

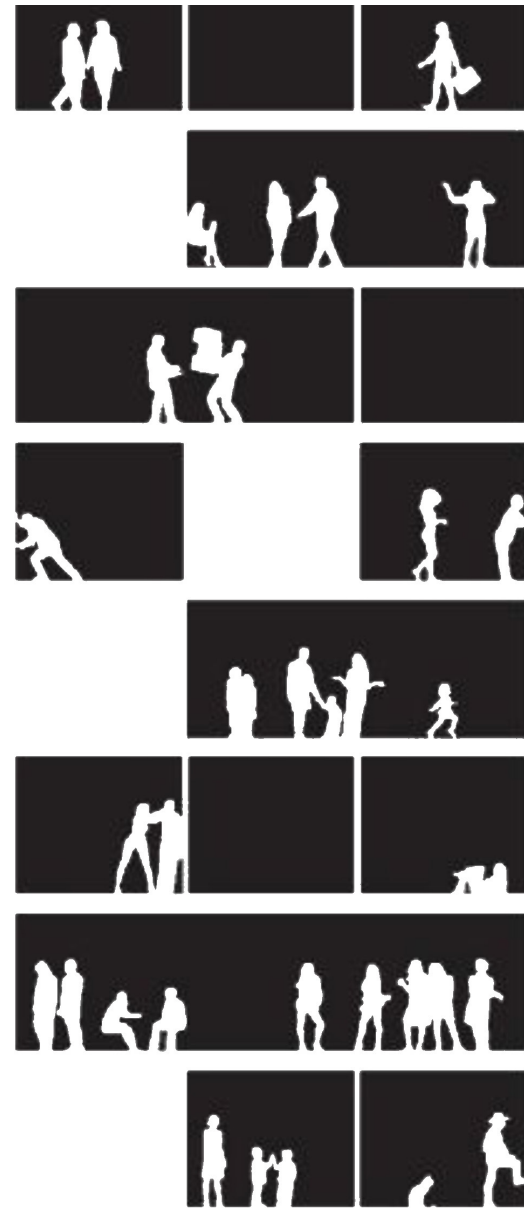


TROIKA

Spring 2024

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TROIKA

A Letter From The President

Dear Reader,

This edition of Troika does not ascribe to a particular theme, and instead aims to highlight the breadth and excellence of undergraduate research across the world.

We publish pieces submitted to us, and do not look for pieces that fit a specific agenda or political view. Troika's main goal is to highlight and celebrate student work.

This issue could not have been possible without our amazing team who worked so hard this entire year. We are ecstatic that we have not only been able to recover Troika from its hiatus, but expand and grow the journal. We hope in the coming years we can continue to grow.

Angelica Smith + The Troika Team Spring 2024

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Ukrainian History: Serhii Plokhii

An Interview by The Harvard Tempus

Serhii Plokhii is Mykhailo S. Hrushevs'kyi Professor of Ukrainian History at Harvard University and Director of the Ukrainian Research Institute. His work has been the recipient of numerous awards and draws a large international readership, having been translated into sixteen languages. His works include *The Russo-Ukrainian War: The Return of History*, *Chernobyl: The History of a Nuclear Catastrophe*, *Lost Kingdom: The Quest for Empire and the Making of the Russian Nation*, and *The Gates of Europe: A History of Ukraine*. His focus is modern Eastern European History.

HT: It's a pleasure having you to interview today. I wanted to begin by asking about the development of Ukrainian nationalism prior to the dissolution of the U.S.S.R. Specifically, the Ukrainian state that existed between 1917 and 1921. Could you tell us about the attempt to establish Ukrainian statehood in the aftermath of World War I?

SP: Sure, absolutely. Thank you for this invitation and questions. Ukraine acquired independence in 1991—the state that exists today—and that was the fifth attempt in the course of the 20th century. So, the first one was in January of 1918, and then there would be another one, and another one, and another one. So, there were a number of attempts. The declaration of independence—the first one—in January of 1918, that was happening in the middle of, on the one hand, the revolution in the Russian Empire, and on the other hand, the First World War. That declaration was really a response to the Russian invasion of Ukraine that started in January of 1918, when the Bolshevik government of Russia really declared war on the Ukrainian People's Republic. The key figure at that time in Ukrainian history,

the head of the Ukrainian Parliament—it was called the Central, rather—was a prominent Ukrainian historian. His name was Mykhailo Hrushevs'kyi, and his name is in my full title as professor of Ukrainian history here at Harvard because the chair is named after Mykhailo Hrushevs'kyi, historian and first leader of independent Ukraine.

What happened to the Ukrainian nationalist and intellectual movement after the collapse of this initial Ukrainian state and its transition to a Soviet Socialist Republic? What happened to Hrushevs'kyi and other figures of Ukrainian nationalism?

The Russo-Ukrainian war that started in early 1918 really put an end to one particular period in Ukrainian and also intellectual history. It ended the parliamentary stage in the development of the Ukrainian political project. Out of that, in the course of the 1920s and 1930s, came two different trends. One was called national communism, and that was the idea supported by the left parties in Ukraine. The idea was that through communism and communist transformation, not only social liberation can be achieved, but also national lib-

eration. That trend was pretty much crushed by Stalin in the 1930s. The trick is that after the revolution and after failed attempts of Ukrainians to acquire their independence, Ukraine was divided between four different countries. The Soviet Union was just one of them. Poland was another one. Part of the Ukrainian territory was within Romania. Another part was within Czechoslovakia. In the Polish part, and to a degree also in the Romanian part, radical Ukrainian nationalism started to develop of the sort that you see in other countries during the interwar period, and particularly the 1930s. So, you have national communism that is being crushed. You had then radical nationalism that became especially popular with the start of World War II. And Ukrainian liberal nationalism survived, but it wasn't actually any more as powerful a force, or as deciding a force, as it was in the middle of the Revolution of 1917 and before. So, Hrushevs'kyi in that sense really became a symbol of this liberal nationalism of the early era. He was in immigration, then returned to Kiev, which was under Soviet occupation. He was arrested and exiled first to Moscow, and then died under suspicious circumstances

in 1934. So, really, with him we see an end of a particular stage in the Ukrainian nationalist movement.

You have spoken in previous interviews and texts on the narrative of Ukrainian national identity as having derived from medieval Kievan Rus', but you also suggest the importance of the 17th-century Zaporozhian Cossacks who founded their own independent state. What role do these two histories play in the imagination of Ukrainian nationality?

If you look at the Ukrainian coat of arms today, the central part of that coat of arms is a trident. The trident is a symbol of Rus', the medieval state that was created by the Vikings. This was the first historically documented state on the territory of Ukraine. The center was in Kyiv. It is essential for Ukrainian history and for the Ukrainian historical narrative. Mykhailo Hrushevs'kyi put a lot of emphasis on the history of Kievan Rus', and that's considered to be the origins of the Ukrainian state, if not Ukrainian nation. The tradition of Eastern Christianity as a religion comes from that period. So, extremely important. The founding block in Ukrainian history and Ukrainian historical identity. Then you move into the 17th century and the history of the Cossacks. Their state exists for a short period of time as an independent state, but mostly as an autonomy within the Russian Empire, and it would be crushed eventually by the end of the 18th century. A few decades later, in the 19th century, you see the rise of romantic nationalism. One variety of nationalism, now already the fourth that we are talking about. We had liberal nationalism, we had national communism, we had radical nation-

alism. It starts with romantic nationalism for people who are key figures in that story. One of them is historian Mykola Kostomarov. Another is Ukrainian poet Taras Shevchenko. For them, the Cossacks really are an embodiment of the ideals that, at that time, were associated with the French Revolution. This equality, this egalitarianism, that they say that Ukrainians had because of. So, they were more prepared in that sense for democracy and for republican ideas, which were very important at that time. So, all of that is being, one way or another, embodied in a very particular region of Cossack history. You look at Jewish relations with the Cossacks and the massacres, it would be a very different one. You look at the Polish region of the Cossacks, who are considered to be the force that ruined the greatness of the Polish state, it would be another reading. For Ukrainian national romantics, the fathers of the modern Ukrainian national project, Cossacks were the embodiment of freedom and equality. And they function till today in Ukrainian historical memory, specifically in that way—as fighters for independence, as the embodiment of freedom and equality. So, all these things became very important for Ukrainian society in the last few years in the middle of this war.

You just spoke of a romanticization of the ideals of the French Revolution, of republicanism, equality, and fraternity. Would you say the Ukrainian nationalist movement was very much in line with the rest of Europe during that period?

You mentioned the term fraternity, right? That's also how the Cossacks of the 17th century were imagined by the nation builders, the awakeners of the 19th century. And if you

go today to the frontline in Ukraine, pobratim is the way soldiers refer to each other. So, that's a continuation of the story that starts with the French Revolution and receives a Ukrainian incarnation in Cossack history, Cossack mythology. But in the 19th century, Ukraine went through a period that is quite common in the 19th-century history of the region. We have a Polish uprising of 1830 in the Russian Empire, where the Poles came up with—a crazy idea as it looked at that time—the anthem that has the words, “Poland is not dead, as long as we are alive.” That means Poland is alive, so that your national identity and your nation can continue even if they lose the state. The Ukrainian borrows from the Polish. The Ukrainian anthem starts with the words, “Ukraine is not dead yet.” That's exactly what the Polish anthem is saying. The idea is that, okay, we can be a nation without a state. Sometimes very difficult to understand in the American context where a nation is a state, whereas in the European context, state and nation are two different categories. Sometimes they coincide, and sometimes they do not. They didn't coincide in the Ukrainian case because the state was two empires that ruled over Ukrainian territories at that time. One was Austria-Hungary, before the Habsburg Empire. Another was the Russian Empire. And the Ukrainian project came as a project that was questioning and undermining the existing borders in 19th-century Europe. The borders between empires. That is a story that is common for smaller nations, or nations that didn't have borders or states of their own in the 19th and the beginning of the 20th century.

Maybe in modern times it might be more apparent, but historically, why

do you think that overlap has existed?

There is a lot of overlap historically and in terms of identity between the Russian interpretation of what a nation is and what Ukrainians claim as their own. Kievan Rus' is a battleground. You look at how Russian history is presented in today's official pronouncements of the Russian leaders, and they would start the narrative with Kievan Rus'. We are in the same situation as, let's say, the Holy Roman Empire, over which the German nation was claiming its right. Just as you have a periphery claiming its right over Rome, you have Russia, which emerged in the periphery of the Kievan Rus' state, now claiming Kiev as its city, its origins. This is not something particularly Russian... Then fast forward to the 19th century and the way the Cossacks are treated. The only Cossacks that ever had a state were the Ukrainian Cossacks. They're central for Ukrainian identity. We discussed these ideas of fraternity, brotherhood, equality, and freedom. In the Russian narrative, there is a very different understanding of who the Cossacks are. For the Russian narrative, the state, and in particular the imperial state, is the cornerstone. That's what is most important. In the traditional narrative, the Cossacks can be admired, but they're also considered a negative, anarchic force that undermines the state at the moment when the state needs it. Russian traditional historiography is very focused on the state. That's where the differences are. In the 19th century the Russian official ideology was that Ukrainians didn't exist as a separate nation. That's what Putin is saying today.

There has been an adoption of this view, at least I find, by people who are against the war in Ukraine, es-

pecially in the U.S., who are of the alternative right, let's say, as evidenced by Tucker Carlson's interview with Putin, where Putin was able to express Russian nationalist narratives about Ukraine and present them as unadulterated fact. Why do you think there has been this movement towards Russian nationalist narratives in the U.S.?

Tucker Carlson becomes my favorite American reporter—especially after that interview—because he exposed so many things that actually were not clear for the public in general. So, we have this line about the war being the result of American imperialism, right? The war as provoked by NATO. Then he goes to the author of this war—more than anybody else—and is exposed to 30 minutes of historical lecture, and he has no clue geographically where these places are or who those people were. That is the reality. The guy is obsessed with history and issues of identity. Everyone who is running around trying to discuss big geopolitics among other things, I beg you, watch Tucker Carlson's interview with Putin, and generally watch Tucker Carlson. He exposes things and presents them in a way that no one is able to do otherwise. So, I like the guy enormously for basically showing what it is we are dealing with. Regarding the left and the right position. I want to see one person from the right that actually listened to Putin's lecture for 30 minutes and could make any sense out of that. But still, they are prepared to embrace him because he is a strong and terrifying and horrible leader. And the right is certainly, if maybe, paying lip service to the ideals of democracy and democratic institutions of this country, but they're out there to undermine it. It's all about the strong authoritarian lead-

ers, and those leaders can say whatever. It doesn't matter. Even if it's a 30-minute lecture where they don't understand what it is. They see that leader and that's what they aspire to. So, it's this anti-democratic message that makes the far-right love Putin and Putin's Russia and undermines the foundations of American democracy. But again, I would be very surprised if anyone who is characterized in general terms as MAGA supporters would understand 10 percent of what Putin was trying to say. You could see Tucker Carlson's confusion when he said, "Polish Lithuanian Commonwealth." He was not hiding how perplexed he was.

When it comes to decolonizing Ukrainian history, as in removing it from the long-standing ideological and cultural influence of Russia, do you find that other institutions in Ukraine are undergoing that process?

I think particularly of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church, its movement away from the Russian liturgical calendar, and I believe they removed Alexander Nevsky recently as one of the saints in the calendar. This is one of the really institutional examples where Ukraine frees itself from the former imperial narratives and formal imperial structures, because the Russian Orthodox Church had very difficult times under the communist regime. It survived by becoming insulated and divorced from reality. What that meant is that, in terms of its own name—its institutions, liturgical practices, and so on and so forth—it remained very much the Russian Imperial Church of what was called the Russian Communist Party. The Russian Orthodox Church never changed its name or its vision of Russia being a group consisting of Russians, Ukrainians,

and Belarusians. Putin for the first time said that Russians and Ukrainians were one and the same people in the presence of the Patriarch Kirill of Moscow. What is happening now are very painful processes of splits within the Orthodox community within Ukraine. But there are clearly even those that are not completely split and divorced from the Russian Orthodox Church centered in Moscow. Even those that are still under the jurisdiction of Moscow are trying to distance themselves as much as they can from Moscow to a degree that there is once this all-out war started in 2022. The leader of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church and the Moscow Patriarch was writing to Putin, really accusing him in soft terms, in religious terms, but accusing him of a fratricidal war and of the sin of Cain.

At points in your former interviews and in your book, you discuss the idea that there's been a cementation of Ukrainian identity because of this war. That prior to it, there was a less solid state of Ukrainian national identity—of Ukrainian nationalism—and that this war has cemented it. And your books are actually quite popular in Ukraine. When the war finally does come to an end, do you think that Ukrainian national identity will have become all the more concrete? And what role do you think this war will play in that narrative?

One of the biggest strategic mistakes Vladimir Putin made was starting the all-out war in 2022 believing that Ukraine was still where it was in 2014 when the first stage of the war started, and that Ukraine was divided politically and otherwise. We got a very different picture of Ukraine with the start of this war in 2022. The expectation on the Russian side

was that there would be a number of nationalist battalions that would fight back, but the rest would welcome Russian troops as liberators with flowers. That didn't happen... What happened in the last two years accelerated the processes that were already underway in Ukraine, making Ukrainians in mass volunteer to risk their lives in defense of their independence in their state, and now more and more of their culture. So, there is also an embrace of culturalization because the country, given its long imperial history, speaks both Russian and Ukrainian, and there is regionalism, and so on and so forth. The cultural and otherwise political differences between regions, between groups, are becoming smaller and smaller as a result of this war, this existential threat... What role will this war play in the future? It already in these two years provided more material for national myth-making. More heroes, more records of suffering, of self-sacrifice, and so on and so forth, than in probably the previous 50 to 60 years, and those sorts of narratives will resonate 100 years from now, 150 years from now. We saw that in the past. That's one sort of moment in the history of Ukraine. And Ukraine is not unique in that way. That's what wars are. They're a thread. They bring nations together. They provide foundations for national mythology for a long period of time.

One of the last questions I want to ask is on myths... Are there any myths or misconceptions that are popular at the moment that you could speak to or debunk for us?

Of course. One of the absolutely mythological things that is pushed by Russian propaganda and gets traction here in the West... I was

talking about historical narratives. Those are too difficult to understand, so they don't get too much traction, or they're too bizarre, in the sense that the map of the world should look like it looked in the 19th century and every state that emerged from the collapse of the empire has no legitimacy. Those don't get much traction. What gets traction is that Ukraine is the land of the Nazis and nationalists, and that is rooted in parts of Ukrainian history. One thing people probably don't realize is that Ukraine is one of the very few, maybe the only country in Europe, where nationalism or radical nationalism is not represented in the parliament. So, we'll look at France and the popularity of the nationalist and right parties there. We'll look at what is happening in Hungary. We'll look at what is happening in Poland. The assumption is that Ukraine is probably worse than that, but the truth is that there are no nationalist parties in the Ukrainian parliament because none of them were able to cross the 5% barrier. None of them. So, the nationalists are not present in the Ukrainian Parliament as a result of Ukrainian democracy. Not because there was a dictator who said nationalists should not be there, and it would be bad for the image of Ukraine and the United States... That's one thing. Another is Volodymyr Zelensky, probably one of the most popular and inspiring political leaders in the world today. He was elected by a landslide: 73 percent of Ukrainians. In a country that is very often still represented—and that narrative is being pushed by Russia—as being a Nazi and anti-Semitic state. He was elected and continues to be the most popular political figure in Ukraine today, which is just also a marker of the political culture and society that exists in Ukraine today.

It's a major transformation from the quite unpleasant and bloody history of relations between Ukrainians, Jews, Poles, and so on and so forth. This is the new reality. Ukraine is still on the world map today, and fights as effectively as it fights today, because Ukrainians learned to cross borders between languages, cultures, and religions. The war on the Ukrainian side is fought in both Ukrainian and Russian. The commander-in-chief of the Ukrainian Armed Forces, General Syrskyi, is an ethnic Russian born in Russia. The Minister of Defense is a Muslim Crimean Tatar. So, this is a place where if one really wants to see how the political nation looks, she or he should go to Ukraine.

My final question, do you have any recommendations for textbooks, sources, for someone who might not be knowledgeable of Ukrainian history who wants to learn about it, a source that's accurate and doesn't have misinformation or possibly a confusing counter narrative?

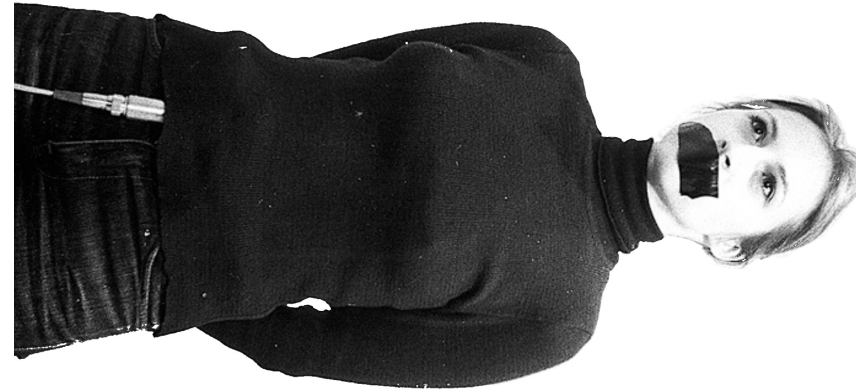
Well, let me promote the institution I represent here because we really deal with these issues and try to create content people can trust. We have a publication division at the Ukrainian Research Institute here at Harvard University.

This issue, we decided to collaborate with *The Tempus: The Harvard College Historical Review*. The idea came from a quote in a speech President Kennedy gave in 1962 at Memorial Stadium on the campus of the University of California, Berkeley. "It is a disturbing fact to me, and it may be to some of you, that the New Frontier owes as much to Berkeley as it does to Harvard University." As part of our exchange, we received a faculty profile with Professor Serhii Plokhii of the Harvard University History Department. To view our faculty profile with Professor Alexei Yurchak, visit them at their website: tempusharvard.org. Also, be sure to check out their podcast *Tempus Talk* for more niche historical insights available now on Spotify!



Beauty, Joy, Diversity: Subtext and Context in the Work of Sanja Iveković

Lena Stavig
University of Washington



Sanja Iveković's work could not have existed anywhere except Tito's Yugoslavia, where the Western ideals of capitalism and the free market met with Eastern communism to form an idiosyncratic culture of intense consumerism met with the alleged equality of socialism. Though typically regarded as a feminist artist, a label Iveković gladly accepts, it is necessary to think of this in relation to the socialist/communist political environment in which she lived and created. Iveković's work does not only question the rituals associated with femininity, but how they intersect in an allegedly egalitarian, communist society. This recurring topic of femininity is not a theme, but a 'subtext' and 'precondition'.¹ Iveković's work reflects on her own experiences as a woman in the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, specifically during the experimental political era of the 1970s. According to Terry Eagleton, the context of the social institution of the

1 Bago, Ivana. "The Question of Female Guilt in Sanja Iveković's Art: from Yugoslav Beauty Pageants to Wartime Witch-Hunts." Page 65.

artist and their work is critical before making any judgments of 'greatness' or 'importance'.² In this sense, separating the artist and her art from the context of their creation reduces the work to just its material components. For conceptual artists such as Iveković, this negates the entire meaning she intended, the questions she provoked by creating such works.

Neo-avant-gardism had been alive in Yugoslavia since the mid-1960s with artist groups such as Red Peristyle, Gorgona, and Grupa šestorice autora (Group of Six Artists), as well as the Black Wave movement in film.³ Publications from the Group of Six Artists featured the tagline, "State, I shall disfigure you with art".⁴ Artist groups regularly questioned the authority of the government, whether it be through their publications, art pieces, or or-

2 Rounthwaite, Adair. "Sanja Iveković, Marina Abramović, and the Global Politics of Authentic Experience." Pages 462-463.

3 Marcoci, Roxana. Sanja Iveković: Sweet Violence. MoMA, 2011. Page 13.

4 Marcoci, Roxana. Sanja Iveković: Sweet Violence. MoMA, 2011. Page 17.

chestrated protests in the city centers. Yugoslav artists had a very unique experience, as there was no official art market to rebel against like in the West, their art was focused on addressing the political issues that directly impacted their everyday lives.⁵ From this artistic and political environment, the New Art (or Artistic) Practice was born. These Yugoslav artists rejected the ideals of both Western capitalism and Tito's own brand of "communist consumerism".⁶ Due to the relative openness of Yugoslavia compared to the Soviet Bloc, these artists communicated and associated much more with artists in neighboring Austria and Italy. At a 1972 show in Graz, Iveković and other Yugoslav artists accessed the newly invented video equipment for the first time. This new development allowed these artists to further their artistic experimentation, with video becoming one of Iveković's main mediums the following year.⁷

Born in Zagreb in 1949, the year after Tito broke Yugoslavia away from

5 Kino, Carol. "Croatia's Monumental Provocateur." The New York Times, The New York Times, 22 Dec. 2011.

6 Bryzgel, Amy. Performance Art in Eastern Europe since 1960. Manchester University Press, 2017. Page 303.

7 Badovinac, Zdenka. Body and the East: From the 1960s to the Present; Moderna Galerija Ljubljana/Museum of Modern Art; 7 July-27 September 1998. MIT Press, 1999. Page 59.

Soviet influence to become its own independent federation, Iveković grew up in the age of Yugoslavia's Third Way experiment.⁸ Halfway through the twentieth century, Croatia had been part of the Austro-Hungarian Empire, a member of the first iteration of Yugoslavia, an independent (yet Nazi-puppet) state during World War II, and again a member of the newly formed second iteration of Yugoslavia. This history, Carmen Winant writes, “is Iveković’s volatile inheritance.”⁹ Iveković’s family history and her own experiences as a woman growing up in a country where abortion was legal, unlike the West, but women were subjected to the same patriarchal standards of beauty, would continue to influence her work. Growing up under such an idiosyncratic regime, Iveković’s work [reflects] on [her] own position as a woman in a patriarchal culture, which was, in spite of officially egalitarian policy, always alive and present in socialism.”¹⁰ Further, she recognizes that living within socialism gave her the advantage to “learn very early on that nothing is free from ideology, everything we do has a political charge and the division between politics and aesthetics is entirely erroneous.”¹¹ Living within a culture steeped in propaganda, whether it be political or

economic, equipped Iveković with the tools necessary to create works questioning the influence of media on our personal lives.

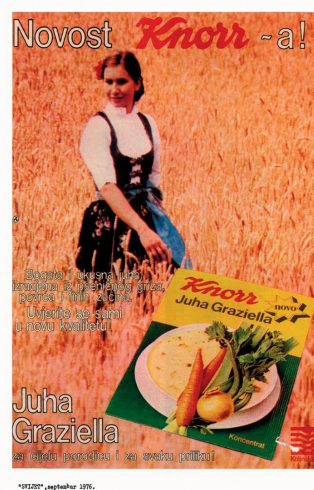


Figure 1. Iveković, Sanja. *Double Life*, 1975.

At the Communist Party Session in October of 1948, Vida Tomšič, a prominent Slovenian politician and women’s rights activist, gave a speech admonishing the Soviet Union for their unattractive women, saying, “the



Figure 2. Iveković, Sanja. *Double Life*, 1975.

women we see in the Russian newspapers are all *drably dressed*. This alleged requirement of socialism negates all that we want—*beauty, joy, and diversity*. We should teach our women

how to dress *well*.”¹² Tomšič’s speech foreshadows the consumer culture of the next thirty years of Yugoslavia, specifically touching on the seemingly paradoxical consumerist communism especially present during the 1970s. Unlike other East European countries under communist power, Yugoslav women had access to Western women’s magazines such as *Marie Claire*. Yugoslav women such as Iveković were subjected to the same patriarchal, unrealistic beauty standards as in the West but with the added emphasis on “beauty, joy, and diversity” equating to their superiority. The omnipresent advertisements, whether in magazines, newspapers, or on television served as material, both literally and figuratively, for Iveković’s works.

