Chapter-1

POETRY OF THE EARLY PERIOD (1900—1914)

In her *A Brief Word about Myself* (1956), Akhmatova herself says that she wrote her first poem when she was only eleven, that is, in 1900.1 Till the advent of the World War I, her first collection was followed by only one other collection, *Rosary*, published in 1914. A careful study of Akhmatova’s poetry of these two collections displays “a remarkable thematic and stylistic consistency”2 and hence, these two collections alone have been specified in this study as signifying the early career of Akhmatova. Of course, it is unnecessary to say that these collections were well received and secured Akhmatova’s reputation as one of Russia’s most talented young poets. Though she herself called her *Evening* as “a small book of love lyrics”3 by “an empty-headed little girl”4, yet her style, characterized by its economy and emotional restraint, struck contemporary readers as original and distinctive. Besides, Akhmatova was able to capture and convey here “the vast range of evolving emotions experienced in a love affair”.5 Such pieces, declaring the strength of “a strong female voice that had been lacking in Russian poetry”6 were much imitated and later parodied by Nabokov and others. Akhmatova was prompted to write sarcastically in her later life:

I taught women to speak...
But, God, how to make them fall silent!

*(Could Biti Create Like Dante, 1958)*

Yet it must be acknowledged that Akhmatova’s debut on the literary stage came at a significant transitional point in the history of Russian
literature. Up until 1910, the dominant literary aesthetic had been that of Symbolism that sought to look beyond the realities of this world towards a higher reality which was accessible through the power of language, by means of the magic of words. By 1911, Gumilev, in particular, was becoming increasingly frustrated with the role of the Symbolists and he formed a literary discussion group called the *Guild of Poets* that included Akhmatova too in it. Soon the *Guild of Poets* disassociated itself from the Symbolists, giving birth to the anti-Symbolist doctrine that became known as Acmeism. Justin Doherty, in his study of Acmeism, has seen Acmeism as more important in providing a literary-political stage for its advocates than in its efforts to articulate an unambiguous aesthetic position. Indeed, the main focus of Acmeism may be represented as a call for clarity, for close ties with the literature and culture of Europe and of all ages, for an emphasis on the objects of this world for their own sake and not on their potential value as symbols. As this study will show, Akhmatova's early verse has displayed an earnest leaning towards the literary and cultural tradition of her own country and the continent as well, besides embodying in it this ideal of clarity and concreteness to a high degree. And because these qualities were atypical in the poetry of the period, this was undoubtedly an important reason of its immediate success.

Of course, a great number of scholarly works have already been done on the early poetry of Akhmatova. Dr Wendy Rosslyn's *The Prince, the Fool and the Nunnery: Religion and Love in the Early Poetry of Anna Akhmatova* (1984), for instance, has studied the themes of the early books in close relation to one another. Dr Rosslyn's account of the early Akhmatova reflects the general agreement, echoing critics like Lev Ozerov:
Her poems express and explore her own inner life, and the experience which they describe is personal and psychological, rather than national and cultural. The field of her activities in them is domestic, at most local. The tragedies which she meets are the outcome of her own character, and are not the tragedies of an individual assailed by the forces of history.8

Dr Wendy contemplates in the main on the persona of Akhmatova's heroine in her early poems (how the persona changes, in each poem and through time) and finds that everywhere, whether it is love or a withdrawal to religion or something else, Akhmatova's heroine succeeds in sustaining a detachment from the poet's own biography. Kees Verheul's The Theme of Time in the Poetry of Anna Akhmatova (1971), again, shows that an acute awareness of the intricacies of time as the stuff of human experience is characteristic of Akhmatova's poetry from the very beginning. In the early books the unifying theme of love has often been presented in various peculiar temporal perspectives.

Susan Amert, in her In a Shattered Mirror: The Later Poetry of Anna Akhmatova (1992), has pointed out to the "sublimely transparent lyrical miniatures of the early period".9 Susan finds that the early poetry is differentiated from the later by its absence of intertextuality in it, which, however, is not unquestionable. The later poetry may certainly be more densely allusive, but the early work is also capable of bearing a considerable weight of interpretation. David N Wells in his Anna Akhmatova: Her Poetry (1996), on the other hand, has examined Akhmatova's early poetry in the light of a wide variety of extensions which lend, according to him, greater weight and significance to these poems. These extensions include the use of different materials drawn from the Russian folklore, mythology as well as history, the architecture of St. Petersburg, religious imagery etc. In the third chapter of the
book, Wells is seen to categorize or classify these early poems through explorations of the embryonic thematic cycles within them. He has, however, placed this task of thematic categorization of Akhmatova's poems as a model for the future research-scholars and feels that lots of works are yet to be done in this field. Sharon Leiter, in her book *Akhmatova's Petersburg* (1983), on the other hand, examines the theme of Petersburg-Leningrad in the poetry of Akhmatova. In the first chapter of her book, *The Early Petersburg Love Poems*, Leiter shows that Akhmatova's Petersburg is never mere passive ornament or backdrop for the love-motif revealed in the early poems. In the early collections, Petersburg is "perceived in terms of spatial dichotomies which separate the heroine from her beloved and the realm of love from that of nonlove."\(^{10}\)

Apart from these, there are some critics who are seen to draw in their studies a line that can relate the early Akhmatova to the later one. Sam N Driver, for instance, has shown that there are definite "new emphases"\(^{11}\) in the later period of Akhmatova, but ultimately little that can not be traced to the earlier work. Of course, all these approaches to the early poetry of Akhmatova are immensely useful for the insight they can offer to any further study on the poet's early works. In our study we will use it for the assessment of the poet's adherence to the poetic tradition on which she relied heavily for the thematic contexts and which she used as a touchstone for compositional aspects of her writing.

A close look at these early poems can establish it well that the quest for an emotional liaison with a beloved worthy of her affections is the dominant focus of these poems. There are, of course, varied treatment of this leitmotif in the poems, for instance, "from the first thrill of meeting, to a deepening love contending with hatred, and eventually to violent destructive passion or total indifference"\(^{12}\), but everywhere her vision is vitally particularized by a
A woman's point of view "who is either unloved or has lost her lover". She is attracted towards love regardless of any suffering it may incidentally cause. As Korney Chukovsky, focusing on her concern as well as effects of her love poetry over her readers, has written:

She was the first to show through poetry what it means to be unloved and loved and, having grown fond of this subject, created a whole line of sufferers, unrequited lovers, and the deathly melancholics, who either "wander like lost souls", or fall ill out of sadness, or else hang or drown themselves.

