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INTRODUCTORY NOTE

IGOR E. KLYUKANOV

We live in the world where ‘info-enthusiasm rules the day’, as Isaac Catt so aptly puts it in his *The signifying world between ineffability and intelligibility: Body as sign in communicology* (2011, p. 123). Knowledge today is increasingly equated with information storage and retrieval, and communication often appears as a commodity exchange. With newer and newer information technologies, the world is at our fingertips, and we get better and better at playing various ‘language games’. We are happily translating the world into specific and precise units of meaning. And yet, something always seems to be lost in translation. Whatever games we play — individually, interpersonally, socially, globally — we never seem to be able ‘to win’. In fact, we keep losing — money, sleep, time, peace. However, we press on hoping this next round will be a lucky one!

It may well be that *Repetitio est mater studiorum*, but repetition of repetition itself is more like the cruel stepmother who readily provides anything we ask for— only to make us crave for more. We play more and more games, and enjoy them less and less: just think of the number of channels on your TV and apps on your iPhone. About a decade ago, a Russian politician expressed this post-modern angst with heart wrenching clarity: ‘We now have the Internet, but still no happiness’ (‘Internet est’, a schast’ya net!’).

And so we grow tired and more uncertain: why is it that meaning cannot be grasped, especially when it seems to be within our reach? The ground seems to be slipping away from under our feet, and a sense of foreboding grows. It is no surprise, therefore, that we hear constant cries of crises: just look at the contemporary state of intellectual uncertainty in social sciences and humanities. Or, take the study of communication, which seems to exist in a perpetual state of identity crisis. Of course, ‘crisis sells well’, as Umberto Eco reminds us in his *Travels in hyper reality* (1986, p. 126). And yet, we seem to be living in very interesting times — unstable, uncomfortable, and uncertain.

With facts so elusive, it isn’t easy to account for our experiences. As we search for safety of narrative coherence, we tend to stand outside of our experience: we trust but verify. We tend to forget (even as Benjamin never tires of reminding us) that communication is not

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only the novel, which carries knowledge subject to verification, but also the never-ending story, through which the communicability of experience takes the form of having counsel. Whenever and wherever we communicate, we not only send and receive information, but we also tell and hear stories. This way, wise counsel is woven into the fabric of our lives.

We are all experienced communicators, bearing witness to what we see, hear, touch, smell, and taste. We all follow the Levinasian formula, ‘the messenger is the message’ (see: *Pinchevski’s By way of interruption. Levinas and the ethics of communication*, 2005, p. 252). Also, regardless of our professional allegiance (interpersonal communication, political communication, organizational communication, etc.), we all are communication theorists: the Greek word *theoria* means, in its most literal sense, *witnessing a spectacle*. So, when we feel response-able and communicate, as best as we can, putting our pen to paper (or, increasingly, our fingers to the keyboard), we become storytellers, messengers, witnesses, and theorists.

And we should not lose our sleep (and cry ‘crisis!’) if the demonstration and argument in communication cannot be completely apprehended — even by us. The most sacred experiences are those of which no explicit account can be given. Those in the sciences seem to take it in stride that the observer and the observed are indivisible, and uncertainty is the name of the game no matter what we do. For instance, Heisenberg did not approach nature as a book (the way most classical physicists did), but as something akin to what Jacques Derrida calls ‘writing’, i.e. in terms of traces. In that sense, Heisenberg belongs to the Romantic tradition (see: Plotnitsky’s *‘In principle observable’: Werner Heisenberg’s discovery of quantum mechanics and romantic imagination*, 2004, pp. 20, 33). Perhaps, in our search for reality, we have forgotten how to be romantic...

In semiotic terms, to discover the ‘mechanism of bringing the entire Universe into existence’ would require a final observer collapsing it to the ‘Ultimate Interpretant’; then, the Universe can appear as an ‘Argument’ and a ‘Cosmic Poem’ (see: Merrell’s *Semiosis in the postmodern age*, 1995, p. 327). We can only hope that, if and when that happens, it happens as Kant *happy accident*. Until that day (or night), however, we will continue arguing and telling stories. Let us just keep in mind (that source of our magical ability to repeat endlessly) that, when we look for transparent meaning in communication practices, we still look through the glass, darkly. Let us remember that the cause for anything we do in communication is lost — and found. Let us come to terms with our role as bricoleurs, albeit increasingly digital ones, rather than engineers of various kind, including social. We putter and tinker as we create stories out of the fragments of our experiences. Communication is not only an account that aims at according with truth and reason, but also a tale whose veracity can be questioned, but whose effect on our life cannot be refuted. And so, should we find ourselves in place of Socrates listening to Protagoras who wonders how to present his argument and says, ‘shall I, as an old man speaking to his juniors, put my

demonstration in the form of a muthos, or of a logos?’ (see: Powell’s *A short introduction to classical myth*, 2001, p.7), we should smile and respond with ‘Yes, please do.’

ARGUING IN RUSSIAN: WHY SOLZHENITSYN'S FICTIONAL ARGUMENTS DEFY TRANSLATION

ANNA WIERZBICKA

This paper discusses patterns of 'arguing' which prevails in Russian speech culture and shows that they differ profoundly from those characteristic of modern Anglo culture(s). The author focuses on the extended arguments (spory) in Solzhenitsyn's novel 'In the First Circle' and shows that many linguistic and cultural aspects of the original are lost in the English translation. She argues that this was inevitable because English doesn't have and "doesn't need" linguistic resources to render various aspects of Russian communicative practices, which are culture-specific and have no counterparts in Anglophone culture(s). The paper shows too that the techniques of semantic analysis developed in the "NSM" approach to cultural semantics help explain why Solzhenitsyn's fictional arguments defy translation, and more generally, how they can be used to identify some deep differences between Russian and Anglo speech cultures and communicative norms.

Keywords: Russian speech culture, 'Anglo' speech culture, Russian cultural scripts, Russian particles, contrastive pragmatics, translation from Russian to English, Russian and intercultural communication

Both linguistic and ethnographic evidence show that arguing is a central and highly valued part of Russian speech culture — far more so than it is of mainstream Anglo speech cultures (even allowing for the internal variation in English-speaking countries).

One linguistic fact which epitomizes this difference is the contrast between the Russian phrase *gorjačij spor* (lit., 'hot argument') and English phrases like *heated argument*

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or *in the heat of the argument*. In Russian, the word *gorjačij* used in relation to speech (or to emotions) implies something good. For example, one can use it in relation to love (*gorjačaja ljubov'*) but not in relation to hate (*gorjačaja nenavist'*); and in relation to greetings (*gorjačij privet*) but not in relation to quarreling (*?gorjačaja ssora*).

However, *spor* 'argument', unlike *ssora* 'quarrel', can readily be described as 'gorjačij' ('hot'), with the usual positive implications. Importantly, *gorjačij spor* does not mean the same as 'passionate' or 'fervent' argument. As discussed in my paper on "The hot centre of Russian discourse" (Wierzbicka, 2009), the word *gorjačij* implies strong feelings linked with the following thoughts: "something very good can happen, I want it to happen, I want it very much". Presumably, what the participants of a *gorjačij spor* want to happen is for the truth to emerge; they want it very much, they see this prospect as something very good, and they feel very strongly about it.

The exchanges between Solzhenitsyn's two protagonists, the two friends Nerzhin and Rubin in chapter 9 of his novel *The First Circle*, offer good examples of a Russian "gorjačij spor" and at the same time, good examples of the untranslatability of Russian arguments (*spory*) into English. No matter how faithful the translator tries to be, the fact is that speakers of English normally don't argue in the way speakers of Russian do, and relatedly, the fact is that English doesn't have adequate linguistic resources to convey the temperature and intensity of a good Russian argument.

Before we look at some of the linguistic resources used by the interlocutors (*sporščiki*, 'debaters') in Solzhenitsyn's novel it will be helpful to take a quick look at some words with which the argument itself is characterized in chapter 9.

The most striking among them is the noun *zaxleb*, derived from the verb *zaxlebnut'* (or *zaxlebnut'sja*), which is glossed by *the Oxford Russian Dictionary* (2000) as "1. to choke, to swallow the wrong way, 2. (fig., coll.) z. *ot vostorga* to be transported with delight". In Solzhenitsyn's novel, the sentence in question reads:

V zaxlebe spora druž'ja poterjali ostorožnost', i ix vosklicanija uže stali slyšny Simočke.
(p. 49)

(lit. in the *zaxleb* of the argument, the [two] friends lost [all] caution, and their exclamations had already become audible to Simočka.)

The young woman Simočka is an MGB lieutenant, whom Major Shikin, the security officer, has instructed to keep an eye on Nerzhin. Being or not being overheard by Simočka could be a matter of life or death for Nerzhin, but the argument with Rubin is so absorbing and so intense that all caution has been forgotten. The image evoked by the phrase *v zaxlebe* is that of someone drinking so avidly as to swallow too much and too quickly, and start

choking. The adverb *vzaxleb* is glossed by the *Oxford Russian Dictionary* as “eagerly or with gusto”. The implication is that Nerzhin and Rubin argue avidly, eagerly, with gusto, and uncontrollably. The argument (*spor*) is for them what water can be for very thirsty people: it is something of great value, and something that one can’t have enough of.

In Willetts’ English translation, the sentence in question reads: “In the heat of the argument, the friends had forgotten the need for caution, and their exclamations were now loud enough for Simochka to hear” (p. 44). The phrase *in the heat of the argument* comes from a speech culture that distrusts passionate and uncontrollable arguments and it is out of kilter with the spirit of the original. This is not the fault of the translator, but a reflection of the simple fact that speakers of English usually don’t argue *à la russe*, that they don’t share cultural scripts which would encourage them to value such a style of arguing, and that they don’t have the linguistic resources to either engage in it or describe it in a positive, or even neutral, way. The image of two people relishing a vigorous argument to the point of losing control over it and ‘choking’ on it is as difficult to convey in modern English as it is culturally alien to modern Anglo culture. At the same time, it is one that throws a great deal of light on Russian speech practices and cultural values.

ABUSIVE TERMS OF ADDRESS?

Looked at from an Anglo point of view, the conversations between Solzhenitsyn’s protagonists seem full of ‘abusive’ terms of address and comments about the addressee. What is even more strange (from an Anglo point of view) is that phrases which seem to imply a very negative judgment about the addressee alternate with affectionate, even tender forms of address. But to start with the negative phrases, here are some examples, with Willetts’ English translations (I will use R for Russian and E for English):

- R. Žalkaja ličnost’! Eto-iz lučšix knig dvadcatogo veka! (p. 32)
- E. You pathetic person! It’s one of the best books of the twentieth century! (p. 27)
- R. Merzavec. No esli xočeš’, v ètom est’-taki racional’noe zerno ... (p. 41)
- E. Swine. But if you like, there is a rational kernel in all that — (p. 35)
- R. Man’jak! — Ot durandaja slyšu! (p. 44)
- E. Madman! (p. 37) — It’s an idiot who says so! (p. 37)
- R. Ty eklektik. (p. 46)
- E. You’re an eclectic. (p. 40)
- R. Kamennyj lob! (p. 48)
- E. Of all the pigheadedness! (p. 41)
- R. Da ne vera – naučnoe znanie, abaldon!
- E. It isn’t a matter of belief, you dunderhead, but of scientific knowledge! (p. 41)
- R. Potomu čto u tebja uma ne xvatalo, dura! (p. 48)

- E. Because you weren't clever enough, fathead. (p. 42)
 R. Tebja by tuda zagnat', padlo! (p. 49)
 E. I would like to see you packed off to Dzhezkazgan! (p. 42)
 R. Da durak ty nabityj! (p. 49)
 E. Fathead, idiot! (p. 42)
 R. Dura! (p. 340)
 E. Don't be silly! (p. 336)
 R. Duren'! Ty beznadežno otravlen isparenijami tjuremnoj paraši! (p. 343)
 E. Idiot! The fumes from the night bucket have gone to your head! (p. 338)
 R. A tebe odnomu nejasno! Obez'jana prjamoxodjajaščaja! (p. 342)
 E. You're the only one who can't see it! *Pithecantropus erectus*! (p. 339)
 R. Sobaka! Sterva! ... Golosa klassificirovat' vmeste ... čtož mne teper' — odnomu rabotat'?' (p. 344)
 E. You dog! You scoundrel! We learned how to classify voices together. What am I supposed to do now? Work by myself? (p. 341)
 R. Da ne im — nam, dura! (p. 344)
 E. For us, you idiot, not for them! (p. 341)

Most of these verbal attacks on the addressee (some of which have been softened in the English translations) denounce the addressee's stupidity, allegedly shown in the preceding utterance. Thus, words like *dura*, *duren'*, *durandaj*, *durak* (all, essentially, 'fool') and expressions like *kamennyj lob* (lit. stone forehead) are particularly prominent in the discussions between Rubin and Nerzhin. They do not indicate, needless to say, that the friends regard one another as stupid, or that they want to insult one another. Rather, every time when one of these words is used, it indicates that the speaker regards the interlocutor's preceding utterance as stupid and that he feels strongly about that. In Anglo speech culture, speakers would normally not feel free to express such a reaction to the interlocutor's utterance for fear of offending the interlocutor; and there are strong cultural scripts operating in this area. Among friends, it may be okay to say "Rubbish" or "Nonsense", but even friends would not commonly feel free to call the addressee "fathead" or "idiot", and especially not in an intellectual discussion, where dispassion is seen as a condition of rationality.

Not so in Russian. Here, feeling strongly about the matter, and expressing one's feelings, is a necessary part of a good *spor*, and one culturally sanctioned way of expressing one's feelings in an argument is to say some 'strong' negative words about the addressee.

Perhaps even more striking than words like *durak* ('fool, idiot') are words implying strong moral condemnation, such as *merzavec* and *sterva*, rendered by Willetts as *swine* and *scoundrel*, or *padlo* (strong term of abuse), which Willetts didn't translate at all. In some cases, such words of strong moral condemnation, used among friends, can be regarded as

jocular. But when Nerzhin calls Rubin ‘padlo’ in the context of his (Rubin’s) defense of the gulag there is nothing jocular about that (and it is significant that Willetts does not try to translate this word in this context). Nonetheless, when minutes after Nerzhin has called Rubin “padlo” and Rubin has reciprocated with “durak” (‘fool’), Nerzhin is summoned, ominously, by the commandant of the camp, there is no ill feeling between the two friends. As Willetts puts it (p. 44), “Their heated exchanges were forgotten. Rubin looked at his friend with concern. When his eyes were not dilated by polemical passion, they were almost feminine in their gentleness. ‘I don’t like it when the top brass starts taking an interest in us,’ he said.”

There are many reasons why seemingly aggressive terms of address don’t have to be deeply offensive in Russian. One is that it is understood — by virtue of Russian cultural scripts — that they express only momentary ‘bad thoughts’ and bad feelings. For example, by calling the addressee “dura” (fool, a feminine form, and so particularly offensive when addressed to a man), the speaker does not express an opinion about the addressee but a contemporaneous thought about what the addressee is now saying. This can be a fleeting thought, and the bad feeling which accompanies it can be a fleeting one, too. The momentary, transient character of bad feelings towards the addressee expressed again and again in the conversations between Nerzhin and Rubin is made abundantly clear by the frequent expression of good feelings in the same conversations, as we will see in the next section.

TENDER FORMS OF ADDRESS

Expressing good feelings for the addressee is as important in a Russian conversation as expressing bad feelings, when such feelings occur. Here, too, Russian has linguistic resources which English doesn’t have and ‘doesn’t need’ because English conversations are not guided by the same cultural scripts and cultural models. Above all, these Russian resources include a vast repertoire of different forms of people’s names which allow the speakers to express a wide gamut of good, and very good, feelings for the addressee.

For example, Nerzhin addresses Rubin, depending on the momentary mood, as *Lev*, *Levka*, *Levočka*, *Levuška* and *Levčik*. This very variability of address indicates that his feelings towards Rubin fluctuate. A particular form of the name used at a particular moment reflects the mood of that moment.

In the case of the name *Lev*, the different semantic implications of the different forms can be characterized, very roughly, as follows: *Levka* — very familiar and casual; *Levočka* — affectionate and cheerful; *Levuška* — tender, loving, serious; *Levčik* — affectionate and

playful; *Lev* — serious and very grown-up. These rough characterizations can be clarified by identifying the interactional prototypes of the different forms.

Thus, forms like *Levočka* evoke interaction between grown-ups and young children. They echo words like *mamočka* and *papočka* (a small child's affectionate words for "mummy" and "daddy"), words like *devočka* (a little girl), and diminutives referring to familiar and "nice" objects, such as *butyločka* (dear little bottle, from *butylka* 'bottle') or *mordočka* (dear little snout, from *morda* 'snout'; can be used playfully and tenderly about a child's face).

Forms like *Levuška* evoke kinship terms such as *babuška* (granny), *deduška* (grandpa), *tetuška* (auntie), *matuška* (mother.dim) and *batjuška* (father, colloquial). They also evoke words like *zoluška* (Cinderella, from *zola* 'ashes') and folk-style diminutives such as *golovuška* (from *golova* 'head', often used in the combination *bednaja golovuška*, glossed in the *Oxford Russian Dictionary* as 'poor wretch'), and *gorjuško* (from *gore* 'grief'). As these parallels suggest, forms like *Levuška* are neither child-centred nor cheerful, and in fact they bring to mind the central Russian value of *žalost'* (roughly, loving pity) and the Russian folk genre of lamentation.¹

The form *Levčik* evokes words like *mal'čik* ('boy, male child'), *pal'čik* (Tom Thumb, from *palec* 'finger') and *molodčik* (diminutive of *molodec* glossed by the *Oxford Russian Dictionary* as 'fine fellow' (see Gladkova 2011). It is worth noting that in the same conversation in which he calls Rubin *man'jak* ('madman') Nerzhin thinks of him also as "molodčik", admiring Rubin's attitude to the German prisoners, for example, the fact that Rubin spends hours teaching one of them Russian.

Forms like *Levka* (*Romka*, *Dimka*, *Jurka*), that is forms with the suffix -ka added to a hard stem and derived from an already derived form ending in *a* (such as *Leva*, *Roma*, *Dima*, *Jura*, from *Lev*, *Roman*, *Dmitrij*, *Jurij*) imply an easy familiarity and a desire to treat the addressee as neither a child nor (necessarily) a grown-up.

Finally, the 'full' form *Lev* is not unmarked either. The fact that Nerzhin can address Rubin as "Lev", rather than "Lev Grigor'ič" (i.e. with a patronymic), as most other prisoners do, shows by itself that he is treating him like a friend. When Nerzhin says to Rubin (on p. 43, and then again on p. 48) "Lev, pojmi" ('Lev, understand'), his choice of the form *Lev* suggests earnestness, seriousness, and an important 'grown-up' topic (in the first instance, it is the horrors of the front, in the second, the pain of Nerzhin's disillusionment with communism).

Terms of address that Rubin uses in relation to his friend are not as varied as those used by Nerzhin in relation to Rubin, but here, too, apparent abuse is interspersed with indications of affection. Nerzhin's name is Gleb, and that is how the narrator regularly refers to him. However, when Rubin calls his friend by his name, he usually uses the form *Glebka*, which is unmistakably affectionate. Since *Glebka* is perceived as derived from the full name

(*Gleb*) rather than a hypothetical form *Gleba*, it does not have the same expressive value as *Levka* (from *Leva*) or *Jurka* (from *Jura*) but is unambiguously warm. Furthermore, when it is used sentence-internally or sentence-finally, as in the following examples, it sounds soft and intimate:

1. Slušaj, Glebka, v konce koncov, ved' ja evrej ne bol'se čem russkij? (p. 29)
You know Glebka, when you come to think of it, I'm as much Russian as Jew. (p. 23)
2. Nu, kori, kori ... Nel'zja, Glebka, mužčine znat' odnu tol'ko ženščinu. (p. 42)
Go on, then, reproach me ... A man mustn't know just one woman, Glebka. (p. 36)
3. Ja rasstroilsja, Glebka. (p. 40)
I'm upset, Glebočka. (sic, p. 34)

What the form *Glebka* implies in all these examples is, I suggest, a double message: “when I say this to you now, I feel something very good towards you”, “I know you very well”. (See Section 4.)

Needless to say, all the nuances of good feelings conveyed in Russian by derivational resources drawn on in forms like *Glebka*, *Levka*, *Levočka*, *Levuška* and *Levčik* are lost in translation into English. Even when the translator keeps the different Russian forms and thus gives the reader some idea of the variability of Russian names, he can't convey the warmth, the tenderness and the intimacy which counterbalance the strong pressure, and the apparent aggression, of a hot Russian *spor* ('argument').

THE NSM APPROACH TO SEMANTIC AND CULTURAL ANALYSIS

Formulae like “I feel something very good towards you” and “I know you very well”, which were linked before with forms of address such as *Glebka* illustrate the NSM approach to semantic and cultural analysis. The acronym NSM comes from “natural semantic metalanguage”.² The NSM approach to semantic and cultural analysis is based on three premises: first, that to identify and compare meanings we need a tertium comparationis, a common measure; second, that such a common measure can be found in the shared lexical and grammatical core of all languages; and third, that this shared core can be used as a semantic metalanguage for the description of meanings across languages and cultures.

The NSM analysis of meaning is based on ‘reductive’ paraphrase, in the sense that complex meanings are ‘reduced’, in a systematic way, to simple or simpler ones. An NSM explication of a word or a phrase can be quite lengthy, because it replaces a complex meaning with the underlying configuration of all its semantic elements. It attempts to “say the same thing” in a paraphrase composed of maximally simple, intelligible, and translatable

words (semantic primes), thereby laying bare the semantic content compressed in the original expressions.

A successful ‘reductive’ paraphrase which is consistent with native speakers’ intuitions and which predicts/explains the boundaries of natural usage can be regarded as a psychologically real conceptual model. It can represent an ‘insider’ perspective because it is carried out in non-technical terms, which are familiar to speakers and form part of their everyday linguistic competence. At the same time, it can be free of the terminological Anglocentrism which plagues other approaches to semantic and cultural analysis, that is, of the unwitting imposition of alien (Anglo) conceptual categories on other languages (Wierzbicka, 2006; Goddard, 2007). Even if the analysis is carried out through English (NSM), this can be done in words that have precise semantic equivalents in the languages concerned; and in fact it can be carried out in these languages themselves.

NSM researchers have sought over nearly four decades of empirical and analytical cross-linguistic investigations to identify this shared core of all languages. It is now believed that this core includes 64 elements — simple concepts (semantic primes) and their associated grammar (Wierzbicka, 1996; Goddard, 1998; Goddard & Wierzbicka, 2002). A sizeable bibliography is available on the NSM Homepage: www.une.edu.au/bcss/linguistics/nsm/. The full NSM lexicon of universal semantic primes is set out in Table 1, using English and Russian exponents. (For equivalent tables in many other languages see Goddard & Wierzbicka, 2002; Peeters, 2006; and Goddard, 2008).

One area highly relevant to the present article where the NSM methodology is particularly revealing of cross-cultural differences in communicative practices is that of illocutionary particles or “discourse markers”. Instead of characterizing the functions of such particles by means of opaque labels (such as ‘intensifying’, ‘emphatic’, ‘contrastive’ and the like, as it is usually done), the NSM framework allows us to decode the ‘postures of the mind’ encapsulated in their meaning. As Locke put it, particles have ‘a whole sentence contained in them’ (Locke 1959[1690]: 100; for discussion, see Wierzbicka, 1986) and NSM allows us to bring this sentence to light, in a revealing and verifiable way. (See e.g. Travis, 2005.)

Three hundred years ago, another philosopher, Leibniz saw clearly that the only verifiable way of identifying the meaning of a particle is to find a suitable paraphrase, which would be substitutable for it in context; and also, that while particles are often polysemous, they have a definite number of meanings each of which can be captured in a paraphrase substitutable for the particle (in that particular meaning) in context. (For discussion, see Wierzbicka, 1986.)

Table 1: Proposed semantic primes – English and Russian exponents, in comparable categories.

English	Russian	
I, YOU, SOMEONE, SOMETHING~THING, PEOPLE, BODY	JA, TY, KTO-TO, ČTO-TO~VEŠČ', LJUDI, TELO	Substantives
KIND, PART	ROD~VID, ČAST'	Relational substantives
THIS, THE SAME, OTHER~ELSE	ÉTOT, TOT ŽE, DRUGOJ	Determiners
ONE, TWO, MUCH~MANY, LITTLE~FEW, SOME, ALL	ODIN, DVA, MNOGO, NEMNOGO, NEKOTORYE, VSE	Quantifiers
GOOD, BAD	XOROŠIJ~XOROŠO, PLOXOJ~PLOXO	Evaluators
BIG, SMALL	BOL'ŠOJ, MALEN'KIJ	Descriptors
THINK, KNOW, WANT, FEEL, SEE, HEAR	DUMAT', ZNAT', XOTET', ČUVSTVOVAT', VIDET', SLYŠAT'	Mental predicates
SAY, WORDS, TRUE	GOVORIT'~SKAZAT', SLOVA, PRAVDA	Speech
DO, HAPPEN, MOVE, TOUCH	DELAT', PROISXODIT'~SLUČIT'SJA, DVIGAT'SJA, KASAT'SJA	Actions, events, movement, contact
BE [SOMEWHERE], THERE IS, HAVE, BE [SOMEONE/SOMETHING]	BYT' [GDE-TO], BYT'~EST', [U KOGO-TO] BYT'~EST' [ČTO-TO], BYT' [KEM-TO/ČEM-TO]	Location, existence, possession, specification
LIVE, DIE	ŽIT', UMERET'	Life and death
WHEN~TIME, NOW, BEFORE, AFTER, A LONG TIME, A SHORT TIME, FOR SOME TIME, MOMENT	KOGDA~VREMJA, SEJČAS, DO, POSLE, DOLGO, KOROTKOE VREMJA, NEKOTOROE VREMJA, MOMENT	Time
WHERE~PLACE, HERE, ABOVE, BELOW, FAR, NEAR, SIDE, INSIDE	GDE~MESTO, ZDES', NAD, POD, DALEKO, BLIZKO, STORONA, VNUTRI	Space
NOT, MAYBE, CAN, BECAUSE, IF	NE, MOŽET BYT', MOČ', POTOMU ČTO, ESLI	Logical concepts
VERY, MORE	OČEN', EŠČE~BOL'ŠE	Augmentor, intensifier
LIKE	KAK TAK~KAK	Similarity

- Primes exist as the meanings of lexical units (not at the level of lexemes)
- Exponents of primes may be words, bound morphemes, or phrasemes
- They can be formally, i.e., morphologically, complex
- They can have combinatorial variants or allolexes (indicated with ~)
- Each prime has well-specified syntactic (combinatorial) properties.

For a proper explanation of the particles it is not sufficient to make an abstract explication (...); but we must proceed to a paraphrase which may be substituted in its place, as the definition may be put in the place of the thing defined. When we have striven to seek and to determine these *suitable paraphrases* [emphasis in the original],

AW] in all the particles so far as they are susceptible of them, we shall have regulated their significations. (Leibniz 1949[1704], 366-367)

(...) we cannot always find a general (...) signification for them (...) which would satisfy all the examples; but notwithstanding this we can always reduce all the uses of a word to a definite number of significations. And this is what should be done. (1949[1704], 365-366)

I will show in the next section how this approach allows us to pinpoint the meaning of the Russian particle *da* which plays a crucial role in the Nerzhin-Rubin arguments, and in Russian polemical exchanges in general.

EXPRESSING SURPRISE AT THE FOOLISHNESS OF ONE’S INTERLOCUTOR: THE RUSSIAN PARTICLE “DA”

In the dialogues between the two friends, Nerzhin and Rubin, many responses start with the particle *da*, as in the following examples given here with their English glosses from Harry Willetts’ translation of the novel:

- R. — Da net že! (p. 34)
- E. — Certainly not! (p. 27)
- R. — Da pošel ty von! (p. 50)
- E. — Be off with you! (p. 43)
- R — Da gluposti! (p. 51)
- E. — Don’t be silly! (p. 44)
- R. — Da durak ty nabilityj! (p. 49)
- E. — “Fathead, idiot!” (p. 42)

As these examples illustrate, the intent of such responses starting with *da* is often polemical: used at the beginning of a response, *da* often expresses disagreement or rejection of what the other speaker was saying. A more extended example:

- [Nerzhin:] *Socializm obeščает nam tol’ko ravenstvo i sytost’, i to prinuditel’nym putem.*
- [Rubin:] - I ètogo malo? A v kakom obščestve vo vsju istoriju èto bylo?
- [Nerzhin:] - Da v ljubom xorošem svinarnike est’ i ravenstvo, i sytost’! Vot odolžili — ravenstvo i sytost’! Vy nam — npravstvennoe obščestvo dajte! (p. 342)
- [Nerzhin:] “Socialism promises only equality and a full belly, and that only by means of coercion.
- [Rubin:] “Isn’t that enough? Has any society in history ever had as much?”

[Nerzhin:] “[Da] You’ll find equality and full bellies in any good pigsty! What a tremendous favor they’ve bestowed on us! Equality and plenty! Give us a moral society! (p. 339)

As the exchanges between Nerzhin and Rubin illustrate, such a use of *da* is particularly common in discussions and arguments, where two or more *da*-s can occur in quick succession. For example:

[Nerzhin:] I vot v našej lživoy pamjati užasnoe tonet...

[Rubin:] - Da ja ne govorju...

[Nerzhin:] - ...a prijatnoe vsplyvaet. No ot takogo den’ka, kogda “Junkersy” pikirujuščie čut’ ne na časti menja rvali pod Orlom — nikak ja ne mogu vossozdat’ v sebe udovol’stvija. Net, Levka, xoroša vojna za gorami!

[Rubin:] - Da ja ne govorju, čto xoroša, no vspominaetsja xorošo. (p. 43)

“You know how it is: memory is treacherous, and all the horrors sink to the bottom —“
”[Da] Look, I’m not saying —“

” — and only the pleasant things remain. But ever since Junker dive-bombers nearly made mincemeat of me one fine day at Orel — sorry, I just can’t recapture the pleasure. No, Lyovka, war is best when it’s farthest away.”

“[Da] Well, I’m not saying that war itself is good, only that we can have good memories of it.”

And one more example, where in the space of a few lines we get as many as four *da*-s:

[Nerzhin:] - Ty soznatel’no zalepil glaza, zatknul uši, zanjal pozu — i v ètom vidiš svoj um? V otkaze ot razvitija — um? V toržestvo vašego čertova kommunizma ty nasiluješ sebja verit’, a ne veriš’!

[Rubin:] - Da ne vera — naučnoe znanie, obaldon! I — bespristrastnost’.

[Nerzhin:] - Ty?! Ty — bespristrasten?

[Rubin:] - Ab-soljutno! — s dostoinstvom proiznes Rubin.

[Nerzhin:] - Da ja v žizni ne znal čeloveka pristrastnee tebjja!

[Rubin:] - Da podnimis’ ty vyše svoej točki zrenija! Da vzgljani že v istoričeskom razreze! Za-ko-no-mernosti! (p. 48)

“ ... you have willfully sealed your eyes, stopped your ears, adopted a pose — and you think that shows intelligence? Is refusal to develop intelligent?

You struggle to believe in the triumph of your infernal Communism, but try as you may, you don’t believe — “

[Da] “It isn’t a matter of belief, you dunderhead, but of scientific knowledge! And objectivity!”

“What? You call yourself objective?”

“Ab-solutely!” Rubin said loftily.

[*Da*] “Never in my life have I known a more biased man than you!”

[*Da*] “Just try to rise above your own molehill! [*Da*] Try to look at things in historical perspective! (p. 41)

As the English glosses reproduced above illustrate, the Russian *da* (in the relevant sense) has no counterpart in English, and although Willetts tries to give as complete a translation of Solzhenitsyn’s original as possible, in most cases he simply omits the *da*-s in his translation. Whenever possible, he acknowledges the dialogical character of this *da*, by rendering it, for example, as “Look,” or “Well”, but this cannot be sustained, and in any case, neither “Look,” nor “Well ...” have the same effect in English as the sentence-initial response “Da” has in Russian.

What exactly is this effect? To rephrase the question from a semantic point of view, what does this sentence-initial response “Da” really mean? The *Oxford Russian Dictionary* ascribes to the particle *da* (as distinct from the conjunction *da*) five meanings. The third of them, which is illustrated with two examples with a sentence-initial response *da*, is explained as follows: “3. (*emphatic*) why; well; *da ne mozet byt’!* why, that’s impossible!; *da net!* of course not! not likely! *da v čem delo?* well, what’s it all about?”. The two English glosses “why” and “well” are helpful, but obviously, they do not capture the unitary (constant) meaning of the Russian particle.

The Russian sentence “*Da gluposti*” (where *gluposti* means literally something like ‘nonsense’, or ‘rubbish’) could not be rendered in English as “Well, nonsense”. “Well” (in a sentence-initial position, in a response) implies that the speaker is considering what to say (“I’m thinking now”, Goddard 2011), but an unqualified dismissal of someone else’s utterance conveyed by “nonsense” or “rubbish” would be incompatible with deliberation.

A simple “no” *could* be combined in English with “well”, but again, “Well no” would imply some reflection, whereas “Da net” is not compatible with reflection. Willetts’ translation of “Da net” as “Certainly not” highlights this big difference between “da” and “well”: *da* (in “Da net”) is decisive, like *certainly* is decisive, so it is very different from the hesitant, deliberative *well*, whose meaning can be represented in NSM as follows (see Goddard 2011):

well (e.g. Well, it depends.)
 you say something to me now
 I want to say something to you after this
 I want to say it well
 I am thinking about it

The second gloss offered by the *Oxford Russian Dictionary*, “why”, is more helpful than “well”, because, as I’ll argue, it captures accurately at least part of *da*’s meaning — but only part, and only a small part. Generally speaking, both Russian dictionaries and Russian grammars tend to be quite helpless when it comes to explaining the meaning of *da* and often content themselves with calling it an “emphatic particle” (or “usilitel’naja častica”). But since many other particles are described as “emphatic” this gives us no clue as to how *da* differs from, for example, *nu*, *že*, *ka*, *ved’* or *vot’*.³ But if we use the natural semantic metalanguage (NSM), we can posit for each particle (in a particular sense) a constant meaning which can be tested by substitution in a wide range of contexts. For particle *da* (used in a respose-initial position that is the point of contact between two utterances by two different speakers), I would propose the following NSM-based paraphrase:

da (e.g. *Da net!*)
 you say something to me now
 I don’t know why you say it
 I say this to you now:

This formula reflects the intensely dialogical and oral (in the sense of Ong 1982) character of the particle: *da* is anchored in the moment of speech defined by what you say to me and what I say to you, that is by a live spoken exchange between two people. In fact, even the word “exchange” is not quite apposite here, because it may suggest a sequence of two utterances, one by “you” and one by “me”, whereas *da* implies that we are both speaking “now” — here and now. The proposed formula explains also, I think, why *da* lends itself so well to expressing disagreement or dismissal of what the other speaker is saying, and why it combines so readily with words of abuse (as in “*Da durak ty nablyj*”, Willetts’ “Fathead, idiot”).

The interpretation of *da* proposed here is also corroborated by the following example offered by the Academy Dictionary of the Russian language (1957):

[Atueva:] My ne niščie. [Muromskij:] Tak budem niščie ... (Maxnuv rukoj) *Da* čto s vami govorit’!
 [Atueva:] We are not beggars. [Muromskij:] So we will be beggars ... (with a dismissive hand-gesture) *Da* what’s the point of talking to you!

-No romany iz ee golovy ty dolžna vybit’. — *Da net* u nee v golove nikakix romanov.
 -But you need to get romances out of her head. -*Da* she doesn’t have a head full of romances.

In these two examples, *da* could perhaps be translated into English with the word *but*, but clearly, *but* could not be used to translate *da* in sentences like “Da gluposti” (?But rubbish!) or “Da durak ty nabitj!” (?But you’re a fathead/idiot). Thus, while various words (e.g. *why*, *well*, *but*) can be pressed into service in different contexts to translate *da*, none of these words are compatible with all the contexts in which *da* (in the relevant sense) can be used, and therefore, none of them captures its semantic invariant. By contrast, the NSM formula proposed here (“I don’t know why you say it”) appears to be compatible with all possible contexts.

Even the well-known lines from Pushkin’s “Eugene Onegin”, which are also cited by the Academy Dictionary in the entry on “da”, and which at first sight may not seem to be compatible with this formula, in fact can be interpreted in a way which fits it quite well.

