

## RHETORIC AND MYTHOLOGY OF THE 1808–1809 FINNISH WAR IN BARATYNSKY'S POEM *EDA*<sup>1</sup>

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The 1808–1809 Russian-Swedish (Finnish) War and its reflection in literature and the press have yet to be fully addressed by scholarship, remaining instead in the background of larger-scale and more “resounding” military campaigns between 1805–1815<sup>2</sup>. Scholarly attention to this topic also reflects contemporary evaluations: for many, the War of 1812 and the Russian army’s campaigns abroad long remained the central political and military event of the time.

Although in terms of scale and consequences the Finnish War cannot be compared to the campaigns of 1812–1815, it required no less rhetorical accompaniment and ideological interpretation, mainly in relation to the fact that the 1808–1809 war resulted in the Grand Duchy of Finland becoming a part of the Russian Empire. This geopolitical acquisition, which was made possible by the disarray of European forces following the Treaties of Tilsit, required the creation and support of an ideological narrative, both at the moment of the Finnish campaign and for decades afterward. This narrative would provide a basis for and legitimize Russia’s appropriation of Finland and Finland’s status as part of the empire<sup>3</sup>.

The polemics around the “Finnish question”, specific aspects of official discourse and its opponents, and historiographical conceptions of the Finnish war between the mid-nineteenth and early twentieth centuries have all been ad-

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<sup>2</sup> For a survey of Russian historiography on the Finnish War see [Приходько 2002; Такала, Соломеч 2009].

<sup>3</sup> On propaganda relating to the 1808 Russian campaign in Finland see [Рогинский 2012: 133–139].

dressed in many historical and cultural studies<sup>4</sup>. Meanwhile, the beginning stages of the formation of a “Finnish” war narrative in the 1810s–1830s, the parallel ideological presentation of this campaign in the press, and first-hand accounts of the war by participants and their younger contemporaries have barely been described<sup>5</sup>. This can be partly explained by the fragmentation of known responses, scattered throughout periodicals from the end of the 1800s–1820s, as well as by the absence of a fully-formed conception (the first generalized studies of the history of the Finnish War appeared only in the 1830s–1840s)<sup>6</sup>. It was precisely during this period, however, that the Finnish War became an object for reflection in notable works of literature: in prose, K. N. Batyushkov’s *Excerpts from a Russian officer’s letters on Finland* (1810)<sup>7</sup>, and in poetry, E. A. Baratynsky’s “Finland tale”, “Eda”. The latter’s plot is timed to the beginning of the Finnish campaign, and Baratynsky’s original idea was for the poem to close with an epilogue directly treating the events of the Finnish War and its consequences.

Although overall the immediate poetic background and generic context of the “Epilogue” have been long since well established, there have been no specific studies of the poem’s relationship to the rhetorical interpretation of the Finnish War in 1808–1810, to those constructions which were evidently known to Baratynsky (who had served in Finland from 1820).

Meanwhile, this material — dispersed and not yet collected, but presenting a full and undiluted ideological picture — is significant for our understanding of both the ideological and stylistic “roots” of Baratynsky’s poem. And when we compare synchronic literary responses to the Finnish campaign and interpretations of it offered in the press to that which we find in Baratynsky’s text and similar statements on the Finnish War, we get a more vivid picture of the essential rhetorical and conceptual breakdown that occurred in the late 1800s – early 1810s in conceptualizing the fate of the empire’s peoples.

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<sup>4</sup> [Korhonen 1967, Pogorelskin 1980; Суни 1982; Соломещ 2004; Лескинен 2004; Витухновская 2004; Витухновская 2008; Гузаиров 2012: 302–318].

<sup>5</sup> Only K. Batyushkov’s *Excerpts from a Russian officer’s letters on Finland* have attracted attention, although they do not directly address the war (see below, fn. 6); also *Thirteen days, or Finland*, by P. G. Gagarin, published in 1809 in Russian and French [Гагарин 1809a; Gagarin 1809], which relate Gagarin’s visit to Finland as part of Emperor Alexander I’s suite during the Diet of Porvoo (about Gagarin’s book see [Соломещ 2004: 144–146; Гузаиров 2012: 309–312]).

<sup>6</sup> These were for the most part the military writings of P. K. Sukhtelen [Сухтелен 1832] and A. I. Mikhailovsky-Danilevsky [Михайловский-Данилевский 1841].

<sup>7</sup> See particularly [Батюшков 1885: 377–383; Шарыпкин 1980: 127–129; Boele 1996: 226–227; Hirvasaho 1997: 35–63].

Thus, the following observations seek to describe, on the one hand, the basic rhetorical constructions and ideological schemas used in constructing interpretations of the Finnish War in the late 1800s – early 1810s press; and also to reveal their “traces” in Baratynsky’s text. On the other hand, we will attempt to clarify the role of those contemporary trends that managed to significantly transform both the ideology and the rhetoric of describing military events of the recent past.

### History of “Eda” and the “Helsingfors court”: biographical context

“Eda” was evidently first conceived of as a poem based on “ethnographic” material, projected onto Baratynsky’s biography (including his literary biography). Many of the lyrical descriptions of Finnish nature, which occupy a significant place in all of the poem’s parts, can be directly correlated with Baratynsky’s “Finnish” elegies, which brought him fame and made his name as a poet. The precise historical details of the plot are rather more unexpected in such a canonical Romantic poem: “...in 1807, before the very opening of our final war in Finland”, as indicated in the preface to the 1826 edition [Баратынский 1826: III]. To all appearances, however, Baratynsky did not begin with the idea of historically localizing the narrative; it emerged as he worked on the poem, and probably under some influence from external, biographical circumstances.