Beginning with her series *Double Life*¹³ in 1975, Iveković began to dissect the connection between Tito’s ‘consumer communism’ and feminism. *Double Life*, originally published as an artist’s book consisting in sixty-two pairs of images¹⁴, one ad, and one photograph from Iveković’s photo albums, questions the tendency to compare our personal lives to the fictional narratives promoted by the mass media. By incorporating existing photographs from her own collection rather than creating new photos to compare, Iveković explores how she

is the same “object of representation” as the models in the advertisements.¹⁵ While the advertisements are reproduced in full color, her personal images are black and white. In *Promises of the Past*, Christine Macel classifies *Double Life* as “an investigation into the social condition of consumerism and its reflection in a socialist framework.”¹⁶ Iveković’s works are not only art, they are research projects, asking questions of the viewer rather than giving answers. But, she is not only asking questions of the viewer, but also of herself and how she has played into the ideals of femininity. Though *Double Life* is her first project incorporating advertisements, it is nowhere near the last. Following *Double Life* were *Tragedy of a Venus* (1965-1976), *Diary* (1975-1976), *Eight Tears* (1976), *My Scar: My Signature* (1976), *Paper Women* (1976-1977), *Make-Up* (1979), *Gen XX* (1997-2001), and *Women’s House* (Sunglasses) (2002-Present). Continuing to investigate the influence and seduction of the mass media, Iveković recognizes that now, nearly fifty years after *Double Life*, this mass media-influenced desire is exponentially stronger than ever.¹⁷

Following *Double Life* was her series *Diary*¹⁸ where she further explored her rela-

15 Bago, Ivana. “The Question of Female Guilt in Sanja Iveković’s Art: from Yugoslav Beauty Pageants to Wartime Witch-Hunts.” Page 70.
16 Macel, Christine. *Promises of the Past: A Discontinuous History of Art in Former Eastern Europe*: Centre Pompidou, Galerie Sud and Espace 315, 14 April - 14 July 2010. JRP Ringier, 2010. Page 99.
17 Hutson-Gray, Ruby. “Q&A: Sanja Iveković.” *Dazed*, 17 Dec. 2012.
18 Figures 3 and 4.

tionship with cosmetics and cosmetics ads. *Diary*, a series of six works in which a page from a cosmetics advertisement is juxtaposed with the cotton pads used to remove her own makeup



Figure 3. Iveković, Sanja. *Diary*, 1975-76.

on a daily basis. Here, Iveković is a painter whose paint is dirty cosmetic pads.¹⁹ Again, this series is not just art but a personal investigation. Where the women in these advertisements are heavily, almost garishly, made up, we



Figure 4. Iveković, Sanja. *Diary*, 1975-76.

are only presented with the remnants of Iveković’s makeup on the cotton balls and tissues. Each of these pages

is signed and dated by Iveković, letting us wonder about the situations she was in during that specific day. Unlike in *Double Life*, we are unable to see the visual similarities and differences between the two women, the model and the artist. But, the lack of blue and purple pigments on Iveković’s makeup pads shows us the difference between the makeup styles promoted in the media in comparison to her, supposedly, daily makeup routine. Created two years before her video *Make Up/ Make Down*, we see here the beginning of her examination of makeup’s fetishistic purpose.²⁰

Regarded as the performance art successor to *Diary* is 1976’s *Un jour violente*.²¹ Once again, Iveković reflects on her own position as a woman under communist rule. Here, she is using directions from a *Marie Claire* advertisement on how to change your makeup for different occasions, using the same base.²² Performed on a stage, Iveković uses the props from the advertisement—flowers, a record player, and clothing—to create the same environment. While Iveković makes herself up using cosmetics, hairstyle, and clothing according to the guidelines, a recording of her voice plays over the speaker system: “One day, violent: today

you are dazzling, you don’t yourself know why, you feel irresistible joy,

20 Griffin, Christopher. “Sanja Iveković: London.” *The Burlington Magazine*, vol. 155, no. 1320, 2013, pp. 191-92. Page 191.
21 Figures 5, 6, and 7.
22 Marcoci, Roxana. *Sanja Iveković: Sweet Violence*. MoMA, 2011. Page 81.

you want sparkling drinks, intensive light, unusual hairstyles, provoking dresses”²³ The performance is divided into three segments for the three different occasions: *Un jour tendre* for morning, *un jour violente* for daytime, and *un jour secrète* for evening.²⁴ In this performance,



Figure 5. Iveković, Sanja. *Un jour violente*, 1976.

her exploration of the cosmetic industry profiting from selling beauty rituals to women is more obviously front and center than in previous, two-dimensional works such as *Double Life* and *Diary*. She “adopts” and “discards”²⁵ each role easily moving on to the next, further exposing the seeming disposability of women. By

23 Bryzgel, Amy. *Performance Art in Eastern Europe since 1960*. Manchester University Press, 2017. Pages 173-74.

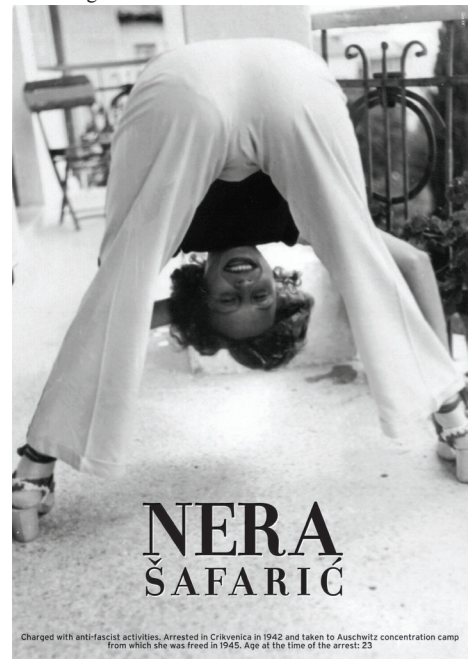


Figure 8. Iveković, Sanja. *Gen XX, Nera Šafarić*, 1997-2001.

24 Piotrowski, Piotr. *In the Shadow of Yalta: The Avant-Garde in Eastern Europe, 1945-1989*. Translated by Anna Brzyski, Reaktion, 2009. Page 355.

25 Marcoci, Roxana. *Sanja Iveković: Sweet Violence*. MoMA, 2011. Page 81.

changing her appearance, she is able to change her experience of the world. Her existence and perception are dependent on her appearance. In Piotr Piotrowski’s words, “a woman ‘exists’ through her representation, through a ‘pose’ which she strikes before the (male) gaze of

culture”²⁶ Like in the West, a woman and her worth is dependent on how men view her, the value assigned to her by others. In Yugoslavia, this was no different.

After Tito’s death in May of 1980, Yugoslavia’s future was unclear. The strong, united power of the previous thirty years was weakening leading to political instability. Eleven years later, Croatia declared its independence leading to four years of war. Following the official recognition of Croatia’s independence was a “collective amnesia” surrounding both the socialist past of the previous decades and the antifascist

26 Piotrowski, Piotr. *In the Shadow of Yalta: The Avant-Garde in Eastern Europe, 1945-1989*. Translated by Anna Brzyski, Reaktion, 2009. Page 355.

ist heroes of WWII.²⁷ While Croatia claimed to accept the antifascist past with the introduction of Anti-Fascist Struggle Day in 1991, this was seemingly forgotten in the newly written history books. Suddenly, the factories and other buildings named after People’s Heroes of Yugoslavia were renamed, attempting to forget.²⁸ The new formation of independent Croatia led to their society being “contaminated by nationalistic ideology, war, the triumph of capitalism and the rediscovery of market economy”²⁹, further desiring to distance themselves from the socialist past.

Reading through her daughter’s history textbook in the mid-1990s, Iveković discovered no mention of any of the People’s Heroes and Heroines of Yugoslavia. Instantly appalled, she need-



Figure 6. Iveković, Sanja. *Un jour violente*, 1976.1976.

ed to do something to reintroduce these women into the public consciousness. Beginning in 1997, she created *Gen XX*, a series of six “advertisements”. This series focused on seven women, mainly People’s Heroines: Dragica

27 Marcoci, Roxana. *Sanja Iveković: Sweet Violence*. MoMA, 2011. Page 31.

28 Bago, Ivana. “The Question of Female Guilt in Sanja Iveković’s Art: from Yugoslav Beauty Pageants to Wartime Witch-Hunts.” Page 80.

29 Ilić, Nataša, and Dejan Kršić. “Pictures of Women.” *Afterall: A Journal of Art, Context and Enquiry*, no. 15, 2007, pp. 72–81. JSTOR, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/20711642>. Accessed 13 Nov. 2022. Page 79.

Končar, Nada Dimić³⁰, Ljubica Gero-ovac, Sestra (Sisters) Baković, Anka Butorac, and Nera Šafarić. All women who were arrested, tortured, and/or murdered for their antifascist involvement in the People’s Liberation War under the Nazi-puppet state of Croatia during WWII.³¹ To create a realistic-looking advertisement upon first glance, Iveković repurposed existing fashion advertisements, replacing the branding with the name of the woman and the copy with brief biographical information about that woman. The one exception to this is Nera Šafarić.³² Nera Šafarić was Iveković’s mother, so the photograph in her advertisement was not from a fashion advertisement, but from Iveković’s family photo albums. At the age of 23, Šafarić was arrested and deported to Auschwitz, where she remained until the camp was liberated in 1945. Her copy reads, “Nera Šafarić: Charged with anti-fascist activities. Arrested in Crikvenica in 1942 and taken to Auschwitz concentration camp from which she was freed in 1945. Age at the time of arrest: 23”. Choosing to place these advertisements in magazines as if they were any regular ads, Iveković is again exploring the influence of the mass media. At first glance, especially in this context, there is no reason to think that it is anything other than typical. She emphasizes that the only way to reintroduce these women to the younger generation is to harness the power of the media

over our subconscious. Recognizing that the influence of the media has only strengthened, returning these reputations to their original home was the most effective way to ensure that these women would be remembered again. Of the multiple magazines that published individual ads, only the in-

30 Figure 9.

31 Marcoci, Roxana. *Sanja Iveković: Sweet Violence*. MoMA, 2011. Page 159.

32 Figure 8.

their issues. Iveković would continue to explore the lives and mysteries of both her mother and Nada Dimić in *Searching for Mama’s Number* (2002-) and *SOS Nada Dimić/Nada Dimic File* (2000-) respectively.



Figure 10. Iveković, Sanja. *Gen XX, Anka Butorac in Arkzin*, 1997-2001.

posed ads to their original home was the most effective way to ensure that these women would be remembered again. Of the multiple magazines that published individual ads, only the in-

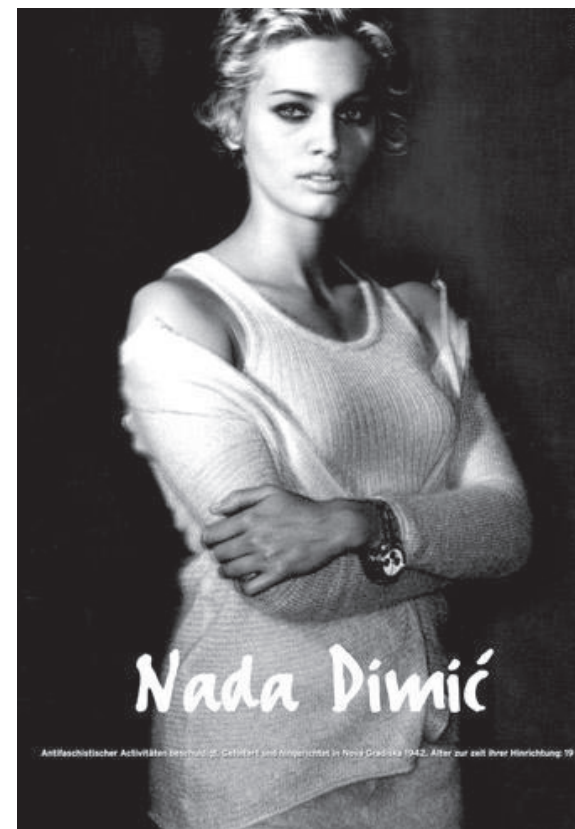


Figure 9. Iveković, Sanja. *Gen XX, Nada Dimić*, 1997-2001.

fluent *Arkzin*³³ published all six in

33 Figure 10.

A “saint of commitment to her war-torn country and to the power of art to social reality”³⁴ Iveković recognized the way that the media manipulates the masses and how she can harness this power for good. Even in 2022, she is playing with these same subtexts that she

first explored nearly fifty years ago: gender, identity, and memory.³⁵ As her works are not only art, but research projects, she is constantly re-examining as society progresses. Growing up in an era of pervasive propaganda, Iveković became an expert at harnessing the power of the media and its influence. This reliance on her personal experiences as a woman in a socialist country for her work refutes any claim that art can be separated from the contexts in which it was born.

The entire interpretation and understanding of her work is connected to our understanding of these contexts.

“There will be no end, because I forgot the beginning”³⁶

34 Rounthwaite, Adair. “Sanja Iveković, Marina Abramović, and the Global Politics of Authentic Experience.” Page 457).

35 Marcoci, Roxana. *Sanja Iveković: Sweet Violence*. MoMA, 2011. Page 153.

36 Iveković, Sanja. *No end*, 1983.

“Survivals of the Damned Capitalist Past”: *Stiliagi*, Western Influence, and Social Protest in the USSR

Jordan Dickens

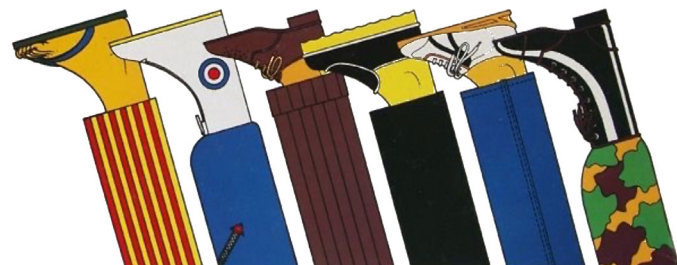
University of Florida

Introduction

In 1952, then-19-year-old Vassily Aksyonov walked into a gathering at the home of a diplomat in Moscow. In what would become one of the opening vignettes of his memoir *In Search of Melancholy Baby*, the dissident writer describes the scene he found: “diplomatic corps brats and their girlfriends” wearing “jackets with huge padded shoulders, tight black trousers, and thick-soled shoes” while smoking American cigarettes, using English phrases, and dancing to American jazz artists like Nat King Cole and Louis Armstrong on an American Radiola.¹ Reflecting on the gathering and the *stiliagi* movement years later, Aksyonov recognized a deep discontent with the Stalinist system within himself and his peers and an aspirational view of America. He argued that “*stiliagi* were the first dissidents.”²

Stiliagi (“style-hunters” or “hipsters”) were Russian youths of the post-war period who were known for their bright clothing (particularly ties and socks), long hair inspired by the American *Tarzan* films of the 1940s, and for their embrace of Western styles and imagery. De-

spite gaining a near mythological status among citizens and scholars in the post-communist period, it is commonly held that the *stiliagi* were apolitical, faced little threat from the state, and fizzled once the period known as the “Thaw” began under Stalin’s successor, Nikita Khrushchev. This is exemplified by Mark Edele’s assessment that *stiliagi* identity developed as a response to post-war cultural pressures rather than political pressures from the state, and that “the struggle against *stiliazhnichestvo* was not a hard-line concern” for the Soviet government.³ In this paper I challenge these assumptions, demonstrating how the actions of the *stiliagi* reflected a social protest against conservative cultural policies in the post-war Soviet Union and that the state took active steps to discredit and attack the movement. For the purposes of this analysis, I will use the Oxford definition of social protest as “a form of political expression that seeks to bring about social or political change” that can “take the form of overt public displays, demonstrations, and civil disobedience, but may also include covert actions such as petitions, boycotts/



boycotts, lobbying, and various online activities.”⁴

In the first section, I outline the development of the *stiliagi* movement, placing them in the post-war context of the Soviet Union and outlining predecessors to the movement. I argue that while many of the *stiliagi* were apolitical in the sense that they were not explicitly pro-capitalist or anti-communist, their actions were political in that they challenged the social policies of the state, particularly those established under Stalin. In the second section, I challenge the notion that the *stiliagi* were safe from state persecution and not viewed as a threat by the Soviet government. I highlight policies enacted by the state that sought to limit access to Western goods as well as propaganda efforts in publications like *Krokodil* and *Komsomol’skaia Pravda* that sought to discredit the *stiliagi*. I conclude by placing the *stiliagi* in the context of the Thaw in the final section. I argue that the *stiliagi* faced greater legal persecution under Khrushchev as a result of anti-hooligan laws, as well as extrajudicial actions taken by groups like

Komsomol patrols against the *stiliagi* that were allowed by the state. This occurred even as the Soviet Union experienced greater openness to Western culture. Nonetheless, I argue that were it not for actions taken by the *stiliagi* that pushed for greater openness to Western styles and trends, Khrushchev would not have centered this openness in his campaign to win over young Soviets during the Thaw.

The Emergence of the *Stiliagi*

It is believed that the first use of the term *stiliagi* was in a 1949 *Krokodil* article written by journalist D. Beliaev.⁵ In the article Beliaev describes the *stiliagi* as beautiful but vacuous, comparing them to ears of rye that are “a parasite, taking moisture and everything else from nature...they are often beautiful in appearance, but internally empty and do not bear fruit.”⁶ Such is how Soviet readers were introduced to the youths who wore Western clothes and danced to American music. Beliaev describes the outfit worn by one *stiliaga* as “amazingly absurd: the back of his jacket was bright orange but the sleeves and flaps were green” and goes on to criticize the “uncommonly free and easy movement [in which] he crossed the right foot over the left, which displayed his socks, that were apparently made of pieces of an American flag.”⁷

The description was meant to shock Soviet audiences with the disregard shown by the *stiliaga*: his socks made of pieces of the American flag demonstrate his alliance with the capitalist enemy. However, in

many ways the description is accurate. Many *stiliagi* chose fashion with the purpose of standing out, as emphasized by one former *stiliaga* who stated: “I wanted to be ahead of fashion and to look a little different. I tried to choose ties that were different from others...I wanted attention...”⁸ Additionally, Beliaev takes issue with the *stiliaga*’s “uncommonly free and easy movement.” This depicts the *stiliagi* as lackadaisical, the opposite of an ideal Soviet citizen who contributed to the construction of socialism through labor.

It is commonly argued that the *stiliagi* valued style over substance, and focused more on clothing and music than debates of capitalism versus communism. As the playwright and one-time *stiliagi* Viktor Slavkin put it, the majority of *stiliagi* were “not intellectually gifted and few of [them] could formulate their position on social questions or a political opinion.”⁹ However, it oversimplifies both the actions of the *stiliagi* and the late-Stalinist context of the Soviet Union to state that the movement was entirely apolitical, as the *stiliagi* engaged in direct challenges to Soviet culture as determined by the state.

An example of this is the *stiliagi* movement’s intricate connection to

jazz music in the USSR. At the time of the movement’s emergence, the Stalinist regime was engaging in an active crackdown on jazz, including a campaign to ban the style in favor of folk songs and classical music.¹⁰ However, as the scene previously described in Aksyonov’s memoir demonstrates and the testimonies of *stiliagi* support, the Soviet youth continued to find ways to listen to jazz music. While some—particularly high-ranking party officials—managed to acquire jazz records that had been smuggled in, many listened to jazz on illegal foreign radio stations like Voice of America or Radio Free Europe.¹¹ While seemingly minor and unlikely to result in arrest on its own, the decision to continue covertly listening to jazz represents a willingness among *stiliagi* to disobey Stalinist policy.

Some *stiliagi* went even further and aided in the production and distribution of jazz music on *roentgenizdat* (“music on ribs”). This process was completed by using a vinyl press on X-ray material, resulting in a record where X-ray scans of bones were visible. The distribution of *roentgenizdat* on the black market was illegal and some young people, such as Boris Taigin, were arrested for their involvement in the production of X-ray records.¹² This challenges not



Figure 1: The *stiliagi* make their first of many appearances in *Krokodil* (Beliaev 10).

1 12
2 18

3 61

4 McLeod and Loya.

5 Figure 1
6 Beliaev 10
7 Beliaev 10

8 Myzelev 200
9 8

10 Tsipursky 338
11 Tsipursky 351
12 Tsipursky 350.

only the notion that *stiliagi* rarely engaged in actions that took direct action against state policy but also that they never faced retaliation for their actions.

This engagement by *stiliagi* in the market of jazz music— complemented by their efforts to acquire Western fashion— demonstrates a certain ideological component to their existence that stood in contrast to socialism under Stalin. While not explicitly stated as an ideology of the movement, materialist consumption was inherent in the *stiliagi* movement. *Stiliagi* based their identity on the clothes they wore and the music they listened to, striving to be different from those around them. Instead of defining themselves by selflessness and devotion to the development of socialism like Soviet citizens were supposed to, *stiliagi* defined themselves by materialist individualism.



Figure 2: 1959 Krokodil cartoon with the caption “Stiliaga Ran Away From Sakhalin...” (Shukaeva 7).

The public-facing nature of *stiliagi* fashion and imagery, when taken with more covert actions like the production of the *roentgenizdat*, gives the *stiliagi* the characteristics of a social protest. While the *stiliagi* movement was not an organized political protest such as occurred in the Eastern Bloc during the Hungarian Revolution of 1956 or the Prague Spring, to label it as

entirely apolitical would delegitimize the actions taken by *stiliagi* that were oppositional to Soviet rule. Moreover, it fails to acknowledge that Soviet leaders did indeed view *stiliagi* as a threat needing to be handled, as well as the dangers that *stiliagi* faced for their actions. In the next section, I will outline the actions taken by the Soviet Union to quash the *stiliagi* movement.

Soviet Attempts at Deligitimization of the Stiliagi

As the Second World War ended and the Cold War commenced, the Soviet Union began to actively tar-

get goods imported from Western Europe, viewing them as a threat to the development of communism. As described above, one such step was the ban on jazz music in the late 1940s. In addition to the music being banned, many Soviet jazz musicians who had previously enjoyed state support were arrested and sent to the Gulag.¹³ These were

¹³ Tsipursky 339.

the conditions of the Soviet Union at the time the *stiliagi* emerged: at any given time the state could arbitrarily change its laws, resulting in people being arrested for activities that had once been legal. This campaign against the *stiliagi* manifested itself across a variety of mediums, including propaganda efforts and legal changes.

After their first appearance in *Krokodil* in Beliaev’s 1949 article, a steady stream of cartoons and articles about the *stiliagi* began to appear in the magazine. While there were variations in the set-up, the *stiliagi* were invariably portrayed

as stupid, lazy, and effeminate. One such cartoon from 1959 depicts a colorfully dressed *stiliaga* running away from an industrial site and its devoted workers, who are portrayed as hyper-masculine.¹⁴ The message of the cartoon is clear: the *stiliagi* offered nothing to socialist development and were rather a drain on societal resources. Moreover, these cartoons illustrate that efforts to discredit the *stiliagi* in the press were sustained: the cartoons were published five years apart but applied similarly negative characteristics to the *stiliagi*.

Beyond portraying the *stiliagi* as

¹⁴ Figure 2.

merely stupid, the Soviet press made efforts to connect the *stiliagi* with criminality. Although murder and theft rates among juveniles dropped in the post-war period, the Soviet press dedicated articles to demonstrating how Western influence— particularly film— corrupted Soviet youth.¹⁵ In one such cartoon, two children are depicted robbing a movie theater showing a film titled “Life or Dollars,” demonstrating the corrupting impact of Western art and the danger of individuals like *stiliagi*.¹⁶

The Soviet state used official organs to discredit, humiliate, and persecute the *stiliagi*. This campaign occurred across multiple decades, beginning in the 1940s and lasting into the 1960s. However, while it was under Stalin that Soviet policies attempted to restrict access to Western goods, it was under Khrushchev that Soviet policies came to explicitly target the *stiliagi*. In the next section, I will place the *stiliagi* in the wider context of Khrushchev’s Thaw, explaining how the *stiliagi* experienced greater persecution even while Soviet citizens were allowed greater access to the West.

Stiliagi in the Soviet Spring

In 1953 Joseph Stalin died, resulting in a power vacuum in the Soviet Union that led to Nikita Khrush-

¹⁵ Fürst 181
¹⁶ Figure 3

chev assuming his seat. Khrushchev embarked on a process of de-Stalinization across the Soviet Union, reforming the political system and allowing for greater openness to the West. This could be seen through actions like the permittance of jazz and the decision to host the

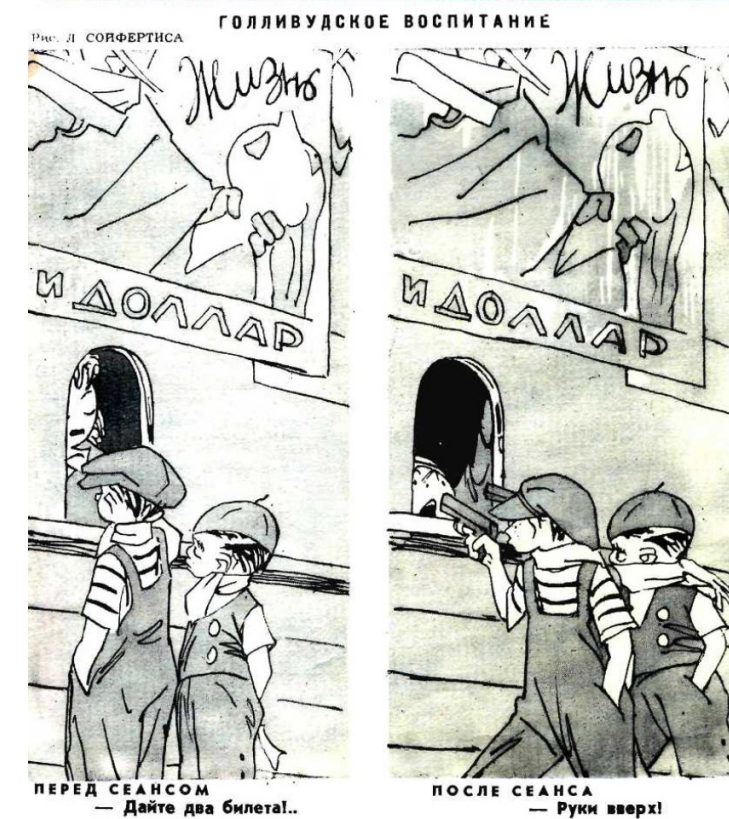


Figure 3: Krokodil cartoon entitled “Hollywood Education” (Soiafertica 7).

6th World Festival of Youth and Students in Moscow, which brought Western youth culture to the Soviet Union. However, Khrushchev simultaneously enacted a series of laws targeting hooliganism, a “pleasingly elastic term to accommodate not only the pre-revolutionary notion of [the] ‘unruly’ but also a plethora of other acts of disobedience and nonconformism”.¹⁷ The target of these laws was indeed, among others, the *stiliagi*.

Khrushchev sought throughout his reign to promote socialism among the youth, seeking a “renewed ideo-

¹⁷ Fürst, “Stalin’s Last Generation” 181

logical commitment” in the Soviet Union.¹⁸ While allowing access to greater Western goods was an incentive for young people, there was still an ideological standard for young people to meet. With their perceived lack of interest in the socialist project, the *stiliagi* did

not meet this standard, and thus anti-hooligan laws were used to police their behavior. This became particularly true with the introduction of laws targeting “petty hooliganism” and “social parasitism” in 1956, which “transformed hooliganism from a crime committed by a few hundred thousand into a mass crime, which involved millions of citizens”.¹⁹

As noted above, terms like “petty hooliganism” and “social parasitism” were elastic and could be interpreted to mean anything depending on the situation.

These laws were often used to target non-conformist youth such as the *stiliagi*, as they were viewed as not actively contributing to society. Statistics prove just how effective these laws were in targeting hooliganism: in 1957 alone, 1,449,303 million people were detained on charges of petty hooliganism.²⁰ As scholars like Brian Lapierre have argued adeptly, this wave of detentions did not reflect a rise in crime in the Soviet Union but rather a rise in criminalization.²¹ The *stiliagi* certainly would have felt this rise,

¹⁸ Fürst, “Stalin’s Last Generation” 182
¹⁹ Fürst, “Stalin’s Last Generation” 196
²⁰ LaPierre 353
²¹ 352

as there was now a legal basis on which to challenge their non-conformism.