[Onegin asks his friend Lensky:]

-Skaži, kotoraja Tat’jana? — Da ta, kotoraja grustna i molčaliva kak Svetlana.

‘Tell me, which was Tat’jana? — [Da] Oh, she’s the one who, sad and silent like Svetlana ...

What “da” adds to the meaning of the second line is a tone of mild impatience with the question, implying that the first speaker should have been able to figure out without asking which of the two sisters was Tat’jana.

In his commentary on this exchange, Nabokov, whose translation of it I have just cited, calls Onegin’s question “casual” and notes that there was hardly any need for it: “Lensky naively explains what Onegin surely must have learned in the course of the visit” (Nabokov, 1964, p. 328). Thus:

-you say something to me now (that you want me to say which is Tat’jana)

-I don’t know why you say this (i.e. I don’t know why you have to ask)

-I say this to you now:

The Academy Dictionary, which illustrates the relevant meaning of *da* with the three literary examples cited here, defines this meaning with the label “usilitel’naya” častica” (“intensifying particle”) and with the comment: “Upotrebljaetsja v načale predloženiya dlja pridaniya vyskazyvaniju bol’shej sily, vyrazitel’nosti” (“It is used at the beginning of a sentence in order to add a greater force, expressiveness to the utterance”.) This may be true, but it is clearly not sufficient to identify the specific force of *da* which distinguishes it from other “intensifying particles”. Nor does it explain why a response like “Da durak ty nabitj” is more likely than, for example, “Da ty umnica” (*Da* you’re a clever man) or “Da ty genij” (*Da* you’re a genius).

Ušakov's (1935) *Explanatory Dictionary of the Russian Language* in its entry on *da* states: "V načale repliki, ukazyvajuščej čto-n. očevidnoe, samo soboj razumejuščeesja, *da* oboznačaeť 'a', 'imenno', 'vot'. (At the beginning of a response which shows something obvious, something that doesn't need explanations, *da* means 'a', 'vot', 'imenno'). Equating *da* with a number of other particles (each with its own meaning) is not very helpful, but the observation that *da* at the beginning of a response can introduce something that the speaker sees as obvious, seems apt. The two examples offered by this dictionary are also instructive: "Gde èto napisano? — Da v pjatoj glave. ('Where does it say so? — *Da* in chapter five'), and "Kuda že idti? — Da napravo". ('Where to go? — *Da* to the right.')

The formula proposed here — "I don't know why you say this" — is compatible with these examples. By using "da", the speaker implies: "I don't know why you ask", and this interpretation applies to many *da*- responses to questions. However, *da* can be used in response to many other types of utterance. For example, the common response to thanking, "da ne za čto" ('*da* not at all') could not be interpreted in terms of "I don't know why you ask", because no one is asking anything. But the formula "I don't know why you say this" applies here too: "I don't know why you are thanking me".

Thus, I do not claim that the particle *da* (as an introducer of responses) is inherently polemical and confrontational. Rather, it is a particle which (so to speak) questions the interlocutor's utterance, and if this utterance expresses an opinion, it is the opinion that is being questioned: "I don't know why you say this", "I don't know why you think like this". In the context of an argument, a ready-made dialogical tool ("I don't know why you say this") becomes a handy weapon. There is no corresponding ready-made weapon in English.

It is worth noting that the "I don't know why" component connects the dialogical *da* with another *da*, used in urgent commands, as in the following examples in Ušakov's dictionary: "Da pomogite že! '*Da* help! (plus particle *že*); "Da zamolčiš' li ty nakonec? '*Da* will you finally be quiet?'. According to this dictionary, in such cases *da* is used "dlja vyraženiia usilennoj i nastojčivoj pros'by" ('to express an intensified and insistent request'). Using NSM, we can clarify the nature of this added "intensity" and "insistence" as follows (I'm not explicating the particle *že* here):

Da pomogite že!

I say: I want you to do something (help) now

I don't know why you are not doing it

The dialogical *da* implies, I argue, an analogous component: "I don't know why you say this", and in the context of opinion, "I don't know why you think like this".

Strictly speaking, then, the dialogical *da* is not exactly a tool for "expressing surprise at the foolishness of one's interlocutor". It is, however, a particle which by virtue of its

meaning lends itself extremely well to such a goal. Since there is no corresponding device in English, the import of the dialogical *da* cannot be reproduced in English and gets generally lost in translation — just as the import of the deliberative English particle *well* (which has no counterpart in Russian) cannot be reproduced in Russian and tends to get lost in Russian translations from English.⁴

PUTTING PRESSURE ON ONE'S INTERLOCUTOR (VERBALLY AND PHYSICALLY)

The exchanges between Rubin and Nerzhin are shot through with imperatives which put communicative pressure on the interlocutor. Looked at from the point of view of English, the prevalence of such imperatives is quite extraordinary.

To begin with, there is the frequently recurring *Slušaj!* ('listen'). In the conversation spread (with interruptions) between pages 29 and 50, this occurs eight times. Wherever he can, Willetts tries to render it faithfully with "Listen!", but in most cases he finds it necessary to abandon the imperative, apparently feeling that the English reader could not stand so many of them (and especially not the reiteration "Listen, listen!"):

Slušaj Glebka (R p. 29) You know, Glebka ... (E p. 28)

Slušaj (R p. 32) D'you know, (E p. 26)

Slušaj, ja ne mogu rozobrat'sja s ljud'mi, začem mne byki? (R p. 34) I can't make sense of people. What do I want with bulls. (E p. 27)

Slušaj dal'se (R p.45) And I haven't finished yet (E p. 38)

Slušaj, slušaj! (R p. 50) Listen to me now! (E p. 43)

Another "communicative" imperative recurring in Solzhenitsyn's dialogue is *Pojmi!* 'understand!', usually "softened" in English to "try to understand":

Lev, pojmi! (R p. 48) Try to understand, Lev! (E p. 42)

Pojmi ty, usvoj ty železnyj zakon našego veka! (R p. 50) Try to understand, try to get the iron law of our age into your head! (E p. 43)

It could be argued that Willetts was forced to translate *Pojmi!* (which is perfective) as "try to understand" because the form *understand* is simply not used in English as an imperative. But one could also argue that if speakers of English felt the need to convey the message which in Russian is conveyed with *Pojmi!* they would find or create linguistic resources to express it. Indeed, expressions like "Get it into your head" do exist in English, but they sound angry and rude. From a Russian point of view, the lack of an equivalent of

“*Pojmi!* is a communicative gap in English, but from an Anglo point of view, there is no gap here. In fact, even “Try to understand” sounds patronizing and didactic in English and could make the addressee’s back bristle, whereas in Russian, *Pojmi!*, and especially *Pojmi Lev!* sounds like a plea. (See section 8.)

The phrase “try to” has also been added to other “communicative” imperatives, perhaps to lighten the pressure. For example:

Da podnimis’ ty vyše svoej golovy! Da vzgljani že v istoričeskom razreze! (R p. 48)
 Just try to rise above your own molehill! Try to look at things in historical perspective!
 (E p. 41)

The relentless pressure on one’s interlocutor — to listen, to understand, to recall something, to look at things in this way rather than another — that we find in the Russian dialogue, can hardly be sustained in the English version. Even in a softened and diluted translation, the widespread use of imperative appeals to the interlocutor stands out in the English text as a non-Anglo way of interacting with another person, which is very unusual even in the case of arguing. Clearly, different cultural scripts are at play here.

The verbal pressure on the addressee, exercised with the help of the imperative and numerous particles (*da, nu, ved’, vot, a?, že*) is accompanied in conversations between Nerzhin and Rubin with physical (bodily) pressure. I will illustrate this with four examples, which I will only adduce in the English translation.

1. [Arguing about happiness]

They were so carried away that they no longer heard the noise of the laboratory and the tiresome radio in the far corner. (...)

Nerzhin spoke, evidently delivering thoughts long pondered. (...)

Rubin could not and never did listen for long. His idea of conversation (and this was how it usually went) was to strew before his friends the intellectual booty captured by his quick mind. As usual, he was eager to interrupt, but Nerzhin gripped the front of his overalls with five fingers and shook him to prevent him from speaking. (p. 39)

2. [Arguing about Stalin]

“Listen to me now!” It was Rubin’s turn to seize Nerzhin by his overalls with a commanding hand. “He [Stalin] is a very great man!”

“Blockhead! Hog’s brain!” (p. 43)

3. [Arguing about socialism]

“All the really enlightened minds! All the greatest thinkers in the West! Sartre, for instance! They all support socialism! They’re all against capitalism! That’s almost a platitude by now! You’re the only one who can’t see it! *Pithecanthropus erectus!*”

Rubin loomed dangerously over Nerzhin and shook him with grappling fingers. Nerzhin planted his palms on Rubin's chest to push him away.

"Have it your way! Maybe I am an ape! But I refuse to use your terminology. I refuse to talk about what you call capitalism and socialism! I don't understand these words, and I won't use them!"

4. [Arguing about justice]

"Fetal philosopher! How far will you get with amorphous, protozoic concepts like that in the twentieth century? Those are all class-conditioned ideas! Dependent on —"

"Are they, hell!" Nerzhin freed himself and stood up out of his niche. "Justice is never relative ..."

"It's a class concept! Of course it is," said Rubin, brandishing an open hand over Nerzhin's head.

"Justice is the cornerstone, the foundation of the universe!" Nerzhin, too, waved an arm. Anyone watching from a distance might have thought that they were about to start fighting. (...)

"You've got nowhere to hide!" Rubin said threateningly. "You'll have to declare someday which side of the barricade you're on."

Nerzhin answered just as angrily. (...) . Nerzhin pushed him away. (p. 340)

The images of the interlocutors physically pressing and pushing one another in their eagerness to say what they think, to influence their opponent, and to make the truth triumph, highlight the intensity of this 'hot' Russian *spor* ('argument'). Even the etymology of the word *spor* seems symptomatic here: *spor* shares the stem with *napor* 'pressure', *otpor* 'repulse' and *upornyj* 'unyielding'. It is all a far cry from a dispassionate exchange of opinions bolstered by rational "arguments" that the English words *to argue* and *argument* bring to mind.

GIVING IN TO PRESSURE WITH THE PARTICLE "NU"

Another feature which is very prominent in the Nerzhin — Rubin dialogues and which is (inevitably) lost in the English translations is the prevalence of the interactive particle *nu*. I'll begin with an example:

[Rubin:] Davaj sravnitel'nym jazykoznanijem zanimat'sja.

[Nerzhin:] Vse proisxodit ot ruki? Marr?

[Rubin:] Nu, pes s toboj, slušaj — ty vtoruju čast' "Fausta" čital?

(R. p. 44)

[Rubin] ... Let's do a bit of comparative philology.

[Nerzhin] Like Marr, you mean? Everything derives from the word for 'hand'?

[Rubin] [Nu] You bum you! Listen, have you ever read Goethe's *Faust*, part 2?
(E. p. 37)

In this exchange, Rubin proposes a discussion about a particular topic (comparative linguistics), Nerzhin dismisses this topic with sarcasm, and Rubin signals with a “nu” that he decides to give in and to talk about something else (Goethe's “Faust”). He gives in, not because he agrees with Nerzhin's sarcastic dismissal of the first topic, but because he can't be bothered to insist. I suggest that, by adding “nu” to his gruff capitulation, Rubin conveys roughly the following message: “Okay, have it your way if you must.” Using NSM, we can formulate this message more precisely — and in a way which could be also rendered in Russian:

-you say something to me now [about Marr]
-I know that you want me to say something to you after this
-I say something to you now as you want
I say it not because I want to

If this is right, *nu* signals here a somewhat reluctant giving in under pressure from one's interlocutor.

In the English translation, *nu* is simply omitted. The sudden change of topic is signaled with the word *Listen* (which translates the Russian *slušaj*), but there is no overt signal that in abandoning the first topic Rubin is giving in to the pressure from Nerzhin to change the subject.

This interpretation of the dialogical *nu* is consistent with the following comments of the *Oxford Russian Dictionary*: “expressing concession, resignation, ... qualified recognition of point”. It is also consistent with the dictionary's examples: “nu xorošo” ‘all right then, very well then’; “ved' vy skazali, čto vy ix uvideli, nie pravda li? — nu da, no tol'ko szadi” ‘but you did say you saw them, didn't you? Yes, I know, but only from behind’.)

From a certain point of view, *nu* may seem to be almost an opposite of *da*, as the two phrases “Da net” (*Da no*) and “Nu da” (*Nu yes*) illustrate: “Da” collocates very readily with *net* (‘no’), whereas *nu* combines easily with *da* (‘yes’). The combination “Da da” (*Da yes*) can occur as a reiterated *da* ‘yes’, but not as a combination of *da* ‘yes’ with the particle *da*; and the combination “Nu net.” (*Nu no*) is much less common than “Nu da”. (In the Russian National Corpus of 176 million words, the figure for “Nu da” is 6329, and for “Nu net”, 763.) Clearly, there are semantic factors at play here. If *nu* signals something like giving in to pressure, this would explain why it collocates more readily with ‘yes’ than with ‘no’.⁵

The common collocations *nu xorošo* and *nu ladno* point in the same direction. The response particle *ladno*, glossed by the *Oxford Russian Dictionary* as “all right”, itself indicates something like giving in to pressure, so it is natural (under the present interpretation) that it should attract *nu*. The word *xorošo*, which used as an adverb means ‘well’, used as response particle expresses (as the *Oxford Russian Dictionary* puts it) “agreement, acceptance”. It may not have, in itself, the same implication of agreeing under pressure as *ladno* does, but it is clear why it should be highly compatible with a particle (*nu*) which implies being under pressure.

Thus, the frequent use of the response *nu* in Solzhenitsyn’s dialogue shows, first, that the interlocutors frequently put pressure on one another in conversation, and second, that they often give in to such pressure (rather than objecting to it, as Anglo interlocutors might be expected to). More than that, the Russian language itself provides Russian speakers with a ready-made tool for accepting conversational pressure and going along with it. I will illustrate this conversational practice (relying on *nu*) with a few further examples from the conversations between Rubin and Nerzhin.

[Rubin:] Ty na Severo-Zapadnom pomniš vot zdes’ za Lovat’ju, esli ot Raxlic na Novovinuxovo, pojužnej Podcepoč’ja — les?

[Nerzhin:] Tam mnogo lesov. Po tot bok Red’i ili po étot?

[Rubin:] Po étot.

[Nerzhin:] Nu, znaju. (p. 41)

In this scene, Rubin wants to share with his friend his nostalgic memories from the front, which included a brief love affair with a girl accompanying the unit as a translator. Nerzhin is reluctant to listen to these memories from the war time which he sees as disloyal to Rubin’s wife. In the sentence “Nu znaju” he reluctantly gives in to Rubin’s pressure and agrees to recognize the particular forest that Rubin wants to evoke. Here is Willetts’ translation of this passage:

[Rubin:] Remember the woods just beyond Lovat’, to the south of Podtsepochie as you go from Rachlitsy toward Novo-Svinukhovo?

[Nerzhin:] — It’s all woods around there. This side of the Redya or the other?

[Rubin:] This side.

[Nerzhin:] Right [Nu], got it. (E. p. 35)

The English translation of the sentence with *nu* (“Right, got it.”) seems very apt. It does not convey, however, the nuance that Nerzhin is giving in to pressure from Rubin (to talk about that particular topic).

Further on in the same conversation, Nerzhin reminds his friend of the hardships that Rubin's wife was experiencing at the time when Rubin was indulging in his idyll at the front, and this time it is Rubin who responds with *nu*: “— Nu, kori, kori,” (R. p. 42). The English translation renders this as “Go on, then, reproach me ...” (E. p. 36). Again, this is an excellent translation, which cannot, however, convey the exact sense of *nu*. In Russian, Rubin is recognizing here that Nerzhin wants him to acknowledge his guilt, and he reluctantly agrees with the criticism, although at the same time he seeks to justify himself (“A man mustn't know just one woman, Glebka; if he does, he knows nothing at all about them.” E. p. 36). But this reluctant recognition of Nerzhin's point is lost in the English version, where “Go on!” sounds like a mock-challenge rather than as what the *Oxford Russian Dictionary* aptly describes as “qualified recognition of point”.

And one more example, in which Rubin and Nerzhin argue about scepticism. Rubin offers to quote what Lenin said on the subject (I'll adduce this passage only in English, in Willetts' translation):

[Rubin:] “Lenin said: ‘To the paladins of liberal logorrhea *à la russe*, scepticism is a stage on the way from democracy to vile lackey liberalism.’”

[Nerzhin:] “What, what, what? Sure you aren't misquoting?”

“His precise words. It's from *Remembering Herzen* and it refers to ...”

Nerzhin hid his head in his hands, as though conceding defeat.

“Well,” said Rubin mildly. “Satisfied?”

“Oh yes.” Nerzhin's whole body rocked. “You couldn't have found anything better. To think that I once worshipped him!”

“What do you mean?”

“What do I mean? Is that the language of a great philosopher? That's simply the sort of wild abuse people go in for when they have no arguments! ‘Paladins of logorrhea’! It makes you sick to say it. Liberalism means love of freedom, so it has to be slavish and dirty. Whereas applause on command is a leap into the realm of freedom, I suppose?” (E p.42)

At this point, Rubin makes a negative comment about Nerzhin's ability to reason, but nonetheless invites him to formulate his own definition of scepticism. In Russian he says:

[Rubin:] Net, u tebja-taki sovsem vyvernuty mozgi, (....) — Nu, opredeli lučše (R. p. 49)

‘No, your brain is completely upside down. [Nu,] define [scepticism] better.’

By using *nu* here, Rubin indicates here that his sentence “opredeli lučše” (‘define [scepticism] better’) is not a sarcastic challenge: he is willing to concede that Nerzhin *might*

have a better definition of *scepticism* than Lenin. The use of *nu* indicates that this concession is made under pressure.

In the English translation, there is of course no “nu” and the implication of a concession made under pressure is lost:

[Rubin:] No, your brain is simply out of kilter. Can't you put it more clearly?

This sounds as if Rubin was criticising Nerzhin's comments as not sufficiently clear, rather than inviting him to propose his own definition of *scepticism* that would be better than Lenin's. In fact, however, Nerzhin's response shows clearly that he understands Rubin's sentence starting with *nu* as an invitation, not as a criticism:

[Nerzhin:] ... skepticism est' forma glušenija fanatizma. Skepticism est' forma vysvoboždenija dogmatičeskix umov. (R. p. 49)
 'Skepticism is a way of silencing fanaticism; skepticism is a way of liberating dogmatic minds.' (E p. 43)

Thus, while precise interpretation of a particular sentence with *nu* depends, of course, on the context, a wide range of examples is compatible with the semantic formula proposed here: “you say something to me now – I know that you want me to say something to you after this – I say something now as you want – I say it not because I want to”.

The fact that *nu* can be a signal of giving in to pressure does not mean that it is largely a conciliatory verbal gesture. On the contrary: *nu*, like *da*, is often a tool for arguing, and for quarrelling. Thus, while the argument between the two friends, Rubin and Nerzhin, is full of *nu*-s, an even sharper intellectual quarrel between Rubin and another close friend, Sologdin (in chapter 65) is even more so, as the following exchange (quoted here with small omissions) illustrates:

- (...) Mogu tebja na ètix zakonax lovit' i lovit'!
- Nu, pojmaj! — ne mog ne vykriknut' Rubin, zljias' na sebja, no opjat' pogrjazaja.
- Požalujsta. — Sologdin sel. (...)
- Nu, s čego b nam polegče? — smakoval Sologdin. — Zakony èti — ukazyvajut nam napravlenie razvitija? Ili net? (...)
- Konečno.
- I v čem ty èto vidiš'? Gde imenno? — xolodno doprašival Sologdin.
- Nu, v samix zakonax. Oni otažajut nam dviženie. (...)

- Kakoj že imenno zakon daet napravlenie?
- Nu, ne pervyj, konečno... Vtoroj. Požaluj, tretij.

There are four occurrences of *nu* in this exchange, three of which (the first, the third, and the fourth one) are instances of the *nu* of response. (The second one is not, as it is a “prompting” *nu*, which will be discussed later.) As the English translation of this exchange reproduced below shows, Sologdin is putting a tremendous pressure on Rubin, who would like to escape the argument, but cannot; and in every one of his responses starting with *nu* Rubin indicates that he is responding under pressure. At the same time, the fact that he does respond shows that such conversational pressure is allowed by Russian cultural norms; and the very existence of the response particle *nu* suggests the same.

Not surprisingly, in the English translation of the Rubin — Sologdin exchanges there is no trace of *nu* (and of its “I respond as you want — not because I want to” effect). In the first instance, it is replaced by “then”, in the second, by “now”, and in the third, by “obviously”.

I can trip you up on those laws as often as I like.”

“[Nu] Go ahead, then!”

Rubin could not help raising his voice. He was annoyed with himself but bogged down again (...)

“”[Nu] Now, where’s the best place to begin?” Sologdin mentally savored some possibilities. “These laws now — they show us the *direction* of development, am I right?”

“Direction?”

“Yes. Which way a ... a ... process” — the word stuck in his throat — “is going.”

“Of course.”

“And where do you see that happening? Where, precisely?” Sologdin asked coldly.

“[Nu] In the laws themselves. They exemplify movement.”

Rubin sat down himself. They began talking in a quiet, matter-of-fact way.

“Which law precisely tells us the direction of that movement?”

“[Nu] Not the first, obviously ... The second. Or maybe the third.” (p. 489)

The Academy Dictionary of Russian (1958) distinguishes the response particle *nu* from the “interjection” *nu*, and attributes to the latter a meaning described as “*prizyv ili pobuždenie k dejstvuju*” (‘summoning or prompting someone to act). This is illustrated with the examples: “Nu, davaj pljasat’ (‘*Nu*, let’s dance’) and “Perepisyvaj, bystro, nu!” (Copy this, quick, *nu!*). Using NSM, we can pin down this meaning of *nu* as a prompt to action as follows:

I want you to do something now

I know that you will do as I want

I know that you will do it not because you want to

Arguably, a very similar meaning can be attributed to *nu* when it is used as a prompt in dialogue, as in the sentence below, where Rubin tries to entice Nerzhin to work with him on a secret task by presenting this work as a path to freedom:

Nu, a — dosročka tebe ne nužna?

But [nu] don't you want an early release? (E. p. 337)

Nu indicates here that Rubin is putting pressure on his interlocutor to admit that he does want an early release and it shows that he (Rubin) is confident that this pressure will be effective. Using NSM, this can be represented as follows:

I want you to say something now

I know that you will say [it] as I want

I know that you will say it not because you want to

The particle *nu* used in response to pressure (as in “Nu da”, ‘*Nu*, yes’) is a mirror image of the “interjection” *nu* used to exercise pressure, as one can easily see by comparing the formula above with the one below:

I know that you want me to say something now

I will say it as you want

I will say it not because I want to

RUSSIAN CULTURAL SCRIPTS

The patterns of arguing illustrated and discussed in this paper will be familiar to anyone who is at home with Russian culture. It is important to recognize, however, that what is involved is not just certain widespread ways of behaving in conversation but also certain widespread ways of thinking. I have already alluded to “cultural scripts” which underlie Russian arguments such as those between Nerzhin and Rubin and to many differences between Russian cultural scripts and Anglo cultural scripts. (Cf. Wierzbicka, 1998, 2002, 2008; Gladkova, 2010; see also Larina, 2009; Zalizniak et al., 2005; Carbaugh, 2005.) The topic is vast and cannot be discussed comprehensively here. I will try, however, to identify at least a few scripts which would explain some differences between Russian and Anglo speech cultures in areas like ‘arguing’.

Nearly a decade ago, in an article entitled “Russian cultural scripts” (Wierzbicka, 2002), I proposed the following scripts, which I linked with the Russian values of ‘iskrennost’’, ‘govorit’ prjamo’ and ‘obščenie’:

it is good if a person says something to someone else
 because this person wants to say what this person thinks (feels),
 not because of anything else
 it is good if a person wants to say to other people what this person thinks (feels)
 it is bad if a person says to other people that this person thinks (feels) something if it is
 not true
 it is good if a person wants other people to know what this person thinks (feels)

In the current version of the Natural Semantic Metalanguage and in the current NSM understanding of cultural scripts, the phrasing of these scripts would need to be adjusted somewhat, but the basic ideas behind them are still, I believe, fully defensible. Using the current version of NSM, I would now propose the following formulations:

RUSSIAN CULTURAL SCRIPTS (“MASTER SCRIPTS”)

- (a) often, when someone thinks something about something
 it is good if this someone says it to someone else
- (b) often, when someone feels something because this someone thinks something about something, it is good if this someone says it to someone else
- (c) often, when someone is with someone else, it is good if this someone wants this other someone to know what this someone thinks
- (d) often, it is good if this someone says it to this other someone
- (e) often, when someone is with someone else, it is good if this someone wants this other someone to know what this someone feels
- (f) often, it is good if this someone say it to this other someone

These are all very general scripts which apply to human interaction across many types of contexts and situations. As for a more narrowly defined range of types of interaction, including ‘arguing’, I would now posit the following more detailed scripts:

Russian cultural script related to ‘arguing’
 [many people think like this:]

- (a) if someone is with someone else for some time
 because this someone wants to say some things about something to this other someone

- (b) it is good if this someone wants this other someone to know
what this someone thinks about this something (when this someone thinks about it)
- (c) it is good if this someone says it to this other someone
- (d) it is good if this someone wants this other someone to think about it in the same way
if this other someone doesn't think about it in the same way
- (e) it is good if this someone says some things about it to this other someone for some
time

Component (a) of this script sets out the scene: someone is with someone else for some time because this someone wants to talk to this other someone. Components (b) and (c) echo components (a) and (c) of the “masterscript”. Component (d) presents it as natural and indeed ‘good’ that the speaker should want the addressee to think about the matter in the same way as s/he does. Component (e) commends a speaker who acts on such a ‘natural’ desire and tries to win the addressee over to his/her own way of thinking.

As for Anglo culture, evidence suggests that many of its scripts are not only different from the Russian ones but also at some point incompatible with them. Sayings like “let’s agree to disagree”, which have no counterparts in Russian, underscore the different emphases of the two speech cultures: in one case, “personal autonomy”, and in the other, “iskrennost’” (roughly, ‘total sincerity’) and “obščenie” (roughly, ‘communion achieved through speech’). Neither *iskrennost’* nor *obščenie* have equivalents in English. While it appears that *iskrennost’* is not cognate with *iskra* ‘spark’, it can indeed bring to mind sparks, as it suggests a spark-like spontaneity as well as total sincerity; and the dialogue between Nerzhin and Rubin shows well how such conversational sparks can turn into fire. The Russian word *obščenie*, which has the same stem as *obščij* ‘common’, suggests a desire for communion with one’s interlocutor, and since such a communion is seen as a value, what in English would be regarded as ‘pressure’, from a Russian perspective can be seen as natural and good.

Perhaps nothing illustrates this difference in perspective better than the difference in tone between *Slušaj* and *Listen*, or between Rubin’s “Slušaj, slušaj” (accompanied by seizing his friend by the overalls) and the translator’s “Listen to me now”. In Russian, Rubin sounds eager: it’s extremely important for him to make his friend see the truth of the matter (so that they can see it together) and he feels strongly about this because, one feels, he cares for his friend and cares about what his friend thinks. In English, on the other hand, he sounds rather aloof and imperious. Whereas “Slušaj, slušaj” implies closeness and intimacy, “Listen to me now” implies distance and a top-down attitude.

Once again, this translational failure is not the fault of the translator. Rather, it is another illustration of the general point that one can’t argue in English as one does in Russian. It is interesting to note that in English, a combination of the imperative “Listen” with the addressee’s name tends to be perceived as patronizing: “Listen George” sounds top

down, and among equals it can be perceived as impatient, and even rude. (The implication seems to be: “you’re not getting the point”.)

“Listen George” is quite different in this respect from an excited “Listen! I have an idea”, where the ‘newness’ of the idea cancels the implication “you’re not getting the point”. These two main uses of “Listen”, the excited one and the patronizing one, are implicitly recognized in the Collins Cobuild Dictionary’s entry on “Listen”: “You say “listen” when you want someone to pay attention to you because you are going to say something important, eg. “Hey, listen, I’ve got a great idea!... Listen Carol, I don’t think you’re going about it the right way.” “Hey, listen!” does not sound patronizing because it does not sound like a directive telling the addressee to pay attention but like a spontaneous expression of a sudden bright idea probably beneficial to both the speaker and the addressee. “Listen Carol”, on the other hand, does tell the addressee to pay attention, and according to Anglo cultural scripts it can be perceived as patronizing and imposing on the addressee’s personal autonomy.

But in Russian, utterances like “Slušaj, Glebka” and “Slušaj, Lev” do not sound patronising or imposing. They emphasize the speaker’s intense desire that this particular addressee — Gleb, or Lev — should hear and “take in” what the speaker wants to share with them. They sound very personal, and very “I — to — thee”. The focus is not so much on “I want you to listen” as on “I want you to know what I want to say to you”. They bring to mind Baxtin’s (1963:358) words about opening oneself and opening another person in dialogical “obščenie” (communication-cum-communion): “one can open another person — or rather, make him or her open themselves — only by means of *obščenie* with him or her, dialogically”.⁶

This, I suggest, is what Nerzhin and Rubin are doing in their *spory* (arguments) in Solzhenitsyn’s great novel. In particular, their “Slušaj, Lev”, “Slušaj, Glebka” and “Slušaj, slušaj” suggest “zaxleb obščenija” (zeal of communing communication). Their arguments defy translation because one cannot argue in English as one does in Russian. And of course vice versa — but that is another story.⁷

NOTES

1. To quote from my 1992 *Semantics, Culture, and Cognition* (p. 255): ... forms in — *uška* (or — *uško*) can be combined (in folkloric style) with words encoding abstract existential concepts, such as *góre* ‘grief’ > *góruška*; *vólja* ‘freedom’ > *vóljuška*; *rabóta* ‘work’ > *rabótuška*; *smert’* ‘death’ > *smértuška*; *dúma* ‘thought’ > *dúmuška*; *zabóta* ‘care’ > *zabótuška*; *sila* ‘strength’ > *siluška*; or *dólja* ‘fate’ > *dóljuška* (cf. Bratus 1969: 68). But suffixes such as *-en’ka* or *-očka* can never be used like that. All these facts suggest that the expressivity encoded in the suffix *-uška* has no relation to children’s speech or speech to children but has its axis of orientation elsewhere. It seems to reflect an important feature of Russian folk philosophy, which views the human condition as pitiful and which encourages both resignation and compassion. Words such as *zimuška* (winter — a Russian

winter), *vóljuška* (freedom — desired but often unattainable), *smértuška* (death — inevitable and therefore to be lovingly accepted), *nevéstuška* (bride, seen as someone to be pitied — a flower to be cut tomorrow), *golóvuška* (head, especially in lamentations such as *bédnaja mojá golóvuška* ‘of my poor little head’), *górjuško* (grief — to be accepted), *xlébuško* (bread — often lacking), *soséduška* (female neighbour — ‘life is hard’, ‘let’s help one another’), *mórjuško* (sea — mysterious expanse which can take people away) have a strong existential flavour and evoke strongly traditional Russian attitudes, expressed in Russian folk literature.

2. Though the concept of a semantic metalanguage was well known, by other names, to Leibniz and his 17th century contemporaries (Eco 1995), it not widely employed in contemporary linguistics — with two exceptions. One is the NSM school, while the other consists of Russian linguists and lexicographers associated with the Moscow School of Semantics and the Meaning-Text Model, based in Moscow and Montreal (Žolkovskij 1964; Mel’čuk 2006; Apresjan 1992, 2006; Zalizniak et al., 2005; Padučeva 2004).

3. Wade’s *Comprehensive Grammar of Russian* (2000: 510), which promises to characterize “the meaning of individual particles,” claims that *da* is used “(i) in self-exoneration: *Da ja molču!* (But I’m being quiet!) (ii) In consolation: *Da ty ne rasstraivajsja!* (Now don’t upset yourself!) (iii) In indefinite answers: *Da ja ne znaju* (Oh, I don’t know). However, the effect of “consolation” comes from “*ty ne rasstraivajsja*”, not from *da*, and while *da* can indeed be used with indefinite answers such as “*ja ne znaju*”, the question is: what exactly does it add to such questions? Generally speaking, the question is: what exactly does *da* invariably bring with it to the different contexts with which it can be combined?

4. Anna Gladkova, a linguist and native speaker of Russian notes (personal letter) that if *da* is removed from the conversations quoted here, “they become formal, abrupt, dry and less cooperative”. This comment highlights the potential for cultural miscommunication in any discussion between native speakers of Russian and English. Many discussions carried out in English can seem to Russians (even those who are competent speakers of English) formal, dry, and lacking in personal connection. When Russians argue in English, they can feel bereft of their natural communicative resources; and when they try to compensate for this lack as best they can, their communicative behavior may come across as inappropriate and odd.

5. Responses starting with “*Nu net.*”, though rare, are not impossible, because if they follow a negative sentence, they can imply that the speaker reluctantly agrees with that negative sentence.

6. According to Walter Ong (1982), cultures can be broadly divided into oral and chirographic (writing-based) ones. Different cultures which have known writing for a long time, Ong suggests, have internalized it to different degrees. In Anglo culture, where, as I have discussed in Wierzbicka 2010b, it has become common to view human lives as ‘stories’, writing appears to have been internalized to a particularly high degree. (See also Wierzbicka in Press.) The material discussed in the present paper suggests that Russian may be at the opposite end of the spectrum. In particular, high-frequency dialogical particles such as *da* and *nu* point to a high degree of orality (since orality and “dialogicality” are closely linked). The matter deserves closer examination.

7. A nineteenth-century English guide entitled *How to Shine in Society* (1867: 20) (quoted in Millar 2002: 184), advised its readers: “when you are compelled to dissent from anything that has been said, state first how far you agree with the speaker, and how happy you are to accord with him so far, then how unwilling you are to differ with him.” Such advice is highly compatible with contemporary Anglo cultural scripts. But not with Russian ones.

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“LENIN IS THE STALIN OF TODAY”: A DEICTIC APPROACH TO THE CULT OF THE LEADER

ANDREAS VENTSEL

The cult of the leader was one of the main characteristics of Soviet culture — it marked its strict hierarchical structure, and, more importantly, the head of that structure. In this article I elucidate the mechanisms of the cult of leadership from the point of view of language theory. In the first part I will focus on the development of the cultural origins of the cult of leadership in Russia. The second part, drawing on Émile Benveniste’s theory of deictics, Ernesto Laclau’s theory of hegemony and Tartu-Moscow School’s semiotics of culture, concentrates on the expression that characterized the cult of the leader during the Stalin era — “Stalin is today’s Lenin”. I claim that the expression “Stalin is the Lenin of today” was, in Stalin’s era, equivalent to the expression “Lenin is the Stalin of today”, for only Stalin’s own act of utterance created the time of the utterance. And it was the time of Stalin’s utterance that determined the conditions of the situation of the utterance — the canonized way that prescribed to the “Soviet people” how to view and interpret Lenin. But the totality of Stalin’s “I” makes it plausible to suggest that there was only a cult of one leader — that of Stalin’s. Accordingly, Stalin’s “I” made it possible to maintain the ideological view of the society as a coherent system of meaning.

Keywords: cult of the leader, Soviet political discourse, deixis, Stalin, hegemonic signification, semiotics of culture

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“**T**he principle of heroism — be it those of the Stakhanovites, war heroes, or members of the party — was one of the primary constitutive structural elements of the text both in political rhetoric and in the artistic canon of socialist realism. However, in Soviet ideology, the role of the supreme hero, the Leader, was particularly marked. The position of the Leader was that “holy place” that always had to be filled and represented: the cult of the leader represents one of the primary characteristics of Soviet culture — its rigidly hierarchical structure with a crowning top. The Soviet version of the cult of the leader is, however, characterised by its doubled nature, something which manifested itself after the death of Lenin and during the entire history of the Soviet Union, and was present on the discursive level most pronouncedly during Stalin’s period of reign.

