Canonical Mandel′shtam

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Osip Mandel′shtam's recognition as a premier Russian poet developed posthumously and largely outside the Soviet Union. The creation of a canonical Mandel′shtam in world poetry is a case study in trans-cultural and trans-linguistic literary history and politics. This position stands in striking contrast to the history of his reputation in the Soviet Union: the period of his deletion from about 1934 lasted in effect well beyond his official rehabilitation in 1956 until the early 1970s. From the 1980s, absorption by a generation of Russian readers who came of age in the 1960s was gradual, nearly silent and clandestine, perhaps largely accomplished by the period of *glasnost'*.

Mandel′shtam's elevation to canonical status comprises an important story in the West. How did a poet who was unpublished at home, imperfectly published abroad, acknowledged as difficult, come to be absorbed into the mainstream of European literature as an indispensable poet?[1] This is not to confuse the West and Russia Abroad or the diaspora. Apart from Gleb Struve, the standard bearers for his poetic reputation were not émigrés of the second or third wave whose knowledge of Mandel′shtam for the most part ended in the early 1920s, but rather English and American writers galvanized by a combination of his poetic art in translation, literary politics and Cold War politics, and a liberal conviction in poets as truth-tellers.[2] This chapter seeks to tell that story with reference to the recovery and interpretation of Mandel′shtam's legacy; his place as a representative man of his cultural and historical situation; the contribution his critical writing makes to his views as a literary

thinker; and, centrally, the vexed question of the relation between moral daring, literary profile and political drama as the basis of his authority.

Over the last forty years a surge in interest via translations into French, Italian and German marked his discovery across Europe. This chapter will collect and analyse the most extensive, cumulative and nuanced, record of engagement, which is to be found in the world of Anglo-American letters. As a description of the canonical and non-canonical Mandel′shtam, the history of Mandel′shtam's reputation constitutes a compelling episode full of implications for how we think about the mechanisms of canon formation and poetic afterlives. Dislocations affect literary history. Does literature belong to the time in which it is composed, or to the time when it reaches a readership? The question becomes even more complex, and potentially fascinating, when the reception is across languages and traditions, when a writer becomes almost fully known and recognized outside the mother tongue first.

My data set derives from a comprehensive analysis of the critical writing published in a range of highbrow literary and cultural reviews of the day.[3] While I shall also touch on the character and phases of Mandel′shtam studies as a scholarly enterprise, limitations of space mean that the scholarly side of the story, with its critical views on his poetic technique, and the question of his poetic difficulty, will feature only as a subsidiary treatment to the main narrative of reputation building. The abundant topic of Mandel′shtam's impact on Russian poets and their practice, both abroad and at home, remains the subject for separate study. One conclusion that needs to be stated outright is that the creation of a canonical Mandel′shtam in the broader world of literature developed in parallel to, and often independent of, scholarship about him. Yet both the scholarly and popular traditions created divisions between a canonical and non-canonical Mandel′shtam, the first represented largely

by his first two collections, the second present in later poems that were off limits to exegesis such as "The Verses on the Unknown Soldier" or too hot to handle because of political controversy such as "The Stalin Ode" or sometimes, as in the case of the Voronezh poem, even perceived as un-Mandel′shtamian because of a highly personal quality that looked alien to interpretations that stressed the poet of high culture.

My first section will present a chronological account of rediscovery, and characterize the main elements of the poet's profile as a writer of lyric and critic as they developed among American and British readers. The next two sections will argue that while the American and British stories overlap they also diverge in emphasis and through their implied understanding of what matters in poetry and why poets matter. What separates the two traditions is a difference in their relation of lives to lines, and the relation of life to context. The politics of reputation can depend on the circumstances of politics. Thematic distillation, more than chronological linearity, is the method of discussion in those parts. The next section will identify how the canonical Mandel′shtam has also imposed an expectation of accessibility and unwillingness to consider difficulty or political controversy; and a finally, brief section will provide a thumbnail sketch of the post-Soviet reception–an on-going story, to be sure.

While the present essay does aim to trace patterns in the story, and corroborate them amply, I would not want to insist that the divisions between biographical and poetic approaches, between the English and the American receptions, are absolutely hard and fast. On both sides of these literary maps, readers were sensitive to the interplay of life and literature, text and context. Nevertheless, I would like to argue that the patterns that emerge in the history of reading Mandel′shtam reflect from

decade to decade larger convictions about poetry and poets: the times shape Mandel′shtam's reception and Mandel′shtam was one voice shaping the times. At a narrower level, the story is part of the chapter of Russia abroad and the recovery of silenced voices in the diaspora. But more broadly it is perhaps a rare case history of how a foreign poet became inextricably implicated in the idea of poetry across cultures and part of other canons. Undoubtedly there was a feedback loop between Mandel′shtam's publication, critical reception, scholarly absorption in the West, and writing about him by the likes of Joseph Brodsky, Seamus Heaney and many others, and poetic craft in Russia.

Mandel′shtam Regained

Outside Russia, the reception of Mandel′shtam constitutes a multifaceted phenomenon, deeply embedded in different Anglo-American and European circumstances of the larger context of the Cold War and its associated literary politics.[4] Coming in the wake of Pasternak's plight and the Zhivago affair, readers invested the recovery of Mandel′shtam with a sense of historical urgency and moral imperative.[5] Initially the search was on for the pure instantiation of the Russian poet in its purest embodiment–an emblem of artistic innovation and traditionalism fully committed to the truth and autonomy of art and prepared to sacrifice himself for those values.[6] In Russia, the Thaw and the death of Akhmatova as the supreme relic of the Silver Age, and the efforts of individuals and small communities, stimulated the recovery of a lost tradition within which Mandel′shtam was reputed to be perhaps the greatest master.[7] The truncation of the Thaw did not check momentum on this side of the Iron Curtain among detractors and admirers of the Soviet Union, both sides having acknowledged Stalinism as a cultural and human tragedy.

Between 1930 and 1967 Mandel′shtam's name never appeared more than a handful of times in the *Time Literary Supplement*.[8] Maurice Bowra, then recognized as a translator of Russian verse, showed unusual awareness in reproaching anthologists such as Marc Slonim for omitting Mandelstam from his 1933 anthology, also lamenting the inadequate representation of Belyi, Khlebnikov, Gumilev, Pasternak, Tsvetaeva, Akhmatova, Maiakovskii, Esenin and Bagritskii in*The Oxford Book of Russian Verse* .[9] Reminiscing in 1995 about that span as a "blackout period", Clarence Brown recalled a conversation he had in the 1950s with the composer Artur Lourié about Mandel′shtam as a figure "whom he [Lourié] deemed to have been irretrievably forgotten".[10] By 1950 early research into Acmeism had yielded some basic information about Mandel′shtam. Excerpts from the two collections published in his lifetime (establishing their titles was important in itself since copies were exceedingly scarce) suggested to readers a poet of Parnassian perfection, an enemy of Symbolism devoted to the supremacy of the object and a craftsman of the adamantine "word". First reputations are hard to dislodge. This picture of Mandel′shtam as the Acmeist par excellence, mainly the poet of *Stone* (Kamen'), persists, discontinuous and unrevised, from the 1930s till the middle of the next decade. For Geoffrey Hill, whose knowledge of Mandel′shtam began around 1965, access to very few translations and scattered references in literary histories hardened the view of an aesthete, an exquisitely private poet unable to adapt to the regime (rather than consciously being opposed to it or being persecuted by it) who was somehow pushed aside.[11] Further crumbs of information came via the English translation of Il′ia Erenburg's memoirs in which Mandel′shtam is mentioned alongside Braque, Modigliani, Apollinaire and Gumilev. A review of an issue of *Poetry Day* (Den' Poezii) 1962 published in the *Times Literary Supplement* cites Tsvetaeva and

Mandel′shtam as banned writers who have had a "marked influence on young poets", a statement that looks more like wishful thinking based on the slightest sample.[12] Relatively little had changed between 1949 when Leonid Strakhovsky and Renato Poggioli published *Craftsmen of the Word: Three Poets of Modern Russia* *The Poets of Russia*, respectively. The profile of Mandel′shtam is of a learned poet steeped in classical literature, a Parnassian detached from politics. Each work essentially repackages a view based on Mandel'shtam's brief period as an Acmeist. Among emigré critics Vladislav Khodasevich's review of *Tristia* in 1924 consolidated the critical reception repeated by these later critics .[13] Yet Poggioli's thoughtful appreciation, based solely on the imperfect editions of the poems and incomplete prose published in 1952 ~~by~~, does make two points of note. First, he disassociates Mandel′shtam from mainstream modernists like Eliot and Pound, and while aware of his learning and use of allusion sees him as a visual poet whose use of image is reminiscent of Picasso and de Chirico. This subjective point will resurface more frequently in literary criticism about his writing than in Mandel′shtam scholarship, focused throughout the 1970s and 1980s on textual allusion rather than visual values. Secondly, and more importantly, Poggioli conveys rumour about a large body of manuscript poems still extant, conveying how severely circumstances had hampered knowledge of Mandel′shtam. Unaware of the many poems with a broader contemporary dimension, Poggioli has heard about Mandel′shtam as an other-worldy and destitute figure, the image of him that survived in memoirs of contemporaries from the 1930s, abetted at least by publication of his later letters. Among Russian readers who become aware of Mandel′shtam from the 1960s, the image of him as an outsider and alien to official literature–essentially the Mandel′shtam of *Fourth Prose* (Chetvertaia proza)–will be an article of faith, inseparable from how his legacy should

be studied. At the Mandel′shtam Centenary Conference held in Moscow in 1991, an event attended by many hundreds even before his republication in Russia had occurred, a public debate broke out concerning the formation of a Mandel′shtam Society dedicated to the editing and publication of his works.[14] Opponents to the creation of such a society, forgetting that Mandel′shtam was an original member of the Tsekh Poetov, saw it as a betrayal of the belief that Mandel′shtam was permanently, in his own words, "otshepenets v narodnoi sem'e" ('an outcast in the national family"), always marginal and about the marginal. At the 2009 events in Cherdyn', commemorating the 75th anniversary of his exile to Cherdyn', violent disapproval silenced advocates of the view that even in the late 1930s Mandel′shtam sought some sort of accommodation with Soviet power.

By the late 1960s, following the publication of the Struve-Filippov edition and slightly ahead of the publication in English of Mrs Mandel′shtam's memoirs, the view emerged that "Mandelstam's name is no longer only for cognoscenti and is known to most people in the West; his poetry already half-forgotten in the 1920s and misunderstood, without noisy adherents or even spectacular excellences of its own, has established itself next to that of Blok, Pasternak, Mayakovsky, Akhmatova and Khlebnikov as a major expression of the Silver Age of Russian verse".[15] By the 1970s, as David McDuff observed, generational interest had shifted from Pasternak to Mandel′shtam, a seismic change from the celebrated to the unknown.[16] Translations broke the ice on the Mandel′shtam revival from the early 1970s. While Gleb Struve and Boris Filippov's single-volume edition of poems raised attention among émigré circles in the 1950s, there was a gap of about a decade between its appearance and a rippling out to wider circles.[17] Lasting literary reputations are not made quickly, especially across language barriers and an iron curtain. With the

publication of their successively more comprehensive editions, which hugely expanded knowledge of Mandel′shtam as both poet and critic in the West and eventually Russia, Mandel′shtam's reputation snowballed. Sidney Monas's translations of selected essays, containing accessible and learned expositions, were joined by landmark translations into English by Brown and Merwin, James Greene for Penguin and Bernard Meares in the early 1980s; the appearance of Jane Gary Harris's compendious *Complete Prose and Letters* confirmed his reputation as a world-class critic worth reading by Western readers for his observations on Western writers.[18] Whatever the merits of these translations as poetic acts, they made a discernible impact.[19] Guy Davenport's appreciation of Mandel′shtam, published in the *Hudson Review*, a venerable organ of conservative literary taste, provided a round-up of critical work by Monas and Brown, also articulated a distinct sense that despite repeated attempts to find reference points for him among canonical writers in Western literature, from Villon to Pound, "Mandelstam is not quite like any other poet so that analogies run into instance trouble".[20] Time and again they garnered a great deal of critical attention, much of it cross-over between scholarly journals and highbrow literary magazines that were widely read, like the *Times Literary Supplement*, *New York Review of Books* and *London Review of Books*.[21] Clarence Brown, a pivotal figure in the restoration of Mandel′shtam literature in Russian and in English, spent a year in Hampstead (1969-70) when he became something of an apostle for his cause among influential UK literary critics such as Al Alvarez. Translation both spearheaded the reception of Mandel′shtam among poetry lovers, and also became a crucible for questions about translation technique. Joseph Brodsky's introduction to the Meares translations championed a poet he felt was still completely unknown in his native country. But in characterizing Mandel′shtam's

verse language for English-language readers, Brodsky also came down hard against renderings that traduced original form. This occasioned a lively response from no less a poet and critic than Yves Bonnefoy who rejected Brodsky's argument by proposing a solution at the other extreme. Where "world literature" was concerned, and there is an international and cross-linguistic demand for poets, Bonnefoy argued that the proper compensation for the inevitable loss of exact form could only be translation in free verse, a medium that, *pace* Brodsky, he regarded still as poetry and a viable medium for phrases, images and ideas.[22]