Chukovsky has not exaggerated here at all. A study of the different perspectives of the love-motif in her early poetry makes his observation authentic. The overall supremacy as well as the strength of love may be seen as the primary motif of these love poems. She knows that love can make anyone its victim and is alluring even as it frightens:

It knows how to sob so sweetly
In the prayer of a melancholy violin,
And it's terrifying to guess its presence
In a still unfamiliar smile. (Love, Liubov, 1911, Evening)

There are again poems, such as the one quoted below, which successfully bring it out that this bitter-sweet sadness of love was certainly a source of enjoyment for the poet's heroine:

The sun fills my room,
Yellow dust drifts aslant.
I wake up and remember:
This is your saint's day.
That's why even the snow
Outside my window is warm,
Why I, sleepless, have slept
Like a communicant. (8 November, 1913, Rosary)

Such moments of elation, however, do not exist in the present. They have been supplemented by moments of despair and alienation resulting mainly out of the tragic breakdown of a relationship or the separation of the two parties for reasons beyond their control. The overwhelming realization of love lost is the only reality now. But there are poems that reveal that the heroine still relishes the memory of those past moments of elation:

Because we stood together
That blessed miraculous moment
When over the Summer Gardens
The rose-coloured moon appeared—

(Because We Stood Together, 1913, Evening)

However, the pathos of the moment of parting or the tragic realization that her love is doomed has been the burden of her soul in most of her early poems. For example:

I wrung my hands under my dark veil...
"Why are you pale, what makes you reckless?"
—Because I have made my loved one drunk
with an astringent sadness.

(I Wrung My Hands under My Dark Veil, 1911, Evening)

Here, love has been seen mainly as a source of pain and the poetic persona has no other way than to accept it all without any cry or complain. In The Pillow Hot (1909, Evening), the second candle of the night dies silently, but she is still restless, it is too late for her "to dream of sleep": without the lost prince,
life for her is a “cursed hell” (White Night, 1911, Evening). She accuses fate with the charge of separating her from her tsarevich:

Change has made me weary,
Fate has cheated me of everything.

(Song of the Last Meeting, 1911, Evening)

The days of childhood innocence are also over now and being totally cut off from the beloved, she now feels cold. What she can do now is only to plead in the following manner:

no, just let me warm myself by the fire!

(The Boy Who Plays the Bagpipes, 1911, Evening)

There is no consolation even in death, for the girl searching for place for her grave is warned by the monks that

Paradise is not for you, not for the sinners.

(I won't Beg for Your Love, 1914, Rosary)

This note of almost relentless lamentation in Akhmatova’s poetry has been stressed by Peter France in his study of Akhmatova’s poetry. Referring to her first collection, Evening, France states that the title itself establishes a tonality to the experiences of separation or loss which the poems represent. Comparing her with Pasternak, he observes that Akhmatova is, neither literally nor figuratively, a poet of the morning. “Where Pasternak’s world, for instance, is freshly and enthusiastically seen, washed clean by rain, hers is more often a place for lament and memory.” Highlighting Akhmatova’s deep concern with the theme of pain in love, Chukovsky also rightly observes that, “Of all the torments of deprivation, she set her heart especially on one: the torment of hopeless love. I love, but am not loved; I am loved, but love...
not--- this is highly descriptive of her work of the period. In this area there is no one who can be compared with her.”

While complications of infidelity are hinted at in some poems, as in *The Grey-Eyed King* (1910, Evening), a very subtle suggestion of betrayal may be seen in *Because Your Lips are Yours* (1910, Evening). In *Today They Brought No Letter for Me* (Evening), the sufferings of the heroine abandoned by her lover have been translated in concrete terms. The poem contrasts a past where the heroine both loved and was loved in return with a present in which the lyric hero has forsaken her:

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Today they brought no letter for me:
He forgot to write or may be went away;
Spring like a trill of silver laughter,
In the bay the ships rock.
Today they brought no letter for me...
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He was with me such a short time ago,
So in love, tender, mine,
But that was in white winter,
Now it's spring, and spring's melancholy is poison,
He was with me such a short time ago.
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(*Today They Brought No Letter for Me, Evening*)

There are, however, many hints to ascertain it that her failure to get long-time contentment in love is ingrained firmly in her own psyche. Paradoxically, it is often the heroine herself who pulls back from final commitment: her overpowering need to love and to be loved is matched by an inability to accept the partial surrender of will that this implies. Of course, the heroine feels herself guilty of it. The theme of guilt, for instance, is exploited in the
poem where the heroine is haunted by a nighttime voice that accuses her of treating her love affair as a game and living a lie:

Oh, you didn’t laugh in vain,
My unforgiven lie! (1913, Rosary)

All these exploitations of the varied love-motifs, thus, reveal Akhmatova’s brilliant capacity to exploit all the matter-of-fact psychological realities of the love experiences. Akhmatova here is speaking of love not on an imaginary plane; instead, it is this very physical world, and the lover as well as his beloved is real human beings, not phantoms. It is the poetic persona who again invites the reader’s attention almost directly to herself. Again and again the poetic persona resorts to “I” and “my”, and “mine”, and this insistence on the lyric “I” gives to these poems the impression of an intimate diary and more particularly a confession. Indeed, pointing out to her projection of the experiences of love in all its recurring phases—meeting and separation, distance and absence, desire and longing, jealousy and remorse—critics have insisted on “an elusive story-line” in these early works. It is true that the original architectonics of these early collections, especially that of Evening in particular, provide almost a definite story-line in them. But the arrangements of the poems in the later editions undoubtedly obscured that plot. Yet attempts have been made to put the individual poems into groups, thereby forming explicit cycles which may expose thematic unity in them and help the critics in interpreting them better. Akhmatova’s association with poetic cycles may, however, be perceived only in her later career, but Sam N driver’s study has already shown that such cycles are clearly present since her Evening. Such attempts, though not always helpful in the evaluation of individual poems written at different places and times, can make clear the
potentialities of a novelist within Akhmatova. Like a true novelist, she is seen to open up the pages of her love story one after another.

It will, however, be wrong to assume in these early poems the presence of one and only image of an ever-sad heroine weeping bitterly and passing her days and nights amidst stinging torment and inconsolable grief. It is true that the sad, gloomy mood dominates the majority of the poems, yet there are poems where sadness and despair mingle with a strong note of hope and aspiration. This note of hope arises out of the inherent strength to survive abandonment or loss: it arises, as Amanda Haight puts it, also out of “the understanding of the illusory nature of partings, of the way love can transcend time and space.” In *Evening* (1912), we have the poem *The Door is Half-open* (1911) where there are the following three stanzas that illustrate such understandings on the part of the heroine:

The lamp casts a yellow circle...
I listen to the rustling.
Why did you go?
I don’t understand...