The dual nature of the cult of the leader of the Stalinist era is best characterized by its central thesis: “Stalin is the Lenin of today”. On the one hand, this legitimised Stalin’s claim to power as Lenin’s successor. This meant that the purity and rightness of the idea of the revolution had been preserved. On the other hand, however, this thesis exhibits the paradoxical nature of the cult of the leader. It remains unclear whether there were two objects of the cult — Lenin and Stalin, or, to the contrary, the cult of Lenin functioned as an integral structural component in the mechanism of the cult of Stalin, dynamically legitimating and ensuring his establishment of power. The issue of Stalin as Lenin’s successor has been of interest for historians, who distinguish between two contradictory positions: the so-called “Thermidor school”, the roots of which go back to Trotsky, sees Stalin as the Bonaparte of the revolution. Stalinism grew out of bolshevism, then diverged from it and, in the end, was opposed to it. The second position is represented, for example, by Roy Medvedev, who in his book *Let History Judge: The Origins and Consequences of Stalinism* (1971) regards Stalin and Stalinism as the logical continuation of the “scientific” system of Marx and Lenin. Simultaneously, we can also place the cult of the leader into a wider cultural context and perceive its roots already earlier in Russian cultural history.

I try two approaches to the cult of Stalin on the level of discourse and power relations in it. In his discussion of the functioning of power in society, Louis Althusser divides the repressive institutions in society into two: repressive state apparatuses and ideological state apparatuses — the former mostly rely on physical force (police, military, etc.), whereas the latter primarily uses softer means of influence (family, school, media, etc.) (Althusser 1970, p. 3-38). The dividing line between the two cannot be rigorously distinguished, however, as they frequently intersect — censorship can be enforced by means of violence, but it can also operate as internal self-censorship. Thus the state does not need to apply direct physical violence in order to organise the social world, since by means of the educational system, but also through other channels of information, the state is able to control, create and reshape those mental structures and codes by way of which people interpret reality, including the

state and power itself (Bourdieu 2003). In this paper I try to conceptualize the issue of the cult of the leader as a socio-cultural phenomenon and as an act of communication from the perspective of linguistic theory and discourse theory. Its purpose is to demonstrate how, on the level of public discourse where the real cult of power (Stalin's cult) was seconded by a symbolic one (Lenin's cult), the former managed to preserve its full authority by incorporating the latter. This article does not deal with discourse analysis that usually concentrates on particular texts but makes rather more generalised insights about of the phenomenon of the cult of the leader. More empirically oriented exploration about the cult of Stalin (see Vaiskopf 2002; Ventsel 2007, 2010).

The applied theoretical framework is drawn mostly from Émile Benveniste's I-centred approach to deictics, fused with the concept of hegemonic logic of signification by Ernesto Laclau, one of today's most renowned theorists of hegemony and the leading figure of the Essex school of discourse theory, and with typologies of culture by Tartu-Moscow School of semiotics. Laclau's concepts of "empty signifier" help us better understand the discursive practice of hegemonic signification that accompanies the construction of "the we". Yet at the same time, in his explanations of the logic of signification, Laclau proceeds from the concept of affect derived from psychoanalysis, especially from its Lacanian version, for which reason it closes the doors, in the opinion of many social scientists, to concrete analyses of political discourse. In my estimation, Benveniste's theory of linguistics seems to avoid such problems. In addition, a deictic analysis can highlight the question of the subject, which would shed some light on the relations between utterances and the subject of utterances. It is true that the tradition of describing deixis has a long history reaching back to the Stoics. But since Karl Bühler's *Sprachtheorie* (1934) the deixis has a well-established place in scientific linguistic studies. Deixis analysis has also extended its theoretical basis: devices for analysis have been borrowed from analytic philosophy (e. g., Kripke 1990; Evans 1985, etc.), semiotics (e. g., Greimas, Courtes 1993 [1978]) as well as from cognitive science (e.g., Lyons 1977; Fillmore 1982; Brown, Yule 1983). While other elements of language in political discourse have attracted attention well enough, e.g., metaphor (see Lakoff 1992; 1996); lexis (see Lasswell et al. 1949, etc.), the role of deixis in constructing power relations has been underestimated (cf. Weintraub 1989). The following could be regarded as a small contribution to filling that gap.

And from the semiotic approach I use some typologies of culture that help reach some generalised insight about public communication during the Stalin era. Moreover, all these three authors are, at least in a sense, part of the tradition whose roots go back to Ferdinand de Saussure's idea of the process of signification as a system of differences. Thus the theoretical aspect of this paper will be an interdisciplinary one, synthesizing approaches from linguistics, discourse theory and semiotics of culture.

CULT OF THE LEADER IN SOVIET IDEOLOGY

In Russia, the sacral Leader-ruler is not a 20th century phenomenon, but rather a particular kind of political-religious mentality appearing from a mutual influence of different cultural regions, and finds its clearest expression in the imagined ruler as a superman of mystical powers. The roots of this phenomenon date back to contacts with Byzantium and western cultural traditions. From the former, ancient Russian culture derives the parallelism between the tsar and God. Western influences are apparent in the belief in the monarch's personal preternatural charisma. The tsar is as if God and Man in one person (Uspenski 1994, p. 122). After the fall of Constantinople in 1453, Moscow became the sole independent orthodox state in the world. According to medieval ideology only the bearers of the true faith had the right of true existence, and in accordance with this idea the ruler of Moscow now became the ruler of the world (Lotman 1999, p. 353-354). This conception leads one to perceive Russia as a sacred place with respect to the rest of the world, ruled by God-Man the messiah who must save all of mankind.

Of course it would be too simplistic to argue that the mechanism for the sacralisation of the tsar was merely carried over into the cult of the leader in totalitarian Soviet society. For one thing, totalitarianism is characterised by a total or nearly total control of the powers over the society (Brzezinski, Friedrich 1956), which in the tsarist regime never materialised, even despite the efforts of the secret police. Second, the totalitarian society was a mass society, characterised by a world-view and stereotypes simplified to the extreme by propaganda, by the monopolisation of information channels by those in power (Anderson 1993, p. 142; Arendt 1973), by the sense of fear perpetuated through violence, and by the working class created during the process of industrialisation (Djilas 1958), etc. However, the purpose of the present paper is not to highlight and analyse the differences between the tsarist Russia and the totalitarian Soviet Union. It is rather to show how one particular attribute (the cult of the leader), characteristic of a particular type of culture, functioned in public discourse. In Russia, spiritual redemption and changing the world (through social reordering) were two sides of the same coin: the religious salvation of a person ensured a better world and, conversely, the (materialistically speaking) better world order gave birth to a new and improved person. Unlike the western world, scientific and religious consciousness here remained a single monadic consciousness; the distinction between the salvation of the soul and the rearrangement of the scientific world had become uncertain (Sedov 1989, p. 440).

For more than half a century, the theoreticians of scientific Marxism spent their energy on determining the conditions of the perfect society and with it, the creation of a new human being. As the embodiments of the top of the power pyramid, Lenin, and later Stalin,

became part of a historic tradition in Russia. In the political discourse, Lenin's works *What is to be Done?* (1902), *One Step Forward, Two Steps Back* (1904), *Two Tactics of Social Democracy in the Democratic Revolution* (1905) and many others, and Stalin's *Short Course* (1938) and *Problems of Leninism* (1945) were imbued with the same sacral significance as Bible in the orthodox tradition.

The cult of "Lenin-Leader" was born among the elite of the Bolshevik party, mostly due to the influence of the people's commissar on education, Anatoly Lunacharsky, on Lenin's jubilee in 1920. The speeches by the party leaders during those days already included the entirety of the essence of "leniniana" (and of the later "staliniana") (Dobrenko 1993, p. 75-76). The cult of the leader can be characterised by the following features:

The superhuman nature of the leader: "in addition to his greatness, penetration, intellect, enormous will [...] there is something superhuman in him." Yet on the other hand, the Leader's "simplicity, humanity": Lenin is, despite his superhuman nature, just a comrade to other members of the party (Dobrenko 1993, p. 76).

"Popularity": in his plainness he is also comprehensible for the people, the masses. The Leader is a true orator and a man of the people. The Party is the conscience of the people, and the Leader embodies the conscience of the party (cf. Vladimir Lenin's *What is to be Done?* (1902), *One Step Forward, Two Steps Back* (1904)).

Foresight: the Leader is the one who can anticipate future events.

Perspicacity: the Leader's superhumanity is characterised not just by the power of foresight, but also of insight, of seeing through others. With his godlike capacity for perspicacity, Stalin could penetrate to the very core of Trotskyism, to those "political figures" who "concealed their views not just from the proletariat, not just from the Trotskyite masses, but even from the leading Trotskyites themselves" (Vaiskopf 2002, p. 355). Here Stalin is as if Trotsky himself, knowing the plans and thoughts of the enemies (i.e. Trotskyites) better than the enemies themselves.

This list could be continued, but we can already see from these points that we are dealing with a person of completely extraordinary and contradictory powers who is simultaneously both a humble comrade and a super-powered demiurge.

THE "EMPTY PLACE" OF THE LEADER

After Lenin's death in 1924 the place of the leader became vacant. On the one hand, the "cult of Lenin" had been established as the symbolic locus of power, yet on the other the

powers needed an actual new leader. The late 1920s and especially the 1930s in Soviet Russia are indeed characterised by the fusion of these two different cults of power, the symbolic and the real, expressed in the thesis “Stalin is the Lenin of today”.

In the 1920s, when depicting the leader became “topical” in fiction literature, a discussion arose about the right way of depicting the leader. At first, only Lenin was in focus. Considering the diversity and intensity of the literary life of the day, it is perhaps unsurprising that every literary group strove to establish their own, that is, the one true figure of Lenin, an ideal monument that would become canon for the others. During these debates, power in fact became an object of aesthetics (Dobrenko 1993, p. 78). As part of aesthetics, the depiction of the Leader/power became an object of interest for the powers themselves, since “totalitarian art is by nature the language of power, and the social-realist discourse is primarily a discourse of power (Dobrenko 1993, p. 36). Influenced by the ideas of the Russian Association of Proletarian Writers (Rossysskaya assotsiatsia proletarskikh pisatelei - RAPP), the left-wing art front (Levij Front Iskusstva — Lef), etc., the canon of Stalinist social realism later took shape, and ultimately, essentially monopolised the possibilities of cultural cognition in general (Hlebkina, 1998, p. 59 — 64; Groys, 1992). Thus the emergent artistic canon of socialist realism did not conform to aesthetic criteria only, but primarily to the politico-ideological sphere of power.

In the following I try to conceptualize these tendencies from the point of view of power relations and claim that establishing a hegemonic discourse was the primary goal of the above-described processes. On the level of discourse this amounts to nothing but a certain articulation of meanings. This articulation requires that a particular difference loses its particularity and becomes a universal representative of the signifying system as a whole. That way a *closure* for that system is provided. Since every system of signification is essentially *differential*, its *closure* is the precondition of signification being possible *at all* (Mouffe 1985). According to Laclau, the role of something like an anchor point is attributed to *some* components of the equivalence in the process of constructing the expression “Stalin is the Lenin of today”, which will then differentiate them from one another. These anchor points — “empty signifiers” — that will begin to signify the chain of equivalence as a unity and whole of meaningful discourse. We may refer to Lotman, who has written that the primary mechanism of meaning generation is indicated by the concept of trope — a pair of units of signification that are non-connectable in principle, but that are nevertheless related as adequate within a particular context (Lotman 2005, p. 406-407). “This means that elements do not pre-exist the relational complex but are constituted through it” (Laclau 2005, p. 68). Consequently, the creation of this unity can only be a figural or tropological construction (Laclau 2006, p. 103-114). “In that case, the rhetorical devices themselves — metaphor, metonymy, synecdoche, catachresis — become instruments of an expanded social rationality, and we are no longer able to dismiss an ideological interpellation as *merely*

rhetorical" (Laclau 2005, p. 12). For Laclau, an especially important role is played here by Paul de Man's concept of generalised rhetoric, "which necessarily includes within itself performative dimension — transcends all regional boundaries and becomes conterminous with the structuration social life itself" (Laclau 2001, p.229).

During the years following Lenin's death, there was a trenchant inter-party power struggle, and it was Stalin who exploited the developing cult of Lenin. By referring in his works to Lenin's written texts, quote-mining them and placing them into a context that suited him, Stalin made skilful use of the symbolic cult of Lenin. Stalin created an image of himself as Lenin's faithful student, keeping the intellectual legacy of Leninism pure (Vaiskopf 2002, p. 278). In public discourse, Stalin never emphasised his own personality in comparison with his teacher. Yet similarly, by interpreting Lenin's texts to suit his own needs, Stalin's purpose was not to preserve the individuality of Lenin as an author.

Let me exemplify these processes within two interwoven discourses in the era of Stalin: "socialism in a single country" and "Soviet patriotism". Before the Great Patriotic War (1941-1945) period, an ideological shift became definitively crystallised, a shift that started in the Soviet Union in the late 1920s. The fading of revolutionary fervour in National Bolshevism and the pathos of a "peaceful build-up" express an ideological turn-about and indicate the localisation of the world revolution — to "socialism in a single country." This was an idea first verbalised by Nikolay Bukharin that, in the hands of Stalin, was turned into a weapon by which he repressed Trotsky and his political followers (so-called Trotskysts). According to Mikhail Agursky, that slogan helped Stalin to unify previous official internationalist ideology with hidden nationalism (Agursky 1980, p. 204). The aim of this ambiguous concept was to reconcile the old generation of party members that were impressed by the idea of world-revolution with the new generation, "Stalinist cadres". It is important to emphasise that Stalin ascribed the conception "socialism in a single country" to Lenin (see "Concerning question of Leninism. Dedicated to the Leningrad Organisation of C.P.S.U (B)" 1926; "The Fifteenth Congress of C.P.S.U(B)" 1927; Report to the Seventeenth Party Congress on the Work of the Central Committee of the C.P.S.U.(B.) 1934). That kind of turn-around does not logically match with the idea of world-revolution that Lenin propagated (see "Socialism and War" 1915; "State and Revolution" 1917; "Letters on Tactics" 1918).

The other discourse, "Soviet patriotism" began to take shape before the war and signifies another important change in Soviet ideology. It could be called a revolution against a materialist world-view. It was no longer the material basis of society that was primary, but the ideological superstructure. Let us now compare "Soviet patriotism" and its antithesis in post-war Soviet political rhetoric: "cosmopolitanism". The latter was officially defined as a reactionary ideology that heralded the abandonment of national traditions and national particularities, a denial of national dignity and pride. The cosmopolitical ideology was

considered to be deeply hostile and essentially opposed to the Soviet patriotism that was the primary quality that characterised the Soviet individual (Dobrenko 1993, p. 330). Cosmopolitanism was understood as a world where words lack meaning and things have lost their colour. With an operation of inversion, cosmopolitanism is derived from the positivity of "Soviet patriotism" as its own opposite. "We" have national dignity and a sense of honour, "they" are nationally inferior and disown their own people; "we" have traditions, "they" do not; "we" are progressive, "they" are reactionary, etc.

The earlier works of Stalin that were written according to Lenin's counsels (see "Marxism and question of nationality" 1913), emphasised the priority of a unified proletariat and did not stress the hierarchy of different nations. The tendencies of Russification began in Stalin's writings already in 1926 (see "Letter to comrade Kaganovitch and other member of Politbureau of Central Committee of Communist Party of Ukraine"), where he claimed that Leninism is the greatest achievement of Russian culture (Vaiskopf 2002: 254). Russification under the label of official Soviet politics had begun in Russia in the second half of the 1930s, after Stalin's famous speech at the 17th congress of the C.P.S.U (b) in 1934, where he declared that from now on the priority will be placed on the Soviet Union and "socialism in a single country" (Report to the Seventeenth Party Congress on the Work of the Central Committee of the C.P.S.U.(B.)). The process of Russification amplified especially after the Great Patriotic War.

One of the most important signs of the creation of a post-war identity was Stalin's speech in honour of the Red Army's generals. The importance of the toast is signified by the fact that the passing of its fifth year was commented on in the editorial of the Estonian newspaper *Rahva Hääl* on 26 May 1950. This brief toast affixes the hierarchy of nationalities within "the Soviet people". "The people" as a whole is not homogeneous, but is constituted by different "we's":

I would like to raise a toast to the health of our Soviet people and, before all, the Russian people. I drink, before all, to the health of the Russian people, because in this war they earned general recognition as the leading force of the Soviet Union among all the nationalities of our country. [...] they have a clear mind, a steadfast character, and endurance. [...] And this trust of the Russian people in the Soviet Government was the decisive strength, which secured the historic victory over the enemy of humanity, – over fascism. (Stalin 1945).

We may add here other important example. The general secretary of the Union of Writers of the Soviet Union, Aleksander Fadejev, wrote: "The Russian people have created *their own* cultural values *by themselves*. For them, an uncritical and slavish veneration of the foreign simply because it is foreign is deeply alien. [...] Only something deeply national, expressing the very soul of the people in its historical development, can become truly

international, truly common to all humanity" (Fadejev 1957, p. 272). Since Russian culture is unspoiled by the influence of other cultures, we are left to conclude that it has come from itself. In light of the last sentence of the above quote it is clear that since it was the Russian people who were at the forefront of "historical progress", it was the Russian soul that was also the soul common to all humanity. Soviet culture defines itself as originating from itself and thereby constitutes a closed, "monadic" system (Dobrenko 1993, p. 214). Thus we should not be surprised that the emphasis on Russian culture simultaneously awakened an opposite process: everything that was perceived non-Russian but at the same time sacral and necessary for Soviet ideology was washed of its foreignness. In 1932 Stalin gave an order to make all the documents that referred to Lenin's possible Jewish roots secret. In 1938 he ordered the already published edition of Šaginjan's novel about Lenin in which the author mentioned Lenin's Swedish, German, and Kalmyk ancestry to be destroyed (Vaiskopf 2002, p. 255).

Two corpora of texts must be distinguished at this point. One is the self-image created by Stalin in his own works. Stalin indeed figures here as a mere "mediator" of Leninism, whose only advantage is an adequate understanding (but not interpretation!) of Lenin's teaching, and its accurate and timely implementation. For example, in an interview with the writer Lion Feuchtwanger, also published in Western media, Stalin argues for his personality cult in light of the intentions of "parasites" who attempt to discredit him and distance him from the people (Sinjavskij 1989, p. 118). The second corpus comprises texts about Stalin, i.e. how the Leader was perceived by others. Texts about Stalin as a great leader and teacher, Lenin's successor, the architect of communism, etc., found in both political rhetoric and social-realist literature, are part of this discourse. It should be remembered, however, that Stalin had control over the public circulation of both of these textual corpora. An example may be given from visual discourse also. Jan Plamper, who in his book *Alhimia vlasti. Kult Stalina v isobrpašitel'nom isskustve. [Alchemy of Power: Stalin's Cult in Painting]* explored Stalin's cult in paintings, in Stalin's Soviet Union, the Russian newspaper *Pravda* and pictures of Stalin that were published in it were the most important public media that canonised "the only true" way of depicting the Leader (with or without Lenin). The photos published in *Pravda* were in fact already canonised by being allowed into mass communication circulation only after passing Stalin's personal censorship. In late 1930s, however, it became official practice that photos of Stalin published in *Pravda* were then sent on to artists, who took them as the basis for visualising Stalin (Plamper 2010, p. 57-59). Later, beginning from 1937, when the first feature film about Stalin was released, cinematography became the second medium through which the canon of visualising the leader was developed and fixed (Plamper 2010, p. 62).

Together with the consolidation of power into Stalin's hands, the depiction of Lenin, too, was crystallised. Starting from mid-1930s, but especially after Stalin's *Problems of*

Leninism was published in 1939 the canonical depiction of Lenin was only based on these works. The culmination of this process is truly summarised by the thesis that “Stalin is the Lenin of today”.

In the public circulation of texts, the slogan “Stalin is the Lenin of today” functioned as a rhetorical device — empty signifier — that allowed itself, according to present political needs, to be filled with new content as the context required. It was an aggregate of different quotations, political suggestions, etc., drawn from Lenin’s oeuvre and pronouncements, all serving to achieve and legitimise Stalin’s current political goals. It also meant that the leader and the other members of the party could not be depicted/described arbitrarily, and for this reason the prevalence of certain ways of depiction/description and the exclusion of others most likely indicates the character of established power relations. Since according to cultural semiotics organised information is the primary foundation for any kind of communication and cultural existence (Ivanov, Toporov, Lotman et al. 1998, p. 34 — thesis 1.1.1), this sort of a hierarchy points to the positive function of exclusion, since this generates inter-cultural order. This form of exclusion is what Chantal Mouffe calls ‘hegemonic practices’ and every hegemonic order is susceptible to being challenged by counter-hegemonic practices, i.e. “practices which will attempt to disarticulate the existing order so as to install another form of hegemony” (Mouffe 2005, p. 18). Putting this into the vocabulary of semiotics of culture, we may say that every (dis)articulating process is process of meaning generation, and it depends on the nature of this process within the cultural context whether it reaches hegemonic status or not (Mouffe 2005, p. 18).

“STALIN IS THE LENIN OF TODAY”

In what follows, the thesis that “Stalin is the Lenin of today” is approached from the perspective of Émile Benveniste’s theory of deixis, and an attempt is made to explain the fusion of Stalin’s and Lenin’s cults through linguistic theory. The emphasis in this thesis is on two of its aspects. The first, the word “today”, refers to the moment of utterance. Every act of utterance creates a new reality during the time of that utterance. It may be parallel, so that the moment of utterance is marked within the utterance as a concurrent narrative. But time in the utterance may also be dislodged and make jumps to the future and the past. In this thesis, time is marked as the present moment: today. Second: the thesis is about Stalin. According to Benveniste, the third ¹ conjugation must have a truth value, meaning that on the level of discourse it is a truthful utterance as long as the participants in the dialogue consent to it (Benveniste 1966, p- 264-265). Stalin’s dual position is thereby revealed: he is placed simultaneously in the world of “content”, that is, the world of the utterance as related to the “objective historical time”, as well as, to use Bühler’s terminology (Bühler

1965), the world of reference, that is, the world of uttering. There is an asymmetry in the totalitarian communicative space: Stalin's "I" (power) — "you" (the people or whoever it happens to be in a particular dialogical situation), power is always the one who speaks first. *The correlation of subjectivity* is, in every act of utterance, Stalin's subjectivity. To explicate, for Benveniste the *correlation of subjectivity* means that "I" is active and creates "itself" in an utterance, since as the subject of the utterance "I" is the creator of "reality". For this reason "I" is always transcendental with respect to "you", since "I" must place itself outside itself in order to make contact with "you". Thus "I" has a subjective "face", while "you" is non-subjective and together they are opposed to "they" who are completely "faceless" (Benveniste 1966, p. 266). Applying Benveniste's treatment of deixis to the thesis under analysis — "Stalin is the Lenin of today", it may be noted that here the attribution of what is fictional and the creation of "reality" has been monopolised by Stalin. Stalin is not defined, but rather he defines himself. Thus in the thesis "Stalin is the Lenin of today" the first and third conjugation are merged within "Stalin", i.e. he belongs to the "objective time" of the dialogue as the one the expression is about (third conjugation), but simultaneously he defines the conditions of utterance for the participants in the dialogue and takes part of the communicative situation as the one who utters (first conjugation) and subordinates the subjectivity of "you". According to Mikhail Bakhtin there is a third party in every dialogue who does not formally participate in the process, but in relation to whom the real communicants order their positions; for instance: God's judgement, the eye of history, consciousness etc. (Bakhtin 1979, p. 149 — 150). In the situation under discussion, the third party is formed by the Communist Party, which is headed by Stalin. In analyses of actual situations of communication between local statesmen and the public, Stalin as the third party, concealed within the text, becomes the real addressee of the message. It is precisely the latter in relation to whom the addresser may not be in error when building up the discourse.

"LENIN IS THE STALIN OF TODAY"

It may thus be said that the thesis "Stalin is the Lenin of today" should more appropriately be read as "Lenin is the Stalin of today", since the creation of the "historical time" of the utterance is here not a matter of agreement between "I" and "you" reached through symmetrical communication, in which Stalin is as if "measured" by a constant Lenin. No, the latter is only created during Stalin's moment of utterance and the "historical time" created by this utterance. It is for this reason that Stalin resides as if simultaneously in both times. Stalin's act of utterance creates the time of the utterance: for example, creates the figure of Lenin. And vice versa: the time of Stalin's utterance creates the conditions of

the situation of utterance: the ways of depicting and perceiving Lenin as canonised for the “Soviet people”. It must be emphasized that this canon existed for the “Soviet people” and not for excluded “others”. Stalin represents a total now-point in which the time of uttering and of utterance merge together. This latter fact is also one of the reasons for which the canon of depicting the Leader was never actually finalized, since only Stalin was capable of depicting Lenin in his “true and complete” nature. This was not, however, because Stalin was more equivalent to Lenin than other party members. Stalin was the only one who had the power to fix the meanings of concepts circulating in political discourse. Lenin, having been discursively created by Stalin, is concurrently Stalin’s self-image and thus the purest embodiment of the self-presentation of power. Because of this process of identification — Stalin = Lenin — the cult of the leader becomes dependent on the moments of utterance by the real Leader, that is, Stalin. Thus it would be misleading to discuss two cults of the leader within Soviet culture. There was only one cult — that of Stalin.

Of course it should not be taken at face value that every sentence uttered by Stalin changed the world and immediately became canonised. There were, of course, chrestomathic texts in the Stalinist culture, but this canon was never unitary and lasting. It should be noted that the status of chrestomathic texts depended on Stalin’s vision. Stalin also often reappraised his own past opinions (Vaiskopf 2002). Texts that no longer conformed with the new utterance turned into non-texts from the perspective of ideological self-presentation (i.e. they were removed from public discursive circulation) or, in some cases, into anti-texts. In the Tartu-Moscow school of semiotics, anti-texts of a culture are defined as texts that are being actively destroyed, as distinct from non-texts that are merely not preserved in a culture (Ivanov, V; Lotman, J; Toporov, V; Uspenskij, B 1998, p. 43). Behind it all is, of course, simple realist politics — in the struggle for power, monopolising the depiction of the “true Lenin” made it possible to remove those who disagreed with Stalin’s politics. We can, in fact, observe a similar process in writing Stalin’s own biography that was to become a sacred text just like his earlier *Short Course*. Due to massive repressions among the party elites it was impossible to make use of the names of Stalin’s contributors, since the period between writing and publication might have brought along several changes in defining them as *friend* or *foe*. Thus the chrestomathic *Biography of Stalin* only names Stalin’s closest allies of the time, and the companions-in-arms of his youth who had already died of natural causes.

During the Stalinist era, the thesis “Stalin is the Lenin of today” was equivalent in meaning to “Lenin is the Stalin of today”, since the totality of Stalin’s “I” makes it possible to argue that there existed but one cult, that of Stalin’s. It was not Stalin who was “measured” with Lenin, but the other way around: Lenin had to conform to Stalin’s current self-image and the needs of realist politics. In addition, this “I” secured the society’s ideological self-image as a unitary system of signification by removing the threat that may

appear on the discursive level during the process of signification if there are two simultaneous but contradictory discourses of the cult of the leader. It was only Stalin's act of utterance that created the figure of Lenin, and with it, the time of Stalin's utterance created the conditions of the situation of uttering and the promised way of depicting and interpreting Lenin for the "Soviet people".

Consequently it can be said that Soviet ideology resembles the type of culture (if we understand ideology in the present context as synonymous with culture) that Lotman characterised as an aggregation of texts, as opposed to the type of culture that creates the aggregation of texts (Lotman, Uspenski 1994, p. 245). In this type of culture, from the standpoint of the self-understanding of this culture, the content of the culture is pre-given; it consists of a prescriptive sum of the "right" texts. In Soviet ideology they comprised the works of the Marxist-Leninist classics and, during the Stalinist era, mostly the works of Stalin himself. In this type of culture the subject of the speech as a creator of reality (content) within the utterance only has relative value. Everything new is in fact predictable and known to the true knowers — the real subjects (Marx, Engels, Lenin, and Stalin). Paraphrasing Benveniste, it could be said that the *I* entirely subjected the non-*I* or the *I* created the *we* in its entirety according to its arbitrary will.

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RUSSIAN DISASTER COVERAGE IS NO ACCIDENT: HOW TWO RUSSIAN NEWSPAPERS AND THEIR READERS FRAME A RUSSIAN PLANE CRASH

SVETLANA RYBALKO

The present study is a content analysis of disaster frames found in 2008 Russian plane crash news coverage. A total of 182 paragraphs from two Russian newspapers, and 77 readers' postings were analyzed to examine which of six news frames and level of responsibility were used by the media and readers. While the dominant frames used by newspapers were disaster aftermath, cause, and human interest, readers were mostly interested in the cause and attribution of responsibility.

Keywords: disaster coverage, media frames, framing, online newspapers

Western mass media play a crucial role in disasters discourse by issuing warning of predicted or impending natural disasters, by conveying information about natural and man-made disasters to the general public, government officials, and emergency agencies, by reporting on the relief and recovery operations. It was not the case for the Soviet media. As one Western researcher noted, it was not as if after the fall of the Soviet Union that planes suddenly started falling from the sky. Those kinds of disasters, as well as other disasters, were generally not covered by the Soviet media. Information about accidents, i.e. what happened, how many people died, what was the cause, and who was responsible for the disaster, was not available to the general public; only few professionals, experts and state

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investigation committee members had an access to such information. Has the situation changed since then? What do modern-day Russian citizens learn about disasters, particularly, plane crashes, from the Russian media? Do Russian media follow the Western principles of disaster coverage or does the Soviet tradition still prevail?

The majority of the studies on the media in countries of the former Soviet Union looked at transformations of the media system, including economic and legislative changes (Corcoran and Preston, 1995; Splichal, 1994). There are also studies that explored the broadcast media in Russia, television specifically (Mickiewicz, 1997; Sparks and Reading, 1994). The review of the literature showed that there are few studies that actually looked at the disaster coverage in Russia. A quantitative content analysis of the online versions of the two Russian newspapers, undertaken in the present article, provides a snapshot of the current state of the disaster media coverage in Russia.

The disaster studied is a crash of Boeing 737 of Russian air company, Aeroflot-Nord, in Perm, Russia, on September 14, 2008, when 88 people perished. The time period is September — October 2008. The empirical analysis aims to determine what are the most common frames used in disaster news coverage to determine the degree to which Russian journalists follow the patterns of Western disaster media coverage.

RUSSIAN MEDIA FROM GLASNOST THROUGH PUTIN ERA

The major concepts of glasnost were accepted by the Communist Party in 1986. It brought some structural and legal changes to the Soviet media system. The press was still controlled by the government, although the nature of the control has changed and became more cooperative (Steinsdorff, 1994, in Becker, 2004, p. 472).

During the time of Gorbachev's era Russian media was offered a venue for some social criticism and promotion of democratization. The coverage of the society became more realistic. Russia was presented as a country which faces a lot of social, economic and political challenges, including crime, homelessness, and ethnic conflicts (Wasburn and Ruth, 1997, p. 674). The content analysis of *Vremya*, Russian news broadcast program produced by Russian Public Television (ORT), revealed that of 66.2% of its news items topics — 1.8% was devoted to natural disasters within Russia. Those broadcasts included stories about earthquakes, fires, floods, damaging weather, and accidents such as mine explosions and plane crashes (Wasburn and Ruth, 1997, p. 674).

By the beginning of the 1990s, Gorbachev's successor — Boris Yeltsin passed a new law which extended press freedom, as well as reorganized Russian news agencies into politically independent news media organizations. From that time forward media outlets were expected to provide "accurate "deideologized" (news free from any kind of ideology)

news” (Wasburn and Ruth, p. 675), which symbolized the shift in the news worthiness values.

Overall, the media under Gorbachev and Yeltsin made substantial achievements compared with the pre-glasnost era (Becker, 2004). Prior to Putin presidency the print and broadcast media were able to provide diversity of ideas, opinions as well as criticism of the government. Revisiting the four theories of the press, Becker (2004) argues that the Russian media under Putin could be considered as a neo-authoritarian media system, under which the government does not have full control over the media but uses more subtle ways to communicate its priorities to the media organizations. Those ways could be tax advantages, subsidies, and other ways of government support (Becker, 2004, p. 149). The Russian media under Putin has relatively independent print media and tightly controlled television. The government does not attempt to control all issues, which was the case in the Soviet Union, but those which are crucial to the state survival, such as elections and Chechnya (a part of Russian Federation) (Becker, 2004, p. 157). Article 4 of the media law, active in 2008, states that gathering and reporting of news on the counterterrorist operation organization is determined by the leader of the counterterrorist operation (“Drawbacks of the current law of the press and correction suggestions”; http://www.ruj.ru/news_2008/081113-5.htm). Even with Medvedev as president, Putin still stays in power as a prime minister, which allows the researcher to argue that the principles of neo-authoritarian media system are still relevant to our understanding of the current Russian media system.

WESTERN JOURNALISM PRINCIPLES

Weaver and Wilhoit (1986) outlined three basic roles of the western journalists: the disseminator role, the interpretive role and the adversary role. The disseminator role implies that a journalist is committed to disseminating objective information on current events to the public. The interpretive role also focuses on the objectivity of the information but with the emphasis on certain standpoints. The adversarial role implies that the mass media are a ‘fourth state,’ meaning that the journalists should view themselves in the opposition of the government, realizing the ‘watchdog’ function of the media over the government and other kinds of socially important institutions. The core value of western journalism, the one which has been mostly argued (Hackett, 1984; McQuail, 1986), is objectivity. According to Westerstahl (1983, in Voltmer, 2000, p. 477) it implies commitment to facts which can be verified and exclusion of personal judgment of a journalist.

SOVIET JOURNALISM PRINCIPLES

Soviet journalists had a very different set of values than reporters in American media organizations. According to Remington (1985), Soviet journalists were expected to reflect the party ideas, and political loyalty. Critical reporting or any kind of investigative reporting could lead to certain risks. Soviet journalists were not trying to explore the audience interests or attempt to meet the needs of the audience, but rather “fulfill of the expectations of party officials” (Remington, 1985, p. 495). Both officials and journalists considered reporting about the party decisions on political matters as well as the political upbringing of the “new Soviet Person” among the major journalists’ tasks (Remington, 1985, p. 496). Soviet journalists did not consider themselves as a middleman between ruling elite and the public on the other hand. An idea of the success for Soviet journalism was not to achieve professional objectivity and independence but to become a part of the ruling elite, “from acting as an extension of the party bureaucracy” (Remington, 1985, p. 497).

In terms of the news coverage in the Soviet media, the news was considered to be “the illustration of positive trends in the process of creating the Communist society” (Hollander, 1967, p. 360). Only those events that could be related to this process were considered to be news, unlike stories about crime or disasters which did not reflect positive developments of the society and therefore deemed not significant.

Hollander (1967) cites the official handbook for the broadcast journalists who prepared the reports on breaking news. The handbook focuses on the “purposeful, directed selection of those facts and events which represent the broadest social interest,” which aims at propaganda of party policy and mobilization of the people for the construction of the communist society” (Hollander, 1967, p. 360). The topicality of the event and objectivity were not considered news in the Soviet journalism.

DISASTER COVERAGE IN THE WESTERN DEMOCRACIES

The mass media in liberal democracies convey information about natural and man-made disasters to the general public, government officials, and emergency agencies. In the disaster aftermath the mass media report on the relief and recovery operations. Disaster researchers outline some of the basic media responsibilities in the time of disaster (Elliott, 1989) The National Research Council’s Committee on Disasters and the Mass Media focus on the following media responsibilities: 1) disaster preparedness, 2) provision of warning and other necessary information to cope with a disaster; 3) provide reassurance in the aftermath of the disaster; 4) to provide coverage of the activities related to a disaster (Wilkins, 1985, in Elliott, p. 162). There are various concerns about how Western media

covers disasters and what conditions have to be met to ensure accurate, complete, balanced and relevant information about the disaster (Wilkins, 1987, in Elliott, p. 163). In spite of those, “press coverage that follows a disaster has become an unavoidable feature of the media age” in liberal democracies (Time, February, 10, 1986, p. 42, in Elliott, p. 161).

FRAMING THEORY

Framing theory attempts to explore how news media content is created. According to Entman (1993), to frame is to select certain elements of a perceived reality and make them more salient in such a way as to promote a particular problem definition for the item selected. Entman’s definition of framing entails both salience and selection. Making an issue more salient implies making a certain piece of information more noticeable, meaningful, or memorable to an audience. Journalists frame issues by choosing to emphasize some elements of the issues over the others, affecting viewers and readers’ awareness and perception of public issues and concerns. Journalists by selecting certain aspects of the reality define what the problem is. Gitlin (1980) defined framing as a process of selection, emphasis, and exclusion used by communicator or message sender to routinely organize verbal and visual activities. Frames are then defined as principles of selection, emphasis and presentation of what exists, what happens, and what matters.