The persecution of the *stiliagi* did not only come through legal means. Under Khrushchev, extrajudicial means of persecution began to emerge. This could be seen particularly through the rise of Komsomol patrols, who in 1954 declared “unconditional and decisive war against all kinds of *stiliagi*, aristocrats and other social parasites and hooligans”.²² Komsomol patrols took to the streets, targeting anyone wearing Western styles and sporting *Tarzan*-style haircuts. Reports describe the *stiliagi* as having their long hair forcibly cut, which stripped them of one of the defining images of *stiliagi* identity.²³ Often, encounters between *stiliagi* and Komsomol patrols would turn into brawls and result in violence and injury. Though not carried out by official state police, violent actions against *stiliagi* by the Komsomol patrols were allowed to proceed, demonstrating a tacit approval of the persecution of the *stiliagi*.

The reliance on extrajudicial Komsomol patrols and the use of anti-hooliganism measures (instead of simply outlawing *stiliagi* style) reflect the awkward position in which the *stiliagi* put Soviet authorities. Banning the *stiliagi* outright would have both undermined the state’s projection of greater openness to the West and inadvertently acknowledged and legitimized the *stiliagi* as an ideological threat that needed to be put down. However, to allow the *stiliagi* to continue unimpeded would have loosened the authoritarian grip the state had on popular ideology and identity.

²² Shelepin
²³ Fürst, “Flowers Through Concrete” 327

Thus we can view the patrols and anti-hooliganism laws as an attempt at a third mediator between illegalization and approval of the *stiliagi*, in which the state could target the movement without actually legitimizing it as a form of stylistic and ideological rebellion.

It was thus possible for the Thaw to occur even while the *stiliagi* were left in the cold. As these campaigns demonstrate, the Soviet state viewed the *stiliagi* as threatening enough to warrant judicial and extrajudicial reprisal. In some ways these fears were justified: even if it was unintentional, the *stiliagi* belief in individualism and materialism was a clear rejection of the Soviet model. Even if they were not truly “the first dissidents,” as Aksyonov argues, they certainly reflected a growing dissent against the strict, culturally conservative socialist system.

Conclusion

The 1960s resulted in the end of the *stiliagi* movement. This was a result of several factors, including increased access to the West, Khrushchev’s policies, and the increasing age of the former *stiliagi*. However, while the movement itself ended, forms of the *stiliagi* continued in counter-cultural movements through the remainder of the Soviet Union’s history. In her study of Soviet hippies of the 1960s, Julianne Fürst identifies overlaps between the *stiliagi* and the hippie movement, even finding instances of people who identified as both *stiliagi* and hippies.²⁴ Additionally, in her study of Russian youth culture, Hilary Pilkington identifies a group of *stiliagi* in Moscow in the

²⁴ “Flowers Through Concrete” 307.

mid-1980s.²⁵ This reflects how even if the *stiliagi* movement ended, the ideas motivating people to identify as *stiliagi* remained.

Ultimately, the *stiliagi* should be remembered as neither political crusaders nor as vapid, uneducated children. Most often they were young people looking for fulfillment in something beyond Soviet isolationism, which they found in Western clothing, films, and music. Yet even if they were not organizing mass rallies or decrying Stalinist repression, their actions revealed a deeper aspiration for a life wherein one could express his individual identity outside of the state’s ideology. This aspiration would not fade— it only grew to be more powerful. As Aksyonov concluded of the *stiliagi*, “the American cult had its roots in our basic antirevolutionary character. Not that we were aware of it at first. But what had once been called ‘the romance of the revolution’ had all but evaporated by the time our generation came along; what is more, it had started giving way to a ‘romance of counterrevolution.’”²⁶

²⁵ 227
²⁶ 19

Soviet Propaganda Art Through The Years: *The Cranes are Flying*

Nastassia Sharanovich
University of Pennsylvania

We, comrades of the collective, united in our unwavering commitment to the noble cause of socialist realist art, hereby unveil our triumvirate of posters for the cinematic masterpiece, *The Cranes are Flying*, symbolizing three epochs: 1957, the present era, and the radiant future. These posters, potent tools of proletarian expression, stand as the vanguard in our resolute campaign to metamorphose the toiling masses into a politically conscious, cohesive, and industrious class.

As artisans and architects of the collective spirit, we deliberately select the poster as our chosen medium, for it possesses an inherently public nature and lends itself effortlessly to mass production. Rejecting the confines of elitist galleries and bourgeois museums, our creations shall adorn the thoroughfares and communal spaces, a visual manifesto of solidarity, shared amongst the people. Together, in harmonious unity, we shall ardently pursue the zenith of artistic and societal excellence. Long live the collective spirit!



Past:

It was very common for soviet movie posters to place a beautiful woman’s face front and center. That one feels self-explanatory but let’s just say it was quite an effective way to grab attention. After studies of peasant “focus groups” in the late 1930s revealed a preference for muted colors, and the color blue, as opposed to the starker blacks and reds of earlier times, many subsequent posters reflected that color preference.

Images were appropriated from the Christian faith and common folklore. Snakes, hydras, and other serpentine beasts most often represented capitalists and the eagle represented imperialism. While the crane does not have a strictly biblical significance, we believe that in this context it can be related to the symbol of the dove which is known to bring peace, or the pelican which can serve as a symbol of self-sacrifice. Both appear very applicable in the context of this film.

Inspiration:

Posters that were the coloring inspiration are bold, do not have much distinction, have a black outline, and have a limited palette. Creative influences were modern movements like Cubism and Futurism rather than traditional Russian art. Soviet propaganda co-opted the color schemes, illustrative styles, formats, and iconography familiar to the general public. They began with a visual language everyone trusted as their starting point, and they simply plugged entirely new meanings into that old, widely accepted set of symbols. Often colorful and illustrated in an appealing playful manner.

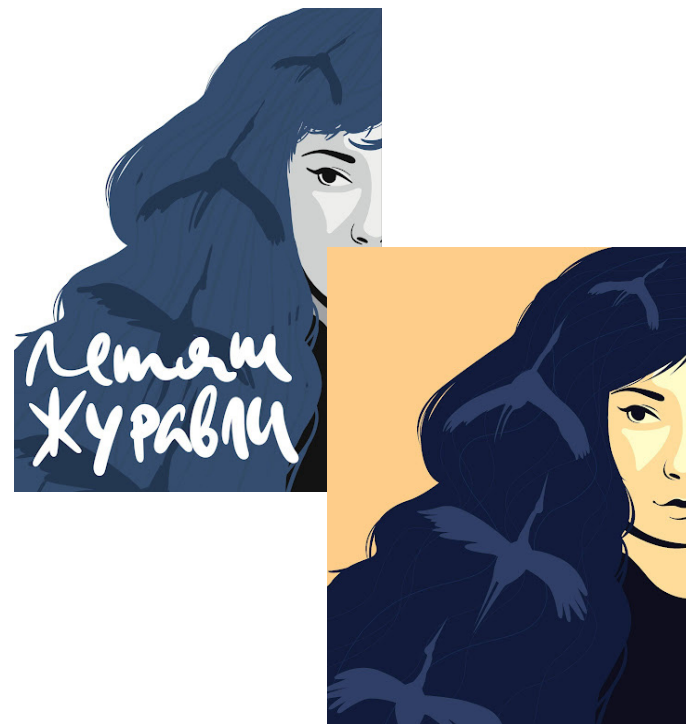


Below are posters that were the inspiration for the composition. The composition was also heavily influenced by the movie itself, where scenes were shot diagonally.



Work In Progress:

The sketch on the bottom left was done by hand and then exported to Adobe Illustrator. The poster is screenprint friendly, meaning that layers of it can be almost directly be used as negatives in the screen printing process. Why screen print? It was one of the main ways to print movie posters at the time of The Cranes are Flying.



Shapes of cranes have four alternatives in total. It started with simpler, more realistic cranes, the first image, then we decided to try to make them more angular to fit better with the general theme of posters in the USSR. While looking at the pictures of cranes to see how they can be simplified the idea of origami cranes came into being. While looking at the origami cranes I discovered a pattern for fabric and so many variations of it, so I created my own version of the pattern and used it in one of the versions.

Present:

The original sketch is a digital hand-picked collage with the Spasskaya tower in the middle and black silhouettes of cranes covering the red sky. There's no time on the clock as if time has stopped and is waiting to happen. The moment before the storm or the moment after a catastrophe, it can be both, and both are represented in the movie. Black proved to be better, they stand out but don't shadow the main subject, but I had to make them smaller and increase their quantity to create a sense of ominous energy.



The Current poster is modeled from the text layout of contemporary posters from Russia. There is not much information about contemporary movie posters, except for the fact that the government is trying to illegalize any foreign text in printed products. So it's very unlikely to come across any non-Russian text.

Future:

The future poster depicts a dystopian, war-ravaged Russia. In part created by AI, war is destruction and despair. Much like the current war with Ukraine, the future will likely be more fighting over resources and land. The silhouette crane flying over the cemetery represents loss and death. Boris and all of the dead soldiers. “Our wounds will heal, but the fierce hatred of war will never fade away!” this is from Stepan’s speech on the train platform at the end of the movie, I intended to show irony.

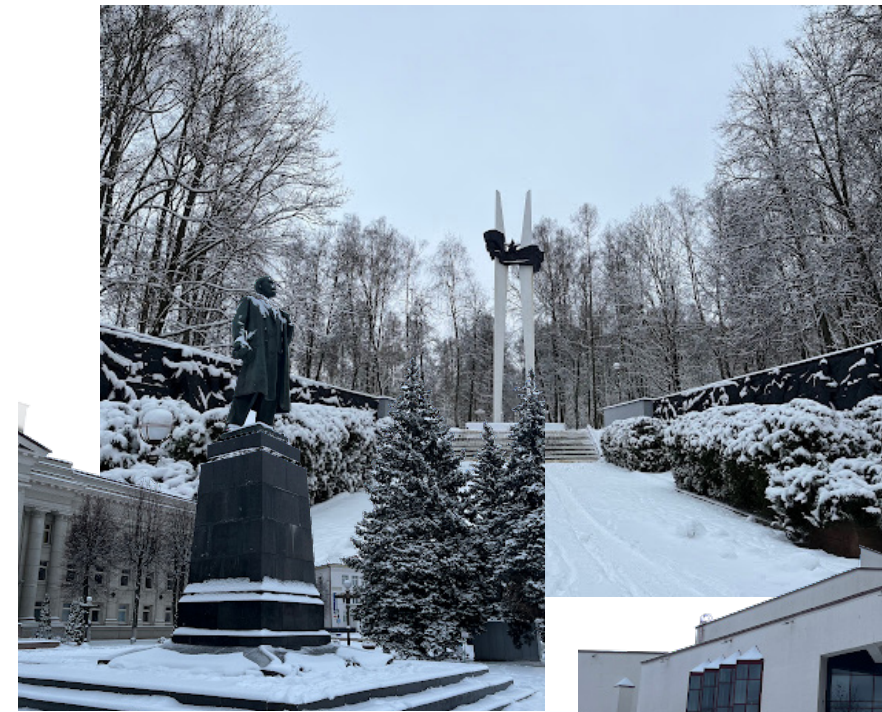


The AI sketch on the left was glued together of 3 different generated pictures, you can point to the borders of each. They all were generated on my prompts that were inspired by the real contemporary movie posters. On the right is “collaboration between human and AI” since I used it heavily to generate certain parts but still had to do a lot by hand to get everything in order and recognizable.

The meanings of the poster start from the top:

Two cranes in the middle on the left are realistic and on the right metallic-robotic like to represent humanity’s shift from nature, the left one is reaching to the metallic one but the metallic one doesn’t pay attention. This is symbolic of planes and drones sharing the sky with birds.

Two swans who represent love, Veronica and Boris, show a scene from the movie where the main character is shot. No blood is shown but rather smoke, that is escaping from the frame. AI also generated the building cranes that represent the centuries Russia has been rebuilding.



Inspiration:

For inspiration, I used pictures my friend took for me in my native city Molodechno. It is covered in snow and completely lifeless which is disturbing enough to create the future variation the way it is. Also in the big pointy building (which is the Palace of Culture) the shape of windows inspired the division on the poster. Pointy, dirty lifeless, and covered in snow.

Russia of the Future:

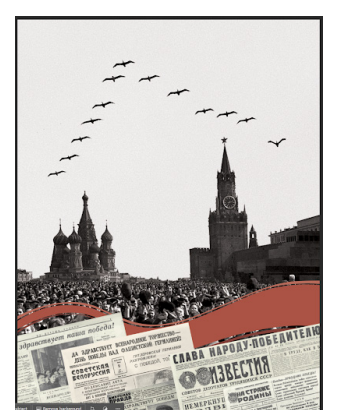
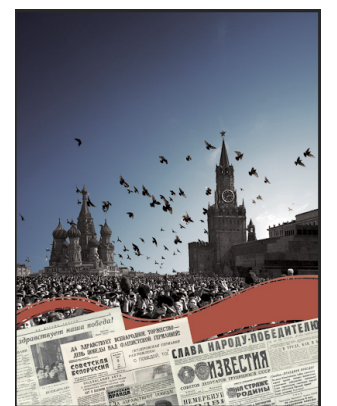
Russia of the Future is an opposition party, originally known as the People’s Alliance and formerly called the Progress Party. It was founded in 2012 and was the party of Alexei Navalny, It stands for decentralization of power in Russia, cutting the number of government officials, reducing the president’s powers

As an embodiment of the idea of a welfare state, the party considers the task of overcoming too great economic inequality between Russians, solving the problem of social tension, as well as “the transition to a social world based on the principles of justice and equality before the law of all citizens of Russia.”

The goals of the party include “real changes, real reforms”, including increased property protections, a fair criminal justice system, and battling corruption.



Playlist of music that played on background while creating all posters. All made by contemporary artists and all have nostalgic vibes, to the USSR and 90s.



Has there been a decline in the presence of Russian in Almaty's linguistic landscape?

Matthew Hale
Edinburgh University

Introduction

Since the breakup of the USSR, the Linguistic Landscape, or LL, of Kazakhstan has undergone a notable change in demographics and language policies that favor Kazakh over Russian.¹ This study explores whether there is a correlation between these changes and the presence of Russian within Almaty, the largest city in Kazakhstan, by analyzing 206 and 333 street signs, from 2011 and 2023 respectively.

This study finds an overall decline in the presence of Russian in Almaty, and a quantitative analysis reveals that the presence of Russian in the LL is declining, especially in bilingual signs. A focussed analysis on bottom-up signs reveals that the decline in presence is strongly correlated with the decline in literacy rates of the language, and also points towards the success of language policies and ideologies laid out by former president Nur Sultan Nazarbayev.

1. Background

1.1 Language in Kazakhstan

Language usage and policy in Kazakhstan have steadily shifted in favor of Kazakh since the dissolution of the USSR. Table 1 shows that the rate of Kazakh proficiency in urban areas has increased almost three-fold, while Russian proficiency is only 75% of what it used to be.

In the Kazakh State Law on Languages from 1997, Chapter 4, Articles 19, and 21 mandate that Kazakh and Russian are compulsory languages on public signs, Article 19, and that Kazakh is to be on the top or left side of a sign, while Russian is to be on the right/below. Moreover, both languages should be written in the same font color, size, and style, Article 21.

	People raised in Soviet Kazakhstan	People raised in Independent Kazakhstan
Proficient Kazakh Speakers	23.77% (% of the population)	66.20% ↑ (x2.91)
Proficient Russian speakers	89.6% (% of the population)	66.80% ↓ (x0.75)

Table 1 – Sample of 2,555 Almaty inhabitants. None of the census data gives specific information about Almaty; thus we have used Smagulova's 2016 study for these statistics (Smagulova 100).

1.2 Literature Review

1.2.1 Linguistic Landscapes

The term Linguistic Landscape, LL, emerged in the 1990s. It was first defined by linguist Rodrigue Landry and social psychologist Richard Y. Bourhis as encompassing 'public road signs, advertising, billboards, street names, place names, commercial shop signs, and public signs on government buildings'.² Recent trends in LL research show that multilingual environments are often connected with the development of globaliza-

tion and (super-)diversity.³ Almaty, with its multilingual and multiethnic composition, provides a unique perspective on globalization, in that its Soviet past has given it a delayed start to integrating into a globalized capitalist economy.

The paper "Linguistic Landscape as Symbolic Construction of the Public Space: The Case of Israel" applies a framework to LL studies that distinguish bottom-up from top-down signs. The latter can be defined as any piece of publicly visible writing produced by local/national authorities.⁴ For this study, signs on government institutions, government and/or election campaign posters, and marketing produced by companies with a majority state investment were all considered top-down. The remaining were considered bottom-up. The 2006 paper "Linguistic Landscape and Minority Languages", which analyzes minority language use in two European cities, notes that observing the patterns of bottom-up signs in an LL can provide quantitative insight into everyday language usage within a given space.⁵ Therefore, to ascertain certain linguistic attitudes towards Russian and its decline amongst the general population, there will be a closer analysis paid to bottom-up signs.

Research on Kazakhstan's LL has focussed mostly on Astana, the capital city, notably with Irina Moore's 2014 study. Limited research has been conducted on Almaty's LL, even though its population is almost double that of Astana.⁶ Moore's study found that Russian still dominates the LL, appearing in 85.90% of all sampled signs, while Kazakh and English appeared in 55.22% and 18.01% of signs respectively.⁷ Furthermore, 25.61% of signs violated Kazakhstan's language policies, as mentioned in section 2.2. The study also found a significant shift towards Kazakh in newer neighborhoods, while Soviet-built neighborhoods display significantly more Russian than other languages. Moore attributes this phenomenon to state language policies shaping new urban spaces.

Similarly, Aisulu Kulbayeva's analysis of 260 signs in an unnamed small town near the border of Russia has revealed that Russian dominates both monolingual (96.1%) and bilingual signs.⁸ She also finds a privileging of Kazakh over Russian in top-down signage, while bottom-up signs are mostly in monolingual Russian, reflecting the contention in the 'imagined nationhood'.⁹

Moore's and Kulbayeva's approaches to Kazakhstan's LL remain partial models for this study. Although they investigate the presence of Russian and Kazakh in the given space, they do not draw on time-specific comparisons that can be used to indicate the direction that the LL is headed in. Filling a notable gap in the literature on Almaty's LL, which represents 10% of Kazakhstan's population, compared with Astana at roughly 5%, this study anticipates that, given the city's urban space being constructed in the Soviet Era, there will be a dominant presence of Russian. However, considering the changes in demographics and language policies of this post-Soviet space,

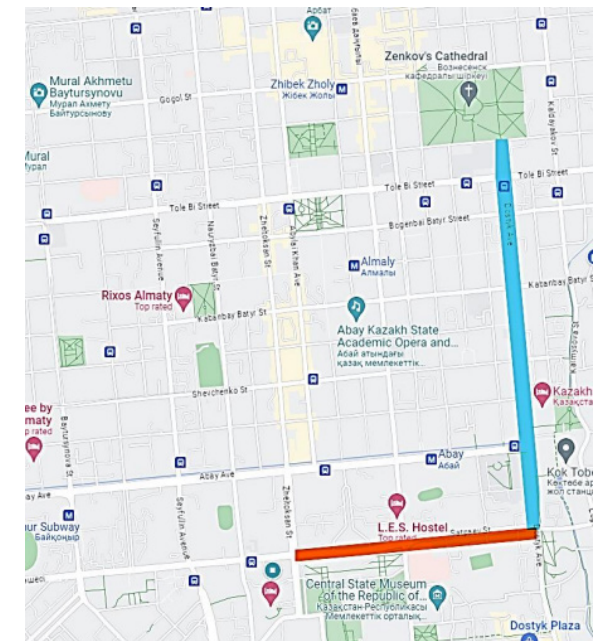


Figure 1 – Map of Almaty City Center and route taken for this study (Google.co.uk/maps 2023). The distance from the Panfilov Monument to the Dostyk/Satpayev intersection, the entirety of the blue line, is 2.02km and 1.27km from the Dostyk/Satpayev intersection to the Zheltoksan Monument, the most western point of the orange line.

1 Smagulova 100; State Law on Language.
2 Landry 25.

3 Bender 2.
4 Ben-Rafael 14.
5 Cenoz and Gorter 68.
6 Bureau of National Statistics 2023.
7 Moore 6.
8 Kulbayeva 305.
9 Kulbayeva 310.

we would also expect to see a decline in the presence of Russian. Finally, examining bottom-up tendencies may serve as a reflection of linguistic attitudes towards Russian in the LL – particularly concerning their accordance, or lack thereof, with national policies on signage.

2. Methodology

2.1 Context: Time and Location

Conducted in November 2023, this study used the street-view function on Yandex Maps, through which archival data from 2011 to 2023 is publicly accessible. Focusing on Dostyk Avenue and Satpaev Street, this study logged all instances of legible writing on top-down and bottom-up signs. These two streets provide a representative sample of the city center. Dostyk Avenue, figure 1, blue line, formerly Lenin Avenue, is where several universities and national institutions, monuments, landmarks, and many small- to medium-sized businesses are located. Satpayev Street, Figure 1, orange line, finds the ‘Republic Square’¹⁰ located on its eastern side, which is home to the former city hall and headquarters of the central committee of Soviet Kazakhstan’s Communist Party. This study’s route, mapped out in Figure 1, commenced at the northernmost point of Dostyk Avenue, extending 2.02km south to the Dostyk/Satpaev intersection and then westward for 1.27km to the Zheltoksan monument. This route was repeated



Figure 2 – Example of data entry from 2011 which had to be discarded due to its poor image quality, hindering the ability to decipher the language of the text.

in both directions for both years and conducted in the direction of traffic to maximize the available data pertaining to infrastructure and roadside marketing.

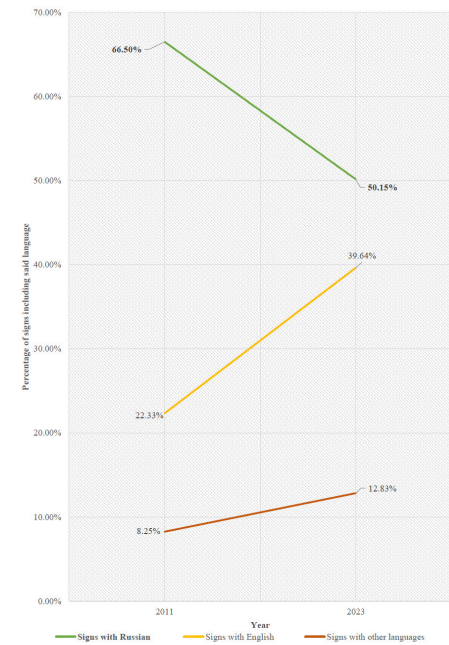


Figure 3 – Overall trends for Russian, Kazakh, English, and other languages (%)

2.2 Scope

Only legible, static, and non-electronic signs were included during data collection. This is because, as online mapping systems only provide a snapshot of a place at one given time, not knowing whether the sign would switch to a different language would lead to an unrepresentative sample of the LL. All data entries were classified for the following:

- Monolingual, bilingual, or multilingual (3+ languages).
- Language(s) present on the sign.
- Whether the sign was Top-down or Bottom-up.¹¹
- Adherence of bottom-up signs to language policy.
- If the law is broken, and whether it was in favor of Russian or not.

In total, there were 206 data entries for the year 2011, and 333 for 2023, forming a total of 539 data entries.¹² Illegible images from 2011 were discarded due to their lower resolution, see Figure 2. This explains why there are significantly fewer signs in the 2011 dataset.

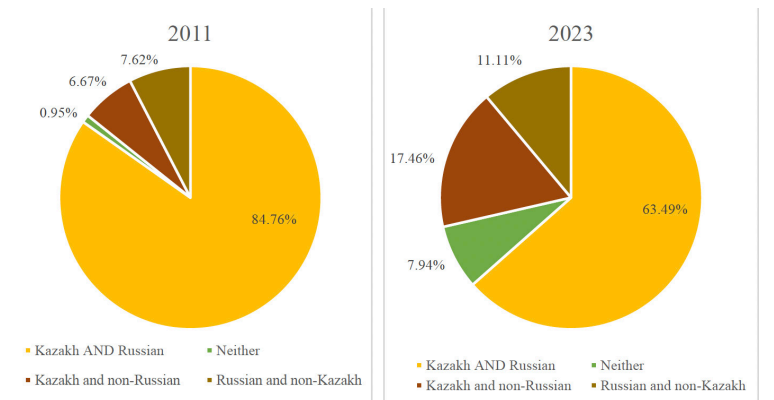
3. Analysis and Discussion

3.1 Russian in the Overall Linguistic Landscape

Beginning with the overall presence of Russian in the LL, results show a 16.35% decline in Russian from 66.50%

¹⁰ ‘Brezhnev Square’ in the Soviet Era.
¹¹ Ben-Rafael et al., 2006, p.14.
¹² See Appendix 1 (2011) and 2 (2023).

of signs in 2011 and 50.15% in 2023. This decline demonstrates that there has been a significant decline in the overall presence of Russian in Almaty’s LL. Additionally, when we compare the rates of all languages recorded in the dataset, there is a very steep increase in the presence of English, almost doubling from 22.33% in 2011 to 39.64% in 2023. Similarly, the presence of other foreign languages (Arabic, Azerbaijani, French, Spanish, Georgian, German, Italian, Norwegian, and Uzbek) has almost doubled from 8.25% to 15.62%. These findings are displayed in Figure 3.



Figures 4 & 5 – The percentage of bilingual signs and the languages they included, 2011 & 2023 respectively.

Understanding the geoeconomic context in post-Soviet Kazakhstan suggests a strong correlational relationship between the decline of Russian and the increase in non-state languages, particularly English. The latter phenomenon seems to reflect Kazakhstan’s ‘multi-vector’ approach towards globalization and economic growth, prioritizing pragmatic international relations, i.e. the West,

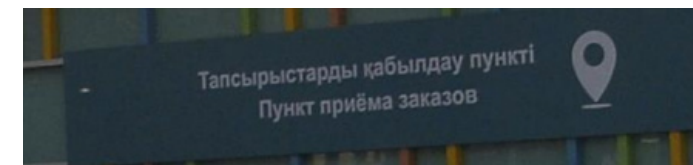


Figure 6 – Example of a bilingual sign in Russian and Kazakh. Data entry 22 from the 2023 dataset. Translation and gloss are provided below:

- a) Kazakh Text
 Тапсырыстарды қабылдау пункті
 [tapserəstar, du] [qabuɫ, dau] [punk, tɛ]
 Order. PL.LOC. reception point.POSS.
- b) Russian Text
 Пункт приёма заказов
 [punkt] [prʲi, joma] [zə, kazəf]
 Order reception.GEN. order.GEN-PL.

3.2 Bilingual Signage

Regarding changes in Russian/Kazakh bilingual signage, there was a 21.27% decrease from 84.76% in 2011 to 63.49% in 2023. This was compensated for by a 10.79% increase in bilingual signs in Kazakh and non-Russian, a 3.49% increase for Russian and non-Kazakh, and a 6.99% increase in bilingual signs that neither include Kazakh nor Russian. These changes are represented in Figures 4 and 5.