By 1981, in Henry Gifford's estimation he was nothing less than "a ferment in the minds of today".[23] Another knowledgeable reader noted in 1967 that the lucky few already aware of the poet of *Stone* will, he assures, encounter a poet who develops strikingly, whose poems become "less cold and chiselled, more varied, allusive, personal and close to the life of his epoch". More conclusively, he offered the view that despite its flaws, anyone with Russian will conclude that "this is the sort of edition that should cause literary histories to be rewritten".[24] When Clarence Brown showed Arkadii Raikin a copy of the Filippov-Struve edition on the train to London from Oxford, after Akhmatova received her honorary degree, he let Raikin who had burst into tears at the Oxford Encaenia, keep the copy.[25] Numerous comparable stories illustrate the incremental process of reputation-creation and consolidation. Conviction about merit is an article of faith, but not absolute faith because writers are opening on a bracket on Mandel′shtam: more editions, more texts, more translations are required as a matter of appreciation and appetite, and in order to establish the scale and shape of his œuvre.

Early attempts to place Mandel′shtam understandably looked to the Western canon for comparison, namely, among Anglo-American (rather than French)

Modernism and sputtered fruitlessly. We find a commonplace assumption that as a poet of high culture Mandel′shtam must be like Eliot and Pound, yet there is some surprise to find that, as Donald Davie says, unlike his Western counterparts, Mandel′shtam prefers the bent-in, the rounded-upon-itself, favouring domes, the seashell's curvature, rather than the modernist preference for the discontinuous and asymmetrical.[26] One recurrent theme that moved to the fore as the Pound-Eliot comparison stalled was the recognition of the small scale, highly delineated and patterned quality of Mandel′shtam's images. In 1978, D. M. Thomas observed that "few poets move so far as Mandelstam in so little space", yet George Steiner, a perennial promoter of affinities with Paul Celan, opined that while each poem might be sharply drawn there are reticulations, "tenacious, elusive bonds" that form a poetic identity.[27] The reception of Robert Tracy's bilingual version of *Stone* consolidated the perception of a Russo-Judaeo-Christian multi-cultural poet, whose voice combined a Pushkinian plasticity and solid verse architecture.[28] Images of stone, lace and enamel scattered through the entire collection revealed a permanent thematic tension between the precariousness of the spoken versus the silent, the lasting versus the ephemeral, the small versus the monumental. John Bayley praised Mandel′shtam as a poet as versatile as Auden with the same "brilliance in gusto".[29] Seamus Heaney, suspicious that that Robert Tracy's euphonius versions were only an echo of their original music ("Tracy's ear is not as gifted as Mandelstam's – whose is?"), sensed that Mandel′shtam possessed "the high voltage of associative word-play which one understands to be so distinctive in Russian".[30] The phrase "one understands" we might read as a hint at the mentoring of his friend Joseph Brodsky, whose broadside against free verse translation of Russian poetry written in classical forms caused a stir. His "Introduction" to Bernard Meares's translations also admired

Mandel′shtam's prosody, observing that "the presence of an echo is the primal trait of any good acoustics, and Mandelstam merely made a great cupola for his predecessors".[31] Tracy's commentaries (highly derivative from work by Mandel′shtam scholars) convinced Heaney and other readers that Mandel′shtam's poems are "as firmly rooted in both an historical and cultural context and in physical reality as Joyce's *Ulysses* or Eliot's *Waste Land*".[32]

"The recovery of Mandelstam has become something marvellous": D.M. Thomas is among the earliest to see in the survival of his work evidence of "a miracle that the worst of times produced the best of poets."[33] For many, Russian poets, and Mandel′shtam best of all, embodied an ideal of lyric further ennobled by troubled circumstances of production. Yet British critics show a clear priority in the ordering of art and life in which the value of a writer's art precedes interest in the life-story. It seems nearly axiomatic that admiration of great poets qua victims must necessarily follows their rediscovery first and foremost as masters of the lyric. Appreciation of the life seems largely to have taken inspiration from the lines rather than vice-versa. The miracle of recovery and rediscovery of a lost voice became a topos often recounted from the late 1960s until the early 1980s. Typically those who write about him also validate his personal importance to them. Virtually each time this happens the writer rehearses the story of the lost poetry, Mrs Mandel′shtam's loyalty and tenacity (Heaney calls her magnificently a "guerrilla of the imagination"), how she kept the poetry alive, who read clandestine copies, the *Voronezh Notebooks* (Voronezhskie tetradi), who kept copies, his arrest and exile, and so on.[34] While the effect is one of awe, the propensity to repetition conveys an impression that writers with an interest in sharing their discovery recognise that establishing foreign poets abroad and in translation takes extraordinary effort. Within this frame

narrative of miraculous poetic survival there is an underlying curiosity about the political relation between poetry and power, and a wish to know why they were victims, what sort of poetry incurs such sanction. But for the most part in the British context there also appears to be a lingering and long ungratified wish to get a handle on the aesthetic dimension first. In 1992, Anatoly Naiman on the pages of the *Times Literary Supplement* sounded a note about sacrifice, rather than aesthetic worth, that had been mainly latent but unexpressed among British appreciations of Akhmatova, Pasternak, Mandel′shtam, as well as Platonov, that "never has such a high price been paid for such a small handful of words that remained free, and never have so many lives been devoted to such a cause".[35]

When at a Cambridge gathering a decade later Sidney Monas pronounced him "the most sought-after poet of the twentieth century", the view that he is a central figure in the Russian poetic canon looks like a certainty, summed up by Henry Gifford: "By this time, many of the audience must have felt that Mandelstam may well be the supreme poet of this age–into which, after almost fifty years, we are still locked".[36] One participant was Joseph Brodsky. He ended the meeting by reading the "Verses on an Unknown Soldier" (Stikhi o neizvestnom soldate), a poem whose dense system of allusion, scientific reference, and formidable obscurity looks like a far cry from the beloved poet of *Stone* and *Tristia*. Brodsky's choice was clearly deliberate, a gesture at moving discussion on. Arguably, 1981 marks a point of closure in the first phase of Mandel′shtam's reception and an opening of the next chapter in which Brodsky will play an important role in refocusing attention on Mandel′shtam as an engaged, difficult and rhetorically complex poet who has been misunderstood by critics engaged, on the one hand, in sub-textual diversions and, on the other, by readers who use him to perpetuate a myth of poetic sacrifice.

Thanks to the publication of his prose in English in several instalments, culminating in Jane Gary Harris's compendious collection for Ardis, Mandel′shtam's work as an essayist became a more prominent part of his legacy.[37] The popularity of this part of his creation stands to reason. For readers such as Helen Vendler, reluctant to assume greatness on the basis of clumsy translations, his prose offered compensation as well as a more secure touchstone by which to judge the quality of his thought, values and language.[38] Too tactful to comment directly on the poetry translations, Seamus Heaney, friend of both Vendler and Brodsky, drew amply on a prose which "itself is bursting with eagerness to break out as a sequence of poems".[39] In admiring Mandel′shtam's gift for metaphor and image, he turns Mandel′shtam's critical values back on to himself: "What Mandelstam said of Darwin's style applies here perfectly to his own applies here perfectly to his own: the power of perception functions as an instrument of thought".[40] Access to Mandel′shtam through his prose was, therefore, not seen as second best.[41] Furthermore, his critical writings come to serve quickly as a reliable source of opinion, and he is often invoked as an authority on the question of "the use of poetry". Lawrence Lipking has remarked that "poets are the carriers of literary history".[42] Mandel′shtam fulfilled that role. Unlike Khlebnikov, a "poet of the future", Mandel′shtam appears both timeless and highly contemporary. Here is a Mandel′shtam who is a big-picture critic, who makes out of literature one of a set of coordinated cultural systems that includes architecture and philology that are about the preservation of "a home for humanity" and the endurance of monuments to the human spirit. Elsewhere readers of the poetry understandably concerned to find an analogous figure to Mandel′shtam, one recognizably modernist in technique yet traditionalist in outlook, will regularly reach for Eliot and Yeats. The former looks like

a surer bet when seen from the viewpoint of these Eliot-like preoccupations with the mind of Europe and continuities of tradition under threat.[43] Mandel′shtam's criticism appealed to readers for a further reason. The immediacy with which he wrote about his poetic milieu was gripping. Writings about the connection between poetry and history and poetry and politics took the reader straight into the vortex of historical change. For poets like Heaney, Christopher Middleton and especially Geoffrey Hill, Mandel′shtam's essays served as a hotline to history. Where Mandel′shtam scores over the others is in conveying history as personal experience. Blok loomed magisterial and distant, Maiakovskii speaks to the world as though he were addressing a political meeting, but Mandel′shtam "invokes the single reader alone with his conscience".[44]

The appreciation of Mandel'shtam rode other trends in literary study. From the late 1970s, New Criticism waned as both New Historicism and Critical Theory revolutionized the academic study of literature. Mandel′shtam slotted into both trends outside the sub-discipline of Russian poetic study where Structuralist approaches focused on intertextual study became an entrenched methodology. In this broader context, two essays garnered repeated attention. "On the Interlocutor" (O sobesednike, 1913) and "On the Nature of the Word" (O prirode slova, 1922) offer a theory of poetry that fit the times like a hand and glove.[45] The first offered a version of a reader-response theory that looked timely in the context of the emergence of the Konstanz school of criticism. Many poetic treatments and tributes to Mandel′shtam, alongside the burst of translation activity, have a peculiarly personal quality. There was appeal (and poetic justice) in the retrieval of a long-lost poet who was himself a theorist of reader-response as trans-historical conversation. As though they had absorbed the lessons of "On the Interlocutor", writer after writer wished to enter into

dialogue with him. Mandel′shtam's discussion of the interlocutor is the theory by which to judge his success as a poet and the measure of ahistorical reader response. It is also one measure by which to describe what sort of poet he is. In this respect, he is more like Akhmatova than one might have expected because his style and his story have a particularly personal and counter-cultural quality. It is also as a reader of Dante that Mandel′shtam earned most plaudits as a critic and literary theorist. As Henry Gifford remarks, "Mandelstam sends modern poets to school with Dante".[46] The essay seems repeatedly to have captured the interest of poets from Brodsky to James Fenton to Derek Walcott.[47] Gabriel Josipovici instinctively brackets the "Conversation on Dante" with Proust's *On Reading Ruskin*,[48] and Seamus Heaney named the "Conversation on Dante" one of his books of the year in 1996.[49] At the level of cultural theory, the essay triangulated the relationship between Mandel′shtam and Eliot, creating an equivalence of stature for the two moderns via Dante and generating stimulating albeit imperfect comparisons with T. S. Eliot's idea of Hebraic and Christian culture. These estimations paved the way for the reception of the "Conversation on Dante" as an instant classic (and published as such in the *New York Review of Books "*forgotten classics" series) among several constituencies. For a readership without Russian intrigued by the Russian tradition and its points of contact with the western tradition, the link to Dante proved significant. According to the Oxford Italianist Martin McLaughlin, 'for that alone Mandelstam deserves to be remembered'. Furthermore, Mandel′shtam's experience as an exile lent authenticity to the role of poetry as a form of consolation. In a review of some new Dante translations, the *Economist* magazine quoted Seamus Heaney as observing that the Dante of Pound and Eliot is "not quite the same as Osip Mandelstam's, whose jaggedly futuristic 'Conversation about Dante' (Razgovor s Dante) " is also covered