Entman (1993) suggested the following functions of framing: to define problems, to identify the causes of those problems, to make moral judgments and to provide suggestions how to deal with them. Along this line of reasoning, Pan and Kosicki (1993) mentioned that, “within the realm of news discourse, causal reasoning is often present, including causal attributions of the roots of a problem” (p.64). Entman (1993) also pointed out that frames can be identified in the four locations in the communication process: the sender of the message, the text, the receiver of the message, and the culture.

Discussing framing effects, Cappella and Jamieson (1997) argue that even if the study understands and provides some evidence of framing in news coverage, it does not determine the effects of the frames on the receiver of the message. The frames can be identified in the messages, while the effects of the frames are in the public opinions and attitudes, people’s knowledge and behavior. The researchers also point out that establishing that framing does function and operate in controlled environment of an experiment does not necessarily mean there will be the same results in a real setting where the messages have more complex nature and the receiver can experience so many other influences. Cappella and Jamieson (1997) refer to the research that explored effects of personal involvement with issue on public opinion. Those studies (Kinder and Sears, 1981; Stoker, 1992) demonstrate that personal

experience, direct or indirect, as well as influence from others can “mask or reverse the effects of framing alone” (Cappella and Jamieson, 1997, p. 49).

Revealing the nature of framing effects is an important part of research (Iyengar, 1991; Kinder & Sanders, 1990). Some studies looked at framing in cognitive and decision science (Kahneman, Slovic, and Tversky, 1982). Others explored framing effects on public opinion (Schuman and Presser, 1982; Miller and Krosnick, 1996). Cappella and Jamieson (1997) discuss the cognitive bases for framing effects. They point out that the frames that exist in the message “make salient certain features of news event and depress others” (p. 58). In return, the salient feature in the message triggers certain mental associations and stimulates other cognitive processes (p. 58). Iyengar (1991) explored and measured the transfer of salience of certain news events’ features from media to public. Maher (1995) explored media framing and public perception of the roots of the problem. The main finding was that the respondents of the survey mentioned the causes of urban sprawl in Austin, TX, which were identified by the media.

In the current study I explore the media frames present in the text of the online stories, and the audience frames found in the postings published on the web site of the newspaper. The communicators are news media journalists of online editions of Russian newspapers who, by selecting, emphasizing, or excluding certain aspects of the plane crash, may influence how audiences perceive it. The audience is the readers of the newspapers’ online editions.

FRAMES IN DISASTER NEWS COVERAGE

In relation to disaster news coverage different aspects of pre-disaster, disaster impact and disaster aftermath stages can be selected and emphasized; for example, a disaster can be portrayed as a result of aviation companies poor safety policies, as local airport personnel’ mistakes, as a pilots’ mishap, or as a bigger system problem. Journalists who engage in framing select one or more specific aspects of perceived reality and make them more vivid and conspicuous in the story, which promotes a specific problem definition. Entman (1993) suggested that journalistic frames are revealed in key words, phrases, or sentences on specific themes or issues. Entman further argued that the selection of frames represents journalists’ exercise of power.

For more than four decades the issues of news media coverage and disaster reporting have been an area of research by a variety of disaster and mass communications scholars. For example, Scanlon’s (1978) study documented that, during disaster coverage, the news media demonstrated considerable inconsistency and factual inaccuracies. Media tended to exaggerate the extent of the crisis, disseminate fragmentary, inaccurate, and speculative

reports. The research data suggested that the news media needed to come to understanding of post-disaster phenomena, and that they should forego their habit of reporting information that they could not either attribute to a specific source or verify themselves.

One of the studies that could be useful for understanding the news media coverage patterns of disasters is a study conducted by Zavestoski et al. (2004). The researchers focused on the institutional framing by official agencies responsible for managing a toxic crisis. They described framing activity as a new approach to managing public responses to contamination, which was a part of an effort to socially construct the risks related to an accident. The researchers revealed that the official agencies responsible for coping with the toxic crisis constructed several frames and sub-frames: the responsiveness frame; the collaboration frame; the minimization frame; the “reliance-on-science” frame; the “caution-not-alarm” frame; the public-protector frame; and “historical-not-chronic source” frame. To identify these institutional frames, the researchers content-analyzed a number of press releases. To detect the influence of institutional framing on the news media they analyzed media coverage. In the content analysis of media coverage, the researchers looked at the quotations from the press releases, or those attributed to the spokesperson. The researchers also argued that framing activity was likely to be found in different social contexts wherever risks are negotiated — whether they had to do with health risks, environmental risks, and impacts of social or economic policies. The frame-alignment perspective could be applied to demonstrate how institutional framing by federal, local, and state agencies influenced the national and local media coverage of the natural hazard and risks.

Wilkins et al. (1987) conducted a study to analyze the role of mass media in risk communication during pre-disaster warning and immediate aftermath stages of disasters. They found: (1) news generally focused on discreet events not on underlying issues; (2) news stories recounted events without providing any relevant historical, social, or governmental context; (3) news of disasters tends to be portrayed as melodrama — a form of communication that relies on plot predictability and stereotype; (4) because news is based on the concept of novelty rather than on situational analysis, car accidents seldom become news stories. The professional demands to humanize individual stories and news reports of risk can be seen as an example of the fundamental attribution error: the tendency to attribute too much responsibility to people but not to social and environmental constraints shaping the behavior.

Wilkins et al. (1987) analyzed the media coverage of the Bhopal and Chernobyl and found that the journalists had failed to analyze the technological and social system in which the events occurred. News reports blamed people and institutions for what were societal problems. Both print and broadcast reports on Bhopal and Chernobyl were event-oriented and included no discussion of underlying social, cultural, and economic forces. News reports focused mainly on the disaster itself, the immediate aftermath, and what was done

to clean-up. Those disasters were not presented in a larger framework of technological hazard and there was little discussion of the various long-term health, environmental, social, or legal issues of the tragedy. One of the major characteristics of disaster news coverage was that the reports included some prevailing tone of helplessness: the victims were portrayed as lost in the tragedy. Bhopal was portrayed as a unique tragedy — the worst accident in the human history — instead of as a symptom of a worldwide industrial disease.

To continue this line of research, Singer and Endreny (1993) conducted an extensive study on how mass media reported on diseases, disasters, hazards and risks. Their research looked at the reporting of hundreds of different hazards in fifteen different media. The researchers distinguished several types of hazard stories, such as a damage story (who died, who was injured?); a risk story (what is going to happen, how serious is the risk?); a blame story; or a clean-up story (what are they going to do about it). It was found that: (1) Media definitions of risk were based on the drama of a single hazardous event, not on the annual mortality figures. For example, catastrophic accidents like natural or man-made disasters that killed many people simultaneously attracted more media attention than car accidents that had greater annual mortality rates, but were less spectacular and dramatic. (2) Media did not report on hazards and associated risks, but rather reported on certain examples of hazards such as floods, hurricanes, earthquakes, or plane crash. (3) Journalists reported on such accidents differently from risk communicators or social scientists. The former provided information about immediate and long-term consequences, discussed the issues, moral and economic. Reporters reported about events rather than issues, they focused on immediate rather than on long-term consequences, while moral or ethical issues were generally not addressed in the stories about hazards.

DISASTER (PLANE CRASH) STORIES

It is noted that “reports of news events are stories — no more, but no less... Reporters discover events (or are presented with events) in which they can locate themes and conflicts of a particular society. These events get retold as essentially the same story from year to year and even from decade to decade” (Cobb and Primo, 2003, p. 6). The authors suggest that, in order to understand why airplane accidents, especially plane crashes, receive such extensive coverage, it is crucial to consider a plane crash as a “political event with an intrinsic human interest angle” (Cobb and Primo, page 6). The authors refer to Entman, who analyzes three basic principles that govern media coverage of stories: (1) simplification, which means that for the story to reach the biggest audience it has to consist of the most basic elements understood by the majority of the general public; (2) personalization, i.e., the story must have a human interest angle so the audience can relate to it; (3) symbolization,

i.e., stories should be told in “words, phrases, slogans, gestures, objects, or dramatic actions” that the audience can easily identify with (Cobb and Primo, 2003, p. 7).

Cobb and Primo (2003) identified the following elements shared by all disaster stories: (1) Damage, i.e., in such stories the reporters will talk about how many are killed, or the value of property destroyed. (2) Victims, i.e., media devote a big portion of its coverage to the victims of the disaster, e.g. human tragedy and how people deal with it. (3) Cause, i.e., a natural stage of disaster coverage is the stories that look at who or what caused the disaster. According to Cobb and Primo (2003), “focus on a cause or responsibility is necessary for the media” (page 8). The relation between victims and causes is “sometimes referred to as the hero-villain syndrome” (p. 8). (4) Cure, i.e., the final stage of the disaster coverage, which focuses on the reaction of the government agencies. In general, the researchers found that media coverage was intense right after the plane crash, but as the time went by, this “interest quickly dissipated” (p.75). As the researchers point out, the coverage became minimal after the few weeks of the crash.

DISASTER COVERAGE IN THE SOVIET UNION

One of the major disasters which became widely known and covered by the Western media was the Chernobyl explosion. One of the reactors at Chernobyl exploded during the experiment in the early morning of the 26th of April 1986. Two people died immediately, between 200 and 300 people received medical treatment because of radiation sickness (in Giel, 1990, p. 383).

It took about 13 days to stop the fire in the reactor. Within the weeks after the accident, approximately 100, 000 people were evacuated from within the 30 km zone (in Giel, 1990, p. 383). On the first day after the accident the media did not have any stories about what happened. The public did not have any information about the accident. People in Pripyat, Chernobyl and Kiev were out in the streets without having any warnings about possible dangers and hazards of being exposed to radiation. The first media report on the disaster appeared late on the 28th of April (Giel, 1990, p. 385). It was an announcement in a Moscow radio news bulletin and a brief message from the USSR Council of Ministers in *Pravda*. It was reported that the “radiation situation the power-station and the adjoining areas had been stabilized” (Voznesenskaya, 1987, in Giel, 1990, p. 385). Only beginning in March 1988 authorities could no longer withhold information and newspapers were able to publish the latest news on radioactivity around Chernobyl (Giel, 1990, p. 385).

Schmid (2004) conducted an analysis of the accident coverage in *Ogonyok* from 1986 to 1995, a magazine edited in Moscow and distributed nationally. Overall, the magazine reflected the widely accepted Soviet practice to cover disasters by providing minimum

descriptive information about the disaster and simply announcing that the problem was under investigation by the authorities (cf. Hollander 1972 in Schmid, 2004, p. 363). The majority of the media stories that appeared right after the accident contained military metaphors to portray the effectiveness of the “liquidation” work. People were presented as calmly dealing with the disaster aftermath. *Ogonyok* prescribed the Soviet people to volunteer in the clean-up work or invite the evacuees from those areas. Only in 1987 there were stories in two subsequent issues of *Ogonyok* that criticized the accident management (Schmid, 2004). Later in 1989, another personal report provided some accusation and reflexive critique of the government response (Schmid, 2004, p. 361). Three years after the accident the journal reported on the problems faced by the participants of the clean-up.

The portrayal of the state was one of the most prominent topics in the Chernobyl news media coverage. In the early media coverage the government was presented as taking care of its population and protecting human lives of (Schmid, 2004, p. 366). However, in 1989 the stories questioning and criticizing the efficiency of the state, and the delay in evacuation began to appear. There were some instances when media stories criticized censorship and information cover-up.

As late as June 27, exactly two months after the explosion of the nuclear reactor, a decree was issued to not to release any bad news about the details of the accident, the results of the medical treatments, about the degree to which the personnel had been irradiated...

It is unclear why it was necessary to conceal all that from the public just then, when the press heralded the “politics of glasnost,” to conceal information that could have helped hundreds of thousands of people to correctly adjust to the radiation conditions (Golovkov 1989, 8, in Schmid, 2004, p. 366).

Based on the examples of the Chernobyl news coverage, it could be argued that the Soviet media was not expected to participate in any way in disaster preparedness, and to provide warnings and other necessary information to cope with a disaster. The basic guidelines for the media was to state that the disaster is under investigation without providing any additional information about its disaster causes and aftermath, or any other information related to the disaster impact. The Soviet media was not expected to provide the public, especially those in the affected areas, with the necessary information about the possible health dangers of the accident.

Based on the previous studies, the following questions are posed regarding the coverage of the 2008 Russian plane disaster by two Russian newspapers:

- RQ1. What are the most common news frames used in the news coverage?
- RQ2. What was the level of responsibility (individual or organizational) in the attribution of responsibility frame in the news coverage?
- RQ3: Which are the most common frames used by the readers of the news articles?

RQ4: What was the level of responsibility (individual or organizational) in the attribution of responsibility frame in the readers' postings?

METHOD

Plane Crash

This study investigated news coverage of the plane crash of the Russian commercial aircraft, Boeing 737, on September 14, 2008 through content analysis.

The study analyzed all news articles related to the plane crash event covered by two Russian newspapers *Izvestiya* and *Kommersant* during the one-month period and published in the online version of the newspapers. Those newspapers were chosen for the study for the following reasons: 1) they are national newspapers; 2) they have online editions; 3) the newspapers allow readers to leave comments on the website; 4) those two newspapers had comparatively similar amount of disaster coverage.

In addition to the newspaper stories, the study analyzed all readers' postings (comments) published after each story. News articles published in these two newspapers as well as the readers' comments were collected from the websites of those newspapers. A total of 182 paragraphs discussing the plane crash disaster were found and analyzed in the two newspapers during the period from 14 of September, 2008 through 30 of October, 2008. A total number of 77 readers' postings were analyzed on the websites of the two newspapers.

Coding Categories

The unit for the content analysis of the news articles was a paragraph of a news story. The unit of analysis for the readers' postings was an individual posting on the website published right after the story.

The coding instrument consisted of the name of the newspaper, news frames, and level of responsibility frame for both news articles and readers' postings. To identify the most common frames used by the readers and also if they are different from the media frames, the researcher coded a newspaper article first and then the readers' posting for that particular article. The following frames were identified:

1. *Human interest frame*: any reference to human life loss, victims of the disaster, friends and relatives. This frame "brings a human face or an emotional angle to the presentation of an event, issue, or problem" (Semetko & Valkenburg, 2000, p. 95).

2. *Damage frame*: any reference to property, and physical damage. Such stories may include numbers and other statistics.

3. “*Disaster aftermath*” frame: any reference to the situation after the disaster except the information about the damage (which is covered by the “damage” frame). Such stories may include information about crash investigations.

4. *Cause frame*: these stories talk about possible causes of the disaster, for instance, technical malfunction, human factor, or maintenance issues. Such stories may talk about the investigation of the plane crash.

5. *Attribution of responsibility frame*: any reference to the notion of responsibility or blame of some leaders for certain events prior, during, or after disaster (LaFountain 2004). The present study attempts to identify how the level of responsibility is presented by the news media for the plane crash on the individual and organizational levels of responsibility.

6. *Treatment frame*: any reference to the reaction of the government agencies, i.e., any policy or regulation changes to avoid such plane crashes in the future.

7. *Miscellaneous*.

Coding Procedure

Two well-trained coders analyzed all the articles. The Holsti Formula was used to check the intercoder reliability. The reliability for the human interest frame was 95%, for the damage frame — 95%, the disaster aftermath frame — 93%, the cause frame — 95%, the attribution of responsibility frame — 95%; the treatment frame — 100%; and the miscellaneous frame — 90%.

FINDINGS

Frames Used by Newspapers and Readers

Table 1 sums up the findings for the use of disaster news frames by both newspapers and readers. Chi-square tests showed no significant difference among the two newspapers in the use of the frames in disaster news coverage ($\chi^2 = 11.3$, $df = 6$, $p > .05$). The dominant frames used by *Izvestiya* and *Kommersant* journalists were the disaster aftermath, cause, and human interest frames. Out of all *Izvestia* disaster coverage, 28% of paragraphs were framed as disaster aftermath, 25% were cause, and 22% were human interest. Out of all *Kommersant* disaster coverage, 39.02% of paragraphs were framed as cause, 32.9% were disaster aftermath, and 13.4% were human interest. The least employed frames for both

Table 1

Frames	Izvestiya	Kommersant	Total	Readers' comments Izvestiya	Readers' comments Kommersant	Total
Human interest	22 (22%)	11 (13.4%)	33 (18.13%)			
Damage	1 (1%)	3 (3.66%)	4 (8.79%)			
Disaster aftermath	28 (28%)	27 (32.9%)	55 (30.21%)		3 (10.34%)	3 (3.89%)
Cause	25 (25%)	32 (39.02%)	57 (31.31%)	22 (45.83%)	15 (51.72)	37 (48.05%)
Attribution of responsibility	9 (9%)	2 (2.4%)	11 (6.04%)	13 (27.08%)	9 (31.03%)	22 (28.57%)
Treatment	10 (10%)	5 (6.09%)	15 (8.24%)	7 (14.6%)		7 (9.09%)
Miscellaneous	5 (5%)	2 (2.4%)	7 (3.84%)	6 (12.5%)	2 (6.89%)	8 (10.38%)
Total:	100	82	182	48	49	77

newspapers were the attribution of responsibility and treatment frames (see Table 1). Despite statistically insignificant difference between the coverage of two newspapers, it is still worth noting that *Izvestia* employed the treatment frame twice as much as *Kommersant*, and the attribution of responsibility frame four times as much as *Kommersant* (see Table 1). Overall, the stories that discussed blame targets as well as what has been done to prevent future air accidents were least represented in the disaster coverage of both newspapers.

If the newspapers did not differ in their use of frames in disaster news coverage, the Chi-square test showed significant difference between newspapers and readers in the use of the frames ($\chi^2 = 79.4$, $df = 18$, $p < .05$). None of the readers left a comment with a human interest angle, which is one of the dominant frames in newspaper coverage. There were almost no comments framed as disaster aftermath, another dominant frame used by both newspapers (3.89% of total coverage). At the same time, both newspapers and readers were interested in the cause of the plane accident, (see Table 1), although the cause frame was the most frequently used one in the readers' comments (48.05%), compared with 31.31% of total newspapers coverage, followed by the attribution of responsibility (9.34%) and treatment (9.09%) frames. Unlike the *Izvestia* readers, the *Kommersant* readers did not discuss treatment at all.

Level of Responsibility

Table 2 sums up the findings for the use of the attribution of responsibility frame by both newspapers and readers. Since the number of the paragraphs actually talking about

responsibility for the plane crash was minuscule, the researcher did not run any statistical tests on those numbers. The table contains the actual number of paragraphs. It is still evident that *Izvestia* provided more coverage of responsibility for the accident than *Kommersant*: *Izvestiya* had 9 paragraphs, while *Kommersant* had only 2. Table 2 presents the basic categories of the potential culprits identified by both newspapers. *Kommersant* talked about inadequate pilot training in relation to the initiative of some of the victims' relatives to pursue the case in the U.S. court. The responsibility of the pilots was presented in a news story, when an actual official statement about the cause of the plane was announced. Compared with *Kommersant*, *Izvestiya* conducted their own investigation and interviewed aviation experts on the possible culprits of the accident. Thus they discovered that the air companies, the Russian aviation agencies, state government, transnational corporations and capitalism itself were perceived as potential blame targets (see Table 2). It is not possible to draw any conclusion about the overall use of the attribution of responsibility frame by either of the newspaper based on such small numbers. What is important to notice is that the readers of both newspapers had almost similar numbers of comments devoted to the attribution of responsibility. At the same time, the main difference between the readers' comments is the target of the blame. *Kommersant* readers tended to attribute responsibility to air companies, while *Izvestiya* readers to the state government (Table 2).

Results of the Official Investigation of the Crash

According to the information on the Aviation Safety Network site, an exclusive service of Flight Service Foundation, the investigation revealed that the pilot lost spatial orientation during the night-time approach through clouds, which led to a banking of the plane onto its left wing, and it's entering into an intensive descent and collision with the ground. The investigation revealed that the pilot was not familiar with the attitude indicator (ADI) used on Western jets. Also, an unspecified amount of alcohol was detected in the pilot's body, and the captain of the plane was overworked (Aviation Safety Network).

DISCUSSION

This study was aimed at identifying how the journalists of *Izvestiya* and *Kommersant* newspapers (online editions) framed disaster stories by analyzing the news coverage of the crash of Boeing-737 of Aeroflot-Nord Air Company, on September 14, 2008, in Perm, Russia, over the period from September 15, 2008 through October 30, 2008. The study revealed that disaster news frames were used in the following order of predominance: *Izvestiya* coverage: disaster aftermath (28% of paragraphs about plane crash), cause (25%),

Table 2

	Kommersant	Kommersant readers	Izvestiya	Izvestiya readers
Air companies (including Aeroflot)		5	4	2
Organizational level of responsibility				
State government		1	1	5
(societal level of responsibility)				
Pilots	1	1		1
(Personal level of responsibility)				
Not enough qualified pilots		1		
(societal level of responsibility)				
Transnational corporations			1	1
(organizational level of responsibility)				
Capitalism			1	1
(societal level of responsibility)				
Russian state aviation agencies (commercial aviation agencies) (organizational level of responsibility)			2	
System of pilot training provided by Boeing	1	1		

human interest (22%), treatment (10%), and attribution of responsibility (9%); *Kommersant* coverage: cause (39.2%), disaster aftermath (32.9%), human interest (13.4%), treatment (6.09%), attribution of responsibility (2.4%). These findings demonstrate some similarities and differences with the previous research on plane crash coverage by Western media. Cobb and Primo (2003) study documented that the most common frames employed by Western media were the ones with the focus on dramatic loss of life (human interest), and cause and blame (attribution of responsibility). The findings of the present study show that the cause, disaster aftermath and human interest frames are most commonly employed, while the attribution of responsibility frame is the least employed one in the news coverage by both newspapers.

The findings provide a snap shot of the current state of disaster news coverage in modern-day Russia. One the previous studies (Schmid, 2004) on disaster news coverage in the Soviet Union revealed the widely accepted Soviet practice to cover up disasters by providing minimum factual and descriptive information about the disaster and its aftermath (cf. Hollander 1972 in Schmid, 2004, p. 363). The content analysis of the two Russian newspapers (online editions) demonstrated that the media provided in-depth and detailed coverage of the plane crash and its immediate aftermath. The disaster aftermath and human interest frames were those most commonly used. Those stories provided factual and descriptive information about the immediate disaster aftermath, including the witnesses' accounts of how the plane actually crashed; the first moments after the crash, the immediate response operations of the local agencies including fire, and police departments.

The content analysis demonstrates some significant changes in the norms and principles of disaster news coverage since the fall of the Soviet Union. As Hollander (1967, p. 360) pointed, under the Soviet system only the events that illustrate the “positive trends in the process of creating the Communist society” were considered to be news. The plane crash coverage by two Russian mainstream newspapers had the highest number of stories talking about the cause, disaster aftermath and the victims of the accident. It is evident that negative developments of the society, such as disasters, as well as ordinary people are now among the elements of the newsworthy criteria for Russian journalism.

Another difference from the disaster news coverage in the Soviet Union and modern-day Russia could be defined as the focus on the “cause” frame in the news coverage of the plane crash. As the previous study (Schmid, 2004) showed, the Soviet media did not provide any coverage of possible causes of the accident. Moreover, the majority of the accidents, especially plane crashes, were covered up and not known to the general public.

One of the major differences between Western plane crash coverage and modern-day Russia news coverage is the fact that the blame or attribution of responsibility frame is the least employed by Russian reporters. Cobb and Primo (2003) study demonstrated that Western (U.S.) media discussed the question of who was to blame for the disaster. The major culprits were airlines, plane manufacturers or aviation companies, and relevant government agencies. As the study of Cobb and Primo (2003) documented, the airline was always under media criticism. In the case of USAir and TWA plane crashes the media focused on the aircraft and its possible malfunctions as a cause of the accident. Two years after crash the *Seattle Times* published investigative reports on the Boeing’s cover up of the rudder system malfunctions on the Boeing’s most popular aircrafts.

In the case of *Izvestiya*, only four paragraphs discussed air companies as a possible blame target; one paragraph, which contained the forum participant opinion, talked about international corporations that lobby the interests of the leading aircraft manufacturers by leasing aircrafts to the third world countries; the other three paragraphs discussed the Russian state aviation agency and the lack of the unified safety standards as well as a single aviation oversight government body. Overall, *Izvestiya* emphasized the organizational level of responsibility rather than the individual level of responsibility. Among the major blame culprits were Russian air companies and the Russian state aviation agency. *Kommersant* had only two paragraphs assigning blame: one discussed the pilots’ responsibility for the plane crash, and the second paragraph talked about the inadequate training program provided by Boeing.

Significance

First, Russian journalists tend to partly follow the patterns of Western rather than Soviet media coverage. Compared with the Soviet practice of disaster cover up (cf. Hollander 1972 in Schmid, 2004, p. 363), modern-day Russian media provide detailed factual information about disaster aftermath, causes of the crash, and victims of the accident. Newspapers also cover the official investigation process, and everything relating to the quest for the cause. Russian media partly follow the Western model of disaster news coverage by timely disseminating information about the disaster aftermath, including air company and government agencies response to the accident; by covering the investigation process and possible causes of the accident, and telling the stories about the victims and their families. Compared with Western reporters, however, Russian journalists devote a very small amount of their coverage to the possible blame targets. Second, one of the recent trends of Russian media is that readers have an opportunity to comment on the news articles online, share their opinion about the matter of coverage, and participate in discussion by asking and answering questions of other readers. Newspapers allow critical and controversial readers' comments to be published on their websites. Also, since the time of Chernobyl there have not been studies that looked at frames used in disaster news coverage, specifically in the coverage of plane crashes. The present research should be treated as a case study, and the results should not be generalized to Russian newspapers or media overall.

Limitations and Suggestions for Future Studies

One of the limitations is that the study only looked at two newspapers. Another limitation is the analysis of the coverage of only one plane crash, which makes any generalizations across other cases impossible. It would be beneficial to look at several examples of plane crash coverage during a longer period of time, including a larger number of newspapers. It would allow the researcher to analyze the changes that took place over time, as well as to see how newspapers differ in their use of disaster news frames.

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NEWS FROM URALS WITH LOVE AND PAYMENT: THE FIRST LOOK AT NON-TRANSPARENT MEDIA PRACTICES IN THE URALS FEDERAL DISTRICT OF RUSSIA

ANNA KLYUEVA AND KATERINA TSETSURA

Building on the previous research of media non-transparency in Eastern European countries, this study examined non-transparent media practices that occur at the interpersonal, intra-organizational, or inter-organizational levels in the media of the Urals Federal District of Russia. It appears that although the majority of non-transparent media practices happen at the inter-organizational level, the single most frequent practice was documented at the interpersonal level. This practice included accepting small gifts and benefiting from the provision of such services as transportation, food, or hotel stay that are eagerly offered by the news sources. The results showed that this trend is common in both local Ural media as well as in the Russian national media. The difference of non-transparent media practices that occurred between local and national media was mostly evident at the intra-organizational and inter-organizational levels, indicating that local media are more prone to be non-transparent than the national media. The study offers implications of the findings and recommendations for future research.

Keywords: media transparency, public relations, media influences, local and national media, Russia

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Media relations holds an important position in the field of mass communication. Media relations involves targeting the gatekeepers of the media with the goal of communicating about an organization or a product by public relations practitioners (Hendrix & Hayes, 2007). Media relations practice in a democratic society raises many fundamental questions about the relationship between media and its news sources, in other words, between journalists and public relations practitioners (Gandy, 1982). The understanding of relationship between journalists and public relations practitioners facilitates the understanding of how media content is being formed. The grasp of the nature of this collaboration is particularly important in countries with transitional democracies like Russia, where independent and objective media often face challenges from the government and from the society.

In many countries of the world, public relations is predominantly perceived as media relations (Jo & Kim, 2004). It is a relatively new professional communication field in many Eastern European countries (McElreath, Chen, Azarova, & Shadrova, 2001), and the majority of its practices in these countries are concentrated around generating information subsidies in a form of news releases and pseudo-events. This study offers a snapshot of the media relations practices in the Urals Federal District, one of the biggest regions of Russia. Adopting a geopolitical approach to examining public relations (Tsetsura, 2003), this research offers empirical data on the state of media relations in the peripheral Russia. According to the geopolitical approach, there are no universally equivalent public relations practices within one country. Public relations practices can be different not only in different parts of the world but also in different parts of the same country. Tsetsura (2003) argued that it is essential to research public relations practices in different regions of the same country, especially as big as Russia.

The Russian Federation is divided into eight federal districts. In its turn, each federal district is divided into several regions or “federal subjects” (Chamber of Commerce and Industry of the Urals Federal District [CCI], 2011). The Urals Federal District is one of the largest geographical regions in Russia and also has one of the highest levels of economic development (CCI, 2011). It includes six other administrative regions with a total population of over 12 million people. The Urals Federal District produces 16% of the country’s GDP and contributes about 42% of all taxes to Russia’s federal budget (CCI, 2011). In terms of the development of the professional field, the Russian Association of Public Relations has a regional chapter in the Urals and an established Regional Award for Achievements in Public Relations called “White Wing,” which is given every year for best practices. All these elements make the Urals Federal District of Russia an important and interesting region for research in the area of public relations. Another reason for focusing on this particular region of Russia is the lack of empirically-based communication and public relations studies

in the areas outside of two big metropolitan areas, Moscow and Saint Petersburg (Guth, 2000; Ragozina, 2007; Tsetsura, 2003). To address the need for investigation public relations practices in different geographic areas, this study focused on one of the underexplored regions of Russia, the Urals Federal District.

To contextualize and situate media relations in the Urals Federal District of Russia, this study provides political, economic, and cultural background of the profession and utilizes the concepts of media transparency (Kruckeberg & Tsetsura, 2003) and information subsidy (Gandy, 1982) to explain the relationship between journalists and public relations practitioners. Media transparency in this study is understood as an open and transparent exchange of information subsidies between journalists and public relations practitioners and is essential for understanding how media relations is practiced worldwide. Media transparency helps to detect a corrupted relationship between journalists and public relations practitioners, the relationship that is contextualized by the concept of information subsidy (Gandy, 1982; Zoch & Molleda, 2006).

The study starts by demonstrating how a geopolitical approach to studying media relations in a country as large as Russia can contribute to better understanding of media practices. Then, this study examines the phenomenon of media transparency in Russia and what forms it takes. Finally, this study offers a snapshot of media relations practices in one particular region of Russia to expand our knowledge about the public relations field in countries with transitional democracies.

To provide a broader cultural and political context for understanding a situation with media practices in the Urals Federal District, the next section provides a brief historical reference to the development of the media in Russia. Then it discusses public relations development and current status of media relations in Russia in regard to the phenomenon of media transparency and information subsidy.

JOURNALISM IN RUSSIA AS A HISTORICAL CONTEXT FOR PUBLIC RELATIONS

History of Russian journalism can be traced to the beginning of the 18th century when, by the directive of Peter the Great, the Russian Academy of Sciences was created and the first official newspaper was published (Lazarevich, 1974). It was not until the middle of the 19th century when the first commercial newspaper *Moskovkie Vedomosti* was established, signifying the emergence of mass circulation press and advertising in imperial Russia (McReynolds, 1991). The development of journalism in the Urals District was not steady until the beginning of the 20th century when Bolsheviks recognized the importance

of the media and utilized mass circulation newspapers to propagate their ideas (Encyclopedia of Russian Periodic Press, 2007).

The period of Soviet journalism was characterized by one major paradox of the Soviet political system: it was a combination of an extreme control and censorship over the media with little attention to the actual perception of the media credibility by Russian publics. In other words, public opinion did not matter (Koltsova, 2006). McNair (1991) reported that, during the Soviet era, mass media were treated as means of mass information and propaganda and were widely used to report and propagate socialist ideals. Propaganda was considered the most significant task for Soviet journalists in order to facilitate the upbringing of the decent citizens of the Soviet society (Koltsova, 2006). At the same time, the ideologist of the communist regime, Vladimir Lenin, had ascribed an active role to the media, and argued for its *glasnost*, or openness (McNair, 1991). Initially, the idea of Soviet journalism was built on the dedication to objectivity, openness, and concern for the society. However, these noble intentions were not met in practice, and principles of objectivity and openness were forgotten for more than 60 years (Kuznetsov, 2006).

The official rehabilitation of the principles of objectivity and openness after a “half a century of virtual silence” (McNair, 1991, p. 2) took place when Gorbachev delivered his speech to party workers during the conference of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union in 1984 (Onikov, 1988). The new information policy, *Glasnost*, promised freedom of the spoken and printed word, pluralism of opinions, and open exchange of ideas and interests among others (Zhirkov, 2001). It led to the restoration of criticism of the government in the media and opened discussions of hot political and economic issues. The public interest in *perestroika* (economic reforms in the Soviet Union) and *glasnost* (freedom of speech) created an increased demand for newspapers and magazines, and by 1988 demand had far surpassed supply (McNair, 1991). In addition, economic reforms led to a free market economy and opened doors to the development of all market-related activities, such as advertising, marketing, and public relations (Tsetsura, 2004).

According to Malakheev (2006), Ural journalists, as well as Soviet journalists, carried out a supportive function of propagating the initiatives of the Soviet government. However, in the era of *perestroika* and *glasnost*, the Urals District was at the center of the society-changing events. One of the main figures of political change, Boris Yeltsin, was an Ural native and had a lot of supporters there. Yeltsin’s connections helped give an early start to the development of public relations in the Urals District, particularly the popular area of political consultancy and media relations.

A new era of Russian journalism was inaugurated by the first USSR *Law on Press and Other Mass Media*, which was adopted in 1990. This law prohibited censorship and allowed individuals to establish private media outlets. This was the first time in the history of Russian state when censorship was forbidden (Koltsova, 2006). In 1991, the parliament

of the newly independent Russian Federation adopted another Law on Mass Media, and from that moment the media officially were no longer under government control (Koltsova, 2006).

As a result of the rapid political changes, at the end of 1980s and in the beginning of 1990s, the members of state-owned Russian media found themselves in a compromising situation. On one hand, they were still funded by the state; on the other hand, the system of state control over media was no longer functioning (Zassourky, 2004). Many journalists described this period as an era of absolute freedom of speech and euphoria (Koltsova, 2006). The media was thriving and developing. The volume of the newspaper and magazine circulations rose dramatically. In 1991, the popular weekly publication *Argumenty i F акты* (Arguments and Facts) reached its absolute record of 33 million copies (Koltsova, 2006). The tremendous increase of new media created the need for cooperation between journalists and public relations practitioners. However, since the journalistic workforce could no longer match the demand for news content in publications, the need also arose for information subsidies from public relations practitioners (McElreath, et al., 2001).

According to Zassoursky (2004), the year of 1993 signified the end of this euphoria and the beginning of the era of economic dependency of the media. The harsh economic reforms and growing inflation made most of the media unprofitable. Circulation dropped significantly. For instance, the circulation of *Argumenty i F акты* decreased to five million copies. During this period, the economic conditions under which journalists in Russia worked affected their professional ethics. Some researchers claimed that harsh economic conditions forced journalists to sacrifice their professional integrity by accepting bribes for producing news stories (Cassara, Gross, Kruckeberg, Palmer, & Tsetsura, 2004). It was an economically unstable period for all industries in the newly created country. However, the media system encountered the greatest challenge of how to survive in the market economy (Cassara et al., 2004).

By 1995-96, most influential media outlets were redistributed and concentrated in the hands of major business groups and corporations in Russia (Koltsova, 2006). These so called cross-institutional groups regarded mass media mainly as a propaganda resource, the tradition carried over from the Soviet times (Zassoursky, 2004). Hagstrom (2000) argued that new ownership of the media substituted state control over the media. Often, the head of a cross-institutional group dictated to his or her media outlet what issues to cover. Consequently, the affiliation of the media with different cross-institutional groups was reflected in media content as hostile groups used their subsidiary media to publish discrediting materials about each other (Koltsova, 2006). This period of Russian journalism was known as the period of informational wars, or *kompromat* wars.

Kompromat wars, literally translated from Russian as the wars of discrediting materials, became a routine part of the political consultancy and gave birth to several

infamous concepts, such as “black PR” and *zakazukha*, i.e., “pay-for-publicity” (Tsetsura, 2004). In addition, *kompromat* wars created the need for these practices, which secured the informational supply and contributed to the prosperity of many media organizations. Some scholars argued that without *zakazukha* and “black PR,” some smaller media outlets would not have survived this period (Koltsova, 2006; McElreath et al., 2001; Zassourky, 2004). This was particularly true for regional journalism, which struggled to survive. In comparison with Moscow and Saint Petersburg, the economic conditions of the Ural media were worse as there were fewer opportunities for the media to find corporate owners or sponsors (Hagstrom, 2000; Harro-Loit & Saks, 2006; Koltsova, 2006).

