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The Sorbian Language – Education’s Struggle Against a Millennium of Occupation

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In the age of Globalization, education serves as a bulwark amongst a variety of factors that protect endangered languages from the encroaching tide of language death whether it is wrought by the auspicious allure of globally prestigious languages, or the hardships of hostile language contact; in the case of contemporary Sorbian, this is their fact of reality. The issues that beset contemporary Sorbian language education have their roots in the historical context of over a millennium of occupation of land of Lusatia itself. These root issues are intrinsic to understanding contemporary struggles in implementing minority language education models in the circumstances of a language environment coinhabited by the German speech community – the majority language and one of global prestige. So too does the global language environment (where English serves as the *de facto lingua franca*), pressure Sorbian language planners and individuals to consider the vast array of languages that could provide optimal routes to a prosperous future for oneself, the Sorbian speech community, and the global community. Given a holistic understanding of the history and contemporary situation of the Sorbian languages, as well as reflections and analysis of the Sorbian language education system, further scholarship could speculate as to the future course of the Sorbian languages, and as to actions and improvements that could continue to preserve them; preventing the potential for language death.

The Sorbian language is a West-Slavic minority language family in East Germany that has, for most of its recorded existence, endured under the circumstances of occupation, enveloped by a historically malicious German-language majority. The Sorbian language is not a unitary language, rather, the two Sorbian languages are known as Upper and Lower Sorbian, which, despite their linguistic relationship, are only partially mutually intelligible. Possessing roughly 25,000 speakers of Upper Sorbian and 7000 speakers of Lower Sorbian, popular discourse regarding the ethnolinguistic situation in Lusatia, the homeland of the Sorbs, often simplifies the two distinct languages as a unitary construct of simply the “Sorbian language”. Further, Sorbian communities are not ethnolinguistically homogenously Sorbian. Thus, coexisting with local German-speaking communities necessitates that the German speech community must also be accounted for when crafting language policy (Marti, 2007, p. 32). One of the utmost priorities for Sorbian language planners is language planning in education, which theoretically and practically differ in approach when contrasting Upper Lusatia, the territory of Upper Sorbian speakers, and Lower Lusatia, the territory of Lower Sorbian speakers. In practice, the education systems of Upper and Lower Lusatia have their own unique struggles, particularly with balancing language maintenance with the production of new speakers while, at the same time, incorporating considerations for the German speech community that coinhabits the territories. Regardless of the means, both systems, under the guidance of the Witaj project, seek the same end: the preservation of the Sorbian language and its speech community given a history of occupation spanning over a millennium.

Lusatia’s history of occupation began with the expansions of Karl, son of Charles the Great, eastwards in the year 806 AD. From that point onwards, the Sorbs faced numerous occupations by Germanic peoples, as well as other Slavic peoples, that have threatened the sovereignty and existence of their languages (Stone, 2015, p. 10). Ownership of Lusatia would transition between German, Polish, and Czech control – culminating ultimately in the conversion of the pagan Sorbs to Catholicism. The conversion of the Sorbian people to Catholicism would incidentally become a feature that would help preserve the Upper Sorbian language, as the Catholic Kingdom of Saxony would prove far more lenient in the use of the Sorbian language in church services than their Protestant counterparts in Prussia, who ruled over Lower Lusatia (Stone, 2015 p. 10-14; Dołowy-Rybińska et al., 2019, p. 1). Under the administrations of Saxony and Prussia, the Sorbian peoples faced varying levels of Germanization, the process by which German authorities sought to assimilate the Slavic languages, cultures, and peoples of its Eastern territories to the German majority. Lower Lusatia under Prussian rule faced more active and

comprehensive policies towards Germanization than those implemented in Upper Lusatia, as the Saxons did not pursue such policies as extensively (Dołowy-Rybińska, 2017, p. 11). Prior to German unification in the 19th Century, there was, at least formally, no official language policy for the German-speaking majority; attempts at Germanization were primarily localized rather than systemic. Sporadically, there were various attempts to eliminate the Sorbian language from schools and churches prior to German unification (Marti, 2007, p. 36-37). The 19th Century's new united German state inceptioned a coherent German language policy, which, through plans to systemically Germanize the lands of Lusatia, severely threatened Sorbian language sovereignty. Local authorities reluctantly allowed the use of Sorbian in public under the condition that effective communication in German was impossible, but official policy forbade the use of the Sorbian tongue in all public spheres, especially schools and hospitals (Marti, 2007, p. 34). While recognition of Sorbian minority language rights was briefly introduced during the Weimar Republic, the peak of Sorbian language oppression subsequently occurred under the Nazi regime shortly after. In line with the goals of the Nazi regime in eradicating the existence of minority groups from German lands, the Sorbian people, along with other Slavs living under the Third Reich, were once again targets of sweeping Germanization. However, following World War II, with the establishment of the DDR came a new language policy that initially ended the Germanization of Lusatia in full, and allowed for Sorbian-language schools to be established. This policy would change once again in the 1950s, and, while the language was still supported as a minority language, the goal once again became the gradual Germanization of the Sorbs. Following German reunification in the 1990s, official recognition of Sorbian minority language rights was reinstated on the state level, but not the federal level. (Marti, 2007, p. 32). Since then, Upper and Lower Sorbian education planning was finally able to take root with the establishment of the Witaj program.

The Witaj program, following Germany's reunification, democratization, and recognition of minority groups such as the Sorbs, emerged with one goal in mind: the revitalization of the Sorbian languages, primarily through language planning in education (Dołowy-Rybińska, 2017 p. 11). The approaches taken with regards to revitalizing the languages are nuanced to suit the historical and contemporary circumstances and environmental factors differentiating the Upper and Lower Sorbian languages. Upper Sorbian, by virtue of religious reinforcement and historically less stringent Germanization policies, has preserved a relatively sizeable population of its native speakers, and thus finds itself in a more tenable situation than its Lower Sorbian sister language. To highlight the significance of this demographic contrast, compared with the Upper Lusatia's fully established pre-K-12 language school system, Lower Sorbian language schools face a scarcity of Lower Sorbian speaking teachers needed to educate the incoming generation of new speakers (Deutsche Welle, 2010). The differences in the prolonged historical circumstances between Upper and Lower Lusatia define their respective approaches to implementing minority language education models, and therefore must be examined independently from one another in order to understand the current state of Sorbian language education holistically.

Starting with the more populous of the two languages, Upper Sorbian language schools follow the European Union's recommended "2 plus" system for bilingual education whereby students receive bilingual instruction in Upper Sorbian and German, with the requirement to learn an additional third language (Dołowy-Rybińska et al., 2019, p. 6). This system aims to integrate German and Sorbian speaking children into each other's respective speech communities, but due to the segregation of students along lines of language proficiencies, these aims are difficult to achieve. From kindergarten to grade 10, students are segregated into three separate groupings based on proficiency in Upper Sorbian, with native Sorbian speakers, those semi-proficient in Upper Sorbian, and non-Sorbian speakers segregated accordingly. However, starting in grade 11, all three groupings are melded together into one body, producing classrooms where students fluent in Sorbian coexist with students to whom the language is nearly incomprehensible. The policies that segregate non-native Sorbian speakers, while acting in the interest of preserving Upper Sorbian, creates feelings of alienation within German speakers seeking to

establish proficiency in Upper Sorbian within the bilingual schooling system (Dołowy-Rybińska, 2018, p. 5). Sentiments pertaining to alienation, and overall feelings of underperformance in language competency by German speakers and Sorbs alike serve as significantly detrimental factors to the success of the bilingual education program as a whole; in order to maintain the bilingual education system as a viable means of language preservation, such issue must be addressed.

The issues of the Upper Sorbian bilingual education model grow increasingly complex when analyzed under socio-educational models of bilingual language acquisition. Individual factors for the successful acquisition of a target language are extremely complex, involving a modicum of variables endogenous to the individual and beyond the scope of this paper (Chiesa, B. D. et. al., 2012, p. 41-55). Environmental factors, that is, exogenous variables that shape the successful acquisition of comprehensive language skills (school environment, home environment, media, society, etc.), revolve around both formal training and informal contexts (the former of which can be built in the classroom, and the latter from everyday interactions and environments). (Chiesa, B. D. et. al., 2012, p. 37-48). In an etic analysis of the bilingual education system of Upper Lusatia, the most apparent variables influencing the success of learning outcomes are exogenous. However, it is quintessential to acknowledge, in examinations of endangered languages in particular, the ways in which exogenous variables may intertwine with highly subjective endogenous factors (pertaining to one's personal, cultural, and gender identity, personal motivation, psychology, etc.) to produce successful language acquisition and maintenance. Beyond the idea of language as merely a means of communication, the metaphorical weight of carrying the language of Upper Sorbian possesses an infinitum of reasons by which a student may internalize the concept of learning or letting go of the language; thus, it is crucial to examine how the school environment fosters students' sentiments systemically.

The system of segregation based on language competency, while seeking to promote an environment that conserves the Upper Sorbian language, instead, produces an environment in which positive individual sentiments towards the target language (either German or Upper Sorbian) and cross-cultural solidarity fail to be nurtured by the school environment. A possible explanation for this could come from the parents, in which the issue then becomes two-fold: the parents of native-speaking Sorbs are concerned that higher numbers of non-native speaking children will influence their children to speak more German, while German speaking children do not receive the exposure to Upper Sorbian native-speakers necessary to develop sufficient proficiency (Dołowy-Rybińska, 2018, p. 5). The question then arises as to the language ideology of Upper Sorbian language planners regarding the intended goal of the bilingual education system, as, given its current state, revisions could be made to create better school environments that foster the "freedom to engage in intrinsically motivated learning; autonomy, competence and relatedness" (Chiesa, B. D. et. al., 2012, p. 85). It may be that the language ideology of Upper Sorbian language planners leans towards the maintenance of the language's perceived purity, yet, this seemingly is not the case given that, if the minimalization of language contact was the goal, an immersive language education model, like that of Lower Lusatia, would serve such ends more effectively. Indeed, despite systemic issues in actualizing the bilingual education system in Upper Lusatia, the quantity and availability of Upper Sorbian native speakers provides ample room for language preservation through education to continue. In Lower Lusatia, such a sense of existential security is sparsely found.

The Witaj project's priority regarding Lower Sorbian, due in large part to its scarcity of native speakers, focuses on the generation of new speakers of the language as opposed to simply language maintenance (Marti, 2007, p. 44). Rather than employing the '2 plus' system for bilingual education that Upper Lusatia has implemented, Lower Lusatia has transplanted the immersion education model invented in Quebec, Canada (Dołowy-Rybińska, 2017). The aim of these schools is the creation of an immersive environment in which students exist purely within the target language of immersion during school hours. Taking inspiration from the Breton Diwan immersion education model, language in education planners of Lower Sorbian hope to revitalize the Lower Sorbian language and close the generational gap between its

speakers. However, many circumstantial issues plague the effectiveness of this approach when applied to the Lower Sorbian language. Contrasted with Breton, which possesses native speakers in the hundreds of thousands, Lower Sorbian boasts a minuscule number of native speakers, roughly 5,000 speakers, the majority of whom are elderly (Dołowy-Rybińska, 2017, p. 10). Due to a severe shortage of Lower Sorbian speakers, the establishment of Lower Sorbian language schools has been met with great difficulty. At its inception, the Witaj project was only able to generate a few Lower Sorbian language nurseries, with primary and secondary Lower Sorbian language institutions eventually being established after many logistical obstacles. The crux of these difficulties lies in demographics, and begins in one's first learning environment—the home. A study in 2006 showing that none of the parents of the children enrolled in Lower Sorbian immersion schools were native speakers of Lower Sorbian (Dołowy-Rybińska, 2017, p. 14). This issue is tied intrinsically to the issues that beset Lower Sorbian primary and secondary schools: students enrolled in these immersion schools, while potentially receiving, at best, the formal immersion of their school environment, they quintessentially lack the informal language contexts vital to language acquisition. Due to a critically low number of students educated in Lower Sorbian language nurseries, and a home environment in which the language likely is not used, the result is that by primary school, new learners are left to struggle with unfamiliarity to the fundamentals of the language. Even beyond the nursery, Lower Sorbian language schools were (and continue to be) unable to operate as exclusively Lower Sorbian language schools (Dołowy-Rybińska, 2017, p. 12). From this lack of sufficient immersion, compounded by home environments largely absent of guardians that speak Lower Sorbian, and countless exogenous variables pertaining to the majority German speech community, new speakers of Lower Sorbian find themselves in a precarious situation whereby their language environment is not conducive to the level of immersion necessary to achieve results akin to the Breton Diwan immersion model. The question of effective language education for the Lower Sorbian language is thus hindered by the difficulties in establishing effective immersion. Even if Lower Sorbian language planners wished to create positive environments in which endogenous factors of language acquisition could be nurtured, the contemporary situation renders such a task as herculean in difficulty. Given the severity of its demographic crisis, and the inability to implement immersive language education models that were beneficial to other endangered languages, it may be beneficial for Lower Sorbian language planners to consider some new approaches, or, to consider some linguistically existential questions.

While language education in the whole of Lusatia continues to fight to preserve the Upper and Lower Sorbian languages, an important question must be levied: can the language education systems of Lusatia effectively prevent the death of the Sorbian languages? Based on the long and arduous history of Upper and Lower Sorbian's admirably stubborn perseverance, as language planning models evolve, and the relatively young language education systems adapt, there is optimism to be found in the idea that just as they have since 806 AD these languages will stay alive. Yet, a crucial external factor exists today that, prior to the end of the Cold War, did not beset the Sorbian speech communities: globalization, and global mass media. With the rise in global interconnectedness and global communications, with English as the *de facto* lingua franca, the question of language acquisition and maintenance is not isolated to the Sorbian minority and the German majority; the matter is global. While individual reasons for learning and maintaining languages is inherently chaotic due to unpredictable endogenous variables, the influence of economic incentives cannot be understated when discussing languages of potential acquisition (Chiesa, B. D. et. al., 2012, p. 89-102). The "2-plus" model of Upper Lusatia's bilingual education system provides some comfort to the threat posed by languages of global prestige, as learning a third language is an added requirement. However, regarding the extent of one's formal knowledge of available languages, the opportunities, and cultural capital of more prevalent languages, such as German and English, can serve as push factors away from mastery of the Sorbian tongue. With regards to Upper and Lower Sorbian language education, schools, and other institutions for language education, as well as Sorbian language planning a whole, will need to be flexible to adapt to a rapidly changing world and an increasingly interconnected global context. While the most powerful variables regarding one's languages are primarily endogenous, an education system that readily adapts and promotes environments whereby students,

Sorbian and German alike, can develop positive and motivational sentiments towards learning and maintaining the Sorbian languages, would thus contribute optimistically to the potential for the Sorbian languages' continued survival and prosperity.

Conclusion

The Sorbian language, divided into Upper and Lower Sorbian, has withstood for over a millennium surrounded by a dominant German-language majority under circumstances ranging from attempted expungement to active preservation. Following German reunification, the goals of the Witaj project in ensuring the revitalization of the Sorbian language strongly emphasized the implementation of language in education policies. Language education in Upper Lusatia faces issues that primarily pertain to the need for reconciliation of non-native speakers in its bilingual education system, while Lower Lusatia's scarcity of native speakers threatens its continued existence, as the environment needed for immersive language education's success is absent within their communities. Effective language planning in education that reconciles the German-speaking majority and encourages inclusivity of outsiders while creating environments that positively reinforce the value of learning Upper Sorbian could seek to remedy the issues plaguing Upper Sorbian language education. As for Lower Sorbian, its dire situation, and the near impossibility of establishing fully immersive language environments lends itself to the possibilities of either merging with Upper Sorbian, or potentially language death. While the result of either would mean the death of Lower Sorbian's language variety, a merger with Upper Sorbian could work to preserve the Sorbian language family as a whole given the latter's greater capabilities in establishing immersive language environments and functional language education institutions. With this in mind, further study devoted to the potential preservation of the Sorbian language as a whole should consider the language attitudes of Lower Sorbian speakers with regards to merging the two languages, and the potential ramifications of such a decision. The development of new language education models specific to the nuanced contexts of the Upper and Lower Sorbian languages possesses greater potential for the preservation of Sorbian compared to attempts to adapt other minority language education models. The question heavily remains, in the context of an ever-globalizing world, as to whether or not the Sorbian languages, with the paramount aid of readily adaptive language in education planning, as to whether or not they will continue to endure despite their circumstances, or if the allures of socioeconomic opportunities, the volume of foreign cultural capital, and global communications will attract interest away from them, extinguishing their statuses as living languages.

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The Difficulties Related to the Borrowing of Scientific Terminology Into the Kazakh Language

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Introduction

The issue of borrowing words from other languages is one of the controversial and public opinion related topics as even though the government puts efforts to standardize the borrowed words, people may not accept translated terms and use them in every-day life. Such problem is presumed in the Kazakh language too and despite the fact that Kazakhstan Government has tried to translate borrowed words into the Kazakh language by saving the phonetic and lexical rules, there were incorrect translations of words which made the Kazakh language to face more difficulties in terms of borrowing (Шүленбаев, 2018, para.51). Since in many cases words which are borrowed from other languages are scientific terms, the question “Should the term be phonetically same as in donor language or should it change according to Kazakh lexical meaning?” appears. Obviously, such delicate question is better to be investigated and analyzed to minimize the challenges in borrowing terms.

This paper focuses on the difficulties which appear in borrowing scientific terminology into Kazakh language and later addresses them by proposing possible solutions. In the first step, it is necessary to briefly review some basic rules in borrowing scientific terminology into another language from a linguistic point of view. Secondly, it is also better to consider the main problems which Kazakh language has faced in borrowing terms to understand the whole situation better. The next step is dedicated to the discussion: with the information obtained from professional in the field of translation linguistics and research analysis done by me, the difficulties related to the borrowing of scientific terminology into the Kazakh language will be addressed and examined. In the subsequent part, the possible solutions and recommendations will be proposed based on the reasons for previously identified problems in borrowing scientific terms into the Kazakh language.

Rules in Borrowing Scientific Terminology into Kazakh and Other Languages: An Overview

It is impossible not to borrow ideas and meanings of the words when speakers of different languages start to communicate with each other. It leads to a language contact which may result in the borrowing of words or meanings. According to Genetti (2014, p.292-307), cultural and social factors (e.g. the degree of knowledge of the native language and the language which comes into contact) matters as they affect the level of borrowing. There is a special name for the borrowed item – loan or loanword, and there are different ways of borrowing words and based on the lexical, grammatical and phonetical structures possible variations of borrowing words can be considered.

Even though there are some solidified rules of borrowing for all languages, as the Kazakh language is an agglutinative language it has its own frequently used methods to translate or to make loanwords. In general, three possible ways of deriving new words exist: the creation of new one in accordance with the phonetic and morphological norms of the Turkic languages; passive words (especially archaic words and dialects) gain new meaning; because of the strong influence of technological progress foreign words and terms related to the economy, culture, science and politics enter into the language with or without phonological changes (Mahmudova, 2019, p.61). In the case of Kazakh language, all ways are used in obtaining scientific terminology.

The next important point is to consider how words change through borrowing overall. As Genetti (2014, p.300-302) mentions, words usually undergo phonological changes through adaptation according to the rules of the recipient language. The process of adaptation may include

assimilation, deletion, insertion, fortition, lenition and others. Next phonological changes are frequently used ones: assimilation is a phonological process when one sound becomes like another sound. For example, the word *spaghetti* came from Italian into the English language. In donor language it has a geminate consonant or a lengthened stop, however in recipient language because of assimilation in American English it is changed to an alveolar flap [ɾ] (ibid). Deletion, a case when sound is removed, in many situations happen to unstressed vowels (Andersson, Sayeed and Vaux, 2017, p.22), while in order to distinguish borrowed words from other similar words and to ease the pronunciation insertion may happen by adding a phoneme (either vowel or consonant) to break the consonant cluster system: borrowed word *mawt* from the Arabic language is changed into *mauti* in Kiswahili by inserting 2 vowels (Akidah, 2013, p.5). By that, we see that in general there are various ways of borrowing new words.

We identified what type of phonological changes can terminology undergo; however, it should be mentioned that the Kazakh language has some regularly used phonological changes to create loanwords and it would be better to classify them briefly based on shared features. Associate Professor of Philological Studies Ismailova Gainigul in her research paper about terminology analyzes these similarities and tendencies in making terms in the financial credit system (2012, p.112-114). By comparing with other languages, it was pointed out that the Kazakh language has just 2 prefixing verbs *de -*, *pe -* and about 800 units of suffixes which are used to form noun in Kazakh: *-гер, -кер, -лық, -лік -дық, -дік, -шы, -ші, -ік, -ыс, -іс, etc.* Other examples are *-ым, -ім, -ма, -ме, -ба, -бе, -на, -не* given in the paper by Sherubay Qurmanbaiuly (Терминологиялық хабаршы, 2016, p.4-5). Moving to the phonological process there is a rule in Turkic languages known as vowel harmony and in borrowing terms this must apply to words. Many of the linguistics professionals insist on keeping this rule while creating new scientific terms as much as possible (Iskhan, Dautova, and Ospanova, 2014, p.46). Vowel harmony or synharmonism is explained as “an obligatory element of phonetic figure of word including vowels and consonants providing the right acoustic and semantic perception of words” and in all syllables of the same complicated word it is compulsory to have same synharmonic timbre (Bauyrzhan and Uai, 2018, p.20). Such rules are important in Kazakh language and in constructing newly borrowed words it is better not to miss them.

Before moving to the challenges which Kazakh language have faced in borrowing scientific terms, the Republican Terminology Commission under the Government of The Republic of Kazakhstan should be mentioned. It is a special commission that consists of the professors in the field of Terminology and those who have experience in this sphere of Kazakh language. All scientific works done by them are published at the site Termincom.kz, which is an electronic database implemented by the Government of the Republic of Kazakhstan. It aims to systematize Kazakh terminology, unify the terminological vocabulary, and regulate terms in accordance with the norms of the Kazakh language. By that it helps to increase the efficiency of terminological borrowed words. It shows that in Kazakhstan there is a committee that works on the regulations connected to the scientific terminology, borrowing and adaptation of these words, and this information is helpful in discussing problems later.

Challenges in Borrowing Terms into the Kazakh Language

Borrowing terms requires hard work, good knowledge of both languages (donor and recipient) and time to adapt newly borrowed word so that people will get to use to it. However, there are some challenges that linguists face while translating the term and these problems may differ based on the language. There can be lots of challenges, but the important ones will be considered and discussed next.

One of the important problems in the field of terminology is a psychological misconception and misunderstanding among the public about borrowed scientific words. Since Kazakhs were under the USSR where the Russian language was a 'prestigious' language, people still hold a belief that it is better to create words from the Russian language, that Kazakh words sound weird. As a linguist, we

know that it is a misconception: if the language exists with its full linguistic norms, then it is totally possible to borrow and create new words by adapting to the donor's language rules. In addition, in the Kazakh language there is a linguistic term 'сөзжасам' which can be translated as 'making or creating a word', and Qarlygash Aisultanova claims that for our society making a new word used for daily life is same as borrowing scientific terms, while in reality it is not (Терминологиялық хабаршы, 2016, p.19-23). What it means is that scientific terms are related to science and it is normal that not everyone understands its meaning. However people think: 'if I do not know the meaning of the borrowed word, then it is a bad translation', while it is a borrowed scientific term that scientists use. For example, the word *мейрамхана* (a restaurant) is an every-day use word, whereas *түрлендіргіш ген* (modifier gen) is a scientific term in biology (ibid). By reading the scientific term reader may not get the meaning of *түрлендіргіш ген* (modifier gen), while for biology scientists it is fully understandable (for linguistic approach see the appendix). Such misunderstanding from the public about borrowed scientific words may challenge linguists and create a problem.

At present most of the scientific papers and research works are not written in the Kazakh language which decreases the quality of Kazakh language in science. As it was mentioned before, after the collapse of the USSR, there is still strong influence from the Russian language. In addition to that, right now one of lingua francas around the world - English has own impact too, therefore the Kazakh language is not developing as a language of science. To be acknowledged as a professional in the field sphere of any science at a worldwide level, it is better to publish works in one of the lingua francas, thus generating more attention from the world specialists. However, it is inhibiting the development of the Kazakh language in science (Терминологиялық хабаршы, 2016, p.20). Thus, the process of borrowing scientific terms, using them and adapting to the Kazakh language is inhibiting.

Another vital issue is connected to the borrowing directly from the donor language and through language-mediator which encountered wrong translations into the Kazakh language. Mazhitayeva explains that during the 20th century lots of words came into the Kazakh language from the Russian language under the influence of the USSR (2012, p.8). It led to the problem: even though it had Kazakh alternative words, the 70-80% of Kazakh terms were derived by the loanwords from the Russian language. Examples can be respectively *план* (plan) – *жоспар* (Kazakh alternative word), *проект* (project) – *жоба*, *класс* (class) – *сынып*, etc. Even today these words sometimes used in a borrowed version from the Russian language despite having alternative forms in the Kazakh language by generating an issue in Kazakh terminology.

Results and Discussion

So far we have considered the main obstacles in borrowing scientific terminology in the Kazakh language. In this part, the reasons for problems will be analyzed and discussed.

The first problem was about misconception and misunderstanding from the public that loanwords are the same as borrowed every-day use words. The reason for misconception is basically related to the lack of a linguistic approach to the problem. During the interview with the Sarkyt Aliszhan, the member of the Republican Terminology Commission under the Government of The Republic of Kazakhstan, it was mentioned that scientific terms are designed only for scientists, not for general people, therefore there should not be any worries about public perception about loanwords. After the translation linguists check the validity, accuracy of the loanword. If there any changes they want to add, then they provide a new form of the borrowed word to the scientists by considering their opinions too. Later, new scientific terms in the Kazakh language undergo the process of approbation or approval of the word. Thus, we see that the reason for misconception comes from a lack of knowledge of the public about borrowing the loanword's process and its function.

In terms of scientists who use other languages to publish research works, just recommendations can be given. Even though the reason for using lingua francas is clear that scientists want to gain more attention from the world professionals, it can be seen that to develop the

Kazakh language as the science language in Kazakhstan, more articles and works should be done in Kazakh language (Терминологиялық хабаршы, 2016, p.20). The philology professor of the Central Asia University Aigerim Smagulova warns that at the beginning new loanwords may sound weird because scientists did not get used to them, however after some time it may become one of the frequently used loanwords, therefore there is a strong need to continue borrowing scientific terms with proper manner (Терминологиялық хабаршы, 2016, p.18).

Consequently, in order to develop the Kazakh language as the language of science more loanwords should be borrowed with its Kazakh translation and appropriate rules and used in science.

Since people already got used to the incorrectly adapted borrowings, changing them to the alternative words may require some time and effort. Some scientists suggest that we should make aware of this problem as many people as possible. Dictionaries should be checked and changed to the right one quickly if there is a need to do so (Терминологиялық хабаршы, 2016, p.28).

However, as Sarkyt Aliszhan mentioned the official committee which is responsible for checking the validity of scientific terms in Kazakhstan (the Republican Terminology Commission under the Government of The Republic of Kazakhstan) does not have any power in terms of command. They just check, approve and consider possible variations of scientific terms which were suggested by the scientists themselves. Therefore, even though the Republican Terminology Commission approves loanwords, people should understand and accept these changes which is a different story and may require other efforts too.

Possible Solutions and Recommendations in Dealing with the Problems of Borrowing

In this part solutions will be addressed based on the reasons identified in the previous part.

The first solution is to increase the control on news-media as they use words not in a proper manner like mixing Russian words in Kazakh texts even though these words have good alternative words and translations in the Kazakh language. Senior Researcher of the Institute of Linguistics named after Baitursynov Nagima Ashimanyeva says: “There were cases when in the news Russian words were used instead of Kazakh words. Examples can be *класс-сынып* (class) and *рынок-нарық* (market)” (Терминологиялық хабаршы, 2016, p.30-31). Thus, it may lead to the adaptation of the wrong version of the term among the public. By that we see that to spread the use of right borrowed words, we should check the news-media so that they will use approved scientific terms by the Republican Terminology Commission under the Government of The Republic of Kazakhstan.

To accelerate the process of adaptation and approbation of scientific terms, more work should be done in the Kazakh language. It may require some time and effort, however if we want to make the Kazakh language as the language of science, then the Government needs to work on it. The possible recommendation can be to create a fund or organize some events, competitions with an award to write academic works in the Kazakh language. Later when the science will accept the Kazakh language other scientists will also write and publish researches in the Kazakh language. In addition, that may generate a need for borrowing scientific terms which means that science is developing in the Kazakh language. In addition, Sarkyt Aliszhan as a professor of Kazakh Terminology believes that increasing the use of scientific terms in the Kazakh language will help in spreading the use of Kazakh language too. Therefore, this recommendation may be helpful in developing the language as a tool of science and in expanding the use of the language.

Third notice is about checking borrowed terms and if they have better alternative words in Kazakh language, then to replace them. The effective way of spreading the use of scientific terms can be enduring words into school curriculum lessons. For example, adding or replacing scientific terms into Kazakh borrowed science terms can facilitate the adaption of the borrowed word (Терминологиялық хабаршы, 2016, p.22). As an example, I can take the word *әсер* which is used

in different sciences, one of them is biology, and defines the word 'effect'. Before this word was borrowed and used as *әффе́к* in Kazakh language and later in school subjects were changed to *әсеп*, and now we use 'әсеп' which has the same lexical meaning as 'effect'.

This situation shows that adding scientific terms approved by the Republican Terminology Commission under the Government of The Republic of Kazakhstan in school subjects can facilitate the adaptation of the word.

The strength of this research work can be the fact that the qualitative method was used as collecting information, analyzing them, and conducting an interview. Sources were taken mainly from the official website of Terminological Commission and peer-reviewed works. The interview was conducted in on-line format with the Professor of the Kazakh Terminology who has 20 years of experience and teaches at Nazarbayev University, and also the member of the Republican Terminology Commission under the Government of The Republic of Kazakhstan.

The limitations of the work can be considering and discussing just three challenges, reasons and recommendations. More work and research are needed to increase the quality of the work.

Conclusion

Borrowing scientific terms require time, effort, knowledge of native languages and recipient languages. Wrong translations may generate big issues and replacing or changing them is also essential if we want to develop the language. The Kazakh language is experiencing difficulties in borrowing scientific terms too. It can be not knowing the difference between loanwords and every-day use borrowed words from the public. In addition, can be the fact that scientists are trying to publish research works in *lingua francas*, thus inhibiting the process of development of Kazakh language as a language of science. Also, another challenge can be the presence of incorrectly borrowed terms throughout history despite the fact it has an alternative word in the Kazakh language with the same lexical meaning.

The core reasons for the before-mentioned problems are lack of knowledge of the concept that borrowed loanwords are for use of scientists and their opinions matter, not the public who do not use them and people need to understand that. By pursuing the scientist's career and publish research works so that worldwide scientists could see maybe the reason why Kazakhstani scientists try to write academic works in *lingua francas*, not in the Kazakh language. And to change incorrectly adapted words to the correct one may require time and effort from the Government, and for sure it should be done; however, the Republican Terminology Commission is capable of checking the loanwords and approving them, but incapable of commanding, therefore it would be great if people would be aware of it and try to adapt to correct version of borrowed loanword by themselves too.

Finally, as a solution control on media and checking them for the correct use of borrowed loanwords approved by the special Commission can be suggested. In order to develop the language as a tool of science some funds, competition or motivation should be provided by the Government so that scientists will have an interest in writing academic words in the Kazakh language. At the same time, it can be also helpful in expanding the use of the language. The last important recommendation can be to change incorrectly borrowed words to the correct one and to ensure scientific loanwords in the education system so that it will facilitate the adaptation of new terms.

Appendix

In borrowing ‘modifier gen’ into *түрлендіргіш ген* we can see that the word ‘modifier’ was changed to *түрлендіргіш* that contains the lexical meaning of the ‘modifier’, while ‘gen’ was obtained directly and changed phonetically: IPA writing for *ген* is /gen/ in the Kazakh language, while in English it is /je:n/.

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The Kazakh Verbs for “Wearing” in a Cross-Linguistic Perspective

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Introduction

A Kazakh editor and translator with an audience of thousands of people on Facebook and Telegram channel “Калькасыз қазақ тілі” (‘Kazakh without calques’, t.me/kalkastop), Nazgul Kozhabek has commented several times on the “inappropriateness” of using the verb “kiy” with items of clothing like masks, glasses, headscarves. According to one of her posts on Telegram, what can be called “kiyim” (‘clothing’), such as clothes, headwear (“bas kiyim”), and footwear (“ayak kiyim”) should be used with “kiy”, whereas everything else, namely earrings, watch, bracelets, scarves, headscarves can only be used with “tak”. Also, she makes an assumption that this “mistake” could be conditioned by two factors: Russian language, a second official language in Kazakhstan with a great influence on Kazakh, using the same verb “надеть” (‘to wear’) for all above items, and Kazakh verb “cec” (‘to put off’) being used as the opposite action of both of these verbs.

Likewise, an Instagram page (launched by the very author of this capstone project) *Kazak Bubble* called for explaining grammar of Kazakh to Russian speakers falls for the same apparently *prescriptivist* questionable assumption and teaches its audience that “for most Kazakh speakers” “kiy” is “specifically about clothes, shoes and types of accessories that ‘cover’ the body area: gloves, socks”, meanwhile, “tak” is about accessories like “ring, scarf, belt, watch, tie, mask, glasses. Interestingly, about a headscarf (*oramal*) it would be more appropriate to say ‘tak’ or ‘tart’, but not ‘kiy’”. Moreover, the author compares the second verb “tak” to a Russian verb “нацепить” (‘to strap on’) in explaining the logic of usage of the Kazakh verb. The comparison to Russian is yet to be tested in corpora because it seems to, firstly, possess stylistic differences from the “main” Russian verb “наде(ва)ть” (‘to wear’) rather than semantic and, secondly, allow more universality since it actually at least *can* be used with dresses, shirts, and other items of clothing, with which “tak” in Kazakh most probably *cannot* be used at all. However, two important questions to be answered stem from the text by Kazak Bubble: (1) What do these two verbs mean in Kazakh? (Is this related to the “way” of wearing?); (2) How do other languages deal with describing similar activities?

Thus, this capstone project seeks to investigate the semantic differences between the two Kazakh verbs *tak* and *kiy* to draw a cross-linguistic comparison of verbs with similar meanings in other different four languages, including ones that historically have been in close contact with Kazakh, namely Russian and Persian as historically influential contact languages, Turkish as another Turkic language with cognate verbs possibly using those in different ways, and English, which is arguably the most accessible language in terms of abundant corpora. The purposes of the capstone project are to document all possible, common and less common, meanings and usages of these two verbs for different speakers of Kazakh, firstly, in corpora, and secondly, via a survey that will also help us determine any possible dialectal, generational, and social factors that might influence the semantics of the verbs and, lastly, to compare these usages to those of similar verbs in other languages and trace any patterns or contact-induced changes.

Literature Review

Lexical typology is a quite nascent sub-field of typological linguistics. Since the scope of problems discussed in lexical typology is not limited to primarily semantic issues, Koptjevskaja-Tamm argues that lexical typology should be considered a subfield of lexicology that deals specifically with its cross-linguistic and typological questions. A range of various systematic cross-linguistic analyses has been conducted in relation to semantic categories, such as body parts, kinship terms, verbs of motion in the water and breaking and cutting, and, a fairly popular one, colors (Berlin and Kay, 1969). Also, lexical typology is not exclusive to the discussion of “purely lexical” items and since typology is a huge field with no strict borders within and is rather a spectrum of approaches and foci, lexical typology might also deal with grammaticalized lexis, such as interrogatives, quantifiers (1–11).

There might be different approaches to researching lexical typology, depending on the research questions and the school. By combining two approaches, namely the word-meaning analyzing methods of the Moscow semantic school and the grammatical typology, Rakhilina and Reznikova (2016) describe the frame-based methodology in conducting cross-linguistic typological research. Thus, their methodology implies the classification of different lexical units into “conceptual frames” based on “the analysis of word combinability in natural texts (corpora, spontaneous speech, etc.)”.

Moreover, in the understanding of two Kazakh verbs and their differences and similarities and the underlying reasons behind them, of a great importance is the typology of parameters related to language change per se, namely the contact-induced ones. Central Asian Turkic languages historically have been influenced by languages from other families, such as Arabic (a Semitic language), Persian (an Indo-Iranian Indo-European language), and more recently, Russian (a Slavic Indo-European language) and, even more recently, English (a Germanic Indo-European language). Meanwhile, English and Russian that arguably influence contemporary Kazakh the most do not semantically differentiate between different ways of “wearing” in relation to different items. Therefore, tracing any contact effects might help us also make assumptions on the matter of contact-induced typology, whether the case of *tak* and *kiy* confirms or contradicts any assumptions on what changes are frequent in contact situations.

Aikhenvald (2008) argues that contacts of different nature usually imply the different types of borrowings as well. For instance, in a more or less balanced and stable contact, the changes within the language “borrowing” certain elements from another language will further enhance the complexity and help gain more patterns, whereas in a displace contact, it might rather lead to a loss or simplification of patterns. It’s important to take into consideration not only linguistic features that are being borrowed, whenever we outline different “hierarchies” of “borrowability” but also the sociolinguistic reality that conditions the very process of borrowing in the first place (43–44). However, it’s still hard to tell what exactly how the contact between Kazakh and Russian should be described in the XXI century when Kazakhstan is an independent country and yet there were certain policies blatantly attempting to “Russify” the ethnic minorities since 1940-1950s, after the 1991, the situation in post-Soviet republics got much more complex. A whole generation has been raised under new ideological paradigms of a nation-state centered around Kazakh culture and history. Also, it is important to consider different spheres of life: in some spheres, Russian might stay influential, in others, perhaps Kazakh has always been the only dominant language. The same goes for different regions.

