

ANDREI PLATONOV: STYLE, CONTEXT, MEANING

The Harriman Institute, the Columbia University Seminar on Slavic History & Culture, and the Columbia Slavic Department generously provided support for this conference.

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 10

7:30-9:30 **FILM SCREENING** – Hamilton Hall, Room 702

Brinton Tench Coxe (Columbia) will introduce and screen Aleksandr Medvedkin's *Schast'e*. The film will be shown with English subtitles.

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 11

*The panels and roundtable will take place in Hamilton Hall, Room 717.
The welcome reception will be held in Room 709.*

1:00-2:45 **PANEL 1**

Chair: Alan Timberlake (Columbia)

Discussant: Hans Günther (Bielefeld University)

Panelists: Natalia Poltavtseva (RGGU), “Андрей Платонов как феномен культуры XX века”

Robert Hodel (Hamburg University), “К развитию стиля Платонова в контексте литературы 20-х годов”

Evgeny Dobrenko (University of Sheffield), “Платонов и Сталин: Диалоги на “тарабарском языке””

Papers will be delivered in Russian.

2:45-4:30 **PANEL 2**

Chair: Rebecca Stanton (Columbia)

Discussant: Eliot Borenstein (NYU)

Panelists: Thomas Seifrid (USC), “Platonov's Blindness”

Philip Ross Bullock (Oxford), “Platonov and the Open Text”

Olga Meerson (Georgetown), “Translation Failures as Interpretation Clues”

Papers will be delivered in English.

4:30-5:15 Welcome Reception

5:15-6:30 **ROUNDTABLE ON “REKA POTUDAN”**

Chair: Cathy Popkin (Columbia)

Participants: Marijeta Bozovic (Columbia), Rory Finin (Cambridge), Douglas Greenfield (Temple), Valeria Sobol (University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign), Rebecca Stanton (Columbia)

The roundtable will be conducted in English.

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 12

All presentations will take place in Hamilton Hall, Room 717.

8:45- Coffee and pastries in Hamilton Hall, Room 709

9:00-10:00 **PRESENTATION ON PLATONOV’S ARCHIVES**

Presenters: Natalia Kornienko & Natalia Duzhina

The presentation will be delivered in Russian.

10:00-11:15 **PANEL 3**

Chair: Nancy Workman (Columbia)

Discussant: Christopher Harwood (Columbia)

Panelists: Tora Lane (Stockholm University), “A groundless *Foundation Pit*?”

Nariman Skakov (Stanford), “Topoi of *Dzhan*”

Papers will be delivered in English.

11:15 -1:00 **PANEL 4**

Chair: Robert Belknap (Columbia)

Discussant: Thomas Seifrid (USC)

Panelists: Boris Gasparov (Columbia), “Platonov and F. M. Reshetnikov”

Robert Chandler (Queen Mary, University of London), “Platonov and Skazki”

Jonathan Platt (University of Pittsburgh), “Solar Reason and the Poverty of Love: Temporal Aspects of Platonov’s Pushkin in 1937”

Papers will be delivered in English.

1:00-2:30 Lunch break

2:30-4:45 **PANEL 5**

Chair: Irina Reyfman (Columbia)

Discussants: Olga Meerson (Georgetown); Eric Naiman (Berkeley)

Panelists: Natalia Duzhina (Gorky Institute of World Literature), "Повесть А.Платонова "Котлован": общепролетарский дом и его строители"

Natalia Kornienko (Gorky Institute of World Literature), "Платонов и советская детская литература: текст и контекст"

Hans Günther (Bielefeld University), "Смешение живых существ" -- человек и животное у Платонова"

Aage Hansen-Löve (LMU Munich), "Между состраданием и безжалостностью: (анти)позиция Платонова"

Papers will be delivered in Russian.

Robert Belknap is Professor of Russian Emeritus at Columbia University and the Director of Columbia University Seminars. He was educated at Princeton University, The University of Paris, Columbia University, and Leningrad (now St. Petersburg) State University. He is author of *The Structure of The Brothers Karamazov* (1989), *The Genesis of The Brothers Karamazov* (1990), and other studies of Russian literature and of university education. He has chaired the Columbia Slavic Department, been Director of the Russian (now Harriman) Institute, and has served as Dean of Students and Dean of the College at Columbia.