When Putin’s power started to rise at the end of 1990s, a trend to re-nationalize the media at the national and regional levels became apparent (Glasnost’ Defense Foundation, 1998). According to Koltsova (2006), this was often achieved through the forced replacement of the private owner or by creating an environment in which private owners could not survive. Some claimed that Putin’s first presidential term ended the era of “informational wars” (Borodina & Vorontsov, 2004). At the same time, in 2000s, Putin proposed new restrictions on the media. For example, he brought all national news broadcasting under Kremlin control in order to effectively bar independent reporting on the country’s most sensitive issues, in particular, the war in Chechnya (Cooper, 2006).

In sum, during the last two decades Russian journalism has been undergoing a series of changes as a result of economic and political developments. The new Russian media system and journalism determined the development of public relations in Russia. The next section discusses media non-transparency in Russia. First, it describes the normative ideal for the media to be considered transparent. Next, it provides a number of documented examples that represent the concern with media transparency in Russia. Then, the section discusses previous studies of media non-transparency in Russia and Eastern Europe and poses research questions.

MEDIA NON-TRANSPARENCY IN RUSSIA

For the purpose of this study, a normative concept of media transparency is defined as “an open and transparent exchange of information subsidies between media and public relations practitioners, based on the idea of newsworthiness of information and without any monetary or non-monetary influence” (Tsetsura & Kruckeberg, 2009, p. 2). In order for the media to be considered transparent, certain criteria must be met. First, media must operate in the environment with multiple and competing news sources. Second, the method of information delivery must be known, whether it is an official government statement, an interview, or a pre-packaged video news release. Third, funding of media production must

be disclosed and publicly available (Tsetsura & Kruckeberg, 2009). When any of these conditions are compromised, the media is considered less transparent or not transparent at all. Media transparency is the main challenge of contemporary everyday media practices around the world as media outlets and media representatives constantly experience pressures from advertisers, information sources, publishers, and other influential groups.

HIDDEN ADVERTISING, ZAKAZUKHA, AND JINSA

Media practices in Russia quite often violate second and third prerequisites of media transparency, and therefore can be defined as non-transparent media practices. The method of information delivery and funding of media production are two issues that are rarely disclosed in the Russian media. These non-transparent practices are sometimes known as hidden advertising, *zakazukha*, or *jinsa*, terms that can be translated from Russian as pay-for-publicity (Cassara, et al., 2004). The issue of hidden advertising was first discussed in Russia in the middle of 1990s when one public relations agency conducted a “*zakazukha*” experiment (Holmes, 2001). A Moscow-based public relations agency sent a fake news release about an opening of a non-existent store to a dozen of leading newspapers in Moscow and asked the media to publish it. Several newspapers contacted the agency and said they would publish the news release if the agency paid money to the newspapers (the price was set anywhere between \$50 and \$500). When the agency paid money to several newspapers, the news release appeared as a news story on the main pages of those newspapers. The newspapers did not check the facts and published a fake news release about the non-existent store as a news report. This experiment made headlines around the world and attracted the attention of the global media and public relations community to the problem of media transparency (Kruckeberg, Tsetsura, & Ovaitt, 2005).

The practice of *zakazukha* was very common in the 1990s. Mater (2001) reported that *The Saint Petersburg Times* in 2001 carried out a survey showing that two-thirds of the local journalists in Saint Petersburg produced stories with hidden advertising. According to Startseva (2001), hidden advertising is a “multimillion-dollar industry involving nearly every publication in the country”. Startseva (2001) argued that selling paid editorial space or accepting money for not running a story was so widespread and routine in Russia that most publications had an “official price list” that they distributed discreetly to public relations firms. Startseva reported that in April of 2001, the second largest newspaper in Russia, *Komsomolskaya Pravda*, alone pulled in an estimated half of a million dollars from *zakazukha*, followed by newspapers, such as *Izvestia*, *Trud*, and *Novaya Gazeta*. She claimed these newspapers together earn more than \$25 million a year through *zakazukha*.

MEDIA NON-TRANSPARENCY RESEARCH IN RUSSIA AND EASTERN EUROPE

Despite the wide presence of the phenomenon, the issue of non-transparent media practices remains on the periphery of research in Russia. Tsetsura (2005a) made the first attempt to examine media transparency among Moscow public relations practitioners. She interviewed employees of the leading public relations agencies in Moscow and found that they perceived cash payments for news coverage as one of the main issues of contemporary Russian media relations. Although practitioners were not in agreement concerning whether different non-transparent practices are good or bad for media relations practices in Russia, the majority of participants said that hidden advertising and *zakazukha* are essential for successful development of Russian media relations. In addition, participants said that journalists, practitioners, and clients should all be responsible for the non-transparent media (Tsetsura, 2005a).

However, cash for news coverage in a form of *zakazukha* is just one side of the problem. Other studies investigated non-transparent media practices around the world (Klyueva, 2008; Kruckeberg & Tsetsura, 2003; Kruckeberg, Ovaitt, & Tsetsura, 2005; Tsetsura, 2005a, 2005b; Tsetsura & Grynko, 2009; Tsetsura & Zuo, 2009) and found that the phenomenon takes different forms. Tsetsura (2005b) explored the issues of media transparency in Poland and researched non-transparent media practices within two dimensions, direct and indirect payments and influences. Direct payments were defined as cash or other monetary payments for news coverage (Kruckeberg & Tsetsura, 2003). Indirect payments were defined as “any type of non-monetary reward to a journalist, editor, or media outlet or the existence of a media policy which dictates, encourages indirect payments or influences the financial success and independence of the media outlet or its employees” (Tsetsura, 2005b, p. 15). Tsetsura also found that in Poland non-transparent media practices happen more often in the local and regional media rather than in the national media.

Later studies examined issues of media non-transparency (Tsetsura & Grynko, 2009; Tsetsura & Zuo, 2009) by focusing on whether direct and indirect payments and influences can be differentiated and systematized. According to Tsetsura and Grynko (2009), non-transparent media practices have three levels: interpersonal, intra-organizational, and inter-organizational. At the interpersonal level, non-transparent media practices happen privately between individual journalists and public relations practitioners. Most of the time in those situations journalists benefit from products or services offered by public relations practitioners or receive monetary compensation for media coverage (Tsetsura, 2005a). An example of this can be a situation when a journalist accepts a hotel stay or an airfare from

a news source in exchange for covering a story. At the intra-organizational level, non-transparent media practices happen when advertising sales departments and media administration can influence decisions of editors regarding what information from which sources will get covered (Tsetsura & Grynko, 2009). Finally, at the inter-organizational level non-transparent media practices happen when media outlets sign formal contracts with other organizations and those contracts dictate what type of information should be covered by the media outlet (Klyueva, 2008). This includes instances when advertising and paid-for publicity materials are disguised as regular news stories to satisfy the requirements of the legal agreement, or when news sources threaten to withdraw an advertising contract.

Differentiating origins of the non-transparent media practices allows one to put a particular practice into a broader social context and explain the relationship between a journalist and public relations practitioner. All previous studies on media transparency merely reported how often different non-transparent media practices happen in different types of media, including national and local media (Klyueva, 2008; Kruckeberg & Tsetsura, 2003; Kruckeberg, Ovaitt, & Tsetsura, 2005; Tsetsura, 2005a, 2005b). Previous studies on media transparency in Eastern Europe (Klyueva, 2008; Tsetsura, 2005a, 2005b; Tsetsura & Grynko, 2009) revealed a pattern that non-transparent media practices happen more often in the local media rather than in the national. Therefore, it is important to examine whether a similar difference in frequency of occurrence of non-transparent media practices exist between local and national media in the Urals District of Russia. To examine these issues, the following research questions were posed:

RQ1: How often do different non-transparent media practices happen at the interpersonal, intra-organizational, and inter-organizational levels in the media of the Urals Federal District of Russia, according to Ural media professionals?

RQ2: Do non-transparent media practices at all three levels happen more often in the local media rather than in the national media, as perceived by the Ural media professionals?

METHOD

This study primarily employed a quantitative methodology of data collection and analysis with elements of a qualitative open-ended response analysis. An online survey was distributed to media professionals in the Urals Federal District of Russia. Such method allowed the researchers to reach respondents outside the United States and to collect data in a timely and accurate manner (Leonard, 2003; Roberts, 2007). This method has proven

to be effective in many previous exploratory studies (Hong & Ki, 2007; Kitchen & Li, 2005; Stein, 2006).

Study Population

The study population was restricted to media professionals who work in the Urals Federal District of Russia. For the purpose of this study, media professionals were defined as journalists and public relations practitioners. Journalists' sample included reporters, editors, and television news anchors of the regional and local mass media outlets. Public relations practitioners' sample was represented by the employees of the private and public organizations, government, and public relations agencies in the Urals Federal District of Russia.

Sampling

To explore media relations practices and the phenomenon of media transparency in the Urals Federal District of Russia, a census of all available journalists and public relations practitioners in the Urals District was desired. The researchers utilized purposive and snowball sampling using three sample frames: 1) members of professional organizations such as The Journalists Union of the Urals Federal District of Russia and The Urals Department of the Russian Public Relations Association, 2) public relations practitioners employed by the Top 50 organizations of the region, which were identified based on the latest available ranking of business reputation, as compiled by *Expert* magazine (2005), and 3) a list of personal contacts of the researchers (one of the researchers has been working for two years as a public relations practitioner in the region and has developed extensive connections among media professionals, which were included in the sample). Together, 357 participants were included in the final mailing list, with 264 journalists and 93 public relations practitioners.

Response Rate and Demographic Characteristics of the Sample

Out of 357 e-mail addresses only 204 were usable, from which a total of 41 responses was received with the overall response rate of 20%. The response rate for public relations practitioners constituted 40.3%, but the response rate for journalists was only 11.2%. The majority of the 41 respondents indicated Yekaterinburg, the largest city in the region, as their residence ($n = 24$). Other locations included Perm Krai, Chelyabinsk, Polevskoy, Tyumen region, Krasnoturinsk, and Khanty-Mansiysk. Among public relations practitioners who reported their gender, 13 (75%) were women and six (25%) were men. Among

journalists who responded to this question, three (42.9%) were males, and four (57.1%) were females. Journalists had an average of nine years of professional experience, and public relations practitioners had an average of seven years of experience.

Survey Design

The study used an updated version of the survey designed by Tsetsura (2005b) to collect data on media practices and media transparency in Poland. To answer research questions, eight multi-dimensional questions were created and embodied in the survey. These questions were constructed to explore the frequency of the phenomenon across two dimensions: types of non-transparent media practices and types of media. Eight types of non-transparent media practices were employed in this study: three at the interpersonal level (offering a personal benefit from a product or service in exchange for publication; engaging in a conflict of interests because of multiple jobs with competing companies; and applying psychological pressures to force publication), two at the intra-organization level (putting pressure on newsrooms by advertising departments in terms of which news gets covered and publishing an advertisement that looks like a regular article), and three at the inter-organizational level (disguising a paid material as a regular editorial content; publishing or producing materials in exchange for advertisement; and putting financial pressures on the media). All these types were identified in previous studies (Tsetsura, 2005b, Tsetsura & Grynko, 2009). In addition, researchers collected data about the frequency of each practice in nine different types of media outlets that exist in the region: 1) national newspapers that publish Ural-produced and Ural-targeted sections, 2) the Ural branches of national information agencies, 3) national TV media, 4) national radio media, 5) regional and local daily newspapers, 6) local and regional weekly newspapers, 7) regional and local information agencies, 8) local and regional TV media, and 9) local and regional radio media.

Respondents were asked to report how often, in their opinion, different non-transparent practices occur in each type of media, using a five-point semantic differential scale, from 1 (*never*) to 5 (*always*). For example, “A news release that is not newsworthy appears in a publication in exchange for a paid advertisement placed in the same publication.” Statement responses were coded so that the highest value indicated most frequent occurrence of non-transparent practice. Some questions of the survey were reverse coded for logic. In addition, after each question, respondents had a chance to share their opinions and examples of a specific non-transparent practice via open-ended responses. The completed survey was translated into Russian, back translated into English, checked for accuracy, and tested before distribution.

Data Gathering

Researchers collected the data over a four-week period in spring 2008 using the online survey service, Survey Monkey (<http://www.surveymonkey.com/>). The four-step distribution process was used, and letters of invitation were sent to all potential participants once a week over the four-week period. The follow-up correspondence was conducted in accordance with Dilman's (1978) recommendations, who argued that this method allows the researchers to maximize the response rate.

Data Analysis

The survey results were analyzed using the statistical software Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS 16.0). The collected data were processed and analyzed using primarily descriptive statistics and a series of *t*-tests. To compare frequencies of the non-transparent practices in the national and local media, two separate sets of constructs were created. Scales for the national media included four items: 1) national press with Ural pages, 2) Ural branch of the national information agency, 3) national TV programming, and 4) national radio programming. Scales for local and regional media included five items: 1) local and regional daily newspaper, 2) local and regional weekly newspaper, 3) local and regional information agency, 4) local TV programming, and 5) local radio programming. The reliability of each scale was satisfactory and varied between $\alpha = .752$ and $\alpha = .992$ (see Table 1).

Qualitative responses from open-ended questions were analyzed to illustrate the reported statistical results on each corresponding survey question.

RESULTS

The goal of this study was to examine how often different non-transparent media practices happen at the interpersonal, intra-organizational, and inter-organizational levels in the media of the Urals Federal District of Russia and whether there is a difference in frequencies of these practices in the national and local Ural media. The first research question asked how often different non-transparent media practices happen at the interpersonal, intra-organizational, and inter-organizational levels in the media of the Urals Federal District of Russia, according to Ural media professionals. The second research question asked whether non-transparent media practices at all three levels happen more often in the local media rather than in the national media, as perceived by the Ural media professionals.

Table 1
Reliability of Scales for Local and Regional Media Construct and National Media Construct

Type of non-transparent practice	Local and regional media	National media
Interpersonal level		
Benefiting from the provision of a product or service is not clearly stated in the article	$\alpha=.909$	$\alpha=.946$
Conflict of interests	$\alpha=.992$	$\alpha=.990$
Psychological pressure from news sources	$\alpha=.955$	$\alpha=.963$
Intra-organizational level		
Pressure from the advertising sales departments	$\alpha=.869$	$\alpha=.900$
Publication or production of materials in exchange for paid advertising	$\alpha=.932$	$\alpha=.831$
Inter-organizational level		
Paid material is often disguised as editorial or regular article	$\alpha=.752$	$\alpha=.777$
Financial pressure from news sources	$\alpha=.884$	$\alpha=.914$
Advertisement is produced to look like a regular article or program without any indication	$\alpha=.818$	$\alpha=.805$

This section presents the results organized by three levels of influences. For each level, it reports frequencies of the practices and the difference in frequencies of these practices in the national and local Ural media as perceived by Ural media professionals and provides illustrations from open-ended responses of Ural media professionals.

Interpersonal Level

Overall, three different non-transparent media practices were reported at the interpersonal level. First, media professionals of the Urals Federal District of Russia reported that Ural journalists quite often benefit from the provision of products or services offered by the news sources. The acceptance of the hotel stay or a paid transportation to cover a story equally rare gets reported in the journalist's article or feature story published in the local (construct: $M = 4.27$, $SD = .938$) or national media (construct: $M = 4.44$, $SD = .883$). One respondent reported that when the fact that free meals and services were provided to journalists was reported in one newspaper, the goal was not to be transparent but to

Table 2.
Reported Means for Media Constructs.

Type of payments	National Media			Local Media		
	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>N</i>
Interpersonal level						
Benefiting from the provision of a product or service is not clearly stated in the article	4.44	.883	14	4.27	.938	19
Conflict of interests	2.88	1.380	11	2.62	1.417	15
Psychological pressure from news sources	1.13	1.313	19	1.16	1.268	19
Intra-organizational level						
Pressure from the advertising departments	2.41 ^a	1.738	18	3.04 ^a	1.397	19
A paid material is often disguised as editorial or regular article	3.08	.923	21	3.17	.653	20
Inter-organizational level						
Advertisement is produced to look like a regular article or program without any indication	2.88 ^a	1.355	22	3.56 ^a	.945	21
Publication or production of materials in exchange for paid advertising	2.17 ^a	1.720	22	3.22 ^a	1.623	21
Financial pressure from news sources	1.95 ^a	1.805	18	2.65 ^a	1.544	18

^a A difference is significant at $p > .05$

demonstrate how great the organization was that it decided to spend the money on journalists.

Ural media professionals reported that a conflict of interests, when a journalist is employed both by a media outlet and a news source, rarely happens at both local and regional Ural media (construct: $M = 2.62$, $SD = 1.417$) and the national media (construct: $M = 2.88$, $SD = 1.380$, see Table 2) although there was a noted variance in responses.

The third type, psychological pressures on a journalist from news sources is not frequent in the Ural media, according to the surveyed professionals. Both journalists and public relations practitioners of the Urals Federal District of Russia indicated that physical threats and psychological pressures are not perceived as a problem for the Ural media (construct: $M = 1.16$, $SD = 1.268$) or for the national Russian media (construct: $M = 1.13$, $SD = 1.313$). Respondents indicated that physical threats are rare, with the exception of situations when a “redistribution of property [ownership] in mass media” or “corporate *kompromat* wars” takes place, as one respondent put it.

Intra-organizational Level

A non-transparent practice at the intra-organizational level takes place when an advertisement sales department influences decisions of editors in terms of what news and from what sources gets covered. The results showed that the influence of the advertisement sales department on a news selection from time to time happen in the local and regional Ural media (construct: $M = 3.04$, $SD = 1.397$), but it happened less frequently in the national media (construct: $M = 2.41$, $SD = 1.416$), according to the respondents. A statistically significant difference was observed between the two media constructs, indicating that this practice happens significantly more often in the local rather than in the national media ($t(17) = -2.89$, $p \leq .05$). Two participants provided illustrations of this practice. One public relations practitioner stated that she “cannot imagine it happening otherwise,” whereas a journalist argued, “An advertising sales department offers the editors prepared information about an event, which needs coverage, if the advertiser is ready to pay for it. Newsroom has the right to say no.”

The second type of the intra-organizational influence occurred when an advertisement was produced to look like a regular article. The results demonstrated that all types of media, including local Ural media (construct: $M = 3.56$, $SD = .945$) and national media (construct: $M = 2.88$, $SD = 1.355$), often publish or air advertisements that look like regular news items, and nothing informs readers, listeners, or viewers that this is a paid message. A statistically significant difference was observed between the frequency of this phenomenon in the local and regional Ural media and the Russian national media ($t(20) = -2.166$, $p \leq .05$) with local and regional Ural media engaging in this practice more often (see Table 2).

Despite somewhat weak statistical indicators, respondents restated their belief that this practice is quite frequent in the Ural media. One of the public relations respondents stated, “This practice is present absolutely in every mass media which I have encountered in my work.” One journalist explained the decision-making process behind the choice of whether to produce advertising to look like a regular article:

Advertising is produced to look like a regular news story if the interests of the advertiser correlate with the important event in the city. An example would be an arrival to Yekaterinburg of the Minister of the Information Technologies and Communications of Russia. He [the Minister] visits an exhibition, where one of the local telecommunication companies presents its services. A story about the services can go together with the story about the minister's visit, and thus it is not marked as advertising in the news block.

Inter-organizational Level

Three practices were reported at the inter-organizational level: 1) a paid material that is disguised as a regular editorial content, 2) publication or production of materials in exchange for advertisement, and 3) financial pressures from news sources (see Table 2).

In regard to paid-for publicity materials, that are presented as regular editorial content, respondents indicated that both Ural media (construct: $M = 3.17$, $SD = .653$) and national media (construct: $M = 3.08$, $SD = .923$) rarely disclose that payments were received for publishing news stories. A few respondents ($n = 6$) from both groups (journalists and public relations practitioners) provided examples of how media disguise paid information. A respondent from the public relations group revealed that he or she is "dealing with it constantly," and often the decision of whether to identify material as a paid-for-publicity comes down to a client's representative, who is very often a public relations practitioner, and in that situation the influence may happen either at an inter-organizational or at an interpersonal level:

The decision regarding whether to mark a material [an advertisement] is made based on the wishes of the client. Expanded materials that accompany activity of the PR subject [a client of the media who is a public relations practitioner representing a company or organization], may not necessarily be marked [as an advertisement], and may be presented as an editorial or as a regular article, hiding the fact that the PR subject has paid for this. Besides, journalists may accept some payments personally without notifying the management.

Another form of non-transparent media practices happens at the inter-organizational level when a media outlet publishes not newsworthy news releases in exchange for a paid advertisement placed in the same media (see Table 2). This practice was observed more frequently in the local Ural media (construct: $M = 3.22$, $SD = 1.623$) than in the national media (construct: $M = 2.17$, $SD = 1.720$). A statistical test confirmed the significant difference between these two types of media, indicating that Ural media professionals think that this practice happens more often in the local than in the national media ($t(20) = -3.85$, $p \leq .05$). One public relations respondent expressed frustration with this practice: "[It

happens] constantly. Free publications are generally avoided by the mass media.” Finally, Ural media professionals who participated in this study reported that news sources more frequently put financial pressures on the local and regional Ural media (construct: $M = 2.65$, $SD = 1.544$) than on the national media (construct: $M = 1.95$, $SD = 1.805$). Ural media are more susceptible to these manipulations by the news sources because threats of withdrawing an advertising contract or government subsidy are rather common at a local level. Additional statistical analysis revealed a significant difference between perception of frequencies of this practice between the national and local media ($t(17) = -2.77$, $p \leq .05$), confirming once again that non-transparent practices at an inter-organizational level happen more often in the local media than the national media, according to these respondents.

In sum, the results showed that the most frequent practice was perceived to take place at the interpersonal level of influence. The Ural media often accept small gifts and benefit from the provision of such services as transportation, food, or hotel stay, and the news sources are often eager to offer these services. This trend is perceived to be common among both the local Ural media and the national media. The perceived difference in frequencies of the non-transparent media practices between local and national media was mostly evident at the intra-organizational and inter-organizational levels of influence indicating that the local media in Ural are more prone to be less transparent than the national media because local media have bigger financial constraints.

DISCUSSION

Previous studies indicated that non-transparent media practices are present in many countries of the world (Kruckeberg & Tsetsura, 2003), including Russia (Tsetsura, 2005a). Findings of this research confirmed their presence in the Ural media relations practices, and partially supported geopolitical approach to studying public relations as proposed by Tsetsura (2003). It has been argued that a geopolitical approach to examining public relations practices improves one's understanding of media practices within the borders of one country. The fact that a number of non-transparent media practices occur with different frequencies in the local and in the national media indicates that media practices in one country may differ depending on the region. Specifically, the local and regional media in Ural produced advertisements to look like regular articles significantly more often than the national media, according to the responses. Also, the Ural media tend to publish not newsworthy news releases in exchange for paid advertisement placed in the same media more often than the national media. Finally, these respondents indicated that the advertisement sales departments of the local Ural media more often influence decisions of

editors in terms of what news from what sources get covered and the Ural media experience financial pressures from news sources more often than the national media.

The differences between local Ural media and national media were most often reported at the intra-organizational and inter-organizational levels. This can be explained by the distribution of financial resources between the local and national media. The local media often experience more financial struggles than the national media. Thus, the local media are more vulnerable to the temptation of following the requests of the news sources, often the biggest contributors to the media advertising budgets. Therefore, non-transparent media practices that originate at the inter-organizational level can often be seen as tools that foster business-like cooperation between media outlets and organizations that seek media coverage. However, the presence of non-transparent practices at the inter-organizational level raises many concerns that these practices are now formalizing and are becoming official business transactions between the media and the news sources in Russia (Klyueva, 2008).

Non-transparent media practices that serve as tools of cooperation between media and news sources at the inter-organizational level can be contextualized through the process of media commercialization in Russia and the Urals Federal District (Zassuorsky, 2004). Commercialization turned mass media into business entities whose main task is now to make money, contrary to the main function of the Soviet media as a mouthpiece for the government.

When researching commercialization of the media in Estonia, Harro-Loit and Saks (2006) noted that media organizations that work in a relatively small media markets (similar to the Urals region) can be vulnerable to the intervention of promotional materials as media organizations are eager to maximize advertising revenues. Therefore, media do not hesitate to utilize any type of non-transparent media practices to gain profit. Often people who are responsible for making the media outlets profitable (representatives of advertising sales departments) try to put pressures on the editorial decisions in order to generate a profit for media. Findings of this study confirmed and extended the previous research by Harro-Loit and Saks. Advertising sales departments of the Ural media, similar to advertising departments of the Estonian media, influenced decisions of the editors in terms of which news from which source gets covered. Future studies must investigate these inter-organizational and intra-organizational levels of non-transparent media practices in more details.

However, for some types of non-transparent media practices no difference was found between local and national media. It may point to two things. First, it may indicate that some practices are rather rare for both local and national media in Russia as in the case of physical threats and psychological pressures that are almost never present in the Russian media, according to these respondents. Second, failure to find differences for other types of non-

transparent practices may indicate that these practices are rather common for both national and local media. For example, both local and national media reportedly rarely disclose information that journalists or editors benefit from any sort of provisions from the news sources, or when journalists have a conflict of interest. Yet, overall the results of this study supported and extended previous research which found that local and regional media tend to be less transparent than the national media in many countries around the world (Tsetsura, 2005b; Tsetsura & Grynko, 2009; Tsetsura & Zuo, 2009).

Limitations

There are several limitations to this study. First, the results of this study are specific to the Urals Federal District of Russia and cannot be generalized to the entire population of Russian media professionals. However, as Tsetsura (2003) pointed out, there is a need to study region-based media practices as it is impossible to talk about homogeneity of media relations practices in a country as big as Russia. In this sense, this study contributed to understanding of media practices specific to the Urals region. The results can now be used to compare and contrast media relations practices in Urals with other regions of Russia to further explore how media relations practices vary in different regions of Russia.

Second, the response rate is relatively low. However, low response rates were anticipated taking into consideration the sensitivity of the topic of this study. In addition, this research was the first of its kind and exploratory in nature. Moreover, the response rate for journalists compared favorably with the previous studies on media transparency, where journalists showed little desire to participate (Tsetsura, 2005a; Tsetsura & Grynko, 2009; Tsetsura & Zuo, 2009). Most importantly, despite the low number of responses, this study provided valuable and unique insights into how media professionals in the Urals Federal District of Russia understand and perceive media non-transparency.

Conclusion

The results of the study demonstrated that journalists and public relations practitioners of the Urals Federal District of Russia often deal with non-transparent media practices in their professional life, specifically at the interpersonal, intra-organizational, and inter-organizational levels. Respondents of this study indicated that these practices are common in the local and regional media and infrequently happen in the national media. The findings of this study contribute to our understanding of the development of media relations in Russia and its diverse regions, specifically the Urals Federal District of Russia, and extend our knowledge about global media relations practices. These results helped to understand non-transparent media practices in the Urals region of Russia and now can be used as a starting

point to explore similar practices in other regions of Russia as well as in different countries of Eastern Europe and the Commonwealth of Independent Countries that have similar political and media environments and share analogous political, economic, social past. The results can also serve as an alarm for overall ethical behavior of media professionals in Russia and may be interpreted as a call for a closer examination of existing codes of ethical conduct for media relations and journalism practices among Russian media professionals.

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BREAK OF LANGUAGE: A RUSSIAN-FRENCH COMPARISON

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This article presents the results of a comparative study based on the interviews with leading French and Russian intellectuals and scholars (Khapaeva, 2005). Initially focused on the phenomenon of translation in the social sciences and humanities over last 15 years, it gradually grew into a search for an explanation of the contemporary state of intellectual uncertainty, usually associated with the present-day crisis of social sciences and humanities. In particular, this paper attempts to contribute to an understanding of the dramatic changes undergone by the social sciences and humanities' conceptual apparatus over the last two decades.

Keywords: crisis, social sciences, humanities, intellectuals, perception, time

The true philosophical question arises when language goes on holiday.

—Ludwig Wittgenstein

“**T**he End of Modernity”, “The End of History”, “The End of Communism”, “The End of Intellectuals” — these are the notions that have become passwords of social thought at the edge of the millennium. Clearly “end” indicates a threshold, a rupture, and a border separating the old époque from the new. Yet, to refer to this new époque, no new concepts seem to have emerged. On the contrary, its different aspects are referred to as “postmodern”, “post structural”, “post colonial”, “post communist”, “post soviet” etc. Why such a deficit of new language? Why the new age is to be called by old names whose inadequacy is manifested by the prefix “post”?

The nineteenth and twentieth centuries were quick to invent new words, new names and new concepts. Words preceded *realia* and powerfully formed political and social reality.

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None of the European languages were spared from the invention of their own *lingua nova*. Twentieth century architects of the future had little doubt about the feasibility of their projects because their aim was firmly fixed.

However, insecurity about the future and the absence of new words (not to mention the absence of great ideologies) characterizes our age. A terrifying past becomes uncertain and unpredictable; unknown catastrophes foreshadow the future, and an all embracing present is rapidly losing its teleological meaning (Nora, 1984-1993, p.988, 994). This lack of new language and ideas are especially surprising, given the scope of changes that took place over the last twenty years: the Communist regime collapsed, leaving Eastern Europe and Russia to experiment with Western democracy; the opposition of two nuclear superpowers came to the end; globalization became banal — clearly, the need to reexamine habitual concepts and practices has become urgent. One would expect that under these conditions, the social sciences and humanities would make a radical breakthrough in their development, and intellectual life would become incomparably rich.

On the contrary, currently the social sciences and humanities are characterized not only by a loss of faith in the great narratives, but also by severe distortions in their conceptual apparatus. Such fundamental concepts as ‘truth’ and ‘reality’, ‘science’ and ‘objectivity’, ‘liberalism’ and ‘democracy’, ‘culture’ and ‘nation’, ‘right’ and ‘left’, ‘nature’ and ‘society’ have been called into question, have been challenged and altered.

By and large, the denying of old concepts was an important gesture of postmodernism. Nevertheless, postmodernism turned out to be unable to break free from these old concepts, nor to destroy them. Despite its radical inspirations, postmodernism was deeply embedded in the old conceptual system because the entire project of postmodernism consisted of a destruction of the old concepts. That’s why now, when the old conceptual framework has been challenged due to its efforts, postmodernism exits the intellectual scene unable to invent a language for a new époque. Could it be the case that the peculiarity of this new époque consists in the fact that the old dismantled concepts have not been replaced with new ones?

The main objective of this article is to contribute an answer to the following question: What blocks the production of new concepts? Why does the silence of intellectuals characterize our current condition?

INTELLECTUALS ON THE SILENCE OF INTELLECTUALS

An important element in answering the question might be to look at how intellectuals and researchers in the social sciences and humanities have perceived the intellectual situation since the beginning of the new millennium. The question of how intellectuals and

researchers evaluate current developments in their fields, and what new schools of thought and new trends were formed over last 10-15 years, allows us to judge the actual state of the social sciences and humanities.

Let's start with the views presented by French scholars and intellectuals. In my interviews, I always asked: "What new trends of thought or new schools have appeared over the last 10 years?" However, this seemingly easy request for new names and new currents of thought created difficulties for my interlocutors. For example, a well-known French anthropologist of science (who preferred to keep his name off record) responded to the question in the following way:

Damn! All are micro-events, with the exception of the Berlin Wall collapse and the disintegration of USSR. I am confused by the question.... The grains of transformation are very small and for this reason it is difficult to answer.... The Sokal case — that was definitely a public event, widely discussed in the mass media. .. Our work here in our lab, is quite different from that of EHESS where everybody is highly isolated from each other... There are a lot of debates, but they are technical.... For me it is difficult to say where interesting transformations are taking place. (Anonymous French anthropologist of science, 2001)

Usually, my interviewees gave an even more pessimistic answer to that question. The sociologist, Luc Boltanski, one of the authors of a trend called *sociologie de cité* said:

In the course of the last ten years nothing has happened at all. The intellectual landscape in France has not changed, nothing new has emerged.... In my pessimistic moods, I tell myself that Paris is Switzerland, a tiny, sparsely populated corner of the world, and that the really important things in literature come from Africa, Latin America, or are created by Indians immigrating to London, and that soon the same will happen with the social sciences. We might well witness that the strikingly new, simple, and powerful ideas come from Siberian forests. (Luc Boltanski, 2001)

The observation offered by Olivier Mongin (a philosopher and historian of intellectuals, the editor of the journal "L'Esprit") is quite similar and also ironic:

"Sociology is used up. Psychoanalysis is used up. There are no innovations. Bourdieu has done away with Bourdieu, Touraine has done away with Touraine, while all other sociologists have begun to practice philosophy in a self-taught way." (Mongin, 2001, 1998)

Starting from end of the 1980s, an intense search for new paradigms and new ideas has taken place in France, not to speak about Eastern Europe and post-communist Russia.

“The syndrome of paradigms” — namely an attempt to create new trends based on imported ideas from abroad — characterized ‘new historicism’ in Russia, the ‘pragmatic paradigm’ in sociology, the “pragmatic turn’ in history (Dosse, 1995; Lepetit, 1988, 1995; Andler, 1992, 2004; Boltanski & Thévenot, 1991; Callons & Latour, 1991; Latour, 1999), and an attempt to introduce analytic philosophy to France. However, the founders of new trends in France do not think these attempts have been particularly successful (while the ‘new historicism’ in Russia came to end soon after its inception) (Khapaeva, 2006). Luc Boltanski further offers:

The dominant sociology today is an elderly American sociology, which controls the committees. It is an avant-garde sociology in inverted commas, the sociology of the left — Bourdieusism.... This problem emerged because of the Ecole Normale Supérieure. All the influential institutions and all the important positions are taken by its graduates. There are also small islands like us, and then the Latourians, the ethno-methodologists, the interactionists, or those who deal with microsociology, but all of them are very marginal.” (Boltanski, 2001).

A similar attitude is expressed by Daniel Andler, an analytical philosopher (at the time of the interview he was a Director of CREA). He observed that analytic philosophy remained marginal in France while ‘continental philosophy’ experienced a deep crisis in the States :

“In the last five years the situation in philosophy has not improved. On the contrary, there are reasons to be pessimistic; rather, we face a blockage.... Analytic philosophy is definitely developing, but that atmosphere of a ghetto is still persisting.... When I was starting, my colleagues in analytic philosophy felt themselves to be a persecuted minority, a ghetto. Today they are professors, but this atmosphere is preserved.... They participate in academic politics, are well paid, sit on juries, but continue to feel themselves a stigmatized minority. By and large it is due to the fact that they are disregarded by the philosophic mainstream, which has remained very conservative and which reduces philosophy to the history of philosophy and continues to worship Kant as the last great philosopher.” (Andler, 2001)

Under the circumstances, some colleagues are looking for institutional reforms as the most efficient way to improve intellectual creativity in the social sciences and humanities. For example, the introduction of a new system of evaluation of a researcher’s activities could be seen as a tool to avoid major short-comings of the structuralism that is viewed by the majority of my interviewees mostly in the negative:

“Everything that remained from the old academic system — an atmosphere of religious cult surrounding genius, great narratives and great ideas — should be swept away by the reforms intending to make everyone compete on equal grounds” — said Daniel Andler (Andler, 2001).

According to the supporters of these reforms, new kinds of reports will help keep spirits up and promote positive values. They think that “activity reports” in the future will become a better indicator of scientific productivity than the publication of a book.

Andler continues:

Symbolic power that was based on prestige, notoriety, and old aristocratic values doesn't exist any longer. Everybody has to write activity reports. The competition has become more democratic — everybody has to look for research grants, and to establish partnership with foreign institutions, to write up reports. If you would ask a great figure a couple of years ago to write an activity report, he would be insulted: “What's this? Everybody knows who I am! It's enough to read my books to judge!” Today the modernization introduced by Jospin and Allegre has brought about considerable change. We have now four year plans and reports. You might consider them Soviet style, but they made my institute evaluate its activity afresh in the spirit of democratic competition. The competition is becoming more fair and democratic... The phrase — “ I am a philosopher, therefore I don't write reports” — is outdated. Even if there are still some people who do not write reports, these people definitely belong to the past. The new process of evaluation requires things other than producing a couple of books and having some disciples. A researcher has to have joint projects and exchange programs with foreign universities. Professional level has been improved (...) However, in so far as new ideas are concerned I have nothing to say... To the contrary, I have to admit that the situation in philosophy has not improved...(Andler, 2001)

In their search for a new original intellectual project, some of my French interlocutors are suggesting that creation of a new field of study or new discipline would challenge the social sciences and humanities. According to Olivier Mongin, the formation of a new intellectual agenda for anthropology would allow this discipline to create a new constellation of ideas that would challenge the social sciences and humanities. Evolution is inherent in the new logic of development in the social sciences and humanities — that is, the radical reformation of existing disciplines based on the questioning of their foundations. The heritage of Marcel Mauss, Emile Durkheim and Claude Levi-Strauss should be re-examined. As Mongin puts it in the interview, “a return back to universalism, from relativism, is important for society as a whole”. It is no surprise, that no new name was

coined for this imagined discipline. Even less surprisingly, the theoretical ambitions of this discipline are reminiscent of the old French anthropology.