The concept of “Eda” and the first steps toward the poem can be dated to the late summer – early autumn of 1824, when the Nyslott regiment (in which Baratynsky served) returned from Petersburg to Rochensalm (Ruotsinsalmi) (see [Летопись 1998: 141]). Baratynsky informed Delvig of his new work in a letter that has since been lost, the contents of which Delvig related to Pushkin on 10 September 1824: “<Baratynsky> wrote a few days ago; he’s finished a song and a half of some kind of Romantic poem. He promises to send it to me with the first mail” [Пушкин 1937–1958: XIII, 108; Летопись 1998: 143]. The remaining part of the poem — in its original version — was also written over a brief period, as can be determined from a letter of Baratynsky to A. I. Turgenev on 31 October 1824: “...perhaps I am being immodest if I tell you that I have written a fairly small poem, and if I ask for your permission to send a copy to you” [Летопись 1998: 145]. But work on the poem was still ongoing at this time — Baratynsky only sent “Eda” to Turgenev along with a letter from 25 January 1825 [Ibid.: 150], evidently continuing to write and “polish” it until this point. It is significant that both of these letters to Turgenev were sent from the capital city of the Grand Duchy of Finland, Helsingfors,

where Baratynsky had arrived in mid-October 1824, on the invitation of the Governor-General A. A. Zakrevsky [Летопись 1998: 144].

The summons to the headquarters of the independent Finland corps, which doubtless attested to the new Governor-General's inclination toward Baratynsky, marked a new stage in the fate of the "Finland exile" and gave him new (and not unfounded) hopes of receiving the long-awaited rank of officer. And it was Zakrevsky's protection in response to intercessory pleas by A. I. Turgenyev and D. V. Davydov that turned out to be decisive: in May 1825 Baratynsky was finally promoted to *praporshik* [Ibid.: 158]. Furthermore, Baratynsky's three-month stay in Helsingfors from October 1824 – January 1825 permitted him to acquire a different and far more interesting social life. While he had previously lodged with the Nyslott regiment in small fortress cities like Rochensalm and Fredrikshamn, in Helsingfors he lived among the officers of the Governor-General's headquarters and the scattered "Helsingfors court" of A. F. Zakrevskaya. Bearing in mind the important role that Zakrevsky played in Baratynsky's fate, as well as the significance that Baratynsky attached early on to his friendship with Zakrevsky's adjutants N. V. Putyata and A. A. Mukhanov<sup>8</sup>, it seems safe to presume that during his time in Helsingfors, Baratynsky was affected in one way or another by discussions of those ideological and political-administrative problems of the Duchy of Finland that Zakrevsky and his close associates were dealing with at the time<sup>9</sup>.

Appointed Governor-General of Finland and commander of the independent Finland corps on 30 August 1823, Zakrevsky was initially skeptical regarding the possibility of his success in this area: "After hearing two talks on Finland, I am even more convinced that I can be of no use there", he complained to P. D. Kiselev shortly after assuming his new position [Закревский 1891: 283; letter from 5 January 1824]. Having known Finland since the Finnish War

<sup>8</sup> The "Finnish" interests of both Mukhanov and Putyata were not limited to their official duties, which fact is particularly evident in their statements in the press — Mukhanov's famous polemical article (which elicited a response from A. S. Pushkin), in which he protested mightily against what he saw as Madame de Stahl's superficial opinion on Finland [Муханов 1825]; and Putyata's "Excerpts from letters on Finland", published in various editions between 1825–27 (also see Putyata's late historical sketch "The Diet in the city of Porvoo in 1809" [Путята 1860] and the preliminary materials for the sketch [РГАЛИ. Ф. 394. Оп. 1. № 50], as well as draft for an article on the history of Finland [РГАЛИ. Ф. 394. Оп. 1. № 65]).

<sup>9</sup> On Zakrevsky's activity in Finland see [Бородкин 1909: 550–562; Бородкин 1915: 59–146; Выходчиков 2004] and Zakrevsky's correspondence for 1823–1831, partially published in the digests of the Russian Historical Society: [Закревский 1890; Закревский 1891]. Detailed information on Zakrevsky's official trips around Finland in 1824–25 can be found in travel notes by Putyata, who accompanied him [РГАЛИ. Ф. 394. Оп. 1. № 18]. On Mukhanov's official activities and his trip to inspect the university in Åbo see [Ginsburg 1961].

of 1808–1809<sup>10</sup>, Zakrevsky understood the national and ideological difficulties he would face in the region, bearing in mind that in his understanding, “the Finns hate the Russians” and “this is obvious nearly everywhere you look”, as he wrote to Kiselev [Закревский 1891: 283]. Thus, Zakrevsky was expected to help form and support the best possible feelings on the part of Finnish subjects toward Russia — particularly by skillfully playing on their national feelings. At the same time, he was also supposed to strengthen the Russian administration in Finland and direct its residents’ “hearts and thoughts away from individual welfare and toward all of Russia, their new Fatherland” (quoted in [Бородкин 1909: 552]; also see [Высочков 2004: 21]). These tasks were evidently meant to be dealt with on both the political-administrative and the ideological levels. We can assume the great demand for rhetorical schemas aimed at redirecting the “enmity” of the subjugated Finns onto a more, as it were, constructive-imperial course, that is, to give the “fallen people” their due while indicating the unequivocal superiority of Russia and her right to control the “gloomy wastelands of the Finn” (cf. [Гузаиров 2012: 301–302]). In this context, an appropriate conceptualization was demanded by the very circumstances of Finland joining Russia, i. e. the events of the 1808–1809 Finnish War.