in the appraisal.[50] Persecuted by Stalin, he speaks from the bookless wastes of internal exile and identifies with the embittered Florentine, driven from his native city by political conflict. Mandel′shtam's Dante is vividly particular, local and spontaneous, his emotion resounding still in the sounds of his words. Eliot's Dante, by contrast, is Latinate and Olympian, evoking in "the mind of Europe" a "sublime vision of universal order".[51] The review observes that the essay "wasn't printed until three decades later, in 1967, when an edition of 25,000 copies appeared in Moscow and quickly sold out–the first of Mandelstam's works to appear after the thaw", a point that was not lost on James Fenton. He praises Mandel′shtam's view that a command of complex linguistic and intellectual resources ought to give poets credibility as good authorities even among the truly powerful. And while Fenton shies away from romanticizing the martyrdom of Russian features, he nonetheless speaks for my left-leaning intellectuals in using Mandel'shtam's authority (and the historic nature of his fate) to express the view that the Russians might be unique in appreciating poetry on an enviable scale, given the comparative enormity of print runs accorded the most famous poets. The essay exercised a particular influence on Heaney who appreciated it particularly as a discussion of inspiration articulated through the special phonetic rules of poetic craftsmanship. He also dwelled on it as a manifestation of poetry as an ethical defence of the non-utilitarian in life.[52] He sees a Mandel'shtam gripped by Dante's metaphorical genius rather than moved by self-identification with him as exile who demonstrates why poetic influence is not only about sound and allusion but also about poetic relationships as ethical touchstones: 'the Dante whom he would come upon in the Thirties and who would help him to live by the pure standard while false currency swirled all around him like blinding chaff.'[53] By pure coincidence this conclusion comes very close to Lidiia Ginzburg's

description seventy years earlier of how in reading the essay Mandel′shtam seemed to merge entirely with his poetic inspiration.[54] What Ginzburg calls "*tvorcheskaia realizovannost"*" [creative realization] presciently identified the attraction of the essay to later generations.

The Special Relationship: The British and American Stories

However attuned to Mandel′shtam's historical period, the critical reception in Great Britain tended to dwell on the poetry and resist cult building. Attention to the life and Mandel′shtam's status as a poet-martyr surfaces intermittently and late, mentioned with respect but overshadowed by interest in his work. From the early 1970s Mandel′shtam had become a formative poet for translators. Mick Imlah, well-placed in various editorial jobs, observed that "fashion is certainly shifting in translation's favour; so much new British poetry alludes to Mandelstam, Montale, Trakl, Neruda and Seferis that it is unsophisticated as well as impoverishing not to know their work".[55]

If Mandel′shtam studies never took root in British graduate culture, it may be that the academic study of Mandel′shtam was inhibited by the degree to which public figures and men of letters such as Donald Davie, Geoffrey Hill, John Bayley and others had appropriated him to the ranks of poet as moral witness, the good antithesis to Pound.[56] Jennifer Baines was perhaps alone among her generation to pursue the course she took, sanctioned to a degree by the confidence and support of Mrs Mandel′shtam. Because Cold War rhetoric was far less extreme among the British intellectual classes of the 1960s whose leftist sympathies were no secret, and this translated into a different sense of purpose for a journal like the *Times Literary*

Supplement had a genuinely different editorial policy and mission by comparison with the *New York Review of Books*. In that context, devotees of Mandel′shtam such as Davie, Donald Rayfield and the translator James Greene pursued their initiative to broaden his readership.[57] Ronald Hingley's *Nightingale Fever* of 1981 took its brickbats for enforcing a groupthink among poets of a notably different cast. Yet the book provided evidence of the bond between Pasternak, Akhmatova and Mandel′shtam as three poets who shared integrity and a conviction that poetry must "deal boldly with substantial things".[58] This left the legacy of an imposing question: How was it possible to write poetry in the adverse conditions of the 1920s and hardening ideological hostility of the early 1930s? Yet in the late 1970s caution remains about adopting a vocabulary of martyrdom and sanctification that might obscure links between writers and a context that while fraught required further investigation. D. M. Thomas argued that Akhmatova and Mandel′shtam were indifferent to failure and numb to the world around them, but the anonymous reviewer in *PN Review* (1978) took a different view, arguing that "too much criticism of Soviet literature has been inevitably and crudely ideological, concluding complacently that these writers' fate demonstrates the natural and unalterable antipathy between socialism and artistic sensibility".[59] British readers sidestepped contentious issues of martyrdom that were part of the American reception from the start.

Instead, there is a pronounced tendency to portray Mandel′shtam as a poet of inner freedom able to sustain his own core values from the stoic simplicity he articulated in poems of the 1920s such as "I am washing myself in the night in the courtyard" [Ia umyvalsi noch′iu na dvore] well into exile. Perhaps optimistically, Henry Gifford sees Mandel′shtam of a decade later still "faithful to that vision" when

he appreciates the "black earth" in "Black Earth" (Chernozem): "what he expressed here toward the end of his life arose from perceptions formed in that Tiflis courtyard".[60] Similarly, Seamus Heaney, and Joseph Brodsky buck the academic trend in Mandel′shtam studies by noting how much of his early poetry infiltrates Mandel′shtam's later poetry. While sub-textual criticism in this same span of about twenty years continued to move centrifugally out of poems, amassing its vast body of external sources, readers more focused on a different idea of poetic and moral personality described a practice of self-allusion that sustained Mandel′shtam in the "cultural and human wilderness in which he found himself in the 1930s".[61] This was the poet saving himself as much as saving the European verse heritage obliterated by Soviet literary politics. That strategy was aptly summed up by Brodsky: "Only a poem could permit itself to remember another poem".[62] For these critics the resumption of poetic creativity was an assertion of power and also a posture of sanity, "oases of calm strength and beauty in a mad and murderous world".[63]

Can poetry resist tyranny with sanity and beauty? In 1974, an editorial in the *Times Literary Supplement*, offering solidarity, restated a traditional critical shibboleth about Russian writers and politics, opining that "a Pushkin, a Turgenev, a Tolstoy, a Mandelstam, a Solzhenitsyn form a state within a state. Theirs is the haunting alternative conscience".[64] Yet the tendency among the poetry mavens was to wonder whether it would be more productive to write about a common commitment to culture and humanity:

> The use of poetry as Mandelstam sees it […] is to keep a home for humanity, to make possible that lightness of allusion, that intimacy of tone, by which moral judgments are most successfully conveyed. […] The most hopeful sign in our dark and criminal century has been the endurance of the word in the writing of the best

> Russian poets. They have raised a monument not so much to themselves as to the human spirit.[65]

The interchange of aesthetic and ethical values and their relative status is one intriguing element in the establishment of a canonical Mandel′shtam. Seamus Heaney exemplifies wariness about valorizing the moral narrative over the poet's work in saying of Mandel′shtam and Zbigniew Herbert that "the admirable thing about those lives is precisely that they demand to be read as lives, not just as literary careers".[66] Geoffrey Hill, fully alert to, and persuaded by Mandel′shtam's example, is determined to argue that Mandel′shtam's greatness resides in an unfaltering capacity, once restarted in 1931, to sustain his art and voice, to produce words and rhythms that survive hauntingly on their own merit.[67] In the late 1970s, joyous delight greeted the publication in translation of Mandel′shtam's memoir *The Noise of Time* (Shum vremeni), and similarly the *Journey to Armenia* (Puteshestvie v Armeniiu), appreciated as evidence that the trip had set him free"[68]. D.M. Thomas regarded it as "blackest comedy", while Heaney revelled in Mandel′shtam's "pure happiness" and rejoiced to see that the poet of *Stone* had regained his faith in the durability of language, citing Mandelstam's own dictum in the *Journey to Armenia* that "the Armenian language cannot be worn out because its boots are made of stone". [69] If Bruce Chatwin, the most fashionable of all connoisseurs of beauty, was prepared to write about Mrs Mandel′shtam and to introduce the translation of the *Journey to Armenia* it was a sure sign that Mandel′shtam become indispensable as a touchstone for certain values.[70] He found in the *Journey to Armenia* and the "Fourth Prose" together a remarkable instance of creative psychology, noting the genetic link between the "angry, elliptical and cathartic"[71] essay and conversely the ebullient

style of the *Journey* in which "Mandelstam's old trust in the resources of language, his identification with the clarity and Classical aura of the Mediterranean, his rejoicing in the 'Hellenic' nature of the Russian inheritance, the ebullient philological certitude of his essay 'On the Nature of the Word'–all was revived by his physical encounter with the 'Armenian language and landscape". [72]

We see among British critics a new consensus that the response of Russian poets to this cultural situation is one of the highest sanity and courage rather than reckless martyrdom. If Mandel′shtam's reputation as a charismatic poet began in the early 1980s to emerge on the American side, no such characterisation attaches to the equally sympathetic but differently nuanced reading of his actions, manner and, above all, poetry among British poets and critics.[73] The emphasis falls more on Mandel′shtam's rational choices, points of ambivalence (an approach also advanced in scholarship by Mikhail Gasparov that went unnoticed by most Russian language critics). Bayley surmised that when Mandel′shtam republished "Let us praise the twilight of freedom" (Sumerki svobody) in 1928 he deleted the two references to the "Soviet night" "in the interests of discretion and concealment".[74] Gifford argued that the poet who maintained that "classical poetry is the poetry of revolution" was committed to "changing continuity", to a form of repetition in which "form counts for less than impulse".[75] For those who read Mandel′shtam's understanding of culture not merely as a regret for the past but as expansive, this provides a view of history as dynamic change that cannot be excluded from poetry and, if anything, is its proper subject matter. Seamus Heaney reminds us that Mandel′shtam's essay "Humanism and the Present" (Gumanizm i sovremennost′), published in 1923 in the Berlin émigré newspaper *On the Eve* (Nakanune) expressed hope for the post Civil War settlement; it is possible that Mandel′shtam was putting a brave face on it. While

Heaney admits that in retrospect the piece "takes on a tragic and ironical colouring", he entertains the possibility that Mandel′shtam, ambivalent or fooled, harboured an optimistic view of the Revolution, hedging and hoping that extremes would be reversed and the commitment to a socialist ideal might be attainable free of Bolshevik dictatorship.[76],

It is because such readers are aware of how difficult it is to decipher political intentions at such a distance, that they refrain from valorising a moral narrative that assigns clear-cut intentions. Reviewing Heaney's book *The Redress of Poetry,* the editorial in *PN Review* (1990) refers to his "beloved Mandelstam" as one of a select set of poets "show how poetry's existence at the level of art relates to our existence as tens of society - how it is of present use". Yet this view is more communitarian than political or ideology; if anything it endorses a more aggressive retreat from any party programme by arguing that "there should be no difference in kind between the 'artistic space' (as opposed to the political space) of Mandel′shtam and Sidney, of Herbert and Bishop; the differences are in the occasions the poets respond to, in the vigour and valour of the achieved artefact, the completeness or otherwise of the transfigurations through words"[77]. The tendency might also reflect a dominant leftist tilt to the politics of the British literary establishment. It takes an overtly right-wing anti-communist like A. L. Rowse to prove an exception to the rule by seeing in Mandel′shtam a victim of Marxism, "a Marxism that has spread to England's shores".[78]

From the premise that Mandel′shtam should be valued primarily as a craftsman of verse language, other conclusions followed. It was felt that he had been harassed and marginalized because he followed his bent for aesthetic rather than political art. The willingness to acknowledge a moral dimension to his verse and

behaviour was tempered by a fear that political statement would distort the meaning of his poems and overshadow his poetic greatness. Even from the start, then, a poet like Geoffrey Hill, alive to poetry as acts of witness and conscience, makes the "Phaedra" (Fedra) poem from *Tristia* his touchstone. In that connection, Hill and many others accord proper respect to Mrs Mandel′shtam's memoirs (which enjoyed dramatization and staging in 1983), but wish to distance her testimony from the poems themselves. [79]

Because Mandel′shtam had acquired a readership and a profile of his own, discussions of Nadezhda Iakovlevna and Mandel′shtam within the UK context tend to be separate, treating her as a great writer in her own right. To call him merely a victim is to group with him the anonymous millions caught up in the terror machine; yet to read him at the level of the "bitch pack", Bayley's tart phrase for *publitsistika* focused on domestic detail and banal domestic rows, was in his view no great addition to the claims of his art.[80] We see that a distinct reluctance to make heroic claims, or to perpetuate the line that Mandel′shtam was a holy fool, followed from an aversion to moralizing about poetry. Most treat the Stalin epigram as a mistake rather than deliberately suicidal although, praised as "brave and brilliant", it serves as a cornerstone of the defence of poetic free speech. [81] Donald Rayfield, unusually positioned as both scholar and gifted literary journalist, goes against the current in arguing that from 1910 Mandel′shtam had been spoiling for a fight against the state, and that his anti-Stalinism grew out of antipathy for absolute regimes.[82] For Gifford, the careers of Pound and Maiakovskii presented the two most instructive counter-examples of political poets to Mandel′shtam as a poet of pure art as well as poet of conscience. He quotes Tsvetaeva's dictum that "Mayakovsky does not forgive powerlessness", there is a sense in which their betrayal of art for the sake of political

programmes spells a loss of a moral compass that whether tragic or farcical meant each writer forfeited some degree of respect in posterity.[83] On this argument, poetry vitiated by political delusion or principle loses its authority because it offers no outside perspective and can therefore not be taken too seriously as a critical judgement on the age. There are sins of commission as well as misjudgement. The explicitly anti-democratic stance Pound took in praising Mussolini, his contempt for the people, look objectionable when juxtaposed with Mandel′shtam's solidarity with the masses, and his alienation from literary life. As Gifford says, when much of Pound outside the *Pisan Cantos* and much of Maiakovskii are set against Akhmatova's *Requiem* and Mandel′shtam's "Voronezh poems", they look marginal rather than like central statements made from the margins. Such an approach does not overplay the heroism; if anything it aims to anchor it in a commitment to literature and language that was betrayed and compromised by the times.

