

THE NABOKOVIAN

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The Nabokovian serves to report and stimulate Nabokov scholarship and to create a link between Nabokov scholars, both in the USA and abroad.

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NEWS

by Stephen Jan Parker

Marking the completion of its fifteenth year of publication, *The Nabokovian* in this issue embarks on a new sort of activity. Brian Boyd is engaged in annotating *Ada*, and he has requested the active participation of *Nabokovian* readers. As he explains, the results of such a collective effort "should bring us closer to the kind of completeness impossible from one person's efforts." Thus, much of this thirtieth edition is given over to the first installment of the ongoing annotation. We encourage readers to join in this collaborative effort.

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There was an immediate and gratifying response to our call for sponsors of *Nabokovian* subscriptions for individuals in Russia and Eastern Europe. Eric Hyman, Michael Juliar, Marina Ledkovsky, Fan Parker, Jacob Pultorak, Thomas Sims, and several others who prefer to remain anonymous came forward with great generosity. *The Nabokovian*, on behalf of its readers in Russia and Eastern Europe, is grateful for this uncommon show of assistance and support.

*

From D. Barton Johnson: The new journal *Nabokov Studies* will be launched in 1993. A refereed, scholarly publication, *Nabokov Studies* will be edited by D. Barton Johnson and published by Charles Schlacks. Gennady Barabtarlo will serve as review editor. The editors will be advised and assisted by an international board of eminent Nabokov scholars. The aim of the journal, which is sponsored by the Vladimir Nabokov Society, is to provide a forum for the best in Nabokov scholarship.

Contributions may deal with any aspect of Nabokov studies or *any* subject matter so long as it concerns Nabokov in some substantive way. The only limitation is that bibliography, annotations, notes, queries, documents, conference paper and dissertation abstracts, Nabokoviana, and Nabokov related news will continue to appear exclusively in *The Nabokovian*. In addition to articles, *Nabokov Studies* will offer detailed reviews of current and past publications on Nabokov (including dissertations), and, perhaps, a modest annual prize for the year's outstanding contribution to the field. We also visualize survey articles focusing on topics such as the history of Nabokov scholarship and comprehensive overviews of critical studies of individual Nabokov works.

Submissions may be of any length and in any major European language, although English will be the usual language of publication. Submissions should observe *The MLA Style Manual* (but with footnotes at the bottom of each page). Preliminary inquiries are welcome. Initial submissions should be in three hard copies accompanied by return postage for one copy. Final, revised (accepted) manuscripts should be on disk, preferably in WordPerfect or ASCII, plus one print copy. Graphic materials are welcome. Although anyone may submit article manuscripts, publication of accepted manuscripts will ordinarily require membership in the Vladimir Nabokov Society and subscription to the journal itself.

The inaugural issue will appear in late 1993. Depending upon the quality and quantity of submissions, two issues are envisioned for 1994; subject to the same conditions, publication from 1995 onward will be four issues per year.

Individual subscriptions are \$20.75 domestic; \$21.50 overseas. Institutional subscriptions: \$30.75;

\$31.50 overseas. Please urge your library to order. Subscription orders should go to:

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All of the Society sessions at AATSEEL and MLA in December in New York were well attended. The papers read were the following:

AATSEEL: The Russian Years

"On Nabokov's Pen Name Sirin," Gavriel Shapiro (Cornell); "Nabokov's Russian Criticism," Galya Diment (U of Washington); "Cloud, Castle, Lake' and the Problem of Entering the Otherworld in VN's Prose," Maxim D. Shroyer (Yale); "On Nabokov's 'The Emyrean Path'," Alexander Dunkel (U of Arizona).

MLA: General Session

"The Salome Motif in *Invitation to a Beheading*," Gavriel Shapiro (Cornell); "A Persistent Snore in the Next Room: Nabokov and *Finnegans Wake*," Tom

Goldpaugh (Marist College); "Nabokov's *Lolita*, Lacan's Mirrors," Virginia L. Blum (U of Kentucky); "On Richard Rorty's Reading of Nabokov," Leona Toker (Hebrew University, Jerusalem).

MLA: Vladimir Nabokov's Discovery of America

"Poshlost or Culture Industry: VN and Adorno on American Mass Culture," John Burt Foster, Jr. (George Mason); "VN's Discovery of America: From Russia to *Lolita*," Ellen Pifer (U of Delaware); "The Intersection of McEwen and Wheaton: VN's Discovery of Clare, Michigan," Joel J. Brattin (Worcester Polytechnic Institute); "VN and America's Cinema: Finding *Pale Fire* in David Thompson's *Suspects*," Shoshana M. Knapp (Virginia Polytechnic Institute).

Also at AATSEEL, at the panel on Russian Emigré Literature:

"VN's *The Gift*: Chernyshevski As a Failed Hero," Hana Pichova (U of Texas); "The Motif of Chess in Nabokov," Bruce Holl (Trinity U).

And, at the Midwest Slavic Conference, May 1, East Lansing, MI:

"The 'Metatheater' of Nabokov and Pirandello," Yana Hashamova (U of Illinois).

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New 1993 publications:

- John Burt Foster. *Nabokov's Art of Memory and European Modernism*. Princeton: Princeton University Press. "In a fresh approach stressing Nabokov's European context, John Foster shows how this writer's art of memory intersects with early twentieth-century modernism."

- *Nabokov: Autobiography, Biography, and Fiction*. Special edition of *Cycnos* (Nice, France), Volume 10, no. 1. Contains abbreviated texts of all papers delivered at the international Nabokov conference, June 1992.

- Paperback editions of Brian Boyd. *Vladimir Nabokov: The Russian Years* and *Vladimir Nabokov: The American Years*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.

Upcoming publications:

- Gennady Barabtarlo. *Aerial View. Essays on Nabokov's Art and Metaphysics*. Peter Lang; for summer or fall 1993.

*

Vadim Stark, Secretary of the Nabokov Fund in St. Petersburg, sends news of recent activities in Russia. In the middle of January the Nabokov Fund, an independent public association, obtained several rooms on the ground floor of the Nabokov home at 47 Bolshaya Morskaya Street as its quarters. The intention is to restore the home, create a Nabokov museum (one room now holds an exhibit of photographs and documents), as well as a library of Russian foreign literature, establish a "Nabokov Center," publish a Nabokov journal, and engage in what Stark calls "legitimate" publication of Nabokov's works. On April 7 an exhibition, "The History of the Nabokov Mansion," was scheduled, and later in the month a conference was planned to coincide with the celebration of Nabokov's birthday. The association is also engaged in preparing and subsequently publishing a bibliography of Russian editions of Nabokov works and published critical writings in Russia, 1986-1993. The association's address is:

Nabokovskii Fond
Bolshaya Morskaya, 47

190000 St. Petersburg
Russia
Fax: (812) 273 4093

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A new electronic discussion group devoted to the works of Vladimir Nabokov has recently been founded at the University of California, Santa Barbara by D. Barton Johnson, its "owner-editor." The address of the new group, NABOKV-L, and its list server are:

nabokv-l@ucsbvm.bitnet
listserv@ucsbvm.bitnet

To subscribe, send the usual e-mail message to the address of the list server. The group is moderated. NABOKV-L is designed to serve as a forum for discussion of the writings of Vladimir Nabokov and is open to anyone interested in Nabokov.

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Our continuing thanks to Ms. Paula Malone who for more than a decade has provided essential aid in the preparation of each issue of *The Nabokovian*.

ANNOTATIONS TO ADA

1. Part 1, Chapter 1

by Brian Boyd

In 1959 Nabokov began to work on a project he thought of as "The Texture of Time" and to toy with another to be called something like "Letters from Terra." After numerous diversions and frustrations, he had a flash late in 1965 of what would become the story of Van and Ada, but the novel did not surge into life until February 1966, when he saw the specific link between Van and Ada, "The Texture of Time" and "Letters from Terra," and began to compose apace. He completed *Ada* in October 1968; it was first published by McGraw-Hill on May 5, 1969.

Although he wrote it quickly, Nabokov incorporated into his longest novel the ideas and the knowledge of a lifetime, and relied on his confidence—now that in the mid-1960s he occupied so dominant a place in the literary world—that he could command the serious attention of first-rate readers. If Nabokov is the most allusive of authors after Joyce, *Ada* is by far the most allusive and demanding of his novels. But while there have been isolated annotations to *Ada* in *The Nabokovian*, there have been far fewer than the book warrants—I suspect because readers simply do not know where to start.

I have had a copious file of glosses to *Ada* since the late 1970s, but because my work on the biography had priority, had no time to do anything with them. Now that I am drawing on this material for the notes to *Ada* in the forthcoming *Pleiade Nabokov* I would like to offer it to readers of *The Nabokovian* as a source of information and an invitation for more. I hope that it will jog readers into realizing where they have noticed something that has not seemed obvious to at least one other reader, and into sending their additional notes to *The Nabokovian*. In this first instalment, for instance, I would particularly value the identification

of the comic strip at 6.01-03n (French readers especially take note) and the quotation about dialogue in autobiography I cannot trace at the end of 8.16-19.12n. I would also welcome suggestions about recurrent features worth being marked as MOTIFS.

This collective effort should bring us closer to the kind of completeness impossible from one person's efforts. I believe that the accumulating evidence will justify Nabokov's appeal after *Ada's* publication: "the main favor I ask of the serious critic is sufficient perceptiveness to understand that whatever term or trope I use, my purpose is not to be facetiously flashy or grotesquely obscure but to express what I feel and think with the utmost truthfulness and perception." (SO 178)

Not that the notes below are intended to explain the global reasons for each local choice. Although it takes a number of pages of annotations to get beyond the first paragraph of *Ada*, it would take much longer to discuss the literary implications of those first few lines—the implications, in terms of character and idea, of the translation theme, of the *Anna Karenin* allusion, of allusion itself, of *Ada's* invocation of the tradition of the novel, of questions of family happiness, sameness and difference, originality and repetition and relationship of all kinds.

Reluctantly eschewing for the most part such eventual implications, the notes explain matters of immediate information both outside the novel (geography, biology, history, literature, lexicology, biography, Nabokovology) and inside (recurring phrases, restated subjects, interlocking details). Recurrent internal allusions will be noted as MOTIFS and at the end of the project listed alphabetically by motif and by page and line number within each motif. To serve undergraduates and those who are not native speakers of English, the notes will be over- rather than under-explicit, but will resist the over-ingenuous. The density of annotation should diminish rapidly after the first two chapters of the novel.

References are to page and line numbers of the Vintage edition (New York, 1990), which is cheaply

available throughout the English-speaking world, preserves the pagination of the first American and English editions of the novel, and incorporates both Nabokov's 1970 "Notes to *Ada* by Vivian Darkbloom" and corrections made by Vladimir Nabokov, Dmitri Nabokov and myself. All textual corrections to the first American edition will be noted. Translations are mine unless otherwise indicated.

For those without the Vintage or Penguin editions, I include all of Nabokov's Darkbloom notes. Abbreviations and editions are the same as in *VNRY* and *VNAY*, but with the following additions:

- Appel, *Ada* Alfred Appel, Jr. "Ada Described," in Appel and Newman, 160-86.
- Boyd 1979 Brian Boyd. "Nabokov and *Ada*." Unpub. Ph.D. diss., Toronto, 1979.
- Boyd 1985 _____ *Nabokov's ADA: The Place of Consciousness*. Ardis: Ann Arbor, 1985.
- Bulhof "Dutch Footnotes to Nabokov's *Ada*," in Carl Proffer, ed. *Nabokov: A Book of Things About Vladimir Nabokov*. Ardis: Ann Arbor, 1974, 291.
- Cancogni Annapaola Cancogni. *The Mirage in the Mirror: Nabokov's ADA and its French Pre-Texts*. New York: Garland, 1985.
- Darkbloom Vladimir Nabokov. "Notes to *Ada* by Vivian Darkbloom." *Ada or Ardor: A Family Chronicle* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1970), 463-77; rpt. in Rivers and Nicol 242-59, and in *Ada* (New York: Vintage, 1990).
- Johnson D. Barton Johnson. *Worlds in Regression: Some Novels of Vladimir Nabokov*. Ann Arbor: Ardis, 1985.
- Mason Bobbie Ann Mason. *Nabokov's Garden: A Guide to ADA*. Ann Arbor: Ardis, 1974.
- Proffer Carl Proffer. "Ada as Wonderland: A Glossary of Allusions to Russian

- Literature." In Proffer, ed., *A Book of Things*, 249-279.
- Rivers & Walker VNAV "Notes to Vivian Darkbloom's Notes to *Ada*." In Rivers and Nicol, 260-95. Brian Boyd. *Vladimir Nabokov: The American Years*. Princeton: Princeton Univ. Press, 1991.
- VNRY _____ *Vladimir Nabokov: The Russian Years*. Princeton: Princeton Univ. Press, 1990.
- W2 *Webster's New International Dictionary, Second Edition*. Springfield, Mass.: Merriam, 1958.
- W3 *Webster's Third New International Dictionary*. 1961; Chicago: Encyclopaedia Britannica, 1981.