Methodology

The capstone project involves a two-step analysis of two Kazakh verbs.

First, it will deal with the data from the corpora of Kazakh (139,000,000 words), Russian (9,034,837,939 words), English (13,190,556,334 words), Persian (474,773,547 words), and Turkish (3,388,418,900 words) languages to analyze verbs for “wearing” in these languages and their usages with different types of clothing / accessories. Corpus linguistics is “firmly rooted in empirical, inductive forms of analysis, relying on real-world instances of language use in order to derive rules or explore trends about the ways in which people actually produce language (as opposed to models of language that rely on made-up examples or introspection)”, and it’s particularly helpful because by using statistical data we can make more accurate assumptions about different patterns than by observing or interviewing or making introspective judgments on any linguistic feature on our own, being exposed to bias, both social and cognitive. An important feature that corpora allow us to use is analyzing the concordance, which is important for determining “semantic preferences”. For instance, in analyzing the word “girl” in a number of texts in English, it turns out that most of adjectives used in relation to “girl” are concerned with the physical appearance. Also, it helps us trace any “discourse prosodies”, for example, for “girl” in English, it could be a patronizing attitude toward women because of its usage for adult females compared to “boy” which is not used for adult males.

Secondly, using the examples from the Kazakh corpus with ‘tak’ and ‘kiy’, a survey is to be designed and distributed online in Kazakh-speaking web in January.

The priority is given to corpora because corpora represent the real-life data and moreover, corpus data may be more “genuine” in some aspects since people don’t feel like having a “quiz” when they write articles, posts in the internet, unlike questionnaires that still, it is safe to assume, might cause some sort of self-policing.

The comparisons will not be limited to the “synchronic approach” — contemporary usage, but they will also include a diachronic parameter — the etymologies AND older usages of these different verbs in five languages will be described to see if there have been some potential semantic shifts.

Etymology

What could be of great importance in comparing different lexemes that stand for the motions of “wearing” in different languages is analyzing their etymology and / or earlier uses.

For instance, if we look at the earlier usages of Kazakh verbs ‘tak’ and ‘kiy’ in the *Divan-i Lugat it-Turk*, the first comprehensive dictionary of Middle Turkic languages (Karakhan, Oghuz, Chagatai, and Kipchak, from the latter of which Kazakh itself derives), compiled in the 11th century by a Karakhanid-based Turkic scholar Mahmud Kashgari, we find that the ‘kiy’ might have derived from the same verb that also meant ‘skinning the animal’ or ‘peeling off’. The same assumption is made about the cognate verb ‘giy’ in Turkish by Nişanyan in his etymological dictionary of the contemporary Turkish. In the Kashgari’s dictionary, verbs:

- ‘kedrildi’: ‘koy kedrildi’ — ‘mutton was cut into strips’
 - ‘kedrishdi’: ‘ol maña et kedrishdi’ — ‘s/he helped me cut the skinned meat into pieces’
 - ‘kedirdi’: ‘ol koyug kedirdi’ — ‘s/he skinned the sheep and cut the meat into strips’
- are used to describe the skinning or slaying the animal, and:
- ‘kedrushdi’: ‘olar ekki ton kedrushdi’ — ‘they wore each other’s clothes’
 - ‘kedruldi’: ‘ton kedruldi’ — ‘a clothing was worn on someone’
 - ‘kedti’: ‘er ton kedti’ — ‘a man wore a clothing’

- ‘kedurdi’: ‘ol maña ton kedurdi’ — ‘s/he wore a clothing on me’
- ‘kedgu’: ‘different types of clothes’

are used in relation to the motion of wearing. Apparently, the Kazakh word ‘kiyiz’ (‘felt’, a word that is used in the phrase for ‘yurt’: *kiyiz uy*) could be from the same root that stands for ‘skinning the animal’, since *kiyiz* is what is received from a similar process.

Meanwhile, the verb ‘tak’ does not seem to have meanings, as it is attested in the dictionary of Kashgari, other than the one that is quite similar to the cognate verb in contemporary Kazakh and Turkish:

- ‘takdi’: ‘er burunduk butluka takdi’ — ‘man tied the halter to the camel's nose ring’. This word is used to describe how to tie a rope anywhere.

Thus, the verb was used in a meaning similar to ‘attaching’.

Meanwhile, in English, the word ‘wear’, according to Etymonline, goes back to a reconstructed Proto-Indo-European root: *eu that meant ‘to dress’ with an extended form *wes ‘to clothe’. In the Germanic forms, it used to be homonyms with the verb for “protecting”.

In Russian, the verb ‘надеть’ (‘to wear’) is said to be derived from the verb that stands for “doing”: “na” + “det”, the latter part of which shares the same Proto-Indo-European root with English ‘do’. In Persian, the verb ‘pushidan’ comes from an older Pehlevi verb that used to mean quite the same: ‘to cover’, ‘to wear’.

Corpus Data

For the purposes of this project, a Kazakh Web Corpus was used that is made up of texts in Kazakh from the Internet and contains about 139 mln words. The corpus doesn’t recognize different inflected forms of the verbs — words in the corpus are not lemmatized. However, it allows us to find the most frequent inflected forms in texts through the search of synonyms. Thus, we can identify that, for instance, the most frequent inflected forms of “tak” are: тағып (1833, converb) таққан (1286, participle / perfect), тағатын (333, participle), тауға (267, ‘to wear’ / ‘for wearing’), тағады (232, present tense, third person), and for “kiy”: киедін (861, participle), киюге (621, ‘to wear’ / ‘for wearing’), кигізіп (517, causative, converb), киеді (498, present tense, third person), киді (327, past tense, third person), кие (199, conditional). Unfortunately, the corpus is not POS tagged either, that is, it does not allow to search for collocations of verbs with specific parts of speech — with nouns in particular in our case. However, since Kazakh is an SOV language and, moreover, places the adjectives and determiners *before* the nouns they modify, we can analyze the words just before our verbs (Men kara kiyim kiyemin = I black clothing wear) and, in case we are considering collocations with participle forms, we can examine words after the word (tagatin acekey = worn accessories). For instance, participles киедін / тағатын can be used before the items.

Thus, we can observe the following. Items of clothing and accessories that go exclusively with “tak”: галстук (tie), орамал (headscarf), погон = шен (shoulder strap), алқа (necklace / medal), үкі (owl feathers for decoration sometimes used as an accessory on headwear), орден = медаль = жұлдыз (medal), бантик (hair bow), шолпы (braid accessory), белдік = белбеу (belt), сырға (earrings), шашбау (braid embellished ribbon), белгі (sign, as a medal as well), лента (ribbon), крест (cross), төсбелгі = бейджик (badge), әшекей (decoration), моншақ (beads), шүберек (cloth, used as a covering for face, for instance, by “robbers”), бай (string, probably a hair accessory), тұмар (amulet), сағат (watch).

Items that are mentioned with exclusively “kiy”:

Headwear: шляпа, тәж, дулыға, телпек, сәукеле, қалпақ, тақия, бөрік, кимешек, каска, тымақ, бөрік, баскиім

Wear: киім, фрак, костюм, желең, хижаб / хиджаб / хиджап, кеудеше, скафандр, камзол, форма, сауыт, жейде, юбка, шекпен, халат, шалбар, шапан, көйлек

Outerwear: пальто, шинель, тон, күпі

Accessories: шұлық, қолғап

Footwear: етік, туфли, пима, аяқкиім

“kiy” can be used with headwear, footwear, clothes, and accessories like socks and gloves. Items that are used with both verbs are “glasses” and “masks” (betperde / maska).

Questionnaire

One of the hypotheses of my capstone is that the different usage of Kazakh verbs for “wearing” could be conditioned by geographical dimensions or social factors, such as language contact, gender, or occupation. In testing such hypotheses, we might want to have a look at the so-called ‘acceptability rating task’. As its name suggests, this method helps us see if certain collocations with kiy and tak are acceptable by more or less fluent speakers of Kazakh and, if yes, to what extent. For the purposes of testing some of my hypotheses, a questionnaire will show some paragraphs with 2–3 sentences with the word kiy or tak in it and ask if they see any mistakes here and comment on those. These will be different real paragraphs from the corpus (Turkic Web) where kiy / tak are actually ‘naturally’ used with different types of clothing and accessories.

However, it is also of crucial importance to not be too ‘straightforward’ with what particular data you are eliciting from your respondents because people might, in this case, be biased towards being over attentive for a certain feature and act less naturally.

I can mitigate this problem by, firstly, adding some additional ‘mistakes’ into the texts on my own (but not try too hard so that it’s not too laborious for the respondent: not more than three ‘mistakes’ in total per paragraph), and secondly, by including additional ‘placebo’ paragraphs with no kiy / tak verbs at all. The first question, the ‘opening’ one in which the participant is probably the most attentive should also be the ‘placebo’ paragraph so that we make our goals even more subtle but the order of questions will be the same for everyone so that each participant is in ‘equal’ situation.

The metadata collected during this questionnaire would include the geographical background of the person, their occupation, gender, age group, proficiency in Kazakh (for instance, it can be a question like ‘Where do you think you learnt most of Kazakh that you know today?’ — this question also might help us, just in case, see if someone is trained as a professional editor, philologist, or some other arguably prescriptivist specialist), and languages that the person speaks (‘What language did you speak most when you were a child?’, ‘What language does your family speak most?’, ‘What language do you use most in your daily life?’).

I expect not more than 10 questions in each section of the questionnaire: the metadata collection and the acceptability rating task, so that the process is not too time-consuming for the participant.

So far, this methodology is limited in terms of the range of different questions in assessing the complete situation with the kiy / tak verbs: for instance, we could also add ‘fill-in’ tasks in addition to ‘commenting’ tasks, where the participant is asked to fill in the empty space with the most ‘naturally sounding word’. Also, we might want to use not only open-end questions but also multiple-choice questions so that the participant, once again, is not too exhausted until they reach the final question and also so that the data interpretation can be facilitated.

Conclusion

Kazakh verbs “tak” and “kiy” are two peculiar verbs and are in need of cross-linguistic comparison since its closest contact languages don’t seem to distinguish as sharply between different items of clothing and accessories as Kazakh: namely, Russian, Persian. However, another corpus analysis is needed to make any conclusions about these languages.

Kazakh verb “kiy” is used with some accessories: socks, gloves, glasses, and masks. Socks, gloves, and masks are all “covering” accessories, whereas glasses are not.

Slurs and Culture: How Slurs Change Cultural Understandings of Minorities in the Russian Language in the Twenty-First Century

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Slurs have a prominent role in language and culture in every language. Populations throughout history have dealt with the use of slurs as the oppression that affected their relationship with the culture they are a part of. Minorities that suffer from slurs include gender, racial, ethnic, religious, sexual orientation, socioeconomic, and many others. The creation of slurs in Russian uses stereotypes and outdated ideologies that negatively affect the lives of minorities in Russia by creating a hostile environment to grow in. The hostile choice of words to create slurs stems from the creation and usage of the language that represents cultural minorities as inferior and focuses on heteronormativity in Russian popular culture. Discussing the problems that face minorities because of the Russian language creates a deeper understanding of morality and opens new conversations related to the rights of oppressed groups. The examples used will represent a common slur in Russian culture related to ethnicity and a slur related to the LGBTQ+ community in Russia.

The assumption is that Russia similarly uses slang to English and other western languages, and that language has a large impact on culture. They also assume that Russia is extremely intolerant of minorities and that slang and slurs contribute to this toxic culture, and this assumption is based on the understanding that many minority groups face severe oppression that is well known and accepted. A common counterargument is that culture changes language instead of language changing culture. Although this is true sometimes, including new slang being created for new fads and technology every day, it roots the stigma of slurs deep in history and has a long process for their creation and their derogatory meaning. Modern slang and slurs are intertwined, but while slang comes in and out of style and can be changed rapidly, slurs have a lasting effect, which is clear in languages other than modern Russian.

For most people, the definition of a slur is a term that is deemed or understood as offensive because it targets a group of people for something they can not control. They say the slur to show people they are lesser than others. The linguistic definition of slurs may vary depending on the research and context of the question posed, but this research breaks down slurs into three parts, “Offensive Autonomy—slurs are offensive even when the speaker does not intend the used to be derogatory. Embedding Failure—the offensiveness of slurs projects out of various forms of embedding, including indirect reports, negations, and mentions. Perspective Dependence—use of a slur is taken to show that the speaker holds derogatory attitudes. Offensive Variation—not all slurs, even if co-referential, appear to be equally offensive. Insulation—despite all the above, slurring terms can occasionally occur inoffensively, and this is true even of particularly potent terms”. Slurs are understood to come from slang, which can colloquially be understood as unofficial language or incorrect language that stems from cultural references and easier communication. It is often associated with improper use of language, however, that is an outdated assumption, and the understanding now is that it is a fast changing ever-growing aspect of language that has blown up because of fast technological advancements and changes in culture and communication. Experts describe slurs as “pejorative expressions that target individuals based on race, ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation, nationality, socioeconomic status, occupation, and various other important properties. They are tools of subordination and their use as a threat to human dignity”. Slurs that are derived from English or other languages are becoming more and more popular because “Russian youth speak (slang) was a movement toward a loss of linguistic autonomy and authenticity vis-à-vis the importation of foreign loan words” In order to understand this definition in Russian language, two different common slurs have been chosen to represent two different minorities that struggle in Russia, ethnic minorities and LGBTQ+. Овцеёб, or ovcejob, is a slur about people from the North Caucasus, including the Chechen and the Avar, and can be more directly translated as a “sheep fucker”. Similarly,

пéдик, or pedik, is a slur regarding homosexual men and is related to the word pederast. This slur uses the derogatory stereotype that gay men are pedophiles and is like the English word faggot. These Russian slurs are the basis for the breakdown of Russian slurs and their relationship to modern culture.

In order to understand the far-reaching implications of slurs in modern Russian, it is important to understand how they are formed. It can break this down into four different categories including, “adaptation from other languages (primarily English); - full and partial calquing (calque/semi-calque); - translation (using standard vocabulary with a special meaning; using slang of other professional groups); - phonetic mimicry; - words in a figurative sense (metaphorization)”. Among these various methods of formation, “words adopted from other languages are the most numerous group of slang words”. Languages, including Russian, adopt English words, but instead of keeping the English pronunciation, they take the style, inflection, and conjugation/declensions of the language that adopted it, in this case Russian. In the two slurs that this research focuses on, пéдик is an adoption and adaptation of the French word pederaste, which translates to a lover of boys, or a man who is engaged in a sexual relationship with a child. Borrowing words from other languages is a common occurrence because of the international culture and communication that has been created because of the internet and easy communication that stems from it. In contrast to the homophobic slur пéдик, овцеёб is a translation using vocabulary that was previously used to insult North Caucasus natives. It combines овца́, sheep, and the verb еба́ть, to fuck or to have sex. This adaptation of common Russian language shows the concept of shortening and combining words already used to oppress people to create new language.

A basic understanding of slurs is that they are used to hurt or insult someone or a group of similar people, however, the reality is more complex. The purpose of slurs is to create an imbalance of power between two groups of people, where one group creates an unequal ranking of people in society and culture through oppression, as stated in the research by Mihaela Popa-Wyatt and Jeremy Wyatt, “Oppression can be explained as unjust power using the power-over conception of power... The goal of oppressive slurring is to achieve and maintain unjust power over the target. A slurring use draws and builds on historical and/or contemporary oppression of the target group”. Slurs take power away from oppressed groups in order to create a sense of inferiority “slurring utterances seek to create (or maintain) an unjust power imbalance via role assignment”. The imbalance of power is specific to “the need to convey that targets are beneath the rest, possessing lower status along the moral domain”. Using slurs allows people without evidence or reason to create an imbalance of power. This allows people to control minorities and keep them out of positions of power where they can change the power structure.

Slurs are used to undermine the validity of the life of minority groups and show them as less than human or less than others. According to Slurs, Roles, and Power, “Slurs can harm and degrade their targets, making them feel humiliated, dehumanized, disempowered, and silenced. Slurs may also offend non targets, often making them feel complicit, while meeting with approval from bigots”. Using овцеёб and пéдик, it is possible to break down how these two specific slurs attack and degrade their targets. Овцеёб is harmful because no longer refers to the group of people as people, and it promotes an untrue stereotype about them, in this case referring to this group of people taking part in bestiality. When an ethnicity is referred to as being less than human or participating in morally wrong acts, it creates an ability to treat them as such. Similarly, пéдик promotes an untrue stereotype that gay men are sexual predators and deviants that prey on young boys. By associating gay men with a crime and being morally inept, it allows for society to treat them as less than human without facing backlash. This creates an imbalance of power that becomes ingrained in the culture of a society. The behavior is tolerated and accepted as normal, which oppresses the minority group being attacked.

The understanding of these slurs are extremely important to understanding the struggles of minorities in Russia and how these slurs impact Russian culture. Russia has many minorities stemming from their large surface area to soviet occupation of different areas throughout eastern Europe and

“Russia is not only the second largest recipient of migrants, after the USA, but it has received the largest number of postcolonial migrants since the Second World War”. Irina Kznetsova and John Round from The international Journal of Sociology and Social Policy discuss how the verbal aspect of slurs damage culture and minority groups within Russia, “The verbal abuse of migrants at work is commonplace. One interviewee discussed how they were described as ‘creatures’ by Russian colleges and another, who had obtained Russian citizenship, stated that although he was treated okay, he always received the worst shifts and equipment and was excluded from most conversations. All of the problems migrants face... facilitated by the state and mass media’s constructions of migrants as diseased and criminal which in turn becomes embedded into cultural imaginations”. An important example of the poor treatment of ethnic minorities and immigrants is through the use of овцеёб. Using овцеёб creates an image that people from the north Caucasian community are primal or second to Russians. The idea of this community being “sheep fuckers” imagines this ethnic minority as dirty, unclean, and morally incompetent, almost sinful. It takes their history and legacy as shepherds and farmers and makes it undesirable and sinful. Similarly, the LGBTQ+ minority in Russia has faced the targeting and oppression in Russia and have been branded as less than human or abnormal behavior. This can be seen in Lucy Pakhnyuk’s article, Foreign Agents and Gay Propaganda: Russian LGBT Rights Activism Under Pressure when she states that Russia “passed the gay propaganda law, banning the promotion of ‘non-traditional sexual relations’ and signaling the growing legitimacy of state homophobia or the ‘totality of strategies and tools’, both in policy and in mobilizations, through witch holders and contenders over state authority involve sexual minorities as objects of opprobrium and targets of persecution”. The exclusion of people in Russian society takes away from the potential advances in cultural and societal development. This imbalance of power leads to human rights violations and can create larger problems including government led persecution, an increase in hate crimes, and a lack of tolerance within similar communities and cultures.

With a better and more comprehensive understanding of two major Russian slurs affecting different minority groups in Russia, there is evidence that the creating and use of slurs negatively affects the community and culture of Russia. The oppression and ostracization of both the North Caucasian population and the LGBTQ+ population create a hateful environment and culture that become unacceptable to differences in their communities. The toxic culture that is created allows for the continuation of oppression of the same group of people, and the precedence to oppress other groups that do not have the same viewpoints, lifestyles, or ethnicities as other Russians. To continue to understand the oppression of other minorities in Russia and other Eastern European cultures it will be important to conduct research on other minority groups including other sexualities and ethnicities.

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Session 2

The Page and the Stage

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URS Proceedings**

Finding God in “The Old Woman:” Reading Daniil Kharms Through Yakov Druskin

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At the turn of the twentieth century, avant-garde art was flourishing in Russia. The soon-to-fall empire was bustling with progressive artistic ideas, made manifest through a host of associations, collectives, and “-isms.” Artists and authors such as Kazimir Malevich, Natalia Goncharova, David Burliuk, Alexei Kruchonykh, and Velemir Khlebnikov broke through the boundaries of artistic convention in a dramatic flurry of radical creativity. While many of these groups faded or broke apart after the 1917 revolution, the undercurrents of Russian modernism carried on, giving rise to the strange, half-hidden world of Soviet absurdism. Throughout the tumultuous 1920s and 30s, a small group of eccentric Saint Petersburg characters known as the *chinari* or OBERIU¹—all of whom had modest day jobs as children’s literature writers or school teachers—would go on to produce some of the most fascinating and innovative works of their era.

After going largely unknown for the better part of a century, the Soviet absurd came to the attention of Western academics through George Gibian’s 1971 translations of two *chinari* authors, Daniil Kharms and Alexander Vvedensky. Gibian’s work sparked a lasting interest in the group among Western scholars, but the attention paid to different members of the group has always been imbalanced. Kharms and Vvedensky get far more scholarly attention than any other people associated with the *chinari*, often leaving others as footnotes. One in particular, Yakov Druskin stands out. Druskin is usually noted for his contribution to saving the writings of the *chinari*—he outlived the other *chinari* and heroically rescued Kharms’ manuscripts from Nazi-beseiged Leningrad²—but he was also a prolific philosopher and musicologist in his own right. While collections of his writings have been published in Russian since the fall of the USSR, virtually none of it has been translated into English, and very little scholarly attention has been given to his work or its influence on the *chinari*.³

I see this as an unfortunate oversight, as I believe Druskin has a great deal to add to our understanding of the *chinari*, especially on the topic of religion. Kharms and Vvedensky refer constantly to God, but the contradictions, grotesquery, and general complexity of their style renders it extraordinarily difficult to discern any sort of systematic function of God and spirituality in their work. However, Druskin himself, who was as close as anyone in the world to Kharms and Vvedensky, was primarily a religious philosopher. His writings, which often mention the other *chinari* by name, are full of in-depth discussions of God, faith, free will, and a host of other spiritual and metaphysical issues. To that end, examining the *chinari* through the lens of Druskin’s philosophy is a promising approach to understanding the function of religion and spirituality in their works.

The present paper aims to be a small step in this promising direction, taking a deep dive into one particular example of Druskin’s scholarly value. By drawing on a number of Druskin’s essays to analyze “The Old Woman,” one of Kharms’ most well-known stories, I lay out an interpretation of the story as a parable about the narrator’s struggle towards faith and the divine. In addition, I conclude with a brief discussion of the exciting potential for further work in this vein to meaningfully reposition the *chinari* in

¹ The first term comes from the Russian word *chin*, used to describe the bureaucratic ranks systematized by Peter the Great in the 1700s and used up until 1917. The second term is a distorted acronym, standing for *ob’edinenie real’nogo iskusstva*, or “the association of real art.” This was a separate but overlapping group which contained more members, but lasted only a few years. The core group—Kharms, Vvedensky, Druskin, Lipavsky, and Oleinikov—continued writing and referring to themselves as *chinari* throughout the 1930s.

² Martynova, Olga. [“The source we drink from.”](#) 2007

³ One important exception is Jaccard, Jean Philippe, *Daniil Harms et la fin de l’avant-garde russe*, Editions scientifiques européennes, Bern, 1991, pp. 115-149

the broader context of cultural history, bringing them closer in line with European existentialism than has been previously considered.

The readings of “The Old Woman” that jump out most immediately revolve around the story’s berth of references to—and parody of—classic works of Russian literature. Framed by the landmarks of St. Petersburg (Nevsky and Liteyny Prospekts, Lakhta, and so forth) and centered around a young man’s killing of an old woman, the story clearly plays with such classics as Dostoevsky’s *Crime and Punishment*, Pushkin’s *Queen of Spades*, and Gogol’s *Petersburg Tales*. There is also a vast array of subtler echoes; for example, the old woman’s self-propelling dentures hint at Gogol’s classic story “The Nose.” Scholarly analyses of “The Old Woman” have pointed primarily to these aspects of parody and satire in “The Old Woman,” as well as to its veiled political dimension—a reflection of Stalinist reality in Kharms’ imagined world of senseless cruelty.⁴ The literary connections are valuable, and they do well to highlight the clever, comic, and political aspects of the work. However, few attempts have been made at tackling the story’s more metaphysical side. While Neil Carrick and Alice Stone Nakhimovsky both deal with religion in the context of “The Old Woman,” neither make use of the potential framework provided by Druskin. If we read the story with Druskin’s theories on faith and free will in mind, “The Old Woman” becomes a sort of parable; a story of the narrator’s struggle to find faith.

Neil Carrick finds religious qualities of “The Old Woman” primarily in the story’s intertextuality, writing that “In a work relying on so many authors, God stands alone as supreme author and originator of events.”⁵ While his analysis does well to tie Kharms’ intertextuality and allusions together with metaphysics, expanding the discussion beyond the realms of parody and satire, he leaves room for deeper engagement with the actual events of the story itself. He also ignores Druskin almost entirely. Interestingly, Nakhimovsky does allude more directly to Druskin in her discussion of “The Old Woman.” She writes,

“The line of development that leads to Starukha involves two ideas: a belief in God closely integrated with the details of everyday life and the expectation of a miracle. Both of these ideas can be found in Kharms’s work dating from the early thirties. They are also present in the philosophical writings of Ia. S. Druskin, a close friend of Kharms and, like him, a member of Lipavskii’s circle. Druskin’s philosophy—in particular, the idea that through prayer one can glimpse the transcendent state that lies just beyond the surface of ordinary life—seems especially relevant to Starukha.”⁶

Nakhimovsky does not elaborate further on the connections between Druskin and “The Old Woman.” Instead, she focuses on the relationship between faith and the comic grotesque, asserting that the first

⁴ For more on the parodic and political in “The Old Woman,” see:

Chances, Ellen B. “Daniil Charms’ ‘Old Woman’ Climbs her Family Tree: ‘Starukha’ and the Russian Literary Past,” *Russian Literature*, 18 (1985), pp. 335-66.

Cassedy, Steven. “Daniil Kharms’s Parody of Dostoevskii: Anti-Tragedy as Political Comment,” *Canadian-American Slavic Studies*, 18.3 (1984), pp. 268-84.

Carrick, Neil. “A Familiar Story: Insurgent Narratives and Generic Refugees in Daniil Kharms’s ‘The Old Woman,’” *The Modern Language Review*, 90.3 (1995), pp. 707-721.

⁵ Carrick, Neil. *Daniil Kharms: Theologian of the Absurd*, University of Birmingham, 1998, p. 56

⁶ Nakhimovsky, Alice Stone. *Laughter in the Void: An Introduction to the Writings of Daniil Kharms and Aleksandr Vvedenskii*,

arises through the second in Kharms' story.⁷ However, the idea that she hints at in her introduction is worth further exploration.

Druskin lays out the idea referenced by Nakhimovsky—that the realm of divinity is visible through prayer—in multiple places, but it features most prominently in Druskin's essay, "You and I, Noumenal Relationship."⁸ Although "You and I: Noumenal Relationship" was written in the 1960s, long after Kharms wrote "The Old Woman," Druskin's essay provides an interesting framework for the process Kharms' narrator goes through in the story.

While prayer as the window to divinity will be relevant to our discussion later on, we must first remember that in "You and I," this concept exists as a caveat, a reverse side to a more central point Druskin wishes to make: the actual importance and potential of interpersonal relationships. Throughout this essay, as in much of his work, Druskin is centrally concerned with companionship. He believes that relationships between two people can reach a special level of closeness such that they become sacred and almost divine in nature, or "noumenal." These noumenal relationships, in turn, become the means through which humans can access the divine. When an isolated individual attempts to locate their self or access a state of transcendence and divinity, they are inevitably met with failure and despair, crushed by the infinite and impossible responsibility to transcend the material realm that God lays upon His subjects.⁹ However, with the help of a true companion (a "co-responsible assistant" (*sootvetstvennyi pomoshchnik*) in Druskin's terminology), the burden is lightened, and the impossible becomes possible. Thus, a central part of the greater search for faith is the search for a true companion.

In fact, this search is visible in Kharms' "The Old Woman." Keeping this aspect of Druskin's philosophy in mind, we can see the narrator's conversations with both the younger lady and Sakerdon Mikhailovich as, at least in part, his search for divine companionship. In both cases, he asks his interlocutor whether or not they believe in God. First, the case of the young lady:

Me: Forgive me, but can I ask you a question about something?

Her (*blushing intensely*): Of course, ask.

Me: Okay, I'll ask you: Do you believe in God?

Her (*surprised*): In God? Yes, of course.

Me: And what would you say to buying a bottle of vodka and coming with me. I live just around the corner.

Her (*fervently*): Absolutely, let's go!¹⁰

⁷ This is already similar to Druskin's views on faith, as expressed throughout his work. Here, the "comic grotesque" can be thought of as one element of the absurdity of everyday life, that is, one particular strain of the absurd. While the two are not identical—Nakhimovsky refers to the comic grotesque as a literary device while Druskin refers to the absurd as a condition of our real world—the two are closely linked. In order to create the comic grotesque, Kharms describes and makes light of the strange, senseless, and cruel events that occur in the world which are impossible to understand logically. That is, he describes the absurd.

⁸ Druskin, Yakov. *Vblizi Vestnikov*, H.A. Frager, Washington, D.C., 1988, p.178

⁹ See Druskin, Yakov. *Vedenie Nevedeniya*, al'manakh zazerkal'e, Saint Petersburg, 1995, pp. 5-14

¹⁰ "Starukha" in Kharms, Daniil. *Polnoe sobranie sochinenii*, tom 2, akademicheskii proekt, Saint Petersburg, 1997, pp.161-188, p.171

While she may believe rather passively and unthinkingly, the narrator remains interested in her, and tries to pursue her. In their conversation, the lady clearly expects the narrator's question to be an invitation to his apartment rather than a questioning of her faith. In fact, the narrator follows up his question about faith with the expected invitation, implying that her answer to his first question may have been a condition, a prerequisite to his invitation. Connecting the discussion back to Druskin, it seems that by confirming her belief in God, she has identified herself as a potential companion for the narrator, prompting him to remain interested in her. Ultimately, however, she is unable to become his companion. In their first encounter, he abandons the prospect of bringing her to his apartment after remembering that the old lady is laying there, dead. The old woman thwarts him a second time, as well. While lugging her corpse to the train station (dismembered and packed in a suitcase), he sees the same woman from the bakery and tries to pursue her. In this case, he is literally weighed down by the old woman: "The suitcase got hampered me terribly...I was covered in sweat, and eventually ran out of strength...when I reached the corner, she wasn't anywhere to be seen."¹¹ In other words, despite showing promise, the dilemma posed by the old woman is overpowering, and her presence thwarts their relationship twice.

In contrast, the narrator's conversation with Sakerdon Mikhailovich is less promising. When asked about his belief in God, Sakerdon takes offense, refusing to answer and describing the question as inappropriate (*neprilichniy*). In response, the narrator seemingly retreated, backpedaling his question and making an excuse to leave. In other words, Sakerdon has demonstrated his unwillingness to be a true and noumenal companion.¹² Thus, consciously or unconsciously, the narrator tries twice to establish a noumenal relationship and find God through a "co-responsible" companion.

In this stage of the narrator's struggle with faith, Kharm's touches another religious idea that will be familiar to the reader from chapter 1: that of the relationship between belief and the desire to believe. After Sakerdon refuses to answer the narrator's question, he states that "there are no believing and nonbelieving people, only those who wish to believe and those who wish not to believe." Sakerdon responds, "in that case, those who wish not to believe already believe in something ... and those who wish to believe don't already believe in anything."¹³ This dialogue rests squarely in the shadow of Druskin's philosophical musings. Through the dialogue of his characters, Kharm's plays with ideas discussed by Druskin in both "On Faith" and "On a nonbelieving person." In "On a nonbelieving person," Druskin describes how, despite faith supposedly requiring so much from humans,¹⁴ it is actually very difficult to describe or locate a person who *does not believe* in God. This paradoxical situation in which the nonbelieving person ceases to exist when placed under examination¹⁵ is reflected in Kharm's conversation: By desiring not to believe, the nonbeliever must tacitly admit to the existence of that which they hope to deny. In order for this to be true, of course, we must accept as fact that the desire to believe or not is the same as actual belief (or lack thereof). This idea mirrors one which Druskin expresses in "On Faith:" "Strictly speaking, I cannot say: 'I believe.' I *don't not* believe. By intuitive logic it does not necessarily follow that I believe. But is this applicable to faith? If there is not indifference or ill will

¹¹ Kharm's, p. 185

¹² Kharm's, pp.175-176

¹³ Kharm's, p. 176

¹⁴ I. e. the overcoming and transcendence of the mind described in Druskin, *Vedenie Nevedeniya (Vision of Blindness)*, "You and I: Noumenal Relationship," and numerous other works. Or, as Druskin himself writes in "On Faith," '*eto ochen' trudno i ochen' legko*' (it is very difficult and very easy).

¹⁵ Sazhin, V. N. (editor). "...*Sborishche druzei, ostavlennykh sud'boyu*:" A. Vvedenskii, L. Lipavskii, YA. Druskin, D. Kharm's, N. Oleinikov, "*chinari*" v tekstakh, dokumentakh, n nssledovaniyakh. Tom pervyi. Lodomir, Moscow, 1998, p. 735

towards faith, then 'I don't not believe,' but if there is an endless fascination with God, then this is already the desire to believe, that is, belief."¹⁶

As the conversation continues, it becomes clear that the narrator is struggling with the elusive nature of faith. When Sakerdon points out that those who desire not to believe must already believe, the narrator responds that it may be so, that he doesn't know. Annoyed, Sakerdon reiterates: "Well, do they believe or not believe in what? In God?" Again, the narrator struggles to pin down exactly what faith can mean. "No," he says, "In immortality."¹⁷ The narrator feels the beginnings of faith, the old woman has prompted him to wrestle with it, and yet he remains unable to pin it down semantically, unable to define it. When the narrator returns to his apartment, he faces a critical moment. He must attempt to re-enter the apartment, and somehow deal with the old woman. Here, he enters into a crisis, trying desperately to force himself to rush in and smash the woman's skull. His fear and uncertainty whirl around him, culminating in a vision of the woman crawling towards him on all fours before he eventually talks himself down and makes it back into his room. In this scene, I see the beginnings of another crucial stage in the process of coming to faith: The struggle with free will.

From *Vision of Blindness* and "You and I: Noumenal Relationship," we know the importance of free will as a topic of Druskin's thought. Essentially, Druskin sees "free will" as a deception on two fronts. First, in the fact of free choice itself, Druskin sees a negative side: If our lives are subject to our choice at every given moment, then we are *forced* to choose in every moment. Even the lack of choice is, in fact, a choice (the choice to do nothing), and in this sense we are imprisoned, rather than being free. We are obligated to constantly choose one of an infinite number of possibilities, and are thus limiting ourselves, closing doors. As Mikhail Epstein writes in his analysis of Druskin's (what?) "freedom, in practice, becomes a chain of necessary limitations."¹⁸ Both Epstein and Avdeenkov, writing on Druskin's views on free will, note the comparison here to Sartre, who expresses a similar sentiment in "Existentialism is a Humanism:" "In one sense, choice is possible; what is impossible is not to choose. I can always choose, but I must also realize that, if I decide not to choose, that still constitutes a choice."¹⁹ This similarity, however, exists only on the surface. Although the idea of being "condemned to choose" appears similarly in both Druskin and Sartre, we must remember that Sartre and Druskin come from starkly different sides of the existential debate. Sartre's statement comes from the viewpoint of *atheistic* existentialism. He stresses the impact and importance of individual choice, and his ultimate conclusion is closer to the cliché "life is what you make it" than anything else. Druskin, on the other hand, is operating from a firmly religious standpoint, and his conclusions are rather different. Druskin overlaps with Sartre in the method he uses to undermine "freedom" in free choice, but Druskin goes further. For Druskin, free will carries actively *negative* connotations. Druskin sees free will as a barrier, a manifestation of the rational mind which ultimately blocked humanity from accessing the divine. Thus, overcoming free will is a critical component of spiritual fulfillment. This is, of course, somewhat absurd: in order to transcend choice, our minds would have to make a choice. In fact, we would have to make the impossible choice of transcending ourselves and our natural capacities. This paradoxical situation, then, can only be transcended with some divine help or action that removes us from the very situation of choice.

Standing outside his apartment door, the narrator begins struggling with these issues, entering into conflict with his will and willpower. He freezes in the hallway, and despite telling himself over and over, "I can't stand here like this," he remains rooted to the spot, unable to move. In the immediate moment, he is powerless, unable to will himself to action. In addition to this immediate crisis of willpower, he faces a simultaneous crisis of free choice. As he describes, "Something terrible had

¹⁶ Druskin, *Vblizi Vestnikov*, p. 88

¹⁷ Kharms, p. 176

¹⁸ Epstein, Mikhail. "[Yakov Druskin](#)," 2018

¹⁹ Sartre, Jean-Paul, *Existentialism is a Humanism*, trans. Carol Macomber, Yale University Press, 2007, p. 44

happened, but it fell to me to do something perhaps even more terrible. My thoughts spun round like a tornado, and I saw only the eyes of the dead old woman as she crawled toward me slowly on all fours.”²⁰ In this moment, Kharms shows us an extreme example of what Druskin would call the “prison of free will,” or the constraining “situation of choice.” The old woman has entered his apartment and died, but now her corpse must be dealt with. To leave the corpse alone is a practical impossibility, but anything he might do to deal with the dead body seems just as awful, if not more awful, than the fact of her death itself. As it stands, the dead old woman exists in a sort of limbo state, in between the real and the surreal. Any action he might take to touch the body or recognize its existence to another person or authority would be an affirmation of her real existence, which is terrifying for the narrator. Even more to the point, he has to *choose* what to do. Whatever happens next will be his conscious choice, bringing consequences which will land squarely on his shoulders.

Eventually, the narrator wrestles his thoughts into submission, at least enough to get back into his room and start packing the old woman into his suitcase. However, throughout the process, he is fully consumed by the project of maintaining willful control of himself. The narrator’s constant struggle with himself—ordering himself around and arguing with his own thoughts—reminds us that the boundary between rationality and insanity, sense and senselessness, normality and absurdity, are frayed to a near-breaking point. The abject absurdity and desperation of the narrator’s situation is overwhelming, and his mind has to work overtime to keep up the illusion of order and control.