We can assume that the emergence of this historical theme in Baratynsky’s poem is directly connected with the Helsingfors context described; this fact has been previously noted by I. N. Medvedeva [Медведева 1936: LIV–LVI]. The “military” “Epilogue” to the poem was written in Helsingfors<sup>11</sup>; it provides one of the rhetorical paths toward relieving national-imperial tensions. Importantly, its existence is immediately acknowledged as a motif of “hidden enmity” (cf. Zakrevsky’s impressions of the Finns’ “hatred”). In the Epilogue’s poetic construct, this “hatred” is declared to be “in vain”, since Fate itself had willed that the might of the Russian arms be capable of overcoming not only the courageous resistance of those who “бесстрашно <...> оборонял / Угрюмых скал

<sup>10</sup> Zakrevsky was director of the office of General N. M. Kamensky, and later director of the office of the commander-in-chief of the Russian army in Finland; he was distinguished in battles at Oravais, Sarvik, Kaurtan and Salmo, for which he was awarded the Order of Saint Vladimir of the fourth degree with a ribbon; see [Высочков 2004: 19].

<sup>11</sup> According to a late statement by N. V. Putyata, “the epilogue <...> was written in 1824 in Helsingfors, at the time when the whole *Eda* story was already finished...” ([Иза. 1914–1915: II, 239]). Putyata’s note on the “Epilogue”, quoted by M. L. Gofman and stated by the latter to be found in a printed copy of *Eda and Feasts* kept in the library of Muranovo (now lost). Also Putyata’s copy of the “Epilogue” is dated 1824. *Helsingfors* [РГАЛИ. Ф. 394. Оп. 1. № 73. Л. 1–1 об.]. The latest possible date (*terminus ante quem*) is 25 January 1825, when Putyata left Helsingfors, taking the text of the “Epilogue” with him for publication in *Mnemozina* [Легопись 1998: 149].

своих свободу”, but also that of the forces of nature (“Каким был ужасом объят / Пучины Бог седо-брадат...”). However, the greatness of the Russian victory was largely determined by this heroic opposition of the Finns, which enables Baratynsky to simultaneously praise “the might of Russia” and, on the other hand, to give the “fallen people” their due:

Ты покорился край гранитной,  
 России мочь изведаль ты,  
 И не столкнешь ее пяты,  
*Хоть к ней горшишь враждою скрытной,*  
 Срок плена вечного настал;  
 Но слава падшему народу!  
 Бесстрашно он оборонял  
 Угрюмых скал своих свободу.  
 Из-за утесистых громад  
 На нас летел свинцовый град;  
 Вкусить не смела краткой неги  
 Рать утомленная от ран:  
 Нож иступленный поселян  
 Окрововляя ее ночлеги!  
 И всё напрасно! чудный хлад  
 Сковал Ботнические воды.  
 Каким был ужасом объят  
 Пучины Бог седо-брадат;  
 Как изумилися народы,  
 Когда хребет его льдяной  
 Звеня под русскими полками,  
 Явил внезапною стеной  
*Их под Сиканскими брегами!*  
 И как Стокгольм оцепенел,  
 Когда над ним шумя крылами  
*Орел двуглавою возлетел!*  
 Он в нем узнал орла Полтавы!  
 Всё покорилось; но не мне  
 Певцу не знающему славы  
 Петь славу храбрых на войне.  
 Питомец Муз, питомец боя  
 Тебе, Давыдов, петь её:  
*Венцом певца, венцом героя*  
 Чело украшено твое.  
 Ты видел Финские граниты  
 Бесстрашных кровию омыты,

По ним водил ты их строи;  
 Ударь же в струны позабыты  
 И вспомни подвиги свои<sup>12</sup>.

It has been long since and repeatedly noted that the nearest generic example for Baratynsky's "Epilogue" was the epilogue to Pushkin's "Prisoner of the Caucasus" (see, for example, [Купреянова, Медведева 1936: 310; Архангельский 1995: 421–422]), which celebrates in odic form the victories of Russian arms on the borders of the empire, and accomplished despite the resistance of the proud sons of the Caucasus<sup>13</sup>. Cf.:

**"Prisoner of the Caucasus"**

< ... > тот славный час,  
 Когда, почуя бой кровавый,  
 На негодующий Кавказ  
 Подъялся наш орел двуглавый...

И в сече, с дерзостным челом,  
 Явился пылкий Цицианов;  
 Тебя я воспою, герой,  
 О Котляревский, бич Кавказа!

И смолкнул ярый крик войны:  
 Все русскому мечу подвластно.  
 Кавказа гордые сыны,  
 Сражались, гибли вы ужасно;  
 Но не спасла вас наша кровь,  
 Ни очарованные брони ...

[Пушкин 1937–1959: IV, 113–114]

**"Eda"**

И как Стокгольм оцепенел,  
 Когда над ним шума крылами  
 Орел двуглавой возлетел!

Тебе *Давыдов* петь ее;  
 Венцом певца, венцом героя  
 Чело украшено твое.