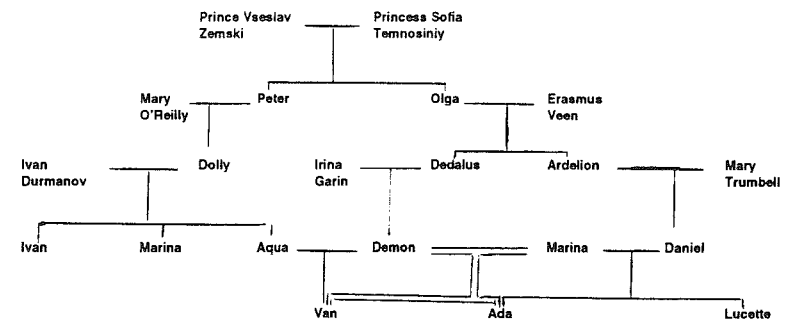
Title page: *Ada or Ardor*: Just as *Ada* as a whole parodies the grand tradition of the novel, its title parodies the fondness for women's names ending in *-a* as titles of eighteenth- and early-nineteenth century novels (Samuel Richardson's *Pamela*, pub. 1740-1741, Henry Fielding's *Amelia*, pub. 1751, Fanny Burney's *Evelina*, pub. 1778, Maria Edgeworth's *Belinda*, pub. 1801, Jane Austen's *Emma*, pub. 1816, for instance). Its subtitle parodies not only the subtitles so popular throughout the same period, in novels such as Jean-Jacques Rousseau's *Julie, ou La Nouvelle Héloïse* (pub. 1761), but also the particular combination of a woman's name and a subtitled abstraction, in novels such as Richardson's *Pamela, Or Virtue Rewarded*.

"Ada" combines the Russian *a, da*. "Oh, yes," and the rather less affirmative Russian *ada*, "of hell" (see 29.27-28, "*teper' iz ada* ('now is out of hell)'" and 332.26, "*iz ada* (out of Hades)"). "Ardor" indicates the Russian rather than American pronunciation of *Ada's* name (demonstrated by Marina at 39.16-17: "She pronounced it the Russian way with two deep, dark 'a's, making it sound rather like 'ardor'" in a manner that echoes the guide to the Spanish rather than American pronunciation of "Lolita" in Humbert's first

paragraph in that novel ("the tip- of the tongue taking a trip of three steps down the palate to tap, at three, on the teeth"). MOTIFS: *Ada; Ada, the ardors and arbors of Ardis; novel*.

A Family Chronicle: The second subtitle evokes the famous Russian novel *Semeinata khronika* (*A Family Chronicle*, pub.1856), by Sergey Aksakov (1791-1859). The raw frontier life and the emphatic Russianness of Aksakov's forebears could hardly be more different from the decadent international sophistication of the Veens. See also 150.19. MOTIF: *family chronicle*.

[x-xi]: This family tree presents the official version. The following diagram records the actual relationships. Single lines mark official relationships, double lines the actual relationships behind official ones.



Note that *Ada* and *Van* are real brother and sister, putative first cousins (since *Aqua* and *Marina* are sisters), putative second cousins (since *Demon* and *Dan* are first cousins) and putative and real third cousins (since *Demon* and *Dan* are second cousins to *Marina* and *Aqua*).

Just as the foreword-translation-commentary-index of Nabokov's *Eugene Onegin* (completed 1958)

inspired the structure of *Pale Fire* (begun in its present form in 1960), so the "Pedigree of Russian Territorial Princes in Relation to The Song of Igor's Campaign" in Nabokov's translation of *The Song of Igor's Campaign* (completed 1959) seems to have planted the seed of this Family Tree in *Ada* (begun in its present form in 1965). Individual names in the Family Tree are glossed as they appear in the body of the novel.

[xiii]: Mrs. Ronald Oranger is Violet Knox (576.01). This editorial note seems to identify "Ed." as Ronald Oranger himself.

3.01 08: "All happy families . . . 1858): *Darkbloom*: "All happy families etc.: mistranslations of Russian classics are ridiculed here. The opening sentence of Tolstoy's novel is turned inside out and Anna Arkadievna's patronymic given an absurd masculine ending, while an incorrect feminine one is added to her surname. 'Mount Tabor' and 'Pontius' allude to the transfigurations (Mr G. Steiner's term, I believe) and betrayals to which great texts are subjected by pretentious and ignorant versionists." Cf. also SO 285: "I planted three blunders, meant to ridicule mistranslations of Russian classics, in the first paragraph of my *Ada*: the opening sentence of *Anna Karenin* (no additional "a," printer, she was not a ballerina) is turned inside out; Anna Arkadievna's patronymic is given a grotesque masculine ending; and the title of Tolstoy's family chronicle has been botched by the invented Stoner or Lower." Note that within *Ada* Stonelower is not named as translator of *Detstvo i Otrochestvo*. Cf. also SO 123: "The opening sentences of *Ada* inaugurate a series of blasts directed throughout the book at translators of unprotected masterpieces who betray their authors by 'transfigurations' based on ignorance and self-assertiveness." MOTIF: *translation*.

3.01 06: "All happy families . . . 1880): The opening sentence of *Anna Karenina*, by Lev Tolstoy (1828-1910) (published in parts 1875-77, except for epilogue, and in book form, Moscow, 1878), reads: "Vse schastlivye sem'i pokhozhi drug na druga, kazhdaia neschastlivaia sem'ia neschastliva po-svoemu" ("All

happy families are like one another, every unhappy family is unhappy in its own way"). The first English translation was by N.H. Dole, *Anna Karénina* (New York, 1886). On Antiterra, with more interplay between Russian and Anglophone populations, the translation appears more promptly than on earth.

3.01-04: "All happy families . . . famous novel: The reference to *Anna Karenin*, in Nabokov's judgement the greatest of novels, announces the theme of the parody of the novel which runs throughout this first chapter, but it also pays homage to the parodic-allusive opening of another famous Russian novel, *Eugene Onegin* (pub. 1825-33) by Aleksandr Pushkin (1799-1837), which begins in Nabokov's translation "My uncle has most honest principles" (EO I,95), and which Nabokov glosses "an echo of l. 4 of Krilov's fable *The Ass and the Boor* (*Osyol i muzhik*).... "The donkey had most honest principles" (EO II, 30). The opening paragraph of Part 1 will be echoed in Part 1's closing paragraph by another fused allusion, this time to two famous final paragraphs in Tolstoy and Flaubert (see 325.08-09). MOTIF: *novel*.

3.01-02: "All happy families...alike": In quoting these lines it could seem—and still may seem, despite the disclaimer in the next sentence—that Van is claiming, by implication, that *his* tale of passionate love will be an idyll of idiosyncratic happiness, not a tragedy like Tolstoy's novel.

Cf. Nabokov on family happiness and singularity: "However that may have been, I am convinced now that our life then really was imbued with a magic unknown in other families" (*Gift* 127); "It had become gradually clear to my conventional Lolita during our singular and bestial cohabitation that even the most miserable of family lives was better than the parody of incest, which, in the long run, was the best I could offer the wif" (*Lolita* 289); "Our [Nabokov's and his father's] relationship was marked by that habitual exchange of homespun nonsense, comically garbled words, proposed imitations of supposed intonations, and all those private jokes which is the secret code of happy families" (*SM* 191).

3.03: Arkadievitch: Cf. Darkbloom and SO comments, 3.01-08n. "Arkadievitch" is the masculine patronymic ("son of Arkady") rather than the correct feminine form "Arkadievna" ("daughter of Arkady") which of course does not form part of the novel's title anyway. The "t" in "Arkadievitch" parodies the kind of nineteenth-century French-influenced transliteration that is responsible for many still spelling the composer's name "Tchaikovsky." The patronymic "Arkadievich" actually belongs to a character in *Ada*. Greg ("Grigoriy Arkadievich") Erminin (453.06), but Van gets this wrong himself when he hails him as "Grigoriy Akimovich!" (453.05)- which in fact are the name and patronymic of G.A. Vronsky, the film director (291.07), whose surname, to close the circle, is that of Anna Karenin's lover.

3.03: Karenina: Cf. *EO* I,xxiii: "Except for the surnames of female performers, such as dancers, singers, actresses, and so on, which traditionally retain these feminine endings (Istomina, Pavlova), all feminine surnames, although ending in a in Russian, take a masculine ending in translation (Anna Sidorov, Anna Karenin, Princess Vyazemski)." Although this is still the convention (Véra Nabokov, Raisa Gorbachev), it tends to be overridden by any woman known in her own right (Nina Berberova [whom Nabokov referred to as Nina Berberov], Tatyana Tolstaya). Cf. other Nabokovian distortions of "Anna Karenin": "Dorianna Karenina," an actress (LD 124); "*Anna Karamazov*" (*Pnin* 10). The title is rendered correctly at *Ada* 25.21-22: "as in Count Tolstoy's *Anna Karenin*, a novel." This correct version of the title indicates that Van recognizes Stonelower's mistranslations (it is not that there exists on Antiterra an *Anna Arkadievitch Karenina* which *does* begin "All happy families are more or less dissimilar"). In quoting this botched opening line, Van himself therefore makes a passing swipe at mistranslation, as he does often in the course of the novel.

3.04: transfigured . . . Mount Tabor: Cf. *Darkbloom* 3.01-08n. For the Biblical transfiguration, see

Matt. 17.1-8, Mark 9:2-8, and especially Luke 9:28-36: "And after six days Jesus took with him Peter and James and John his brother, and led them up a high mountain apart. And he was transfigured before them, and his face shone like the sun, and his garments became white as light." Mount Tabor, 5 miles east of Nazareth, is traditionally identified as the mount of the transfiguration. The transfiguration is interpreted as "a high hour of vision which the disciples could trust," "a change of form, an effulgence from within, not a mere 'flood of glory' from without.... no pagan metamorphosis" (*Interpreter's Bible*). Nabokov refers to Mount Tabor in *EO* III,441.

3.04: transfigured . . . R. G. Stonelower: "R. G. Stonelower" combines George Steiner (1929-) and Robert Lowell (1917-77), one a theoretician, the other a practitioner of the free translations into verse that Nabokov had been berating since he began his own very literal translation of *Eugene Onegin* in the early 1950s. After the transatlantic controversy caused by Nabokov's 1964 translation, Steiner in 1966 published an essay "To Traduce or to Transfigure: On Modern Verse Translation" (*Encounter* 27:2 [August 1966], 48-54), whose title seems to derive from Nabokov's comment that "A schoolboy's boner mocks the ancient masterpiece less than does its commercial poetization, and it is when the translator sets out to render the 'spirit,' and not the mere sense of the text, that he begins to traduce his author" (*EO* I,ix). Steiner argues the converse: that the unfaithfulness inevitable in translating into verse is more than compensated for by the attitude of the translator, the initial decision to write poetry: "This creative insurgence"—"against the grain of the ordinary"—"is the very start of the poem." He writes that "A great poetic translation—Holderlin's Sophokles, Valery's restatement of Virgil's Eclogues, Robert Lowell's readings of Osip Mandelstam—is criticism in the highest sense."

Lowell had come to Edmund Wilson's defense against Nabokov in the *Eugene Onegin* controversy in a letter in *Encounter*, May 1966; in the same issue, Nabokov retorted "I wish . . . that he would stop

mutilating defenceless dead poets—Mandelstam, Rimbaud and others.” A letter from Lowell “in defence of George Steiner” appeared under the title “To Traduce or Transfigure” in the February 1967 *Encounter*, immediately after a letter by Nabokov on another subject (Freud). Nabokov also parodies howlers in Lowell's Mandelstam translations in *Ada* (11.26-34). After *Ada's* publication, he took Lowell to task in “On Adaptation” (*New York Review of Books*, Dec. 4, 1969) for an adaptation of “one of the masterpieces of Russian poetry,” a poem by Mandelstam (“Za gremuchiuu doblest' griadushchikh vekov,” “For the resonant valor of ages to come,” 1931); one infidelity, significantly, is labeled “another miracle of misinformation, mistransfiguration, and misadaptation” (SO 280-83).

The name “Stonelower” suggests a reverse “Exegi monumentum,” the Vandals attacking Horace.

MOTIFS: *trans*; *transfigure*.

3.05: little if any relation: MOTIF: *relation*.

3.06: a family chronicle: MOTIF: *family chronicle*.

3.07.08: Detstvo . . . Fatherland: Tolstoy's semi-autobiographical novellas *Detstvo* (*Childhood*, pub. 1852), *Otrochestvo* (*Boyhood*, pub. 1854) and *Iunost'* (*Youth*, pub. 1857) first collected edition 1864, are here garbled and fused with *Ottsv i deti* (*Fathers and Children*, usually translated as *Fathers and Sons*, pub. 1862), by Ivan Turgenev (1818-83). The Russian for “fatherland,” *otechestvo*, has evidently confused Stonelower. The first translation of Tolstoy's first two sketches was *Childhood and Youth*, by “Count Nicolai [sic] Tolstoi,” translated M.V. Meysenbug [sic], London, 1862. Once again the Russians mingling with Antiterra's Anglophones ensure a quicker if less accurate translation than on earth.

3.08: Childhood and Fatherland: In light of the prominence of Francois-René de Chateaubriand (1768-1848) throughout *Ada*, and especially of his *René*, in which as Nabokov notes “a subtle perfume of incest permeates [René's] relationship” with his sister (EO III, 100), it seems more than accidental that *Childhood and Fatherland* echoes the phrase “de l'enfance et de la

patrie” at the beginning of *René* (pub. 1802, in *Le Génie du christianisme*), just where René introduces the subject of his special closeness to his sister: “Timide et contraint devant mon père, je ne trouvais l'aise et le contentement qu'auprès de ma soeur Amelie. Une douce conformité d'humeur et de goûts m'unissait étroitement à cette soeur; elle était un peu plus âgée que moi. Nous aimions à gravir les coteaux ensemble, à voguer sur le lac, à parcourir les bois à la chute des feuilles: promenades dont le souvenir remplit mon âme de délices. O illusions de l'enfance et de la patrie, ne perdez-vous jamais vos douceurs?” (“Timid and constrained before my father, I was happy and at ease only near my sister Amelie. A sweet match of temper and tastes linked me closely to this sister; she was a little older than me. We loved to climb the slopes together, to row on the lake, to roam the woods in the fall: outings whose memory still fills my soul with delight. O, illusions of childhood and fatherland, do you never lose your sweetness?”) (*Atala. René, Les Aventures du Dernier Abencérage* (Paris: Garnier, 1962), 186-87. MOTIF: *Chateaubriand*).

