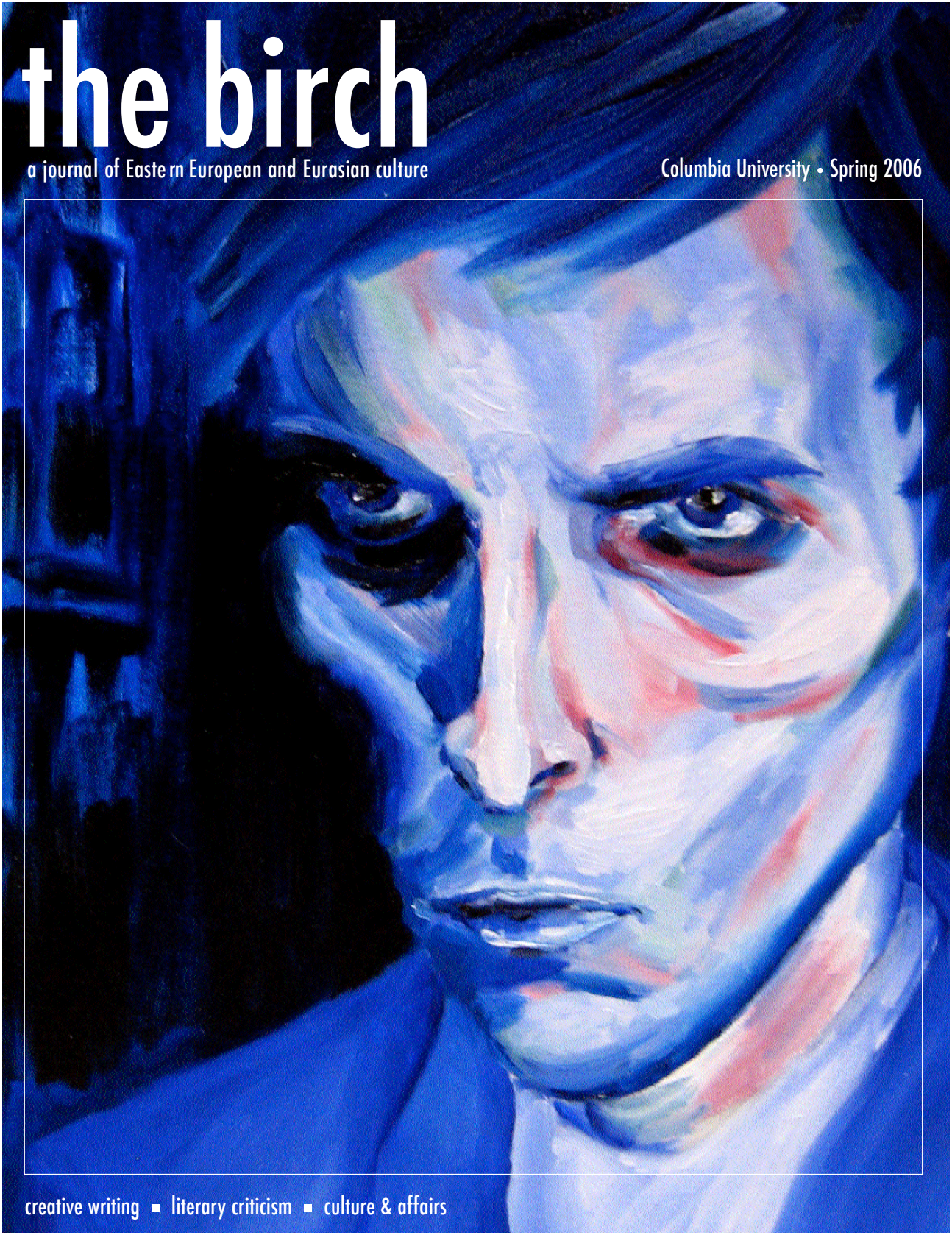
the birch

a journal of Eastern European and Eurasian culture

Columbia University • Spring 2006



creative writing ▪ literary criticism ▪ culture & affairs

EDITOR'S NOTE

Someone recently asked me to describe *The Birch*. "A journal that focuses on themes related to the countries of Eastern Europe and Eurasia," I said. But when asked about the content, I had to think for a bit.

The Birch has become an eclecticism of both theme and genre. No longer do the journal's authors hail from the same school, with the same teachers and similar backgrounds, and the content has grown into something less conventional than it has been in the past. From a short story about a lifelong-learner-turned-imaginary lover in a beginning Russian class, to an analysis of the regional conflict in Transnistria, to a series of haikus, to the painting of *Crime and Punishment*'s Raskolnikov that appears on the cover, this issue proves that *The Birch* has evolved into an all-inclusive sort of Eastern European and Eurasian free-for-all, where exciting thoughts and interests trump allegiances to a specific form, genre or time period.

At first, we were self-conscious. We tried to come up with all kinds of different section titles that would allow Sarah Milov's political and historical analysis of Russia's 1996 elections to fit in seamlessly alongside Mark Krotov's review of Russia's hit movie about blood-sucking zombies. We even changed our name to "a journal of Eastern European and Eurasian culture," casually appropriating the nebulous word "culture" as a stand-in descriptor for the journal's peculiar non-conformist contents.

Yet the other part of our new title—the description "Eastern European and Eurasian"—speaks to our decision to chuck that self-consciousness into the proverbial receptacle of homogeneity and embrace the enjoyable eclecticism that we created. We no longer wanted to be just a journal of "Slavic" studies, confined to themes present only in the Slavic-speaking world; the new description "Eastern European and Eurasian" allows us to open our figurative doors to more countries and traditions. From now on, we will attempt to include pieces from all corners of the Eastern European and Eurasian world. This issue is a start. It includes work related to Poland, Ukraine, Romania, Moldova, Russia and the Balkans, and we are determined to fuel the journal's diversity even more. We hope you begin to take pleasure in the journal's fun and distinctive mélange of pieces as much as we have. Enjoy.

—Paul Sonne

Cover Painting: "*Rodya*"
by Jenny Lam, Columbia University

Copyright © 2006. *The Birch*, Columbia University. All rights reserved.

the birch

A NATIONAL STUDENT-RUN
UNDERGRADUATE JOURNAL

PAUL SONNE
EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

JANE MIKKELSON
DEPUTY EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

MARK KROTOV
MANAGING EDITOR

ANNA KOYFMAN
BUSINESS MANAGER

ATOSSA ABRAHAMIAN
MERRELL HAMBLETON
JULIA KITE
CREATIVE WRITING

MONICA FINLEY
MASHA MAFTER
LITERARY CRITICISM

DAVID PLOTZ
DAVID SCHOR
CULTURE & POLITICS

ELENA LAGOUTOVA
DIRECTOR OF PHOTOGRAPHY

ALINA SMYSLOVA
DEPUTY BUSINESS MANAGER

EMILY LASKIN
COPY EDITOR

VITALIY SHCHUPAK
WEB EDITOR

www.thebirchonline.org

CRITICISM

CHALLENGING EVIL'S FAMILIAR FACE JEANNE-MARIE JACKSON 4

DETECTING A NEW AESTHETIC MASHA MAFTER 7

THE UNREALITY OF SUKHANOV JULIA BUTAREVA 9

EXCAVATION OF THE FUTURE JENNIFER WILSON....11

TRANSLATING TEXTUAL AMBIGUITY ERIC SWINN....14

MANDELSHTAM'S METAPHYSICS JANE MIKKELSON....17

CREATIVITY

MOTHER RUSSIA BRYAN KELLY 20

IN PLACE OF A CAESURA KATARZYNA KOZANECKA 22

PAST INTERRUPTS PRESENT ANNA GERMAN 23

Марку ANNA KOYFMAN 25

Наркому Пахомову JORDAN SHEDLOCK 26

GOLUBTSY YELENA SHUSTER 27

THREE FACES MONICA FINLEY 29

CULTURE & AFFAIRS

CALLING YUSHCHENKO'S BLUFF: GAS, THE PRESS, AND THE PREDICAMENT OF POST-REVOLUTION UKRAINE DAVID PLOTZ 32

FROZEN IN CONFLICT AND TIME: NEGOTIATING TRANSNISTRIA AND THE FUTURE OF MOLDOVA DAVID SEYMOUR SCHOR 35

THWARTED VOTERS: VOTING PATTERNS IN RUSSIA'S 1996 PRESIDENTIAL RACE SARAH MILOV 39

THE CHILDREN OF KRASNOYARSK: FIRST-HAND INSIGHT INTO THE PLIGHT OF RUSSIAN ORPHANS STEFANIE IVES 45

POST-SOVIET ZOMBIES: UNVEILING THE RUSSIANNESS OF *NIGHT WATCH* MARK KROTOV 47

THE BEAUTY OF AN UGLY DUCKLING: EXPLORING AN INNOVATIVE NEW PUBLISHING COLLECTIVE V. G. DAVIDZON 49

Interview Series
CRIME AND NO PUNISHMENT: THE TRIAL OF SLOBODAN MILOSEVIC PAUL SONNE 51

PHOTOGRAPHY

BY ERIN BROWN, MARGALIT FADEN, JOSEPHINE KALIKA, ELENA LAGOUTOVA, EMILY LOWRY (DRAWINGS), JORDAN SHEDLOCK, JON WARD AND BEVERLY WILSON

WE WOULD LIKE TO THANK ALL THE SPONSORS WHO MADE THIS ISSUE POSSIBLE

SPONSORS
The Harriman Institute
Barnard Russian Cultural Association
Valentina Izmirlieva
Mara Kashper
Liza Knapp
Roman & Marina Koyfman
Mark Krotov
Elena Lagoutova
Jane Mikkelson
Catharine Nepomnyashchy
David Schor
Paul Sonne
Tatiana Smoliarova
Alla Smyslova
Jack Snyder
Rebecca Stanton
Alan Timberlake
Richard Wortman

Additional Patrons and Sponsors will be listed on our website at www.thebirchonline.org.

Special Thanks

As always, there are a number of people who deserve to be thanked for all of their hard work and support. To the Harriman Institute, Catharine Nepomnyashchy and Jack Snyder for supporting us and making the journal's publication possible. Also, we would also like to thank Alla Rachkov, Lara Nettelfield, Rebecca Stanton, Elena Cherniavsky, Valentina Izmirlieva, Gordon Bardos and Frank Bohan for all of their help and support, and of course, all board members and contributors, as well as our sponsors.



Beverly Wilson, Barnard College

CRITICISM

Challenging Evil's Familiar Face

East and West in Tadeusz Konwicki's *The Polish Complex*

JEANNE-MARIE JACKSON
DREW UNIVERSITY

CRITICAL ESSAY

The Polish Complex,[*] Tadeusz Konwicki's 1977 novel about the state of Poland under socialism, puts a decidedly postmodern spin on Poland's age-old struggle between antagonistic East and apathetic West. While Russia is likened to an imperious relative with whom Poland shares little of substance, a fixation on putative Western virtues breeds little in the way of assistance or reform. As the specter of Yalta looms large, Konwicki articulates an alternative vision of Poland's position vis-à-vis the West in the quixotic figure of a young French anarchist. There is thus a divide between official European and American apathy and the response of ostensibly more sympathetic progressive intellectuals. Yet the verdict ultimately favors neither, leaving Poland to fend for itself amidst widespread historical fallacy and the infiltration of an intimate foe.

The legacy of Soviet domination pervades, consistently characterized in ambivalently familiar, even filial, terms. The novel's Polish setting is often difficult to distinguish from the Russian traits superimposed upon it. We find a jewelry store's interior with its "…little boxes painted with scenes from Russian fairy tales and Matryoshka dolls…" Russian influence is inextricable from even the boldest assertions of Polishness. Indeed, the callous neighbor to the East has provided even the military training from which the rebels of Poland's 1863 uprising draw their confidence. An omniscient Konwicki addresses his historical counterpart's "turbulent faith," which was "retained in the dismal cells of Petersburg's School for Military Engineers…" (33). It is crucial to note that reference to Russia's yoke here is not merely technical, but spiritual in implication. Poland's noble spirit is so often defined relative to the oppressive collectivism of the Russian Soul that it becomes difficult to conceive of its independent existence. With macabre humor, the economics of historical intertwinement are underscored by the use of Russian currency to bolster rebellious efforts. When Konwicki continues, "Without thinking what you were doing, you shook the new money bag, which someone had embroidered beautifully, and heard the clinking of the rubles, which had been collected…for Poland, for the resurrection of the country" (54), we are struck both by the degree to which Russia's presence has become subconscious, and by the incongruous range of its contributions. The rubles, after all, are encased in beauty, and Russia's cultural veneer can be likewise appealing. This

[*] *All quotations are taken from Tadeusz Konwicki, The Polish Complex. (Normal, Illinois: Dalkey Archive Press, Reprint edition, November 1998), 13.*

external appearance of Russianness is again at the fore in Major Nawalkiewicz's assertion that "I may talk like a Russky, but I'm a Pole. I'm from these parts" (63), displaying an ambiguity that is especially disconcerting given the dangerous Muscovite infiltration. Nonetheless, the Poles' hopes for victory are rooted precisely in this reluctant intimacy. "I know them," Nawalkiewicz warns, "I keep smelling their stink in the air" (66). There are countless such incidences of Russian paraphernalia leaving its insidious mark on the Polish effort, and the omnipresence of Russian language and literature is also a given.

The common Slavic roots of Poland and Russia have their most cogent expression in a literal, filial relationship between representatives of the two countries. Konwicki—in his character form—notes that his Russian relative "…beckon[s]…with his fingers, somewhat coarsely, somewhat familiarly" (113), invoking more-refined Poland's reaction to Russia as a whole. When Kaziuk—reeking of bootleg tobacco and sheepskin, in sharp contrast to Konwicki's Green Water shaving lotion—exclaims, "Everybody always said we were like two peas in a pod" (114), it seems to be in reference to the West's facile and chronic likening of Poland to its oppressor, and, implicitly, to Poland's naïve and weak-willed concessions to the Soviet Union at Yalta. Following a drawn-out description of the Russian's brutish and unwittingly condescending behavior, Konwicki appositely reverts to Soviet-realist terms. "You're a positive hero" (117), he remarks to his relative, and repeats himself in Russian. The vapidity of the connection between the two men is, not unexpectedly, entirely lost on Kaziuk, who leaves Konwicki with a symbolic family memento in the form of a piece of malachite. Laden with historical significance, the object was obtained during a period of exile, as a result of "…some sort of revolt by the Polish exiles who were building a road near Baikal" (153). The stone's, and accordingly the Russian-Polish connection's, uselessness is reintroduced at the end of the novel, as Konwicki futilely attempts to harvest its monetary value for the good of freedom. Upon offering the stone to a vaguely well-intentioned student, the student "…withdrew his hand from that foreign rock" (186). "You could sell it for a good price in an antique store," Konwicki insists, since it is "the kind sentimental foreigners go to" (186). The history shared by Russia and Poland in reality has little implication, and is of ironic consequence to the foreigners who claim sympathy for either country. Though Konwicki goes on to note that the malachite "[signifies] nothing in [his] childhood," it signifies much for Poland and its perpetual martyrdom at the hands of an insouciant Russia.

Poland's intimate and complicated relationship with Russia is offset by its enigmatic and unfruitful Western aspirations. Though America is vaunted as a refuge from Soviet dominion, Poles' experiences with America are generally ungratifying and disconcerting. Disarmed by American racial diversity (18), Kojran's military colleague is said to have "…made his way to the West, where his endless wanderings quickly took their toll on his health" (18). Religious eclecticism in America is as baffling a concept as race, and the idea of a non-denominational house of worship atop a gas station affronts Poland's intense Catholicism (19). Though Kojran speaks of wooing a woman with American dollar bills and a photograph of the gas station-church (92), the official reality of the West's reception of Poland is far less hospitable. The perception that the United Nations shunned Poland at Yalta, effectively condemning it to a Stalinist fate, pulses through the novel. Konwicki poignantly bemoans the West's hypocritical disregard for the fate of his freedom-loving, besieged country: "It is true that, in brief moments of high-mindedness, you held us up as symbols of freedom, but the next day you expelled us from your well-fed countries, which hold the freedom of the written and the spoken word in such esteem" (119). Despite Poland's self-professed Western ideological affinities, the Poles are left to fend for themselves against ruthless domination. "At the great bazaar of the United Nations everyone who wants freedom is portioned out a share," Konwicki continues, "So, goddamit, why not give us a whiff of freedom, too?" (119).

Yet the West's official caprice and inattention is perhaps preferable to the ideological didacticism of its supposed progressives. Echoing Czeslaw Milosz's suspicion of Western European intellectu-

als' relations with their Eastern counterparts, the novel's token French student is quixotic and misled. In his native French, he says, "Formerly every young European had to go to Paris. But nowadays one goes to Warsaw" (9). This establishes the trendy naïvete of his outlook on others' insufferable reality. Waiting tediously in line is no more than a tourist exercise, and the self-alleged anarchist even claims that "he wanted a souvenir photo" (95). This impetuous young man knows Poland only in nebulous and second-hand terms, and his failure to understand why photography is forbidden evinces an abject disregard for the plight of real Poles. Though his assertion that "There's something in Poland…Some sort of spirit. Some force of eternal unrest" (109) may well be true, the words lack any specificity. A bit further in the novel it becomes still clearer that his conception of Eastern Europe is no more nuanced than that of non-intellectuals, and his endorsement of Russia is all the more offensive given its fervor and authoritative tone (155). Such a flippant and unrealistic take on Poland resonates as well in Konwicki's description of "tipsy tourists…[setting] off to cover the short distance to their hospitable hotel, built on a spot where executions had once taken place" (210). Such surface-level or romanticized interest in Poland is not necessarily more productive than the official apathy displayed at Yalta.

Konwicki's Poland is torn between its likeness to a force known but despised, and its aspirations to acceptance by a force foreign but largely admired. Despite some cultural estrangement, America and the West are generally acknowledged as fitting ideological allies. Yet efforts at alignment remain hampered by a pervasive misconception of Poland's kinship with Russia. The besieged Poles must further contend with both their deep resentment of Yalta's legacy, and their misgivings towards Westerners who *do* claim sympathy. Refreshingly, Konwicki depicts specious intellectual trends as no less pernicious than the apathy of officialdom towards his country's plight. The complex dichotomy at hand, then, is evolved from Poland's struggle to distinguish itself from a history in which it unwittingly shares, while going unnoticed by that for whose ideals it has squandered so many lives. "Yes, you're right," Konwicki confesses, "I'm waiting for a miracle" (9). By the end of the novel, it has yet to arrive.



