The Department of Slavic, East European and Eurasian Languages and Cultures at the University of California, Los Angeles cordially invites you to

The 2019 California Graduate Slavic Colloquium

Co-sponsored by the Center for European and Russian Studies

Saturday, April 6, 2019
9:00 a.m.

306 Royce Hall,
10745 Dickson Court
Los Angeles, CA 90095

https://slavic.ucla.edu/conference/ca-slavic-colloquium/
## COLLOQUIUM SCHEDULE

*All sessions will be held at 306 Royce Hall*

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<td>8:00</td>
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<td>9:00</td>
<td>Welcoming remarks by Roman Koropeckyj, UCLA</td>
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<td>9:00 – 10:30</td>
<td>Chair: Ronelle Alexander, UCB</td>
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<td>9:00</td>
<td>Vitaliy Yefimenkov, UCLA</td>
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<td><em>Paschalia to the Rescue: Deductive Dating Methods in the Literature of Medieval Rus'</em></td>
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<td>9:20</td>
<td>Tetyana Yakovleva, UCSD</td>
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<td>9:20</td>
<td>University as Heterotopia in Odessa 1905: Space analysis in the story “In October” (1905) by Aleksandr Kipen</td>
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<td>Anastasia Belik, USC</td>
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<td>I and not-I: the Pursuit of Identification and the Narrative Arc in Eduard Limonov’s poems</td>
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<td>10:00</td>
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<td>10:50 – 12:20</td>
<td>Chair: Amelia Glaser, UCSD</td>
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<td>Jiyoung Hong, Stanford</td>
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<td><em>Oblomov: A Spectator on the Threshold</em></td>
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<td>Olga Ovcharskaia, Stanford</td>
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<td>11:10</td>
<td>Chekhov’s short story “The Wife” and the Russian famine of 1891-1892</td>
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<td>Lydia Roberts, UCLA</td>
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<td>“The Work Sleeps Calmly in Summer”: Prisoner and Guard Perspectives in Poetry from the Solovetsky Special Purpose Camp</td>
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<td>11:50</td>
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12:30 – 1:30  
Lunch break

SESSION THREE

1:30 – 2:40  
Chair: Alexander Zholkovsky, USC

1:30  
Yonni Kim, USC  
The Narrative Composition of Nabokov’s *Spring in Fialta* as a Means of the Aestheticization of Reality

1:50  
Hank Miller, UCB  
*Pale Fire* in a Nutshell

2:10  
Discussion

2:40  
Coffee break

SESSION FOUR

3:00 – 4:30  
Chair: Gabriella Safran, Stanford

3:00  
Margarita Delcheva, UCSB  
‘Censor’s Trinity’ and ‘How to Fly Like a Bird’: Pawel Petasz’s Intermedia Mail Artworks in 1970’s Poland

3:20  
Jesse O’Dell, UCLA  
The Brothers Strugatskii in the Post-Soviet Context

3:40  
Masha Gorshkova, Stanford  
The book market as the mirror of social change: the government and the contemporary Russian publishing houses

4:00  
Discussion

4:30  
Closing remarks by Roman Koropeckyj, UCLA

5:00  
Dinner for participants (details to be provided)
PASCHALIA TO THE RESCUE: DEDUCTIVE DATING METHODS IN THE LITERATURE OF MEDIEVAL RUS’

VITALIY YEFIMENKOV  🌸  UCLA

Produced mostly by the monastic scribes and the Orthodox clergy, the Chronicles and Lives of the Medieval Rus’ reflect the liturgically-oriented way of life in the pre-Petrine era. While it is a blessing for a scholar to encounter an exact day, month and year accompanying a specific historical entry, one shouldn’t underestimate the importance of the church feasts mentions, especially those associated with the Paschal-tide, as they can help date the otherwise undated events. Stretching over a span of 20 weeks from January to June, the *Paschalia* is divided into 5 preparatory Sundays, 7 weeks of Lent, another 6 weeks of Pascha, and two of Pentecost. This presentation will demonstrate a recent discovery of how a seemingly insignificant day and month mention, in congruence with the liturgical deductive method, helped pinpoint the previously questionable year of a saint’s finding of relics.