3.08: Pontius: See Darkbloom 3.01-08n. Pontius Pilate, the Roman procurator of Judaea from AD 26 to 36, was judge in the trial of Jesus Christ. See Mark 15:15: “And so Pilate, *willing to content the people*, released Barabbas unto them, and delivered Jesus, when he had scourged him, to be crucified” (King James Version). In the Revised Standard Version the phrase I have italicized is rendered “wishing to satisfy the crowd.” Cf. Nabokov's scorn for translations that betray the text in the interest of “the conventions attributed to the consumer” (EO I, vii).

3.09-5.33: parody of the “genealogical” introduction of the hero or heroine in nineteenth-century novels such as Jane Austen's *Persuasion* (pub. 1818) or William Thackeray's *The History of Henry Esmond* (pub. 1852). MOTIF: *novel*.

3.09: Van's: As noted in the family tree, Van's name is short for Ivan, the Russian equivalent of English John and especially of Spanish Juan. The Don Juan

story sticks to Van, as myths of Venus attach themselves to all the Veens (see 4.16n2).

3.09: Van's maternal grandmother: the phrasing neatly evades the question, "Who is Van's mother, Aqua or Marina?"—one of the chief concerns of the chapter.

3.09: Daria ("Dolly") Durmanov: As Proffer notes, Dolly (Daria Oblonsky) appears in the opening page of *Anna Karenin*. Cf. *Ada* 25.21-24. "Durmanov": accented on the second syllable. *Durman* means "thorn-apple (*Datura stramonium*)" and "drug, narcotic."

3.10: Prince Peter Zemski: Cf. "Prince (*knyaz'*) Pyotr Vyazemski (1792-1878), a minor poet, . . . a verbal virtuoso, a fine prose stylist, a brilliant (though by no means always reliable) memoirist, critic, and wit. Pushkin was very fond of him and vied with him in scatological metaphors (see their letters). He was Karamzin's ward, Reason's godchild, Romanticism's champion, and an Irishman on his mother's side (O'Reilly)" (*EO* 11,27).

3.10: Governor of: The beginnings of Parts 1,2 and 3 of the novel are linked by references to the governors of, respectively, Bras d'Or, Bessarabia and Armenia (330.18-20), and Armenia (449.05). MOTIF: *governor of*.

3.10-11: Bras d'Or: a play on Labrador, the Atlantic coastal territory now part of Canada's Newfoundland province. Cf. "in the Russian countryside, latitude of Labrador" (*Pnin* 106). But Bras d'Or is also the name of a tidal salt-water lake in central Cape Breton Island, Nova Scotia, Canada, where Dr. Alexander Graham Bell (1847-1922), the inventor of the telephone, experimented with hydrofoils, a fact that in view of *Ada's* dorophones (hydrophones) and "jkkers" (magic carpets) Nabokov appears to have known.

3.11-21: an American province . . . not only French, but Macedonian and Bavarian settlers: again Chateaubriand's prominence in *Ada*, especially his *René*, *Atala* and *Mémoires d'outre-tombe*. make the opening paragraph of *Atala* (1801) seem not accidentally related to this part of *Ada's* prologue: "La

France possédait autrefois, dans l'Amerique septentrionale, un vast empire qui s'étendait depuis le Labrador jusqu'aux Florides, et depuis les rivages de l'Atlantique jusqu'aux lacs les plus reculés du haut Canada" ("France once possessed, in northern America, a vast empire extending from Labrador to the Floridas, and from the shores of the Atlantic to the remotest lakes of upper Canada") (*Atala. Rene. Les Aventures du Dernier Abencérage*. 29).

3.12: Mary O'Reilly: see 3.10n on Prince Peter Vyazemski.

3.13: Irish: MOTIF: *Irish*.

3.13: woman of fashion: MOTIF: *woman of fashion* (and cf. the "man of fashion" motif in *PF*)

3.14: tender and wayward age: Cf. "tender age" (51.27).

3.15: General Ivan Durmanov, Commander of Yukon Fortress: Nabokov's great-uncle General Ivan Nabokov (1787-1852) was "commander of the Peter-and-Paul Fortress in St. Petersburg" (*SM* 53). There is a Fort Yukon in northeast Alaska, and Alaska was a Russian colony between 1799 and 1867. Nabokov's comic distortions of earthly fact in his Antiterranean fiction, first signalled in this paragraph, usually conceal comic correspondences.

3.16-17: Severn Tories (Severniya Territorii): Darkbloom: "Severniya Territorii: Northern Territories. Here and elsewhere transliteration is based on the old Russian orthography." The old orthography applies because there has been no revolution on Antiterria to affect the Russian spoken and written throughout the planet's North America.

The Severn is the longest river in Wales and England, and Tories the name in Britain since the eighteenth century for members of what is now the Conservative Party; but neither this "Severn" nor "Tories" has anything to do with "Severniya Territorii" (Northern Territories). However there is a Fort Severn situated at the extreme northwest of Ontario—a province noted for its Tory leanings—and therefore not far from Canada's Northwest Territories. Because of his work on butterflies, especially nearctic

butterflies, Nabokov had an extraordinary knowledge of place names, especially North America ones.

3.17: tessellated: "formed of little squares, oblongs, or pieces approximating squares, as mosaic work; marked like a checkerboard" (W2). See also 3.18-19n.

3.18: •Russian Estoty: Estotiland was a name given by early explorers to the northeastern part of North America, now northeast Labrador. Old mapmakers let it stretch as far north as their conjectured coastline ventured. Cf. John Milton, *Paradise Lost*. X.686: "From cold Estotiland." "Estotiland" is listed, along with Eden and Arcedia, under the heading "utopia, paradise, heaven, heaven on earth" in *Roget's International Thesaurus* (New York: Crowell, 1962). "Russian Estoty" may contain an echo of "Russian" Estonia.

3.18-19: granoblastically and organically: *Darkbloom*: "granoblastically: in a tessellar (mosaic) jumble." *Granoblastic*: "Petroq. Having a texture in which the fragments are irregular and angular and, under the microscope, appear like a mosaic" (W2). *Gran'*: Russ., border, edge, facet. *Oblast'*: Russ., province, region, district. In other words this complex bilingual pun means that the border (*gran'*) of each province (*oblast'*) in Antiterra's North America helps to mark the edges in a mosaic (*granoblastic*) jumble; note that the letters of "granoblastically" and "organically" have themselves been rearranged like pieces in a mosaic.

3.19: "Russian" Canady: another echo of Russia's nineteenth-century settlement of Alaska; on Antiterra, Canada (spelt "Canady" perhaps to avoid a superfluous "ada") seems only a region of the United States, and has a substantial Russian component.

3.19-20: "French" Estoty: allusion to the regions of French settlement in Canada, the province of Quebec and the areas of Nova Scotia and Brunswick peopled by Acadians (after "Acadie," the old French colony on the Atlantic coast of what is now Canada).

3.20-21: not only French, but Macedonian and Bavarian settlers: allusion to the reputation of the

United States of America as a refuge for settlers from throughout the world.

3.21: halcyon climate: contrast this with Estotiland's reputation for extreme cold (cf. Milton at 3.18n.).

3.21: our Stars and Stripes: the flag of the United States of America.

4.01-02: Raduga near the burg of that name: although there is a tiny settlement called Raduga (52.35N, 31.05E) in what Nabokov knew as Belorussia, this "burg" is an invention from the Russian *raduga*, rainbow. There is a Radugovitra (rainbow glass) in *PF* 258, and various "burgs" in Nabokov's American fiction, such as the "ancient little burg of Vandel in the Dordogne" (*Prin* 140), or "a little burg we were traversing" (*Lolita* 173). MOTIF: *-uga*.

4.03: Kaluga: city 90 miles SW of Moscow. At 108.08 there is also a Kaluga, Conn. MOTIF: *-uga*.

4.03: New Cheshire: since the New England state of New Hampshire echoes the English county of Hampshire, and New York the English city and county of York, since American names in fact were frequently duplicated "across the ha-ha of a doubled ocean" (18.01), Nabokov invents a New Cheshire, in honor of the English county of Cheshire but perhaps also, with a grin at Lewis Carroll's Cheshire Cat, in honor of New York's Catskill Mountains (cf. Appel, *Ada* 167).

4.04: Ladoga: lake near St. Petersburg, the largest lake in Europe. Ladoga, Mayne is "not to be confused with Ladoga, N.A." (156.03). MOTIF: *-uga*.

4.04: Mayne: the state of Maine, with a dash of Mayne Reid (1818-1883), the Anglo-Irish author of American Westerns avidly read by Nabokov and countless other Russian children (*SM*, ch. 10). Nabokov also continues here the theme of transatlantic doublings, since Maine was named after the sixteenth- and seventeenth-century French province of Maine, of which the feudal proprietor was Henrietta Maria (1609-69), wife of Charles I (1600-49), king of England at the time the state was first colonized. The name therefore nicely compacts the

Anglo-French and Amerussian components of *Ada's* world.

4.06: a son, who died young and famous: Ivan Durmanov, Van and *Ada's* Uncle Vanya, so to speak, famous at eighteen (65.26-27) as a violinist (43.10), dies at twenty of lung cancer (65.23).

4.07: twins: MOTIF: *twin*.

4.10: Aqua and Marina: a play on the Latin *aqua marina* (sea water) and its English derivative, aquamarine (the gem, the color). "Marina" is a very common Russian feminine name. MOTIFS: *aquamarine; colors-names; water*.

4.10: Why not Tofana?: Darkbloom: "allusion to 'aqua tofana' (see any good dictionary)." W2 defines "aqua tofana" as "A fluid (described as colorless and tasteless, probably combining arsenic), used for secret poisoning, made by a Sicilian woman named Tofana, in the middle of the 17th century, who is said to have poisoned more than 600 persons." Not in the other two largest English-language dictionaries, W3 (why drop such a gem?) and OED. In his "Reply to My Critics," composed January 1966 after the *Eugene Onegin* controversy, Nabokov commented on Edmund Wilson's attacking him for "my 'addiction to rare and unfamiliar words.' It does not occur to him that I may have rare and unfamiliar things to convey; that is his loss." A page later, he asks: "And should the translator simply omit any reference to an idea or an object if the only right word—a word he happens to know as a teacher or a naturalist, or an inventor of words—is discoverable in the revised edition of a standard dictionary but not its earlier edition or *vice versa*?" (SO 250-51) Nabokov "happened to know" of aqua tofana before consulting W2: he wrote in 1928, in *Korol', dama, valet*, "Tofana prodavala svoiu voditsu v sklianakh s nevinnyim izobrazheniem sviatogo" ("Tofana sold her 'aqua' in vials with the innocent image of a saint") (p. 159), and expanded this in *King, Queen, Knave*, at the end of 1966 and the beginning of 1967—by which time he was writing *Ada* and could consult W2 and W3—into: "Tofana, a Sicilian girl, who dispatched 639 people, sold her 'aqua' in vials

mislabeled with the innocent image of a saint" (p. 162). MOTIF: *water*.

4.11: sur-royally antlered: Darkbloom: "fully antlered, with terminal prongs." After the brow antler there appear first the bay antler, then the royal antler and finally the sur-royal or crown antlers. The sur-royal antlers are usually attained at the age of four years, the length of time General Durmanov has been married when he makes this remark. Nabokov here adds a naturalist's twist to horns as the traditional emblem of the cuckold. MOTIF: *antlers*.

4.14: April 23: Nabokov's—and Shakespeare's—birthday: "I find 'April 23' under 'birth date' in my most recent passport, which is also the birth date of Shakespeare" SM 13-14). Nabokov's actual date of birth in Russia was April 10, 1899, Old Style, "which corresponded to April 22 in the West. But since with the new century Old Style dates fell an extra day behind the Western calendar, Nabokov's first and subsequent birthdays took place on April 10/23. When he left Russia, April 23 . . . therefore became his date of birth." (VNRV 37n.)

In view of the importance of Eric Veen's Villa Venus brothels in *Ada*, it should also be pointed out that ancient Rome's second temple to Venus Erycina, outside the Colline gate, "developed in a way reminiscent of the temple at Eryx with its harlots becoming the place of worship of Roman courtesans, hence the title of *dies meretricium* ('prostitutes' day)' attached to April 23, the day of its foundation." (*Encyclopaedia Britannica*, 1972 ed., 22:978; Boyd 1979:196) April 23 is also St. George's Day (see 19.09-11). MOTIF: *April 23; Nabokov*.

4.16-20: Walter D. Veen . . . Walter D. Veen: The doubling up of "Walter" reflects the "water" in the doubled "Aqua" and "Marina," especially since, as a passage in Shakespeare shows, "Walter" and "water" were perfect homophones in early new English:

WHITMORE. And so am I: my name is *Walter* Whitmore.

How now? Why starts thou? What doth death affright?

SUFFOLK. Thy name affrights me, in whose sound
is death:

A cunning man did calculate my birth,
And told me that by *Water* I should dye;
Yet let not this make thee bloody-minded,
Thy name is Gualtier, being rightly sounded.

WHITMORE. Gualtier or *Walter*, which it is I care
not.

(2 *Henry VI*, 4.1.31ff.)