Eliot Borenstein received his doctorate in Slavic Languages and Literatures (with a minor in Comparative Literature) from the University of Wisconsin in 1993 and now serves as Professor and Chair of the Department of Russian & Slavic Studies at New York University. His first book, *Men without Women: Masculinity and Revolution in Russian Fiction, 1917-1919*, won the AATSEEL award for best work in literary scholarship in 2000. In 2007, he published *Overkill: Sex and Violence in Contemporary Russian Popular Culture*, which received the AWSS award for best book in Slavic Gender Studies in 2008. Recently, he was awarded a Guggenheim Fellowship to finish the companion volume, *Catastrophe of the Week: Apocalyptic Entertainment in Post-Soviet Russia*.

A specialist in Russian and Balkan modernism, **Marijeta Bozovic** is a Ph.D. candidate in Russian Literature at Columbia University and a Harriman Junior Fellow. Her dissertation, *Onegin and Ada: Nabokov's Masterpiece and the Texture of Time*, raises questions of cultural borrowing and adaptation, transnational literatures, and struggles with rival canons and other media. She has a second project planned on Eastern European avant-gardes and their contemporary incarnations.

Philip Ross Bullock teaches Russian at the University of Oxford. He is the author of *The Feminine in the Prose of Andrey Platonov* (London, 2005), *Rosa Newmarch and Russian Music in Late Nineteenth and Early Twentieth-Century England* (Farnham, 2009), and various articles on aspects of nineteenth- and twentieth-century Russian literature and music.

Robert Chandler's translations of Sappho and Guillaume Apollinaire are published in the series "Everyman's Poetry." His translations from Russian include Vasily Grossman's *Life and Fate*, *Everything Flows* and *The Road*, Leskov's *Lady Macbeth of Mtsensk* and Aleksander Pushkin's *Dubrovsky* and *The Captain's Daughter*. His translation of Hamid Ismailov's *The Railway* and his co-translations (with Elizabeth Chanler, Olga Meerson and others) of works by Andrey Platonov have won prizes both in the UK and in the USA. Chandler is also the editor of *Russian Short Stories from Pushkin to Buida* (Penguin Classics) and the author of *Alexander Pushkin* (in the Hesperus 'Brief Lives' series). For the last six years he has taught part-time at Queen Mary, University of London.

Brinton Tench Coxe holds a Ph.D. from the Columbia University Slavic Department. His dissertation is entitled *Envisioning Moscow: The Role and Image of Moscow in Soviet Film and Literature*.

Natalia Il'inichna Duzhina received her Ph.D. from the Faculty of Philology at Moscow State University in 1986 and now works as a senior research fellow at the A.M. Gorky Institute of World Literature of the Russian Academy of Science. Her main research interest is Andrei Platonov, and she is a member of the special editorial group that works on compiling an academic collection of Platonov's works. Her most recent publication is *A Guide to A.P. Platonov's Story The Foundation Pit: A Manual* (Moscow: Moscow University Press, 2010).

Evgeny Dobrenko is Professor and Head of the Department of Russian and Slavonic Studies of the University of Sheffield. He is the author, editor and co-editor of twenty books and more than 250 articles and essays on Soviet cultural and intellectual history, literature, film, visual arts, architecture, photography, media and music, Socialist Realism and critical theory. His recent publications include the monographs *Stalinist Cinema and the Production of History: Museum of the Revolution* (Yale University Press, 2008) and *Political Economy of Socialist Realism* (Yale University Press, 2007) and the co-edited volumes *Soviet Culture and Power A History in Documents, 1917-1953* (with Katerina Clark, Yale University Press, 2007) and *Petrified Utopia: Happiness Soviet Style* (with Marina Balina, London: Anthem Press, 2009).

Rory Finnin's primary research interest is the interplay of literature and national identity in Ukraine. He also studies Soviet Ukrainian and Russian dissident literature; Turkish nationalist literature; and human rights theory. His current project is a comparative study of literary allusions to the deportation of the Crimean Tatars in Ukrainian, Russian, and Turkish literatures. Finnin received his Ph.D. in Slavic Languages and Comparative Literature from Columbia University and is now a Lecturer in Ukrainian Studies at the University of Cambridge.