The final stage of the narrator’s journey to faith is his literal journey to Lisy Nos. Boarding a train with the old woman in his suitcase, the narrator is wracked by anxiety and illness. His stress and paranoia mount, until suddenly the old woman disappears. At first, this sends the narrator into further distress, but it also seems to give way to a jarring shift. Suddenly, when the train stops, the narrator walks calmly into the woods, kneels down, and says a prayer: “In the name of the Father, Son, and the Holy Spirit, now and forever and for time eternal, amen.”²¹ In their analyses, both Carrick and Nakhimovsky describe the moment of the old woman’s disappearance as a burden being lifted. For Carrick, the disappearance of the old woman “liberates the narrator from the ‘sin’ for which, as a character in a surrogate Dostoevskian narrative, he needs to atone. The narrator does not require God’s intercession to relieve him of the Old Woman: She has already left him. Thus, when the narrator prays, his action is made more dramatic by the fact that it occurs without warning or obvious need.”²² For Nakhimovsky, the old woman’s disappearance signifies the replacement of one burden with another: “The physical burden of the old woman has been lifted, leaving in its stead a spiritual burden, fear and guilt, that is all the more intense.”²³

Reading the story through a Druskinian lens, a third interpretation arises: If, as I have argued above, the dilemma of what to do with the old woman represents the prison of free will, then her disappearance sets the narrator free. Since the old woman has miraculously disappeared, the narrator has been relieved of the necessity to choose. Druskin sees this as a crucial step towards the divine. As he makes clear in “You and I: Noumenal Relationship,” “The slavery of ‘free choice’ can be overcome not through the denial of any particular [possible choice,] but through the denial of the very situation of choice.”²⁴ Thus, the old woman’s disappearance can be seen as the weight and shackles of free will being lifted from the narrator’s shoulders, opening the doors to the divine for him to walk through. We can also see the final scene of the story through the lens of this quote from Druskin’s “On Faith:” “God is not in knowledge or certainty, but in ignorance and uncertainty. Kierkegaard: Paganism is belief in the

²⁰ Kharms, pp.178-179

²¹ Kharms, p. 188

²² Carrick, p. 67

²³ Nakhimovsky, p. 102

²⁴ Druskin, *Vblizi Vestnikov*, p. 169

believable. Christianity is belief in the unbelievable.”²⁵ There is no tangible revelation of knowledge that leads the narrator to accept God. No miracle occurs in the traditional sense, and there is no life-affirming dialogue or monologue a-la Dostoevsky that would rationally *explain* why he goes into the woods and prays. Complete removal from the situation of choice has somehow, mystically, allowed the narrator to accept the uncertainty, even absurdity, of recent events. It is not that he finds God and thus, prays. Rather, it is in the moment of prayer itself, which arises in a vague sort of mystery, that the narrator finally accesses God.

Thus, we can see now how using the conceptual structure provided to us by Druskin opens a new window onto “The Old Woman’s” narrator’s journey to faith. The appearance and sudden death of the old woman prompts the narrator to ask himself spiritual and metaphysical questions, preoccupying his daily existence and presenting him with a dilemma of choice: how to deal with her body? He searches first for a companion, someone with whom he can enter into a true and noumenal relationship. Failing that, he enters into conflict with his inner spirit, specifically with the burden of choice placed upon him by the existence of the old woman’s corpse. Finally, the old woman’s miraculous disappearance removes him from the situation of choice, allowing him to access the divine through prayer.

Reading “The Old Woman” through the lens of Druskin helps us connect and find significance behind the otherwise vague and nebulous religious aspects of Kharms’ writings. While Druskin is not the *only* key to the religious side of Kharms, his philosophical writings offer a great deal of nuance, substance, and cohesion to the function of God and divinity in Kharms’ work.

Beyond the insight it provides for any one story or author, Druskin’s work has fascinating implications for how we understand the *chinari* movement. In his approach to faith, free will, time, and many other philosophical issues, Druskin invites us to reposition *chinari* in line not only with their predecessors in the Russian avant-garde, but with the broader existentialist turn of early 20th century Europe. In addition to Epstein’s parallels between Druskin and Sartre, and Druskin’s explicit references to Kierkegaard, in his writings we find ideas and concepts that echo those of such existentialist thinkers as Karl Jaspers, Martin Heidegger, Miguel de Unamuno, and others. While it is far beyond this paper’s scope to rigorously develop these lines of comparison, I hope to have at least scraped the surface of the broad, exciting implications of reading the *chinari* through Druskin.

²⁵ Druskin, *Vblizi Vestnikov*, p.87

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Guilt and Punishment in Dušan Jovanović's Drama *Kdo to poje Sizifa* (Who Is Singing Sisyphus)¹

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1 Contextualising the Drama

Dušan Jovanović (1939–2021) was a contemporary Slovene playwright, director, essayist and columnist with Serbian roots. He was a professor of directing at the Academy of Theatre, Radio, Film and Television at University of Ljubljana. His creative career began in the 1960s. As a director, he broke the tradition of politically involved literary theatre and brought avantgarde trends into Slovene theatre with a turn in performative art. His opus as a director encompasses his own plays, including the two cult dramas *Pupilijski, papa Pupilo pa Pupilčki* and *Spomenik G* (Monument G), as well as stagings of his own scripts and the works of his contemporaries and classics alike, such as *Waiting for Godot*, *In Search of Lost Time* and *Anna Karenina*. His writing went through various phases – from avantgarde works with elements of ludism, satirically-parodical and politically involved dramas to adaptations of myths and intimate, sometimes autobiographical themes. Private themes are interchanged with social engagement and his works are, according to Mateja Pezdirc Bartol (61), “in motion and evolving all the time, within genre, content, language, style and performance”.

Kdo to poje Sizifa (Who Is Singing Sisyphus) is the concluding drama of *Balkanska trilogija* (The Balkan Trilogy). It was performed in 1997 at the Slovene National Theatre Drama in Ljubljana and was published in 1996 together with the other two plays in the trilogy. The author uses motifs from mythology and literary history in all three dramas: *Antigona* (Antigone), *Uganka korajže* (The Riddle of Courage), *Kdo to poje Sizifa* (Who Is Singing Sisyphus). *Antigona* stems from the Ancient Greek myth and establishes a dialogue with the poetical drama by Dominik Smole with the same title. *Uganka korajže* intertextually references the play *Mother Courage and Her Children* by Bertold Brecht. The plots of all three plays are situated in the war time connected with the breakup of Yugoslavia and the period of transition following it.

Kdo to poje Sizifa is subtitled with the term musical drama, which relates to Wagner's operas in the world of musical art. The play is divided into three parts: *Žalitev* (Insult), *Hajka* (Chase) and *Kazen* (Punishment). Modern as well as post-modern elements can be found in it. The perspective of the drama is subjective and the dramatic reality is the reality of *Operni pevec* (the Opera Singer). His co-workers, memories and hallucinations enter his reality. The reality of the opera rehearsals and the Opera Singer's paranoia intertwine, which is a distinctive postmodern characteristic. The fragmental scenes are filled with topoi from classical and popular culture that build the intertextual layers. Autoreferential elements can be found as well. The text is not double coded, which is a typical feature of postmodernism, as it is solely meant for intellectual reading, which led to the theatre audience expressing disapproval (Kermanauer 133). The alteration of the myth and its transfer into the modern society is a technique typical of modernist literature as well (Kralj 103).

2 Story

2.1 Events

Functions are difficult to identify due to various jumps in time and place. The opera *Kdo to poje Sizifa* (Who is singing Sisyphus) is being staged in the Cologne Opera. The title role is played by an immigrant from one of the former Yugoslavian republics who is burdened with his origins and

¹ The draft is translated from Slovene by Tinkara Uršič Fratina.

feeling guilty for his past actions. Neznanka (the Unknown Woman) is calling him on the telephone and reminding him of his decisions – namely, as a radio host, he played nationalistic music during the war, thus encouraging violence. He is trying to run away from the Unknown Woman's allegations. At the same time, the scenes up to the one of Sisyphus's punishment in Hades are being rehearsed.

Indices are what marks the central self of the Opera Singer and the chronotope. They appear as titles of performances. The first call that the Opera Singer receives from his homeland anchors the plot in the chronotope. The unsuccessful nail hammering, as he wants to hang a picture of a rock, is a variation of the Sisyphean labour. In the dreamlike scenes of the chase, the index of a shepherd on (Balkan) pastures indicates a chronotope of the Opera Singer's origins. Similarly, the red star that is fading away in a tunnel denotes the breakup of Yugoslavia and the wars connected with it. Rojak's (Compatriot's) short embedded narrative about wolves and shepherds can be considered an indice as well; it metaphorically points to the understanding of the Balkan interethnic situations in which the Opera Singer played, according to his own opinion, "patriotic" nationalistic music. Intertextual references to classical and popular culture appear as indices as well.

2.2 Actantial model

The actantial model can be constructed in two ways that lead to two contradictory interpretations of the central self and his ethical value. In both cases the subject is represented by the Opera Singer. In the first model, the position of the object is taken by the flight from punishment. It stems from the Opera Singer's belief that he acted rightly when he played music that encouraged nationalism, fighting for independence and violence against members of other nationalities during the war. His objective is to protect himself from the Unknown Woman's vengeance and his own conscience. His helper is the Compatriot, a representative of the society which the Opera Singer comes from. The Compatriot defends him with his principles and protects him from guilt; justice is on the side of shepherds and not wolves, although they both butcher sheep and cause damage to each other. Mother's warnings of the fatality of passions are overridden by the cultural memory. The Opera Singer gives himself over to it in the football match scene, which is a metaphor for war. According to this version of the actantial model, the Opera Singer is certain of his innocence.

The second variation of the model places punishment in the position of the object. The Opera Singer feels the guilt that he at first does not admit to, but cannot hide it from himself anymore as the Unknown Woman keeps calling him. He accepts the punishment that is realised in rolling the boulder by singing. His aim is to calm his conscience by fulfilling the task, his conscience being simultaneously the sender and the receiver of his action. D. D. (5) argues that all type characters are allegories of desires, memories and feelings of the Opera Singer. This is analogous to Jovanović's essay *Sizif* (Sisyphus) (*Paberk* 163), in which he writes that the boulder crushes Sisyphus into dust after he has done the same with the boulder. Sisyphus's identity crumbles and its typified components are incarnated in other dramatic personas, just as the "isolated parts of memory" (Tarkowski) are embodied in Andrei Tarkowski's film *Solaris*, which Jovanović intertextually references in the excerpt that is used in identical form in both the essay and the drama. The Unknown Woman personifies the Opera Singer's guilt; she fills the positions of sender, receiver and helper, as she reminds the Opera singer of the punishment that he is deserving of. Her phone calls are calls of the subconscious into the conscious mind. The Unknown Woman as a feeling of guilt could even take the position of the object, as the punishment already exists in the awareness of a crime for which no penalty exists. The Opera singer experiences Raskolnikov's punishment, but he, unlike Jovanović's character, has a possibility to turn himself in and actually does so. The Compatriot and the Unknown Woman switch places in this model; the Compatriot takes the place of the opponent. The Opera Singer craves the punishment to calm his consciousness, but the Compatriot substantiates the righteousness of his act from the ethnic society's point of view. The Compatriot is the "burden of origin" (D. D. 5) of the Opera Singer and a symbol of him belonging to one of the Yugoslavian ethnic groups that broke-up during the war. The second actantial model, taking into consideration the intertextual reference to *Solaris*, leads to an interpretation that shows all characters as parts of the

Opera Singer's crumbled identity, who takes all positions in the model himself and directs the action to the Sisyphean effort to cleanse his consciousness.

2.3 Chronotope

The chronotope of the drama is dual. The title of the trilogy locates the Opera Singer's origins in Balkan. The wars during which he worked at the radio station and the fading of the red star place the action in the time after the breakup of Yugoslavia. His nationality is not specified, he is a member of one of the nations that fought during the wars. His nationality is not important, it could be any of the Yugoslavian nationalities, as the inciting of violence was present on all sides during the war and nobody is blameless. Balkan, as a stereotypical rural region of primitive ethnic groups that are unable to control their passions and desires, is represented by the Compatriot. Both he and the Opera Singer are moved to German Cologne from their original chronotope. The Cologne Opera is the dramatic reality of the Opera Singer. Germany is the opposite of Balkan because of its order, precision and functioning laws. The opera house represents music, which is, from Madame de Staël on, stereotypically considered to be the central point of German culture.

In the Compatriot's legally disordered Balkan, culture is reduced to stories about shepherds and wolves ("ours" and "theirs"), the shepherd's flute and war songs. These are useful products for the society; their primary purpose is not aesthetic enjoyment but encouraging economic and military actions that benefit the community. The Opera Singer is an immigrant in Cologne and a foreigner in the chronotope of the cultivated Central Europe. Elements from his original Balkan chronotope intrude into the dramatic reality. He cannot forget them, even though he obsessively keeps on repeating the German sentence "Ich bin ein Opernsänger," (Jovanović *Balkanska* 97) after every phone call from his homeland. He is trying to persuade himself that he belongs to the chronotope of the German opera singer, not the Balkan radio host and a baby in the Compatriot's cradle. In Germany, the Opera Singer belongs to the cultural society, he is a successful and eminent individual – he brags about this in his first phone call to a friend from his homeland.

Immigrating paid off and it seems like he was able to sever ties with his past. But the Compatriot, the Unknown Woman and the Mother keep barging into his consciousness from his memory. The Compatriot's fate is, unlike the Opera Singer's, stereotypically Balkan-like. In one of the scenes, he appears as a garbageman at a train station; he does not do away with his thoughts of his homeland, does not try to hide his cultural memory and patterns or "tame his low passions," (Jovanović *Balkanska* 101) as Mother instructs the Opera Singer. Although the Compatriot is an immigrant in Germany, he still consciously lives in his primary chronotope and sings Balkan songs at the train station. Compatriot's chronotope is imprinted on the Opera Singer with his childhood memories, even though everything changed "when he started singing" (Jovanović *Balkanska* 99). The Opera Singer becomes aware of their common chronotope, he falsely equals himself with the Compatriot and asks Perzefona (Persephone) (his co-actor and at the same time the Unknown Woman, who threatens him because of the death of her loved ones that was caused by ethnical intolerance) why he is the one that has to bear the punishment for his guilt and not the Compatriot. The Opera Singer's social status is different, he has (unsuccessfully) changed his old chronotope and Persephone would rather "take an opera singer than a garbageman" (Jovanović *Balkanska* 116) who lives in his primary chronotope and does not feel the guilt. The Opera Singer's punishment partly stems from his awareness of his own guilt. It is possible to understand it as a personal guilt of an intellectual who fuelled and justified armed conflict and the genocide related to it by favouring his own ethnic group.

3 Plot

3.1 Time

The narrative time is the time of opera rehearsals and progresses linearly. Simultaneity occurs in scenes with a parallel stage. The narrative time coincides with the Opera Singer's consciousness.

He returns to the past, to his meeting with Mother, love encounters with Ljubica (Darling) and his flight from the homeland. His real memories of the train journey blend with dreamy images of a shepherd. It is impossible to differentiate between hallucinations and memories. We do not know whether it is really the Unknown Woman that is calling the Opera Singer from Balkan or simply the voice of his consciousness. From the images of the Opera Singer's consciousness, the narration returns (without any notes in the stage directions) to the narrative time of the opera house where rehearsals are progressing. In the first two acts, deceleration and stillness alternate. In the final act the narrative time and the time of the plot become one. The Opera Singer in the role of Sisyphus acts out the punishment of the mythical hero and he himself endures his punishment as he is conscious of his guilt.

Some events are repeated. Their meaning is emphasised with the title of the scenes that number the repetitions. In the first act, the Unknown Woman's call and nail hammering are repeated with variations and irregularly. The four calls formulate the Unknown Woman's accusations at the Opera Singer in different ways. The repetition makes the Opera Singer feel the guilt that he eventually acknowledges. The Sisyphean nail hammering represents his stubbornness and ineffectiveness in any kind of action. His mood is ruined by failure, he doubts his interpretation of the events during the war and his responsibility. The Opera Singer's thought about his origins is always followed by singing in German. His intonation changes even though the words remain the same. At first, he is certain of his new identity as a German musician and sings it overwhelmed with joy. The Unknown Woman's calls plant a seed of doubt about erasing the past. The syntagma becomes a means to uncertainly affirm himself. This turns into a screaming self-persuasion when the repressed Compatriot wakes up. Towards the end of the first act, the sentence loses its meaning completely, the Opera Singer does not believe it anymore. The last Unknown Woman's call cannot be followed by singing in German as the Opera Singer cannot justify his actions with it. His claim should have been denied: *er ist kein Opernsänger*.

3.2 Focalisation

The fragmentary dramatic narrative formed with subjective scenes of the Opera Singer's public and private life is focalised from his point of view. The scenes are arranged according to the Opera Singer's consciousness in which, during the opera rehearsals, contents from his childhood and youth alternate with those from German middle-class life. His co-actors change into persons from his private life or he portrays parts of his own crumbled identity onto them.

3.3 Characterisation

Characters are named after their occupation (the Opera Singer, Maestro) or after their role in the Opera Singer's life (Mother, Darling, Compatriot, the Unknown Woman). In the *dramatis personae*, the Opera Singer and the Unknown Woman are also named with their opera roles: Sisyphus and Persephone. *Skakalka v globino* (Depth Jumper) is the only one that is only named with her opera role. The personas are characterised by their speech and actions that are predominantly described in extensive stage directions. "They play themselves and their roles at the same time." (Jovanović *Balkanska* 91). In the opera *Who is Singing Sisyphus*, Darling is Sisyphus's lover and at the same time she is a married German opera singer who is the Opera Singer's lover. The Depth Jumper as an actress at rehearsals waits for her part to come on stage and narrates the story of a play within a play. She and Maestro share the epic passages in which they summarize the story of Sisyphus from the Greek mythology. However, the playwright's subject's statement from the introductory stage directions is true only in part as Mother and Compatriot do not play a role in the opera. In the first two acts, they appear as parts of the Opera Singer's consciousness. But if Mother and Compatriot are understood as having roles in the opera and not only as contents of the Opera singer's consciousness, all fragmental dream-like scenes are a part of the play within the play – the opera *Who Is Singing Sisyphus*. The Unknown Woman is another actress who has two roles in the opera – the Unknown Woman and Persephone, and the Opera Singer plays Sisyphus and the Opera Singer, two parts in the same opera. Thus, the opera *Who Is Singing Sisyphus* could equal Jovanović's play *Kdo to poje Sizifa*

(Who Is Singing Sisyphus). The scenes in which the characters step out of their opera parts and become opera singers are autoreferential comments.

The given interpretation that is substantiated by the introductory stage directions partly diverges from the interpretation based on Jovanović's essay *Sizif* (Sisyphus) and the intertextual reference to the film *Solaris*. According to the latter, all characters are a part of the Opera Singer's consciousness – the perspective of the whole drama leads to this and the names of the characters originate from the Opera Singer's relationship with them. The contents of the Opera Singer's consciousness intertwine with his tangible co-workers. The feeling of guilt is embodied in the hallucination of the Unknown Woman who merges with the actress in the role of Persephone. The Opera Singer's cultural memory is embodied in the Compatriot and links with the garbageman at the German train station. In the last scene of the drama, all characters are saying farewell to the Opera Singer, just like Hari says goodbye to Kris in Tarkowski's *Solaris*. Parts of the Opera Singer's crumbled identity will part from him in order for him to forget about them or they will merge into a unified personality and order will be restored, just like in the Greek tragedy.

4 Intertextuality

In his drama, Jovanović pastiches intertextual references to opera arias with which he defines German opera's place in opposition to partisan, shepherd and fan chants from Balkan. At the beginning of the drama, the Depth Jumper mentions a suicide Dorothy Hale and a painting by Frida Kahlo with which she explains the meaning of her role and the syntagma from her naming. Darling names the Opera Singer with the name of the lead character of Lermontov's novel *A Hero of Our Time*. While the Opera Singer is reading the novel, Mother is ironing his clothes; ironically, the hero of his time, who is still dependent on his parents. In the role that the reference to Lermontov's novel assigns to him, the Opera Singer is also a person who could not and would not escape his time. During the war he was warming up for quite some time before he started eagerly playing music that was, according to his words, appropriate for the war situation (Jovanović *Balkanska* 96), but later he could not contain his passions and shifted from the primary passivity to the other extreme. The main intertextual reference which the drama's plot is based on and is repeated in motifs is the Ancient Greek myth of Sisyphus. The drama also refers to Albert Camus's *The Myth of Sisyphus* and his happy Sisyphus.

5 The Sisyphus Theme

5.1 The Ancient Greek Myth

Sisyphus, "the craftiest of men", betrays Zeus's secret and rebels against the divine order by chaining Death, thus cheating the gods of the underworld so he could return to Earth. The first time, he cheated the chief of the gods – he told the river god Asopus that Zeus kidnapped his daughter. In return, Asopus promises him that he will cause a spring to flow on the Corinthian acropolis. Sisyphus places the benefit of the polis before loyalty to Zeus; he is responsible for the polis as its founder and king. Zeus intends to punish him for his betrayal. This way, Sisyphus is similar to Prometheus, who steals from gods in order to benefit humans. Zeus's decision is that Sisyphus should die. But Sisyphus is not prepared to accept this punishment and defies the god once again. By chaining Death, he resists Zeus, escapes the punishment and upsets the natural order. Until Ares frees Death, no one can die, "not even the ones who are beheaded or cut into pieces" (Graves 6). After order is restored, Death leads Sisyphus to Hades. Sisyphus still does not want to die so he cheats Hades and Persephone to allow him to temporarily leave the underworld, but this turns into a permanent arrangement. When Death brings him to Hades again, he is sent to Tartarus where the wickedest criminals are punished. Because of his deceitfulness he is sentenced to a never ending, aimless task – rolling a boulder to the top of a hill.

5.2 Sisyphus's Guilt and Punishment in Jovanović

Jovanović's drama references the myth of Sisyphus with its three-part structure: *Žalitev* (Insult), in which Sisyphus betrays the gods, *Hajka* (Chase), in which he is running from the underworld and *Kazen* (Punishment) in Hades. In the first act, Maestro explains Sisyphus's guilt. Sisyphus is described as a human who contemptuously defies gods out of "hate for death and war" (Jovanović *Balkanska* 92). In antiquity, Sisyphus did not defy gods because of his reluctance towards wars. He chained Death so he would not need to endure his punishment in Hades. He incurred it when he provided a spring for his people – a good deed for the community. In the world of antiquity, disabling Death meant upsetting the natural cyclical order out of self-interest and was not considered a positive action, as Maestro describes it. Sisyphus was punished for defying the gods.

Jovanović's titular Sisyphus (the Opera Singer) is not punished because of his humanitarian defiance of gods. There is no transcendence above the dramatic personae that would judge and punish. The Opera Singer is punished by the society and his own consciousness. The latter is split into isolated units of consciousness that punish the Opera Singer with their presence. Maestro speaks of hatred of wars; the Opera Singer was the one that encouraged war violence. His actions during the war were not thought through, even though he is trying to rationally explain them with the music's relevance for the circumstances. His actions are revealed in the scene titled *Mousetrap* with the football match metaphor. The Opera Singer followed the events of the war from his radio studio as if he were watching a football match from the grandstand and acting in the same way as well. He followed his instincts and cheered "our own" without differentiating between a war and a football match, between people's lives and scoring goals. There is no legal punishment for playing music that encouraged war violence over the radio. If it existed, too many people would have to be punished. It is not even possible to convict everyone who executed mass murders under orders (Jovanović *Sizif* 161). There is no one above the Opera Singer that could punish him. He himself starts to become aware of his guilt. He runs away from the chronotope of his crime which, legally speaking, is not a crime, just as Sisyphus runs from Hades. The Opera Singer does not want to remember his old self who was responsible for choosing what kind of music to play. Sisyphus ran from the kingdom of the dead, the Opera Singer from the place where mass murders were perpetrated. He is punished by the legal non-existence of the crime and the punishment for it, as he could calm his consciousness by enduring the punishment. If there were a boulder (punishment) for him, he would fall in love with it, just as Sisyphus falls in love with his boulder in the last act of the drama. Absurdly, the Opera Singer is punished by the lack of punishment for him. There is no moral offence in the ancient story about Sisyphus, there is only the defiance against the gods' rule; they punish him of their own accord. However, Jovanović's Sisyphus is preoccupied with an ethical offence. The need for punishment is rooted in himself; it would restore order in the Opera Singer's inner world of ethical norms. The ancient Sisyphus is punished for defying the divine order and runs away from the punishment because of his self-interest. In Jovanović's world without gods and judges, there is nobody who would take upon themselves the role of an ethical judge for intellectuals who support war violence. The court and punishment are reserved for people with a moral compass; their role is taken over by consciousness that the Compatriot as an independent person lacks. The Opera Singer is running away from it at first, but his Sisyphean search for inner peace eventually turns into an equally Sisyphean search for punishment.

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The Production of Art in Isaac Babel's *Red Cavalry*

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Introduction

A brass statue of a man sits on Zhukovskovo street in Odessa with a notebook and pen in his lap. He gazes off towards somewhere in the distance. What exactly he's looking at—there's no way to tell from the pictures. He stares with a half-grin and plaintive eyes behind round spectacles. The statue depicts Isaac Babel, the Odessan and Soviet short story master. Off to his right, a brass disk balances on the cobblestone. For the sculptor, the disk represents a carriage wheel from Babel's famous *Red Cavalry* cycle, or alternatively "the wheel of fate."¹ To me, it looks more like a painter's pallet.

Babel himself is often compared to the visual arts—Victor Terras draws a connection to the painter Marc Chagall, since "the space of both artists is color without a boundary, none even between heaven and earth. In this continuum of color there floats images—some beautiful, some sordid, some delicately ethereal, some coarsely naturalistic."² Here Terras touches on the core concern of most Babel scholarship: his beautiful combination of extremes. This essay will read Babel's use of ambiguity as an argument about what makes good art.

In *Red Cavalry*, the combination of opposites is usually read as part of a pacifistic intellectual's reconciliation with a warrior society with which he travels. The intellectual never comes to these terms. On one side, the intellectual feels a morbid attraction to bloodshed, along with the sinking suspicion that the warriors' brutality provides what the historical moment requires. On the flipside, the intellectual's humanism is revolted by these killers and must screen his Jewish identity from their hands drenched in pogrom. The intellectual is Lyutov, a semi-autobiographical depiction of Babel himself. Lyutov writes about his time as a journalist embedded with the 1st Cavalry Army, a Red Army formation organized from local Cossacks that fought in the two-year long Polish-Soviet War. Critics often emphasize *Red Cavalry*'s contrasts, observing a "double allegiance to opposite attitudes and values" which Renato Poggioli identifies as an antagonism between Cossack and Jew, "the killers and the killed," or most generally, the "heroic and pathetic" elements of Babel's prose.³ Poggioli continues by quoting Lionel Trilling's influential 1929 essay on *Red Cavalry*, in which he expressed his disturbance at the novel's beautiful violence. Trilling wrote of *Red Cavalry*:

The stories were about violence of the most extreme kind, yet they were composed with a striking elegance and precision of objectivity, and also with a kind of lyric *joy*, so that one could not at once know just how the author was responding to the brutality he recorded, whether he thought it good or bad, justified or not justified.⁴

Trilling's simultaneous attraction to and revulsion for *Red Cavalry* mirrors the predicament of its narrator, who revels in his "lyric *joy*" when describing brutality yet rides into battle with an unloaded gun ("After the Battle").⁵ I would like to provide another reading of Babel, where this predicament concerns the aesthetic, rather than the social, realm. We can read *Red Cavalry* as an argument about art, one in which Babel presents multiple contrasting artistic processes that develop towards a conception of the great artist.

Red Cavalry is full of characters who speak in verse, creating performances that are captivating both to the novel's readers and its in-text audiences. These characters narrate *skaz* tales in their own chapters, a form of direct speech storytelling which Val Vinokur notes, in Babel's world, is reserved for "the people of the sword."⁶ These narrators make up the Cossack contribution to art—galloping, bawdy, and visceral. Yet, possibly due to this off-the-cuff style, none are officially recognized as artists. In

“Konkin,” the Cossack Vaska tries to prove to a captured Pole that he’s a ventriloquist, an attempt that produces more fear than amazement; and in “At Saint Valentine’s” the platoon leader Afonka Bida tries to play the organ, but the sounds are just as brutal to the ears as his gun to Polish villagers.⁷ Babel himself sat over his work for ages, striving towards a perfection which is reached in his multivocal portrayal of artistic creation. Both attempts at art imply a striking truth about the characters who commit them, but both are much too spontaneous to be counted in the ranks of Babel’s canon.

Babel is quick to signal the aesthetic faults of these artists, though not directly through his narrator’s judgement, which carries its own, distinct artistic lens. Instead, we come to understand Babel’s aesthetic criticism through the subtleties of his artists’ works and lives themselves. Babel inserts artists throughout his work, including fictionalized versions of real writers, like Guy de Maupassant, who appears in an eponymous story from one of Babel’s early works. All of the artists which appear in *Red Cavalry* are, as far as we know, products of Babel’s vibrant imagination, and they serve as foils and character studies in Babel’s quest to fashion the great artist. These artists are Lyutov the writer, Sashka Christ the singer, and Pan Apolek the painter. Each of these artists, including Maupassant, fall short of Babel’s ideal—except Pan Apolek, whose aesthetic perfection signals him as Babel’s true literary stand-in. For Babel, great art is deeply connected to the harnessing of passion. Great art stems from passion, but also tames it.

Guy de Maupassant

At least one of these artists served as an early writerly inspiration for Babel’s work. This artist is Guy de Maupassant, who Babel fictionalizes outside of *Red Cavalry* as a coy trickster that suppressed some of his penetrating artistic vision to produce lively, “fructifying” art.⁸ This tradeoff is untenable, and Maupassant’s life ends in debased tragedy, as his lack of a critical eye causes his massive passion to collapse in upon itself. Babel describes Maupassant’s writing like this:

As for Maupassant, maybe he doesn’t know anything, maybe he knows everything; a covered wagon clatters down a scorched road, in the carriage sit the fat and sly Polyte and a strapping clumsy peasant lass. What they’re doing in there and why they are doing it—that’s their business. The sky is hot, the earth is hot. Polyte and the lass are dripping with sweat, while the wagon clatters on the bright scorched road. And that’s all⁹

This passage is what earns Maupassant the title “singer of the sun,” which Babel does not bestow lightly.¹⁰ This is because there is nothing “cerebral” in Maupassant’s description—instead, he restricts his prose to only what the sun might know about: scorched roads, covered wagons, hot earth, and sweat.¹¹ Maupassant embodies the heat and passion of a sexual encounter without directly “knowing” it. This is an artistic achievement for Babel, whose work is full of implication and things left unsaid. Babel even called himself a “master of silence.”¹² Of course, this was during a speech at the 1934 First Soviet Writers’ Congress, where his silence carried a note of dismay at the State restrictions tightening around his work. So, silence is double-edged—it can be productive in conveying something that is more profoundly left unsaid, or it can be a stifling expression of incapacitation brought on by an outside force.

In the end, Babel finds his Maupassant to be a representative of the latter, stifling silence. In his later fictional biography “Guy de Maupassant,” he relates how the Frenchman ended his life in an insane asylum, where “he crawled about on all fours and ate his own excrement...Mr. Maupassant has turned into an animal.”¹³ In the most monstrous of ways, Maupassant becomes his passion. He has lost the distance between himself and his art, a distance which provides the necessary preconditions for a healthy critical eye.

While he draws inspiration from Maupassant's mystery and excitement, in the final analysis Babel finds the author's mystery more muddled than ambivalent, and his excitement more foolish than ironic. From these roots Babel develops Lyutov, a narrator who is deeply, yet unintentionally, ironic and ambivalent.

Lyutov

Most of *Red Cavalry's* bloody stories are filtered through the spectacles of Lyutov. The orthodox reading of *Red Cavalry*, that it is a tale concerning the intellectual's relation to society, is formed by the stark contrasts Lyutov encounters. Such readings often collapse the difference between Babel and Lyutov, discussing them as pseudonyms for each other, yet their relationship is much more complex than this would suggest.¹⁴ Babel develops and deploys Lyutov as representative of a certain ethos and art style, but by no means fully identifies with him. In fact, Babel's distance from Lyutov allows us to situate the character as a step, not the culmination, of Babel's artistic judgement.

Like Maupassant, Lyutov is sensual and attracted to the extremes of emotion—but his affect is awkward, not insouciant. He appears like someone who has read and adored Maupassant's love stories but is having trouble translating them into his own life. This self-consciousness comes across even when Lyutov succeeds in romance. In "The Kiss," he falls in love with a Jewish woman and wins her affections like this: "'For your information,' I said when I ran into Tomilina in the hall, 'for your information, I should tell you that I have a law degree, and one could say I'm something of an intellectual.'" ¹⁵ Through his intellectualism, Lyutov retains an ironic distance from Maupassant's fervent passion—a quality that allows him to see the passionate Cossacks in frightening detail. Lyutov demonstrates the artistic strength that ironic detachment affords the artist with his contradictory descriptions of warriors like Afonka Bida, who cries in a "plaintive womanly voice," and Savitsky, who walks on "long legs like girls sheathed to the shoulders in shining riding boots."¹⁶

Lyutov directs this critique against Cossack violence, as he constantly tries to stop fights, but it is the critical component of his art, as opposed to Maupassant's, which is an important development. Such a sharp critical eye is dangerous in that its proper use requires the artist to be fully aware of their own ironies and contradictions. Although he beautifully describes the ambiguities of the Cossacks and understands the humor and tragedy of a clumsy intellectual riding alongside glorious killers, Lyutov never deals with the violent energy of his own art and its relation to his pacifism. Instead, Lyutov's violent art underlies Cossack violence, and serves as his self-induction into-and-above the Cossack myth. Although on the surface, Lyutov is the object of Cossack abuse, he subtly takes on a singular Godlike role in his narration, an act that limits his art's quality but allows him to remain detached and morally superior to the Cossacks.

The aesthetics of Lyutov's art contradicts its values. Lyutov hides this contradiction, so instead of a laudable mystery it becomes a symbol of his cowardice and overriding cruelty. This comes through most clearly in the story "Dolgushov's Death," where a dying Dolgushov begs Lyutov to end his misery, and Lyutov turns his back. The pacifist's refusal to kill entails more violence than would a simple bullet, as Dolgushov says, "The *szlatcha* will come along and have some fun with me."¹⁷ Lyutov's act of sympathy is debased from the outset. His pacifism is linked to a cruel negligence, the kind previously expressed by a Cossack commander.¹⁸ This closing of distance between Lyutov and his Cossack object of study nullifies his humanist critique.

Lyutov's critical capacity is further twisted by his indulgence in bloody description. No one is seen injuring Dolgushov, so Lyutov paints the man's gore into our imagination: "His belly had been torn out, guts crawling to his knees, and you could see the heartbeats."¹⁹ Lyutov spares no detail in describing the innards of this man, yet becomes squeamish when that literary brutalization should turn into action. Lyutov can take no pacifist stance—he has already done the damage. Although Lyutov cannot bring himself to kill,

he can write characters who will. Far from a meek victim of Cossack oppression, in prose Lyutov is the ur-aggressor who arranges bodies across the field so that he can emerge as a tragic pacifist.

Lyutov has a heavy authorial hand, a lack of subtlety that keeps his art from greatness. Lyutov reveals the traces of his brush and the way he manipulates characters to reach a desired conclusion. Lyutov's desire to straddle the middle-ground is distinct from the glorious, contradictory nature of Babel's artists like Sashka Christ and Pan Apolek. These artists are proud of their dual nature, which they express in equal measure through all their art. Lyutov is ashamed of his competing impulses to violence and peace and uses one to tame the other. Through Sashka Christ, Babel introduces an artist who is completely unashamed of his extreme contradictions. Lyutov isolates his contradictions, using his art as a critical tool that ignores himself. Sashka gains his heroic status through his contradiction, and creates a critically detached art, fully contained within himself.

Sashka Christ

Sashka Christ embodies ambiguity. He is a saint and a syphilitic, and the Cossacks seem to enjoy his music much more than they do Lyutov's prose—Cossacks being illiterate as they are. In this way, Sashka's art is democratic. In his sensuousness, Sashka also resembles Maupassant. Despite what his syphilis might suggest, though, Sashka is not merely a libertine. His art also has a serious weight and detachment which we found in Lyutov, but which was absent from Maupassant. By combining these two elements, the profane and the sacred, Sashka represents a further development in Babel's conception of great art. Reinterpreting Maupassant, Sashka does not examine society, but examines himself—a subject undoubtedly worth study due to his saintly nature. Maupassant was limited by his refusal to look towards society, because the only other things he saw were sex and the sun. Lyutov tried to critique society but could not separate his critique from his own moral failings. Sashka has no need to look outside himself because he can look to God.

Sashka's sainthood creates an aura of respect around his character. Unlike Lyutov, who is pacifistic in practice, but violent in writing; Sashka acts profanely, but tells his story and sings his songs with a weighty sense of the sacred. Sashka's contradiction serves as a mythologizing force, rather than one which nullifies his artistic power. This is because Sashka does not rest his art on an intellectual, pacifist ethos, but commits his art to his life, reveling in its production and aesthetic effects on the world. While Lyutov appears even more pathetic in contrast with the Cossacks and with his own art; Sashka draws inspiration from the holy fools, whose internal contrast proves their sainthood. Sashka's contraction of syphilis triggers the rest of his hagiography, and in this way his sainthood is fed in equal parts by carnal desire and divine inheritance.