In the double doubling of Aqua and Marina and Walter and Walter, Nabokov parodies all literary character parallelism and contrast—the sort of thing that led Shakespeare to name his characters Olivia and Viola and Malvolio in *Twelfth Night*—although the water imagery will prove to have a specific and serious undercurrent. MOTIF: *water*.

4.16: Walter D. Veen: the “D. Veen” in this art collector’s name suggests Joseph Duveen, the first Baron of Millbank (1869-1939), “the dean of international art dealers” (*Encyclopedia Britannica*, 1962 ed., 7:783). Nabokov read and enjoyed S.N. Behrman’s biography *Duveen* (London, 1953) as it appeared serially in the *New Yorker* (unpub. letter to Katharine White, November 29, 1951, VNA).

4.16: Veen: in the course of the novel Nabokov plays on several aspects of the surname. “Van Veen,” the name of Ada’s narrator, is a Dutch surname (there was a Cornell professor Van Veen whose name was painted on the letterbox of a home in Highland Road, Cayuga Heights, Ithaca, when Nabokov was living further along Highland Road in 1957). Otto Van Veen (1556-1629), a Flemish flower painter (Nabokov had been particularly interested in Dutch and Flemish flower painting for his *Butterflies in Art* project in the mid-1960s, just at the time he began *Ada*), was best known for his “*Amorum Emblemata*, a collection of engraved emblems in which various aspects of love are symbolized through the actions of naked children in a kind of landscape garden.” (Patricia Crown, *VNRN* 4 [1980], 38; cf. also Gennady Barabtarlo, *Nabokovian* 14 [1985], 25). “Veen” evokes “V.N.,” the initials Nabokov was often known by in the literary world in

the years of his fame in the 1960s and 1970s, and thereby lures readers into at first identifying Van and Ada with their maker. Van himself also links “Veen” with Venus, the Roman goddess of love: Van, Ada and Lucette are called at 410.10 “the children of Venus”; and since the name of the Greek Aphrodite, the origin of most of Venus’s attributes as goddess of love, means “foam-born” (and scenes of her birth commonly depict her as rising from the sea), there is a double aptness in the first names of Aqua and Marina Veen. That these two names reflect each other, and water, as do “Walter D. Veen” and “Walter D. Veen,” becomes even apter if one recalls that the emblem of Venus is a mirror. *Vina* is also the Russian for “fault,” “guilt,” “blame,” which in the genitive plural is simply *vin*. See also 4.17n. MOTIFS: *Veen; Nabokov*.

4.17: ancient Anglo-Irish ancestry: In an interview with Alden Whitman, Nabokov referred to the “noble and wealthy Veen clan—it’s an Irish name” (*New York Times*, April 19, 1969), but this seems to reflect the fiction, not the facts. “Vaughan” is an anglicized form of “Mahon,” which while generally a distinct name is sometimes used as an abbreviated form of MacMahon, “one of the best known and most distinguished names in Ireland” (Edward MacLysaght, *Irish Families: Their Names, Arms and Origins* [Dublin: Hodges Figgis, 1957], 217-18). But more in keeping with Nabokov’s imagination is that *veen* is the Dutch for “peat” or “bog” (a fact he puts to good use later in the novel) and in this sense is appropriately Irish. MOTIF: *Irish*.

4.17: long conducted: Since January 5, 1868 (10.01-02).

4.19: some time in 1871: December 16, although the date is memorialized as August 16, to disguise the fact of Demon’s having impregnated Marina well before mid-December (see 5.34-6.16); hence the evasiveness here.

4.22: Demon: his name derives principally from the hero of the long narrative poem *Demon* (begun 1828, last version completed 1841, pub. 1856) by Mikhail Lermontov (1814-1841). Cf. MOTIF: *demon*.

4.23: Demian or Dementius: Cf. this exchange from *The Waltz Invention*, written 1938: "COLONEL: I beg your pardon, Your Demency, but I am only performing my plain duty. WALTZ: A sonorous title. From 'demon' or 'dementia'? You're rather a grim wit" (WI 74). Nabokov added Waltz's second sentence in the English translation in late 1965. MOTIF: *insanity*.

4.24 Raven: In allusion to his dark coloring, but also to "The Raven" (pub. 1845), the best-known poem of Edgar Allan Poe (1809-1849), the author most frequently alluded to in *Lolita*. Ll. 103-105 read: "And the Raven, never flitting, still is sitting, *still* is sitting / On the pallid bust of Pallas just above my chamber door; / And his eyes have all the seeming of a demon's that is dreaming." The famous refrain "Nevermore" may be applied to Demon's injunction to his children in Pt.2 Ch.11.

4.25-26: Dark Walter . . . Durak Walter . . . Red Veen: The "Dark" and the "Red" allude to the emphatic blackness and redness, respectively, of Demon's and Dan's hair. "Durak" seems to continue the obtrusive parallelism, but in fact as *Darkbloom* notes means "fool" in Russian"; Dan is slow-witted beside the mentally and physically hyperactive Demon. MOTIF: *colors-names; red hair*.

4.27: collecting old masters and young mistresses: cf. 4.16n. and Demon's activities *passim*. Joseph Duveen "was often accused of making Old Masters look like new masters" (S.N. Behrman, *Duveen* [London: Hamish Hamilton, 1953], 115).

4.28. middle-aged puns: cf. Demon's "prebrandial' brandy (an ancient quip)" (238.07-08).

4.29.32: Trumbell . . . "bell": "The Turnbells, so largely represented in the North, according to Buchanan (1820) and others, obtained the surname in the fourteenth century upon one of their ancestors turning an unruly bull which threatened to be disrespectful to King Robert I. Doubtless, like many other similar tales, the story is made to fit the name rather than the reverse. If the surname was acquired through any achievement, it is much more probable to have resulted from a daring act in the brutal sport of

bull-running, which was popular from time immemorial up to the last century. . . . The surname ramified strongly in the northern counties and Scotland, variants being Trumball, Trumble, and possibly Trumble, Tremble, etc., but these two may be of local origin" (C. L'Estrange Ewen, *A History of Surnames of the British Isles* [London: Kegan Paul, Trench, Trubner, 1931], 226); "Turnbull.... There can be no doubt that this much-discussed surname is a nickname from 'turn bull,' indicative of strength or bravery. The name appears to be northern, particularly Scottish, but early examples are not common. Black's derivation from *Trumbald* cannot be correct. The early forms of *Trumble* are quite distinct from those of Turnbull and there is no proof that any of the 15th-century Scottish Trumbles were Turnbells.... [Old English] *Trumbeald* ["strong, bold"] developed naturally to *Trumbell*, also spelled *Trumbull*. It is much more likely that this should be corrupted to *Turnbull* than that *Turnbull* should become an unintelligible *Trumbull*, *Trumble*. The nickname origin of the surname is proved by Ewen himself (despite his antipathy to nicknames) in his reference to a Yorkshire horse named *Turnebull* (1358)" (P.H. Reaney, *A Dictionary of British Surnames*, 2nd ed. corr. and add. R.M. Wilson [London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1958,1977], 357).

Van's "side-tracked by a bore-baiter" plays teasingly with "boar" and "bearbaiter" and the "turn bull" image; the English "bull" and the New England "bell" echo both the onomastic relationship between "Turnbull" and "Trumble" and the kind of doubling of English names in New England or New World locales toyed with in "New Cheshire" (4.03).

5.03: ups and down: apparently a still uncorrected typo for "ups and downs."

5.06: a few carefully shaded summer weekends: because of Dan's red hair and sensitive skin, which Lucette will inherit.

5.06: Ardis: although gazetteers list Ardisa, a reservoir in Spain, and Ardes, a village in France, and although the Latin town of Ardea was involved in the

bringing of the cult of Venus Erycina to Rome, Nabokov seems to have chosen the name primarily to evoke intimations of "paradise" and "artist" and the Greek *ardis*, "point of an arrow" (225.17-19; important in connection with the theme of "the ardis of time" [185.01, 538.30]). There may also be an echo of Sardis, the former capital of the ancient kingdom of Lydia in Asia Minor, which was notorious to early Greek historians for its luxury and immorality. MOTIF: *Ardis*.

5.07: Ladore: Named after La Dore, a river in Puy-de-Dôme department, central France, that is commemorated in Chateaubriand's "Romance à Hélienè" (1.10: "Du château que baignait la Dore," "The castle bathed by the Dore"), which he composed during a trip to Mont Dore in the Auvergne region and which becomes a celebratory refrain for Van and Ada (138-39). The village of Ardes lies twenty miles southeast of Mont Dore and thirty miles west of the source of the Dore, but Nabokov locates *Ada's Ladore* "in an unspoiled part of New England" (*New York Times*, April 19, 1969, p. 20).

Chateaubriand's romance is considered one of the finest examples of its kind in French. Nabokov was particularly fond of it, and even considered calling his autobiography, in its French translation, "Le château que baignait l'Adore (ou est-ce 'La Dore'?—je ne me souviens pas au juste)" ("The castle bathed by the Adore (or is it 'the Dore'—I can't quite remember)") (unpub. VN letter to Doussia Ergaz, October 30 1951, VNA). MOTIF: *adore; dore; Ladore*.

5.08: another estate: Radugalet (149.28).

5.09-11: Lake Kitez h . . . body of water: MOTIF: *water*.

5.09: Lake Kitez h: Darkbloom: "allusion to the legendary town of Kitez h which shines at the bottom of a lake in a Russian fairytale." "According to this tale, the Virgin Mary, in answer to prayers from the inhabitants of Kitez h, made the city invisible to save it from being sacked by the Tartars. The reflection of the invisible city, however, could still be seen in a nearby lake. When the Tartars beheld the reflection, they fled

before this evidence of the Christian God's power. The tale of Kitez h combined with the tale of St. Fevronia is the basis for an opera by Rimsky-Korsakov with libretto by Vladimir Belsky, *The Tale of the Invisible City of Kitez h and the Maiden Fevronia* (composed 1904, first performed 1907). An interesting feature of Rimsky's opera is the singing of the sirin, a mythical bird that lives in paradise, to herald the final transfiguration and apotheosis of Kitez h. Another sirin associated in the Russian tradition with fairy tales and magical transformation is, of course, Vladimir Sirin, né Nabokov, who puts his personal and artistic signature on the passage in this allusion to Kitez h." (Rivers & Walker 263) MOTIF: *fairy tale; Nabokov*.

5.09: Luga: city 85 miles SSW of St. Petersburg. Vyra, the Nabokov estate, was on the Petersburg-Luga highway. MOTIF: *-uga*.

5.10-11: oddly rectangular though quite natural body of water: the rectangular but natural Lake Kitez h at Radugalet, the "other Ardis" (149.29) is not to be confused with "that rectangular lake" (116.19), the man-made reservoir, at Ardis itself.

5.10-13: body of water which a perch . . . great fisherman in his youth: this pair of "weirdly misleading" (SM 288) and seemingly irrelevant clauses, introducing details that recur nowhere else, hints, by way of Demon's ability to catch the fish that Dan can only time, at the two men's comparable relations with women.

Dan owns this "body of water" (Lake Kitez h) "jointly with his cousin," Demon. But Marina herself is by name a "body of water" and in the next chapter Demon thinks of the likeness of Marina to an old master sketch as the similarity "of young bodies of water" (13.27). Dan also, the analogy seems to suggest, shares Marina herself with Demon. And that proves to be the case. While Dan can time a fish at Kitez h, it is at Kitez h—where she spends an ardent month with Demon—(26.23) that Marina becomes pregnant with Ada just before suggesting Demon divorce Aqua and

marry her, at which he throws her out and she has to revert to Dan's proposal.

If Dan has timed Marina's pregnancy with Ada—and not only does the timing of that pregnancy form the subject of the next two paragraphs, but we also learn that Dan has a penchant for timing natural phenomena (see 5.11 n)—he will have discovered that he cannot be the father of his wife's first child, and may have guessed that the true father is Demon. Cf. the memorable image from Shakespeare's *The Winter's Tale* (c. 1610):

There have been,
Or I am much deceived, cuckolds ere now,
And many a man there is, even at this present,
Now, while I speak this, holds his wife by th'arm,
That little thinks she has been sluiced in's absence,
And his pond fished by his next neighbour, by
Sir Smile, his neighbour. (1.2.191-97)

As narrator, Van, always happy to mock Dan, seems to have introduced these apparent irrelevancies as a particularly elaborate taunt—one which would pass Dan by but Demon would have been able to catch in a flash. (Cf. Boyd 1979:199-200.)

5.11-13: a perch which he had once docked took half an hour . . . fisherman in his youth: a bizarre subliminal pun lurks here. The fact that Dan measures the speed of this perch may prompt us to recall the homonym of "perch," *perch* as a unit of measure (16 1/2 feet). A synonym of *this* "perch" is "rod," a homonym of which in turn is the fisherman's implement. The bizarre convergence of perch-perch-rod-rod here simultaneously mocks the Walter D. Veen-Walter D. Veen, Raven-Red, Dark-Durak pairings and confirms that Demon's rod hooks Dan's perch.

5.11: perch which he had once clocked took half an hour: Dan enjoys timing things: he informs "Van that it was going to rain in a few minutes 'because it had started to rain at Ladore,' and the rain, he said, 'took about half-an-hour to reach Ardis.'" (67.16-18) Curiously, he is right about the rain.