Erin Brown, Wellesley College

Detecting a New Aesthetic

Boris Akunin's *The Diamond Chariot*

MASHA MAFTER
COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY

BOOK REVIEW

The legendary Russian writer and linguistics professor Boris Akunin has created a monster. His gentleman-cum-detective Erast Petrovich Fandorin, a late-nineteenth-century nobleman who solves mysteries with aplomb, flair, and the famous "deductive method," has stolen the hearts of countless female readers, all of whom are clamoring for more. As the "Adventures of Erast Fandorin" series grows (it is now ten novels in length), Akunin struggles to deliver the same suspense and emotional turbulence that the earlier books generated. The latest installment in the series, *Almaznaya Kolesnitsa* (*The Diamond Chariot*, published in 2004), begins in Russia in 1905, where Fandorin has returned after years in France and America, and then reverts back to 1878 Japan, where a young Fandorin was serving as vice-consul. This "time morphing" technique, unknown in Akunin's former works, serves to heighten the dramatic difference between the youth and the middle-aged hero, and also seeks to shed light on some of the intricacies of Fandorin's character. The Japan part, in other words, is more of a long "psychological" explanation than anything else—the actual detective aspect is highly unimportant here.

Fandorin mysteries generally focus more on characters than plot—one has the sensation that the detective genre is merely an excuse for creating such a paragon as Erast Petrovich and parading him before a largely female readership. (When Akunin was asked, "Who is your ideal reader?" he replied, "Women"). Certainly Fandorin's aloofness, his seeming coldness coupled with an almost fanatical sense of honor and justice, as well as his numerous love affairs, all serve to make him more or less irresistible to an impressionable audience. In fact, Akunin motivated the creation of this series by the lack of a "middle-brow" literature in post-Soviet Russia, where readers were trapped between Dostoevsky and Dontsova, as it were, and had no opportunity to enjoy good, yet relaxing literature from a master of the prose style. In filling that gap, Akunin recognized that the path to the kind of popularity he sought was the creation of a sort of "ideal hero," with brilliance, good looks, and physical and verbal dexterity–a kind of Sherlock Holmes meets Mr. Darcy phenomenon.

The Diamond Chariot, however, comes across, especially after the previous nine books, as *primarily* a psychological work masquerading as a detective novel; at 711 pages, it is at least three times as long as any of the earlier novels, and most of the Japan narrative is focused on matters completely extraneous to the plot, which seek to explain, through a typical defensive reaction to trauma, why Fandorin became the person we know him to be. While the last page includes a rather startling surprise ending, overall, one cannot avoid the feeling that Akunin was simply running out of ideas, and that to some extent he has abandoned the idea of covering every

possible detective genre in this series, and is now merely struggling to keep it going. Akunin has admitted, in numerous interviews, that it is growing increasingly difficult to keep up with the expectations of his readers; his latest take on Erast Fandorin demonstrates, more than anything, the results of having little more than a character in mind.



Compared to the nine previous novels in the series, *The Diamond Chariot* presents a definite change in pace and intention, but Akunin's virtuosic mastery of nineteenth-century Russian language and life still make for a smooth and entertaining perusal, especially for a reader who is already hooked on the adventures and fate of Erast Petrovich. His prose style is easy without being light or vulgar, and his intricate knowledge of the little details that never fail to fascinate about another century enthralls the reader far more than the rather predictable plot line. Akunin has created an ideal character in a long-gone world, one infused with both realism and nostalgia and one that bears surprising resemblances to our own. His views are hard to define – Fandorin has both liberal and conservative tendencies, for example, and seems to spend a lot of his time caught between the terrorists and the law enforcement agencies—but his obvious fascination with and detailed knowledge of Russian history are sure to strike any reader who does, in fact, read more for the character and setting than for the detective plot. Thus, Akunin, in attempting to cover all existing mystery genres, may have unwittingly created a new one—a kind of Nabokovian "aesthetic detective" where the plot always remains secondary to the intricacies of an elegant prose style.

HAVE YOU EVER WONDERED WHAT MAKES A TRANSLATION REALLY GOOD?

LITERAL OR FREE TRANSLATION? THE DICTIONARY – FRIEND OR ENEMY? DIFFERENT TYPES OF TRANSLATION/INTERPRETATION AND MUCH MUCH MORE.

Introduction to Translation and Interpretation

INTO ENGLISH FROM RUSSIAN AND FRENCH (in English, 3 credit points)

LYNN VISSON

interpreted for many heads of state, more than 25 years of experience at the UN

The basic principles of translation and interpretation, that is, the rendering of written texts and oral statements from one language into another without losing the basic ideas, intent and stylistic level and linguistic register. Illustrations and discussion of a variety of short modern texts in the fields of political/social science, economics, legal studies, literature, and journalism. Exercises include sight translation, translation of complete texts, structure of consecutive translation, and basic principles of simultaneous interpretation. Two lectures and one workshop per week. Workshop to be offered in two sections: students may choose either the Russian or the French section.

PREREQUISITE: THREE YEARS OF COLLEGE RUSSIAN OR FRENCH, OR EQUIVALENT. CLASSES ARE OPEN TO UNDERGRADUATES, GRADUATE STUDENTS, WORKING PROFESSIONALS, AND ADULT LEARNERS.

www.harrimaninstitute.org/programs/russian_practicum.html ● **Contact Alla Smyslova, Director at as2157@columbia.edu**

The Unreality of *Sukhanov*

Olga Grushin's *The Dream Life of Sukhanov*

JULIA BUTAREVA
COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY

BOOK REVIEW

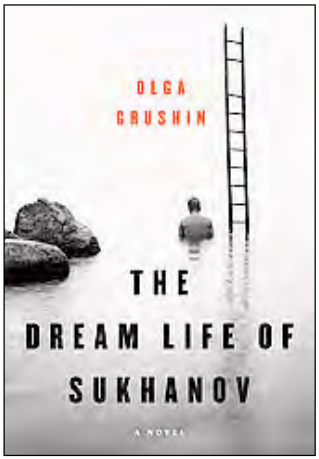
In her novel *The Dream Life of Sukhanov*, Olga Grushin proves that her ambitions are nearly as grand as those of Nikolai Gogol or Mikhail Bulgakov. At the very least, she borrows their theatricality and the fluidity with which they negotiate the real and the imaginary. The novel is literary in a self-conscious way, and absolutely crammed with heavy-handed symbolism and moralizing. Such features overshadow the funny and charming passages that show her potential as a writer.

The story of Sukhanov—a man who gives up the dangerous life of an underground artist to become the wildly successful editor of a Soviet art magazine, at once excoriating the Western artists he once admired while boosting tasteless socialist realists at the same time—begins at an exclusive opening reception at the *Manezh* in honor of his wife's father, a successful artist and official. The first disturbance to his perfect reality, and the first hint that he is already doomed comes almost immediately. Seeing his chauffeured car missing, Sukhanov fumbles a conversation with an important minister. As it turns out, his wife has gone home in it with a migraine. As he waits for a cab in the rain, he runs into an old artist friend, Lev Belkin, for the first time in decades. Belkin is having an opening as well, and his shabbiness and devotion to his art are underscored in an overt reproach to Sukhanov. When he finally catches a cab, the driver claims never to have heard of Sukhanov's street, and reveals that the map of Moscow he keeps in his memory is the pre-Revolutionary one, with all the old street names.

Those events are already bright and memorable, as well as absolutely impossible. One can hardly blame Sukhanov for being bewildered by what is suddenly happening to him, and by the way these strange events are suddenly triggering unwelcome childhood memories. He is remarkably adept at forgetting. He doesn't remember the name of his own chauffeur, even though the man has worked for him for months. He forgets everything from how his father died to when his children are going on vacation. When a cousin arrives at his door and declares Sukhanov to be a formative influence from his childhood, Sukhanov has no idea who the man is.

Given the degree of Sukhanov's detachment from reality, perhaps his bewilderment is natural. Indeed, one never knows whether or not Sukhanov, the ultimate unreliable narrator, is hallucinating or misremembering. The present frequently turns into a dream sequence, as when a train ride takes him into one of his own early paintings, or into a moment from his childhood. Similarly, a patch of a particular shade of yellow reminds him of his

father's death. A startling switch is made at such moments to the present tense and the first person. Grushin capably handles shifts of voice, time, dream, and reality, and drags the poor man through psychological hell, gradually revealing his past.



Some of Sukhanov's most deeply buried memories have to do with the avant-garde art he abandoned. Surrealism is a major motif in this novel. Sukhanov begins as a surrealist and a follower of Salvador Dali, and the book itself moves through surrealist tableaux. There is one dream in which he rescues a weeping bride from a pack of dogs outside his apartment building by throwing her his scarf. Later, his doorman ceremoniously removes the mangled scarf from a desk drawer and hands it to a bewildered Sukhanov. The bride could be a figure for one of several jilted or precariously positioned women in the novel.

Sukhanov's cousin is a transparent kind of facilitator in the novel, coercing Sukhanov into expressing all manner of meaningful opinions about the nature of art at the dinner table. He is also a carrier of symbols—sometimes literally. He gives Sukhanov's mother a canary, which the former artist eventually releases from its cage. As expected, that scene, too, is replete with references to Sukhanov's father, who left his son a cryptic message that read, "Never let anyone clip your wings," before leaping from a top-story window, and this metaphor of clipped wings recurs to an almost ubearable extent in reference to Sukhanov's life.

The parallel between the stifling of religion in Soviet Russia and Sukhanov's spiritually deadening choice is irresistible. It seems vivid and fresh at first in scenes like the one in which Sukhanov stumbles into an abandoned church in the middle of a forest and confronts a tramp sleeping among the crumbling frescoes, but towards the end of the novel it begins to seem dull and heavy-handed. One realizes that every single thing—from the biography of an architect briefly recounted by his cousin, to that forgetful cab driver, to the mythical genius Andrei Rublev, to an image in a song lyric or a character in a story told by his daughter—is a figure for Sukhanov himself, and that it's all in the service of a single message: don't sell out.

Soviet life provides only an ostensible backdrop to this story. Grushin herself never lived in the Moscow she describes—at thirty-five, she's about ten years too young—but that isn't important here. It doesn't matter how unlikely it is that Sukhanov's daughter is dating a stand-in for Russian rock legend Boris Grebenshchikov, here called Boris Tumanov, or that he holds a *kvartirnik* (apartment concert) right in Sukhanov's lavish apartment. Nor does it matter that the wise, half-insane people that help send Sukhanov on his path share his supposedly exclusive building. This novel thrives on its tenuous relationship with reality, keeping the reader forever off-balance. There is no moral confusion here. The lesson gets tiresome, presented again and again in scenes whose very brightness eventually grows oppressive.

One wants more scenes like the one in which Sukhanov's neighbor, an opera singer, calls the police in the middle of the night to disrupt an "orgy" in his apartment. The overweight woman, standing there in her "unbecomingly flimsy tangerine kimono," with her basset hounds in the background and her head "blooming with a profusion of pink curlers," is brilliantly described. So are the policemen, one of whom morphs into a potato, and the other into some other vegetable by the time Grushin is done with him. Yet *The Dream Life of Sukhanov* doesn't contain nearly enough passages with that sort of innovative and playful description to lift the mood. Although the novel has captured the drab Soviet aesthetic quite well, Grushin would do well to perhaps take herself less seriously and allow herself more mirth.

Excavation of the Future

Nostalgia in Revolutionary Russian Art

JENNIFER WILSON
COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY

CRITICAL ESSAY

Although industry, labor, and worker solidarity were tenets of the Russian Revolution, artistic attempts to capture the spirit of change and the impending insurgency were, ironically, focused on Russia's pre-industrial past. Many of the more progressive artists of the Russian avant-garde explored *narodnost* (folkdom), depicting what they believed to be the fiery energy of the peasantry that needed to be revived. Others were fascinated with Scythianism, the ancient mythic origin of the Slavic peoples and the violence of the Scythian warriors. The Mongol invasion of the thirteenth century was also often a source of revolutionary tropes in art and literature, as it involved a radical change in Russia's connection with the West. In a revolution centered on workers' rights, it seems rather amiss to invoke the culture of an unskilled peasantry and to reference the notion that power should only be in the hands of the strongest. One soon realizes, however, that the realities of Russian folk culture, Scythianism, and the Mongol invasion have been skewed in such a way that this contradiction is no longer problematic. The progressive artists of the Russian avant-garde present only those select elements of the past that are most applicable to the revolutionary cause.

Narodnost was a particularly ironic fascination to have for an artist working within the ethos of workers' rights. Whereas Scythianism and the Mongols at least have the aspect of violent overthrow to recommend them to the revolutionary spirit of *fin-de-ciecle* Russia, *narodnost* would appear to have nothing to offer an era preoccupied with industry and capital. The fascination with *narodnost* on the part of the avant-garde, however, came out of an attempt to valorize the unrefined folk people in order to transform them into a something of a proto-proletariat. Doing this often required a distorted representation of history. For one, although it is commonly thought that Russian folk traditions were embedded in Christianity, many Russian artists at the turn of the century chose rather to explore the pagan traditions of the folk past, which involved more violent rituals and which were, consequently, more applicable to revolution. Igor Stravinsky is perhaps the most famous example of modern Russia's fascination with *narodnost*. His ballet "The Rite of Spring" re-enacts the ancient pagan ritual of a chosen virgin dancing herself to death.[1] Stravinsky later equated folkdom with rev-

[1] *Robert Craft, "The Rite of Spring: Genesis of a Masterpiece," Perspectives in Music, Vol. 5, No. 1, (Autumn-Winter 1966), p.23.*

olutionary thought. He found that its celebration of an unrefined community lent itself to sentiments of the Bolshevik cause. Stravinsky said the following of the folklorist tradition in Russian classical music:

> The Five,* Slavophiles of the Populist variety, were set up as a system of this unconscious utilization of folklore. Their ideas and their tastes inclined toward a kind of devotion to the people's cause.[2]

Stravinsky recognized *narodnost* primarily as a celebration of an un-genteel people, a proto-proletariat of sorts. This idea is not wholly unfounded. As far back as Pushkin, *narodnost* has been imbued with a sense of protest against the ways of the West. Pushkin's poem "The Captive of the Caucasus" was absorbed by a movement to create a national literature,[3] a literature that would be distinct from the West. This was central to the revolution that was, in essence, a reaction to Western decadence, and parallel to this was the literary tradition that called for the separation of Russia from the West and its ideals.

The celebration of Russia's unrefined, non-Western elements, however, is not the only revolutionary aspect of *narodnost*. With the celebration of the folk also came a desire to depict these unrefined masses as violent. Stravinsky's choice of a human sacrifice was one of the most violent of the pagan rituals. Furthermore, Pushkin wrote that the "The Captive of the Caucasus" came from a bloodthirsty muse fascinated by war and violence (Hokanson, 344). These representations do not exist in isolation, but can be attached to a larger movement amidst the avant-garde that depicts Russia's ancestors as a violent people. This idea is more thoroughly examined in Scythianism.

The Scyths were a nomadic tribe from Central Asia who ruled the steppes around the Caspian Sea from about 800 to 300 B.C.E. The Russian intelligentsia of the nineteenth century looked upon them as the ancient ancestors of the Slavs.[4] During the nineteenth century the "Scythian temperament" was valorized for being barbaric, crass, unrestrained, and was usually held up in extreme opposition to the cultivated, refined Western European sensibility (Figes, 416). Nicholas Roerich, the original set designer for "The Rite of Spring" designed the costumes and backdrop using Scythian influences from the excavations in Crimea (Figes, 417) in order to properly invoke the violent subject matter of Stravinsky's ballet. The self-proclaimed Scythian poets embraced the violence of Russia's mythic ancestors, and used it as means of protest against the traditions of the West. They looked to the coming revolution, which in 1909 seemed inevitable, as the moment which would separate Russia from the West, both politically and aesthetically (Figes, 418). "The Scythians" by Alexander Blok, the canonical piece of the Scythian poet movement, describes the fierceness of the tribe and its intentions, and may also be read as a reference to the Russian Revolution:

> When pulling back on the reins
> Of playful, high-spirited horses,
> It is our custom to break their heavy backs...
>
> Come to your senses for the last time, old world [Europe]!
> Our barbaric lyre is calling you.[5]

These passages bring us yet again to the question of how one can use ancient temperaments and influences to capture the moods of industrial laborers. The answer is, yet again, that the past is not what is being treated, but the spirit of the present; the past is manipulated to meet contemporary demands. Thus, only the politically attractive elements of Scythianism were absorbed by revolu-

** The Mighty Five (Mily Balakirev, Aleksandr Borodin, Cesar Cui, Modest Mussorgsky and Nikolai Rimsky-Korsakov) were a group of Russian nationalist composers who fought agains the dominance of Western influences in Russian classical music.*

[2] Richard Taruskin, "Russian Folk Melodies in 'The Rite of Spring,'" Journal of the American Musicology Society, Vol. 33, No. 3, (Autumn 1980), p. 504.

[3] Katya Hokanson, "Literary Imperialism, Narodnost and Pushkin's Invention of the Caucasus," Russian Review, Vol. 52, No. 3 (July., 1994), p. 338.

[4] Orlando Figes. Natasha's Dance. New York: Metropolitan Press, 2002.

[5] A. A Blok. Dvenadtsat'; Skify.

tionary art. The violence necessary for an overthrow of western ideals fit nicely into revolutionary rhetoric. However, more factual aspects about Scythianism are ignored, namely the strong historical suggestions that they were, in fact, not the ancestors of the Slavs (Figes, 417). Once again, therefore, it not the true past that is being beckoned, but rather a history that has been distorted in order to support the endeavors of the present.

The fascination with Scythianism among the avant-garde was only one component of a larger preoccupation with the possibility that the traces of the Asian ethnicityin the Russian people had an effect on their temperament. The warrior force that was most often evoked in revolutionary poetry was not that of the Scythians, but of the Mongols who conquered Russia in the thirteenth century and held control until the fifteenth century (Figes, 366). Revolutionary Russian authors often looked back to the Mongol invasion as a precursor to the overthrow of the tsar, in terms of the idea of crude, unrefined masses conquering a more genteel and Westernized population.

One notable example of this conflation is within Andrei Bely's symbolist novel *Petersburg*. The novel is replete with references to "Mongol hordes" and their eminent invasion of the capital. This can be attributed to the fact that Bely was greatly inspired by the writer Solovev, whose poem "Pan-Mongolianism" depicts an apocalyptic Mongol invasion of Russia. The two main characters in the novel, Apollon Apollonovich and his son Nikolai, are representative of the Western and Eastern elements of the Russian self-image. Apollon is a key figure in St. Petersburg politics, whereas Nikolai consorts with a group of rebels who want to bring down the city, its bourgeoisie in particular; hence Nikolai is often referred to as "the Mongol."[6]

Solovev's poem also spoke of the invasion as yellow peril, and in Bely's *Petersburg*, proletariat victories often involve the color yellow. At one point, Apollon is suddenly knocked over by a mysterious wind and separated into two. When Apollon looks back to see what the wind replaced him with, it is a "little yellow man." This wind can be read as a proletariat force as wind is a constant symbol of revolution in Petersburg. Apollon is toppled by the sound of revolution, and his role has been usurped by a yellow man, a symbol of Mongolian invasion.