Such views come close to an understanding of Mandel′shtam as exceptional, but also exceptionally rational, shown by one of his most perceptive contemporary commentators. For Lidiia Ginzburg, who in the 1930s confined her most astute writings about Mandel′shtam to her notebooks, two forces were at play in Mandel′shtam's creative psychology and ethos. The ability to write poetry, even against his better judgement and sense of self-preservation, was an organic part of his personality that defined him as a genuine poet in the highest existential sense. Derek Walcott in a poem written for Brodsky, "Forest of Europe", celebrates the "divine fever" of Osip Mandel′shtam ("a fire whose glow warms our hands, Joseph"). Ginzburg, Hill and Walcott, to name a few, supported a view of Mandel′shtam as aware and dignified despite being trapped by the tide of history and circumstance. When confronted by political isolation and assailed by loneliness, Mandel′shtam's

ethical worth, in this account, lies in the record of honest responsiveness to the times; and in the conclusion that he remained true to himself by deliberate decision. All adherents of the "noble victim" paradigm are close, but the distinctions they draw point to a significant and possibly fundamental difference of opinion. This idea of Mandel′shtam as a smart person–not just the poetic id to his widow's superego–challenges a very different portrait of Mandel′shtam, shaped by the larger idea of how poets should behave, as a "fool figure", the latest instantiation of the Romantic ideal of poet as semi-insane visionary. More recently, Grigorii Kruzhkov expressed his consternation about a fashion of speaking of Mandel′shtam as an "odd little man or urban lunatic", citing the monument to him in Voronezh as a grotesque piece of iconography, a monument to a distorted image.[84]

While the Anglo-Irish reception of Mandel′shtam diverges from the tendency observed by G. S. Smith, it is undoubtedly true biography could be an irresistible narrative means when put to service of ideological ends. Peter France expressed his anxiety that hero-worship had come to overshadow Mandel′shtam's reputation, noting that "Nadezhda Mandelstam's splendid memoirs have probably appealed far more to the English-speaking public than her husband's poetry even though this was their raison d'être".[85] This reaction seems to convey a warning from the British perspective about the phenomenon of Mandel′shtam's reception among American readers. Smith's dictum about "lives rather than lines" is borne out more on the American side of the equation. The American reception, largely as it can be traced through the pages of the *Paris Review*, the *New York Times* and the *New York Review of Books*, is more monolithic. It is the story of a single poetic David versus the Soviet Goliath or a parable for the Cold War antagonism of the mass collectivized state and inhuman killing machine versus Western liberal democracy in

which individuals are not done to death for their formal choices and love of art. That is putting it crudely, but there is a view of Mandel′shtam that coheres with the anti-Soviet posture of establishment culture in these years.

By contrast with the more apolitical English perspective, the American reception almost always began at the end of Mandel′shtam's life, firmly associated with anti-totalitarian values and heroic resistance. While he was never made into a spokesman for anti-communism, his widow's celebrity cast a long shadow. From the early 1960s until about 1981, Mandel′shtam as a victim overshadowed Mandel′shtam the poet. The selection of ten poems in translation made by Olga Carlisle and Robert (thoroughly hated by Mrs Mandel′shtam for their rewritings) published in December 1965 were landmarks, among the very first to appear in English.[86] The *New York Review of Books*, perhaps premier establishment literary and cultural highbrow magazine of the age gave Mandelstam's top billing as the cover item and the subject of three items. No more authoritative and passionate advocate could be found than the dazzling essay Isaiah Berlin provided at the start, while a memoir by Akhmatova followed the translations. Berlin, Akhmatova and, above all, Robert Lowell, made the most powerful trifecta imaginable in adding a forgotten poet to the canon of world literature from outside his native land and language. But from the start, and even before the sensational publication of Mrs Mandelstam's memoirs in 1970, the biographical narrative tinges the literary image. Lowell and Carlisle commented that the poems were "among the last by Ossip Mandelst'amm [sic], [and] written during the apocalyptic days of the great Stalinist purges in the Thirties". The set included versions of "Preserve my speech" (Sokhrani moiu rech′), "No, I cannot escape this grand nonsense" (Net, ne spriatat′sia mne ot velikoi mury), the Stalin epigram (said in the notes to have caused Mandel′shtam's arrest), "We will sit in the kitchen" (My s

toboi na kukhne posidim), two poems (Den' stoial o piati golovakh; Ot syroi prostyni govoriashchaia) presented as two parts of a single lyric called 'Chapaev' .[87] Lowell invented and affixed titles, including 'The Future' as the rubric over 'My body, all I that borrowed from the earth' (Ne muchinistoi babochkoiu beloi). That was the final poem of the section, chosen by Lowell and Carlisle's who see it as a message from the Russian poet to those later readers who will be final comrades. Lowell and Carlisle gave emphasis to Mandel′shtam as the isolated outcast of totalitarianism well before the Parnassian poet of *Stone* appeared on American poetic radar. This was the trend that the *New York Review of Books* helped to establish and perpetuate. Their profile anticipated the wave of acclaim that followed on the publication of Mrs Mandel'shtam's first volume of memoirs in the early 1970s. In a banner review of *Hope Against Hope*, Christopher Lehman-Haupt, the chief book critic of *The New York Times*, saluted the author's moral courage. But what he found most remarkable was the "very idea that a man could be persecuted so for writing a poem".[88]

We see two separate impulses, different in origin but complementary and compatible, joining forces on the pages of the *New York Review of Books* in the 1970s. Clarence Brown's work set the academic seal on Mandel′shtam's reputation as a poet, picking up where Poggioli left off and conclusively establishing his claims on posterity. Yet this literary appreciation was subordinated to the role of poet-martyr that suited the firmly anti-Soviet and vocally pro-dissident editorial slant of the *New York Review of Books*, who rightly celebrated the devastating accomplishments of his widow.[89] The joint article published by Brown and Mrs Mandel′shtam in October 1970 printed an account of the Stalin-Pasternak telephone call about Mandel′shtam. It takes up the story as published anonymously in 1958 in *The New Reasoner*, a

version written by D. P. Costello. There was probably never any doubt that poetry mattered to Russians, an aspect of Soviet life that appealed to Western cultural commentators, especially on the Left. Michael Ignatieff comes close to glamorizing oppression as an ideal creative state. He voices, perhaps unexpectedly, a nostalgia for the courage and daring bred by oppression: "When one looks back at it now, the Stalin-Mandelstam story, terrible as it is, cannot fail to awaken a certain dubious nostalgia. For centuries, censorship was the deference the Western state offered to the only power which stood in the state's way, the power of the word. Dictatorship respected the word, even as it silenced it. The freedoms which have followed the abolition of censorship in Russia and the West seem bleak: the word has lost its power."[90] In that respect Mandelstam's fate looked like an exemplary tale. What makes such a gloss tolerable, if it is, was the fact that readers considered it to have been authorized not only by the guardian of his legacy but by the poet himself. Mrs Mandelstam in memoirs attributes to her husband a remark that has been widely reproduced after their English-language publication, 'Why do you complain? …Poetry is respected only in this country—people are killed for it. There is no place where more people are killed for it.'[91]

To be sure, the connection between inspiration and can be contested. What was riveting and might have constituted emotional proof of the claim that poetry was a life and death matter was the drama of the Mandel'shtams life in the 1930s as evidence became available: the players were Pasternak, himself a victim, Bukharin, Stalin and Mrs Mandel′shtam who recounted the story based on what Pasternak had told her. This version aimed to correct many fundamental misapprehensions about events; it was written in 1965 and the fact that it took a full five years to publish abroad was in itself a small fact that told a story about heroism and the effectiveness

of the Iron Curtain. As Clarence Brown wrote, "Stalin's telephone call to Pasternak on that summer evening in 1934 is probably, in certain circles, the most celebrated use of the instrument since Alexander Graham Bell asked his assistant what God had wrought".[92] This was heady stuff in the context of Cold War politics, and it established the shape of Mandel′shtam's reputation among this influential readership. Vladimir Nabokov, who had in the 1930s sweetly celebrated pre-revolutionary Mandel′shtam in *The Gift*, in his interview for the *Paris Review* (1967) expressed a scepticism that looks understandable when seen against this background: "Today, through the prism of a tragic fate, Mandelstam's poetry seems greater than it actually is".[93] The metropolitan literary base, defined by the journals cited here, continue to relate to Mandel′shtam primarily for his political value and status as a martyr. By contrast, American universities incubated increasingly active Mandel′shtam studies as a sub-field of Russian poetics. Yet in this sphere discussion of the political and moral implications of Mandel′shtam's writings were virtually taboo in a field dominated by Structuralist approaches.

The creation of a more rounded image of Mandel′shtam awaited the appearance of new translations such as offered by Brown and Merwin, and then Robert Tracy's versions of *Stone*. Yet the initial image survived reliably well into the 2000s.[94] For instance, numerous pieces in the *New York Times Book Review*, encompassing everything from Maia Plisetskaia's autobiography to Orlando Figes's cultural history, literature often spuriously invoke the "grim fate" of Mandel′shtam.[95] His name became a portmanteau word for a certain exemplary fate. On 30 September 2001, Margo Jefferson included Mandel′shtam as the author *Stone* alongside Tom Clancy, Robert Ludlum and Doris Lessing as one of the ‘"texts of our time" post- 9/11.[96] A translation of "Let the names of flowering cities" (‘Pust′ imena

tsvetushchikh gorodov), wrongly dated to 1917 (rather than 1914), cements his relevance as a poet to a besieged city. In 2010, Michael Scammell argued that the brilliance of Mandel′shtam, Akhmatova and Pasternak was the product of the Russian philosophical and literary tradition rather than political pressure.[97] Among journalistic criticism, this statement was more exception than rule.

The reception of Mandel′shtam and the story of his acceptance into a canon of great European writers occurred on a fault line between American and British literary and academic establishment. The gap between the American view and British reticence about martyrdom, sublimated into the idea of conscience, combined with the attachment to the poet as poet, provoked creative irritation. While from about 1981 champions like Heaney and Brodsky were perhaps going into overdrive to establish Mandel′shtam's reputation, it now looks clear that at least in the USA and starting from the mid-1960s, martyrology had overtaken Mandel′shtam's art. As well as taking aim at academic scholarship on Mandel′shtam, about which he was publicly disparaging, Brodsky targeted the preference for lives over lines. The degree to which "Mandel′shtam" had become a dissident brand assumed a degree of anecdotal absurdity in 1991 when the MLA rejected a proposal for a panel on Mandel′shtam at its annual convention. Grounds for refusal concerned the unsuitability of discussions built around single authors, seen as unfashionable at the time at a moment when the death of the author as a theoretical premise was persuasive, at least to some. However, as a concession the committee recognized that Mandel′shtam was a rather special case, given his fate, and were prepared to allow a panel on Mandel′shtam and Nelson Mandela.