By and large, French intellectuals instantly define contemporary intellectual conditions in terms of the “loss of shared frame of reference” (*désorientation*), uncertainty (*l’incertitude*) and the absence of ideas (*le vide*). Even these colleagues who share the most optimistic views about the state of the social sciences and intellectual life in general (some of whom at the time of the interview held key administrative positions in the French academy), agreed that a crisis of great paradigms — Marxism, structuralism, psychoanalysis — left a painful feeling of intellectual vacuum. That vacuum could be praised by the most courageous colleagues as “freedom from the intellectual constraints of another day” and as a “potential source of creativity”. However, even these optimistic expectations do not help overcome a feeling of insecurity in the face of an ‘opaque’ social world that turned out to be inexplicable after the fall of paradigms. A pathetic example of this feeling of insecurity and uncertainty is frequently quoted by my interlocutors as the inability to provide any social reason for the economic crisis of 1997 that continues to resist explanation. Even the memory of this remarkable failure of social thought is still perceived as quite disturbing. Says Jacques Revel, a historian, former president of EHESS:

The economic crisis experienced by our society has not been even described yet and of course not explained. What kind of theoretical reflections and explanations did it produce? The crisis of 1920-1930 was theoretically explained a couple of years after it took place, but this one is still incomprehensible because nobody has a global vision of what happened. However, it is hard for society to live through a crisis that it cannot even describe in any systematic way... It is how to live with a cancer... We need social sciences not only for their expertise, we also need them to conceptualize actualities (Revel, 2001).

In contrast with French attitudes toward the crisis of the social sciences that might be characterized as rather serious and dramatic, Russian attitudes are marked by extreme trivialization. Against the collapse of communism, and following big and small social, economic, and political crises, the disintegration of the two main “domesticated” paradigms (Marxism and semiotics), the similar fate of “minor” paradigms (such as the Russian school of the *Annales* — namely the medievalist historians — A. Gurevich, Y. Bessmertny, and L. Batkin, who started a new trend in historiography in early 1970s.), and the discovery of the crisis of Western social sciences and humanities revealed by the translation of contemporary Western thought in mid-90s — all these events served to deaden the sensitivity of the Russian intelligentsia. In addition, it is important to mention the painful crisis of the idealization of the West experienced by Russian intelligentsia that took place in the mid-

1990s (Khapaeva, 2002). Michail Boytsov observed in 1999, “The fact of the death of science must of course remain a strict secret of the corporation which can be revealed only to the initiated”. This view was echoed in 2001 by Alexander Sogomonov and Pavel Uvarov when they said: “Social history is dead. This phrase is heard more and more often”. In fact the crisis has started to be regarded as a norm of life, a natural course of events. Reflecting on the condition of their discipline, historians wrote about the death of history as if it were a generally accepted and even slightly trivial fact, a state of affairs that requires no further commentary.

Philologists kept pace with the historians, and behind them, with a certain lag, followed the representatives of the other disciplines. Pessimism and frustration became a theme on everyone’s lips, indicating a certain discursive norm in Russian scholarly life:

But the apathy reigning in the void [left after the collapse of communism], the concentration on the ‘grass’ survival or the satisfaction of private ambitions cannot be possibly associated with freedom, creating in the university scholarship a climate that scares away rather than attracts young people. The desire for integration into the world community in reality is endlessly postponed, or even causes doubts: is it worth it at all? Won’t we lose more than we’ll gain? (Venediktova, 2001)

The standard answer “Nothing” to the sacramental question of my interviews “What new has happened over the last several years?” sounds even more pessimistic in Russian than in French. For French intellectuals the main dramatic feature is precisely the lack of intellectual novelty. People wait for new ideas; new ideas are necessary, but they do not emerge. However, to admit a fading intellectual curiosity would be equal to professional death, disqualification, self-defamation, or something similar. But the Russian intellectuals, without the slightest embarrassment, say that the “lack of a craving for the new” is the main feature of Russia’s intellectual landscape. The common answer contains the following diagnosis: No new ideas have emerged because there is no one in the intellectual community who would be ready for their emergence and, strictly speaking, no one is interested in them anymore. Mikhail Boitsov, a historian and the chief editor of the historical journal *Kazus*, says, “The craving for new ideas is lacking, although the new ideas themselves are sometimes born in narrow circles. Fragmentation manifests itself in the fact that new ideas cannot win the scholars over. (Boitsov, 2003)

The contemporary period of intellectual stagnation looks especially strange in comparison with the “period of stagnation” of Breznev’s era in the 1970s. According to my interlocutor that was a time when intellectual life was flourishing. A rich variety of schools such as Moscow-Tartu school of semiotics, Russian historical anthropology, and cultural

studies competed to saturate societal hunger for new ideas. Now, on the contrary, the period after perestroika doesn't look especially fertile for intellectual life:

Today's Moscow lives through the period of intellectual uncertainty and disarray although all necessary conditions seem to be fulfilled for it to flourish... In RGGU (Russian State Humanities University) there is a seminar led by Elizar Melitinsky whose members are Vladimir Toporov, Mikhail Gasparov, Leonid Batkin, Georgy Knabe... True, there are not so many young interesting scholars where... Once in a while discussions take place in this seminar, but there are no extraordinary intellectual events that would result in widely discussed publications. I would not say that intellectual life is hot where — it is rather cold (Gurevitch, 2003).

Russian scholars understand the present crisis as the fragmentation of the academic community, or the disintegration of the academic environment. The abundance of scholarly seminars is not regarded by my interlocutors as an indicator of flourishing academic life but is rather interpreted negatively, as an indicator of fragmentation.

The dominant vision of the collapse of the intellectual milieu looks especially persuasive when my interviewee, Sergei Kozlov, the former editor of the theory section of the NLO (New Literary Review — one of the best humanities journals in post Soviet Russia), after having cited more than 20 seminars, confirms his diagnosis that “Nothing happens”:

[Q]... What new trends or new debates are taking place in Moscow today?

[A] I am afraid that nothing happens at all because there is no community that could create interesting set of ideas. I think that it is due to the fragmentation that took place in 90s.

[Q] How could you say “nothing happens”? I can quote you several seminars regularly attended by more than 30 people...

[A] In terms of Thomas Kuhn, this could be called ‘normal science’ meaning the routine of functioning according to the old models and rules of the game. I attend few of the seminars and do not participate actively in this seminar academic life. I make my judgment on the ground of publications, and I have to admit that there are very few real discussions or exiting intellectual events taking place.” (Kozlov, 2003)

The habitual description of this situation in my interviews with historians, sociologists, and anthropologists proceeds as follows: Moscow is suffocating from a plethora of various associations, seminars and publications, but all of them are interesting exclusively for their narrow audience, and that the representatives of the narrow circles never cross each other.

“Fragmentation of the environment,” “disintegration of the community,” “crisis of communications,” and “clannishness” — such are the words that express the sensibility of marginalization, of cutting down the academic environment of the social sciences in Russia.

The feeling of disorientation and uncertainty is reflected in the fact that a couple of years ago, to speak about “absence of the project for a future”, “the opacity of the present” and “a preconditioned incapacity to explain society” required a certain intellectual arrogance both in France and in Russia — Today, at the “age of an end of global certainties” these phrases are cliché. Intellectuals understand their mission in terms of the difficult task of providing society with a lost meaning:

“A mission of the intellectual nowadays is to make meaningful our world that is completely uncertain. The more the intellectual is capable of communicating this lost meaning to the world, the more he is to be respected” , said Michel Winock, historian of intellectuals, and, at the time of the interview, the editor of a publishing house Seuil (Winock, 2001).

These attitudes of intellectuals are echoed by the mass audience: the future is no longer associated with social progress. A need to cure neurotic reactions in the face of the future, to provide society with an optimistic scenario, is perceived as an obvious task for the social sciences and humanities:

“The most important task for the social sciences and humanities today is to help people avoid dramatizing social changes that society is experiencing. It is important to help society understand that we are not approaching the End of the world, “ — says Maurice Aymard (Aymard, 2001), a historian, and former director of MSH.

Could it be that the catastrophic expectations about the future are not based on the more or less adequate estimations of the possible outcomes of foreseeable social or natural disasters but are expressions of a cognitive shock caused by collapse of a habitual system of reference? A lack of names to describe everyday experience, lack of means to express ‘the world we live by’ could be felt as an upcoming catastrophe.

The explanations of the situation provided by intellectuals in the interviews that I will try to analyze and develop further, point to the relations between the intellectual crisis and the crisis of concepts. “We do not know where we are going. Society is not capable to understand itself any longer. (...) All the practices have been challenged but there is no new language to express adequately all the levels of the challenge,” said Olivier Mongin (Mongin, 2001).

Despite the fact that the break of language is commonly viewed by intellectuals as a difficult problem, but it is most often explained as an off-side effect of this or that particular phenomenon. Oliver Mongin explains:

There is a radical rupture between political action and its conceptualization. There is an obvious lack of adequate language [to reflect upon it]. The work of the intellectual, always, from antiquity up to now, has been the search of new language. Today we have no new language. We are incapable of inventing it, we are following reluctantly what is called new technologies.

[Q] Why are we incapable of inventing a new language?

[A] Because French intellectuals are stuck in their ideological and political presuppositions and convictions (Mongin, 2001).

The urgent need to produce new concepts suitable for contemporary political discourse forecloses the need to analyze the logic of conceptual transformations. However evident a need for new concepts is, intellectuals are ready to accept new concepts only insofar as these are added to the existing conceptual apparatus.

“The social sciences and humanities will have to create new concepts to overcome their Eurocentric attitudes. That’s why the dialog among European scholars and scholars from the developing world, such as India and China is so essential,” thinks Maurice Aymard (Aymard, 2001).

Even if the crisis of old concepts and the lack of new ones is evident, there are very few attempts to hypothesize what would happen when the old concepts finally lose any meaning and get completely redundant. Francois Hartog reflects upon this problem during our interview:

[Q] Over last couple of years historians have become more and more interested in the problematic of historical temporality. You are working on your book about presentism that describes our new capacity to think of history in terms of the present while thinking past and future becomes much less important. How does the idea of presentism influence our representation of time as a sequence of past, present and future? What happens if these concepts collapse? Can we still speak today about the existence of past, present and future?

[A] It is an interesting question. It could be that temporal triad would not exist any longer even though we keep acting according to these categories... These are the basic structures of everyday life for people and society.... In any case, there is no other way to speak about this. It could be that we are approaching a peculiar moment when these notions will cease to exist, and when it would be impossible still to refer to them otherwise. Sure, the most exciting thing would be to imagine that these eternal categories that used to structure social experience, such as past,

present and future, would cease to function...(...) How could one speak about time when these old concepts will be not any longer adequate and will have no relevance for contemporary life, while the new ones have not been invented yet? (...) How could one express 'before' and 'after' in a new way? Nowadays historians' work is determined by these questions and the absence of an answer. (Hartog, 2001) .

SATTELZEIT REVERSED

The History of Concepts, a German historical school, offers a way to look for explanations of the contemporary crisis of language. According to one of its founders Reinhart Koselleck (Koselleck 1990), basic historical concepts appeared in the history of XVIII century Europe due to the radical change in the perception of historical time. Koselleck's idea that the challenge in perception of historical time from "histories" to a "universal history" brought about new historical concepts that created Modernity, is a concept that belongs to the classics of contemporary social thought. Consequently, one could argue that the challenge to the perception of historical time might result in a conceptual crisis with important intellectual and societal consequences. Could it be that the contemporary crisis of concepts such as "nation", "state", "society", etc., has been conditioned by the radical challenge in the perception of historical time that emerged together with the Enlightenment? What if we are living through a revolution in the perception of historical time?

Koselleck stressed the role that the idea of progress played in the development of the new perception of time. Thanks to Enlightenment philosophy and the French Revolution, history acquired a meaning of a universal, objective, irreversible world process that leads humanity from humble past to a radiant future. However, the progressive vision of history was in itself conditioned by the idea of linear, irreversible, homogeneous, abstract, objective time that won over minds precisely during Enlightenment. The concept of objective time of Newtonian physics was crucial to the ideology and philosophy of the Enlightenment and indispensable for such concepts as "universal history", "societal progress", and so forth. Objective, irreversible, homogeneous, linear time could be rightly called the dominant perception of time in modernity. The objectivity of time conditioned the objectivity of knowledge, and sufficed, up to the beginning of the twentieth century, as an important indicator of belonging to the "civilized world" and European culture:

[...] We know that their [i.e. savages] perception of time is different from ours. They cannot imagine a straightforward infinite line, always equal to itself, as an abstract line that orders and organizes the events in irreversible and homogeneous sequences. Differently from us, time for primitives is not a specific intuitive order of sequence and

continuity. Even less is it perceived as a homogeneous substance. Time is rather felt when rationally represented,” — said Lucien Lévy-Bruhl referring to the unquestionable perception of time shared by his readers.

Obviously, this perception of time has been challenged nowadays. There are some studies that have pointed to the fact that we are witnessing a radical challenge to the perception of time. One could quote revealing titles of books such as “Malaise dans la temporalité” or point to other studies that share the same pathos such as “Temporalité et modalité”.

However, the most comprehensive study was undertaken by Francois Hartog in “Regimes d’historicité. Présentisme et expériences du temps” (Hartog, 2003). According to Hartog (2003), we are living through a radical change in the perception of time that he calls ‘presentism’. The task of a historian under these conditions consists of understanding, describing and explaining of the peculiarities of this new vision of historical time (Hartog, 2003, p.27). The peculiarity of this new vision, according to Hartog, consists in the definite domination of present over past and future. Present occupies “all the time” at the expense of the past and future and forecloses any attempts to get out of the present. He calls that present “eternal, and quasiimmobile”.

“We are gazing backwards and forwards but we cannot help to find a way out of the present that we have turned into our ultimate horizon,” Hartog says (Hartog, 2003, p. 28, 217). Another important feature of presentism is manifested by a break in the chain of time, by a break in the sequence of time, or by the distortion of the intimate connection between past, present and future.

The concept of presentism points not only to a challenge in the contemporary perception of time but leaves open a question about the consequences of this challenge. Can the crisis in the perception of time be reduced to the complexity of relations between past, present and future? Are we to think that such categories as “present” will inevitably survive the crisis? Does the presence of presentism exist objectively “out there”? In other words, do we still live in a world where the idea of objective time is valid? One could think that presentism presupposes the objectivity of time? However, if both the past and the future don’t matter any longer, the idea of a continuity of time, as well as the idea of irreversibility of time, has no point either. Consequently, the objectivity of time deprived from these basic qualities does not hold for presentism. Therefore, presentism could be interpreted as an invitation to call into question the concept of objective time as a dominant idea of Modernity.

The radical break from the Modern perception of time doesn’t limit itself to distortions in the relations among past, present and future however complicated they might be. To speak about the “rupture between past, present and future” or about the “interruption

of the natural flow of time or sequence of time” has become almost a banal expression of mass media and textbooks nowadays. For example, an expression “broken chain of time” was highly popular in Russian media in the early 1990s. It explained, on one hand, the backwardness of Russia as compared to Western society caused by the break in time, namely, the Bolshevik revolution, and on the other hand allowed a view of the Soviet period as a gap in time (Khapaeva, 2002).

In dictionaries scientists explain that such concepts as past, present and future have no longer any plausible sense in so far as science is concerned. To prove their viewpoint, they quote a famous fragment from Albert Einstein’s 1955 letter: “For any of us devoted physicists, the difference between past, present and future is an illusion even if a persistent one.” Since late 1980s, even historians have embraced an idea of temporal rupture as a normal feature of historical time. As a result, rejection of the objectivity of time and the “existence of psychological time of each observer” are becoming perceived by general public as scientifically proven. Indeed, both popular books on physical theory and the mass media popularize this idea as an undeniable fact, a feature of reality. This may be illustrated by the following typical examples: “One of the consequences of the relativity theory consists in the fact that an absolute abstract time that would be equal for every observer, independently from his/her position in space and speed of his movement doesn’t exist in reality” (Le Monde, 1977; Bachelet, 1996). Or: “Theory proposed by Everett suggests [...] that future and past are equally is probable! In order to comprehend the theory, one has to introduce a concept of the “psychological personal time “ for each observer” (Izvestia, 2002). One might suppose that the vision of time as objective, linear and irreversible has gradually started to lose its persuasive power over minds.

It is important to stress that the rejection of an objective vision of time has not emerged just over last decade. Starting from end of the nineteenth and into the beginning of the twentieth century there were a number of “attempts” against the objectivity of time. Since resistance to the concept of the objectivity of time was manifested in fields as different as literature and physics, one could hardly trace the genealogy back to a common intellectual root or to a single tradition of thought. To be sure, Marcel Proust knew about relativity theory and read Henri Bergson, but it would be an exaggeration to say that his writings were influenced by these authors. It is important to mention that in the course of the twentieth century each break through the traditional perception of time was compensated by the objectivist reaction. Interestingly enough, these first ruptures in the Modern vision of time appeared in the works of the authors who didn’t acknowledge time a central place in their writings: At the edge of twentieth century, time had not been perceived yet as such a painful problem as it is today. Time was considered instrumental to tackle more important issues such as memory, consciousness, perception, etc.

Let's briefly point out the most important breaks in the perception of objective time over the twentieth century. Against this general background we will focus on the contribution of social sciences and humanities to the process that might be called an 'anthropological reduction of time' with a special reference to the role of historical discipline.

The denial of the objectivity of time by contemporary physics plays a singular and separate role in the whole story. The concept of 'space-time' haunted the imagination of Einstein to become, soon after it was coined, not only a mathematical tool but an integral part of physical reality itself (Bachelet, 1996, p. 153). Consequently, objective time that exists independently from an object lost any meaning beyond Newtonian physics. Moreover, the equivalence of space and time made redundant the sequence of events and the order of time. The next step was made by the Copenhagen school that discovered "atoms of time" and postulated discontinuity of time as a ground for quantum process. However, the idea of "proper time of observer" that was considered as *sine qua non* condition of any observation of physical reality acquired critical importance for the perception of time. The concept of subjective time penetrated into the very heart of physical investigations.

Similar intuitions about the nature of time appeared in the works of philosophers and writers who profoundly influenced twentieth century culture. Without pretending to exhaust the list, let's evoke Henry Bergson (1991) who opposed subjective time as a "pure durée" to the objective time of the outer world, Edmund Husserl (Husserl, 1994; Granel, 1996; Carr, 1986) who claimed the phenomenological reduction of objective time, and introduced such concepts as the 'temporality of consciousness' and 'horizon of temporality'. Martin Heidegger revolted against the '*vulgar temporality*' of objective time in favor of internal time (Heidegger, 1962; Greisch, 1994). Marcel Proust wrote about the subjective temporality of memory, Michel Foucault conceptualized the infinite present of mutations and transformations (Foucault, 1969), and Jorge Borges made time a favorite object of his intellectual experiments and offered his readers an experience of the collapse of Newtonian time through his prose.

In the social sciences and humanities objective time had been challenged by the idea of its cultural, historical, or social determination. On one hand, it was closely connected to the historization of the transcendental subject by Droysen and Dilthey (Schnadelbach, 1984). On another, Emile Durkheim (1960), (as well as H. Hubert and M. Mauss (Hubert, Mauss, 1929)) invented a new way of dealing with time that might be called an "anthropological reduction of time". Categories of religious consciousness that mirrored Kantian categories made available for social sciences the idea of "sacred, eternal, cyclical time" (Khapaeva, 2002). "False consciousness" as opposed to science acquired its own peculiar temporality that differed dramatically from objective time of scientific enquiry.

These tendencies in the perception of time found their counterparts in the historiography. Fernand Braudel introduced in the idea of the plurality of historical time into historical studies. Historical time had already gradually started to slow down its speed in Braudel's writings regarding the cease of flow in the "histoire immobile" of his disciple Emmanuel Le Roy Ladurie (Ladurie, 1975, p.430). Jacques Le Goff and Aaron Gurevich (Gurevich, 1984, p.152, 111, 113) proclaimed a specificity of the perception of time for particular cultures in the Middle Ages. Could it be the case that the idea of the plurality of historical time paralyzed the flow of time in the works of historians, undermined global history and conditioned its collapse?

Further development of the idea that time could be a product of social, historical or cultural circumstances, brought about the studies of 'temporalities' typical for economic cycles and labor, sports and painting. Being regarded as a subject of culture, time had started to lose its objective nature. By the end of the 1980s when studies of different temporalities flourished in the social sciences (Fabian, 1983; Bensa, 1997; Pomian, 1984; Chesneaux, 1996), and relativity theory entered secondary school curriculum, perception of time as external, abstract and universal has finally lost its evidence. The anthropological reduction of time served as an important resource of the "quantization of time" in contemporary culture that served to destroy the very idea of external time independent from a phenomenon or an observer.

One of the most impressive projects of contemporary French historiography, namely "Lieux de mémoire" by Pierre Nora (Nora et al., 1984-1993) could be regarded as a tacit reference to the problem of time in contemporary historiography. The originality of this outstanding project consists of, among other things, the fact that the structural principle of historical narration becomes space and not chronology. This makes the Gothic cathedral or the labyrinth into some of the most important metaphors of this approach to history. Places of memory acquire their symbolic meaning primarily due to the importance of the events of the past for the contemporary French identity.

Unique, abstract time of world history has been broken into multiple times to get transformed into subjective personal time. Maybe, we are living through a transition from objective time to internal subjective time? Disillusioned with the ideas of objectivity and reality, scientific rationality revealed an alternative perception of time that was marginalized and suppressed by European culture for centuries. As a result, such qualities of time as irreversibility, continuity, and time's abstract nature ceased to be perceived as immanent ones. To the contrary, time has started to be perceived as essentially subjective, discontinuous, and non-linear; this differs from the beginning of the twentieth century's vision of time and passed from extreme intellectual innovation to everyday consciousness.

Coming back to Koselleck's argument, European society experienced a critical conceptual crisis during the French Revolution (Koselleck, 1990), "Sattelzeit", a "time of

transformation” settled on the historical development of Europe. Could we suppose that the contemporary radical challenge in the perception of time will lead to the opposite consequences as compared to Sattelzeit?

An important feature of the contemporary intellectual crisis is the absence of new paradigms. Moreover, the absence of new concepts is a typical feature of the contemporary intellectual crisis, while the old concepts have almost lost their meaning and relevance. “Sattelzeit” as described by Koselleck, resulted in a huge proliferation of new concepts that transformed society to create Modernity. Could it be the case that contemporary change in the perception of time caused a cognitive shock that prevented the successful formation of new concepts? The contemporary conceptual crisis resulted in a condition of “reversed Sattelzeit”: Instead of stimulating the production of new concepts that led to the “Brave New World” of a century ago, an unbridgeable gap has separated the space of experience from the capacity to describe that experience and to conceptualize it. Cognitive shock foreclosed the plausible replacement of old concepts with new ones. The “silence of intellectuals” could be explained by the revolutionary nature of the challenge currently experienced by European society.

While the crisis of concepts is obvious, its mutual interdependence with the crisis of the perception of historical time is less apparent. According to Koselleck, basic historical concepts appeared due to the radical rupture that broke away the space of experience from the horizon of expectations. Concepts that appeared during “Sattelzeit” had an important feature in common: they were future-oriented because the horizon of expectations overwhelmed the space of experience while increasing their abstract and general meaning. A progressive, futurist vision of historical time was rooted in basic historical concepts. Being part of a larger system of concepts, historical concepts relied upon the idea of objective linear time that allowed universal history to replace local histories. Consequently, the dominance of a new perception of time presupposes the end of the system of concepts that resided within a different vision of time.

Certainly, the formation of basic historical concepts didn’t happen overnight. According to Koselleck and his school, it took more than two to three generations for new concepts to emerge (William, 1983). If we suppose that nowadays we are entering a period of pause, then the silence of intellectuals would be over in the foreseeable future and new concepts will appear to transform the world. However, an alternative scenario is also plausible. Given the speed of change in the twenty-first century the new conceptual system might be short of time to emerge. What happens if the speed of change will be quicker than the speed of its conceptualization? What if there is no time left for intellectuals to overcome approaching intellectual chaos?

These questions are especially difficult to answer because there are very few studies undertaken on the logical structure of concepts. According to Nikolai Kopylov (Kopylov,

2001, 2005, 2009), who specifically studied this problem, the contemporary crisis of historical concepts is closely linked to the transformations of their logical structure. Koposov's own research is centered primarily on French intellectual tradition, particularly the Annales school. Analyzing French historians' use of concepts like society, culture, history, nobility, bourgeoisie, and others, he underlines the fact that these concepts are based on the cooperation of two logics that presuppose different, and in fact hardly compatible, standards of concept formation, and hence different types of category structures. To put it in a slightly simplified way, these two logics may be called the logic of general names and that of proper names. The first logic is based on the profoundly linguistic experience of interpreting the meaning of words, tends to produce categories designated with general names, following the rules of Aristotelian logic. The second one, based on the experience of the empirical ordering of unnamed objects, tends to produce prototypical categories for which we usually do not have general names. These categories that Koposov calls semantic emptiness, are usually designated with proper names. According to Koposov (Koposov, 2009), historians most often follow the precepts of the two logics at the same time, thus producing self-contradictory concepts. However, the balance between the two logics in the concrete historical concepts is subject to change.

Thus, in the eighteenth century, when, according to Reinhart Koselleck, most of the basic historical concepts came into being, their universal theoretical content began to prevail over their empirical references to concrete historical experiences. Contemporary historical concepts, however, seem to have undergone a shift in the opposite direction, in which reference to concrete occurrences has become more important and has even tended to eclipse the universal content of concepts. Hence proper names that have some elements of universal meaning may come to substitute general names, which contain reference to individual experiences.

The concept of Europe, which Koposov describes as a new type, represents a proper name acting as the bearer of universal meaning:

On the one hand, Europe remains a historical concept, but on the other hand, being borne out of the tension of similitude to/opposition with America, it no longer means "civilization," per se, the common fate of humankind. Thanks to that, Europe to a much larger extent has become a proper name; its connections with universalism, nourished both by liberalism and communism, look considerably weakened. At the same time Europe has not lost some of the features of a general name. Continuing to mean the tradition of European humanism, it does not impose itself as a universal predicate. Maybe Europe emerges now as a historical concept of a new type (Koposov, 2005, p.92).

According to Koposov, 'Europe' represents an example of a historical concept where the balance between the logic of proper names and that of general names is getting shifted. In times of Modernity, to define a political and ideological project of that kind, a general name such as "civilization" would be required. Nowadays, a proper name such as Europe that is currently replacing "civilization", has acquired some of the functions of a general name.

Following Koposov's analysis, one can argue that a new way of perceiving historical time as subjective deeply disturbs the balance that existed between proper and general names and empowered proper names to impose their logic upon some general names. We can only guess what mechanism allows for the transformation of general names into proper ones under the pressure of subjective time. One possible guess might be that this mechanism resides in the historicity of proper names. A case of an individual name that represents an extreme case of a proper name could serve as a demonstration.

German historicists reflected upon the relationship between proper names and historicity. They used to oppose abstract concepts usually referred to by general names to the unique historical facts normally defined by proper names (Iggers, 1968; Oexle, 2001). Historicity of an individual name might emerge through the act of naming that has two functions. First, it fixes the individual reference, and secondly, it marks the semantic place of the individual name in the common system of names as opposed to a general name. The unique singularity referred by an individual name embodies the individual name with its own temporality. The predominance of subjective time in contemporary culture has started to transform general names that were occasionally used as proper names into proper names par excellence. It started to deform the internal logic of general names, embedding them with a concrete meaning, transforming them into semantic totalities and fulfilling them with their own temporality.

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Forum

UNLIMITED IMAGINATIONS

INNA SEMETSKY

I am a historian... An interesting event will take place on Patriarchs' [Ponds] tonight...

–Woland, in Michail Bulgakov's *The Master and Margarita*

The decline and fall of the Soviet empire in the last decade of the 20th century put an end to the cultural and political epoch that was rigidly disciplined by the aesthetics of a mainly socialist realist type. The social-political setting, traditionally looked upon as the Other by the Western mind, has lost its distinguishing features, has lost its proverbial “otherness”. Soviet literature and fiction used to be informed, at least during the years between the 1970s and 1990s, by the legacy of historical materialism and social realism. The present essay addresses a formidable exploration of this particular three-decades-long period in Soviet literature by Nadia Peterson in her book *Subversive Imaginations: Fantastic Prose and the End of Soviet Literature, 1970s - 1990s* published in 1997 by Westview Press.

Today it becomes especially important to revisit, analyze and synthesize the wealth of information brought forth by Peterson's critical analysis more than a decade ago and to look into the diversity of meanings in the then new Russian letters. Had their subversive imagination already run its course? Has subversion turned into inversion? Still this essay, in an attempt to differentiate between many levels of description appearing in Peterson's work, necessarily takes the form of a discrete message or a synchronic slice within the larger diachronic dimension of her book and an even larger diachronic dimension of the whole of Russian culture.

It is paradigmatic that in the very first sentence of her introductory chapter Peterson comments on a certain sense of closure. She affirms that the deconstruction of Soviet myths in many of the literary works during the said period has mirrored a sudden collapse of the

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whole ideological edifice that so far has been supporting the stability of structures comprising the Soviet state.

Nevertheless, what seemed to have been taking place just before the dawn of the 21st century was the new beginning, captured in the perceptive title of Peterson's book with its emphasis on *Subversive Imaginations*. Soviet literature is dead; however, long live its Russian progeny! The stable material signifier prescribed by the verisimilitude of the official Soviet prose and grounded in its prototypical "square protagonists" (in Peterson's words) firmly grounded in the soil of Komsomol and Communism has been replaced by the imaginary one.

It is an a-signifying semiotics (incidentally the object of philosophical investigations by Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari in post-1968 France; see, e.g., Semetsky 2006; 2008) that serves the destabilizing function which has paradoxically contributed to the creative production of authors' artistic subjectivity. Indeed, and as Peterson also states, it is the artist's self that itself became the object of investigation in literary, fictional, prose. The Russian prose that emerged in the equivocal dialogue of the 1970s-1990s is, according to Peterson, characterized by a plurality of styles, utopian or apocalyptic plots, as well as phantasmagoric and carnivalesque narratives.

Interestingly enough — and apparently without Peterson being aware of the fact — Lev Vygotsky's psychological legacy appears to gleam from the pages of her book at both symbolic and social levels. Vygotsky's socio-cultural approach to cognition has usually been apprehended in terms of interactional theory, and the psychoanalytic element in it has long been overlooked. However, Vygotsky happened to be a member of the Russian Psychoanalytic Society, and his ideas about *pedology* — the one historically and culturally unique Russian discipline, whose purpose has been to investigate possible methods of transforming human nature during early childhood and which was initially informed by traditional Freudian psychoanalysis — do yield multiple interpretations in different contexts.

Little attention has so far been paid to the fact that in a chapter on "Thought and Word" in his book *Thought and Language*, Vygotsky used as an epigraph the following lines from a poem by Osip Mandelstam, a loner and outcast who was persecuted by the Soviet hierarchy as an antisocial element and later disappeared in the Gulag: "I have forgotten the words I intended to say, and my thought, disembodied, returns to the realm of shadows" (my translation). This shadowy world can be taken as constituting the subtle body of emergent prose by Russian authors towards the end of the 20th Century.

The egocentric, yet already social, speech of the newly born Russian literature unfolds into narratives defined by Peterson as fantastic that is, betraying both logical discourse and commonsensical explanations. For the writers of fantastic prose one of the major concerns became, as Peterson says, "the examination of mystery". In this process Russian literature became further disengaged from its Soviet forebear, which contained in itself the seeds of

its own demise — that paradoxical and always already present “as if” quality of official propaganda and Soviet mythologies which later would become subverted into fluid, uncontainable, fantastic reality, even if the combination of words, “fantastic reality” (used by Peterson) does appear as a logical contradiction of terms.

Starting from the time of the Khrushchev’s Thaw, Peterson considers transformations in several domains: the appearance of an alienated hero in a sociocultural texture of youth, urban, and village prose; the emergence of an irrational dimension and the least-expected juxtaposition of communist dogmas with religious ones; the preoccupation with space travel and the idea of the Soviet superman; and the turn from the monological character of canonical, realistic writings to the dialogue manifesting itself in experimentation with new modes of expression, such as Utopian impulse and its necessarily apocalyptic counterpart.

In the process of moving away from the goal-oriented literature of the past to the ambivalent and uncertain present, the dialogue is played out in futuristic and fantastic narratives, allowing for examination of alternative patterns of social practice in multiple forms of representation of the glasnost and the post-glasnost eras.

References to the immortal novel by Mikhail Bulgakov *The Master and Margarita*, from which the epigraph is taken, appear quite often on Peterson’s pages. In fact one chapter focuses exclusively on Bulgakov’s numerous later disciples. No wonder: some interesting historical events continue to happen on Patriarchs’ Ponds — this sweet boulevard that traditionally remains one of the few nostalgic quarters in the center of “old” Moscow. Sure enough, Peterson skillfully traces the dynamics of both mainstream and alternative literature in Russia by situating them in the context of broader sociocultural and historical changes.

To me, however, it seems to be an unfortunate omission on the part of the author that there is no mention of two exemplary novels from the 1980s, *The Burn* and *The Island of Crimea*, both written by the great, and recently deceased, Vasily Aksenov. In fact, Aksenov is mentioned only once with regard to one of his rather romantic novels of the late ‘60s. Like Bulgakov in the ‘30s, Aksenov himself is the Master of the latter day, whose creativity is guided by the archetypal Wise Old Man or Magician (albeit in the guise of Woland in *The Master and Margarita*), while the unconscious of the writers that belong to the “fantastic decade” seems to be overwhelmed by the opposite pole of the same archetype, the Trickster.

Considering archetype in the Jungian sense of a typical mode of apprehension, the qualities associated with Aksenov’s prose partake of those that Jung used to attribute to the symbolism of the Wise Old Man: knowledge, wisdom, insight, and vision. The psychology of the Trickster, on the other hand, reflects not wisdom but cleverness, not knowledge but caprice, not insight but wit, and not vision but voyeurism. While Peterson focuses explicitly on the social and cultural aspects in her efforts to elucidate the relation of Soviet literature to the history that gave rise to it, the more subtle psycho-historical elements appear to be absent or just slightly touched upon.

Meanwhile, the interplay between the apparently binary opposites represented by the light and dark aspects of the same archetype points to the profound psychological difference, unfortunately only hinted at by Peterson, between Bulgakov's masterpiece and the later imitations by Bulgakov's epigones. The magical inner strength that fortifies the suffering Master in his mental and physical struggle turns into demonic power from the outside and the post-Bulgakov protagonists' fascination with their own omnipotence. The spiritual fulfillment and true love between Margarita and the Master turns into a moral void and erotic or autoerotic adventures, constituting the social agenda of the new "freedom" of glasnost.

The literal meaning of "glas", translated from Russian, is "voice". Libidinal energy, long repressed since the plateau state of Russia's post-revolutionary, post-1917, period, has returned and acquired its own voice. It started speaking up by means of symbolic defiance and exhibitionism, with the replacement of psychology by physiology in the erectile mood of perpetual "lift-off". The novel *Danilov, The Viola Player*, for example, seems to implicate the subtle difference affected by the "dark" archetypal pole. However it has been read by Peterson at a rather crude level of dichotomizing between its "human plot" and its "demonic plot" lived out by the protagonist who presents himself as both human and demon at once. For Bulgakov, the mythological form of his book recapitulated the tragedy of his real life. As for the novels referred to by Peterson as "Bulgakovian", she describes them as plainly entertaining even if mildly satirical. Respectively, Bulgakov's great original work becomes simultaneously presented, in the reductive manner of Western criticism, as belonging to the low end of popular culture (albeit having been a "sensationalist" model).