Just as certain elements of *narodnost* and Scythianism were incorporated, factual elements of the Mongol influences in Russian history that weren't applicable to the revolutionary fervor were discarded. For instance, the Mongol invasion did not actually change the shape of Russian government or culture. For the most part, they collected taxes and went on violent raids to assert their power. These raids were, however, quite infrequent (Figes, 366). The Mongols may have seized power, but they did not bring about the drastic change in policy to which the Bolshevik cause was dedicated. The Mongol influence, as romanticized by the avant-garde, was nearly mythical with respect to Russia's cultural history, but its practical application to the revolution required such exaggerations.

The turn of the century was indeed a time of great change, and as we have seen, the artistic responses to the times were just as cognizant of the immensity of that moment. That cognizance, however, was often followed by a tendency to sacrifice the truth for an agenda. In the case of revolutionary Russian writing, that tendency effected a view of history that was distorted to create the myth that Russia's ancestors were a violent people with no connection to the West. This myth was fashioned in order to support contemporary ideas which involved celebrating Russia's common people and urging them towards violent overthrow of the decadent lifestyle, which was considered a mark of Western European decadence. What is interesting is that this tendency implies that a nation's self-image is shaped by its conception of its ancestors—it assumes that history is only a source of self-worth. We are left to believe that social progress is a struggle not against an aggressor, but against the authority we believe history has granted our enemy.

---

[6] *Andrei Bely. Petersburg. trans. Robert Maguire and John Malmstead, Indiana University Press, 1980.*

Translating Textual Ambiguity

Anna Akhmatova's *On Liubil Tri Veshchi Na Svete*

ERIC SWINN
WILLAMETTE UNIVERSITY

Он любил три вещи на свете:
За вечерней пенье, белых павлинов
И стертые карты Америки.
Не любил, когда плачут дети,
Не любил чая с малиной
И женской истерики.
...А я была его женой.

– Anna Akhmatova, 1910*

Three things enchanted him:
white peacocks, evensong,
and faded maps of America.
He couldn't stand bawling brats,
or raspberry jam with his tea,
or womanish hysteria.
…And he was tied to me.

– Stanley Kunitz and Max Hayward, 1967†

CRITICAL ESSAY

In his article on poetic translation Waclaw Lednicki notes that "as indispensable as they are, artistic translations are always an extremely difficult enterprise."[1] This is especially so in translation of the complexities of the Russian language, as we discover through analysis of Stanley Kunitz and Max Hayward's 1967 English translation of Russian poet Anna Akhmatova's poem "*On liubil tri veshchi na svete*"(1910). Although the translators succeeded in capturing many important aspects of the original poem, they failed to convey the structural complexity and textual ambiguity in the Russian original.

The original poem clearly portrays two "mutually incomprehensible worlds," [2] opposing the intellectual world of a man to the prosaic world in which his wife lives, and Kunitz and Hayward's translation reveals their agreement with this interpretation. The woman's voice introduces the poem, and her world consists mostly of the mundane details of her life as a mother, while the husband's world is filled with such exotic images as "white peacocks" and "faded maps of America." The speaker juxtaposes the two worlds by presenting them in two three-line sentences, both of which are brought to a close with a period. In the original poem, Akhmatova continually connects the two worlds through subtle use of rhythm and rhyme and consequently never allows them to be completely separate. Kunitz and Hayward, however, do not fully convey these subtle connections in their translation. This makes it more difficult to fully sympathize with the woman, and thus some of the tone of the original version is lost in translation.

** Unless otherwise specified, all quotes in Russian are taken from Anna Akhmatova. Stikhotvoreniia i poemy, ed. V.M. Zhirmunskii. (Leningrad: Sovetskii Pisatel', 1976), 45.*

† Unless otherwise specified, all quotes in English are taken from Anna Akhmatova, Poems of Akhmatova, trans. Stanley Kunitz and Max Hayward. (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1967), 47.

One of the most noticeable aspects of the original poem is the use of anaphora of the verb *liubit',* which is repeated in three of the seven lines of the poem. In lines one and four, the verb is used to introduce respective halves of the poem which portray the two opposing worlds, and lines one and four are meant to be read together due to their close rhyme. The rhyme between the words *svete* and *deti* is not the perfect rhyme we see in many Russian poems – the placement of stress on the first syllable of the word *svete* causes the ending /*e*/ sound to reduce to a sound only somewhat similar to the /*i*/ sound at the end of *deti* – but the matching sound of the words' first syllables clearly draws our attention to the connection between the first and fourth lines. Kunitz and Hayward's translation connects the first and fourth lines only in that they both introduce the conflicting lives of the husband and his wife. They incorporate neither the anaphora of the verb *liubit'* nor the use of end-rhyme in their translation.



Emily Lowry, Barnard College

The literal translation of the second line of the Russian poem, *Za vechernei pen'e, belikh pavlinov*, would be "evensong singing" or "singing at vespers" followed by "white peacocks." Kunitz and Hayward invert the position of the two objects in the poem to read "white peacocks, evensong." The inversion of the words in the English version helps retain the assonance found in the original. In Russian, we find the /*e i*/ sound repeated four times in the line *v**e**ch**e**rn**ei** p**e**n'e, b**e**likh pavlinov*, and the /*i*/ sound repeated twice: *v**e**chernei pen'e, belikh pavlin**o**v*. The latter use of assonance is accentuated in the English version through the closeness of the words "p**ea**cocks" and "**e**vensong," but the even stronger repetition of the /*e i*/ sound is left out entirely. It is also interesting to note that the Russian line *za vechernei pen'e* has the meaning of not only evensong, but specifically the singing portion of the evening service, since the man enjoys *p e n' e* (the noun "singing") *Za vechernei* (instrumental grammatical construction meaning "during vespers"). The English version does not mention this specificity, but rather refers to the man's interests as just "evensong."

In the Russian poem, the third and sixth lines are connected through their rhyme. Although the poem is split into two opposing three-line sentences, this connection shows how Akhmatova subtly ties aspects of the first half to the second. The Russian version, *I stertye karty Ameriki*, denotes the final line of the first half of the poem, or the husband's half. When the Russian version is read aloud, we hear the repetition of the very similar yet subtly different /*y*/ and /*i*/ sounds: ***I** c**t**er**ty**e k**ar**t**y** A**m**er**iki**.* The sound is repeated five times. The English translation, "and faded maps of America," captures this assonance through its repetition of the /*a*/ sound in the words "**a**nd" and "m**a**ps" and the /*o*/ sound in "**o**f **A**merica." However, each sound is repeated only twice and thus the connection between the individual lines is not as clear as it is in the original. When the third line of the Russian poem is read in conjunction with the sixth, *I zhenskoi isteriki*, we notice that they not only share the strong rhyme of the words *Ameriki* and *isteriki*, but that in addition, the sixth line contains repetition of the /*i*/ sound five times, just as the third line does. The sound is produced four times in the line: ***I** zhen**s**k**oi** **i**st**e**r**iki**.* This similarity in assonance between lines three and six in the Russian version is not accidental, but instead acts as a means of intentionally drawing our attention to the inherent connection between the lines. The English translation of the sixth lines reads "or womanish hysteria." The /*a*/ sound is repeated only twice here: "or wom**a**nish hyster**ia**," as it is in the third line. The position of the /*a*/ sound at the end of the word "hysteria" manages to connect it to the third line through rhyme and similarities in assonance, but the connection is not as clear as it is in the original version.

In addition, Kunitz and Hayward's translation of the woman's *zhenskoi isteriki* as "womanish hysteria" changes the tone of the original poem. The Russian word *zhenskoi* here is the genitive form

(due to the negative nature of the sentence from ***ne liubil)*** of the feminine singular adjective *zhenskaia*, meaning "female," "girl's," "woman's" or "feminine." "Womanish," as Kunitz and Hayward translate it, is a different word in the Russian language: *zhenstvennyi*. The word *isteriki* in the poem is the genitive form of the feminine non-count noun *isterika*, meaning either "hysterics" or "hysteria." Although this difference may seem negligible at first glance, the *a priori* feeling we experience when we read "woman's hysterics" is somewhat different than what we experience when reading "womanish hysteria." When reading the latter option, we sense a chauvinistic attitude in the poem, due mainly to the fact that the poem is written through the woman's voice and it seems uncommon for a woman to use the adjective "womanish" in reference to herself without seeming condescending. This attitude is accentuated by the translation of the fourth line *Ne liubil, kogda plachut deti* as "He couldn't stand bawling brats." The English translation leads us to believe that the speaker is using her husband's own words in this section, while in the Russian version, ownership of the words is more ambiguous and thus opens up the possibility of feeling sympathetic towards the wife. The verb *plakat'* is much like the English "to weep," which can be caused by either joy or sorrow, and the word *deti* translates as "children." It is quite probable that these words could be either the speaker's or the husband's. When we see the phrase "bawling brats" in the English version, we are forced to focus upon the husband's negative view of the children and his unwillingness to play a role in his wife's life. When we read "weeping children," however, there is not necessarily any associated chauvinism to the words, but rather we are exposed to the possibility of sympathizing with the plight of the woman married to an intellectual.

When Kunitz and Hayward attempted to transfer Anna Akhmatova's poem into the English language, they succeeded in many ways, such as subtly linking the third and sixth lines through rhyme, separating the poem into two halves, and even transferring some of the assonance found in the original to the English version. Their translation, however, demonstrates the difficulty in capturing the many complex and ambiguous nuances of Anna Akhmatova's original version of the poem. It contains neither the rhyme that subtly connects certain lines nor the structural complexity of the original, each of which adds to the most important aspect of Akhmatova's poem: its textual ambiguity.

Notes

[1] Waclaw Lednicki, "Some Notes on the Translation of Poetry." American Slavic and East European Review vol. 11, no. 4 (December 1952), 304.

[2] Roberta Reeder, Anna Akhmatova: Poet and Prophet (New York: Picador USA, 1994), 54.

Russian Cinema! Russian Cinema! Russian Cinema!

Introduction to Russian & Soviet Cinema

in English, 3 credit points, Professor H. Baran, May 22–June 30, Mon./ Wed. from 5:30–8:40pm

Introduction to one of the world's major cinematic traditions– –Russian and Soviet. Films from the pre-1917 "silent" era; the 1920s (Eisenstein, Kuleshov, Pudovkin, Vertov); the Stalinist 1930s-1940s; the 1950s–1980s, with their struggles for artistic integrity (Kalatozov, Tarkovsky, Shepitko, Muratova); the exuberance of the *glasnost* years; and most recent filmic attempts to construct new myths for a "new" Russia. Focus on films as documents of a particular era and its ideology; and on the influence of the socio-political milieu on the form and content of films.

FILMS IN RUSSIAN WITH ENGLISH SUBTITLES; READINGS AND DISCUSSION IN ENGLISH.
CLASSES ARE OPEN TO UNDERGRADUATES, GRADUATE STUDENTS, WORKING PROFESSIONALS, AND ADULT LEARNERS.

www.harrimaninstitute.org/programs/russian_practicum.html Contact Alla Smyslova, Director at as2157@columbia.edu

Mandelshtam's Metaphysics

Timeless Investigations of Nascence, Temporality and Mortality

JANE MIKKELSON
BARNARD COLLEGE

Отчего душа так певуча,
И так мало милых имен,
И мгновенный ритм - только случай,
Неожиданный Аквилон?

Он подымет облако пыли,
Зашумит бумажной листвой,
И совсем не вернется - или
Он вернется совсем другой.

О широкий ветер Орфея,
Ты уйдешь в морские края -
И, несознанный мир лелея,
Я забыл ненужное "я".

Я блуждал в игрушечной чаще
И открыл лазоревый грот...
Неужели я настоящий,
И действительно смерть придет?

– Osip Mandelshtam, 1911

Why is the soul so melodic,
Why this dearth of the dearest of names?
And why is instant rhythm – merely instance,
Aquilon's precipitous gale?

He will come with a billowing dust cloud,
Leave the foliate foliage ague,
And he'll never return – or maybe
He'll return, unequivocally new.

Oh sweeping Orphean wind,
You will flee toward the far ocean realms –
As I cherished the world, uncreated,
I dismissed the superfluous "self."

I wandered the miniature coppice,
And exposed the indigoral* cave...
Am I really an actual being,
Will I someday succumb to the grave?

–Translated by Jane Mikkelson

CRITICAL ESSAY

In "*Utro Akmeizma*," the manifesto and cornerstone, as it were, of Acmeism, Osip Mandelshtam posits that the construction of architecture—or the composition of poetry, by extension—is always done "in the name of three dimensions," and that the art of building or writing itself may be defined as a "battle with emptiness" and "hypnosis of space."† In the poem "*Otchego dusha tak pevucha*," however, he quite literally lends a new dimension to this idea, making time, not space, the subject of poetic and philosophical scrutiny. Mandelshtam's primary concerns with time fall upon the transient quality through which temporality colors human experience, and in the very formulation of these concerns he presents several possibilities by which time may become suspended, briefly arrested, and even protracted.

The first line, like the first stanza itself—and, arguably, the entire poem—is composed in the form of a question, beginning with the decidedly interrogative *otchego*. There is no interlocutor to whom the question is posed, and as a result, the poem appears

* *"Indigoral" is a portmanteau ("indigo" plus "oral"), created in an attempt to reproduce in some fashion Mandelshtam's own word play of "*grot*" and "*rot*" by crowning "indigo" with a suffix ("-oral") that is suggestive of something relating to the mouth.*

† *O. E. Mandelshtam, Chapter 3, p. 365.*

as though it were suspended in interrogative space—a foreshadowing of the temporal suspensions to follow.

The role of time in the poem itself comes to the fore almost immediately thereafter, with the perplexing "*mgnovennyi ritm*." It is an interesting paradox, for the very definition of rhythm seems rooted in the principle of consecutive time intervals, and to examine an infinitely small segment of rhythm—that is, an instant—would be to negate rhythm's existence altogether. Interestingly, that very line happens to be the most unique in terms of poetic meter; all the other lines in the poem are vaguely suggestive of an anapestic trimeter, while *"I mgnovennyi ritm – tol'ko sluchai"* contains an anapest and an iamb, followed by a caesura and two trochees. Indeed, this metrical anomaly affords the line an even, rhythmic quality; in a certain sense, if poetic meter may be taken for a chronometric device of sorts, this "instant" of perfect rhythm in the poem expands in time over four metric feet.



Emily Lowry, Barnard College

The allusion to Aquilon in the next line brings the element of wind into the fold. Wind is as an apt physical analogy to time, insofar as it lacks an identifiable beginning or end and is tangible only in the movement of air it elicits, much like time is only perceived through change. As made explicit in the case of Aquilon (the northern wind), it has direction.

The effects of wind, and thereby of time, are more scrupulously scrutinized in the second stanza, but instead of elucidating the phenomenon, the stanza renders matters more elusive. The disjunction in the third and fourth lines ("*I sovsem ne verniotsia — Ili,/ On verniotsia sovsem drugoi*"), appears to be of considerable importance, as both enjambment and a preceding hyphen accentuate a sort of disjointed uncertainty. The uncertainty of the outcome has the curious effect of suspending time in ambiguity; this seems even more plausible once the alternative is considered — absolute certainty of a future event often seems to expedite the progress of time until its arrival. The most potent example of such a foreknown event would be, of course, knowledge of one's own mortality, which becomes important in the final stanza of the poem.

Mandelshtam not only succeeds in stretching time; in the third stanza, he brings time's progress to a halt altogether. The first two lines are in the future tense (*ty uidiosh'*), while the last two are in past perfect (*ia zabyl*). It is clear that all four lines stand in their intended sequence; in fact, the hyphen at the end of the second line seems to imply a sequentiality in which the last two lines follow directly from the first two. Because an inversion of syntax cannot explain the temporal chiasmus, the past tense must follow the future tense deliberately. Assuming that such was indeed Mandelshtam's design, the effect is extraordinary; it is as though the vector of time were severed in half and the latter half turned inward, in the opposite direction of the first. Such an effect obfuscates the very foundational principle of time, namely, that time progresses only in a unidirectional fashion. When Mandelshtam derails time in such a way, all the trammels of temporality unhinge as well—and time is arrested, if only for a stanza.

Mandelshtam makes other allusions to time and the attendant concerns about temporality more circuitously. For instance, the adjective *pevuchaia* that refers to *dusha* in the first line and the later allusion to Orpheus give the poem a musical hue, and from other poems in the collection "*Kamen'*" (namely, "*Est' ivolgi v lesakh, i glasnykh dolgota*" and "Silentium"), the semantic connection between music and time may be more easily discerned. It seems that for Mandelshtam, music—in both the classical sense and in the "natural"—was able to extend time with the "*bogatstvo tseloi noty.*" Orpheus' ability to affect trees and rocks with his lyre speaks to the divine nature of music; God

breathes life into inanimate objects—and plays with the rules governing time.

In that vein, perhaps there is some allusion to creative inspiration as well; it comes and goes with wind-like unpredictability and caprice, and the very etymology of 'inspiration' (and *'vdokhnovenie,'* for that matter) speaks to the poet's physical incorporation of breath from another, presumably divine, source. It is precisely in such an ephemeral moment of inspiration that time could also briefly suspend its course.

In addition to transcending temporality, Mandelshtam employs a veritable squadron of paronomastic devices and deft linguistic maneuvers as well. For example, the second line of the second stanza is another instance of past-future conflation and reversal, only this time of a semantic nature. The phrase "*bumazhnaia listva*" seems, at first glance, to be nothing but a common collocation—what the eye instinctively perceives as *bumazhnyi list* or *list bumagi*. In reality, however, the phrase is inverted—*bumazhnaia* qualifies *listva* instead of *list* qualifying *bumaga*. Such semantic interdependency creates an additional complication: on one hand, *listva* indicates *derev'ia*, the origin of paper; on the other, *bumazhnaia* characterizes *listva*; and thirdly, the unit of measure for *bumaga* is a *list*. This interdependency and inversion blur the lines between source and product, and thus between past and future as well.

The paronomasia is more difficult to discover. For instance, perhaps not every exegete would agree that *"bluzhdal v igrushechnoi chashche"* is phonically reminiscent of *"bliudtse"* and "*igrushechnaia chashka*." But certainly the second line of the last stanza ("*I otkryl lazorevyi grot…*") reads without too much controversy as "*I otkryl lazorevyi rot…*" *Grot* and *rot* remain linked not only phonically, but semantically as well. It does not require a great stretch of the imagination to link 'mouth' with 'small cave.' Furthermore, this paves the way for discourse on preverbal muteness: what could be more suggestive than an open mouth followed by the poem's only ellipsis?