This balance is delicate and strictly maintained—the prose matches the point. Sashka gives into lust, but his sex is written about with the modesty and elision of a Bible verse: “And Adam knew Eve his wife; and she conceived;” “Sashka went over to her—and caught a foul disease.”²⁰ This contradictory gesture towards sexual pleasure isn't just due to embarrassment, it is directly linked to Sashka's status as a saint. Sentences before, Sashka's stepfather Tarakanych “lay with her and fooled around to his heart's content.”²¹ In *Red Cavalry*, sex can be beautiful, “The listless moon crawled out of the clouds and lingered on Sasha's bare knee,” (“The Widow”) or brutal, “Kurdyukov the half-wit mounted her and started to bounce as though in the saddle,” (“At Saint Valentine's”) but it is only ignored for Sashka.²² Stepping around sex while simultaneously including it in a highly debauched form shows Sashka's development over Maupassant, who wrote about sex as the highest human expression. Sashka maintains that passion but interweaves it with a tempering sanctity. This moment also implies that Lyutov merely transcribed Sashka's story. If he had been embellishing, Lyutov would not have resisted a vivid description of the saint losing his virginity. The tale would have lost its mythical mysteriousness, and Sashka would appear more a womanizer than a saint.

As a saint, Sashka is free from Maupassant's obsessions and Lyutov's self-consciousness. He knows that his perspective has a divine writ, so Sashka's artistic experience can be completely insular, yet still effect the masses. Sashka receives this holy message in bed:

Two silver cords appeared to him and twisted into a thick thread suspended from the sky, and a cradle hung down from them... Sashka rejoiced in his waking dream and kept closing his eyes so as not to see the horse collars under his mother's bed.²³

Sashka's vision is a rebirth, or more literally, a return to infancy. The sky reaches down and swaddles Sashka. He is reminded of his real lineage, not to Tarakanych (whose name sounds like "Cockroachson"), but to God himself. Victor Shklovsky famously said that Babel "speaks of the stars and the clap in the same voice," and this observation is particularly true for Sashka Christ.²⁴ The stars and syphilis represent Sashka's twin heritage—the latter to God, and the former to mankind.

It is this twin purpose that positions Sashka as a rift-mender. He is equally approachable to the "Old muzhiks, and the worst of them too," and their wives, who "run to Sashka to recover from the thoughtless ways of their men, and they were never mad at him because of his love and because of his disease."²⁵ Still, Sashka constantly struggles between his own two lineages. As he is raised up to heaven, Sashka tries to stay asleep and choose God's music over "the horse collars under his mother's bed," a decision that privileges the holy over the material. Lyutov, responding to his Cossack passions, describes the world as "a meadow traversed by women and horses," so Sashka's attempt to shut this out would close off his humanity. However, Sashka is pulled away by real world concerns—Tarakanych is giving his mother syphilis. Sashka steps out into the field and conducts an extremely profane deal that would trade his mother's life for the right to live as a saint. Sashka chooses between the holy cradle and the profane meadow (or field). For Sashka, God lives in the dreamer's realm, and Sashka's contradictory art inhabits the groggy space between sleep and wakefulness: "Sashka pacified me with that swaying, muffled voice of his."²⁶

This liminality is visible in Sashka's song, which goes "Star of the fields...star of the fields above my father's house, my mother's hand is full of sorrows..."²⁷ Sashka's star is 'of the fields,' an indeterminate place between high and low, holy and profane. The song cannot remain within this ambiguity, however, and its celestial balance is quickly dragged back down to a profoundly worldly concern—Sashka's mother's once "clean" body, is now "full of sorrows."²⁸ In this way, Sashka's art bounces from the divine to the worldly, and even from the ambiguous to the direct.

Sashka's unresolved song affects the same in its audience, which falls into a trancelike state. His voice is "pacifying," yet it provokes a strange, inverted kind of passion. In "The Song," Sashka's song both deescalates a potential rape and convinces the potential victim to "lay down" with Sashka.²⁹ This muddled, even suggestible state is a salve for soldiers: "Sashka alone could strew our wearisome way with tunes and tears. Footsteps of blood marked our way. Song flew over these footsteps of ours."³⁰ Sashka's art is like the ghostly afterimage of Cossack passion—guided by blood, but also above it (his song "flew over" the Cossack path). He only appears at night, as a singer of the moon that hangs in a sky not unlike Gedali's, where "delicate blood pours from an overturned bottle up there, and a whiff of decay overcame me."³¹ Sashka's song harnesses and inverts passion, creating a slow, languorous reaction.³²

"Star of the fields" is the only song of Sashka's that we are shown, and its alignment with his life story and specific sleepy ambiguity suggests that this is the extent of his artistic expression. Although Sashka's art is powerful and stems from "deep and ancient" roots, its subject is limited to Sashka, and its effect limited to his ethos.³³ For Babel, such limitation stifles art in its truest expression. Only a truly self-negating, democratic art can fully embody the ambiguity which Sashka begins to suggest. The artist with this skill is Pan Apolek.

Pan Apolek

Pan Apolek creates an art whose contradiction is projected out into the world. His subjects are the unseen, who he renders in the images of saints. His passion is uncorrupted by Maupassant's blindness, Lyutov's intrinsic violence, or Sashka's languorousness. Where Sashka's art gained power by projecting his own biographical contradictions into the hearts of others, Apolek's art reveals the world to itself by exploiting its own contradictions. Apolek does not invert passion, he presents it in all its paradoxes—sex and violence, awe and pity.

We can introduce Apolek's revelatory use of passion by comparing his claim to sainthood with that of Sashka Christ. Sashka receives a secondhand (though Lyutov) hagiography in which he is anointed as Messiah by God Himself. It is only at the end of Sashka's story that we see his art. As far as authenticity goes in *Red Cavalry*, Sashka is a verifiable great man. Sashka is not so much an exploiter of the sacred and profane as his entire biography is intimately entangled with it.

In contrast, Pan Apolek's connection to Christ comes almost as an afterthought, in the last act of his story and whispered "in a corner smelling of spruce."³⁴ We have no reason to believe Apolek, whose story is related fourth-hand, at best (from his mother, Deborah, to the priests that hid him, to Apolek, to Lyutov).³⁵ There is no benefit to believing Apolek, whose tale only inspires the church caretaker to say "*Ten chelovek* won't die in his bed."³⁶ In other words, being Jesus' son gives Apolek no celebrity status, and adds neither divine power nor creative fodder to his artistic process. Apolek's art is introduced, and has significance, way ahead of any Jesus connection. Apolek is not connected, he is an outsider—a distance which allows him to create. In the world of *Red Cavalry*, Apolek has Babel's outsider eye.

Pan Apolek's claims to divinity are thoroughly shabby, but he makes an unrivaled claim to difference. His art expresses a similar difference as it touches multiple senses: sight, taste, sound, and smell ("three chocolate feathers," "a faint melodious cadence," and "a corner smelling of spruce.")³⁷ It is this aesthetic variety that reveals passion to Apolek's audience in a novel way. Rather than inducing an altered kind of passion, he combines multiple passions with each other, creating a new vision which confronts the old. Apolek and his companion, the blind accordion player Gottfried, stay at Schmerel's tavern, and pays his tab with a portrait of the tavern keeper's wife. Schmerel, outraged, intends to beat up the pair, but changes his mind:

He took a stick and set off in pursuit of his lodgers. But on the way Schmerel recalled Apolek's rosy body streaming with water, the sunshine in his little yard, and the soft hum of the accordion. The tavern keeper's soul became confused; dropping his stick, he returned home.³⁸

Schmerel remembers Apolek and Gottfried's stay at his tavern, a memory that envelops him with its twin visual and auditory inputs. He is about to hurt Apolek but is reminded of a profoundly sensual moment with the painter. These two passions meet, one towards violence and the other toward sex, and produce an understanding, or at least a question, in Schmerel. His passion isn't changed, but he sees something new—the preciousness of a man, not simply in his meekness, but in his beauty. A similar moment happens in "At St. Valentine's," where Cossacks defile a church full of Apolek's artwork. A velvet curtain miraculously falls aside, revealing Pan Apolek's statue of Christ.³⁹

Pan Apolek's Christ wears a set of colors that are blasphemous simply in their vibrancy. Again, the art presents itself through multiple means—sounding a "hoarse cry" which belongs as much to the statue as to the Cossacks, and reaching out as it "pinched our hearts."⁴⁰ The Cossacks stop their rampage before this vision of Christ—a Jew running from a hail of blows. Considering Cossacks' history of pogrom, especially in the Ukrainian borderlands where this story takes place, it is likely that this Christ is running

from the Cossacks themselves. Their reverence doesn't signal that the Cossacks at Saint Valentine's are about to cease their wicked ways and all hold hands. No art can accomplish that feat for Babel, and Lyutov's perverse attempt is a good example of why. Dolgushov's evisceration was pornographic, any dismay at the violence was overcome by Lyutov's orchestration of it, and the tantalizing question of 'Should I? Shouldn't I?'. In Apolek, only the victim is in sight, and the violence is not a brutalization—his trickles of blood are more metaphoric than visceral. Yet, avoiding the shock produces more awe. Lyutov could not help but stare as Afonka Bida "shot Dolgushov in the mouth,"⁴¹ of course, Lyutov stares at everything, but faced with Apolek's Christ the "little Cossack standing next to me screamed, ducked, and fled."⁴² The Cossacks are faced with their own contradiction: they commit pogroms, but worship a Jew who bares the signs of their hatred. Sashka's audience sleeps and weeps in empathy with Sashka, Apolek's audience reacts to themselves. Noticing his own face in Apolek's painting of the Magi, the pater "smiled...and sent a goblet of cognac to the painter at work beneath the dome."⁴³

Judith Kornblatt notes that, in *Red Cavalry*, "there is no progression, development, or maturity on the part of any of the characters."⁴⁴ This is true—between stories, Lyutov continually has to prove himself to the Cossacks, and even the plot thread within specific stories seems to proceed without a clear logic.⁴⁵ Pan Apolek's art stands out for its stability in this unevenness. His studies of passion are not just experiments, but organic, lasting philosophies. Take Apolek's portrait of the "lame convert" as Saint Paul, and the Jewish daughter of unknown origin and "mother of numerous stray children" as Mary Magdalene, both of which "can still be seen today."⁴⁶ These are statements about truth in divine contradiction which become canonized, and even dissenters "did not dare paint over" them.⁴⁷

Apolek's art retains its effect on peoples' thoughts even in his absence. It shocks Cossacks at Saint Valentine's and dissuades painters from tampering with his message. Apolek's most profound effect is on Lyutov, who begins "Pan Apolek" with a paean to the artist and ends it like this: "The homeless moon wandered around town. And I went along with her, hopeless dreams and discordant songs growing warm in my breast."⁴⁸ In this finale, Lyutov sees the world in a new way, the way Apolek would. Lyutov began in "the spiderweb stillness of a summer morning," and ends free and active at night.⁴⁹ He experiences a true synthesis of contradictions. Discord does not cool and slow passion, but heats it up, serving as creativity's engine. The moon, no home or cradle for a man, is just a silent companion, one that "listens to the endless music of his blindness."⁵⁰

Babel once said that, "If the world could write by itself, it would write like Tolstoy."⁵¹ Babel did not mention Tolstoy within his review of Russian novelists in "Odessa," but his name lurks in the background of any Russian discussion of the greats.⁵² Babel wanted to be like Tolstoy, and in Apolek he fashioned a highly modern incarnation of the Count's work. If the world could paint by itself, it would paint like Pan Apolek.

Conclusion

What did Isaac Babel mean by his statement about Tolstoy and the world? He was speaking to an immediacy that is unavailable to mortal artists. There is a truth, untouched by us, which exists in nature, the way things really are. The world cannot write, and it takes an incomplete human hand to copy down these lessons. Only a certain piece of the truth passes through onto the page.

"The truth" appears, for one example, at the end of Tolstoy's last novel, *Hadji Murat*, where the eponymous hero has died, and "The nightingales, who had fallen silent during the shooting, again started trilling, first one close by and then others further off."⁵³ No one seems to hear this, so the trilling remains indifferent and concerned, a funeral and a rally. There is a deep, unresolved, and truthful contradiction in the world. Tolstoy believed that this source was accessible through authenticity, specifically that of the humble peasant, who lives close to the earth.

For Babel, truth is not to be found. Nature is receding, and the golden child of the state is not the peasant, but its early 20th century incarnation, the Bolshevik. Peasants still exist, but they are muddy, depressed, and outside history.⁵⁴ The Bolsheviks are rigid, sterile, correct. Babel expresses unvarnished distaste and pity for them and their art, describing a *Red Cavalryman* columnist's endless rhetorical spiel, but never his prose: "he continued at length with dull and perfect clarity."⁵⁵ It is not just that the Bolshevik artist lacks passion, his thoughts lack contradiction. Only Lyutov, something of a Bolshevik washout, can catch the redeeming contradiction behind the greatest Soviet: "I read and gloried, and in all my glory tried to track the mysterious curve of Lenin's straight line."⁵⁶ But there is no truth.

Babel cannot fully trust Tolstoy, for whom there is a right way which contains the opposing sum of all other ways. Instead, the opposition, the contradiction, is the elusive thing which Babel seeks to grasp. This is why violence figures so heavily in his work, a quick and dirty route to the starkest contrasts: killer and killed. Yet, as Lionel Trilling notes, "for Babel it is not violence in itself that is at issue...but something else, some quality with which violence does indeed go along, but which is not in itself merely violent."⁵⁷ I have called this quality passion.

Still, it remains unclear whether passion begets contradiction, or the inverse, or whether they are one and the same material. Guy de Maupassant's blind passion shut him off to contradiction, a libertine sensuality which led him to the ultimate, fitting contradiction—an uncultured death. Lyutov mimicked passion through his characters, playing the pacifist but directing a brutal show. Sashka Christ's love was a contradiction, it carried a hazy sting which he embodied in art, spreading his strange passion to his audience. Pan Apolek did not make, so much as channel art directly from the earth. This is the Tolstoyan quality defined by Babel, which uncorked the earth: "A current flows unobstructed from the earth, directly through his hands, straight to the paper, and completely and mercilessly tears down all veils with the sense of truth. Moreover, as this truth makes its appearance, it clothes itself in transparent and beautiful dress."⁵⁸

Here, for once, Babel shows a belief in the truth. He also presents Tolstoy's passion as a pure and simple violence, and the only means to that truth.⁵⁹ On another mistaken count, Babel identifies much closer with Lyutov in person than I would prefer. When Osip Mandelstam asked Babel why he associated himself with secret police agents, Babel replied, "I don't want to touch it with my fingers—I just like to have a sniff and see what it smells like."⁶⁰ This sounds just like Lyutov, who wants to get very close, but not *so* close, to violence. Though, it does sound like Apolek, too. His art occurs in synesthesia, where to smell is to hear is to see is to touch. Each sense contains the others, and each winks towards some "beautiful dress."⁶¹

Notes

¹ Vladislav Davidzon, "Monument to Isaac Babel Erected in Odessa," *The Forward*, accessed May 12, 2020, <https://forward.com/schmooze/142758/monument-to-isaac-babel-erected-in-odessa/>.

² Judith Deutsch Kornblatt, *The Cossack Hero in Russian Literature: A Study in Cultural Mythology*, Judith Deutsch Kornblatt (University of Wisconsin Press, 1992), <https://uwpress.wisc.edu/books/0054.htm>, 112.

³ Renato Poggioli, *The Phoenix and the Spider: A Book of Essays about Some Russian Writers and Their View of the Self, The Phoenix and the Spider* (Harvard University Press, 2013), <https://null/view/title/322875>, 235.

⁴ Lionel Trilling, *The Moral Obligation to Be Intelligent: Selected Essays*, 1 edition (Evanston, Ill: Northwestern University Press, 2009), 312.

⁵ Isaac Babel, *The Essential Fictions*, trans. Val Vinokur, annotated edition edition (Evanston, Illinois: Northwestern University Press, 2017), 286.

⁶ Val Vinokur, "Morality and Orality in Isaac Babel's 'Red Cavalry,'" *The Massachusetts Review* 45, no. 4 (2004), 678.

⁷ Babel, *The Essential Fictions*, 230 & 248.

⁸ Babel, 7.

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- ⁹ Babel, 7.
- ¹⁰ Babel, 7.
- ¹¹ Babel, 7.
- ¹² Efraim Sicher, "The Trials of Isaak: A Brief Life," *Canadian Slavonic Papers / Revue Canadienne Des Slavistes* 36, no. 1/2 (1994), 29.
- ¹³ Babel, 50.
- ¹⁴ See: Poggioli, *The Phoenix and the Spider*, 236.
- ¹⁵ Babel, 303.
- ¹⁶ Babel, 206 & 192.
- ¹⁷ Babel, 206.
- ¹⁸ Babel, 205-206.
- ¹⁹ Babel, 206.
- ²⁰ Genesis 4:1 & Babel, *The Essential Fictions*, 211.
- ²¹ Babel, 211.
- ²² Babel, 266 & 247.
- ²³ Babel, 213.
- ²⁴ Viktor Shklovsky, *Viktor Shklovsky: A Reader* (Bloomsbury Publishing USA, 2016), 204.
- ²⁵ Babel, 214.
- ²⁶ Babel, 289.
- ²⁷ Babel, 288.
- ²⁸ Babel, 214 & 288.
- ²⁹ Babel, 290.
- ³⁰ Babel, 289.
- ³¹ Babel, 190.
- ³² Babel, 289.
- ³³ Babel, 289.
- ³⁴ Babel, 182.
- ³⁵ Babel, 183.
- ³⁶ Babel, 183.
- ³⁷ Babel, *The Collected Fictions*, 179 & 182.
- ³⁸ Babel, 179.
- ³⁹ Babel, 248-249.
- ⁴⁰ Babel, 248.
- ⁴¹ Babel, 207.
- ⁴² Babel, 206.
- ⁴³ Babel, 180.
- ⁴⁴ Kornblatt, *The Cossack Hero in Russian Literature*, 117.
- ⁴⁵ See the narrator of "The Letter," who cannot put his thoughts in order and mentions his father's death, the story's crux, almost accidentally. See "A Teaching on the *Tachanka*," which moves from biography, to technical history, to cultural memory in two pages and change.
- ⁴⁶ Babel, *The Collected Fictions*, 180-181.
- ⁴⁷ Babel, 181.
- ⁴⁸ Babel, 183.
- ⁴⁹ Babel, 178.
- ⁵⁰ Babel, 182.
- ⁵¹ Leo Tolstoy, *War and Peace: Translated by Richard Pevear and Larissa Volokhonsky*, trans. Richard Pevear and Larissa Volokhonsky, Reprint edition (Vintage, 2011), vii.
- ⁵² Like Michael Jordan, in basketball.
- ⁵³ Leo Tolstoy, *Hadji Murat*, trans. Richard Pevear and Larissa Volokhonsky, Reprint edition (New York: Vintage, 2012), 116.
- ⁵⁴ See "Berestechko," where Babel describes the Red Cavalry taking over a Jewish shtetl. This is not the Christian peasantry that Tolstoy referred to, but neither is Babel Christian.
- ⁵⁵ Babel, 240.

⁵⁶ Babel, 194.

⁵⁷ Trilling, *The Moral Obligation to Be Intelligent*, 324.

⁵⁸ Kornblatt, *The Cossack Hero in Russian Literature*, 107.

⁵⁹ There is more to be said about the profoundly grisly end of Hadji Murat, and how this explosion of violence relates to Tolstoy's passion and belief in brutality. The disfigured warrior bears some assonances with Dolgushov.

⁶⁰ Elif Batuman, *The Possessed*, First Edition edition (New York: FSG Adult, 2010), 33.

⁶¹ Kornblatt, *The Cossack Hero in Russian Literature*, 107

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Session 3

Responses to Crimea

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“The Russian World”: An Analysis of the Concept’s Trajectory and Rossotrudnichestvo’s Policy

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Introduction

Since the late 1990s, the concept of the ‘Russian world’ has been articulating in the official discourse to conceptualize certain Russian national interests; state actors tend to use this narrative as a tool for expanding the influence in the Near Abroad. Initially, the idea of such a concept was presented as a cultural construct because ‘the methodology built in Russian would be a channel for Russia’s return to world culture’¹. Eventually, the narrative of the ‘Russian world’ has evolved to proclaim Kremlin’s soft power tools; there have been references to ‘the divided nature of the Russian nation and Russia’s legitimate moral duty to take care of Russian communities outside Russia and to respect their supposed desire to rejoin the motherland’². Soft power is valuable to a state’s public diplomacy by building long-term relationships that influence the context for government policymaking³, and then might be transformed itself into a gateway for hard power⁴.

It is possible to say that the climax of the ‘Russian world’ concept refers to the reintegration process of Crimea in 2014 when President Putin justified these events using geopolitical arguments about the instability in Ukraine, but he also rallied on the ‘compatriots’ narrative as “there was a threat to Russian speaking Crimea [...] in this regard, residents of Crimea and Sevastopol appealed to Russia to protect their rights and life itself [...] Crimea is also a unique fusion of cultures and traditions of different peoples. And this makes it so similar to greater Russia”⁵.

The issue of the ‘Russian world’ is highly relevant in contemporary political thought to comprehend and analyze Russia’s foreign policy aspirations. This problem has already been addressed by such scholars as A. Grigas⁶, M. Laruelle⁷, M. Pieper⁸, and other researchers. However, little attention was paid to covering organizational level’s analysis and detecting group and private interests; moreover, researchers did not analyze the policy of soft power agent — *Rossotrudnichestvo* [Россотрудничество]. Authors tend to provide the conceptual overview or highlight shifts in changing in the concept.

Consequently, this essay is going to focus on the analysis of actors promoting the concept of the ‘Russian world’ and using it as a tool of soft power exercising. I use the concept of the

¹ Ещепенознер. Пётр Щедровицкий: «Россия возвращается в историю» // Youtube, 6.08.2020. URL: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qHA4K92_EhE (accessed: 22.12.2020) (1:03:55)

² Laruelle M. Russia as a “Divided Nation,” from Compatriots to Crimea: A Contribution to the Discussion on Nationalism and Foreign Policy // *Problems of Post-Communism*, 2015, № 62. P. 88

³ Nye Jr. J. S. Soft power: the means to success in world politics. PublicAffairs, 2004. Pp. 6 – 10

⁴ Laruelle M. The “Russian World”: Russia’s Soft Power and Geopolitical Imagination. – Center on Global Interest, 2015. P. 12

⁵ Putin V. Obrashenie Prezidenta Rossijskoj Federacii, 18.03.2014 [Address by President of the Russian Federation, 18.03.2014] URL: <http://kremlin.ru/events/president/news/20603> (accessed: 22.12.2020)

⁶ Grigas A. Beyond Crimea: the new Russian Empire. Yale University Press, 2016.

⁷ Laruelle M. Russia as a “Divided Nation,” from Compatriots to Crimea: A Contribution to the Discussion on Nationalism and Foreign Policy / *Problems of Post-Communism*, № 62, 2015; Laruelle M. The “Russian World”: Russia’s Soft Power and Geopolitical Imagination. – Center on Global Interest, 2015

⁸ Pieper M. Russkiy Mir: The Geopolitics of Russian Compatriots Abroad // *Geopolitics*, 2018 №3 (25).

‘Russian world’ as an indicator of Russia’s ambitions, to what degree the concept predicts the rhetoric of foreign policy whether it is offensive or defensive; in this regard, special attention will be paid to the analysis of federal agency *Rossotrudnichestvo* policy. The questions I tend to answer are the following ‘could the federal agency *Rossotrudnichestvo* be used as a tracker of Russia’s foreign policy forms? Is this agency effective in terms of exercising soft power and spreading Russian influence?’

Evolution of the ‘Russian world’. Actors’ analysis

The question of the ‘Russian world’, which includes ‘compatriots’ narrative, is an important argument in Russian political decision-making circles; it depends on the configuration of political forces in the highest echelons of power, namely which group or individuals use the concept to pursue certain goals. In this chapter, I will analyze different periods of developing the concept, starting with the 1990s; I will emphasize actors’ interests and justify that the policy vector was formed as a result of specific ideological debates, or political battles.

The germ of using the narrative of ‘compatriots’ in Russian policy might be first mentioned with the activity of *the Congress of Russian Communities* (KRO), whose leader was **Dmitry Rogozin**, who had and still has connections with **Vladimir Putin**. The Congress set the goal of ‘protecting the interests in the Near Abroad, intending to engage in “spudding” the Russian idea’⁹. During one of the meetings, members of the Congress declared that Russia should be revived through united Russian diasporas¹⁰; this group with the head of Rogozin proposed a revanchist agenda in Russian discourse by calling the Russians as ‘a split nation’¹⁰. This repertoire of ideas was shared by **Yury Luzhkov** and **Konstantin Zatulin**; he in 1993 was elected to the State Duma¹¹. In 1994, Zatulin was appointed as head of the State Duma Committee on Compatriots Abroad; in 1995, Rogozin was elected to the State Duma in the list of KRO. During 1994 – 1996, Zatulin frequently visited Crimea, where he spoke in support of the rights of the Russian population of the Peninsula, which became the reason for the aggravation of Russian-Ukrainian relations¹².

In 1995, the State Duma issued the ‘Declaration on the support of compatriots abroad’¹³, in this document ‘compatriots’ were considered as “former citizens of the Soviet Union [...] who recognize and maintain their spiritual or cultural-ethnic connection with the Russian Federation”¹⁴. In this regard, *the Council of Compatriots* was established at the State Duma¹⁵. Moscow administration supported these actions, in consequence of which there was established *the Institute of Diaspora and Integration* headed by Zatulin¹⁶.

So, I might presume that the group interest was in developing the ‘Russian idea’ to use the narrative for domestic recipients as the tool for possible expansion of Russian influence

⁹ Archangelskaya N. Congress russkich obshin: General Lebed: fal’shtart ili mezaliance [Congress of Russian Communities: General Swan: False Start or misalliance?] // Kommersant, 11.04.1995. <https://www.kommersant.ru/doc/106366> (accessed: 26.12.2020)

¹⁰ Ibid.

¹¹ Lenta.ru. Biography of Konstantin Zatulin // Lenta.ru. URL: <https://lenta.ru/lib/14177531> (accessed: 26.12.2020)

¹² Ibid.

¹³ State Duma. O Deklaracii o podderzhke rossijskoj diaospora i o pokrovitelstve rossijskim sootchestvennikam [On the Declaration of Support for the Russian Diaspora and Protection of Russian Compatriots] URL: <http://docs.cntd.ru/document/9015013> (accessed: 26.12.2020)

¹⁴ Ibid.

¹⁵ State Duma. O sovete sootchestvennikov pri Gossudarstvennoj Dume [About the Council of Compatriots at the State Duma] URL: <http://docs.cntd.ru/document/9012281> (accessed: 26.12.2020)

¹⁶ Lenta.ru. Biography of Konstantin Zatulin // Lenta.ru. URL: <https://lenta.ru/lib/14177531> (accessed: 26.12.2020)

because the group promoted the idea that there were ‘compatriots abroad’ who needed protection after the collapse of the USSR. The collapse of the Soviet Union left Russia searching for a new ‘national idea’¹⁷. At the organizational level, this narrative was enabled to expand the power and create official institutions. And it is reasonable to say that relying on the concept, individuals, namely Rogozin, Zatulín, managed to gain power and spread these ideas among the highest echelon.

The next period is interconnected with the beginning of the presidency of Vladimir Putin; there was exactly the birth of the ‘Russian world’ phrase following the cultural aspect to acknowledge the liberal image. The crucial role was played by **Petr Shchedrovitskiy**, pro-Kremlin political consultant, who developed an ideology of the ‘Russian world’ connected with the cultural segment of the issue. It was considered that the Russian language might be a link to the homeland for those Russians who emigrated after the collapse of the USSR. The ‘Russian world’ was defined by Shchedrovitskiy as "a network structure of large and small co-societies that think and speak Russian"¹⁸. Using such a framework enabled to avoid only the ‘Near Abroad Compatriots’ connection, it also made the concept more global.

The Presidential Administration and Putin himself supported this aspect of the ‘Russian world’. In 2001, President Putin firstly used the term ‘Russian world’ in a speech to the World Congress of Compatriots Abroad, he noted that “there were also those who left Russia for various reasons. Among them were Russians, Germans, Tatars, and Jews – people of various nationalities. Russian language and culture remained their native language for most of them. And they remained our compatriots. [...]. The Russian world goes far beyond the geographical borders of Russia and even far beyond the borders of the Russian ethnic group”¹⁹. During the Second World Congress of Compatriots Abroad in 2006, Putin stressed that “the support of compatriots abroad is now a priority of the national policy of Russia”²⁰.

Remarkably, *the Federal Agency for the Commonwealth of Independent States Affairs, Compatriots Living Abroad, and International Humanitarian Cooperation* (known as *Rossotrudnichestvo*) was established right after the Georgian War in September. So, it is fair to say that the policy towards compatriots and the concept itself has received a fairly strong institutional basis; the agency is subordinated to the President. An analysis of the agency will be presented in the next chapter.

Interim conclusions should be stated here: at the beginning of the presidency of Putin, the concept of the ‘Russian world’ acquired a cultural aspect. The group interest was to find a more global idea for constructing the diaspora to extend cultural and economic interactions. Closely to 2007, policy towards compatriots was revised to remove elements of partnership from it and emphasize its confrontational component as a tool of Russia's ‘soft power’ against the West; the character of the concept became more defensive and aggressive. The main actor for the strategic implementation was the Presidential Administration and Putin.

¹⁷ O’Loughlin J., Toal G., Kolosov V. Who identifies with the “Russian World”? Geopolitical attitudes in southeastern Ukraine, Crimea, Abkhazia, South Ossetia, and Transnistria // *Eurasian Geography and Economics*, 2016, №6 (57). P.747

¹⁸ Shchedrovitskiy P. Russkij mir i Transnatsionalnoe russkoe [Russian World and Transnational Russian] // Russian journal, 2.03.2000. URL: http://old.russ.ru/politics/meta/20000302_schedr.html (accessed: 26.12.2020)

¹⁹ Putin V. Vistuplenie Prezidenta Rossii Vladimira Putina na Pervom Vsemirnom kongresse rossijskih sootchestvennikov [Speech by Russian President Vladimir Putin at the First World Congress of Russian Compatriots / World Coordinating Council of Russian Compatriots Living Abroad, 11.10.2001 URL: <https://vkrs.com/publications/vystuplenie-prezidenta-rossii-vladimira/> (accessed: 27.12.2020)

²⁰ About the II World Congress URL: <https://vkrs.com/vsemirnyy-kongress/kongress/ii-vsemirnyj-kongress/> (accessed: 27.12.2020)

In 2012, during Putin's third term of presidency, the notion of the 'Russian world' took "on a more pronounced civilizational meaning"²¹. The 'Russian world' could be also an ideological cornerstone of Russian foreign policy²²; its climax was detected in 2014, after the accession of Crimea. **Putin** justified this process with the concept of the 'Russian world' ("an aspiration of the Russian World, to reestablish unity"²³). In early March 2014, **Dmitry Peskov**, Putin's press-secretary, proclaimed that 'Russia is the country that underlies the Russian World, and the President Putin precisely is the main guarantor of the security of the Russian world'²⁴.

After 2014, the aggressive expression of the concept has started to decline. I might presume that the direction of the policy has changed into a more defensive way. Events of 2020 might be the examples of that; for instance, in the question of Belarus, there was not the discourse of 'reestablish unity [*собирация земель русских*"]', the vector now is for cooperation.

Rossotrudnichestvo and 'soft power': analysis

In the "Main Directions of the Russian Federation's policy in the sphere of International Cultural and Humanitarian Cooperation"²⁵ it is stated that "culture plays a special role in the implementation of Russia's foreign policy strategy"²⁶; the authority of Russia in the world is also determined by its culture²⁷. The document declares that a significant role in the implementation of such a vector of policy belongs to the Federal Agency Rossotrudnichestvo; it is used as a tool of 'soft power' in expanding authority in the world. Its activity is wide-ranging, it includes the promotion of the Russian culture in the world, public diplomacy, the support of compatriots, strengthening the position of the Russian language²⁸. In this regard, I will analyze the intensity and the efficacy of *Rossotrudnichestvo*, I will examine the indicator of attitudes towards Russia, and its policy, namely expanding the Russian language. *Rossotrudnichestvo* is not the only and leading actor of soft power, but still, it is reasonable to measure these two indicators as they are directly connected with the Agency's activity.

Rossotrudnichestvo is supposed to use Russian culture to strengthen Russia's position on the world stage; there are 80 *Rossotrudnichestvo*'s agencies abroad in different countries²⁹. I have tracked the evolution of opinions of Russia in countries where the agencies exist; I have chosen 4 periods to evaluate the efficacy: 2009 — the year after establishment, 2014 — the accession of Crimea, 2015 — the year after Crimea, 2019 year.

²¹ O'Loughlin J., Toal G., Kolosov V. Op. cit. P.751

²² Laruelle M. The "Russian World": Russia's Soft Power and Geopolitical Imagination // Center on Global Interest, 2015. P. 14 – 15

²³ Putin V. Obrashenie Prezidenta Rossijskoj Federacii, 18.03.2014 [Address by President of the Russian Federation, 18.03.2014] / Kremlin.ru, 18.03.2014 URL: <http://kremlin.ru/events/president/news/20603> (accessed 28.12.2020)

²⁴ TASS. Peskov: Rossiya ne ostanetsya bezuchastnoj, kogda nad russkimi na Ukraine navisaet opasnost' [Russia will not remain indifferent when the Russians in Ukraine are in danger / TASS, 07.03.2014. URL: <https://tass.ru/politika/1029517> (accessed: 28.12.2020)

²⁵ MFA RF. The main directions of the policy of the Russian Federation in the field of international cultural and humanitarian cooperation / MFA RF, 18.12.2010. URL: https://www.mid.ru/foreign_policy/official_documents/-/asset_publisher/CptICkB6BZ29/content/id/224550 (accessed: 28.12.2020)

²⁶ ²⁶ MFA RF. The main directions of the policy of the Russian Federation in the field of international cultural and humanitarian cooperation. Op. cit.

²⁷ Ibid. The words are underlined by me.

²⁸ See the full list of activity: Rossotrudnichestvo. Activity / Official site. URL: <https://rs.gov.ru/ru/activities> (accessed: 28.12.2020)

²⁹ See the full list: Rossotrudnichestvo. Representative offices in the world / Official cite. URL: <https://rs.gov.ru/ru/contacts> (accessed: 28.12.2020)

In 2009, among the represented countries, opinions, which show the negative image of Russia, were relatively moderate, or ‘favorable views’ prevailed. For instance, only 39% of Americans expressed unfavorable opinions; similarly, only 33% of the British expressed negative opinions; however, other European countries expressed more negative opinions. Notable, 65% of Israelis expressed negative views (see Appendix 1.1). Following Crimea’s accession in 2014, there were sharp increases in a negative perception of Russia, and those sentiments mostly persisted. In this regard, 72% of Americans, 63% of British, 81% of Poles expressed unfavorable views (See Appendix 1.2). Thereby, I argue that there were not sufficient actions of *Rossotrudnichestvo* in mitigation tensions, or spreading justificative discourse, similar to President Putin used to justify the ‘Russian world’, and ‘reestablishment of unity’ *ad locum*. The next year is crucial to analyze in terms of mitigation after 2014, and whether *Rossotrudnichestvo* capable of it. Shade fewer Americans and European Countries demonstrated unfavorable views of Russia (see Appendix 1.3), but, in my opinion, there was no *Rossotrudnichestvo*’s influence on mitigating. I presume that the hype after 2014 had been gone, and the media less paid attention to Crimea’s issue, that is why there were slightly lower numbers. In 2019, negative opinions of Russia in America, the UK, Germany, Poland remained nearly in the 2014’ level, but since 2009 there was a sharp decline in unfavorable opinions in Israel, and Brazil (see Appendix 1.4). However, I argue that there are again no merits of *Rossotrudnichestvo*; as for Israel, this is the role of Putin in face mending: “Relations between the leaders undoubtedly play an important role”³⁰.

If we focus on Near Abroad precisely, I suggest we should pay more attention to 2019 when there were a plethora of discussions on the integration with Belarus; opinions of Belarusians are crucial to examine. 75% of Belarusians considered that Belarus and Russia should be two independent countries with fellow relations; however, there are more opinions in the discourse that “Belarusians are mentally far from Russians”³¹. *Rossotrudnichestvo* neither made no comments nor organized more cultural events³² in Belarus to mitigate the narrative, or provide the necessity of ‘reestablishment unity’ (see also Appendix 2).

It might be concluded that the policy of *Rossotrudnichestvo* in building the strong, positive image of Russia is not that effective. I believe that in times when it could be seen advances of opinions towards Russia, there is no role of *Rossotrudnichestvo*; other factors and actors have influence. For instance, I might presume that Brazil and China have shown a relatively high level of favorable views to Russia due to the complex of factors, namely cooperation within *BRICS*, and relations of Putin with foreign leaders; Putin used instruments of ‘soft power’ in spreading positive sentiments (the example of ice cream as a gift to Xi Jinping³³).