In other words, these results reveal that Russian presence in bilingual signs has dropped from 92.38% in 2011 to 74.6% in 2023. This suggests that Russian and Kazakh are increasingly not being held to an ‘equal’ standard, despite this being mandated in law, see section 1.1. As

¹³ Hanks 259.
¹⁴ Nazarbayev 2007.
¹⁵ Olcott 25.

over ideological ones, i.e. Russia.¹³ With the global market having a stake in Kazakhstan’s vast reserves of natural resources and greatly contributing to Kazakhstan’s economic growth, it is reasonable to suggest that these pragmatic mutual exchanges have led to a shift towards English, the presence of which represents a ‘successful

integration into global economics’ according to Kazakhstan’s former president.¹⁴ Meanwhile, as Kazakhstan establishes itself as a geoeconomic power, relations with Russia are not regarded as pragmatic to this goal. Brill Olcott notes that Russia has a ‘psychological barrier to accepting Kazakh statehood’, and as a result, Kazakhstan is prevented from full integration into global economies.¹⁵ In short, this analysis suggests that the decline in Russian and the increase in non-state language have a geoeconomic foundation.

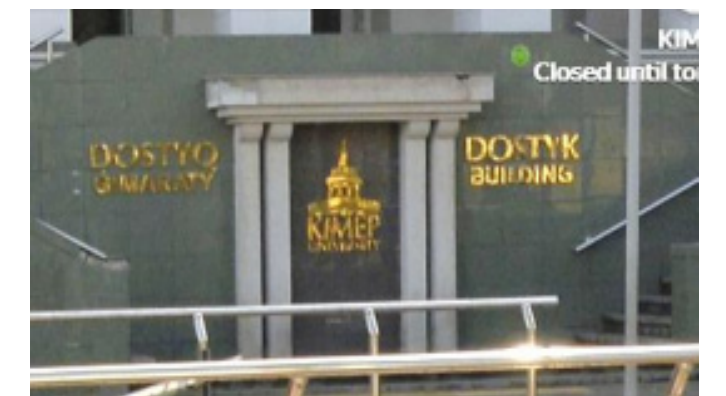


Figure 7 – Example of a bilingual sign in Kazakh and English. Data entry 22 from the 2023 dataset. The text reads “KIMEP University [English only]: Dostyk Building [Kazakh then English]. Translation and gloss are provided below:

- c) Kazakh Text
 DOSTYQ ĞIMARATY
 [dos, tuq] [jimara, tu]
 Dostyk building.POSS

well as for previously mentioned geoeconomic reasons, linguistic attitudes of the LL may also account for this decline in data. To account for this, the next section will analyze bottom-up signs.

3.3 Changes in Bottom-Up Signage

Table 2 summarizes the number of top-down and bottom-up signs using the sample data. As Cenoz and Gorter have pointed out, observing the patterns of bottom-up signs in an LL can provide an objective insight into everyday language usage within a given space.¹⁶ Therefore, to ascertain particular linguistic attitudes toward Russian amongst the general population, we will now analyze bottom-up signs.

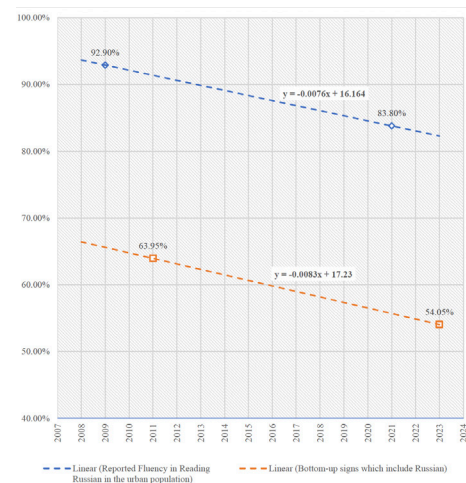


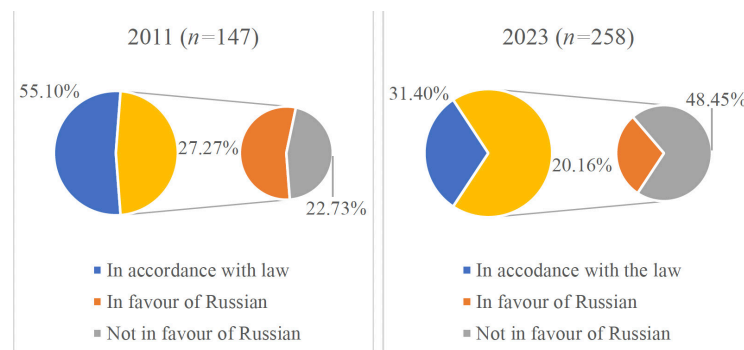
Figure 8 – Line graph showing a near-identical rate of decline in the production of bottom-up signs in Russian and the rate of fluency in reading Russian.

3.3.1 Connection with Literacy Rates

There has been a 9.9% decrease in the presence of Russian in the bottom-up signs. This falling statistic neatly reflects the change from 2009-21 in census reports concerning literacy rates. According to Kazakhstan’s 2009 census, 92.9% of Kazakhstan’s urban population was fluent in reading Russian, compared to 57.3% for Kazakh.¹⁷ Their 2021 Census, however, reports a decline to 83.8% in reading Russian, and an increase to 76.3% for Kazakh.¹⁸ In Figure 8 one can see that plotting both the decline in Russian bottom-up signage and Russian literacy reveals that these declines are happening at almost an identical rate: the two trend lines show a very similar gradient, with a negligible difference of 0.0007x. These near-mirroring trends point towards a symbiotic relationship between these two phenomena. This adds credit to Cenoz and Gorter’s claim that analyzing bottom-up signs can lead to an accurate depiction of true language usage within an LL.

3.3.2 Attitudes Towards Policies

Results show that in 2011, 51.1% of bottom-up signs did not adhere to these policies. Meanwhile, 27.27% of bottom-up signs violated these policies in favor of prioritizing Russian. However, in 2023, 31.4% of bottom-up signs adhered to policies, while 20.16% violated them in order to prioritize Russian. These results are shown in Figures 9 and 10. This shows that not only is Russian declining, but the percentage of signs that disobey state laws to prioritize Russian over other languages has declined by over 25%. This evidence is indicative of how fewer members of the LL produce signs that prioritize Russian over Kazakh; it could also be used to suggest that the language attitudes within Almaty are shifting away from Russian, adhering to the language policies and overall ideology set out by former president Nazarbayev.¹⁹



Figures 9 & 10 – The percentage of bottom-up signs that adhere to State Law on Language Protocols for 2011 and 2023 respectively. The yellow sectors represent signs that did not adhere to language policies.

	2011 (%) (n)	2023 (%) (n)
Top-Down	28.64 59	22.52 75
Bottom-Up	71.36 147	77.48 258
Total	206 (100%)	333 (100%)

Table 2 - Top-down and bottom-up signs in the two datasets, represented both as percentages (%) and in their raw value (n).



Figure 11 – Example of bottom-up sign in violation of all laws laid out in section 1.1. Data entry 128 from the 2023 dataset. Here, there is an Italian company name ‘Colibri’ (hummingbird), and a description of the company in Kazakh and English (‘Boutique mall’), but no Russian is present on this sign.

a) Kazakh text (repeats on either end of the sign)
бутик орталығы
[buˈtʃik] [ortaˈlə,ʋu]
Boutique Center.POSS

4. Conclusion

This study explores the overall trend of Russian in the Linguistic Landscape of Almaty, Kazakhstan, and it found that Russian declined significantly between 2011-2023 due to several factors. The first reason is that Kazakhstan’s rapidly developing and globalized economy makes significant space for English and other international languages at the potential expense of Russian. Second, this study has

presented a strong correlation between the decline of Russian literacy and presence in the Linguistic Landscape. The third factor is that a major shift in language policy and linguistic attitudes toward Russian is reflected in the decrease in its use of bottom-up signs. Further research into the social attitudes towards Russian in this LL will help inform the judgments made in this study.



16 Cenoz and Gorter 68.
17 2010, 262.
18 2023, 484.
19 Nazarbayev 2007.

Gender Distribution of Shamans Across the Circumpolar North

Charlotte White

The University of Texas at Austin

Introduction

Across Siberia and Sápmi, the most common traditional spiritual belief system is shamanism. In the shamanistic tradition, a person known as a ‘shaman’ has the ability to communicate with spirits and the spirit world. A shaman is able to enter an altered state of consciousness through traditional chanting, ritual instruments, or hallucinogenic substances. In this state, a shaman is able to communicate with or travel to the spirit world. The traditions and roles of a shaman vary across different cultures and regions, but they nonetheless typically include healing, blessing, divination, and the appeasement of spirits.

The purpose of this paper is to investigate and explain the prevalence of female over male shamans across Siberia and Northern Europe. It will examine six indigenous groups in Siberia and Northern Europe to describe the distribution of shaman gender within each group, and identify patterns representative of the Circumpolar North as a whole. Through a variety of case studies, this paper demonstrates that there are both male and female shamans across most of this region; and that the gender distribution varies significantly, depending especially on cultural customs such as



beliefs about the impurity of women, which limit the prevalence of woman shamans in some areas.

Gender in Siberian Shamanism

The Buryats

The Buryats are an ethnic Mongolic group who reside primarily in the Republic of Buryatia in Russia. Traditionally, the people of Buryatia practiced shamanism, and in the modern day most practice either Buddhism or traditional shamanism. The shamanistic beliefs of the Buryats in particular were greatly oppressed during the Soviet era, and as a result, the practice of traditional shamanism has become less common today.

There are both male and female shamans in Buryat shamanism, referred to as *bō* and *odogon* or *odogonj* respectively. Female shamans are somewhat less prevalent in Buryat society than their male counterparts, but have equal status as practitioners of shamanism.¹ As Buyandelgeriyn states, “[...] because of the overall patriarchal and

1 Buyandelgeriyn.

patrilocal structure of Buryat culture, female shamans tend to fall behind male shamans in the taxing quest for power.”

During the Soviet era, Buryat shamanistic beliefs were heavily repressed: shamans were persecuted and many were sent to labor camps or killed. Due to violence against suspected shamans, the Buryats largely abandoned the public practice of traditional shamanism. During this time of political oppression, the primary practitioners of shamans were women, who maintained their traditions in secret.² Indeed, women practiced shamanism more frequently during this time because they were less visible to Soviet authorities and thus less likely to be caught. There has been a significant decrease in the practice of Buryat shamanism since then, but there is currently a modern revival of traditions and practices in the post-Soviet era.

The Evenki

The Evenki are a Tungustic indigenous group who live in Russia,

2 Buyandelgeriyn.

China, and Mongolia. In the present day, the majority of the Evenki are Orthodox Christian or Buddhist, with some still practicing traditional shamanism. Like many other indigenous Siberian peoples such as the Buryats, Evenk shamanistic practices were heavily repressed during the Soviet era, and thus shamanism is practiced much less among the Evenki today.³

Because most Evenki no longer practice shamanism, it is difficult to obtain data regarding female shamans from the recent past or modern day. It appears, however, that male shamans are more common, though Evenk women also practice shamanism—for example, M.P. Kurbel’tinova, was a female shaman born in the late 19th century in the town of Iyengra.⁴ In Evenk shamanistic cosmology, it is also possible for shamanistic ability to be passed down from either a male or female family member; however, it is rare to see an inheritance from a woman to another family member. To illustrate this, one can examine data collected on the inheritance of shamanistic power. Within an Evenk population, there were 48 cases of shamanistic inheritance, and of these, only two involved a female recipient or ancestor.⁵ In these two cases, there was one inheritance from father to daughter, and one from mother to son.

The Kanty

The Khanty are an Ob-Ugric indigenous group who mostly reside in the Khanty-Mansi Autonomous Okrug in Russia. Some Khanty also live in the neighboring regions of the Yamalo-Nenets Autonomous

3 Ssorin-Chaikov.
4 Helimsky and Kosterkina.
5 Dioszegi.

Okrug, and the Tomsk and Tyumen Oblasts. Today, a majority of the Khanty are Russian Orthodox Christians, though some still practice traditional Khanty shamanism. One of the most important Khanty traditions is the bear ceremony, the customs of which differ between the Eastern and Northern Khanty.

In Khanty shamanism, there are both *tsirte-ho*—female shamans—and *tsirte-ne*—male shamans.⁶ A Khanty shaman has the responsibility of communicating with spirits to request the health, fertility, wealth, and hunting success of the Khanty people.⁷ The majority of Khanty shamans are male and it is typically uncommon to see female shamans. One reason for this gender difference is the Khanty belief that women have intrinsic impurity, and for this reason they are prohibited from presiding over ceremonial activities.⁸ In traditional Khanty customs, women are typically segregated from men in daily life and have many restrictions. For example, women could not be told when a bear hunt was occurring, due to the conviction that a woman having this knowledge would influence the event and spoil the hunt.⁹ Such restrictions spilled into religious practice, leading to a limited presence of female Khanty shamans.

Although there is a lack of prominent female shamans among the Khanty, female shamans do still exist: for instance, Anastasia Vasilejevna Sopotsina was a female shaman born in the early 20th century.¹⁰ There are also some Khanty ceremonial roles that are taken only by a female shaman or a ‘changed

6 Pentikäinen.
7 Pentikäinen.
8 Balzer 2016.
9 Balzer 1981.
10 Pentikäinen.

man.’ For example, in the bear ceremony—one of the most important rituals of the Eastern Khanty—the responsibility of waking up the bear is specifically granted to a female shaman or a changed man.¹¹ This highlights the spiritual power that Khanty women could hold.

The Koryaks

The Koryaks are a Siberian indigenous group who live in the Kamchatka Krai region in Russia and along the coast of the Bering Sea. In the modern day, the Koryak people practice Russian Orthodox Christianity and shamanism. Traditionally, the Koryaks practiced shamanism, believing in a supreme being who created the mythical first shaman and ancestor of the Koryak people (named *Quikil* or *Quikinnáqu*, translated as “Big-Raven”). Their traditions include festivals that include both family-centric and community-wide events.

Among the Koryak people, some researchers have identified two distinct types of shamanism: family and professional. Family shamanism pertains to a specific family and its rituals. In contrast, a professional shaman is consulted by members of the community. Jochelson mentions gender in the discussion of family versus professional shamanism, notably mentioning a specific spiritual role that a woman may have in family shamanism, where “some female member acquires particular skill in the art of beating the drum and singing, and familiarizes herself with the formulae of prayers and incantations.”

Another scholar, Czaplicka, expresses similar ideas of family and professional shamanism. In regards

11 Balzer 2016.

to the transition of a shaman from the family to a professional sphere, Czaplicka states that “someone with unusual gifts, often a woman, is requested to use them on behalf of a larger circle outside the family, and thus becomes a professional shaman.”

It appears that among the Koryaks, both men and women may be shamans and assume spiritual roles in ceremonies. Regarding the gender of Koryak shamans in general, Czaplicka states that “in the old days, as at present, the women - shamans were considered as powerful as the men.” Women in particular possess a majority of the knowledge of family practices and traditions, and as shamans, they appear to be equal in spiritual power.

The Mansi

The Mansi people are an Ob-Ugric indigenous group in Siberia related to the Khanty. Most Khanty live in the Khanty-Mansi Autonomous Okrug in Russia. Today, the Mansi primarily practice traditional shamanism. Like the Khanty, one of the most integral traditions of the Mansi culture is the bear ceremony; after a bear hunt, the bear hide is placed on display and many performances take place, including musical performances, dances, and re-enactments.

The role of the woman is usually restricted during Mansi rituals and in spiritual traditions, much like the Khanty. Among the Mansi, there is also a traditional belief that women are impure after maturation, and therefore the extent to which they can participate in ritual activities is restricted (Rombandeeva et al.). For instance, only men are able to participate in the bear ceremony proper; at the same time, women can certainly play a spiritual role related to the bear ritual, even if they are not necessarily participants.¹² Even though women are restricted

practice both traditional shamanism and Christianity. In traditional Sámi shamanism, the *noaidi*— or shaman— serves as an intermediary between the human and spirit worlds. Through the use of a traditional drum, the *noaidi* is able to enter a trance and communicate with the spirit world.

Sámi culture is an example of a shamanist tradition in which its practitioners are primarily and almost exclusively male. The shaman position is a traditionally male role among the Sámi, and it is commonly claimed that only male shamans exist in traditional Sámi shamanism. There are some female shamans among the Sámi, but this is really quite rare to see.

One reason that shamanistic ability is typically held by men in Sámi culture is that there are certain axioms that affect womens’

ability to touch or use the sacred drum. Again, women are believed to be impure after maturation and are therefore forbidden to touch the sacred drum, an important object in traditional Sámi shamanism.¹⁴

While it is true that the presence of female Sámi shamans is limited per traditional customs, there are some examples of notable female shamans. The most well-known Sámi female shaman is Rijkuo-Maja,

also known as “*Rika-Maja*”, meaning “rich Maja”. She was a female *noaidi* born in the 17th century, known for her wealth and status as a shaman who used the sacred drum. Her husband, Nils Andersson, was also a shaman; so when he died she took over his role as a shaman, including using the drum as a *noaidi*.¹⁵

Conclusions

As seen across a variety of case studies, most regions of the Circumpolar North have both and male and female shamans. Nonetheless, the distribution of gender across these areas varies widely. In some regions, shamanism is almost exclusively practiced by men with only some exceptions of women shamans; and in other areas male and female shamans are equally prevalent or powerful. As seen in the figure below, the gender distribution varies the most across Siberia. In the shamanistic practices of indigenous groups who inhabit regions such as the Khanty-Mansi Autonomous Okrug, the Tuva Republic, and Tyumen Oblast, we observe that shamanism is a male-dominated role. In contrast, in parts of the Republic of Buryatia, Kamchatka Krai, Chukotka, and the Sakha Republic we see both men and women taking critical roles in shamanistic practices.

In Buryat and Koryak shamanism, both male and female shamans are common. Spiritual power is considered to be equally held by men and women, and shamans of both genders play significant roles in rituals and ceremonies. While it may be less common for women to be seen as powerful shamans, they still boast an invaluable capacity to

preserve and practice shamanistic ability.

Across other regions— such as among the Sámi, Khanty, and Mansi peoples— female shamans are quite rare. The idea of female impurity is one commonality shared across several of the groups that almost exclusively have male shamans. Due to this, women across all three of these groups are customarily restricted from participating in significant parts of ceremonies or from touching sacred objects used by a shaman. Sámi women are historically prohibited from touching the sacred drum; Khanty and Mansi women are restricted from playing major roles in the bear ceremony. There are some limitations to acknowledge in this paper. Only a limited number of regions were thoroughly investigated, the number of which should be increased in future research. Additionally, the shamanistic customs and gender distributions of the Tuva, Tuba, Teleut, Chukchi, and Sakha were used to create Figure 1 but were not discussed in this text. It would be worthwhile to additionally investigate, for example, the gender distributions across these other regions of Siberia to obtain a better understanding of how gender varies across the remainder of the region. Still, with just an examination of the regions included in this paper, one can already begin to see the full picture of gender distribution among Siberian and Sámi shamans.



Figure 1. Gender Distributions of Shamans Across Siberia

Note: Data from the Sakha Republic, Chukotka Autonomous Okrug, and Altai Republic are included in the above figure, but not described in the text of this paper.

from fully participating in ceremonial activities, female shamans still exist in Mansi society and shamanistic ability can be inherited through female lineage.¹³

The Sámi

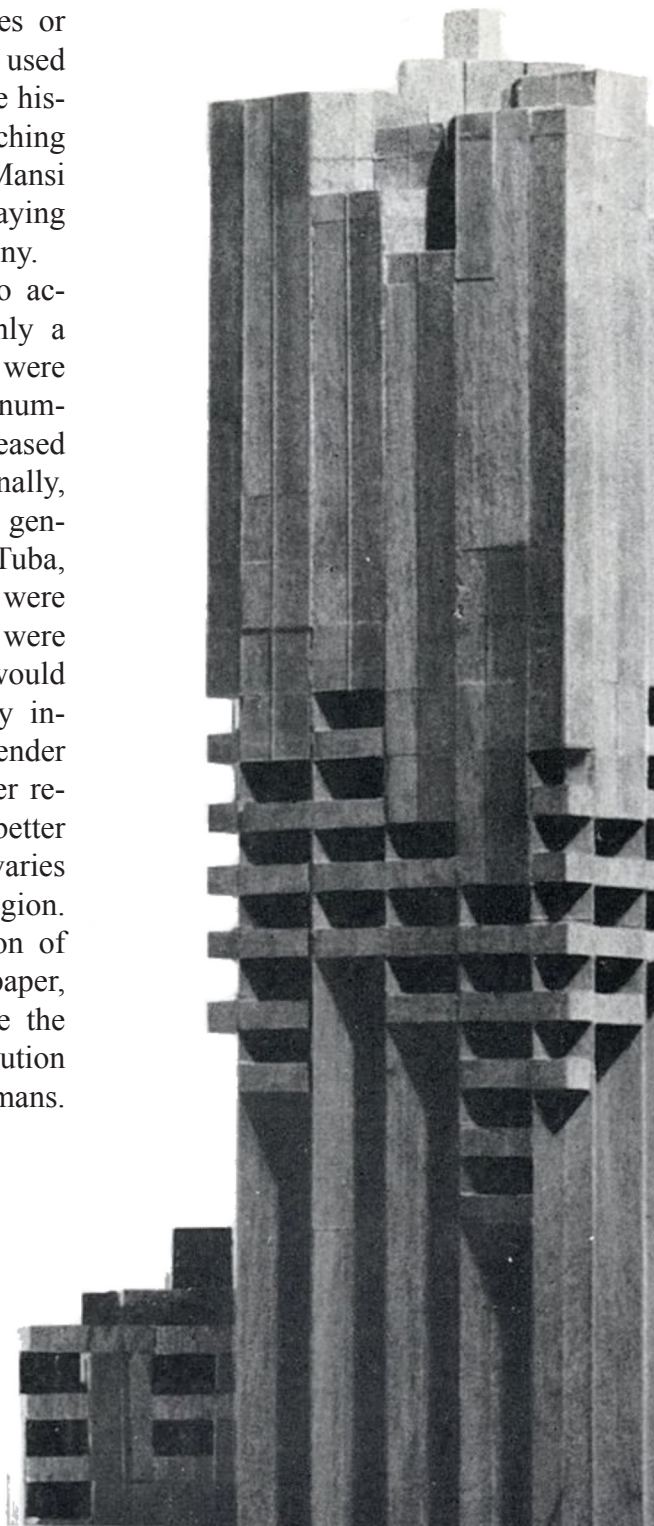
The Sámi are an indigenous group who live in their ancestral homeland Sápmi, which spans northern Norway, Sweden, Finland, and Russia. Today, the Sámi people

¹² Hitchcock et al.

¹³ Eliade.

¹⁴ Rydving.

¹⁵ Backman and Hultzkrantz.



The following works were written for UC Berkeley Professor Harsha Ram's Literature & Revolution class in Fall 2023. The class explored the literature of two revolutions, 1905 and 1917, through three essential questions: What is a revolution? What is the role of literature and art in revolutionary times? What is the role of artistic form in representing revolutionary history? Students collaborated on research presentations, staged a debate on Marxism versus Formalism, and wrote papers on topics of their interests. In this issue of Troika, you can read work by Ava Ratcliff, Cai Noël, and Dominic Vitz. These students would like to thank him for his encouragement, feedback, and generosity during the writing process.

Mothers, Messiahs, Martyrs: Women as Vessels for Social Change in *We & The Mother*

Ava Ratcliff

University of California, Berkeley

Why does God expel man from Eden? He tells Adam that it's "because you have listened to the voice of your wife."¹ In other words, the first change in social hierarchy, where humans shifted from pure to fallen, happened because of a woman. Her punishment? God will "greatly increase [her] pangs in childbearing."² While God can create simply through breath, Eve and all her descendants will now risk their bodies and endure immense suffering during their acts of creation. Genesis 3 illustrates how from the beginning, authors have linked a disruption in social order to a specific female identity: motherhood. Beyond the creation of a child, Biblical authors such as Matthew also used birth as a metaphor for social change. When his Christ describes the sign of the apocalypse, he likens famine, war, and earthquakes to "the beginning of birth pangs."³ Nearly two thousand years after Matthew's metaphor, Russian authors still relied on motifs of motherhood to illustrate their messages of revolutionary

¹ Coogan, *The New Oxford Annotated Bible: New Revised Standard Edition*, Genesis 3.17. All further Biblical quotes come from this edition unless otherwise noted.

² Genesis 3.16.

³ Gospel of Matthew 24.8.

disruption. In this essay, I will explore how two authors write about two distinct revolutions: Maxim Gorky, who wrote *The Mother* in response to the failed 1905 Revolution, and Yevgeny Zamyatin, who wrote *We* after the successful 1917 Revolution. I will interrogate why these authors use motifs of motherhood and why they grounded these motifs in recognizably Biblical language. I will also use the work of French-Bulgarian thinker Julia Kristeva to explain why, in the Christian tradition, the maternal body is inextricably linked to revolutionary, infinite time.⁴ Ultimately, I will argue that through the characters Pelageya Nilovna, I-330, and O-90 both Gorky and Zamyatin reconceive the relationship between the Virgin Mary and Jesus in order to service their revolutionary ideals; I will then demonstrate that a new understanding of womanhood and family structure is key to revolutionary success.

Both canonical and apocryphal,

⁴ Kristeva, Julia, and Arthur Goldhammer. "Stabat Mater." *Poetics Today* 6, no. 1/2 (1985): 139

New Testament narratives were already familiar to twentieth-century Russians and therefore served as a natural touchstone from which radical authors could build their new ideas. In the first years of the twentieth century, Maxim Gorky helped found the literary movement "God-Building." This movement considered Christian imagery to be "still the source of spiritual strength," but "valued [it] as an instigator of change and not as the bearer of church dogma."⁵ For Gorky, the Virgin Mary provided the "central metaphor of his God-building philosophy" because her image was a "'living' miracle-working icon... [who] demonstrates the possibility of collective salvation. Doing so, she transcends her own individuality, embodying...the collective experience."⁶ Because of her ubiquity in Orthodox iconography, the Virgin Mary was a perfect vessel for Gorky's collectivist ideology. Al-

⁵ Scherr, "God-Building or God-Seeking?" 451

⁶ Adams, Amy Singleton, and Vera Shevzov, eds. "5. The Woman at the Window. Gorky's Revolutionary Madonna." In *Framing Mary*, 124, 127. Cornell University Press, 2020

though there are not many extended reports of Mary's life in the canonical Gospels, "stories about Mary's life had already enjoyed quasi-canonical status in Russia for centuries insofar as they had informed liturgical hymnody and iconography."⁷ In nineteenth-century Russia alone, there existed "more than two dozen accounts of Mary's life," the majority of which were not directly sanctioned by the Orthodox Church.⁸ Mary's position inside the collective imagination but outside of Orthodox dogma afforded her the perfect opportunity to be transformed into the mother of a new mythology.

Although Zamyatin did not belong to the God-Builders, he similarly showed a clear appreciation for Christian mythology. In his polemic, "On Literature, Revolution, Entropy, and Other Matters" Zamyatin lamented that in modern times "instead of the Sermon on the Mount... there is drowsy prayer."⁹ His solution to this spiritual sleepiness? "Harmful literature" and heresy, which are "necessary to health."¹⁰ He defines his new literature as a departure "from the canonical tracks" and a "turn away" from authors like Gorky.¹¹ While Gorky embraced pre-existing Marian motifs, Zamyatin envisioned a new, heretical Mary by splitting her into two polarities—traditional motherhood and revolutionary activism.¹²

Starting with his title, Gorky fore-

7 Shevzov, Vera. "Mary and Women in Late Imperial Russian Orthodoxy." In *Women in Nineteenth-Century Russia*, edited by Wendy Rosslyn and Alessandra Tosi, 1st ed., 69. Lives and Culture. Open Book Publishers, 2012.