Non-canonical Mandel′shtam

Within the English and American context, the poetry composed before 1926 constituted the canonical Mandel′shtam. In the early 1990s, nearly thirty years after Poggioli's speculation about imperfect editions, two decades after Jennifer Baines's study, and a decade after Peter France's overview of later Mandel′shtam in his book chapter, the message about a different sort of poet began to get through. D. M. Thomas saw in both Akhmatova and Mandel′shtam "new standards of poetic austerity and "hardness" with which to survive, and also detected a greater poise about history, and perhaps a degree of fatalism, that could not be found in Blok.[98] This idea of poetic sangfroid would be taken up later by Seamus Heaney who speaks of the "common sense of the craftsman"[99], and groups Mandel′shtam with other poets (notably Rilke in his lecture "The Sound of Poetry") whose poems are always rooted in real life, whose art does not exist for its own hermetic ends.[100] This sense of Mandel′shtam as an experiential poet both at odds with yet within Soviet life increased with the publication of more late Mandel′shtam in the original and in translation.

Critical assessment of the poems faced resistance among three constituencies. For a variety of reasons impossible to discuss here, scholarly methods devised to analyse earlier poems made little headway with the later works, which in the minds of some devotes were of a difficulty bordering on madness. English language readers fond of the Modernist poet of classical archetypes found it hard to identify, and identify with, Mandel′shtam's mature voices and changing poetics. And, finally, adherents to what I would call the "moral valour school" had grave misgivings about poems on Soviet and national themes, most especially the controversial "Stalin Ode".

Attachment to the younger Mandel′shtam became an almost organic need to keep a canonical reputation intact, reinforced by a sense of poetic prudence by readers restricted to reading him in translation. Frank Kermode cast the dynamic of canon formation as question of aesthetic choice guided by the pleasure of change.[101] Conversely, modification to the canonical might occasion the displeasure of change. Negative reaction partly reflected hostility to the translations of Richard and Elizabeth McKane, which looked on a text by text basis more problematic than versions of the same poems as produced by the likes of Brown and Merwin who, for good or ill, had arguably created a single consistent style for Mandel′shtam.[102] Previously the proportion of late, difficult poems to the familiar earlier poems remained relatively small in anthologies whereas there was now a larger body of texts whose tone was hard to judge, whose moral resilience no longer looked absolute. The imperfect state of the texts, reflecting the absence of reliable Russian editions (a point importantly trailed by Jennifer Baines), was compounded by the highly erratic quality of the translations. No stranger to difficult poetry, the critic writing for the *PN Review*, worried whether translation had made the notebook poems look more elusive than they might actually be, but also expressed a sense of deprivation brought about by poems that seemed only half finished, by writing that lacked the poise and finish associated with Mandel′shtam. Resistance to the experiential poet or to a late style is a manifestation of the tug of familiarity with a poet the English poetic establishment thought it knew well. Even poems that Russian had internalized as classics such as the Muscovite poems, "To the German Language" (K nemetskoi rechi), "The Verses on Russian Poetry"(Stikhi o russkoi poezii), in English engendered feelings of "bafflement and elation at being granted this kind of intimacy with the mercurial laboratory of Mandel′shtam’s sensibility".[103] The reception is not uniformly blinkered.

Pilling, for one, ekes out a more positive view of the second notebook in which "most readers will look for the finesse they associate with Mandel′shtam, though this is different in kind from that found in the pre-1925 poetry". Still, in 1991 John Pilling clearly found it hard to overcome his sense of estrangement from a poet whose chief accomplishment was to preserve intact in the lyrics of *Tristia* both world culture and that longing for world culture, whereas the fragmentation of that culture with its uncomfortable alloying of the Soviet in the later poems confounds. By contrast, in a piece published in the *Times Literary Supplement* five years later, the poet Lachlan Mackinnon, while scathing about the translations which encouraged the view that Mandel′shtam had become an hysteric, clearly felt it was time to grasp the nettle and acknowledge that Mandel′shtam's poetry was "notoriously difficult", "allusive, elliptic and deeply attentive to both the acoustics and the etymology of its own language in ways that must defy translation".[104] This cautious rowing back from first impressions of a late style possibly distorted through translation was a positive step. Moreover, Mackinnon relates none of this difficulty of the late lyric to biographical circumstance–he notes that the poems are "encrusted by legend"–but adduces instead Brodsky's view that in the later poems, especially in the "Verses on the Unknown Soldier", we witness an "incredible psychic acceleration". For Mackinnon the appearance of Mandel′shtam's late style was a moment to celebrate an "uncannily great poet, possibly the greatest of our century".[105] By the late 1990s the moment was ripe for adjustment if no longer ripe for the refashioning of reputation. The disappearance of authorities of the older generation, including Brodsky, and the rise of cultural studies, brought to a halt a new dynamic in revising one's view of Mandel′shtam.

For all groups of readers invested in Mandel′shtam as a certain type of poet, perhaps the greatest trial, and acid test, of received opinion surrounded attempts to understand the "Stalin Ode". Since its publication in 1975, the "Stalin Ode" continues to cause consternation. Among Mandel′shtam scholars it is almost a no-go area, a toxic battle ground. In 1981, Heaney wisely guessed that any attempts to talk about Mandel′shtam's politics of compromise as principled rather than desperate would unleash discord among his readers. Nobody should underestimate the degree to which, for reasons that remain mysterious and must be to a degree culturally determined, certain questions elicit almost elemental emotions rather than principled debate. Even the suggestion that Mandel′shtam may have had regrets or adopted a verbal position is sufficient to elicit rebuke and censure from holders of the flame among Russian scholars and fans. Within the many pronouncements on Mandel′shtam's life and fate differences in emphasis and vocabulary articulate two poles of opinion. The division concerns the degree of complicity and awareness that Mandel′shtam exhibited with respect to his own position, and therefore the degree to which the outcome was the result of heroic defiance or blindness. In other words, is Mandel′shtam a martyr or, like Pasternak and Khlebnikov, an example of the poet as fool (*iurodivyi*)?[106]

At just the moment when interest in the Stalin poems, epigram and ode, began to cause debate and real controversy in Anglo-American circles, we see a determined resistance among the hard-core *Mandel'shtamovedy* of the 1980s to deliberating the place of these poems in his oeuvre and evaluating their impact on his reputation. Mikhail Gasparov opined that there was much more to be said about both the Stalin epigram and Ode and Mandel′shtam's intentions but that the time was not ripe. Even the suggestion that critics might discuss intentions, rather than list

allusions, caused division and open hostility among the panellists, as recorded in the published transcription of the event. Gasparov's illuminating albeit incomplete remarks acknowledged that nobody was prepared to face the possibility that Mandel′shtam's politics were more complex than the moral valour school permitted.[107] On the grounds that such discussion would cause considerable pain he curtailed his remarks. The value of his intervention lay in the powerful suggestion that it was simplistic to view the "Stalin Ode" as a taboo subject because a craven or desperate act of submission. Instead, he went one step further in hinting that Mandel′shtam might have been struggling to keep faith with some forms of socialism. The second speaker to tackle the topic was Joseph Brodsky who throughout the proceedings adopted a consistently sceptical view of Mandel′shtam studies, at one point accusing the scholarship of simply missing out the poetry altogether and failing to pay attention to how Mandel′shtam's art worked because the obsession with subtextual sources had completely blinded it to elementary questions of critical reading. In the 1980s-90s Brodsky's close readings of a large range of Russian, English and American poets made him a much lauded revivalist of the art of close reading in the New Critical style, and he clearly took a dim view of the gap between his style of interpretation and a critical school that in his view misunderstood how poetry was written and how it signified; and failed to appreciate its true power. He had allies such as the editor of the *PN Review* who supported Seamus Heaney's similar credo that only through close encounters with poetic language and form would readers experience the living centre of poems, and that "questions of expressive forms and diction, theme […] lead towards the larger questions that an intrepid reader might wish to call 'moral'"[108]. The poets cited included Hill, C. H. Sisson and Donald Davie, but once again Mandel′shtam provides the most

challenging examples of the tense knot between the moral and the poetic. Pundits repeatedly adduce (and misquote) Mandel′shtam’s dictum, as said to Akhmatova, that only in Russia is poetry taken seriously because only Russia truly persecutes its poets. At the London meeting Brodsky stated his view that the "Stalin Ode" was one of Mandel′shtam’s very greatest poems, and one of the greatest anti-Stalinist statements ever written, far more subversive than the notorious epigram. This statement was of a force and ostensible perversity–and Brodsky’s authority and conviction too imposing to contest– as to reduce the group to a stunned silence (after tart exchanges between members of the audience, also recorded).

On the Anglo-American side of the fence other impassioned life-long advocates of Mandel′shtam grappled with the question, properly recognising that the combined evidence of biography and psychology, historical circumstance and the texts themselves opened the late political poems to multiple readings, all troubling but for different reasons. J. M. Coetzee reads the "Stalin Ode" not as an abject self-abasement but as a genuine ode of praise written emphatically in the conditional tense, a hedging of bets that attempts, on the one hand, to perform the ritual tribute of the genre and, on the other hand, to maintain a stance of totally contradictory irony. Such an interpretation, I would argue, implicitly groups Mandel′shtam with the likes of other Russian poets such as Derzhavin and Pushkin willing to produce rhetorical statements of praise that bears the risk of moral compromise in the hope of a breakthrough. While this view stops short of Brodsky’s compelling argument about the parodic and deadly subversiveness of the "Stalin Ode", it advocates a need to start with the lines and read the poem as a complex verbal statement rather than to begin from the life and work inward. For at least one reviewer of Coetzee’s essays his explanation–or expiation–was insufficient to draw the moral sting of an act of

compromise, a "desperate strategy" used "to fabricate the body of an ode without actually inhabiting it".[109] Donald Davie, an earlier lover of Mandel′shtam and early champion in English, read the poem for the first time when reviewing Gregory Freidin's scholarly monograph. Disillusioned by the "Stalin Ode", he publicly lambasted Mandel′shtam and said he had lost all respect for him. The extreme response from a distinguished scholar of Pound, an expert reader of complex poetic statement and rhetoric, is disillusion in inverse proportion to erstwhile hero-worship.[110] It makes it clear that once Mandel′shtam was seen as a political poet, regard for him as a poet who remained ethical because his work was non-political, was a premise that might be open to question. Valentina Polukhina in a letter to the *Times Literary Supplement* had earlier hammered home the message that "from the classic model lives of Mandelstam, Tsvetaeva and Akhmatova", we should all know "that the degree of the poet's lack of well-being in Russia almost always directly depends on his or her non-conformism".[111]

For Davie, Freidin's reading of Mandel′shtam as a kenotic poet could not be reconciled with an act of self-abasement. Mandel′shtam, whose art he cherished for its love of life, whose image he worshipped as a victim of involuntary suffering, must forfeit his moral stature and relevance. The price Davie exacts from Mandel′shtam as a charismatic poet of self-sacrifice whose praise of Stalin he reads as betrayal is revulsion and expulsion. This distinguished lifelong advocate of the cause of Russian poets and Russian poetry turns belatedly against the "inflation" with which "groupies" invested the lives of Russian poets and no longer sees any point in reading their lines. Mandel′shtam "cannot be so easily taken as a model by English language poets", and Davie in his disillusion warns that we should be "prudently aghast at how Russian intelligentsia, before and after the Revolution, accorded to their poets (and

also their musicians, notably Scriabin) the privileges of the mystagogue, the sage, and the scapegoat"[112]. The outrage stands strikingly alongside the refusal to speak of the Stalin poem that marked the 1991 London conference with the exception of Joseph Brodsky's reading of it as a highly subversive work and among Mandel′shtam's greatest poems. Davie was not alone in finding in one instance of disenchantment reasons to reconsider the equation of life and lines, and the potential cost to the proper appreciation of poetry on its own merits. Mandel′shtam's name is likely to continue to be used as shorthand for the victim of totalitarian ideology and repression–and enlisted in the ranks of firm anti-Communists.[113] At the other end of the spectrum, and in Russian but still on the this side of the vanished Iron Curtain, the poet Vladimir Gandelsman read the "Stalin Ode" as an experimental work, a defiant statement of poetic freedom almost detached from aspects of political content and risk.[114]

But the forum for this type of reference may have shifted decisively to the realm of popular literature. Mandel′shtam continues, justifiably, to be seen as a poet devoured by the wolfhound age that he so uncannily named.[115] Now the standard bearers of this view are commercial writers like Laurent Binet, whose 2011 novel about Heydrich *HHhH* bears an epigraph from "Century" (Vek), the historian Anthony Beevor's edition of Vasily Grossman's war journalism begins similarly, while Robert Littell's 2010 *The Stalin Epigram* pits Mandel′shtam in a face to face encounter with Stalin himself. By 2005 this antagonism to poetry that must be tested for its value by stories of persecution and assaults on integrity has hardened into what has been called "the Mandel′shtam syndrome", a damning tag for the entire hold that Eastern European poetry had on the minds and hearts of its readers.[116] It suggests that an appetite for lines over lives, a position I have described as the starting point in the

previous cycle of appreciation, finally began to obtain in a more globalized literary field extended across borders.