UNIVERSITY AS HETEROOTOPIA IN ODESSA 1905: SPACE ANALYSIS IN THE STORY “IN OCTOBER” (1905) BY ALEKSANDR KIPEN

TETYANA YAKOVLEVA  🌸  UCSD

1905 in Odessa is characterized by workers’ strikes, revolutionary wave and the brutal anti-Jewish pogrom. Russian-Jewish author Aleksandr Kipen reflects in his story “In October” (1905) this period in Odessa, depicting not only the resulting collective violence but also its political, symbolic and social spaces in the city. One of the important spaces is the university where people gathers from different social classes, political parties and ethnic groups. It becomes the center of the socialist movements and of guard organizations against the Cossacks during the revolutionary strike. The university is also the center for the Jewish self-defense groups during the pogrom. It plays a complex role as a social space in the time of violence where activities take place out of sight and where individuals are in a state of crisis in relation to society and to the human environment in which they live. The space of the university is similar to heterotopia elaborated by Michel Foucault. Till now this story is not translated in any other language and this field is not investigated in any historical, cultural or literary research. The focus of this paper is to analyse the space of the university as heterotopia in the story “In October” (1905) by Kipen in the light of the space concept by Foucault.

I AND NOT-I: THE PURSUIT OF IDENTIFICATION AND THE NARRATIVE ARC IN EDUARD LIMONOV’S POEMS

ANASTASIA BELIK  🌸  USC

One of the signature features of Eduard Limonov’s literary work, in general, is the shift of focalization associated with the theme of the lyrical persona looking at himself from the outside. A manifestation of Limonovian narcissism, the theme finds its most well-known expression in his magnum opus *This is me, Eddie* (1979). For instance, within a
couple of pages, there can be found an abundant usage of forms of “I” (“сижу полуголый я,” “глазеют на меня,” “я не стесняюсь,” “моя фотография,” “я подонок,” “я поэт,” “я вас презираю,” etc.) in close vicinity of references to oneself in the third person (“у Эдички чудовищные силы,” “идущий Лимонов,” “Эдичке неинтересны такие люди,” “кусают ноги Эдички Лимонова,” etc.).

However, more intricate and sophisticated mechanisms of changing perspective shape a number of his earlier poems – those of the late 1960s – early 1970s. Under close examination, it can be seen that a number of poems in which these mechanisms are explicit, all deal with the problem of self-identification. I argue that it is this problem that naturalizes/brings to life the idiosyncratically Limonovian device that one can call a “traveling focalization,” or, broader, a “narrative arc.”

In my paper I examine variants, thematic contexts, and the pragmatics of the device, showing how this theme manifests itself on various levels: lexical (the lyrical persona referring to himself with estranging words such as “господин,” “фигура,” “любой поселенец,” etc.), grammatical (shifting from the first to the third person and ungrammatically merging the two in one phrase), narcissist imagery (mirror), narrative and generic forms (e.g., imitating internal dialogue, employing another person’s perspective). Overall, the research seeks to emphasize the diverse and intricate character of Limonovian poetics of shift of focalization as shaped in his early poetry.

**OBLOMOV: A SPECTATOR ON THE THRESHOLD**

**JIYOUNG HONG STANFORD**

This paper aims to redefine the identity of Goncharov’s *Oblomov* by looking at his sleep and dreams. I argue that Oblomov’s dream and drowsiness function as a space for preserving his individuality from others who expect him to assimilate into society, to follow social custom and, ultimately, to become a typical figure who represents a certain society. To redefine his sleep and dreams, I locate his dream in the context of dream history by looking closely at how the understanding of sleep and dreams transformed in the middle of the nineteenth century. I contrast the habit of sleep in Oblomovka in the preindustrial countryside where Oblomov grew up with that of St. Petersburg, the modern city where he lives. The contradictions between Oblomovka and Petersburg, and between two types of dreams in these time-spaces, evoke Oblomov’s inner struggle between his ideal and imminent reality but, simultaneously, they motivate him to find a place where he is able to belong. In this process, I investigate Oblomov’s thoughts and reactions to the social customs and habits of each time-space and I argue that the uniqueness of his dreams illustrates his individual character, which stands on the threshold between two time-spaces.
CHEKHOV’S SHORT STORY “THE WIFE” AND THE RUSSIAN FAMINE OF 1891-1892

OLGA OVCHARSKAIA 🧐 STANFORD

Chekhov’s story “The Wife” was written during the Russian famine of 1891–1892 and represented the author’s contemplation on several topics that became especially significant in those critical circumstances. I discuss how Chekhov’s thoughts about his moral duties as a person and a writer influenced this text. Chekhov combined many social roles, some of which contradicted each other. As a descendant of serfs and a doctor, he was well acquainted with the peasants’ life and did not romanticize it. As an intellectual and an estate owner, he felt responsible for people who suffered, but these duties burdened him and distracted him from his main activity, writing. Finally, his status as a writer was the most complicated one as it created a major conflict. In Russian culture, writers were traditionally regarded as moral and spiritual leaders, but Chekhov claimed that an author’s role was to ask questions rather than give answers. He had just overcome Tolstoy’s influence; his polemics with Tolstoy’s dogmatism and the Tolstoyan movement influenced this text. But voicing ideas that significantly differed from the dominant public opinion was risky at a time when the press was becoming more influential. By delegating his thoughts and concerns to different characters and then undermining readers’ trust in them, Chekhov created a complicated story that reflected upon ethics, self-representation, and the performative power of literature.