This seems to be the denouement of the poem, and, true to Acmeist form, the punch line comes in at the very end. The pregnant elliptical pause is followed by two of the perturbing questions that a human being can ask: is my existence real, and will I really die someday? But perhaps the questions themselves are not as crucial as the silent pause that precedes them. In that moment of silence, the laborious process of contemplation—a period of self-reflection that approaches a loss of the 'self' (*"ia zabyl nenuzhnoe 'ia'"*)—finally begins to surrender to the emergence of comprehension. It is this nascence of understanding that wields more pure meaning than any hopelessly inadequate verbal representation thereof can—and it is that precise moment that Mandelshtam tries to recapture as he suspends, confuses, and nearly halts time.

Museum of Jewish Heritage – A Living Memorial to the Holocaust presents:

PANEL DISCUSSION

The Jewish Experience in the Gulag

WEDNESDAY, MAY 10, 6:30 P.M., MUSEUM OF JEWISH HERITAGE

Moderated by Catharine Nepomnyashchy, The Harriman Institute and Barnard College; with Michael Eskin, Columbia University; Emily Johnson, University of Oklahoma; Cynthia Ruder, University of Kentucky

From 1929 until Stalin's death in 1953, some 18 million people passed through the Stalinist Gulags. The experience of Jews in these forced labor camps has received less attention than other monumental injustices of the twentieth century. This panel discussion will reveal new evidence about Jewish life and death in the Gulag while reflecting on the struggle to maintain one's humanity under inhumane conditions.

Co-sponsored by the Harriman Institute of Columbia University.

RESERVE TICKETS
On-line: **www.mjhnyc.org**
Phone: Call 646-437-4202 or 646-437-4203

MUSEUM OF JEWISH HERITAGE
36 BATTERY PLACE
BATTERY PARK CITY, NY 10280 (646) 437-4299

CREATIVITY

Mother Russia

BRYAN KELLY
UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

I met Mary on the first day of Intensive Russian 103 in the summer of 2005. I had dressed up to make a good impression on any female students that also may have decided to take Russian, but there were only several other men, also dressed up to make a good impression, and Mary, a large, elderly woman with deep eyes and yellow-gray hair. Looking back now, I never got to compliment what a striking stock of hair she had, perhaps because Russian teaches you how to say, "Your dictatorship is pleasing to me" about four months before it gets to colors, but I think she understood.

Sitting in that room, surrounded by seven or eight well-dressed men, Mary (who chose Masha as her Russian nickname) looked as if she had ordered several male prostitutes from a phone book, and demanded they all dress up as mannequins from a JCPenney's. She was like a sixty-year-old woman in a young male body store (figuratively speaking).

It was an impossible love: a sexagenarian, probably married halfheartedly to another old and large man, and sharing an old and large bed every night, sometimes taking the time to try a kiss, but more often than not letting the bone tiredness of their old bodies immobilize them the minute they got into bed. Pair that with a nineteen-year-old boy without any sort of relationship to his name past the thirty-six-hour mark, half-crazed from his overwhelming love for women, and deeply confused about his own sexuality ever since he asked his father what curves were, referring to a woman, and was told that a curve represents the fundamental basis for the field of calculus, that it symbolizes one of the nagging questions of Isaac Newton's time, and that it has something to do with the fruit drink Tang. I still can't look at an integral sign without getting slightly aroused.

Sometimes Mary would notice me, but most of the time, with her tired, sad eyes she would focus all her energies on attempting to unscramble the Cyrillic alphabet in our daily readings. This was a woman with no time for inane, teenage eye contact games, the kind of games I had relied on and enjoyed for years and years. Most importantly, this was a real woman.

She said she was taking the class in order to do research, but I knew the truth. She was making the commute to school from Toledo, Ohio to Ann Arbor to stave off the loneliness that only those who have been to Toledo, Ohio know. Why Toledo, Ohio isn't a ghost town during the day is a mystery to me, but I still admired Masha for trying to get out. It would not have surprised me if, as a reason for taking the class, Masha would simply have responded, "I just had to get the hell out of Toledo, Ohio."

One day, after the morning session, I changed clothes and came in to the afternoon session early. There was Masha, eating Wendy's and doing a crossword puzzle. She looked up at me and, with a smile, asked whether I had been wearing those same clothes that morning. I couldn't speak. It was like I was made of some sort of gelatin, and that this gelatin had just found another gelatin that he secretly had been in love with since first sight. I'm sure gelatins would have similar relationships to ours, if given the powerful mandate from God Almighty to be rulers of the earth, and thus be burdened with the very earthly constraints of boredom, awkwardness, and complicated sexual give and take.

We did not kiss. We did not need to, probably because we knew that in a distant future, in the afterlife that awaits impossible lovers, we would be together, feeding Wendy's to each other, watching this or that on the television, and relaxing in the completeness of a relationship otherwise frowned upon and made a

mockery of in the modern day. Also, she probably found me gross.

The thing about Masha was that there really was nothing extraordinary about her. To everyone else, she was the nice old lady who was always late. On the street, you might briefly think, "Wow, she looks like…" and that would be all. But to me, she was one of the half-crazy sacred cattle of America, ruined by capitalism yet somehow, sadly beautiful, crippled by millions of Diet Pepsis and coffees and other chemical and biological weapons of mass destruction, fouled by television and "culture" magazines, and yet thoughtlessly and comfortably harnessed to the convenience of their routine. If the world were more like a Thomas Kinkade painting, or if it were always the week before Christmas, Masha could become Queen handily, and the power would not corrupt her.

She dropped the class on the final day that one could receive half of his or her tuition back, simultaneously shocking me into a brief coma, confirming my suspicion that she was not a researcher, and leading me to suspect that she may not have been real at all (I must confess, parenthetically, that I have this suspicion about everyone I meet). With a flippant comment our teacher told us that she was gone.

The old comedian Jimmy Durante used to puzzle all of his fans by signing off with a goodbye to an obscure, and perhaps not even real woman, closing his show by saying, "Goodnight Mrs. Calabash, wherever you are." Masha is my Mrs. Calabash. Someday, when the gravity of Toledo sucks me in, I will find her. I will probably be brazen drunk, shouting for her on some street; the violence of my mood all wrong for the tenderness of the gesture. And yet, as kindred spirits, we will meet again, and sit down to watch other people who may not be real make us laugh on the television.



Josephine Kalika, Occidental College

Вместо сезуры
In place of a caesura

KATARZYNA KOZANECKA
COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY

Отправить [письмо]. To mail [a letter] Mayhaps because of such sentences-precedents as Вини Пух отправился в лес за медом. (Winnie the Pooh set off into the forest to find honey), the verb carries connotations of с бутербродами в карманах и песней на губах (with provisions in your pockets and a song on your lips), that the English equivalent does not muster.

Отпеть [кого-то]. To hold a funeral service [for someone]. Петь is to sing; taken with the prefix от, the verb means to sing someone off in the sense of seeing him or her off on a journey across the river Styx.

Поехали! Let's go [but not on foot]! The past tense is used in hopes of quickening the departure by referring to it as if it had already occurred. It is not uncommon for a woman to exclaim, Поехали!, upon discovering a run in her stockings.

Вы стоите? Are you standing? Seemingly a rhetorical question, this is the most concise way to address someone at the tail-end of an очередь (line). Are they standing in wait, or are they milling and humming?

Интерьеры. Французские, английские, и другие. Interiors (in the sense of interior designs). French, English, and others. On sale all over Москва (Moscow), they also appear in nightmares literally, as additional rooms or space in the center of a house, concealed at first by walls and doors. For example, three couples move in. They figure there is more to the apartment than meets the eye. My host mother tells them matter of factly, Здесь нет никакого интерьера. (There isn't any kind of interior here.) All despair. At least I'm beginning to dream in Russian.

Вешалка. The hook inside a coat by which a бабушка (babushka) hangs in the гардероб (coat check), which can be found in any theater, museum, or other respectable establishment. It is usually obligatory to use it; otherwise, the theater, museum, or other respectable establishment begins to resemble a вокзал (train station). If your coat lacks a вешалка, the бабушка will often refuse to take it. She may hunt in vain beneath the care/wash instructions and on the other side of the collar, and stare at you in pity, wondering what villain sold you the thing. If she doesn't keel over in disbelief, she may relent and let you get away with a reproachful grumble. However, the same бабушка will never do this twice, so you'll soon find yourself turning down invitations to plays at certain theaters, because you've already made the acquaintance of all the бабушки (babushkas) employed there. Considering that бабушки gossip, within the space of three weeks all respectable establishments in the city will be closed to you. Therefore, sew on a вешалка with whatever thread, floss, or difficulty you've at hand!

Девчонки. Girls. More often than not, наши девчонки (our girls). This concept is to Russian universities what the Arab street is to American columnists. Наши девчонки are a tightly knit crowd that moves together from пара (period, as in class) to пара; they exist convened in an eternal pow-wow. Without them, the boys in any given группа (group of students who share a major/specialization, and therefore, schedule) would be lost. As far as homework and room changes are concerned, Если это есть у наших девчонок (if our girls collectively possess it), then all is well.

Давай вечерком. Let's [talk] tonight, where tonight (вечер) is given in the diminutive. Classic phrase of professors who answer their cell phones in class.

Past Interrupts Present

ANNA GERMAN
COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY

Found
Old ad for КЕФИР
between pages of Tolstoy.
No creases, just laughs.

St. Petersburg
Leningrad, they said
Still, while rolling their r's in
Nostalgia, routine.

True Story of a Ballet Company
The inside joke goes,
Only those rich, related
Or Russian get in.

Girl, Age 15
Nesting dolls sold here,
The sign said. She read. Eyes closed.
Wish: to disappear.



Elena Lagoutova, Barnard College



Margalit Faden, Macalaster College



Beverly Wilson, Barnard College

Марку

ANNA KOYFMAN
BARNARD COLLEGE

И в том строю есть промежуток малый –
Быть может, это место для меня.

Темнота внутри пустыни тянет нас,
и каждый раз мы тихо мчимся,
бросая туда пейзаж.

Тут что-то есть, какое счастье без силы,
бросить и уйти – найти по-новому начало,
отдать песку все то, что бъет и режет весь наш ум.

Не надо жечь бумажный небоскреб,
кто-то другой его затопит; звонки вернут,
я обещаю, даю Вам слово – есть герой, который Вашу память похоронит.

Бежать!
Бежать!
Нет, гнаться мы не будем; мы не воры, и не убийцы.

Душа, возможно, пострадает,
но плакать будем только ночью –
только тогда мы на минуту вспомним войну,
        и ночь тревоги,
        любви, холодного ветра,
        и Союз,
и захотим бежать назад.

Наркому Пахомову

JORDAN SHEDLOCK
HAMILTON COLLEGE

Из всех имён истории нашей
Ни одно не так блестяще—
Ни Онегин, ни Обломов—
Как наш любимый друг Пахомов.

По поверхности Невы-реки
Плавают всякие корабли,
Лодки, медленный паром,
И почтеннейший наш Нарком.

С красной на носу звездой
Водя его вон за прибой,
Не яичница, а божий дар
Есть наш Народный Комиссар.

Имеет роскошей избыток
Сей советский пережиток.
Славнее буксиров и паромов—
Да здравствует Нарком Пахомов!



Jordan Shedlock, Hamilton College

Golubtsy

YELENA SHUSTER
COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY

Worried that I would never find a husband, my *babushka* enrolled me in her very own culinary academy. After careful consideration of which apron looked best on me, I spent the next half hour tinkering with the stove. I had recently learned how to boil water (we had purchased an electric tea kettle), and felt ready to skip a few levels. I would recreate the centuries-old Ukrainian dish *golubtsy* (stuffed cabbage) under the wise tutelage of my Ukrainian "*baba*," who nervously glanced at the fire extinguisher before we began.

Slightly uneasy that so many years of tradition now lay at my clumsy, inexperienced fingertips, I held my knife carefully. Watching my *babushka*'s aged hands slice the onions and carrots so much faster than mine could, I realized this was virgin territory. I had placed myself in a situation where I had to rely on my wits, my *babushka*, and perhaps a firefighter's help.

She took out the ground meat and we mixed it with the boiled rice. It was as if we had traveled to the past on the back of her vegetable grater. I again became the helpless little girl before her: she guided my hands with certainty in the dark pot containing what felt like freshly ground brains.

Twelve years earlier, we had both emigrated from Khmelnitsky, Ukraine, a land where only fools and heroes wore their Stars-of-David openly, she at age fifty-two, I at age five. Along with open arms, America greeted me with a new, anglicized name, Yelena. I had to practice twisting my mouth to pronounce how I would now introduce myself: "Ye-**ley**-na."

"Lyenna," my *babushka* said, calling me by my original, intimate, Russian name, "Come take cabbage out of pot." Her thick Slavic accent coated her English words.

I noticed her still-lustrous hair, wrinkled skin, calloused hands, and recognized myself in her determined smile. She calls me an "*Amerikanka"* whenever she detects a slight American accent in my pronunciation of our native tongue. She understands that the U.S. is now my home, with most of my memories now rooted here.

As we cut the cabbage leaves, I thanked God that the lesson had progressed without blood adding flavor to the stuffing. We started filling and folding cabbage leaves, and I noticed that mine were not nearly as well-stuffed as hers. But she encouraged me with every new fold, understanding that my culinary experience was limited to Eggo Waffles, Cups o' Noodles, and burnt Hot Pockets.

We were almost finished, and I knew she was wondering if I would ever learn how to cook. To reassure her I said, "Finding a husband won't be too hard. It's keeping him at my table that's going to require effort." My *babushka's* face creased as she giggled.

The twisting of my mouth became more natural every time I would tell someone to call me "Yelena." "Yelena" is who I have become, an American teenager who has grown up to love the English language. Although I had an initial mix-up between "toilet" and "bathroom" (which my friends found particularly amusing) I absorbed this language, catching every vowel and consonant buzzing in the air. Still, I will always be "Lyenna" when drinking tea with my *babushka*, when an instinctive "*Vay-iz-mir*!" leaves my mouth as disaster strikes, and when my five-year-old sister asks me to read her fairytales in Russian.

Every time I eat *golubtsy* (made in my smoky kitchen or not), I find myself in a foreign yet familiar world where grandmother is known as *babushka*, and Yelena as *Lyenna*.



Elena Lagoutova, Barnard College

Three Faces

MONICA FINLEY
BARNARD COLLEGE

The *marshrutka* screeched to a halt on the blighted grey hem of St. Petersburg, and we obediently tumbled from the ripped sour seats and into the lip of the road. "Girls!!! I am so happy you have arrived!" Darya squealed, embracing Becky (Byecky), Michael (Mischa) and me (Monichka) at the doorframe.

"I apologize that we are late," I excused us, spacing and elongating the words and fitting them into a Russian grammar construct for no one's benefit.

"You are late? It does not matter! Do come in!" she begged, leading us inside by the hands. Inside the apartment, a bare bulb burned from the ceiling, and the linoleum peeled up at the corner. Darya traipsed into the second room, stiletto boots snapping brightly. Mischa stared at her butt. "This is my flatmate, Tatiana!" Tatiana lay on the only bed tangled in a comforter like a woman defiled; her face knotted into a wan smile. "She does not speak English, friends! I will translate!" Darya said. Byecky ventured that we'd love to practice our Russian, but Darya seemed noncommittal. We backed into the kitchen.

"We brought our surprise!" Byecky and I announced; we'd been carrying a box of brownie mix purchased for one hundred and eighty rubles from an "international" store for several hours now, along with a mammoth bottle of *podsolnichnoe maslo*.

"It has to taste kinda Russian, or they won't want to try it," Mischa had mused while we stood in line, clutching peanut butter, Reese's cups, and brownies.

"Friends! I have a gift for you as well! But I do loathe to cook, so it is not so nice." She tugged a small cake—more frosting than starch—from the top shelf. Mischa stared at Darya's cleavage, contemplating something. We'd determined not long ago that our new friend had been conned into a go-go dancing cartel, but we weren't sure how to tell her.

We poured the brownie batter into a frying pan and adjusted it over an open flame. After thirty minutes spent staring into the sludge, the brownies were deemed cooked, and Byecky placed the pan next to the store-bought cake in the center of the table. The five of us gathered around the tiny table, spoons poised midair.

"May I take a picture?" Darya inquired, her English bright as a sparrow in the dim room. She held up a cardboard disposable camera, and Byecky pulled a digital camera from her coat pocket; we all smiled. Wielding spoons, we attacked the batter, frosting, peanut butter, and melted Reese's. "This is so fun!" Darya gushed, "but it is so hard to meet friends here. This city has many mysteries. I heard this before I arrived, but I did not believe it. I think we all read Dostoevsky, yes?"

Byecky, Mischa, and I nodded, Darya laughed, Tatiana choked out a smile, and the sun slid into the gap between the *khrushchyovki*.

"She is not such a nice girl, yes?" Masha parsed out the words over a bite of sushi. Byecky, Mischa and I looked at each other. "She is not from here, I know. Where is she from?" She quizzed us, looking for the truth with judgment straightening her shoulders. "She just moved here from the Urals to go to college. I think she studies Egyptian tourism? She's a really good dancer, too," Byecky parsed out carefully.

Masha sighed: "There are many such girls here. They are provincial, you know?" She pushed up her

rumpled blazer sleeves, picking up her fork.

She had been to the West several times with her father, a warmhearted party planner for Petersburg's elites. Last week they took Byecky, Mischa, and me to a promotion party for Marlboro cigarettes. The Americans wore jeans, and Masha opted out of her conservative staples for a halter dress. During the promotion a table collapsed, sending go-go dancers flying. We thought it was hysterical and sad all at once, but Masha had simply sniffed dismissively.

Masha was our voice of morality in Petersburg, a sort of stand-in for our host-moms during late nights. She wore slightly oversized clothes, evoking her modest nature, and studied "Sport." We'd never spoken Russian with her or her father, even though their English was spotty. Masha prided herself on her close relationship with Petersburg urbanity, and invited us to the city's foremost sushi restaurant, *Dve Palochki,* for dinner.

When she and her father picked us up from Darya's she'd bit into the phone: "Girls, we wait for you on the street. Please come." Mischa's role as the platonic male friend was beyond comprehension for our Russian friends, so they lumped us together.

"Have you ever eaten brownies before?" I asked Masha, studying my teacup.

"In the United States, yes. They are okay. I like sushi better. Your friend, Darya, does she eat sushi?" The question hung loaded below a crumpled paper lantern while Masha speared a freshwater fish roll on her fork.

"I don't know. She likes peanut butter, and speaks English really well…" I trailed off uncomfortably, studying Masha's impassive face. Darya's English was really quite good, better than Masha's. Masha tried so hard to speak English faultlessly that her words were as colorless and brittle as *sukhariki.* She cupped each word carefully in her mouth before emitting it, like a baby bird hatched from an egg. When the bill came, I was relieved that Masha insisted on paying. St. Petersburgers were always willing to pay more for urbanity than Americans. A stray dog outside trembled in the cold.

