

# ELEVENTH ANNUAL UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA UNDERGRADUATE RESEARCH CONFERENCE ON CENTRAL AND EASTERN EUROPE

**MAY 3, 2008, UCLA**

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Title: **“Frames of the 2008 Russian Presidential Election”**

With the 2008 Russian presidential election that took place on March 2nd of this year, the American news coverage of Russia increased and began to present alarming depictions of the Russian government. As Dmitry Medvedev, the current President Vladimir V. Putin’s endorsed candidate, became very successful during his campaign and was eventually elected president, questions surrounding the current President’s influence and possibly corrupt involvement in the election began to surface. However, the depiction of this election in the media was not always the same across all sources. This difference in presentation of the same events surrounding the Russian election can be attributed to the media process of framing. Through framing, stories and issues are shaped in certain ways to ensure their desired presentation and make sure that they receive the desired response from the audience. In order to better understand how different news sources have framed the subject of this highly controversial election, I examined both a liberal American newspaper, The New York Times, and a conservative American newspaper, The Wall Street Journal, as well as the Russian newspaper, The Moscow Times. My findings after comparing 10 news articles published between January 10, 2008 and March 4, 2008 from each of these three newspapers were very interesting and informative. Although the main frame of President Putin controlling the election is present in all three newspapers, each individual newspaper also uses another, different prevailing frame: here-and-now based in The New York Times, economic in The Wall Street Journal, and local in The Moscow Times.

James Oglesby

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Title: **“A Glorious Democratic Tradition”**

Due to increased state power and (at least what I perceive) the willingness of the Russian people to sacrifice personal and economic freedoms for stability, a popular notion that Russia has never had a successful democratic tradition has appeared. Using this logic, many Russians (at least from my interpretations) use this to justify Russia’s current political situation as the state clamps down on personal liberties. As my good Russian friend put it, “Democracy has never existed in

Russia, there has only been the Tsar.” Fortunately, both my friend and anyone who subscribes to this belief couldn’t be more wrong. Not only does Russia have a democratic tradition, it has one that even predates the Federalist system here in the United States. Enter the Veche, or Вече, a popular assembly that existed in medieval Russian communities. The Veche dominated the medieval Russian landscape in the form of the Republic of Novgorod in which the Veche was the highest judicial and legislative body in the land. Deliberately misrepresented by Marxist scholars during the Soviet period as a feudalistic system lorded over by an oligarchical cabal of princes, and now being underscored in the current Russian education system it is no wonder that Russia seems to be abandoning its glorious traditions. Perhaps unlocking various aspects of Russia's democratic past will allow Russia to secure democracy for its future.

Masaya Tajika

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Title: **“Russian Piano School”**

In 1862 the Petersburg Conservatory was established by Anton Rubinstein, a pianist and composer, in St.Petersburg, then in 1862, Moscow Conservatory by Anton’s brother, Nikolai Rubinstein in Moscow. Many great pianists have graduated from both conservatories, such as Sergei Rachmaninoff, Dmitry Shostakovich, and Sviatoslav Richter. An original and traditional method of musical education and performance has been established out of this traditional genealogy. It is now called Russian Piano School. The history of international piano competitions starts from the very first one in 1890, suggested by Anton Rubinstein. Unfortunately this competition doesn’t exist anymore. The oldest continuing one is the Chopin International Piano Competition, which was started in 1927. The winner of the first competition was Lev Oborin, and the winner of the second competition was Yakov Zak, both of whom studied at the Moscow Conservatory, becoming important professors at the conservatory later on. Since the beginning of the Chopin International Competition, a great number of competitions have taken place, and receiving a prize in the competition is essential in order to make a professional debut as pianist. Throughout the history of the competition, pianists from Russia have showed their dominance by consistently winning. In this presentation, we will position the establishment of the conservatory by Anton and Nikolai Rubinstein as an origin of the Russian Piano School and will focus on its history, originality and educational system.