8 Shevzov, "Mary and Women in Late Imperial Russian Orthodoxy," 72.

9 Zamyatin, "On Literature, Revolution, Entropy, and Other Matters," 108

10 Zamyatin, "On Literature," 109

11 Zamyatin, "On Literature," 111

12 Thank you to Harsha Ram for this phrase!

grounds Pelageya Nilovna, then deconstructs her previous connection with her son in order to refashion her as a Virgin Mary. In "Stabat Mater," Kristeva describes the first characteristic of a Marian figure as the mother's singular relationship with her son, at the expense of all other relationships, including sexual ones.¹³ For instance, Pelageya Nilovna's "sexuality is reduced to a mere implication" in the first chapter of *The Mother* when her husband dies.¹⁴ Pelageya Nilovna's sexual role is further rendered obsolete by the fact that her son, Pavel, is no longer a child. He no longer needs her to fulfill her nurturing role, and, in a pivotal scene, asks her to leave her home.¹⁵ This can be read as his rejection of her maternal role and his assumption of the home's leadership in the place of his father. Unmoored from ties of sexuality and motherhood, Pelageya is finally able to reckon with her own conception of herself. This reckoning comes to a head during a police search of Pelageya Nilovna and Pavel's home (notably "witness[e]d" by her neighbor "Maria")¹⁶ On a symbolic level, this search is a narrative turning point. The police find nothing inside the house because the home no longer holds significance within Pelageya Nilovna and Pavel's relationship. Their relationship must now be defined in terms outside simply Mother/Son.

Immediately following the search, Pelageya Nilovna dreams about what exactly the reimagined terms of their relationship could be. At the beginning of her dream, she looks "at her son.... she felt too ashamed

13 Kristeva, "Stabat Mater," 142.

14 Ibid.

15 *The Mother*, 21.

16 *The Mother*, 174.

to approach him because she was pregnant".¹⁷ This "because" is crucial: it allows Gorky to show how Pelageya Nilovna understood herself through her relationship with her son but now feels a rupture in that relationship. If she had another child, that child would disrupt the singularity of their relationship. She is ashamed because she imagines that he would be jealous of the new child. However, this shame is a projection onto Pavel of her jealousy towards him for leaving the home and finding an identity outside of their relationship. Now that Pelageya's role as a nurturing mother is unnecessary, she finds a new identity elsewhere: as her son's partner, or, in Kristeva's Marian tradition, wife.

Pelageya Nilovna's latent desire for Pavel is clearest as she watches his trial. While in the gallery, she notices how the judges "were all talking about the bodies of her son and his comrades, about the young men's muscles... full of hot blood and vital strength".¹⁸ The possessiveness that she feels towards Pavel's body demonstrates her blurred view of him as fulfilling the role of both son and husband. Pelageya Nilovna projects her sexualized view of her son onto the judges again later in the paragraph, noting how the judges' eyes "probed his chest... rubbed against his hot skin".¹⁹ It's difficult to read these verbs of penetration and heated bodily friction as asexual. To drive the point home for less observant readers, Pelageya Nilovna thinks about how "for her, a woman and a mother... her son's body is always... dearer than what is called the soul".²⁰ By separating

17 *The Mother*, 175.

18 *The Mother*, 341.

19 *The Mother*, 341.

20 *The Mother*, 341.

herself into two descriptors, woman and mother, that both possess her son's "body," Pelageya Nilovna fulfills Kristeva's claim that the Marian figure must "[bow] her head before her son but not without a boundless pride in the knowledge that she is also his wife and daughter."²¹

The second quality that Kristeva argues is crucial to a Marian figure is her ability to humanize the words of her son—Pelageya Nilovna does this in the novel's final scene when she dies spreading Pavel's testimony. Kristeva explains that Christ is "'human' only through his mother," who provides the womb that makes God's word into flesh.²² Pelageya Nilovna begins to materialize Pavel's words when she considers whether she should "abandon [her] son's word," then decides against it, announcing to passengers in her train station that her "son...made a speech, and here it is!... Read it and think about the truth".²³ At this moment Pelageya Nilovna reaches into the dark, enclosed space of her suitcase, an allegorical womb, and draws out Pavel's testimony. As she hands out the speech, she watches the papers become "hidden away inside clothing and in pockets".²⁴ Pavel's words move out from the inner confines of Pelageya Nilovna's person, penetrating the boundaries of new people. Eventually, these people "[surround] the woman in the continuous ring of a living body" and "[merge] into something whole, warmed by the fire of the word".²⁵ Here, the revolutionary word becomes incarnate. This incarnation is further emphasized through the scene's liminal setting in a train station, which is a space

21 *Stabat Mater*, 142.

22 *Stabat Mater*, 134.

23 *The Mother*, 365.

24 *The Mother*, 365.

25 *The Mother*, 366.

of transference from one place, or state, to another. This final scene of transference was especially crucial to Gorky because of his historical context. He wrote *The Mother* in the wake of a failed Bolshevik Revolution, so he needed to demonstrate how an idea could grow outside of any specific individual.

Although Zamyatin published *We* following the successful 1917 Revolution, he too painted Marian motifs onto the character O-90 in order to convey his idea of revolutionary time. Like Gorky, Zamyatin highlighted how Marian mothers make ideas material through their children. However, because O-90's child is not born by the end of *We*, latent sexual desire is less relevant. More relevant is Kristeva's third characteristic of Mary, who she argues can transcend linear time and operate in the same infinite, cyclical time as Christ. Kristeva argues that "if Mary is prior to Christ, and if he...originates with her...Mary does not die but rather...in a never-ending cycle which is in itself an imitation of the process of childbirth—she passes over."²⁶ In other words, because Mary existed before she gestated Christ—who exists outside of linear time as the Holy Spirit—Mary also must exist outside of linear time. How else could she come before something infinite?²⁷ Through childbirth, Mary makes the word flesh again and again, repeating revolutionary rebirth for an infinite number of cycles. In the next section of this paper, I will elaborate on how Zamyatin fits this infinite "Marian time" within his idea of "infinite revolutions."²⁸

26 *Stabat Mater*, 138-139

27 For more clarity, see John 5.25 "the hour is coming and is now here" where the differing temporalities of "coming" and "now" exist simultaneously.

28 See Zamyatin, *We*, 149.

But, before parsing O-90's Marian depiction, it's crucial to understand how Zamyatin's other female character, I-330, represents not a Gnostic Eve but a Messianic, heretical Christ. While Zamyatin is interested in many realms of science, adhering to the rules of biology is not one of them. After all, the male D-503 frames his diary writing as a birth (we'll return to this soon).²⁹ It would hardly seem characteristic of Zamyatin to care about preserving Christ's maleness. Even if Zamyatin did care about this, Jesus himself says in the Gnostic Gospel of Thomas that sex can be transcended and that he will "guide [Mary Magdalene] to make her male, so that she too may become a living spirit resembling you males."³⁰ Zamyatin's "gospel" is his theory of entropy and energy, which he inserts into the messianic mouth of I-330. Zamyatin introduces her as an "echo, laughter," whose meeting with D-503 catalyzes the plot.³¹ Both echoes and laughter are boundless and beyond representable language, but when paired with I-330's physical materiality, they become constrained and physical.

As D-503 becomes closer to I-330, his descriptions of her face shift from scientific motifs into Christian ones, which ultimately culminate in the "Passion of I-330." If I-330 is Christ, then D-503 is her disciple, whose diary is a "testimony" or gospel, of her life. When D-503 first encounters I-330, he notes that "in her eyes or her eyebrows, there's a strange irritating X, and I cannot understand it".³² First, his description reflects D-503's unenlightened

29 *We*, 2.

30 Pagels, *Beyond Belief*, 241 (Gospel of Thomas 1.114).

31 *We*, 5

32 *We*, 9.

state, where he is unable to even recognize the most basic Christian symbol of the cross. More interestingly, however, this symbol creates a link between Christian symbols and Zamyatin's "gospel" of entropy and energy, where I-330 is the "X factor."³³ As Andrew Barratt points out, the X/cross motif reappears during "the final revelation of the revolutionary conspiracy," when I-330 reveals the Mephi plan.³⁴ In this scene, D-503 describes how "the angle of her eyebrows made a cross."³⁵ At the beginning of his journal D-503 "[could] not understand" Christian imagery, but after his conversion through I-330's conspiratorial plot, he sees the symbol of the cross.³⁶ In the entry after D-503 sees the cross, he observes that the Day of Unanimity is "something like what 'Easter' was for the ancients."³⁷ He continues this description by fondly recalling how in childhood he would "cross off" time in a calendar leading up to the celebration, and wishing he could make a similar calendar of time until he could see I-330.³⁸ This calendar wish demonstrates how I-330's cross-like face has intruded into D-503's unconscious. While crossing out days until he can next see her, he would also be repeating the cross symbol of her face.

Now that the connection between I-330 and Christ is clear, we can further understand how the Mephi conspiracy and I-330's martyrdom closely align with the Passion of Christ. Barratt notes that "when some of the Mephi conspirators are later captured by the Guard-

ians, they [are] *twelve* in number."³⁹ These twelve Mephi are a clear allusion to the twelve apostles. More importantly, I-330's death parallels the crucifixion. First, like Christ, she is killed through state violence for refusing to renounce her beliefs. In the Gospel of Mark, the only words said by Christ on the cross are in a foreign language, which Mark translates for his readers, "Eloi, Eloi, lema sabachthani?" which means 'My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?'"⁴⁰ Mark's decision to include Christ's words both in a foreign language and in Greek emphasizes how Christ is in the process of transcending the material and understandable world and returning to the unrepresentable Word. The conspicuous unintelligibility of Christ's last words mirrors I-330's refusal to speak during her torture: she has fled the bounds of recognizable language. Finally, all passion narratives in the Gospels end with a call to spread Christ's message. Likewise, I-330's torture under a Bell alludes to how, after her death, her ideas will resonate outside of her physical body. Although I-330 dies, her message remains, as, to borrow the first word that Zamyatin uses to describe her, an "echo," reverberating out in the "chaos...of Numbers who have betrayed reason."⁴¹

Thanks to this lengthy digression into I-330, we can finally see how O-90's salvation is inextricably linked to I-330 helping her transcend the boundaries of the known world and enter the heavenly paradise outside the Green Wall. I-330's revolutionary conviction is made flesh through the unborn child of O-90, Zamyatin's Marian figure.

Although the child biologically belongs to O-90 and D-503, its conception is "sanctioned...by I-330's pink check."⁴² This unborn child was certainly not created through immaculate conception, but the two most important figures in its creation and survival are its mother and I-330, while D-503 is a mere intermediary.⁴³ Some may argue that because D-503 positions I-330 and O-90 as rivals, it is counterintuitive to think of their relationship as a collaborative Jesus and Mary. These readers should remember that D-503 is repeatedly characterized as an unreliable narrator.

O-90's singularly defining characteristic is her motherhood, just like how Pelageya Nilovna's maternal role eclipses all her other traits. The first details that readers learn about O-90 are that she deviates from the "Maternal Norm," is "rounded all over" and has a "pink O" of a mouth.⁴⁴ D-503 never clarifies what he believes is the "Maternal Norm," but considering how the OneState criminalizes birth and raises all children in a Platonic collective, it is clear this norm is the opposite of Mary's inseparable bond with her child. Christopher Collins calls O-90's open mouth "obviously" vaginal and argues that her roundness is an allusion to her eventual pregnancy.⁴⁵ Physically, O-90 cannot be understood as anything other than a Marian mother. Her characterization is especially compelling because she is the only character to successfully escape the OneState. While other characters fail, she is uniquely successful precisely be-

42 Collins, *Evgenij Zamjatin: An Interpretive Study*, 73.

43 Here it's important to remember that because of the trinity, I-330 can be both Christ, God, and the Holy Spirit.

44 *We*, 4.

45 *Evgenij Zamjatin: An Interpretive Study*,

57.

cause she represents the synthesis of revolutionary ideas and maternal materiality. When I-330 helps O-90 escape the OneState, she ensures that her revolutionary ideas will continue existing through O-90's child in a regenerative, Marian cycle.

However, O-90 is not the only "pregnant" character in *We*—D-503 also gestates a child in the form of a collective account. His "birth" characterizes him as an author of the apocryphal gospel of I-330. As discussed in the introduction, biblical authors used pregnancy metaphors to explain revolutionary change. Here, D-503 unknowingly reinterprets these metaphors into signs that announce the revolutionary change in the pages to come. This is supported by D-503's post-operation question, "could it be that I, D-503, actually wrote these 225 pages?"⁴⁶ (*We*, 198). Perhaps D-503, like many biblical authors before him, was not writing his own words, but was divinely inspired by the Holy Spirit of I-330. When he becomes estranged from his imagination at the end of his writing, her divine spirit is no longer accessible. Furthermore, just like a New Testament Gospel, *We* ends soon after the "passion of I-330."

Mothers, messiahs, martyrs— all these female archetypes present the clear message that a revolution will only be successful if it synthesizes traditional expectations of women and then creates new ones. However, as *We* contends, this new, revolutionary ideal of a family is emphatically *not* one that centers a revolutionary ideal. Through the failed gestation of D-503's diary, which he likens to a "new little per-

46 *We*, 198.

son" that he hopes to lay "at the feet of the OneState" readers see how worship of an ideal cannot "fulfill an emotional need" created by a lack of family.⁴⁷ After all, at the end of his diary, D-503 still longs for "a mother, the way ancients had."⁴⁸ Instead, both Zamyatin and Gorky suggest that as old hierarchies must change, networks of mutual care must take their place. This network idea is best exemplified through the symbiotic relationship between Mary and Christ, who cannot exist without each other. Marian figures such as O-90 and Pelageya Nilovna provide the flesh that accommodates the revolutionary ideals of I-330 and Pavel, whose words then live on through infinite cycles (also known as revolutions) of rebirth.

In these pages, I have considered how Gorky and Zamyatin fit the role of women into their revolutionary imaginations and how that role changed from 1905 to 1917. While I focused on the Marian archetype as embodied by Pelageya Nilovna and O-90, I also parsed I-330's messianic portrayal and D-503's authorial role. I relied on Julia Kristeva's understanding of the Virgin Mary as someone who is both her son's wife and mother and someone who exists within cyclical, non-linear time. Ultimately, I showed how Russian authors reinterpreted biblical ideas about women and families to serve their new revolutionary goals.

47 *Evgenij Zamjatin: An Interpretive Study*, W04/23/24e, 2.

48 *We*, 185.

33 Barratt, Andrew. "The X-Factor in Zamyatin's 'We,'" 662.

34 Barratt, 667.

35 *We*, 113.

36 *We*, 9.

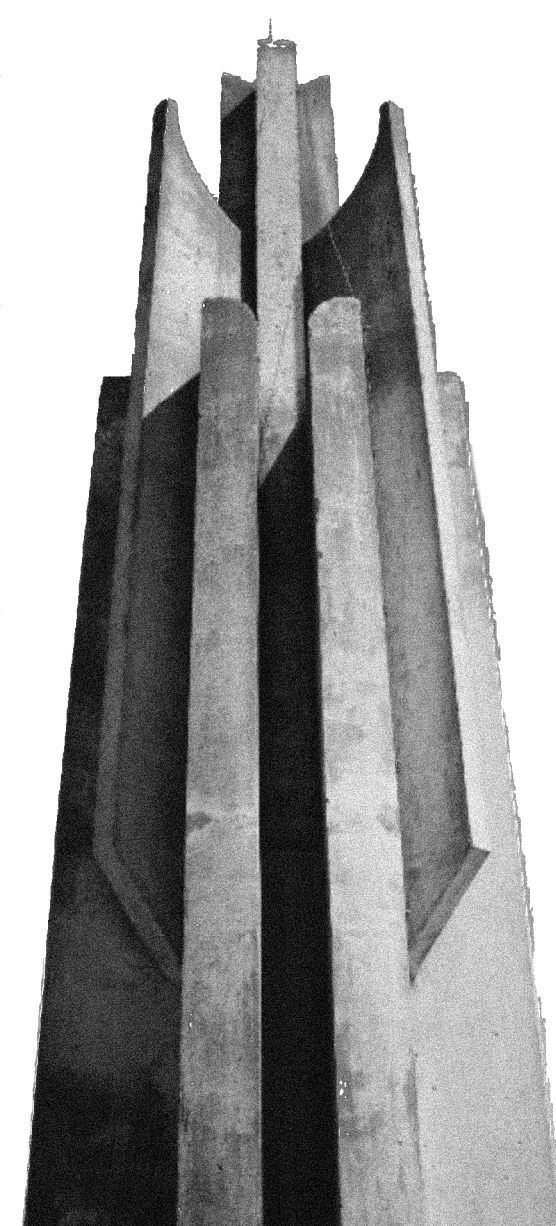
37 *We*, 117.

38 *We*, 117.

39 Barratt, 668 (italics his).

40 Gospel of Mark 15.34.

41 *We*, 5, 199.



Contriving Pasts; Remembering Futures: The Duality of *We*

Cai Noël

University of California, Berkeley

The How do we construct the past...?

As the result of intensive, painstaking scholarship, admirably attempting to reconcile a tapestry of disparate, often contradictory accounts? As abstract occurrences that, though we may lack a concrete connection to, still possess thematic power in the imagination? It is as much a philosophical question as it is a practical one. There is record, and there is memory; fact—or, at least, an imitation of it—and impression. Which provides the more accurate, the more worthwhile view? (Not that these two are necessarily the same). It is from this space that “myth” arises, the bygone infused with every narrative tendency: comforting cosmic causality, emotional swells and denouements, protagonists and antagonists, gods and monsters (both immortal and mortal). These are fictions, of course, running contrary to reason and record, and yet they are just as indelible a component of the past as the passage of time itself. The lines between artist and archivist are blurred, an opaque division that evades a simple conclusion.

To interrogate—and, if we are lucky, harmonize—this tension, we turn to the Russian Revolution and its aftermath. Has any other event been

torn so viscerally between such extremes? Within their work, artists grapple with this anxiety, positioning it as a key thematic and formal concern, but at the same time, a broader intertextual dialogue also rages. History is drafted in pencil and never inked, always subject to revision, to re-examination, to resurrection. Myths are ethereal, omnipresent, influencing our cultural perceptions long after we believe them to be discarded. Truth cannot be immortalized, but art can, and by taking Myth together with History, we will find a potent understanding of what we have left behind.

“Won’t this be, of its own accord, an “epic?”

A brief clarification: *We* actually refers to two texts: first, Yevgeny Zamyatin’s seminal novel, a work of fiction envisioning life amid a dystopian future, but also the journal that its protagonist, D-503, keeps within the narrative’s confines. In a curiously metafictional text, readers experience a book-within-a-book, a structural choice,

the relevance of which will become clear momentarily.

Both *Wes* are concerned with the relationship between Reason and Unreason but do so in such remarkably different ways. D-503’s *We* initially extolls the virtues of the OneState: life is “immovable and everlasting,”¹ characterized by “great eternal progress.”² Mathematics, Logic, Order. This is Reason, and will, of course, soon be interrupted by the arrival of an interloper. In contrast, Zamyatin’s *We* begins in the opposite position, making the paradoxical, nonsensical irony of the OneState immediately apparent. This is not a subtle novel, and from the opening, where free will is considered “the primitive state,”³ it is evident how the reader is meant to understand this setting. Suppression, control, suffocation. This is Unreason. Over the course of the book, each of these will move closer to the other. Simultaneously, the two texts will undergo another similar reversal of mode.

1 *We*, Yevgeny Zamyatin, p.3.
2 Zamyatin p.12
3 Zamyatin p.1

D-503’s *We* begins as an ostensibly historical record, subsumed by his inner turmoil and the alien ideal of resistance—a work of Reason corrupted by Unreason, of History distorted by notions of cosmological inevitability so as to be inseparable from Myth. Yet, through Zamyatin’s *We*, initially a ridiculous farce, so brazen is its satire that the opposite must also be true. This is a work of Unreason in which the reader will frantically search for Reason, which ultimately comes in the form of emotion, of passion. The conclusion one must draw is that Reason is not synonymous with rigidity but rather an expression of human nature—that illogical intensities are purer than the OneState’s exacting precision.

The catalyst for such transformation comes in the form of I-330, who deliberately positions herself as incongruous with the manufactured harmony of D-503’s life. In a setting where sexual desire has been rendered “a purely technical matter,”⁴ not just emotionally neutered but disconnected from reproduction, she is sensual. She provokes desire in D-503, though he is unable to reciprocate such feelings at first. Following Joseph Campbell’s monomythical thesis, she exists as both a mentor and temptress. “The woman is life, the hero, its knower,” as Campbell remarked.⁵ I-330 holds the totality of human experience within her as both the “goddess of the flesh... and the queen of sin.”⁶ In Myth, these two aspects are inextricably linked, something acknowledged in Aristotle’s *Poetics*: “The change from ignorance to knowledge... [sits alongside] suf-

4 Zamyatin p.19
5 *The Hero with a Thousand Faces*, Joseph Campbell, p.120
6 Campbell p.123

fering.”⁷ This is a particularly pertinent pattern when one considers the OneState’s pursuit of “a magnificent infinity of happiness... [through] the cleansing power of logic”⁸ and scientific development—though we are already acquainted with the irreconcilability of these notions.

We have laid out where the novel begins, with two texts set in opposition—one of Reason and History, the other of Unreason and Myth—but as D-503 continues to interact with I-330, the divisions between the two begin to blur. Our author is maddened by newfound contradiction: where he began “writing without holding back,”⁹ he now fears that “he might write... something bad.”¹⁰ Whereas his prose was rhythmic, each sentence structured with certainty, it now falters, dipping into an erratic stream of consciousness: “Buddha... yellow... lily-of-the-valley... and what about?”¹¹ These images will return, though slightly more coherent when the two have an intimate encounter. Even though he does not yet comprehend the reality of the OneState, he is beginning to suffer from an understanding that he has crossed a line—perhaps, by force. Regardless, there is no chance of homecoming.

Let’s briefly retreat from D-503’s deteriorating state of mind to discuss the OneState itself, and the origin that our narrator recounts (one can almost picture the enthusiasm). Creation myths—enduring legends about the dawn of time—attempt to answer the unanswerable. Where did we come from? Every culture and theology reflects this pattern:

7 Aristotle, *Poetics*, 1452b 9-11
8 Zamyatin p.19-20
9 Zamyatin p.21
10 Zamyatin p.43
11 Zamyatin p.44

“The world’s coming to manifestation and subsequent return.”¹² For a totalitarian state, however, civilization is “the world,” and little gravitas can be granted to anything outside its domain. The OneState must be all-encompassing, and thus its creation story must rival (or exceed) the genesis of the universe. Sound like anywhere you know? Indeed, the official doctrine inspires a religious fervor. D-503 remarks, as one might be inclined to pro-

“O heart and pulse of OneState!”

claim in worship because that is exactly what it was. Mathematics are discussed with divinity, but the bureaucratic apparatus, that is the true heir to Christianity. The official doctrine speaks nebulously of a two-century-long conflict, but specifics are not granted to the citizenry, nor are they necessary.

Creation myths do not need to be believable. Myth seems to inherently possess a layer of unreality, an impossibility that makes its intrusion into History all the more compelling. The purpose of such constructs is not in factuality, but faith. “The Benefactor, the Machine, the Cube, the Gas Bell, the Guardians: sublime, splendid noble!”¹³ All exclaimed the way a zealot embraces the sigils and institutions of his beliefs. What few artifacts have persisted, immured in the Ancient House, have had their context excised. That building is crucial, though not in the way OneState envisioned. It siloes off any remnants of the past behind opaque walls, but it is this rare secrecy that makes it a permeable space, physically and ideologically. It is a plane where the

12 Campbell p.259
13 Zamyatin p.53

two *Wes* intersect—the historical record now irrevocably upended by D-503’s awakening to consciousness, and the mythical ideal of the OneState now punctured, however lightly.

Even more than this carefully fabricated chronicle, OneState ceaselessly ensures near-total hegemony through a series of rituals, and ceremonies that entwine Myth into the unconscious fabric of every action “interweave myth... with all other activity.”¹⁴ Many of these are universal activities in which all must participate: the ubiquitous schedule that establishes the population as “one body with a million hands,”¹⁵ or the “election” with an outcome that is not just predetermined but enthusiastically accepted. Others are contingent: the self-effacing prostration when you inform the authorities of another’s (or your own) transgressions. All these serve as “symbolic representations of the dominant configuration”¹⁶ of the OneState. Ritual and Myth are symbiotic. Each gives the other weight—a “mutual[ly] interdependent”¹⁷ relationship that maintains the status quo, eases doubts, and encourages compliance. After all, acquiescing to circumstance is not enough; there must be fervor, a zeal to sacrifice.

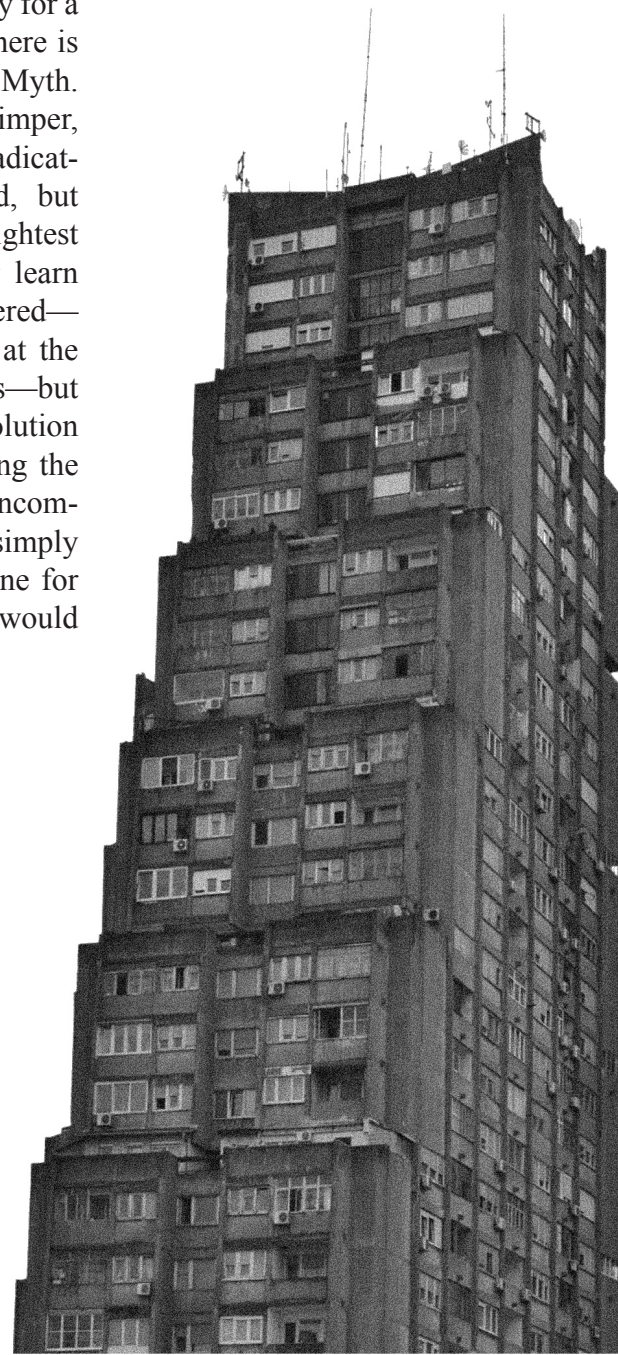
What about that “election,” anyway? It is certainly steeped in religious imagery—the Benefactor is literally described as “the new Jehovah,”¹⁸ though D-503 repeatedly uses the reverentially capitalized Him. For a society that has ostensibly moved past the “savage” trap-

pings of organized religion, the OneState has borrowed an awful lot of them. The ritual itself is like many others with a choreographed, predetermined outcome. Repetition lends it significance, giving the proceedings inertia. Everyone expects it to go the way it always has... Until it does not.