5.19-20: later sold to Mr. Eliot, a Jewish businessman: *Darkbloom*: "Mr Eliot: we shall meet

him again, on pages [459] and [505], in the company of the author of 'The Waistline' and 'Agonic Lines.'" Nabokov disliked T.S. Eliot (1888-1965) as a writer and an anti-Semite. In "Gerontion" (pub. 1920), II. 7-8 originally read "My house is a decayed house, And the jew squats on the window sill, the owner," until after objections to the lower-case "j" in "jew," Eliot changed the word to "Jew." Nabokov parodies and echoes "Gerontion" in *Lolita* (18, 260), as he does here in making Mr Eliot a Jew and a "real-estate man" (505.31). Alfred Appel lists Eliot allusions in Nabokov's fiction in the *Annotated Lolita* (18n3, rev. ed. 16n3).

5.21: elevator: though elevators powered by man, beast or flowing water had been attempted from Roman times, the first practical elevators, using the hydraulic principle, were developed in Europe in the early 1800s. But "because of physical limitations of plunger length, drilling depth and piston lengths for geared hydraulics, building heights and elevator speed were limited.... In the U.S. the electric elevator was first used commercially in 1889." (*Encyclopaedia Britannica*. 1962 ed., 8:351) Since on Antiterra electricity is intermittently banned and its technological role taken over by various obscure methods of harnessing water, it is apt that the first real technological reference in *Ada* should be to something we automatically imagine as being powered by electricity but which as late as Nabokov's youth could still be operated hydraulically: a hydraulic elevator remained in use in the Nabokov townhouse in Petersburg in the 1910s (*SM* 114-15, *DB* 107; cf. also *Defense* 164). MOTIF: *technology*.

5.21-22: Manhattan's first ten-floor building: The Home Insurance building in Chicago, which consisted of ten floors when built in 1885 (two more were added in 1889) is "generally acclaimed the forerunner of the modern skyscraper" (*Encyclopaedia Britannica*, 1962 ed., 21:369C). MOTIF: *technology*.

5.23-24: to air his feelings, set off . . . on a triple trip around the globe: Among many examples from literature and life: in *Julie, ou La nouvelle Héloïse* by

Jean-Jacques Rousseau (1712-78)—a novel Nabokov refers to often in the course of his *EO* commentary—Saint-Preux, after he finds his beloved Julie is to marry M. de Wolmar, sets off on a trip around the world to distract him from his disappointment.

524: counter-Fogg direction: *Darkbloom*: "Phileas Fogg, Jules Verne's globetrotter, travelled from West to East" in *Le Tour du monde en quatre-vingt jours* (*Around the World in Eighty Days*, pub. 1873). For other references to Verne's novel, see *Defense* 33, *ND* 156, *SO* 43.

5.26-27: making his evening plans with the same smelly but nice cicerone: Cf. 233.21: "You are not a pederast, like your poor uncle, are you?"

5.29: aerocable from Marina: she has been thrown out by Demon, whom she hoped to marry, and has been pregnant with Ada since September.

5.29: areocable: neologism, fusing "aerogram" and "cablegram." The cable part at least is not anachronistic: a permanently successful transatlantic cable was laid in 1866.

5.31: dove hole marked RE AMOR: since doves, though members of the pigeon family, are traditionally associated with love in a way "pigeons" are not, Van has renamed the pigeonhole marked "Re Love."

5.34-9.12: the following episode, the first "scene" of the novel and the densest passage in all of Nabokov's fiction, explains Van and Ada's true parentage, and their discovery that they are brother and sister. Nabokov here inverts or parodies several features of narrative exposition, by making the material so inaccessible (though colorful and amusing) on a first reading, and so accessible on rereading; by compressing exposition and what would ordinarily be a narrative climax, the discovery of incest; by making this discovery matter so little to Van and Ada. Van's and Ada's ability to deduce so much at such a young age from the oblique evidence in the attic is meant to be as comic as it is flabbergasting, and their pride in the ability they share (and their delight that others—including us as readers-do not) proves typical of their

sense of superiority, their gleeful exclusiveness, and their uncanny similarity. Nabokov, who at first seems to parody exposition by withholding so much, ultimately proves to offer much more than any conventional exposition could. For a more detailed explanation of his strategies here, see *VNAY* 542-51. **MOTIF:** *family relationship; novel.*

5.34: Sunday supplement of a newspaper: cf. "the voluminous Sunday supplements of the papers from Balticomore, and Kaluga, and Luga" (128.12-13); the present newspaper is the *Kaluga Gazette* (6.22).

6.01-03: on its funnies page the now long defunct: Goodnight Kids, Nicky and Pimpernella (sweet siblings who shared a narrow bed): *Darkbloom*: "Goodnight Kids: their names are borrowed, with distortions, from a comic strip for French-speaking children." Not identified. Cf. "two children being put to bed . . . -no, not children, but . . . honeymooners" (492.10-12); "a little book in the Ardis Hall nursery, could no longer prop up in the mysterious first picture: two people in one bed" (588.02-04). **MOTIF:** *Pompeianella.*

6.01-03: on its funnies page the now long defunct: cf. "the abrupt, mysterious, never explained demise of a comic strip in a Sunday newspaper" (28.29-30).

6.04: cockloft: "an upper loft or attic" (W2), here with appropriately obscene overtones.

6.05: on St. Adelaida's Day: Nabokov intends December 16 (see 6.10). Although this is the date when St. Adelaida (931-999) died, St. Adelaida's Day is actually December 12. Adelaida "was aged sixteen when she married the son of the man who had wedded her mother. The marriage was incestuous, but no prelate of the time ventured to remonstrate." (S. Baring-Gould, *The Lives of the Saints*. 3rd ed., 1914, 15:163) Kept in captivity, she was freed by a subterranean passage.

Nevertheless, Nabokov has not slipped up. December 16 happens to be the day of St. Ado, remembered partly for his involvement in an incest case. Lothair, anxious to marry his concubine, accused his wife (whose case Ado pleaded before the Pope) "of

having been guilty of incest with her brother, abbot of S. Maurice, a churchman of profligate character, who lived in oriental luxury, surrounded by a bevy of beautiful dancing-girls. This most revolting charge was made more loathsome by minute circumstances, contradictory and impossible." (Baring-Gould, 15:200)

6.06: two naked children: cf. "our two naked children" (121.33-122.01).

6.07-08: one dark-haired and tanned, the other dark haired and milk-white: the descriptions of Van ("dark-haired and tanned") and Ada ("dark-haired and milk-white") anticipate the imminent discovery that Ada is not the child of "Red" Veen and that both are in fact the offspring of "Dark" Veen.

6.08 sunlight that slanted: cf. "slant of scholarly sunlight" (41.11).

6.15: parvis: W2: "[. . . fr. L. *Paradisus* paradise . . .] A court or an enclosed space before a building, esp. a church, often surrounded by a balustrade or parapet or with colonnades or porticos . . . -a term little used in English-speaking countries."

6.17: July 21, 1872: Ada's birthday commemorates Nabokov's father's birthday, July 21, 1870. Nabokov in the first version of his autobiography assigned his first conscious memory, "the birth of sentient life" (CE 4), to the day of his father's birthday in 1902, although in *Speak, Memory* he corrected the date. His father's birthday also features in *Pale Fire* as the date of Shade's death (PF 13). Cf. "Ada (born on July 21, 1872)" (218.31).

6.18: for some obscure mnemonic reason: in other words, to remind Marina of the actual date of her wedding, not the false date she has assigned it.

6.19: Adelaida: the name, German in origin, means "nobility"; perhaps there is also an echo of "Atala," the heroine of Chateaubriand's *Atala*. MOTIF: *Ada*.

6.19-20: Another daughter, this time Dan's very own: Lucette. Significantly, she seems not even worth mentioning by name in this chapter.

6.22: gaga Kaluga Gazette: MOTIF: *-uga*.

6.22-23: Pimpernel and Nicolette: an echo perhaps of *The Scarlet Pimpernel* (pub. 1905) by Baroness

Orczy (1865-1947) and certainly of the medieval French tale *Aucassin et Nicolette* (13th century), which Nabokov studied at Cambridge. MOTIF: *Pompeianella*.

6.24-25: according to Kim, the kitchen boy, as will be understood later: Kim Beauharnais enjoys photography, but the real point here is that he is also a blackmailer, and some of the material on this microfilm could have proved embarrassing to Dan. Kim, incidentally, takes a photograph of this scene: "another abominable glimpse—apparently, through a hole in the boards of the attic" (406.19-20).

6.25: microfilm: microfilming began in the 1920s. MOTIF: *technology*.

6.28: heliocolor: neologism, from *helio-*, "sun-" and *-color* (as in trade names like "Kodacolor," "Technicolor"), with a glance at *heliochromy*, color photography. MOTIF: *technology*.

6.28-29: Naturally, at a time one was starting to build a family: drily ironic, since it is Demon, not Dan, who at this point has started to build a family with Marina.

6.32: liver side: right side; with pun on Russ. *levyi*, "left"?

6.33: old Archie: the archeologist from Arkansas; the *arche-* in *archeologist* means "ancient, old."

6.33: squitteroo: neologism: as a noun *squitter*, according to W2, is English dialect for "squirt," and according to OED, for "diarrhea"; as an intransitive verb, according to OED, it means "to void thin excrement." "Premature squitteroo," with its play on "premature ejaculation," suggests a nasty combination of diarrhea and sodomy.

7.07: in a lower layer of the past: Cf. "earlier or later, lower or higher, in the stratigraphy of my past" (546.12-13).

7.07-9.07: small green album with neatly glued flowers that Marina had picked . . .: Cf. "I must have been eight when, in a storeroom of our country house, among all kinds of dusty objects, I discovered some wonderful books acquired in the days when my mother had been interested in natural science.... Other

books I found in that attic among herbariums full of alpine columbines" (SM 121-22; in CE, this ends "full of edelweiss flowers"). In *The Defense* (p. 61) young Luzhin also finds his mother's herbarium. MOTIF: *flowers*.

7.09: Ex, a mountain resort: the "ex" ending (pronounced "-ay") is common in the Swiss cantons of Valais (where this "Ex" lies) and in Valais (where Montreux is situated). There is a Bex in the Vaud, a Vex in the Valais, but Ex seems to be modeled on Châteaud'Oex, a resort town twenty miles from Montreux. A health resort noted for its rich flora, and frequented both in summer and winter, it has chalets attractively scattered on the hillside. *Pale Fire* also has a Lex not far from Geneva (197). MOTIF: *Ex*.

7.09: Brig: a town in the Valais on the banks of the upper Rhône.

7.10: where she had sojourned before her marriage: Marina would be about four months pregnant with Van when she comes to Ex under the pretext of being close to her sister Aqua, who is also pregnant by Demon, her husband. Picking flowers, not a usual hobby for Marina (65.20-22), kills time for her in this enforced retirement.

7.14: Hotel Florey: MOTIF: *Flora*.

7.15: nusshaus: Aqua's jocular German for "nuthouse." This is Aqua's "first bout with insanity" (20.11). MOTIF: *insanity*.

7.15: "the Home": MOTIF: "*Home*".

7.16: identified: corrected from 1969, "identified."

7.19-20: conspicuous decrease in the number of specimens: the visibly pregnant Marina does not want to be seen outside.

7.22: Dourmanoff (sic): in Francophone Switzerland Marina adopts the French transliteration of her name.

7.23: Ancolie Bleue des Alpes: Alpine columbine, *Aquilegia alpina*, flowers July-August.

7.23-24: From Englishman in hotel. "Alpine Columbine, color of your eyes": not yet obviously pregnant, Marina can still be flirted with.

7.25: Epervière auricule: hawkweed (*Hieracium*) with ear-shaped leaf.

7.25: 25.X.69, Ex, ex: MOTIF: *Ex*.

7.25: ex Dr Lapiner's walled alpine garden: by now it is only for a visit to the doctor who will attend at delivery that Marina leaves her seclusion; his walled garden presents her with a precious opportunity to remain outside unseen.

7.25: Dr. Lapiner's: Darkbloom: "for some obscure but not unattractive reason, most of the physicians in the book turn out to bear names connected with rabbits. The French '*lapin*' is matched by the Russian '*Krolik*,' the name of Ada's beloved lepidopterist (p. [8], *et passim*) and the Russian '*zayats*' (hare) sounds like '*Seitz*' (the German gynecologist on page [230]); there is a Latin '*cuniculus*' in '*Nikulin*' ('grandson of the great rodentologist Kunikulinov,' p. [433]), and a Greek '*lagos*' in '*Lagosse*' (the doctor who attends Van in his old age). Note also Coniglietto, the Italian cancer-of-the-blood specialist, p. [379]." MOTIF: *Krolik*.

7.27: ginkgo: a handsome tree (*Ginkgo biloba*) with green fan-shaped leaves that become a bright golden yellow in the fall. Cf. 299.32-300.06 and PF 93.

7.27-28: The Truth about Terra: first mention of Terra, the "sibling planet" believed in by some on *Ada's Antiterra*. To us, Terra (Latin for "earth") sounds like our planet, but on *Antiterra* it is often the deranged, like Aqua, who particularly believe in Terra (18.18-20).

7.30" Artificial edelweiss: paper copy (9.04-05) of edelweiss (*Leontopodium alpinum*), the floral emblem of Switzerland, the symbol of Alpine flora. Cf. "Edelweiss. . . the velvety white flower, that pet of herbariums" (*Glory* 1).

7.30" brought by my new nurse: Marina no longer ventures outside, and has a nurse for her impending pregnancy.

7.31-32: "mizernoe and bizarre" Christmas Tree: what is particularly bizarre about this Christmas tree, a larch (9.03), is that pregnant Aqua skis into the stump presumably left when this very tree is cut down

for Christmas, and thus aborts the child she is carrying (8.07-09, 25.27-28).