“THE WORK SLEEPS CALMLY IN SUMMER”: PRISONER AND GUARD PERSPECTIVES IN POETRY FROM THE SOLOVETSKY SPECIAL PURPOSE CAMP

LYDIA ROBERTS 🧐 UCLA

As part of a larger project describing the literature of the Solovetsky Special Purpose Camp (SLON), this paper contrasts two short poems printed in the camp’s Novye Solovki newspaper in 1926. The first, “The Work Calmly Sleeps in Summer,” is attributed to a camp guard, krasnoarmeet͡s (Red Army Soldier) Zhdanov of the 4th Regiment. An ironic examination of camp labor inefficiencies written in iambic tetrameter, the poem incorporates prison jargon and lays out the different value attributed to physical labor versus the labor of “camp correspondents,” i.e. the prisoners who wrote and published Novye Solovki itself. The second poem, “Have You Seen the Tail of a Comet…” was written by the prolific and lyrically sophisticated prisoner-poet Boris Emeli͡anov. The poem, a collision of Romantic and Symbolist imagery that juxtaposes harsh winters on the Solovetsky Islands with the “calm summer,” is written in dol’nik and presented in Emeli͡anov’s signature ladder lines. This paper’s examination of two poems is initially structured by the guard-prisoner power differential, a binary division that I expand and complicate in order to describe the literary milieu at SLON. Major aspects of analysis include the use or non-use of prison slang and military jargon, the effects of this specialized language on formal aspects of the poems published in Novye Solovki, and the treatment of themes relevant to internment generally and to SLON specifically, with the imagery of “calm summer” serving as a touch point for analysis throughout the paper.
The narrative composition of Nabokov’s *Spring in Fialta* is characterized by a unique way of representing memory in which the protagonist-narrator, Vasen’ka interweaves his sets of memories about a heroine over the past fifteen years with the memory of the last day he spent with her in Fialta. On the one hand, a series of studies of this short story so far have tended to consider it as epitomizing the Nabokovian art of memory where memory as a high-level form of artistic consciousness shows its ability to overcome time and space. Such understandings are mainly based on the fact that Vasen’ka’s method of constructing the narrative is characterized by an abundance of literary references, a virtuosic style in writing, and the last-moment achievement of an extended perception. Also, such an approach usually entails a perception of the narrator as a successful artist of memory, as we can see in the studies by Shrayer and Foster. On the other hand, however, a number of scholars have cast suspicion on the reliability of the narrator, questioning his status as an epitome of the Nabokovian artist, which is based especially on the impression that Vasen’ka is somewhat similar to the antagonist, Ferdinand, in his attempts to assert control over the voice of Nina. Such approach is represented by Dolinin, however, his observations seem to be applied in only a limited way to the analysis of specific scenes or situations.

Partly following the tendency of the latter studies, in this paper I want to expand on the suspicion cast upon the unreliability of the narrator to address the whole narrative composition and ultimately argue that the narrative composition of *Spring in Fialta* is a carefully designed artifact by the narrator aimed at concealing and aestheticizing his failure in competition with Ferdinand for the heroine, Nina, and his failed love confession taking place at the end of the story. To support this claim, I will try to restore what really happened to Vasen’ka’s relationship with Nina during the past fifteen years by rearranging the story in a chronological order, which will show that there is a ten-years void in their relationship. Also, I will try to show that the way Vasen’ka represents the memory reveals allusively the fact that Ferdinand defeats Vasen’ka in their competition for ownership over Nina at the time when Vasen’ka is reunited with Nina in Fialta. And as a corollary of such observations, my paper will detail the last sentence characterized by its virtuosic style, artistic sophistication, and innovativeness, because this last sentence is the place where Vasen’ka’s artistic manipulation of reality reaches its apogee. Ultimately, I want to show how Nabokov covertly reveals that this short story is all about the aestheticization of reality, pointing out the parallel between the metaphor of “a voice swallowing the object in a glory of fiery cloud” and what the narrator attempts to achieve the final scene.
PALE FIRE IN A NUTSHELL

HANK MILLER  🌟  UCB

The vexed question of how to read Nabokov’s *Pale Fire* has long played out in the continuing search for Kinbote’s crown jewels. A given reader’s theory (or lack thereof) of the crown jewels’ location reveals much about that reader’s conception of the text. *Pale Fire* models potential hermeneutic strategies for approaching the text, but these tend to be negative examples. This paper examines the cautionary tale of Andronnikov and Niagarin, two Soviet treasure hunters employed by the Zemblan revolutionary government to find the crown jewels. In a crucial moment, the ‘Soviet experts’ misread a trompe l’oeil painting; expecting to find the crown jewels at long last, they instead find nothing but the cracked remnants of a walnut shell. I will seek to connect this concrete moment of misreading to broader debates on how to read *Pale Fire*. This paper is concerned with the process of critical engagement with the text and how the text itself seeks to shape and control that critical engagement—in other words, to goad us into looking for nuts of our own.

