

AATSEEL 2022
Conference Program
Presentation Abstracts

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 18, 2022

Session 1: 8:00am-10:00am

1-1 Stream 1A: Tolstoy

Adapting Bifurcation: Anna Karenina and the Ethics of Active Participation

Mattingly Gerasimovich, Northwestern University

Since *Anna Karenina*'s initial publication, scholars have devoted significant effort trying to understand the connection, or "linkages," between plots. Scholars like Liza Knapp, in her *Anna Karenina and Others: Tolstoy's Labyrinth of Plots*, draw attention to some of the critical moral and ethical questions that Tolstoy poses to readers. Clearly, there exists a unique, albeit difficult, relationship between the different plots that Tolstoy invites the reader to explore. *Anna Karenina* film adaptations further highlight the complexities of the bifurcated plot structure and the difficulty of retaining the moral complexity of the original work.

The portrayal of the multiple plotlines presents one important aspect to gauge a film's success at retaining Tolstoy's ethical dimension. Most adaptations reduce both the Anna-Vronsky plotline and what remains of the Levin-Kitty plotline to a celebration of romantic love. Even when directors choose to retain parts of the Levin-Kitty plotline, it serves almost no other purpose than giving the film aesthetically interesting shots or a happy ending. Ultimately, this approach does not encourage the viewer to actively discern moral nuances between the plotlines, and instead uses both plotlines as examples of the same thing—leading to a disconnect between original and adaptation. By simplifying both plots, adaptations fail to pose even the most basic ethical questions that the novel asks. By presenting an unchallenging, reductive synthesis of plotlines, some directors continue to encourage viewers to passively interact with their adaptation.

Some of the questions I will consider in my presentation are: what problems do directors face when adapting *Anna Karenina*? How have recent adaptations, with particular attention given to Joe Wright's 2012 adaptation, valued aesthetics over ethics? And, how does viewing this film present a fundamentally different experience compared to reading the novel?

Combustion, Explosion, Equilibrium: Reading Anna Karenina Thermodynamically

David Parker, Carnegie Mellon University

This paper examines the expression of thermodynamic principles within Tolstoy's *Anna Karenina*, beginning with the reference within the novel to John Tyndall's 1863 treatise *Heat*

Considered as a Mode of Motion. This single mention belies the extremely detailed notes recorded by Tolstoy in his journals as he read Tyndall's book during the early years of *Anna Karenina's* composition, which saw him not only attempt to understand thermodynamic principles but also apply them to the larger world around him.

A fully thermodynamic reading of *Anna Karenina* reveals a complex but almost unified system that extends far beyond motifs of burning candles and hissing steam engines to influence character development, plotting, and even the form of the narrative itself. The first section of my talk discusses the motif of the road within the modern novel and the close linkage between motion, cognition, and emotion. The second section reads the character of Anna as a thermodynamic system that is out of equilibrium, unable to convert the heat of emotion into the cooling relief of words or thoughts. The final section of the paper discusses Levin's story and the novel's conclusion in the context of Tolstoy's much earlier work "A History of Yesterday," arguing that Levin's discovery of "the Sun" as the source of all warmth, light, and good provides an alternate path to the engine of narrative: in *Anna Karenina*, equilibrium is finally reached not through the exhaustion of narrative potential but through the discovery of an energy so boundless that narrative itself becomes meaningless.

Dusting off Tolstoy

Michael Denner, Tolstoy Studies Journal

Characteristically, Lev Tolstoy described things in his writing: Think, for instance, of his lengthy descriptions of an oak tree in *War and Peace*, or fingernails in *Boyhood*, or the pages "stuck on" Levin's contemplation of ants and grass at the end of *Anna Karenina*.

Tolstoy is generally considered a realist author, so of course he describes things in his fiction. Realism describes and analyzes types of "real" subjective mental activity or experience, in short, acts of consciousness (not a tea cup, but how a tea cup is perceived). These descriptions are both an end in itself — it's part of the project of Realism in the nineteenth century, it's the bona fide that proves "this is literature" — but these things and their description, they are also a means, an implicit guarantee or gesture that the world of things "makes sense," coheres into some great explanatory system made available by and through the act of consuming the work of art. You read, say, a story by Balzac, to better understand, say, how money works in a marriage.

Inherent in this gesture at coherence lies a kind of materialistic, anti-religious, deterministic conception of reality (or at least human reality), an admission that meaning is created by human consciousness. "The world makes sense because I, the author, assert that it does make sense, and if you read this poem or novel, you'll understand it the way I do."

Tolstoy rejected this idea of Realism -- he is not a Realist author -- because Realism lacked faith, it oversold human agency and guarantee. Tolstoy believed that objects (maybe better, "our consciousness or intentional awareness of objects") reflect the divine: Things — objects like teacups, events like war, people like Anna, etc. — reveal and make available the presence of the divine, they demonstrate that God's world is there, alongside or beneath reality, projecting forth, ready to be accepted and entered. (The Kingdom of God is Within You.)

The world makes systemic sense because it was made by something not human, нерукотворный. But things must be interpreted, just like scripture cannot exist outside its being read.

Accurately describing a thing is a kind of theodicy, maybe a kind of liturgy for Tolstoy. In my short presentation, I'll describe Tolstoy's couch (literally... the one that's in his study right now), and then I'll describe Tolstoy's description of that couch. And I'll talk about Tolstoy's God. And women. And work. And art. And leather.

1-2 Stream 2A: Othering and Authority in Slavic Studies, Panel I: Whose Theories? And What for?

The Anthropological Turn a Decade Later: Is This Enough for a Turn?

Mark Lipovetsky, Columbia University

Ten years ago on the pages of NLO we discussed the anthropological turn in literary studies. Nowadays, it's accepted as something that has already happened in Slavic literary and cultural studies. The most obvious result of this turn is associated with the formation of a relatively narrow circle of scholars predominately living either in the US or Russia, who are speaking the same language, which distinguishes them from most of colleagues in Russia and in the US alike. This language can utilize different theoretical models - anthropological, sociological, semiotic, sometimes even philological (Formalist). What does constitute an actual shared ground? 1) a focus on culture rather than on textual poetics and the transposition of methods and concepts developed for the analysis of poetics onto broader cultural phenomena; 2) a more or less consistent constructivism as opposed to essentialism that constitutes. Is this enough for a turn? What are the pros and cons of this approach to Russian culture? What can be done to advance it further and in which direction should we move from where we are now?

Memory Studies Boom in Slavic Studies: Ukraine and Russia

Nataliya Shpylova-Saeed, Indiana University

This presentation explores ruptures in memory studies which can be discerned in Western European and North American approaches, on the one hand, and in the studies which prevail in Ukraine and Russia, on the other.

Over the last decade, memory studies gained a lot of academic attention in both Ukraine and Russia. The 2014 developments that involve the two states contributed to a more intense engagement with memory politics in particular. This entailed much attention to history, or rather contested issues that mark the pasts of the two states. As a result, specific historical events became a dominant part of memory explorations, which led to lack of attention to theoretical aspects of memory studies. Much focus on history is supplemented by the difficulties to incorporate theories which were produced in the West.

Apart from ideological priorities, the issue also centers on translation challenges. The majority of the present memory studies theories has been produced in French, English, and German (Jan Assmann, Aleida Assmann, Pierre Nora, Marianne Hirsch). Not only do linguistic nuances ask for additional explanation of memory studies concepts (e.g., “contested memory,” “Gedächtnis and Erinnerung,” “les lieux de mémoire,” “social forgetting,” etc.) which were coined in these languages, but also the conceptual notions need to be translated and specified in the Ukrainian and Russian contexts. At the same time, works in memory studies produced in Ukraine and Russia, with much emphasis on history, as well as politics (Tetiana Zhurzhenko, Lorina Repina) may seem rather biased and politicized to Western European and/or North American scholars.

This paper explores if there are ways to establish productive academic communication in memory studies, which have acquired some regional specificities which at times complicate scholarly intersections.

On the Russophone and the Russophobic

Anastasiya Osipova, University of Colorado, Boulder

In recent years, postcolonial, anti-racist, feminist, anti-homophobic, and anti-transphobic critique has risen, with great political urgency, to the forefront of popular political debate in America. While it is natural that Western Slavists apply this critique to the study of Soviet and post-Soviet material, at times this is done without serious self-reflection about their own relation to the institutional, economic, and cultural privilege which has afforded them access to the critical discourses which they now wield as arbiters over their post-Soviet counterparts. One worries that with the increasing political tensions between Russia and the US and the resulting challenges to traveling to the region, this tone-deafness to the particularities of the intellectual history and current culture of the Eastern European region as well as to the endemic intellectual discourse of internationalism and political emancipation will only deepen. Examining frequent indifference to the particularities of the Eastern European intellectual context (that at times comes close to an anti-Russian bias) becomes all the more crucial.

In my presentation, I will investigate the uses of the term “Russophone.” While embraced by the Western community of scholars as a category that allows to discuss Russian-language literature written outside of Russia’s territorial limits without symbolically subjugating it to Russia proper, I wonder whether Russophone writers themselves find the term meaningful. What actual pragmatic functions does it acquire as it enters increasing circulation and shapes our field? Could it be that instead of complicating the map of cultural connections, the term “Russophone” is sometimes used to veil an essentializing prejudice about Russian literature on political grounds? This inquiry is inspired by the recent call for submissions for the issue on “Russophone Poetry” posted by the journal run by an American Two Stories Press. The editors warn potential international contributors that Russian poets might be included in the issue. The wording of the submission call also betrays the fact that some of the contributors from the former Soviet republics felt unease about the term and would prefer to be grouped according to their nationality. I would like to think about the pragmatics of the term “Russophone” and conduct interviews with Russophone writers working in and outside Russia about their relation to the term.

1-5 New Research on Nabokov

Nabokov's "Friend" Pnin

Ludmila Shleyfer Lavine, Bucknell University

The serialization of *Pnin* overlapped with working on *Lolita*, a duo that presents fruitful comparisons of its polar opposite narrative modes. The call not to confuse first-person narrators and their authors has become a truism, conscientiously heeded by readers beginning with secondary-school literature classes. Humbert Humbert does get dangerously close to his author's life trajectory, close enough for Nabokov to call attention to demarcated differences between himself and Humbert in interviews (12). On the other hand, the illusory third-person narration in *Pnin* is what David H. Richter terms a "pretense of omniscience" (230). Even though this pretense begins to crumble early in the text, the narrator continues to practice literary techniques of omniscient narration. In this paper I will explore the effect of "pretending" to write about a "friend" in the novel. If Humbert could not be farther from his author, could Pnin be read as a bit too close for comfort? While we are trained to view Humbert's "confession" through the oft-discussed hermeneutics of suspicion, what are the dangers of suspecting *Pnin* as another type of cryptic "confession"? Gary Saul Morson's *sideshadowing* can serve as a lens through which to view the character of Pnin as that "possibility of possibility" (118) for the author, a shadow existence that offers both hopeful open-endedness and freedom, as well as a devastating mental loop of the past's hypotheticals.

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Her Image Would Grow Immortal: Hyperreality and Visual Media in "The Return of Chorb"

Alexander Messejnikov, Indiana University Bloomington

Generally, readings of Nabokov's "The Return of Chorb" have focused on exploring the aesthetic, moral and existential implications of the titular character's attempt to replace his dead wife with an "immortal" memory. An important aspect of the narrative that has yet to receive sufficiently sustained critical attention is its hyperreality, which Jean Baudrillard defines as "the generation by models of a real without origin or reality." The narrative establishes a slippage between Chorb's wife and imperial Russia that indicates he is only interested in her (in life and in death) as a signifier of his lost Russian past. Consequently, his attempt to remember her is a link in a series of hyperreal substitutions; Chorb seeks to simulate his wife so that he could in turn simulate his vanished Russian past. To emphasize the hyperreal nature of Chorb's memories, the narrative repeatedly associates them with film and photography. The Kellers, in turn, exemplify the hyperreality of a middle-class culture that reduces profound existential and aesthetic realities to the purchasable signifier. They also function as a representation of a past Russianness that conflicts with Chorb's idealized memories and threatens to assimilate him. I argue that the story theorizes art's proper relation to reality and gives us insight into the role that nostalgia plays in Nabokov's fiction.

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1-7 Preservation of Texts and Traditions

The Text of the Czech Forged Manuscripts as a Product of Translation

David L. Cooper, University of Illinois

The common consensus on the authorship of the Czech forged manuscripts is that Václav Hanka composed the lyric songs and that the epic songs were composed by others (Josef Linda, Václav Svoboda, and Josef Jungmann chief among the candidates), but that Hanka was ultimately responsible for the Old Czech language form of all the poems, translating them all into Old Czech. Karel Krejčí challenged that assumption, arguing that the Old Czech language forms were too integral to the poetics of the Manuscripts and had to be part of the composition process. This paper will examine the evidence in the Manuscripts themselves and in the so-called "covering" forgeries that translation played a key role in the shaping of the texts of the Manuscripts.

Ethnic Czechs in Argentina: Heritage, Language, and Culture 12,000 km Away from the Homeland of Their Ancestors

Marie Stepanova, Filozofická fakulta, Univerzita Karlova / Charles University in Prague

The presentation touches on issues of Czech language acquisition, maintenance, and possible attrition among heritage speakers of Czech in Argentina. It is based on review and analysis of a database containing transcripts of nearly 350 pages from about 40 hours of biographical recordings of members of the oldest generations of ethnic Czechs in Argentina. After a brief introduction to the socio-historical context, the presentation focuses on the environment and situations in which the descendants of Czechoslovak emigrants had the opportunity to maintain contact with the language of their ancestors and what importance the national institutions (such as ethnic Czech organizations, minority schools, etc.) had in preserving the language at an individual level. Heritage speakers, whose families have lived circa 80–110 years outside the Czech lands, reflect on how, and under what conditions, they and their ancestors managed to transmit the Czech language to subsequent generations.

Session 2: 10:00am-12:00pm

2-1 Stream 1B: Tolstoy

Between Statistics and Humanitarianism: the Case of Tolstoy and Chekhov

Olga Ovcharskaia, Stanford

Both Tolstoy and Chekhov claimed to have life-changing experiences while collecting data for the census bureau: Tolstoy visited dwellers of the impoverished *Rzhanovskaia krepost'* district in Moscow in 1882, while Chekhov conducted the census in a penal colony on the island of Sakhalin in 1890. Even though these authors were gathering information for statistical, governmental purposes, they admitted that these projects were of moral importance for them. I will analyze as humanitarian narratives Tolstoy's and Chekhov's texts about their census work (*About the Census in Moscow* and *What then Must We Do?* by Tolstoy and *Sakhalin Island* by Chekhov). Thomas Laqueur, who coined the term "humanitarian narrative," argued that other types of narratives, namely medical reports, with their attention to details, encouraged the development of humanitarian discourse. He highlighted the importance of the causal link that medical reports establish between the immediate cause of death and the deceased's social environment, revealing the need for social changes and helping the underprivileged. I will show how authors' statistical work informed their humanitarian discourses and how the causal relations that statistics establishes brought writers to unexpected conclusions: Tolstoy found the root of all social evil in himself and the lifestyle of his class, while Chekhov felt that all Russian life was infused with Sakhalin ("кажется все просахалинено").

Gendered Mentorship Dynamics as a Thematic Throughline in Tolstoy, Turgenev, and George Sand

Megan Kennedy, University of Wisconsin-Madison

Tolstoy's distaste for *Family Happiness* has been well documented: when the first section was published in *The Russian Messenger* in 1859, Tolstoy was horrified. He felt that the language was stilted and artificial, which, for Tolstoy, was a moral failing. Writing to his friend Vasily Botkin during this time, he called the novel a "shameful abomination" and "utter filth." To understand connections between the literary-aesthetic and biographical reasons for Tolstoy's hatred of *Family Happiness*, this paper will examine, firstly, Tolstoy's response to Turgenev's story *Asya* and secondly, Tolstoy's affair with Vera Arsenieva.

Tolstoy hated Turgenev's story, writing in his diary on January 19, 1858, "Ася дрянъ," and writing to Nekrasov on January 21, 1858 "«Ася» Тургенева, по моему мнению, самая слабая вещь из всего, что он написал." His dislike of both *Asya* and *Family Happiness* is interesting, as many scholars have noted the similarities between the two stories. The central romantic relationships in both stories involve a teacher/student dynamic. This paper will trace Turgenev's sentimental influences, namely George Sand, and examine this teacher/student dynamic between men and women as a thematic throughline between Sand, Turgenev, and Tolstoy.

This dynamic was present in Tolstoy's own life at the time of writing *Family Happiness* in his affair with Vera Arsenieva. Tolstoy himself connected the affair to the novel in a letter to P. I. Biriukov in November 1903. In his letters to Arsenieva, he constantly criticized her, positioning himself as an intellectual and spiritual mentor. I argue that in trying to recreate and redesign the behavior of a real woman (Vera Arsenieva) in *Family Happiness*, Tolstoy relied on a sentimental style that he despised on a moral and an aesthetic level, and that this is a partial explanation for his dislike of *Family Happiness*.

2-2 Stream 2B: Othering and Authority in Slavic Studies, Panel II: Authorities, Ideologies, and the Power of Belonging

The Collapse of the Nineteenth Century World and the Diremption of Cold War Modernity: Towards a De-provincialization of Political Theory

Adam Leeds, Columbia University

The Cold War is over, but the history of Soviet socialism is still, or perhaps increasingly, on the other side of an iron epistemological curtain, a local domain for specialists but strictly tangential to the continuing progress of world history. Whether leftist, liberal, or conservative, scholars accept or at best struggle with political and historiographical conceptualizations that separate socialist and Soviet histories from liberal and North Atlantic histories. We see this most clearly in political theory and in history, intertwined because historiographical terms have sedimented out of political projects. At best, the histories proceed in parallel— here a history of liberalism and capitalist modernity, there a history of a diverging alternative, which, tragically, happily, or inevitably, is over. What common origins or ground is obscured? What are the conditions that enabled their diremption? What stories might we tell if we reinserted the history of socialism and the Soviet Union into the historiography of modern political thought? In this talk, I will sketch a schema for interpreting socialist political thought since the French Revolution, show its mutual

constitution with liberalism and its inextricability from Western democracy, and conjecture at the historical conditions, political concepts, disciplinary formations, and false narratives that have rendered these relationships obscure or unintelligible.

Post-Revolutionary Thought in the Emancipatory and Political Discourses and the Authority of Slavic Studies

Siarhei Biareishyk, University of Pennsylvania

My contribution will pose a question about the dynamics of recent reception and instrumentalization of communist thinkers in the disciplines bordering Slavic studies as well as extra-university discourses. More specifically, I am interested in how the authority of "undertheorized" thinkers is currently playing out in critical theory and political theory in the West, which has a specifically left or emancipatory leanings: e.g., revisiting Proletkul for alternative models of social organization; utilizing Bogdanov and Platonov for comprehending the age of anthropocene; rediscovering Pashukanis for value-form theorists and Marxologists; drawing on Vygotsky and Ilyenkov (but also Akselrod) for the new, politically oriented Spinoza scholarship and activism (including the legacy of post-Autonomia tradition). More broadly, I am interested in investigating how the post-revolutionary thought is utilized today as a resource for revitalizing different theoretical traditions in the West. The modes and limits of such appropriations raise a number of questions in relation to the discipline of Slavic studies: From what position should Slavic studies encounter these extra-disciplinary and extra-university discourses, which exercise its authority over the scholarly objects and contexts traditionally associated with the domain of Slavic studies? What kind of relations should new Slavic studies forge with the institutions that reproduce these discourses (e.g., extra-university presses, such as Haymarket or Verso)? In view of overt politicization of these historical texts and cultural objects in service of a response to the current political and ecological crises, the function of political engagement in scholarship poses itself anew: What is the role of political tendencies and orientations in the scholarly practices on historical objects in the currently changing discipline of Slavic studies? How does the authority of Slavic studies change, and how is this authority exercised, in the encounters with these extra-disciplinary and extra-academic discourses?

On Slavophilic Queerness and Westernized Heteronormativity: Kharitonov's Under House Arrest and Vasiliï Aksenov's The Island of Crimea

Julia Vaingurt, University of Illinois at Chicago

My plan is to place Evgenii Kharitonov's Under House Arrest and Vasiliï Aksenov's The Island of Crimea in conversation with each other and to demonstrate the inadequacies of either Western queer theory or postcolonial theory for understanding the complex entanglement of sexuality, gender, and nationality in these projects' formation of subjecthood and dynamics of belonging and othering. It might appear that either text would lend itself neatly to the Western liberal democratic project and its advocacy of pluralism and tolerance; after all, their authors were major figures in the 1970s Soviet artistic underground and their respective self-presentations as a gay aesthete and a cosmopolitan playboy could not be easily integrated into the normative notion of Soviet manhood. Furthermore, both authors use their texts not only to fully flesh out the parameters of this identity formation, but also to advocate for its aesthetic and ethical worth. In their attempts to do so, both writers attempt to inscribe their particular form of otherness into

Russian culture, that is, to justify its right to existence not through a recourse to human diversity or freedom, but through the argument that the said peculiarity is, in fact, innate to Russian cultural tradition. Furthermore, they both attempt to authenticate and legitimize their particular type of otherness by redrawing the “insider/outsider” border and isolating another, more alien Other whose claims to inclusion could not be accommodated.

It is tempting to apply queer theory, especially Judith Halberstam’s seminal *The Queer Act of Failure*, to Kharitonov’s exaltation of his own weakness. Yet, in my view, this temptation should be resisted. Kharitonov’s conception of queer outsiderhood as an instantiation of holy foolishness is radically different from Halberstam’s secular conception of queerness as a democratic openness to diversity, ambiguity, mutability and other riches of non-identitarian existence. Kharitonov painstakingly and systematically defines his abjection as a form of kenosis, an acquisition of sanctity through the abnegation of ungodly pragmatism, materialism, and an undue attachment to social existence. It is, of course, Jews, the radical, unassimilable Other, who exemplify these latter pernicious attributes, and by juxtaposing gays to Jews, Kharitonov makes it clear that the essence of the Russian national character lies precisely in the set of principles coded as gay: the rejection of pragmatism and profit in favor of the life of the spirit; the creative urge to transcend the mundane; and monastic seclusion, a self-sacrificial refusal to follow others. Kharitonov’s performance of gay holy foolishness does nothing less than buttress and affirm the long-standing narrative of Russian exceptionalism and messianism.

In contrast to Kharitonov’s pronounced Slavophilism, Aksenov wishes to make a case for Westernized cosmopolitanism as closely aligned with the humanistic values of Russian culture and, specifically and paradoxically, the Orthodox idea of abundant, selfless love. And he does so by using sexuality as a prism through which Russian cultural belonging can be defined, reversing Kharitonov’s binary. The cosmopolitan idea of convergence between the capitalist émigré Crimea and the socialist Soviet Union is not just a utopian ideal shared by the aristocratic émigré Andrei Luchnikov with the half-Jewish Soviet functionary Marlen Kuzenkov; it is reflected also in their belonging to the “men’s club,” which tolerates both their versions of manliness, i.e., ostentatious superman virility and genteel quiet dignity. Both are made legible and legitimized as recognizably home-grown. Whom this “men’s club” patently excludes is the ultra-right monarchist and feminized homosexual Ignatiev-Ignatiev. Ignatiev-Ignatiev’s anti-Western anti-cosmopolitanism goes hand in hand with his sexual orientation, conceptualized here as a partiality for homogeneity and a form of self-love. To bring this point home, the novel tells us of one Soviet neo-nationalist, who becomes visibly aroused by his own fiery speech rejecting Christianity as a Jewish ploy and promoting a vision of homogeneous, secular Russia. The novel, therefore, reiterates the implication that homosexuals and ultranationalists (of either monarchist or socialist hue) share the narcissistic predilection for sameness and bets on cosmopolitan playboys as more suitable inheritors of Russian culture and, specifically, its devotion to the Judeo-Christian ideal of selfless love.

What this brief summary aimed to demonstrate is that neither postcolonial binary paradigm, nor the Western idea of queer, non-identitarian sociality are adequate tools for theorizing the idiosyncracies of either Kharitonov’s vision of Slavophilic gayness or, conversely, Aksenov’s vision of Westernized heteronormative libertinism.

Toward a New Internationalism in Slavic Studies

Jason Cieply, Hamilton College

Western scholars' call to decolonize Slavic studies — itself a healthy step towards disciplinary self-reflection much needed in our field — has, in practice, sometimes manifested itself in a transference of critical attention from the analyst to the analyzed. This summons has been paralleled by well-reasoned accusations of cultural imperialism, directed, by post-Soviet scholars and artists, at the institutional and disciplinary foundations of our field. The critique is related to a more general trend, in which the revitalization of leftist politics globally has prompted these thinkers to claim privileged access to the legacy of twentieth-century leftist culture and politics. Whereas Western scholars leverage theory from postcolonial studies and identity politics, their post-Soviet counterparts have emphasized economic- and class- analysis, institutional privilege, asymmetrical distribution of cultural capital, and the primacy of the lived experience of real socialist society and culture. For example, in her new book, *Practicing the Good: Desire and Boredom in Soviet Socialism*, Keti Chukhrov makes a theoretically provocative if somewhat essentializing argument about the obstacles to engaging in genuinely anticapitalist thought outside the lived experience of real socialism. In this paper, I examine the rival charges of cultural imperialism and claims to the legacy of emancipatory politics made by Western and post-Soviet scholars, focusing on the insights and blind spots that define both positions. Rossen Djagalov models a promising approach to repairing this rift in his new book, *From Internationalism to Postcolonialism: Literature and Cinema Between the Second and the Third Worlds*. I argue that only an internationalist perspective, grounded in a balanced account of global flows of emancipatory theory and culture between the second, third, and first worlds, will allow for the integration of these discourses in an intersectional politics adequate to the crises facing the world in the twenty-first century.

2-3 Slavic Linguistics

The mechanism of “zone-flooding”: Coverage of COVID and its (re)framing in anti-system media in the Czech Republic

Masako Fidler, Brown University and Vaclav Cvrček, Faculty of Arts, Charles University

This study examines the mechanism of zone-flooding in the Czech anti-establishment media (ANTS). It takes a closer look at the generally existing notion that ANTS “floods” the mainstream media (MS) to disorient and confuse the readers (e.g., Illing 2020), and proposes a more complex and dynamic model: while it confirms flooding of concepts from ANTS to MS, it further demonstrates that (1) a consistent ANTS agenda can be drawn from apparently random stories and (2) the conceptual flow is detected not only from ANTS to MS, but also from MS to the ANTS where intensive conceptual reframing occurs.

Two corpus methods, Market Basket Analysis (MBA) (Cvrček and Fidler 2022) and Companions (a new corpus tool), are applied to ANTS and MS (defined by media classification by Šlerka) from the ONLINE corpus (<https://wiki.korpus.cz/doku.php/en:cnk:online>). MBA measures the strength and spread of word associations (e.g. a word vaccine co-occurring with

words such as Sputnik, wearing, mask, freedom, and restrictions in texts). This is in a sense an operationalization of Fillmore's frame semantics, according to which a word or a construction cannot be understood without other concepts (Fillmore 1985: 239-39). Companions measure coincidence of the surge and decline of two words (e.g. coronavirus and flu) by correlating their frequencies in time and complement the results from MBA. Illustrative text samples show reframing of concepts.

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Pain Verbs and Case Assignment in Lithuanian

James Lavine, Bucknell University

Overview. This paper provides a survey of constructions from Lithuanian that bear on the question of case-assigning modality, namely whether case is assigned by configurational rules or by designated functional heads. According to the configurational assignment strategy of Dependent Case, if there are two distinct NPs in the same local domain, then value the case feature of the lower NP as accusative (under nominative-accusative alignment) (Marantz 1991, Baker 2015). The appearance of accusative on the object in the absence of a higher, structurally-case-marked nominal, as in the Pain Verbs in (1), challenges the idea of accusative as necessarily the result of case competition:

(1) Pain Verbs

a. *Gelia jam kojas nuo šalčio.*

sting.3.PRS him.DAT leg.ACC.PL from cold.GEN.SG

'His legs ache from the cold.'

b. *Nuo tabako kvapo mane pykina.*

from tobacco.GEN.SG smell.GEN.SG me.ACC sicken.3.PRS

'I am nauseated from the smell of tobacco.'

