревожило, и враг меня мутил.
> Мне снилося, что лестница крутая
> Меня вела на башню; с высоты
> Мне виделась Москва, что муравейник;
> Внизу народ на площади кипел
> И на меня указывал со смехом,
> И стыдно мне и страшно становилось —
> И, падая стремглав, я пробуждался....
> И три раза мне снился тот же сон.
> Не чудно ли?[44]

[44] "All night long / Thou hast been writing and abstained from sleep, / While demon visions have disturbed my peace, / The fiend molested me. I dreamed I scaled / By winding stairs a turret, from whose height / Moscow appeared an anthill, where the people / Seethed in the squares below and pointed at me / With laughter. Shame and terror came upon me — / And falling headlong, I awoke. Three times / I dreamed the selfsame dream. / Is it not strange?"

A textual analysis of this account of the dream will help elucidate the intricate ways the syuzhet formation of the drama is connected to, and is embedded in, Salvation. This curious dream recalls one of the three *temptations* Jesus was exposed to in the desert (being offered earthly wealth and power), whereas the topos of falling down from high above bears an allusion to the fall of the Angel, with "I scaled / By *winding stairs* a turret") inferring the connotation of the tower of Babel in the text.[45] This and further elements in the narrative that allude to the Biblical text ("While demon visions have disturbed my peace, / The fiend molested me"), as if circumvallating with pretexts from the Scriptures the topos of *temptation,* expose the cycle of the Fall → Redemption → Fall with numerous and emphasized references to the presence of the Evil One ("accursed", "demon", "fiend"). This cycle yields us the syuzhet as developed in the course of the play. In New Testament Greek, the word used for "temptation" is "peirasmos", the actual sense of which is *trial,* or *test,* the verb "peiraô" meaning *to try, attempt [to do sth], to try, prove [sy], put [sy] to the proof.*[46] There can hardly be any doubt that the motif of "trial", "test" is of central and decisive importance in *Boris Godunov.* It can be traced as early as in the first scene, where the play is actually launched by prince Vorotinsky's trial by Shuysky, then we have Godunov's trial by the *narod* pleading him to take the crown, and later on, the strange dream that recurs three times to tempt, or "try", Grigory etc. Yet among all of the "temptations" in *Boris Godunov* by far the most important is the one that comes from Pimen: the incitement. Further appearances of the temptation motif, or "temptation scenes", are: Suisky → the boyar Pushkin; Shuysky → Godunov; the Pretender and Marina trying each other; Pushkin → Basmanov. Losing one's innocence betrays strong ties and correlation with the Fall (Marina, for example, is explicitly referred to as "serpent" by the Pretender at the end of the Fountain-scene). Just as in the Scriptures, the stakes of temptation are whether innocence and chastity can be preserved. Among the poetic representations of the crucial relationship between trial and chastity, temptation and innocence in *Boris Godunov,* probably the most important and far-reaching effect on the structure of the play is brought about by what opens up grand-scale perspectives before a critical interpretation: the conspicuous analogy between the testaments left by Pimen and Boris resp. Arriving at the autumn of his life, Pimen warns his pupil of "woman's seductive love". Boris thus formulates his warnings, addressed to his son, who in the very moment of the paternal blessing is still rival to the Pretender — and a "pupil" to the dying tsar: "He, who through passion has been wont to wallow / In vicious pleasures in his youthful days, / Becomes in manhood

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[45]   A further reference to the Biblical tower, "winding stairs", adds to the force of this poetic trope.

[46]   In a recent article (Mezősi 2004), I termed as "poetics of provocation" the ways the characters in *Boris Godunov* put one another to the test.

bloodthirsty and surly; / His mind untimely darkens." Simultaneously, albeit the other way round, the chronicler's figure is being undone, undergoing a process of de-construction, with the role of the *writer of the story* being conferred onto the creator of this figure. With this, as has already been mentioned, Pimen "renders" the poet the one and only authentic writer of the story about Boris Godunov. In fact, it is the poet, naturally, who wrests the mace out of the hands of the figure created by himself — to pinch Vergil's *bon mot,* when accused of infringing Homer's copyright, he is alleged to have said "it is easier to wrest the mace out of Hercules' hands than to take a verse from Homer".