7.31: mizernoe: Darkbloom: "Franco-Russian form of 'miserable' in the sense of 'paltry'" (French *miserable*, paltry, Russian *mizernoe*, scanty, meagre).

7.33: Petal of orchid, one of 99 orchids: from a butterfly orchid (8.21-22), and sent by the typically extravagant Demon (8.19) on the occasion of Marina's giving birth (to Van, on January 1, 1870). MOTIF: *orchids*.

8.01: yesterday: since Marina would hardly be up to adding a new entry in her herbarium on the very day her first child is born.

8.01: Special Delivery: pun: special delivery post; and Marina is delivered of a child, Van.

8.01: c'est bien le cas de le dire: Darkbloom: "and make no mistake." Marina's comment draws Van and Ada's attention to the pun in the preceding phrase, and from this vital clue the children deduce that the orchids have been sent on Marina's giving birth to Van. Nabokov uses the phrase again in his characteristic way to foreground a pun at 26.19-20: "had conceived, *c'est bien le cas de le dire* ... the brilliant idea...."

8.02: Villa Armina: Demon's villa near Nice, where he has recently fought a duel (14-15). Cf. 15.14, 163.05-06. There is a Hotel Mirana in *Lolita* (11-12), also on the French Riviera.

8.02: Alpes-Maritimes: France's southeasternmost department.

8.03-04: "Snowing in Fate's crystal ball": in other words, now that she has given birth to Van, unmarried Marina cannot see her future clearly. For the snow, cf. 25.32-26.01 ("At other moments she felt convinced that the child was her sister's, born out of wedlock, during an exhausting, yet highly romantic blizzard"); for crystal balls, cf. 175.26; for the paperweight, cf. *Pnin* 45: "a sad stylized toy, a bauble found in the attic, a crystal globe which you shake to make a soft luminous snowstorm inside over a minuscule fir tree and a log cabin of papier mâché."

8.04: as he used to say: Demon, who is allusive and imagistic in the Veen manner, and whom Marina dare not name here.

8.04: (Date erased.): the date must be January 2, 1870, the day after Van's birth. For Van's birthday, cf. 551.23n.

8.05: Gentiane de Koch: Koch's gentian, *Gentiana kochiana*, whose intense blue flowers bloom naturally between May and August.

8.05: lapochka: Russ., literally "little paw"; cf. 342.32. Lapiner is "a general practitioner and gentian-lover" (26.02-03).

8.06. gentiarium: a place for growing gentians. MOTIF: *-arium*.

8.06: 5.1.70: the occasion is Marina's twenty-sixth birthday (cf. 10.01-02).

8.07-09: [blue-ink blot . . . 15.1.70: Marina's whimsical and grotesque record of Aqua's skiing accident, which killed her six-month-old fetus, and of her own decision to substitute her two-week-old boy (the future Van) for dazed Aqua's dead son (25.25--26.04). The mock-Latin, mock-taxonomy might be rendered "the *aquamarina* variant of the flower *Complicuarina complicata* (common name: Complications complicated)." Cf. Nabokov's poem "A Discovery": "being versed / In taxonomic Latin" (*PP* 155).

8.10: Fancy flower: identified at 8.23.

8.10: 16.II.70: presumably the paper flower was given to Aqua for Valentine's Day two days earlier.

8.12: Gentiana verna (printanière): the spring gentian, which flowers from April to August.

8.16-9.12: *Ada* contains much more dialogue than most Nabokov novels, despite his frequent disparagement of dialogue in fiction: "even the humblest reader (who likes books in dialogue form with a minimum of 'descriptions'—because conversations are 'life')" (*NG* 133); "dismally pedestrian writing with oodles of dialogue" (*ND* 199); "who for instance would want a detective story without a single dialogue in it?" (*Lolita* 315); cf. also *SO* 43, 57. For a less negative comment, see *SO* 138: "Dialogue

can be delightful if dramatically or comically stylized or artistically blended with descriptive prose; in other words, if it is a feature of style and structure in a given work. If not, then it is nothing but automatic typewriting, formless speeches filling page after page, over which the eye skims like a flying saucer over the Dust Bowl." Part of the explanation for *Ada's* extensive dialogue may be found in this last quotation, in the lines from *Speak, Memory* cited in 3.01-02n ("Our relationship was marked by that habitual exchange of homespun nonsense, comically garbled words, proposed imitations of supposed intonations, and all those private jokes which is the secret code of happy families"), and in Nabokov's distrust of the reliability of memoirists who effortlessly reproduce dialogue.

8.16-17: not yet married Marina and her married sister: note Van's careful avoidance of the term "my mother."

8.17-18: lieu de naissance: *Darkbloom*: "birthplace." Cf. 25.27: "in a *lieu de naissance*."

8.18: her own Dr. Krolik: MOTIF: *Krolik*.

8.18: pour ainsi dire: *Darkbloom*: "so to say."

8.19-22: orchids . . . Butterfly Orchis: MOTIF: *orchids*.

8.20: by the sea, his dark-blue greatgrandmother: a particularly exhibitionistic example of the allusive "Veen wit" (254). Demon has chosen to stay not in Switzerland but in Villa Armina, whose name recalls the sea (as Demon explains: "Marina never realized it was an anagram of the sea, not of her" [163.05-06]), as does the name of Van's great-great-grandmother, Princess Sofia Temnosiniy (see Family Tree and 9.14-18). Van says "great-grandmother," not "great-great-grandmother," not by mistake (he gets it right at 9.15) but in allusion to the opening chapter of another famous novel, *Ulysses* (pub. 1922), by James Joyce (1882-1941). In the opening chapter Buck Mulligan, looking seaward, and like Van and Ada also showing off in the first conversation in the novel, exclaims: "Isn't the sea what Algy calls it: a great sweet mother? The snotgreen sea. The scrotumtightening sea. *Epi*

oinopa ponton." ([Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1986], 4; 1.77-78) "Algy" here is Algernon Charles Swinburne (1837-1909): "I will go back to the great sweet mother, / Mother and lover of men, the sea" ("The Triumph of Time," pub. 1866, II. 257-58). "*Epi oinopa ponton*" means "over the wine-dark sea," a Homeric formula recurring throughout the *Odyssey*.

It is as if Van already knows he is in a novel, as *Ada* seems to at 8.26-29, and as Van as narrator certainly does from the moment of the Tolstoy allusion in 3.01. MOTIF: *colors-names: novel*.

8.20: grandmother.: corrected from 1969, which omits quotation mark.

8.21-9.03: *Ada* is an expert naturalist. MOTIF: *Ada's taxonomy*.

8.22: Butterfly Orchis: W2: "An orchid of either of two European terrestrial species of the genus *Platanthera* (*P. bifolia* and *P. chlorantha*)." MOTIF: *butterflies*.

8.22-23: my mother was even crazier than her sister: *Ada* reveals here that she has already deduced that her mother, Marina, had substituted Van for Aqua's dead child, and in that sense is "crazier" than Aqua in her "nusshaus."

8.25: sanicle: W2: "Any plant of the genus *Sanicula*," "a genus of chiefly American herbs of the carrot family (Ammiaceae), the sanicles, having palmately compound leaves, and unisexual flowers in panicked umbels."

8.25-28: to whom you, Van, as Jane Austen might have phrased it . . .: *Darkbloom*: "Jane Austen: allusion to rapid narrative information imparted through dialogue, in *Mansfield Park*." Nabokov has in mind an unexpectedly apt passage from the opening chapter of *Mansfield Park*, a novel he knew thoroughly through teaching it at Cornell in the 1950s. Just as Van's words introduce an undefined Dr. Krolik into the novel and *Ada* adds specific information, so Sir Thomas Bertram's reference to his sons merely establishes their existence, while Mrs Norris's reply names the young gentlemen and indicates their ages. Mrs Norris is trying to suggest that the Bertrams could

much more easily accommodate their poor niece Fanny Price than could Mrs Norris herself: "You are thinking of your sons—but do not you know that of all things on earth *that* is the least likely to happen; brought up, as they would be, always together like brothers and sisters? It is morally impossible. I never knew an instance of it. It is, in fact, the only sure way of providing against the connection. Suppose her a pretty girl, and seen by Tom or Edmund for the first time seven years hence, and I dare say there would be mischief. The very idea of her having suffered to grow up at a distance from us in poverty and neglect, would be enough to make either of the dear sweettempered boys in love with her. But breed her up with them from this time, . . . and she will never be more to either than a sister." (*Mansfield Park* [Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1966], 44) Despite Mrs Norris's reasoning, Fanny ends up marrying Edmund. MOTIF: *novel*.

8.28-29: (you recall Brown, don't you, Smith?): perhaps a glancing allusion to *The Comedians* (1966), by Graham Greene (1904-91), which is narrated by a Brown and with Smith and Jones as leading characters, or Nabokov may simply be using the names as Greene did, as stock English surnames.

For a comment on Ada's speaking style, at twelve, see 61.14-15: "Her spectacular handling of subordinate clauses, her parenthetic asides.... "

8.30-31: Bear-Foot, B, E, A, R, my love, not my foot or yours: *Darkbloom*: "both children are naked."

8.30: Bear-Foot" W2: "=CHRISTMAS ROSE," a "European herb (*Helleborus niger*), having white or purplish flowers, like single roses, produced in winter."

8.31: or the Stabian flower-girl's: *Darkbloom*: "allusion to the celebrated mural painting (the so-called 'Spring') from Stabiae in the National Museum of Naples: a maiden scattering blossoms." The maiden (who is in fact gathering blossoms rather than scattering them) is bare-footed. One of the best-known paintings of antiquity, the so-called "Primavera" is given for instance a generous full-page color reproduction in Ernst Gombrich's popular *The Story*

of Art (London: Phaidon, 1950 and numerous subsequent editions). Stabiae was buried along with Pompeii and Herculaneum in the eruption of Vesuvius in AD 79.

8.32-34: an allusion . . . like this: Demon, an art connoisseur, can instantly consult "the copiously illustrated catalogue of his immediate mind" (435.09-10).

8.33: your father, who, according to Blanche, is also mine: Blanche presumably knows from Bouteillan, one of her lovers, who was Demon's butler at the time of both Van's conception and birth and Demon's last row with Marina, when she was already pregnant with Ada (252.17-20).

8.34: like this": corrected from 1969, which omits quotation mark.

9.02: its scientific name: see 8.30n.

9.02-03: Pied de Lion: lion's foot, a name for several flowers, here specifically "edelweiss" (7.30).

9.04-05: a very sick Chinese boy who came all the way from Barkley College: Ada's exuberant but unsupported guesswork ("very sick": because he is "a fellow patient" [8.11]; "Chinese," because of the paper flower, although origami is a Japanese art; "Barkley College," because the sanicle grows in profusion in coastal California), or a family reminiscence (cf. "the Chinese chant of that young student with a non-Chinese guitar" [24.28-29]) or, as it seems, another inspired deduction?

9.05: Barkley College: University of California at Berkeley, via the British pronunciation ("Barkley") of the surname.

9.06: Pompeianella: because of the Nicky and Pimpernella comic strip (6.02) and Stabiae's proximity to Pompeii. MOTIF: *Pompeianella*.

9.07: picture books: see 8.31n.

9.07-08: but whom I admired last summer in a Naples museum: Nabokov himself, at the time of writing *Ada*, had just been travelling in Italy looking at museums in small towns and large cities for a projected but never written *Butterflies in Art*. He visited Naples and the Museo Nazionale di Napoli—

where a large proportion of the relics from Pompeii, Herculaneum and Stabiae are housed—in May 1966 (VNAY 512).

9.11: Destroy and forget: Ada realizes that her and Van's consanguinity could prove embarrassing if a blackmailer knew of their affair. For the herbarium album as a precursor of Kim's blackmailing photograph album, see 397.03-05n. For the framing of Part I by the combination of album and "destroy and forget," see 323-24n. MOTIF: *destroy and forget*.

9.11-12: But we still have an hour before tea: in view of Ada's sexual appetite, this means "We have time to make love again before tea" (and perhaps more than once). Despite just discovering that they are brother and sister, Ada and Van are quite undaunted about their relationship. (See VNAY 542-51.)

9.13: the "dark-blue" allusion: see 8.20.

9.14-30: This passage should turn us back to the Family Tree—if we have not already been enticed to do so—to check the details of Van and Ada's parentage against the official genealogy. The first and simplest of Ada's challenges is set before us: if Van appears to be the son of Demon and Aqua, and Ada the daughter of Dan and Marina, how can both be the children of Demon and Marina?

9.14-18: Temnosiniy . . . "dark blue": since "Temnosiniy" would be as unusual a surname in Russian as "Darkblue" in English, there may be an echo here of "Darkbloom." "Vivian Darkbloom" is a minor character in *Lolita*, Clare Quilty's occasional co-author, and Nabokov's way of signing himself anagrammatically into a novel that he intended for a long time to publish anonymously. MOTIF: *color-names; Nabokov*.

9.16-17: a direct descendant of the Yaroslav rulers of pre-Tartar times: princes of Kievan Russia, 10th and early 11th century, beginning with Yaroslav I (d. 1054). See SIC 19-20, 24-25, 75. The Tartar invasions of Russia began "in the third decade of the thirteenth century" (SIC 75); the Tartars dominated the country from 1240 to 1480. Russian snobs particularly valued families that could trace their origins (as the

Nabokovs could not) right back to the nobility of Rurik (died 872) and his descendants such as the House of Yaroslavl. MOTIF: *Tartar*.