Ian Wong

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**“Russian Classical Music: A Journey from Obscurity to Recognition”**

While most of Europe was fully embracing the artistic developments and creative energy of the Baroque and Classical era, eighteenth and early nineteenth century Russia was in a state of instability and isolation; the classical music tradition that began elsewhere in the 1600s was

absent. Despite its late start, Russian classical music quickly developed into a diverse and distinctive tradition that has influenced the international artistic community as a whole. It remains one of the cornerstones of the country's rich history of creative expression. Founded by a handful of self-taught amateurs and forward-looking pioneers, Russian classical music established many of its unique characteristics early on, while building on the influences from the West, where the Romantic era was beginning to take hold. For more than a hundred years, generations of composers from Glinka to Prokofiev forged the path ahead for the blossoming of the country's musical tradition onto the world stage. Russian composers incorporated aspects of French and Italian Romantic tradition while simultaneously maintaining folk aspects from Eastern traditions. These innovators of musical style were keen on expanding the scope of harmonic and textural possibilities with their inventions of new scales, structures, and orchestrations. All these characteristics of this new musical force developed into a one of a kind school of art music that has defined itself through countless masterpieces. This presentation will look into the surprising history and meteoric rise of Russian classical music through the musical styles and works of several of the most famous composers of their time.

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Elena Kokhanovski Slavic and Global studies, UCSB; elena01@umail.ucsb.edu

Title: **“Politics of Russian Fashion”**

Throughout history, Russian fashion and culture has changed dramatically. From eras of extravagant dress, to periods of conformity, Russia has seen it all. The fashion and styles of the 19<sup>th</sup> century and earlier have had a great influence on the 20<sup>th</sup> century, which in turn led to the 21<sup>st</sup> century fashion we see today. Fashion is not limited to materialism or superficial beauty; it is a powerful tool that can be used to bring people together or create division among them. Fashion can be used in many ways, it can simply be used as a means of expressing creativity, or it can be used to influence other people. This type of power has been invaluable to many in Russia's history. Fashion can show a lot about a person and their upbringing. Within the Russian culture, it has played a major role in daily life from marriages and friendships, to jobs and social standings. Sometimes economic circumstances have made fashion an important factor in people's perceptions and their mentality towards others. The 21<sup>st</sup> century has been an age of liberation for Russian women and fashion has played an enormous part in that. No matter where we look, fashion is all around us. It is a symbol of status, of individuality, of creativity, and of power. Throughout history, fashion has been used as a tool for independence for women and likewise, it has been used as method of control. We wanted to examine the implications of fashion and how the past has effected the present and what the future holds for us.

Johana Fiserova

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## **"Pubs in the Czech Republic: Simply a Gentleman's Business"**

The pub in the Czech Republic has a distinct role in that it lays a foundation for the character of the Czech society. The pub, "hospoda", is the most basic Czech drinking establishment that carries along with it its abundant history. The establishment of pubs in the Czech Republic dates all the way back to the 15<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> century. The pubs, however, had to await their popularity until the Czech National Revival of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, when pubs became a place and center for the emerging societal recovery predominantly occupied by men. The revival started in pubs because it was a place where men kept the Czech language alive through social interactions with each other. Due to their historical role and significance, pubs became a gendered space within the Czech social life and culture and even though women are not prohibited to enter into pubs, it is an unspoken rule that their presence is not welcomed. The role of the pub as a gendered space will be examined through the physical composition of the pub, men's role within that space and women's separateness and perception of internally rugged "life of the pub". Not only do these details contribute to the gender divide within pubs, but in reality, there are two major domains of the pub, in which one is positive and the other negative. Men tend to perceive the function of the pub as a positive one, while women and those who do not visit pubs, view the pub as a negative social gathering place. This perception results in men versus women gender-divide, which is popularly reflected in Czech literature and country-wide spread media.