Boris Gasparov received his education in linguistics and musicology in Moscow and continued his intellectual development in Tartu, Estonia. He emigrated to the United States in 1981 and taught at Berkeley for 11 years before coming to Columbia, where he is Professor of Russian, co-chair and founder of the University Seminar on Romanticism, and a member of the Seminars on Linguistics and on Slavic History and Culture. His books range from Slavic medieval studies and comparative grammar to semiotic studies of oral speech, to Pushkin and his time, to Russian modernism and twentieth-century poetry. His recent projects include *Speech, Memory, and Meaning: Intertextuality in Every-Day Language* and a book on the Early Romantic roots of modern theoretical linguistics.

Douglas Greenfield is a graduate of Columbia's Slavic Department and Assistant Professor in the Intellectual Heritage Program at Temple University. Penn State Press just published a volume he edited with another Columbia grad, Jefferson Gatrall, that grew out of conference sponsored by the Harriman Institute in 2003 (*The Icon and Modernity*).

Hans Günther received his Ph.D. in Munich in 1967. From 1969 until 1971 he was lecturer of Russian at the University of Düsseldorf. After that he served as a Docent at the

University of Bochum and, from 1980 until his retirement in 2006, as a professor of Slavic literatures at the University of Bielefeld. His main fields of research are the Russian Avant-Garde, Socialist realism and the culture of the Stalin era, and Andrei Platonov.

Aage A. Hansen-Löve is Full Professor and Chair of the Institute for Slavic Philology at LMU Munich and, since 1999, a full member of the Austrian Academy of Sciences. He also serves as an editor of the journal *Wiener Slawistischer Almanach*. Hansen-Löve's publications include the monographs *Der russische Formalismus (Russian Formalism, 2001)* and *Der russische Symbolismus (Russian Symbolism, 2003)*, as well as more recent articles on the Russian media landscape; on Jakobson, Kierkegaard, and Freud; and on the Suprematist decade. He completed his doctoral work at the University of Vienna.

Christopher Harwood completed a Ph.D. in Russian literature at Columbia University in 2000 with a dissertation on the works of Andrei Platonov. Since 2001, he has been a Lecturer in Czech at Columbia University. His present research interests include Czech language pedagogy and contemporary Czech literature and film.

Robert Hodel is professor and Head of the Department of Slavonic Studies at the University of Hamburg. He has published several monographs, including: *Investigation of "Skaz" (N.S. Leskov and D. Mihailović) (1994)*; *Free Indirect Discourse in Russian Literature: From Sentimentalism to Socialist Realism (2001)*; *Free Indirect Discourse in the Prose of Andrey Platonov (2001)*; *Text Coherence and Narration // Narratologia. Contributions to Narrative Theory (2008)*. *Discourse of Serbian Modernism (2009)*.

Katharine Holt (chief conference organizer) is a Ph.D. candidate in Russian literature at Columbia University and the current editor of *Ubandus: The Slavic Review of Columbia University*, where proceedings from this conference will be published. She is presently at work on her dissertation, provisionally entitled *Space, Power, and Imperial Poetics in the USSR: The Cultural Construction of Central Asia, 1921-1939*.

Natalia Vasil'evna Kornienko, Ph.D., is a professor of twentieth-century Russian literature, a Corresponding Member of the Russian Academy of Sciences, and the head of the Division of Modern Russian Literature at the Gorky Institute of World Literature (IMLI), where she is also the leader of the Andrei Platonov research group. She is the author of more than 500 works on Russian literature and its history, including «"Сказано русским языком..." Андрей Платонов и Михаил Шолохов: Встречи в русской литературе» (2003), «"Нэповская оттепель": Становление института советской литературной критики» (2010), and «А. Платонов: Записные книжки. Материалы к биографии. Составление, подготовка текста, комментарии, вст. статья» (2000, 2006). She is also the editor-in-chief of the academic edition of Platonov's collective works.