Claim. I argue on the basis of such constructions against Dependent Case, at least for Lithuanian. I adopt the competing theory of structural case assignment by functional heads, namely, finite and agreeing T for nominative and a transitive v-head for accusative, as in standard generative models. I identify a lower, v-Cause head as the source of accusative. That the VP-internal causer (e.g., *nuo šalčio* 'from cold' in (1a)) is not a genuine external argument is indicated by the fact that (i) not all such causers occur as a nominative subject; and (ii) impersonal Pain Verbs resist passivization. The role of the lower v-Cause head in assigning accusative is indicated by the failure of accusative to appear in the absence of a causative subevent. For example, impersonal Pain Verbs are incompatible with anticausative morphology and 'by itself' modification. The result is a strong empirical argument from Lithuanian against Dependent Case Theory.

2-6 Problems of Contemporary Russian and Ukrainian Film

"I Didn't Want That Child": Recurring Patterns in Zviagintsev's *Neliubov'*

Kirsten Rutsala, Virginia Tech

The filmmaker Andrei Zviagintsev frequently investigates the theme of children who lose their parents, whether through absence, estrangement, or death. Beginning with his first film, *The Return*, and continuing in *The Banishment*, *Elena*, and *Leviathan*, the motif of actually or functionally orphaned children occurs repeatedly, often to reveal and underscore wider cultural developments and trends. In his 2017 film *Neliubov'* (*Loveless*), Zviagintsev reverses this theme. An unwanted child goes missing, and his parents are transformed into a state for which there is no word: they become parents without a child. In this stunning and bleak film, Zviagintsev inverts and subverts the trope of the orphaned child.

Throughout the film, the breakdown of personal relationships is reflected in the frequent self-imposed isolation of individuals from one another. Characters often sequester themselves in separate rooms; even when together, their attention tends to be focused on screens, a constant presence and distraction. Many scenes show characters standing or seated side by side, rather than facing each other; they are placed as if on parallel tracks, destined never to meet or find any meaningful connection. The boy's disappearance remains an unresolved mystery, a tension that further splinters the already fragile family bonds. Although the couple at the center of the film embark on new relationships, nothing indicates that they will succeed this time around. Both of them seem intent on rewriting the past but are simply repeating the same failed patterns. In the wider society, a similar paradigm emerges: official institutions that assert high ideals turn out to be incompetent or corrupt. This paper examines Zviagintsev's exploration of the loss of a child as it reflects elements of the contemporary Russian experience, including the lack of cohesive cultural values and the emptiness of new mythologies and codes of behavior.

Hopes for contemporary Russia in Yuriy Bykov's filmography

Natalia Sletova, The Ohio State University

The last decade of the twentieth century and the first two decades of the twenty-first century in Russia can be characterized as ongoing political and economic turmoil. It is safe to say that all the hopes and dreams for a bright future brought by economic and political reforms in the 1990s and with Vladimir Putin's "reign" as a president have faded away. The country is still corrupt, impoverished, and longs for change. This paper analyzed a possible shift in Russian people's ideology using movies "The Fool", "The Major", and "The Factory" of a contemporary Russian director, Yuriy Bykov. Although in the 1990s Russian nation watched popular movies to find their hope in imaginable nation heroes, like Danila Bagrov (Hashamova, 2007), and found a new national hero in Mr. Putin in 2000s, it has become evident that neither the movie hero nor the hero-president will save the country from corruption, poverty, and other social problems that are still prevail in modern Russia. All these problems are skillfully portrayed in the above-mentioned movies and explored in this paper. Moreover, in his movies, Yuriy Bykov provides a possible

solution for Russian people's hardships through changing people's views and beliefs. Considering the popularity of the director, it is possible to assume that Russian people's ideology is shifting towards addressing people's personal characteristics, choices, and morality.

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Creating Memories About Recent History: Memory Of The Russo-Ukrainian Contestation In The 21st C.

Tetyana Shlikhar, University of Pittsburgh

After the disintegration of the Soviet Union, Ukraine was constantly moving away from the nostalgic Soviet narrative about the past. It created its own anti-Communist ideology that culminated in April 2015 when Ukrainian government passed a law prohibiting the Communist Party of Ukraine and propaganda of its symbols. The dominant sites of memory of the Soviet regime were now replaced by new national symbols and *lieux de mémoire* of independent Ukraine.

After the Euromaidan revolution of 2013-2014, and in the circumstances of the ongoing war, Ukrainians have developed a new mythology and new heroes. Such concepts as "Maidan," "Heavenly Hundred," "volunteers," "Cyborgs" began to fill in the semiotic space. The war also changed the attitude towards national cinema in Ukraine. As a result, more funds were allotted to film industry after 2014 to produce patriotic films that would counteract Russian cinema that had overtaken Ukrainian movie theaters and TV channels in 2010-2014. Ukrainian cultural producers strove to develop a new model of the national hero—a young man who is not a natural warrior, but, who in the course of a war takes up arms and is ready to sacrifice his life for the country. One of the major films that reveals this kind of a protagonist is Akhtem Seitablaev's patriotic military drama *Cyborgs* (2017).

In the paper, I will look at two Ukrainian films (Akhtem Seitablaev's *Cyborgs* and Oleksii Shaparev's *Winter of the Brave Ones*) and one Russian film: Aleksandr Pimanov's *Crimea* (2017) that shows the events from a completely different angle. All three films focus on the recent events in Ukraine (Euromaidan revolution, annexation of Crimea, and the ongoing military conflict in Eastern Ukraine), yet bring different perspectives – the Ukrainian and Russian point of view.

Putin at the Movies: Recent Russian Films Speak in Riddles and Parables

Irina Dzero, Kent State University

Several recent films use biblical symbols and learned allusions to portray society under Putin. Andrei Zvyagintsev's *Leviathan* portrays a corrupt mayor, a judge, and a police chief who collude to expropriate land from a car mechanic. The film represents him as the biblical Job, who suffers undeserved misfortunes and submits to God's decisions. The mayor of the town taunts the hero that he can do whatever he pleases with little men like him. Zvyagintsev's *Loveless* tells the story of a boy who disappears because he is unloved and psychologically abused by his

parents. In one scene the boy is shot as the iconic being of Edward Munk's *The Scream*. The closing scene, with the mother thumping on her balcony treadmill with "Russia" on the back of her tracksuit, exemplifies Gogol's famous musing: "Whither, then, are you speeding, O Russia of mine? Whither? Answer me! But no answer comes – only the weird sound of your collar-bells." Zvyagintsev's *The Banishment*, where a father kills his unborn child, and *The Return*, where the two boys kill their father, refer to Cronus devouring his children and Zeus killing Cronus. In Kirill Serebrennikov's *The Pupil* a high schooler turns into a violent religious fanatic. He kills his "disciple" who fell in love with him, quoting the Old Testament that homosexuality is a mortal sin. He plans to kill one of the teachers for being liberal and Jewish. The ruling regime encourages religiosity as one of "the spiritual clamps" of the Russian society, so the school administration goes easy on the criminal fanatic and hard on the good teacher. The film is highly allegorical and alludes to Antichrist. These films signify a return to the pre-perestroika Aesopian storytelling, such as *The Ordinary Miracle* and *To Kill a Dragon* by Mark Zakharov. Metaphorically, all these films tell the story of a bad father, exemplifying the declining deference to authority figures in Russia and accelerate its further decline. In the pre-perestroika films, allusions disguised the critical message. Now allusions are used to make criticism more impactful, since the state can no longer preclude access to private financing, audiences, or prestigious international awards at Cannes, Venice, and the Oscars.

2-7 Boundary-Breaking in Soviet and post-Soviet Music

Emblematic Women-Criminals in Russian Criminal Ethos and Popular Music (Shanson) Anastasiia Gordiienko, University of Arizona

Given women's subaltern position in the criminal hierarchy, it is not accidental that in the Russian criminal ethos, there have been few examples of eminent women felons recognized as full members by organized crime. This study focuses on the histories of several women-criminals, such as Aglaia Demidova, Kalina Nikiforova, and Sof'ia Bliuvshstein a.k.a Son'ka Zolotaia Ruchka (Son'ka the Golden Hand), to investigate why even the most notorious of these lawbreakers failed to gain thieves' acceptance as equals, let alone to ultimately achieve the highest ranks of the criminal hierarchy. In addition, I argue that the rare respect for a woman in the underworld, ultimately gained by Son'ka the Golden Hand, illuminates her unusual, rather exclusive, place in the criminal ethos. Specifically, the star-swindler ascended to the level of sainthood in underworld mythology, approximating Mother Mary in Christianity. The concluding part of my talk will examine the representation of female characters in an overwhelmingly popular musical genre, the shanson (the music of social undesirables, often with direct or implied ties to the criminal world), which, despite its commodified form still bears the stamp of women's misogynistic treatment by the criminal world.

The Bard Songs of Soviet Space Engineer Chekhovskiy Kaylin Land, McGill University

Vitalii Prokofievich Chekhovskiy's tombstone features a unique juxtaposition of symbols: the silhouette of a guitar with a neck made not of wood but rather of a rocket launching upward. Beneath his name the stone reads: Конструктор песен и ракет (constructor of songs and

rockets). Chekhovskiy worked as a rocket engineer at the KB Iuzhny Design Bureau in Dnipro, Ukraine. Chekhovskiy is equally remembered for his artistic contributions to the Soviet space program in the form of bard songs as he is for his role in engineering rockets.

In this paper I explore Chekhovskiy's corpus of songs, placing them in the larger bardic tradition of the 1960s and 1970s. Chekhovskiy himself acknowledges this tradition in two of his songs dedicated to Vysotskiy («Высоцкому») and his "Imitation of Okudzhava" («Подражание Окуджаве»). Contemporary Igor Khanin suggests Chekhovskiy's ballads belong to a genre he calls the "testing ground romance" (полигонный романс), the heir to the "city romance" (городской романс) of the late 19th and early 20th centuries.

While some of Chekhovskiy's song lyrics are typical of the bard romances of the 1960s, the most interesting subsection incorporates Chekhovskiy's work experience as a rocket engineer. For example «Взлетают ракеты» compares rocket launches within the Soviet Union with those in the United States: «Грохочет огонь в жаропрочных дюзах, Грохочет он в Штатах, грохочет в Союзе» ("Flames roar in heat resistant engines/They roar in the States, they roar in the Soviet Union.") I examine Chekhovskiy's lyrics not only for what they can tell us about the space program but as a corpus belonging to a larger genre of life writing of former cosmonauts and engineers. I suggest Chekhovskiy's work occupies an important role in the literary traditions of the Soviet space program.

"Круче Цветаевой, круче Ахматовой": Persona and Play in the Lyrics of Liza Monetochka

Karina McCorkle, University of California at Berkeley

This paper will examine several lyrics by contemporary singer and songwriter Liza Gyrdayeva, more commonly known as Monetochka, placing her in a lineage with other Russian women poets and focusing on texts of hers which I identify as persona poetry. The persona poem, typically called either "ролевая лирика" or "лирическая маска" in Russian, is a work in which the "I" of the speaker does not match with the biographical "I" of the poet. For example, poems narrated from the voice of an object, animal, or historical figure. Persona poetry has historically been popular amongst women, because it allows them to explore identities and views which might not be acceptable coming from their "real" selves. Mirra Lokhvitskaya, considered a foremother for many women poets, almost exclusively wrote persona poems. Marina Tsvetaeva, Anna Barkova, and Elena Shvarts also have a significant body of persona poems or poems written from alter egos. I argue that Monetochka follows in their footsteps, and that this aspect of her work has been insufficiently discussed. After the release of her 2020 album, *Декоративно-прикладное искусство*, Monetochka was accused of publicly airing family scandals because of the song "Папина любовница," resulting in her having to announce that the song was a "фантазия." To explain why many listeners are inclined to understand Monetochka's "I" speakers as literal reflections of herself, and to understand where they have gone wrong, I will close-read several songs from her first album, *Психоделический клауд рэн*. The album begins with a song called "Я—Лиза," which appears confessional; however, when read in conjunction with other songs from the album with different "I"s (a "babe from the ghetto," someone who thinks bad poetry from stih.ru is better than Akhmatova), it becomes clear that even "Я—Лиза" belongs to a project of intentional, though playful, persona construction.

2-9 Panel: Modernist Transformations

Fyodor Sollogub's *The Poisonous Garden*: the transformation from a novella to a play in verse

Kate Tomashevskaya, The University of Southern California

Dramatization of Sollogub's novella *The Poisonous Garden* has received no coverage in literary studies except for an article (Gerasimov 1997), containing a number of factological inaccuracies. This paper aims to fill this scholarly gap in Sollogub studies by demonstrating how the genre transformations of *The Poisoned Garden*, which exists as a novella, a play, and a play in blank verse, can provide us with a deeper understanding of Sollogub's creative practice and illuminate his ideas about modernist theater. The proposed paper shows how Sollogub used different writing strategies to change the novella during the process of its dramatization and poetization. During the first attempt he was focused on poetic of traditional theatre. Later, he decided to create a new version of the play, in according to his vision of modern symbolist theatre. The other strategy was its poetization, correlated with Sollogub's vision of theatricality: both the style of prose and formal aspects of play were transformed. The process of *The Poisoned Garden*'s dramatization represents the writer's search for a better form of a play for contemporary theater. By examining and comparing the eight typewritten versions of *The Poisoned Garden* located in the Pushkin House archives in St. Petersburg, I show the essential changes on levels of the texts' organization: time, space, characters, composition, and language. The methodological basis of this work is a combination of close reading and textological criticism, framed in terms of Sollogub's theoretical articles about theater.

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Overcoming Nature to Resurrect the Dead: Poetics of Metamorphoses in Mikhail Kuzmin's *The Trout Is Breaking Through the Ice* (1927) As a Literary and Life-Creation Project

Victoria Buyanovskaya, University of Wisconsin-Madison

In 1927, when Mikhail Kuzmin's poetic cycle "The Trout is Breaking Through the Ice" was written, little was left of what the Silver Age *Zeitgeist* that it captures – and the poet himself was already commonly perceived as a relic of the bygone era. Though Kuzmin's later writing is often referred to as an example of disregard for the "external" environment, in which it emerged and existed, the relationship between his texts and the contemporary reality was in fact much more complicated and dramatic. In case of the "Trout...", this underlying tension, encounter and "clash" of epochs, and, moreover, of the actual, "natural", timeline, to which the text and its author had to stick, and the re-imagined past or atemporal reality that the cycle constructs, significantly enhances and to a certain extent shapes its inner conflict, which I define as the

confrontation of the natural laws and artificial/artistic metamorphoses. As I will argue, the total victory of the latter in the cycle connects through the years to the symbolist concept “a realibus ad realiora” (“from reality toward a higher reality”) and, what is even more, proves its validity beyond the realm of literature, resulting in powerful life-creation. Re-framed in terms of synthetic authorial self-fashioning, the principle of artistic interference in the course of nature not only defines the structure and the plot of the “Trout...” and accounts for its “unnatural” aesthetics, but also makes claims on the re-writing of Kuzmin’s own biography and, through it, the subversion of existing norms, including those regarding gender and sexuality.

Geometricizing the Modern(ist) Self: Paradoxes of Geometry in Andrey Bely’s *Petersburg*
Marsel Khamitov, University of Wisconsin-Madison

Throughout most Andrey Bely’s fictional texts and memoirs, the figure of the dreadful mathematician is almost a leitmotif: the most famous example is Senator Ableukhov (based loosely on Bely’s own father) in *Petersburg* (1913). Yet, as I will try to demonstrate in this paper, the role of mathematics in the novel is much more complicated: Bely used recent discoveries in modern geometry, which challenged the classical scientific worldview, to construct his magnum opus. It was non-Euclidean geometry and its anthroposophical echoes in Rudolf Steiner’s theoretical legacy to underlie the representation of the modern(ist) self in Bely’s revolutionary novel.

In the introductory part, I will briefly introduce different “mathematical” approaches to fiction, in which scientific discoveries play a crucial role in organizing a literary universe and its spatial and temporal axes. As I will argue, this correlation between mathematics and literary fiction is of special importance regarding fin-de-siècle and modernist epoch, when the foundational crisis of mathematics triggered fundamental changes in all cultural fields. Russian modernist writers successfully adopted newest scientific models to express modern forms of time, space and subjectivity. In attempt to find an adequate literary form for this experience, Bely refers to Rudolf Steiner’s new teaching, anthroposophy, in which recent geometrical revolution is framed by Steiner’s own spiritual philosophy of “organic geometry”. Similarly, in *Petersburg* the multi-dimensional structure of space is aimed to reflect the new ontological status of the human being in the modern world: instead of being limited to classical Euclidean model, the modern self in Bely’s world is presented in multiple dimensions. Yet the universe of *Petersburg* is a carnival mirror of Steiner’s “organic geometry”: in the inverted space of Saint-Petersburg, built in defiance of natural laws, the fourth dimension is a source not of intellectual and spiritual illumination, but of devilish transformations. The positive version of Steinerian organic geometry will be presented in Bely’s later works, *Kotik Letaev* (1916) and *History of the Becoming of the Self-Conscious Soul* (1926), in which anthroposophical experience will get a unique geometrical form.

2-10 Topics in Russian Grammar

The Role of Gender in the Acquisition of Russian Case

Natalia V. Parker, University of Leeds, UK

Though the acquisition of Russian gender and of Russian case have been actively explored in both Second Language Acquisition (SLA) and language pedagogy (e.g., Cherepovskaia et al., 2021; Denhovska & Serratrice, 2017; Kempe & Brooks, 2008; Taraban & Kempe, 1999), no studies have examined how gender influences the acquisition of case morphology and how that affects the learning of case in a language classroom.

This paper will present the results of a teaching experiment, where the acquisition of two Russian cases (Prepositional and Accusative) was investigated within two gender subsets. Three groups of beginners were tested and the case production success rates were calculated separately for masculine and feminine, as well as for each of the two cases within each of the subsets. In addition, six different case contexts were analysed on the subject of gender differences.

The results demonstrated that there are significant differences in the acquisition of case between genders, even if the endings are identical (e.g., “e” in Prepositional). Moreover, the relationship between gender and case in the process of case acquisition is more complex than was anticipated, and there are several different factors that affect its success. The findings of the current study open up a new direction for research in case acquisition and have major implications for teaching the Russian cases.

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Representation of Motion and Direction in Russian and non-Russian speakers: toward an alternative method of teaching Russian basic verbs of motion

Maria Bondarenko, Université de Montréal

In Russian L2 instruction, the common approach of teaching basic verbs of motion (VOMs), such as *ИДТИ-ХОДИТЬ*, has been based on the opposition related to the notion of direction. The concept of direction - one direction vs. many directions/more than one direction/round-trip/no specific direction - has been traditionally suggested to novice students as the conceptual tool guaranteeing the correct choice of the VOM. Lately, researchers have raised doubts about the efficiency of this approach (Israeli, 1917; Bondarenko, 2019; Six, 2018a; 2018b; 2019), and suggested alternative context-based methods of instruction (Bondarenko, 2019; Six, 2018a, 2018b, 2019, 2020), such as the method of *semantic labeling* (Bondarenko, 2019). Based on some ideas from cognitive semantics, it suggests analyzing motion events thought rephrasing

them in Russian by using essential characteristics of the context (e.g. Я СОБИРАЮСЬ В ДРУГОЙ ГОРОД = Я ЕДУ; Я БЫЛ ТАМ (ДРУГОЙ ГОРОД) = Я ЕЗДИЛ).

The alternative methods of teaching Russian VOMs have been little supported by empirical research. This paper aims to share some preliminary data from an ongoing empirical study examining the conceptualization of motion with regards to its direction in the mind of Russian and non-Russian speakers. Approximately 300 Russian, French, English, and German native speakers have been asked to describe 52 motion events (worded in their mother tongues) by choosing from suggested descriptors traditionally used in teaching Russian basic VOMs (Survey 1) and from descriptors based on semantic labeling (Survey 2). The study demonstrates that participants in Survey 1, as opposed to Survey 2, likely chose descriptors that were not expected from the perspective of the traditional approach to teaching Russian VOMs. The findings suggest that conceptualization of a motion event through its direction strongly depends on contextual details. It gives too much room for individual interpretations, and therefore, is less efficient as learning tool.

A Corpus-Based Pedagogical Examination of “Vvodnye slova”

Joan Chevalier, United States Naval Academy

“Vvodnye slova,” in Russian are a heterogenous group of structures, ranging from adverbs, verbs, nouns, and pronouns that can occur as words or phrases. By definition “vvodnye slova” (VS) are expressions that are embedded in another syntactic string but are syntactically independent, and they comment in some way on the utterance (Grenoble, 2004). Given their heterogeneity, it is difficult to provide comprehensive semantic definitions for VS. They are typically used to convey speakers attitudes and emotions about the text, to supply background information, and to organize the events or arguments within the text (Sonnenhauser, 2020). Although VS are not mentioned explicitly in the ACTFL Guidelines (2012), production of “connected discourse” characteristic of Advanced-level proficiency as well as the ability to present and support arguments at the Superior level, both require mastery of at least the most frequently used VS. While mastery of VS are required to execute rhetorical strategies required at more advanced levels of proficiency, an examination of the most widely used American textbooks of Russian language reveals a lack of consensus about 1) which VS are important and 2) when (at which levels) should they be introduced. This research aims to fill this gap by providing a corpus-based analysis of the 150 most frequently occurring VS, establishing patterns of usage in specific registers both spoken and written. On the basis of this data, recommendations will be made about when and how to integrate VS into Russian language curricula of all levels.

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3-1 Stream 3A: Russian Poetry and Poetics: Roundtable on Russian Stylistics and Poetics

"Voronezh - voron, nozh": From Western Stone to Slavic Root in Mandelstam's Exilic Poetry

Veniamin Gushchin, Columbia University

This paper will consider the shift in Mandelstam's understanding of the word and its inner form in his Voronezh-era poetry. Throughout his career, Mandelstam maintained a consistent view of the word as autonomous and an interest in its (pre-)genesis, often metaphorizing this genesis through an appeal to the premodern. What shifts is the particular kind of premodernity he is interested in (from an entirely Greco-Roman antiquity in his earlier works to some elements of East Slavic premodernity in his later period) and the ways in which he chooses to manifest the "inner form of the word" – Oleksandr Potebnia's concept of the resonance/relationship between similar sounding roots, a concept that was deeply influential to the poet's linguistic thought. After a brief consideration of his theoretical writings on language and their relationship to his earlier poetic practice, I will focus my attention on close readings of sample poems from Mandelstam's Voronezh notebooks to demonstrate the shift that occurred in his poetic sensibility. Whereas in his earlier work, the resonances created the inner forms of words are latent and often trans-linguistic, in the poems I analyze the poet indulges in more explicit paronomasia, engaging with the actual roots of the words in a Russian/East Slavic context. I read this shift as a reflection of Mandelstam's exile with its resultant change in the poet's conceptions of space and authorial autonomy and as the flip side of his famous "longing for world culture."

Pushkin's "Insomnia Poem" in the French Translations of Nabokov and Tsvetaeva

Adrian Wanner, Pennsylvania State University

Vladimir Nabokov and Marina Tsvetaeva both translated a number of Pushkin's poems into French. While Nabokov's translations appeared in 1937 in France and Belgium, the vast majority of Tsvetaeva's translations only came to light decades after her death. The recent anthology *V luchakh rabochei lampy*, edited by E. B. Korkina (Moscow: Dom-muzei Mariny Tsvetaevoi, 2019), includes seven previously unknown translations of Pushkin poems from Tsvetaeva's archive, among them her version of "Stikhi, sochinennye noch'iu vo vremia bessonnitsy." This poem was also translated by Nabokov, which allows for a direct comparison between the two translators. Nabokov and Tsvetaeva had very different ideas about how to translate Russia's national poet into French. While Nabokov gives us an elegant "French" Pushkin of classical harmony and balance, Tsvetaeva offers the disruptive spectacle of a "Russian" Pushkin in French amplified through the magnifying lens of her own poetic maximalism. Both translators use rhymed French verse, but Nabokov hews to conventional syllabic prosody whereas Tsvetaeva reproduces the Russian syllabotonic meter, thereby creating a "foreignizing" effect in French.

In this paper I will offer a comparative reading of Nabokov's and Tsvetaeva's rendition of Pushkin's "Insomnia Poem" in the context of their own theories and practices of multilingual literary creation. In that sense, the paper builds on my earlier article "Marina Tsvetaeva and Vladimir Nabokov as French Translators of Pushkin" (SEEJ 65:1, Spring 2021, 79-99), which I wrote without knowledge of Tsvetaeva's translation of "Stikhi, sochinennye noch'iu vo vremia bessonnitsy." Given that insomnia is a prominent theme in the work of both authors, I will also explore how these translations relate to the treatment of insomnia elsewhere in Nabokov's and Tsvetaeva's oeuvre.

Rhythm and Rhetoric: Vysotsky's "Pesnia o druge" and the Logaoedic Aura of Simonov's "Ubei ego!" for the Poetics and Stylistics panel of the "Russian Poetry and Poetics" Stream

Timothy Sergay, University of Albany

In verses dedicated to Konstantin Simonov on his fiftieth birthday, in 1965, Vladimir Vysotsky the actor named Simonov both godfather and godmother to the entire Taganka Theater ("Prozhit' polveka — eto ne pustiak..."). Could Simonov also have been a godfather of sorts to one of Vysotsky the bard's "breakout" "alpine" songs, "Pesnia o druge," written for Govorukhin and Durov's 1967 film *Vertikal'*? The question is, of course, somewhat eccentric. Thanks to the reminiscences of the film's sports adviser, Leonid Yeliseev, we know much about the conversations that inspired "Pesnia o druge," conversations about mutual reliance within mountain-climbing parties (Yeliseev, "Istoriia odnoi pesni," in Krylov, ed., *Vladimir Vysotskii: Chetyre chetverti puti* [Moscow, 1988], 25–37). But in reviewing Simonov's famous WWII propaganda poem "Ubei ego!" (*Krasnaya Zvezda*, 18 July 1942) I was finally struck by (1) the way Simonov's strict logaoedic meter—two anapests followed by an iamb—could certainly be sung to "Pesnia o druge": "Esli dorog tebe tvoi dom..." (cf. "Esli drug okazalsia vdruk..."), and (2) the abstract rhetorical congruence of the two texts. Both are built on extended series of protases introduced by *esli* followed by hortatory apodoses based either on imperative verbs or *pust'/puskai* constructions. What Vysotsky does to the tonality of Simonov's putative precursor text is like color-inverting a photograph: he inverts hatred to love, enmity to friendship, "kill him" to "rely on him." Exploring these rhythmic and rhetorical patterns leads to reconsideration of the development of nonclassical meters in twentieth-century Russian poetry as a whole, and their role in the oeuvres of the classic guitar poets, especially the technical influence of Aleksandr Galich on Vysotsky. I have already benefitted from the advice of Michael Wachtel and Barry Scherr on this topic and am reviewing publications by Gerald Smith, Bogomolov, Mikhail Gasparov, Fomina, Novikov, Baevsky, and others.

The Dolnik and Beyond: Russian Accentual Verse Revisited

Igor Pilshchikov, University of California Los Angeles

Many features that scholars usually ascribe to Russian accentual verse as opposed to dolnik are, in fact, equally typical of both meters. These features include but are not restricted to skipping metrical (schematic) stresses, adding extra-metrical (extra-schematic) stresses, and limiting the length of inter-ictic intervals (accentual verse has an empirical limitation of eight syllables). Particular rhythmic types of Russian accentual verse can limit the length of inter-ictic intervals even further (such as 0 to 4 in Mayakovsky's late verse). Therefore, the definition of Russian accentual verse as a pure tonic meter based exclusively on verbal rhythm contradicts the cultural-historical facts and can be questioned.

Hiatus as Device

Michael Wachtel, Princeton University

In different poetic traditions, consecutive vowels are treated in different ways. They can be elided (in which case one is not pronounced at all), combined into a single long sound (diphthongs), or pronounced as two distinct syllables. This third possibility is characteristic of Russian phonology. The technical term for it is hiatus (in Russian: зияние). However, it is essential to distinguish genuine hiatus from “false” hiatus. An example of the latter would be the vowel combination “аю,” which has the unwritten consonant “jot” between the vowels. In contrast, “ay” really is an example of hiatus. Of course, “аю” occurs very frequently in Russian, whereas “ay” does not. Precisely because of its rarity, hiatus has a special attraction for poets. Hence it is hardly surprising that Pushkin begins his exotic southern poem “Kavkazskii plennik” with the exotic aural effect of hiatus: “В аюле...”