Ты покоришься край гранитный  
 России мочь изведал ты ...  
 Но слава, падшему народу,  
 Бесстрашно он оборонял  
 Угрюмых скал своих свободу;

< ... >

И все напрасно!..

In terms of artistic device and ideological purpose, Baratynsky's points of reference are for the most part clear; but the thematic background remains understudied. At the same time, when Baratynsky was presenting a series of key events of the Finnish War in his "Epilogue", he doubtless had to correlate his version with the existing tradition of description and reception of the war.

<sup>12</sup> The "Epilogue" is cited according to N. V. Putyata's copy [РГАЛИ. Ф. 394. Оп. 1. № 73. Л. 1–1 об.], which dates back to the manuscript of the version Baratynsky sent to *Mnemozina*. Consequently, following the censorship of the publication in Küchelbecker and Odoyevsky's almanac, Baratynsky made a second attempt to print the "Epilogue" — in *Zvezdochka*, the almanac of K. F. Ryleev and A. A. Bestuzhev — and evidently made some changes to the text at this time (the relevant lines are indicated in italics). The "Epilogue" is traditionally printed according to the censored manuscript of *Zvezdochka*, which reflects later decisions by the author; the first version, written in Helsingfors, is more relevant for our purposes here, and we cite from it.

<sup>13</sup> On the ideology of the epilogue and its interpretations see [Проскурин, Охотин 2007: 239–249].

Examining this tradition will allow us to more accurately place Baratynsky's text in the context of the "Finnish War narrative" as the latter developed over the 1810s–1820s.

### The "treacherous Swede" and brother Finns: war rhetoric in 1808–1810s

The Finnish War was covered quite comprehensively in the press. Newspaper reports on the campaign and official ceremonies, journal articles on the most significant events and battles, poetic responses to them, odes on the Treaty of Fredrikshamn, complemented by the famous book by Prince Gagarin *Thirteen days, or Finland* [Ггарин 1809a; Gagarin 1809], which described his trip to the Diet of Porvoo — all together, these materials paint a fairly cohesive image of how these military events were presented.

The motivation for the commencement of war with Sweden was founded, first and foremost, on a call to the image of Russia's historical "northern" foe, the "haughty Swedish neighbor"<sup>14</sup>, who "in raptures of pride" wished to "conquer the Russians", and also furthermore fell for the treacherous advice of "renegade-friends", i. e. the British:

Да будут Шведы всем примером,  
 Коль страшно Россов оскорблять;  
 Друзей-изменщиков советам  
 Свое спокойствие верить,  
 И слушая наветов ложных,  
 Идти против Героев мощных.

Не Шведы ль, в гордом упоеньи,  
 Хотели Россов победить,  
 В мечтательнейшем восхищеньи,  
 Желали славу их затмить?  
 Желали — но глагол Всемощный  
 Сей замысел их гордый, злобный  
 Разрушил, в прах преобратил [Голтяков 1809: 36–37].

Клятвопреступников постигнет длань Владыки  
 < ... >  
 Реченья пусть сии: война, враги, коварство,  
 В устах исчезнут и в делах:  
 Едина правота стрежет Царей и Царство,  
 И Миротворца трон созиждется в сердцах! [Глинка 1809: II, IV]

<sup>14</sup> On this image of the "Swede" see [Boele 1996: 215–218].



Царю, Отечеству в любви,  
 Он жизни не щадил и крови,  
 И дерзость Шведа наказал.  
 Смирися, о сосед кичливый!  
 От ныне главы не возноси... [Лобысевич 1810: 4]

In this way, literary texts reflected the motivation for war as a reaction to Sweden's failure to observe the pacts of 1780 and 1800 on the defense of the Baltic Sea from foreign fleets. After the Treaty of Tilsit and the British attack on Copenhagen, Russia demanded that Sweden join the continental blockade and assist in putting pressure on England. Meanwhile, the Swedish king Gustav Adolf decided, on the contrary, to support the British in their war against Denmark. This version of events was long held in official Russian historiography — and it is typical that this conception of the beginning the war (“to sever the union with England, as a cautionary measure and in order to force the hand of the Swedish king”) was put forth in a late article, “The Diet at Porvoo” (1860) by N. V. Putyata [РГАЛИ. Ф. 394. Оп. 1. № 50. Л. 17–18]. The same explanation of military action can be found in the third part of “*Eda*”: “Коварный швед опять / Не соблюдает договоров...” [Баратынский 1826: 35].

In descriptions of the course of the war and the most significant Russian victories, first place was predictably accorded to the feats of “brave Kulnev” while crossing the Gulf of Bothnia: in February–March 1809 the vanguard under his command managed to repulse the Swedes from the Aland Islands, cross the gulf and threaten Stockholm from the Swedish coast. The “Saint Petersburg Gazette” reported on the maneuver:

when taking the Aland Islands, General-Major Kulnev was send with a division of cavalry to pursue the enemy; having driven off the enemy and captured the Swedish coast, Kulnev took Grisslehamn <...> Masses of ice in the frozen stormswept sea and deep snow seriously hindered the speed of movement <...> Our troops, crowned with new glory, entered the city of Umea with full military ceremony 10 March, having covered more than ninety versts of open sea in two days, beneath the 64th line of Northern latitude, with fierce frosts, going through great broken heaps of ice and deep snow, where no trace of man nor a single path had ever before been laid [СПб. ведомости. Прибавление. 1809. № 29. 9 апреля. С. 1–3].