Tora Lane received her Ph.D. in Russian Literature from Stockholm University in 2009. Her dissertation, *Rendering the Sublime: A Reading of Marina Tsvetaeva's Fairy-Tale Poem "The Swain,"* was awarded a special prize from the Swedish Academy. She is currently working on philosophical aspects of Platonov's prose in the light of the notion

of groundlessness both at Stockholm University and as a part of a greater project at Södertörn University College. She also teaches Russian Literature at Uppsala University.

Olga Meerson, an Associate Professor of in the Department of Slavic Languages at Georgetown University, is the author of the books *Personalism as Poetics: the World of Fiction Through Its Inhabitants' Eyes* (2009), *A Free Thing: The Poetics of Re-Familiarization in Andrei Platonov's Work* (1997; republished 2000), and *Dostoevsky's Taboos* (1998). She also has published numerous articles on Russian literature and religious thought and has worked with Robert Chandler, Elizabeth Chandler, and others on several translations of Platonov's works, including the New York Review Books edition of *The Foundation Pit* (2009) and the Harvill Press edition of *Soul* (2003). Meerson received her Ph.D. in Russian literature from Columbia in 1991.

Eric Naiman teaches Russian and Comparative Literature at the University of California, Berkeley. He is the author of *Sex in Public: The Incarnation of Early Soviet Ideology* and *Nabokov, Perversely*. He has written six articles on Platonov: "Iz istiny ne sushchestvuet vykhoda': Andrei Platonov mezhdru dvukh utopii", "V zhopu prorubit' okno: seksual'naiia patologiia kak ideologicheskii kalembur u Andreia Platonova" (both in NLO), "Andrei Platonov and the Inadmissibility of Desire"; "The Thematic Mythology of Andrei Platonov" (both in *Russian Literature*), "Mise en Abîme: Platonov, Zolia i Poetika truda" (with Anne Nesbet in *Revue des études slaves*), and "Communism and the Collective Toilet: Lexical Heroes in Happy Moscow," as well as the introduction to Robert Chandler's translation of *Happy Moscow*.

Jonathan Brooks Platt, a graduate of Columbia University, is an Assistant Professor in the Department of Slavic Languages and Literatures at the University of Pittsburgh. His primary research interests include the works of Alexander Pushkin, the history of the poet's reception, and Stalinist culture. He is currently revising a manuscript, titled *Greetings Pushkin!: Stalinist Attitudes to Time in the 1937 Pushkin Jubilee*.

Natalia Poltavtseva is currently a docent within the Russian Anthropology School Research Institute at the Russian State University for the Humanities (RGGU) and a Senior Researcher at the Russian Institute for Cultural Research. She received her Ph.D. in Philological Studies with a monograph entitled *Filosofskaja proza Andreja Platonova (The Philosophical Prose of Andrei Platonov)* and has since published more than thirty articles on topics ranging from the diaries of Mikhail Prishvin to the role of TV Serials in modern Russian culture. Before moving to RGGU and the Russian Institute for Cultural Research, she worked in the Department of Silver Age Literature at the Gorky Institute of World Literature and in the Department of Art and Culture Researchers at the Russian State Library.

Cathy Popkin is the Jesse and George Siegel Professor in the Humanities and Professor of Russian at Columbia University. She is the author of *The Pragmatics of Insignificance: Chekhov, Gogol, Zoshchenko*, and the editor and one of the translators of the new Norton Critical Edition of *Anton Chekhov's Stories*. Work in progress includes a book manuscript, "Chekhov's Corpus: Bodies of Knowledge," and several essays on Chekhov ("Teaching Chekhov's Medicine"; "The Spaces Between the Places: Chekhov's

Story 'Without a Title' and the Art of Being Out There”) and Turgenev (“Trees Are People Too: Turgenev and Metaphoricity”). Professor Popkin teaches courses in nineteenth- and twentieth-century Russian prose and literary theory. She also teaches regularly in Columbia’s Core Curriculum and has served as Chair of Literature Humanities.