Kenneth Martinez

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Title: **"Solaris: Philosophy through Science Fiction"**

Written in the context of post Stalinist Poland, Solaris is a cleverly engineered philosophical novel that hides behind the pretense of science fiction to deliver stunning social and political commentary. In addition to Stanislaw Lem's novel, Russian filmmaker Andrei Tarkovsky produced a 1973 film version of Solaris. The film and Lem's novel present a finely woven story about a seemingly sentient alien planet, and the attempts of humans to communicate with it. The planet Solaris is almost completely covered by an enigmatic "ocean"; drawing from the immense repertoire of the human experience has yielded only this imprecise linguistic definition. Not much more can be ascribed to the body with any certainty. It was observed to have qualities that suggest consciousness, and it was found to have an immense control over factors it should have been subject to. When scientist Kris Kelvin arrives on the planet to investigate strange occurrences at the station, he has to relive tragic memories of his past; somehow the planet has brought a visitor from the past back to life for each of the scientists on Solaris. The main thematic concerns of this novel stem from how the characters deal with their visitors as they try to understand what the nature of the "ocean" really is. Philosophically, both the film and novel deal with the same issues, but show the influence of different ideas deliver slightly different

messages. My presentation will examine the philosophical aim of Solaris collectively and also examine the variation in delivery.

Maia Lazar

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**Title: "Africans as Representations of Social Anxiety in Perestroika Russia"**

In this paper I will discuss how Africans are depicted in the "Chernukha" film of late Soviet/early Perestroika Russia to represent social fears and xenophobic feelings of the time. I will demonstrate an association of Africa with AIDS and danger in Malenkaya Vera, and will show how Africans are sometimes used to signify danger in other films in this era. In Malenkaya Vera, there is a scene in particular to be examined. Vera visits her friend Khristyakova who is in a far worse situation than she is herself. Khristyakova somehow has an African-Russian child she tries her best to ignore. The child sits passively on the sofa and watches "Dr. Aibolit", a Kornei Chukowsky cartoon on the television. The song on the TV begins, "Deti, Ne hodite v Afriku..." and goes on to warn the viewer, presumably the child that Africa is not a safe place for there are dangerous animals there. Additionally, in Malenkaya Vera, there is a zoon-in of an AIDS pamphlet suggesting that the virus may originate from Africa...and homosexual activity. Through films like Malenkaya Vera and literature such as the AIDS pamphlet, Africans are depicted as causes of much anxiety and prejudice during the "dark age" preceding the fall of the Berlin wall.

Evan Cassidy

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**Title: "A Comparison of the Russian and French Verb Systems"**

This presentation analyzes the similarities and contrasts of the Russian and French verb systems. These observations have been made by a native English speaker with 2 years of undergraduate experience studying both Russian and French. We typically wouldn't think of Russian and French as similar languages: one is a part of the Slavic language family, the other part of the Romance language family. However, both are part of the greater Indo-European language family. Therefore, there are observable patterns in French that are much more similar to Russian than other non-Indo-European languages. In Old Russian, the conjugation of the verb 'to be' although usually omitted in modern Russian, had a similar conjugation to the French one. The vestige of that verb is still used in Russian today in the third person singular form 'есть', a cognate of the French verb in the same person, 'est'. The rules of conjugation, moods, and tenses of each language will be presented. Differences and similarities will be pointed out, where evident. In both French and Russian, verbs follow formulas, with suffixes that change in the first, second, and third person singular and plural. Nevertheless, there are many exceptions to these rules in these languages, with perhaps many more in French, to the bereavement of a student of the

language. Perhaps more different than similar, both languages are complex and intriguing in their order, exceptionality and beauty. Considering the complexity of their structure, it's no surprise that in both languages there is a history of such beautiful prose.

Jonathan Poser

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Title: **“Class, Government, and Language in the Post-Revolutionary and Stalinist USSR”**

Following the October Revolution of 1917, the Russian language underwent extensive renovations. With the new political ideologies of the time came linguistic alterations to semantics and additions to vocabulary that were previously employed by only a small group of people and later imposed upon general society as the norm. These changes initially centered around revolutionary concepts such as eradication of class distinctions, then industrialization, and eventually war, and were manifested in the forms of stump-compounds, acronyms, and foreign loan words that described newly relevant abstract concepts such as socialism, the bourgeoisie, and the proletariat. This language was inaccessible and irrelevant to the uneducated majority of the population which occupied the lower social strata of Russian society, as it failed to fulfill the linguistic needs of daily life. As a result, several dominant forms of slang emerged. The first part of this essay looks at vocabulary formation and solidification of the official Russian language by Bolshevik and Soviet leaders between Revolutionary and Stalinist-eras. The second looks at forms of slang that existed simultaneously which illustrated the values and interests of groups that were socially removed from and seen as below the revolutionary and political elite, i.e. that of factory workers, sailors, criminals, prisoners, and school children. I argue that the disparity between the two groups highlights an important lack of respect on behalf of the government in understanding its own populace, and furthermore, that the institution of language control and suppression of so-called subversive languages was in fact a means of dominating the groups that used them.