This paper will examine a few striking twentieth-century examples of hiatus (Mandel’shtam, Mayakovsky), where it is clearly exploited for poetic effect. I will then focus on Blok’s “Neznakomka,” where it is used repeatedly to underscore the poem’s “otherworldly” thematics. Ultimately, I would like to suggest that hiatus offers a means of precisely surveying the otherwise nebulous subject of poetic musicality.

3-2 Stream 4A: Language development and language pedagogy of Slavic languages: Focus on morphology

Development of Inflectional Morphology Across Program Levels

Aleksey Novikov, The Oxford College of Emory University

While syntactic L2 complexity has been the topic of much research, morphological complexity is a fairly new construct in complexity studies (Brezina & Pallotti, 2019). Previous studies indicate differences in morphology across L2 proficiency levels (Brezina & Pallotti, 2019; Yoon, 2017). Studies on the acquisition of Russian morphology show that there is a certain order of acquisition of grammatical morphemes both in L1 and L2 (Polinsky, 2007; Thompson, 1980).

The present study uses a learner corpus of both written and spoken texts (over 1,000 texts) that students produced as part of their curriculum at a large southwest university. The overall goal of this study is to provide a comprehensive description of morphological L2 development at lower levels (e.g., beginner to intermediate). To this end, 21 morphological features were analyzed across four program levels.

Results demonstrate that, in terms of adjectival and nominal morphology, both nouns and adjectives in genitive and instrumental cases along with dative nouns show increasing trends across levels. On the other hand, both accusative nouns and adjectives show decreasing trends. As per verbal morphology, both perfective and imperfective past verbs increase, while all the present verb forms, especially 1st person singular are on the decline. These trends closely mirror the curricular progression, and some of these results are also on par with previous studies (Polinsky, 2007; Thompson, 1980).

Although more research is needed in this area to make generalizations, these findings demonstrate some important trends of how fine-grained morphological individual features are used across levels. The analysis of these trends can serve as a solid foundation for future studies, especially in terms of the selection of variables.

Orthographic errors in the writing of heritage learners of Russian

Irina Dubinina, Brandeis University and Olesya Kisselev, University of Texas at San Antonio

The paper reports on the results of a pilot study that investigates spelling proficiency in heritage language writers of Russian. Until recently, spelling was viewed as a trivial aspect of literacy development in heritage learner language research (Llombart-Huesca, 2017). However, the wealth of research on the acquisition of orthography from the field of child language development (both mono- and bilingual) has highlighted orthography as a fundamental aspect of literacy development that connected to such important linguistic skills as phonological knowledge and awareness, and understanding of morphological structures (Nagy et al., 2006). Spelling skills also depend on the knowledge of spelling conventions which require extensive practice with reading/writing in the language.

The goal of the paper is to provide an initial qualitative analysis of misspellings in Russian heritage data with an aim to begin addressing the gap in the research literature and to hypothesize on the role of the underlying linguistic knowledge that result in spelling idiosyncrasies in Russian heritage data. The data for the study were drawn from the heritage sub-corpus of a Russian learner corpus which contains essays collected from Russian learners at different proficiency levels from across the U.S. 120 heritage learner essays were subjected to the Writing Proficiency Test to obtain independent proficiency ratings. All words spelled in a non-standard way were tagged and extracted for analysis. Orthographic errors were then categorized based on the probable cause of deviation, i.e., phonological, morphological, and convention-based. The types of errors, and their relative proportions, were then correlated with proficiency levels. The paper discusses patterns observed in the distribution of types of spelling errors in light of the nature of heritage languages. The paper also explores how research on spelling and orthography may inform heritage language teaching and learning.

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Teaching L2 Russian Aktionsart verbs through instructor-learner collaborative interaction

Albina Khabibulina, Vanderbilt University

Even highly proficient L2 learners of Russian are seldom familiar with the category of Aktionsart (modes of action), or *категория способа глагольного действия*. In this presentation, I will propose how Russian Aktionsart verbs can be taught, using a collaborative, interactionist dynamic assessment (DA) pedagogical approach. I will draw on Aljaafreh and Lantolf's (1994) suggestions on mediational assistance during instructional activity and present implicit to explicit mediation inventory designed to facilitate acquisition of Russian Aktionsarten. I will also describe learning activities to promote learner conceptual understanding of unique semantics of Russian Aktionsart verbs and offer examples of instructor-learner interactions to illustrate how the intended knowledge and meaning are constructed and negotiated dialogically between the instructor and the learner. I will conclude with a discussion of learner errors in the use of Aktionsart verbs and offer possible explanations for the deviant performance.

3-9 Nineteenth-Century Prose: Comparative and Institutional Views

illuminating Darkness: Toward a Nyssen's Reading of *Dead Souls*

Alexei Pavlenko, Colorado College

Gogol's semiotics of the void in his *poema* is evoked through such oxymorons as "dead souls," pleonasm of "Russian muzhiks," and a host of images—Manilov's mounds of tobacco ash; Nozdryov's barrel organ, capable of playing with no air in it; Plyushkin as a tear on the fabric of humanity, and more. A sense of gaps and omissions is furthered by a narrator who continuously disrupts his own story with lengthy and often tenuously related digressions which in turn are riddled with non-sequiturs. This motif of cryptic absences and disconnects in Gogol's oeuvre in general, and in *Dead Souls* in particular, has provoked a riot of wide-ranging interpretations: Where the censors suspected blasphemy, later critics saw Gogol's brilliant embrace of the irrational: "the figure of fiction" (Bely), "a phantom interrogation of a phantom symbol" (Fanger), or an expression of his sexual phobias (Karlinsky). A lens that offers yet another dimension in examining Gogol's absences is that of an apophatic approach to the encounter with the divine, adumbrated by a fourth century Byzantine theologian St. Gregory of Nyssa, whose *Life of Moses* (c. 390) represents darkness, a renunciation of all empiric knowledge, as a necessary stage towards a more complete union with God. Furthermore, Gregory's controversial teaching on universal redemption, *apocatastasis*, negates a possibility of a void and claims the absolute reach of the divine infinitude, thus reasserting Pauline formula that God will be "all in all."

Emile Zola's "Comment on se marie" as an intertext of Tolstoy's "Kreutzer Sonata"

Elena Petrova, University of Southern California

Lev Tolstoy's *The Kreutzer Sonata* is known to be inspired by several literary texts: N. Ruddick claims that the story of Pozdnyshev contains homages to Zola's *La Bete Humaine* (Ruddick: 181); L. Opol'skaia emphasizes the fact that at the time Tolstoy began to work at Sonata he read another Zola's novel – *La Terre* – and even reviewed it favorably (Opol'skaia: 129);

furthermore, *The Kreutzer Sonata* “finds support” (Opul’skaia: 164) in Shakers’ philosophy. Moreover, it is known that Zola himself responded to Tolstoy’s work, calling it in an 1890 interview “a nightmare, the fruit of a sick imagination” (Bond: 90). However, the connections between Lev Tolstoy’s *Sonata* and Emile Zola’s novella *Comment on se marie* (1876) has never been investigated before. This paper examines allusions to Emile Zola’s text, which in Russia was published as *Kak liudi zheniatsia*, in Tolstoy’s scathing treatment of marriage. I will show by comparing the texts how Tolstoy, employing his usual method of putting allusions to the pieces of literature in his works (as he did with *War and Peace* and *Anna Karenina*, where homages to Thackeray and Flaubert’s novels are clearly present), creates a new representation of the sexual and spiritual relationship between husband and wife that is more shocking and provocative than Zola’s.

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The Ferapont Paradox: Institutional Religion and Liturgical Orthodoxy in Dostoevsky’s *The Brothers Karamazov*

Peter Winsky, University of Southern California

At the time of its writing, and even to this day, critics, scholars, and members of various Christian communities have argued over the orthodoxy of Dostoevsky’s Orthodoxy in *The Brothers Karamazov*. Despite the author’s constant defense and championing of his faith, his works still draw accusations that his depiction of the life of the Church is too moral, lacks representations of the liturgical life, and generally adhere too closely to secular trends rather than the reality of late nineteenth century Russian Orthodoxy. Is it possible, however, that Dostoevsky faithfully represented Orthodoxy in his work without entering directly into the liturgical and monastic traditions?

Dostoevsky successfully addresses and engages with these accusations directly in *The Brothers Karamazov* through the protestations of the eremitic Father Ferapont against the Elder Zosima. While the general consensus of the Orthodox monastic community at the time is reflected in Ferapont’s perspective and his vindication through the immediate stench of decay that wafts from Zosima and leads to the crowd’s rejection of eldership, Dostoevsky simultaneously champions the hesychastic practices, including eldership, in the novel. This paper investigates how Dostoevsky interweaves multiple facets of Orthodoxy in order to express the fullness of the life of the Church without leaving the genre conventions of the realist novel, and it is, surprisingly, Father Ferapont who plays a crucial role in balancing the Orthodoxy of the text. What’s more, Ferapont, and the facet of Orthodoxy he represents, is vital to Alyosha’s repentance and representation of a good, holy, Orthodox monastic in the world. Without the institutional aspects of Orthodoxy as represented by Ferapont, the liturgical and lived experiences of Zosima and Alyosha’s lives could not flourish in the text.

Chekhov and Psychology: the Mind-Body Problem

Matthew Mangold, George Mason University

Anton Chekhov was Russian literature's first writer trained as a doctor. The implications of this fact are far-ranging for how we understand medicine, literature and their interaction in his work and that of later writers. In this presentation I will discuss one particular innovation that Chekhov encountered in medical school: psychology's contribution to the mind-body problem. In the anatomy and psychiatry classrooms Chekhov became familiar with the work of Russia's first experimental psychologist, Ivan Sechenov. This encounter inspired him to focus on the paradoxical relationship between the mind and the body while treating patients and while writing stories. This presentation shows the connection between Sechenov's ideas and Chekhov's "Grisha" (1886), a story about the developing mind of a nearly three-year-old boy. I argue that Chekhov synthesizes insight in developmental psychology with creative techniques to reveal a new understanding of the joys and trauma of early childhood and the mind's first constructions of subjective self-consciousness.

3-10 Open Seminar with Raquel Greene (Grinnell College): Discussing Africa as the Other in Russian Literature and Culture: Lessons for Instructors

Recently the field of Russian, East European, and Eurasian Studies has turned to discussing the issues of race, ethnicity, and intersectional identity in the undergraduate curriculum. While students are increasingly drawn to the question of race and identity, few departments regularly offer courses that provide an overview of how to critically address these topics in the Russian language and literature classroom. In this seminar, Dr. Raquel Greene will share her experiences teaching her course "The Theme of the African in Russian Literature and Culture," which centers the representation of race in Russian cultural production. Discussion will focus on how to integrate texts and media that center African and African American perspectives into traditional courses on Russian literature. Seminar attendees will be introduced to nineteenth- and twentieth-century texts in addition to contemporary media representations. Participants will come away with useful resources and ideas to begin introducing a topic that has been under-examined in Russian language and literature courses.

Session 4: 4:30pm-6:30pm

4-1 Stream 3B: Russian Poetry and Poetics: Earlier Influences on 20th- and 21st-Century Poetry

Mining for Subtext: Shared Strategies of Postal Censorship and Zaum Poetry

Kamila Kocialkowska, University of Cambridge

Reading Aleksei Kruchenykh's nonsensical *zaum* poetry is notoriously challenging: words are fractured into fragments and scrawled in disorderly longhand. To mediate any meaning from this textual chaos, the reader must be attuned to allusive references and equipped to decrypt coded messages. Mining for subtext in this way is a celebrated trait of many modernist texts, yet this paper presents an unusual precedent for reading *zaum*: Russian postal censorship. [1] [SEP]

The practice of 'perustration' (intercepting, surveying, and redacting postal correspondence) had a long history in Russia, stemming back to the mid-1700s. This pre-nineteenth-century practice resurged during the First World War. This intensification of censorial control provides an intriguing context for Kruchenykh's coterminous development of *zaum* poetry. Mail, passing through the wartime 'black office', emerged over-written with coloured pencils, authorised with stamps, and scanned for hidden meanings. Kruchenykh's books, such as *Zzudo* (1921) recreate a similar visual chaos of coloured annotations and rubber stamping. Moreover, the postal censor was an expert decoder, reading critically for subversive meanings; thus, both the aesthetics of perustration and the readerly strategy it required present pre-nineteenth century precedents for encountering *zaum*.

Whilst modernist experiment and censorial control are often assumed to be antithetical, this paper builds on the growing field of censorship studies, which challenges the simplicity of stereotype and reveals more nuanced models which foreground the multiplicity of censorship's forms and reciprocity of interactions between writers and censors. Aesopian evasion is recognised as one mode through which Russian writers responded to censorship, but this paper suggests a more direct mimicry was also present in modernist poetry, and thus highlights how, counterintuitive though it may seem, writers like Kruchenykh were influenced by the very institution they so vocally opposed.

Apolitical Overlaps of Time and Space in Joseph Brodsky's "Pis'ma k rimskomu drugu" Benjamin Musachio, Princeton University

I excavate the overlaps of historical periods and imperial geographies that suffuse Joseph Brodsky's "Letters to a Roman Friend" ("Pis'ma k rimskomu drugu", 1972), a poem composed just before the poet's forced emigration. My argument highlights how Brodsky's speaker constructs idiosyncratic temporalities and spatialities that refuse to participate in official chronologies and neat territorial demarcations. The poetic speaker shows no interest in the capital's normative vision of space or time, and thus suggests a new model of relations between the poet and political authority. Brodsky's poetic and public personae stage an "apolitics" that seeks to avoid the overlapping discourses produced by loyalists and dissidents alike. My insights are nourished by cultural anthropological studies (particularly scholarship by Alexei Yurchak and Serguei Oushakine) examining the late Soviet intelligentsia. I conclude the analysis of "Letters" by offering a novel reading of the enigmatic final stanzas. Readers here are saved from the disorienting flux of Brodsky's non-authoritarian poetic vision by the stabilizing comforts of a domestic ruin. It is precisely in and among ruins that the individual creative personality can create his own chronotopic combinations unencumbered by imperial or public compulsions.

I-mitatio: Elena Shvarts's "Imitation of Boileau" Laura Little, Connecticut College

Shvarts balances the incompatible in her programmatic poem “Imitation of Boileau” (“Podrazhanie Bualo,” 1971), joining classical notions of the poetic craft to modernist ones and deploying a combinatory stylistics that is characteristic of her work. Shvarts’s “imitation” makes light mockery of the prescriptive neoclassicism of which French poet Nicola Boileau was an exemplary figure and of the culture of *imitatio* that was central to his artistic program. In “L’Art Poétique” (1674), Boileau articulated expectations that would inform, if not govern, poetic ideals from the end of the seventeenth century to the beginning of the Romantic era in Europe. Shvarts would have had the chance to discuss and perhaps translate parts of Boileau’s famous work at the Translation Seminar with Elga Linetskaia, to whom the poem is dedicated. The French literary legislator’s primer for poets and other aspiring writers was appropriately – by neoclassical standards – imitative, asserting through its title its indebtedness to Horace’s *Ars Poetica* and drawing on the authority of antiquity to justify the poetic values Boileau espoused: clarity, symmetry, restraint, and strict adherence to generic conventions. These qualities would seem to have little to do with Shvarts’s poetic practice, and in “Imitation of Boileau” she infuses a long-running dialogue in European poetry with renewed Dionysian energy. This paper will discuss how Shvarts acknowledges her indebtedness to tradition even as she claims her right to poetic idiosyncrasy, holding contradictory impulses in orchestrated tension.

4-2 Stream 4B: Language development and language pedagogy of Slavic languages: Focus on morphology

Development of nominalization in writing: a survey of Russian learner (L2 and heritage) texts at intermediate and advanced levels

Anna Alsufieva, Portland State University

In the field of pedagogical linguistics, among the criteria used to determine the level of a language learner’s writing development is their capacity for nominalization. In systemic functional linguistics (SFG) the phenomenon of nominalization was elaborated into a general concept of “grammatical metaphor” (Halliday & Matthiessen). Nominalization implies an L2 learner’s ability to designate a process, quality, or condition by a noun or noun phrase; in order to do that, an L2 learner has to understand intra-system connections between words belonging to different parts of speech, to recognize morphological categories, and to grasp common patterns of word combinations. This paper presents a survey of usage of nominalization by L2 and heritage learners of Russian (intermediate – advanced level) in written texts focused on general, impersonal subjects (social issues, politics, education.) The paper analyzes genres of the texts typical in academic writing: abstracts, expository essays, and research papers. The data derives from the texts constituting the Russian Learner Corpus (RLC). The selected texts are compared along two major axes: (1) between intermediate- and advanced-level learners; and (2) between American learners of Russian and Russian heritage learners. The results of the study are relevant for deepening our understanding of grammatical/syntactic complexity in language learners’ writing development, and for enriching practices of teaching Russian at advanced levels.

Derivational Morphology and the Lexical Richness in the Writing of Advanced Learners of Russian

William J. Comer, Portland State University

Alsufieva in the stream ("Language development and language pedagogy of Slavic languages: Focus on morphology") considers the nature of nominalization in the writing of intermediate and advanced learners of Russian. This presentation will continue that discussion by exploring the intersection of nominalization and the lexical richness that L2 learners of Russian exhibit in writing at the ILR Levels 2+/3. The ability to access a wide range of high and low frequency lexical items, control their inflectional morphology and deploy them in syntactically appropriate contexts is essential as students try to write well-formed argumentative essays on social and political topics, a requirement for a rating of ILR Level 3. Taking quantitative and qualitative approaches to the vocabulary used in Writing Proficiency tests by students in the Russian Overseas Flagship Program, the presenter will show evidence of how the abstract language of ILR Level 3 texts is manifest in students' lexical sophistication. The presenter will focus on evidence of students' control of derivational morphology (i.e., their deployment of semantically-related word sets like *оппонент, оппозиция, оппозиционер, оппозиционный*), and their increased usage of nouns expressing abstract notions/processes suffixed with *-ость, -ация, -ствие -ание*, etc. The presenter will also consider how the move towards nominalization at ILR Level 3 writing is reflected in the writers' use of verbs, namely the increased usage of low-frequency derived imperfective verbs with the infixes *-ыва-/-ива-* and of low-frequency in/transitive verbs (e.g., *уменьшать(ся)/уменьшить(ся)*). After documenting the lexical richness of students' writing, the presentation will consider its implications in the development of students' language proficiency.

Russian heritage children in Cyprus: Narrative abilities and grammaticality

Sviatlana Karpava, University of Cyprus

Heritage language maintenance and development depend on family language policy, language dominance, frequency of use, linguistic distance and similarity between the minority and the majority languages or (dia)lects of the society (Montrul, 2016; Polinsky, 2015, 2018; Kupisch and Rothman, 2018), multi-directionality of cross-linguistic influence and accommodation (Rothman et al., 2019).

The present study investigates narrative skills of Russian heritage children in Cyprus, with the focus on macro-structure (story structure, structural complexity and internal states terms), micro-structure and grammaticality, i.e. the extent to which utterances follow the grammatical rules of a language. The participants of the study were 40 Russian–Cypriot Greek (CG) simultaneous bilingual children. Their age ranges from 4;0 to 6;0 (mean 5;2), and they attend kindergarten and primary CG schools, where the language of instruction is Greek. The LITMUS-MAIN, the multilingual assessment instrument for narratives (Gagarina et al., 2012, 2015) was used for data collection. Their language proficiency in Russian was measured by the Russian Proficiency Test for Multilingual Children (RPTMC) (Gagarina et al., 2010). Background information was collected using parental questionnaires and interviews. The narratives were recorded, transcribed and analyzed in terms of grammaticality.

The analysis of the data showed that heritage children had errors in aspect and tense, case, gender and in subject-verb agreement. Some code-switching errors were revealed in the data as well as innovation forms of words (nouns and verbs). There was a deviant production in terms of words order, lexical stress, prepositions and prefixes. Overall, it was found that grammaticality is affected by the quantity and quality of input the child receives in the weaker (heritage) language,

parents' level of education and their willingness to use, maintain and transmit Russian to their children and to develop their literacy in L1 Russian. There is also a correlation between macro-, micro-structure and grammaticality.

4-3 Stream 5B: Neverending History: New Historical Cinema in Russia: Panel

The Unholy Rus': Quality Television and Putin-era Memory Wars

Elena Prokhorova, College of William and Mary and Alexander Prokhorov, College of William and Mary

Alexander Veledinsky's TV series *The Sanctuary* (Obitel'), which premiered in May 2021 on Channel Russia and is based on Zakhar Prilepin's 2014 eponymous novel, takes one of the most notorious GULag camps, Solovki, as its subject and its setting. In our presentation we claim that the main representational strategy of the series is the consistent erasure of boundaries: between the past and the narrative present of Solovki; between the socio-political history of Stalin-era repressions and the Orthodox religious metanarrative of guilt, suffering and redemption; and, even more disturbingly, between the guards and the inmates. At the same time, *The Sanctuary* follows the trends of a global "quality" TV drama: high production values, complex and conflicted characters, genre hybridity, explicit treatment of sexuality, etc. Taking into account both of these strategies, our presentation examines *The Sanctuary* as a new type of Putin-era memory vehicle.

Imperial nostalgia in films like Andrei Kravchuk's *Union of Salvation* (2019)

Pavel Khazanov, Rutgers University

4-6 Russian, French and English Motifs in Multilingual Contexts

"C'est moi": On Sokurov's Russophone *Francoфонia* (2015)

David G. Molina, University of Chicago

At first glance, Aleksandr Sokurov's 2015 *Francoфонia* appears mistitled: a paean to Paris and the creation of the Louvre, the film seems to better suit the title Francophilia, perhaps especially considering that the text is predominantly in Russian. In this paper, I offer a reading of *Francoфонia* as Russian film, arguing that despite its glowing portrayal of the ways in which French language and culture were able to unite warring states around a common cause, that of preserving art – Count Metternich and Jacques Jaujard, like the characters of Renoir's *Grande Illusion*, are more alike than one might initially expect – the culture's failure to see the art of Bolshevik Russia as part of its own tradition brings about a tragic double standard in the conducting of war in the eastern front of the Second World War, one that is enormously costly for Soviet cities and museums. Through sound design, montage, and visual imagery, *Francoфонia* is, by dialectical negation, profoundly interested in the fate of the "The Russian Ark," the State Hermitage Museum, during the Leningrad blockade. In this reading, the

overwhelming respect shown by Nazi officials to the integrity of the Louvre and the city of Paris serves as ironic foil to German disregard for Russian contributions to European culture in the east.

Alternative Slavic Fantasy: The Case of Orson Scott Card

Larisa Fialkova, University of Haifa

Alternative Slavic fantasy is a creation of English-language writers on the basis of real or assumed Slavic folklore, separate from Slavic fantasy per se. Starting in 1989 with *Rusalka*, the first part of Cherryh's *The Russian* trilogy, it is still underway. Some authors created imaginary worlds, without direct links to Slavic history. The enemies and allies in these novels are also fictional. All contain signs of estranged Slavic world (e.g. Russia, Ukraine or Poland) from representation of language, coats of arms, architecture and personal names, to clothes, food, folk characters and/or beliefs. Inaccurate representations may signal not so much lack of knowledge as authors' choice (Fialkova 2020, Kitzen 2019). Others construct alternative Russian history in combination with accurate or alternative Slavic folklore. Orson Scott Card's *Enchanted* represents both trends. His novel is set in Soviet and post-Soviet Ukraine, the USA during the 1970s to 1990s and in the fictional state of Taina (*Mystery*), ruled by the invented King Matfei, in Rus of the everlasting 9th century. The protagonist is a professional folklorist. I argue that Card's quasi-Slavic folklore is in fact to a large extent constructed through the combination of *Sleeping beauty* with folklore of Jews from Muslim countries.

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Oscar and Roman: Salomé's Eccentric Intersectionality on Center Stage

Elizabeth Richmond-Garza, University of Texas at Austin

Moscow and London share global imperial centrality. At different times and in different ways, they each control (or have controlled) a network of cultural and ideological values, both reflecting the worlds they dominate and promoting cultural, aesthetic and ethical norms. In addition to this hegemonic affinity, however, they also share a potential for queer disruption. In 1891 and 1998 respectively, playwright and personality Oscar Wilde and director and personality Roman Viktiuk turn to the hybrid orientalism of the story of *Salomé* as offering a space for a gay Irish/Ukrainian intervention which epitomizes and critiques the potentials of both the theatrical stage and the historical moment. Each creates an artistic ellipticism whose multifocal configuration connects Dublin to London (and Paris) via Palestine and Lviv to Moscow via London. Just as Wilde's play was banned from the London stage, so too Viktiuk was drawn to creating a performance for the first time since 1917 of a work that was censored and excluded from the Soviet stage. Neither native born nor even provincial, their "eccentric" (in Yuri Lotman's terms) perspective on oppressively normative power is not abstract. Instead it is

embodied. Their engagements with the transgressive dynamics of gender and sexuality take place in specific locales and place specific bodies, those of the great actress Sarah Bernhardt and the accomplished dancer Dmitry Bozin, in motion before the eyes of the capital city. They anticipate José Muñoz's experience of dissidentification, offering the audience bodies that are desirable but also queer and other so as to interrupt a monolithic narrative of sameness and unitedness in favor of something more heteroglossic. Wilde's imagined but unstaged play, choreographically, chromatically and linguistically exuberant, awaited its full realization for almost a century, only to find it in downtown Moscow.

The Memory of Memory in Julian Barnes's *The Noise of Time*

Olga Zaslavsky, Harvard University

"The flies won't let me sleep." This is the phrase, used by Shostakovich to his beloved friend I. Glickman, a musicologist, who had eventually written extensively about his more illustrious friend. This constant insomnia and the protagonist's painful self-examination is what becomes the subject of Julian Barnes's "Cold War" portrait of Shostakovich, published in 2017.

In his interview to various outlets Julian Barnes admits his fascination with Russian literature and culture. He also admits his fascination with the "Artist and Power" topic — something hardly relevant in a democratic society and all too relevant for a totalitarian society.

In my paper, I will demonstrate how Barnes painstakingly delivers the details of the Soviet musical world and politics, in general, and of Shostakovich's world, in particular, for the Western reader through the voice of his protagonist. He creates a third-person narrative, in the manner of a cinematic voice-over, whereby he makes his main character go through many stages of fear, guilt, and self-loathing.

In some ways, Barnes' artist hero takes place next to the other famous artist characters in literature and cinema in the West European and Anglophone tradition of the previous century, such as Van Gogh and Michaelangelo in Irving Stone's *Lust for Life* (1934) *the Agony and the Ecstasy* (1961), respectively; Adrian Leverkühn in *Doctor Faustus* (1947), and Hendrick Hofgen in Klaus Mann's novel *Mephisto* (1936). Yet, Barnes's narrative voice-over is very much in tune with today's tendency to highlight and obscure historical memory by combining elements of fiction and non-fiction in the manner of Sebald and Maria Stepanova.

In my analysis, I will explore how the author manipulates the reader's perception of memory by relying on non-fictional documents about Shostakovich, and how the novel's start, its development, and denouement create a post-modern portrait of a tormented artist in a totalitarian world.

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4-7 Elena Guro: Feminist Revisions

“Elena Guro’s Female Eros at the Intersection of Culture and Nature”

Elena Poiata, Northwestern University

Poised between Symbolism and Futurism, Elena Guro is a seminal yet relatively unstudied figure in early 20th century Russian culture. As the only female futurist, she was keenly aware of the limitations imposed on her by a patriarchal society. This tension is reflected in her work in ways which warrant inquiry and will contribute to the limited body of Guro scholarship and to the examination of Russian literature from the perspective of gender and sexuality.

In the 1909 short story *Poryv*, this tension becomes an exploration of the interrelationship between female friendship, unity with nature, and artistic creation. Unlike in her life and much of her work, where Guro styles herself as a universal mother; in *Poryv*, maternity of any kind is conspicuously absent. Belonging, fulfilment, and inspiration are found in the spiritual interdependence of women and fostered by the natural environment. I argue that Guro selectively embraces the association of women with nature and of men with culture as defined by Sherry Ortner. However, in rejecting the biological imperatives of reproduction and domesticity, both she and her characters break the tethers of immanence to pursue transcendence. In *Poryv*, their relationship compels Emma and Eva to seek transcendence both through “masculine” culture, i.e., writing, and “feminine” communion. It transports them from the realm of “compulsory heterosexuality,” defined and limited by relationships to men, into what Adrienne Rich calls the “lesbian continuum” of “sharing of a rich inner life.” Their relationship is erotic in Audre Lorde’s sense: it is “an assertion of the life force of women; of that creative energy empowered” and blurs the distinctions between self and other, as defined by Jessica Benjamin. It shifts beyond the physical, into an atemporal, mythic dimension as they reach ultimate unity — what Ortner refers to as “the highest levels of the cultural process”.