“Instant uproar... frenzy... thousands of silent mouths, screaming”¹⁹—not the first time a mass of human biology has been employed all at once, but instead of harmonious cooperation, everything is out of sync, writhing, chaotic. The illusion has been shattered, if only for a moment. For the first time, there is uncertainty and cracks in the Myth. D-503’s *We* ends with a whimper, with his “imagination” eradicated and compliance restored, but Zamyatin’s *We* offers the slightest glimmer of hope. We never learn how this day will be remembered—the OneState’s actual status at the end of the novel is ambiguous—but just as the process of revolution continues, the act of rendering the past does as well, eternally incomplete. As readers, we are simply left with a creation myth—one for a world its architect hoped would never come to pass.

¹⁴ Clyde Kluckhohn, from *Ritual and Myth*, p.252
¹⁵ Zamyatin p.11
¹⁶ Kluckhohn p.252
¹⁷ Kluckhohn p.254
¹⁸ Zamyatin p.120

¹⁹ Zamyatin p.123



On the Outside / Always Looking in: Written Selves and Outsider-ship in Reed & Babel

Dominic Vitz

University of California, Berkeley

entered Harvard as an Oregonian nobody, he ultimately cemented his collegiate reputation.¹ Crucial to his intellectual upbringing was Charles Townsend Copeland, who emphasized writing with “simple language about... actual experiences and to look for... ‘the hidden beauty of the visible world’”.² Reed’s dogged commitment to learning despite such obstacles allowed him to rise above his outsider status. His journalistic propensity seems striking, albeit unsurprising, since brevity and externality remain the tools of the trade. Reed’s studies also highlighted how personal outsidership might exist alongside the search for beauty, both of which mold his narrator in *Ten Days*.

When he traveled to Russia and gathered information for *Ten Days*, Reed’s vulnerable position as an outsider seemed somewhat uncertain. Although the communist ideology permeated his beliefs, he still “spoke almost no Russian... [while o]ther correspondents in Petrograd had been there longer [and] knew more about Russia”.³ Unable to absorb all that he witnessed due to the language barrier and distanced

¹ Frazier, 30
² Frazier, 31
³ Frazier, 35

The Bolshevik Revolution of 1917 and the ensuing civil war unleashed a wave of literary creativity that emerged from the muddy depths of human violence and despair. Sparked by the radical, optimistic reimagining of the world by communist ideologues, the American journalist John Reed traveled to Russia and soon after penned *Ten Days That Shook the World*, his celebrated account of the events of 1917. Because the text proved scripturally integral to the revolutionary narrative, it was received enthusiastically in Russia no less than elsewhere and formed the foundation of Eisenstein’s commemorative film of the same name. However, such feelings were not universal; other authors found themselves grappling with the socialist narrative. The Russian writer Isaac Babel’s *Red Cavalry Stories*, alongside the inspirational impressions found in his 1920 diary, painted the Red Army as a force marked by brutal, appetitive traits. Although Reed’s sympathies for the revolution differ markedly from Babel’s nuanced apathy, both authors indelibly inform

their texts’ respective narrators and the often traumatic memories from their experiences as outsiders. In turn, the narrator instantiates these feelings and allows the author a cathartic outlet through the figure of the hero. By imprinting their experiences onto the narrator, the hero reflects the author’s life, acutely perceived and filtered through the audience’s eyes. Consequently, the author – Reed with his eyewitness account or Babel through poetically charged short stories – can find belonging and reconcile himself with his internalized sense of otherness.

Let me first place *Ten Days* and *Red Cavalry Stories* within their respective authorial histories. After all, to grasp how Reed and Babel’s positions as othered shaped their narratorial voices, we must first examine their lives within the context of Russia and America during the early 20th century. In his article “John Reed’s Unblinking Stare”, Ian Frazier elucidates the journalist’s upbringing and emphasizes these persistent patterns of experienced externality. Although Reed

by his identity as an American citizen, it seems unsurprising that Reed would feel uncomfortable in his skin. Yet, he persevered and crafted *Ten Days*. Repeatedly, Reed entered spaces where he did not belong.

Similarly, throughout his work, Isaac Babel remains acutely aware of his identity and the sense of otherness it generated. Although Babel came from a well-educated Jewish community in Odessa,⁴ Babel's diary entries express a certain level of comfort when surrounded by Jews he encountered during his travels. On July 21st, 1920, Babel writes: "An old Jew – I love talking with our people – they understand me".⁵ After describing the cemetery, he notes that "These Jews are like paintings: lanky, silent, long-bearded, not like ours, fat and jovial" (Babel, 404). Altogether, these details indicate how Babel appreciates the cohesion rendered by his Jewishness and pays reverence to the diversity of Jewish body types. To add to that, when traveling with the Cossacks two days earlier, he briefly remarked: "A pity we can't enter Mlynov, it's a Jewish shtetl".⁶ He appears to long for these shared demarcations of Jewish society despite their comparatively different levels of education. Babel clearly cannot shake his ancestry, which somewhat severs him from his Cossack compatriots.

Nonetheless, when Jews in Demidovka billet him on the Sabbath and debate whether or not to fast, Babel does not intervene because, in his own words, "I am a Russian".⁷ Thus, due to his unique position in both circles, he remains an outsider

to both the Jews and Russians he encounters, trapping him in a crisis of liminality. Although Babel's identity creates a fundamentally different form of otherness versus Reed's, both their positions as outsiders left scars that influenced the narratorial perspectives in their respective texts. In Reed's case, this feeling propelled him to dive further into the Revolution, writing and cataloging its details in the face of his circumstances. For Babel, such externality proved more explicit, with more overt parallels in his writings, as illustrated by his diary entries.

To bridge the gulf between the author and narrator, I will now examine how Reed and Babel's lived journalistic experiences energized their voices with the air of an observer. Although the authors stand apart from their voices within the texts, Reed and Babel both understood how their memories could mold their narrators, thus placing a part of their writing selves into their written selves. For instance, Frazier notes how Reed's prior role as a journalist during the Mexican Revolution impacted his unique position in the Bolshevik literary canon. These events, which Reed captured on the frontlines, formed *Insurgent Mexico*, which Frazier frames as "an exciting first-person account, vague on political context but strong on atmosphere... [with a] flat, laconic, understated voice... that would become the distinctive American voice of the century".⁸ Frazier alludes to how Reed's wartime reporting in Mexico helped fashion this detached, seemingly objective style that also informs parts of *Ten Days*. At the same time, because Reed interweaves fictitious elements into his narrative, the text

moves beyond journalism and into legend. In the introduction to *Ten Days*, A.J.P. Taylor noted that Reed "would patch together fragments of conversations, add imaginative detail of what was likely to have happened and crown all with a brilliant phrase".⁹

Similarly, Babel infuses his narrator with his experiences derived from itinerant recording. In his article titled "The Revolutionary Art of Isaac Babel", Herbert Marder highlights how the *Red Cavalry Stories* "occasionally parody journalistic style... which [as used in "Crossing into Poland"] can shift from the news dispatch to a vision of the countryside and on the next page calmly present us with a corpse"¹⁰. On a similar note, in the "Urban Comedy of Revolution", Harry Henderson III unpacks the generic elements of Reed's works. For instance, when analyzing Reed's *Insurgent Mexico*, Henderson notes the focus on guerrilla rebels who "bear the same relationship to Reed as Isaac Babel's cossacks were to bear to the urban Jewish artist... in his *Red Cavalry Stories*"¹¹. In many respects, Babel's short stories directly mirror wartime observations, just as Reed's accounts did. Certainly, their parallel experiences as documentarians of wartime tinge the writings of Reed and Babel in similar shades. Although both Babel and Reed play with the subjectivity of first-person narration and the objectivity of journalistic reporting, their genres ultimately differentiate *Ten Days* and *Red Cavalry Stories*: Babel's collected stories decorate fiction with autobiographical flairs whereas Reed focuses his story as a political and historical chronicle.

In *Ten Days*, Reed erases his narrator, reflecting his discomfort with his externality, but also injects certain details into his voice that become superimposed onto his writing and written selves. In his numerous descriptions of meetings, Reed is often absent and not mentioned; rather, he simply describes the scene that transpires. During the fourth chapter, when recounting the meeting that catalyzed the assault on the Winter Palace, he makes way for the thoughts of the assembly: "[T]hey knew it for the truth... This clear-eyed young soldier... was the voice of... the stirring millions of uniformed workers and peasants... and their thoughts and feelings were the same".¹² Reed describes the thoughts of the whole rather than his own, thus elevating the masses over his own perspective. He eliminates the overt presence of the narrator from his account to detail the broader, universal feelings of the revolutionaries with which his writing self identifies. Indicative of an intentional journalist, the language of *Ten Days* often strays toward restating episodes with the narrator's presence absent.

Nevertheless, Reed exploits the subjectivity afforded by literature rather than journalism in his account to temper the overarching plot of the Russian Revolution with his observations, hopes, and fears. As a result, Reed folds the often distant narrator into the movement. Toward the end of the second chapter, Reed writes "Monarchist plots, German spies, smugglers hatching schemes... And in the rain, the bitter chill, the great throbbing city under grey skies rushing faster and faster towards – what?".¹³ Not

only does the selected scene deviate from a simple recounting of pertinent events preceding the Revolution, but it also infuses the text with Reed's uncertainty. In moments like these, Reed operates outside of the distinctly journalistic account demanded by the text and speaks through the narrator, placing himself into the Revolution.

Because he is not a Russian native, Reed's eye catches what slips by those around him; he remains acutely aware of "the petty conventional life of the city".¹⁴ For instance, Reed writes: "The theatres were going every night, including Sunday... I remember noticing a student of the Imperial School of Pages... who stood up correctly between the acts and faced the empty Imperial box".¹⁵ It is a minute, unimportant flash, yet it fleshes out the world, snagging a mental photograph of Russia while it perches on the brink of upheaval. Such external details, unique to Reed's memory, belong to an outsider – a boy who has yet to fully integrate into a post-tsar Russia. When combined with his propensity toward particular embodied sensory details, subjectivity peeks through the pages of *Ten Days*.

Unlike Reed, Babel foregrounds the first-person narrator first and foremost, thus imbuing *Red Cavalry Stories* with his presence and connecting his written and writing selves from the text's start. For instance, within "Berestechko", Babel's narrator states that the "Berestechko stinks inviolably to this day... [F]ading reflections of frontier misfortune wander through it. I had had enough of them by the end of the day, went beyond the edge

of the town, climbed the mountain, and reached the abandoned castle".¹⁶ The devastation of Berestechko drives the narrator away, which perhaps parallels Babel's disgust when faced with the civil war's aftermath.

In the book *Isaac Babel and the Self-Invention of Odessan Modernism*, Rebecca Stanton draws special attention to how Babel masks truth in his childhood stories, although the ideas she raises can be applied to his short stories as well.¹⁷ When discussing "the problem of genre", Stanton identifies Babel's writings as "hybrid narratives" that "embed... autobiographical material in a fictional narrative".¹⁸ As mentioned previously, the link between Babel's experiences and short stories seems quite clear, as demonstrated by his descriptions of Cossack bodies in "My First Goose." As the section continues, Stanton appears to argue that these literary strategies draw from autobiography and blur the lines between truth and fiction.¹⁹ Consequently, this curious mixture present throughout his work appears to demonstrate how Babel places the spirit of his authored self within his narrator.

Through Lyutov, the narrator remains intimately integrated into the stories told. In "My First Goose", the narrator persists, constantly present in minute, granular details. For example, the narrator remarks that "[s]moke rose from [the pot of pork] as distant smoke rises from the village hut of one's childhood, mixing hunger with intense loneliness within me".²⁰ Not only does

4 Ryan-Hayes 6
5 Babel, 404
6 Babel, 400
7 Babel, 409-410

8 Frazier, 30-31

9 Reed, ix
10 Marder, 54
11 Henderson, 427

12 Reed, 103
13 Reed, 62

14 Reed, 38
15 Reed, 38

16 Babel, 271-272
17 From which the second chapter derives its name.
18 Stanton, 50
19 Stanton, 51
20 Babel, 232

Babel often use personal pronouns like “me” here or “I” elsewhere to affect the text, but such scenes brim with personal meaning for the narrator. Despite the narrator’s fictionality, Babel pens the events of “My First Goose” through Lyutov’s unique perspective.

To reconcile their experienced otherness, which they have anchored to their narrators, the heroes of Reed’s *Ten Days* and Babel’s *Red Cavalry* stand as instantiations that allow them to heal as their respective protagonists interact and engage with those around them. Indeed, both authors facilitate this development between the hero and the written self (i.e. the narrator).

In *Ten Days*, Reed positions the revolutionary city as the hero, and the narrator’s relative invisibility demonstrates his sincere acceptance of the Bolshevik cause. Yet he begins this idea through the narrator’s encounters with prototypical figureheads of the Bolsheviks. In the chapter “On the Eve”, the narrator encounters Trotsky and witnesses him outside the environment of politics and meetings.²¹ Reed’s meeting with Trotsky immediately follows.²² As a result, Reed legitimizes Trotsky by rendering him a tangible human figure; his narratorial voice acts prophetically, positioning him as a forerunner to the Revolution. Reed scatters such moments of encounter with notables and nobodies throughout the text. During the storming of the Winter Palace, Reed asks some soldiers where they are going and then joins them as the Provisional Government crumbles.²³ Here, an encounter proves essential for Reed’s

integration into the revolutionary movement by allowing him greater access to the movement, despite his inability to directly communicate or understand Russian.

Furthermore, these moments of the narrator’s visible subjective experience via encounters pave the path for the communal hero, which Henderson defines as Red Petrograd. Henderson argues that the city emerges as the book’s hero through three stages: the unmasking of the intelligentsia, the perseverance of the Proletariat during the events at the Winter Palace, and the city’s recognition through a symbolic wedding.²⁴ Reed’s narrator serves crucial roles in these stages. Not only is he folded into key historical moments, but he also gives voice to other figures who verify Red Petrograd’s authentic position as the revolution manifested. Indeed, Henderson observes that “the figures of Lenin and Trotsky [are] the new historical character made articulate”.²⁵ Such instances remain possible by imposing the narrator’s subjective voice, cutting through his carefully constructed absence. Although he erases the narrator through the journalistically styled narrative to unite the narrator to the revolutionary cause, Reed concurrently allows the narrator to peek through to give legitimacy to these heralds of the revolution. Consequently, Reed’s effacement has allowed him to move beyond his externality and use his abilities to fuel the Bolsheviks’ efforts.

On the other hand, despite the superimposition of narrator and hero in Babel’s work, the hero maintains a complicated, nuanced distance between himself and revolutionary

ideals. Yet this connection between the two figures must first be established. Babel’s journal illustrates how his lived wartime reporting inspired the narrative voice in the *Red Cavalry Stories*. For example, when traveling with the Cossacks, Babel writes: “I ride with the division commander, the staff squadron, the horses gallop, forests, oak trees, forest paths, the division commander’s red cap, his powerful frame, bulgers, beauty, the new army, the division commander and the squadron – one body”.²⁶ Although readers must be careful not to conflate the protagonist, Lyutov, with the author himself, the start of “My First Goose” echoes the language of the diary. The narrator remarks how he is “taken aback by the beauty of [the Sixth Division Commander, Savitsky’s] beautiful body”.²⁷ Perhaps the hero allows the narrator to echo the author’s innermost desires expressed in his diary and attain a degree of refuge from his othered past. Regardless, an acute connection or parallel thus exists between the author himself, who deeply shapes the narrative voice, and the authored hero. Altogether, Babel layers author, narrator, and hero to create a singular blurry figure.

As such, encounters enable Babel’s hero both to comment on the revolution from a distance and to find cathartic release and belonging in the violence he witnesses. In “Gedali”, the narrator’s conversation with an elderly Jewish shopkeeper seems virtually devoid of any semblance of any plot but possesses passages that bubble with meaning: “The sky changes color – tender blood pouring from an overturned bottle – and a gentle aroma of decay

envelops me”.²⁸ The passage’s diction underscores how violence has infected the narrator’s mind. The hero almost indulges in these violent images wherein the decay of the Revolution provides a fleeting comfort. Nevertheless, the story concludes with Gedali walking off to pray, ending the tale peacefully and perhaps reconciling the narrator with both the violence he has seen and his past of Jewish tradition. The encounter with people and objects²⁹ allows Babel to find peace with his othered heritage via the hero. To add to that, this instance also showcases Babel’s hero’s complicated relationship with the Revolution. On one hand, by indulging in repressed feelings, Babel through Lyutov has an outlet that can reconcile himself with his internalized otherness. Yet, on the other hand, remaining aware of cultural and ethnic ties also offers a community that the Revolution threatens to wash away.

To close, although their generic differences offer them divergent avenues, Reed and Babel filter history through their sieve-like eyes to reconcile their heroes with their narrative voices. Both communicate, as Reed says: “history as I saw it”.³⁰ Such techniques prove the power of the interplay between fiction and history, especially when examining the potent experiences of revolution and war. Therefore, Reed and Babel bridge genres to demonstrate the personal importance of historical witnessing and how, in the face of violent despair, it may prove healing.

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21 Reed, 67
22 Reed, 68
23 Reed, 104-105

24 Henderson, 433-435
25 Henderson, 435

26 Babel, 395-396
27 Babel, 230

28 Babel, 228
29 See “Berestechko”, for instance.
30 Reed, 9

To My Queen Anahit

Madlen Jalalyan
University of California, Berkeley

Trapped in four walls, chained and alone,
The pale light entered my room
As the moon was turning full.
My fingers wrapped around the yarn
Were webbing patterns on the loom.
The prince, weaved the red and blue,
Making the flowers appear anew,
Surrounded by the burning flames
For Anahit my chknagh ditsuhi.*
A broken oath, to my future queen,
I only pray that she will see
The message I hide that will set me free.
If my sword began to rust,
It was not a concern to me—
No good against the metal rods,
No duels against my foes
When I am trapped behind the prison door.
How foolish it was of me to think
That my strength and virtue alone
Made me enough for the throne.
Anahit come find me,
Read my message and look for me,
For I did not abandon thee.
I listened and learned artistry,
My love, so gentle and fair,
I think of your wits and beauty,
Your gentle hands soothe me.
You were right all along,
Who knows what fate has in store
Even for a noble king.
But I do not fret, nor lose hope
I promised I would make a rug for thee
My heart knows that you will save me,
As my fingers continue to loop
Day and night, waiting for my rescue.

*chknagh ditsuhi means beautiful goddess

This poem is based on the Armenian fairytale of Queen Anahit and Vachagan. Vachagan is a spoiled prince and does not want to become king, however, upon his meeting with Anahit he falls in love with her and her wit. Anahit tells Vachagan that if he wishes to marry her he must learn how to weave carpets. The young prince agrees and as the tale progresses he wants to become a better man for her. She not only humbles him but teaches him about the importance of art and humility.

The Spine of Broken Time: Mandelstam's "Bek"

Ellie Makar-Limanov
Princeton University

Osip Mandelstam's 1922 poem "Bek" is a poignant— and tragically prophetic— portrait of the 20th century.¹ He begins with an apostrophe, echoing the personal address of lyric poetry ("Век мой, зверь мой", кто сумеет / Заглянуть в твои зрачки...?"); yet the poem instantly carries both the apocalyptic flavor of W.B. Yeats' "Second Coming" and the deep-seated pain of a Russian lament. Mandelstam paints the twenty-year-old 20th century as an age of brokenness. He examines his age within both historical time and metaphysical space and deems it a fragment of snapped bone, segregated from both.

Mandelstam describes his "век" as a broken-spined animal, and the image of a snapped spine becomes the fundamental structure of the poem's subject matter. In the opening lines, Mandelstam synthesizes anatomical breakage with temporal severance:

"Век мой, зверь мой, кто сумеет
Заглянуть в твои зрачки
И своею кровью склеит
Двух столетий позвонки?"

Even as he describes an unbreachable rupture, his creative instinct rails at the divide: the animal's

¹ The poem consists of five stanzas in trochaic tetrameter, and its lines alternate between feminine and masculine rhymes.

disjointed vertebrae and the two centuries, cleaved apart, are fused into a single image. Broken bones must be regrown, and Mandelstam beseeches somebody— anybody— to merge history's severed halves across the unbreachable divide of time.

He writes of his own epoch. "Bek" was written five years after the Russian Revolution, but it is far-seeing rather than retrospective, and Mandelstam's foresight is frighteningly accurate. The 20th century is mired in a sea of blood that gushes in throatfulls from all "earthly things" ("Кровь-строителница хлещет / Горлом из земных вещей"); blood is the construction material of this age. In the dawn-years of the Soviet Union, brokenness— from exploitative working conditions to the "alienation of the masses"— was repaired by sacrifice, force, and bloodshed. Mandelstam, who quickly came to be persecuted by the Bolshevik regime and who, as a nonrevolutionary poet, was a 'social parasite' by Soviet dictates, describes his fear at this bloody method of construction: "Захребетник лишь трепещет/ На пороге новых дней."²

² Twenty-three years after Mandelstam's



Mandelstam tells of structurally broken time, describing a present severed from the past and with no future before it. Though the poem begins with a plea directed to the future— with "сумеет" and "склеит" in the future tense— it ends with the injured present. Instead of healing, Mandelstam predicts death: "Льется, льется безразличье / На смертельный твой ушиб."

The second stanza shifts temporal gears. It describes natural, cyclical time, which is apparent in the language of obligation that Mandelstam uses ("Тварь...должна"). The animal's commitment ("...донести хребет должна") is routine— it constitutes the motions of its life and lasts as long as its lifespan ("покуда жизнь хватает"). Mandelstam's use of the imperfective aspect ("хватает," "играет") indicates that the animal's spine-bearing duty is habitual and continual: once an animal dies, its offspring takes up the same task in its stead.

Within Mandelstam's chronology, cyclical time is time of the past. This stanza features the only in-death in 1938, parasitism ("тунеядство") will be legally instated as a crime. Brodsky was famously arrested for "social parasitism" in 1964 at the age of twenty-three (Remnick).

stance of the past tense in the poem (“Снова в жертву, как ягненка, / Темя жизни принесли”), suggesting its association with an older age. Then, the earth was yet young (“Век младенческой земли”) and elastic (“Словна нежный хрящ ребенка”). Nature had governed history: hence the wave plays with the spine of time (“И невидимым играет/ Позвоночником волна”). Human history is yet fragile, akin to the boneless fontanelle of an infant’s head. Yet the natural motions of past time are those of cyclical slaughter: the animal of this stanza, the lamb, is subjected to the biblical ritual of sacrifice.

The third stanza describes a new kind of time that breaks the cyclicity of the previous age (“Чтобы вырвать век из плена.”). These lines anticipate a new world (“Чтобы новый мир начать”), echoing the temporal rhetoric of the revolutionary socialist project—old, cyclical time must be finished with, its knees must be tied. Mandelstam anatomically constructs the setup of the inevitable fall (“ушиб”) that will finish the poem: time will be tripped.³ The instrument of the new age—the flute—likely references Mayakovsky’s 1915 poem “Флейта-позвоночник”; the poet’s lyrical voice has become an instrument of revolution and temporal change. The motions of the previous stanza are reversed: now, history governs nature (“Это век волну колышет”). The animal of this stanza is anticipatory: an adder in the grass is poised in preparation for a strike. Mandelstam summons the image of the biblical serpent, whose insid-

ious whispers precipitated the first rupture of time, ending Eden’s eternity and beginning the linear time of mankind on Earth. Mandelstam parallels original sin to the events of his own age, as the 19th century turns over to the 20th. Like the suspenseful snake in the grass, late 19th-century Russian history is on the edge of catharsis. Pre-revolutionary Russia is mired in exasperated yearning (“Человеческой тоской”— Russian society’s disease of the superfluous man climbs to climax) and is appraised by the golden measure of capital (“Мерой века золотой”— that is, by money).

By the fourth stanza, time has ruptured: old is now severed from new. History is no longer in natural time, and Mandelstam juxtaposes the cyclical repetitive rhythms of nature (“И еще набухнут почки/ Брызнет зелени побег,”) with the broken, linear gait of the eponymous age. The motions of nature will continue; Mandelstam directs the reader’s gaze forward in time, referencing spring in the future tense (“набухнут почки”, “брызнет зелени побег”): natural time is connected to the future.

The time of the new age is severed from the past. Now, the age looks back on its history without comprehension (“И с бессмысленной улыбкой”), and its retrospective gaze has neither the generosity nor the generative force of spring (“Вспясть глядишь, жесток и слаб”). Mandelstam’s age is now akin to an animal that once was—but no longer is—supple and strong (“Словно зверь когда-то гибкий, / На следы своих же лап”). Mandelstam morphs the image of the nascent age to one of disillusioned discontinuity, reversing the prison

metaphor of the prior stanza: previously, the new age had represented freedom in the face of nature’s captivity (“Чтобы век из плена вырвать”); now, the new age is excluded from the freedom of budding spring—“побег,” plant shoot, doubles as a word for escape.

Time morphs from an infantile body (“Словна нежный хрящ ребенка, / Век младенческой земли”) to a pre-fall, knee-tied body (“Чтобы вырвать век из плена... Узловатых дней колена/ Нужно флейтую связать”), and then to a pathetically broken one. The fourth climactic stanza erupts in the spinal break Mandelstam had implicated in the first stanza (“кто...своею кровью склеит / Двух столетий позвонки?”). The injury is now made explicit; pliable child’s cartilage has been replaced with broken bone.

Mandelstam underlines the thematic rupture of time by constructing a rift in the poem’s grammatical structure. In lines 27-28 (“Но разбит твой позвоночник, / Мой прекрасный жалкий век!”) Mandelstam punctuates the negation “но” with the only exclamation mark in the poem, which comes to serve as a punctuational ‘break.’ The stanza also mirrors this rift phonetically: the clustered repetition of the syllable *no* (“почки...побег... позвоночник”) is replaced with the interspersed alliteration of the sound *ж* (“жалкий...жесток... своих же лап”). Now, nature and history have been severed. Neither affects the other. The animal of the fourth stanza is a weak, cruel, damaged, and current one.