Kulnev's feat was praised in verse and in reports printed during the course of military action, and was mentioned often in odes on the celebration of the treaty with Sweden:

Летя по льдам морским, ты мужеством пылаешь;  
 По мразным крутизнам путь к славе пролагаешь:

Смирилась Белта вод свирепа глубина!  
 Не мразом скована она;  
 Стеснилась мужеством Героев...  
 (“To the brave Kulnev” [PB. 1809. Ч. VI. № 5. С. 269–272])

He was made famous by military feats in the last war with the French and during the crossing to the Aland Islands, where the Russians, battling Nature and the icy barriers of the sea, proved that for Russians nothing is impossible.

(“Something about the brave Kulnev” [PB. 1809. Ч. VIII. № 11. С. 171–172])

Росс выступил на поле брани;  
 < ... >  
 Мир! мир! — Росс взором победил.  
 Его ничто не удержало,  
 Ни горы, реки, ни леса;  
 Пред ним и море встrepетало;  
 Угрюмо-вьюжная зима  
 Зунд бурный льдами оковала;  
 И тем к врагам путь открывала,  
 Чтoб Росс скорей их погубил.  
 От Свеаборгския твердыни,  
 Ботнийски шумные пучины,  
 Махнул мечом — и покори́л [Голтяков 1809: 36–37].

Там Росс вновь славою процвел:  
 Там он против препон природы,  
 Чрез льды, скалы, чрез быстры воды,  
 Геройской цели достигал;  
 Царю, Отечеству в любви,  
 Он жизни не щадил и крови,  
 И дерзость Шведа наказал [Лобысевич 1810: 4].

It is noteworthy that Kulnev’s maneuver was sometimes described — as in Baratynsky’s “Epilogue” — as a triumph of the “Russian eagle”, causing Stockholm to tremble. Cf.: “...at that time our Eagles forged their way through the *Bothnian* ices, and forced the Swedish Lion to tremble in Stockholm, and even at the pole” [Гагарин 1809a: 41]; cf. in the French version of the book: “A cette époque nos Aigles se frayoiient des routes sur la glace de la *Bothnique*, et faisoient trembler le Lion suédois à Stockholm, et jusques près du Pôle” [Gagarin 1809: 40].

The stable character of the 1808–1809 rhetoric can be likened to the Great Northern War; this rhetoric was generally typical for descriptions of all new wars with Sweden. Recalling Peter’s victories was part of the official ideological

handling of the Treaty of Fredrikshamn. Thus Alexander I not only conducted a thanksgiving service “in the Cathedral built in the name of St. Isaac of Dalmatia and in memory of the birth of Peter the Great”, but also “stopped before the monument to his Great Predecessor, saluted Him with all of His Troops, and thus resurrected the memory of the great deeds of the Victor of Poltava” [СПб. ведомости. 1809. № 74. 14 сентября. С. 947]. Cf. the exact same parallels in poetic texts:

Проснись, Великий ПЕТР! зри ... Правнук пред Тобою:  
 Победоносною сразив врага рукою,  
 Он лавры новые несет к Твоим стопам,  
 Вещая: “Ты полет орлиным дал полкам”.  
 <...>  
 Сей повторенный глас есть глас Полтавской славы...  
 (“Стихи, по случаю возданной чести Императором АЛЕКСАНДРОМ  
 Первым памяти ПЕТРА Первого” [РВ. 1809. Ч. VIII. № 10. С. 133, 136])  
 О ПЕТР! Ты мнил ли под Полтавой,  
 Разя кичливого врага,  
 Что Твой ПРАПРАВНУК большей славой  
 Восхитит Невские брега? [Голенищев-Кутузов: 4]

As is fairly obvious, the panegyric part of Baratynsky’s “Epilogue”, which praises the Russian victories, is a direct descendent of this tradition that was established in texts around 1809–1810. Baratynsky reproduces both the description of Kulnev’s feat (“Как изумилися народы, / Когда хребет его лдяной / Звеня под русскими полками, / Явил внезапною стеной / Их под Сиканскими брегами! / И как Стокгольм оцепенел...”) and directly likens the new victories to the victory at Poltava (“Он в нем узнал орла Полтавы...”).

In this context, we find an even more striking contrast in descriptions of the historical fate of the “fallen people” — the Finns — to the motivation of the necessity of Finland’s joining the Empire. When considering the “Epilogue” to “Eda” (as in the “Prisoner of the Caucasus”), we can talk about the formation of a historiosophical idea appealing to the fate of the nation and its people<sup>15</sup>; but in the 1808–1810 texts this is still a purely mythological interpretation that refers to the sovereigns’ mythical ancestors, or to allegorical figures that represent various states.

<sup>15</sup> In the words of O. A. Proskurin, the postulate “that doomed were they who <...> stood in the way of the course of history and affirmation of the Russian Empire” despite “personal sympathy for heroic resistance, even of the hopeless variety” [Проскурин, Охотин 2007: 248].