Tomorrow the morning
Will be clear and happy.
This life is beautiful,
Heart, be wise;

You are utterly tired,
You beat calmer, duller...
You know, I read
That souls are immortal.

(*The Door is Half-open, 1911, Evening*)
In the second collection, *Rosary* (1914), the theme of survival at the face of all odds finds more forceful expression than in *Evening* (1912). The realization of immorality of the soul, for instance, marks a new development in the persona's consciousness. She can now underline her sadness as something useless and ask her lover, "You aren't going to hurt me again like last time, are you?" (*You aren't Going to Hurt Me Again*, 1914, *Rosary*) or demand of him—"Don't come crawling like a whelp/Into my bed of loneliness" (*I won't Beg for Your Love*, 1914, *Rosary*). Her voice is the voice of resolve and affirmation:

> And I'll stand—God help me! - on this ice,  
> However light and brittle it is,  
> And you... take care of our letters,  
> That our descendants not misjudge us.

*(So Many Requests, Always, from a Lover, 1913, Rosary)*

She discards the lover who knows only the physical aspects of love:

> He said: 'I am your faithful lover'  
> And touched my dress.  
> How unlike an embrace  
> Is the touch of those hands.

> That's how one strokes a cat or bird,  
> Or looks at slender horsewomen.  
> There's only laughter in his quite eyes  
> Beneath the light golden lashes.

*(In the Evening, 1913, Rosary)*

The complaint against the lover is here expressed in ironical overtones. In comparison to Akhmatova, Kamala Das, the distinguished Indian-English poet, however, is more bitter and direct in this respect. A close look at the
poetry of Kamala Das makes it clear that as a poet, she is almost exclusively concerned with the personal experiences of love in her poetry. Here she clearly resembles the early Akhmatova, but there are striking differences in their treatment of this theme. Of course, there were many Indian English poets before her exploring personal experiences of love in their poetry, but Kamala Das' treatment must be recognized as something bold, original, and concentrated. Women's social unrest in respect of education and career, sexual desire and frustration, suffocation of a caged loveless marriage, numerous affairs, the futility of lust, the shame and sorrow of not finding love after repeated attempts, the loneliness and neurosis that stalks women especially and such other things which were not spoken of candidly are powerfully dealt with for the first time in her poetry. Unlike Akhmatova's, the explorations of the psychic striptease of Kamala's poetry reflect her restlessness as a sensitive woman moving in the male-dominated society, and in them she appears as a champion of woman's cause. Poem after poem she hammers hard at the patriarchal structure of the society she belongs to and as such, she has more to say about the pathos of the female gender emerging from a passive role to the point of discovering and asserting her individual liberty and identity. More often she concentrates on sexual love, and her woman-persona rises as though in a mood of revolt. The love poems of Kamala Das, therefore, usually breathe an air of nonconformity and urgency. This air of nonconformity, as may be seen in the following excerpt from Kamala Das, is significantly absent in the love poems of Akhmatova:

    Of late I have begun to feel a hunger
    To take in with greed, like a forest-fire that
    Consumes, and, with each killing gains a wilder,
    Brighter charm, all that comes my way.
My eyes lick at you like flames, my nerves
Consume; and, when I finish with you, in the
Pram, near the tree and, on the park bench, I spit
Out small heaps of ash, nothing else.

(Forest Fire, 1965, Summer in Calcutta)

Akhmatova’s confessional mode has not been characterized by such nonconformity. In this poem, Kamala Das frankly speaks of the female sexual desire, which too is thought of, like everything else in the universe, as something under the control of the male. She openly declares her revolt against such tendencies, as the last lines of the poem speak of the poet’s thought of paying the male the price he deserves for such attitudes. In the poetry of Kamala Das, thus, often there is the rising voice of depression, frustration, and anger against any control or restriction imposed on her. As the beloved, her psyche, for instance, is persistently loaded with the bitter realization of the lover’s inability to offer spiritual fulfillment in spite of fulfillment on the bodily level. She has compared the lover to a fish coming up for fresh air and diving deep when the need is over:

He came to me between
Long conferences, a fish coming up
For air, and was warm in my arms
And inarticulate........

(The Invitation, 1967, The Descendants)

Akhmatova’s confessional mode in this respect is not so imposing like that of Kamala Das. Even when her heroine complains, she is seen being accompanied by her womanly postures and restraints. It is, hence, not possible for her to describe her lover as a fish, or to compare the lover’s kisses
to an insect’s bite. Akhmatova can only recognize the demonic power of the lover who has made her powerless:

And he kept his eyes’ dull gaze
On my ring
Not one muscle moved
On his enlightened evil face.

Oh I know: it is his pleasure
To know intensely, passionately,
That he needs nothing,
That I can deny him nothing.

(The Guest, 1914, Rosary)

Obviously she is trapped by her own weaknesses, but at last she becomes able to cry in defense in the following manner:

You are cunning and evil,
You are quite without shame.
He is quiet, tender and submissive,
In love with me forever.

(In Love, 1914, Rosary)

The one who is quiet, tender and submissive is the lost prince, the tsarevich. Life without the lost prince is death-like for her, but poetry comes to embrace her as the exclusive medium for the cathartic release of unbearable sorrow and pain. Poetry responds to the vital need of the poetic persona to come to terms with it which otherwise threatens to collapse under the complex tensions generated by the peculiar experience. The possibility of a relationship outside the framework of love and rejection, a creative relationship with her sister, the Muse was only suggested in Evening, in Rosary, it has been confirmed as the solution to overwhelming pain and grief, as may be seen in the following lines from I Taught Myself to Live Simply and Wisely (1912):
I write down happy verses
About life's decay, decay and beauty.

(I Taught Myself to Live Simply and Wisely, 1912, Rosary)

She is now so engaged with poetry that even if her lover now knocks at the door, she may not hear it:

Only the cry of a stork landing on the roof
Occasionally breaks the silence.
If you knock on my door
I may not even hear.