The textual analyses on the pages above draw up the contours of a narrative that can be understood in terms of genre poetics which, owing to the poetization by Pushkin of the Karamzinian historiography, thus becomes a narration of the writing of the story, or a "meta-narrative".[47] This meta-narrative too has its own *hero:* the fate (or *story...*) of the belief in "truth" and in historical personages in Russian literary thinking of the 19th century. It tells us about the road leading from historiography to historical drama. No adequate or authentic poetical interpretation, however, of the historical drama as understood in the modern sense (appealing to the Shakespearean tradition, esp. the histories) can avoid the definite declaration that the pieces belonging to this genre are not equivalent to some sort of "topical" staging of the historical events they "depict". The genre of Russian history (play), or dramatic chronicle, outspokenly defies any form of moralisation whatsoever, and, accordingly, should be alien to any "obligatory" preconception(s) of aspiring to so-called "historical fidelity". In Karamzin's *History... (История...),* designed by its author to represent and mediate his own ethos, the function of the biography of the autarch is to convey the moral lesson, providing the reader with a kind of ethical paradigm. Judging by the *История,* Karamzin, no doubt influenced by Montesquieu, was an adherent of firmly established state power and undivided monarchical rule. It is this monarchist attitude that drives him when he outspokenly condemns Boris Godunov in the last but one tome of his *History....* Karamzin and Pushkin both view history as writers, both of them being pioneers in their own genre, although their perspectives were different: whereas Karamzin seeks to arrange heterogeneous elements, historical events and personages divergent from one another into one organic unit, Pushkin *de genere* views with skepticism that way of thinking (and its product) which basically works with finished forms.[48] The following story well illuminates the "strategic" difference between the two minds,

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[47] On the "poetics of transposition" concerning the *Boris* tale, see: Emerson 1986: 1–29; on Pushkin's dialogue with Karamzin, see: ibid. 137–41.

[48] "If Karamzin's telling was a model of cohesion, Pushkin's *Boris* is a model of fragmentation and unexpectedness — spatial, temporal, stylistic." Emerson — Oldani 1994: 24. For the "unexpectedness" as a basic feature in the poetics of Pushkin, see: Shaw J. Th. 1994. *Puškin's*

that of the moralistic historiographer on the one hand and the poetic skepticist on the other: Karamzin, expressing his satisfaction over Pushkin's *Boris Godunov,* proposed that Pushkin should have Godunov read the Bible on the scene, as the tsar had had the reputation of being an ardent believer. In a letter addressed to Vyazemsky, Pushkin thanked Karamzin for this idea, saying he "would seat [Godunov] by the Gospel and have him read Herod's story".[49] The supremacy of the unexpected and indirect over the expected and obvious (the "natural expectations" of the audience) bespeaks of the dominance of a poetic speech which operates through poetic irony as the main principle in the compositional process. In Pushkin, the driving force underlying the dramatic action is gossip and slander; it is the gossip spread about the Uglich happenings that connects the events in the drama together. Pushkin's discourse with Karamzin can be detected here: the latter's authoritative voice is that of divine Providence, whereas in Pushkin this homogeneous narrative structure is undermined: history is no more made by God, but by man. With Pushkin's Boris and Pretender, a new kind of dramatic conflict is emerging: these figures would heavily challenge the Karamzian notion about Providence, questioning the concept of heroic personage and its role in history, and consequently, the representation of (historical) "truth" on the stage.