"Where the *F**** were you!?" Katya screeched from a long table. Bright TV screens with soccer games flickered over belching misogynist ex-pats inside Tinkoff Brewery, famous for clean bathrooms and unlimited napkins. Katya was seated in a crowd of Americans, dressed to the nines and sipping a cosmo. It was hard to miss her blinding hair, polished like brass. Byecky, Mischa and I approached the table tentatively.

"You said you would meet us outside? We waited for you. We spent the day with Darya and Masha…" my voice disappeared into the din.

"*Darya's a SLUT*!!!" Katya sounded like a murder of crows, her harsh laugh manhandling the group for attention. "And Masha's a *b*****!!! Her clothes suck." Perched on her head was a three-hundred-dollar cap on which I'd often fantasized stomping.

"Hey, *devushka*, bring these girls some menus," Katya's voice rang like a hammered nail even in the loud room.

Despite her upbringing as the only child of Ukrainian immigrants, the girl feigned ignorance in all matters of language and culture. None of the Americans could bring themselves to yell *DEVUSHKA!* even after several months in St. Petersburg, but it sometimes happened after several *napitki*. "You're too provincial," the Riverdale resident sniffed at the blushing Americans.

Some go-go girls gyrated on a table, while fat faced businessmen stuffed hundred-ruble notes in their thongs. If there is one habit I picked up in Russia, it is stinginess, if not miserliness.

Those of us not aspiring to a night rivaling New York's Marquee convened in the bathroom.

"Why don't we show her she can't call all the shots? We'll go to Russkii Klub! Oleg will remember us," Byecky ventured. The multiple mirrors reflected my gritted teeth back and forth hundreds of times. I smacked the reflection, watching it spring and dissolve for a few moments. I pictured Katya's brash blonde face in the mirror, whining about the near-death experience she once had in a *marshrutka* (yes, she demand-

ed her money back). It was set.

"Hey girls," I snarled from the head of the table. "I didn't come to Russia to get drunk on four-dollar beers at some ex-pat fraternity and pretend I'm still in America. We're going to meet our favorite Russian slut at Russkii Klub, and you're welcome to join."

Katya dismissed me with a glance, pulling a gold plastic square from her wallet. "Whatever, they take credit cards," she replied.

I flicked the hat from her head, watched it land at the go-go dancer's feet, and stepped into the crisp, dark night. Darya was meeting us in fifteen minutes, and I didn't want to be late.



Jon Ward, Columbia University

Calling Yushchenko's Bluff

Gas, the Press, and the Predicament of Post-Revolution Ukraine

DAVID PLOTZ
COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY

COMMENT

When my American friend returned to St. Petersburg from his trip to Ukraine in spring 2005, he brought me a small gift: an orange pen, upon which was written in Cyrillic "*Yushchenko: Nash Prezident*." I was charmed, and took it to my Russian class at the Smolny Institute. My professor, who bore an uncanny resemblance to Lenin, was not impressed.

"Yushchenko," he said with a condescending glare, "is a fascist. Why is he betraying Russia?" This was not the first time I had heard this. The first time was back in January, when I'd discussed Ukrainian politics with a couple of immigrants from Kiev. Not only did they think that Viktor Yushchenko, the newly elected Ukrainian President, was a fascist (and very bad for the Jews), they also insisted that he had faked his own poisoning to get elected.

It's funny, because that's not what I recall reading in *The New York Times*, where columnist Nicholas Kristof urged President Bush to wear an orange tie in solidarity with Ukrainian street protestors ("Let My People Go", December 4, 2004). Or in *The Washington Post*, where Anne Applebaum compared Ukraine's plight to that of Poland during the Cold War, writing "all that is needed is a promise—even an implied promise—that when the specter of this new iron curtain is removed, Ukraine too will be welcomed by the nations on the other side." ("The New Iron Curtain", November 24, 2004).

As an American who likes to keep informed, I could be forgiven for thinking that the Orange Revolution was a heroic blow against tyranny, a chance for my generation to share in the excitement that Gen-Xers experienced when the Berlin Wall came down. After all, that's what the American media told me, and it's not like I've ever been to Ukraine. And yet outside of the media, the Cold War establishment, and the Ukrainian diaspora (one of the three must have been responsible for tying an orange scarf to the Taras Shevchenko statue in downtown Washington), Ukraine's political upheaval never quite became a *cause célèbre* in the West. Orange never became the new black.

It's just as well that it didn't. Yushchenko's party was thrashed in Ukraine's recent parliamentary elections. His opponent from 2004, Viktor Yanukovych (in Kristof's words, "a fine Putin stooge"), won a plurality of 32 percent, and Yushchenko placed a distant third behind the gorgeous flip-flopper Yulia Tymoshenko. Democracy,

it seems, is a fickle beast. So what happened? Why hasn't Ukraine joined the EU or NATO yet? And more importantly, why aren't young British men throwing stag parties in Dnepropetrovsk?

The problem begins with the fact that Ukraine is very different from, say, Poland. Poland is a deeply Catholic country, with a vague approximation of the Latin alphabet, steeped in the traditions of the Renaissance, the Reformation (more accurately, the Counter-reformation), and the Enlightenment. It is, in a word, more Western. And Russia is, well, Russian. But what is Ukraine? The country's name, which means "on the border", says it all. The clash of civilizations takes place not on Ukraine's long border with Russia, but in the very heart of the country.

Yushchenko's brief stint as a rock star in the West had as much to do with his plans for privatization of Ukraine's economy as with his appeals to democracy and nationalism.

Western Ukraine, or Galicia, has strong ties to Europe. It was part of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth, the Habsburg Empire, and Poland prior to World War II. The population strongly prefers Ukrainian to Russian, and the Uniate (or "Greek Catholic") Church, which recognizes the Pope as its head, is preferred to the Orthodox. Lviv, the region's capital, looks like a run-down version of Vienna. Yushchenko and the Orange Revolution enjoyed overwhelming support in Galicia.

But eastern and southern Ukraine are an entirely different story. In Odessa, on the Crimean peninsula, and in the Donbass industrial region, the population is a mix of ethnic Russians and Russian-speaking Ukrainians, whose cultural, economic, and even familial ties to Russia remain extremely strong. These are the regions that supported Yanukovych in 2004. Kiev (or Kyiv, as Ukrainians prefer) is where east meets west, a traditionally Russian-speaking capital (and once the USSR's third city) enjoying a modest revival of Ukrainian.

The Orange Revolution unquestionably drew on the support of Ukrainian nationalists, who have traditionally felt aggrieved by Russian (or "Muscovite") civilization. But their support was not sufficient to explain the Revolution's initial electoral triumph. What really drew thousands of demonstrators to the streets of Kiev in 2004 was a reaction to the corrupt practices of Ukraine's previous president, Leonid Kuchma.

"The Orange Revolution was mainly against the corrupt Kuchma regime, and incidentally against Russia," says Professor Frank Sysyn of the Harriman Institute, a sympathetic observer. "Yushchenko promised to battle corruption, and in doing so won the support of many Ukrainians whose support for Ukrainian nationalism or western-style economic reforms was much more limited."

The trouble, of course, lies with the western-style economic reforms. Yushchenko's brief stint as a rock star in the West had as much to do with his plans for privatization of Ukraine's economy as with his appeals to democracy and nationalism. But just as it's hard to find a majority of Ukrainians who speak primarily Ukrainian, or who identify more strongly with western Europe than with Russia, it's equally hard to find a majority who actually want a greatly reduced state role in the economy. As Sysyn explains, the Orange coalition was basically split by the dismissal of Yushchenko's prime minister, the charismatic Tymoshenko, who very deliberately appealed to Ukrainian nationalism while guaranteeing the continuation of state subsidies for critical industries. This placed Yushchenko in a politically impossible position; his economic policies may be popular abroad, but they are dismally unpopular in Ukraine outside of Galicia.

Yushchenko's nationalist bluff was called in the final week of 2005, when Gazprom, the most-

ly state-owned Russian energy giant, forced a confrontation with Ukraine. Gazprom abruptly announced that it would quadruple the price of natural gas piped through Ukraine on New Year's Day. Putin then offered Ukraine a loan to offset the damage the gas hike would do to the economy. Yushchenko turned him down, citing a refusal to allow Ukraine to become dependent on Russia. The always excitable Applebaum denounced Russia's "blackmail" and urged western governments to expel Russia from the G-8 club of rich nations ("Playing Politics with Pipelines", January 4, 2006), a response that was rather typical of the western media at the time.

As it happens, I spent a week in Moscow in early January, and the talk of the town was rather different. The Russians with whom I discussed the gas crisis seemed bewildered that western governments were so concerned about Russia's behavior. The Russians were surprised not because they regard Ukraine as a Russian satellite (although they do), but simply because they thought they had economics on their side. A fact acknowledged, but all too frequently downplayed, in western accounts of the gas crisis was that Russia wasn't trying to make Ukraine dependent; Ukraine is and always has been dependent. Russia just wanted to prove it.

As Sysyn explains, the Kuchma government signed an agreement with Moscow in March 2004 promising to freeze the price of gas, as well as the price of its transportation to Europe through Ukrainian pipelines, through 2010. Since the price of gas on the world market has been steadily rising for the past few years, this agreement effectively gave Ukraine artificially low gas prices. In essence, Russia was subsidizing Ukraine's entire economy in exchange for a cheap and reliable pipeline to the west, along with an implicit guarantee of Ukraine's loyalty to Russia.

The Orange Revolution threatened that arrangement, which is why Putin fought so hard and squandered so much of his reputation trying to stop it. When Yushchenko was inaugurated, he put Russia on warning that it could not count on any agreements made under Kuchma. Gazprom, which is more or less an extension of the Russian state, engineered the gas crisis to send a message to Yushchenko: "If you want Ukraine to be a western country, you can pay the same price for gas as a western country." And despite a brief show of support from America and various European governments, Yushchenko blinked. He had no choice. His only card was the gas pipeline, and Russia has plenty more of those.

VIKTOR YUSHCHENKO



Emily Lowry, Barnard College

Between his mishandling of the gas crisis, his humiliation in the elections, and the failure of like-minded reformers to gain any traction in neighboring Belarus, Yushchenko has had a nasty winter. Ukraine is not going to break free of Russia's orbit anytime soon. Nevertheless, Sysyn notes that the Orange Revolution has succeeded in a crucial respect. Yanukovych may have won a plurality, but an Orange coalition of Yushchenko and Tymoshenko could theoretically command a majority of parliament, and in any case, Ukraine will have a democratically elected and accountable government. It will also have the same corrupt post-Soviet bureaucracy it had under Kuchma, and an economy that can be disrupted with the flick of a switch in Moscow. Ukraine's demographic divisions ensure that its politics will be significantly livelier than that of neighboring countries for the foreseeable future. East is East and West is West, but Ukraine still hasn't made up its mind.

Frozen in Conflict and Time

Negotiating Transnistria and the Future of Moldova

DAVID SEYMOUR SCHOR
COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY

From Abkhazia to South Ossetia, Chechnya to Kosovo, the post-Soviet space continues to face undesirable consequences of the often pell-mell border drawings and population manipulations that grouped and split ethnic groups during and after the Soviet era. Today, many of these regions pose security risks to their neighbors and prevent development and transitional economic efforts.

One of the consequences of Soviet intervention has been the region of Transnistria. The region, also known as Transdniester, is a sliver of land approximately the size of Rhode Island that spans most of the border between modern-day Moldova and Ukraine. Historically, it has been a place where great powers fought for hegemony over the Black Sea region, a place where East met West, where Europe met and occasionally confronted Russia.

The land that now sits inside modern-day Moldova's borders has been in flux for centuries. Moldova consists of the traditionally Slavic Transnistria, and what was once called Bessarabia, the area west of the Dniestr River populated by ethnic Romanians, which has traded hands between Romanians, the Ottoman-Turks and Russians for more than five centuries. Years later, the Soviet-sanctioned Moldavian SSR (MSSR) became a forced melting pot of ethnic Russians, Romanians and Ukrainians. As the Soviet grip weakened in the late 1980s, Moldovan nationalism dominated the political space, and the rising nationalism led the MSSR legislature to declare Moldovan (a dialect of Romanian) the national language, as opposed to Russian.

The Slavic Russian-speaking population in the Transnistria area became worried about its marginalization in what would inevitably become a larger Moldovan republic. In 1990, Transnistria declared itself independent. Months later, in 1991, the Republic of Moldova declared independence and included the entirety of the former MSSR—including Transnistria—in the boundaries of the newfound state. A geo-political conflict had arisen.

War broke out in the summer of 1992 between the newly formed Moldovan army and the secessionists in Transnistria. The secessionists, aided by contingents of Russian, Cossack, and Ukrainian volunteers, and the Russian military, successfully defeated the Moldovan forces. A ceasefire followed, but the international community never acknowledged Transnistrian independence, and the de facto autonomous entity of Transnistria, one of the frozen-conflict zones in the post-Soviet space, came to be.

Today, banking on Russian sympathy for a displaced Slavic brotherhood, Transnistria functions as a rogue state, complete with its own prime minister, its own currency and a Russian-supported military. With Russian troops lingering around statues of Lenin on the streets of Tiraspol—the capital city where the hammer and sickle still flies and a number of old Soviet passports still circulate—it would appear that negotiations have failed. For the half-million people within its borders, the time warp that is Transnistria has become a diplomatic nightmare, frozen both in

conflict and in time. Moldova, an independent and recognized European state, has come to be at loggerheads with a Soviet past that simply won't fade into the distance.

"With the relative peace in the Balkans and the expansion of the EU to include Romania and Bulgaria next year, the Moldova problem will now be right on Europe's doorstep," said Charles King, a professor of foreign service and government at Georgetown University.

Legitimacy

There are many obstacles that stand in the way of a resolution to the frozen conflict. Some are related directly to the parties involved, that is, Transnistria and Moldova. But others are related to geo-political power struggles between peripheral players like Russia, the EU, and the US. In all dealings related to the conflict, one issue remains central: the legitimacy of the secessionists' claim to independence.

"It all depends on what legitimacy means," King noted. "On historical, linguistic, and just about any other criterion, a place called 'Transnistria' is about as legitimate as a place called 'Moldova,'" said King. "The difference, however, is that Moldova has used its independence to build a generally well-functioning, democratic state, whereas Transnistria has used its effective independence to build an authoritarian one."

In a 2004 census it turned out that 30.2 percent of Transnistria's population was ethnic Russian, 28.8 percent ethnic Ukrainian, and 31.9 percent ethnic Romanian. Thus the majority of the region's population is Slavic and Russian-speaking.

"Legitimacy is determined politically," said Robert Legvold, Columbia University Professor of Political Science. "It is acquired through international acceptance and recognition." As Legvold points out, Transnistrian aspirations for independence have been deemed illegitimate by their lack of recognized statehood in the international community.

With the exception of Russia, the international community does not recognize Transnistria. Most parties who have taken a pro-Moldovan position—namely the EU, and the US—are concerned chiefly with the viability of Moldova. One of the poorest countries in Europe, Moldova remains developmentally frozen, in part because much of the area's heavy industry remains concentrated in Transnistria as a result of Soviet partiality toward Transnistria's Slavic population. The conflict in Transnistria has starved the Republic of Moldova of important tax revenue and viable industrial development.

Negotiations & Failures

Pulled both east and west, and low on the priority list for both the eastern and western powers in charge, Transnistria faces a conflict that remains at a standstill, and both sides within the region have reached an impasse.

Negotiations seemed promising for a time. According to a report produced by the US Department of State in 2002, the negotiations had developed what was known as the Kiev document, which outlined a basic structure of federal governance for Transnistria. These negotiations laid the groundwork for a 2003 initiative, proposed by Moldovan president Vladimir Voronin, which included provisions for Transnistrian participation in the creation of a new Moldovan constitution. While rejected by Transnistria in that form, both sides stated their agreement on the importance of reintegrating the region shortly. Furthermore, the official position of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) is that "any acceptable solution has to fully respect the independence, sovereignty, and territorial integrity of the Republic of Moldova, while providing a special status for Moldova's Transnistrian region." From this perspective, it seems as though a solution may have been in sight, even if it had still been blurry.

But outside intervention, especially the Russian kind, has devastated hopes of progress. After the ceasefire agreement in 1992, Russia continued to provide military, political, and economic support to the region. The 14th Russian army remains in Transnistria, despite agreements to remove them in 1994, 1999, and 2001. Just after the OSCE, Russia, and Ukraine had put together the failed but promising Kiev document mentioned above, Russian authorities presented the Kozak memorandum. It was created bilaterally between Moldova and Russia behind the backs of the other partners and laid out an "asymmetrical" federalization plan that critics say gave Tiraspol, Transnistria's capital, disproportionately large representation in state decision-making, and blocked powers in the executive and legislative bodies. In addition, the memorandum allowed for the deployment of Russian "peacekeepers" for another twenty years, doing away with the earlier commit-



ments by Russia to remove its weapons and munitions stockpiles and its troops.

Moldovan President Vladimir Voronin came close to signing the document, but he relented under pressure from the West and ultimately rejected it. The West was chiefly concerned with the continued presence of Russian troops in Transnistria, which would turn the "federation" into an essentially Russian satellite.

The Current State of Affairs

Despite promising opportunities since the Kozak memorandum, little has been done. In fact, things seem to be steadily deteriorating.

With both Moldova's accession to a three-year Membership Action Plan with the European Union in December 2004, and Romania and Bulgaria's planned accession in 2007, it seems the EU had new impetus to push for a resolution. Indeed, when Belgium's Foreign Minister Karel De Gucht took control of the OSCE, he pledged to resolve the issue in Transnistria. In addition, with the pro-Western Viktor Yuschenko taking office, Ukrainian officials seemed prepared to cooperate. And last but not least, as it took the helm of the G8, Russia may have been expected to play a more constructive role.

But in spite of this convergence of motivations, negotiations seem to be devolving. In September 2004, Transnistrian authorities raided a school where students were taught Romanian using the Latin script. The school was closed down and reopened as a "Transnistria-friendly" school, reverting to Russian instruction. This crisis was a major setback for Moldovan-Transnistrian relations. In addition, days of talks in January 2006 proved completely unfruitful. Then on March 3, 2006, the Transnistrian problems worsened when Ukrainian officials imposed restrictions on Transnistrian trade, which demanded that all items imported from Transnistria into Ukraine be accompanied by documents from Moldova's trade authorities.

Supported by the West and Moldova, this move was a response to the alleged "black hole" in the region that economically hurts both Moldova and Ukraine, and greatly concerns the European Union. Russian authorities were livid about the trade restrictions. Russian spokesmen have called it an "economic blockade" that could lead to a "humanitarian crisis." Meanwhile, Transnistrian authorities responded by halting all trade across the border.