(I Taught Myself to Live Simply and Wisely, 1912, Rosary)

It is the intimate nature of these amatory themes that places the reader in the role of a confidant to the rejoicing or sadness of the poetic persona in these poems. The reader as a confidant can deserve some mention here. To the reader, the poet and the poetic persona in Kamala Das are identical or almost indistinguishable from one another: it is because she is not seen to take the help of any guise that can give an expression to her intensely personal experiences. In other words, poetry and autobiography have become one in Kamala Das. In Akhmatova, however, the reader is led to accept the various guises or images taken up by the poet for expressing herself as well as her intimate emotions. In her Evening (1912) alone, it is possible to find out so many guises of the poetic persona: the sensitive upper-class young woman, a water nymph, a tightrope walker, a peasant woman, and so on. A high degree of biographical impetus is clear in her early poems, but "it is dangerous to posit the self-identification of the poet and her subject, if only because of the different aesthetic purposes of poetry and biography." The different poetic personas, therefore, should not be assimilated with the different parts of the
poet; instead, they should be seen as deliberate romanticizations on the part of the poet herself. In all her early poetry she chose “heroines who can reflect a part of her own personality and set it in a larger context, freeing her experience from the purely private.”

Stylistic features of this kind, thus, helped Akhmatova in extending the meaning of her work beyond the confines of individual poems. This, however, is to be judged in relation to the fact that she was writing against the background of the Symbolist movement. In *Something about Myself* (1965), she recognizes herself as an Acmeist, who, along with her colleagues, sincerely waged war against Symbolism of the day. In order to fight the general temperament of despair at the advent of the First World War and Bolshevik revolution, the Symbolists were then using poetry as a vehicle for mystical or otherworldly experiences. The Acmeists differentiated between the poet and the mystic, theologian or philosopher, refusing to identify the function of poetry with means to transcendence or description of the mystical experience. Unlike her colleagues, Gumilev, Mandelstam, or Gorodetsky, Akhmatova did not prepare anything like manifestoes or critical essays in defence of their Acmeist ideals, but her poetry well illustrate the entire acmeist ideals cherished by her colleagues in their manifestoes or essays. The subject matter of her early poetry, as it has been discussed, for instance, brings to us the familiar world of experiences stressed by Gorodetsky in his manifesto, which differentiates, in very precise terms, between Acmeism and Symbolism:

What is basically in question in determining the differences between Acmeism and Symbolism is our resounding and colourful world: This world made of time, volume and form, this planet—the earth. By filling the world with "correspondences", Symbolism essentially transformed it into a phantom whose importance is determined only by the degree to which other
worlds are visible through its translucencies. Symbolism depreciated its great intrinsic worth. For the Acmeists, a rose has again become beautiful in itself, for its petals, fragrance, and colour, and not for its purported likeness to mystical love or something else. Not only is a rose an object of beauty, but so is any earthly phenomenon, even something deformed.25

A beautiful woman, for Akhmatova, is, hence, is not what Vladimir Solovev, the leading Symbolist poet, thought her to be--the manifestation of the 'Eternal Feminine' who is ideal, alluring and distant. Nor is she, as found in Blok's Poems on the Beautiful Lady (1904), a phantasm the poet carries within. In Akhmatova, a woman is a woman made of flesh and blood, who has to go through unhappy encounters, confusion, suffering, jealousy, silences, sleeplessness, quarrels, and even lack of communication. Torment of love resulting out of desperation after a break and yearning for love is as natural to the woman in Akhmatova as it is to any ordinary woman. Her feelings of embarrassment during the last meeting with her lover, as expressed in the following lines, illustrate well the exact naturalness of this earthly woman in Akhmatova:

How helplessly my breast grew cold
But my steps were light
I put on to my right hand
My left-hand glove.

(Song of the Last Meeting, 1911, Evening)

Exact exploration of essentially earthly experience here becomes the strength of the poet. This type of lyrical commitment to express such emotional experiences is reminiscent of Innokenty Annensky who was hailed as the most influential poet by all the Acmeists. It was Annensky who in has On Contemporary Lyricism (1910), called for discussions of poetry from an
aesthetic rather than a philosophical or ideological perspective, and recognised the failure of the Symbolist movement to continue to be "daring" in facing the world's "baseness and torments". Reviewing Annensky's *Cypress Chest* (1910), Gumilev acknowledged him as his mentor and model. He defined Annensky's aesthetic goal as "the precise embodiment of emotional experience" and showed that it was a far cry from the Symbolist Ivanov's mystical view of poetry as the instrument for attaining true reality. Annensky, of course, proved to be "the only avowed modern influence" over the upcoming Akhmatova. Going through his impressively down to earth poems in *Cypress Chest*, the proof copy of which she happened to read accidentally—Akhmatova suddenly found the way how to react against the other-worldly Symbolists of the period. It was, of course, realising in poetic form Gumilev's assessment of Annensky's aesthetic goal as a poet: the precise embodiment of emotional experience. The precise embodiment of experiences, as may be seen in the following poem, *Poppies* (1909), by Annensky,

The gay day flames. The grass is still.  
Like greedy impotence, poppies rise,  
Like lips that lust and poison fill,  
Like wings of scarlet butterflies.  

The gay day flames... The garden now  
Is empty. Lust and feast are done.  
Like heads of hags, the poppies bow  
Beneath the bright cup of the sun.  

*Poppies* (1909)

has been the dominating feature of most of Akhmatova's poems. The matter-of-fact emotional details of the love drama in her poetry may undoubtedly be alluded to such influences over her.
For precise and authentic expression of the emotions and experiences, Akhmatova, as an Acmeist, however, is seen to avoid the use of highly rhetorical or overtly poetic language in her poetry. Her language is set in firm contrast to the suggestive language of the Symbolists. The repelling metaphors and drastic words of the Symbolist poet, Zinaida Gippius, for instance, have no place in Akhmatova. A study of Gippius' poems confirms that the central fable of her poetry was "the ordeal of the spirit in its attempt to break away from the jail of reality and to fly heavenward." In comparison to Gippius' suggestive language, Akhmatova's language is the language of this real, physical world—her metaphors and imagery are all those drawn from this world of living existence. It was Mandelstam who in his Acmeist manifesto perceived the function of poetry as the actualization of the human experience in all its perfection, vitality and complexity. The means to this end, he indicated, are in the precision of details as opposed to the suggestive language expounded by the Symbolists. Akhmatova, in her poems, is seen to share Mandelstam's views in regard to the conversational, colloquial language she chooses as the vehicle for her innermost feelings:

I notice everything freshly.
The poplars smell of wetness.
I am silent. Without words
I am ready to become you again, earth.

(I Came Here in Idleness, 1911, Evening)

In I have Come to Take Your Place, Sister (1912, Rosary), dialogue has been used to heighten the drama of the encounter:

_ 'You've come to put me in the grave.
Where is your shovel and your spade?
You're carrying just a flute.}
I'm not going to blame you,
Sadly a long time ago
My voice fell mute.