“‘My Suffering is my Joy’. Masochism in Fyodor Sologub’s and Elena Guro’s writings”

Veronika Andrianova, Northwestern University

In his essay *Masochism: Coldness and Cruelty* (1967), Gilles Deleuze approaches the problem of masochism from a literary point of view, examining the narrative structure of Leopold von Sacher-Masoch’s and Marquis de Sade’s works. This paper applies Deleuze’s theory of masochism to Sologub’s *Petty Demon*, as well as selected writings by Guro. The analysis also demonstrates Sologub’s influence on Guro, previously not examined. In particular, Guro’s short story “Summer Kingdom” is interpreted as a bridge from Sologub’s masochistic poetics acquired by Guro to her own, inherently different from that of Sologub, and evident in the story “So Life goes”.

Deleuze's insights about the nature of masochistic language shed new light on Sologub's and Guro's texts. First, a reading through the lens of Deleuze's theory demonstrates that Sologub, often associated with sadism by scholars, created what Deleuze identifies as a masochistic narrative. Moreover, Deleuze's ideas allow for an unorthodox interpretation of Guro's short stories. Her female protagonists, generally regarded as victims of the patriarchal society, through Deleuze's concept of masochistic "humorism" can be understood rather as non-conformists hidden under the guise of victims.

An application of Deleuze's theory thus provides a counterintuitive and deeper understanding of Sologub's and Guro's work and contributes to the discussion of the Silver Age writers' problematic relationship with gender, body, and sexuality: their simultaneous denial of carnal matters, ambivalence towards gender, and their paradoxical placing of the body and gender in the middle of their poetics.

"The Transcendent Fragment: Elena Guro's Slippery Poetics of Subjectivity"

Matvei Yankelevich, Columbia University / School of the Arts

Elena Guro's most salient contribution to Russian Modernism is her embrace of the fragment as a unit of composition that thwarts narrative unity. This paper attempts to draw a connection between Guro's focus on fragments and formal variety in her books to her transcendentalist beliefs in the inherent, natural goodness and purity of the independent, self-reliant individual (corrupted by society, institutions, urban life), her ability to generate insight with little deference to the past, and the primary importance of subjective intuition over "objective" empiricism. The paper will trace the ways Guro's descriptions of the natural world embody ideas of independence, insight, and subjectivity, and how a transcendentalist reading affects the possibilities for translating her work.

"Grandmothers and Granddaughters: from the 'Amazons of the Revolution' to the 'Amazons of the Avant-Garde'. A Genealogical Study"

Nina Gurianova, Northwestern University

For the scholars of Russian avant-garde, the crucial truth located within the Guro sisters' (Elena and Ekaterina) engineered genealogy as revolutionary amazons is their inherited passion for the fight against any instance of violence or enslavement, for the freedom and social rights of those cast to the wayside, the "humiliated and insulted" of their society, and, most of all, the rights of women. They knew that this latter fight was more relevant than ever, as they were women who placed a higher emphasis on education and creative activity than on family duties. The sisters had chosen the "manly profession" of writing and, in so doing, tossed their anarchic challenge to the institutions of an authoritarian world.

4-8 Panel: Either/And: Economies of Desire and the Affixed Self

How a Georgian Poem Became a Soviet Yiddish "Song of Songs": Translations of Shota Rushtaveli's "Vepkhist'kao-sani"

Amelia Glaser, UC San Diego

In the 1930s and 40s, when Stalin's structures made it increasingly dangerous to discuss individual national minorities in the USSR, some Soviet and Soviet-aligned writers chose to highlight the struggles of other minority groups instead of their own. In his 1943 book, *Kavkaz* (The Caucasus), the American communist Yiddish literary critic Alexander Pomerantz calls Shota Rustaveli's "The Man in the Panther's Skin" ("Vepkhist'kao-sani," translated "Der oysgekleydter in tiger-fel"), originally written between 1196-1207, the "Georgian 'Song of Songs'." With this comparison, Pomerantz engages in what Lawrence Venuti has called a "specular process:" he allows a translation from a source language to reflect the national concerns of the target language, in this case Yiddish. Pomerantz, emphasizing Rustaveli's motifs of friendship and love, informs his readers that the Soviet Union celebrated the Georgian poet's 750-year jubilee in 1937, noting that "The Man in Panther's Skin," "thanks to the national politics of the Soviet power, [has become] the property of all Soviet peoples." Pomerantz's comparison of the Georgian epic to Biblical Hebrew text demonstrates how communist writers obeyed the imperative to reject their own ethnic and cultural traditions and create a literature that was national in form only but purely internationalist in content, and simultaneously explored race and ethnicity through other nations' traditions. My primary source for this talk will be the Soviet Yiddish poet Moyshe Kashtshevatski's translation of Rustaveli's Georgian poem, Itsik Fefer's Yiddish poems about Georgia, and Alexander Pomerantz's *Kavkaz*. These texts about the Caucasus in the 1930s and 1940s suggest that at a time of increasing vigilance against nationalism, Soviet and Soviet-aligned writers found ways of using discussions of Soviet internationalism to engage in covert discussions of the specifically national, and thereby develop home-grown anti-racisms that moved beyond the forms that had been instrumentalized at that moment by the Soviet state.

Tonke, Tsalke, and the Tractor: Gender and Soviet-Jewish Identity in *The Zelmenyaners*
Elaine Wilson, Columbia University

This paper considers the gendered dimensions and tensions of Soviet-Jewish identity during the first two decades of Bolshevik rule as they are represented in Moyshe Kulbak's Soviet Yiddish novel *The Zelmenyaners*. First published in serial from 1929 - 1935, Kulbak's text explores how a Jewish family on the outskirts of Minsk grapples with the social and ideological volatility of the early Soviet era, a time when open discussion of gender equality, sexual freedom, and social progress promised greater economic and social mobility for Soviet citizens. However, the pluralistic possibilities of the 1920s were gradually overcome by totalizing and penetrative state policies (collectivization and industrialization) and the rise of high Stalinist culture. This paper raises a magnifying glass to the spectrum of Soviet-Jewish selfhood represented in *The Zelmenyaners* to argue that its deconstruction of traditional gender roles and, consequently, a binary understanding of gender, conveys the variable, pluralistic potentialities of the early Soviet period and emerges as a literary site of resistance to Stalinist chauvinism. Drawing breath from Elissa Bemporad's historical portrait of Soviet Jewish Minsk (2013), Jeffrey Shandler's theory of Queer Yiddishkeit (2006) and Sarah Ahmed's *Queer Phenomenology* (2006), this study discusses the literal and metaphorical spaces between the binaries of male and female, tradition and progress, and concomitantly examines their potential for cultural exploration—and exploitation—before the implementation of hetero-normative masculine narratives that would become a hallmark of Stalinist socialist realist literature.

“Hers Was a Family of Touch”: Desire, Intimacy, and Postmemory in Gordana Kuić’s *Balkan Trilogy*

Alex Pekov, Columbia University

This paper studies the intimations of desire as a driving force of narration, identity preservation and performance, as well as its postmemorial literary reconstruction in Gordana Kuić’s autofictional family novel *Miris kiše na Balkanu* (“The Scent of the Rain in the Balkans”), the first volume of *Balkanska trilogija*. Kuić renders the maternal figure of Estera Salom, a prolific and “inexhaustibly patient” narrator of Jewish history for her five daughters, as a repository of the oral archive of Sephardi lineage, written down and out in the novel. The youngest daughter Bjanki constantly longs for her mother’s protective embrace, while remaining wary of exploring the uncharted terrain of a man’s perilous caress. The narrator deems the Saloms primarily “a family of touch,” in which the words seem to arrive later. The tactile thus operates as the pre-verbal so that the immediacy of touch comes to the fore as anterior and antecedent to any subsequent verbality. Playing upon Ann Laura Stoler’s term “the intimate” from *Carnal Knowledge and Imperial Power*, I argue that the narration in Kuić is ignited by the intimate and the intimations of female subjectivities. The novel also showcases “intermarriage,” scorned at by the matriarch Estera as *vringuensa* (“shame” in Judeo-Spanish), as it relates to the Bosnian Sephardi women’s lifeworlds, located on the crossroads of faiths, tongues—but also hearts—intertwined. Finally, another Salom sister named Laura ardently collects Judeo-Spanish romances and proverbs in that she performs the (auto)-ethnographic and linguo-“conservationist” work of a woman Talmudist and a postmemorial agent. Accordingly, these examples underscore the pivotal role of desire, the intimate, and libidinal investments in my reading of Kuić’s work as a specimen of the contemporary Jewish autofictional writing from Southeast Europe in the broader context of postmemorial art.

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 19, 2022

Session 5: 8:00am-10:00am

5-1 : Stream 6A: Data, Technology, and Language Acquisition: Panel

A FLAIR for Russian: grammatically intelligent web search for learners and teachers

Robert Reynolds, Brigham Young University

Authentic texts have many benefits for language learning, but identifying appropriate texts can be time-consuming. We introduce a new Russian module for FLAIR (Chinkina & Meurers, 2015), a free and open-source tool that enhances web search with grammatical analysis, allowing teachers and learners to find online texts (1) on virtually any topic; and (2) containing target grammatical constructions selected by the user. We briefly describe the natural language processing resources we developed to support the Russian module, and then demonstrate how to use the website to find your own texts.

Videoconferencing as a mediating tool: in-class interaction and learner autonomy

Snezhana Zheltoukhova, Stetson University

The study investigates the impact of videoconferencing on in-class interaction and learner autonomy. Particularly, it employs student surveys and instructor reflection journals to indicate the major affordances for autonomous learning facilitated in interactive two-way videoconferencing distance courses. While students at the host campus receive face-to-face instruction, the remote campus students and a teacher assistant communicate with the host campus via videoconference.

Non-pedagogical apps for group work at Elementary level

Ekaterina Burvikova, UNH

Group work is an essential part of class. As a very effective component of cooperative learning (McCafferty, S. G. (2006), it engages involvement, collaboration and collective usage of the language mimicking natural conversation. Technology based group tasks (for example, in Flipgrid or Padlet) provide us with certain frames and workflows that are embedded in the selected technology. Whereas there are a lot of apps specifically created to design group work in a collaborative manner, we propose using non-pedagogical apps (Instagram, Snapchat) that are very familiar to our students outside of the classroom. They can be used for group activities such as in-person or digital scavenger hunts and encourage collaboration and interaction between group members in the target language.

Digital Social Reading (DSR) in the Intermediate Russian Classroom

Kit Pribble, University of California at Berkeley

One of the central challenges of the intermediate L2 classroom is helping students move from basic familiarity with grammatical structures to proficient engagement with authentic cultural materials. In particular, intermediate students often express apprehension when first confronted with longer literary texts in the target language. Works of literature can appear daunting to students who are accustomed to working with shorter, simplified texts such as those found in most beginner textbooks.

The goal of this study is to determine whether digital social reading (DSR) tools, such as Perusall, can aid in the development of students' literacy skills in an intermediate (fourth semester) Russian class. Perusall is a digital learning platform that allows students to collectively view, highlight, and annotate parts of a text. Students can identify and define vocabulary and grammatical patterns, answer each other's questions, and respond to activities and discussion prompts left by the instructor. By promoting social reading, Perusall increases students' engagement with literary texts while also removing some of the apprehension that students feel when asked to sit down on their own with a lengthy passage of authentic text in the target language.

I will be using Perusall in my Fall 2021 fourth-semester Russian class to teach short stories by Dostoevsky, Chekhov, and Zoshchenko. I will experiment with a range of tools and assignment types offered through Perusall and will ask students to fill out qualitative surveys at the end of each unit to reflect on the affordances and drawbacks of the platform. I hope to illustrate that Perusall and other DSR tools have a place in the modern L2 classroom.

5-2 : Stream 7A: Uneven & Combined Development

The Uneven Modernity of Niko Pirosmani

Harsha Ram, University of California, Berkeley

Georgia's most celebrated twentieth-century painter Niko Pirosmani (1862-1918) experienced a belated and largely posthumous rise to fame. The recovery of Pirosmani's legacy is in fact the story of two distinct interpretive aesthetic models competing but also colluding in the artist's canonization: the *cosmopolitan* discourse of modernist primitivism, and a *nationalizing* discourse of local particularity. On the eve of World War I representatives of the Russian avant-garde, followed closely by central figures in Georgia's national revival, sought to interpret and recode the textural and thematic "unevenness" of Pirosmani's canvases as a naïve yet artful combination of historically distinct forms. The "discovery" of Pirosmani serves as a paradigmatic instance of a vernacular practice recuperated in the service of a modernizing discourse on art, one that elevated a local figure existing on the margins of urban society to an emblem of the syncretic cultural capacities of a nation and a region.

Development and Belatedness in Abdulrauf Fitrat's *Tales of an Indian Traveler*

Emily Laskin, NYU

This paper examines one of the polemics of Abdulrauf Fitrat, the book *Bayanat-i Sayyah-i Hindi* [*Tales of an Indian Traveler*, 1911]. Written originally in Persian just as liberal reformist thought gained ground in pre-Soviet Central Asia, the book provides exhaustive descriptions of life of Fitrat's native Bukhara through the eyes of a fictional traveler from India. Fitrat found nearly every aspect of life in his native Central Asia inferior to recent European achievements in governance, medicine, philosophy. And yet he also strove for his region's independence from imperialism and colonization.

This paper explores the fraught relationship between Fitrat's vision of his native Central Asia as developmentally "behind" other parts of the world, and his strict vision of the terms on which development should proceed. I pay particular attention to a constellation of literary-political issues: choice of language (Persian was the prestige literary language of a region which encompassed and stretched beyond Central Asia); literary form (the travelogue was closely associated with imperial expansion); and political geography (Fitrat was interested in locating Central Asia in relation to regional and global political power). These issues, taken together, reveal Fitrat's concern with Central Asia's relationship to the broader Muslim and Asian worlds, as well as a self-reflexive tendency to compare Central Asia's social, economic, religious, and political situations to those in other neighboring regions. In critiquing his own society while using a traveler from the east, rather than the west (or Russia in the north) to provide an evaluative gaze, Fitrat's *Tales of an Indian Traveler* represents a Central Asia that looked both inward, toward its own social problems and developments, and outward, toward its connections to neighboring regions and empires. Ultimately this paper argues that Fitrat, who would go on to help establish Soviet socialism in Central Asia, anticipated some of the issues attendant on a cultural transition from imperial periphery to "modern" state.

Trotsky, the Self, and the Cell: Uneven and Combined Development in Intellectual History

Nicholas Bujalski, Oberlin College

Over the course of the long nineteenth century, no Eurasian state imprisoned its internal political opponents at the scale of the Romanov Empire. It was in this context that, from 1851 to 1905, Russian revolutionary actors developed a rich tradition of carceral life-writing: memoirs capable of imparting political legibility to spaces of autocratic discipline. In my work, I trace how this genre form – as a particular “technology of the self”, as a particular set of reproducible models and tropes, as a particular shared understanding of the cell and the world – grew to wide prominence in Russian revolutionary political cultures.

Until, quite quickly, the genre fell into decline.

After decades of investment in the form of the prison memoir, how are we to understand the fall of this political aesthetics at the turn of the twentieth century: the rapid move away from individual accounts of cellular suffering and struggle? This talk explores the reasons for this shift – as well as its wider historical significance – through the life and work of L.D. Trotsky.

Imprisoned in St. Petersburg from 1905 to 1907, a renewed engagement with Trotsky’s own prison writings reveals a symptomatic departure from the conceptual frameworks, epistemological horizons, and visions of the self undergirding earlier memoirs of incarceration. Furthermore, I argue that Trotsky’s own theoretical work can give us a key to understanding the logic of this shift – that the history of broad changes in revolutionary political cultures can be best grasped through the utilization of a Theory of Uneven and Combined Development in the discipline of intellectual history.

Uneven and Combined Devices: Shklovsky's revolutionary memoirs

Dominick Lawton, University of California Berkeley

From 1919 to 1922, the arch-Russian Formalist Viktor Shklovsky wrote and published his memoirs of the Revolution and Civil War, *A Sentimental Journey* (*Sentimental'noe puteshestvie*). This text is clearly 'motivated' by its author's experience of, and participation in, world-historical events, yet echoes the sentiment of Shklovsky's theoretical output from the same years in upholding creative autonomy and literature's independence from social developments. The text, part of which narrates Shklovsky's involvement in organized anti-Bolshevik activity with his fellow members of the Socialist Revolutionary (SR) party, also polemicizes with the Russian tradition of socially engaged criticism. This polemic exerts a decisive influence on the form of Shklovsky's text. Just as Shklovsky repeatedly asserts that his generation should have focused on making biographies rather than making history, *A Sentimental Journey* fragments the linear and implicitly teleological narrative form that characterizes modern historiography, turning instead to a centrifugal, aphoristic style which highlights the circumstances of its own production. Yet this deformation, perhaps contrary to Shklovsky's intent, ultimately links the text back to its historical moment. With reference to the work of Hayden White, I show how Shklovsky's fragmentation of historical narrative produces a paratactic form which recapitulates pre-modern paradigms of historical writing (like the chronicle and the annals) within the framework of a modernist memoir -- producing an echo of the notion of Uneven and Combined Development advanced by Shklovsky's adversary Trotsky, precisely on the level of form itself.

5-3 Art Forms in the Language Classroom

Theater for Language Teaching and Learning

Alena Makarava, DLIFLI

The theater project aims to promote Russian learning through a literary and cultural approach by performing various Russian authors' literary pieces. L2 learning through acting allows meaningful, inspirational, and motivational learning. Motivation is known to influence the execution of conducts that produce learning, acting, and performance in L2 is directly linked to increased intrinsic motivation among language learners.

The presenter will discuss incorporating a theater studio as part of extracurricular activities, which motivated students and gave them a sense of accomplishment conducting performances both in verse and prose.

The presenter will share how the production of the Russian fairytale "The Frog Princess" and Krylov's fables helps students understand acting techniques and engages students studying Russian as a foreign language in learning about various aspects of the Russian culture through visual arts.

Students applied skills of awareness and collaboration as members of an ensemble. They demonstrated an understanding of Russian folk culture and learned how to express themselves creatively. The presenter will show practical ways of enhancing student learning by creating performance and demonstrating an exciting way to strengthen Russian online learning.

The presenter will describe theatrical elements as effective stimulation for acquiring communicative skills in Russian. Students' feedback will be shared to assess the level of success and efficacy in implementing theater rehearsals in the language learning environment and see how it can help achieve learning goals and objectives established by the Defense Language Institute.

Making Russian, Slavic, and post-Soviet Studies Hip: Teaching Contemporary Histories, Politics, and Cultures through Rap

Veronika Williams, University of Arizona

This paper reports on how Russian and other post-Soviet contemporary histories can be taught by analyzing the development of rap and hip-hop cultures as artifact systems in a general education course on contemporary histories in post-Soviet region. This course became a part of curriculum of a Slavic department at a large Southwestern university. There has been a recent increased interest from international media in the Russian rap music scene and various rap artists in terms of their relationship to Russian politics and power (Ewell). However, there is a need for more attention to the topic from academia. Russian rap artists actively participated and expressed their opinions in relations to Putin's regime and to 2021 protests in Russia. However, the popularity of rap with Russian youth and young adults also made this genre of music a desirable tool for propaganda for the Russian current government. Russian President Putin himself spoke about the role of rap and rap artists in modern Russian culture approving some of the artists and condemning others, usually those with opposing views. In particular, the course focuses on the global phenomenon of rap music and Hip Hop as it enters and adapts to local contexts mainly in post-Soviet Russia, but also Ukraine, Uzbekistan, and Kazakhstan. Additionally, the course introduces hip hop development in Serbia and Albania. Selected rap pieces introduce topics of

post-Soviet cultural shifts, protest and propaganda, nationalism, corruptions, racism, minorities' voices, women rights, and feminism amongst many others.

The structure of the organization of the material in the text of the genre "blog" and the creation of educational blogs in the context of online learning

Larisa Moskvitina, Rice University

The article describes the texts of "blogs", which have their own characteristic features, namely the brevity of information, communicative focus, in order to interest the reader / viewer and get feedback. Based on the structure of the blog text, the structure of work in a student audience in the study of a foreign language as a second is proposed, which can be used in online learning, as well as student's individual work in conditions of a limited number of academic hours. The article describes the stages of work for an educational project, analyzes the results of students work.

This pedagogical approach will help practicing teachers organize grammatical and lexical material according to a thematic principle, show the principles of work to increase the student's vocabulary, propose methods for activating communicative teaching methods by formulating questions, forming intentions to request an opinion, and initiating a discussion.

This project helps students were creating a user profile, publishing new videos regularly, creating texts that will be interesting for as many people as possible. The project "My Blog" gave students the opportunity for self-presentation and creative self-expression using the free form provided by a new language.

5-5 New Research on Russian Symbolism

In Between, Above and Beyond: East, West, and Middle East in Solov'ev's Poetics

Melvin Thomas, Princeton University

Vladimir Solov'ev sought to reframe the nineteenth-century debate about Russia's national consciousness and destiny in light of his grand vision of universal reconciliation and unity. Referring to Christian Churches originally but later more broadly to entire civilizations, the principal impediment to this vision was the division between the East and the West. While much scholarship has examined Solov'ev's attitudes towards the West, Russia, and the Far East, this paper aims to identify an overlooked party in Solov'ev's thought: the Middle East.

This paper will analyze two of Solov'ev's poems, "Ex Oriente Lux" (1890) and "Pan-Mongolism" (1894), as well as the ending of his prose "A Short Tale of the Antichrist" (1899). "Ex Oriente Lux" uses the military and cultural history of antiquity to posit and evaluate three forms of unity between the East and the West. Interestingly, what Solov'ev means by "the East" is quite complex as he seems to carve out, on the basis of geographical, historical, and religious factors, a "Middle East" distinct from the "Far East." This distinction proves warranted – whereas "Ex Oriente Lux" surveyed the Middle East in antiquity, "Pan-Mongolism" presents two new battlegrounds that are geographically and spiritually situated between the Far East and the West: the Byzantine and Russian Empires. The significance of the Middle East in Solov'ev's thought reaches its zenith in "A Short Tale of the Antichrist," at the conclusion of which the Christian Churches are reconciled and Godmanhood commences. I conclude by arguing that the

ending of “A Short Tale” constitutes a reconfiguration, rather than a rejection, of Solov’ev’s Slavophile view of Russia’s special mission for the redemption of the world.

Reaping What One Sows: Agricultural Myth in Viacheslav Ivanov's *Tantal*

Gabriel Nussbaum, Princeton University

Viacheslav Ivanov is well-known as a Symbolist poet and literary theorist, but relatively little attention has been paid to his activity as a dramatist. Ivanov’s first tragedy, *Tantal* (published in 1905) was warmly received by contemporaries like Andrei Bely and Aleksandr Blok, and is worthy of renewed attention. This paper will analyze Tantalus’s opening monologue and the paired climactic monologues delivered by Tantalus and his son Broteas. In each of these scenes, motifs of planting and harvesting emerge within the characters’ speech and take on symbolic significance. Agricultural language becomes part of a symbolic gestalt that associates the image of the earth with parenthood, divine retribution, and a Dionysian understanding of death and resurrection. I conclude by showing how this imagery dovetails with Ivanov’s broader theoretical claims about Symbolism and mythopoesis.

The Symbolists’ Dostoevsky

Chloe Kitinger, Rutgers University, New Brunswick

My paper focuses on the influence of Russian Symbolist criticism on Dostoevsky’s “afterlife” in scholarship and theory, in both Russian and Anglophone traditions. I suggest that the lingering aura of the Symbolists’ Dostoevsky, understood as an aesthetic prophet with the potential to revolutionize both literature and the world, sheds light on Dostoevsky’s ongoing mystique throughout the twentieth century and into the present day. I will concentrate especially on how prominent Symbolist accounts of Dostoevsky shaped seminal writings of Mikhail Bakhtin, whose critical and philosophical prestige often occludes his embeddedness in Russian and Soviet critical traditions. Through Bakhtin’s far-reaching readings of Dostoevsky, the Symbolist dream of “life-creation” has found a surprisingly tenacious foothold in contemporary novel theory.

5-6 In Between Politics and Literature in Soviet and post-Soviet Times

Aesthetic and Linguistic Defamiliarization in the Soviet Communal Apartment: An Analysis of Abram Tertz’s “Pkhents”

Isabella Palange, University of Wisconsin-Madison

Abram Tertz’s short literary work, “Pkhents,” centers around a being from another planet, who assumes the guise of a semi-hermitical hunchback living in hiding in a Soviet communal apartment. Tertz defamiliarizes the apartment through the eyes of his alien visitor, blurring the line between person and object, beauty and deformity. This paper will apply anthropological materials and the author’s own reflections on aesthetics found in his and Igor Golomstock’s survey, *Pikasso*, to analyze these reconceptualized aesthetic standards. Just as Picasso broke down the human image into its most basic units and questioned their assigned value, so does Tertz, first on the aesthetic, and then, the linguistic level. The work culminates in the narrator’s outcry of despair at his estrangement from his native ways of life and in preparation for his reassimilation into them. By rendering this passage as incomprehensible noises mixed with

human words and onomatopoeic sounds, this paper posits that Tertz successfully deconstructs these words, as Picasso did with visual units, thereby allowing their accepted value to be called into question. Thus, Tertz's short work emerges as an active rejection of the slogans and phrases promoted in the Socialist Realism style and as an attempt to adhere to a new literary style that would "not interfere with the work of thought and imagination" (Tertz 1960, 94), but in its abstraction, depict the world as it is.

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Russian Intelligentsia: Importance or Impotence in Facing the Pandemic. Vladimir Sorokin's *The Blizzard*

Tetyana Dzyadevych, New College of Florida

Through short stories by Anton Chekhov and Mikhail Bulgakov the image of the county doctor as one who runs to help, and comfort frightened people has become a perennial character within classical Russian literature. Another common cliché about Russian culture is the belief in the special moral role and almost spiritual mission of the Russian intelligentsia. This belief entails the idea that the best, most educated people have sacrificed their comfortable life and have "gone to the people" with a sacral mission to enlighten them. They are held to bring the truth about life in order to awaken people's class consciousness. In fairness, should it be noted that the two authors mentioned above, Chekhov and Bulgakov, did much to debunk this cliché by unveiling the truth about life in the Russian provinces. Vladimir Sorokin's novel *The Blizzard* (2010) is an intertextual game rooted in Russian classical literature. The novel takes the form of a travelogue during a time of pandemics. Thus, it is timely for the contemporary global scene. Despite this contemporary relevance, the Russian original appeared when the global pandemic of Covid-19 was far away. Even Bill Gates' famous 2015 warning about the forthcoming pandemic occurred five years after Sorokin published his zombie-pandemic novel, coincidentally with publishing the English translation of the novel. In my paper, I will show that Sorokin's *The Blizzard* claims not only the weakness of the Russian intelligence (represented by Garin, a district doctor, full of self-importance about his special mission) but also that they can be very dangerous to others, first of all to common people, who live a simple life. An example of this danger may be seen in Garin's actions which cause the death of Crouper (his coachman, and simple villager), just as many essential workers in the time of pandemics have died due of the thoughtless decisions of the

leading elites. In my text, I shall address also the political context of the novel and Sorokin's use of the dystopian genre.

Toward a Minor Literature, Back in the USSR

Cassio de Oliveira, Portland State University

In this paper, I will revisit the question of a Soviet minor literature in Russian. The concept of minor literature has acquired renewed importance in the Russian context in light of recent interventions that highlight the historically and geographically contingent character of Russian cultures (Platt). In their seminal work on the theme, Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari see the oeuvre of Franz Kafka as a manifestation of a minor literature written in "Prague German," thereby emphasizing the "deterritorialized" character of language employed in "minor" (including colonial) settings. Notwithstanding the heuristic potential of this theory, however, critics have found issue with its assessment of Kafka's artistic intentions (Corngold). I discuss how the discontinuities originating from the communist collapse, and the potential limitations of Deleuze and Guattari's framework, affect the conceptualization of a Soviet minor literature. My analysis will focus on two late Soviet works written by a "non-Russian" (Haber) and Russian author (from Moscow) respectively: the Abkhazian Fazil' Iskander's famous cycle *Sandro iz Chegema*; and Iurii Dombrovskii's two-part novel *Khranitel' drevnosti* and *Fakul'tet nenuzhnykh veshchei*, set in Kazakhstan, where Dombrovskii had lived in forced internal exile and in labor camps.