Coda: Mandel′shtam at Home

There are numerous accounts of Mandel′shtam's disappearance from the printed page in Russia. On the basis of the documentary reception presented here, with firm evidence of a poet now firmly in the canon of translated European poets, this despairing outburst of frustration by Joseph Brodsky expressed the transcultural gap between appreciation at home and abroad. In his *Paris Review* interview of 1982, Brodsky said that Mandel′shtam was "still largely unpublished and unheeded–in criticism and even in private conversations, except for the friends, except for my circle, so to speak. General knowledge of him is extremely limited, if any. I remember the impact of his poetry on me. It's still there. As I read it I'm sometimes flabbergasted".[117] Yet conversations about Mandel′shtam were happening, texts were circulating, an invisible accumulation of regard was happening. Putting one's finger on his rescue from oblivion is more a question of disconnected dots on a timeline than the steady snowballing effect we see in the West. There comes a moment when, as he predicted in a famous letter to Yuri Tynianov of 1937, Mandelstam, while modestly summing up his poetic life as a mixture of the "important and trivial", concluded that after twenty-five years of "coming up against" Russian poetry (or "forming a crust on" since the verb he uses can mean both) he felt that "my poems will soon pour into and dissolve into it, changing something in its structure and composition."[118] Mandelstam's afterlife abroad made him a canonical figure in American and the United Kingdom before that prediction came true in Russian. His stature as a classic of the Russian canon is perhaps a still unfolding

story although that chemical reaction he predicted now seems irreversible. If in fact it seems almost more a matter of alchemy than the logic of literary history it is obviously because political circumstances in Soviet Russia constrained the formation of a critical consensus before the 1990s.

Nikolai Khardzhiev's flawed Biblioteka poeta edition (1973; 1974), quickly withdrawn as a political misjudgement and excoriated in the émigré press as textologically unreliable, meant that only handwritten or samizdat copies circulated, making the question of reception in late Soviet Russia random.[119] The children's writer and poet Marina Boroditskaia (b. 1954) records that Mandel′shtam, the last of the great Silver Age poets to become accessible because he was "the most forbidden", eclipsed Pasternak and Akhmatova in her affections, and that numerous poems from *Tristia* were easily memorised by radio listeners even at a time when his name was still unprintable.[120] Grigorii Kruzhkov (b. 1945), the poet and gifted translator of English poetry, discovered Mandel′shtam's verse only in the late 1970s and came to see him as the equal of Boris Pasternak, both classics worthy to stand alongside Pushkin and Baratynskii, together with if slightly ahead of other beloved poets such as Blok, Georgii Ivanov, and Akhmatova.[121]

A generation later the phenomenon of Mandel′shtam as a quietly absorbed revelation recurs, his reader base and place in the canon growing outside official literature from the ground up, almost reader by reader. The poet and academic Mariia Falikman (b. 1976) first read some of Mandel′shtam's late and most difficult poems, and found the rhythmic irregularities disturbing (a topic for scholarly discussion by Iu. D. Levin at roughly the same time).[122] The publication of Nadezhda Mandel′shtam's memoirs, with quotations from Mandel′shtam's verse, expanded her awareness to a fuller range of poems and changes in his poetic vision and

technique. By turning back to the earlier verse as texts became available during the Perestroika period, Falikman began to make sense of the experimental quality of his later lyric and to acknowledge him as an influence on her own poetry.

Public events only served to formalize, and possibly expand, a truth hidden from distant advocates like Brodsky. Namely, that despite the formidable obstacles faced by readers, including the absence of sound editions, Mandel′shtam post-rehabilitation in 1956 steadily attracted the interest of a new generation of poetry readers. By the time of the Mandel′shtam Centennial Celebration held in Moscow in 1991 a banned poet had become mainstream even before most of his works could be published in his native country. To anyone who attended this particular event, however, it would have been very clear that among the large educated class of Russians, Muscovites and from elsewhere, Mandel′shtam was already a classic and much loved figure, in the minds and on the tongues of hundreds of conference attendees who often from the audience fed speakers lines of his verse. With the newfound freedoms of Perestroika, a generation of Mandel′shtam devotees such as Pavel Nerler and Iurii Freidin responded to obvious demand producing new editions and making determined efforts to absorb a Western legacy of Mandel′shtam scholarship and foster home-grown studies. In the same year, a star of the new generation, Viktor Krivulin, provided an introductory essay to new English translations of poems from the 1930s, presented as *The Moscow Notebooks*, an invented title.[123] Less than twenty years later, *The Air* (Vozdukh), founded in 2006 and the most impressive contemporary journal to publish new poetry and poetic criticism, took its epigraph from Mandel′shtam, whose name appears frequently on its pages as an acknowledged master but also interlocutor for contemporary poets.

A detailed reconstruction of this internal reception of Mandel′shtam, as told more consecutively through memoirs and anecdotes, would , I surmise, multiply the reactions cited above in fascinating detail. While entities like the Mandel′shtam Society (Mandel'shtamovskoe obshchestvo) use a questionnaire to collect data about Mandel′shtam's readership, including information about their preferences among his works, the evidence suggests that his canonical reputation was uncontested among literary elites in both Moscow and Leningrad/St Petersburg, dovetailing with Perestroika rather than being unleashed by political change. Within post-Soviet Russia, Mandel′shtam was inherited silently as part of a tradition that was being reconstituted because his life made him morally impeccable and his poems continued to strike a chord. While Mrs Mandel′shtam's own legacy has now become the subject of debate, the questions about image-manipulation that now accompany studies of Akhmatova do not assail Mandel′shtam.[124] Even a slender sample of websites, interviews in poetry magazines and private correspondence strongly attests the view that Mandel′shtam remains central and essential because he is both classical and experimental. It is these dual qualities that are seen to make a poet generative beyond his own time. In this sense, the idea of the canonical acquires another dimension to merely historical significance. In his manifesto for *Vozdukh*, the editor Dmitrii Kuz′min wrote eloquently about the relation between major and minor poets, and the work of literary histories to account for secondary and tertiary byways and even dead-ends. He cites Mandel′shtam as the measure of poetic greatness, a sound yet remarkable judgement when we think how little his poetry was known before the 1970s. By comparison, it is instructive to see how other poets interviewed in *Vozdukh* identify Brodsky as a classic, a great poet who, in the words of Aleksei Tsvetkov and Tat′iana Shcherbina, shut down traditions unlike

Nikolai Zabolotskii or Mandel′shtam who are cited as living sources for new poetry.[125] Mandel′shtam's reticulations to the Pushkinian tradition of lyric do not camouflage an avant-garde trend that leads Alexander Skidan to associate his later poetry with Velimir Khlebnikov and Konstantin Vaginov. Important poet-critics like Brodsky and Ol′ga Sedakova, each in their own way, anticipated the impasse by rooting the authority of the poet firmly in artistic genius. For Brodsky the moral stature of a writer could only be a matter of consideration if it depended on aesthetic statements and if poetry formulated ideas in ways that remained true to his ideals of poetry. For Sedakova, who like Brodsky admires the capacity of the poet to de-familiarize and make us see, the great moral stability of Russian poetry lay not in its martyrology but rather in its escapism to a greater appreciation of reality, in which few can compete with Mandel′shtam's "intelligence of sight, of hearing" (umnost′ samogo glaza, slukha).[126]

Arguably, the true measure of Mandel′shtam's post-Soviet reception, present of course in the now large body of scholarship, memoir-literature and biography of Russian *Mandel'shtamovedenie*, will be in his influence on poets and their lyric writing—in other words his contribution to the creation of a new canon. Meanwhile, outside the virtual reality of literature, physical landscapes now feature Mandelstam and tangibly bear witness to his newly established place. In a now famous letter to Tynianov, written just a year before his final arrest, Mandelstam declared that he was not a "ghost" and was still "casting a shadow." Once he became a non-person, he was of course not even a shadow since his writings were left unpublished, unmentioned and unstudied. In the post-Soviet period, acts of commemoration have restored him to the cityscapes of St Petersburg and Moscow, his new textual presence into monuments and texture. Like Pushkin, whose celebrated imitation of

Horace boasted that his posthumous fame would reach the entire extent of Russia's vastness, effigies of Mandelstam exist nearly at both ends of Russia. The first of three monuments erected to the poet was in Vladivostok, his final scheduled destination, and is located at 41 ul. Gogolia. A concise timeline of the monument's history and its opening can be found online at: http://polit.ru/article/2008/08/27/vladivostok/. In Moscow, the unveiling in late November 2008 of a statue commemorated the seventieth anniversary of Mandelstam's death in a transit camp on the way to the Far East, a bust of Mandelstam, undertaken at the initiative of a group led by the poet Oleg Chukhontsev, was unveiled at no. 5 ul. Zabelina. This is the site of the communal apartment block where the Mandelstams were frequent overnight guests of his brother Alexander. The bust, on top of a slender black marble column, is the work of the sculptors Dmitrii Shakhovskoi and Elena Munts. It bears as an inscription the opening lines of the poem 'For the ringing renown of future ages' (Za gremuchiu doblest' griadushchikh vekov). The third statue is in Voronezh, a full-sized bronze statue by Lazar Gadaev unveiled in November 2008 near the house where the Mandelstam's lived from 1934-1937. Like the other representations, the image of the poet fixes the poet's characteristic gesture of tilting his head back, his eyes, shut as though in a trance, a posture that contemporaries notes in memoirs and even in poetry (Tsvetaeva, among others). The figure stands in front of a handsome stone on which his name and dates are inscribed in gilt letters. A number of historic plaques indicating the poet's places of residence have been installed in St Petersburg and Moscow. In June 2009, under the aegis of the Mandel'shtam Society of Moscow, a group travelled to Cherdyn', the original place of the Mandelstam's

exile before their transfer to Voronezh, to unveil a slate tablet on the outside wall of the hospital where Mandelstam broke his arm after jumping from a window.

For their comments and suggestions I would like to thank Jennifer Baines, Sasha Dugdale, Lazar Fleishman, and Andrew McNeillie.

[1] Terry Eagleton, 'International Books of the Year for 1996', *Times Literary Supplement* (henceforth *TLS*), 29 November 1996, 12; Clive Wilmer, 'Song and Stone', *TLS*, 6 May 2005, 12.

[2] Gleb Struve, 'Soviet Poetry', *TLS*, 4 July 1958, 377.

[3] A proper assessment of the stature of a poet naturally depends on the content of their reception as much as its frequency. But some comparative figures are of use in measuring the penetration of poetic presences and awareness among a readership. On the pages of the ~~*Times Literary Supplement*~~*TLS* for the period from 1930 until roughly 2000 Mandel′shtam (excluding Mrs Mandel′shtam) is mentioned about 350 times (for these purposes a mention means anything from a full-blown article to a single-word reference in passing). Khlebnikov is mentioned 79 times (and mainly in the 1990s), Tsvetaeva occurs 145 times but only from the 1960s, Maiakovskii and Akhmatova are roughly on a par with Mandel′shtam although Maiakovskii garners far fewer full-length pieces and is invoked more often within larger contexts such as Futurism. Brodsky is mentioned 391 times from the 1960s. Zabolotskii, initially pegged by Robin Milner-Gulland in 1967 as the other poet on the launch pad of rediscovery next to Mandel′shtam, occurs 36 times. Pasternak remains in public view from the 1920s, and earns 850 references over the duration. To Pushkin, of course, belongs the laurel at 1000 hits. By comparison Mallarmé stands at 745 references, Goethe a whopping 3000, and Paul Celan 160, the last an interesting counter to the expectation that Celan's reputation now eclipses that of the Russians hands down. Brodsky's status among the bean-counters looks impressive when we note that Seamus Heaney stacks up at 585 mentions and Derek Walcott 153 times.