³⁰ Belenkaya M. “Dumayu, Rossiya ponimaet emocii izraelskoj obshestvennosti”: Glava MID Israel — o dele Naam Issachar I dvustoronnih otnoshenijah [“I believe that Russia understands the emotions of the Israeli public”: the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Israel Israel Katz about the case Naamah Issachar and bilateral relations / *Kommersant*, №10, 22.01.2020. URL:

<https://www.kommersant.ru/doc/4226533?id929097> (accessed: 29.12.2020)

³¹ Belanovskiy S., Nikolskaya A. Velikaja strana ot Bresta do Chukotki? Hotiat li belorusi ob’ediniatsa s Rossijie? [The Great Country from Brest to Chukotka? Do Belarusians want to unite with Russia] / *Forbes*, 09.08.2020 URL: <https://www.forbes.ru/obshchestvo/406615-velikaya-strana-ot-bresta-do-chukotki-hotyat-li-belorusy-obedinyatsya-s-rossiey> (accessed: 30.12.2020)

³² I examined the list of activities during 2019. There were no large, crucial, cultural events, which could strengthen the positive image of Russia. Even though there was organized so-called ‘Russian week in Minsk’, but the level of efforts is incommensurate because this ‘Russian week’ was held in several Minsk’s Grammar Schools, which is not enough and effective. See the list of activities here:

Представительство Россотрудничество в Республике Беларусь. Новости. URL:

<https://blr.rs.gov.ru/ru/news> (accessed: 30.12.2020)

³³ RIA News. Putin podaril Xi Jinping na den’ rozhdenija rossiskoje morozhenije [Putin presented a Russian ice cream to Xi Jinping for his birthday] / *Ria News*, 15.06.2019. URL: <https://ria.ru/20190615/1555592589.html> (accessed: 30.12.2020)

Language is an integral part of the culture — a tool for exercising ‘soft power’. In this regard, the policy of expanding the Russian language is the prerogative of *Rossotrudnichestvo*. It is crucial to mention this vector of policy by examining the number of people studying Russian abroad.

By 2018, the number of people studying Russian as a foreign language and studying it in schools, colleges, and universities in the world has fallen by half approximately in the post-Soviet period (from 74.6 million people to 38.2 million people)³⁴. Notably, in Eastern Europe and the Balkans, fewer people speak Russian now: by 2015 there were 8 million Russian speakers compared to 38 million in 1990³⁵.

I presume that the intensity of *Rossotrudnichestvo* is not effective, if the Agency continues such a policy, there will be fewer Russian speakers and less interest in Russian culture abroad. What we have seen *ad locum* that one of the crucial ‘soft power’s’ propagator *Rossotrudnichestvo* does not manage its primary duties, the existing organizational design is not active; the possible solution would be changes in the policy-making process.

Conclusion

The ‘Russian world’ has been frequently mentioned in the context of the accession of Crimea in 2014; however, the concept has its grassroots since the 1990s. In this essay, I have traced the evolution of the concept and distinguished several periods in the development of the narrative. In each period, there are special formulations of the ‘Russian world’ to reach specific goals of different actors. The climax of the policy was in 2014, the concept was used to justify Crimea’s repertoire. I proposed that after 2014, there was a decline in the intensity of the concept, and now the direction of the policy has a more defensive way rather than an aggressive one.

The Federal Agency *Rossotrudnichestvo* is supposed to promote the concept, and it is an official institution that implements ‘soft power’ abroad. So, I have analyzed the intensity of the Agency; I have found out that the policy and the organization itself are not effective in spreading the Russian culture and building a positive image of the country. I would say that *Rossotrudnichestvo* cannot be used as a tracker of Russia’s foreign policy forms as it has a feeble influence on the world stage; moreover, as we have seen, a more conspicuous figure in the implementing ‘soft power’ and the concept is Putin and his circle, not the Agency.

³⁴ Cit. ex. Gubernatorov E. Chislo izuchajushih russkih jazik v mire upalo v 2 raza so vremen raspada USSR [The number of Russian language learners in the world has fallen by 2 times since the collapse of the USSR] / RBC, 28.11.2019: URL: <https://www.rbc.ru/society/28/11/2019/5ddd18099a79473d0d9b0ab1?from=newsfeed> (accessed: 1.01.2021)

³⁵ Ibid.

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Appendix 1.1

To conduct these graphs, I used the datasets on Global Attitudes & Trends of Pew Research Center. The selection of the countries was the following: firstly, I have chosen states, where the Agencies of Rossotrudnichestvo are; secondly, I have chosen those countries where the Research of Pew Research Center has been conducted. I expelled the countries, which do not fit my periods.

2009: Do you have an unfavorable view of Russia?

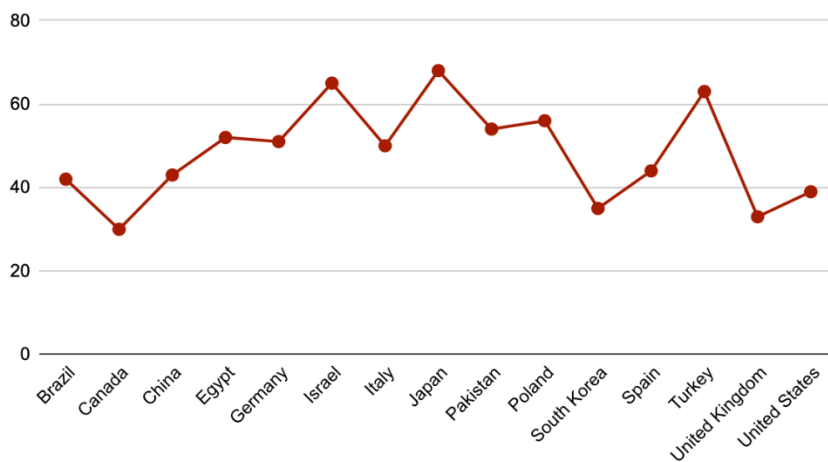


Figure 1. Source: Pew Research Center. Spring 2009 Survey Data. P.37

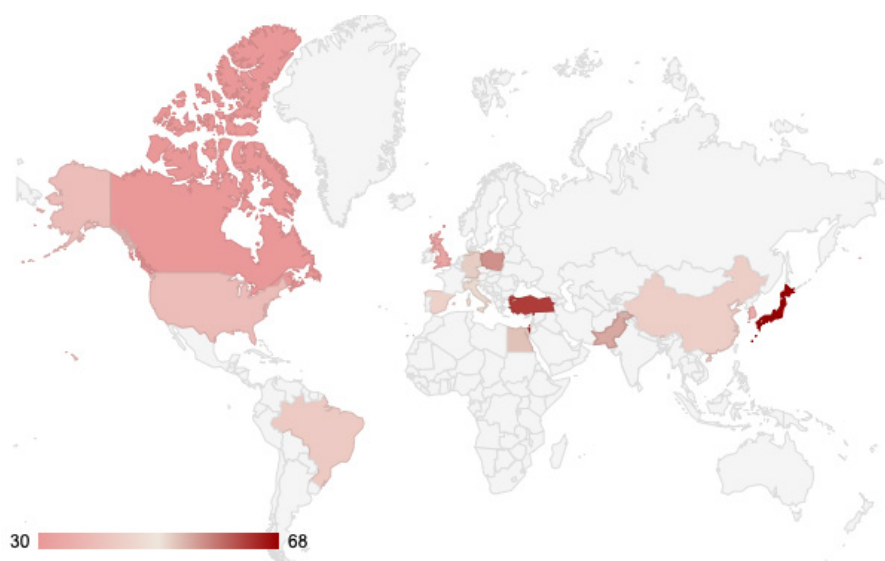


Figure 2. Source: Pew Research Center. Spring 2009 Survey Data. P.37

Appendix 1.2

2014: Do you have an unfavorable view of Russia?

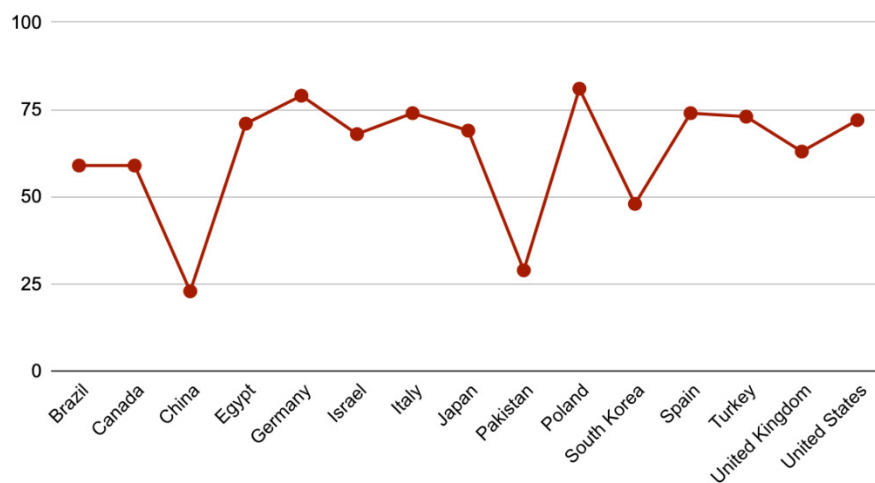


Figure 3. Source: Pew Research Center. Spring 2014 Global Attitudes P.30

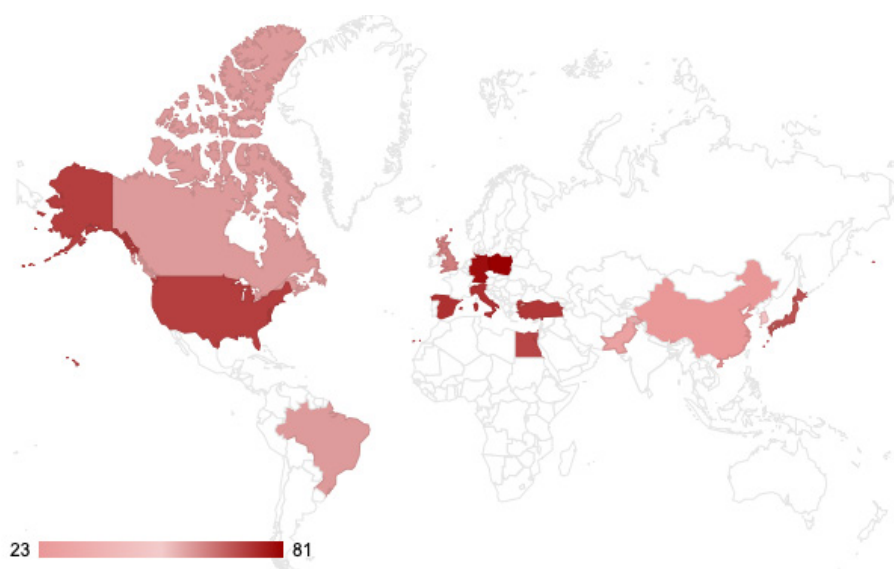


Figure 4. Source: Pew Research Center. Spring 2014 Global Attitudes. P.30

Appendix 1.3

2015: Do you have an unfavorable view of Russia?

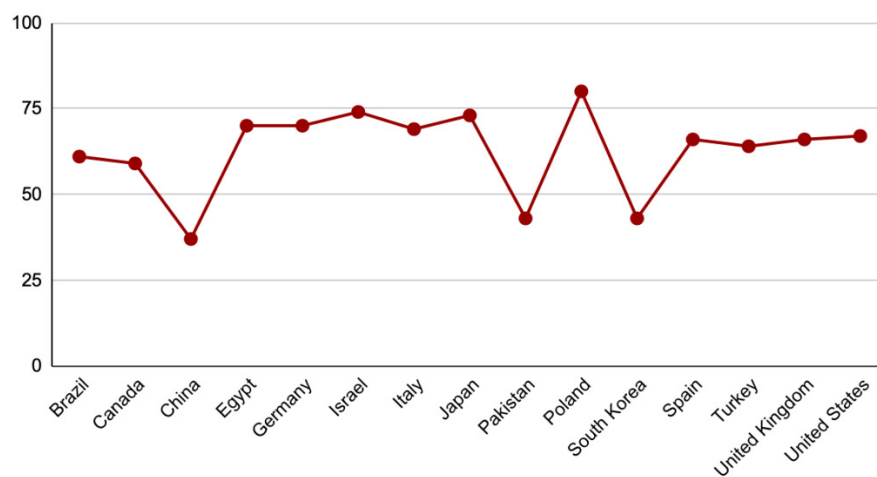


Figure 5. Source: Pew Research Center. 2015 Survey Data. P.9

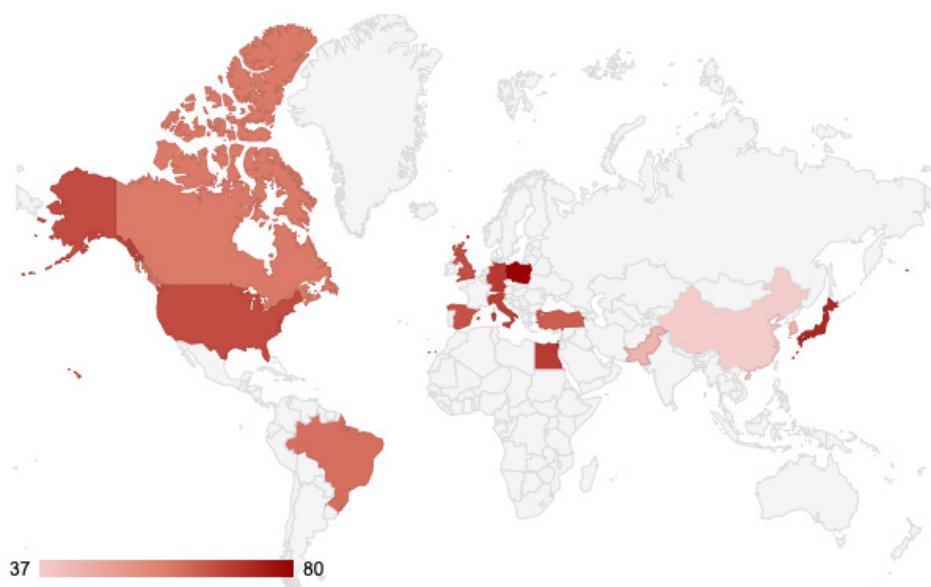


Figure 6. Source: Pew Research Center. 2015 Survey Data. P.9

Appendix 1.4

2019: Do you have an unfavorable view of Russia?

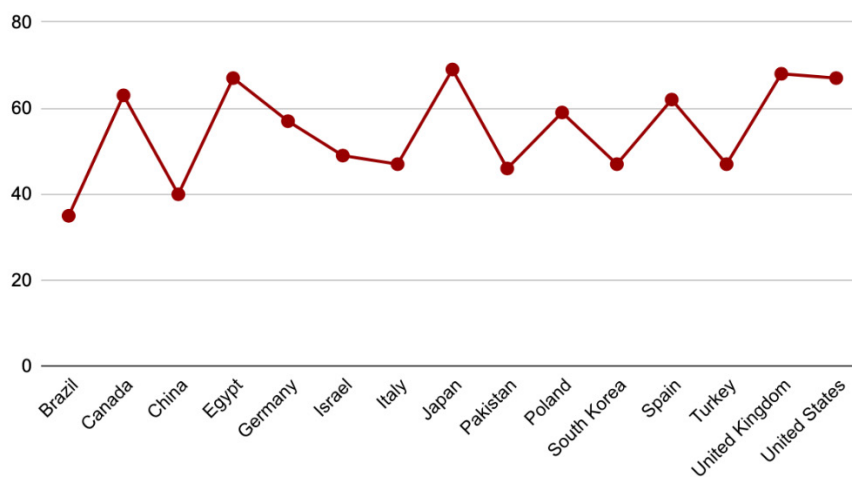


Figure 7. Source: Pew Research Center. Spring 2019 Survey Data. P.7

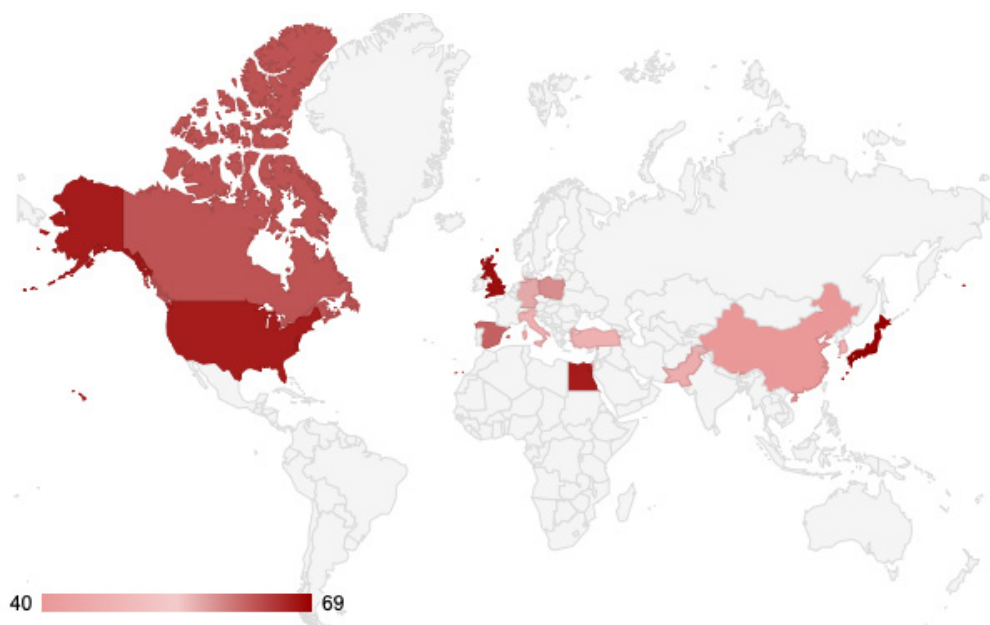


Figure 8. Source: Pew Research Center. Spring 2019 Survey Data. P. 7

Appendix 2

To analyze the activity and its efficacy of Rossotrudnichestvo in terms of defending compatriots Abroad, I investigated statements of the Agency since 2009 to 2020; I used tools in Google search to limit the specific time period, and I looked for phrases as “Россотрудничество призвало”, «Россотрудничество выступило с заявлением», «Россотрудничество направило ноту протеста», «Россотрудничество обратилось».

Phrase	Are there any?	If yes, when?	Occasion	The outcome
“Россотрудничество призвало»	+	2020	The arrest of the teacher of the Russian language in Ukraine ³⁶	Rossotrudnichestvo made a request to the UN Human Rights Council and the OSCE
«Россотрудничество выступило с заявлением»	—			
«Россотрудничество направило ноту протеста»	—			
«Россотрудничество обратилось»	—			
«Россотрудничество выступило в защиту»	—			

It might be concluded that during its existence the Agency only once made a statement in defense of Russian compatriots, which is utterly inefficient, and not enough.

³⁶ See. Тасс. Россотрудничество призвало ОБСЕ и СПЧ ООН изучить арест учителя русского языка на Украине. — Тасс, 09.09.2020. URL: <https://tass.ru/obschestvo/9411481>

Examining the Cooperative Durability of the Visegrad Group

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The Visegrad Group, which consists of member states Poland, Czech Republic, Slovakia, and Hungary, is one of the most notable examples of cooperation among states in the post-Soviet space. Therefore, its success sets a precedent for the possibility of any future engagement between nations in Russia's peripheral region. The existence of this cooperation is increasingly important as a bulwark against Russia's gradual encroachment into the region, which attempts to subvert each nation's sovereignty and security. As such, it is necessary to examine the effects of internal and external threats on the Visegrad Group to evaluate the current resilience of Central Europe against any future Russian aggression. Internal threats such as divergence on policy have weakened the Visegrad Group's cooperative capabilities by creating room for hostility, which has led to a skewed application of the objectives of the International Visegrad Fund. However, external threats to the security of V4 member countries have led to a strengthening of cooperative defense capabilities through increased engagement with NATO and the development of an EU battalion. This can be shown by establishing a pattern of decreasing monetary commitment to Russia by the International Visegrad Group along a timeline of policy disagreement among member countries. Additionally, military dedication to NATO and the EU can be measured by tracking budgetary increases in NATO funding as well as commitment to the Visegrad EU battalion, especially in the years following the Ukrainian crisis.

The greatest internal threats to the stability of the Visegrad Group take the form of policy disagreements between member states, especially regarding foreign relations with Russia. Poland and Hungary are the members that remain devoted to their opposing positions, with the former generally supporting Western-backed harsh measures towards Russia and the latter supporting a closer relationship with Russia. The Czech Republic and Slovakia tend to change positions on a case-by-case basis, siding with either Poland or Hungary. Prior to Viktor Orban's election in 2010, all four Visegrad members tended to agree for the most part in their Russian foreign policy, as shown by the unanimous decisions to join NATO in 1999 and then the European Union in 2004. However, since 2010, Hungary has made a much-advertised effort to follow a path that is more ideologically and economically aligned with Russia than its Western-oriented counterparts.

With Viktor Orban as torchbearer, the eastward looking faction of the Visegrad group uses cyclical arguments of economic pragmatism and ideological alignment to employ alternative narratives of the Ukrainian crisis. These, in turn, are used to justify its rising discontent with NATO's and the EU's harsh economic responses towards Russia's involvement in the crisis. An important part of Hungary's change in orientation is the implementation of Orban's "Eastern Opening" policy, which aims to reduce economic dependence on the West through increased trade with Eastern nations, of which Russia is a major recipient¹. Through this policy, Hungary has superimposed economic considerations over political relationships, making decisions that maximize trade rather than ones that fit within a certain foreign policy orientation. To justify a close economic relationship with Russia in the wake of Western hostility, Orban, along with Czech president Milos Zeman² has been quick to minimize Russia's role in the 2014 Ukrainian crisis. For example, both leaders have questioned the presence of Russian troops in Ukraine, and later acknowledged the role of "Russian engagement" but refused to admit an "invasion of Russian

¹ Bninska, Maria. "Economic Traits of the Hungarian Eastern Opening Policy." *Obserwator Finansowy: ekonomia, debata, Polska, świat*. Obserwator Finansowy, January 22, 2020.

² "Annexation of Crimea by Russia Is Solved Case, - Milos Zeman." President of Czech Republic Milos Zeman thinks that the annexation of Crimea by Russia is a solved case and offers to resolve an issue by means of benefits to Ukraine. 112 Ukraine, October 10, 2017.

troops.”³ In addition, Orban has used strongly worded rhetoric to further his pro-Russian narrative, proclaiming Hungary’s future as an “illiberal state” among the likes of Russia and China, thereby rejecting the EU’s commitment to Western style democracy.⁴ In this way, Orban cycles between economic justifications for ideological alignment and ideological justifications for economic relations with Russia. This is in contradiction with his insistence on pragmatism being the sole reason for Hungary’s improving economic relationship with Russia.

Poland, in direct contrast to Hungary, superimposes political alignment over economic considerations, maintaining strict accordance with Western responses to Russian aggression even to the detriment of its own economy. Slovakia remains divided between the two flanks as former president Andrej Kiska and former prime minister Robert Fico clash over the relevance of the Ukrainian crisis to Slovakia, with the president affirming loyalties to NATO and the EU while Fico has blamed the EU for dragging the V4 into a geopolitical conflict with Russia in which Slovakia has no part.⁵

These contrarian policies towards Russia are most apparent in each member country’s response to the third wave of EU and NATO sanctions against Russia after the Ukrainian crisis, which impose restrictions on engagement with companies in Russia’s energy, finance, and defense sectors, among others. In the Czech Republic, several high-ranking officials have openly voiced their dissent to the sanctions, such as former prime minister Bohuslav Sobotka, who stated that “sanctions are not a solution”. President Milos Zeman has emerged as the leader of the opposition to the sanctions, participating in Russian propaganda efforts organized by oligarchs such as Vladimir Yakunin immediately after their declaration in September 2014.⁶ This has pushed the office of the president into direct conflict with the representatives of other governing coalition parties in the Czech government, such as prime minister Andrej Babis, who value the Czech Republic’s relationship with the EU and NATO over its connection to Russia. These high-profile declarations of Russian alignment have also created space for popular unrest in the Czech Republic, as shown by the mass protests against President Zeman during the 25th anniversary celebrations of the Velvet Revolution – an event which specifically commemorates Czech freedom from Russian hegemony.⁷ Widespread internal strife also found its way into Slovakia after the announcement of sanctions. Former prime minister Robert Fico has acted as Zeman’s Slovakian counterpart in providing a contrarian and pro-Russian narrative to the Ukrainian crisis and its resulting sanctions. His primary argument is that the Ukrainian crisis was an entirely internal conflict, and as Slovakia was in no way involved, it should not have to participate in any economically damaging sanctions put forth by the EU. He has combined this logic with loaded rhetoric and false claims intended to emphasize Slovakia’s struggles under the EU’s direction, such as alluding to “secret analyses” that describe the “brutal and catastrophic” effects of EU sanctions on the Slovakian economy. Fico’s position is in direct contrast to that of former president Andrej Kiska, whose vocal support for the sanctions stems from his emphasis on human rights violations during the Ukrainian crisis.⁸ In this way, the forces that have pulled Poland and Hungary towards opposite flanks in the larger context of the Visegrad group have also created political and social conflict within the less unanimously oriented member countries. The use of strongly worded rhetoric and the legacy of Soviet era path dependencies

³ Kucharczyk, Jacek, and Grigorij Mesežnikov. “Diverging Voices, Converging Policies: The Visegrad States’ Reactions to the Russia-Ukraine Conflict.” *Heinrich-Böll-Stiftung*, 2015.

⁴ Mahoney, Honor. “Orban Wants to Build ‘Illiberal State’.” *EUobserver*. EUobserver, July 28, 2014.

⁵ Racz, Andras. “The Visegrad Cooperation: Central Europe Divided over Russia.” *L’Europe en Formation*. Centre international de formation européenne, May 19, 2015.

⁶ “President Zeman Calls for Lifting of Russia Sanctions at Event Organized by Putin Associate.” *Radio Prague International*, September 29, 2014.

⁷ “Czech President Pelted with Eggs on Revolution Anniversary.” *BBC News*. BBC, November 17, 2014.

⁸ “A Visegrad Cacophony over the Conflict between Russia and Ukraine.” *OSW Centre for Eastern Studies*. Ośrodek Studiów Wschodnich, April 19, 2018.

have fueled the bitter and identity-based nature of these conflicts and reduced the willingness of opposing sides to engage in areas of cooperation that would benefit the entire Visegrad organization.

These growing divisions have had an effect on the primary cooperative institution of the Visegrad group, the International Visegrad Fund. Founded in 2000, the IVF has served to strengthen cultural, intellectual, and political ties among member nations by providing joint funding to non-governmental projects in the region.⁹ The IVF is funded by all Visegrad group members as well as closely aligned countries such as Germany, the United States, and the Netherlands. Although overall funding to Eastern European countries has increased, there is a marked discrepancy in the IVF's monetary distribution to Russia.



Figure 1 (compiled from International Visegrad Fund 2015 annual report)¹⁰

As shown in Figure 1, there has been a drastic decrease in net IVF funding going to projects in Russia since 2010, which is the same year as the election of Viktor Orban and the start of major policy disagreements vis a vis Russia in the Visegrad group. When ranked in terms of the amount of funding received from the IVF, Russia places seventh, in between Moldova and Bosnia and Herzegovina. Considering that Russia has far more influence in the Visegrad region than either of these countries, it can be seen that the IVF has a negatively skewed monetary policy towards Russia, most likely due to the inability of member countries to reach a consensus on foreign relations with Russia. In addition to the decreasing net IVF funding to Russia, the diversification of funding has also remained minimal. While other Eastern European countries receive money from the IVF in the form of large-scale grants as well as individual scholarships, Russia has only ever received scholarships. This is another example of a lack of engagement with Russia on the part of the IVF, as grants generally require a larger commitment and involve large groups of people and institutions in the recipient country, whereas scholarships are individually rewarded. One of the primary objectives of the IVF, as stated in the Statute of the International Visegrad Fund, is the “common presentation of the States of the Contracting Parties in third

⁹ “Home: International Visegrad Fund.” Visegrad Fund.

¹⁰ “Visegrad Fund=15!” *Annual Report 2015*, n.d.

countries.”¹¹ It follows from this statement that decreasing presentation of funding to a third country signifies an inability of the contracting parties, which are the member countries, to decide on a common policy towards that country. Therefore, the Visegrad group’s lack of coordination on foreign policy towards Russia has manifested in its primary collaborative structure, the International Visegrad Fund, demonstrating a serious setback to the cooperative success of the Visegrad organization.

The greatest external threat facing the Visegrad group is Russia’s growing aggression in Central and Eastern Europe. Despite their support for alternative narratives that play down Russia’s military role in the Ukrainian crisis, many policymakers in Visegrad member countries have viewed the crisis as a dangerous precedent for the forceful subversion of sovereignty in Russia’s peripheral region. The crisis had a particularly strong effect on Visegrad members due to their shared legacy of Soviet intervention, as in Hungary in 1956 and in the Czech Republic and Slovakia in 1968. This path dependent trauma, combined with a general state of alarm at the perceived military unpreparedness of Visegrad members in the event of a Ukraine-style intervention, has led to swift and coordinated actions by each country to strengthen their collective defense capabilities. As such, the Visegrad strategy for defense cooperation has been realized through increased engagement with the group’s two primary supranational organizations: NATO and the European Union.

As NATO already possessed large scale cooperative defense infrastructures, Visegrad member countries sought to increase their stake in the NATO partnership to reap the proportional benefits of greater investment in its tools of collective defense.

¹¹ “AGREEMENT CONCERNING THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE INTERNATIONAL VISEGRAD FUND,” May 14, 1999.

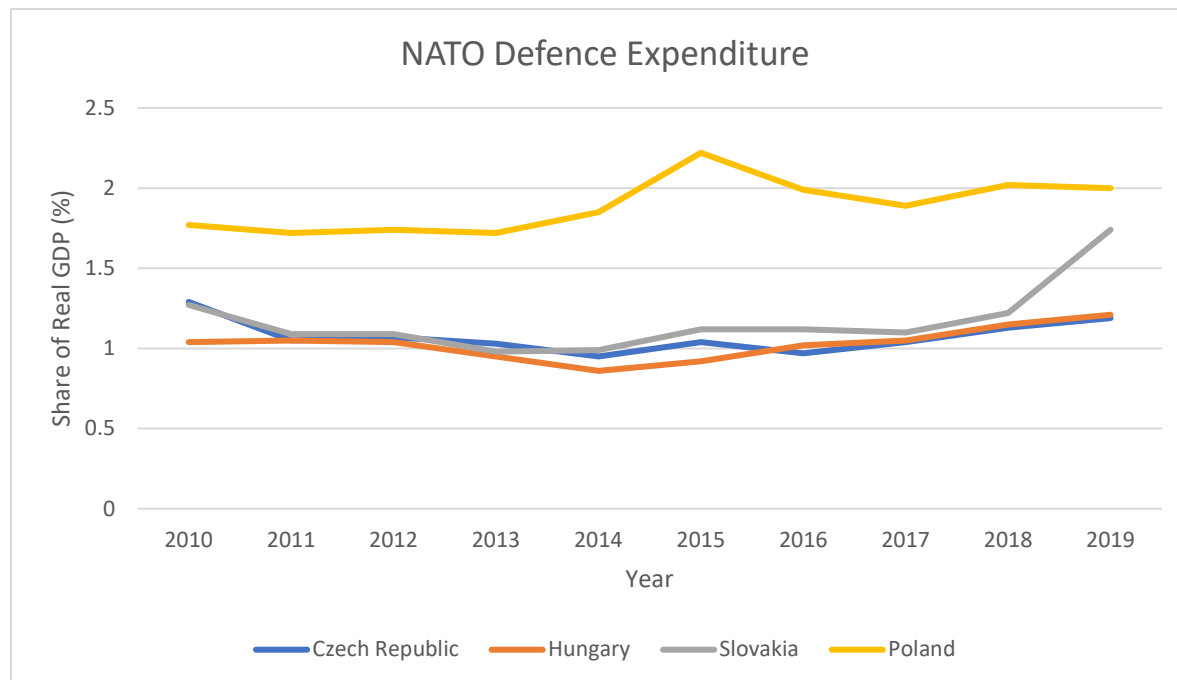


Figure 2 (compiled from NATO defense expenditure reports, 2016 and 2019)¹²

In addition, as shown in Figure 2, 2013 - 2014 marked a low point in monetary dedication to NATO in Slovakia, the Czech Republic, and Hungary, to the extent of actually violating NATO member obligations in the case of the Czech Republic. This fact contributed to insecurities over a lack of sufficient integration with NATO or general military cohesion. In response, the Visegrad group issued the Bratislava Declaration in September 2014, officially reaffirming its commitment to NATO by stating an intention to “reflect on the security challenges in our immediate neighbourhood in close and mutually reinforced cooperation of the EU and NATO.”¹³ This was followed by a joint communique in 2015 from its combined ministers of defense to more specifically evaluate the state of current defense cooperation and outline a plan for a more militarily integrated future. These plans revealed an unprecedented amount of military cooperation and involvement with NATO, with new initiatives such as the Visegrad Group Military Educational Platform, which “coordinates efforts regarding the use, planning, pooling and/or sharing of V4 professional military education and research capabilities...to guarantee the best achievable level of education and training of military officers and other experts in the area of security and defense according to EU/NATO standards.”¹⁴ These communiqués contrast with the more noncommittal language of those released prior to the Ukrainian crisis. For example, the 2012 joint ministers of defense communique states that “We will continue to strengthen our cooperation through projects where our countries actively participate and that have already produced results”, meaning that the Visegrad group planned to limit its NATO activities to a select few projects that had experienced prior success, rather than entering the new and more ambitious projects outlined in the 2014 and 2015 communiqués.¹⁵

The Visegrad group has also developed its defensive collaboration through one of the primary cooperative military structures of the European Union by establishing the Visegrad Battlegroup. Although

¹² Defence Expenditure of NATO Countries (2013-2019), Defence Expenditure of NATO Countries (2013-2019) § (n.d.).

¹³ The Bratislava Declaration, The Bratislava Declaration § (2016).

¹⁴ “Joint Communiqué of the Visegrad Group Ministers of Defence.” *The Visegrad Group*, March 23, 2015.

¹⁵ “Joint Communiqué of the Visegrad Group Ministers of Defence.” *The Visegrad Group*, May 4, 2012.

the battlegroup had been planned since 2011, it was only in March 2014, following the annexation of Crimea, that the Memorandum of Understanding was signed by the joint ministers of defense. This document is an official statement of the Visegrad group's intentions to prepare and deploy soldiers to the EU as needed, as well as to reach stand-by capabilities by 2016, and was ostensibly written in response to concern over Russia's intervention in Ukraine. In signing the document, the Visegrad group entered into its "most specific contribution to further enhance the EU's rapid reaction capacities", as mentioned in a joint statement by its prime ministers. Through the battlegroup, member countries have engaged in cooperative activities such as joint military exercises with other EU nations. Furthermore, in the Bratislava Declaration of September 2014, the Visegrad group declared the use of the battlegroup "to maximise the efforts to support Ukraine", which portrays the rapid ensuing cooperation within the battlegroup as a specific response to the external threat of the Ukrainian crisis.¹⁶

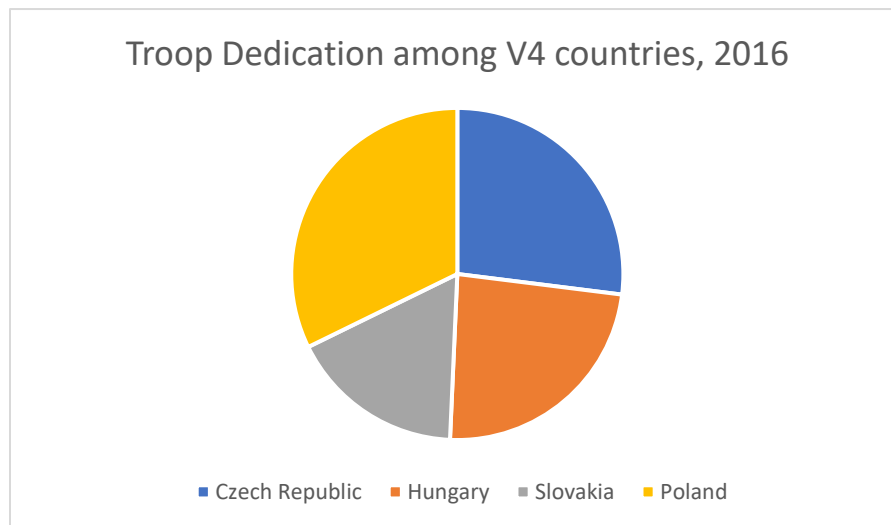


Figure 3 (from Prague Daily Monitor)¹⁷

Additionally, as shown by Figure 3, the battlegroup has fostered generally equitable contributions from member countries, considering proportionality to the size of their individual militaries. In this way, the Visegrad-EU Battlegroup, the formation of which was accelerated by the Ukrainian crisis, has increased the defensive cooperation of Visegrad members and therefore led to an overall strengthening of the organization.

While the Visegrad Group's intended cultural and economic cohesion has been successfully applied within Eastern Europe, as shown by increasing engagement by the International Visegrad Fund with various countries in the Visegrad region, its contentious foreign policy towards Russia has led to a lack of funding with that country through the very same cooperative structure. This is the result of a growing disconnect between eastern and western oriented flanks in the organization led by Hungary and Poland, respectively, which has sowed conflict within the individual governments of Slovakia and the Czech Republic as well. However, the physical threat posed by Russia's incursion into Ukraine has united the group firmly by leading to a drastic increase in participation with the collaborative defense structures of NATO and the European Union. This is shown by increased monetary dedication to NATO after a minimum point in 2014, narrative shifts in joint Visegrad communiqués that reveal an urgency for NATO

¹⁶ Paulech, Michal, and Jana Urbanovská. "Visegrad Four EU Battlegroup Meaning and Progress." *Obrana a Strategie*, December 15, 2014.

¹⁷ "V4 EU Battlegroup with 728 Czech Troops to Be on Standby in 2016." *Prague Daily Monitor*, December 30, 2015.

participation after the Ukrainian crisis, and the formation of an equitably sourced Visegrad-EU battlegroup to pursue cohesive defensive consolidation within the context of the EU's Common Security and Defense Policy. Therefore, while the Visegrad Group has shown its collaboration to be successful in terms of responding to military threats, its political and economic disagreements demonstrate a slippery slope that could eventually undermine its status among Russia's periphery.