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5-7 Panel: Construction of Memory in Soviet and Early Post-Soviet Literature

Futile revolt: Bronze Horseman references in the poetry of Elena Shvarts, Sergey Stratanovskii, and Viktor Krivulin

Iiona Sotnikova, University of Wisconsin-Madison

The unofficial Leningrad poets sought to reconnect and continue the pre-revolutionary literary tradition and distance themselves from the official Soviet discourse. However, if to rephrase Theodor W. Adorno's argument from "On Lyric Poetry and Society," the contemporary ideas for the poet's society penetrate to their writing through language. The Bronze Horseman did not only adopt past literary tradition but accumulated a plethora of interpretations in its textual aura. Thus, engaging with the poema, the Leningrad unofficial poets inevitably encountered the complexity of the superimposed interpretations of the pre-revolutionary literary tradition and Soviet literary canons. This paper will discuss this complexity in connection with the archetypal plotline of rebellion.

“Who Are We and Where Are We Going?”: The Reflection on Past and Present in Soviet and Early Post-Soviet Alternate Histories.

Alexandra Portice, Middlebury College

As a Russian journalist Konstantin Frumkin puts it, the genre of Alternate History in Russia has become a means to “collectively meditate on the national past” - the task all the most daunting during the “epidemic of historical lunacy” of late 1980s-early 1990s. In a situation when neither the authoritative social institutions nor any other political force was willing to provide a sufficient theoretical framework in regards to the Soviet and Imperial past, Alternate History offered convenient tools for reflecting on the past and present of the country, and many prominent Russian authors were quick to give it a try. This paper analyzes the Alternate History stories and novellas written in 1988-1994 by Tatiana Tolstaya, Alexander Bushkov, Viktor Pelevin and Vyacheslav Rybakov, and focuses on topics of History, Memory, and national identity.

The Memory of Non-Existence: Space and Post-Memory in Girshovich’s “Prais”

Assel Almuratova, University of Wisconsin-Madison

This paper addresses the theme of post-memory in the novel “Prais” by Leonid Girshovich. Written in 1988 and published ten years later in 1998, the novel is centered on the would-be deportation of the Jewish population to the Far East during the Soviet anti-Semitic campaign of the early 1950s, and the life of a community of deportees in their new location. The exiled had to share the settlement with fictional indigenous people – Fizhmy. This paper explores what happens to the memory of the past life in the community that is isolated from the rest of the world. Furthermore, through the experiences of the main character Leontii Prais, a Jewish boy born and raised in Fizhma, this paper discusses how the second-generation of the deportees are affected by the narratives of the past, to what part their memories are imaginary, and how these memories collapse when the character meets the outside world for the first time.

5-9 Panel: The Lyric Pact: Poets and Their Readers

Lyric (Im)pacts: Gavrila Derzhavin and His First Readers

Erica Camisa Morale, University of Southern California

This paper explores the concept of “lyric pact,” which reflects the nexus of the expectations that authors inspire in their readers through their lyrics and the previously acquired experiences of the readers who approach the texts. The paper is divided into two parts. The first section, building on the works of scholars like Antonio Rodriguez and Daria Khitrova, considers the broad implications of the “lyric pact” in the relationships between lyricists and their interlocutors. Indeed, identifying the “lyric pact” operating in a given time allows us to delineate the specific concept of the lyric in a particular period and contributes to our understanding of lyric as a genre.

The second section of the paper presents a case study, reconstructing the “lyric pact” in the lyric theory and practice of Gavrila Derzhavin (1743-1816). How does Derzhavin conceive of lyric poetry? Is his conception respected in his lyric practice? Does it correspond to coeval readers’ expectations? These questions are answered by comparing Derzhavin’s “Reflection on Lyric

Poetry or on the Ode” (1811-15) and readers’ reactions to “God” (1780-84) and “My Idol” (1794). In the “Reflections,” the figures of the poet and of the prophet are essentially merged and the public is addressed as both “readers” and “listeners.” Although the Orthodox Church criticized “God” because the notion of the divinity it expressed contradicted Orthodox dogma, coeval readers like Ivan Lopukhin and Fedor Kliucharev praised the ode’s author for his originality. For them, the conditions of the lyric pact had been fulfilled. Starting from similar reactions by Russian eighteenth-century readers—which constituted the first reading public in the Russian Empire, albeit socially delimited and restricted in size—the paper defines the notion of “lyric pact” and highlights its inner workings in connection with the work of Derzhavin.

The Lyric Pact and Decembrist Exiles

Emily Wang, University of Notre Dame

Daniil Kharms frequently included notable historical figures in his work, placing them in ridiculous contexts which disrupted established cultural hierarchies. A prime example of this practice can be found in his unfinished 1927 play *Comedy of the City of Petersburg*, which features the emperor Nicholas II as one of its most prominent characters. The play takes place in an ambiguous timeline, encompassing the decades preceding and following the 1917 Revolution; Nicholas is thus suspended between his life as emperor and his death as a prisoner of the Bolsheviks.

This paper explores Kharms’s depiction of Nicholas, analyzing the insights it offers into questions of Russian sovereignty, history, and memory. My interpretation of this version of Nicholas is based in Kharms’s decision to parallel him with the city of Saint Petersburg, as both emperor and capital are thrown into doubt and confusion amidst the Bolshevik takeover. In this play, the Revolution and the subsequent transformation of Saint Petersburg into Leningrad serve as an act of severing, cutting off the city and its residents from the rest of the country and their own history. I claim that this spatial, temporal, and institutional isolation and disorientation are conveyed through the characterization of Nicholas, who alternates between states of self-awareness and amnesia, hubris and shame. His inconsistency and uncertainty are reflections of an emotional state Kharms ascribes to Saint Petersburg as a whole, in an unusually pointed commentary on post-Revolution life which also serves as his contribution to the Saint Petersburg canon: the old empire may have been destroyed along with its emperor, but its memory, though it may be weak, is more difficult to erase.

The Lyric Pact and the City: Moscow Poetry

Ainsley Morse, Dartmouth College

In Trotsky’s *The History of the Russian Revolution*, the theory of uneven and combined development is most readily applied to Trotsky’s analysis of how the Russian Empire, a relatively backward country both politically and economically, could become the most progressive country in the world, and the harbinger of world socialism. It is a theory which mainly concerns economics and politics. However, the question remains to be asked, how does Trotsky in *The History* apply the theory of uneven and combined development to revolutionary Russia as it existed as a symbol producing mechanism? How can Russia, as a supposedly “delayed” society, express its accelerated development through the accelerated production of symbols? In *The History*, Trotsky proposes two main tendencies which dictate the production of

revolutionary symbols. On the one hand, the revolution presents all events in a symbolic, and one might even say, literary form. In a sense, the revolution expresses itself via the overproduction of symbols. On the other hand, this tendency, and the tendency for the revolution itself to be metaphorically related to natural phenomena (avalanches, boiling water, explosions, etc...) present a certain danger. Symbols and metaphors turn into clichés and semantically empty slogans. The seemingly revolutionary acts of metaphorically uniting the social and natural sciences, and of extending said metaphors by portraying the revolution as a type of science fiction conceal conservative tendencies which seek to eliminate the human element from history's "mass dramas." These conclusions are reached by placing Trotsky's comments on revolutionary symbolism as they are found in *The History* within the context of the debates which took place between the Marxists and the Formalists in the 1920s, and by extending that context to the pre-revolutionary philosophical debates which took place within the Bolshevik Party between Vladimir Lenin and Alexander Bogdanov.

Session 6: 10:15am-12:00pm

6-1 Stream 6B: Data, Technology, and Language Acquisition: Roundtable

Encouraging vocabulary - statistics, suggestions, and sample sentences

Linc Jepson

We will share results from our attempts to encourage student vocabulary growth, through the following three means.

Statistics - Helping students visualize the words they already know, using word frequency lists, also reveals the words they do not know. This may be both motivational and also help to fill holes.

Sample Sentences - Providing target words, which students are studying, in sample sentences may help students retain words more quickly, while also discovering new words.

Suggestions - Intelligently suggesting words that students might want to learn (or might already know) based upon words they have indicated they already know, may encourage further vocabulary growth.

Anonymized student-data will be shared from the ALP platform.

Mobile technology in the Russian language classroom

Katya Nemtchinova, Seattle Pacific University

A rapid development of mobile technologies creates new opportunities for students to learn inside and outside the classroom and opens a range of exciting possibilities for collaborative language learning as well as contextualized and personalized instruction (Peng, Jager, and Lowie, 2020). Recognizing students' needs that stem from the ever-growing role of smartphones in our lives, teachers should be versed in the affordances that mobile devices and applications offer their classroom. And yet, despite research findings describing mobile devices as having a

generally positive impact on students learning, instructors view them as disruptive items not to be used during the lessons (Churchill, 2020). How can mobile technology complement and enhance the teaching and learning of Russian? How can instructors integrate mobile devices and applications into the syllabus? Which specific digital resources can be used in the Russian language classroom and how? This presentation will try to answer these and other questions by exploring how existing methodologies and activities can be transferred to a new mobile environment. From smart phone applications, texting, and phone cameras to truly interactive activities immediately applicable to student needs, the presenter will demonstrate how the mobile tools that students carry with them all the time can support Russian language learning and practice.

Churchill, N. (2020) Mobile technologies and teacher readiness. *Educational Media International*, 57(3), 183-186.

Peng, H., Jager, S., & Lowie, W. (2021). A person-centered approach to L2 learners' informal mobile language learning. *Computer Assisted Language Learning*, DOI: 10.1080/09588221.2020.1868532

Using Praat software in teaching Russian pronunciation

Ala Simonchyk, University of Mississippi

Providing corrective feedback is one of the most important aspects of teaching pronunciation. Second language (L2) learners cannot fully rely on their own perception of L2 contrasts to identify their mistakes due to the influence of their native phonological categories. For example, American English learners of Russian experience difficulty producing, as well as perceiving the difference between plain and palatalized consonants. Therefore, in order to develop accurate pronunciation learners need immediate negative evidence to adjust their articulations (Saito & Lyster 2012). As a rule, the teacher is the main and often times the only source of feedback, which limits learners' ability to work on their pronunciation autonomously. This talk will demonstrate how Praat software (Boersma & Weenink 2021) was incorporated in an intensive Russian language program to teach pronunciation and provide feedback to students on their production of target L2 sounds and intonation. Praat is a free software that is widely used by professional linguists for acoustic analysis. Throughout the course, students were taught how to identify discrepancies between their pronunciation and that of Russian native speakers by relying on the visual representation of speech that Praat provides and use it as corrective feedback to improve their own production. Students responded positively to the use of this software in class by stating that it lessened their anxiety about making mistakes and allowed them to practice their pronunciation in the comfort of their home.

References:

Boersma, P. & Weenink, D. (2021). Praat: doing phonetics by computer [Computer program]. Version 6.1.51, retrieved 22 July 2021 from <http://www.praat.org/>

Saito, K., & Lyster, R. (2012). Effects of form-focused instruction and corrective feedback on L2 pronunciation development of /ɹ/ by Japanese learners of English. *Language learning*, 62(2), 595-633.

6-2 Stream 7B: Uneven & Combined Development

Grafting the Actual: Chinese Readings of Vissarion Belinsky and the Question of National Development

Roy Chan, University of Oregon

I explore how the Chinese reading and reception of nineteenth-century critic Vissarion Belinsky in the twentieth century attempted to translate the category of actuality (deistvitel'nost') into China, with its clear connections to the aesthetic mode of realism, and especially under the rule of the People's Republic of China. Chinese thinkers reading of Belinsky recapitulated the dynamics of Belinsky's reading of Western Europe and highlighted the complex and anachronistic ways of articulating one nation's sense of actuality within a global frame of multiple nations, each progressing in its own developmental trajectory. Considering Chinese responses to Belinsky, I seek a speculative understanding of realism's temporality, both as representation of one's indigenous situation, but also thoroughly mediated through citation of another nation's experience. Realism, via Western Europe to Russia, and then to China, exhibits a recursive, dialectical temporal dynamic of both immanent, native unfolding and external, transnational adoption; the task consists of seeing these seemingly opposing tendencies forming a dynamic, concrete whole. While both Russia and China felt themselves "belated," thinkers capitalized on the recognition of belatedness to create a revolutionary sense of the "now"; in working through the temporal abyss, a more concrete sense of universal time could be ventured.

Socialist Modernism: Miroslav Krleža and the Poetry of Capitalist Development

Marina Antic, Indiana University Bloomington

As a state-sponsored aesthetic in socialist Yugoslavia (at least since the Third Congress of Yugoslav writers in 1952), modernism is treated variously as a contradiction in terms, a historical curiosity, or a cynical ploy utilized by the socialist state—along with its well-known non-aligned posture and the policy of self-management—to differentiate itself from the Soviet Union. Focusing on programmatic statements of Yugoslav socialist modernism and its most representative author, Miroslav Krleža, I move beyond such Cold War emphasis on the separation of art and politics and the attendant geo-political mapping of (socialist) realism onto the East and (apolitical) modernism onto the West. Instead, I explore how socialist modernism, in the Yugoslav variety, registers and responds to global relations of economic and social dependency, linking global south with the south of Europe. Methodologically, I approach the subject through broadly conceived study of the ideology of forms, accounting for signature modernist formal experimentation and innovation by situating this unique aesthetic within its own intellectual and political milieu.

Windows on Combined and Uneven Development: Stanislaw Lem's Solaris and the Critique of the Cold War Epistemology

Katja Perat, Washington University in St. Louis

Because of its genre accessibility and its rich cinematic afterlife on both sides of the Iron Curtain, Stanisław Lem's *Solaris* has often been a victim of simplistic allegorical readings that shaped its reception, confining it to a role in anti-Soviet dissent it never necessarily intended to play. A group of scientists that sets out to explore the sentient planet of Solaris is traditionally understood as a group of dissidents, helpless in the face of a larger-than-life entity that uses their personal flaws and weaknesses as a source of control, mirroring the relationship between the Soviet Union and its citizens. In this presentation, I argue *Solaris* indeed offers a space to explore the many of the political conditions of the time it was written in – the 1960' – but that this space doesn't necessarily entail a critique of any single power involve in the Cold War; rather than it offers a detailed critique of a Cold War epistemology that renders many facets of political and intellectual invisible in its focus simple dichotomies. I argue *Solaris* uses this epistemological critique on two levels: firstly to construct a critique of Western intellectual thought in regard to un/anti-Western traditions that are only globally accessible through representation, and secondly to analyze the conditions of its own reception in advance. In this paper, I will analyze how *Solaris* is a story of discursive invisibility of underrepresented intellectual traditions and that its assumptions were confirmed by the history of reception of the unevenly developed stage of World literature.

Superimposed Time in the Contemporary Russian Novel

Jacob Emery, Indiana University

Contemporary Russian fiction seems to retain the exceptional claim to mediate national history that is a distinctive feature of the longer tradition. The Russian Booker and Big Book Prizes have been awarded in more than 70% of cases to historical fiction, defined loosely as novels taking place against a defined backdrop prior to the fall of the Soviet Union. Several others are futuristic novels that incorporate explicitly historical elements (especially recrudescant medievalisms), so that an astonishing 80% of this corpus explicitly separates itself from the present day. This proportion significantly exceeds that of the American Pulitzer Prize (53%), English Booker Prize (53%), or French Prix Goncourt (61%) in the same years—but these are not negligible numbers either. The contemporary Russian novel's orientation onto the past might in fact signify an extreme or vanguard position in a global historiographic turn, along the lines described by Fredric Jameson or Linda Hutcheon. This presentation probes the historiographic techniques employed to superimpose time scales in intelligentsia novels by authors like Sharov, Sorokin, and Akunin as well in popular alternative histories. To what degree does the salience of historiographic fiction in contemporary Russia represent a distinct formation emanating from the unprocessed legacy of the unsettled Soviet past, as Alexander Etkind among others has argued? And in what respects does this overlaying of historical periods constitute a local mode of registering discontinuities in the larger capitalist world, whose every point can be seen at once as a peripheral backwater and a node in a global network?

6-3 Intercultural Competences in Teaching Russian

Shaping Stereotypical Cultural Representations in an Introductory Russian STARTALK program

Alla Kourova, University of Central Florida

Learning a foreign language promotes new ways of seeing the world and the self in relation to it (Gee, 1996), making practices and perspectives underlined through the acquisition of vocabulary and grammatical structures available for appropriation (Bakhtin, 1981; Kramsch, 1993,2009). Using the combination of interviews and self-reported questionnaire, this study explores what may influence learners' preconceived images and cultural representations of the Russian language and culture during STARTALK program. Data analysis shows that participants started a reflection on how learning Russian language opens access to the cultures that speak it and embodies cultural acts. However, the finding suggests that at the beginning level, the reflection on the interconnection between a language and its culture needs to be nurtured the program and introductory course content itself in order to encourage the process of developing cross-cultural understanding. The presentation will address the following research questions:1. In What ways does learning a foreign language contribute to the shaping of existing images and cultural representations about the Russian language? 2.In What ways does learning a foreign language contribute to the shaping of existing images and cultural representations about the Russian people? The presenter will cover methods, findings, pedagogical considerations and discussion.

Developing Intercultural Competence in Intermediate to Advanced Russian Courses: practical application.

Alexandra Shapiro, University of Georgia

Developing intercultural competence in students is one of the major goals of any foreign language course and is especially crucial for upper-level courses where there is more room for creative output and communication. The most widely used framework for teaching Intercultural Competence (ICC) developed by Byram (1977) suggests that in order for students to gain ICC, they need to acquire positive attitudes, knowledge, skills of interpreting and relating, and critical awareness of products and practices of the target culture. In her most recent article on Developing Intercultural Competence Ekaterina Nemtchinova (2020) describes ways of developing ICC in a language classroom.

In my presentation, I will describe practical applications of the theoretical basis outlined in Nemtchinova's article in two upper-level Russian Flagship courses at the University of Georgia, taught in-person and virtually. I will focus on our students' experience with telecollaboration projects with Russian students, blogging, creative projects such as describing paintings and movies, seminars with guest speakers, and other culture-centered activities that are not directly associated with the textbooks used in class. After providing the project's goals, outcomes, and challenges, I will share strategies for improvement of future implementations.

Byram, M. (1997). Teaching and Assessing Intercultural Communicative Competence. *Multilingual Matters*. <http://eds.b.ebscohost.com.proxygsu-nga1.galileo.usg.edu/eds/ebookviewer/ebook/bmxlYmtfXzE2ODM3X19BTg2?sid=986a17c4-d514-4a89-9319-3d856cdbf434@pdc-v-sessmgr04&vid=1&format=EB&rid=1>

Nemtchinova, E. (2020). Developing intercultural competence in a Russian language class. In E. Dengub, I. Dubinina, & J. Merrill (Eds.) *The Art of teaching Russian*. Georgetown University Press, Washington DC

Filling the Russia Gap in Social Studies Standards: A Multitiered Approach to K-16 Collaboration

Rachel Stauffer, University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign and Reagan Flewelling and Michael White, Maggie L. Walker Governor's School

To disrupt systemic racism and white supremacy, standards-based curricula must be less ethnocentric, and more multicultural and multilingual in their focus. To address this problem, and seek to resolve it through instructional means, post-secondary faculty and their students, in cooperation with like minded K-12 teachers, can collaborate to enrich and deepen secondary and post-secondary students' understanding of lesser known peoples, regions, languages, and cultural geographies residing within the borders of the Russian Federation. Through such cooperation, there is opportunity to supplement the curriculum, meeting important objectives for obligatory standardized testing, while simultaneously providing content and materials that instructors do not have time to create. Ultimately, these practices have the capacity to improve students' critical thinking skills, information literacy skills, and overall critical consciousness (Freire 1970). In order to deliver content that presents a more balanced focus on multiculturalism and multilingualism in the Russian Federation, it is important to move beyond curricula that dedicate disproportionate attention to dominant culture. State standards about Russia in secondary social studies curricula are selective, often requiring knowledge of events and culture relevant only to urban, upper-class, ethnic Russians, and/or to Russia's historical and political intersections with the West, frequently emphasizing hostilities and tensions between Russia and the US. In addition to discussing this challenge, this presentation describes a successful year-long curriculum and instruction project that brought together the individual expertise and unique perspectives of a post-secondary instructor of Russian, a high school teacher of Russian, and an undergraduate minoring in Russian, who created original learning modules and conducted activities with high school students in a Russian language class at a public high school in the US South. We offer a model for virtual K-12 and post-secondary collaboration that enriches content about Russia usually neglected by national and state social studies standards, thus having the potential to foster more synergy among secondary and post-secondary faculty teaching students of Russian and other East European languages, and strengthening the K-16 national pipeline.

6-5 Philosophy and Art in the Soviet Period

Parajanov's Aesthetics of Conscious Experience

Robert Efird, Virginia Tech

There are relatively few filmmakers who ask more of their audience than Sergei Parajanov and perhaps fewer still who make such deliberate breaks from the patterns of classical cinema. Much of what lies behind the uniquely moving experience of Parajanov's mature cinema, however, is not only the chronic deviation from cinematic norms and beautifully complex imagery, but a persistent exploration into the nature of experience itself. Questions of phenomenal perception and consciousness play a significant role in each of Parajanov's major works and do so in a surprisingly fundamental, even defining sense. Focusing on *The Color of Pomegranates*, this paper explores the film's creation of a compelling analogue to conscious experience and its negotiation of this experience in a manner decidedly removed from the ordinary perception of

physical, Euclidean space. As I explain in this paper, the quasi-biography of Sayat Nova is also a sophisticated exploration into the contingency of personal identity, the fluid temporal layers of perception and, at heart, the nature of consciousness itself.

The World Viewed Skeptically in Marlen Khutsiev's *Il'ich's Guard*: Neorealism, Censorship, and Reception

Filip Sestan, University of California, Berkeley

Marlen Khutsiev's *Il'ich's Guard* remains one of the most infamous of the Thaw's cinematic "events." The term "event," used by Denis Kozlov and Eleonory Gilburd in their recent collection, *The Thaw, Soviet Society and Culture during the 1950s and 1960s*, highlights the divergent happenings, subjective perspectives, and memories associated with the historical process of the Soviet Thaw. The cinema of the Thaw, for the first time in Soviet film history since the 1920s, turned to new trends in Western, European films—as chiefly manifested in Italian neorealism and the French New Wave, which in turn allowed the official cinema of the state to borrow openly from these Western, liberal trends. The backbone of Khutsiev's visual style, which integrates both traditional elements of Russian literature, such as the poetry of Pushkin, and the developments of the socialist aesthetic, such as the poetry of Mayakovsky and the lyric poetry of the 1960s, can best be understood, I argue, through the latent anxiety of neorealism's political efficacy for a Soviet state.

In this paper, I consider both the literary and cinematic moments of modernism evident in Khutsiev's film and offer the argument that *Il'ich's Guard* privileges a "skeptical worldview," one that it borrows from the Italian neorealist aesthetic, as chiefly manifested in the films of De Sica, Antonioni, and Rossellini. This skeptical worldview posits a hermeneutic tension between reality and its arrangement; it suggests that the world must be staged and then received by the individual in order to be understood. Thus, what remains truly radical about Khutsiev's film is not simply its ostensible rejection of Stalinist culture, but rather its challenge to the traditional modes of production and reception in socialist realism as an aesthetic practice.

Philosophy and the Diary of a Madman: Lev Shestov and Vaslav Nijinsky

Peter Orter, Colby College

Conducting a "Shestovian" reading is a paradoxical proposition. Shestov's approach to reading, "his voyaging through souls," is, to put it mildly, extremely individual; to systematize it in order to apply it to new contexts risks violating his spirit of reading. Nonetheless, Shestov wrote enough about the role of philosophy in Russian literary "Diaries of Madmen" (ex. Gogol, Dostoevsky, Tolstoy) to justify putting his insights into dialogue with the "Diary of Vaslav Nijinsky", a lesser-known text often read as a literal madman's diary. Doing so reveals that one need not ascribe to Romantic Ideology in order to see in Nijinsky's text a true work of philosophy in Shestov's sense: a work of "free inquiry" into the individual's place in the world, at grips with catastrophic evil, and in quest of "the most important thing." Carrying this dialogue out offers a chance to explore three things: these writers' shared literary context (i.e. their tangential connections and use of a common literary heritage); Shestov's notion of philosophy as it relates to poetry and literature; and Nijinsky's claim to be a "thinker" of "feeling." In the latter regard, I will show that Nijinsky's text is, not a work of pure reason, written "not to laugh, not to

weep, not to hate, but to understand,” but rather the work of a private thinker, for whom “feeling” belongs at the very center of thought.

Session 6-6 Memory and Trauma in Eastern European Literature

Challenging the “New Normal” in Hanna Krall’s Story “The Chair”

Natasha Rubanova, Indiana University

Polish author Hanna Krall dedicated most of her work to confronting the aftermath of the Holocaust. Popular reviews often identify her writing as reportage. While Krall's texts are closely based on the survivors' testimony, they can hardly be counted among typical representatives of the genre. Why does Krall's reportage take a form that reads like metaphysical fiction? How does this form convey the lived experience of a Holocaust survivor? This paper is an attempt to answer these questions through a close reading of Krall's short story “The Chair”.

I use Viktor Shklovsky's examination of parallelism as a literary device and his method of plot structure analysis in order to explicate Krall's journalistic strategies. I argue that the author uses parallelism with the intention of stylizing three parts of the story so that they resemble distinct literary genres and, in this way, represent corresponding degrees of the imaginative. The three sections of “The Chair” demonstrate a stepped construction, a progression in which the imaginary quality gradually intensifies. Such a step-by-step organization is a device that creates a contrast between the imagined brought to its extreme and the extreme of the lived experience. Both can be categorized under the “unheard of,” but, while fictional abnormality remains in the category of “strange and marvelous adventures,” the abnormality of the Holocaust story transforms into the “new normal” of a survivor's experience (160), a “new normal” Krall protests. The increasing degree of the imaginative and a sudden return to the factual exactitude of a true story acts as defamiliarization and helps to “extricate a thing from the cluster of associations in which it is bound” (61).

Krall, Hanna. *The Woman From Hamburg and Other True Stories*. Other Press, 2005.

Shklovskii, Viktor. *Theory of Prose*. Dalkey Archive Press, 1990.

Bulgarian Birds of the Prague Spring: Revisiting the Reflections of the Events of 1968 in State-Approved Bulgarian Literature

Miroslava Nikolova, Bowdoin College

Bulgaria's role as a loyal satellite state to the Soviet Union and a vocal advocate for the suppression of the Prague Spring has been extensively explored by scholars and journalists alike. As the common narrative goes, Bulgaria rendered a helpful ally to the Soviet Union during international negotiations culminating in the invasion of the Czechoslovak borders in August 1968. Furthermore, the People's Republic of Bulgaria seemed to remain unmoved by the Prague Spring. Any hints of discontent with the ruling communist party or acts of solidarity with the Czechoslovaks were swiftly censored or, perhaps, altogether non-existent.

Such interpretive paradigms do not encompass the complexity of the sociopolitical climate and the literary sensibilities in the country. Bulgaria, in general, and some of its most prolific and well-regarded writers at the time, in particular, did not remain untouched by the spirit and the

events of the Prague Spring. This paper will take a close look at the works of two Bulgarian authors, the Bohemist scholar, interpreter and poet Václav Havel and the prominent author and playwright Yordan Radichkov. Works written and published by them in the final years of the 1960's are telling of the different, yet interrelated ways, in which the Bulgarian literary fabric captured the Prague Spring.

The imagery of birds is of particular interest. Some of the poems Rakovski wrote and successfully published after August 1968, relied on images of birds. Moreover, Radichkov's entertaining and state-approved collection of stories for children *We, the Sparrows* (incorporated in school curricula to this day) contains subtle sociopolitical commentary. In the case of *We, the Sparrows*, such critique is interwoven among stories of the adventures of a group of sparrows and conventional communist morals. It is through this bird motif that we can witness the possible Prague Spring's impact on Bulgarian authors.

6-8 Who Studies Russian and Why?

Maintaining Russian after graduation: Advice from over 300 graduates

Dmitrii Pastushenkov, Michigan State University and Jason Merrill, Michigan State University

Despite being more commonly taught than many other Less Commonly Taught Languages, Russian remains underrepresented in Second Language Acquisition research. Even less is known about Russian learners' attitudes toward learning the language (e.g., Zaykovskaya, Rawal, & De Costa, 2017) and their long-term engagement with Russian (Merrill, 2020), particularly after graduation (e.g., Pastushenkov & McIntyre, 2020). This survey-based study-in-progress aims to address this gap and investigate learners' engagement with and attitudes towards learning Russian after completing their studies. The study's primary goal is to identify areas of improvement for Russian language programs, including students' suggestions on language learning resources.