In writings in the press from 1809–1810, Finns appear as “brothers” to the Russians [россы], “reaching out their hands” to them in the hopes of a long-awaited peace (cf. “Росс выступил на поле брани / К нему простерли Финны длани — / Мир! мир! — Росс взором победил” [Голтыков 1809: 36–37]). The Finns’ blood-ties to the Russians are emphasized through the fact that Riurik — the mythical predecessor of the Russian emperors — came from Finland, and thus the brave Russians were simply bound to return to the Russian tsar — the descendent of Riurik — the historical homeland of his forefathers. “The Finns are our ancient brothers”, wrote Prince Gagarin in his *Thirteen Days*; as the publisher of *The Russian Herald* clarified in his publication of excerpts from this book: “The father of Rurik (sic!), the first Russian Prince, ruled in the realm of the Finns” [Гагарин 1809b: 390]. This idea of returning what was deemed to be Riurik’s homeland was voiced in both official statements (cf. the speech of Metropolitan Ambrosius upon the signing of the treaty with Sweden, in which he states that Alexander “won the right to rule over all of the Varangian-Russian possessions that had belonged to his ancient ancestor... Riurik” [СПб. Ведомости. 1809. № 74. 14 сентября. С. 947]), and in poetic panegyrics:

Родоначальный Князь, средь Финских стран рожденный,  
Еще властителем Славян не нареченный,  
Был славою велик <... >

И в славном торжестве, великий сын Умилы,  
Ко благу устремя победоносы силы,  
Оставя край родной, к Новграду поспешал,  
И славою гремя, Вождем Славянским стал.

Но к отческой стране невольно мы влечемся;  
В расстаньи с ней в душе унынью предаемся.  
О Рюрик! может быть ты в вечности скорбел,  
Что отческой твой край с Россией разделен!

Спокойся! с нами он!.. он под одной Державой... [Глинка 1809: 136–138]

This expressive transformation clearly demonstrates how the archaic high odic style is gradually permeated by a new historical (and in the broad sense, Romantic) mythology — the mythology of the *nation*. The rapid development of this mythology began during and after the War of 1812. At the same time, the abstract odic canon was breaking down due to the juxtaposition of allegorical images (cf. “the grey-bearded god of the waves”, “the eagle of Poltava”) with concrete and “naturalistic” sketches, like the depiction of the Russian troops’ difficulties with advancement and living quarters (cf. the “leaden hail” flying from behind the Finnish “craggy boulders”, the “warriors exhausted from their

wounds”, etc.)<sup>16</sup>. In this connection, Pushkin’s epilogue could have served as a guide for Baratynsky on the level of “construction” and style. However, the “Epilogue” also evidently had a significant pre-text that contributed to a shift in focus and a new twist on the military theme.

### A new twist on the “Finnish” theme: Denis Davydov’s notes on the 1808–1809 campaign as a pre-text for the “Epilogue”

The first issue (published 25 February 1824) of *Mnemosyne*, the almanac put out by V. K. Küchelbecker and V. F. Odoyevsky, featured “Excerpt from the Notes of Major-General D. V. Davydov” with the qualifying subheading “The 1808 campaign. Finland” [ДАВЫДОВ 1824: 15–23]. This prose article, which came second in the issue following an article by Odoyevsky, turned out to be the most indisputable composition in the entire almanac and earned the praise of nearly all the reviewers of the first issue of *Mnemozina*<sup>17</sup>. The excerpt, which would be subsequently republished in the “Reminiscences of Kulnev in Finland”, published only in 1838 (see [ДАВЫДОВ 1838]), opened with a short survey of the war, the main thrust of which lay in reminding readers of the unjustly forgotten heroic campaign:

The war in Finland, at its most fervent peak, did not attract the attention either of civil society or military men. The collective curiosity had been over-exhausted by the enormous events in Moravia and East Prussia <...> But meanwhile the blood of the courageous was washing the Finnish tundra and baking into the cliffs scattered throughout them! meanwhile we were seeing out the better part of our lives

<sup>16</sup> Similar observations have been applied to the poetics of the epilogue to “Prisoner of the Caucasus”; see [Проскурин, Охотин 2007: 245–246].

<sup>17</sup> See, for instance: “The best article in this book, in terms of content, style and strategic observations. It is a shame that it is too short; for it contains only a quick glance at the topography of Finland and the first preparations for war. A continuation has been promised, and we await it with impatience” [Булгарин 1824: 183]; “Written with intelligence, shows the quick, reliable viewpoint of an experienced military man, on whom the Muses have smiled since birth, and converse with him even when he is discussing matters that cause the *aesthetic* fibers of such peaceful maidens to tremble” [СО. 1824. Ч. 93. № XV. Отд. III. Современная русская библиография. Новые книги. С. 33 (подпись: С....)]; “The prose *Notes of D. V. Davydov* on the *Finnish campaign* are very curious; their style is pure and clear. In his discussion of military action one can see an observant mind and sharp eye. We hope that the Author will keep his word and present us with not only a continuation, but also a conclusion” [Воейков 1824: 24–25]; “Who doesn’t know our Partisan Writer? Should we speak of the virtues of his style? Of the expressive exposition of his thoughts? Unnecessary! Davydov is famous as an excellent *litterateur*, and the readers of *Mnemozina* will read his *Notes* with pleasure and benefit” [Благонамеренный. 1824. Ч. 26. № 8. Книжные известия. С. 131 (подпись: P.)].

beneath the frosts of the North amidst oceans of ancient forests, on the banks of desolate lakes, chasing after that glory of which nary an echo could be found in our fatherland! [Давыдов 1824: 13–14].