Session 4

Secession Tension

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Ethnic or Supra-Ethnic Cleavages: Explaining Civil War Onset in Transnistria

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Abstract

To what extent do ethnic divisions, as typically discussed in the academic literature, explain the onset of the civil war in the Transnistrian region of Moldova? What features of ethnicity does traditional literature miss? The Transnistria War of 1992 was a territorial dispute between Transnistrian separatists and the Moldovan government following the collapse of the Soviet Union. A disenfranchised Russophone population formed a separatist movement and fought to secede from Moldova. It remains a frozen conflict today, with Transnistria—or the PMR¹—forming a de facto state, unrecognized by the international community.² Literature presents the conflict along ethnic lines, but this is not an ideal framework, as the onset of conflict may have been influenced by ideological and geopolitical frameworks such as the Russkii Mir concept, and also by a Transnistrian supra-ethnic identity, which provide a more nuanced explanation for conflict onset. In this paper, I will open with Moldova's historical context in the 1990s, which presents the polity's demographics historically and currently. Second, I will present a literature review, in which I critique reading the Transnistrian conflict as an ethnic one. Third, I will introduce my proposed framework for "supra-ethnic" cleavages and the Russkii Mir concept.

Fourth, I present my argument for the proposed framework, followed by a conclusion.

¹ Pridnestrovskaiia Moldavskaia Respublika

² Magdalena Dembińska. 2019. "Carving out the Nation with the Enemy's Kin: Double Strategy of Boundary-making in Transnistria and Abkhazia." *Nations and Nationalism* 25 (1), 298. <https://doi.org/10.1111/nana.12386>.

Introduction

Historically, the territory of the modern Republic of Moldova fell under the rule of various polities, namely the Russian Empire and Romania. The two regions comprising Moldova, Bessarabia and Transnistria, differ greatly due to territorial-administrative differences. In 1792, the Russian Empire, Turkey, and the Ottoman Empire forged a treaty, ceding the lands between the Nistru and Bug Rivers to the Russian Empire.³ The majority of the population spoke Romanian, but this changed after increased Slavic colonization of the region. In 1812, the Russian Empire acquired the eastern portion of Bessarabia, while the rest fell under Romania.⁴ Following the Russian Revolution of 1917, Bessarabia declared independence from Russia, with aims to become part of Romania.⁵ In 1924, the Soviets formed the Moldovan Autonomous SSR with Transnistrian lands within the Ukrainian SSR.⁶ During World War II, the Soviet Union annexed Bessarabia from Romania.⁷ Bessarabia and Transnistria were joined to create the Moldovan Soviet Socialist Republic in 1944, but both regions retained the linguistic-cultural features forged by their occupiers.⁸ Bessarabia remained Romanian-speaking at home, while Transnistria retained its sizable Slavic influence, with increased use of the Russian language during the Soviet Period.⁹ Russian became the administrative and inter-ethnic language, and a Soviet Transnistrian Moldovan elite emerged, filling high-ranking positions in industry,

³ Natalia Cojocaru. 2006. "Nationalism and Identity in Transnistria." *Innovation: The European Journal of Social Science Research* 19 (3–4): 263. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13511610601029813>.

⁴ Ibid., 263.

⁵ Alejandro W. Sanchez. 2009. "The 'Frozen' Southeast: How the Moldova-Transnistria Question Has Become a European Geo-Security Issue." *The Journal of Slavic Military Studies* 22 (2): 155. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13518040902917917>.

⁶ Dembińska 2019. "Carving out the Nation", 303.

⁷ Theodor Tudoroiu. 2012. "The European Union, Russia, and the Future of the Transnistrian Frozen Conflict." *East European Politics and Societies: And Cultures* 26 (1): 140. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0888325411404885>.

⁸ Ibid., 140.

⁹ Yuri Slezkine. 1994. "The USSR as a Communal Apartment, or How a Socialist State Promoted Ethnic Particularism." *Slavic Review* 53 (2): 443. <https://doi.org/10.2307/2501300>.

management, the Communist party, and the army.¹⁰ In fact, Transnistria became the economic powerhouse of the Moldovan SSR, with a focus on arms and heavy industries.¹¹ Additionally, the Soviet 14th Army was stationed in Transnistria.¹²

Perestroika and the beginnings of the collapse of the Soviet Union disenfranchised much of the Soviet elite, who were now seeing legislation that limited the use of Russian as the lingua franca. In 1989, the Moldovan SSR established Moldovan—or Romanian—as the state language, switching, also, from the Cyrillic to the Latin alphabet.¹³ In 1990, the disenfranchised Russophone Soviet elite living in Transnistria, a region with relatively equal populations of Russians (25.5%), Ukrainians (28.3%), and Moldovans (39.9%), announced their separation from the Moldovan SSR.¹⁴ Secessionist rhetoric cited the danger of Moldovan independence, as the collapse of the Soviet Union could enable an unwarranted reintegration with Romania.¹⁵ This rhetoric has its roots in Bessarabia’s historical affiliation with Romanian rule, culture, and language. The narrator’s rhetoric in a 2016 Transnistrian state-produced PMR history video about the PMR’s legislative body showcases the Transnistrian concerns for language rights: “The representatives-pioneers had a great desire to protect the interests of the nation: their right to live on their land; to speak their native language”¹⁶ The Soviet period marked the formation of ‘right’ and ‘left-bank’ identities: with Bessarabian Moldovans as Romaniaphiles and Transnistrians as Slavophiles.¹⁷

¹⁰ Tudoroiu, “The European Union”, 140; Cojocaru, “Nationalism and Identity”, 264.

¹¹ Cojocaru, “Nationalism and Identity”, 264.

¹² Sanchez, “The ‘Frozen’ Southeast”, 155.

¹³ Dembińska 2019. “Carving out the Nation”, 301.

¹⁴ Tudoroiu, “The European Union”, 140.

¹⁵ Cojocaru, “Nationalism and Identity”, 261.

¹⁶ 25 *Let VS PMR-28.01.2016*. *YouTube*. Novosti Verkhovnogo Soveta PMR, 2016.
https://www.youtube.com/watch?time_continue=82

“U deputatov-pervoprokhodtsev... bylo ogromnoe zhelanie zashchitit’ interesy naroda -- ikh pravo zhit’ na svoei zemle govorit’ na rodnom iazyke”

¹⁷ Cojocaru, “Nationalism and Identity”, 263.

Following the declaration of secession from the Republic of Moldova in 1991, Igor Smirnov was elected president of the PMR.¹⁸ A short military conflict ensued in 1992, during which Smirnov's paramilitary forces attacked all administrative institutions loyal to the Republic of Moldova and 1,500 lives were lost.¹⁹ On June 19, 1992, the Moldovan President Mircea Snigur announced a counterattack, but on June 20-21, 1992, the Transnistrians emerged as the stronger side due to their foreign backing.²⁰ The Transnistrians were backed by the 14th Russian Army—once a Soviet entity—and by Russian Cossacks.²¹ A ceasefire agreement was arranged between Moldova and Russia, with Russian troops remaining on Transnistrian soil as protectors of the Russophone population.²²

Literature Review: Traditional Explanations for the Transnistria War

Numerous examples of political science literature cite the Transnistria War of 1992 as a conflict that emerged along ethnic fault lines. According to James Fearon, episodes of ethnic violence in Eastern Europe emerged after the breakup of the Soviet Union because the formation of new states generated a commitment problem between the ethnic majority and ethnic minorities: ethnic majorities were unable to commit to not exploiting ethnic minorities.²³ Such commitment problems facilitate the onset of ethnic conflict because they incentivize preventive war initiated by the disenfranchised ethnic group under the condition of anarchy.²⁴ James Fearon also dismisses the concept that historic ancestral hatred contributes to the onset of ethnic conflict, as quantitatively no support for such a relationship exists; in fact, ethnic hatred is considered a

¹⁸ Sanchez, "The 'Frozen' Southeast", 157.

¹⁹ Ibid., 157.

²⁰ Tudoroiu, "The European Union", 141.

²¹ Sanchez, "The 'Frozen' Southeast", 157.

²² Ibid., 157.

²³ Fearon, James D. 1995. "Ethnic War as a Commitment Problem." *Stanford University*, August, 24, 2.

²⁴ Fearon, "Ethnic War, 3.

strategic and rational action meant to instigate conflict by belligerents.²⁵ Additionally, the bigger the payoff, the more likely ethnic groups will be willing to fight for their cause; for Moldova, Fearon describes the Transnistria War as “Russians” seceding from the republic, as they feared the outcomes of the creation of the new Moldovan independent state.²⁶ This scholar’s theory of ethnic violence is compelling, yet it oversimplifies the ethnic makeup of Transnistria. The Transnistrian separatists were not all ethnically Russian; some may have identified with a Russophone Soviet identity—in other words, a supra-ethnic category—; some, Slavic; others, Transnistrian-Moldovan.

James Fearon’s argument closely relates to Alan J. Kuperman’s ‘moral hazard’ hypothesis: if a credible threat to the minority exists, and if a minority population stands to become the majority following risk-taking behavior, onset of conflict is likely, especially if secessionists expect military backing by foreign powers.²⁷ However, if the onset of conflict depends on secessionists’ expectations of military assistance, how can those expectations be meaningfully measured and traced to conflict onset? Alex J. Bellamy and Paul D. Williams present empirical evidence that disputes Kuperman’s approach, citing that if the ‘moral hazard’ concept is accurate, then an increase in humanitarian aid should be associated with an increase in armed rebellion.²⁸ The scholars used the Uppsala Conflict Data Program database, limiting between the years 1990-2018, and excluding intra-state conflicts that ended in state collapse or states that did not have monopoly on the legitimate use of force prior to conflict onset.²⁹ Their

²⁵ Fearon, “Ethnic War, 4-5.

²⁶ Fearon, “Ethnic War, 22.

²⁷ Alan J. Kuperman 2008. “The Moral Hazard of Humanitarian Intervention: Lessons from the Balkans.” *International Studies Quarterly* 52 (1): 59. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1468-2478.2007.00491.x>.

²⁸ Alex J. Bellamy and Paul D. Williams, “On the Limits of Moral Hazard: The ‘Responsibility to Protect’, Armed Conflict and Mass Atrocities,” *European Journal of International Relations* 18, no. 3 (December 2011): pp. 546, <https://doi.org/10.1177/1354066110393366>

²⁹ *Ibid.*, 546.

results dispute the ‘moral hazard’ theory, as with the increase of humanitarian aid and deployments, there is actually a decrease in the number of rebellions.³⁰ In light of this empirical evidence, Transnistrian separatists may have taken more risks because they were backed by the Russian Federation, but conflict onset should not be explained and over-simplified by Russian- backing. The ‘moral hazard’ theory also has a methodological shortcoming that Bellamy and Williams include in support of their argument. Per Jon Western, whom the scholars cite, the ‘moral hazard’ theory centers on the outbreak of rebellion, disregarding “the historic and strategic context in which political pressure builds before intra-state conflict erupts.”³¹ Essentially, how can the ‘moral hazard’ explain the onset of conflict with Russian backing if it does not explore other contexts for the basis of conflict? In another scholar’s view, foreign backing is what perpetuates conflict—not necessarily what explains its onset.

Theodor Tudoroiu argues that the ethnic, frozen conflicts in the post-Soviet space can be treated as a unitary phenomenon, as they showcase these features: (1) a political instrumentalization of secession, (2) the pursuit of state-building projects, (3) economic problems and organized crime, and (4) Russian military backing.³² According to this scholar, Russian military backing on the basis of protecting its minority populations abroad is what perpetuates frozen ethnic conflicts in the post-Soviet space.³³ Though there is evidence for the correlation between foreign military backing and the perpetuation of frozen conflicts, Tudoroiu’s approach neglects to analyze the ideology of Transnistrians and their backers. The Russian Federation’s protection of its minorities is rationalized by the Slavic populations living in

³⁰ Ibid., 547.

³¹ Ibid., 557.

³² Tudoroiu, “The European Union”, 139.

³³ Ibid., 140.

Transnistria, in my opinion, through a supra-ethnic ideological concept: one of the Russkii Mir—or Russian World.

An ethnic explanation for the Transnistrian War can be established vis-à-vis Elaine K. Denny and Barbara Walter's framework regarding ethnicity and civil war onset. According to these scholars, civil wars are more likely to be initiated by ethnic groups because they have grievances against the state—just as Transnistrians felt disenfranchised linguistically—and face more bargaining problems—Moldovans were unable to credibly commit to accommodating the Transnistrians, and can mobilize easily.³⁴ Ethnic mobilization in Transnistria is a problematic feature in the civil war onset argument. According to Magdalena Dembińska, the Transnistrian separatist movement did not necessarily have an ethnic basis, citing Transnistria's ethnic heterogeneity.³⁵ This scholar argues for an ideological approach to conflict onset, with which I agree; if the Transnistrians were not ethnically Russian and could not mobilize according to ethnic slogans, then an ethnic explanation falls short of fully explaining the onset of conflict.

Instead, a supra-ethnic identity may better explain Transnistrian mobilization.³⁶

“Supra-Ethnic” Cleavages and the Russkii Mir

Transnistrian elites were the part of the population to lead the secessionist movement from the soon to be independent Moldova in 1990, opting for a continued Soviet identity over a Romania-friendly one. The Transnistrian-Moldovan identity was formed via relation to Moldovans and a non-affiliation with Romanians, yet embraced the region's ethnic heterogeneity.³⁷ In this manner, the Transnistrian identity was forged from the Soviet ideology of

³⁴ Elaine K Denny and Barbara F Walter. 2014. “Ethnicity and Civil War.” *Journal of Peace Research* 51 (2): 199. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0022343313512853>.

³⁵ Dembińska 2019. “Carving out the Nation”, 301

³⁶ Ibid., 302

³⁷ Ibid., 302

internationalism: “a formal equality” of all ethnic groups residing in the region.³⁸

Internationalism is demonstrated through anti-nationalist rhetoric in the aforementioned PMR history video, as the narrator describes the Transnistrian region as “the main region against nationalism”³⁹ in the 1990 anti-Romanianization protests and relayed how the “citizens protest[ed] against discriminatory laws.”⁴⁰ In this manner, the Transnistrian cause was one in which “local elites posed as guardians of ‘true’ Moldovans—those who do not self-identify with Romania and who write in the Cyrillic Alphabet, not Latin.”⁴¹ Transnistria serves as a microcosm of a Soviet multi-ethnic Russophone population, and forming a category under which to mobilize would, thus, have to be supra-ethnic. For example, Ilia Galinsky, a History faculty member of Tiraspol University in the PMR stated that, “We have nothing against the Moldovan identity, yet, we can’t really promote it here as it would destroy the multiethnic character of Transnistria.”⁴² Additionally, a PMR news article states that “...there is no titular nation, and according to the last census of 2015 more than a thousand people designated their nationality as ‘Transnistrian,’” rather than choosing to specify their ethnicity.⁴³

The Soviet elites—the strategists and proponents of the Transnistrian secession—were a Russophone population advocating for language rights, so they were posterchildren for the Russkii Mir ideology. The concept defines the Russian state and empire as a “civilizational space” to which Russophone populations may subscribe.⁴⁴ In the 19th century, Russkii Mir

³⁸ Slezkine, “The USSR as a Communal Apartment”, 425.

³⁹ “glavnyi... za protivleniia natsiolizmu -- Pridnestrovskii region” (25 Let VS PMR-28.01.2016)

⁴⁰ “zhiteli vystupa[li] protiv diskriminatsionnykh zakonov” (25 Let VS PMR-28.01.2016)

⁴¹ Dembińska 2019. “Carving out the Nation”, 302

⁴² Ibid., 303

⁴³ “12 interesnykh Faktov o Pridnestrov’e.” *Novosti Pridnestrov’iia*, May 14, 2018. <https://novostipmr.com/ru/news/18-05-14/12-interesnyh-faktov-o-pridnestrove>.

“...zdes’ net titul’noi natsii, a po dannym poslednei perepisi 2015 goda bolee tysiachi chelovek oboznachili svoiu natsional’nost’ kak «pridnestrovets».”

⁴⁴ John O’Loughlin, Gerard Toal, and Vladimir Kolosov. 2016. “Who Identifies with the ‘Russian World’? Geopolitical Attitudes in Southeastern Ukraine, Crimea, Abkhazia, South Ossetia, and Transnistria.” *Eurasian*

implied the communion of Orthodox Christians united by traditions and customs, but its post-

Soviet definition is not confessional.⁴⁵ The modern definition of Russkiĭ Mir seeks a solution to a geopolitical crisis: 25 million ethnic Russians were suddenly ‘abroad’ after the Soviet Union’s collapse in 15 newly independent states.⁴⁶ Russkiĭ Mir’s mechanism is the following: using a common language—Russian—as a means of connecting communities across the world.⁴⁷ Defining the Russian culture and its far-reaching community fell along linguistic affiliations rather than among those who resided in the Russian state: the term is Russkiĭ Mir and not Rosiĭskiĭ Mir, after all.⁴⁸ The Russkiĭ Mir ideological approach became a means for disenfranchised Russophone populations to connect to fellow Russian speakers who were once connected via the Russophone Soviet elite structure. For example, Transnistrian separatists were offered elective Russian passports—a legal ticket into the Russkiĭ Mir—and now 100,000 out of 550,000 people are Russian citizens in the PMR.⁴⁹ Additionally, paired with primordialist myths that Transnistria was an ancestral Slavic homeland, justifying membership in the Russkiĭ Mir was simple.⁵⁰

Dembińska’s argument for the existence of a Transnistrian supra-ethnic identity fits well with the Russkiĭ Mir concept. Though Transnistria boasts a multi-ethnic identity, it blurs these lines to gain membership to the Russkiĭ Mir. For example, the Moldovan language is written in Cyrillic script in Transnistria—but Russian is far more common in daily life, with 82% of schools being Russophone—and history textbooks date back to the Soviet period and its

Geography and Economics 57 (6): 747. Ossetia, and Transnistria.” *Eurasian Geography and Economics* 57 (6): 745–

78. <https://doi.org/10.1080/15387216.2017.1295275>.

⁴⁵ Ibid., 747.

⁴⁶ Ibid., 747.

⁴⁷ Ibid., 748.

⁴⁸ Russkiĭ is an ethno-cultural adjective, while Rosiĭskiĭ is an adjective used in relation to the Russian Federation.

⁴⁹ Tudoroiu, “The European Union”, 148.

⁵⁰ Dembińska 2019. “Carving out the Nation”, 303

ideological interpretations.⁵¹ Essentially, her argument culminates to Transnistrians identifying as part of the Russkii Mir with ethnic boundaries blurring to accommodate this ideological construct.⁵²

Analysis: The Case for an Alternative Explanation

The evidence suggests that the Transnistrians favored an ideology that aligns them with the Russian-speaking community abroad, also known as the Russkii Mir. This implies that an ideological-geopolitical framework—or a “supra-ethnic” cleavage—can better explain conflict onset. I also argue that the ethnic frameworks proposed by the cited scholars contain elements that can still be mechanisms for the supra-ethnic cleavage, such as the concept of preventive war, but on an ideological basis rather than on an ethnic basis. Instead of operating under the assumption that the Transnistrians were ethnically motivated, I adopt the hypothesis that they were ideologically motivated by Soviet allegiance and the concept of the Russkii Mir.

Essentially, the collapse of the Soviet Union meant that the Soviet elites could no longer operate with elite status in the 15 newly-formed states, which were imposing language laws that demoted the Russian language in favor of the state languages that represented the titular group in each of the former Soviet republics. Transnistrians, identifying with a supra-ethnic category and who by no means identified with a Romanian historical or cultural identity, still faced the same commitment problem that James Fearon spoke of in relation to ethnic conflict. The Republic of Moldova could not credibly commit to accommodating its Russophone population, as its majority Moldovan population embraced affiliations with the Romanian culture complex. Thus, the disenfranchised Russophones, harboring social and linguistic grievances akin to those referenced by Elaine K. Denny and Barbara Walter, launched a preventive war. Igor Smirnov,

⁵¹ Ibid., 311-312

⁵² Ibid., 314

the leader of the Transnistrian separatists and first president of the PMR summarizes the Transnistrian separatist grievances in an interview with «Ėkho Moskvu» radio in 2011: “We never lived in a state called Moldova... We did not participate in lawmaking, because they did not let us speak, we were forced to leave parliament, at that time still Soviet. We did not vote [to leave] the Soviet Union... Who are the separatists, them or us...?”⁵³ For the separatists, the benefits (the formation of a new accommodating state) outweighed the costs (the prospect of losing and limiting bargaining power).

Secessionist rhetoric was rooted in the Russophone disenfranchisement, and the Transnistrian separatist movement was fueled by the Russkii Mir ideology. In the 2011 interview mentioned above, Igor Smirnov summarized the Transnistrian affiliation with the Russkii Mir in an interview with «Ėkho Moskvu» radio in 2011: “And here from the Soviet [rule] a Transnistrian nation formed with a Russian mentality.” Transnistrians, as a multi-ethnic population, were Slavophiles with a legitimate place in the Russkii Mir, originally seeking to remain in the folds of the Soviet system, but eventually, to remain a part of the Russophone community. In a speech given to university students, Igor Smirnov presents the desire to be a part of the Russkii Mir by explaining how the PMR never left the Soviet Union, and since the successor to the Soviet Union is the Russian Federation, a merge with Russia is a logical next step.⁵⁴

This ideological framework for the onset of civil conflict explains the common denominator in post-Soviet civil conflicts: Russian intervention and military backing. As the

⁵³ “I my nikogda ne zhili v gosudarstve, nazyvaemom Moldova... My ne uchastvovali ni v zakonodatel’nom, potomu chto nam ne davali govorit’, my vynuzhdeny byli uiti iz parlamenta, togda eshche sovetskogo. My ne golosovali za vykhod iz Sovetskogo Soiuza... Kto separatist, oni ili my...?” (Radiostantsiia «Ėkho Moskvu»)

⁵⁴ Igor’ Smirnov *Poobshchalsia So Studentami i Prepodavateliami Gosuniversiteta*. YouTube. First Pridnestrovian Channel, 2017.

“a pravopriemnik Sovetskogo Soiuza eto kto?” -- “Rossiiska Federatsiia” -- “[Pochemu] oni nas ne berut?”.

Russkii Mir is an ideological and geopolitical concept, it was used as a means for conflict intervention and exercise of soft power by the Russian Federation for numerous conflicts, citing the defense of the Russian minorities, Russian speakers abroad, etc..⁵⁵ The Russkii Mir concept is one that played a prominent role in the Russian Federation's interventions in Donbas, Crimea, Abkhazia, and South Ossetia.⁵⁶ With Russophone populations 'vying' for Russian backing, an intervention came to signify a formal entrance into the de facto Russkii Mir. To corroborate the Russkii Mir concept with Transnistrian identity, a study conducted by O'Loughlin et. al, 2016, revealed that Transnistrians—tied with Crimea—have the highest level of agreement about whether their population is part of the Russkii Mir: over two-thirds of respondents agreed that it was so.⁵⁷ According to these scholars, Transnistrians wish to be part of the Russian Federation, citing a 2006 referendum with 98% support for annexation with a 78.55% voter turnout.⁵⁸ Additionally, 90.9% public with a 68.7% turnout voted against expelling the 14th army from the PMR in a referendum that took place on March 6, 1995, revealing the public's Russophilic ideology 3 years following civil conflict.⁵⁹ The Russkii Mir is far-reaching and Transnistria's Soviet-era self-defined disenfranchisement and lack of ethnic homogeneity is what ultimately explains the stronghold of this Russophilic ideology.

Conclusion

Transnistria is a multi-ethnic region that mobilized in the 1992 Transnistria War via an ideological cleavage rather than what many scholars view as a conflict along ethnic cleavages. Transnistrians formed a supra-ethnic category per Magdalena Dembińska, allowing them to align

⁵⁵ O'Loughlin et. al, "Who Identifies with", 750.

⁵⁶ Tudoroiu, "The European Union", 136.

⁵⁷ O'Loughlin et. al, "Who Identifies with", 764.

⁵⁸ Ibid., 750.; "12 Interesnykh Faktov o Pridnestrov'e." *Novosti Pridnestrov'ia*.

⁵⁹ "12 Interesnykh Faktov o Pridnestrov'e." *Novosti Pridnestrov'ia*.

with the Russkiĭ Mir concept, and receive military backing. They remain a de facto state unrecognized by the international community. However, despite no official international recognition the rationalization and perpetuation of the Russkiĭ Mir ideological and geopolitical approach is quite public. In 2014, Vladimir Putin stated, “When I speak of Russian and Russian- speaking citizens I am referring to those people who consider themselves part of the broad Russian community, they may not necessarily be ethnic Russians, but they consider themselves Russian people.”⁶⁰ An ideological framework—one of the Russkiĭ Mir—is an appropriate analysis for onset of civil war in Transnistria in 1992, fitting with Tudoroi’s argument about frozen conflicts. Russian military backing on the basis of protecting fellow Russophones is what perpetuates frozen ethnic conflicts in the post-Soviet space. Further research should be conducted to test the ideological framework suggested in this paper, as the ethnic framework has now been problematized.

⁶⁰ O’Loughlin et. al, “Who Identifies with”, 750.

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Session 5

Intersections of the East and West in Art

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Vertov's Kino-Eye: Formalist or Functional?

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The Russian Revolutions of February and October were, without a doubt, events which marked significant political change in the Eurasian empire. Beyond the manifold reforms in the fields of education and markets, the 1917 Russian revolution brought about a sea change in the country's production of art. Although many fled the country after the events of October, there remained scores of Russian thinkers, artists, and citizens with dreams of utopia; a new order organized around the principles of fairness and equality (Stites 25-35). Even as these visions took a host of diverse forms and borrowed from a wide range of traditions, they were united by a common urge: to use this unique social moment, this "leap into the open air of history" (Benjamin), to refashion Russian society and seize its untapped potential.

Though the October Revolution consolidated power in the hands of the Bolshevik party, diverse ideas and philosophies lived on. Massive population movements from the countryside to urban centers and the processes of state-backed proletarianization contributed to the atmosphere of a society in flux (Stites 163). Throughout the intelligentsia, visions of radical life flourished. The scope of these visions ranged from utopia in the communal apartment to socialism on a global scale, hearkened in by a world proletarian revolution. While these visions certainly had a political element, which was concerned with reinventing the form and order of government, their implications were not limited to the political realm. In fact, it is in the realm of film where we see some of the most striking and influential innovations.

In the Early Soviet intelligentsia's world of contentious ideas and heated personalities, few filmmakers set themselves apart from the crowd as well as Dziga Vertov. Indeed, he would object to being identified as a filmmaker. According to his worldview, he just made documentaries. Rather than seeking to merely redefine the form or style of film production in the early Soviet Union, Vertov sought to redefine the very nature of the medium itself. To him, his incursion into cinema was an attempt at arriving at the real truth, which the fallibility of human senses hide from us. "From the viewpoint of the ordinary eye you see untruth. From the viewpoint of the cinematic eye (aided by special cinematic means, in this case, accelerated shooting) you see the truth" (Vertov 123). In other words, through the application of labor, creativity, and machine enhancements, mankind is able to arrive at the truth.

What characterizes this "truth" which Dziga Vertov is seeking to arrive at through the Kino-Eye, this fulfillment of historical purpose? Certainly, it is something beyond the sight of normal human vision. From a technological standpoint, Kino-Eye enables us to transcend the earthly limitations of space and time. Writing in "Kino-Eye to Radio-Eye," Vertov states quite clearly that "Kino-eye means the conquest of space, the visual linkage of people throughout the entire world based on the continuous exchange of visible fact, of film-documents as opposed to the exchange of cinematic or theatrical presentations" (Vertov 87). In this, it serves almost a utilitarian purpose, a means of sharing. Contrary to the expert opinion at the time, Kino-Eye was a Constructivist project, a means of destroying inefficiency and circumventing human limitation. In this, Kino-Eye transforms the documentary film from an object of historical preservation into a tool for the realization of the Revolutionary project; an appropriation of capitalist methods and technology for the building of socialism.

As Vertov shows in "We: A Version of a Manifesto" and "On the Organization of a Creative Laboratory," his philosophy of the Kino-Eye is not only a historical materialist argument, but also can be understood as the film counterpart to the labor organization theory of Gastev. Vertov and Gastev both appropriated the technology of Western capitalism, believed in the transformative power of organization, and sought to overcome limits of space and time. Both philosophies can be understood through the

framework of Bogdanov's "labor causality," which emphasizes the role of applied labor to explain historical and social development (Bogdanov 201-204). By analyzing *Man With A Movie Camera* through the lens of Kino-Eye theory and labor causality, we will see how Vertov's theory of film production was attempting to accomplish similar goals to Gastev's Institute of Labor theorizing. Vertov's documentaries, rather than being relics of a hollow and formalist avant-garde, were actually forward-looking incursions into the realm of documentary and propagandized primary sources.

Since the socialist ideology, particularly in the form espoused by the Bolsheviks, recognized no real distinction between the world of aesthetics and the world of material production, their arrival to power was bound to change Russia's visual culture. In the frenzy of early Soviet avant-garde output, every artistic medium was affected. While the fiction novel, oil painting, and sculpture were developed, the innovations in the field of film production were certainly the most significant. Film was seen as the most revolutionary artistic medium, a symbol of the modern era as well as a potent tool for the transmission of documentary evidence and manipulated political messaging. It was not just the artists who understood this. As V. I. Lenin famously stated: "Of all arts, cinema for us is the most important" (Beumers 38). Although there was widespread agreement on the value of film, and certainly a general market trend towards increased consumption in the New Economic Policy (NEP) period, film remained a new and unexplored genre when Vertov entered the scene.

Since there was no canon of cinematography, understandings of the nature of film and ideas surrounding its future occupied a wide spectrum. Given the revolutionary setting and the strong opinions of those involved, debates over film theory were often bitterly partisan and ideological. Cinema was seen by many of its early Soviet practitioners as the first medium which was yet unsullied by capitalism, and thus could be produced in a manner which eschewed the old bourgeois values and celebrated the new virtues of the Soviet ideology (Kepley 262-264). Ironically, the market dynamics after the Revolution would show a strong penchant for the film production of the capitalist countries during the period of NEP from 1921-1928 (Beumers 40).

Vertov's Kino-Eye philosophy, best known in the positive, dynamic iteration of *Man with a Movie Camera*, is also quite evident in his less positive films, such as the revolutionary call-to-action of *Enthusiasm*. Vertov's production of documentary films comes as part of an entire social movement towards mechanization in the Soviet society of the 20s. In this landscape, American production methods were hailed as the greatest example of capitalist-funded efficiency. No individual American typified these advancements in production as singularly as Henry Ford (Stites 148). According to Stites, the intelligentsia of the U.S.S.R. referred to his methods as "Fordism," an explicit philosophy to be emulated in planning. Meanwhile, the lower classes viewed Ford as a wizard, a person with almost alchemical power in the field of production (Stites 149). What happened in the Soviet Union in the 1920s could be described as a rediscovery of America as a cultural source.

Although perhaps best seen in Soviet enthusiasm for the Ford automobile or the efficient workplace organization of Taylor, the influence of American production was clear on the films of the early 20s, including Vertov's (Beumers 40). Particularly after the official ban on the import of American films (1916-1922) was lifted, the presence of foreign films in the NEP period was almost ubiquitous within the Soviet Union. The prevalence of American, French, and German films is illustrated by the fact that 95% of films distributed throughout the Soviet Union in 1924 were of foreign origin (Beumers 41). Lack of economic viability, a singular, struggling source of film production, and no "star" culture dimmed Soviet film prospects at that time period. To this reality, the filmmaker Kuleshov responded by writing the tract "Americanism," in which he laid out the reasons for American film supremacy, and the ways in which their techniques might be adopted for the improvement of the domestic Soviet Film industry.

What did the American films have, which the Soviet films did not? An "organic link with contemporary life," a filming style which emphasizes "the maximum amount of movement" with shorter scenes and more striking shots (Kuleshov 72). Kuleshov advocates for the position that Soviet filmmakers ought to be creating films with more rapid cuts between shots, epic close-ups, and increased attention to the "dynamism of construction" (73). These elements of American film reflect a style of filmmaking which actually does more to create emotional and narrative authenticity than the stiff and drawn-out scenes of the existing national film corpus. The need to adapt in order to stay competitive in the changing world of film was a truth noted by many Russians in the 20s. The truth is, however, that when attempts were made by filmmakers, including unscripted "documentary" artists such as Dziga Vertov, to use this new, "Americanized" style of movie production, it was resisted by their contemporaries (Beumers 53).

Although Vertov clearly is influenced by this Kuleshov-style turn to the cutting-edge, he is not fully enamored American way of doing things. In "We," Vertov characterizes the American adventure film as "good... but disorderly, not based on a precise study of movement. A cut above the psychological drama, but still lacking in foundation" (Vertov 6). It is ironic that Vertov was criticizing the Western adventure film along the organization principles introduced in American business and labor. Looking back, we can analyze a set of scenes from Vertov's *Enthusiasm*, to see how this Americanized, organized factory production-style filmmaking plays out. Analysis of a small chunk of the film's beginning will show this. In the following three sets of scenes, a class conflict emerges, it is met by a Marxist, historical materialist answer, and then a new reality is forged. All of this takes place within minutes, in a socialist appropriation of the assembly line. In this film, we see very clearly the implications of Vertov's idea that the artist is not a creator, but rather an engineer and builder who solves the problems of production in an "active process" (Heftberger 65). The viewer of *Enthusiasm* is made to detest certain things and celebrate others. This film, more so than *Man with a Movie Camera*, is a tool of revolutionary fervor. An analysis of the approximately 10 minutes from 6:00-16:00 in *Enthusiasm* shows this.

Enthusiasm sets the scene with a dynamic splicing of two varieties of shots. The first set of shots features a group of ragtag alcoholics, drinking high quantities of vodka at an absurd clip. This clip of the drunkards is interposed between shots of earnest Orthodox worshippers, vigorously doing their prayers (*Enthusiasm* 6:00-7:00). As these shots build in visual intensity and movement, there is an accompanying, calamitous ringing of the church bells. The music, which started out holy and consonant, now has become imposing and dissonant, both frightening and unnatural. Religion and the excessive intoxication are drawn as a parallel to one another, in a comment with obvious Marxist roots (Vertov, 6:00-8:00). More than anything the viewer is made to see disarray, the disorientation of people unable to walk straight or perform to the best of their ability. They are stumbling, immature, incapable. The religious worshippers seem to be hopelessly and helplessly repeating the same set of actions, vainly seeking relief and fulfillment. Orthodox fanaticism and the soundtrack's bells shriek at the viewer in unison. The "truth" of religiosity, unrestrained by the realities of human sight (and actual world experience) is shown through the Cine-Eye, an apparatus which portrays reality in its Marxist development.

Although the scenes of religious disarray are striking, what follows makes it truly Vertovian. Into the chaos of superstition arrives the antireligious Bolshevik formation, sober and marching in confidence (*Enthusiasm* 9:15). Everything about them screams "contrast!" from the previous shots of the religious fanatics and the alcoholics. The strength of the contrast is in fact an argument: the old way of life ages you, blinds you and renders you sluggish. The new way of life is youthful, dynamic, and provides a path forward, away from the inevitabilities of the past. Alongside the camera shots of the youthful marchers comes a change in the background music. It once again has assumed a march-like quality, with a faster tempo and a pleasant melody (*Enthusiasm* 9:45). It's made clear by Vertov that the dynamism of the youthful, Red-Star carrying cohort will allow them to surpass the out-moded ways of the past.

This increasing tension and movement culminates with the hoisting of the Red flag over the cathedral, a symbolic act and call to action which signifies the triumph of the new, socialist future over the outmoded ways of the past (*Enthusiasm* 13:57). After the symbolic placement of the Red banner, Vertov employs film editing techniques to signify the collapse of the church as a false idol of the past. A shot of cathedral spires is cut in half, and each half is twisted inward in order to give the impression of collapse from within. The pulling down of the cross, a blatant act, needs no explanation in its call to Revolutionary agitation. Accompanied by the throngs of the cheering people we see the beginning of a new day (*Enthusiasm* 16:09). The Red banner stands high, placed in the same spot as the recently tore down cross. In the distance, a factory billows smoke out of its chimneys, a sign of progress. The destruction of the church and the replacement of its worship with the committed implementation of the antireligious revolutionary project is a productive act, a liberation from the disorientation of the past and distraction of religion. It is, according to Vertov's understanding, an exposure of the truth, a piece of documentary evidence.

The revelatory nature of the *kinoglaz* is its central characteristic. We see this whether it takes place on a class-conflict level between group actors or on an interpersonal level between individuals, Vertov states this quite clearly: "If it's a question of reading someone's thoughts at a distance (and often what matters to us is not to hear a person's words but to read his thoughts), then you have that opportunity right here. It has been revealed by the Kino-Eye" (123). In Vertov's reality, the eye is something which can deceive. Breaking through the limits of human vision is accomplished through the combination of new technology and the application of film editing techniques. A scene from *Man with a Movie Camera* shows this in action.

At the 22:30 mark, the audience is presented with several long scenes of film rolls, lined up in a row, all set for editing (*Man with a Movie Camera*). One by one, the camera investigates the film. In each roll is contained a person. For now, they are still. When they are not being projected or edited, they are snapshots of an emotion frozen in time. A peasant woman cynically looks to her side. A small girl smiles for the camera. An older woman breaks out in a modest grin. Then the shot flips back to the row of film rolls. It's all set up for the production process to begin.

Just before the 23:00 mark, the film editor arrives. She is methodical and quick, when she sits down there is a certain grace to her movement. It's clear that she is skilled in this craft and will be able to transform the individual portraits into an attractive collection. She sets about doing just that. This serves as a documentary example of Vertov's desire for individuals to make films and solve problems in an "active process" (Heftberger 65). Vertov makes clear that what the audience is viewing is a combination of the mechanical process and the imaginative process. The imagination comes from the arrangement of the shots, concerns over the composition as a whole, and concerns over inclusivity. Within the various film strips are a diversity of subjects: Old, young, Muslim, peasant. Who brings them together, if not the filmmaker?