The "question of questions" raised by our play enquires about the *chances of Redeption* that awaits Man upon his Fall. The way the dramatic syuzhet develops seems to adequately model the road leading from Biblical Genesis up to Golgotha. As a representative of the *polyphonic drama,*[50] Pushkin's romantic tragedy becomes a pioneer in literary history in that it leaves, or is about to leave, the dramatic genre owing to the scenic polyphony generated by its irony-based composition and virtual stagecraf.[51] Those features which constitute what I call "polyphonic drama" are to be detected, curiously, not so much in the other *Boris* drama, the Musorgsky opera, as in *Khovanshchina* by the same composer. However, if we want to elucidate the way the syuzhet forms and develops in Musorgsky's *Boris Godunov,* the opera borrowing its subject-theme from Pushkin's text and entering into dialogue with it, there is one important aspect that can hardly be ignored, viz. the illumination of the relationship between *Salvation* and the syuzhet structure. The authorial concept

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Poetics of the Unexpected. The Nonrhymed Lines in the Rhymed Poetry and the Rhymed Lines in the Nonrhymed Poetry. Columbus, Ohio.

[49] Letter to Vyazemsky, 13–15th September, 1825. Пушкин А. С. 1952-62. *Собрание сочинений в десяти томах.* Vol. 9. Москва, 205..

[50] "Polyphonic drama", or "polyphonic dramaturgy", is the central category in my interpretation of the Russian history, or chronicle drama, which forms the subject-matter of my last book (Mezősi 2006) discussing Pushkin's *Boris Godunov* and Musorgsky's *Khovanshchina* together. Two of the Pushkin chapters of this book have previously appeared in print in English (Mezősi 1997; Id. 2003).

[51] See: note 41.

— in part crystallizing from the discourse with its main praetext, in part stemming from the author's personal experience — which may be named the "poiesis of the personality falling asunder" is constituted in an attempt made by the composer-artist to eliminate the "Boris Godunov syuzhet".

CONCLUSION

As we have seen, the idea of "eternal return" in Vergil's poem is conveyed by a reference made to the expected arrival of the "Golden Age" ("toto surget gens aurea mundo"[52]). The notion of the "Golden Age" will later return on a much grander scale: Vergil, regarded as the greatest of Roman poets in what came to be the "classical period" of Roman literature, was to become an emblem for the "Golden Age" of that literature. Within the Russian paradigm, it is Pushkin who was allotted the same role as Vergil in Rome: becoming the etalon for Russian writers, he came to represent the "Golden Age" in Russian literature, having created the literary language in Russia himself. Vergil's *Eclogue 4* and Pushkin's *Boris Godunov* are both vivid examples of how a literary genre is being re-created in and by a single poetic work that has conspicuously been made void of some of the most typical tokens that were traditionally regarded as indispensable for that genre. Our eclogue has no shepherds, no love to sing about; yet the pastoral genre "works" perfectly without these traits being formally present in the text through what can be called an "autopoetic process" generated throughout the poem. Our drama has no open-scene dialogue, and, consequently, no dramatic conflict between the chief characters; *Boris Godunov,* however, seems to do pretty well without this feature, managing to (re-)constitute a new genre, the "historical tragedy" — again through an act of autopoesis.

"History, however paradoxical this may sound, is not the science of preserving, let alone that of honouring, the past. On the contrary, it provides us with historical knowledge by stating its experience of never-ceasing temporality as the very condition of self-comprehension interested in the present. This is what has been taught by Schiller, whose opportunities allowed him to conceive the accomplishment of the self on grounds much safer than we have today. History, he said,"cures us of the excessive adoration of antiquity and the infantile yearning towards past times; while it draws our attention to our own domain, it does not allow us to want the return of the glorious Golden Age of Alexander the Great or Emperor Augustus".[53]

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[52] Line 9: "in the whole world the golden race will arise".

[53] Kulcsár Szabó E. Hatástörténet és metahistória. Hozzáférhető-e a történetiség? [History of Influence and Metahistory. Is Historicity Accessible?] *Literatura* 1995 (1), 80. The translation is mine. The citation from Schiller cf. Schiller Fr. 1913. *Horenausgabe.* Ed. by C. Schuddekopf and C. Hofer. Bd. 6. München — Leipzig, 262.

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