The article goes on, in the words of one of the reviewers, to include a “quick overview of the Topography of Finland and the first decrees of war” [Булгарин 1824: 183]; this is the point at which the “Extract” cut off, accompanied by an editorial note: “The respected Author promised to provide us with a continuation of this article — for one of the next parts of *Mnemozina*” [Давыдов 1824: 23]. The two following issues of *Mnemozina*, which came out in 1824<sup>18</sup>, did not feature the continuation of Davydov’s “Notes” (readers would have to wait nearly fifteen years for it), and in this context Baratynsky’s poetic address to Davydov became a sort of reminder of readers’ expectations. It was probably no accident that Baratynsky sent his “Epilogue” to *Mnemozina*, thus expressing his intention to continue pursuing the Finnish War theme on the pages of Küchelbecker and Odojevsky’s publication.

Continuity with Davydov’s article can be observed not only in the general evaluations of the Finnish War — that forgotten but heroic page in the pantheon of Russian glory. Baratynsky’s obvious orientation toward Davydov’s text is also attested to by direct interchanges between the “Epilogue” to “Eda” and Davydov’s article, including the interpretation of the “people’s war” as a major hurdle on the path to victory. Cf.:

А между тем кровь храбрых орошала  
тундры Финские, запекалась на скалах по  
них усеянных!..

... когда вспыхнула война народная, когда  
подвозы с пищею и с зарядами прекрати-  
лись от набегов жителей, <...> когда  
каждый шаг вперед требовал всеминут-  
ных жертвований жизни...

[Давыдов 1824: 14]

Ты видел финские граниты  
Бесстрашных кровию омыты.

Но слава, падшему народу,  
Бесстрашно он оборонял  
Угрюмых скал своих свободу;  
Из-за утесистых громад  
На нас летел свинцовой град,  
Вкусить не смела краткой неги  
Рать утомленная от ран,  
Нож иступленный поселян  
Окрововляя ее ночлеги.

<sup>18</sup> Part 4 of the almanac, which was passed by the censors on 13 October 1824, took a long time to be published — the permit from the censors was issued only on 2 July 1825, and subscribers received this issue of *Mnemozina* only in mid-October 1825 (see [Летопись 1998: 163; Боратынский 2002: II, 111]).

In turn, the final lines of the “Epilogue” (“Ударь же в струны позабыты / И вспомни подвиги свои”) can be read as a reaction to the closing lines of the opening passage of Davydov’s article: “I will be satisfied in these notes <...> will remind my comrades of the enchanting moments of our youth, the dreams and hopes of honor and danger that we threw ourselves upon, and of our nomadic Ossian conversations beside flaming logs and beneath overcast skies” [Давыдов 1824: 15]. Baratynsky thus called for the “equestrian writer” to continue these memoirs — while perhaps suggesting that he abandon prose and return to poetry: Davydov’s most vivid public statements of the early 1820s are closely tied to prose, particularly his “Attempt at a theory of partisan action” (1821).

We can point to an incontestable attestation of Baratynsky’s familiarity with the 1824 first issue of *Mnemozina*. In a letter to the journal’s publisher Kūchelbecker, sent to Moscow with Putyata in late January 1825, Baratynsky specially thanked his old friend for having sent the first issue: “When you sent me the first part of *Mnemozina*, you did not bother to include even two lines of handwritten message; nevertheless I wished to thank you for this present, very nice for me...” [Летопись 1998: 149]. In turn, Davydov also managed — despite the censor’s prohibition of the “Epilogue” — to acquaint himself with an early version of the text, as evident in a copy of Baratynsky’s text preserved in Davydov’s archive, hand-copied by the latter into a notebook under the heading “Collection of poems and prose written to me and about me”<sup>19</sup>.

Baratynsky’s address to Davydov at the end of the “Epilogue” had both a purely literary and a biographical subtext. On the one hand, Baratynsky-the-poet was making homage to Davydov-the-*litterateur*, responding rapturously to the latter’s recently published composition and taking up the theme that it raised. On the other hand, the possibility of a literary dialogue with Davydov was even more important to Baratynsky because the “Finnish exile” was very much in Davydov’s debt for the latter’s intervention in his fate. Although he knew Baratynsky only through his poems and by recommendations for A. I. Turgenev and Viazemsky, Davydov eagerly interceded on Baratynsky’s behalf and approached Zakrevsky several times with requests: “My dear friend Arseny Andreyevich <...> Brother, please make an effort for Baratynsky...” (letter of 11 May 1824 [Ibid.: 138]); “Again about Baratynsky, I repeat my request that you take him under your wing. If he has been censured, it is surely due to some kind of slander <...> Please take him under your wing <...>” (letter of 23 June 1824 [Ле-

<sup>19</sup> [РГВИА. Ф. 194. Оп. 1. № 64. Л. 19–19 об.]; this copy of the “Epilogue” was first printed as an appendix to an 1860 edition of Davydov’s writings, under the heading “Epilogue, completing the first draft of the poem ‘Eda’” (see [Давыдов 1860: III, 196–197]).

топись 1998: 140]). To all appearances, it was thanks to Davydov that Baratynsky moved to Helsingfors and found himself in Zakrevsky's good graces; the latter had enjoyed a friendship with Davydov for years, beginning from the 1808 Finnish campaign.