The answer which Vertov seems to provide is: the Soviet city. The city depicted is not a real city, although shots of it are taken in Moscow, Odessa, Kiev, and places out in the country. The city which Vertov depicts is a transcendent city, the ideal type which you can *experience* when you live your life, but you could never point to on planet Earth. At 23:40 you catch a glimpse of it, as if you're experiencing it through the eyes of the small boy whose portrait is interposed between shots of the crowded city (*Man with a Movie Camera*). As this example shows, Vertov constructs an ideal through Kino-Eye.

Contemporaries of Vertov who categorized his work as "camera mischief" were mistaken in attributing no social dimension to his documentaries (Beumers 40). Even as Vertov was unique in his theories and execution, the purpose of his endeavors can be found in Marx. "The eye has become a *human* eye," the German materialist wrote, "just as its *object* has become a social, *human* object – an object made

by man for man. The *senses* have therefore become directly in their practice *theoreticians*. They relate themselves to the thing for the sake of the thing, but the thing itself is an *objective human* relation to itself and to man” (Marx 46). Through the application of the technical advancement which the film camera brings, coupled with the artistic possibilities which film editing affords, Vertov is able to use filmmaking for the realization of the revolutionary project embarked upon in 1917. Vertov and his cohort demonstrated the social orientation of their work when they embarked on “film-trains” from the center, tasked with the production of documentary information from the provinces. Additionally, Vertov took the opportunity to distribute his *agitki*, short sketches intended to incite social improvement (Beumers 49-50). Even as the opportunities for collaboration with the Stalinist government existed for Vertov, it would eventually come to mean a tempering of his more avant-garde tendencies in favor of a need to toe the censor’s line. Initially this was not the case, but certainly by the time *Enthusiasm* was produced, the state would have loomed large in Vertov’s artistic conceptions.

The problem which Vertov faced for his entire career was that his vision of the revolutionary ideals of 1917 and the way that film production fit into that landscape departed markedly from the film critic and director establishment. Contemporary critics and reviewers of Vertov’s work, many of them fellow directors or artists in their own right, almost across the board failed to grasp his artistic vision (Michelson xix-xxiii). To them, his work was formalistic and fell flat in its execution. But what was the work of Vertov, really? It was a new incursion into the world of filmmaking on the part of the documentary film. Vertov staked a claim with his Kino-Eye theory that the documentary film, even more so than the artfully scripted movie, could transform a culture. As his writings make clear, he understood the ways in which the wider distribution of primary source, documentary knowledge would be an asset to the Soviet system by building a sense of community bonds. His execution was avant-garde, reflecting the dynamism of imported Futurism and the Soviet Constructivist movements, but in the scope of his vision he saw the vital role which communications technologies would really come to play. The novelty of his medium, heightened by its technical limitations, hardly lent him credibility when he presented some of his wilder ideas.

Even as students of Soviet film history return to the work of Dziga Vertov as exemplary of the revolutionary dynamism and innovation of Soviet film, it is hard to gauge to what extent he can be considered an essential part of the Russian film canon’s development, much less one of its more influential stars. It can be stated quite clearly that almost all of Vertov’s contemporaries considered his work to be a slave of formalism, an over-wrought solution to the question of film’s place in a revolutionary society. Eisenstein, himself an advocate of the “montage of attractions” theory of high-paced camera shots to agitate the audience, referred to *Man with a Movie Camera* as a collection of “formalist jackstraws and unmotivated camera mischief” (43). As this paper has earlier stated, the critical reception to Vertov’s work misunderstands its most vital purpose: it is merely the jumping-off point for a new reality of cinema.

Even if the critical reception is understood to be a misreading of Vertov’s artistic intentions, it is still beneficial to judge his corpus on the basis of its influence. *Kinoglaz* sought to replace the old methods of filmmaking, with its scripts, tropes, and melodrama, with a new cinematography which can document truths which the human eye cannot see. The fulfillment of this purpose requires the combination of human labor and technology. As Vertov writes, summing up the longevity of his ideas: “We cannot improve the making of our eyes, but we can endlessly perfect the camera” (15). The revolution in cinematography which Vertov sought in his own life did not come to pass, stopped as it was by technical limitations and social unacceptance. What Vertov could not have anticipated is the extent to which technology development and the creation of modern communications networks such as the internet have caused the instrumentalization of documentary evidence. Clips of real-world events become cultural touchstones, documentary evidence of a reality which is in desperate need of reform. Protests come and go, and individuals fall from power on account of shared images and film. If Dziga Vertov had access to

our modern technology, he may have been able to carry his vision to a larger audience, with a more bombastic presentation. However, that remains a counterfactual proposition, and the role of Vertov in the evolution of Soviet film must be seen for what it was: misunderstood, underdeveloped, but hinting at a great revolution which sought to unify human ambition and production far beyond the realm of cinematography.

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Gender Approach to Studying American Female Poetry in Ukraine (on t A. Rich's Poem 'The Roofwalker')

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Introduction

For the last 20 years, literary and critical articles on women's prose do not leave the pages of Ukrainian and foreign publications. Perhaps, the topic of feminism is not the dominant in research and disputes in Ukrainian scientific journals but it causes a lot of questions and debates. The end of 1980s – the beginning of 1990s is famous for female prose analysis mainly from literary-aesthetic perspective in the US, however, works on gender studies with the use of sociological methods became popular by the end of the century. In Ukraine, these directions in prose and poetry emerged at the beginning of the 21st century. Two of the most prominent examples are Kyiv Institute of Gender Studies (1999) and the Ukrainian Gender Network (2010.) Within the framework of gender studies in Ukraine, the poetry of both popular and little-known writers is studied thoroughly. In order to present the whole importance of feminine poetry in Ukraine in terms of the interconnection of both gender and linguostylistic viewpoints, Adrienne Rich's poetry has been chosen for comprehensive analysis. She is an indicator of powerful female poetry that has left its mark for many decades. According to Poetry Foundation [1], she is considered to be 'one of America's foremost public intellectuals' whose works are read all around the world and are female- and political-oriented.

The study of the indicated 20-year period can show two opposite views on the previously made statement about feminism in Ukrainian poetry. The supporters of the first frame of preference are convinced that women's poetry existence is permanent, and representatives of second viewpoint strongly believe that women's poetry is a temporary phenomenon.

As far as this paper is concerned, it sheds light on the first statement, we prove that modern female poetry is important nowadays in Ukraine because every person should be heard, and namely A. Rich's poems widely popularize this thought. Furthermore, we are to have a deeper insight into A. Rich's biography, the main events in her life and how they affect her poetry on different levels (phonological, graphological, grammatical and lexical.)

Scientific relevance of this research paper is to apply a method of a gender analysis in late American poetry and make it popular in Ukraine. Taking into account fact that A. Rich's poetry is not thoroughly analyzed in the country in question, we provide the ground for further research in the same field of study.

Apropos the state of scientific development of this topic, we have gone through many internet articles dedicated to A. Rich's life path, political and social views, and her poetry in general. In regards to exactness, the amount of information about her poetry — both early and late — is scarce. It is the main reason that motivates me to elaborate on this topic.

The aim of this work is to apply a method of a gender analysis to analyze A. Rich's poem 'The Roofwalker' It includes solving the following tasks: 1) to research special features of the gender approach to the analysis of the poetic text; 2) to study characteristics of Adrienne's Rich literary style; 3) to analyze gender features of the poem 'The Roofwalker'.

The practical value of the work is that the results obtained can be used in the study of American literature in Ukraine and are also advantageous at the analysis of various literary works.

Adrienne Rich's artistic style and its peculiarities

It is believed that this research will be beneficial in solving the difficulties of gender analysis in modern American literature in Ukraine. We agree on the fact that the poetry of any writer cannot be

analyzed without studying his biography thoroughly. Adrienne Rich (1929-2012) was a comprehensively developed person: having been an American poet, she was a political influencer and an activist for women's rights [2]. Apparently, feminism has become a critical issue in the scope of her work after the marriage with Alfred Haskell Conrad, a brief story of which is to be presented below in the practical part of the work.

The period of her lifespan from 1960 is the most of our interest. Adrienne Rich proved herself to be a writer, a politician and a feminist simultaneously. As far as women's activism became an issue she could not live without, it was not complicated for her to combine her political, feminist and artistic journeys in the poems we are to deal with [1]. Additionally, she published a book 'Of Woman Born: Motherhood as Experience and Institution' where the reader understands A. Rich's inclinations and finally notices her release as a free person who is not afraid of being blamed for demonstrating her sexual orientation (or for exposing whom she really was without any elaboration) [4]. The only issue we highlight straightaway is why she decided to tell the truth to her reader in times when even America was not ready to face and accept it (in our case it is same-sex relationships). In the previously mentioned book she states, 'The body has been made so problematic for women that it has often seemed easier to shrug it off and travel as a disembodied spirit.' The question of our analysis is whether Adrienne Rich managed to 'shrug off' that body or only to make a visibility of attempts.

The novelty of the work is to improve methods of gender approach in American and Ukrainian poetic texts by means of investigating gender peculiarities of Adrienne Rich's poem 'The Roofwalker.' As gender analysis is increasingly set to become a vital factor in understanding the initial message of any author, the task of the philologist is to decipher the poem by analyzing its language. The scientific relevance of this research paper is to apply a method of gender analysis in late American poetry and make it popular in Ukraine.

Linguostylistic analysis of the poem 'The Roofwalker'

This poem represents Adrienne Rich's view on the life from the side of both a feminist and a public figure. The following analysis of this piece of her work focuses on both of them. The fact that the opinions of different publishing houses and literary critics on the main thought of her poems contradict each other (the question is whether her poems are lesbian- or feminist-oriented) does not prevent us from outlining the main concept of this piece of poetry [3]. While giving an interview to "The Washington Post" in 1981, A. Rich claimed that she wrote as "woman, lesbian and feminist" [1]. Although some people do not see any difference between the adjectives lesbian and feministic, it does exist. If her poems included only lesbian agitation and nothing else, they would not be so worldwide spread and appreciated by masses. Still, in our perspective, Adrienne Rich uncovered the philosophy of life due to the air of mystery she creates in the "Roofwalker".

As well as the fact of her feminism propensity, the dedication "for Denise Levertov" should be mentioned, too. A. Rich considered D. Levertov as a like-minded person because of her affliction the mentioned above movement. Being more precise, she was a political and civil activist and her position as a poetry editor of "The Nation" provided her with a variety of privileges, including publishing works of various feminist writers. [4]

Theme of the poem 'The Roofwalker'

The main topic of this poem may be considered differently. It is unclear for a reader what thought the author wanted to convey: whether it was a cry of a woman who was not able to resist the oppression and moral values of the society or just a disastrous marriage story, or both options simultaneously. We believe, the principal topic of "The Roofwalker" is the author's contradiction against the tension of the labels that society puts on her.

Firstly, the theme of unfortunate marriage bothers A. Rich personally. If we take a deeper look at her biography, we find out that she was married to Alfred Haskell Conrad, a professor at Harvard University, and she had three children from him. Still, A. Rich impression of her marriage was not as cheerful as it may be from the newly wife. "I married in part because I knew no better way to disconnect from my first family. I wanted what I saw as a full woman's life, whatever was possible" – that was how she commented on her decision to marry [5]. Consequently, the theme of a miserable

marriage is strongly depicted in this poem and the reader can feel it through a variety of expressive means and stylistic devices: rhetorical question, “Was it worth while to lay-/with infinite exertion-/a roof I can’t live under?”; also, she A. Rich uses the epithet ‘*infinite exertion*’ to refer to how many efforts she put into her marriage.

Logically, the next theme comes out from the first one. In A. Rich’s life, we have observed that she searches for something meaningful in her life, some constituent that may replace the lack of fruitful marriage. Again, we have to relate to A. Rich’s biography to understand the origins of such style of narrating. In 1976, she has published her book ‘Of Woman Born: Motherhood as Experience and Institution’ where she wrote, “The suppressed lesbian I had been carrying in me since adolescence began to stretch her limbs.” Therefore, the depressive motif of the whole poem ‘The Roofwalker’ can be observed easily thanks to stylistic devices and expressive means as well: repetitions, rhetorical questions, ellipses, epithets, metaphors and hyperbole.

Narrative voice and lyrical persona in the poem

In this case, we have the first-person narration that allows us to understand many aspects in the poem. When a reader wants to understand any piece of literary work deeply and thoroughly, what does he do first of all? He always pours himself through the given situation and tries to analyze it from his point of view. Here Adrienne Rich does a complex thing:

Firstly, she facilitates the role of the reader because he has to accept her point of view and only think about it. She makes easier reader’s part because after the first pronoun “I” he stops imagining the whole situation and starts only accepting the information given. Still, we think that every poem has something to think about after being read, this is the main mission of poetry.

Secondly, she makes the role of the reader more difficult and compromises herself. Despite the fact that writer, at the first sight, does not have to contemplate many aspects himself because they are already presented in the author’s viewpoint, the reader starts analyzing A. Rich’s frame of thinking and her attitude to life. Here, he may face misunderstanding between his and her attitudes that may lead to further contradictions in perception.

Phonological level

Taking into consideration that our analysis is not only stylistic, we approach not only phonological level but phonetic as well. We do this with the aim of taking a profound insight into A. Rich’s poetry and analyzing it from all possible angles. We analyze the poem in the following way:

1. Features of a phoneme → 2. its meaning in the context → 3. presumable reader’s feelings and reaction

What poetic foot in this poem concerns, it is blank verse iambic pentameter. Blank verse is usually used with the first-person narration (as it was previously mentioned) in order to make a poem more personal and self-oriented (in our case author-oriented). In addition, a poem acquires dramatical narration features. The author contemplates about the essence of woman’s existence in the world and tries to find answers to all her questions. The question about the use of iambic pentameter is understandable: the stress is on the second syllable; therefore, the whole poem attains the rhythm of everyday way of speaking and is easy to read.

First stanza

Onomatopoeia is a phonetic imitation of different natural and animal sounds (in our case indirect). A. Rich wants to set the atmosphere of a deep night, silence and loneliness. She uses both onomatopoeia and consonance (constant repetition of ‘s’ sound) with the aim of:

1. Creating mental pressure: “Over the half finished houses/night comes. The builders/stand on the roof/It is quiet after the hammers/the pulleys hang slack.” [6]
2. Highlighting the silence of steps of the roofwalkers: “Giants, the roofwalkers/ on a listing deck, the wave/ of darkness about to break/ on their heads...” [6]
3. Emphasizing the stillness and quietness of the night: “...The sky/is a torn sail where figures/ pass magnified, shadows/on a burning deck.” [6]

Second stanza

In this stanza the focus is, vice versa, on vowels. The only visible difference is that A. Rich does not ‘whisper’ in the night anymore but pays special attention to the presence of the roofwalkers and conveys her personal emotional perception. She uses assonance in order to provoke reader’s sensation and grab his attention to what happens next: “I feel like them up there:/exposed, larger than life,/and due to break my neck.” [6]

Third stanza

The last stanza includes ‘s’ and ‘th’ sound consonance anew. The aim for using exactly this phonetic expressive means is clear: after the second stanza that sounds quite melodic due to assonance, the third one reflects A. Rich’s emotions that are hidden in her words. Thus, consonance depicts her struggle for freedom and releasing with the shade of despair: “Was it worth while to lay - /with infinite exertion -/a roof I can’t live under?/- all these blueprints, closing of gaps/measurings, calculations?/ A life I didn’t choose/chose me: even/my tools are the wrong ones.” [6]

Graphological level

On the level of graphology, the aspect of spelling should be mentioned firstly. A. Rich makes no deliberate spelling mistakes and the poem sounds natural like a flow of speech.

As far as punctuation is concerned, the author uses commas and full stops mostly. The use of commas may be interpreted as listing different aspects that A. Rich wants to tell the reader about. As it can be seen, A. Rich used pauses between commas because we act in the same in our everyday speech while sharing some ideas or news that take place in our lives: “exposed, larger, thank life/ and due to break my neck.” Or: “All those blueprints,/closing of gaps/measurings, calculations?” [6]

Taking into account that most of her sentences are simple and declarative, the tendency of a frequent use of full stops is clear: she sets the atmosphere of the poem by giving simple sentences one by one. In this way, the reader puts these sentences together into the a single story: “Over the half finished houses/night comes./ The builders/stand on the roof.” [6]

What is more, A. Rich uses em dashes in order to specify the information given. With reference to em dashes, they, unlike simple dashes, give longer and more expressive intonation pause. If we compare them to our speech, we notice that we make the same pauses orally: “Was it worth while to lay -/ with infinite exertion -/ a roof I can’t live under?” [6]

Space management plays an important role in this poem. As it was stated above, the poem represents the way people communicate with each other daily. In this respect, A. Rich does not start every new line with a capital letter and makes the sentences as simple as it possible to imitate natural flow of speech.

Grammatical level

On this level of analyzing of “The Roofwalker” we consider it relevant to make a table of different parts of speech and analyze their functions in the poem. Due to this, we can analyze the tone of the poem and understand whether positive or negative mood is predominant (see Table 1).

Nouns	Verbs	Pronoun	Adjective	Preposition	Article
Houses, night, roof, builders, giants, darkness, sky, shadows, life, exertion, man	Comes, stand, break (2), pass, fleeing, sitting	It (1), I (5)	Half finished, quiet, listing, torn, burning, exposed, larger, worth, infinite, wrong	Over, on (4), after, about, up, under, across (2), in, against	The (10) A (7)

Table 1. Parts of speech used in A. Rich's poem "The Roofwalker"

Nouns: some nouns like 'roofwalker', 'figures', 'shadows' refer to concrete nouns that indicate their real existence (they can be touched and seen). A. Rich wants to focus on human's senses and represent the background of the poem using concrete definition.

On the other hand, the author uses such abstract nouns as 'exertion', 'life', 'difference', 'indifference' that stand for the event (life), emotions (difference; indifference) and a concept (exertion). In this way, A. Rich wants to awake our imagination and consider this poem from the philosophical point of view.

Pronouns: "I" was used 5 times in the poem and this indicates to the reader that the writer pays special attention to her personality and tries to transfer her emotions.

Adjectives: most of adjectives are descriptive. Therefore, they are to convey certain emotions of the author. They are mostly negative 'torn', 'exposed' 'wrong' 'ignorant'. In this regard, it could be concluded that the whole atmosphere of the poem is pessimistic and thoughtful (because of a selective choice of adjectives).

Adverbs: only two adverbs of manner are in the poem. Thus, A. Rich strives to illustrate not only 'how' but 'in what way' the action was carried. This is especially true for A. Rich who aspires for find the right answer: the pulleys hang slack/ figures pass magnified.

Prepositions: six prepositions in the poem are prepositions of place. The use of them means that the author literally feels a need for building the picture and placing all the object on it.

Articles: despite the slight difference in the number of using definite and indefinite articles, definite ones prevail. The attention is paid to exact:

1. People (the builders, the roofwalker)
2. Places (on the roof, in the lamplight, against the cream wallpaper)

Verbs: we approach verb from different aspects:

1. Transitivity. Transitive verbs prevail in the poem to add some specifics and frame the final thought: "*the builders stand on the roof, the wave...brake on their heads, I feel... them, life...chose me.*" [6]

2. Dynamism. Dynamic verbs are used to add some movement to the still atmosphere: *night comes, figures pass, wave...brake, man fleeing* [6]

Contractions: 'I can't', 'I didn't', 'I'm naked' are used in order to create colloquial and trusting atmosphere between the author and the reader. It is noteworthy that in the first two stanzas A. Rich uses only uncontracted constructions like 'It is' to endear reader to her.

Tenses: Present Simple is used in this case. Generally, its purpose is to express habits, general truths and unchangeable situations. We can assume that by using Present Simple A. Rich highlights the situation every woman is in: social imprisonment she cannot escape from.

Lexical level

Adrienne Rich uses 6 main lexical stylistic devices: repetition, rhetorical question, ellipsis, metaphor, epithet and hyperbola. Each stylistic device is to be analyzed separately.

Repetition: the repetition of the words 'roof', 'roofwalker', 'naked', 'fleeing' indicates us that these words have special meaning for the author and she emphasizes them to show the transience of life.

Rhetorical question: '*Was is worth while to lay-/with infinite exertion-/a roof I can't live under?*' [6]. In our perspective, A. Rich asks herself whether all efforts that she put into her marriage were justified or not.

Ellipsis: verbal ellipses are used. For example: "*Giants.../on a listing deck; the wave/...about to brake; - All those blueprints, / closing of gaps/ measurings, calculations?*" [6] It is done in order to omit unnecessary information and give a reader some food for thought.

Epithet: epithet is used in poetry with the purpose of making the narration more vivid and memorable due to various intensifications of the word. We have payed attention to such epithets as:

'torn sail' – describing the structure of the sky

'burning deck' – almighty roofwalkers can walk even on such a deck as if walking on fire

'infinite exertion' – it is a reference on how many efforts A. Rich put into her marriage

'I'm naked', 'naked man' – highlights women's fragility in the society

Metaphor: the main function of metaphor is to find similarities between things that are not related at the first sight. Here A. Rich uses only one metaphor 'night comes' and it literally changes the color of the poem from light to dark: the whole atmosphere fades and starts being quiet.

Hyperbola: A. Rich benefits from hyperbola because she needs it for accentuating the core problem in her poetry: will the roofwalkers eventually break her neck? The roofwalkers that are, in her opinion, 'larger than life'. In this way, she may show her fear of people who possess enormous force of going on the burning deck.

Conclusion

We have presented the topic of gender approach to studying American female poetry in Ukraine as a new method of the analysis of literary text, its features and peculiarities. It has been deduced that currently two leading thoughts on analyzing literary texts through the prism of gender analysis prevail in Ukraine: 1) it is a temporary, not previously studied, paradox; 2) the aspect that has always been stable and long-lasting.

In my opinion, linguostylistic analysis within the frames of gender approach is a complex set of consistent stages: phonological, graphological, grammatical and lexical. It is worth mentioning that while analyzing any piece of poetry, we should remember about abstractness and ambiguity of words and phrases that may mislead a reader in case being misunderstood, especially the ones pertaining to gender issues.

We have noticed that A. Rich's poetry bears a shade of darkness and mystery. She conveys it on different levels of a linguostylistic analysis and we have highlighted the brightest examples on every of them.

The writer provides one driving subject in her poem 'The Roofwalker': women fight for their rights and their perpetual way to freedom. The author uses a variety of peculiar punctuation marks to diversify the narration way: repetitive comas and full stops in order to enlist different points. Also, her choice of different parts of speech is worth being drawing our attention to: nouns, pronouns, adjectives, verbs, and prepositions.

She runs the experiments with the stylistic devices and expressive means of the English language by using a variety of them. Still, the main focus is on the epithets and metaphors that characterize quality, concept and phenomenon and a figurative meaning of a word based on its similarity with the other one.

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Session 6

Energy and Environment

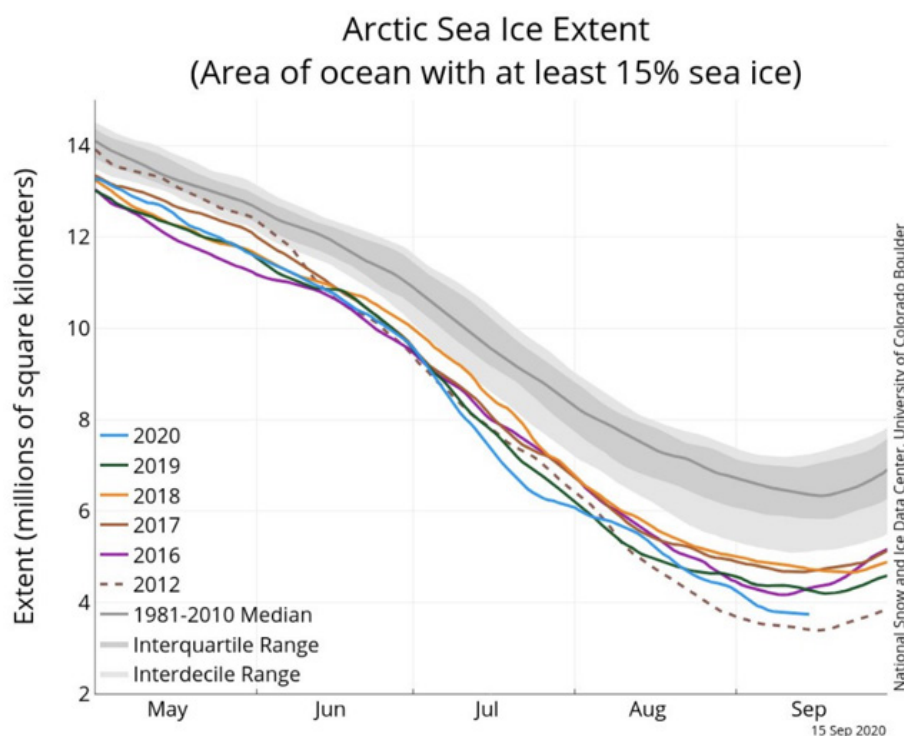
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Who Wins the Most from the Russian Arctic Strategy?

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Introduction

Nowadays the issue of the Arctic attracts more and more attention. It is becoming the area of investment, cooperation, and politics. Only one hundred years ago its exploration and exploitation seemed to be impossible. Today with the loss of sea ice, which gives more possibility for navigation across the Arctic, the use of “Arctic treasures” (oil, gas, mineral ores, rare metals, and the Northern Sea Route [NSR]) becomes possible.



This gives scope for both cooperation and competition in the Arctic area. In 20s years of the XXth century Canada, Denmark, Norway, the USA, and the USSR declared their territorial affiliation in this zone according to the sectoral principle; the point of the North Pole was the border of the concerned states, but after the adoption of the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea in 1982, the situation has changed. In accordance with the Convention, the Arctic states have the exclusive right to develop subsoil within the exclusive economic zone [EEZ] and the continental shelf belonging to them¹. This means that it is impossible to lay claim to sovereignty over the off-shelf zone; it is international, with the open access for its waters for all the international players (see Appendix A). The Arctic issues are really complicated, because, every country looks at it as a zone of cooperation, while each of them pursues own selfish national and territorial interests, which makes the cooperation complex as well.

During the period of Cold War, the Arctic region was seen as the strategic zone for both USSR and USA (Trajectories of missile combat flights from bases on the territory of the USSR to targets in

¹ Boguslavskaya A., *Arktika: bor'ba za resursy i vliyaniye* [The Arctic: a struggle for resources and influence], Deutsche Welle, URL: <<https://www.dw.com/ru/арктика-борьба-за-ресурсы-и-влияние/a-48254991>> (accessed: November 29, 2020)

the USA and vice versa were laid through the North Pole²); while Mikhail Gorbachev in his famous speech in Murmansk in 1987, announced that the Arctic is not more a zone for competition, it is the sphere of peace and international cooperation and place for environmental protection³ with not any word about the natural resources. Only in the beginning of the XXI century Russian government and president Putin himself shifted the focus from international cooperation in this region to hydrocarbon production and the development of NSR.

In this essay, I am going to analyze Russian Arctic strategy [RAS] using the researches by Dmitri Trenin and Pavel Baev (2010)⁴ and Marlene Laruelle (2014)⁵. The mentioned researches are devoted to RAS as a whole, paying little attention to regarding the actors within it. So, I am going to apply the decision-making theory by Graham T. Allison and Philip Zelikow (1999)⁶ on RAS to see who are its actors. I will make an attempt to answer the questions: who are the actors of the process, and who benefit most from it? My hypothesis is that Russia as the unified actor is benefiting the most from its Arctic strategy.

What is the Russian national Arctic strategy?

As Allison and Zelikow suggest there are multiple ways for us to understand why the exact one country performs as it does. The Model I called "The Rational Actor". It considers the policy of a country as a "intelligible, rational continuum"⁷, when we perceive national government as a unified actor with its own "conscious calculation of advantages"⁸. Russia (as an integral actor) regard its Arctic zone as its historical heritage and the sphere of the national interest. What exactly can be seen as country's interest there? I am going to look at the official decree concerning Russia's strategy in the Arctic zone. The key points there are: to ensure national security; as the Arctic zone produces more than 80 percent of combustible natural gas and 17 percent of oil (including gas condensate) in the Russian Federation, it is needed to preserve and develop the oil and gas production; to develop the NSR; to implement economic investment projects in the Arctic zone to create demand for high-tech and science-intensive products for Russian industries; to continue preparing materials for substantiating the outer boundary of the continental shelf; to prevent aggression against the Russian Federation and its allies⁹.

Russia's Arctic strategy is highly centralized and all directives according to it comes from the Kremlin. From the first cut, as Russia is a country which well-being is highly dependent on oil and

² Trenin D., Baev P. The Arctic: A View from Moscow (Research Report). Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, Moscow, 2010, P. 7

³ Åtland K. Mikhail Gorbachev, the Murmansk Initiative, and the Desecuritization of Interstate: Relations in the Arctic // *Cooperation and Conflict*, vol. 43, no. 3, 2008, pp. 289–311

⁴ Trenin D., Baev P. The Arctic: A View from Moscow (Research Report). Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, Moscow, 2010

⁵ Laruelle M. Russia's Arctic strategies and the future of the Far North, M.E.Sharpe, Armonk, New York, 2014

⁶ Allison G., Zelikow P. *Essence of Decision: Explaining the Cuban Missile Crisis* (Second Edition), New York: Longman, 1999

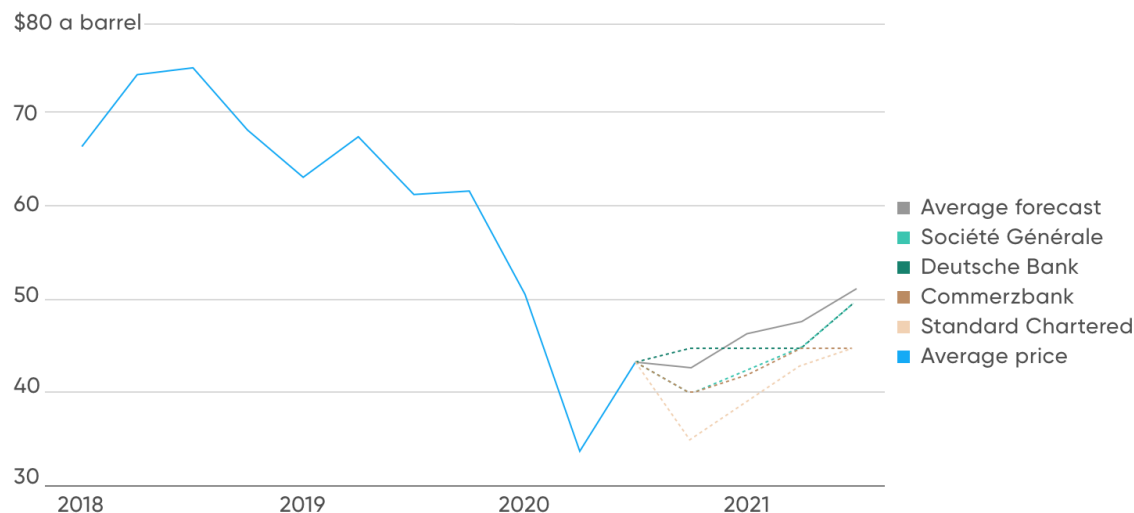
⁷ Ibid, P. 12

⁸ Ibid, P.13

⁹ Ukaz prezidenta Rossijskoj Federacii "O strategii razvitiya Arkticheskoj zony Rossijskoj Federacii i obespecheniya nacional'noj bezopasnosti na period do 2035 goda" [Decree of the President of the Russian Federation "On the Strategy for the Development of the Arctic Zone of the Russian Federation and Ensuring National Security for the Period up to 2035"], [dated 26.10.2020 No. 645]

gas, the Arctic zone is crucial for the country as a whole, but Dmitry Marinchenko, *Fitch Corporation* Director claims Arctic oil to be unprofitable as “the production of hydrocarbons in the Arctic is awaiting a \$ 100 for a barrel; from an economic point of view, working in the Arctic is ineffective¹⁰” (the average forecast for oil price in 2021 is below \$ 55).

Analysts that see Brent Crude futures trading below \$55 in 2021



Source: Medleva B. Oil price forecast 2021 and beyond: can oil become a lucrative investment again? *Capital*. URL: < <https://capital.com/oil-price-forecasts-2021-and-beyond> > (accessed: November 30, 2020)

So, from my point of view, oil extraction can be hardly named strategical interest due to its unprofitability. Besides, the global tendency to “green” energy resources become strong enough to attract more users in the future.

From the first sight, the idea to create demand for technologies in the Arctic zone for national industries sound strong enough as a national interest; but Russian governmental actors — state companies *Rosneft* and *Gazprom*, are highly interested in Western technology and investment, because they are not able, due to the monetary and human factors, to create technologies for the development of this area¹¹. This means that the demand for the production hardly can be created for Russian industries because, for now, it is not possible for them to produce such science-intensive technologies. For example, in the year of 2012 the most advanced and capital-intensive *Gazprom*’s project — *Shtokman deposit* was frozen due to the lack of technologies and investment¹². Also, the expansion of Russian EEZ cannot bring any benefits but the figurehead ones. The presence of any gas and oil deposits inside EEZs cause a lot of questions, because all the deposits are located on the shelves,

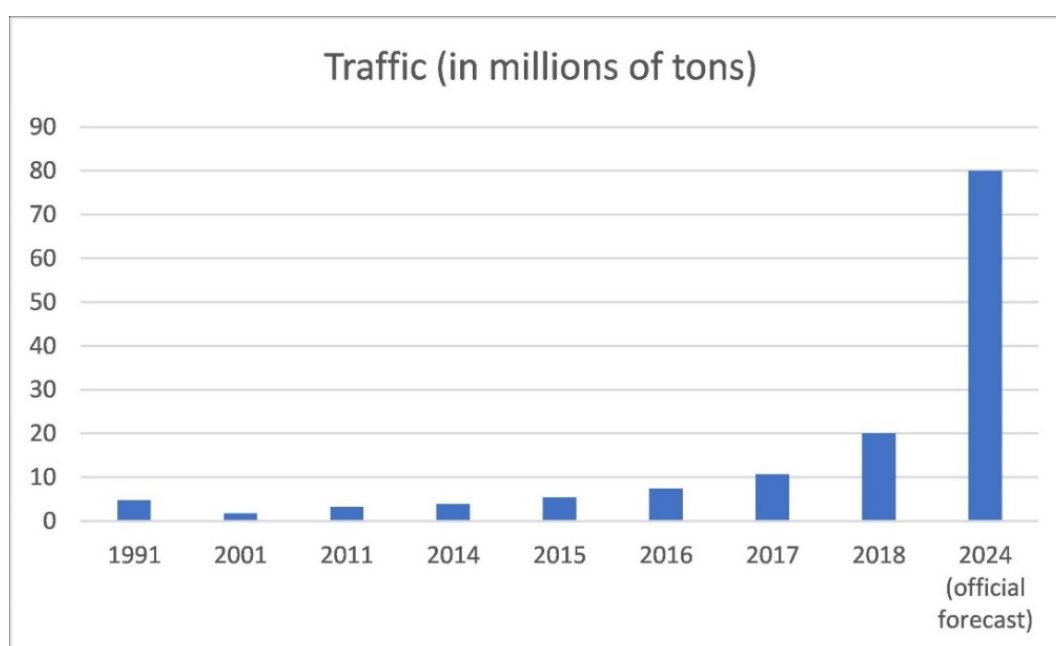
¹⁰ Cit. Ex. Vavina E. Vitaly V. Pravitel'stvo razreshit chastnym kompaniyam dobychu nefi i gaza v Arktike [The government will allow private companies to extract oil and gas in the Arctic] (August 27, 2019) *Vedomosti*. < <https://www.vedomosti.ru/business/articles/2019/08/26/809703-pravitelstvo-dobichu-nefti> > (accessed: November 30, 2020)

¹¹ Laruelle M. Russia’s Arctic strategies and the future of the Far North, M.E.Sharpe, Armonk, New York, 2014 P. 188

¹² Mazneva E., Glikin M. Odin iz samykh gromkiykh proektov «Gazproma» zamorozhen [One of the most high-profile projects of Gazprom has been frozen] (August 30, 2012) *Vedomosti*. < https://www.vedomosti.ru/business/articles/2012/08/30/shtokman_zamerz > (accessed: December 2, 2020)

which already are included into countries' EEZ (see Appendix C). It should be noted that the Arctic strategies of states not only with access to the Arctic Ocean, but also on active economic activity in the region are based on forecasts of significant resources of natural resources; and associate with the prospects for their development. At the same time, in comparison with other Arctic coastal states, the most powerful industrial base has been created in the Russian part of the Arctic. Share of mining enterprises in the domestic regional product created in the Russian Arctic is about 60%, while in Canada and Alaska it does not exceed 30%, and in the northern countries of Europe, which relate to the Arctic, this figure is at the level of 15%. At the same time, according to the characteristics of the quality of life, the Arctic zone of Russia lags significantly behind other Arctic and subarctic states. For example, according to the level of income of the population at parity Russia's purchasing power is 2 times behind the Arctic regions of Denmark, Norway, and it is 4 times less than that of the USA ¹³. This lag has led to challenges to the sustainable development of the Russian Arctic Zone, and ensuring Russia's national security in the Arctic.

The development of the NSR, to my mind, is the point of Russia's strategy, from which it can benefit in the future. Russia is claiming its sovereignty over the NSR¹⁴ and as a unified actor can get economic dividends from the increase in trade turnover almost by virtue of Chinese interest in the usage of the NSR. For China the NSR becomes "The Ice Silk Road" – it is far cheaper for China to transport its commodities through the NSR than through the Suez channel¹⁵. Alexey Likhachev, CEO of *Rosatom*, claims that trade turnover will be 92.6 million of tons by 2024.