The participants were 392 graduates of a large summer immersion program in the United States. This presentation focuses on resources that the graduates use to maintain the language and what resources they would recommend for future learners. The preliminary analysis revealed that approximately 45% of the participants used Russian in their personal lives and 30% in their professional lives. Some of the resources that the graduates used include Russian podcasts, language learning apps such as Duolingo, and independent news outlets such as Meduza. 72% of the participants expressed interest in learning Russian informally in the future and 76% positively viewed their decision to study the language.

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Preparing the Future Professoriate in Slavic Languages and Literatures

Emily Herring, Harvard University and Benjamin Rifkin, Hofstra University

Undergraduate and graduate students seeking K-12 certification in English are routinely required to take methods courses on the teaching of literature. Graduate students seeking doctoral degrees in world language or English teacher education are also required to take such courses. Our doctoral students, however, don't have the same opportunity to study issues related to teaching literature, even though faculty in our field frequently teach literature and culture in translation.

On the basis of a national database for education (NCSES, cited below), we identified the doctoral programs in the United States that grant the largest number of degrees in literature, including Comparative Literature, English, French, German, Slavic, and Spanish. We examined the number of programs offering and/or requiring courses in methods of teaching literature in translation. In our presentation, we will discuss the data, focusing on English and Comparative Literature as one category, the World Languages as another, and Slavic as a third. We will discuss why such a course is necessary for future faculty and what content and learning activities should be included in that course.

At a time when budgets are tight and enrollments are being monitored very carefully, it behooves us as a field to prepare our students to be the best teachers of language and literature they can be. Moreover, as the undergraduate population across the country becomes increasingly diverse, our future faculty should be well prepared to teach students from diverse backgrounds, with diverse interests and goals, in both language and literature classrooms.

References:

National Center for Science and Engineering Statistics. <https://ncesdata.nsf.gov/>. Accessed Feb. 4, 2021 for data on degree completion in languages and literatures.

Session 7: 1:30pm-3:00pm

7-1 Single-panel Stream: The Counter Human

Vegetal Supremacy, Ecospeculative Misanthropy, and the (non) Future of Meat

Virginia Conn, Stevens Institute of Technology

The idea of vegetal life not only as an alternative to faunal life, but an improvement over it, has long been a speculative mobilization with real-world consequences. Throughout the 20th century, Russian speculative literature and future-forecasting policies uniquely took up the concept of vegetal alternatives to fleshly embodiment, linking technospeculative interventions to the animate matter of plant life. Touching on issues as diverse as space travel, guided human evolution, national productivity quotas, immigration, language, and political revolution, plants in

Russian literature model an alternative to fleshly embodiment that rejects an alliance with consumption and instead identifies with the consumed.

Beginning with the Russian aeronautics engineer Konstantin Tsiolkovsky's writings about what he saw as the necessary evolution of plant-like features for humans to survive in space, I explore how "plant people" as a material concept influenced the push for mutant agriculture that defined much of the later Soviet modernization experiment. These "hopeful plant monsters" set the groundwork for the short story "Pkhentz" and its vegetal-alien narrator's hatred of humanity in general and meat in particular. I conclude with an analysis of the contemporary turn towards veganism mustered by contemporary Russian Covid lab-leak hoaxers who see zoonotic transfer as part of a plot to contaminate the vegetal food chain.

Landscape over Labor: Sketches of a Mine without its Miners at Zgorzelec Land

Eliza Rose, University of North Carolina - Chapel Hill

In 1971, a group of artists and scientists convened at coal mines in Opolno-Zdrój, Poland for the symposium *Zgorzelec Land*. The event's theme was "Science and art in defense of the natural environment of man," yet this last term – man – is conspicuously absent from the art made on site. Using documentation of this understudied event, this paper considers how its participants' fixation on industry's environmental costs made invisible the workers associated with the mines. Instead of engaging on-site personnel, artists treated industrial infrastructure and its attending landscape as nonhuman abstractions. Artist Natalia LL documented the event in large-format photographs of barren lignite mines that prefigure Earth after humans. Konrad Jarodzki's "Registration of Space" entailed surveying the mine by bisecting it with geometric lines, as if land is best beheld in humans' absence. In a lecture delivered on site, architect Stefan Müller proposed splitting the biosphere and technosphere (nature and civilization) into segregated domains. The symposium would inspire Müller's later project *Terra-X*, which envisioned evacuating humankind from Earth into space colonies. Though the event's organizers praised the Polish architectural tradition for its success at "humanizing our environment," participating artists had a different vision: at *Zgorzelec Land* and in the ecological projects it inspired, landscape is an autonomous protagonist who fares better without human tenants. The symposium's theoretical program blames "former social regimes" for humans' persistent drives to overpopulate Earth and overproduce waste at nature's expense. Despite its anticapitalist premises, the event diverged from socialist values by treating industrial production and human labor as separable categories. This paper assesses *Zgorzelec Land* as a counter-human articulation of Marxian ecological thought.

Dark Cosmism: Contested Territories of the Counter-Human in (Extra)Planetary Philosophy

Taylor Genovese, Arizona State University

In this paper, I will trace a genealogy of "counter-human imaginaries" from the political mysticism of the Russian Cosmists at the turn of the 20th century to Silicon Valley technologists at the turn of the 21st. Rather than claiming a direct trajectory between the two, I will illustrate how Cosmist techno-utopian, futurist, and other-than-human discourse exist as Weberian "elective affinities" within various ecologies of the imagination, transmitting a variety of philosophies and political programs throughout trans-temporal, yet philosophically-bounded,

communities. As such, I will dissect how different groups of philosophers and technologists interact(ed) with Cosmism—as well as how seemingly disparate communities (re)shape and deterritorialize Cosmist political theology to frame their constructed imaginaries. Cosmism, therefore, is not a discrete and specific philosophy, but rather a loose set of shifting ideas that exist within a highly contested space. To demonstrate this point, I attempt to de-valorize and examine the philosophies of figures like Nikolai Fyodorov, Konstantin Tsiolkovsky, Aleksandr Chizhevsky, Vladimir Vernadsky, and Aleksandr Bogdanov to illustrate how the “shadow work” of their otherwise egalitarian projects became wellsprings for both post-Soviet and Western reactionary thinkers like Lev Gumilyov, Aleksandr Dugin, Nick Land, Curtis Yarvin, Steve Bannon, and Peter Thiel.

Crossing the Invisible Circle: Anthropocentrism, Speculative Realism, and the Occulted Universe of Aleksandr Sokurov’s *Days of Eclipse*
Brittany Roberts, Southeastern Louisiana University

Aleksandr Sokurov’s film *Days of Eclipse* (1988) follows a Russian doctor, Dmitri Malianov, who is conducting research on the correlation between religious faith and children’s health. His research, however, is interrupted again and again: some agentive force—strongly suggested to be the universe itself—prevents Malianov from developing his work. As Malianov attracts more and more inexplicable geological events, Sokurov suggests that the nonhuman, unable to be domesticated by anthropocentric discourses, always overflows narrowly human timescales; the geological deep time of the universe, along with its agentive capacities, forever evades human access. In *Days of Eclipse*, then, Sokurov confronts viewers with cosmic agencies and nonhuman ontologies that vastly exceed the explanatory capacities of human-oriented epistemological frameworks, demanding a reorientation of the anthropocentric means through which we often try to order and make sense of the world.

In this talk, I read Sokurov’s depicted universe alongside object-oriented ontology—particularly Timothy Morton’s hyperobjects, Eugene Thacker’s “world-in-itself,” and Levi Bryant’s ontic principle—in order to consider how Sokurov simultaneously depicts the creativity of a radically nonhuman universe and foregrounds the limitations of humanist and anthropocentric epistemological frameworks when confronting the nonhuman. Drawing on several key scenes from the film, I argue that *Days of Eclipse* reveals the nonhuman space through which we move, to which we are ecologically bound, and from which we are ontologically foreclosed: an inhuman universe that cannot be known, ordered, or rendered sensible, but that, nonetheless, exists alongside, interpenetrates, and demands recognition from the human. I conclude that, by presenting a fable that warns against the assumption of human mastery over the nonhuman environment, Sokurov critiques traditional Soviet approaches to nature—particularly the emphasis on the nature/culture binary—and makes room for an understanding of the nonhuman universe as both immanent to the human and beyond any anthropocentric understanding.

7-2 Stream 9A: Russian Literature and Western Modernism

From Pater’s “Portraits” to Chukovskii’s “Portrety”: The Modernist Trace in Soviet Memoir
Daniel Brooks, Smith College

Authors' memoirs about their mentors, peers, and associates (dubbed by Barbara Walker as the "contemporaries" genre) comprise a rich but complex body of Russian life-writing. Such texts became a vital tool of self-fashioning during the Soviet era, and scholars have traced their generic roots to specific progenitors (Saint-Simon's *Mémoires*, Herzen's *My Past and Thoughts*, etc.) palatable to Soviet cultural politics. My paper will enhance this narrative by tracing the influence of English and French modernism on a prominent vein of "contemporaries" texts—specifically those designated as "literary portraits" [*literaturnye portrety*]. Russian works of this designation first flowered in Symbolist and modernist circles that drew both direct and indirect inspiration from French critic Remy de Gourmont, English writer Walter Pater, and other figures in *fin-du-siècle* Western Europe. These Western portraitists gave Russian literary critics (Voloshin, Aikhenval'd, Chukovskii, etc.) new and characteristically modernist mechanisms for articulating tensions between an author's individual personality [*lichnost'*] and interpersonal connections. Such mechanisms were assimilated into wider, less rarefied publishing contexts and thereafter into early Soviet memoir writing, where they were slowly codified over the course of the twentieth century. Chukovskii published *portrety* (of both the literary-critical and memoiristic types) throughout his career, and his works vividly exemplify the genre's curious evolution in the Russian cultural context. By examining affinities and points of influence between French, English, and Russian literary portraiture, this paper will seek to illuminate connections between Soviet memoir and Western modernism that have been obscured, both wittingly and unwittingly, in histories of Soviet life-writing.

An Heir to Modernism: Joseph Brodsky and Transnational Poetics

Daria Smirnova, Portland State University

This paper is an attempt to establish connection between Anglo-American Modernism and Joseph Brodsky's poetics. The difficulty lies mostly in the time period Brodsky's writing belongs to (1960s-1990s) which is distanced from what is traditionally defined as the peak of Modernism (1920s-1940s). Drawing on the idea of "temporal expansion" of Modernism by Douglas Mao and Rebecca L. Walkowitz, I will show that, notwithstanding the dates, Brodsky's writing is modernist in the way it is in dialogue with the masters of the movement both "at home" (Akhmatova, Mandelstam, Tsvetaeva) and "abroad" (Auden, Frost, Lowell). In his book *A Transnational Poetics* (2009) Jahan Ramazani presents the concept of transnational Modernism and describes the exceptional capacity of poetry above all genres to exist within this category. Transnational approach resists the limitations of national literary studies, such as: identarian preconceptions, culture-of-birth and territorial determinism, language determinism, and Anglo-centrism, monolithic anthological views and hierarchy of poets, the idea of "provincialism" or home-bound character of poetry as a genre and, subsequently, the idea of its untranslatability. As Ramazani provides the case studies of several modernist poets he considers transnational, some of his claims can describe Brodsky's poetics and some cannot. Brodsky's bilingual poetry showcases the resistance to Anglo-centrism, however the peculiarity of Brodsky's case of transnational Modernism is in the reverted order of its linguistic aspect. Instead of bringing the Russian element into the Anglo-American tradition, it "appropriates" certain characteristics of the English tradition, particularly as it is crafted in Modernist poetry, and applies it to the "problematic" areas of Russian.

Three Simeons: Candlemas Poems in Eliot, Brodsky, and Sedakov

Nataliya Karageorgos, Wesleyan University

T. S. Eliot's later poetry, written after his conversion to Anglo-Catholicism and reflecting this religious turn, proved to be an important source of inspiration for the underground Russian poets of the second half of the twentieth century who saw this poetry as an alternative for the atheistic mode prescribed by Soviet literary canons. In this paper, I explore the dialogue with Eliot's poem, "A Song for Simeon" (1928), that addressed the biblical plot of Candlemas, in the writings of Joseph Brodsky and Olga Sedakova. Brodsky wrote his "Candlemas" in 1972, and Olga Sedakova wrote her "Candlemas" in 1976-1978; she also translated Eliot's "Song." The three poems represent the poets' respective interpretations of the encounter with Christianity and address the integration of poetry and faith.

7-3 Stream 10A: Women Writers and Artists in Slavic and Eurasian Literature and Culture

Happiness is always ahead?: The Politics of Love and Plot in Pomialovsky's and Panaeva's Social Novels

Helen Stuhr-Rommereim, Swarthmore College

Nikolai Chernyshevsky's and Nikolai Dobroliubov's polemics with Ivan Turgenev are well known as a structuring rift in Emancipation-era literary and political culture. The critics' heated screeds helped carve out a distinct identity for *Sovremennik* among competitor thick journals in the early 1860s. But actual literary works with social and political concerns were also being published in *Sovremennik* in this moment of heightened political discourse around literature. This paper focuses on the contrasting approaches to addressing women's contemporary social plight in Nikolai Pomialovsky's connected novellas, *Bourgeois Happiness* and *Molotov* (1861), and Avdotia Panaeva's novel *A Woman's Lot* (1862), both also published in *Sovremennik*, and also, in different ways, in polemical relation with Turgenev's contemporaneous literary works. Pomialovsky's and Panaeva's works defy the poetics of plot of traditional realism. As Margarita Vaysman has argued in her recent study of Panaeva's novel, following Margaret Cohen's definition of the "feminine social novel," they replace a hermeneutics of "suspense" with one of "annunciation" and "repetition."¹ Both *Bourgeois Happiness/Molotov* and *A Woman's Lot* concern women's fate and agency in contemporary society, and both problematize young women's reading of literature in relation to the practical realities of love and marriage. The works offer different messages, however: while Pomialovsky gives a love plot in which marriage freely chosen is situated as, possibly, a really existing and accessible form of social progress, Panaeva puts forward a polemically hopeless portrait of women's contemporary fate. In this paper, I will articulate what is shared between these works: a new approach to "social" literature that is in polemic relation with Turgenev in both form and content, and which implicates existing literary form and content in the social problems being addressed. I will also attend to their important differences: Pomialovsky's more optimistic versus Panaeva's markedly pessimistic outlook. In so doing, I seek to offer a new view of both the multivalent approach to the "Woman Question" in the radical camp at this time, and the contemporaneous efforts to develop literature as a tool for social thought and critique that led to interventions in the realist novel form.

1 Margarita Vaysman, "A Woman's Lot: Realism and Gendered Narration in Russian Women's Writing of the 1860s," *Russian Review* 80 (April 2021): 239.

Pregnancy in Avdotia Panaeva's *Tri strany sveta*

Melissa Miller, University of Notre Dame

My paper will consider Avdotia Panaeva's depiction of pregnancy in her novel *Tri strany sveta*. Though she was writing under a male pseudonym, V. Stanitsky, and co-authored this novel with fellow writer Nikolai Nekrasov, this work from 1848-1849 stands out for being one of the first, if not the first, female-authored explorations of pregnancy in Russian literature. My paper will examine how Panaeva reasserts female agency in a predominantly male-dominated genre and will consider how her birth scenes fit into the larger discourse of childbirth within Russian literary culture of the 19th century, most famously elaborated by Lev Tolstoy in novels such as *War and Peace* and *Anna Karenina*.

7-5 Virtual and Remote Learning: Russian and Ukrainian

Assessment for Learning in the Virtual Russian Language Classroom

Veta Chitnev, UBC

Fully online language courses are currently on the rise (Arrosagaray et al., 2019). The online environment poses a significant challenge in assessing students' knowledge. Assessment of student knowledge is central to contemporary pedagogy (Carless, 2015). Research supports the importance of assessment for students' learning and program improvement (Bloxham & Boyd, 2007). Assessment constitutes a significant proportion of the teaching workload. The quality of assessment is a critical factor in determining students' course satisfaction. However, the theory and practice of assessment have received little attention in the literature on teaching language courses online.

This paper is based on the author's experience teaching synchronous Russian language courses. The presenter will focus on some distinctive features of online assignments and effective assessment methods that enhance learning. The presenter will speak about challenges of assessing students' knowledge virtually and some strategies for preserving academic integrity. She will also discuss online assignments' scores and weight, overall gradebook practices, and effective instructional feedback. Assessment practices examined in this paper are not limited to the virtual Russian language classroom. They can enhance an L2 language classroom in any delivery format.

Arrosagaray, M., González-Peiteado, M., Pino-Juste, M., & Rodríguez-López, B. (2019). A comparative study of Spanish adult students' attitudes to ICT in classroom, blended and distance language learning modes. *Computers and Education*, 134, 31-40.

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Experiential Learning at a Distance

Heather Rice, The University of Texas at Austin

One of the greatest challenges of online, asynchronous instruction is ensuring that students receive adequate opportunities to speak in the target language. In the fall of 2017, the Department of Slavic and Eurasian Studies at the University of Texas at Austin launched an online, and largely asynchronous Russian program - one that I had designed and would be teaching. The ensuing two years revealed a need for increased opportunities for speaking Russian.

Upon securing a Global Virtual Exchange grant from Texas Global, the division within our university that supports international education and exchange programs, I was able to design a virtual exchange program with student teachers at the Higher School of Economics in Moscow. The program was designed to give our online students the chance to experience aspects of Russian language and culture in real-time with native Russian speakers. Using video sharing apps, our students were able to connect with their Russian-speaking peers and be taken on virtual tours around Moscow. The tours included both major cultural spots, but also and perhaps more importantly, they included aspects of everyday student life. These everyday spots included tours of living spaces, visits to eateries and cafes, experiences of various forms of transportation, meet-ups with friends, and so on.

In this presentation, I will talk about the design and implementation of this virtual exchange program, the immediate challenges we faced and quickly overcame in the face of the pandemic, how this kind of experiential distance learning can boost student engagement in the online classroom, as well as serve as a preview for study abroad, and finally, what the future of this kind of virtual exchange for our online students might look like.

7-6 Panel: The Russian Canon and the (post-)Soviet School

‘An incorrect interpretation’: Goncharov in Late-Soviet Curricula and Culture

Natasha Kadlec, Harvard University

This paper uses the case of Ivan Goncharov to examine some institutional and non-institutional mechanisms that shaped Soviet-era perceptions of the canon. As mid-to-late school curricula in Russian literature were generally stable, Goncharov’s near-total disappearance from Soviet schools over the 1940s-1960s was a highly unusual case. The paper seeks to contextualize Goncharov’s changing status in the school within the larger critical discourse on the author and perceptions of his place in the larger cultural canon. In particular, it examines representations of Goncharov in school textbooks (Zerchaninov et al.; Kachurin) against the backdrop of two very different biographies of the author within the *Lives of Remarkable People* series (Rybasov, 1957; Loshchits, 1977) and approaches to his oeuvre in literary criticism and artistic works of the period. It finds, in some cases, a perhaps surprising degree of receptivity of curricular representations of Goncharov to broader critical and cultural narratives.

World War Two Poetry in Late-Soviet and Post-Soviet Russian Schools: Canonical Texts and Canonized Norms

Katharine Hodgson, University of Exeter

For Irina Luk'ianova, the emphasis on 'patriotic education' in 2021 documents setting education standards took her back to 1984 when she was in class 8 (Luk'ianova 2021). This paper investigates how far the revival of late-Soviet norms noted by Luk'ianova applies to teaching of Russian poetry about World War Two, and whether there were any significant changes to the way this topic was taught between the 1980s and the early 2020s.

In anthologies for general readers the canon of 'core' authors, texts, and norms of how the war is represented are largely unaltered since the mid-1980s, though anthologies now offer a wider range of material. Post-Soviet lists of works recommended for schoolchildren suggest that formerly marginal or unknown poets remain outside the educational canon of war poetry. This paper aims to establish how far this apparent inertia results primarily from the need to select a small number of acknowledged 'classics' for study, and how far it responds to a growing emphasis on cultural nationalism in education.

Evidence for analysis will be drawn from information about the post-Soviet literature curriculum, online selections of war poetry for school students, lesson plans and other teaching materials to establish what children have been taught about this subject in recent years, and how, as well as from textbooks and anthologies of the late Soviet period. Using the teaching of war poetry as an example, this paper will consider how far Elaine Hopkins's description of Soviet literature teaching still applies: 'The position of literature in the Soviet school reflects both its importance in Russian life and official concern that its power be guided to suit official ends' (Hopkins 1974: 25).

Bibliography

Hopkins, Elaine, 'Literature in the Schools of the Soviet Union', *Comparative Education*, 10:1 (March 1974), 25-34.

Luk'ianova, Irina, 'Spustili urok', *Novaia gazeta*, 12 July 2021.

Russia's New Children's Literature Canon and Post-Soviet Canonization of Children's Books

Marina Balina, Illinois Wesleyan University

The word "canon" conjures *stability*, but studying canon in literature, we are forced to have second thoughts on this score. Bettina Kümmerling-Meibauer and Anja Müller question the very idea of canonical immutability: "what canons generally do: they change!"

And indeed, the dominant role of the state in establishing the canon in the former Soviet bloc has given way to different evaluative practices: new commercialism, which was quick to fill a children's-literary space; and the development of a new children's literature sparked by the lifting of censorship and by a reorientation to new readerly interests. At the same time, bookshelves remain full of socialist-realist works, and the classic Soviet-era children's writer Arkadii Gaidar is still ubiquitously promoted in school curricula, online parenting sites, etc.

Since 2012, a decidedly Soviet-style academic canon of children's literature, a **Russian Canon of Great Books** has been revived in Russia in the form of a list of 100 books compiled as an initiative of President Vladimir Putin. Ilya Kukulin sees this act as harboring certain disciplining strategies and as a fear of the new generation's activity on the Internet. It is within this "framework of fear of the future," that the list of 100 books on history, culture and literature of the peoples of the Russian Federation was created and distributed to libraries and schools.

In my analyses of this new canon, I follow the American scholar Deborah Stevenson who identifies three different canons that demonstrate the diversity of canonicity processes: an academic canon, a sentimental canon, and a popular canon. Each of these canons went through their own methodology for text selection which I will discuss in my presentation.

Reference: *Canon Constitution and Canon Change in Children's Literature*, Bettina Kümmerling Meibauer and Anja Müller's eds. New York, London: Routledge, 2017.

7-7 Panel: Close Encounters between Image and Text: Photography, Calligraphy, Painting

Extramarital Male Game: Art, Photography, and Writing in Boris Kudryakov's Oeuvre
Aleksey Berg, University of Pennsylvania

Boris Kudryakov's two names: he was known as Boris Kudryakov as an author, and as *Gran Boris* as a photographer, bespeak a schism upon which Kudryakov's/*Gran Boris*'s creative oeuvre is largely situated. While his legacy is celebrated and, to an extent, canonized, it is inevitably presented, catalogued, and categorized as either text or art. This paper argues for a new, non-binary, comprehensive approach to Kudryakov's aesthetics, and focuses on the inherent suppleness and mutability of genre and medium boundaries in Kudryakov's creative output. Focusing on Kudryakov's "narrative" photography: his practice of commenting on, interpreting, and incorporating his own photographs into his prose, and on his highly photographic prose, this paper suggests that image and text in Kudryakov should be considered together, as specimens of a new medium which seeks to transcend the divide between the visual and the textual.

Calligraphomania: On Aleksei Remizov's Art of Writing-Drawing Letters
Jenya Mironava, Harvard University

"We fail to recognize the extent to which the very art of writing, at least until it was ousted by typography, lay in the drawing of lines," Tim Ingold points out in his 2016 *Lines: A Brief History*. No art illustrates his thesis that "writing is a modality of drawing" more vividly than calligraphy. The inseparability of what Ingold calls two "species of line-making" is captured by the adjective "scripto-graphic" ("pis'menno-risoval'noe"), which Aleksei Remizov coined to describe his experiments with writing-drawing texts. The term also emphasizes the mutual mutability of the two modalities: "My manuscript passes into drawing and drawing into writing," Remizov said. The boundary between verbal and visual art was fluid for this writer and a graphic artist, who in the 1930s produced hundreds of illustrated albums that combine hand-written texts, drawings, and collages. These albums are seen as the culmination of Remizov's synthetic approach to art. In this paper, I will make a case that Remizov's intermedial practice is exemplified by his "scripto-graphic" art and that calligraphy represents a meeting point between

text and image, where the two touch and come close to fusing into one. I will read Remizov's calligraphy as a tangible expression of what he described as his maniacal "obsession with the word" ("oderzhimost' slovom"), which manifested itself in his verbal preciousness, excessive focus on form, and in his compulsive copying of texts (his own and those of others) by hand. This practice may have verged on graphomania, but it represents, I argue, a ritual of (re)writing as remembering. My reading of Remizov's calligraphy will show how the scribe's embodied experience relates to the writer's conception of cultural memory and the role it plays in Remizov's "archaic modernism"/ project of engaging with the Old Russian tradition.

"Sur le mode mineur": Somov's Rococo and the Theme of Music

Mila Nazyrova, University of Pennsylvania

The subject of this paper is the expression of melancholy in Somov's artistic idiom, specifically, in his images of 18th century fireworks. The mood of melancholy, "half sensual and half-dreamy" (Verlaine), has come to be associated with the work of Watteau and other rococo artists after Paul Verlaine's poetic cycle *Fêtes galantes* that was incredibly popular in the decadent culture at the turn of the 20th century.

As a psychological mood and a complex emotion, melancholy can be named explicitly and referred to directly in a text, but how is this emotion conveyed on canvas? In art, it is usually expressed through various aspects of subject matter that can be linked to verbal connotation, such as facial expressions of characters, or, as sometimes in Russian realist paintings, representations of countryside poverty and barren landscape.

I aim to demonstrate that in Somov's spectacular fantasies on the subject of 18th century festivities there is an attempt to render the melancholy mode directly through a synesthetic experience of artistic form that evokes a spirit of rococo music.

I will examine the interpretation of Watteau-Verlaine motifs in two versions of *Harlequin and Lady* (1912) and explore several ways in which Somov created a visual counterpart of melancholy by using the correspondences between both musical and artistic rhythms, between musical timbre and the quality of color, and finally between the organization of shallow and transparent space and the melodic structure of rococo music.

7-8 Panel: Gender and Identity in Poland

Polish LGBT Dissidence Through Music and YouTube Videos

Sofia Bachman, Ohio State University

The Polish government continuously puts forth anti-LGBT rhetoric despite the European Union's 2007 condemnation of homophobia. After numerous Polish regions decreed themselves in 2020 as "LGBT-free zones," the EU self-designated as an "LGBTIQ-freedom zone." In response to the anti-LGBT Stop-Pedophilia law that passed in the Sejm 2019, non-binary activist Margot launched the online group "Stop The Nonsense" to spread awareness about queer and sex-education. When police arrested Margot after a protest, punk group Siksa released the 2020 music video "Simple Motto" in support of Margot.

Siksa began in 2014 as a way to publicize through concerts and YouTube videos experiences of injustice to shock people into supporting the oppressed. While the government attempts to dictate what occurs in the private sphere, Siksa's performances help move LGBT-rights activism to the public sphere.

Jakub Kwieciński and Dawid Mycek are a gay, married, Polish couple who began posting lip-sync and pro-LGBT videos to YouTube in 2016. Their approach to spread awareness is very different from Siksa's and Margot's. In videoclips, they walk around Polish towns asking people questions about equality, utilizing a strategy of congenial dialogue akin to Solidarity movement protests and the 2021 Equality Parade in Warsaw. In their lip-sync videos, Jakub and Dawid involve the international LGBT community to reach a wide array of people using music as a *lingua franca*.

This paper examines how, as further performative pieces appear on YouTube and in live concerts, the Polish LGBT community creates a new space of freedom and interaction that is both virtual and actual. As its methodology, this paper refers to scholarly texts on queer theory, hetero- and homonormativity, the East European queer experience, performative living, and defining space in addition to pro-LGBT music and informational videos on YouTube.