(I have Come to Take Your Place, Sister, 1912, Rosary)

Here, the straightforward expression of feeling has been combined with simplicity of syntax and everyday vocabulary has been used to amplify the impression that the reader is being addressed by an intimate companion. The use of metrical schemes based on the dol'nik and the relative unobtrusiveness of Akhmatova's rhymes work to similar effect. Indeed, this language, as it may be seen, is characterized by clarity and distinctiveness of the word. Each word is precise and projected with great care so that it might attain in her lyrical poetry the beauty and appeal of the fine classical style. In this context may be cited Gumilev's paraphrase of Oscar Wilde's evaluation of "the word" as the most universal aesthetic medium; Gumilev paraphrased it in order to establish the main tenets of Acmeism:

The material used by musicians and artists is poor in comparison to the word. The word contains not only music, tender music like that of the alto or lute; not only colour, vivid and luxurious like those which enchant us on Venetian and Spanish canvases; not only plastic forms, more lucid and distinct than those revealed to us in marble or bronze—those which contain thought and passion and spirituality. Words contain all these qualities. Such straightforward expression of feeling, however, is often juxtaposed by concrete details of time and place. Details of appropriate time and place often heighten the heroine's emotional drama while they also highlight the Acmeist ideal of clarity and specificity against the Symbolic love for mysticism. In We're All Drunkards Here, and Harlots (1913, Rosary), the concrete reality is the Stray Dog Café, the famous St Petersburg night club frequented by artists and
poets of the period. The poem dramatizes the pain of jealousy and desire among the assembled artists and poets at the advent of the New Year, 1913. In the following poem the days of the month of November has specifically been pointed out in the context of the heroine’s memories of love and its decay:

Do you forgive me these November days?
In canals around the Neva fires fragment,
Scant is tragic autumn’s finery.

(Do You Forgive Me These November Days?, 1913, November, Rosary)

Sometimes there are exact statements of time or even date, as in the poem dedicated to Alexander Blok:

But I remember our talk,
Smoky noon of a Sunday,
In the poet’s high grey house
By the sea-gates of the Neva.

(For Alexander Blok, 1914, Rosary)

Apart from these, often there are references to the heroine’s surroundings or attire too. In Evening Room (Evening), we find “the room where the light strikes through slits” and also ‘a bed, with a French inscription over it.”, while in some poems we find such references to things like drawing-room candles, pillows, fans, and so on. Occasionally the heroine is seen to specify her dress too:

I wear my skirt tight
To my slim thighs.

(We’re All Drunkards Here and Harlots, 1913, Rosary)

These concrete references to place and time are, however, never mere passive ornaments or backdrops in Akhmatova, they rather constitute “a dynamic
element in her transformation of the particulars of her life into the composite legend of a Petersburg heroine which emerges from the mosaic of individual poems." Of course, the informal mode of language, which often approaches prose narration, prompts the reader to speculate interestingly in this regard. Chukovsky's comment that in her early work "hints, barely audible and microscopic details dominate", thus, does not hold good in case of her early poetry. Her poetry is the poetry of hints in so far as it withholds much of the important information that alludes to the private world of the 'I' in these poems.

The reverence for concrete details can, however, illustrate it well that like Mandelstam, Akhmatova also deliberately accepted the celebration of existence as the principal function of the Acmeist poet. The details of time, place and attire which highlight the emotional encounters in the poems merely speak again and again for Akhmatova's interest in expressing the delights of existence itself. It is not strange that what Mandelstam wrote in his Acmeist manifesto is all shared by Akhmatova's poems:

The Acmeist poet's function is to recognize the existence of the phenomena of this earth and to reveal their physical and metaphysical beauty to his fellowmen so that they, in turn, may celebrate their existence.35

Being rooted in this earth, there is no place in Akhmatova for any kind of eventual spiritual ascension of mankind or of mystical epiphanies. Nor did she regard poetry, as Mayakovsky did, as something bearing no relation to its ancestors. As a poet who has deliberately rejected the suggestiveness and mysticism of symbolism, Akhmatova looked back to her ancestors for the intended poetic strength and power. In his comparative study on
Mayakovsky and Akhmatova, Korney Chukovsky has highlighted this very particular trait in Akhmatova:

She possesses that intellectual refinement and charm that are given to those who participate in a long cultural tradition.36

It may be cited that in A Brief Word about Myself (1965), Akhmatova herself speaks of her familiarity with the rich poetic tradition of her country, still when she was very young:

I wrote my first poem when I was eleven. For me, poetry began not with Pushkin and Lermontov, but with Derzhavin ('On the Birth of a Boy to the Royal Purple') and Nekrasov ('Red-Nose Frost'). My mother knew these things by heart.37

She is, of course, emotional with these legendary poets of her country and endearingly thinks Russian Poetry still at a very tender age:

And I am sure that we still are not fully aware of what a magical choir of poets we possess, that the Russian language is young and supple, that we have only been writing poetry for a very short time as yet, that we love it and believe in it.38

Indeed, she did not miss it out that at the advent of the Bolshevik Revolution, the Symbolists were infusing into the image of the poet the image of the prophet who were capable of epiphanies or prophesies. In what way the secular image of the poet was shattered by the jolt of Symbolism, may be realized from the following statements about two great Symbolists of the period, Blok and Bely:

Both Blok and Bely began to romanticize the destiny of the nation, which they perceived as a mystical entity. The political disappointments of the times touched off metaphysical disillusionments in them. Henceforth Russian
symbolism ceased to be a completely cosmopolitan movement; however wide its cultural perspectives, Russian symbolism was more or less preoccupied with the national character and fate.\textsuperscript{39} 

Akhmatova set her resentment against this and emphasized on continuity and tradition. For "one can not launch a new history—the idea is altogether unthinkable; there would not be continuity and tradition. Tradition cannot be contrived or learned. In its absence one has at the best, not history, but 'progress'—the mechanical movement of a clock hand, not the sacred succession of interlinked events."\textsuperscript{40} 

Akhmatova, by her adherence to the poets of the past, may be seen trying just to oppose such 'progress'\textsuperscript{41}. She came out to defend the secular image of the poet as one engaged in making the past, present and future a single, indivisible thread to withstand any ravages that might threaten it. It does not, therefore, sound strange at all that many chief devours from the tradition, both oral and literary, provided Akhmatova with a rich store of both themes and techniques.

