

ABSTRACTS

Hegemony of Brotherhood: The Birth of Soviet Multinational Literature, 1922–1932

EVGENY DOBRENKO

The formation of Soviet multinational literature is usually attributed to 1934, the activities of Gor'kii and the created Union of Soviet Writers. In fact, institutionally, the project of Soviet multinational literature began to be implemented within the framework of the VAPP (All-Union showcase of the RAPP, the Russian Association of Proletarian Writers) immediately after the creation of the USSR in 1922. Since in 1932 the RAPP was dissolved and condemned, it became politically disadvantageous to associate such an ideologically important project with it, and the entire dramatic history of the creation of Soviet multinational literature of the previous decade was erased and almost never mentioned (or mentioned in a highly distorted form). Based entirely on new archival sources, this article traces and documents for the first time this formative period in the institutionalization of Soviet multinational literature.

“Critical Appropriation of Literary Heritage” and the Shaping of Soviet National Literatures: A Close Reading of the Debate in the Journal *Literaturnyi kritik* (The Literary Critic, 1933–36)

SUSANNE FRANK

This article zooms in on what can be called the laboratory of the notion of Soviet literature: the debates of the journal *Literaturnyi kritik*, in which the programmatic debate at the First All-Union Congress of Soviet Writers (1934) was prepared, followed up, and further elaborated. It puts the focus on one of its key concepts—“the critical appropriation of heritage,” and tries to distinguish between different notions of heritage (with regard to realism and modernism respectively) and modes inheriting and tracing their instrumentalization in competing aesthetic and political positions. In this context it elaborates on the attempts to conceptualize Soviet national literatures by means of national heritage and within the horizon of what in the same context was conceptualized as “world literature.”

Key words: Heritage, *Literaturnyi kritik*, Soviet multinational literature, world literature, (Socialist) realism, *voprekisty*

National Form: The Evolution of Georgian Socialist Realism

ZAAL ANDRONIKASHVILI

In this article, I tell the history of the “national form” of Georgian socialist realism, in light of a theoretical question: Was a national (peripheral) socialist realism possible, or did it only vary the forms created at the center? If it was possible, then what were its specifics, its differences from “central”

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socialist realism? Furthermore, did it have a reverse impact on multinational Soviet literature? I will demonstrate that “peripheral” socialist realism not only varied the forms created at the center but generated its own forms in a complex interaction of national tradition, modernism (national, European, and Russian), and central socialist realism. I examined a form that is specific to Georgian socialist realism, the “Great Georgian Novel,” an amalgam of history and myth that interprets the history of Georgia; its “metanarrative.” I analyze the development of the national form from the beginning of the socialist realism exemplified by the poetic collection *The New Colchis* (1937) (the historicization of mythology), the historical novels of Konstantine Gamsakhurdia (1939–56), the mythologization of history to the literary de-Stalinization exemplified by the Novels by Otar Chiladze (*A Man Went Down the Road*, 1973), and Chabua Amirejibi (*Data Tutashkhia*, 1972–75).

The Lithuanian Version of Socialist Realism: An Imposed Doctrine and Incorporated Tradition

DALIA SATKAUSKYTĖ

The process of imposing socialist realism on Lithuanian literature, which became a part of the Soviet multinational project after the Soviet occupation in 1940, does not directly follow the general pattern of transferring the Russian model. The agents of the Soviet national literary field not only transposed standard socialist plots to local realia, but also had to transform them in order to legitimate occupation, to reject the legacy of the independent Lithuanian republic, and to reinterpret anti-Soviet resistance. In the process of inventing the national sources of socialist realism and forging “the most advanced artistic method,” overcoming the constraints of the Lithuanian literary tradition proved impossible. This article discusses the encounter of inherited literary structures with the external model and its effects on the development of Lithuanian socialist realism.