“Women’s Hell”: The Church and Right-Wing Populism’s War on Gender in Poland and Nationwide Retaliation

Krystyna Sikora, Georgetown University

In October of 2020, the Strajk Kobiet (Women’s Strike) Movement erupted throughout Poland to protest the country’s near total ban on abortion. While Strajk Kobiet openly criticizes the ruling right-wing populist party Law and Justice (PiS), the movement also has another more radical target: the Catholic Church. Before Strajk Kobiet, openly criticizing the Church in Poland was considered a taboo. The anti-Church nature of the mass movement indicates that frustration with the Church has reached new heights, a significance the paper argues is in part a consequence of the Church’s close ties to PiS and their recent collaboration to undermine gender rights and democratic values. This paper serves two purposes. First it analyzes the intersection of populism, religion and gender via the Polish case, highlighting PiS and the Church’s joint efforts to pushing discourse and policy that regulate women’s individual rights and stigmatize the LGBT community under the guise of protecting traditional family norms. Second, the paper underscores the significance of the Strajk Kobiet movement by examining its anti-PiS and anti-Church features in order to highlight this revolutionary new development in Poland.

Intersections of Gender and Genre in Modern Polish Film: The Case of Agnieszka Smoczyńska’s *Córki dancingu* (*The Lure*)

Ekaterina Tikhonyuk, Ohio State University

When Polish filmmaker Agnieszka Smoczyńska debuted with *Córki dancingu* (*The Lure*) in 2015, she created a film that quickly generated international acclaim and piqued the interest of critics and scholars alike. One aspect of *Córki dancingu* that is remarked on nearly universally is the fact that this film straddles a range of genres and supplies its viewers with an abundance of gore, explicit sensuality, and agony of unrequited love. The other facet of Smoczyńska’s creation that has garnered critical attention is the film’s treatment of gender roles, although existing

English-language assessments of the film's gender dimension leave ample room for further inquiry.

This paper investigates Smoczyńska's stance on the issues of female agency and (non-)conformity to 'traditional' gender norms by offering a close cinematic reading of *Córki dancingu* through the lens of genre. More specifically, this paper interrogates the claims made by some film critics (e.g., Angela Lovell) and scholars (particularly Martine Mussies and Nicole Elizabeth Cook) about this film's potential to serve as a feminist challenge to a patriarchal mindset. The crux of the analytical framework employed in this study is represented by the work of Linda Williams, particularly her essay "Film Bodies: Gender, Genre, and Excess" (1991) that explores the intersections between horror, melodrama, and pornography. Williams' work is complemented with the insights from gender studies, film theory (with a particular focus on viewer identification, such as the works of Yana Hashamova and Christian Metz), and scholarship on modern Polish cinema (e.g., the works of Marek Haltof and Agnieszka Jeżyk).

Agnieszka, The Daughter: Daughterhood and Fatherhood in Andrzej Wajda's *Man of Marble*

Aleksandra Shubina, Ohio State University

This talk focuses on the issue of representation of relationships between fathers and daughters in Andrzej Wajda's 1977 film, *Man of Marble*. Unlike the relationships between fathers and sons in Polish national cinema, the image of a daughter and her connections to the father hasn't been in the center of a scholarly study. The goal of this film's close cinematic reading is to find out what meaning is ascribed to daughterhood and fatherhood as a specific form of family bound in Polish cinema of the 70s.

Wajda's film, set in the mid-1970s Poland, tells a story of a young woman, Agnieszka, who begins her career in the male-dominated field of filmmaking with a project of making a documentary film about Mateusz Birkut, a Stakhanovite bricklayer. Her career choice and her looks challenge the conventional idea of femininity and distribution of gender roles, thus she represents a brand new type of a heroine in Polish cinema. However, as this talk demonstrates, Agnieszka's motivation for choosing the subject for her film corresponds to the traditional feminine image because her inspiration comes from the story her father told her. Thus, Wajda's heroine fits in a traditional fairytale archetype of a "good daughter." The heroine doesn't confront the gender psychodynamic of a traditional family that represents for Wajda the model connection between private and historical past and present, that is the key for the development of both the individual and the society. The film presents positive model of inter-generational relationships in a family that is based on mutual support and expression of emotions. In the end, the visit to her hometown, and the meeting with her father helps Agnieszka rethink her role in the society, and reestablish her responsibility of a creator to tell the truth about the past.

7-11 Open Seminar with Brian Baer (Kent State University): Queer(ing) Slavic Studies: Terminology, Theories and Approaches

Since the publication of Simon Karlinsky's *The Sexual Labyrinth of Nikolai Gogol* in 1976, the study of queer sexuality in Slavic and East European literature and art has evolved and expanded

exponentially, shaped by major historical research as well as developments in the field of sexuality studies and queer theory. (Karlinsky's earlier writings on gays and lesbians in Russian history and culture were first published in non-academic venues; and so, his book on Gogol, published by Harvard University Press, could be said to represent the official entrée of a queer perspective in the field of Slavic Studies.)

The central question addressed in the workshop involves how to approach the study of queer sexuality in the cultures of Eastern Europe and Russia in ways that are neither anachronizing (projecting contemporary understandings onto earlier periods) nor colonizing (projecting contemporary conceptions of sexual identity from the Global North onto other socio-cultural contexts) while avoiding claims of radical alterity and untranslatability. To that end, the workshop begins by situating queer Slavic Studies within the fraught, centuries long relationship between Russia and the Anglophone West, often characterized by accusations of sexual licentiousness that were made by both sides and that accelerated in the context of the Cold War, assuming a symbolic dimension. More specific challenges related to the study of queer sexuality in Eastern European and Russian art and literature will be discussed, ranging from terminological confusion to competing theorizations of sex and sexuality (e.g. minoritarian vs. universalist; identitarian vs. queer). All these issues will be discussed in relation to queer life writing, investigated from the point of view of poetics, framing and translation.

Session 8: 4:30pm-6:30pm

8-2 Stream 9B: Russian Literature and Western Modernism

Kafka's *Trial* in Soviet Print: Progress Publishers' *Roman, novelly, pritchi*

Alexander Jacobson, Princeton University

In 1964, as the result of the Khrushchev thaw – and possibly agitation by Kafka supporters, including Jean Paul Sartre – Soviet authorities unexpectedly allowed for the publication of several Kafka short stories in *Inostrannaia literatura*. This decision thrust Kafka to the forefront of Soviet artistic debate, amplifying a discourse of criticism and support that had already surrounded the author for several years. This event, constituting the first publication of Kafka's texts in Russian, has been covered in existing scholarship. These studies, however, gloss over a crucial aspect of the affair; in addition to the aforementioned publication, Soviet authorities also allowed for the creation of a monograph containing Kafka's work, 1965's *Roman, novelly, pritchi*.

My paper offers an analysis of this book, a woefully understudied object and the only pre-perestroika Soviet monograph entirely comprised of Kafka's texts. Through a close reading of this book, including its physical form, publisher's paratexts (imprint, colophon, etc.), and its interpretative preface, I claim that the volume deftly straddles the line between critiquing the author as a depressive decadent and elevating his work to the level of public discourse. On one

hand, the book's editors sourced nine separate translators and presented Kafka's texts within an unusually handsome volume, suggesting that they wished to render Kafka's oeuvre accessible to Soviet readers. On the other hand, the volume is bookended by a critical preface written by Boris Suchkov, the director of the Gorky Institute of World Literature, and conspicuously lacks a tirazh, an omission which implies that authorities wished to obscure the availability of this text. In compendium, I argue that this bibliographic ambivalence both echoes the tension between official and unofficial attitudes towards Western modernism within the USSR and reflects several of the conflicts inherent to Soviet publishing writ large.

In Kafka's Tracks: Deprogramming Modernism

Thomas Epstein, Boston College

This paper traces the reception of Kafka in Soviet culture and outlines the impact of his works on the unofficial culture of Leningrad, with special emphasis on the prose writer Boris Dyshlenko (1941-2015).

Of the Western Modernists, Franz Kafka may have had the hardest road into, and ultimately greatest impact on, Soviet literature and society. Initially banned for his 'decadence,' 'pessimism,' and excessive 'abstraction,' several of Kafka's works were first published in 1964. My presentation will summarize the circumstances surrounding this publication and point to Kafka's immediate impact on dissident literature of the 1960s (especially in Siniavsky and Daniil). I will argue that it was the extreme relevance of Kafkan themes of alienation, bureaucracy, and the helplessness of the individual that put his work front and center in the consciousness of many non-conformist Soviet intellectuals. Moreover, as W. R. Dodd has shown, Kafka's 'breakthrough' works of 1912-1914 ("The Judgement," "In the Penal Colony," The Trial) were written in the shadow of Kafka's intense engagement with Dostoevsky. Thus not by coincidence the unofficial prose of the 1970s was deeply marked by this Dostoevskian Kafka, joined by Daniil Kharms, whose own Kafkan spirit is undeniable and whose play, Elizaveta Bam, may bear explicit evidence of his having read Kafka. Writers of the 1970s such as Boris Vakhtin, Fyodor Chirskov, Boris Kudryakov, and Boris Dyshlenko are exemplars of this dialogue. I will analyze Dyshlenko's work in this light, and will end with an attempt to expand our concept of Modernism.

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Extraordinary Modernists: Nabokov, Bakunina, Gazdanov

Tatyana Gershkovich, Carnegie Mellon University

The Russian émigré writers shared with their European peers the modernist imperative to wrest an irreducible "I" from the sociohistorical forces that threaten to objectify the individual. In fact,

for the émigrés this impulse was all the more urgent: Who was more of an object of grand forces than someone exiled from their homeland by the upheavals of Revolution and Civil War? Yet—or, perhaps, for this reason—the modernist techniques of the likes of Proust, Joyce, and Woolf, with their focus on building up subjectivity out of ordinary experience, seem ill-suited for writers whose experience was anything but ordinary. My talk will consider how the generation of so-called “younger émigré writers”—writers who fled Russia as children or young adults—grappled with this conflict between form and content, between a style that enshrined the quotidian and a subject matter replete with cataclysm. I will examine the works of three authors who in the heated polemics of the émigré period often found themselves in opposing camps: Vladimir Nabokov (*Soglyadatay*), Ekaterina Bakunina (*Telo*), and Gaito Gazdanov (*Prizrak Aleksandra Vol'fa*). Despite their many differences, I argue that these authors are united in using the modernist trope of the “bifurcated self” to reconcile their formal and thematic concerns.

8-3 Stream 10B: Women Writers and Artists in Slavic and Eurasian Literature and Culture

Telling Herstory: The Metropolitan Russian Rag Doll from Natalia Shabel'skaia's Collection

Liliya Dashevski, Yale University

This paper explores a late 18th (?) century Russian rag doll from Natalia Shabel'skaia's collection, currently owned by the Metropolitan Museum of Art (<https://www.metmuseum.org/art/collection/search/156463>). Who made the doll, when it was made, and for what purpose? Who owned it and how did it get to the US? And finally, what can it tell us about dolls' function in the life of 19th century Russian women? The combined answers to the raised above questions reveal a complex story about Russian rag dolls, organized women labor, and collection practices.

A detailed formal analysis of the doll, combined with a historical exploration of its provenance, suggests that the Metropolitan doll was made by and for women, either at the end of the 18th century, or at the end of the 19th century. Moreover, the Metropolitan doll encloses various facets of womanhood. It tells the story of how maternal pagan protective charms (oberegs) transformed into toys, and later into fashionable collectable items. After tracing this evolution, the paper suggests that instead of being a patriarchic game for girls, the Metropolitan doll participated in the organization and propagation of women's labor. Thus, it tells a herstory. Although it is a unique story, I believe it to be a representative case study, which presents the complexity of dolls in general.

The Snuffing of Ekaterina Shakovskaia in Turgenev's “First Love”

Sara Dickinson, Università di Genova

Turgenev's “First Love” is the well-known story of a boy's difficult realization that the young woman he adores is actually having a love affair with his father. The first-person narrator tracks his youthful infatuation with Zinaida, his dim, but growing perception that she is enamoured of someone else, and his determined resistance to any understanding of that lover's identity. “First Love” is also well-known as an “autobiographical” story, which is to say that it reworks certain events that befell the young Turgenev himself: a similar infatuation at a similar age with a

similar young woman who similarly ignored him for his father. Turgenev described this story as his personal favorite, because unlike the others, it contained no fabrication:

Одну только повесть я перечитываю с удовольствием. Это “Первая любовь.” Она, пожалуй, мое любимое произведение. В остальном — хотя немного, да выдуманно, в “Первой любви” же описано действительное происшествие без малейшей прикраски, и при перечитывании действующие лица встают как живые предо мною.

Despite these allegations, the authorship of literary texts obviously requires various types of invention and “First Love” was no exception: Turgenev both adds details and omits them. His changes include details regarding the age, familial relationships, and personal characteristics of the story’s main characters, for example, modifications that also alter the relationship of these personage to described events. This talk focuses on the omission of one very important detail and its implications for 19th-century literary history: Ekaterina Shakhovskaia, on whom the figure of Zinaida is based, was a writer. Of Zinaida we know that she speaks French wonderfully and also has the good taste to appreciate Pushkin, but she never touches a pen to paper. Nonetheless, Shakhovskaia was a published poet with connections to literary circles. We explore Turgenev’s choice to elide writerly inclinations in Zinaida, arguing that it functions to position Turgenev more firmly in the literary landscape. His selective remembrance also implicitly contributes to the misogynistic shape of the 19th-century Russian literary canon by condoning, even promulgating, the silencing of women authors.

8-6 Panel: The Life of ‘Foreign’ and World Literature in Soviet Russia: Readers, Networks, and Theories

World Literature, Friendship, and Terror at the Moscow Institute of Philosophy and Literature (IFLI)

Petr Budrin, Harvard University

This paper will examine how world literature was read and interpreted by academics and students at the Institute of Philosophy and Literature (IFLI) in Moscow. Following its establishment in 1931, IFLI grew to become a prestigious college where students of different backgrounds were taught by leading Soviet translators and literary critics of the day. Grigorii Pomerants, an influential dissident philosopher who studied at IFLI, recalled how, against the background of totalitarian control and repressions in all spheres of life in the late 1930s, the most complex and controversial matters were discussed in “the ghostly micro-climate of the auditorium”. He compared this to Rabelais’s utopian Abbey of Thélème, where there was only one rule: do whatever you want. The archival materials that my paper introduces illuminate the ubiquitous intellectual independence that flourished at IFLI in the late 1930s and reveal hitherto side-lined theoretical contexts that set the scene for future Soviet literary criticism. In particular, the paper will focus on letters and critical texts of Izrail Vertsman, a scholar of sixteenth-century art and eighteenth-century novel, Leonid Pinskiĭ, a Shakespeare connoisseur and a Renaissance literature expert, and Vladimir Grib, whose main interest was the nineteenth-century European realism. The archival correspondences of these scholars, which often mix Russian with French, English, and German, are an intriguing, and previously unknown, document of intellectual life in Stalin’s Russia.

The Image of Greek Literature in *Inostrannaya literatura*

Panayiotis Xenophontos, University of Oxford

Founded in 1955, the state-funded, literary journal *Inostrannaya literatura* played an important role in bringing foreign texts into the Russian-language cultural sphere. By the 1960s, it had a print run of 300,000, making it a key actor in the transmission of foreign literature within the USSR. It was both a symbol of post-Stalinist liberalisations in the arts and an essential part of the post-war literary landscape in the Soviet Union. The very first translations into Russian of works by some of the most prominent writers of the twentieth century — Faulkner, Hemingway, Ionesco, Kafka — appeared in the journal before being published elsewhere.

My paper focuses solely on Greek and Cypriot writers published in the journal from its inception in 1955 up until the collapse of the USSR in 1991. I will begin by showing when, and how, Greek and Cypriot writers were published in *Inostrannaya literatura*, as well as surveying the writers and texts chosen for publication; Cavafy, Seferis, and Ritsos, were first published in Russian in the journal. Following this overview, I will show how the reading of Greek literature in Russian was a highly mediated affair which was affected by political forces, as well as social and cultural structures. As a result, the Greek and Cypriot writers translated for the journal not only gave a window into Greek-language literature but were also subject to the restrictions and mechanisms in place in the Soviet Union at the time. Since the journal was read by some of the most influential Russian-speaking writers of the post-war era — Brodsky, Venclova, Losev, for example, all read the publication regularly — an understanding of what was read, and how, shines a fresh light on both Greek and Russian literatures in the latter part of the twentieth century.

“Kurt Vonnegut is one of us:” The social life of Vonnegut in translation in the Soviet 1970s

Sarah Phillips, Indiana University

The Soviet ideological apparatus could control—to a certain extent—the translation and dissemination process of world literature in the Soviet Union. It could not control, however, how world literature would be received, interpreted, and even operationalized by Soviet readers. Readers often ignored the obligatory, sanctioned paratextual information provided by literary critics to accompany translations of world literature: official attempts to provide ideological frames fell flat as readers brought their own sensibilities, experiences, and interpretations to their reading. Drawing on archival research and personal interviews, this paper examines the diverse and unexpected “aftereffects” of young Soviet readers’ engagements with the work of American writer Kurt Vonnegut in the 1970s. I also track the institutional and ideological factors that positioned Vonnegut as an acceptable, and even ideal, author to represent America on the late Soviet world literature stage. The paper additionally highlights the singular role the translator Rita (Raisa) Rait-Kovaleva played as a cultural mediator for world literature in the Soviet Union, as she introduced Soviet readers not only to Kurt Vonnegut’s work, but also to the writing of J.D. Salinger, Faulkner, Sarraute, Kafka, and many others.

World Literature for World Theory: Russian Formalism and Beyond

Vasily Lvov, Hunter College, CUNY

Russian Formalism—self-admittedly “the first Russian theory that embraced ... the world”—could not exist without world literature; the contents of Shklovsky’s Theory of Prose testify to this. Inseparable like color, light, and vision, the global and the national ought to be distinguished as a literary form’s two aspects and modalities; figuring out the groundwork of their interplay (McLuhan) is key to an all-encompassing system of systems (Tynianov, Jakobson), sought by any formalist at any time.

World literature is situated between the gravity of national traditions and the outer space of out-of-context structures, found in humankind’s collective unconscious (Jung) and abstract theory. An in-between electrified with defamiliarization, Weltliteratur relates to these two as an anti-environment (McLuhan), impeding (Florensky) each to restore our “sensation of life” (Shklovsky). Thus, the *res nullius* of persistent forms (Veselovsky) and stray plots (Shklovsky) is “wired” from world literature “offshore” to national literatures, to be “cashed” through complementary form (Shklovsky), or the orientation (*ustanovka*) of bare structure to a certain literary epoch, where it becomes vested with positional meaning, as in place-value notation. Accordingly, when regionally produced meaning causes the inflation and automatization of a device or genre, world literature becomes its tax haven—unless an author invests in an unexportable resource of national literature, e.g. poetry (Shklovsky and Jakobson) or humor (Moretti). Based on Shklovsky’s Theory of Prose of 1983, I argue that unlike national literatures, Weltliteratur does not automatize literary form. Rather, free from history, like folklore, and from fixed signification, like dreams (Freud), it is a medium that accelerates the clichés of national literatures into archetypes (McLuhan), wherefrom they are again retrieved (McLuhan) or resurrected (Shklovsky), via motivation (Shklovsky) in the inner form of a national literature.

8-7 Eighteenth-Century Russian Literature

Theatrical Performance in the 18th Century: Russian Themes and European Conventions

Irina Avkhimovich, University of North Georgia

Sumarokov and Catherine the Great wrote the first plays set in the Russian past. In many of them, factitious Kievan Rus’ serves as the era of national antiquity, in parallel with Greece and Rome in the Neoclassical French culture. The political messages, aesthetics, and cultural implications of these plays have received a lot of scholarly attention. However, their stage life is rarely discussed. I propose a study of these plays from the perspective of performing arts. The surviving information on the acting styles, costumes, and set designs is very scarce and fragmentary but sufficient to provide important insights into the educated society’s understanding of emerging modern Russian identity. I argue that theatrical productions express the emerging problematics of modern Russian identity and nation earlier and more vividly than the contemporary rhetoric in writing. Performances reflect the elites’ collective self-perceptions. For example, the surviving drawings of costumes demonstrate that Russian-style pre-Petrine clothes for stage did not fully fit into the contemporary theatrical ideas of beauty, taste, and propriety. They also expose the simultaneous connection with the Russian past and its perceived exoticism. As a result, the visuals were very eclectic and quaint. Stage practitioners of the era were fascinatingly free-spirited in their creative endeavors, as no models pre-existed on how to present Russian history in theater. The grand shows at the royal theater could combine spoken plays, opera, dancing, and special effects, where Greek mythology was mixed with the

references to Russian antiquities and various imperial symbols. They were spectacles of power for the aristocracy as well as the foreign officials and guests.

“Нету водки в штофе, пей одно ты кофе”: How the Eighteenth-century Russian Literati Drank Their Coffee, in Which Way It Influenced Their Successors, and Why It Is Important for Us

Daria Solodkaia, Independent scholar

In Alexey Tolstoy’s famous ambitious novel *Peter I* (1929-1934), Alexander Menshikov complains about the field marshal Ogilvy’s gastronomic demands: “He needs as he wakes up chocolate [шеколад] and coffee [кофей] instead of a shot [чарка].” For the contemporary ear, the word “кофей” sounds truly pertaining to an eighteenth-century conversation. The only problem is that Tolstoy brought his historic narrative to 1704, and the form “кофей” appeared two decades later.

In my presentation, I will discuss a few popular myths and misapprehensions (like Tolstoy’s above) with which the word “кофе” has been surrounded. I will particularly focus on the eighteenth-century publications — governmental papers, letters, journal articles, memoirs, travelogues, plays, novels, and poems — to show the precedence of “кофе” over “кофей” / “кофий” as well as the superior usage frequency of the former. I will also provide examples from Alexander Sumarokov, Nikolai Novikov, and Nikolai Karamzin to debunk the presumptuous assurance that the neuter form of the word “кофе” is completely unacceptable. By analyzing how and why Karamzin — the champion of his time at writing about coffee — worked against the norm (“кофей”) suggested by the first Russian explanatory dictionary, *The Dictionary of the Russian Academy* (1789-1794), I will prove that his “new” norm (“кофе”) was welcomed by Pushkin and his circle and influenced the present-day one. At the same time, I will demonstrate that both Denis Fonvizin and Gavriil Derzhavin, who were the authors of *The Dictionary* and introduced “кофей” as a linguistic norm, themselves gravitated toward “кофе” and that the watershed between “кофе” and “кофей” / “кофий” as an opposition between pro-Slavonic and pro-European writers becomes relevant only after Nikolai Gogol started publishing his *Petersburg Stories* in mid 1830s.

Did Derzhavin Dare? Another Look at “Vlastiteliam i sudiiam”

Stuart Goldberg, Georgia Institute of Technology

One recent tendency in the scholarship on Gavrila Derzhavin has been to challenge previous narratives of his “daring,” using extensive cultural and historical contextualization, as well as a fine-grained picture of Catherine’s political world, to resituate his poetry. In particular, this approach can be seen in the work of Vera Proskurina and Kirill Ospovat, who are, at least in part, reacting to more sanguine readings of the poet’s independence by Anna Lisa Crone, in the former case, and Soviet scholars like Ilya Serman, in the latter. In this paper, I will revisit this discussion through a look at “Vlastiteliam i sudiiam,” both acknowledging the body of knowledge brought to bear in Ospovat’s expert contextualization and asking if something can be missed when approaching Derzhavin’s works through such contextualization. I will ask in what ways Derzhavin’s poem depart from the texts and norms that formed its contextual frame and how this ought to impact our reading of its purported “daring.” And, in the end, I will argue that

too strong a focus on Derzhavin's conservative world view and Catherinian politics can work to occlude a real but differently situated daring.

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8-8 Brave New World: Radical Early Soviet Culture

Revolution of the Heart: The New Woman in Alexandra Kollontai's *Vasilisa Malygina*
Rachael Neidinger, Harvard University

Alexandra Kollontai's novella *Vasilisa Malygina* is often overshadowed by her political writings on the place of women in the Bolshevik Revolution. In the early 1920s, when first published, it was dismissed on the grounds of being "too sexually explicit" (Porter). Earlier scholarship focuses on treatment of the body (Naiman) and material objects (Ingemanson). However, by focusing on the central love triangle and considering her novella as part of the realist tradition, I show how Kollontai contributes to the literary practice of using the domestic setting to explore the "women question." I argue that her fictional writing constitutes an invaluable view into the practical concerns that women of the early 20th century were facing at the beginning of the NEP period. To advance this argument, I situate Kollontai's fiction in the larger literary canon, building on the work done by Dawn D. Eidelman on the topos of the love triangle in George Sand's novels and Caryl Emerson's work on Chekhov. Additionally, I consider Kollontai's article "The New Woman" to examine how she experiments with her political ideas in fiction. I provide a close reading which further uncovers Kollontai's notions of the political value of female solidarity and recognition of the self in others, both prominent themes in her nonfiction. Through this close reading, class identity complicates Kollontai's conception of feminism, exposing both key challenges and potential strategies for overcoming class-related challenges.

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LikBez and the Digital Legacy of the Soviet Literacy Campaign

Carlotta Chenoweth, United States Military Academy

This paper will explore the intermedial afterlife of the first Soviet literacy campaign. I will focus specifically on the contemporary understanding of the term "LikBez" [*likvidatsiia bezgramotnosti*] as well as its origins in the early Soviet period. The term itself is compelling: "the liquidation of illiteracy" seeks the impossible – to erase (or "liquidate") an absence. The popularized shortened form, LikBez, similarly conjures an impossible erasure - "the face without." Both concepts presuppose that illiteracy is not only to be without knowledge, but to materially embody that lack of knowledge. The literacy campaign, under its first Soviet iteration, aimed to mask that "face without;" with enough knowledge to no longer be perceived as illiterate. The goal of this paper is to examine how this early Soviet pedagogical epistemology has endured and thrived since its emergence one hundred years ago. The term has remained in popular culture, particularly digital media, as websites and social media accounts have similarly promised LikBez; in fashion, music, and culture more broadly. I will examine how the act of LikBez remains a process of masking an imagined "face without" with sufficient knowledge to be perceived as literate in these broader cultural contexts.

Two *Aelitas*: Nostalgia and Trauma in Early Science Fiction in the USSR

Zhanna Budenkova, University of Pittsburgh

In her discussion of nostalgia, Svetlana Boym describes this phenomenon as an effect of modernity whose spatial and temporal displacements trigger a longing for the mythical lost "home" of traditional society with its communal ethos and predictable cyclical rhythms. Boym poses a notion of exile as fundamental to the experience of nostalgia – the perceived exile from home (writ large) that is mourned and recreated by a longing consciousness. According to Boym, in post-Christian world, the notion of nostalgic exile is metaphorized and stands for the "human condition ... in proudest possible sense: the first family of Adam and Eve, after all, were the first exiles from the Garden of Eden" (255). In my paper, I use Boym's thoughts to discuss two "canonical" texts of Soviet science fiction – the novel *Aelita*, written in 1923 by Aleksei Tolstoi, and its cinematic adaptation by Iakov Protazanov (1924). Both the novel and the film were the products of their epoch – emerging shortly after the Revolution, they document the destruction of former power structures and attempts at building the new society. They were created by the individuals who experienced post-revolutionary exile firsthand, both at the level of a concrete lived experience, and also in terms of being exiles in their own patria – the former aristocrat Tolstoi had to denounce his title upon his return to Russia from a failed attempt at immigration, while Protazanov had to prove his worth to new cinematic avantgarde. In my paper, I explore the workings of nostalgic exile in both *Aelitas*, showing how the texts helped to process the trauma of revolutionary displacement and violence. I view my project as an attempt at postmemory, aiming to reflect on Russia's past, its cultural consequences and imprints.

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8-9 Literature and History in the 1920s

Rhythm and (Literary) History in Yury Tynianov's Problem of Verse Language

Isobel Palmer, University of Birmingham

Regardless of their merits as accounts of prosody, modernist approaches to versification are valuable for what they reveal about evolving notions of poetic time and its relationship to historical consciousness. Of particular interest is the tension between the naturalization of rhythm, associated in modernist discourse with spontaneity, unpredictability and disruption, and what should arguably be regarded as some of the era's most enduring legacies, namely the codification of the distinction between meter and rhythm and the pursuit of scientific methods for their study. These impulses do not, in fact, run contrary to one another. Focusing in particular on Yury Tynianov's *Problem of Verse Language* (1924), this paper argues that the vitalist strain in early twentieth-century discussions of rhythm gave rise to a renewed sense of versification as a dynamic historical system. If decontextualizing formal structures is an essential step towards perceiving them as formal, rather than expressive structures, it is also essential to recognize, as Tynianov did, that taking form out of time is the surest way to reveal its embeddedness in time. This is consistent with the emphasis among OPOIaZ Formalists on the ongoing struggle between old and new as the defining feature of literary history, a position that extracted history itself from time to render it one long "present-as-such" [aktual'nost' kak takovoe].

