



"The Topos of Woman's (Self)-Sacrifice in Late 1830s Russian Prose: Melodramatic Narratives in the Age of 'Official Nation-Building'"

**Friday, February 16th, 2018
3:30pm - 5:00pm
348 Humanities Building**

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When discussing the plots of Russian "society tales" published in the 1830s and 40s, we can discern two narrative models that have yet to be studied: the story of a "dead fiancée" and the story of a "self-sacrificing woman." In the first case, a fiancée dies either just before a marriage or immediately after it; in the second, a woman denies herself happiness with her beloved in order to keep her family, or rejects his love so that another woman can marry her sweetheart.

Should these narrative models be viewed as a legacy of late Romanticism? Do they reflect the standard "formulas" of a "society tale"? Or should we analyze these plots as representations of a deeper meaning that could shed new light on the interrelation between literature, ideology, and society in Russia in the 1830s and 40s?