"The Ukrainian move is completely legitimate in my view," King said. "The Ukrainians have a right to protect their border and to control commerce across it. And let's be clear: a blockade is an act of war which entails stopping all trade into and out of a state; Ukraine has not done that—it has not even placed an embargo on Transnistria. It has simply said that commercial transactions have to be conducted according to applicable laws."

The Russians

Within the chaos of the Transnistrian conflict, it is worth questioning why Russia is willing to oppose the rest of the international community to support what is ultimately a rogue state. There seems to be no consensus on the matter.

According to the International Crisis Group, a think-tank committed to ending conflict worldwide, "Russia remains reluctant to see the EU, US or the OSCE play an active role in resolving the conflict because Moldova is still viewed by many in Moscow as a sphere of exclusively Russian geopolitical interest." In response to Russia's denunciation of the trade restrictions, the *New York Times* reported that as it takes over the leadership of the G8, Russia appears to be "an immature economic partner blind to the conventions of international commerce."

But other experts contribute more constructively. "Russia has been very sensitive, probably too sensitive, about Russian minorities in post-Soviet states, so with respect to Transnistria they've been fairly consistent," said Levgold. "With the fall of the Soviet Union came a decline of the buffer between Russia and

Europe. Keeping troops in Transnistria has been a way of holding on to that buffer," he said.

However, King noted that "the military dimensions of the Russian presence are unimportant. Less than 2,000 poorly paid and poorly equipped troops don't help Russia in any strategic sense. But Russia has made a commitment to Transnistria, and it is now hard to back down without appearing to have 'lost' to the EU and US."

Black Hole?

Another complex component of the situation is the perception that Transnistria is something of a "black hole" for illegal activity, from human trafficking to illegal weapon exports. This status is further complicated by the continued presence of large Russian weapons and munitions depots in Transnistria, arsenals that are questionably secured by the Russian "peacekeepers." The combination of eastward EU enlargement and post 9/11 security worries has greatly amplified these concerns.

The *Washington Times* published an article in 2004 titled "Hotbed of Weapon Deals," which quoted an anonymous official from a country in the region; the official said that "weapons from Transnistria have turned up in Russia's restive Chechnya, in Georgia's breakaway Abkhazia region and in the hands of insurgents in Africa."

In an interview with Radio Free Europe at the end of March 2006, Voronin said that Transnistria carries out $2 billion in illegal trade each year: "About smuggling from Transnistria to Moldova, we have daily evidence: tens of trucks loaded with all sorts of merchandise, and [we have proof of] situations of money [transfers to] foreign banks, and there are many other things, which we are discovering and investigating on a daily basis."

Still, King had a different take on the alleged criminal activity. In response to allegations like Voronin's, he argued that "no one has good information on this, unfortunately. All of those [activities] quite likely take place in Transnistria, but let's be honest: they also take place in Moldova, Russia, and Ukraine. My feeling is that the Transnistrians are rather unfairly treated in this regard … It is complete speculation."

"In other words, it's important to untangle the reality of Transnistria's status as a 'black hole' for drugs, money, people, and guns from the political uses to which its 'black hole' status are put," King said.

The black hole status concerns the West, but it has also produced a group of area businessmen opposed to reconciliation. According to Legvold, "any criminalized state essentially becomes Illegal Trade, Inc." Without having to pay taxes or tariffs on imports, Transnistrian, Ukrainian, and Moldovan business elites prosper by importing goods and re-exporting them illegally into Moldova and Ukraine.

Kosovo in the Mix

Outside of all of the issues that pertain to Transnistria on its own soil, its future may also be determined by that of Kosovo.

"Some Russian politicians have already said that if Kosovo is recognized as independent by the international community, it would justify Russia recognizing the independence of other break-away territories, such as Transnistria," said Legvold.

Indeed, Kosovo has recently been a source of considerable discussion—in April, the third in a series of UN-led negotiations was held. These negotiations are supposed to determine Kosovo's ultimate status. A province in Serbia with an ethnic Albanian majority, Kosovo wants independence, while Serbs prefer a region with some sort of local autonomy within the Serbian state.

"I think Russian officials are torn on the question, because they have been committed to preserving the territorial integrity of states like Moldova and Georgia and they don't want to set a precedent for Chechnya," Legvold added. "But on the other hand, their relations with Moldova and Georgia are increasingly sour, and they do seem to be edging closer to a different approach to the separatist territories."

With regard to the Transnistria debacle, there is unlikely to be a resolution anytime soon. "There is not enough commitment from any of the players at this moment," Legvold said.

The situation continues to deteriorate, most recently made clear by the March trade restrictions, as well as the ban on Russian importation of Moldovan wine, a $75 million industry for Moldova, which was banned for "sanitation" reasons. The EU, the US, and particularly Russia, have not done enough to end this conflict, and as time goes on, spheres of influence continue to overlap in a nightmare of a conflict with no foreseeable conclusion on the immediate horizon.

Historical and Political Analysis

Thwarted Voters

Voting Patterns in Russia's 1996 Presidential Race

SARAH MILOV
HARVARD UNIVERSITY

The 1996 Russian presidential race was high drama for followers of Russian politics. Two candidates, representing vastly different worldviews, dominated the media spotlight in the summer of 1996. There were many reasons for Western interest in the Russian election, not the least of which was that in a highly simplified version, the election represented the first time Russian voters could choose between forward-looking democracy and the Communism of the old regime. For the Western observer, Russia's 1996 election affirmed the West's Cold War moral victory. But the drama of the ideological clash that played out in the runoff in July of 1996 obscures Russian electoral reality: one-third of the Russian electorate cast ballots for candidates that were outside the main communist/liberal divide. This paper explores the choices of those voters.

In the first round of the election, which took place in June 1996, about 70 percent of eligible voters turned out to vote. Because no candidate received a constitutionally mandated majority of ballots, the communist challenger Gennady Zyuganov forced a runoff against incumbent Boris Yeltsin. For casual observers of Russian politics in the United States, this result may have been more than a little bit surprising. After all, Russia had renounced its Communist past five years prior with the "revolution" of 1991, and US president Bill Clinton made his support for Yeltsin known from the beginning. That Zyuganov captured only three percentage points less than Yeltsin in the first round of elections—Zyuganov had 32 percent of the vote to Yeltsin's 35.3 percent—could have meant a potential renewal of east-west tensions. With a Communist Party (CPRF) stronghold in the parliament, a victory for Zyuganov would have caused domestic as well as international instability. But, of course, this is speculative, because in the second round of elections held the following month, Yeltsin took 54 percent of the vote and ensured Russia's place on the rocky path toward Westernization, at least for the next four years.

The numerical discrepancy between the first and second round electoral results can be explained by the decisions of "thwarted voters." As Roy Pierce explains, "Thwarted voters are voters who are prevented by the play of the electoral process from casting their vote for their preferred candidates at the decisive ballot."[1] With only 65 percent of voters accounted for as Yeltsin or Zyuganov supporters, third-party candidate voters comprised a significant percentage of the electorate in the first round. In fact, slightly more people voted for a third-party candidate in 1996 than voted for Zyuganov. This meant that one-third of voters would have to settle for their second choice in the July runoff, or simply not vote at all.

Using data collected in a survey of the Russian electorate in 1996, this paper argues that thwarted

voters were more likely to vote "against" a candidate than "for" the selected candidate in the second round of voting. In other words, a thwarted voter who voted for Yeltsin in round two ultimately did so in opposition to Zyuganov, not because the voter in question actually approved of Yeltsin's program. I will call this behavior pattern 'negative voting.' This hypothesis is less intuitive than it appears. Although thwarted voters must resign themselves to a second choice, they may approve of a candidate whose place on the political spectrum most closely aligns with their own. Perhaps to avoid cognitive dissonance, a thwarted voter may end up positively supporting one of the two remaining candidates, especially if the voter's preferred candidate endorses a final-runoff contender.

However, because the visions for Russia posed by Zyuganov and Yeltsin were so vastly different, I contend that the 1996 runoff, as spun by each candidate's campaign, was essentially a referendum on the status quo. To vote for Yeltsin meant that the voter wanted to shut the door decisively on Russia's Communist past and stay the path toward democratization. To cast a ballot for Zyuganov was to condemn the current situation in Russia.

The Thwarted Voter

It is hard to make generalizations about what type of person—in terms of gender, education, socio-economic status—voted for a third-party candidate in the 1996 election. Because eight candidates who represented a broad range of positions did not make it past the first round of the election, a wide spectrum of the voting public experienced first round disappointment. However, Timothy Colton's *Transitional Citizens* provides a comprehensive analysis of the two leading vote-recipients among the dropout candidates: Alexander Lebed and Grigory Yavlinsky. In total, these two candidates captured 23 percent of the vote, with 15 percent going to Lebed, and 8 percent to Yavlinsky. Yavlinsky drew most of his support from "educated, well-healed, and youthful voters."[2] Lebed captured his best support from "younger voters, the technically trained and persons not in the largest cities."[3]

There were not a striking number of issues the thwarted voter focused on. The survey data indicate that Lebed's "main appeal is in one opinion niche—among supporters of a strict social order who do not want to reinstate the one-party Soviet political system."[4] Even though Lebed favored reintegration of the USSR and condemned NATO enlargement, his stance on these issues was not decisive for voters. Yavlinsky, whose poorer-than-expected showing at the polls probably can be attributed to positional overlap with Yeltsin, had "minor issue appeal on one issue […] opposition to a Soviet-like political system."[5]

The responses of Yavlinsky supporters should make us more confident in our hypothesis that in the runoff thwarted voters are more likely to vote "against" a candidate than to support a new candidate positively and directly. Yavlinsky supporters, 67 percent of whom supported Yeltsin in the runoff,[6] found one issue to be of primary importance: staving off a return to the Soviet regime. It is plausible, then, that their votes for Yeltsin were simply votes against Zyuganov, who symbolically represented a return to the old way of life.

The Thwarted Candidate

Even though Lebed and Yavlinsky were the top vote-recipients of all the dropout candidates, this still leaves 11 percent of votes cast in the first round of elections unaccounted for. Eight other candidates, including former USSR secretary-general Mikhail Gorbachev, economist Yegor Gaidar, Yurii Vlasov, Vladimir Bryntsalov, Vladimir Zhirinovsky, Svyatoslav Federov, Martin Shakkum, and Viktor Chernomyrdin, captured the remaining votes. General Lebed captured the vast preponderance of third-party votes in the June race. He was followed by Yavlinsky, who received just about half as many first round votes as Lebed. Both were followed in vote tally by the ultra-nationalist LDPR leader Zhrinovsky. Besides Federov, who received about 4 percent of third-party votes, no other candidate received more than one percent of discarded first round votes. Because of the numeric negligibility of votes cast for third-party candidates other than Lebed, Yavlinsky and Zhirinovsky, my analysis will focus on thwarted voters who initially supported these three candi-

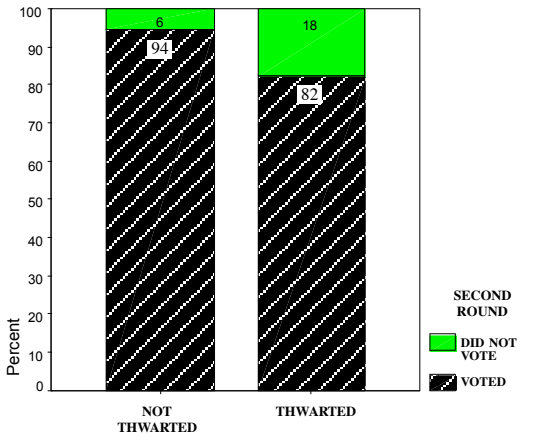
Figure A

DECISION TO VOTE IN SECOND ROUND RUNOFF BY CANDIDATE SUPPORTED IN FIRST ROUND OF ELECTION

	Voted in Runoff		
	Yes	No	Total
Bryntsalov	3		3
	100.0%	.00	100.0%
Vlasov	1	1	2
	50.0%	50.0%	100.0%
Gorbachev	1	1	2
	50.0%	50.0%	100.0%
Zhirinovskii	57	17	74
	77.0%	23.0%	100.0%
Lebed	306	55	361
	84.8%	15.2%	100.0%
Fedorov	20	3	23
	87.0%	13.0%	100.0%
Shakkum	4	2	6
	66.7%	33.3%	100.0%
Yavlinskii	144	36	180
	80.0%	20.0%	100.0%
Gaidar		2	2
	.00	100.0%	100.0%
Chernomyrdin	1	.00	1
	100.0%		100.0%
Total	537	117	654
	82.1%	17.9%	100.0%

Figure B

SECOND ROUND VOTING RATE



dates.

In July, 82 percent of third-party voters returned to the polls. As would be expected, this figure is strikingly less than the 94 percent of Yeltsin and Zyuganov voters who returned to support their candidate. *Figure A* shows the percentage breakdown of votes in the runoff election. It also illustrates the low number of voters who cast ballots for candidates for anyone besides Lebed, Yavlinsky and Zhirinovsky.

Even though the majority of voters supporting all candidates returned to the polls in June, the differences in the behavior of thwarted versus satisfied voters cannot be ignored. *Figure B* is a graphical display of the return rate of thwarted and satisfied voters.

Holding age, income and life assessment[7] constant, there is a significant difference in the rate at which thwarted versus satisfied voters returned to the polls in July.[8] Thwarted voters were 10.8 percent less likely to vote in the runoff election.

There are structural reasons for this discrepancy. If a voter actively supported a candidate in the first round of elections, then he or she might not have felt strongly enough toward the two runoff candidates to actually vote. This logic would also support my hypothesis that thwarted voters who return to the polls demonstrate more negative voting behavior. This leaves a greater incentive to return to the polls for people who displayed negative voting behavior in round one. If a ballot was cast for a third-party candidate as a negative measure against Zyuganov or Yeltsin, then the same voter can still cast a negative ballot in round two.

This is substantiated by the data. Among voters who cast a ballot for Yeltsin in the second round, thwarted voters were 60 percent more likely to consider their ballot a strike against Zyuganov than a testament to Yeltsin's capabilities.[9] Respondents' longer explanations further justified their negative voting pattern. "I did not want Zyuganov to become the president" or "I did not want reversion to the old way" were typical responses.

For those who ultimately cast their lot with the Communists, the rate of negative voting among thwarted voters was equally striking. Controlling for age, status assessment and income, thwarted voters in this category were 50 percent more likely to consider their ballot a

Figure C

VOTING BEHAVIOR AMONG YELTSIN SUPPORTERS IN FINAL RUNOFF

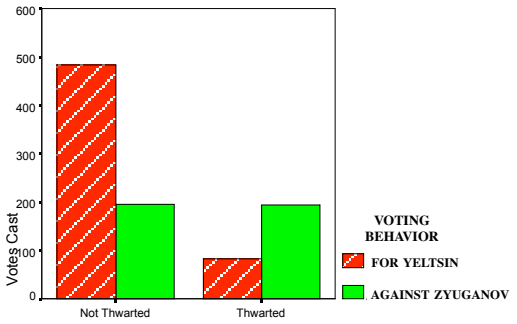
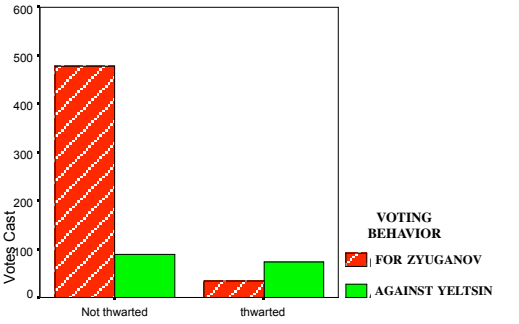


Figure D

VOTING BEHAVIOR AMONG ZYUGANOV SUPPORTERS IN FINAL RUNOFF



statement against Yeltsin. *Figures C and D* illustrate the difference in negative voting patters between thwarted and satisfied voters.

Thus, the data confirm my hypothesis that thwarted voters are more likely to engage in negative voting during the July runoff. Explaining such a discrepancy is a somewhat harder task.

Running Negative Campaigns

The second-round strategies of both Yeltsin and Zyuganov intensified the negative tenor of the race. This phenomenon was reflected in the voting rationale of thwarted voters. Yeltsin's final vote count—53.8 percent of second round voters—was won by a campaign strategy that cast the runoff as "yet another referendum on Communism."[10] The communist strategy was essentially the same. Responding to opinion polls that indicated that centrist voters cared about social stability, Zyuganov assured voters that a victory would mean "a return to stability and social harmony rather than radical turmoil."[11] Unfortunately for the Communists, this strategy backfired because it substantiated Yeltsin's claim that a win for Zyuganov would mean a return to Soviet-style living.

Yeltsin's initial campaign strategy failed to capitalize on the polarized electorate. Perhaps due to the unexpected parliamentary success of the Communists in 1995 and the general leftward shift of the Russian electorate, Yeltsin, under the advice of his Deputy Prime Minister Oleg Soskovets, co-opted the socialist and nationalist platform. After firing three key reformers, he criticized his own government for failing to increase social spending, and then appointed Soviet-era relic Yevgeny Primakov, who was venerated by both Communists and nationalists. Yeltsin's 5 percent approval rating in January of 1996 demonstrated how unsuccessful this approach was. Because Yeltsin's early strategy did not even draw a clear distinction between his own political leanings and those of the Communists, Yeltsin was not committed to running a negative campaign from the beginning. Yeltsin's political about-face in the spring of 1996 suggests a strong correlation between encouraging ideological polarization and success at the polls.

Yeltsin's political fate changed for the better directly after he fired his old campaign management team and assembled a team headed by Anatoly Chubais. Chubais correctly believed that Yeltsin could probably not win an election by trying to act more like the Communists and nationalists. Chubais also did not think Yeltsin could win based on his accomplishments while in office. The only way to ensure electoral success was to make voters believe "that they were choosing between two systems, not two candidates."[12]

Yeltsin culled all the resources at his disposal to exploit the ideological divide between himself and his opponent. Yeltsin had the support of

Russia's three largest television stations, which not only provided favorable coverage of Yeltsin, but also critical coverage of Zyuganov.[13] The message that Yeltsin sought to get across on TV and on the stump trail was that there was continuity between the Communist Party of the Soviet Union and Zyuganov's CPRF. Yeltsin's TV advertisements showed Soviet horrors such as famine, execution, and destruction of churches while an announcer proclaimed, "Russia's Communists have not changed the name of their party; they will not change their tactics either."[14] The message was clear: to vote for Zyuganov was to usher in a new wave of social strife. Yeltsin intensified this message in the month between the first and second elections.

But Yeltsin's effort to cast himself as the only alternative to Soviet rule was only half of his campaign strategy. He also had to persuade third-force candidates to back him in the runoff. Yeltsin assumed that, as liberals, Yavlinsky voters would likely support him in the runoff, so he focused most of his efforts on Lebed. In exchange for second-round support, Yeltsin promised Lebed a post in his government.[15] By getting Lebed on the Yeltsin bandwagon, Yeltsin was able to secure voters who otherwise would have never voted for him, and perhaps would not have voted at all in the second round.