Corinne A. Seals

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Title: **"From Russification to Ukrainisation: A Survey of Language Politics in Ukraine"**

Throughout the twentieth century, inhabitants of Ukraine went through many drastic changes in linguistic identity as a result of the establishment of the Soviet Union working to “unify” Russia with its neighboring countries and then again when Ukraine gained its independence in 1991. As a result of shifting language policy and ability in Ukraine, an interesting situation has presented itself in which there are some Ukrainians who claim Ukrainian as their native language, but not all. Others who feel they are ethnically Ukrainian speak Russian as their native language, and

some even speak a variety of mixed language, which many native Ukrainians refer to as surzhyk (Bilaniuk, 25). Since Ukraine's independence, the political awareness of the current linguistic situation has led to a reinforced exclusive use of Ukrainian in an effort to help it reemerge as the official accepted native language of the state and general population. Major recent policies have targeted the media especially, due to the fact that media has a major effect on populations, and it had previously been presented almost entirely in Russian (Radio Free, Radio Liberty). However, an interesting situation has presented itself, in that media outlets are finding ways around the rules by having two presenters: one in Russian and one in Ukrainian, reflecting the linguistic divide in Ukraine (Valychenko). This overview of the current linguistic situation in Ukraine will serve to show the background reasons for the current language policies and exactly how far these policies have extended in this effort.

Timea Antal

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**"The Transformation of The Concept of Love in The Twentieth Century Through The Work of Móricz Zsigmond"**

In the western culture, the study of human sexuality springs out of the curiosity of great thinkers of the period when they start analyzing the different aspects of love and sexuality in connection with the generally accepted moral values and beliefs of the time.

This analysis is present in the writings of Móricz Zsigmond, who breaks the silence around sexuality, and gives voice to people's deepest desire to feel complete and happy through the manifestation of love. Most of Móricz's characters are constructed around this concept, and he focuses on the dilemma and the outcome of these characters' dilemma. In his novel "Relatives", Móricz analysis the dilemma of a middle class intellectual, István Kopjás, who gets in direct contact with the upper class since he is elected as a town clerk. The subject of my discussion would be the analyses of István and his wife's – Lina-- relationship, and how their relationship changes due to interacting with the upper class. Mostly, an analysis of Pista's desires, dreams, projections, and disappointments because of being able to break out of the conventional, generally accepted middle class lifestyle, and daring to feel and experience passion and love by stepping into the sphere of the sophisticated high class woman, embodied in the presence of Szentkálnay Magdaléna.

Ilona Datskovskaya

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**"The Ukrainian nationalism and their struggle for independence through the art of Taras Shevchenko"**

The purpose of the speech is to inform about the ideals and life of the Ukrainian poet and painter Taras Shevchenko. The paper focuses on poet's strong nationalism and how his works and

biography continue to influence Ukrainian literary, and most importantly nationalist political development. His poems like "Testament" helped to define the nature and focus of the nationalism of the Ukrainian people infusing new and practical urgency for liberal culture. For example, political events that took place in Ukraine from late November 2004 to January 2005, in the immediate aftermath of the run-off vote of the 2004 Ukrainian presidential election that was compromised by massive corruption, and direct electoral fraud. The results of the run-off vote of November 21, 2004 between leading candidates were rigged by the authorities in favor of the candidate endorsed by Russian president. The Russian president Putin indisputably favored Yanukovich by having meetings before and during the elections and repeatedly congratulated Yanukovich while the results were still contested. This led to nationwide revolution by a series of acts of civil disobedience during which it was not unusual to hear Shevshenko's poems. In particular his poem "Testament" in which he urges Ukrainians to raise up and break free from occupation of Russian Empire in the early 19 century. The nationalism is the dominant force in the political and economic life and the dominant ideology of the political establishment to such extent that people of other nationalities are treated as second-class citizens. The need for globalization for economic vitality in developing country such as Ukraine puts ideals and ideas of nationalism in a negative light of neo-nazism.