As far as her poetry of the early period is concerned, in many poems Akhmatova may be seen adopting the topos of the folk tradition in order to underline the themes of betrayal and rejection. The heroine, who feels betrayed and rejected and yet waits for the beloved, is identified with specific characters from the folk-tale tradition. In \textit{I don't Need My Legs Anymore} (1913, Rosary), she becomes a mermaid and swims off in freedom while her companion stands pale, by the shore. In \textit{Nobody Came to Meet Me with a Lantern} (1913, Rosary), she is Cinderella at the moment she has returned secretly from the prince’s hall leaving her slipper behind:

And there he was, under
the green lamp, and
With a corpse's smile
he whispered, 'Your voice
Is strange, Cinderella...

(Nobody Came to Meet Me with a Lantern, 1913, Rosary)

She tries to hide the three carnations he has given her, and is waiting for him to seek her out with a fusion of yearning and nervousness.

The lyric hero, on the other hand, for whom the heroine is waiting becomes identified with the folkloric tsarevich or prince. In Believe Me, It is not the Sharp Sting of a Snake (1914, Rosary), for example, the heroine is excluded from the castle where the tsarevich lives for reasons that are not explained, but continues to live only in her love for him. In The Grey-Eyed King (1910, Evening), the heroine is shown to be secretly in love with her king though married to somebody else. White Night (1911, Evening) presents a more delicate situation, in which the heroine expects the arrival of the prince, though she knows,

That life is a cursed hell

(White Night, 1911, Evening)

In these poems the heroine often ascribes to her magical powers:

My magic tries to make the tsarevich dream of me
But my spells are powerless

(Believe Me, It is not the Sharp Sting of a Snake, 1914, Rosary)

The motif of the magic ring that will give her power over her beloved occurs in Tale of the Black Ring (1912, Evening), where the ring given to the heroine by her pagan grand-mother accords her the power to make anyone she prefers fall in love with her.
In his brilliant study on the Russian folktales, Vladimir Propp, the outstanding Russian formalist, may be seen defining these motifs in terms of their function, that is, in terms of what the dramatic personae do. Propp states the number of these functions obligatory for the folk tale and classifies them according to their significance and position in the course of the narrative. The motif of the black ring in *Tale of the Black Ring* (1912, Evening), as it has been seen, is thus to accord the heroine magic power, and nothing else. Similarly, some other folkloric motifs such as the dragon that keeps the heroine in thrall also occur in Akhmatova's poetry based on folk tales.

Besides these, adaptation of different forms of folk poetry may also be seen in Akhmatova. It is possible to see her poetry imitating such folk genres as lament, lullaby and song. The pain and anguish of separation as reflected in the following lines, for instance,

> The lamp casts a yellow circle...
> I listen to the rustling.
> Why did you go?
> I don’t understand...  
*The Door is Half-Open, 1911, Evening* 

is reminiscent of the same motif found in the famous traditional song *Along the Petersburg Road* consisting of several chastushkas. *Chastushka* is a type of traditional Russian poetry which had its origins in simple and repetitive rhythmic peasant songs and is very simple in structure, usually consisting of four-line stanzas that are repetitively sung at a rapid tempo. In *Along the Petersburg Road*, the folk character, Dunya has good reasons to be grieved about her darling who drives his troika, which always has a little bell to keep the horses running, right to the *Tverskoi-Yamskoi Quarter*, which was an ill-reputed quarter of Moscow in the times of the Russian Empire.
Along the Petersburg Road,
along the small lane
to the Tverskoi-Yamskoi Quarter
with a little bell

He writes to his dear one,
to me, a note,
a small note to me,
a sad message:

"Don't sit, Dunya,
so long in the evening,
and don't burn the candles
of the clear wax!

Don't you burn the candles
of the clear wax –
and don't wait any longer
for your darling!"

The words of a total and frank devotion to love of the following chastushka

Dark eyes, passionate eyes,
burning and so beautiful eyes –
how I am in love with you, how I am afraid of you!
Since I saw you I have had no good time.

may again be seen in many poems, as is seen in the following frank confession:

He was with me such a short time ago,
So in love, tender, mine,
But that was in white winter,
Now it's spring, and spring's melancholy is poison,
He was with me such a short time ago.
In *The Door is Half-Open* (1911, Evening), for instance, the lullaby has been used, as may be seen in the following excerpt from the poem:

Tomorrow the morning
will be clear and happy.
This life is beautiful,
heart, be wise.  *(The Door is Half-Open, 1911, Evening)*

Of course, it is evocative of one Cossack lullaby, *Sleep, Good Boy, My Beautiful*, which movingly composes the dear affection and the alarming presentiments of the mother -

Sleep, good boy, my beautiful,
*bayushki bayu*,
quietly the moon is looking
into your cradle.

I will tell you fairy tales
and sing you little songs,
but you must slumber, with your little eyes closed,
*bayushki bayu*... etc.

In poems like *The Grey-Eyed King* (1910, Evening) again, the ballad tradition has been imitated quite consciously. The ballads, known as the *byliny* in Russian, were oral heroic poems celebrating the adventures and feats of renowned heroes. They were originally performed in courts and then they were transmitted to the public through the bands of singers or minstrels. The extremely melodic trait, the use of repetitions and refrains, the recurrent fixed epithets are the dominant characteristics of the *byliny*. The *byliny* were most popular during the medieval period and hence, it is evident that they exerted
significant influence on the texture of the Russian poetry of the succeeding centuries. References to these byliny are often available, mostly in the form of allusions drawn either “nostalgically or ironically”.46 The lyrical spontaneity and sincerity of tone, the lore of imagery drawn from the world of Nature and the familiar world in Akhmatova’s *The Grey-Eyed King* (1910, Evening) are all folkloric by nature. The rustle of the poplars outside the window, the stifling and crimson autumn night and the old oak near where the body of the grey-eyed king was found are the references in the poem that make clear Akhmatova’s direct association with the ballad tradition. Besides, the following lines which, through exaggeration characteristic of the ballad tradition, express the intensity of the queen’s grief at the demise of the king are also significant:

> Poor queen. He was so young!
> In one night she turned grey.

*The Grey-Eyed King, 1910, Evening*

David N Wells finds in the poem, *I have Come to Take Your Place, Sister* (1912, Rosary) the combination of the “folkloric couplet with more literary six and four line stanzas”47. The conversational structure of the poem is certainly reminiscent of ballad structure, as may be seen in many folk ballads belonging to the medieval period. Apart from these, patterns of repetition characteristic of folk poetry are also used extensively by Akhmatova, as may be seen in the following:

> Give her my poems to read in bed,
> Give her my portraits to keep—it’s wise to
> Be kind like that when newly-wed

*I won’t Beg for Your Love, 1914, Rosary*
Let the last leaves rustle!
Let the last thoughts languish!

(I have Written Down the Words, year not mentioned, Evening)

And she was like a white flag,
And she was like the light of a beacon.