[4] A comprehensive scholarly treatment of this aspect of cultural politics and the Cold War is sorely needed, all the more so as embargoed archives and formerly classified documents become available. Hence as widely reported in the popular press and the New York Times, a newspaper of record (see Jeff Himmelman, 'Peter Matthiessen's Homegoing, *New York Times Magazine*, 3 April 2014, available at http://www.nytimes.com/2014/04/06/magazine/peter-matthiessens-

homegoing.html?_r=0[last accessed at 08.09.2015]) the personal files of contributors to the *Paris Review* such as Peter Matthiessen, a founder of the magazine, and George Plimpton its editor, have revealed ties to the CIA and the Congress for Cultural Freedom. For the broader context of how culture was weaponized, see David Caute, *The Dancer Defects: the Struggle for Cultural Supremacy During the Cold War* (New York & Oxford :Oxford University Press, 2003), especially Part V 'Art Wars' (pp. 507-611). His discussion focuses on the performing arts, Hollywood, and there are no entries in the index for literature and poetry much less Mandelstam.

5 See Magnus Ljunggren, and Lazar′ Fleishman, 'Na puti k Nobolevskoi nagrade (S. M. Bowra, N. O. Nil′sson, Pasternak)', in *Rossiia i Zapad: Sbornik statei v chest' 70-letiia K .M. Azadovskogo,* compiled by M. Bezrodnyi, N. A. Bogomolov, A. Belkina (Moscow: Novoe Literaturnoe Obozrenie, 2011), pp. 537-92. See more at: http://www.nlobooks.ru/node/27#sthash.bzRqPhbQ.dpuf.

6 For a vigorous account of the poet in Eastern Europe as a moral beacon, see most recently Clare Cavanagh, Clare, *Lyric Poetry and Modern Politics: Russia, Poland and the West* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2010); for an alternative view that is sceptical or even antagonistic to the moral hero approach, see G. S. Smith, 'Russian Poetry: The Lives or the Lines?', *The Modern Language Review*, 95 (October 2000), xxix-xli.

7 See Emily Lygo, *Leningrad Poetry, 1953-1975: the Thaw Generation* (Oxford & Berne: Peter Lang, 2010),p.8.

8 R. D. Charques, 'Russian Poems', *TLS*, 9 January 1930, 23; idem., 'Soviet Literature', *TLS*, 19 October 19 1933, 707.

[9] Maurice Bowra, 'Poets of Russia', *TLS*, 2 April 1949, 222

[10] Clarence Brown, 'Ashes and crumbs', *TLS*, 7 January 1994, 8.

[11] Geoffrey Hill, 'Unpublished Lecture Notes', in Kenneth Haynes and Andrew Kahn, 'Difficult Friend: Geoffrey Hill and Osip Mandelstam', *Essays in Criticism* 63 (2013), 51-80 (pp.71-76).

[12] Alexander Werth, 'New Russian Poetry', *TLS*, 22 March 1963, 200.

[13] Vladislav Khodasevich, *Sobranie sochinenii v vos'mi tomakh*, ed. John Malmstad and Robert Hughes (Moscow: Russkii put'), vol. 2, 283 (review of O. Mandel'shtam, *Tristia*, 1922).

[14] Eyewitness account, Andrew Kahn, Moscow, January 1991.

[15] Robin Milner-Gulland, 'Mandelshtam and Zabolotsky: Two Russian Rediscoveries', *TLS*, 11 May 1967, 398.

[16] David McDuff, 'The Prosody of Fate', *TLS*, 1 July 1983, 703

[17] O. E. Mandel′shtam, *Sobranie sochinenii* (New York: Izdatel′stvo imeni Chekhova, 1955); superseded by O. E. Mandel′shtam, *Sobranie sochinenii v dvukh tomakh*, ed. by G. P. Struve and B. A. Filippov (Washington & New York: Inter-Language Associates, 1964-66); the second edition, expanded and revised, was republished in 1990-1991 as an immediate result of the glasnost′ policy, and served in effect as the first comprehensive view of Mandel′shtam's oeuvre to be made available to Soviet readers.

[18] John Bayley, 'The Dangerous Poet', *New York Times Book Review*, 4 March 1979, n. p.

[19] For a review of a job-lot of translations along these lines, see Charles Newman, 'A People Does Not Choose its Poets', *Harpers*, 248 (1974), 83-84.

[20] Guy Davenport, 'The Man Without Contemporaries', *The Hudson Review*, 27: 2 (1974), 300.

[21] For a review of translations by Brown and Merwin, Burton Raffael, David McDuff and others, see, for instance, Jennifer Baines, *Modern Language Review*, *69*: 4 (1974), 954. In a separate review Baines gave higher marks to Meares over Greene for selection and style; see Jennifer Baines, 'Mandelstam, Poems', *Slavonic and East European Review*, 57: 3 (1979), 439.

[22] Yves Bonnefoy, 'On the translation of form in poetry', *World Literature Today*, 53: 3 (1979), 374-79.

[23] Henry Gifford, 'Surrounded with Fire', *TLS*, 19 June 1981, 700.

[24] Milner-Gulland, 'Mandelshtam and Zabolotsky: Two Russian Rediscoveries', 398.

[25]Clarence Brown, 'Every Slightest Pebble', *London Review of Books* (henceforth *LRB*), 25 May 1995, 24, 26-27 (p.26).

[26] Quoted in D. M. Thomas, 'The Weaponry of Poets', *TLS*, 17 February 1978, 186.

[27]Thomas, 'The Weaponry of Poets', 186; see also John Pilling, 'Before Yesterday and After', *PN Review*, 82 (Nov–Dec 1991), 55-56; George Steiner, 'An enclosure of time', *TLS*, 4 February 1977, 132; see also these other pieces by Steiner: 'A terrible exactness', *TLS*, 11 June 1976; 709; 'Songs of a torn tongue', *TLS*, 28 September 1984; 1093.

[28] Stuart Hood, 'As if winter had not touched', *PN Review*, 22 (Nov-Dec 1981), 62-63; Henry Gifford, 'The staying power of Russian poetry', *TLS*, 24 May 1991, 9.

[29] John Bayley, 'Nightingales.' Review of Ronald Hingley, *Nightingale Fever: Russian Poets in Revolution,* Ronald Hingley, *Russian Writers and Soviet Society 1917-1978*, Archie Brown, ed. *The Cambridge Encyclopedia of Russia and the Soviet Union* ,

Edith Frankel, *'Novy Mir': A Case-Study in the Politics of Literature 1952-1958*, *LRB*, 15 April 1982, 5-7 (p. 6).

[30] Seamus Heaney, 'Osip and Nadezhda Mandelstam', *LRB*, 15 August 1981, 5.

[31] Joseph Brodsky, 'Introduction', *Osip Mandelstam: 50 Poems*, trans. by Bernard Meares (New York: Persea Books, 1977), 14; and Henry Gifford, 'The Flinty Path', *TLS*, 20 October 1978, 1227.

[32] Heaney, 'Osip and Nadezhda', 4, quoting from Robert Tracy's introduction to his translation of *Stone*, published in 1981.

[33] D.M. Thomas, 'The Weaponry of poets', 186.

[34] Heaney, 'Osip and Nadezhda Mandelstam', 3.

[35] Anatoly Naiman, 'From Prayer to Howl', *TLS*, 4 September 1992, 4.

[36] Quoted in Gifford, 'Surrounded with Fire', 700; ibid.

[37] Henry Gifford, 'A Witness between two Worlds', *TLS*, 14 March 1980, 283.

[38] Helen Vendler, 'False Poets and Real Poets', *The New York Times Book Review*, 7 September 1975, n. p. This influential taste-maker concludes that the poems "simply do not survive translation", with "all color, weight and magnetism utterly lost" by McDuff.

[39] Heaney, 'Osip and Nadezhda Mandelstam', 6.

[40] Ibid.

[41] The appreciative trend began auspiciously in a prominent revisionist journal with Sidney Monas, 'An Introduction to Osip Mandelstam's Essays', *New Literary History* 6: 3 (1975), 629-32.

[42] Laurence Lipking, *The Life of the Poet: Beginning and Ending Poetic Careers* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1981), p. 160.

[43] Likpking, Idem.

[44] Ruth Fainlight, 'Touching the String', *Times Literary Supplement*, 8 February 2002, 25.

[45] Henry Gifford, 'Origins and Recognitions', *TLS*, 25 July 1980, 827; Fainlight,'Touching the String', 25.

[46] Gifford, 'A Witness between two Worlds', 283.

[47] James Fenton, 'Hell set to Music', *The Guardian*, 16 July 2005 (see at http://www.theguardian.com/books/2005/jul/16/classics.dantealighieri [last accessed on 08.09.2015], reviewing the reprint of Osip Mandelstam, *The Selected Poems of Osip Mandelstam*, translated by Clarence Brown and W.S. Merwin (New York: New York Review of Books, 2004), originally published in 1971.

[48] Gabriel Josipovici, 'The Book of the Book', *TLS*, 17 June 1988, 684.

[49] Seamus Heaney, 'International Books of the Year', *TLS*, 29 November 1996, 11.

[50] [Anon], 'An Underworld Classic: R.W.B. Lewis, Dante: A Penguin Life; The Poet's Dante, ed. by Peter Hawkins and Rachel Jacoff; The Inferno, trans. Robert and Jean Hollander', *The Economist*, 17 February 2001, 125.

[51] [Anon], Idem.

[52] For a useful summary with attention to Mandelstam's presence in Heaney's poetry, see Stephanie Schwerter, *Northern Irish Poetry and the Russian Turn: Intertextuality in the work of Seamus Heaney, Tom Paulin and Medbh McGuckian* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013), esp. pp. 30-33.

[53] Heaney, 'Osip and Nadezhda Mandelstam', 4.

[54] See Andrew Kahn, 'Lidiya Ginzburg's Lives of the Poets: Mandel'shtam in Profile', in *Lydia Ginzburg's Alternative Literary Identity*, ed. by Andrei Zorin and Emily van Buskirk (Oxford: Peter Lang, 2012), pp. 163-91 (p. 181).

[55] Mick Imlah, 'Poetry Publishing and Publishers', *TLS*, 27 April 1984, 455.

[56] Claude Rawson, 'Escaping the Irish Labyrinth', *TLS*, 24 January 1992, 19; Wilmer, 'Song and Stone', 12; Charles Tomlinson, and John Bayley, 'An Involuntary Witness', *Times Literary Supplement*, 21 November 1986, 1295; Henry Gifford, 'Binocular Vision: review of Donald Davie, *Czeslaw Milosz and the Insufficiency of Lyric'*, *PN Review*, 55 (May-June 1987), 83-84.

[57] Donald Rayfield, 'The Great Unfathomable', *TLS*, 2 July 1999, 13.

[58] Gifford, 'The Flinty Path', 1227.

[59] C. H. Cisson, 'Editorial', *PN Review*, 2 (January-March 1978), 1-2.

[60] Henry Gifford, 'The Use of Poetry in Twentieth-century Russia', *PN Review* 2 (1978), 4.

[61] Mikhail Meilakh, 'Mandelstam in London', *TLS*, 6 September 1991, 13.

[62] Joseph Brodsky, ' "S mirom derzhavnym ia byl lish' rebiacheski sviazan…" ' in *Mandelstam Centenary Conference*, ed. by Robin Aizlewood and Diana Myers (Tenafly NJ: Hermitage Publishers, 1994), pp. 9-17.

[63] Bayley, 'Nightingales', 6.

[64] 'Commentary', *TLS*, 15 February 1974, 159.

[65] Gifford, 'A Witness between two Worlds', 283; France, 'Songs of a Torn Tongue', 275.