But the greatest negative endorsement of Yeltsin came from an unlikely source: Zhirinovsky. Because it would have been politically damaging to openly court the anti-Semitic Zhirinovsky (indeed, polls showed that Yeltsin would have lost 17 percent of supporters if the two were openly allied), any support for Yeltsin would have had to have been phrased in the form of a condemnation for Zyuganov. Zhirinovksy delivered. At a press conference, Zhirinovsky ridiculed Zyuganov and the Communists for claiming to be nationalists when in reality they were merely unreformed Communists.[16] Though the majority of Zhirinovsky supporters did not end up voting for Yeltsin (in our sample, the plurality of his supporters voted against both candidates in the second round), Zhirinovsky's lack of support for Zyuganov, and thus his implicit support of Yeltsin, is striking because Yeltsin and Zhirinovsky had little in common politically. Yeltsin's effective capture of the third-force candidates left little room for Zyuganov to increase his electoral pool.

Though the Communists attempted a similar campaign of condemnation, the rhetoric employed by Zyuganov ultimately made him susceptible to Yeltsin's charge that Zyuganov would steer the country back toward its Soviet past. Zyuganov emphasized patriotic themes and called Yeltsin a pawn of western capitalism. Even though one could read the emphasis on patriotism as a positive tactic for Zyuganov—he was playing up his own campaign themes rather than simply denigrating his opponent—Zyuganov's appeal to patriotism was an appeal to nostalgia for the glory days of the USSR. His admonishment of Yeltsin as pro-western was merely a Soviet-style insult. Zyuganov's most pointed condemnation of the reform path of the 1990s came at the Congress of People's Patriotic Forces in June of 1996. There he called Gorbachev and Yeltsin "the two beasts from the abyss sent by the devil."[17] Zyuganov's rhetoric indicated that he wanted to force the populace to choose between reform and a return to the past.

Zyuganov's actual platform was, in reality, a great deal more moderate than unreformed Communism. He favored a mixed economy, whereby the government would retain control over some industrial sectors.[18] This, however, was not the thrust of the Zyuganov campaign, which, explicitly asked voters to choose between the less-

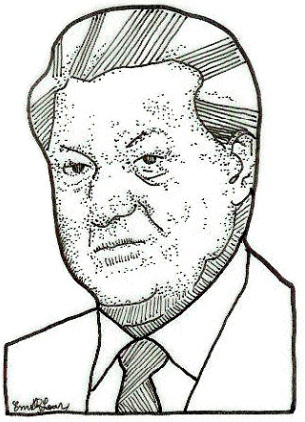
Gennady Zyuganov



Emily Lowry, Barnard College

er of two evils. As part of its campaign propaganda, the CPRF press reprinted a statement by a well-known Soviet-era political dissident, Andrei Siniavsky saying that, "there is no choice: Yeltsin is more dangerous than the Communists."[19] In the end, both candidates got what they wanted: an election that was a referendum on reform. Unfortunately for Zyuganov, 40 percent of the electorate decided that they were not willing to consider reliving the Soviet experience.

BORIS YELTSIN



Emily Lowry, Barnard College

This finding has implications for how candidates should structure their campaigns in a two-tiered voting system. If the thwarted voters who return to the polls are already predisposed toward negative voting (because positive voters would abstain), campaign managers can exploit this tendency by making voters believe that dire consequences will ensue should the oppositional candidate win. That this type of behavior occurred in Russia should not be surprising. As Michael McFaul explains, "When confronted with a choice between candidates representing alternate political and socioeconomic systems…voter concerns about systemic issues or ideological beliefs become more salient."[20] Russia was therefore the perfect backdrop for negative campaigning: the runoff system polarized the electorate, and Russia's unhappy experience with Communism and its more recent unhappy experience with reform gave both sides plenty of ammunition with which to scare voters. The interplay of the election structure, the characteristics of the thwarted voter, and the campaign strategies of Yeltsin and Zyuganov resulted in overwhelming negativity on the part of voters who initially supported dropout candidates. Having begrudgingly supported either Yeltsin or Zyuganov, the large number of people dissatisfied with the results of the 1996 election could also help explain the eventual appeal of Vladimir Putin. Classifiable as neither communist nor liberal, Putin appealed to those voters whose first experience with democratic presidential elections was less than satisfying.

Works Cited

Timothy Colton, *Transitional Citizens*, (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2000).

Michael McFaul, *Russia's Unfinished Revolution: political change from Gorbachev to Putin*, (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2001).

Roy Pierce, "Modelling Electoral Second Choices: thwarted voters in the United States, France, and Russia," *Electoral Studies*, 22 (2003).

Joan Barth Urban and Valerii D. Solovei, *Russia's Communists at the Crossroads,* (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1997).

Notes

[1] Roy Pierce, "Modelling Electoral Second Choices: thwarted voters in the United States, France, and Russia," *Electoral Studies*, 22 (2003): 265.
[2] Colton, 79.
[3] Ibid.
[4] Colton, 167.
[5] Ibid.
[6] Colton, 30.
[7] Respondents were posed the question 'How has your family's material situation changed over this past twelve months?' and were asked to asses the change on a 1-5 scale where one signified great improvement and 5 meant a worsening of the situation.
[8] The p-value for this regression was p<.001
[9] This figure controls for age, status assessment and income made in the past month. The p value of being a thwarted voter is p<.001.
[10] Michael McFaul, *Russia's Unfinished Revolution: political change from Gorbachev to Putin*, (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2001), 293.
[11] Urban and Solovei, 171.
[12] McFaul, 293.
[13] McFaul, 295.
[14] Ibid.
[15] McFaul, 294.
[16] McFaul, 299.
[17] Urban and Solovei, 172.
[18] Urban and Solovei, 171.
[19] Urband and Solovei, 172.
[20] McFaul, 291.

Viewpoint From Abroad

The Children of Krasnoyarsk

A First-Hand Insight Into the Plight of Russian Orphans

STEFANIE IVES
DURHAM UNIVERSITY, UK

PERSONAL ESSAY

There are an estimated 70,000 children living on the streets of St. Petersburg and Moscow alone. Some are as young as five, yet they are already drug addicts or alcoholics who commit petty crimes. Although the fall of Communism was hailed in the West as a giant leap forward for Russia, many ordinary Russians have come to associate Russia's newfound capitalism with poverty and unemployment. In the aftermath of the economic collapse of the 1990s, orphaned and abandoned street children became a regular feature on the streets of major cities throughout the country.

For five months, I lived and worked in Krasnoyarsk, a Siberian city of one million people, where it is impossible to miss the poverty on every street. The elderly, infirm, disabled, and even young children can be seen begging for money in temperatures as low as 35 degrees below zero (Celsius). These children are often between the ages of three and ten and many live in the city sewers in order to avoid freezing to death.

In Krasnoyarsk, local organizations keep these children alive by providing food and basic help. Not all of them are orphans in the sense that their parents are no longer around; in the majority of cases, they have been forced to leave home due to alcohol abuse by one or both parents, sexual abuse, violence or poverty. Ninety-five percent of children in Russian orphanages today are classified as "economic orphans," meaning that they may still have at least one living parent.

Due to the prevalence of poverty in Russia, many parents lose their homes and become forced onto the streets, or they find themselves in situations in which they can no longer feed their family. In such situations, children have the option of becoming wards of the state and moving into the grim orphanages that surround the city. Such orphanages are under-funded and under-staffed, and therefore the children are not adequately provided for in most cases.

I taught English in a private orphanage in the Siberian city, where I helped entertain the children and became involved in their daily life. A philanthropist owned the orphanage, and luckily the facilities were decent and clean. Yet the children still became very distressed when their parents and older siblings would come to visit on weekends, usually for an hour at a time. The orphanage system in Russia is similar to American social services in that parents are not obliged to relinquish parental rights and can reclaim their children at any point.

Some children choose the streets over life in an orphanage. Many of the children with whom I worked had run away from other institutions where

they had been the victims of negligence and cruelty. Russian orphanages are subject to virtually no regulation. Many are secretive and naturally wary of foreigners, whom they suspect come to Russia only to criticize and expose negligent practices.

One woman explained to me that many of the children would have a miserable life anyway, so it is best to toughen them up now so that they might have a better chance of survival. For a moment, her argument almost seems to make sense considering official statistics show that ten percent of orphans will commit suicide and half will die from a drug or alcohol addiction. Furthermore, the children can be taken away from the orphanage by their parents at any time, so there is a genuine fear of becoming too emotionally involved.

Many Western organizations see black motives everywhere in the orphanage system. It is true that corruption is rife, but here administrators must be differentiated from employees. The average orphanage receives only thirty kopeks from the state per orphan for food. Employees are well aware of the poor conditions, but they have no way to change them. Few foreign observers are actually prepared to provide the money needed to improve conditions.

Although foreign organizations are active in Russia, the government views them with suspicion. A new law due to be introduced will prohibit Americans from adopting orphans, signaling yet another blow for the children. Unlike in most countries, in Russia orphans tend to be viewed as somehow disabled. This attitude is so endemic that it is even acknowledged in Russian Family Law, in which Article 135 allows adoptive Russian parents to change the date (by up to three months) and the place of birth on the birth certificate. In addition, all records regarding biological parentage are destroyed, so as to prevent the child from being stigmatized.

Non-religious aid groups are rare in Russia. One has only to Google "Russian orphans" to find countless American organizations who offer "salvation" to street children. This will often be in the form of a clean bed and food in return for the acceptance of Jesus Christ. Recruiters from such groups often came to pick up and convert children on the streets of Krasnoyarsk. The Russians I worked with would usually ask me, as the only English speaker, to tell them to leave the street children alone. With the absence of official help from the government, this aspect of Russian life can only become more and more exposed to those with ulterior motives.

It is in this context that the population of street children expands. Many of these children survive by stealing, mugging and committing other violent crimes; they are the true victims of Russia's unstable economy and of the harsh realities of transition in post-Soviet Russia.





Photos courtesy of Stefanie Ives

Top: Children sweep snow away from the courtyard of an orphanage in Krasnoyarsk. Bottom: A view of the city of Krasnoyarsk with a cloud of industrial pollution looming overhead.

Post-Soviet Zombies

Unveiling the Russianness of *Night Watch*

MARK KROTOV
COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY

FILM ESSAY

A major blockbuster in Russia and a well-publicized art-house curiosity in the United States, *Night Watch* (*Nochnoi Dozor*), which was recently released in the US, is an intriguing phenomenon. In many ways, the film's popularity has had an almost minstrel-like quality: "Look at the Russians! They can do everything like the Americans, but better!" Thus far, *Night Watch* has been received (both here and abroad) as a triumph of *nashe* over *vashe*, ours over theirs, but what makes it *nashe*—what makes it decidedly Russian, that is—has become almost irrelevant. What seems to matter to critics and audiences is the appropriation of American genre and style. Some negative American reviews of the film even suggested that the film used the traditional elements (zombies, copious amounts of violence, quick editing, etc.) of genre films to such a degree that it was essentially a Russian clone of American films. While superficially accurate, such a reading of the film avoids the movie's Rusianness, for lack of a better word—just a few so-called cultural elements in *Night Watch* demonstrate that it is far from an American clone.

A noticeable suggestion of *Night Watch*'s distinctive otherness appears near the very beginning of the film with a simple title card: "Moscow, 1992." In selecting such a loaded year, director Timur Bekmambetov clearly seeks to establish a parallel between the goings-on in the film and the fall of Communism. And although no one utters any overt political statements in the movie, it is clear that the timing of the first events matters. In the film, what happens after 1992 leads directly to chaos and the start of a major battle between the "forces of the light" and the "forces of the dark." After the Soviet Union officially crumbled in 1991 and 1992, Russia would follow a similarly anarchic trajectory until the establishment of a strong political order that has become more noted for its repression than for its policies. Though it is difficult to draw precise analogies between the nation's historical events and the content of the film, it is clear that Bekmambetov utilizes 1992 to demarcate a significant historical rift. In a sense, the title card acts as shorthand, because every Russian viewer is aware of the year's significance, and to draw similar conclusions about *Night Watch*'s significance is unavoidable.

It is also notable that the events in 1992 center around a botched abortion, performed by an old woman in her creaky, shabby apartment. Of course, the abortion has a mythical tinge in the film, as the woman attempts to abort a baby whose mother is on a boat a few miles away. Still, Bekmambetov's equation of a shift toward anarchy with an act that is largely banal and commonplace in the Soviet Union is undeniably significant. It is unclear

whether his use of abortion is intended to moralize or simply to shock, but in placing the origins of a crisis in a grotesque sequence centered on an abortion, Bekmambetov succeeds at creating a culturally specific situation.



Another sequence in the film humorously distances *Night Watch* from American reference points. When Anton, the main character, steps off the subway, he stumbles upwards in a daze, drunk both on pig's blood and vodka (the former, in itself, being a fantastic choice for a chaser). The Moscow militia, in their stern coats and fur hats, immediately see Anton, whose appearance is made all the more suspicious by his dark coat and his opaque sunglasses (which is brilliant in its own way—essentially, Anton is stopped by the militia because he looks like a character from *The Matrix*). As soon as he enters the street, the police stop him, prompting him to show his identification, and taunt him about his drinking. The random ID check is a loaded image in contemporary Russia, given current attitudes toward anyone different, much less "foreign-looking." While Anton's appearance does not allow him to be placed into any "Asian" category, he does look different, which is grounds enough for the militia to stop him. However, the most entertaining part of the scene unfolds when Anton, in the midst of the militia's taunts about his drinking, stumbles to the edge of the subway entrance and vomits blood. In itself, this is not especially funny, but the militia's immediate withdrawal from the situation and refusal to investigate further is a great comic moment. Here, Bekmambetov slyly criticizes the corrupted authority structure in contemporary Russia, which immediately engages with petty situations but consciously avoids real problems (like, for example, a man vomiting blood).

The Russianness in *Night Watch* continues with the Zil truck that the Night Watch uses to drive frantically around Moscow. The Night Watch's headquarters in GorSvet, the City Light division, is an amusing, if obvious little joke, but the use of the GorSvet emergency vehicle may connote something more complex. Just as the 1992 setting of the first scene directly references an important moment in Russian history, the Zil truck can be seen as a reference to the stories from the 1920s and 1930s about the clandestine transportation of prisoners on their way to the Gulag. During that era, there were rumors that whenever one saw a milk truck in St. Petersburg or Moscow, one could assume that it was actually ferrying human cargo on its way to the train station, which would then move people to Siberia. While the connection with *Night Watch* is perhaps a bit tenuous, it is worth noting that the movie prominently features the truck, whose purpose is to disguise its passengers from the outside world. If one perceives the Night Watch as a secret (and in some respects, anti-government) organization, then the notion of concealment becomes intriguing, at the very least.

Finally, the most evocative example of Russianness in the film is the issue of authority. What distinguishes *Night Watch* most clearly from traditional movies of the genre is its pronounced moral relativism. The reluctance to side with either Night Watch or Day Watch remains predicated on the issue of "licensing." Multiple members of Day Watch complain throughout the film about having to receive official permission from Night Watch to kill members of Night Watch. One of the characters says, "we have a hunger," but it is a hunger that cannot be sated without first getting permission. In a country where the history of bureaucracy and corruption has been so prominent, the image of murder by legal decree is striking. Because Bekmambetov does not hesitate to reinforce the idea of licenses and restrictions, the audience is not left with a clear understanding of good guys and bad guys. Just as bureaucracy played an insidious role in the Soviet regime, in *Night Watch*, it seems to legitimize the Day Watch's cause.

The Beauty of an Ugly Duckling

Exploring An Innovative Publishing Collective

V. G. Davidzon
City University of New York

Make your way to the corner of Coffey and Ferris, a warehouse-lined cobblestone street at the end of Brooklyn's dilapidated but bordering-on-majestic waterfront district of Red Hook. Turn into one of those broad and undistinguished structures that line the water. After you ring the doorbell and are buzzed in, walk up the dusty staircase and down the long hallway. In one of the spacious and clutter filled rooms, amidst stacks of books, periodicals and heavy letterpress machinery you will find the headquarters of the Ugly Duckling Presse and Poetry Collective (UDP), a non-profit, non-traditional art and publishing collective.

The press, which has been putting out alluring, hand-crafted volumes of poetry, chapbooks, artist's books, and broadsides for more than a decade has earned a reputation in the art and poetry worlds for producing tasteful and delicate works of "emerging" or "forgotten" authors. Indeed, no other literary press in America has quite the same agenda—let alone the sensibility and paucity of a Russian born editorial staff—as the UDP.

The collective wasn't always well known; they had their requisite inauspicious beginnings. As their website reads, "A couple of college kids decide to put together a zine, without really knowing what that is. The hand-pasted collages, cheap glue sticking out, ballpoint scrawl, ink blots.... it's truly a beautiful mess. They call it The Ugly Duckling. No intention of becoming a swan."

Though they have come a long way, the UDP has sustained their original Do-It-Yourself aesthetic. Such an approach is rooted in parallel autonomous publishing movements concocted by sensitive outsiders, such as the American punk zine and Russian *samizdat*, which both incubated the Ugly Duckling editors.

In many ways a "traditional" avant-garde project, the UDP cultivates and maintains many of the techniques and methods of the twentieth century's vanguard art movements. A revolutionary fervor roams in the warehouse, with echoes of collectivism, mutual aid, syndicalism and an egalitarian division of labor by craft. Collaboration and editorial dependence are equally essential for the press's six to ten rotating editors. The UDP is quiet comfortable operating in the margins of a culture that, while awash with capital, is unwilling to direct it toward the arts.

A few years ago, the UDP inaugurated the *Balaklava,* their heralded and influential Eastern European Poetry Series, which holds readings each Sunday at the Bowery Poetry Club. Edited by poet, editor and avant-gardist-about-town Matvei Yankelevich, the series is more ardently ideological and broader in its range than the press's usual offerings. The goal of the series is to bring cheap editions of important and influential, yet lesser-known books to working writers and artists. As

opposed to the musty museum shelves that have a tendency to eat up a large portion of small-run poetry books, the series places the titles on the cared-for personal bookshelves of struggling and not-so-struggling writers. So far, twelve titles have been published.

There are the exciting rarities, the unearthed (and yet un-anthologized) gems of the canonical poets waiting to be found by the discriminating Slavophile connoisseur: Alexander Vvedensky's *Gray Notebook*, Daniil Kharms's *Blue Notebook*, and Tomaz Salamun's *Poker* (the Slovenian classic never appeared in English before in one piece or in its entirety) are some of the works on offer.

The poetry wing of the Moscow Conceptualists is represented by Dmitri Prigov's *50 Drops of Blood* and Lev Rubinstein's *Catalogue of Comedic Novelties*. The *Catalogue*, a set of poems written line by line on the back of Library cards when Rubinstein was working in the Moscow Library, is formally innovative and particularly lovely.