Anna Godick

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Title: **"Karolina Karlovna Pavlova: How Personal Experiences Translate Onto Paper"**

Karolina Pavlova is an important figure in Russian literary history. She wrote beautiful poetry and fascinating novels. She was not only one of the first female writers/poets of her time, but also one of the first feminists in Russia as well. Despite being unique, impractical, and monumental in her views and writing styles, Pavlova is not well known in popular culture, and there is not much literature and information available on her. For this particular research, selected works of Pavlova's were read and analyzed. Publication dates of her works were compared to her biography, and themes and styles were correlated to events in her life. After analyzing certain works in such a manner, it is clear that Pavlova's writing styles, themes, and motifs constantly changed, and were heavily influenced by the events that took place in her life, especially with respect to her romantic relationships, and thus her outlook on men and feminism in general. From this research, we achieve a deeper understanding of her works and her views. We can value her work in a different way because we understand the context and conditions under which it was written in, and also we are able to extrapolate the lifestyle, emotions, and experiences of women at that time and compare them to the contemporary feminine persona of today.

Elen Kanayan

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Title: **“The Cherry Stone” and “Love”: Struggling to Accept the New World”**

Yuri Olesha wrote “The Cherry Stone” (1929) and “Love” (1928) during a period in Russian history when the Bolsheviks imposed the “New World” of Communism onto the population. Not everybody in Russia was willing to accept the New World with all its laws and regulations and people struggled for their personal freedoms. This struggle was widely found in the works of numerous writers, including Olesha. Both short stories demonstrate the struggle of the two main characters, Shuvalov (“Love”) and Fedya (“The Cherry Stone”), to fit in and find their places in the “New World.” Shuvalov feels that even the basic laws of physics, particularly gravity, have lost their meaning in this New World. During his conversation with the color-blind man, he is ready to give up his love and be color-blind if that would help him to fit in (the color blind man does not see the New World as a problem). But then he realizes that his love for Lola helps him to accept the New World and be a part of it. Fedya, on the other hand, feels that there is a third world called the imaginary land. Rejected by the woman he loves, he decides to plant a cherry tree in that imaginary land and see it blossom in five years. The tree, which is dedicated to his rejected love, will bloom in the very place where Fedya’s imaginary land and the New World come together. Thus, Shuvalov and Fedya find a way to fit into the “New World” through love.

Emilia Bogdanova Liberty

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Title: **“Image and Themes of V.V. Mayakovsky Through M.A. Bulgakov’s Works”**

Vladimir Mayakovsky was the brightest star of Russian Futurism. Although he wholeheartedly supported the ideas of the October Revolution and composed poetry that glorified it, he believed that the Futurist movement was his alma mater. R. Jakobson—a contemporary of Mayakovsky writes “Volodja liked to speak of himself as a futurist...He never renounced Futurism and never became a realist” (Jakobson, 96). Mayakovsky’s death in 1930 relieved him from witnessing the consequences of Stalin’s forceful proclamation of Socialist Realism as the only acceptable style in art and literature. With an obliteration of various avant-garde movements, including Futurism, it became close to impossible for artists and writers to create their works and get them published or displayed. M.A. Bulgakov was one of the writers who continued to produce literature that did not follow the acceptable Soviet canon. Futurist Mayakovsky and the representative of intelligentsia Bulgakov appear to be the extreme opposites in terms of their personalities, attitudes towards the Soviet power and writing styles. However different and critical Bulgakov is of Mayakovsky’s image in *Master and Margarita*, the writers are alike in their use of satire to comment on bureaucracy and have similar approaches to parallel themes, such as resurrection, time travel, rejuvenation and immortality.