9.18-29: The recollective, sensual, synesthetic, allusive style here pays homage to *A la recherche du temps perdu* (In Search of Lost Time, pub. 1913-27), by Marcel Proust (1871-1922). So of course does the subject: nowhere does the combination of aestheticism and snobbishness evident here receive fuller expression than in Proust's novel (cf. Kinbote's reference to Proust's "Tolstoian nuances of snobbishness repeated and expanded to an unsufferable length" [PF 162]). When at 9.27-29 Van announces that "his favorite purple passage remained the one concerning the name 'Guermantes,' with whose hue . . .," he has in mind Marcel's meditation, beginning on the second page of *Le Côté de Guermantes* (*The Guermantes Way*) and lasting for several more pages (Pléiade ed., 1954, I, 10-15) on the romance, the sounds and the color of names, especially of an old aristocratic name like "Guermantes." Nor is it accidental that a chapter that begins with an echo of Tolstoy's novel should end with a reference to Proust's, right where Marcel muses: "C'était, ce Guermantes, comme le cadre d'un roman" ("It was, this 'Guermantes,' like the scene of a novel"). Since the Guermantes name comes back to Marcel at its purest as "ce mauve si doux, trop brillant, trop neuf, dont se veloutait la cravate gonflée de la jeune duchesse" ("that purple so soft, too brilliant, too new, which gave a velvet bloom to the young Duchess's billowy scarf"), Van's "purple passage" (9.27), though quite accurate, is also a pun. Various other details of Van's reverie echo Marcel's longer one: the "velvet background" picks up the velvet bloom of the Guermantes name; the "summer sky through the black foliage of the family tree" tips its hat to scenery like "dépliées sur l'écran d'or du couchant, les ailes noires et ramifiées de la cathédrale" ("the black, branched wings of the cathedral, spread out against the golden screen of the setting sun"); "the prism of his mind" recalls the prismatic top whose spinning and slowing Marcel

compares to the mind losing and regaining the distinct sense of a name's successive hues. MOTIF: *novel*.

9.24-27: never been able to reread Proust . . . without . . . heartburn: may seem related to "that special asparagus . . . which does not produce Proust's After-effect" (254.13-14), except that the after-effect is not heartburn but "an asparagus dream" (PF 162).

9.28-29: with whose hue: in this context of snobbishness, and in light of Ada's quibble at 9.31, an echo of *Who's Who*; cf. 587.29 "In the latest *Who's Who* the list of his main papers...." MOTIF

9.30: Van's artistic vanity: MOTIF: *Van*.

9.31-32: Hue or who? . . . Ada Veen's late hand): the first firm indication that *Ada* will not be a third-person narrative, and that *Ada* herself is somehow involved in the book's composition.

9.31: Hue or who?: MOTIF: *colors-names*.

ANNOTATIONS & QUERIES

by Charles Nicol

[Material for this section should be sent to Charles Nicol, English Department, Indiana State University, Terre Haute, IN 47809. Deadlines for submission are March 1 for the Spring issue and September 1 for the Fall. Unless specifically stated otherwise, references to Nabokov's works will be to the most recent hardcover U.S. editions.]

GOETHE IN HUMBERLAND

In *Strong Opinions*, Nabokov tells us that while he did not read Goethe as an émigré in Berlin, he "read Goethe and Kafka *en regard* as [he] also did Homer and Horace" (189), though he does not specify when he did so. His later works show considerable familiarity with Goethe, and I hope to demonstrate, in particular, parodic references to *Die Wahlverwandtschaften* (hereafter referred to as *Elective Affinities*) in *Lolita*.

The most distinct Goethe allusion in the Nabokov *oeuvre* is to the poem *Erkönig* (The Elf-King). In *Lolita*, when Humbert carries Lolita to the Elphinstone (!) hospital, he conjures up an image of Quilty as "a heterosexual Erkönig in pursuit" (242). The poem receives a more involved treatment in *Pale Fire*. Kinbote notes in his gloss of line 662 ("Who rides so late in the night and the wind"): "This line, and indeed the whole passage (lines 653-664), allude to the well-known poem by Goethe about the erkling, hoary enchanter of the elf-haunted alderwood, who falls in love with the delicate little boy of a belated traveller" (239). In referring to the "haunted alderwood," Nabokov quietly points out to the reader that, as Edwin H. Zeydel states it in *Goethe, the Lyrist* (13), "*Erkönig* (actually 'alder king') is a mistranslation of

Danish *ellerkonge*, 'elfin king'." This is followed by Kinbote's parodic translation of some of the poem's lines into Zemblan and an aside: "Another fabulous ruler, the last king of Zembla, kept repeating these haunting lines to himself both in Zemblan and German . . . while he climbed through the bracken belt of the dark mountains he had to traverse in his bid for freedom." During an earlier escape episode, Kinbote recalled that "a shiver of *alfear* (uncontrollable fear caused by elves) ran between his shoulder blades. He murmured a familiar prayer, crossed himself, and resolutely proceeded toward the pass" (143). One wonders whether the lines from the poem were not actually the "familiar prayer," or he confused the two.

Nabokov also parodies Goethe's *Wilhelm Meister's Apprenticeship*. In *Bend Sinister*, Ember, like Wilhelm, involves himself in a production of *Hamlet*, as Literary Adviser to the State Theater. The parody of Goethe's and Wilhelm's twisted perceptions of *Hamlet* and Ophelia is overt: "She and the producer, like Goethe, imagine Ophelia in the guise of a canned peach: 'her whole being floats in sweet ripe passion,' says Johann Wolfgang, Ger. poet, nov., dram. & phil. Oh, horrible" (116). Nabokov apparently did not agree with Goethe's interpretation of *Hamlet*.

Citing the *Nabokov-Wilson Letters* (214), Gennady Barabtarlo notes in *Phantom of Fact: A Guide to Nabokov's Prun*, "Nabokov did not care much for Goethe and once called *Faust* an 'academic shibboleth'" (215). In *Nikolai Gogol* we find the reason behind Nabokov's distaste for Goethe, and *Faust* in particular:

Among the nations with which we came into contact, Germany had always seemed to us a country where *poshlust*, instead of being mocked, was one of the essential parts of the national spirit, habits, traditions and general atmosphere, although at the same time well-meaning Russian intellectuals of a more romantic type readily, too

readily, adopted the legend of the greatness of German philosophy and literature; for it takes a super-Russian to admit that there is a dreadful streak of *poshlust* running through Goethe's *Faust*. (64)

Here we have not only the motive but the *modus operandi* for Goethe parodies as well: *poshlust*. According to the Nabokovian sense of justice, *poshlust* provides a fair target for parody. When we compare *Elective Affinities* with *Lolita*, we see that Nabokov does not merely distort the Goethe work by reflecting and refracting its precious plot structure, but openly parodies its most *poshly* elements.

Parodic references to *Elective Affinities* center around Charlotte, whose *poshlust* resembles that of Goethe's bourgeois couple. While Goethe's Charlotte occupies herself with the dilettantism of landscaping and estate beautification, Nabokov's Charlotte must confine herself to home decoration in American suburbia:

She dabbled in cretonnes and chintzes; she changed the colors of the sofa. . . . She rearranged the furniture--and was pleased when she found, in a household treatise, that "it is permissible to separate a pair of sofa commodes and their companion lamps." With the authoress of *Your Home is You*, she developed a hatred for lean chairs and spindle tables. (80)

In *Elective Affinities*, Goethe reveals his characters solely by their first names, and the four main characters share one communal forename: Otto. The novel begins by introducing the protagonist as Eduard, but the reader soon learns that Otto is his true Christian name, which he relinquished as a youth to distinguish himself from his boyhood friend, the Captain, also named Otto. And the names of the two females in the novel both contain elements of this same name: Charlotte and Otilie. This is not far from

Charlotte and Lolita. One cannot help being struck by "one of those dazzling coincidences that logicians loathe and poets love" when Humbert Humbert includes among his possible choices for pseudonyms, "Otto Otto" (310).

Making love with Charlotte, Humbert "would manage to invoke the child while caressing the mother" (78), and does so for the reader by combining their names: Lotte, Lottelita, Lolitchen. Alfred Appel, Jr., glosses these names by reference to Goethe's *The Sorrows of Young Werther*. "H.H. no doubt recalls that Goethe's Werther calls his Charlotte 'Lotte' and 'Lottchen'" (*Annotated Lolita* 368) and points to the *Eugene Onegin* commentary (on which Nabokov was working collaterally), where Nabokov says of Werther, "he meets Charlotte S., Lotte, 'Mamsell Lottchen' (as he so delightfully addresses her in the original, using a German bourgeois intonation peculiar to the period)" (2: 345). However, the situation seems instead to parallel that of Goethe's other Charlotte in *Elective Affinities*, where Eduard, while embracing his wife Charlotte, "[holds] Ottilie in his arms" (105).

The *Eugene Onegin* commentary demonstrates Nabokov's close reading of *Elective Affinities*. At one point (2: 403) he notes that an intertwined E and O monogram appears in both works. More relevant here is another reference: "the passion for a pretty instep that Pushkin shared with Goethe would have been called 'foot-fetishism' by a modern student of the psychology of sex" (*EO* 2: 117), referring to a scene in *Elective Affinities* where Eduard says to Charlotte before the double adultery scene, "I have taken a vow that tonight I shall kiss your shoe" (105). Nabokov parodies this passion by giving it to Humbert: "God, what I would not have given to kiss then and there those delicate-boned, long-toed, monkeyish feet!" (53).

We know from a biographical standpoint that Goethe fell in love with younger women in his later

years; in fact, critics have described *Elective Affinities* as a reflection of Goethe's conflict between the high moral regard he had for his marriage and the spontaneous passion he felt for an aging nymphet, eighteen-year-old Mina Herzlieb. Goethe entered a "literary duel" with Minna's other admirer, Zacharias Werner; the weapons were Italian sonnets. Humbert and Quilty seemingly duel over Lolita at a literary level: Quilty writes a play in her honor, while Humbert composes poems to his lost Lolita and reads Quilty his death sentence in verse.

Ultimately, the element in *Elective Affinities* that made it a victim of choice for Nabokov may have been its element of social criticism. In it, the Baron suggests that marriage should be made a five-year renewable contract. For Nabokov, in contrast, marriage is a bond, a sharing of two lives, and stands above all else as the only possible way to escape the prison of one's own self and access another's. Perhaps for this reason, Nabokov does not even give Goethe a consolation prize. At the end of the novel, Humbert finds Lolita married to Richard F. [Friedrich?] Schiller. As a *coup de grâce* and final lampoon of Goethe's fondness for young girls, Nabokov gives *his* nymphet to the namesake of Goethe's closest personal friend and rival, Schiller.

--Jake Pultorak

WHENCE THE COCKERELLS' PITCHER?

Optical reflection is one of the major motifs in *Pnin*. A common source of reflection is glassware, such as the "gleam of a tumbler" in chapter one and the "large bowl of aquamarine glass" Pnin receives as a present from his son Victor. When Joan Clements sees the bowl, she compares it to another glass vessel, telling Pnin that the Cockerells own "a Lake Dunmore pitcher that looks like a poor relation of this" (158). In *Phantom of Fact* (242) Gennady Barabtarlo has

suggested several models for the pitcher; I would like to add a more probable source, expanding on Barabtarlo's mention of Old American glassware.

In November 1810, the Vermont State Legislature granted a charter for the founding of the Vermont Glass Factory in Middlebury. Production started the next year, and business was so successful that a second factory was established nearby on the banks of Lake Dunmore. A fire in 1815 temporarily halted glass production at the new location, and two years later, due in part to the economic effects of the War of 1812, the Lake Dunmore Glass Company ceased operations. In 1833 a group of Middlebury investors refurbished the plant and manufactured glass for the next nine years. In 1849, the Lake Dunmore Hotel Company purchased the land on which the factory was situated, and tourism became the lake's main industry.

All types of glassware were made at Lake Dunmore, such as bottles, bowls, dishes, and most importantly, pitchers. The articles were well known, appearing for sale as far south as Hartford, Connecticut. However, due to the short life of the Lake Dunmore Glass Company, the glassware it produced is very rare. There is a small collection at the Sheldon Art Museum in Middlebury, Vermont, and the Chemistry Department of Middlebury College also owns several pieces. A complete discussion of Lake Dunmore glassware can be found in Florence Allen and Thomas Ornsbee, "Glassmaking at Lake Dunmore, Vermont," *American Collector*, August 1937: 6-7, and a sequel published the next month (6-7, 19). The article contains many photographs of the various types of glassware made at the Lake Dunmore factory, including two Lake Dunmore pitchers. (Several of the featured pieces are aquamarine, the same color as *Prin*'s bowl.) Victor's gift must be extremely valuable if a Lake Dunmore pitcher pales in comparison.

Nabokov and his family spent two summers, 1940 and 1942, with Mikhail Karpovich in West Wardsboro,

Vermont, less than fifty miles from Lake Dunmore (Boyd, *American Years* 14-16). More importantly, on July 20, 1955, Nabokov delivered a guest lecture at the Middlebury College Russian Summer School (Boyd 270). Especially popular among students during the hot summer months, Lake Dunmore is only a few miles from the college. Nabokov mailed Chapter Six, in which the Lake Dunmore reference occurs, to the *New Yorker* on August 23, only one month and three days after his Middlebury lecture. It seems likely that he heard about or saw examples of Lake Dunmore glassware during this stay at Middlebury, and they thus found their way into his *Prin*.

(I would like to extend special thanks to Mrs. Betsy Brent at the Ilsley Public Library in Middlebury, VT.)