The series has also taken to the work of emerging Russian-American poets, whose English rhymes still carry the easily identifiable tones, cadences, references and influences of the Russian poetic tradition. New York's contingent of Russian and Russian language poets is quiet large, but the one's who are writing in English may perhaps be at a loss for some of the communities resources. The UDP has stepped in to publish the work of this distinct category of versifiers. Taken as a set, the series represents an effective sample, leaving an idiosyncratic, though perhaps a skewed portrait of the work being done.

The volumes published in the series are all quite unique, as the parameters of the rubric are flexible enough to incorporate most sorts of work. New York poets with varied interests like Eugene Ostashevsky (formalism and a playful tweaking of the history of ideas) and Genya Turovskaya (a LANGUAGE-school influenced poet) have both been published by the series.

Arkadii Dragomosshchenko's elliptical and symbol-strewn novel *Chinese Sun* was published in a handy pocket edition, and can also be read in its entirety on the UDP website. The series' inaugural offering was Ilya Bernstein's *Attention and Man*, a formally structured and mellow book of light verse so fluffy it may as well have been a book of lullabies.

On the readings and series' shoulders falls the necessary duty of the integration of New York's large population of young first- and second- generation immigrant Russians into the stream of a literary history that is their birthright, but that they perhaps may not be getting at home from their parents. I have often seen students from the various CUNY Slavic departments at the Sunday night *Balaklava* readings.

When asked about the series achievements, Yankelevich noted a lack of literary translations being done in America, and even within those completed translations, a prevalence of inattentive poetries.

"The series has had a huge effect and great reaction," said Yankelevich. "It is a series with bearing on stuff. Lev Rubinstein's book has been published. No one talked about Prigov before this, and we had him speak with Charles Bernstein. Eastern European poets get exposure to American poets. Poets establish connections with American writers, and a broadness of scope. Better then just imagining what Eastern Europe is like, is to actually see what is being done there."

On some level, the UDP seems to be endeavoring upon a socio-political project, as well. Indeed, at the readings, one can come across unexpected interactions that grow out of a sprawling, communal literary scene that interacts with a public sphere and its readership in a way that modern poetry usually does not. The atmosphere is typically anarchic, with no sign of the clique-oriented competitiveness and territoriality latent in these endeavors.

Keeping the flame of publication, translation, and transliteration of the works of a minority tongue in a foreign land is a noble affair. The UDP has mixed an old tradition with a new culture, and within this mixed world of UDP's free-wheeling sort of honest cultural exchange, perhaps there has blossomed a refreshing, rather wholesome and good-looking swan.

Interview Series

Crime and No Punishment

The Trial of Slobodan Milosevic

Geoffrey Nice
Lead Prosecutor in the Slobodon Milosevic Trial, ICTY

Diego Arria
Special Advisor to the Secretary General, UN

INTERVIEW BY
PAUL SONNE
COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY

An attorney from the UK, Geoffrey Nice QC, served as the principal trial attorney in the trial of Slobodan Milosevic at the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia (ICTY). He served as lead prosecutor for all of the trial's four years, and the trial ended abruptly when Mr. Milosevic died of a heart attack in his prison cell at The Hague on March 11, 2006.

Paul Sonne: How will the Milosevic case's unfinished status change the image of the case, in terms of both the international community and the people of the former Yugoslavia?

Geoffrey Nice: Had there been a decision upheld on appeal, where he was largely guilty as charged, and had the integrity of those decisions stood the test of time, then the case would have stood as a warning to bad politicians and a lesson to the world as a whole about how easily politicians can become criminals. Its unfinished status deprives us all of that advantage. Had he been acquitted of much or even all of the indictments, then the whole process of this part of international law would have been up for review. As it is, we must live with what may seem the more modest image of a case that shows the world that trying heads of state for wars can be done and can be done fairly. The image of a case is one that has laid down a large amount of reliable evidence from victims, perpetrators, and senior military and political figures—from the region and from outside—now all available to the public and all blocking processes of denial that might otherwise have developed.

PS: Do you have any comments about the way the decision surrounding Milosevic's right to self defense was handled?

GN: This was extremely difficult for the judges, given the statutory right to defend oneself and given that the Accused was manifestly intelligent enough to do the job of defending himself, subject to what that phrase really means. With hindsight, it might have been possible to fashion a more limited role for the Accused by requiring—subject to sanction—methods of preparation and presentation that would have limited his ability to make himself ill, "or to claim he had done so," by taking on all parts of

defense preparation himself. The somewhat convoluted series of decisions by the Trial Chamber and Appeals Chamber led to the final position where the Trial Chamber was obliged to let Milosevic run his own defense. It would have been interesting to see how things would have developed had that not been imposed as a process on the Trial Chamber, and had they been allowed to enforce their choice, which would have had the assigned Counsel more involved. Remember that it is always easy to do the job of others, especially in hindsight. The court was absolutely determined to give Milosevic a fair trial and to ensure that his complaint to the contrary effect would be seen as hollow. Although we may have been frustrated by the way he was handled, I reckon in the end the "laissez faire" policy of the Trial Chamber was becoming sufficiently consistent for fairness of process to have been achieved, but on the Chamber's terms. Personally, I would have liked the Chamber to exercise more control from the start; who knows whether that would have worked.

PS: How did the international community's involvement in the wars of succession in the region influence the efforts to prosecute military and political leaders? One of your witnesses seemed to suggest that perhaps some international actors might deserve a seat in court. What did the trial teach us about international accountability?

GN: This is probably too big a question for me to answer, not least because I simply do not know enough of what the international community really did. Remember we are limited in our knowledge by what others choose to tell us or what we are able to find out. It is never possible to be sure that this country or that has told you all it can; we might have learned more about international involvement had the Accused ever put on a full defense to, say, Srebrenica, and had he raised issues of the type discussed in the press, but not raised by him in cross examination of possibly relevant witnesses. Ignorance of the full role of the international community would not have denied us the ability to bring in fair results on the gravest of charges because the Accused's responsibility, as we defined it, would not have been eliminated by any collateral liability of external states.

PS: How do you feel about criticisms that the focus on Slobodan Milosevic left other key participants in the criminal enterprise untouched?

GN: It is hard not to see some force in the criticism. Of course, charging decisions were made individually, and circumstances—including the circumstance of whether there were resources and time to charge more people—had to be taken into account. However, once the ability to reach the top echelons of the military and of the government was clear, then it might have made sense to pursue many more of the top leaders, and their escape from justice may mar the tribunal's overall record to a degree.

PS: What were the biggest challenges you faced in prosecuting the case, and how did your past training help you? How did you begin to build a case?

GN: The biggest problem was that there was no clearly identified team to prosecute the case! Past training helped by its discipline of being able to work without stop and knowing that this was a necessary standard to set for others. Also, I knew when to acknowledge ignorance of the facts or background and to rely on those with real expertise, not necessarily lawyers, to find my way into and through the case. This case, like all ICTY cases, was always a work in progress where investigation and prosecution of the case went hand in hand.

PS: Which witnesses surprised you the most and how did you respond to such surprising developments? What way the most memorable testimony or day in court?

GN: Dragan Vasiljkovic [the former head of Knindze, the Serbian paramilitary force] was the worst witness, who never should have been called; I am pleased that he is now to face proceedings, having been arrested in Australia. There were too many impressive witnesses to count. However, in human terms, the spirit of General Vegh [a retired general and former commander of the Hungarian Defense Forces], who testified despite being paralyzed and deaf, or Croatian General Marinovic, who testified despite serious ill health, are memorable in human terms. The victims of the worst crimes were always memorable, even though they typically dealt with the worst horrors they faced—loss of several children in front of them being one recurring theme—in a staid and controlled way, which we always respected.

Indeed, it would have been wrong to draw emotion from witnesses who probably do better dealing with their memories in a matter-of-fact way. Vojislav Seselj [the president of the Serbian National Party in the 1990s] was the most amusing and easiest of the Defense witnesses.

PS: Many have said that the trial's attempt to prosecute Milosevic for his leadership role in a large criminally driven scheme made for an overly bulky and lengthy case. Should the prosecution have focused on one or two smaller events only, in which it would have been easier to implicate Milosevic? How has the idea of command responsibility evolved at the ICTY and in this case?

GN: Focusing on one or two smaller events would not have achieved what was wanted and needed, and the charges laid were in any case specimen or sample counts, at least to an extent. More important, the overall allegation against him was that he had responsibility, in one way or another, for criminal acts in three separate wars. This is what we wished to prove. If there were a straightforward crime—or even a few straightforward crimes—for which there had been straightforward evidence of his giving orders for the crimes to be committed, then, of course, he could have been tried for them. But such a trial would have said nothing about the overall process whereby a politician comes to bear responsibility for major tragedies of the kind seen here. And trying him for individual crimes would hardly justify turning to an international tribunal—he could as easily have been tried locally. This man needed to be tried for all he did; that could only be accomplished by a comprehensive indictment. With hindsight, we might have reduced the 66 counts. With hindsight, the court might have found more ways of reducing the time it took to try him. There is also this point: the public perception is of a very long trial. Long, yes. But if you calculate the hours taken for the Prosecution to prove its case, and then calculate how many ordinary—say US or UK—five-day trial weeks the case would have taken, then the trial was very economic. The Kosovo case, for example, occupied only a couple of ordinary court months for the prosecution case to be put in.

PS: In retrospect, should more of the proceedings have taken place in national courts? With total expenditures up to almost $1 billion US dollars, the price tag of the ICTY proceedings has become controversial. How do you feel about this?

GN: I have no strong view, save that the amount of money might have done much good if spent in the region. I have no experience of how the local courts are working out. My instinct would be to get local courts involved as early as possible, providing they dispense impartial justice. There would have been much to commend using the region's own civil system of law, rather than the extravagant and expensive Common Law system. I always assume the civil system would have taken far less time.

Ambassador Diego Arria, who currently holds the position of Special Advisor to the Secretary General at the United Nations, testified against Slobodan Milosevic in February of 2004. As Venezuela's ambassador to the UN, he served as President of the Security Council in 1992 and as head of the Special Mission to the former Yugoslavia during the war in Bosnia-Herzegovina and Croatia. Arria's testimony was a charge against Milosevic—he asserted that Milosevic had notice of the "Slow Motion Genocide" taking place against Bosnian Muslims—but it was also a testimony against the UN. Ambassador Arria faults many permanent representatives to the UN and the former Secretary General for not taking action to prevent the genocide and the massacre in Srebrenica, a town in Bosnia-Herzegovina where Serbian forces murdered over 7000 Bosniaks. He is the founder of the Arria Formula, the UN system that allows the Security Council to be briefed by non-government actors about international peace and security issues. He is currently writing a book about the Security Council.

Paul Sonne: In your opinion, what is the legacy of the Milosevic Trial and the ICTY in general?

Diego Arria: I think the value added to the whole process goes much beyond the court. You use the argument that people will be responsible, that international law takes some time, but eventually it will get you. I think it is a priceless inheritance that our friends like Geoffrey have left to all of us.

PS: You acted both as a witness against Milosevic, and as a sort of UN whistleblower. What drove you to do this?

DA: I came to one conclusion when I was questioned by Mr. Milosevic and Geoffrey Nice. I found that permanent members and the former Secretary General Boutros Boutros-Ghali of the UN were almost as guilty as Milosevic himself, because there was no reason for the massacre at Srebrenica to take place at all. Had the major powers not looked the other way, had Secretary Boutros-Ghali not helped cover up what was taking place on the ground, these horrendous things could have not taken place.

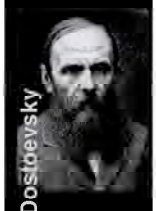
PS: How did you get involved in the Milosevic Trial?

DA: I got a call from an investigator on the court, Bret Randall, from Australia and from Geoffrey Nice, the lead prosecutor. They both came to see me in New York, to see if I wanted to be a witness for the prosecution. Representatives from the major countries who had been asked by the Court investigators whether the Srebrenica massacre could have been anticipated and prevented responded by saying that it was impossible to have forecasted the massacre. They said it was impossible for Milosevic to have known that a "slow-motion genocide" was taking place, an assessment I had made after visiting Srebrenica in 1993 as part of a UN security council mission which I had the privilege to lead. I told them that they were not being truthful. We then started working on my deposition, and a few months later I went to The Hague. I will never forget how I arrived at The Hague and went immediately to see where the tribunal was located. Ten years had passed since I raised my hand in the Security Council to vote for the creation of the ICTY. Now I was there, and when I looked around I was told that Slobodan Milosevic's prison was a few blocks away, and that the next day I would be facing Milosevic as a witness for the prosecution. It would have been almost impossible to believe ten years before that the main culprit in the Bosnian tragedy would actually be facing the Tribunal that we created to process him and other war criminals. I had the privilege of being the only person who was actively engaged in creating the Tribunal, who also served as a witness against him.

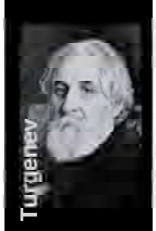
PS: You headed the UN mission to Srebrenica in 1993, and there you saw the how UN Protection Forces (UNPROFOR) were walking the streets alongside Serb paramilitaries. According to the Coalition for International Justice, you said that, in Srebrenica, it was almost as if the Serbs were running a concentration camp policed by UNPROFOR. How did you end up going to Srebrenica, and what did you think while you were on the ground? How did this influence your view of the UN?

DA: Pakistan and Venezuela, along with the other three non-aligned members on the Security Council, raised the issue of Srebrenica. We asked the Pakistani ambassador, who was then heading the Council, to send a Security Council mission to the ground. I was appointed to head the mission. Other ambassadors from France, Pakistan, Russia, Hungary and New Zealand were part of the mission as well. A few days later, I understood why there had been no missions to the ground before: because a major cover-up operation had taken place. As you can imagine, this was a major discovery for us. We had a delegation of about 25 international journalists with us, but the UNPROFOR cooperated with the Serbs in preventing the journalists from entering Srebrenica. The UNPROFOR cooperated even in taking the cameras away from the ambassadors. I refused and kept mine. Thanks to that, the only pictures that came out were those taken by me, pictures that I later gave to the Reuters journalist traveling with us. Later, I saw a videotape of the trip, and the UN film only showed me coming out of the helicopter and did not show all of the people being triaged by the Serbs around the soccer field. These things portray what I would call the greatest cover-up in the history of the United Nations. Five months before, Ms. Sakato Ogata, the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, wrote a letter to UN Secretary General Boutros-Ghali warning him about the potential for an enormous massacre in Srebrenica, and asked him to warn the major powers in the UN Security Council. Eleven years later, I saw that letter for the first time when the prosecutor asked me if I had knowledge of such a warning. The Secretary General never showed the letter to the Security Council. With the assistance of the Secretariat, major powers were able to cover up anything that would have forced them to act. The claim of genocide was to be ignored at any cost in order to avoid becoming forced to act. Of course, more than 7000 people paid the price of the cover-up.













THE GREAT RUSSIAN NOVEL

☑ **Have you always wanted to read great Russian novels but never had time?**

☑ **Do you need more credits to fulfill your literature requirements?**

REGISTER FOR SUMMER RUSSIAN PRACTICUM 2006!

THE GREAT RUSSIAN NOVEL

(IN ENGLISH, 3 CREDITS)
PROFESSOR C. NEPOMNYASHCHY
MAY 22 – JUNE 30: **TUESDAY, THURSDAY 1:00-4:10 PM**

Over the course of the last two centuries Russian writers have produced some of the most acclaimed and enduring novels in world literature. This course examines the evolution of the tradition of the Russian novel, paying particular attention to such questions as: What is a great novel? How do works of literature both define and transcend national boundaries? What is the relationship between art and social conscience?

READINGS INCLUDE:

EUGENE ONEGIN BY ALEKSANDR PUSHKIN
FATHERS AND SONS BY IVAN TURGENEV
THE IDIOT BY FYODOR DOSTOEVSKY
ANNA KARENINA BY LEO TOLSTOY
MASTER AND MARGARITA BY MIKHAIL BULGAKOV
LOLITA BY VLADIMIR NABOKOV
DOCTOR ZHIVAGO BY BORIS PASTERNAK

Open to undergraduates, graduate students, high school students, working professionals, and adult learners.

Need more information?
www.harriman.columbia.edu
Alla Smyslova, Director at as2157@columiba.edu

Do it this summer!

RUSSIAN PRACTICUM
HARRIMAN INSTITUTE, COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY

Summer Session:
June 5 - June 30 and July 5 - July 28

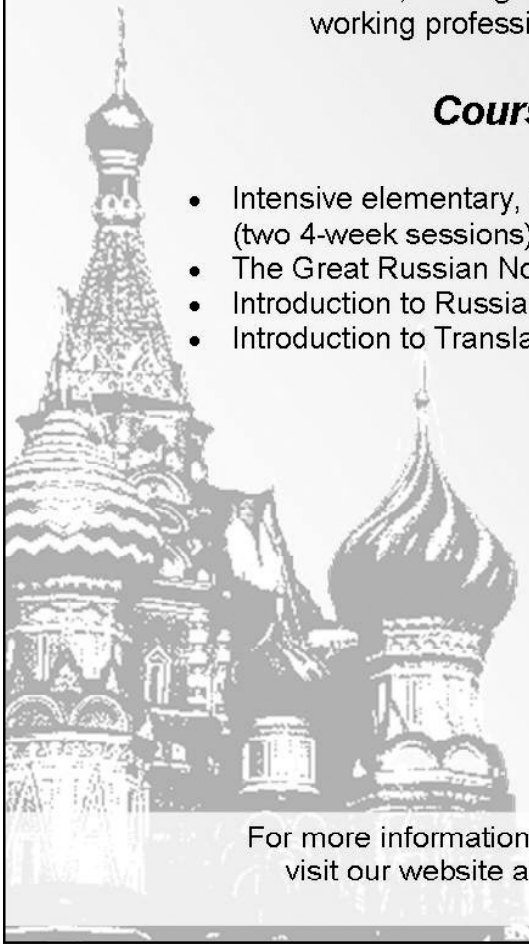
Our excellent program is available in two
4-week sessions and features:

- Superb language instructors
- Small classes for your individual needs
- A variety of extracurricular activities
- Lowered tuition for Russian language courses

Classes are open to advanced high school
students, undergraduates, graduate students,
working professionals, and adult learners.

Courses offered:

- Intensive elementary, intermediate, and advanced Russian (two 4-week sessions)
- The Great Russian Novel (6 weeks)
- Introduction to Russian and Soviet Cinema (6 weeks)
- Introduction to Translation and Interpretation (4 weeks)



Columbia & NYC
Get the best
Russian experience
outside of Russia!

For more information about the Russian Practicum,
visit our website at www.harrimaninstitute.org