

Julia Vaingurt, University of Illinois at Chicago

I Drink, Therefore I Am: The Poetics of Intemperance in Venedikt Erofeev's Moscow to
the End of the Line

This talk will analyze the ethics and aesthetics of weakness, with alcohol as the mechanism of its attainment, in Erofeev's famous poem in prose. According to the Italian philosopher Gianni Vattimo, the ethical choice of "weak thought," the thought that acknowledges its own limits and contingent nature, is a response to the violence of absolute metaphysical systems that have a pretension to truth. Attempting to establish a subject position along the parameters of weakness and doubt rather than power and knowledge, Erofeev's work remains ultimately ambivalent about his chosen solution to the problem of subjectivity.