Irina Reyfman is professor of Russian Literature at Columbia University. She received her M.A. degree equivalent in 1973 from Tartu University and her Ph.D. degree in 1986 from Stanford University. She is the author of the books *Vasilii Trediakovsky: The Fool of the 'New' Russian Literature* (Stanford, 1990) and *Ritualized Violence Russian Style: The Duel in Russian Culture and Literature* (Stanford, 1999; also in Russian, Moscow: NLO, 2002). She is also a co-editor (with Catherine T. Nepomnyashchy and Hilde Hoogenboom) of *Mapping the Feminine: Russian Women and Cultural Difference* (Bloomington, IN: Slavica, 2008). Her current projects include a collection of articles, *Rank and Style: Russians in State Service, Life, and Literature*, and a book with a working title “Ranks & Writing.”

Margo Shohl Rosen (conference organizer) is a poet, translator, and literary scholar. Her work can be found in *APR*, *LRB*, the *Harvard Review*, *Tolstoy Studies*, *Ulbandus*, and other leading publications. A 2010 PEN translation grant recipient for Anatoly Naiman’s novel, *Poetry and Untruth*, Rosen is currently completing her Ph.D. dissertation on Russian poetry of the “Thaw” era at Columbia University, where she has taught Russian and Literature Humanities.

Thomas Seifrid completed his graduate study in Russian literature at Cornell University, earning his Ph.D. there in 1984. Since 1986 he has taught in the department of Slavic Languages and Literatures at the University of Southern California, of which he is also presently the chair. His primary scholarly interest is in the literature and culture of Soviet Russia. His first book was on Platonov (*Andrei Platonov. Uncertainties of Spirit*, Cambridge UP 1992); his second on philosophy of language in Russia in the early twentieth century (*The Word Made Self: Russian Writings on Language, 1860-1930*, Cornell UP 2005). He has also written a *Companion to Andrei Platonov's The Foundation Pit* (Academic Studies Press 2009). His current interests are in theater and conception of urban space in the Soviet era, and in Polish language and culture.

Nariman Skakov is an Assistant Professor of Slavic Languages and Literatures at Stanford University. He received his doctoral degree from Oxford University where he also completed an M.Phil. in European Literature. His research interests include Andrei Platonov, Russian postmodern literature, the cinema of Andrei Tarkovsky and Rustam Khamdamov, and post-Soviet visual arts. His book on Tarkovsky will be published in 2011.

Valeria Sobol received her Ph.D. from Columbia University in 2003. She is now Associate Professor of Slavic Languages and Literatures at the University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign. She is the author of *Febris Erotica: Lovesickness in the Russian Literary Imagination* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2009) and of a number of articles on eighteenth- and nineteenth-century Russian literature and culture. She is also a

co-editor, with Mark Steinberg, of *Interpreting Emotions in Russia and Eastern Europe* (forthcoming in 2011 from the Northern Illinois University Press). Her new project examines the tradition of the “imperial uncanny” in the Russian literature of the late eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.

Rebecca Stanton is Assistant Professor of Russian at Barnard College and Columbia University, where she teaches courses on twentieth-century Russian literature. She has published articles on Babel, Nabokov, Tolstoy and Dostoevsky, among others, and she recently completed a book manuscript on Babel and his contemporaries, entitled “Isaac Babel and the Self-Ishness of Odessan Modernism.” Her current research explores the role of magic in Soviet culture.

Alan Timberlake (emeritus from the University of California at Berkeley, now Professor of Slavic Languages and Chair of the Department of Slavic Languages & Literatures at Columbia), aside from synchronic Slavic grammar, is interested in contingent uses of language, from the early Slavic written tradition to contemporary media of the Soviet sphere.

Nancy Workman is an adjunct assistant professor of Russian at Columbia University working in the Columbia College Core Curriculum.

The organizers would like to express their gratitude to the Department of Slavic Languages & Literatures, Columbia University Seminars, and the Harriman Institute for hosting this event. In particular, they would like to thank **Elsie Martinez, Cathy Popkin,** and **Alan Timberlake** of the Slavic Department; **Henryk Baran, Robert Belknap,** and **Alice Newton** of Columbia University Seminars; and **Darren Byler** (graphic designer) and **Tim Frye** (Director) of the Harriman Institute. **Alla Rachkov**, the Harriman Institute Program Manager, deserves special thanks for her many hours of work on this event, her logistical genius, and her fundamental indispensability. Without these generous individuals and their unflagging commitment to the exploration of ideas, this conference would never have been possible – and Columbia would be a far less interesting place.