--Jason Merrill, University of Kansas

ADA AND PERCY: BEREFT MAIDENS AND DEAD OFFICERS

The affair between Ada and Lt. Percy de Prey is brief, but its echoes resound throughout much of *Ada*. Since the reader sees Ada's other lovers mostly through Van's eyes, Percy emerges as a despicable figure. Ada, who understandably tries to minimize the virtues of her past lovers, nonetheless remarks that Percy "had a keen sense of honor, odd though it may seem to you and me" (335). Count de Prey's offer to duel Van following their scuffle at Ada's birthday picnic attests this, as does his enlistment in the Crimean conflict. Ada is perhaps not without feeling for the doomed young officer. Three superimposed motifs that are linked with their affair may suggest this.

Percy de Prey is associated with the French folk song "Malbrough's s'en va-t-en guerre," the melody of which underlies the English "For he's a jolly good fellow" (287-289). In the song Malbrough or Malbrook has gone to war but nothing is known of his return. Perhaps at Easter or Trinity. Easter and Trinity pass.

His wife, watching from a tower, sees the approach of a page dressed black. Malbrook is dead. (The text of the song may be found in my earlier VN note "Ada's Percy de Prey as the Marlborough Man.") The "Malbrough" of the song is widely assumed to be the famous Duke of Marlborough who won a great victory over the French at Malplaquet in 1709. Although in real life the Duke survived, the song with its image of the grieving widow became enormously popular throughout Europe. Catherine the Great had it played at the funeral of her lover Prince Potemkin. It is perhaps worth noting that the Duke of Marlborough and his almost equally famous wife, Sarah Jennings, are one of history's great love stores. In *Ada* the song is sung as a clue to the identity of Ada's lover and as a foreshadowing of Percy/Malbrook's death in the Crimea, but the implied role of Ada as bereft mistress should not be overlooked.

The second layer of allusion focusses more directly on Ada. At the family dinner Demon teasingly prophesies that Ada's dream is to become a concert pianist and (mis-)quotes the lines: "Lorsque son fiancé fut parti pour la guerre / Irene de Grandfief, la pauvre et noble enfant / Ferma son piano ... vendit son elephant".... Van identifies Coppee as the author and goes on to mention that Ada de Grandfief has translated another of his poems into English (246). J. E. Rivers and William Walker (*Nabokov's Fifth Arc*, pp. 284-85) further identify Francois Coppee's (1842-1908) sentimental narrative poem "La Veille" and summarize it: Vicomte Roger has gone to war while Irene de Grandfief waits for him. There is a skirmish near the castle and a wounded enemy soldier is brought in for care. In nursing him Irene learns he has killed Roger. After a struggle with her Christian conscience, she continues to nurse him but her hair has turned white overnight. Demon jokingly quotes the poem and assigns Ada the role of Irene because he has heard rumors of her affair with Lt. de Prey who is departing for the Crimea. As with the song "Malbrough s'en va-t-en guerre," Ada is cast as the abandoned fiancée and Percy's death is forecast.

The motif has a third incarnation arising from Ada's career as an actress. One of her roles, she says, is that of "*la pauvre et noble enfant*" Irina, the youngest of Chekhov's *Three Sisters*--which become four in the Anti-Terran version (426-430). Note Ada's quote from the Coppee poem specifically links this scene to the family dinner scene with its covert allusion to Percy. They are also linked by the names Irene and Irina. Chekhov's Irina, failing to find a meaningful life or love in the provincial garrison town where the sisters live, agrees to marry one of the officers, Baron Tuzenbach, whom she finds decent but little else. As the regiment departs on the eve of her wedding, Lt. Tuzenbach is killed in a duel by a friend, a disappointed suitor.

The French folk song, Coppee's poem, and Chekhov's play all serve as subtexts for the Ada-Percy relationship. In each of them, as in *Ada*, a titled army officer is killed leaving a grieving fiancée. Percy's role is echoed by the Duke of Marlborough, Vicomte Roger, and Baron Tuzenbach; Ada's--by the Duchess of Marlborough, Irene de Grandfief, and Irina Prozorov.

We opened our remarks by suggesting that perhaps Ada's feelings for Percy were deeper than Van implies. This may be but we must reflect on another possibility. Ada is not an admirable character and perhaps our suggestion that she grieves for her lost lover is over generous. Brian Boyd points out that Ada even encourages Van to fondle Lucette, ostensibly to defuse her pesky jealousy but in part to give Ada time for her "botanical rambles" with Percy (*Ada: The Place of Consciousness*, p. 49). Nabokov may be using the above three subtexts parodically. The superficial situation is similar in all cases, but Ada's feeling for Percy may be quite different from that of her proxies. Whatever Ada's feelings for Percy, the real point is Nabokov's artful use of the triple-decker set of allusions for *Ada's* bereft maiden/dead officer theme.

--D. Barton Johnson
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ABSTRACTS

"A PERSISTENT SNORE IN THE NEXT ROOM: NABOKOV AND *FINNEGANS WAKE*"

by Tom Goldpaugh

(Abstract of a paper delivered at the Annual MLA Convention, New York City, December 1992)

Although Vladimir Nabokov always expressed admiration for *Ulysses*, he claimed that *Finnegans Wake* was "a cold pudding of a book, a persistent snore in the next room, most aggravating to the insomniac that I am" (*Strong Opinions* 71). For the most part, Nabokov's critics have taken him at his word, in the process ignoring the *Wake's* impact on him. In fact, if the *Wake* was a snore Nabokov heard in the next room, it was one that turned him into the perfect insomniac that Joyce claimed was the true reader of *Finnegans Wake*. From 1939 and "The Waltz Invention" to 1969 and *Ada*, *Finnegans Wake* informs Nabokov's works with a force that can be felt in his themes, his structures, and his character types.

Three works bear the imprint of the *Wake*. "The Waltz Invention," a play written in Russian shortly after Nabokov met Joyce, employs the dream-as-setting and uses multi-roled characters similar to those that characterize *Finnegans Wake*. *Lolita*, the most heavily indebted, re-works the *Wake's* character types and its Viconian cycle. In *Ada*, Van Veen's treatise on time opposes Joyce's version of Viconian time, and throughout *Ada* both *Finnegans Wake* and Joyce are sent up.

The *Wake's* presence in these three works, though, suggests more than Nabokov's customary acknowledgement of a literary ancestor. Each one displays a different stage in Nabokov's relationship

with Joyce and the *Wake*. In "The Waltz Invention" Nabokov awkwardly borrowed both the general framework of the dream and minor elements from published parts of Joyce's still-as-yet unfinished work. In particular, what Joyce had already published as "The Mime of Mick, Nick and the Maggies" was influential. What we see in such borrowings is a young Nabokov's masked and hesitant appropriation of material from Joyce.

Lolita, however, shows Nabokov's comic mastery of that same material. Not only do his characters bear a close resemblance to Joyce's, right down to the speech impediments of Humbert Humbert and Humphrey Chimpden Earwicker, but in *Lolita* Nabokov embeds the four-stage Viconian cycle that Joyce uses to power *Finnegans Wake*. To think of this as a case of literary borrowing misreads Nabokov's purpose. His inclusion of the *Wake's* structure and character types in *Lolita* attempts to subordinate the *Wake* to *Lolita* in the same way that the *Wake's* inclusion of other works tries to subordinate them to the *Wake*.

Appropriation and subordination, though, are not the same as confrontation, a task Nabokov undertakes in *Ada*. Here Nabokov frequently parodies the *Wake*, and at least two minor comic characters directly recall Joyce as its author. At the same time, twice in the novel Nabokov places himself as third in a line that begins with Lewis Carroll and includes the Joyce of the *Wake*. His mockery of the *Wake* and his recognition of Joyce as a literary forbearer are the two sides to his confrontation with Joyce and the *Wake*. In *Ada*, partially through Van Veen, Nabokov directly challenges Joyce's version of the Viconian cycle of Time by separating Time and Space which in *Finnegans Wake* are opposed but indivisible.

Nabokov's relationship to *Finnegans Wake* as it manifests in *Ada* is the final stage in his relationship with James Joyce. Simultaneously mocking the *Wake* and acknowledging Joyce on the one hand, and directly challenging the *Wake's* theory of Time on the other, it completes the process begun in "The Waltz

Invention." Over the course of his career, Nabokov moves from a simple appropriation of minor elements, to a comic mastery of Joyce's Viconian cycle and his character types, to a confrontation with Joyce and with *Finnegans Wake* in an area where both laid claim: Time.

"LIBERAL IRONISTS AND THE 'GAUDILY PAINTED SAVAGE': ON RICHARD RORTY'S READING OF VLADIMIR NABOKOV"

by Leona Tucker

(Abstract of a paper delivered at the Annual MLA Convention, New York City, December 1992)

While applauding Richard Rorty's discussion of the analogies between Humbert's callousness to the bereaved father who gives him a "mediocre haircut" in *Kasbeam* and the reader's insensitivity to Charlotte Haze's and Dolly's feelings for Dolly's dead little brother, the paper protests (1) against Rorty's pointing to "cruelty" rather than callousness as the main target of Nabokov's fiction, (2) against the conclusions that Rorty draws from Nabokov's statement that the "little shiver" of aesthetic experience "is quite certainly the highest form of emotion that humanity has attained when evolving pure art and pure science" (*Lectures on Literature* 64), and (3) against his comments on Nabokov's conjoining, as it were, literary immortality with metaphysical, or "literal" immortality.

"THE SALOME MOTIF IN NABOKOV'S INVITATION TO A BEHEADING"

by Gavriel Shapiro

(Abstract of a paper delivered at the MLA Convention, New York City, December 1992)

This paper demonstrates that in his portrayal of Emmie, Nabokov drew on the image of Salome as it had evolved throughout the centuries, from the Gospels to his day. Like her evangelical counterpart, Emmie is a blind tool in the hands of an adult, in this case of M'sieur Pierre. The latter masterminds and, with her assistance, carries out a vicious ploy designed to torment Cincinnatus, who is evidently cast in the novel in the role of John the Baptist. Emmie is twelve years old and therefore is close in age to 'the little girl' of the Gospels. The Late Medieval and Renaissance iconography based on the Gospels, as reflected in the works of Giotto, the anonymous artist of the San Marco mosaic, Filippo Lippi, and Benozzo Gozzoli, all of whom portrayed Salome as an adolescent with blond hair, was, no doubt, the source of Nabokov's inspiration for the portrayal of Emmie. Further, the condemnation of dancing, that Devil-pleasing activity, as expressed in the homiletic works of John Chrysostom and his Russian successors, is manifest in the photoroscope, with its realization of the metaphoric formula--'dancing is the Devil's bride.' And, finally, in accordance with the modernist image of the evangelical princess, particularly as it appears in Oscar Wilde's *Salomé*, Nabokov portrays Emmie as a peevish adolescent avenging her unrequited love. The paper was accompanied with slides.

"ON NABOKOV'S PEN NAME SIRIN"

by Gavriel Shapiro

(Abstract of a paper delivered at the Annual AATSEEL Convention, New York City, December 1992)

This paper proposes the reasons for Nabokov's choosing Sirin as the pen name for his 'Russian years.' The discussion follows Nabokov's own remarks on the subject which he made in his second interview with Alfred Appel, Jr. (*Strong Opinions* 161). In these remarks, Nabokov suggests the four sources for this *nom de plume*: Sirin as an owl, Siren as a Greek Deity, Sirin as a mythical Russian bird, and Sirin as 'the Blokian era' image. In conclusion, the paper considers some fatidic dates, to which Nabokov always attached great importance, and particularly the fatidic date symbolism with which Sirin had surrounded the first two decades of the writer's life, as an additional argument in favor of this choice. The paper was accompanied with slides.

"THE POLITICS OF PERCEPTION: VLADIMIR
NABOKOV'S IMAGES OF THE 1940S"

by Gregory Wickliff

(Abstract of a Ph.D. Dissertation, Purdue University, December 1991.)

Nabokov's published texts of the 1940s--his lepidoptera articles, *Nikolai Gogol*, *Conclusive Evidence*, ten short stories, and *Bend Sinister*--are read in terms of Henri's Bergson's theories of image perception. For both authors, time is real, and change is basic to human perception. Consequently, any static representation of time, including language, is

finally mechanistic, false, and even deterministic in the sense of presenting a single, closed future. In Nabokov's texts, mechanism and determinism are rejected, subverted by reflexive techniques, and parodied as aesthetically and morally empty doctrines.

In Nabokov's lepidoptera articles this thesis takes the form of Nabokov's theory of the creative evolution of butterfly genitalia, a hypothesis that rejects Spencerian "survival of the fittest" and the single line of biological development implied by Darwin's theory of "natural selection." Instead, Nabokov argues for the mind-like development of species in novel and plural directions, and the constant need for revolutionary revision in science.

Principles similar to biological mechanism are carried into the human social realm by Spencer's deterministic theories of sociology that Nabokov rejects utterly, especially as they are represented by nineteenth century Russian literary criticism, by Marxist-Leninist dogma, by Stalinism, and by Hitler's National Socialism. In Nabokov's literary biography of Gogol, he revises criticism of the Gogol texts to continue a critique of nineteenth century Russian literary and social criticism, and to parody the biological determinism of associationist psychology, especially as practiced by Freud. Nabokov's autobiography creatively explodes many genre conventions and imitates the flow of human memory in the structure of its recurrent themes, one of the greatest of which is the political liberalism of Nabokov's father. The short stories treat quite directly the conflict between mechanism and individual creative consciousness that Nabokov suggests underlies the causes of World War II, and that projects itself as a kind of neurosis, even in the wake of the war. *Bend Sinister*, the most important work of the period for the purposes of this study, presents an exhaustive parody of the mechanistic police state that destroys every vestige of creative consciousness within its borders, but is itself destroyed by the unexpected intervention of the creative author of that world.