

Title: “You are a god, Mozart, and you do not know it”: Love vs. Relationships in Andrej Bitov's Novel *Pushkin's House*.

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A gateway to the Russian postmodernist novel, Bitov's *Pushkin's House* contains a painstaking analysis of the creative literary process as viewed through the prism of the economy of human relationships. It is tempting to subdivide these ideas into two mutually opposing dyads, or even triads: Creativity – (Spontaneity) – Love, on the one hand, and Craftsmanship – (Learning) – Relationships, on the other.

However, given the fact that the Russian word for Relationship(s), *otnoshenije/ja*, has multiple other meanings – and Bitov explores them all – the above scheme appears insufficient. Setting the Salierian “algebra” against Mozartian “harmony” is only a starting point for the author, whose work vacillates between the genre of a fiction and that of a quasi-scholarly research. Salieri's claim to know Mozart better than Mozart knows himself (Pushkin, 269) is questioned in the novel's subchapter “The Three Prophets”, designed as a critical essay.

I will take a Baxtinian approach to *Pushkin's House* and to various other texts by Bitov in an attempt to provide a clearer outline of the “Salieri” semantic field (that of Relationships, rather than Love) in the artistic thesaurus of the author. The ultimate goal is to close the rift between the Baxtinian vision of human relationships as the means to surmount mutual cognitive limitations and Bitov's emphasis on the superiority of the object of cognition over its (envious) subject.