Bearing in mind all these circumstances, there is no reason to be surprised by the fact that Baratynsky attached particular significance to the "Epilogue", as evidenced by his rather unexpected decision to first present his new poem in print by means of an *epilogue*. After the censorship debacle in *Mnemozina*, Baratynsky did not give up on publishing the "Epilogue", passing it on — with a few revisions — to Ryleev and Bestuzhev in summer 1825 for publication in their almanac *Zvezdochka*. Given Baratynsky's recent promotion to *praporshik*, the "Epilogue" could be read as an expression of gratitude to Davydov and Zakrevsky for their efforts toward this long-awaited rank; but, as is well known, the last issue of *Zvezdochka* did not manage to appear in print.

It is not entirely clear why Baratynsky elected not to include the "Epilogue" in the full 1826 edition of "Eda" — for fear of censorship, or because "some expressions could appear offensive and inaccurate for the conquered nation", as Putyata suggests (quoted in [Изд. 1914–1915: II, 239]), or because of Baratynsky's not wishing to further emphasize his work's resemblance to the "Prisoner of the Caucasus". Whatever the reason, the censorship documents indicate that it was Baratynsky's own decision: at this stage the "Epilogue" was not presented to the censors.

Moreover, we can assume that the decision to exclude the "Epilogue" provoked certain reconstructions on the level of plot and composition in the 1826 version of the poem. Evidently, many of the epilogue's functions — particularly its indication of the time of the poem's action and the circle of important literary predecessors — were taken on by the prose preface, which in its leanings toward "perfect simplicity" contrasts with the odic rhetoric of the "Epilogue". Yet another "trace" can be found in the (likely late) plot shift — the link between the hussar's fateful departure and the beginning of the war with the "treacherous Swede": "Коварный Швед опять / Не соблюдает договоров: / Вновь хочет с Русским испытать / Неравный жребий бранных споров. / Уж переходят за Кюмень / Передовые ополченья: / Война, война! Грядущий день / День рокового разлученья" [Баратынский 1826: 35]. There are no chronological or precise geographical indications in the first parts of the poem at all; in the actual text of the poem, the Finnish War theme arises only in the middle of the third part. Meanwhile, as we can see in a fragment from an early version of "Eda" sent by A. I. Turgenev to Viazemsky 26 February 1825 (after having received the full text of the poem from Baratynsky — see above), at first



the hussar's departure had no concretized motivation — cf.: “Меня зовет кровавый бой; / Не знаю сам куда Судьбой / Я увлечен отселе буду; / Но ты была любима мной, / Но век тебя я не забуду” [Остафьевский архив 1899: III, 100]; for the original, see: [РГАЛИ. Ф. 195. Оп. 1. № 2891. Л. 5 об.– 6]). In the final text of the poem, however, this motivation appeared evidently as a reflection of the important historical theme discovered in the “Epilogue”.

*Translated by Ainsley Morse*

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University of Tartu  
Department of Slavonic Languages and Literatures  
Department of Russian Literature

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Russian National Myth in Transition

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## CONTENTS

Ljubov Kisseljova. Introduction from the Editor .....	7
Roman Voitekhovich. “The Russian Cold” as Perceived by Europeans in the 15 <sup>th</sup> through 19 <sup>th</sup> Centuries as a Constituent Element of the Russian National Myth .....	13
Jelena Pogosjan. How to Build a Russian Imperial Iconostasis: Ivan Zarudny and the Navigation of Guidelines and Politics .....	22
Kirill Ospovat. The (Dis)empowered People: Kingship, Revolt and the Origins of Russian Tragic Drama .....	38
Alina Bodrova. Rhetoric and Mythology of the 1808–1809 Finnish War in Baratynsky’s Poem <i>Eda</i> .....	59
Inna Bulkina. The Russian Warrior at a <i>Rendez-vous</i> . The Sources and Reception of Evgeny Baratynsky’s Finnish Poem .....	79
Timur Guzairov. “Finnish Attitudes toward Russians”: National Narrative, Imperial Politics and the Mechanism of Governance of the Rebellious Borderland (1907–1910) .....	94
Alexey Vdovin. Formulating the “Russian Idea”: Russian Writers and the Nationalization of Patriotism during the Crimean War (Maikov, Goncharov, Pisemsky) .....	107
Tatiana Stepanischeva. The Russian National Myth in Export: P. A. Viazemsky’s <i>Lettres d’un vétéran russe de l’année 1812 sur la question d’Orient</i> .....	121
Ljubov Kisseljova. War Discourse as a Means of Constructing a National Myth (The Crimean War in Pre-Revolutionary Schoolbooks and Popular Literature) .....	143
Ben Hellman. Tolstoy’s “The Three Bears”: The Metamorphosis of an English Tale into a Russian National Myth .....	163
Lea Pild. The Artist in N. S. Leskov’s National Myth .....	174
Maya Kucherskaya. Comrade Leskov: How a Russian Writer was Integrated into the Soviet National Myth .....	187

Maria Borovikova. “Pity” as a National-Historical Category in Tsvetaeva’s Poetry .....	208
Toimi Huttunen. “Not Back to Pushkin, but Forwards Away from Him”: On the Russianness of Russian Imaginism .....	218
Konstantin Polivanov. Ethnicity and History in Boris Pasternak’s <i>Doctor Zhivago</i> .....	227
Roman Leibov. Harmonists in the Camp of the Russian Warriors: Once More on the Historical Transformations of the National Literary Canon .....	241
Andrei Nemzer. The Happiness and Destiny of a Russian Poet: the Story of David Samoilov .....	256
Name Index .....	273
Summaries in Estonian .....	285
About the Contributors .....	297

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