[66] Quoted in the Editorial, *PN Review* 15 (July-August 1988), 4.

[67] Kenneth Haynes and Andrew Kahn, 'Difficult Friend', 51-70.

[68] Henry Gifford, 'Mandelstam Whole. Review of Sidney Monas, *Osip Mandelstam: Selected Essays*, Jennifer Baines, *Mandelstam. The Later Poetry*', *New York Review of Books* (henceforth *NYRB*), March 9, 1978 , vol. 25, no. 3 .

[69] D.M. Thomas, 'Catching up - Poetry: 3: Poetry in translation', *TLS* 18 January 18, 1980, 66; Heaney, 'Osip and Nadezhda Mandelstam',4.

[70] Bruce Chatwin, 'Introduction', Osip Mandelstam, *Journey to Armenia*, trans. by Clarence Brown (London: Next Editions in Association with Faber, 1980), pp. i-iii.

[71] Heaney, 'Osip and Nadezhda Mandelstam',5

[72] Heaney, 'Osip and Nadezhda Mandelstam',6.

[73] Gregory Freidin, *A Coat of Many Colors: Osip Mandelstam and his Mythologies of Self-Presentation* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1987); for a recent restatement of the position see Stephanie Sandler, 'Visual Poetry after Modernism: Elizaveta Mnatsakanova', *Slavic Review*, 67, 3 (2008), 610.

[74] John Bayley, 'Nightingales.' Review of Ronald Hingley, *Nightingale Fever: Russian Poets in Revolution,* Ronald Hingley, *Russian Writers and Soviet Society 1917-1978,* Archie Brown, ed. *The Cambridge Encyclopedia of Russia and the Soviet Union* , Edith Frankel, *'Novy Mir': A Case-Study in the Politics of Literature 1952-1958,* London Review of Books, 15 April 1982, 6; see also Aileen Kelly, 'Brave New Worlds', *NYRB*, 6 December 1990, pp. 60-7 (on Mandelstam, p. 64).

[75] Henry Gifford, 'Dante & the Modern Poet', *PN Review* 12 (March-April 1980), 13.

[76] Heaney, 'Osip and Nadezhda Mandelstam', 3-6.

[77] Editorial, *PN Review* 74 (1990), 1. This is in fact an endorsement of Heaney endorsing Mrs Mandelstam whom he quoted on this point in The Redress of Poetry. Oxford Lectures (London and Boston: Faber and Faber, 1995), 193.

[78] A. L. Rowse, 'The Mandelstam Experience', *Contemporary Review*, 249 (1986), 21-6.

[79] Andrei Rogatchevski, 'Staging the Unstageable: Casper Wrede's production of *Hope Against Hope* at the Royal Exchange Theatre (1983)' in *When the Elephant Broke Out of the Zoo: A Festschrift for Donald Rayfield*, edited by A. Schönle, O. Makarova and J. Hicks, *Stanford Slavonic Studies*, 39 (2012), pp. 108-28.

[80] John Bayley, 'Mandelstam and the Bitch-Pack', *The Listener* (6 December 1973), 781.

[81] Hugo Williams, cited in John Mole, 'Daisy chains and trains', *TLS*, 1 February 2002, 11; the poem was included for display in the Poems on the Underground exhibition.

[82] Donald Rayfield, 'Stalin, Beria and the Poets', *PN Review*, 92 (July-August 1993), 22-30.

[83] Henry Gifford, 'Pound, Mayakovsky and the Defence of Human', *PN Review*, 6 (January-March 1979), 15-19.

[84] Personal communication (Moscow. May 2013).

[85] Peter France, 'Four Troubled Lives', *TLS*, 12 March 1982, 275.

[86] Osip Mandel′shtam, 'Nine Poems', translated by Robert Lowell and Olga Carlisle, *The New York Review of Books*, 23 December (1965), 3-7.

[87] Osip Mandel′shtam, 'Nine Poems',7.

[88] Christopher Lehmann-Haupt, 'The Good Woman of Mandelstam', *Books of the Times*, 19 October 1970, n. p.; see also Richard Pevear, 'On the Memoirs of Nadezhda Mandelstam', *Hudson Review*, 24: 3 (1971), 427-440; he argues that Mandel′shtam is the "embodiment of poetry" and Stalin "the embodiment of force", transvaluing "poetry" into the "language of freedom", a line of argument saturated in Cold War dichotomy. For evidence of the persistence of this moral evaluation and narrative in mainstream literary circles, see, for instance, W. D. Erhart, 'An Indomitable Poetic Spirit', *The Virginia Quarterly*, 65: 1 (1989), 175-82.

[89] Clarence Brown and Nadezhda Mandelstam, 'The Nature of the Miracle', *NYRB*, 22 October 1970, 24-27.

[90]Michael Ignatieff, 'The Beloved'. Review of J.M. Coetzee, *Giving Offence: Essays on Censorship*, *LRB*, 6 Feb. 1997, 15.

[91] Nadezhda Mandelstam, *Hope Against Hopes*, trans. Max Hayward (New York: Atheneum, 1970), 190 (as reported by her in the chapter 'The Fatal Path' ['Gibel'nyi put']). Although essentially apocryphal and taken on trust, the comment will be often repeated, e.g., Osip Mandel'stam, *Poems from Mandelstam*, trans. R.H. Morrison (London and Toronto: Associated University Press, 1990), p.18, and used to frame the value of the poet's legacy ('a poet of towering proportions', p.22), implicitly enhanced because feared by the state.

[92] Brown and N. Mandelstam, 'The Nature of the Miracle', 24; the episode was repeatedly picked up by later commentators as clinching proof of the moral defence of art argument or the battle between "poetry" and "force".

[93] Vladimir Nabokov, 'The Art of Fiction', *Paris Review*, 40 (1967), 99.

[94]In connection with the Stalin epigram, Ann Carson accords Mandel′shtam a cameo appearance in her 'TV Men: Akhmatova (Treatment for a Script)', *PN Review*, 126 (March-April 1999), 14-15.

[95] 'Orlando Figes, 'A Double Game with Stalin', *NYRB*, 12 January 2012, 33. Here and in other reviews Figes essentially perpetuates what might be called the '*New York Review of Books* narrative'. That trajectory of appreciation probably dates to a piece by Isaiah Berlin that raises the theme of the poet's sacrifice but pays equal attention to a remarkably insightful and vivid appreciation of Mandelstam's qualities as a writer, a balance that will recede as the political narrative comes to dominate (Isaiah Berlin, 'A Great Russian Writer'. Review, *The Prose of Osip Mandelstam*, trans. Clarence Brown, *New York Review of Books*, 23 December 1965, 1-2. This text is followed by 'A Portrait of Mandelstamm [sic] by Akhmatova that pays tribute to him as a 'tragic figure' who continued to write works of 'untold beauty and power until the very end of his life', works that were largely unknown and unavailable).

[96] Margo Jefferson, 'On Writers and Writing: Texts for Our Time', *New York Times Books Review*, 30 September 2001 (see: http://www.nytimes.com/2001/09/30/books/on-writers-and-writing-texts-for-our-time.html).

[97] Michael Scammell, 'Writers in a Cage', *NYRB*, 14 January 2010, 55.

[98] D. M. Thomas, 'The Weaponry of Poets', 186.

[99] Heaney's appraisal of Mandelstam's craft is taken up in the editorial of the *PN Review* 63, September-October 1988, p. 1.

[100] As reported in Harry Guest, 'Cantos at Kantô', *PN Review* 62 July-August 1988, 23.

[101] Frank Kermode, *Pleasure and Change: The Aesthetics of Canon* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004), chap. 1 (pp. 15-35)

[102] Pilling, 'Before Yesterday, and After', 56.

[103] 'Before Yesterday, and After', idem.

[104] Lachlan MacKinnon, 'A Last Testament', *Times Literary Supplement*, 6 September 1996, 6.

[105] MacKinnon, ibid., 6.; with the *Voronezh Notebooks* also cited as definitive works by Helen Szamuely, review of Sonia Ketchian, 'The Poetic Craft of Bella Akhmadulina', *TLS*, 23 September 1994, 26.

[106] Czeslaw Milosz, 'On Pasternak Soberly', in *Emperor of the Earth: Modes of Eccentric Vision* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1977), pp. 69-77.

[107] M. L. Gasparov, 'Metricheskoe sosedstvo "Ody" Stalinu' in *Mandelstam Centenary Conference*, *ibid*., pp. 99-111 (p. 107).

[108] Editorial, *PN Review* 50 (1986), 1.

[109] J. M. Coetzee, 'Osip Mandelstam and the Stalin Ode' in his *Giving Offence: Essays on Censorship* (Chicago: University of Chicago,1993), pp.104-16; and Michael Ignatieff, 'The Beloved', *London Review of Books*, 6 February 1997, 14.

Ignatieff accepts Coetzee's argument that in the end if the 'Stalin Ode' was meant as exculpation Mandel′shtam's language betrayed him into writing a highly subversive work.

[110] Donald Davie, 'From the Marches of Christendom: Mandelstam & Milosz', *PN Review*, 109 (May-June 1996), 13-24.

[111] Valentina Polukhina, 'Poets of Protest', *TLS*, 11 September 1987, 987.

[112] Donald Davie, 'From the Marches of Christendom', 14.

[113] Dennis O'Driscoll, 'Going a-roving', *TLS*, 12 June 1998, 24.

[114] Vladimir Gandel′sman, '"Stalinskaia oda" Mandel'shtama', *Novyi zhurnal*, 215 (1999), 133-41.

[115] Nicholas J. Anning, 'The Wolfhound Age', *TLS*, 2 July 1971, 752; Henry Gifford, 'On Modesty and Boldness', *TLS*, 23 August 1985, 915.

[116] Chris Miller, 'The Mandelstam Syndrome and the "Old Heroic Bang"', *PN Review*, 162 (March-April 2005), 14-22.

[117] Joseph Brodsky, 'The Art of Poetry', *Paris Review*, 83 (1982), 104.

[118] 'Letter to Yu. N. Tynianov', 21 January 1937, Osip Mandel'shtam, *Polnoe sobranie sochinenii i pisem v trekh tomakh*, ed. A.G. Mets (Moscow: Progress-Pleiada, 2011), vol. 3, p. 548 (no. 194).

[119] Viktoria Schweitzer, 'Spustia pochti polveka', *Russica* (1981), 229-56.

[120] Marina Boroditskaia (personal communication, 11 May 2013 Oxford).

[121] Grigorii Kruzhkov (personal communication, 11 May 2013 Oxford).

[122] Mariia Falikman (personal communication, 13 May 2013 Oxford).

[123] Henry Gifford, 'Hearing Close-Knit Harmonies: Mandel'stam's essential music translated'', *TLS*, 24 May 1991, 9.

[124] From their original publication in Russian, Mrs Mandelstam's books were given classic status along with Solzhenitsyn for their look into the Soviet system as much as their contribution to poetry. See Gleb Struve, 'Nadezhada Mandelstam's remarkable memoirs', *Books Abroad* 45, 2 (Winter 1971), 18-25. The "cult" of Nadezhda Iakovlevna was more or less sanctioned in an anecdotal piece by Clarence Brown, 'Every Slightest Pebble', *London Review of Books*, 25 May 1995, 24-27; inevitably her reputation, and Mandel′shtam's image, have subsequently become entangled in evaluations of other memoirists, most especially that of Emma Gershtein, on which see Rachel Polonsky, 'Beneath the Kremlin Crag', *TLS*, 14 May 2004, 9; Pavel Nerler, 'V poiskakh kontseptsii: kniga Nadezhdy Mandel'shtam ob Anne Akhmatovoi na fone perepiski s sovremennikami', in Nadezhda Mandel′shtam, *Ob Akhmatovoi* (Moscow: Novoe izdatel'stvo, 2007), pp. 7-108.

[125] Dmitrii Kuz′min, 'Atmosfernyi front', *Vozdukh. Zhurnal poezii* 1 (2006), 11; for some thoughts on the relation of literary "overproduction" and the canon, see the "state of the field" piece by G. S. Smith: http://www.aatseel.org/resources/stateofthefield/poetry.htm

[126] Ol'ga Sedakova, 'Zametki i vospominaniia o raznykh stikhotvoreniiakh, a takzhe Pokhvala poezii', in *Proza* (Moscow: NFQ/Tu Print, 2001), p. 61.