(I have Come to Take..., 1912, Rosary)

The preponderance of lines beginning with the conjunctions like “and” or “but”, as seen in the last example, also relates Akhmatova's verses to the monumental style of Russian folk poetry.

Akhmatova’s use of religious motifs and colour imagery is also close to that found in folklore. Often in the pattern of folk materials, Akhmatova's religious motifs are also seen laced with superstition and vestiges of paganism such as the willow, tree of water nymphs in the following:

Willow, tree of the water nymphs,
Do not bar my way!
In the shadowy twigs black jackdaws,
Black jackdaws shelter.

(I Know, I Know, Again the Skies, 1913, Rosary)

Akhmatova’s treatment of the figure of the Muse in her early poems, again, is another linkage to the folkloric tradition. In any folk epic or narrative poem, the presence of the Muse or the poet’s earnest prayer for it for strength and inspiration may be seen as a common feature. Traditionally, the Muses have a number of particular attributes closely associated with them. One of these is the laurel leaves. Another is the lyre, a stringed musical instrument believed to have been invented by Hermes, who made it out of a tortoise shell and nine linen cords. Hermes presented Apollo with the instrument and
through him it became associated with the Muses. Some sources say that a shepherd's pipe was also given to Apollo along with the lyre; this pipe, or musical reed, figures prominently in Akhmatova's Muse mythology. The lyre is also associated with the poet Orpheus, who was taught by the Muses to play the lyre. In Akhmatova's poems, it is during the absence of the heroine's lovers that the Muse appears: as his substitute, as a reflection of the poet, as an emotional care giver, or as a source of escape. Whatever mask she wears or role she plays, her poet can always identify with her because of their shared gender. *Evening* presents the Muse's first appearance as a barefooted girl weeping by a fence as the heroine weeds. In *To the Muse* (1911, Evening), the Muse comes to the girl abandoned by her lover and takes back the gift of song or the golden ring from her. In later poems about the Muse, in which the folkloric coloration is generally lost, she remains in a sense the heroine's sister, an intimate companion on whom she is dependent.

Besides these different folkloric materials, Akhmatova may be seen extending the applicability of her lyric situations by reference to other works of literature through allusions or quotations. The past writers are not dead for Akhmatova; instead, she can find it out that all those writers of the past have created a distinct tradition of which she herself is a part, both integral and inseparable. The following poem may be cited for illustration:

A swarthy youth rambled
By the forlorn lakeshore.
A century passes, and we hear
His crackle on the path.

   Pine needles, thick, thorny,
Bury the stumps of the trees...
Here lay his tricorn hat,
This poem can make the importance of the literary tradition for Akhmatova clear. Here Akhmatova is recounting the young Pushkin in the park at Tsarskoe Selo. It is true he has not been named directly, but the references such as the subject's swarthy, murky complexion as well as the dress and literary fashions of the period easily help us to find it out that the subject is none other than Pushkin. For Akhmatova the poetic past manifests itself clearly in the present. The link between present and past is conveyed not only by the statement *A century passes, and we hear /His crackle on the path* (Pushkin, 1911, Evening), but also by the juxtaposition of past and present tenses in each of the two quartrains of the poem. In each case a statement about the present day is linked with a statement about the time of Pushkin. This binding up of the two time frames closely together can undoubtedly be revelatory of Ahmatova's reverence for the precious poetic tradition of her country.

Of course, in many of her poems, Akhmatova may be seen to draw on specific works by Pushkin either as models or in order to offer her own treatment of particular themes that the earlier poet had addressed. The *Tale of the Black Ring* (1912, Evening), for example, may be seen inspired by Pushkin's poems *Preserve Me, My Talisman* and *Talisman*, which describe the powers of a magical object to protect its owner against love.48

Akhmatova's close association with Pushkin indeed continued to the end of her career. During the first of her long periods of isolation and persecution in the 1930s, it was Pushkin who helped to survive her. But apart from Pushkin, the works of the early Akhmatova display her association also with some other important writers and their works. Stanley Kunitz and Max
Hayward refer to the occasional mannerisms in *Evening*, such as "ermine mantle" in the lines "But may those words stream like an ermine mantle/Behind him for ten thousand years" (*Reading Hamlet*, 1909, *Evening*), and they suggest the influence of Mikhail Kuzmin in them. It was Kuzmin who "drove home the point that art doesn’t have to be heavy to be important"⁴⁹; he himself freely borrowed from all poetic sources and influenced all the Acmeists by his advocacy of earthliness and clarity along with casualty of word structures in his poems. The very title of another early poem *Imitation of Annensky* (*Evening*), on the other hand, makes the debt to Innokenti Annensky clear. The poem has in it textual allusions to Annensky’s work in that the melancholy of the scene in which a male hero reflects on the disappointing ending of a romantic episode is broadly similar to the situations in several of Annensky’s poems. However, as Catriona Kelly has shown⁵⁰, Akhmatova deliberately avoids the Symbolist rhetoric and high style of Annensky, preferring to highlight the devastating sense of loss by the use of extreme prosaic imagery and dialogue, as the following lines may illustrate:

> O, the heart is not made of stone  
> As I said, it’s made of flame...  
> I'll never understand it, are you close  
> To me, or did you simply love me?  

* (Imitation of Annensky, *Evening*)

The 1909 poem *Reading Hamlet* is, again, a dramatization of a particular situation in Shakespeare’s famous drama, but Akhmatova projects it on to the concerns of her own poetry. It is written from the point of view of Ophelia, but in Akhmatova’s own idiom of emotional disappointment.

You said to me, ‘Well now go into a convent,
Or marry a fool ...  
Princes always speak like this,  
But I remembered these words.  

(Reading Hamlet, 1909, Evening)

In later poems of Akhmatova’s early period this type of transformation of the plot of another literary work is unusual, but Akhmatova was to use this technique with great effect in some key poems of her second period.

Apart from literature and folklore, critics and scholars have noted the influence of Art Nouveau in Akhmatova’s early poetry, particularly in its mood of languorous enhancement, and in the way that essential details are registered with a few subtle strokes. Not only the architecture of St Petersburg feature prominently in her poetry, there are also references to specific sculptures and paintings. This interest in art and architecture played a major role in shaping her poetry, enabling her to reconstitute the body and texture of particular things. It also helped her in acquiring a precious sense of place and circumstances, and a concern for immediate surroundings, as may be seen in the following lines from the poem dedicated to the famous Russian actress, O. A. Glebova Sudeikina:

What do you see on the wall, your eyes screwed up  
When in the sky the sunset’s burning late?  