The Intertwined Fates of Nicholas II and Saint Petersburg in Kharms's *Comedy of the City of Petersburg*

Lenora Murphy, Stanford University

Daniil Kharms frequently included notable historical figures in his work, placing them in ridiculous contexts which disrupted established cultural hierarchies. A prime example of this practice can be found in his unfinished 1927 play *Comedy of the City of Petersburg*, which features the emperor Nicholas II as one of its most prominent characters. The play takes place in an ambiguous timeline, encompassing the decades preceding and following the 1917 Revolution; Nicholas is thus suspended between his life as emperor and his death as a prisoner of the Bolsheviks.

This paper explores Kharms's depiction of Nicholas, analyzing the insights it offers into questions of Russian sovereignty, history, and memory. My interpretation of this version of Nicholas is based in Kharms's decision to parallel him with the city of Saint Petersburg, as both emperor and capital are thrown into doubt and confusion amidst the Bolshevik takeover. In this play, the Revolution and the subsequent transformation of Saint Petersburg into Leningrad serve as an act of severing, cutting off the city and its residents from the rest of the country and their own history. I claim that this spatial, temporal, and institutional isolation and disorientation are conveyed through the characterization of Nicholas, who alternates between states of self-awareness and amnesia, hubris and shame. His inconsistency and uncertainty are reflections of an emotional state Kharms ascribes to Saint Petersburg as a whole, in an unusually pointed commentary on post-Revolution life which also serves as his contribution to the Saint Petersburg canon: the old empire may have been destroyed along with its emperor, but its memory, though it may be weak, is more difficult to erase.

The Uneven and Combined Development of Revolutionary Symbolism in Trotsky's *History of the Russian Revolution*

Michael Lerner, UC Berkeley

In Trotsky's *The History of the Russian Revolution*, the theory of uneven and combined development is most readily applied to Trotsky's analysis of how the Russian Empire, a relatively backward country both politically and economically, could become the most progressive country in the world, and the harbinger of world socialism. It is a theory which mainly concerns economics and politics. However, the question remains to be asked, how does Trotsky in *The History* apply the theory of uneven and combined development to revolutionary Russia as it existed as a symbol producing mechanism? How can Russia, as a supposedly "delayed" society, express its accelerated development through the accelerated production of symbols? In *The History*, Trotsky proposes two main tendencies which dictate the production of revolutionary symbols. On the one hand, the revolution presents all events in a symbolic, and one might even say, literary form. In a sense, the revolution expresses itself via the overproduction of symbols. On the other hand, this tendency, and the tendency for the revolution itself to be metaphorically related to natural phenomena (avalanches, boiling water, explosions, etc...) present a certain danger. Symbols and metaphors turn into clichés and semantically empty slogans. The seemingly revolutionary acts of metaphorically uniting the social and natural sciences, and of extending said metaphors by portraying the revolution as a type of science fiction conceal conservative tendencies which seek to eliminate the human element from history's "mass dramas." These conclusions are reached by placing Trotsky's comments on revolutionary symbolism as they are found in *The History* within the context of the debates which took place between the Marxists and the Formalists in the 1920s, and by extending that context to the pre-revolutionary philosophical debates which took place within the Bolshevik Party between Vladimir Lenin and Alexander Bogdanov.

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 20, 2022

Session 9: 8:00am-10:00am

9-5 Panel: "The Sluice Gates of Janus: Mythology and Mythopoesis in Platonov's *Foundation Pit*"

"When Creation Loses its Charm: Disenchantment and (Authentic) Reenchantment in Platonov's *Foundation Pit*"

Brad Underwood, Northwestern University

This paper reformulates the existentialist dimensions of Platonov's *The Foundation Pit* within the philosophical and/or sociological discourse of "disenchantment" and "re-enchantment." The novel contextualizes the characters' existential quests within a larger project of redressing – or "re-enchanting" – a cosmos in which humans are doomed to dominate or detach from a dead, fragmented – "disenchanted" – world. Thus, the novel's world is one devoid of meaning because it is a world devoid of the sacred. For Platonov, Russia's communist revolution initiates an epoch of disenchantment *par excellence*, because Platonov regards communism as the culmination of the disenchanting assumptions of scientific modernity. It is only in the aftermath of

communism's failures that one clearly sees the deficiencies of all forms of myth-making – be they religious, secular, scientific, or political.

In reading Platonov's *Foundation Pit* through his short story, "The Sampo," this paper will consider whether Platonov regards the communist revolution as a failed attempt to re-enchant a world that scientific modernity has already disenchanted. Kirey's ruminations on the Finnish myth of the "Kalevala" in "The Sampo" appear in the *The Foundation Pit's* anthropomorphic character of "the Bear." Thus, Platonov uses a traditional myth to critique the mythical undertones of Soviet collectivized agriculture. *The Foundation Pit* does not suggest the absence but the failure of myth. More specifically, Platonov is skeptical of any attempt to access the sacred through any latent recourse to mythology. In contrast to the Bear, I argue that Voshev and Nastya represent an authentic attempt to re-enchant the world. However, the latter form of re-enchantment does not rely on a mythical ideology but rather on consciousness itself – especially the human mind's capacity to remember with compassion.

"The Foundation Pit as Parodic Socialist Realism: A Paratext to the Production Novel"
Lucas Plazek, University of California, Berkeley

This paper considers Andrei Platonov's novel *The Foundation Pit* in the context of the literary practices of Socialist Realism and its nascent forebear, the production novel. While there have been successful attempts to consider the parodic elements of the novel in relation to its linguistic and structural components, the aim of this paper will be to situate *The Foundation Pit* within greater thematic debates surrounding the substantiation of the Socialist Realist method. Canonical definitions of Socialist Realism and the Soviet novel (Andrei Zhdanov's speech proclaiming the goal "to depict reality in its revolutionary development," and Katerina Clark's influential "master plot") have provided models through which scholars generally understand the political and aesthetic ideals of the early Soviet literary establishment.

An examination of some of the novel's primary character's—Voshchev, Chiklin, Safronov, and Prushevsky—and their parodic similarities to other literary heroes of Socialist Realism allows for a critical reading of the methods being then formulated throughout the development of the Soviet literary canon. Perhaps more significant is the way in which Platonov demonstrates the institutional failures implicit in preventing *The Foundation Pit* from taking its place in that canon. By rejecting this strange production novel, in which the principles of the spontaneity/consciousness dialectic are so thoroughly out of joint, the literary establishment failed to affirm its own principles as reflected in this parodic and auto-critical portrait of one of Socialist Realism's primary genres.

9-6 Early Twentieth-Century Poetry

"Mne bylo trudno / Vnov' oshchushchat' vse telo, ruki, nogi..." Embodiment in Form and Content in Vladislav Khodasevich's Poetry
Sarah Matthews, University of Southern California

Embodiment is a central theme in Vladislav Khodasevich's poetry, particularly in "Epizod," "Zhiv Bog! Umen, a ne, zaumen...", "Vesennii lepet ne raznezhit...", and "Vstaiu rasslablennyi s posteli...". In these four poems there is either explicit commentary on the body (its individual

parts, senses, or movements) or the poems themselves are given characteristics of a body. These poems serve as a reminder that the material world, for Khodasevich, is inescapable. Other scholars have noted the prevalence and power of the phenomenal world in Khodasevich's poetry, especially in his later works where it becomes near impossible for the poet or lyrical speaker to transcend. However, what this paper will add to the existing scholarly conversation is that the concept of the body and the real world as inextricable is reflected in both form and content. Many scholars have demonstrated that the relationship between form and content in Khodasevich's poetry is paramount and often mimetic (it does what it describes), but this paper will discuss the relationship between form and content in the specific context of a physical body. Not only do the structure of these poems emphasize what the lyrical speaker says about embodiment, in "Zhiv Bog! Umen, a ne, zaumen..." poetry itself becomes the new vessel for the dying lyrical speaker.

After analyzing the poems, Khodasevich's personal life, and how it affects his worldview and poetry, will be considered. By referring to the secondary literature written on Khodasevich's life, one can see that his experiences leading up to and as an émigré writer are closely connected with this idea that the phenomenal world is an inescapable prison.

"In the Beginning There Was the Word": Lyric, Logos, and Dialogism as Communion in the Mandel'shtamian Image

Zachary Deming, Columbia University

Using the exegetical framework of patristic Christian theology, this paper posits Osip Mandel'shtam's fascination with the Biblical Johannine *Logos* as a dominant, animating poetic principle in his oeuvre—one that is ultimately responsible for the strikingly dialogical orientation of his figurative language. In the Mandel'shtamian artistic schema, the construction of the figurative image is a meditative, alchemical process of self-analysis and synthesis. It comprises a quasi-mystical exploration of "the Word," and the self in relation to it. As such, the act of crafting the image is for Mandel'shtam a sort of dialogue with oneself—and with the reader, whose internal interactions with the rich tapestry of potential significations contained in a given image render it poetically effective, and imbue it with the responsiveness of a living thing. This paper argues that this execution comprises a creative act rooted above all in the patristic Christian theological logic of communion, and one which results in an organic and corporeal piece of text—an act of animation through dialogue, mirroring that performed by Genesis's trinitarian God.

This paper examines Mandel'shtam's fascination with the logic of the patristic *Logos* through his own polemical writing on poetics, and dissects the structural mechanisms of figurative constructions in "Grifel'naia oda" and the novella "Egipetskaia marka," by which the Mandel'shtamian image invites and compels the analysis that renders it dialogically effective. In so doing, the paper demonstrates the consonance between the Christian notion of erotic communion with the divine and Mandel'shtam's own aspiration to replicate such a communion between reader and lyric speaker.

A Complicated Illusion of Simplicity: The Contradiction between Form and Content in Vvedensky

Elizaveta Dvortsova, University of Southern California

This paper examines the relationships between form and content in poetry written by Alexander Vvedensky (1904–1941), a member of the OBERIU circle. The late avant-garde group contributed to the modernist project of disrupting traditional assumptions about the harmony between form and content. The tension between the two was thematized in the pre-symbolist poem *Silentium* by Fedor Tiutchev where inadequacy of language to the poetic thought was articulated. In his poem *Tvorchestvo*, symbolist Valerii Briusov continued to display the contradictory nature of art by focusing on the means of expression. The form of the texts themselves, however, supported their content. In the works of OBERIU poets and Vvedensky in particular, the two became opposed: what is said does not correspond to how it is done. Their poems bring up scary and sophisticated content in an easy form and often appear too simple on the surface.

Analyzing the poem *Gost' Na Kone* (1931–1933) with the involvement of other texts, I will argue that such superficial simplicity can be an illusion. While the grammar constructions may look easy, the lack of obvious logical sequences complicates the text and makes it seemingly incomprehensible. A deeper reading, however, makes it possible to uncover new connections, and a reader's expectation is deceived again: what seemed to be oversimplified speaks indirectly, yet is not completely impenetrable. My textual analysis will suggest that the seeming incongruity between form and content reflects Vvedensky's own dim view of epistemology: a poem that cannot be fully deciphered epitomizes the Universe which cannot be fully understood. In addition, the multilayered illusion of simplicity-complexity reflects a doubt about the reality of our experiences. The compound of sophisticated and easy also fits OBERIU's philosophy: the incongruity between form and content is not only a matter of poetics, it is intimately tied to their ontological inquiries.

Session 10: 10:15am-12:00pm

10-1 Single-panel stream: The Contemporaries

With Friends Like These...: Turgenev, Grigorovich, Druzhinin and the History of “Shkola Gostepriimstva”

Donna Oliver, Beloit College

In May 1855, Dmitry Grigorovich, Aleksandr Druzhinin, and Vasily Botkin paid a visit to their friend Ivan Turgenev on his estate at Spasskoye. While there the four friends composed and staged a play called “Shkola gostepriimstva” about a good-natured landowner (played by Turgenev) who invites everyone he knows to visit him on his estate, only to be beset by various domestic calamities just as he is overrun by guests. As a joke, his friends included the infamous line attributed to Turgenev in 1838 when he was onboard the Nikolai I after it caught fire: “Save me, save me, I am the only son of my mother!” Though intended as a playful gag, the joke was on Turgenev, who was forever plagued by stories of his behavior on the burning ship.

But the life of “Shkola gostepriimstva” did not end there. That autumn Grigorovich published a prose version in *Biblioteka dlia chteniia*, in which the character who utters the humiliating plea is not the landowner, but rather an unpleasant critic named Chernushkin (a nasty caricature of

Chernyshevsky) who disparages contemporary literature. And the following winter the original play was reprised in a domestic theater in Petersburg, with Druzhinin and Turgenev in attendance. As a prank on his friend, Druzhinin told the host that Turgenev was the sole author of the piece. When the actors decided to fortify themselves with vodka before the performance, the drunken spectacle that ensued directed the audience's indignation at Turgenev, who tried unsuccessfully (and one might assume, ungracefully) to hide behind chairs and other audience members to avoid their wrath.

This paper examines these three episodes in the "life" of "Shkola gostepriimstva" and analyzes the ways in which this collaborative effort provided inimical space both to mock a friend, Turgenev, and to attack an ascendent enemy, Chernyshevsky.

An Issue of the Journal: Volume 55 of *Sovremennik*, January 1856

William S Nickell, University of Chicago

This paper examines the issue of *Sovremennik* that was most recent when Levitsky took his famous studio portrait. It features a lot of the star power shown in the photograph: Turgenev with his first novel, *Rudin*, Tolstoy with the first publication of a work ("Sevastopol in August 1855") under his family name, Goncharov with an excerpt from *Fregat "Palada,"* and Druzhinin with a study of George Crabbe. There are also pieces by other well-known authors of the time, including Fet, A' K. Tolstoy, Nekrasov, Botkin, and Polonskii. We will consider the whole table of contents, however—with special attention to the reviews, the Petersburg Life section, and forgotten literary contributions (N.I. Sokal'skii's "*Zhizn' na Sevastopol'skoi bataree (Rasskaz matrosa Galishchenko)*," M. Mikhailov's "*Derev'ia i gorod*," and the oral history "*Gavrilke v ratniki itti, a mne ostat'sia*")—in order to create a bigger picture of what the journal was about at the time.

10-2 Stream 12B: Carceral States in Slavic and East European Studies: Panel

Storytelling and Essays in Grossman's *Everything Flows* and Shalamov's *Kolyma Tales*

Emily Van Buskirk, Rutgers University

Vasily Grossman and Varlam Shalamov both intended their works about the camps to speak to the general features of Soviet life, and indeed to make statements about the essence of the human as it is revealed in conditions of incarceration, torture, slavery. They not only show what happens to individual characters who are caught by the inhuman and destructive machine of the state, but also include copious, direct philosophical and historical generalizations into their fictional or semi-fictional writings about the camps (*Everything Flows* and *Kolyma Tales*) – which appear to issue from an authorial voice. In my talk I will begin by contrasting some of the authors' most fundamental differences when it comes to the camp theme. I will then turn to examine the meaning of the inclusion of the essay for the genre of these works, which straddle boundaries between fiction and non-fiction. How can one describe the narrative fabric, and temporality of the narratives, given the authors' attempted historical or philosophical scope? I am also interested in the occasion of storytelling in each work: what does it mean for characters to give voice to some of these truths to one another? Do these authors make insights about Russian

history or camp life into meaningful encounters between characters? How do these generalizations interact with events and characters?

Memories of Solovki in Vodolazkin's *Aviator* and Prilepin's *Monastery*

José Vergara, Bryn Mawr College

This paper examines two contemporary representations of the Solovki prison labor camp: Evgeny Vodolazkin's *The Aviator* (2016) and Zakhar Prilepin's *The Monastery* (2014). It argues that, through their depictions of the carceral theme, these very dissimilar novels speak to not only their respective authors' politics—Prilepin's nationalism, Vodolazkin's tendency toward apoliticism—but, more significantly, to their conceptions of the interrelated nature of history, memory, the legacies of Russian prison literature.

The Poetics of Death in the Prison Letters of Sergei Parajanov

Simon Garibyan, University of Southern California

Sergei Parajanov is one of the pioneers of Soviet poetic cinema, the author of countless collages and striking performances. Moreover, he is one of the few directors who was arrested several times for being queer. The Soviet authorities arrested him three times: in 1949 in Tbilisi, in 1974 in Kiev, and in 1982 again in Tbilisi. He served the longest time in Ukraine from 1974 to 1977, and during this period Parajanov engaged in various forms of creative activity – he made collages, dolls, drawings, medallions, and wrote letters to his friends in which he reflected upon his living environment in “the Zone.” This paper analyzes Parajanov's necropoetics as expressed in his *Letters from the Prison* (2000) and argues that death does not signal the end of life but rather functions as a carnivalesque reversal of a symbolic order in the context of Soviet necropolitics and practices of imprisonment. Drawing on Mikhail Bakhtin's theories of parody and carnival, I reveal how Parajanov's letters and visual work from the period of imprisonment in Kiev break mimetic relationships with established cultural patterns to express an oppositional ethos against various forms of normativity. This paper will contribute to the stream “Carceral States in Slavic and East European Studies” by showing that Parajanov's treatment of death and dying in his epistolary and visual work from the period of incarceration paradoxically helped him maintain optimism in the face of the state's political violence.

Reading Shalamov and Solzhenitsyn, Geometrically

Yasha Klots, Hunter College, CUNY

The paper looks at the organization of space as a literary and historical allegory in Shalamov's and Solzhenitsyn's Gulag narratives. With Solzhenitsyn's *One Day in the Life of Ivan Denisovich* and Shalamov's “Through the Snow” (as well as his Mandelshtam cycle) as a case study, I will propose a “geometrical” reading of these works as a way to draw students' attention to the proverbial dichotomy between the two authors – not on the basis of their first-hand camp experiences, but based on their respective uses of space as a literary metaphor. The paper will argue, in particular, that while Solzhenitsyn's literary geometry tends to be cyclical and self-enclosed, Shalamov orchestrates space as a linear, non-hermetic continuum, inviting other authors and texts, such as Mandelshtam, to join the “process(ion),” as in the opening sketch of his *Kolyma Tales* “Through the Snow,” whereby snow serves as a page collectively covered with text(s).

10-4 Motivation in Language-Learning

Authentic Classroom: Investigating The Impact Of Teacher's Authenticity On Student's Motivation And Persistence

Anna Shkireva, University of Massachusetts

There is a vast amount of research that investigates the concept of motivation in relation to language learning (Gardner and Lambert, 1972; Guilloteaux and Dörnyei, 2008; Dörnyei and Al-Hoorie, 2017), however, minimum research attention has been directed at the examination of teacher's attitudes and behaviours that can influence student's persistence to study foreign language (FL). According to van Lier (1996), one of the principles of FL curriculum is the constant of authenticity, which should not be seen only by means of authentic materials, but a "process of engagement in the learning situation and as a characteristic of the persons engaged in learning" (p. 125). Even though the concept of authenticity is a popular concept in the field of FL, the term remains vague due to the various meanings that are associated with this term (Gilmore, 2007, p. 98). The existing research on authenticity has focused on tasks and teaching materials (van Lier 1996; Guariento & Morley, 2001), however, the role of teacher's authenticity in language classrooms is still poorly understood.

The aim of this presentation is to explore the authentic classroom beyond teaching materials and investigate what it means to be an authentic teacher in all levels of FL instruction. The presentation will investigate teacher's authenticity through the means teachers convey their authenticity into the class routine, as well as how they build instructional communication with students. Furthermore, the understanding of teacher's authenticity can potentially influence student's motivation and persistence on learning FL and may yield several positive outcomes for teachers and students. It is anticipated that the knowledge from this presentation will provide new insights on teacher's instructional communication and contribute to the pedagogy of teaching FL.

Examining Student Motivation for Learning Russian Language

Olga Scarborough, The U.S. Air Force Academy

Motivation is a complex concept that requires thorough examination of its multiple facets. Student motivation is considered to be one of the key factors in second language acquisition. Placing students at the starting point for a successful course and in the center of their learning process, instructors should determine who their current students are, what has brought them into the classroom, which interests and goals they may have for learning a particular language. Continuous stimulation of learning motives by incorporating materials connected to students' interests and goals may help young people sustain the long language learning process.

The presentation focuses on components of foreign language learning and teaching and their influence on student motivation for learning the Russian language. The data received from students taking Russian as a foreign language courses at various levels at several Moscow universities, U.S. colleges and a military service academy is analyzed and summarized for the presentation. The possible survey questions can also be shared with the audience.

10-5 Panel: Humor and Marginalized Identities in Russian Culture

“Violence and Ethnic Humor in Late Imperial Russian Jokebooks”

Gabriella Safran, Stanford University

From the 1860s, Russian publishers produced inexpensive, cheaply printed collections of short comical monologues and dialogues, often about encounters between peasants and non-peasants, titled Scenes from Folk Life (Stseny iz narodnogo byta). Soon after, the characters in these books of “scenes” began to include non-ethnic Russians, such as Jews, Germans, Ukrainians, and Armenians. The encounters in these collections featured misunderstanding, hostility, and sometimes violence. Looking at an assortment of scenes from the first section of a dozen collections, this paper compares the violence in encounters between different ethnic groups to that in encounters between Russians; it draws on Christie Davies’ arguments about the type-casting of ethnic groups in jokes, while also noticing the similar plots of jokes about different groups.

The Trickstar in Putin’s Russia: Gender, Identity and Neo-Conservatism in Manizha’s “Паша Вуман.”

Alexey Shvyrkov, Columbia University

This year’s Russia’s bid at the Eurovision Song Contest generated a massive social media and political outcry back at home. All due to fact that Manizha, who is of a Tajik origin, performed a feminist march about a “Russian” woman. Her performance, thus, exposed the intricate relationships between identity and nationalism, postcolonial hybridity, and post-Soviet cynicism. This paper argues that Manizha is a female trickster, a trickstar. Analysis of her performance reveals that on stage Manizha combines the folk buffoon’s theatricality and laughter, turning the ritualistic trick into a performative act. This mini-carnival through the inverted ritual reappropriates existing discourses on gender, sexuality, and ethnicity, as well as creates a liminal zone of freedom. The laughter produced, as this paper contends, is both triumphant and mocking. Manizha’s liminal position “in-between” two cultures (Tajik and Russian) highlights her post-Soviet hybridity. As a trickstar, she uses this hybrid multivocality as an artistic gesture to dismantle the processes of identity construction and challenge the dominant neoconservative discourses on who can be considered to be a Russian. Manizha, thus, reclaims her right to be, represent and speak for a “Russian” woman, expanding the scope of inclusion as well as deconstructing the very sacredness of being “Russian.” The public reaction to the trick leads to a conclusion that in the post-Soviet (read postcolonial) environment, the trickster becomes a subaltern who can speak.

On the Skaz Narration of Sexual Trauma in Alexei Remizov’s Prose

Fiona Bell, Yale University

The Russian modernist Alexei Remizov (1877-1957) was famously interested in transmitting expressive oral speech into written form. In his stories and novels, Remizov uses folkloric morphological structures, non-linear narrative techniques, and a peasant-marked lexicon in order to mimic the oral speech of peasant women. Remizov’s women characters often use this speech to narrate their experiences of sexual trauma. In other descriptions of sexual violence, however,

Remizov assumes the joking voice of an implicitly male “skaz” narrator. This “skaz” narrator, who “punches down” by joking about women’s trauma, exposes the hegemonic hermeneutics of sexual violence in early twentieth-century Russia. What results from the combination of these two approaches—mimicking women’s sincere speech and adopting a joking “skaz” narrator—is a polyphonic style that juxtaposes the subjectivities of victims, abusers, and bystanders. By considering the problem of the “rape joke” in early twentieth-century Russian modernist prose, this paper raises broader issues within humor studies and the ethics of representation.

10-7 Twentieth-Century Poetry Crossing Boundaries

Not Primitive or Provincial, but Universal: The Anticolonial Poetry of Jean Amrouche and Shamshad Abdullaev

Hana Stankova, Yale University

Although separated by time and space, the early-20th century Algerian poet Jean Amrouche and the contemporary Uzbek poet Shamshad Abdullaev share a number of similarities worth examining. Both Amrouche and Abdullaev were educated in the language of the colonizer—French for Amrouche and Russian for Abdullaev—and went on to write only in these languages, instead of their countries’ native tongues. In this sense, both poets are defined by a hybrid identity that they strive to reconcile in their poetry. This paper explores these two poets’ fraught relationships with their own countries’ intellectual landscapes and with the imperial powers that shaped them in order to examine how former subjects of both the French and the Russian Empire were able to carve out a unique postcolonial space for themselves through poetry.

Both Amrouche and Abdullaev saw poetry as a uniting force, and they both understood that their respective native cultures had long been relegated to a “primitive” or “provincial” position. For Amrouche, redefining the limits of time in his poetry entailed accepting Algerian traditions on an equal plane with contemporary French culture. For Abdullaev, writing in Russian was as a tool for uplifting Ferghana from its marginal place on the outskirts of the Russian Empire. In their poetry, they envisioned new timelines and spaces where they could more easily fit in. But both of these poets have also been criticized on either side of the divides they attempted to bridge and have changed their outlooks over the course of their lives. While their solutions to the problem of forging one’s own identity while navigating an anti or post-colonial space were imperfect, their art offers a lesson in how poetry can be used to bridge some of these persistent divides.

"A Kind of Buzzing": Nature Sound as Symbol of Poetic Creation in Natalya Gorbanevskaya's Pre-Emigration Poetry

Melissa Azari, University of Wisconsin-Madison

In an interview about Joseph Brodsky's poetry, Natalya Gorbanevskaya describes what she perceives as the two different approaches to poetic creation. The first is that of the planned poem, one which is considered and carefully plotted out with intention. According to Gorbanevskaya, Brodsky was her real-life introduction to this method when he described in detail to her his then still unfinished poem “Isaac and Abraham” in 1964. The other poetic method Gorbanevskaya describes is one without planning, one in which the poet hears a sound (which she describes as a “kind of buzzing”) and fixates on it until it becomes a poem. Gorbanevskaya explains that this second method is the way she has always written poetry.

This paper will explore the link that Gorbanevskaya creates between sounds of nature and the process of poetic creation in two of her pre-emigration poems: “Проклятье! Счастье! Пишутся!...” (“Damnation! Happiness! Writing!...”) (1967) and “Жужжание жука, журчание ручья...” (“The buzzing of the beetle, the babbling of the brook...”) (1975). Both poems contain auditory images from nature that have qualities similar to that of the buzzing noise that Gorbanevskaya describes as the sound of her own emergent poetry. In addition to comparing the sound attributes of these poems, this paper will also describe how Gorbanevskaya develops her auditory images by building upon the portrayal of nature sounds in Russian poetic tradition. Through these poetry analyses, this paper will illustrate that sound is the foundation of Gorbanevskaya’s creative process and that she explores it as both the inspiration for and the building blocks of poetry itself.

Poetry of Michaila Stainova

Virginia Zickafoose, Independent Scholar

Published posthumously in Bulgaria in 1993, *Green Staccato*, a collection of thirty-two poems written by Michaila Stainova, has never been translated into English. A scholar of Ottoman studies by training, Dr. Stainova researched on, among other themes, the European aesthetic of eighteenth-century tulip gardens that influenced the upper stratum of Ottoman society. Before her unexpected death in 1987 at the age of 46, she would also be known for her humanitarian activism on behalf of colleagues affected by the communist regime's policy of forceful assimilation of Bulgaria's ethnic Turks. Privately, she had begun writing poetry and plays. Outside of Bulgaria she was remembered for her scholarship in folklore and language by the Polish Turcologist, Edward Tryjarski, who eulogized her life and work. Despite restrictions placed on her travel, she worked in Poland, the US, France, the former Yugoslavia, Egypt, Greece, and Turkey.

This presentation provides translation and analysis, introducing some *Staccato* poems for interpretation through two prisms. One examines the Poet “intellectual” within the larger Eastern Bloc context suffering and opposing political oppression. Two considers the early days of the Changes, when self- or family publications, absent of censorship and with pent up demand, proliferated. It was a time of disruption of imposed narratives and remembrance of existences. There was a struggle of primacy: recover “national” culture, European past, diversity. Poetic thought is a testimony to a garden tended, though dormant, regenerating in and for a new climate.

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