The final stanza mirrors the divided structure that characterizes the

fourth stanza. Mandelstam bases the final imagery of the poem on a locational division of earth and sky. The former four lines depict “earthly things”: the seas, their fish, and the shore; the latter four lines depict a flock of birds, the clouds, and the rain. This interstanzaic division is emphasized by the phonetic structure of the stanza. The repeating sibilant, fricative, and trilling sounds of its first lines—the repetition of *op/ro* (“кровь-строительница,” “горлом,” “горящей,” “морей”) and the repetition of *x* and *еще/ящ* (“хлещет,” “вещей,” “мещет,” “горящей,” “хрящ”), which echo the conclusive lines of the first stanza (“Кровь-строительница хлещет / горлом из земных вещей, / захребетник лишь трепещет / На пороге новых дней”)—are replaced with liquid *л*: “От лазурных влажных глыб / Льется, льется безразличье / На смертельный твой ушиб.” The stanza cleaves into two spatio-phonetic halves.

Yet the ambiguous phrase denoting earthly things, “земные вещи,” encompasses both the humans that drive history, as in the first stanza, and earth’s nature, as in the last stanza (“Кровь-строительница хлещет / Горлом из земных вещей, / И горячей рыбой мещет / В берег теплый хрящ морей”). Blood gushes both from linear human history and the natural lifecycle; the collision of ocean and shore is underscored by a unity of human and natural motion. Mandelstam’s chosen metaphor for time, the animal, stands at the juncture of the human and the natural. In his concluding lines, Mandelstam brings together humans and nature under the mantle of “all earthly things”—yet at once he situates both in jux-

taposition with the sky and, metaphorically, with the heavens.

Mandelstam begins “Век” with a question: “Век мой, зверь мой, кто сумеет/ Заглянуть в твои зрачки / И своею кровью склеит / Двух столетий позвонки?” This framework poses time face-to-face with someone who will look it in the eye; the author is sidelined as a mere observer of this potential encounter. Throughout the poem, Mandelstam notes the changing interrelation between human history and nature; he observes their synthesis, then their divide; he observes the mutual bloodshed of either. Yet neither the blood of history nor the blood of nature’s cycle can glue together his fragmented age, and neither the first nor the last stanza ends with healing. The blood of *Earthly* things cannot meld the age together. In his plea for an agent who can meld together time, Mandelstam appeals to someone totally outside of either human history or nature’s rhythmic cycles.

In the final stanza, Mandelstam gestures upwards. He remains within the bounds of natural language (“И с высокой сетки птичьей/ От лазурных влажных глыб”) until the last line—“Льется, льется безразличье / На смертельный твой ушиб”—wherein he personifies the rain. Mandelstam’s locational divide of earth and sky in the fifth stanza is ensconced in a broader divide between earthly life and celestial life. In the penultimate line, Mandelstam alludes to the “кто[-то]” he had beseeched in the first line; yet his appeal to God is finally answered with indifference.

Throughout the poem, divine presence is just beyond explicit men-

tion. Nevertheless, a religious history permeates the poem’s narrative. Mandelstam appeals to God in the first stanza, beseeching him to glue together broken history. In the ancient second stanza, God is offered ritual sacrifice; in the nascent, anticipatory third stanza, faith has eroded and God is replaced by man—his coherent power is superseded by the flute, which binds the days in his stead. In the new-age fourth stanza, God is conspicuously and entirely absent.

Mandelstam extends the image of a broken spine beyond a severance of the ages and writes of a severance between the material world and the spiritual one: the greatest break is between earthly life and God. He juxtaposes earth with heaven anatomically and temporally. Mankind’s current linear history is a beast with pupils, a throat-full of blood, paws, knees, and a broken spine; the old cyclical time of nature has cartilage and a fontanelle, a supple spine swayed by the waves. It, too, gushes in throatfuls of blood and even its budding springtime “почки” are homonymic with kidneys. Mandelstam’s initial appeal to God implores him to bind time with his blood—“Кто...своею кровью скелет/ Двух столетий позвонки”—yet the implicative image of God that the poem conclusively presents eludes anatomy altogether. Within the purview of divine anatomy, rain ought to be tears, but it is instead *indifference*. Mandelstam further juxtaposes the earthly time he had outlined in sequential history with eternal celestial time, which he depicts with an emphatically repeated present-tense imperfective (“льется, льется”), indicating its ever-lasting perpetuity.

³ Mandelstam thrice invokes the image of an interruptive knot in describing that the “knees” (visually knotlike junctures of the legs’ lines) “of knotty days must be tied”.

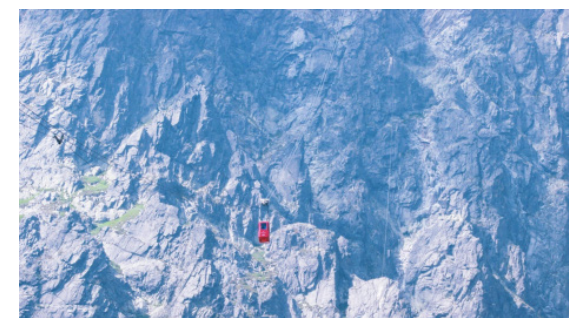
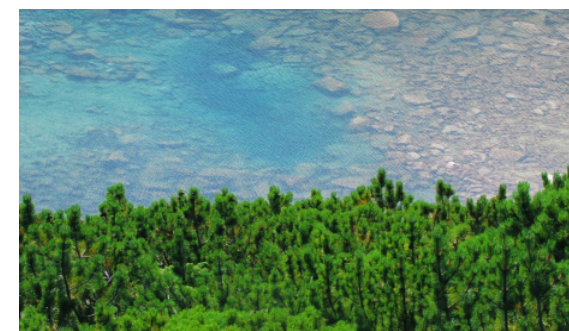
Mandelstam's God is outside of terrestrial time. He remains beyond the reach of both the poem's words and its space, which never truly move away from the bounds of Earth's atmosphere. By the final stanza, God is ambiguous; gushing blood is replaced with a pouring indifference to the plight of the modern age. It is unclear whether this negation is apophatic or nihilistic, whether God has abandoned earthly life, or whether there is any God at all. Mandelstam hence explicates the metaphor of a broken spine as a spatio-temporal address of 20th century Russia: it is outside of progressive time, outside of natural time, outside of metaphysical space. And yet, it is telling that Mandelstam's portrait of his time is neither resentful nor castigating so much as it is vivid, living, and deeply empathetic. Mandelstam does not supersede the absent God; he stands aside, watches, writes, and feels. In lieu of a poetic retribution, he pens a love letter to tragically broken time.



Summer In Slovakia

René Strezenicky Franko
Columbia University

This collection is my perspective of my family's home country in the summers of 2014 and 2016, when I was 12 and 14 years old. Nestled in the heart of Europe, Slovakia boasts a rich culture and stunning landscapes. The Slovak people's deep connection to nature is evident in these images, reflecting the nation's love for the outdoors. As I reminisce about my summer in Slovakia, I am filled with nostalgia and gratitude for the enriching experiences of my childhood. I hope this collection conveys the essence of Slovakia and resonates with those of similar Slavic heritage, evoking a sense of belonging and home.



Dostoevsky's Depth on Screen: A Comparative Study of Three Films on *Crime and Punishment*

Patrick Duan

Duke University

Introduction

Over the last century, *Crime and Punishment* by Fyodor Dostoevsky has been adapted to cinema at least twenty-four times.¹ This paper analyzes the retentions, omissions, and adaptations of the 1866 novel's original themes across three films: Lev Kulidzhanov's *Crime and Punishment* (1970), Darezhan Omirbaev's *Student* (2012), and Woody Allen's *Match Point* (2005).

Kulidzhanov's piece, filmed in the Soviet Union, is perhaps "the most faithful adaptation" of the novel to the screen.² All characters from the literary work are cast with unchanged names and roles. The 19th-century St. Petersburg setting is retained, and countless quotes are extracted verbatim from the novel. Despite working in an era where most Russian-literary films were produced in color, Kulidzhanov chose to film in black-and-white to "suggest the oppressive weight of the poverty, hopelessness, and despair" that Dostoevsky's novel embodies.³

In contrast, Omirbaev reincarnates Raskolnikov into a Kazakh student in contemporary Almaty. Although the plot of a murderer-turned-confessor is preserved, Omirbaev adjusts the original narrative into a social critique of capitalism in his native country. *Student* thus continues his record of adapting Russian-literary classics to a new setting, "the unforgiving economic backdrop" of modern-day Kazakhstan. In *Student*, the protagonist's name is never mentioned. However, while Budd Wilkins of *Slant Magazine* confirms he is "nameless,"⁴ Leslie Felperin of *Variety Magazine* refers to him as "Ali."⁵

Woody Allen's rendition features the most dramatic alterations to the traditional story. Whereas Raskolnikov "is truly poor and lives entirely on handouts,"⁶ the protagonist Chris Wilton, despite a modest background, comes to dwell among the wealthiest circles of British high society. Chris, too, lives on

handouts—albeit ones of exorbitant sums—as he feeds off an affluent family amid his "social ascent."⁷ Allen emphasizes Chris's parallels with Raskolnikov by depicting the former reading a copy of *Crime and Punishment* in bed. However, the similarities grow sparse as Allen's murderer never confesses and ultimately gets away with his crime.

Overall, these films fall short of capturing the complexity, consciousness, and symbolism of the characters in the 1866 novel. However, Kulidzhanov comes the closest by mirroring Dostoevsky's original script. Omirbaev forces the plot to support his political statement, thereby destroying the nuance and depth of the story. Allen, too, makes revisions, but changes so much that he produces new avenues of creative meaning.

Motivation to Murder

In all three films, the protagonist is motivated by philosophy, as in the novel, but across varying perspectives. Kulidzhanov's Raskolnikov explains to the investigator Porfiry Petrovic his theory of becoming a

"superman"—one who has "the right to break the law" and transcend moral boundaries.⁸ Ali, who reveals his intentions to Saniya, is inspired by the Social-Darwinist ethos of "might makes right."⁹ In both cases, the killer derives some form of ethical permission—a right to murder. In contrast, Chris in *Match Point* adheres to a nihilistic conception of the world, an absence of moral laws altogether. Thus, Chris derives his philosophical license to sin, not through any *rights*, as with the other murderers, but rather in the belief of a lack thereof. In other words, in the vacancy of principles and meaning, everything is permitted. Thus, Allen provides a creative twist to the murderous philosophy.

However, all films fail to express the utilitarian component so central to Raskolnikov's justification of murder in the novel. Dostoevsky explains this logic: "Hundreds, maybe thousands of lives put right; dozens of families saved from destitution ... Wouldn't thousands of good deeds make up for one tiny little crime?..."¹⁰

...One death for hundreds of lives— it's simple arithmetic!

This rationale is not mentioned in any of the films, thus removing from the crime the counterbalanc-

8 Kulidzhanov, Lev. *Crime and Punishment*. Gorky Film Studio, 1970; "Crime and Punishment (1970)." IMDb, 28 September 1970.

9 Omirbaev, Darezhan. *Student*. Kazakhstan Film Studios, 2012; "Student (2012)." IMDb, 5 March 2014.

10 Dostoevsky, Fyodor. *Crime and Punishment*, trans. Richard Pevar and Larissa Volokhonsky, 1993, 65.

ing justification of *charitable motives*. Consequently, in the films, the sophisticated moral dilemma Dostoevsky poses is diluted down to an act of pure self-interest.

Guilt

In Dostoevsky's novel, guilt dominates Raskolnikov's inner psyche. In fact, long before he is sentenced, it becomes clear that his guilt is a form of punishment in itself. "What, can it be starting already, can the reckoning come so soon?" the killer asks himself, reflecting on the "torment" of his mental distress.¹¹ Dostoevsky's method of expressing guilt relies on a third-person narrator voicing the inner monologues of Raskolnikov's mind.

Here, both *Student* and *Match Point* are devoid of any attempts to vocalize the killer's unspoken thoughts. Although *Crime and Punishment* (1970) does so in the opening scene, this technique is abandoned for the rest of the film. Instead, the directors try different alternatives to attempt to replace the written consciousness of the novel.

Here too, Kulidzhanov ditches the mental voice. However, he conveys the murderer's conscience through a visual substitution—by positioning Orthodox icons in the background of scenes where Raskolnikov faces a moral decision. They are found in the pawnbroker's room during the murders and in the office where Raskolnikov confesses. Additionally, Kulidzhanov uses auditory effects to compensate for this. After Raskolnikov commits the murders, one can hear the loud drums of his heavy heart. Furthermore, Kulidzhanov retains other details from the novel that hint at Raskolnikov's

11 Ibid, 90-1.

guilt: the killer discards the stolen items and later almost confesses to Zamyatov before blurting out to an officer,¹²

"I'm covered with blood!"

None of these scenes have an equivalent in *Student*. In fact, Omirbaev provides no clear indications that Ali feels guilty, thereby suggesting that the shooter's distress may only be a selfish concern of getting caught. However, unlike Raskolnikov in Kulidzhanov's film, Ali sees the ghost of one of his victims, as Omirbaev attempts to project the murderer's mind. However, the Kazakh director's decision to exclude one of the slain figures from this vision (the cashier), while grouping the other victim with the living characters in the same scene, confuses the message of this dream and its connection to the criminal's guilty conscience.

Match Point is the only cinematic rendition out of these three where the killer vocalizes his guilt: "I just feel so guilty, just so terribly guilty," Chris admits.¹³ Unlike Ali, Chris is visited by the ghosts of *both* of his victims, who condemn his crime. Despite being the most outspoken about guilt, however, Chris is the least repentant. While Raskolnikov and Ali follow Dostoevsky's script by confessing their crimes, Chris never does, telling the ghosts, "You have to learn to push the guilt under the rug and move on."¹⁴

Symbolism

Dostoevsky, Alexandra Rudicana

12 Kulidzhanov, Lev. *Crime and Punishment*. Gorky Film Studio, 1970.

13 Allen, Woody. *Match Point*. BBC Films, 2005; "Match Point (2005)." IMDb, 20 January 2006.

14 Ibid.

1 "Crime and Punishment: Ranking 24 Films Inspired by Dostoevsky's Novel." IMDb, 29 July 2020.

2 Ibid.

3 Canby, Vincent. "The Screen: 'Crime and Punishment.'" *New York Times*, 5 May 1975.

4 Wilkins, Budd. "Cannes Film Festival 2012: Darezhan Omirbaev's *Student*." *Slant*, 18 May 2012; Omirbaev, Darezhan. *Chouga*. Artcam International, 2007.

5 Felperin, Leslie. "Student." *Variety*, 18 May 2012.

6 Ivantis, Linda. "The Other Lazarus in *Crime and Punishment*." *The Russian Review*, Vol. 61, No. 3 (Jul. 2002), pp. 341-357, 353.

7 Scott, A.O. "London Calling, With Luck, Lust, and Ambition," *The New York Times*, 2005.

writes, “follows the Christian myth, with its promise of man’s redemption,” in *Crime and Punishment*.¹⁵ At the heart of this biblical plot is the story of Lazarus, a dead man resurrected by Christ. Raskolnikov requests Sonya to read this parable, an act which Rudicina argues foreshadows Raskolnikov’s own spiritual resurrection at the end of the novel.¹⁶ However, none of the three films cite scripture. Indeed, Omirbaev and Allen never mention religion in their films, and Kulidzhanov limited the explicitness of religious messages under the restraints of Soviet-era atheism.

Nevertheless, even without the Lazarus reading, much of the novel’s religious symbolism is retained in Kulidzhanov’s film through his faithful casting of Sonya. Sonya, “like Christ . . . is innocent, yet ‘becomes sin’ for the sake of her family,” a pattern which reflects Christ taking the sin of others upon himself.¹⁷ Kulidzhanov preserves this connection by retaining Sonya’s storyline of being forced into prostitution as an act of self-sacrifice to support her destitute family.

Additionally, Reverend Francis Rossow holds that in the novel, “Raskolnikov . . . proceeds from spiritual death to spiritual life through the intervention of Sonya, a Christ figure.”¹⁸ During Raskolnikov’s dialogue with Sonya in *Crime and Punishment* (1970), such religious undertones remain. Raskolnikov explains that during

his murder, “I killed myself, and not that old witch,” thereby hinting at his own spiritual death, which precedes spiritual rebirth.¹⁹ Furthermore, in Kulidzhanov’s film, Sonya proclaims to Raskolnikov, “I won’t leave you! . . . I’ll follow you to the end of the world!”²⁰ This quote, Rev. Rossow notes, echoes Jesus’s speech in Matthew 28:20: “I am with you always, even unto the end of the world.”²¹ Thus, even without explicit allusions to religion, Kulidzhanov tacitly preserves much of the spiritual superstructure of Dostoevsky’s original plot by leaving Sonya’s character unchanged and retaining quotes with religious undertones.

By contrast, Omirbaev, although not filming under the same anti-religious restraints as Kulidzhanov, fails to grasp the novel’s religious richness and depth by revising the character equivalent of Sonya in his effort to cast the poor as blameless. Saniya is not a prostitute, nor a sinner of any kind. But by not taking on any sin, she does not bear the cross as the novel was written. This revision also sees the additional loss of the poetic connection between Raskolnikov and Sonya. In the novel, the protagonist bonds with his lover through the common status of being sinners: “The murderer and the harlot strangely come together.”²² He confides in Sonya and sees her as “the only one who understands [him]” because of their shared sins: “Haven’t you done the

19 Kulidzhanov, Lev. *Crime and Punishment*. Gorky Film Studio, 1970.

20 Ibid.

21 Matthew 28:20, English Standard Version (2001); “Matthew 28:20.” *Bible.com*; Rossow, Francis. “The Gospel Pattern of Death and Resurrection in Fyodor Dostoevsky’s *Crime and Punishment*.” *Concordia Journal*, Vol. 34, No. 1, 2 (Jan.–Apr. 2008), pp. 38–48, 43.

22 Dostoevsky, Fyodor. *Crime and Punishment*, trans. Richard Pevear and Larissa Volokhonsky, 1993, 328.

same thing? . . . You have destroyed a life: your own life.”²³ Thus, Omirbaev’s reinterpretation not only forsakes the religious themes but also burns a significant point of commonality between his characters that Kulidzhanov preserves.

Nevertheless, Kulidzhanov and Omirbaev’s films retain, to varying degrees, Sonya’s symbolic role as a moral compass and inspiration for the killer to confess. In both *Crime and Punishment* (1970) and *Student* (2012), the killer looks to their lover twice before deciding to plead guilty. However, in Kulidzhanov’s film, Sonya is shown bearing an active influence over Raskolnikov, persuading him to repent through her tearful pleas as in the novel. But in Omirbaev’s film, Saniya is deaf and mute, which turns the animated dialogue of the story into a flat monologue from Ali. Thus, Omirbaev reduces more of the original Sonya’s significance as Saniya is relegated to the role of a passive-observer apropos Ali’s character arc.

Nola, in Allen’s film, is also, to an extent, a moral compass for the sinful protagonist. Indeed, she repeatedly tells Chris to “do the right thing” and implores him to confess the affair to his wife.²⁴ However, Chris ultimately rejects her advice. Overall, Allen’s creative freedom sees the Sonya archetype twisted into serving new purposes, but this has interesting implications: instead of serving as the killer’s inspiration for moral redemption, Nola is the source of Chris’s sins—the object of his adultery—and later the reason for his murders.

23 Kulidzhanov, Lev. *Crime and Punishment*. Gorky Film Studio, 1970.

24 Allen, Woody. *Match Point*. BBC Films,

2005.

Class Commentary

A signature of Dostoevsky’s novel, Linda Ivantis notes, is his exploration of “the complex psychology of the destitute person, who may be both victim and *perpetrator* of [their own] suffering.”²⁵ Indeed, this method is exemplified in the character of Marmeladov, whose unrepentant alcoholism forces his daughter into prostitution and ultimately pushes his family into the streets. Kulidzhanov, in his film, maintains Marmeladov’s complexity by casting a sympathetic and pitiable figure as simultaneously sinful and the cause of his own suffering—to make it difficult for the viewer to judge a character any *one* way. Indeed, the Soviet film retains the drunkard’s song of self-condemnation: “I ought to be crucified, not pitied.”²⁶

In *Student*, by contrast, Omirbaev drains all complexity away from the poor, instead using poverty to serve his one-sided polemic against capitalism. Tomanov, the film’s character equivalent of Marmeladov, is a starving artist whose blameless passion for poetry becomes unprofitable under capitalism. Thus, the resulting financial woes of his family have only the economic system to blame. Here, the Kazakh director reduces the novel’s moral grayness down to a mutually exclusive portrayal of good and evil along class lines. Indeed, in an adaptation of Raskolnikov’s dream of the beaten donkey, a poor farmer frees a rich

25 Ivantis, Linda. “The Other Lazarus in *Crime and Punishment*.” *The Russian Review*, Vol. 61, No. 3 (Jul. 2002), pp. 341–357, 351.

26 Kulidzhanov, Lev. *Crime and Punishment*. Gorky Film Studio, 1970.

man’s car from the mud; the latter responds by whacking the former’s donkey to death. This unnuanced villainization of the wealthy and purification of the poor simplifies Dostoevsky’s portrayal of immorality among the oppressed: in the novel, the donkey is beaten by its owner—a peasant.

Furthermore, according to Edward Wasiolek, Dostoevsky portrays the victim’s situation as “one in which the individual looks for his misery and destitution and derives some strange satisfaction from displaying it and even exaggerating it.”²⁷ Indeed, the peasant laughs and finds joy in hammering his pet to death. Thus, Omirbaev’s one-dimensional characterizations betray the convo-

By inscribing reprehensible traits into sympathetic and suffering figures, the monochrome Soviet film illustrates a colorful ambivalence and ambiguity of personas not captured by the black-and-white moral demarcations of *Student*.

luted personalities of the novel. Allen, however, throws the theme of poverty out the door by depicting Chris and the Hewett family as thriving in exorbitant affluence. Though tearing up the central foundations of the novel’s plot, the American director, again, produces new avenues of meaning without falling into Omirbaev’s reductionist hole. Indeed, the motif of wealth in *Match Point*, alone, yields an array of interpretations. Chris succeeds in climbing to the zenith of the social ladder, yet in the final scene, sur-

27 Wasiolek, Edward. *Dostoevsky: The Major Fiction*. Cambridge, MA: M.I.T. Press (1964), 63.

rounded by a mountain of riches, he looks more discontent than to begin with. His achievements come with irreparable costs: Chris sacrifices Nola to get there. This could be read as a warning of the permanent regret in choosing money over true love or, as Chris enters a life of indissoluble guilt, a suggestion that financial mediocrity is more bearable than a wounded conscience. Either way, Allen leaves the moral of the story open-ended, and in doing so, unlike Omirbaev, treads nearer to preserving the spirit of Dostoevsky’s literary depth.

Conclusion

In the end, these three films speak to the general inability of cinema to capture the moral complexity, inner psyche, and symbolic significance of characters in a novel such as *Crime and Punishment*. However, Lev Kulidzhanov’s *Crime and Punishment* (1970) is proof that it is possible to come close by playing it safe and sticking to a proven script. On the other hand, Darezhan Omirbaev’s *Student* (2012) illustrates how bending

another author’s plot to fit one’s opinionated message can destroy the multi-layered depth of a creative work. Instead, Woody Allen’s *Match Point* (2005) suggests that the solution to balancing reinterpretation with artistic complexity may be to recreate the story altogether. Above all, the hermeneutic profundity which Kulidzhanov retains, and Allen innovates, and which Omirbaev reduces, confirm the dictum that the hallmark of good literature is its ambiguity, which sparks a myriad of interpretations and debates.



Poor Liza's Lasting Legacy

Luke Kurcina
University of Virginia

Nikolai Karamzin is often credited with founding the modern Russian literary tradition. His short story “Poor Liza,” published in 1792, revolutionized Russian writing, launching a long legacy full of brilliant literary and artistic works. Because of Karamzin’s foundational significance, tracing the archetype of “Poor Liza” through Russian literature demonstrates the artistic and intellectual progression of the Russian literary tradition. Tracing this archetype also allows for intertextual communication between Russian writers, amplifying the commentary of each individual author.

Nikolai Karamzin’s story “Poor Liza” highlights the Russian aesthetic and moral attitude towards women in the late 18th century. Georgetown University Professor of Russian Svetlana Grenier describes this demure feminine ideal, remarking that “in...the Sentimental system the heroine is defined as a creature ‘beautiful in body and soul,’ and at the same time socially and sexually vulnerable.”¹ Karamzin’s Liza fits this model perfectly; she is beautiful, humble, and naive, associated with purity and nature. Liza lives in the country with her

mother, helping at home and selling flowers in town. It is nauseatingly picturesque. Yet, Karamzin’s story is that of an innocent maid seduced and abandoned by a man. This tragic conclusion to a Sentimental story indicates layers to Karamzin’s “Poor Liza” yet to be unpacked.

With Karamzin’s conclusion commenting on the pitfalls of naive idealism and critiquing gender roles in Russia, this story becomes a satirical tragedy of Sentimental values. Describing the natural scenery where Liza lives, Karamzin writes,

Below unfold fertile, lushly verdant meadows strewn with a variety of tiny... flowers, beyond which... flows a crystalline river... murmuring beneath the rudders of the heavily laden, flat-bottomed boats sailing from the most fruitful lands of the Russian Empire to provide covetous Moscow with grain.²

This flowery imagery epitomizes the Sentimentalist idealization of nature. The landscape itself is viewed as a benevolent force, nestling Liza and her mother in its innocent bosom, while Moscow is a “covetous” consumer of grain. The absolute nature of this dichotomy

mocks Sentimental naivete, while later events upset the divide, when innocence is lost in the countryside and the “covetous” invades the natural. Just a few pages later, Karamzin delivers another Sentimental cliché, yet with darker undertones. Erast (Liza’s lover) tells her, “I would always like to buy flowers from you; I would be pleased if you would pick them only for me.”³ Though the surface seems tame, there is a subliminal sexual innuendo to Erast’s words. Erast makes no promise that he will not “buy flowers” from other women, but his whole interest in Liza rests on whether she “would pick them only for [him].” The moment Liza’s innocence is compromised, Erast loses interest, and the charms of Liza’s Sentimental purity are lost entirely. Karamzin is commenting on Erast’s idealism and flakiness, his contradictory lust for a pure maiden, and all the “weak and capricious” aspects of Sentimentalism.⁴ Karamzin is revealing the crux of the Sentimental pitfall: naive idealism colors the world leaving one blind to the darkness of reality.

Karamzin’s “Poor Liza” is profound in itself, as demonstrated by its popularity among contemporaries. Tracing Poor Liza, however, through the following decades extends the significance of Karamzin’s story to 19th-century Russian

literature as well.

Aleksandr Pushkin picks up Karamzin’s pen a few years later, building on “Poor Liza” through Lizaveta Ivanovna in his short story “Queen of Spades.” Though following Karamzin’s archetype, Pushkin’s approach is very different. Where Karamzin overwhelmingly employs Sentimentalist images, themes, and phrases, Pushkin intentionally mixes styles. As Grenier observed, “Pushkin traces [Liza’s] lineage to several genres... No sooner does Pushkin introduce one of these [literary] codes than he subverts it through introducing another one. This procedure results in an all-pervasive relativization of generic predictability.”⁵ Simply put, Pushkin is blending genres. He does not want one interpretation to win above all others, so he intertwines folkloric, Sentimental, Gothic, and Romantic themes to confuse Liza’s characterization.