(Re)shaping Literary Canon in the Soviet Indigenous North

KLAVDIA SMOLA

In this article I demonstrate how in the post-Thaw period—the period of “soft” socialist realism—the northern indigenous minorities began to (re)invent literary writing and manifest their own version of the canon. Due to the lack of a pre-Soviet written literary tradition, “young” literatures were born as a symbiosis of folklore, beliefs, indigenous-Christian customs and the surrogate literary tradition of the Russian-European center: the Soviet “master plot.” Having graduated from universities in Moscow or Leningrad, the first generations of writers “(re)invented” a view of themselves as simultaneously native and Other. A consequence of the fact that the authors internalized the role of the youngest “brother” was, among others, the amalgamation of children’s and adults’ narrative and pedagogical zeal, which combined folklore ethics with socialist realist moralism. The study is of a transitional time: before the local authors had experienced a cardinal reevaluation of their values during perestroika and afterwards.

Key words: Socialist realism, Soviet North, indigenous literatures, modernization, postcolonial writing, literature and ecology, ethnic minorities, Siberia

The (Un)making of a Man: Aleksandr Aleksandrov/Nadezhda Durova

RUTH AVERBACH

Aleksandr Aleksandrov, more commonly known under his feminine birth-name Nadezhda Durova, is commonly portrayed one of Russian literature's most curious figures. Born female, Aleksandrov-Durova lived, dressed, and identified as male for most of his life, served in the Russian military during the Napoleonic Wars, given a legally-binding name change by Tsar Alexander I in recognition of combat heroism, and became a popular memoirist and fiction writer. My paper seeks to challenge and reevaluate the dominant narrative of Nadezhda Durova—that she was a woman who joined the army out of a sense of patriotism—by focusing instead on the fact that the author's narrative of masculine self has been subverted by publishers and scholars projecting their own interpretations on Aleksandrov's masculinity.

The Hungarian Nationalities Act of 1868 in Operation (1868–1914)

ÁGOSTON BERECZ

The article investigates explicit and implicit state language policies in Dualist Hungary (1867–1918), focusing on its eastern Romanian, Hungarian, and German-speaking parts. It sets the regulation and practices against the benchmark of the linguistic rights outlined in the 1868 Nationalities Act, the earliest modern, liberal language law on the continent. This document served as a central reference for contemporaries, an importance also bequeathed to historiographical accounts. Building on the applied linguist Janny Leung's analysis, the first half of the article engages with features that the Nationalities Act shared with most provisions enshrining legal multilingualism worldwide: a legitimating function, the under-specification of several key sections, and the fact that it referred to institutions on the move. Next, the article turns to more unambiguous paragraphs of the law, distinguishing between those that fit into the logic and were exploited for symbolic politics and those with more immediate, practical consequences for large sections of the citizenry. It further probes into the dispersed agency, ideological and pragmatic motives, and the center-periphery dynamics behind the (non-)implementation of the law.

No More Godmen: Alexandre Kojève, *Atheism*, and Vladimir Solov'ev

TREVOR WILSON

Prior to his influential seminars on G.W.F. Hegel's *Phenomenology of Spirit* in the 1930s, the philosopher Alexandre Kojève was still Aleksandr Kozhevnikov, a recent émigré to Germany who studied the philosophy of Vladimir Solov'ev in Heidelberg. As a result, Kojève published several articles in French and German on Solov'ev's philosophy of history and divine Sophia. While he soon

developed his own reputation as a celebrated philosopher, posthumously published works such as *Atheism* (1931) and the forthcoming publication of a manuscript written in 1940 and devoted once more to “Sophia,” suggest that his engagement with Russian religious philosophy was more protracted than previously considered. This article outlines the uniqueness of Kojève’s interpretation of Sophia, from his initial interest in Solov’ev’s philosophy, through to his secularization of the concept in *Atheism*, and ultimately his “return” to Russian philosophy, when he writes a treatise on Sophia in Russian to be sent to Stalin himself.