‘CENSOR’S TRINITY’ AND ‘HOW TO FLY LIKE A BIRD’: PAWEL PETASZ’S INTERMEDIA MAIL ARTWORKS IN 1970’S POLAND

MARGARITA DELCHEVA  🌟  UCSB

Studying mail art in general, but especially from countries in the Eastern Bloc, is worth pursuing due to the unique communication strategies developed in the genre and from that location. In his book *Networked Art* Craig Saper explores the ways, in which artists have incorporated bureaucratic elements in their works, coining the term “intimate bureaucracies.” The language of bureaucracy can be a repetitive, absurd language, sometimes losing its meaning. In mail art, as in bureaucracy, the message can be more prevalent in the form, rather than its content. This situation allows artists to exploit bureaucratic language through exaggerated use or through placing it in a different context, which can create new meaning. In the 1970’s, Pawel Petasz sent multiple works from Poland to Pat Fish in Santa Barbara. He fused books with postcards and fashion plates with subversive text to create unique intermedia works, in which he employed bureaucratic elements. In the postcard-book “How to Fly Like a Bird” humorous rubber stamps compound an animation flipbook, instructing how to perform “spiritual flight.” “Censor’s Trinity,” a striking three-layer “fashion doll,” on the other hand, includes dark shapes, used to mimic official censoring of images. The doll, which can be undressed, raises questions about transgression in regards to the artwork but also to women’s bodies, as well. Petasz juxtaposes the intimate with the bureaucratic and invites the viewer to decide whether they would like to interact with the work. His mail art, humorous, subtly political, and semiotically layered, paints the mood of unofficial art in Poland at the time.
THE BROTHERS STRUGATSKII IN THE POST-SOVIET CONTEXT

JESSE O’DELL 🌻 UCLA

Arkadii and Boris Strugatskii were among the most active and widely read Russian science fiction authors of the post-Stalinist period. Although their writing was regularly suppressed by the Soviet bureaucracy in the 1960s, 70s, and early 80s, they became icons of dissident culture and played a critical role in the evolution of late-Soviet and post-Soviet cultural identity. My paper will explore the influence of the Strugatskiis’ oeuvre on the development of contemporary Russian culture. Through an examination of six film adaptations and two video games based on their works, I will show how the brothers’ ideas have continued to affect the Russian sociocultural space from the late 1980s to the present day. In my analysis, I will examine both big budget blockbusters (including Fedor Bondarchuk’s Obytaemyi ostrov and Obytaemyi ostrov: skhvatka) and low budget auteur film adaptations (including Konstantin Lopushanskii’s Gadkie lebedi and Aleksei German’s Trudno byt’ bogom). I will also underscore the role of the “Stalker” (the Strugatskiis’ most famous fictional character) in the development of the post-Soviet Russian video game market.


MASHA GORSHKOVA 🌻 STANFORD

Writing and reading have long played a key role in the formation of the Russian national identity. The myth of the Soviet Union as the most reading country was an important part of Soviet propaganda which aimed at juxtaposing the nation to the rest of the world and creating a sense of superiority among Soviet citizens. The official book market was totally controlled by the government, and both book publishing and book dissemination were centralized and monopolized, which allowed the authorities to create a politically expedient image of literature, available for its citizens. The turbulence in the Russian politics of the last thirty years has influenced the book market: the ideology-driven Soviet market was replaced by the free entertainment-focused and politically diverse market of the nineties -- a short period of time in which the ideological meaning of reading as a part of national identity was forgotten. In recent years, however, one can observe the return of the ideologization of readership and the revival of the myth of the special status of literature for the Russians. Numerous state-funded events such as “The year of literature” and “The year of culture” are meant to raise the prestige of reading as an activity. However, unlike in the Soviet period, contemporary book publishing exists in the market economy, and publishers are independent from the government. The need for the ideologization of reading and the readership puts the government and the publishing houses in a position where they each need to negotiate: the former needs to create the image of high literature and of the ideal reader, while the latter have to respond to public demand in order to compete with other types of entertainment.
Map, Directions & Parking for the Event:

Parking Lot 2:

From Hilgard driving south, turn right onto Westholme toward the UCLA campus, and take the first left into the North entrance of Parking Structure #2.

From Hilgard driving north, turn left onto Manning toward the UCLA campus, and then take the first right into the south entrance of Parking Structure #2.