The climax of the gradual disintegration of the cultural and political myths in Russian society is seen by Peterson in the fact of the emergence of alternative literature, which replaced the mimetic mode of the pre-glasnost period, characterized by "monosemy, univocity of purpose, clarity and coherence of presentation", with pluralistic discourse and transgressive intent apparent, for example, in the deliberate distortions of the narratives. The use of erotic play with language is considered by Peterson to be a powerful strategy, which produced works, especially by women writers of the 1990s that are subversive in content and unorthodox in form. One example of the genre becomes a story referencing the child who was born to the protagonist in one of the novels after having been conceived over the phone.

Another characteristic of new alternative literature is its preoccupation with violence. It is significant that, pointing to a sense of closure at the very beginning of her book, Peterson, when analyzing what she calls "games women play" — as the title of one of the book's chapters — describes the protagonists' actions as representing the threat of a possible severance of the genetic line, thereby implicating closure by means of a rupture. Violent gestures are often inscribed overtly in orgiastic terms. A story's hidden transcript becomes

hyperreal when in one of the novels several male characters are mutilated and murdered only to be brought back to life, yet so as to be mutilated and murdered yet again. The fictional process eventually turns male protagonists into empty signifiers. Peterson specifically points out that the women writers make the male point of view inaccessible to the reader, clearly delimiting the socio-sexual positions of the reader and writer.

The privileged point of view of Peterson in her book appears as a certain standpoint, itself blending into a mediated version of the textualized world of social discourse. The structure of Peterson's volume is not chronotopically identical with the world of Russian literature it represents. To remind the readers, the term *chronotope* was introduced by Mikhail Bakhtin as a reference to the specific organization of the spatio-temporal textual configurations that serve a mediating function of constructing the life-world independent of the text. Through her negative mediation, Peterson's aim, it seems to me, was to achieve the means to make her already textualized world aesthetically visible and meaningful. Thus, while the subjectivity of Russian protagonists seems to dissipate in their self- (and over-) reflexivity and the absence of the other, it is nonetheless being continuously recreated in the interactive process between Peterson's own narrative and the phantasmagoric world of contemporary Russia.

It remains to be seen, though, in what direction Russian letters will develop. After the three decades of explosion, the collective consciousness (or rather the collective unconscious, indeed manifested in fantastic prose and subversive imaginations) has been slowly going through the integration within individual minds that internalized it. According to Vygotsky's law of cultural development, internalization does transform the structure and functioning of the developmental process itself. In this respect, we are about to witness the submergence of the super-vocal and egocentric speech of Russian authors into inner speech, into what Gilles Deleuze qualified as silent discourse (Semetsky 2010). Does it mean that we should consider the phenomena, as described by Peterson, to have been Vygotskian *unorganized heaps*, that is, serving a semiotic function of a sign and reflecting dynamics inclined toward developing conscious, conceptual thinking in the Russian literature that is yet to come into being? Are there limits to imagination?

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BOOK REVIEWS

Alexander Kozintsev, *The Mirror of Laughter*, translated by Richard P. Martin, New Brunswick, Transaction Publishers, 2010, ISBN-13: 978-1412810999, 298 pp., \$43.55

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Alexander Kozintsev's *The Mirror of Laughter* is a passionate book. This does not mean, however, that the primary objective of the book is to entertain, as its title might suggest. On the contrary, the main value of *The Mirror of Laughter* lies in an in-depth revision of a subject that ordinarily appears as mundane, common, and inconsequential. Laughter subsides as quickly as it rises, leaving but a trace that rarely calls for reflection and circumspection. In fact, argues Kozintsev, it is precisely the fleeting character of laughter that, in combination with its pervasive and taken-for-granted character, calls for the need to approach laughter as extraordinary, a complicated and multifaceted phenomenon with far-reaching implications, a phenomenon with a convoluted, if not contradictory, history of conceptualization.

The primary task of the book is therefore to unfold the concealed sense of laughter, which is to be done literally in the manner of opening a map, even if this task involves such diverse disciplines as philosophy, psychology, sociology, linguistics, anthropology, human biology and numerous related disciplines. From the very beginning it appears that the sheer volume and variety of sources that represent these disciplines could potentially reduce the book to a creative review of literatures on laughter. However, this potential does not realize itself, neutralized by both a strong style of argumentation, as well as the book's lucid composition and clear organization. In this review, I would like to focus on this order, trying to tie together the emergent theory of laughter as well as the manner of its presentation.

The Mirror of Laughter has four main chapters that move Kozintsev's argument through a series of folds that expand the main theoretic through several different yet related perspectives. The chapters are interwoven: they have explicitly defined components and elements that appear throughout the text, making it a thematically dynamic whole. In order to approach this whole consistently, Kozintsev gives the reader a key, a quote from

Aristotle's *Poetics*: "Comedy is a representation of inferior people, not indeed in the full sense of the word bad, but the laughable is a species of the base or ugly. It consists in some blunder of ugliness that does not cause pain or disaster, an obvious example being a comic mask which is ugly and distorted but not painful" (quoted from above, 1; Aristotle, II, 1448a, 16-18; V, 1449a, 32-36). I consider this quote essential to the text as it provides Kozintsev's line of argument not only in its general direction, but also through its 'relay stations,' which include comism, humour, play, morality, and aggression. Serving as conceptual background, these features adumbrate laughter as a figure that is being slowly disclosed. This manner of analysis is reminiscent of a hermeneutic method: at the end, the book returns us to the above quote with a new sense of the analyzed phenomenon.

Therefore, in the first chapter, Kozintsev approaches laughter in the 'natural' attitude. The mundane perspective tells us that we often laugh at the things that challenge the local normative social order. In turn, these things appear in the form of a deviation from habitual behaviour. Importantly, the deviation itself must fail to reject the habitualized content in order to be laughable (it is quite common to see an instance when some initial laughter at what appears to be an expression of 'stupidity' subsides once the apparently stupid act fails to show a failure but instead shows a potential to institute a new habit, thus changing the norm). For the natural attitude, laughable is an action that is defined as 'stupid,' and that would be a failure-to-be. Once this action is ascribed to a person, his or her standing vis-à-vis another group falls, and this inferiority becomes transferred automatically to other acts and, more importantly, from the sociological perspective, to other activities, turning the entire group into something laughable. Here, Kozintsev entertains both the subjective and the objective theories of laughter, emphasizing the predominance of the former.⁶ However, even if we accept the subjective origin of laughter, in order to make laughter functional, one needs to objectify it, and that presupposes a collective; hence, the pervasiveness of stereotypes, which represent stable narrative forms shared by the initiated members, with the joke being the most common narrative of the 'laughing' kind.

Kozintsev's reduction of the Aristotelian idea of cosmism to jokes and joking introduces humour as a condition that allows us to understand jokes. Jokes are made to be shared; therefore, they tend to utilize local *realia*. A sense of humour, however, is more susceptible to universal interpretations and can sustain itself for the self without involving the other. A humorous chuckle is a behavioural indicator of that ability: enjoying the situation for its humour and, at the same time, elevating oneself above it makes it unnecessary to reveal the cause of laughter or turn it into an object of discussion. Despite this difference, structurally both share the same characteristic: discrepancy or incongruence

⁶Here, he is heavily supported by Jean Paul (1984/1873, as cited in Kozintsev) and Kant (2007/1790, as cited in Kozintsev), who firmly assert the subjective origin of laughter.

of some kind is a must for the creation of a comical effect. It might or might not cause laughter, but it is affective. The absence of this structural feature would turn what is 'funny' into what is 'commonplace,' as we tend to observe when a joke fails.

Conceding to a broad definition of discrepancy, Kozintsev points out that it could manifest itself non-verbally, as a gesture, or intonation, or vocal inflection, in other words a signal that what is going on belongs to another dimension. Focusing on identifying this dimension, Kozintsev insists that laughter should belong to a meta-level. This makes laughter a liminal phenomenon, a phenomenon that necessarily implies the dialectic of the visible and the invisible. Laughter makes things visible by moving them onto a different level, where the situational context is delimited by the means of expression. From the narrative perspective, the two levels require two author-positions, a superior one, that of the laugher, and the inferior one, that of the laughed at. Kozintsev puts it as follows: "the superiority theory of humour finds its proper place [...] at the meta-level, in the gap between the actual author's position and that of the intermediate implied author, who is always present and is always inferior to the author" (14).

The narrative perspective on the superiority theory implies an eventual move to language. From a broader linguistic perspective, laughing at inferior people cannot help but be arbitrary when it comes to the object of laughter. Of course, normative considerations play an important role, yet, following the Saussurean theme, the relations between the signifier and the signified in terms of laughter and the laughable are not based on any specific convention. One can laugh at anything. No wonder then that the entire conglomerate of laughing matters, if one can imagine such a thing, sits on the concept of pretence in the worse-case scenario and the concept of performance in the best-case scenario.⁷ The existence of inferior people and the overall division along the lines of inferiority-superiority may not appeal to contemporary sensibilities, but the latter does not have any currency with Aristotle, who prompts Kozintsev to make the connection between laughter and the 'ugly'. The ugly is a category that implies beauty; it is therefore a moral category. This is the point when Kozintsev shifts to approaching laughter in terms of humour that enters the subsequent argument via classical theories of comism.

As a structural anthropologist, Kozintsev shows a strong preference for Kant's theory of laughter as opposed to that of Freud, for example. To the latter, Kozintsev ascribes both "dismal and deadly seriousness" and the ability to see a "hidden filthy theme" in "most innocent looking jokes" (62). In general, argues Kozintsev, those psychological theories of laughter that entertain the phenomenon in terms of its being funny, that is, as an expression

⁷As far as performance is concerned, structural anthropology should be credited with the focused research of ritualized laughter, or 'laughter without an object' (John Frazer 1998/1922, and Victor Turner 1969, as cited in Kozintsev.).

of desire, and ridiculous, that is, an expression of the uncanny, do not provide a convincing explanation of laughter. For example, he finds the notion of laughter as a defense mechanism against the consciousness of shame a vulgarization of the phenomenon's essence. This bias seems to bring Kozintsev uncomfortably close to advocating the mind/body split, which is nonetheless avoided by an attempt to treat theories of humour and theories of play, the two tracks to which his theorizing continually returns, on the same epistemological level.

Having dealt with the ordinary perspective on laughter, in Chapter 2 Kozintsev moves to the eidetic analysis, proceeding to examine laughter in terms of its origin. In his key quote, Aristotle connects laughter to the absence of pain, an important observation as it coincides with what Gregory Bateson identified as the dividing line between a fighting animal and a playing one.⁸ Bateson's theory of play also emphasized the role of ambiguity, another theme that strongly influences Kozintsev's search for the origin of laughter. At this juncture, St. Augustine comes into the discussion to facilitate the connection between the pleasure of experiencing shame and laughter, showing that the act of enforcing superiority, such as by deceit, is seen as a cause of the same reaction that one sees in tickling. Intriguingly, through that very relation, there appears a correlation between the bodily response to laughter, or the reaction of the organism, and the laughable, that is, the symbolic object of laughter, making it possible to create "an interface between biology and culture" (above, 80).

From this perspective, it appears logical to proceed with an investigation of play. Play is an even more complex phenomenon, as it too can be understood as a bodily and intellectual activity, an interactional and social resource and the beginning of sociality. The distinction between the 'animalistic' laughter caused by tickling and the 'intelligent' laughter tied to the sense of humour is considered by Kozintsev to be an evolutionary step toward being human. For the transition, he uses James Sully and his notion of play-challenge, which is but a "reduced form of quasi-aggression" (90). Sully and the Freudians argue that aggression precedes, accompanies, and follows laughter throughout. Incidentally, in the court of criminal law, laughing at the suffering of a victim by the perpetrator is recognized as an aggravating circumstance and adds to the weight of the overall guilt the perpetrator would have to bear for his or her actions.

A formal transition from play to humour and language is carried out in Chapter 3 that extends the discussion of play above by first distinguishing between the animalistic and the

⁸In addition to Gregory Bateson (1955, as cited in Kozintsev,), when speaking about the humanity of laughter, Kozintsev also quotes Helmuth Plessner (1970, as cited in Kozintsev,). Unfortunately, the latter's phenomenological theory does not receive as much attention as it deserves, in my opinion. In general, the role of perception in the constitution of laughter barely figures in Kozintsev's argument.

human use of laughter and secondly by suggesting some uniquely human modes of processing sense and other data into coherent schemes on the basis of symbolic thinking. Thus, this chapter makes yet a wider spiral around the Aristotelian quote, terminating its path at the site of the relation between play and language for the sake of laughter. This engages not just linguistics but communication studies as well. Especially interesting in this regard is conversation analysis, a methodology that discloses the structural parameters of laughter empirically.⁹ In turn, irony, parody, and speech acts lead to a strange territory, where emotions, reflexes, and symbols form a rhetorical subject, an embodied *dramatis personae*, who is both the clown and the audience. Here, at the meta-level, humour emerges as “the collapse of symbolic communication” (Kozintsev, 156).

With this, in the last chapter we are brought back to the beginning, but it is also important to remember that at each turn of the spiral there was a point of crossing or transition which leads to the next reduction. The last reduction deals with the juxtaposition of culture and nature. Of course, laughter is a phenomenon of the excited body. It is also a reflex. However, its main function belongs to language. Although it figures in the previous chapter, in this last chapter the reduction to language gives Kozintsev a symbol, which is but a meta-reading of a situation, an intention, and an exchange: “Without understanding the meaning of laughter, man, the speaking primate, does his best to turn laughter into a conventional sign like other linguistic signs” (Kozintsev, 174). Cultural variations are also symbolic variations but with a particularly high level of complexity: historical transformations produce inevitable sedimentations that must be acknowledged in any comprehensive analysis of culture and its effects. Yet, it appears to be the only way; by completing his analysis, Kozintsev discloses the final sense of laughter: “a mirror for *Homo sapiens*” (above, 201).

In sum, the theoretical reflections in *The Mirror of Laughter* make a significant contribution to theorizing laughter. In addition to the theory itself, one will also admire the collection of various materials and, in conjunction, the author’s ability of presenting them within a complicated argument. This is accompanied by a richness of style and clearly stated positions on a number of perspectives. In this respect, the excellent translation by Richard P. Martin is particularly noteworthy. The abundance and variety of outside sources, as well as the complexity of the argument required versatile linguistic expertise and much patience, all attributes that the English translation of *The Mirror of Laughter* shows confidently.

⁹Here, I would like to note Sacks (1974) and Jefferson (1979, 1987, as cited in Kozintsev).

Vladimir I. Karasik. *Yazykovaya kristallizatsiya smysla* [Language Crystallization of Meaning]. Volgograd: Paradigma, 2010. 422 pp. ISBN 978-5-903601-30-1.

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Vladimir I. Karasik's book fully represents what may be called the anthropological turn in Russian linguistics. The author is very well known in Russia, and partly abroad, for his contribution to anthropological linguistics and discourse studies. In fact, the book crowns a row of widely quoted publications produced by the author within the last decade. It is also worth noticing that Karasik's publications have been followed by dozens of research papers of smaller or broader scope, written by the author's disciples or his disciples' disciples.

The series started in 2002, with the publication of *The language of social status* (1st edition, 1992), which introduced a novel vision of language phenomena, mainly lexicon and phraseology, as markers of the speaker's social status. Social status was explained as a socio-linguistic category from the point of view of pragmatics and semantics.

In 2004, *Language circle: personality, concepts, discourse* developed the notion of linguistic identity, or 'personality-in-language' (*yazykovaya lichnost'*) formerly introduced by Y.N.Karaulov, categorizing its aspects and types. The main focus of the book was the Russian brand of cognitive language studies, which focuses upon the idea of culturally relevant concepts, defined as portions of knowledge containing the 'concentrated' experience of humankind, ethnic or social groups, or an individual (language personality). The functioning of these concepts was analyzed in various discourse domains and types: institutionalized and everyday discourse, discourse in religious and scientific, political and medical domains, ritual or ironic discourse, etc.

Language keys, published in 2007, developed E.Sapir's idea that language is a starting point in studying culture and human identity, the idea which has become extremely important in the new information age, the age of virtual reality, intercultural exchanges and shifting stereotypes. Anthropologically oriented approach to language, in V.I.Karasik's view, will be able to bridge the gap between the systemic and the communicative aspects of language, standing in opposition to one another in traditional Saussurean linguistics. One of the cues to revealing the essence of a language culture is to be found in language and cultural identity types (lingua-cultural prototypes).

The 2010 *Language crystallization of meaning* draws some preliminary conclusions from recent developments in anthropological linguistics. The author starts by revisiting the traditional differentiation between meaning and sense, defining meaning as "collective

symbolic appropriation of one or another segment of reality”, whereas sense is defined as “personally and situationally relevant characteristics of the outer world”. The gradual accumulation of culturally and ethnically relevant bits of knowledge in language signs and users’ minds is metaphorically compared to the physical process of crystallization as the realization of a pre-established pattern.. Culturally relevant meanings are variably coded into concepts or scripts, i.e. static or dynamic mental formations, into plots of repeated events and into ways of narrating these events. Society creates patterns for compressing and preserving valuable information, as well as patterns for “dissolving” redundant knowledge.

Language and culture join efforts (if they are ever separate) in establishing a system of *modi communicandi*: routine and creative communicative modes, as well as emblematic, allegoric and symbolic modes. Routine discourse differs from creative communication in its lower degree of accurateness or elaborateness; it is monotonous and often carries zero information (close to Bernstein’s *restricted code* and Malinowski’s *phatic communication*). Language signs used in routine discourse are vague (*thing, stuff*), often supported or overwhelmed by non-verbal semiotics, and their interpretation is situationally bound and imprecise. Creative communication is aimed at achieving a precise definition, an elaborate designation, and a personalized sense. Creative texts are thus always open to discussion and commentary.

Creative discourse is a relatively small sphere of human communication, but its significance for “crystallizing meanings” is imposing. Language is not homogeneous; it contains signs of three types: epinomes, ergonomes and acronomes. Epinomes are semantically vague, situationally bound, but very rich in emotional content (under-language). Ergonomes are everyday words with meanings defined in dictionaries (language). Acronomes possess personalized senses generated in creative discourse and expanding the boundaries of meaning. Communicating with acronomes requires certain effort and represents a transition to the “third signal system” (signs of signs).

Various degrees of complexity are also seen in the three interpretative *modi communicandi*. In emblematic discourse, the almost simultaneous reaction is valued; the stimulus sign does not require detailed interpretation, which is widely welcome in advertising, politics or religion. Allegoric discourse requires the addressee’s special attention and intellectual force, but accelerated life style and democratization leave little chance for this type of discourse nowadays. Symbolic discourse is multifaceted and implies deep interpretation.

Modern mass culture displays a tendency towards the so-called “deverbalization” when the variety of speech genres is simplified to routine emblematic and epinomatic communication. This phenomenon is seen in vocabulary impoverishment, expansion of emotional and reduction of rational content, simplification of syntax or lowering of style.

Fortunately, Karasik does not see any fatality in these developments, since the creative type is preserved and performs its functions.

The theoretical framework of cultural elaboration of meanings is broadly illustrated in the book by several examples drawn from national (Russian and English) language corpora and interpreted by collocation analysis. Thus, the culturally relevant conceptual opposition of *cleanliness/dirtiness* discloses its basic similarity in English and in Russian, as regards its notional, imaginary, or axiological content. Both cultures differentiate the state of being *dirty* as outer or inner dirt, surface spotting or contamination by admixture, etc. The difference is found in the genetic prototype of *dirt*, which lies in the nomination principle, the Russian prototype being closer to *mud*. In general, the English idea of *dirtiness* is more sensorial and pragmatic; *dirt* is socially marked as belonging to lower classes and areas, as well as to unlawful actions. The Russian concept of *dirtiness* emphasizes the spiritual side, *cleanliness* being part of an ethical ideal. These matrixes of culture-related conceptualization are directly related to patterns of socially acceptable (or unacceptable) behavior. The author analyzes some other concepts from a cross-cultural angle, such as *glory* or *intrigue*. Culture related language concepts are regarded as determinants of behavior.

Another perspective on culturally related concepts brings forth the differences between various historical or political periods (epoch markers). Such concepts illustrate the cross-cultural gap between, for example, the Soviet Union and the Western world. The “almost untranslatable” *soznatel’nost* (conscientiousness, usually, communist conscientiousness) or *ochkovtiratel’stvo* (white-washing or misrepresentation in order to receive some kind of bonus from the bosses) serve as a very vivid example of “epoch markers”. This branch of lingua-cultural research offers a new perspective also on political communication studies.

One more relation to historical periods is found in studying linguistic cultural prototypes (*lingvokulturnyj tipazh*), or typical representatives of a certain culture viewed through their verbal characteristics and verbal (or also non-verbal) behavior. Again, a vivid example of “untranslatable” is represented in the Russian designation of low company, hooligans or street gangs *shpana*, and in some other examples.

The low company of *shpana* fortunately gives way to the high company of text interpreters and commentators in Chapter 3. Commentary is viewed as a genre of hermeneutic discourse, thus emphasizing the role of the addressee in communicative interaction. Commentary is one of the highest varieties of creative communication, which advances the eternally discussed issue of understanding or transferring knowledge. Based upon a tridimensional model of ‘knowledge — understanding — interpretation’, Karasik distinguishes such types of interpretation as compression and amplification, the latter being subdivided into associative and rational. All of these types of interpretation are clearly

displayed in several examples of interpretative analysis, or linguistic-cultural commentary (Ecclesiastes, Queen Eleanor's Confession, "O where are you going?" by W.H. Auden, Edgar Poe's "Eldorado", and Stephen Crane's "Lines")

Karasik's theoretical perspective developed in his books and summarized in this latest one aims at bridging the gap between the individual and the society, innovation and norm, mechanical repetition and creation, human and humanitarian, thus making his new book a vivid illustration of the latest anthropological turn in Russian language and communication studies.

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Inna Semetsky (ed.), *Semiotics Education Experience*. Rotterdam, Boston, Taipei, Sense Publishers, 2010, ISBN: 978-4-6091-223-8 302 pp., \$49.00 (paper)

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An excellent collection of some fifteen papers, *Semiotic Education Experience* begins with an introductory Foreword by Danesi entitled “Edusemiotics”. The label names “the idea of amalgamating signs with learning theory and education to establish a new branch” in the larger arena of Semiotics as a discipline. Danesi identifies displacement as the key characteristic in learning, i.e., the ability to represent the world indirectly. In communicology this ability is referred to as the semiotic capacity to substitute time binding in place of space binding, or alternatively, to replace task ordering for content ordering.¹⁰ Thus, “Semiotics is ultimately a form of inquiry into how humans shape raw sensory information into knowledge-based categories through sign interpretation and sign-creation, that is, through the use of forms that stand for the categories.” In short, a semiotic pedagogy guarantees “once children discover that signs are effective tools for thinking, planning, and negotiating meaning with others in certain situations, they gain access to the historically-produced knowledge repertoire of their culture”.

The first chapter, Winfried Nöth, “The Semiotics of Teaching and the Teaching of Semiotics,” is a traditional “review of the literature” and an encyclopedic effort that cites more than 200 sources and is divided into three main sections. *Section one* titled “Semiotics, Teaching, and Learning” discusses in order: Semiotic Foundations of Pedagogy, Peirc[i]an Foundations: Experience and Surprise, Learning as Semiosis, Semiotics as an Integrative Framework, Semiotic Axiology, Ecology and Ecological Pedagogy, Teaching as Communication, Asymmetry of Teaching and Learning, and Teaching as Discourse. In the subsection on Peirce, Nöth captures the essence of a semiotic pedagogy by saying summarily that “experience means the predominance of the phenomenological category of secondness in contrast to the one of firstness of freedom, creativity, and spontaneity”.

Section two called “Semiotics in the Teaching of Schools and School Subjects” is subdivided into the following discussions: Teaching Semiotics in Primary and Secondary Schools, Language Education: first language teaching, media semiotics, and semiotic di[d]actics of literature; Second Language Learning and Teaching: semiotic aspects of FL teaching methodology, nonverbal communication, media semiotics, semiotics of culture and

¹⁰Such learning is discussed by Tom McFeat, *Small-Group Cultures* (New York, NY: Pergamon Press, Inc.1974).

intercultural competence; and Other School Subjects (advertising, everyday life, visual arts, mathematics, natural sciences, applied arts and crafts, religious instruction, and special education). *Section three*, “Teaching Semiotics at University Level,” has several subsections: Semiotics as an Interdiscipline (“Courses in semiotics first began to be offered in Europe and in America in the 1960s in departments of philosophy, language, literature and aesthetics [and speech communication].”), Research Centers and University Program (“In most of these program, semiotics is an interdisciplinary endeavor, whose courses are associated with other university programs...”), and, Introductions to Semiotics, often organized by (1) language of publication: English, German, French, Dutch, Spanish, Portuguese, (2) The “Classics” and “Major Schools” Approach, (3) The Anthology Approach, (4) the Specific School Approach, and (5) The Applied Semiotics Approach.

In Andrew Stables, “Semiosis and the Collapse of Mind-Body Dualism: Implications for Education”,¹¹ the Cartesian dualism of subjective mind and objective body is emblematic of the semiotic distinction between signs and signals, i.e., the contrasting perspectives of “anthroposemiotics” and “biosemiotics”. Stables draws upon the philosophy of John Dewey to argue against dualism in favor of a synthesis: “Indeed, so committed was Dewey to a rejection of the view that mind and body should be treated as separate that he used the term ‘body-mind’ to stress this inseparability”. Semiotic support for this anti-anthropocentric position is found in Peirce: “Peirce defined the aim of speculative rhetoric (“methodeutic”) as ‘the science of the essential conditions under which a sign may determine an interpretant sign of itself and whatever it signifies, or may, as a sign, bring about a physical result’”. The final pedagogical approach to semiotics is the Dewey-inspired position “that humans do not have separate minds and bodies but engage their environments as a whole; that such engagement is always context dependent in the broadest sense, and therefore that actions and responses always have an element of unpredictability as well as being grounded in socially accepted patterns; and, finally, that this is true for all people, of all ages, in all situations”.

In Howard A. Smith, “Peircian Theory, Psychosemiotics, and Education”, Peircian semiotic theory is the foundation for arguing “The primary aim of education is to promote competence in multiple forms of signs through understanding and meaning and to de-emphasize a technocratic approach to learning and instruction that focuses only on paper-pencil tests of language and mathematics”. Peircian theory is reviewed in terms of the concept of a sign, the process of semiosis (the “cooperation” of sign, object, and interpretant), the forms of inference and their motivation (stressing that “emotion or feeling is a quality based in Firstness, a central property shared with abduction”), and last, surprise

¹¹A contextual discussion of the topic is Richard L. Lanigan, “Mind-Body Identity” in *Encyclopedia of Identity*, ed. Ronald L. Jackson II (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 2011), pp. [in press]

and experience. The second section of the paper is devoted to the Greimas and Courtés perspective that “psychosemiotics is the study of how humans learn, understand, and use the signs of culture”. The perspective is illustrated by Gardner’s seven “signways”: linguistic, musical, logical-mathematical, spatial, bodily kinesthetic, social-personal, and naturalistic. From a Peircian point of view on signways, “all new learning arises from encounters with doubt and triggered by surprise”. The institutional aims are clear: “Educational goals should emphasi[z]e the learning of cultural signs and the promotion of competence in the knowledge and uses of the major signs of one’s culture, including its myths, rituals, and ways of being”. “In addition, having students represent the ‘same’ meaning in different signways through the process known as *transmediation* offers further important experiences in learning and using the signs of culture”.

Inna Semetsky, “Moral Stumbling: When Ethics Recapitulates Ontology,” shows “that an important aspect of learning is to be found in experience and that the development of our practical life as moral amounts to the progressive capacity of becoming able to intelligently evaluate and reconstruct this experience”. Exploring John Dewey’s concept of “organizations” (“our very experience of new, intelligent, habits”), the author details the relevance of Peirce’s abduction within Dewey’s view of “transaction” as person and the immediate environment. The continuity of the experience (Peirce’s *synechism*), quoting John Deely, is a moral grounding: “Abduction enables the grasp of moral meaning as *primum cogitum* making therefore ‘a *transcendental relative*’ in fact immanent in perception and affective thought alike”. The result is a moral mediation of the A and not-A,¹² such that abduction allows “a semiotic bridge connecting both ‘opposites’”. In short, “The need for developing a sense of value-judgment — rather than simply learning a given set of values — is what moral education should focus on”.

In Torjus Midtgarden, “Toward a Semiotic of Learning”, learning is approached as a condition of Peirce’s *synechism*. The analysis is a careful explication of Peirce’s notion of scientific intelligence: “On the model of the medieval *trivium* these three species of semiotic analyses are designated by the labels ‘speculative grammar’[,], ‘logic (proper)’ and finally, ‘speculative rhetoric’”. The author has a wonderful discussion of how Peirce thereby corrects the “psychologist’s fallacy” (“if the investigator confuses his ‘own standpoint with that of the mental fact about which he is making a report’”) and the “philosopher’s fallacy” (failing “to consider processes of experience and inquiry conditioning the production of knowledge” and projecting “back upon such conditioning process distinctions and relations

¹²The definitive work on A and not-A logics is to be found in Oliver Reiser, *The Promise of Scientific Humanism* (Boston, MA: Oskar Priest, 1940). Part I of this book is reprinted in Sanford I. Berman (ed.), *Logic and General Semantics: Writings of Oliver L. Reiser and Others* (San Francisco, CA: International Society for General Semantics, 1989).

belonging rather to the established outcomes of such processes”). The latter fallacy is illustrated by John Searle’s theory of speech acts. Peirce and Dewey are analyzed to show that “a semiotically qualified conception of abduction would bear on an understanding of educational contexts connecting learning processes of the life world with those of the speciali[z]ed (empirical and formal) sciences”.

In James A. Whitson, “Curriculum as Semiotic Formation: From Signifying Discourses to the Formation of Human Being,” the discussion of Curriculum Studies is thematized according to James P. Gee’s theory of “Discourse” wherein “Meaning is rather something that is *done* in the ‘saying (writing)-doing-being-valuing-believing combinations’”. Curriculum is “the course of experience in which human formation occurs, we use *experience* for the engaged activity of human being in which *the formation* of human being emerges”. Learning is “not reducible to communication or cognitive construction”, but rather is the phenomenological *doing* condition of *being* human: “Coming to know happens only in the course of coming to be”.

Sébastien Pesce’s “From Semiotics of Teaching to Educational Semiotics: The Case of French-Speaking Research in Education” clarifies the French conception of “semiology” as “an interpretive science based on linguistics that considers *signs*” and “semiotics” as “the science based in philosophy that consider *semiosis processes*”. A review of Félix Guattari and François Tosquelles centers on “schizoanalysis” as “a critical analysis of classical theoretical models developed in the fields of psychology, linguistics, and pedagogy”. Michel Balat’s use of Peircian “abduction and tychistic aspects of semiosis” precedes a discussion of Vygotsky’s “connection between semiotics and social phenomena”. A useful table is constructed comparing the “semiotics of teaching” with “educational semiotics” with respect to: representaments, objects, interpretants, semiosis, status of language, vision of education, meaning, and signs of adjustment.

Ronald Bogue and Inna Semetsky’s “Reading Signs/Learning from Experience: Deleuze’s Pedagogy as Becoming-Other” introduces the connection between “Geophilosophy” and semiotics as a “mode of cultural pedagogy” in a direct attack on Saussurean semiotics “that replaces the logical copula ‘is’ of the logic of identity with the radical conjunction ‘and’ of the logic of multiplicities”. While this approach duplicates corrections to Saussure already made by Roman Jakobson that are not mentioned by the authors, the Deleuze model does advance a theory of “subjectless individuation, the main characteristic of which, rather than being a concept, is an affect. Concepts that exist in a triadic relationship with both percepts and affects express events”. There is a useful discussion of Deleuze’s “four kinds of signs”: (1) “worldly signs of polite society”, (2) “amorous signs of passion and jealousy”, (3) “evanescent sensual signs of involuntary memory”, and (4) “the immaterial signs of art”.

In the first of two articles, Michael H.G. Hoffmann and Wolf-Michael Roth, “Four Functions of Signs in Learning and Interdisciplinary Collaboration,” set the general conditions for examining two problematics: (1) learning processes and (2) interdisciplinary collaboration. Thus, the “role of signs in learning, teaching, and communication” are examined according to four functions: “representational, epistemic, volitional, and formal”. A useful table specifies the functions as respectively “sign’s meaning”, “cognition; knowledge”, “other(s); self” and “cognitive economy”.

In the second article, Wolf-Michael Roth and Michael H.G. Hoffmann, “Signs in/of Communication,” offer a “phenomenology of signs” in the highly restrictive sense of Heidegger’s *Daseinanalysis*, which is generalized rather than specified. There is no discussion of the usual distinction between the ontological use (*Daseinanalysis*) and the psychological use (*Dasein-analysis*) in philosophy. Strangely, ethnomethodology is substituted for the latter use. A “case study” of “two physicists” is explicated by means of the technique of *conversational analysis* (a dubious quasi-linguistics invented by sociologists). The topic of the conversation is “graphs and graphing” and is used to illustrate the emergence of the “four functions” prescribed their previous article.

Louis H. Kauffman, “Virtual Logic — An Introduction,” is a genuine attempt to illustrate the title of the entire book, i.e., virtual logic is *semiotic* (signs are a problem), it is an *education* (paradox requires choice), and it is an *experience* (learning takes place). For all those readers who will not be interested in learning the eidetic differentiation among linguistics, logic, and mathematics, I recommend moving on to the next chapter. For those who stay with the text, there is a rewarding tutorial on eidetic analysis where “virtual logic lives in the boundary between syntax and semantics”. Virtual logic “provides the real possibility and the means for the opening of communication across boundaries long thought to be impenetrable”. A clear introduction to “topological logic”, “paradox logic”, and “knot logic” follows using a variety of formal symbolic techniques. For the language-bound (non-formal thinkers), there is an excellent discussion of the aphorism made famous by the General Semantics movement, namely, that “the map is not the territory” or, in Magritte’s visual paradox variation: “Ceci n’est pas un pipe” and the image of the smoking pipe.

Building on the foundation laid by several of the preceding chapters with respect to the phenomenology of self and other, Inna Semetsky, “Simplifying Complexity: *Know Thyself...and Others*,” moves from the formalism of general systems theory and its human application as social systems theory to issues of complexity theory “pointing out that the organization of systems proceeds through self-realizing and self-balancing processes”. This is the learning process that can be illustrated by the historical use of the Tarot card system as a learning simulation tool in the classroom. The Tarot represents “the unusual communicative link capable of crossing the thresholds of perception across the levels of

order” because of “the self-organizing dynamics” of the Tarot logic as a human cybernetic function of learning.

James A. Whitson, “Thinking of(f) the Deep End: Semetsky and the Complicated Conversation,” presents a critical examination of Inna Semetsky’s general project to introduce the Tarot card system as an innovative instructional device in the classroom. A classic of pedagogy in France, this “reduction of the text” approach to Semetsky’s curriculum project yields a comparison of pedagogical theory levels for understanding the Tarot: (1) Complexity/Systems Theory (autopoiesis escape from determinist cybernetic control), (2) Archetypal Synchronicity/Quantum Psycho-Physics (demystifying the uncanny; fulfilling dreams), (3) Life-World Theory (knowledge of self/others in personal and social self-formation), and (4) Magic (dispelling uncertainty gaining control).

Deborah L. Smith-Shank, “Semiotic Pedagogy and Visual Culture Curriculum,” opens with a discussion of Peirce’s attempt to define the nature of the University and his refusal to add “instruction” as an attribute of theoretical guidance and understanding. Hence, “Semiotics and Peircean pragmatism can play an important role in rethinking the learning and teaching processes”. This is to argue that “collateral experience” makes learning possible, whereas “historically determined disciplinary boundaries constrain learning”. The “environment” of learning is thus a shift from the context of “outside the individual” to the notion of *Umwelt*. “Semiotic pedagogy purposefully calls into conversation routinely unexamined cultural signs and explicitly confronts their arbitrary natures”. Art education come to demonstrate that “visual culture is a real and virtual enterprise” and requires “a multidisciplinary interrogation of visual culture”. “Semiotic pedagogy acknowledges the human urge to make order, to play with ideas, and to make pragmatic sense”.

In the concluding chapter of the book, Tomasz Szkudlarek, “Meaning and Power: Education as Political Semiosis,” presents Ernesto Laclau’s “political economy of education”. Beginning with the proposition that “discourse is understood as the domain of relations that *precede* meaning of particular elements”, Laclau’s approach to discourse is the functions of *rhetoric*. Together with Umberto Eco’s research, rhetoric is examined as the “devices” of catechresis, metaphor, synecdoche, and metonymy. Unfortunately, the discussion of “objectivity” as the product of discourse does *not* include the important axiological differentiation of *figures of language* versus *tropes of speech*. The problematic academic economy is “a *postulative* and *mobilizing* rhetoric that performs a perverse function of making things invisible through positioning them as objects of desire or demand”. The problem and its remedy: “What makes people employable is, in this context, *skills in knowledge production* rather than *possession* of knowledge as such”.

