

Title: Active Heroes in Contemporary Russian Poetry: Free Will and Pushkin's "Prorok"  
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Given the breadth of Pushkin's legacy, the question to pose is not if contemporary poets respond to Pushkin but rather how they do so. The use of Pushkinian language, insertion of direct quotations and appearance of mythologized Pushkin as a character all play a role in this response. The present paper deals with poems by Lev Losev, Aleksei Tsvetkov, Sergei Gandlevskii and Bakhyt Kenzheev, in which these poets respond to Pushkin's "Prorok." Not surprisingly, due to the various interpretations of the source text, the contemporary poems have distinctly different themes, ranging from meta-literary to religious, but across the board the contemporary poets put more emphasis on the inner life of the poet/prophet. Moreover, the questions of free will and active participation versus passive obedience take on particular significance, as these poets react to Pushkin's "Prorok" from the perspective of their own, contemporary worldviews.