Do you see a seagull on the water’s blue  
Cloth, or gardens by the Arno?  

Or the great lake of Tsarskoye Selo  
Where terror stepped in front of you?  

(The Voice of Memory, 1913, Rosary)
All this was in tune with the art of austerity and logicality of her predecessors such as Pushkin or Baratansky, and hence stood against the suggestive and mystical Symbolism of her time. It, thus, perfected the Acmeist within her, as the following excerpt from Alexis Rannit's estimate may well account for it:

The rational, reflective approach culminating in her Acmeistic, short-lined verses should be compared with Degas and also with Cezanne, Seurat and Lhote. Such a comparison reveals the related tendency toward a clear and sober design both in modern poetry and art.... Such Akhmatova lines as *On the table a riding whip and a glove are forgotten* remind us stylistically of the still-life paintings of Alexander Kahnold, the central figure of the *Neue Sachlichkeit*. This simplicity of approach led Akhmatova—as it led Kahnold—to traditional forms combined with a new intellectual awareness.51

Akhmatova's early poetry, thus, confirms her as an experimentalist in stylistic matters, though it displays, in the light of her later poetry, a moderately narrow range of thematic concerns. Towards her later career, as it will be assessed in the next chapters, themes of political and historical consequences as well as philosophical themes play a progressively more vital role in her writings. Yet, her early poetry too displays a varied treatment of the leading theme of love and its associated sufferings, and it undoubtedly accounts for her originality.

To sum up, the varied perspectives whereupon the theme of love has been projected by Akhmatova display her sincere concern with the matter-of-fact psychological realities of the real and intimate love experience, and give the impression of an intimate diary or more particularly of a confession. These poems also make clear the potentialities of a novelist within her. A break from the dominant mood of despair in love is arrested in some of her poems that announce the persona's intrinsic strength to survive the loss or abandonment.
The recognition of the immortality of the soul, which marks a new
development in the persona's consciousness, and the persona's approach to
the creative power of the Muse as a medium for release of pain and affliction
are also perceptible shifts from the central mood of pain and suffering in love.

The comparison of her love poems with those of Kamala Das, the
distinguished Indo-English poet, helps specifying the concerns and manner of
both the poets. Kamala Das resembles Akhmatova in her exclusive concern
with the personal experiences of love in poetry. But there are also striking
differences between the two. The love poems of Kamala Das, with their
guileless treatment of sexual love and the cause of woman's exploitation in a
male-ruled society, are characterized by an air of nonconformity and urgency
which are discernibly lacking in Akhmatova's poems. Akhmatova's intuitive
exploration of her woman-self is characterized by her feminine stances and
restraints, and hence, she is not fiery and eloquent, like Kamala Das.
Akhmatova's mode displays the intimate nature of her amatory concerns,
placing the reader in the role of a confidant to the confessions of the poetic
persona.

The use of different guises sets the experience in the poems in a larger
context, and also draws a detachment from the poet's own personal
experience. Such stylistic features, besides the thematic concerns, relate her to
Acmeism that revolted against the dominating Symbolists of the day. Her
concern with the familiar or even with a fairly ordinary world and the precise
embodiment of emotional experience in her poems are in perfect tune with
the Acmeist ideals emphasized by its exponents in their manifestoes or
articles. The avoidance of a highly rhetorical or overtly poetic language and
an honour for concrete details of time and place has set her far from the
suggestive and mystic Symbolists. Her poetry is, therefore, not the poetry of hints, as Chukovsky observed.

As an Acmeist, Akhmatova's early works also reflect her intense concern with the literary and cultural tradition of Russia. Her early poetry extensively uses materials drawn from both the oral and literary tradition of Russia. In many poems, she uses the topos of the folk tradition in order to underline the different perspectives of the amatory themes. Sometimes she uses different motifs from the folk tales. Because the functions of these motifs are obligatory in the folk tales, which Vladimir Propp's study shows, their use in the poems only contribute further to her art of precision. Besides, different forms of folk poetry, such as chastushkas, lullaby, byliny, etc. have been used by her. Her treatment of the figure of the Muse in her early poems, again, is another linkage to the folkloric tradition.

Besides these different folkloric materials, Akhmatova extends the applicability of her lyric situations by reference to other works of literature through allusions or quotations. Pushkin is referred to as the link between present and past. Sometimes specific works of the past writers are alluded for highlighting the motif of the poems or for contrasting an idea or a thought. All these authentically declare Akhmatova's close association with the rich literary and cultural tradition of her country.

The incorporation of historical and political themes into the framework of Akhmatova's early poetry, as will be discussed in the next chapter, becomes increasingly insistent in the work she produced after the First World War. Immediate experiences of the contemporary situation during this time brought changes both to her thematic concerns and her style, and it will be seen that in the next period of her poetic career, all those changes were intensified by her adherence to the literary and cultural tradition of Russia.
Notes and References:

1 Akhmatova, Anna: *A Brief Word about Myself*, in *Soviet Literature*, April, 1989, pp-6-7

2 Driver, Sam N.: *Anna Akhmatova*, Twaine, New York, 1972, p-133


4 Quoted in Wells, David N.: *Anna Akhmatova: Her Poetry*, Oxford and Dulles, Virginia, Berg, 1996, p-8


11 Driver, Sam N.: *Anna Akhmatova*, Twaine, New York, 1972, pp-84-86


15 Meaning 'Prince'


17 Ibid., p-56


19 Rosslyn, Dr Wendy: The Prince, the Fool and the Nunnery: Religion and Love in the Early Poetry of Anna Akhmatova, Avebury, Amersham, 1984, p-26


26 Mickiewicz, D: The Acmeist Conception of the Poetic Word, Spring, 1975, p-268

27 Ibid; p-268.


30 France, Peter: *Poets of Modern Russia*, Cambridge University Press, 1982, p-113


32 *Dol’nik*: a metre characterized by a fixed number of stresses separated by variable intervals of either one or two unstressed syllables


37 Akhmatova, Anna: *A Brief Word about Myself*, in Soviet Literature, April, 1989, pp-6-7


43 Translation by Kai Kracht at http://www.musicrussia.com

44 Translation by Kai Kracht at http://www.musicrussia.com
"bayushki bayi" is what Russian mothers sing when they rock their babies to sleep - just a lovely soft sound, no words that could be translated. When the children get older this is abbreviated to "bai bai" - "Sleep well!"


Ibid., p-36

Markov, Vladimir & Sparks, Merrill (ed.): *Modern Russian Poetry: an anthology with verse translations* (parallel texts), MacGibbon & Kee, Scotland, 1966, p-23