Overall, Pushkin’s Liza is rather ambiguous. Unlike Karamzin’s Liza, there is minimal genuine romance in “Queen of Spades.” Grenier argues that Liza’s love was “but a thrilling, fascinating, dangerous game, motivated... by the desire for recognition of her human and feminine significance.”⁶ Pushkin’s Liza is not nearly as naive as Karamzin’s. When describing her low status, Pushkin writes that “[Lizaveta] was proud, felt her position keenly, and looked about—waiting impatiently for a deliverer.”⁷ At first, she is rational and cautious, taking things slowly with Hermann. Eventually, she gets caught up in the romance and the dream of deliverance. Liza’s vulnerable social

position leaves her primed to make such a mistake—all men (all potential “deliverers”) before Hermann have looked past Liza to her low social standing. Pushkin’s telling is a bit more sinister than Karamzin’s; Lizaveta Ivanovna is less naive than she is blinded by her social trauma, and the male character is not just Sentimentally flaky, but intentionally deceiving Liza from the beginning. Considered together, Karamzin and Pushkin’s Lizas illustrate the evolving notions of female psychology and sexuality in early 19th-century Russia. However, these two examples are far from the full narrative of Poor Liza.

In her story “Self-Sacrifice,” Mariya Zhukova provides one of few interpretations of Poor Liza’s legacy from a female perspective. Right away, Zhukova rejects the docile image of Liza. Zhukova writes of her,

“Her attraction was not that childish charm or the frailty which are so pleasing in a woman: an artist would have depicted her as a Druidic priestess, on the top of a cliff staring into the limitless distance... or as a proud Amazon, just as she was now, on a fine black horse which... seemed to obey the hand that guided it against its own will.”⁸

Not only does Zhukova reject the Sentimental feminine ideal, but she even displays Poor Liza as a Romantic Hero—a position typically reserved for men. This associates her with Russian symbols of masculinity. Zhukova also portrays Liza on horseback, expertly guiding her mount, invoking the cultural mythos of Cossack masculine power. Zhu-

kova crafts her Liza as internally independent and willful as any man. As such, Liza strains against social barriers that reduce her to an ill-bred servant girl. “Self-Sacrifice” is an exposé of High Society’s restrictive expectations. Liza is doomed to fail from the start because her social position does not align with her personal temperament. She is punished for being herself. The societal culpability for Liza’s tragic end echoes Pushkin’s story, but Zhukova’s portrayal of Liza is very different. Pushkin depicted a sympathetic, reasonable girl who gets caught up in a romance due to her desire for a savior. Zhukova depicts a strong-willed, intelligent young woman who legitimately falls in love but is rejected by High Society. Zhukova is using Poor Liza to underline the abuses of social power, the prejudice of the Russian aristocracy, and the unequal expectations regarding female and male promiscuity.

Zhukova’s Poor Liza throws out the concept of the tragic, abandoned damsel, instead concluding “Self-Sacrifice” with an image of Liza taking control of her fate. Near the end of the story, Liza does reflect tearfully on the injustice of what happened to her. However, she does not commit suicide as does Karamzin’s Liza, nor is she married off to some secondary suitor as was Pushkin’s Liza. Zhukova emphasizes female agency in a story exposing the lack thereof in Russian society. She provides a complex, active portrayal of Poor Liza, contrasting deeply the wistful women of her predecessors’ tales.

In his novel *Notes from Underground*, Fyodor Dostoevsky portrays another incarnation of Poor Liza. Dostoevsky blends the pure,

1 Grenier, 93-107.

2 Karamzin, 181.

3 Karamzin, 184.

4 Karamzin, 186.

5 Grenier, 95-6.

6 Grenier, 104.

7 Pushkin, 207.

8 Zhukova, 232.

naive Liza with the trope of the “Redeemed Prostitute”—a theme with literary progenitors at least as far back as Rahab of Jericho. In Dostoevsky’s work, Liza is a prostitute visited by the reproachable “Underground Man.” He talks a big game, trying to position himself as Liza’s moral superior, but when Liza shows up later at his apartment, it becomes obvious that this was an illusion. The Underground Man reveals his emotions, “[Liza] entered [the apartment], stopped, and began gazing at us in perplexity. I looked, died of shame, and rushed to my room.”⁹ Having successfully coalesced the pure, naive Poor Liza and the Redeemed Prostitute, Dostoevsky now brilliantly brings both those tropes to a climax in an instant. Here again, we see Poor Liza, betrayed by a “lover,” told promises that could not be kept. However, this moment also shows the impure Prostitute seeking Redemption. Liza came to him searching for help, but through her reaction to the Underground Man’s exposure, Liza redeems herself. Upon entering the apartment, Liza takes one look at the squalor and understands that it is *she* who would help redeem *him*. She has compassion for him and forgives him. With a prostitute as a moral ideal, Dostoevsky is exploring a concept of morality prioritizing intentions over actions. Dostoevsky demonstrates that it is not personal depravity which made Liza a prostitute, but circumstance and social abuse that forced her into sex work.

The intertextuality of Poor Liza takes on even more importance when considering the symbolic significance of *Notes from Underground* to Russian culture. Literal-

ly, the novel is a host of ideological ramblings satirizing Chernyshevsky and the Russian Radicals of the 1860s. Functionally, it is an exploration of and commentary on various artistic and intellectual movements in Russia. Because of its content and composition, *Notes from Underground* serves as an ideo-cultural nexus for Russian literature. It reflects on what went before and speaks to what comes after. Dostoevsky positions Liza—in her roles as Poor Liza and as the Redeemed Prostitute—as central to the climax of *Notes from Underground*. The moment between Liza and the Underground Man in his apartment at the end of the story is so successful only because of the long line of Lizas that came before. In a novel exploring the vicissitudes of Russian culture, Dostoevsky intentionally harks back to Karamzin’s original. *Notes from Underground*, though certainly a force to be reckoned with itself, loses impact if one ignores Karamzin’s, Pushkin’s, or even Zhukova’s Lizas. Each adds something to the cultural heritage of Russia and provides a vital perspective on Poor Liza and the themes orbiting her archetype.

In his short story “Ward No. 6,” Anton Chekhov makes multiple references to Dostoevsky’s *Notes from Underground*, citing the arguments presented in that work and exploring many of the same principles. Speaking to his patient in a psych ward, Our Hero Andrei Yefimych remarks, “You ask, what is to be done?” alluding to Chernyshevsky’s work, which *Notes from Underground* responds to.¹⁰ Also, many of the Underground Man’s arguments are echoed in “Ward No. 6,” with Chekhov even referencing

the “toothache” concept presented by the Underground Man.¹¹ Chekhov recognized the importance of *Notes from Underground* and the wealth of commentary he could craft by recalling its themes.

Though “Ward No. 6” itself lacks a Poor Liza, her legacy is alive in this masterpiece of Chekhov’s oeuvre. Chekhov even encourages an intertextual interpretation of this work, making specific references to *Notes from Underground*. Because Poor Liza was so central to Dostoevsky’s arguments in *Notes from Underground*, she is also critical to the message of Chekhov’s “Ward No. 6.” Though published a century apart, “Poor Liza” and “Ward No. 6,” are knotted at the nexus of *Notes from Underground*.

Though the original story of “Poor Liza,” published 231 years ago, may seem archaic to a modern reader, the value of Karamzin’s work cannot be understated. Poor Liza is foundational to the entire Russian literary tradition, and the themes explored by her various incarnations remain topical and controversial, even to a modern American audience. What Karamzin created allowed countless writers to draw from Poor Liza’s archetype, commenting on the ever-evolving issues of human society and psychology. In this way, Poor Liza’s legacy shaped 19th-century Russian literature significantly.

Of War and Pickles: Vasilisa Egorovna and Ivan Kuzmich in Pushkin’s *The Captain’s Daughter*

Ellie Makar-Limanov

Princeton University

The Passage

In the sixth chapter of *The Captain’s Daughter* (enticingly titled “The Pugachev Rebellion” — at last!), Pushkin begins with a two-page scene about Captain Ivan Kuzmich Mironov and his wife, Vasilisa Egorovna, as she attempts to learn the news of Pugachev’s imminent arrival:

“Иван Кузьмич, оставшись полным хозяином, тотчас послал за нами, а Палашку запер в чулан, чтоб она не могла нас подслушать.

Василиса Егоровна возвратилась домой, не успев ничего выведать от пощады, и узнала, что во время ее отсутствия было у Ивана Кузьмича совещание, и что Палашка была под замком. Она догадалась, что была обманута мужем, и приступила к нему с допросом. Но Иван Кузьмич приготовился к нападению. Он нимало не смутился и бодро отвечал своей любопытной сожительнице: «А слышь ты, матушка, бабы наши вздумали печи топить соломою; а как от того может произойти несчастье, то я и отдал строгий приказ впредь соломою бабам печей не топить, а топить хворостом и валежником». — «А для чего ж было тебе запирасть Палашку? — спросила комендантша. — За что бедная девка просидела в чулане, пока мы не воротились?» Иван Кузьмич не был приготовлен к такому вопросу; он запутался и пробормотал что-то очень нескладное. Василиса Егоровна увидела коварство своего мужа; но зная, что ничего от него не добьется, прекратила свои вопросы и завела речь о соленых огурцах, которые Акулина Памфиловна приготовляла совершенно особенным образом. Во всю ночь Василиса Егоровна не могла заснуть, и никак не могла догадаться, что

бы такое было в голове ее мужа, о чем бы ей нельзя было знать” (Пушкин, 36-37).

Why is this seemingly superfluous, oddly humorous passage situated in Pyotr Grinev’s narrative? What purpose does it serve within Pushkin’s novel? I will attempt to answer this question as fully as possible by answering it thrice. First, I will consider how this passage is situated within the plot of *The Captain’s Daughter*; second, I will consider how this passage is situated within the story’s stylistic structure; third, I will consider how this passage is

situated within the story’s first-person narrative.

The Plot

This passage arouses suspicion, firstly, because it appears to be unnecessary. The story is about Pyotr after all, but we learn nothing about his experience from the passage cited above.¹ Neither does this mo-

¹ The temporal gap between “Иван Кузьмич, оставшись полным хозяином, тотчас послал за нами, а Палашку запер в чулан, чтоб она не могла нас подслушать...” and “Василиса Егоровна возвратилась домой...” has already been filled in the previous pages, in which Pyotr learned about Pugachev’s imminent attack on the Belogorsk fortress: „Однажды вечером (это было в начале октября 1773 года) сидел я дома один (...) Тут

ment convey anything of historical significance.² The passage focuses on minor, short-lived characters and does not advance the plot.³ Why,

он задумался и в рассеянии стал насвистывать французскую арию” (35-36).

² Compare this to the passage on the previous page, in which Pyotr justifies his deviation from the narrative: „Прежде, нежели приступлю к описанию странных происшествий, коим я был свидетель, я должен сказать несколько слов о положении, в котором находилась Оренбургская губерния в конце 1773 года” (35).

³ The passage seems especially inessential in light of Pyotr’s promise to tell of “unexpected events, which were to have a significant influence on [Pyotr’s] whole life” and suddenly give his soul “a strong and salutary shock” in the end of the previous chapter: “Неожиданные происшествия, имевшие важные влияния на всю мою жизнь, дали вдруг моей душе сильное и благое потрясение” (323, 34). Upon first glance, this episode seems like a mere

9 Dostoevsky, 118.

10 Chekhov, 193.

11 Chekhov, 200.

then, does Pushkin include it in the story?

A closer reading of the passage reveals that it is a manifestation of the broader conflict between matriarchal and patriarchal forces. The comical interaction between Vasilisa Egorovna and Ivan Kuzmich foreshadows the military conflict between Catherine the Great and Yemelyan Pugachev who, likewise, constitute a literary pair. The above interaction between husband and wife occurs within a previously-established gendered power dynamic: Ivan Kuzmich, a seasoned captain, is formally in charge of the military sphere; and Vasilisa Egorovna, who keeps the house clean and expertly pickles mushrooms, is formally in charge of the domestic sphere.

Yet the passage reveals a tension between the masculine and feminine powers. Vasilisa Egorovna attempts to invade Ivan Kuzmich's military domain by wheedling secret information out of him, whereas Ivan Kuzmich rebels against the feminine authority of the domestic domain by physically evicting all women from the house.⁴ Ivan Kuzmich further encroaches on the domestic sphere by suggesting that women don't know how to properly operate ovens: he refers to feminine actors (“матушка, бабы, [...] бабам”) and tries to assert

delay in the revelation of these unexpected events.

4 He tricks Vasilisa Egorovna and Masha into visiting the priest's wife (“...Он довольно искусным образом выпроводил Василису Егоровну, сказав ей, будто бы отец Герасим получил из Оренбурга какие-то чудные известия, которые содержит в великой тайне. Василиса Егоровна тотчас захотела отправиться в гости к попадье, и, по совету Ивана Кузьмича, взяла с собою и Машу, чтоб ей не было скучно одной”) and locks the serf-girl Palashka in the closet (“а Палашку запер в чулан, чтоб она не могла нас подслушать”). Only after all female presence has been removed, does he “remain the absolute master” (“Иван Кузьмич, оставшись полным хозяином”) (36-37).

his authority over them (“отдал строгий приказ”).⁵ Nevertheless, Vasilisa Egorovna maintains the seat of power, which is apparent in the ironic phrase “оставшись полным хозяином.” Ivan Kuzmich becomes an “absolute master” only when Vasilisa Egorovna leaves, so his mastery is clearly not absolute (36). Vasilisa's superiority is also evident in the passage's language. This is apparent in the contrast between the active voice describing Vasilisa Egorovna's actions and the passive voice describing Ivan Kuzmich's: “Василиса Егоровна *возвратилась* домой, *не успев* ничего *вывесть* от попадьи, и *узнала*, что во время ее отсутствия *было* у Ивана Кузьмича совещание, и что Палашка *была* под замком. Она догадалась, что *была* обманута мужем, и приступила к нему с допросом” (36; my emphasis).⁶

The military terminology Pushkin uses (“Она [...] *приступила* к нему с допросом. Но Иван Кузьмич *приготовился к нападению*”) frames the interaction between Vasilisa Egorovna and Ivan Kuzmich as a battle with attacks and retreats, echoing the military conflict that is taking place between Pugachev's and Catherine's forces and foreshadowing the coming siege of the Belogorsk fortress (36; my emphasis).⁷ Vasilisa Egorovna's “допрос”

5 “А слышь ты, матушка, бабы наши вздумали печи топить соломою; а как от того может произойти несчастье, то я и отдал строгий приказ впредь соломою бабам печей не топить, а топить хворостом и валежником” (37; my emphasis). Ovens and fire are a traditional symbol of domesticity, and may be seen to represent the home here, in which case, Ivan Kuzmich is suggesting that women cannot properly manage the home.

6 Vasilisa's actions are described with active verbs that phonetically resonate (успев/узнать, возвратилась/вывесть). Возвратилась also phonetically resonates with the name Василиса, paralleling the звонкие/глухие гласные dichotomy of успев/узнать.

7 For instance, Vasilisa Egorovna performs a tactical withdrawal by redirecting the the conver-

foretells how— in just a few pages—the captain's men will interrogate an enemy Bashkir; and how— in a few chapters— Pyotr will be interrogated for his association with Pugachev (“Начался допрос”) (79). Meanwhile, Ivan Kuzmich's decision to lock up Palashka foreshadows that Shvabrin will lock up Masha while she remains in the fortress. By asking, “За что бедная девка просидела в чулане, пока мы не воротились?” Vasilisa Egorovna foretells her daughter's fate: Masha too will eventually “sit locked up” until Pyotr returns (*воротиться*) for her (326). This superficially humorous passage hence predicts the novel's most critical events. Ivan Kuzmich's momentary mastery over the household foreshadows Pugachev's temporary takeover of Orenburg. Vasilisa Egorovna's dominance over Ivan Kuzmich, meanwhile, gestures at Catherine's superior power; her eventual victory over her husband foreshadows Catherine's eventual victory over Pugachev.⁸

The Style

The clashing forces of matriarchy and patriarchy are furthermore reflected in the passage's style, in which colloquial domestic jargon (“слышь ты, матушка” “бабы наши вздумали” “А для чего ж

sation to the domestic topic of Akulina Pamfilovna's extraordinary brined pickles: “...Зная, что ничего от него не добьется, [она] прекратила свои вопросы и завела речь о соленых огурцах, которые Акулина Памфиловна готовила совершенно особенным образом” (37). Pickling is established as a domestic sphere wherein the woman reigns supreme; the general later notes that Vasilisa Egorovna has mastered the art of pickling mushrooms: “...мадам Миронов добрая была дама, и какая майстрица грибы солить!” (56).

8 Pyotr previously observes that Vasilisa Egorovna is in charge of both the household and the fortress, as well as of Ivan Kuzmich himself, “Жена его им управляла, что согласивалось с его беспечностью. Василиса Егоровна и на дела службы смотрела, как на свои хозяйские, и управляла крепостию так точно, как и своим домком” (23).

было тебе” “девка” “о соленых огурцах”) clashes with more official phrases (“тотчас послал за нами” “приступила к нему с допросом” “приготовился к нападению” “сожительнице” “отдал строгий приказ” “не был приготовлен к такому вопросу” “коварство своего мужа” “завела речь” “которые Акулина Памфиловна готовила совершенно особенным образом”) (36-37). Pushkin stylistically reflects the historical moment of the Pugachev rebellion: the illiterate Pugachev, hero of the peasantry and bearer of colloquial language, clashes against Catherine the Great, an enlightened despot who represents the educated elite and acts as the bearer of official imperial language. The bizarrely-mixed heteroglossic language creates a perplexingly humorous effect. This passage opens the chapter that marks a dark turning point in the novel; hardly ten pages later, Ivan Kuzmich and Vasilisa Egorovna are abruptly and violently killed.⁹ Why does a humorous episode open the most horrific and serious part of the novel?

An examination of Pushkin's humorous language reveals that the selected words anticipate Ivan Kuzmich and Vasilisa Egorovna's deaths. The passage predicts the coming tragedy (“а как от того может произойти несчастье”), Pugachev's cruelty (“коварство своего мужа”), and even Vasilisa

9 In her essay Пушкин и Пугачев, Marina Tsvetaeva notes that Ivan Kuzmich would've been a comical figure if not for his noble death: “комендант Миронов, тип почти комический, если бы не пришлось ему на наших глазах с честью умереть...” (Цветаева). Vasilisa Egorovna's comical nature is also subverted by the way she meets her end; it is strongly implied that she has been raped by Pugachev's men just prior to her death, for they drag her out “disheveled and stripped naked” (339). This violence further adds to the grim reality and shock value of the scene; Ivan Kuzmich had anticipated that Masha could be subjected to sexual violence, but not his wife, who is considered an old woman.

Egorovna's dying words about her husband's head (“что бы такое было в *голове ее мужа*, о чем бы ей нельзя было знать”; “Свет ты мой, Иван Кузьмич, удаля солдатская *головушка!*”) (37, 46; my emphasis). Pyotr, as the narrator, is acutely aware of Ivan Kuzmich and Vasilisa Egorovna's impending deaths, and upon rereading, what was a silly moment between husband and wife is suddenly imbued with tragic nostalgia. Pyotr recalls the couple's squabbles with the same sad fondness with which one might recall the ridiculous antics of a family member that has passed away.

The Narrative

This brings us to the final conundrum of the passage: the question of perspective. Throughout the passage, Pushkin alternately expresses Vasilisa Egorovna's and Ivan Kuzmich's inner thoughts.¹⁰ Our usual narrator, Pyotr, is not even present in the scene.¹¹ The last line of this excerpt— “Во всю ночь Василиса Егоровна [...] никак не могла догадаться, что бы такое было в голове ее мужа, о чем бы ей нельзя было знать”— reads iron-

10 The passage appears to be polyphonic as it alternates between Ivan Kuzmich's and Vasilisa's Egorovna's perspectives. A switch of perspective occurs three times in the passage, with “Иван Кузьмич, оставшись (...) подслушать” and “Но Иван Кузьмич приготовился (...) что-то очень нескладное” expressing Ivan's perspective, and “Василиса Егоровна возвратилась (...) с допросом” and “Василиса Егоровна увидела (...) чем ей нельзя было знать” expressing Vasilisa's (37). For instance, “Она догадалась, что была обманута мужем, и приступила к нему с допросом” is from Vasilisa's perspective, while “Но Иван Кузьмич приготовился к нападению. Он нимало не смутился и бодро отвечал своей любопытной сожительнице” is from Ivan's, which is apparent from the manner in which either spouse refers to the other: Vasilisa thinks of herself by name and of Ivan as “her husband” (“обманута мужем”), while Ivan thinks of himself by name and of Vasilisa as “his inquisitive companion (“своей любопытной сожительнице”) (37).

11 As aforementioned, Pushkin has already told us about Pyotr's experience of discovering about Pugachev's imminent attack on pages 35-36.

ically: how does Pyotr know what is going on in Vasilisa Egorovna's head? How does our narrator know about this interaction?

The unusual perspectives featured in this scene suggest that it is a reconstructed memory rather than a perceptual one. At this point in the story, Pyotr has grown close to the Mironov family and is well acquainted with its members' personalities and interrelationships.¹² The written interaction between Vasilisa Egorovna and Ivan Kuzmich describes how Pyotr *imagines* Vasilisa Egorovna and Ivan Kuzmich had acted, basing his conjecture on the regular familial interactions he is familiar with. Pushkin hints at such implicit knowledge in the passage: note how Vasilisa Egorovna's knowledge of her husband's character connects to the implied regularity of his attempts at secrecy (“...но *зная*, что ничего от него не добьется, прекратила свои вопросы”). Pushkin further connects knowledge with regular action by referencing Akulina Pamfilovna's brined pickles: “... и завела речь о соленых огурцах, которые Акулина Памфиловна *готовила* совершенно особенным образом” (37). The imperfect verb aspect of “готовила” calls to mind the mundane, repetitive actions by which we come to know the habitual tendencies of other people.

Yet this imagined memory isn't just Pyotr's, but also Masha's. Masha, who was more likely to have learned about this specific interaction between her parents than Pyotr would have, serves as a hidden evidential source for this scene. Vasilisa Egorovna took Masha with her

12 “Командиры, слышно, им довольны; а у Василисы Егоровны он как родной сын” (34).

to visit the priest's wife; they likely returned together, so Masha also likely witnessed Vasilisa's initial attempt to confront her husband. Masha also quite probably learned about this interaction from her mother in the two days it took her to dupe Ivan Kuzmich into confessing.¹³

In narrating other parts of *The Captain's Daughter* that he did not witness (such as Masha's journey to St. Petersburg), Pyotr references the "stories" he had heard "so often...that the smallest details are engraved in [his] memory, and it seems to [him] as if [he] had been invisibly present"(385).¹⁴ As Masha is obviously best acquainted with the interactions of her married parents, her stories underpin Pyotr's description of the scene between Vasilisa Egorovna and Ivan Kuzmich. While the voices of her parents are explicit and Pyotr's voice structurally implicit, Masha's memories of her family glimmer through as the underlayer of his puzzling—but tragically touching—moment.

In Conclusion: The Conclusion

The Captain's Daughter is first and foremost a story about family, and its intergenerational theme dominates the work. The novel's conclusion reads:

“Здесь прекращаются записки Петра Андреевича Гринева. Из семейственных преданий известно (...) Потомство их

¹³ “Василиса Егоровна тотчас захотела отправиться в гости к попадье, и, по совету Ивана Кузьмича, взяла с собою и Машу, чтоб ей не было скучно одной” (36).

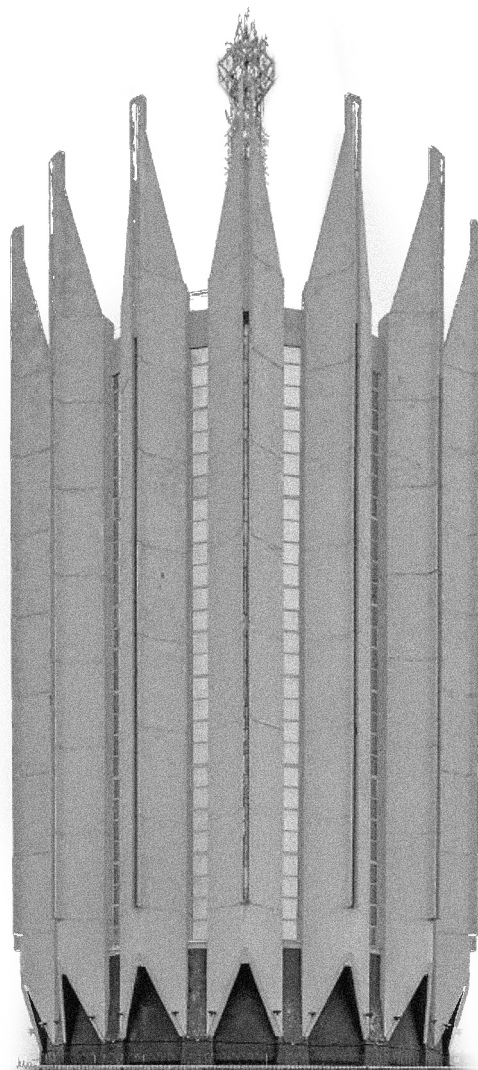
¹⁴ “Я не был свидетелем всему, о чем остается мне уведомить читателя; но я так часто слышал о том рассказы, что малейшие подробности вре зались в мою память, и что мне кажется, будто бы я тут же невидимо присутствовал” (81).

благоденствует в Симбирской губернии. (...) Оно писано к отцу Петра Андреевича и содержит оправдание его сына и похвалы уму и сердцу дочери капитана Миронова. Рукопись Петра Андреевича Гринева доставлена была нам от одного из его внуков, который узнал, что мы заняты были трудом, относящимся ко временам, описанным его дедом...” (86)

The layered perspective of the work shows that the narrative itself is Pyotr and Masha's “потомство.” The passage explored in this work, for instance, has entered Pyotr's writings through Masha's memory of her family. In this moment about Masha's parents, Masha and Pyotr's perspectives are layered, echoing the explicitly layered perspectives of the novel's denouement. Pyotr and Masha's union is apparent in the very title of the work, which balances the apparent Pyotr-centricity of the narrative. Though one may wonder why Pushkin named his story after Masha (who has been dismissed by critics as one of his more forgettable heroines), for Pyotr the story was about finding Masha, the Captain's daughter. He accordingly titles his memoirs “Капитанская дочка,” with his voice evident in the affectionate diminutive.

Pushkin thus wrote Russian history neither as chronicle (as did Karamzin) nor as political critique (as he previously had in *Boris Godunov*), but as a family story. By depicting Masha and Pyotr's romance, the oddly intimate relationship between Pyotr and Pugachev, and even the married squabbles of Ivan Kuzmich and Vasilisa Egorovna, Pushkin reminds us that history is formed not by inanimate forces, but by people and the profound, complex, and oc-

asionally ridiculous relationships between them.



Appendix

Beauty, Joy, Diversity: Subtext and Context in the Work of Sanja Iveković

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**Troika Would Not Be Possible
Without Our Contributors**

The Harvard Tempus
Lena Stavig
Jordan Dickens
Nastassia Sharanovich
Matthew Hale
Charlotte White
Ava Ratcliff
Cai Noël
Dominic James Vitz
Madlen Jalalyan
Ellie Makar-Limanov
Rene Strezenicky
Patrick Duan
Luke Kurcina

