Title: Reflections of Time in Andrei Bely's *Gold in Azure*: Linear and Cyclical Approaches to an Eternal Perspective

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Andrei Bely's first collection of lyric verse, *Gold in Azure* (*Zoloto v lazuri*, 1904), captures the youthful energy of his early worldview and exhibits his perception of time more clearly and openly than some of his more sophisticated works. The terminal and cyclical approaches to time depicted in *Gold in Azure* reveal an intrinsic relationship between mankind's linear, limited perspective and nature's eternal, cyclical pattern. The coexistence of terminal and cyclical time in nature provides a framework for Bely's presentation of binary opposition in human experience. Bely embeds conflicting temporal views into the form and structure of the individual verses and the collection as a whole. The temporal themes and devices used by Bely in his early poetry expose a formula that can be applied to his later works.

In my paper, I examine the narrative poems of the collection to show how Bely sabotages the linear pattern of each journey with the overpowering force of cyclical time. In one of Bely's influential poems from the collection, "The Golden Fleece" ("Zolotoe runo"), the mythological quest of the Argonauts is recast as an aerial journey towards the sun. The short prose work "The Argonauts" ("Argonavty"), included in the first edition of the collection, undercuts the linear optimism of "The Golden Fleece" by using the same storyline but demonstrating its fallibility. The failure to reach the goal proliferates an endless cycle of attempts rather than the single trip planned. In other narratives, a False Christ provides the stage for the convergence of the linear and cyclical modes. The promise of an apocalyptic end to world history fails to overcome the natural cyclicality of time. The journey narratives are just one representation of the temporal dichotomy between the linear and cyclical modes in Bely's *Gold in Azure*.

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