This volume is a major contribution to understanding both semiotics and contemporary issues in curriculum construction and pedagogy presentation. The collective arguments bring the social domain of public education work of John Dewey into the

semiotic world of Charles S. Peirce and his epistemology of a community of understanding in oneself and others. The joint statement of Dewey and Peirce is a political pedagogy with social import across cultures and disciplines. Unfortunately, I must close this review with a textual caution. Readers of this review will have noticed the insertion of bracketed letters and punctuation that indicate my corrections (albeit a mere sampling) of the atrocious typesetting and editing errors in this book. In an age of spell-checking and other automated tools, this low quality of presentation is unacceptable for an academic publication and is to be regretted for its distraction from an important message.

Mark Bassin, Christopher Ely, and Melissa K. Stockdale, eds., *Space, Place, and Power in Modern Russia: Essays in the New Spatial History*, Northern Illinois University Press, 2010, ISBN-13: 978-0875804255, 250 pp., \$42.00

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Opening the cover of a volume of essays comes with some trepidation as I often expect to find chapters with little relation to each other. Fear not. The volume editors and contributors of these ten essays on the new spatial history have managed to illustrate the many ways in which scholars can use the lens of spatial history to investigate centuries of Russian history in a multitude of ways. Not only is the concept of spatial history explored consistently throughout, but also the authors refer to each other's essays seamlessly to show that the individual chapters are part of a larger whole instead of isolated examples.

So what is the new spatial history? The study of spaces and places is not new to geographers, historians, and other scholars, but the new spatial history has not been employed as fruitfully as this before. As the editors note in their introduction, the new spatial history understands that there is subjectivity to space and geography and that much of it is discursively constructed. This differs from earlier geographical history that saw space and geography as fixed by things such as landscape, natural borders, topography, and more. Thus, the new spatial history can as easily investigate the use of language, the memories of inhabitants, and the cultural use of sites. In short, "space is now regarded as an element in the social and cultural processes under consideration." (7)

The rich essays in this volume could have been organized in any number of ways, but the editors rightly chose to group them thematically rather than sequence them chronologically. In the first section on geopolitical space Melissa Stockdale illuminates the changing relationship between the terms 'fatherland' and "motherland" in the first five turbulent decades of the twentieth century. She charts an evolution of near synonymous usage of the two terms from the idea of a fatherland becoming more statist and political to a near loss of the terms before their resurrection in the 1930s when eventually motherland became dominant. Mark Bassin then discusses environmentalist discourse among Eurasianists. Following a comprehensive review of the literature, Bassin finds that "the place of geographical determinism in Eurasianism remained ambivalent." (70) Individual human will and other non-material factors played as great or greater role in the Eurasianist view of the construction of human societies.

Section two includes essays on space, place, and power by investigating a road, dance floors, a traveler in Central Asia, and agitational vehicles to show how place and space can

create power. John Randolph shows how the construction of the Petersburg-Moscow Road in the 18th century represented imperial power while at the same time creating a sometimes-unruly new society to serve the needs of travelers along the “big planned road.” The late Richard Stites’ contribution is yet another artful piece of research and writing. Stites steps onto the dance floor at court, in aristocratic homes, and even peasant celebrations to illustrate how the mastery of these social spaces could be used to promote various hierarchies, contract business and alliances, and even construct and express one’s national and personal identities. As he concludes, “social dancing generated power with its links to hierarchy, gender distinctions, and even “national” consciousness. (114) Patricia Herlihy follows the career of Eugene Schuyler who, without the approval of his superiors in the US State Department, abandoned Moscow and St. Petersburg in the 1870s to tour Central Asia. The various reports he issued allowed him “to participate in the shaping of that new exotic space, indeed to mold and remold the original Russian imprint.” (135) He supported Russia’s civilizing mission, but his reports from Tashkent show the corruption and abuses that he thought were beneath Russians. Robert Argenbright, in what is arguably the most conceptually detailed of all the essays and is worth reading simply for his deft explanation of the terms space and place, brings alive the work of agitational trains and boats during the civil war. He sees their use as a form of colonization, but also as civic spaces in which the free expression allowed in the dialogue between agitators and audience could have led to something more democratic. An agitational vehicle was a “rolling campaign of bureaucratic restructuring.... [that was] meant to embody and represent not only the new regime, but also an imaginary future world.” (148)

The third section of the book is equally diverse. Christopher Ely illuminates the dark and rapidly changing streets of St. Petersburg during Alexander II’s reign. He shows that as the population and city grew, it operated more like other European cities with people increasingly free to circulate ideas, mingle among classes, and rebel against authority. However, he notes that this was a Russian phenomenon in that “the experience of a modernizing urban space encouraged interaction, tolerance, and public expression without direct influence from the West.” (187) Sergei Zhuk shows the angst of Orthodox leaders as sectarian Stundists began to push into the sacred landscape of the Dnieper River region. They saw this region as sacred because of its association with the founding of the church. The clash of the two faiths reveals the “problems of boundary and identity in a multiethnic state and competing representations of religious, local, regional, and national identity.” (211) Cathy Frierson’s chapter invokes the deep past of Vologda’s cultural heritage and its ongoing problems trying to represent its religious past and its well-known place at the heart of Soviet terror. As a church was preparing for reconsecration after the collapse of the USSR, builders found a massive grave of children killed during dekulakization in 1930. Authorities tried to lower a veil of silence on this discovery at the same time that they

preserved a house in which Stalin lived for one and a half months. In both cases, local residents and officials chose to mark their understanding of the past in public spaces. Lisa Kirschenbaum concludes the volume with a thoughtful look at the renaming of streets and squares in Leningrad as it reverted to being St. Petersburg. Late- and post-Soviet place names are a jumble of Soviet and “new” pre-Revolutionary people, events, and concepts. As Kirschenbaum unravels some of the arguments for and against changing place names in the 1980s and 1990s, she shows that full blown iconoclasm was impossible in the new St. Petersburg because too many of the Soviet place names associated with the roughly 900-day blockade of the city during World War II had become “part of the personal geography of Leningraders.” (254) Therefore, to revert fully to pre-Revolutionary names would have undercut one of the most important events in the city’s and many residents’ biography.

The editors and contributors deserve great praise for one of the best volumes of essays in recent years. The individual chapters are well researched and written in such a way that they are accessible to students and scholars alike. The editors and the conference from which the contributions came helped to bring focus and clarity to this exciting and emerging field of study. The new spatial history uses the same sources with which we are all familiar, but the new lens allows us to see things that have been right in front of us but have gone unnoticed. This collection of scholars has shown us how to open our eyes and see the past in a new and exciting way.

Janet Elise Johnson, *Gender Violence in Russia: The Politics of Feminist Intervention*. Bloomington, Indiana University Press, 2009, ISBN-13: 978-0253220745, 256 pp., \$24.95

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Janet Elise Johnson's book is an ambitious, informative, and densely packed volume that focuses on the plusses and minuses of foreign interventions in the fight against gender violence. While the case study is Russia after the fall of the Soviet Union, the issues raised by the author are equally pertinent to the global community's efforts in this area in other countries.

The central question posed by Johnson's book is whether foreign intervention "in the name of women" works in general and, more specifically, whether it has worked in Russia. In the eyes of global feminists success would mean: 1. fostering women's mobilization and activism; 2. cultivating a new public awareness of violence against women; and 3. recognizing violence against women as a human rights violation. To establish whether the Russian case fits the above requirements, the author examines Russia's history of dealing with gender violence; the effects of the collapse of the Soviet Union; the women's crisis center movement; the handling of sexual assault, domestic violence and trafficking in women within crisis centers; and she compares Russian interventions in Russia with those occurring elsewhere. The conclusion is a list of possible future remedies.

As Johnson asserts, by the mid 1990s feminists around the world came to see gender violence as an international problem of significant proportions in need of urgent attention. In Russia the initial results of the global feminist position on gender violence and of the concomitant interventions appeared to be positive. When funding became available for women's organizations it led, most effectively, to the creation of Russian women's crisis centers. Issues of domestic violence and trafficking in women became much more prominent in the media and the minds of Russian politicians. For a brief moment it seemed that changes in the government's response to violence against women were in the offing. Yet, rather predictably, in Russia activism against gender violence did not achieve its desired ends. Johnson provides some of the answers for this failure. Clearly, the engrained antifeminist stance of both the politicians and the general populace, resistance to imposition of foreign cultural norms and perceptions, and a widely shared view that a country in transition needed to pay attention to other, more pressing economic and political concerns made any effective reform of gender violence policy virtually impossible. What is more intriguing, however, is that, according to Johnson, some forms of intervention did succeed under these challenging circumstances.

Local activism mobilization through transnational feminist networking (the least intrusive form of intervention) proved to be more symbolic than practical, however. Volunteers in the women's crisis centers did not have time or resources to work on mobilization. Raising awareness of violence against women and increasing state responsiveness in policy and practice did not fare much better when intervention was limited to transnational feminist networking. Likewise, Johnson sees no change in the identification of sexual assault as a violation of women's rights or any state reform on the issue from the mid-1990s to the middle of the next decade (the overall time frame of the study). Johnson's conclusion is not surprising: that in countries like Russia, with its history of neglecting the problem, minimally coercive interventions are not enough. Similarly, the most aggressive interventions in her opinion are inadequate as well. The best outcome of the aggressive approach appears to have been superficial policy reforms slanted to benefit the state rather than satisfy the goals of feminist activists. However, as Johnson convincingly demonstrates, when global and local feminists join forces with large donors, then many of the objectives of global feminism can be accomplished. Obviously, funding is the key to success for Russian initiatives against gender violence.

As a "participant-observer," interviewer of people involved in different aspects of the intervention process, a careful reader of multiple secondary sources and a textual analyst of relevant materials, Johnson is able to weave an intricate narrative about what happens when foreign activists and their local counterparts rely on Western funds and models in a country with entrenched ideas about gender differences and a paternalistic, nationalistic, and authoritative government. Russian activists, it seems, were able to recognize the limitations of their situation and went for what they knew would work most effectively and quickly: women's crisis centers. The Western model was recreated in its new home; manuals were translated, new language appropriated for the process and many women were helped, at least in major urban centers. These activists and their supporters from around the world are the study's true heroes. It is when we hear about the daily struggles of the people on the ground that Johnson's book comes alive.

Niels Erik Rosenfeldt. *The "Special" World: Stalin's power apparatus and the Soviet system's secret structures of communication*, Copenhagen, Museum Tusulanum Press University of Copenhagen, 2009, ISBN-13: 978-8763507738, 2 vols. 1154 pp., \$97.06

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It is not by mere chance that the word "special" in the title of this book is set off in quotes. At the core of the book are the "special" mechanisms on which the vast institutional system of the party and state bureaucracy relied to steer the machinery of the Stalinist regime — from management of the economy to covert operations and state terror. This is, above all, a system of communication — to translate and realize Stalin's will.

Of particular importance is the issue of "secrecy." The author demonstrates that "secrecy" is not merely the operational characteristic of Stalinism that cloaks all spheres of the institutional functions of government; "secrecy" itself is the source of Stalinist power. This obliges us to question the long-established thesis of Stalin's "paranoiac craving for secrecy." As the author demonstrates, the origins of this "secrecy" are not so much psychological as explicitly political. The depiction of the infrastructure and machinery of government in the book greatly enhances our understanding of Stalinism and simultaneously allows us to refine our perspective on the nature of totalitarian power.

Because of the high level of secrecy and the inaccessibility of the Soviet archives, the circumstances were such that the topics explored in this book relied on materials of memoirists, authors who defected, and former secret agents, all who worked fervently in the West to establish the genre of "Kremlinology" and political conspiratology. Some were simply fraudulent belletrists posing as historians, who based their accounts on hearsay and unverified anecdotes. For the most part, their work (much of which constitutes the 'golden corpus' of Western Sovietology) is, justifiably, treated with apprehension by modern historians. Over time, however, this attitude has spread to all "closed-off" areas of institutional history. When it comes to Soviet history, this is especially counterproductive, since dealing with these aspects of political machinery is essential for the understanding of it.

The author focuses primarily on the ultra-secret structures within the Soviet Communist Party's central apparatus but also devotes attention to the secret offices within the state security service, OGPU / NKVD (especially within some of the so-called "special departments") and to the similar secret structures of the Comintern, since the party structures were intertwined with them. This gives the analysis greater scope. In fact, it is not merely limited to Stalin's secret chancellery, but encompasses the way the country as a

whole was ruled. Since this area was especially restricted, the author has had to reconstruct decades later the system of communication — and in fact the structure of power itself — sometimes from fragments. His method in places can be defined as institutional reconstruction. This process requires tact when working with these materials. We should also mention that the book is based on vast archival material that is being introduced, presented, and analyzed for the first time.

The author deliberately takes an antigeneralizing position, refusing at the outset to discuss such “general” questions as totalitarianism, the nature of Stalinism, and the like. He instead emphasizes description of the regime’s communicative structures and their functioning. Yet despite the fact that the author tries to avoid general questions in his institutional history, it is the themes to which the materials he examines lead him that compel him to address these most pressing aspects of the debate about Stalinism. For example, when he refers to the concept of “control,” a key concept in the functioning of the Stalinist power machine, the author is inevitably drawn into dialogue with both Sovietological and revisionist approaches to Stalinism, discussing the theme of Stalin’s personal role in the adoption of certain decisions or in the implementation of a certain political line.

The author analyzes the fundamental dilemmas of management and control faced by the Stalinist system, which made this system both efficient and inefficient. Since unfiltered information ensured a high degree of institutional power, Stalin sought to obtain the biggest possible stream of information. This in turn led to the expansion of the bureaucracy that was designed to analyze and provide the leader with this information. However, Stalin’s well-known “suspiciousness” and his “mistrust” of this information called for the reduction of this bureaucracy’s ability to manipulate information and, consequently, to distort it. Thus, the more information needed to be obtained, the more bureaucracy was needed to obtain it; but the more the bureaucracy expanded, the greater the risk that the information could be manipulated. This explains why Stalin was undoubtedly the one person most informed about Soviet reality and at the same time the most detached from it, as he was both the source and the consumer of the beautified picture of Soviet life.

After the detailed introductory first part, the second part, “Secrecy: Principles and Procedures,” analyses the role of “secrecy” in party operations. The historical traditions of secrecy and conspiracy in Bolshevism found new life in the post-revolutionary era, in the “Secret Chancellery” of the Central Committee. As General Secretary, Stalin from the beginning understood the importance of the bureaucracy in strengthening and heightening conspiracy, and in controlling and distributing information, since he saw this as a great source of power. Here, the author examines in great detail the process of circulating materials among the higher echelons of power, as well as the mechanisms used in classifying information (coding, storage, dissemination, classification, clearing, etc.)

The comprehensive third part, “The Top of the Pyramid,” is devoted to the history of the “Secret Department of the Central Committee” or “Secret Party Chancellery” (after 1953, the “General Department”). As the author demonstrates, this organ in particular was the driving force that put the machinery of Stalin’s power into action. By meticulously scrutinizing the interaction between Stalin and his secret bureaucracy, its composition and structure, Stalin’s immediate assistants and the heads of his bureaucracy (the vast majority of whom — among the hundreds of names mentioned — are unfamiliar even to experts and historians of Stalinism), the author reveals the invisible “secret world,” the whole network of bureaucrats who together produced something that could really be called the institutionalized will of Stalin. For all intents and purposes, the Stalinist security apparatus, which essentially amounted to a shadow government of the Soviet Union and administered both domestic and foreign policy operations, was a kind of externalization of Stalin’s political philosophy.

The fourth part of the book, “New Bureaucratic Constellations,” analyses the inner world of Stalin’s secret bureaucracy — the internal struggles for power and influence in the Kremlin court. This discussion primarily encompasses the structures of communication and the dissemination of information both within the various levels of the party apparatus and to the general public through the press and mass media. The author shows how the secret Stalinist system evolved and operated at different periods of Soviet history (in the mid-1920s and early 1930s, in the era of the Great Terror and the war, and then in late Stalinism), how the shifting goals in each period were reflected at the structural level of the system’s bureaucracy, and how the system functioned in a mode of permanent mobilization. Stalin’s Secret Chancellery, this inner sanctum of Stalinism, was a kind of “collective Stalin.” Without it, the leader could not practically exercise his own power, could not impose his own will on the country. In fact, it compensated for the lack of collective power sharing and legitimacy of the regime. Its flip side was the magic of Stalin’s image, which was just as removed from reality as the work of his secret chancellery was from the country’s officially proclaimed system of government.

The fifth section, which is devoted to the work of the sister institutions of the Secret Chancellery, reveals the links between Stalin’s “Special Sector” and other party and state institutions. Specifically, this includes the role of the Sector’s chief, Alexander Poskrebyshev, in culling the letters and denunciations sent to Stalin from all quarters; Stalin’s personal staff; archives; the role of Stalin’s Secret Chancellery in the Great Terror and the conduct of international politics; and the interaction of the “Special Division” with the Central Committee’s Organizational Bureau and Politburo. Detailed too is how the whole system of supervisory bodies permeated all central and local authorities: how links were established between the Old Square, where Stalin’s bureaucracy was entrenched, the

Kremlin, where Stalin himself lived, Lubyanka, the headquarters of the secret police, and the most remote areas of the country.

The final part of the first volume, "Patterns in the Decision-making Process," analyses the relationship between the Special Sector and public institutions. As the status of the official governing organs declined (many were reduced to being purely 'decorative'), the role of the party bureaucracy strengthened; however, it was not so much the visible part of this latter iceberg, but rather the submerged base, which grew. In fact, even in the workings of such Stalin-dominated official institutions as the Politburo, there was a certain degree of collectivity (collective power-sharing/decision-making), whereas in the daily workings of Stalin's all-powerful bureaucracy, decisions were made exclusively by the dictator and were simply transmitted by Poskrebyshev. Subsequently, the apparatus' only task was to officialise these decisions and execute their implementation. This communication model developed in the early 1930s and lasted with only slight modifications until the end of Stalin's reign. The Special Sector was subordinated directly to the dictator and was, intrinsically, the primary mechanism for enforcing his will.

Nevertheless, the implementation of Stalin's will was the ultimate responsibility of the state security apparatus. The sixth section of the book, which opens the second volume, is devoted to the interaction of the "Special Division" and other specialized agencies with the state security system. The proximity of these agencies was dictated by the fact that they were all in the shadow zone, practically outside the rule of law as such. With a vast, unlimited power, they were on the other side of legitimacy, submitting solely to Stalin. This grey zone had its own communication channels, which are scrutinized in this part. The author examines in detail the functions of each "Department" and "sub-department", "Sector" and "sub-sector", accounting for all the minutiae of the workings of these "special units," above all, of the secret service: in fact, Stalin directed the major areas of the Soviet Union's espionage activities abroad through the secret Sector, while the "governing bodies" only fulfilled operational tasks. The last part of the book deals with the work of the Comintern's secret apparatus.

Summarizing his study, the author observes that "the analysis has sought to document that the institutions on which it focuses must be regarded as an indispensable key to understanding the bureaucratic mechanisms that permitted Stalin to act as he did. This institutional network constituted only a small part of the total Stalinist reality. Taken separately, none of the individual elements were necessarily unique to Stalin's system. In isolation some of them can be seen as fairly ordinary components of any bureaucratic pattern, as an expression of the banality of power, so to speak. What was decisive, however, was the interaction among them and the tendency to go to extremes in all fields that characterized their interaction. In this respect the system was 'special.' In this respect the

especially secret structures reflected essential aspects of Stalin's dictatorship." (Vol. 2, p. 324).

The author has managed to skillfully reconstruct and outline the structures of the regime in their action and interaction, a feat rarely achieved, since a narrative of institutional history has its own distinct features: it yields to the emotional narrative of social history; it is less dramatic than the narrative of political history; and is much less colorful than the narrative of cultural history. All of these "inherited deficiencies" are compensated by consistency and systematization. In Rosenfeldt's book, this consistency is of a special kind: Stalin's secret Chancellery ("Special Division"), as a product of the leader himself, is the most fitting reflection of both the political structure of Stalinism and the mental profile of its leader.

The true significance in Soviet history of the party bureaucracy described in this book is best reflected in the fact that those who were directly involved in the work of these secret institutions were the ones able to attain power — after Lenin, Stalin; after Stalin followed Malenkov; and after Brezhnev, Andropov and Chernenko. Undoubtedly, Stalin played a special role in this: he created and perfected this system. In fact, the system remained unchanged even after Stalin's death, throughout the remainder of the Soviet era. But even in the post-Soviet era little has changed: the system (infamous "vertical of power") is still concealed from public view, completely secret and opaque, and even today it is still dominated by the so-called "siloviki" who came to power there in the Putin era. Moreover, the all-powerful "Presidential Administration" (which in everyday life is referred to as the "Kremlin") that actually rules the country is quartered within those very same walls on the Old Square.

As this book demonstrates, power is not only a machinery of violence, not only knowledge, not only the ability to impose one's own will. Above all, it is a system of communication. Only through special communication channels can it accumulate, manipulate, and control information and thus set in motion the apparatus of violence. The full treatment of the communicative aspect of the institutions of Stalin's power is what distinguishes this book from many other studies in the field. This is exemplary institutional history - systematic, comprehensive, nuanced, definitive, and well documented. This story is all the more important in that it is largely universal — the model described here has been, and is still being followed to produce power structures in countries with authoritarian and, especially, totalitarian regimes. It is particularly interesting in that what is being discussed here are the most secret, if not the most important parts of Stalin's political machinery. This is what defines the significance of this book: it broadens our understanding of how the Stalinist regime operated, how Stalin secured for himself an absolutely central role in the political decision-making process both in the Soviet Union and in the larger Communist

movement. Rosenfeldt allows us, in a fresh way, to approach common issues — the origins, nature, and functional mechanisms of Stalinism.

V.I. Zhuravleva and I.I. Kurilla, eds. *Rossii i SSHA na stranitsakh uchebnikov: opyt vzaimnyh reprezentatsii [Russia and the United States: Mutual Representations in Textbooks]*. Kennan Institute and Volgograd State University Press, 2009, ISBN 978-5-9669-0591-0, 408 pp.

Double Review by Yuri Stulov and by Janet E. Dean

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Interest in things American in Russia and the USSR have always been great. Major Russian intellectuals and artists have tried to understand the specificity of the United States and to draw lessons from American history, comparing it with their experience at home. A.S. Pushkin denounced slavery in the North American United States and saw obvious parallels with the system of serfdom in Russia. America figures very prominently but ambiguously in the novels of F.M. Dostoyevsky. Leo Tolstoy paid great attention to the theory and practice of American transcendentalists. Some of the revolutionaries, members of the “Narodnaya Volya”, sentenced to long-term exile in Siberia found their way to freedom by escaping to the United States. In the 1920s American engineers enjoyed the respect of the Soviet working class for their professionalism, dedication to work and perseverance.

I belong to the generation that came to discover America during or immediately after WW II. It was a very special period in Soviet — American relations. US Studebaker trucks called “studer”, planes, American tinned meat, American T-shirts, and other things made in the USA became part of Soviet reality within the framework of the Lend-Lease program that became the material realization of USSR — US cooperation during the war years. Cultural products were also of great importance. Such US movies as *Tarzan*, *Gaslight*, and *The Great Waltz* were among the most favorite in film theaters throughout the country. The concluding pronouncement in the Soviet movie *Meeting on the Elb* --“James, remember: friendship between the people of Russia and America is now the most important issue” -- seemed to be an adequate reflection of the attitudes of the two nations towards each other. However, the cold war, anti-Soviet hysteria in the USA and the anti-“cosmopolitanism” campaign in the USSR seemed to put an end to the warm feelings of the two nations towards each other in the war years. However, this did not happen. The US exhibition in Moscow in 1959, Richard Nixon’s visit to the USSR and Khrushchev’s discovery of America showed our genuine interest in each other. There have been ups and downs throughout all these years, but one thing is clear: we have always needed each other.

Edited by two renowned Russian Americanists, Victoria Zhuravleva and Ivan Kurilla, *Russia and the United States: Mutual Representations in Textbooks* has a noble goal — to show changes in this bilateral relationship and their impact on the way the two countries are represented in textbooks on history, literature, geography, international relations, and social sciences and to analyze the ways that these representations reflected developments in domestic and foreign policy. The question of identity construction is of key importance for any discussion of representation. It is generally acknowledged that reflecting on the Other is often a way of understanding how one's own identity has shaped history, culture, literature, and values. For several centuries, the study of Russia in the USA and the study of the USA in Russia have proved to be effective tools for developing an awareness of the commonalities and differences crucial for shaping each nation's sense of national identity. At the same time, many myths, half-truths and obvious distortions have informed the ideological discourses shaping both countries' policies towards each other. An honest dialogue is needed to help achieve a more objective picture of each other in both the USA and in Russia. As the distinguished U.S. Slavist Prof. Irwin Weil, a contributor to the volume, says, "Even at that relatively early time in my life, I began to understand that the Russian reality was a center of strong polemics concerning big problems of politics and sociology. It seems to me, in retrospect, that our professors at the University of Chicago tried to take as objective a stance as humanly possible toward such hot polemics, since they wanted to train us, or perhaps push us, toward the ability to engage in thoughtful and critical dialogue" (p. 347). This same kind of dialogue was also necessary for their counterparts in the U.S.S.R., who had to study the American experience in order to find answers to the same questions the USA was trying to address.

Textbooks are instrumental in constructing knowledge. The relationship between Russia and the U.S.A. has never been stable. Periods of mutual interest in each other have been followed by a demonstrative stance of non-recognition; rapprochement has superseded long years of fear and suspicion. To this day, Americanists in Russia and Slavists in the U.S.A. face a number of complex issues, which, if not solved adequately, will stand as obstacles to a better understanding between the two great nations. Therefore, the job undertaken by the contributors of this volume cannot but inspire great respect. Of special value is the methodology employed for the discussion of such issues as ideologies of international relations, the I-narrative and the Other in the construction of national identity and Russian-American relations. The involvement of specialists from different fields (history, literature, cultural studies, political science, geography) is also a great asset as this facilitates deeper insights into the nature of various links between the two countries.

The book is a tribute to Academician Nikolay Nikolaevich Bolkhovitinov, who was one of those scholars who laid the foundations of American Studies in Russia. The scope of the topics covered and the range of contributions is impressive. The collection offers a

remarkable diversity of views of authors from the two countries who, in a number of ways, come together to present a comprehensive picture of the study of the USA in Russia and of Russia in the USA. The key to the book is the opening paper by the two editors.

Victoria I. Zhuravleva and Ivan I. Kurilla analyze how changes in the American view of Russia and the axiology of US-Russian relations were dependent on lacunae, dichotomies and contradictions in the representation of Russian history in the USA. Their thorough analysis shows the transformation of Russia into a significant Other just at the time the USA was beginning to realize its role as a world power.

This informative chapter is complemented by an insightful paper by A. Kubyshkin and I. Tsvetkov, who regard university textbooks on US history as “indicators of the condition of American Studies in Russia”. The precision of their formulations, academic honesty and meticulousness demonstrate ways to improve the quality and standards of university courses introducing American Studies as an interdisciplinary field, which, in itself, is an innovative and challenging project.

Several papers deal with the introduction of American authors in Russian textbooks. They show which writers attracted Russian audiences and discuss the factors that led to an increase in the number of American texts and authors. One common theme in these papers is the role of social and moral issues in books by US writers that helped to inculcate humanistic values. It was exactly this factor that ensured a warm response of American books in Russia as key American themes began to find their way into the works of major Russian authors.

Tatyana V. Buzina’s review of Soviet and Russian textbooks of American literature sought to provide a broad overview of trends in literary studies in the USSR and Russia. However, in spite of a few insightful remarks concerning the ideological bias of Soviet literary studies, the article seems not quite adequate to the intentions of the book. Thomas Mayne Reid is presented as a major American writer (he was an English one!). Special praise is given to the *History of US Literature* by Boris Gilenson, a quite traditional work of this kind, yet for some unknown reason the author completely ignores *The History of US literature* in 7 volumes being published by the Institute of World Literature of the Russian Academy of Science (Vol. 5 appeared at the beginning of 2010). This is a remarkable oversight, given that this 7-volume work has no equal in scope and effort. This ongoing work involves the most renowned literary scholars of Russia, Ukraine, and other countries and, for all intents and purposes, is the most ambitious literary project on American literature outside of the USA. Furthermore, her remarks concerning *The History of British and American Literature* by L. Pozdnyakova sound supercilious and diminish the level of the paper.

The Russian readership is certain to read the chapters written by their US colleagues with great interest as they discuss such crucial issues as the content of a history curriculum,

the goals and methods for the teaching of history in schools, and the role of history curricula “as a means of inculcating the common values that could bind students to the state and to their communities” (Ana Siljak). David R. Stone’s article concerning the Eastern Front in American history books shows the incompleteness of the coverage of the events of WW II and provides arguments for the neglect of the Eastern Front, pointing to positive changes in historical scholarship in recent years.

Great attention is paid to the consequences of the Cold War (Betty A. Dessants), though it would have benefited the collection if a topic like this had been supplemented by a Soviet narrative of the same period to show definite parallels in the policies of Soviet and US leaders.

Prof. I. Weil’s contribution is probably the most personal and, therefore, most poignant in the whole collection. It contains profound observations of the role of the academy in shaping a more human and objective view of each other not only in the university classroom but also in the community at large. This first-hand experience of an American Slavacist is filled with warmth and appreciation of the significant Other that helped him to understand his own culture better.

The collection highlights grave misconceptions and unfair prejudices in mutual representations of Russians in America and Americans in Russia — USSR. It will be of interest not only to the academic community but also to the general public, who would like to learn the lessons of the not-too-distant past and look into the future with greater optimism and hope.

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The recent transnational turn in American Studies has advanced conversations among scholars in different parts of the world, encouraging dialogue and a comparative approach to understanding national cultures and identities. This collection of essays (in Russian and English; this review addresses the English materials) represents just such a collaborative, comparative effort, as it analyzes the construction of historical knowledge in the United States and Russia. Bringing together scholars from both countries and blending history, historiography, and pedagogy, the book looks at the teaching of history as a factor in shaping national identity and presents interesting research. The contributions to this volume are uneven, however, and they do not coalesce to offer a cohesive picture of how education influences nationalism, and vice versa.

Ernest Gellner argued that the standardization of education was a vital part of the development of national cultures in the modern era. The editors of this collection mean to

apply a transnational lens to this relationship between education and national identity. Thus essays on representations of Russia in American history textbooks join with those on images of the United States, American literature, and the “American theme” in Russian Empire, USSR, and post-Soviet education. In a forward, the editors contend that textbooks and other educational materials are interesting for the ways they reveal how “Russian and American ‘Others’ were used in the past and are still used to construct the national identity in the US and Russia” (13). The essays in the collection vary in their support for this thesis, and not all focus on the depiction of “Others” as a strategy of constructing identity.

For example, a valuable analysis of history education in *fin de siècle* Russia calls into question the premise that education programs always have nationalist foundations. Unlike their counterparts in Western Europe and the United States, Ana Siljak argues, Russian educators at the turn of the twentieth century did not see school as the fertile ground in which national identity and patriotism should be sown. To the contrary, they deemphasized Russian history and culture in primary and secondary school curricula, taking instead a universal and trans-historical approach. This distrust of nationalistic history was far from benign; rather, as Siljak demonstrates in her examination of textbooks and pedagogical debates, it was part of an official effort to develop a “dynastic” history that commemorated the activities of the ruling class and assiduously avoided controversial subjects such as government structure and popular opinion. Obedience, not national indoctrination, was the goal of historical education in Imperial Russia. Of special interest for transnationalist scholars of American Studies is Siljak’s look at one textbook’s positive portrayal of the American Revolution as a popular uprising, which contrasts sharply with depictions of the Russian people as powerless. Siljak’s investigation reveals the unexpected official strategies educators employed to support orthodoxy and autocracy, rather than nationalism.

Another essay in the collection goes further to disengage education and the ideologies of nationalism, though its case is undermined by the troubling assumption that American textbooks are always without bias. The subtitle of David R. Stone’s “The Eastern Front in American History Textbooks: A Glass Half-Full” indicates the author’s desire to justify rather than critique the teaching of Russian and Soviet history in the United States. The essay responds to complaints that a neglect of Russian and Soviet history in American secondary and post-secondary textbooks reflects ideological hostility. Acknowledging a pattern of omission, Stone attributes it, instead, to the constraints of contemporary American education--the limited time in an academic calendar and the market demand for textbooks that cover large spans of history. He further argues that the consistency in textbook contents from the Cold War through its end proves that the neglect of Russian and Soviet history is not ideologically motivated. However, underlying these arguments is Stone’s assumption that “[t]he goal in a textbook [is] pursuing relative evenhandedness and objectivity” (148). Such thinking leads to sometimes illogical defenses of American approaches to Russian and

Soviet history; even a textbook identified as “openly and unabashedly anti-communist” is commended in this analysis for identifying Stalingrad as a turning point in the Second World War (153). The assessment of American history textbooks is not entirely sanguine: Stone objects in particular to the ways most underplay Soviet contributions to victory over Germany. But one wishes the analysis itself displayed the objectivity it presumes of American textbooks.

Indeed, Stone’s apology for American textbooks stands in stark opposition to the assessment of Cold War educational practices by another contributor to this collection. Betty Dessants examines efforts to introduce anti-Communist propaganda into American public school social studies curricula. She points to external pressures for schools to expose the dangers of Soviet-style Communism, cataloging organizations, from the John Birch Society to the National Council for the Social Studies, that pushed to “enlist the schools in the battle for the minds of youth” (169). This effort produced a dilemma, according to Dessants: educators wished to project objectivity and open-mindedness as American values, but they determinedly pursued a political agenda that required, according to many, hard-line indoctrination. Debates about methodology ensued, as “efforts to gird America’s youth against Communist infiltration and dogma undermined American ideals of tolerance and open expression” (178-179). Dessants concludes that “[t]he difference between indoctrination and objectivity blurred as educators assigned ideological assumptions to teaching methods” (180). Given Dessants’s research, Stone’s confidence in the objectivity of American textbooks seems misguided, to say the least. Placed in juxtaposition in this collection, the two essays suggest there is much work to be done to assess the ways ideology impinged on educational goals in American teaching of Russian and Soviet history and culture.

Irwin Weil’s essay adds a personal account to the conversation about nationalism and education on both sides of the Atlantic. His memoir of a long, transnational education in Slavic studies begins with a description of learning Soviet patriotic songs in his Ohio high school during World War II. As Weil’s interest in Russian language, history, and culture grew, so too did American animosity toward the Soviet Union. But Weil found intellectual homes at the University of Chicago, what would become the New School for Social Research, and Harvard University that he claims were largely immune to the ideological reactions of the culture at large. Working at the Library of Congress, Weil learned to sift through Soviet and American propaganda to develop “an understanding of the many faceted reality we call Russia” (355). Beginning in the 1960s, this education was supplemented with many trips to the USSR and participation in the Russian-American Academic Center at Russian State University for the Humanities. Weil’s experience suggests that while American teaching of Russian and Soviet subjects may have been ideological driven at the secondary level, it was not so in the nation’s top research universities. The essay closes with

a description of the American Council of Teachers of Russian and Russian Literature, an organization Weil describes as leavening American public opinion about the Soviet Union and post-Soviet Russia through its promotion of objective research, as well as supporting the Russian study of United States history, politics, and culture. This example of an educational endeavor that transcends ideological motives and encourages transnational understanding ends the book on a promising note.

Still, the collection lacks coherence to a certain extent. The dialogic structure of the book should encourage an interplay of ideas across disciplines, periods of study, and national contexts, but the contributors seem to talk past one another. A more thorough editorial introduction might have productively drawn these voices into dialogue; alternatively, more judicious selection of essays could have given the whole the unity it lacks. The essays do not fully address the issue of “mutual representations”: of the materials in English, only Dessant’s examines in depth how classroom depictions of one nation define national identity in the other. Typographical errors (including inconsistent punctuation throughout and one instance of missing text [140]) further the impression that the editors were not as attentive as they might have been. Despite these problems, the book does present some illuminating research, and it is valuable for the questions it raises about the ways scholars analyze educational materials and address national identity across time and in very different places.