Source: Sukhankin S. *Russia's Arctic strategy melts under scrutiny*. (May 5, 2020) Riddle <<https://www.ridl.io/en/russia-s-arctic-strategy-melts-under-scrutiny/>> (accessed: December 3, 2020)

¹³ Laruelle M. *Russia's Arctic strategies and the future of the Far North*, M.E.Sharpe, Armonk, New York, 2014 P. 188

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¹⁵ Trenin D. *Rossiia i Kitaj v Arktike: sotrudnichestvo, sopernichestvo i posledstviya dlya evrazijskoj bezopasnosti* [Russia and China in the Arctic: cooperation, rivalry and consequences for Eurasian security] (March 31, 2020) Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, Moscow <<https://carnegie.ru/commentary/81384>> (accessed: December 3, 2020)

Summing up, RAS cannot be named a set of rational actions of the unified actor, because it cannot stand the cost-benefit analysis. The Rational Actor Model assumes the value-maximizing mechanism for making strategical decisions¹⁶ – this is not the case of Russian Arctic strategy.

Bipolar disorder of the Russian Arctic strategy

Despite the fact that formulating Arctic policy in Russia is a centralized process, a lot of actors are involved in it. According to Allison and Zelikow's second model – the "Organizational Process", governmental behavior is regarded as the outputs of large organizations functioning according to standard patterns of behavior¹⁷. Russian strategy in the Arctic is ambivalent due to pre-established organizational lines. It consists of two different directions of policy-making.

The first one is "security-first" direction. It "endorses the Arctic as the main outpost of Russia's reassertion as a great power — as a theatre where Russia's revival of great power status can be forcefully expressed"¹⁸. The great role in building RAS play Security Council and the Ministry of Defense. The former head of FSB and the Secretary of Security Council, Nikolai Patrushev claims: "the United States, Norway, Denmark, and Canada are conducting a united and coordinated policy of barring Russia from the riches of the shelf. It is quite obvious that <...> it constitutes a systemic threat to its national security"¹⁹. The key problem here is that there is no any evidence of coordinated aggression against Russia, there is no also any presence of NATO in the region. Patrushev's claims are rooted in his military background; he is in Putin's inner circle and influences him building the plethora of militarization of Russian Arctic. So, militarization of Arctic is based on the repertoire of FSB and the Ministry of Defense, when all their decisions are constructed as strategic and military operations – e. g. the Ministry of Defense is responsible for the preservation and *expansion* of the Russian borders there²⁰. As we understand, the key value of any actor is the survival; for the Ministry of Defense the survival means financing. The greatest beneficiary from the "security-first" strategy is the Ministry of Defense, especially, the Northern Fleet.

The second direction is "cooperation-first". It is motivated by governmental (*Rosneft* and *Gazprom*) and non-governmental players (e. g. *Novatek*, *Surgutneftegas*, and *Lukoil*)— energy companies who consider every decision in terms of economic benefits. They build their rhetoric in terms of cooperation with Western and Asian partners. "In order to develop its potential, Russia must be open to foreign influence, both in terms of investment and with respect to sharing expertise; and private actors, whether Russians or foreigners, have to play an increasingly important role, because the state alone cannot provide all the necessary support"²¹. Till the year 2019 oil and gas extraction were accessible only for governmental companies – *Rosneft* and *Gazprom*; but they were unable due

¹⁶ Allison G., Zelikow P. *Essence of Decision: Explaining the Cuban Missile* P. 36

¹⁷ *Ibid*, P. 67

¹⁸ Laruelle M. *Russia's Arctic strategies and the future of the Far North*, P. 6

¹⁹ Patrushev N., *Arkticheskie territorii imeiut strategicheskoe znachenie dlia Rossii* [The Arctic territories have strategic importance for Russia], (March 30, 2009) *Rossiiskaia gazeta* < <https://rg.ru/2009/03/30/arktika.html>> (accessed: December 4, 2020)

²⁰ Zgirovskaya E. «Sever ne lyubit suety» Rogozin poruchil Minoborony utochnit' granicy Rossii v Arktike ["The North does not like fuss" Rogozin instructed the Defense Ministry to clarify the borders of Russia in the Arctic] (May 24, 2016) *Gazeta.ru* <<https://www.gazeta.ru/army/2016/05/24/8261825.shtml>> (accessed: January 5, 2021)

²¹ Laruelle M. *Russia's Arctic strategies and the future of the Far North*, P. 6

to sanctions regime and inefficiency of investment to give the needed boost in development for Russian economy in the region. Then the innovative players such as *Novatek*, *Surgutneftegas*, and *Lukoil* got the permission to produce oil and gas in the region²². *Novatek*, for example, is specializing in liquefied natural gas (LNG) rather than on the extraction of raw hydrocarbon resources as *Rosneft* and *Gazprom* do.

The main difference, from my point of view, between private and governmental players is that governmental corporations besides the exploitation of the subsoil tend to perform the “geological exploration of the region as a part of governmental program”²³. They contribute more to the long-term development of the Arctic region. *Novatek* as other private companies is less limited by sanctions – that is why they have the access to the foreign technologies. Despite the fact, that *Novatek* was interested in building its own fleet of tankers and icebreakers based on Russian technologies, its shareholders made the decision towards using the vehicles by *Daewoo Shipbuilding Marine Engineering* (South Korea)²⁴. While almost all the technologies, which are used by *Rosneft* and *Gazprom* are produced within Russia by the *Vyborg Shipyard* and, in part, the *Northern Yard* and the *Baltic Factory* (*Baltiiskii zavod*)²⁵. This cause, in turn the development of Russian shipbuilding industry.

All the aforementioned concerning the “cooperation-first” can reveal that the biggest winners from RAS are governmental companies – *Rosneft* and *Gazprom* who in turn cause the demand and capital flows into Russian shipbuilding companies – the *Vyborg Shipyard*, the *Northern Yard*, and the *Baltic Factory*; they become winners as well. Since the year of 2019 even the bigger winners of the RAS than governmental companies are private structures such as *Novatek*, *Surgutneftegas*, and *Lukoil*.

Private interest and influence on the Russian Arctic strategy

The third model suggested by Allison and Zelikow is called “Governmental Politics”. It regards the outputs of the governmental behavior as the “result of the bargaining games. Men share power. Men differ about what must be done”²⁶. In other words, the chosen strategy of the whole country is the result of the private influence on the governmental leader; in our case – on Putin. “The Arctic continues to be a concern of the state elites, not of the Russian society as whole”²⁷. The heads of both governmental and private companies have the direct access to Putin’s circle (e.g. Igor Sechin – the executive director of *Rosneft* or Leonid Mikhelson – the president of management of *Novatek*). There is no any need for them to make the requests to any ministries to get governmental investment or to suggest the leader some measures that will be profitable for them. I will illustrate my words with a case which involves one more crucial actor in RAS.

Rosatom (to be precise – its subsidiary company, *Atomflot*) is the state holding which controls the Russian atom fleet (the only one such a fleet in the world). In the year of 2018 occurred a clash between *Rosatom* and the Ministry of Transport [the MT]. After the head of the NSR Administration

²² Vavina E. Vitaly V. Pravitel'stvo razreshit chastnym kompaniyam dobychu nefi i gaza v Arktike [The government will allow private companies to extract oil and gas in the Arctic]

²³ Laruelle M. Russia’s Arctic strategies and the future of the Far North, P. 149

²⁴ Katysheva E. Gazovaya promyshlennost' rossijskoj Arktiki [Gas industry in the Russian Arctic] (October 2, 2020) Neftegaz, <<https://magazine.neftegaz.ru/articles/arktika/633267-gazovaya-promyshlennost-rossiyskoy-arktiki/>> (accessed Decembrer 6, 2020)

²⁵ Laruelle M. Russia’s Arctic strategies and the future of the Far North, P. 187

²⁶ Allison G., Zelikow P. Essence of Decision: Explaining the Cuban Missile P. 144-145

²⁷ Laruelle M. Russia’s Arctic strategies and the future of the Far North, P. 12

(controlled by the MT) Dmitry Smirnov was accused of corruption²⁸, *Rosatom* claimed its control over the NSR (as we have already mentioned, the NSR is the key development prospect in the Arctic, so the large amounts of capital are concentrated there). There was a period when for several month the control over the NSR was carried out only by *Rosatom*. It occurred because of the efforts of Sergei Kirienko (ex-director of *Rosatom* in 2005–2016) as he is a very powerful lobbyist²⁹ in the Presidential Administration. Nevertheless, in eight months the control over the NRS was divided by the MT and *Rosatom*³⁰. So, we can see, that the private influence is crucial in building the RAS. Also, Nikolai Patrushev is really close to Putin, and he can influence the decision-making process in order to build the strategy which will satisfy him. For instance, in 2019, his son Andrey Patrushev became the CEO of the Center “Arctic Initiatives”; its main activity is called “consulting on commercial activities and management in the Arctic region”³¹.

Besides the influential people, who are close to Putin getting advantages of the RAS, because they can share the responsibilities of performing activities in the region (sharing activities means getting profits of the process), Putin himself is the winner of the RAS. Performing well in the region means the proof of Russia becoming the super-power and Putin’s name being input into the history. That is why the rhetoric of defending our territories and expanding them are mentioned in the RAS till 2035 as the first points, while in the RAS of the year 2008 there was no any word about these intentions³².

Conclusion

As we can see the process of building the Russian Arctic strategy is not the national interest of the population as a whole. It is still the case of distributing profits towards the companies and ministries, which is covered by the patriotic narrative of the national security. However, I am strongly convinced that Russian national interest in attracting more international attention and making the NSR in the list of the most important international transport corridors will be realized in the future with the help of such entities as Novatek, who prove the NSR to be the easiest way to transport commodities from Asia to Europe, and vice versa. It makes the attention of the foreign investors attracted towards their arising will of the improvement of the infrastructure in the region. In addition, Russia’s international perception can be named dependent on its performance in the region, making it the Arctic superpower, that is why still with all the reservations on the group and private interests; Russia still needs its Arctic. The case for the further research can be the arrangements which can be included into the RAS.

²⁸ Cit. Ex: Sergunin A., Konyshev V. Forging Russia’s Arctic strategy: actors and decision-making // *The Polar Journal*, 9:1, 2019, pp. 75-93

²⁹ Ibid

³⁰ Federal’nyy zakon “O Vnesenii Izmeneniy V Otdel’nye Zakonodatel’nye Akty Rossiyskoi Federatsii” [On Making Changes in Some Legislative Act of the Russian Federation] (December 11, 2018) [dated: 18.09.2018]

³¹ Filipenok A. Andrej Patrushev vozglavil Centr “Arkticheskie iniciativy” [Andrei Patrushev, the CEO of the Center “Arctic initiatives”], (November 27, 2019), RBC
<<https://www.rbc.ru/business/27/11/2019/5dde46379a79472d082f60d2>> (accessed January 5, 2021)

³² Ukaz prezidenta Rossijskoj Federacii “Ob Osnovah gosudarstvennoj politiki Rossii v Arktike na period do 2020 goda i dal’nejshuyu perspektivu” [Decree of the President of the Russian Federation " On the Basics of Russia's state policy in the Arctic for the period up to 2020 and beyond"], [dated 18.09.2008]

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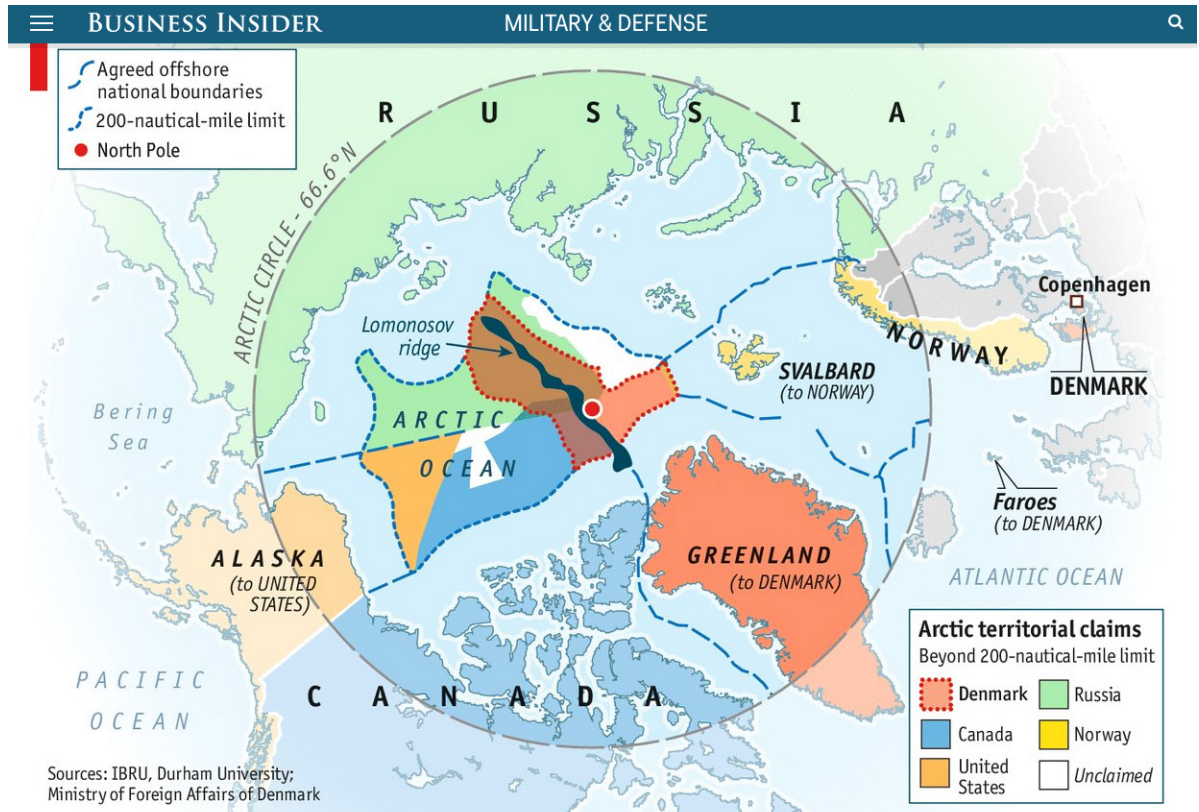
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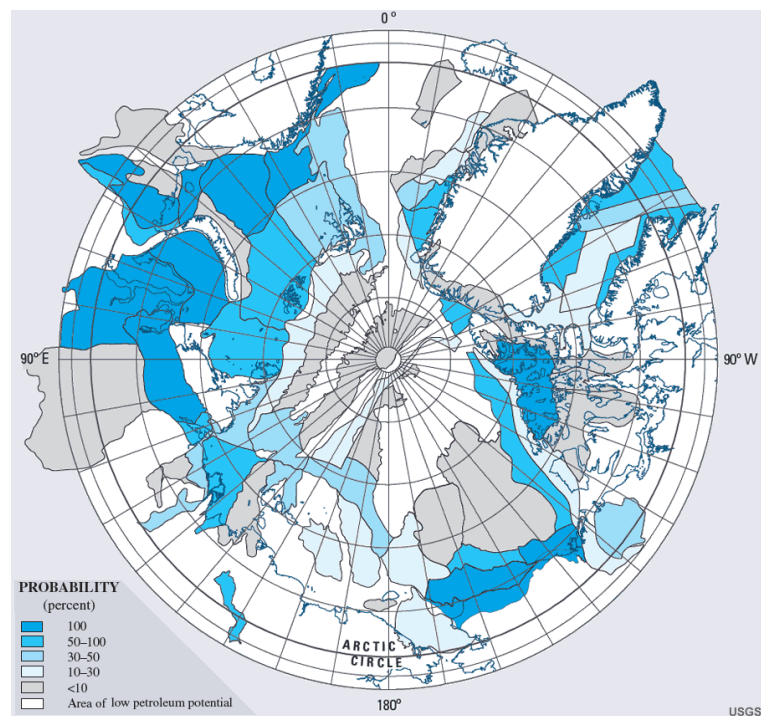
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Appendix A



Economist

Appendix B



Source: US Geological Survey's probability map of yet-to-find Arctic oil and gas. U.S. Geological Survey URL: <<https://www.usgs.gov/>> (accessed: December 2, 2020)

Russian Caviar: A Delicacy in Jeopardy

Bronwyn Galloway, Syracuse University

The Tsar and the Egg: Caviar in Russian Foodways

Caviar, the luxury food product sourced from sturgeon roe, has a fascinating history and a complicated future. As members of the Acipenseriformes order of fish, sturgeon have survived on this planet for 200 million years, and the 25 living species today are virtually identical to their ancient ancestors (Raloff 138). Sturgeon are an odd sort of fish; they mature slowly over decades like sharks, but their method of reproduction mirrors that of both fish and amphibians (Raloff 138). These living relics appear unassuming at first glance, but their eggs are one of the most coveted and expensive delicacies in the world, demanding upwards of \$200 per ounce (Spitzer 67). Some even consider caviar to be the true “black gold” of the world, the term often used to describe the world’s underground oil deposits.

Each species of sturgeon produces caviar of a different value, depending on the population size or rarity of the species, the location of its habitat, and the quality of its roe. The most highly coveted variety of caviar by far is that of the Beluga sturgeon, a species from the Caspian Sea, which borders Russia’s south and sits directly to Iran’s north. The Caspian is the largest inland saltwater sea in the world with almost three hundred rivers flowing into it. The largest of these rivers is the Volga, which almost exclusively runs through Russia. Its delta alone is responsible for almost 80 percent of the Caspian’s volume. The organic matter brought by the rivers makes the sea an ideal place for sturgeon to feed. The fish swim in the Caspian until it is time for them to travel up the nearby rivers to spawn (Fletcher 24).

Russia’s proximity to the Caspian Sea partly explains the key to its connection with caviar. Iran had the geographic position and resources to develop a similarly powerful industry, except that due to the species’ lack of scales, sturgeon and their roe are not halal but haram, or forbidden, according to the standards set by the Koran (Fletcher 11). Because of this, Iran exported most of its Caspian Sea sturgeon and caviar until the late 20th century instead of consuming it themselves (Chehabi 18).

With religious restrictions preventing Iran from becoming a powerhouse in the market, Russia was left alone to capitalize on the Caspian’s rich bounty. There is evidence to suggest that Slavs were eating caviar in what would later be known as Russia as early as the 8th century; sturgeon spines have been found in old fireplaces built during that time period (Strelavina). However, at this time caviar did not carry the prestige we associate with it today. In fact, until the 13th century, sturgeon roe was consumed by regular people of the lower classes and was even fed to their livestock due to its nutritional properties, as it is high in protein and only 74 calories to the ounce (Fletcher 24; Saffron 76).

The Russian Orthodox Church played an enormous role in the daily lives of Russians and shaped the evolution of their foodways. In the year 1280, the Church declared that caviar could be eaten on fasting days (Fletcher 25). Fasts constitute a large part of the Orthodox traditions, and during the 13th century when the vast majority of Russians were devout, specific foods were restricted for more than half of the days of the year (Fletcher 16). Thus, caviar’s inclusion into the ranks of approved foods year-round ensured its rise in popularity among Russians, especially considering that fish roe at the time was much cheaper than the fish itself (Fletcher 16).

All methods of caviar production include the addition of salt for its flavor and preservative properties, but Russians used salt that they had matured for several years to make their caviar. This maturation period helped remove excess chlorine from the salt (Fletcher 17). Traditionally, Russians also added borax to the salt mixture they used for caviar, which both added sweetness and helped preserve the roe. This technique developed after tradesmen discovered the positive effects of storing barrels of caviar in the borax-rich soil around the Caspian Sea (Fletcher 17). America and Japan have both since banned borax, so it is no longer added to caviar exported to those countries (Fletcher 17-18).

Russians traditionally serve caviar atop blini: thin, crepe-like pancakes that are eaten year-round but are served especially during the holiday of Maslenitsa, a week-long celebration of indulgence and parallel to Mardi Gras that takes place before the long spring fast that precedes Easter (Saffron 72-73). Caviar is often served with buttered blini or blini with sour cream (Saffron 74). Consumers often pair caviar with alcoholic drinks; the roe lowers the rate at which they absorb alcohol into their system, which lets the party go longer and more drinks to flow (Saffron 76).

Peter I, better known as Peter the Great, took caviar to new heights as a symbol of wealth and power. During his rule from the late 17th century until the early 18th century the *zakuski* (appetizers) on his banquet tables always included bowls of caviar, despite his employment of foreign chefs (Fletcher 30). During the Great Northern War against Sweden (1700-1721) Peter the Great in 1704 established a state monopoly on Russia's fish production and trade (Strelavina). By the time of Peter's death in 1725, Russia was exporting 80 percent of its caviar and using the profits to build up the Russian Navy. Under Peter I's daughter, Elizabeth I, Russia lost its monopoly and didn't regain it until the late 1800s; all the Volga and Astrakhan fisheries were owned privately during this time (Strelavina).

Peter the Great made great strides in furthering the development of the caviar industry, but his accomplishments pale in comparison to those of Catherine the Great a few decades later. As Nichola Fletcher puts it, "It was during Catherine the Great's reign that caviar became more than just a traditional Russian dish, it entered the realms of unparalleled luxury" (32). Despite its rise in popularity among society's elite during the latter half of the 18th century, caviar was adored by and accessible to both the upper class and those less well-off. Caviar ran for around the same price as butter did at the time, and there were plenty of sturgeon; about 250 sturgeon were caught each hour on the Volga in 1770 (Fletcher 33).

Traktiri is the Russian word for the tavern-like establishments where middle-class and well-off Russians alike often dined in Imperial Russia. By the 1800s, caviar had become a staple at these *traktiri*, though the quality of the caviar served varied depending on the class each establishment catered to (Saffron 75). Pressed caviar was more often served at the *traktiri* frequented by working men than the "true" caviar served at the wealthier spots, but the accompanying garnishes remained fairly consistent across the board; anchovies, cheese, pickled vegetables, and fish were commonly served alongside the roe (Saffron 75).

The lower classes enjoyed access to caviar for only a brief period. In 1859, a railway line was built which linked the Volga and Don rivers, paving the way for an enormous boom in caviar exportation and fishery business and opening the door to the European market (Fletcher 33-34). Once caviar's value as an internationally important delicacy was made apparent, the price of the roe soon exceeded the means of Russian peasants (Fletcher 34).

By the time Tsar Nicholas II took the throne in 1894, the amount of caviar gifted to the court by the Cossacks (the *tsarskii-kusok*) had risen to eleven tons per year (Fletcher 34). The magnitude of this offering was a stark reminder of the ever-widening gap in wealth between the social classes of Russia. Inga Saffron explains how the divide between the rich and poor represented by delicacies like caviar

contributed to the 1905 revolution: “By 1905... caviar prices were beyond the budgets of workingmen—a good enough reason for a revolution” (76). Though the Revolution of 1905 did not depose Tsar Nicholas II, it did sow the seeds of unrest and frustration that would later topple centuries of imperial legacy in 1917.

Already, however, the sturgeon stocks in the Caspian Sea and Volga River were feeling the strain of centuries of unsustainable fishing. In 1860, the annual Caspian caviar production was about four tons; by 1900, that number had grown to 3,000 tons (Fletcher 35). However, with war on the horizon, Russians would soon be focused on other issues and temporarily ignore the sturgeon, giving them and their eggs a brief moment of respite.

The timing of WWI in 1914 and the Russian Revolution in 1917 allowed sturgeon populations seven years to recover (Fletcher 35). During the early 1920s, the newly formed Bolshevik government led by Vladimir Lenin needed a way to bring in currency, and caviar proved to be the perfect product for the job (Saffron 149). The Soviet Union established ties with two rival caviar distributors: Dieckmann & Hansen and Petrossian (Saffron 150). The Soviets agreed to allow Dieckmann & Hansen and Petrossian to have exclusive selling rights in Germany and France, respectively (Saffron 151-152). Russian caviar was steadily growing its global presence and prestige.

After the end of WWII, the Soviet Union focused on oil production in the deposit-rich Caspian Sea, which led to the contamination of the Volga-Caspian Basin and negatively affected the sturgeon living there (Strelavina). The water quality and living conditions of the sturgeon continued to worsen during the latter half of the 20th century. However, sturgeon populations did experience a substantial increase around the 1970s due to strict measures put in place by the USSR to regulate fishing as part of their belated focus on pressing environmental issues caused by decades of neglect (Strelavina). However, as Mikhail Gorbachev attempted to open up the Soviet Union, the tight grip of the government began to loosen.

The Soviet Union finally collapsed in 1991, and the former Soviet republics bordering the Caspian became their own independent countries with more imperative to plunder the caviar industry for their own economies. The amount of Caspian coastline Russia currently possesses is smaller than a third of the area the USSR controlled (Strelavina). Boris Yeltsin was elected president of the Russian Soviet Federative Socialist Republic (soon to be the Russian Federation) in 1991, and among the issues confronting him came the problem of fixing the sturgeon crisis.

To simplify the existing quotas concerned with sturgeon fishing, the Yeltsin administration established a minimum parcel amount of 10 tons, which left fishermen with no option but to resort to poaching. Illegal smuggling was rampant due to caviar’s enormous profit margin. Funding for research in fisheries was slashed, rendering scientists powerless to stop the situation or even generate data which would support such efforts. The fisheries that had previously been owned by the state were now privatized, which allowed them to sell breeding stock to the highest bidders, which included eager buyers from all over the world.

Due to the increase in poaching and changing dynamics of the legal market, Russia’s official caviar production dropped significantly. Russia reported its annual production in 2000 to be 40 tons, a figure that is 34 times smaller than the Soviet Union’s production in 1990 just ten years prior (Strelavina). “In 2010, Russia exported 10 tons of caviar, which is 14 times less than the Soviet Union did in 1989” (Strelavina). A deadly combination of overfishing, polluting, and oil harvesting had transformed one of Russia’s most lucrative natural features into a mere shadow of its former self.

Sturgeon Under Siege: Environmental Challenges Facing the Caviar Industry

There are a multitude of factors that have contributed to bringing sturgeon populations worldwide to the brink of extinction. Overfishing and exploitation are the most obvious culprits, but ecological damage and its physiological effects are no less of a threat and equally thwart sturgeon repopulation efforts. Landfill dumping and plastic waste buildup has made the Caspian Sea one of the most polluted bodies of water on the planet and damming in both American and Russian rivers has dealt significant blows to the fish living there. If nothing is done to improve the natural habitats of sturgeon, soon there will be none left living in the wild, and the only sturgeon will be those living in farms.

Sturgeon are especially vulnerable to overfishing and exploitation because they take a long time to reach sexual maturity and only spawn every few years (Nierenberg). Males usually spawn for the first time at the age of 12, whereas females tend to be around 25. Once they spawn, it takes around 3-5 years for them to spawn again (Raloff 138). In response to the world's growing hunger for caviar, sturgeon fishers began harvesting younger and younger females; a short-term solution which has now reaped serious long-term problems. The Beluga's situation is especially dire, considering that within just the last thirty years, the population of the species has been slashed by 90 percent (Watson 136). During the 1970s, the official annual sturgeon catches in the Caspian Sea were around 20,000 tons; by the year 2000, that number had dropped to about 550 tons (Watson 135).

In theory, sturgeon roe could be harvested for caviar without killing the fish, but the delicate taste and texture of caviar that consumers expect can become jeopardized when solely the roe itself is extracted (Raloff 139). Therefore, in order to ensure consumer satisfaction and remove the potential for ruining the product and rendering it unsellable, sturgeon catchers extract the ovaries in their entirety from the female sturgeon, killing them in the process (Raloff 139).

Sturgeon are biologically prompted to swim far upstream during spawning from whatever body of water they inhabit, but humans have been disrupting this process by making alterations to rivers over the past century and a half. One example of this type of disruption is the deepening, straightening, or damming of rivers for traffic (Raloff 139). Reshaping shipping channels strips away river areas with slow currents where the sturgeon feed, decreases the number of bottom-dwelling animals for the sturgeon to feed on, and limits rivers' ability to flush out harmful pollutants (Raloff 139).

The Columbia River, located in the Pacific Northwest region of the US, was filled with huge sturgeon until the late 1800s, when commercial fishermen arrived and began killing the sturgeon for caviar. In the 1930s, hydroelectric dams were built, disrupting the river's flow. Today, almost half of the hydropower electricity generated in the U.S. comes from the dam in the Columbia River (Nierenberg). Most of the efforts to stem the decline of the river's fish species have centered around salmon. Some fish ladders have been installed, but sturgeon (being large fish) cannot always climb these ladders. As a result, different sturgeon populations are separated, limiting genetic diversity and further exacerbating the problem. Dams also endanger sturgeon babies by causing them to collect together in groups in the water, making them easy prey (Nierenberg).

The Caspian Sea, home of the prized Beluga sturgeon, has a whole host of ecological problems associated with pollution. Much of the Caspian Sea's pollution stems from the processes of extracting oil and gas from the sea. Scientists estimate that the sea contains 50 billion barrels of oil and 300,000 billion cubic meters of natural gas, making it an attractive and lucrative target for the economic interests of the countries bordering it (Palasciano).

The sea also faces devastating pollution in the form of plastic waste resulting from the poor waste management infrastructure of the countries that border it. The Caspian Sea shares its shores with five countries: Russia, Iran, Kazakhstan, Turkmenistan, and Azerbaijan. Although all five countries contribute to the plastic debris that makes its way into the waters of the Caspian and worsens the living conditions of

its inhabitants, about 92% of the coastal area population lives in Russia, Iran, and Azerbaijan, and these three countries make up the vast majority of the plastic waste (Ghayebzadeh et al. 3). The total amount of plastic debris that entered the Caspian in 2016 was estimated to be between 58,000 and 155,000 tons (Ghayebzadeh et al. 4).

All five countries that border the Caspian have abysmally low percentages of properly managed waste, which is defined by Jambeck and Kaza (qtd. in Ghayebzadeh) as the use of controlled or sanitary landfills, recycling, composting, anaerobic digestion, or waste-to-energy methods. Inadequate methods include non-sanitary and uncontrolled landfills, open dumps, and unspecified landfills (Ghayebzadeh et al. 3). Russia's waste management is comprised of 95% open dumping and a meager 4.5% recycling, while 100% of Azerbaijan's waste is dealt with exclusively using open dumping (Ghayebzadeh et al. 4). The number of different countries in the same area makes the issue of waste management complicated, as it is easy for the various involved governments to simply point fingers at each other instead of owning up to their own mistakes. And what incentive is there to stop polluting the sea if the four other bordering countries continue to dump their plastic into it?

If these countries refuse to take the necessary steps to correct their waste management practices, scientists predict a 15% increase of plastic debris input into the Caspian Sea by 2030, equal to between 68,000 and 182,000 tons (Ghayebzadeh et al. 5). There are specific steps that these countries can take, including establishing a reduced government tax on more climate-friendly products and banning single-use plastics (Ghayebzadeh et al. 5). Finding a good enough incentive for the governments to implement real change is essential; unless they have good reason to shift their practices, all five countries will continue to choose the convenience of uncontrolled landfill dumping over the expense and effort of more sustainable, less harmful methods of waste management and reduction.

The physical abnormalities cropping up in sturgeon specimens recently have scientists particularly worried. Janet Raloff describes other bizarre findings from studies done on shovelnose sturgeon (*Scaphirhynchus platyrhynchus*) living in the Missouri and Mississippi rivers, stretches of which are plagued with heavily polluted waters: "Some males had testes full of sperm and also ovaries riddled with mature eggs. Some females' eggs were undergoing cell division although they hadn't been fertilized by sperm. A few females hosted tumors..." (Raloff 140). Even more disturbing is the fact that these abnormalities are being found in shovelnose specimens increasingly often. According to biologists, at least ten percent of the region's shovelnose sturgeon population display "major reproductive pathologies" (Raloff 140). With blocked-off spawning areas, food source destruction, and pollution, it is a miracle that the fish are reproducing at all.

With a rather bleak outlook for the future productivity of sturgeon populations and their roe, many have turned to alternative methods of obtaining and selling "caviar." In some cases, fake caviar is sold as authentic but in actuality is made up of random ingredients. For those who are willing to take the risk, the practice of poaching caviar from protected species of sturgeon is a lucrative, albeit dangerous way to cash in on the trade. Another popular method for those invested in the black market is the practice of intentional mislabeling their caviar products in order to circumvent importation laws or fishing bans. People will do anything they can think of to continue meeting the market's demands – at any cost.

Given sturgeon caviar's high value and rarity, it is unsurprising that black market roe has been flourishing ever since restrictions were first placed on its production and trade. Everyday consumers inadvertently participate in this black market when they unknowingly purchase seemingly ubiquitous poached caviar; approximately 80% of the caviar eaten in Russia in 2013 was poached, according to Andre Moiseyev, a representative from the World Wildlife Foundation Sustainable Marine Fisheries program in Russia (Strelavina). A large part of the problem is the phenomenon of caviar mislabeling, in

which caviar harvested from one species of sturgeon is sold under the label of a different species, often in order to fetch the seller a larger profit for lower-quality caviar.

A 2015 study researching caviar mislabeling in Bulgaria and Romania illustrates the difficulty of regulating caviar labeling. According to Arne Ludwig, illegal fishing occurs in the Danube and Black Sea despite the bans in place because the bans are hardly enforced (Ludwig 587). Researchers purchased samples for the study from a variety of sellers, including restaurants, street vendors, and sturgeon farms (Ludwig 587). Four of the samples tested lacked any sturgeon DNA whatsoever, three of them “were most likely free from any source of animal DNA,” and one sample was identified as lumpfish roe (Ludwig 590; Bronzi and Rosenthal 1541). The geneticists concluded that it is highly likely two of the samples were artificial (Ludwig 590).

Laws in both Bulgaria and Romania mandate that caviar sold in shops or by vendors on the street must have CITES labels displayed on their containers, a requirement that was ignored by seven of the sellers in the study (Ludwig 590). Surprisingly, the study found mislabeled caviar in the group of samples with apparently authentic CITES labels (Ludwig 590). Four of the other samples without CITES labels were all identified by the geneticists as Beluga sturgeon caviar but were sold with the source listed as wild Danube sturgeon, signaling that the sturgeon were caught illegally (Ludwig 590). These findings confirm the high rate of poaching in the Danube River and Black Sea and question the effectiveness of the mandatory labeling ordered by CITES (Ludwig 590). The scientists argue that caviar should be DNA tested more often to ensure product authenticity and prevent the sale of roe from illegally fished sturgeon.

Poaching and illegal trade are inseparable from caviar; more than 1,400 poachers were arrested by Russian officials in 1994, in addition to the seven illegal caviar processing facilities and 120 tons of caviar that were confiscated (Watson 135). People in this business are condemned by government bodies and officials, but the circumstances that cause people to become poachers are often left unmentioned. Many nations that export sturgeon are too poor to police poaching, let alone scientifically monitor the health of their sturgeon (Raloff 140). Those that do attempt to enforce poaching laws often pay their employees low salaries, which inevitably leads them to accepting bribes from poachers while on the job.

The appeal of committing caviar-related crimes is more even more understandable once the punishments for them are compared with similarly lucrative felonies. According to a reporter for the London *Sunday Telegraph*, caviar smuggling “rivals cocaine as a source of mob income” (Elvin 16). A Special Agent interviewed for the article explained the attraction of the smuggling by pointing out that bringing cocaine into the country on the same scale as caviar would mean the smugglers could face life sentences, whereas getting busted for smuggling caviar would get them a couple years at worst (Elvin 16).

A real-life example of this occurred in 2013 in the wake of a major paddlefish poaching operation takedown in Warsaw, Missouri (Jerek). Warsaw, which the Osage River runs through, is home to a large Russian population, and a number of these Russians were allegedly taking paddlefish roe from the river out of the U.S. in suitcases (Jerek). Undercover agents rounded up the suspects who were later charged with violating the Lacey Act, which makes it a federal crime to poach with the intention of selling the catch in another state as well as to transport illegally captured wildlife over state lines (Jerek). These laws only apply to situations in which the poached game exceeds a market value of \$350, but sturgeon caviar’s high prices ensure that most caviar-related crimes well exceed this minimum amount (Jerek). The perpetrators in the Warsaw, MO operation faced a maximum prison sentence of five years and a fine of \$250,000 for each violation count (Jerek).

The caviar industry faces a problem with counterfeit products, but an altogether different form of fake caviar may end up being its savior. In the following chapter I will outline several possible futures for the caviar industry and examine the various efforts to save the 25 species of sturgeon that remain on the

planet. There has been an increasingly urgent push to find alternatives to sturgeon caviar as populations continue to crumble, and many believe the answer to the issue lies in either substitutes or alternatives. These innovations reflect the deep current of irony that underlies the entire caviar industry and the world's realization that after centuries of enjoying sturgeon caviar, the feast is likely coming to an end.

Rough Seas Ahead: Sturgeon Conservation and the Future of Russian Caviar

Between habitat destruction, overfishing, and a lack of legal protections, the future of sturgeon caviar is in jeopardy. There are a number of plausible solutions to the problem, though all of them are racing against the clock; the sheer amount of time needed for many conservation efforts is an enormous obstacle. It took humans less than two hundred year to nearly wipe out the sturgeon, and it will take far longer than that to repair the damage. Fortunately, waiting is not the solution that most experts propose as the best option. Alternatives, substitutes, and increased protections are among the most likely courses of action to succeed in the coming years. With the right combination of these efforts, sturgeon may be able to survive us yet.

With wild sturgeon populations rapidly dwindling, sturgeon aquaculture has come to take center stage over the past few decades. This shift in sourcing more or less tracks with the fall of the Soviet Union, when legal enforcement of fishing laws practically ceased and the economic chaos that followed the collapse encouraged black market dealings and poaching. Today, wild sturgeon fishery is banned in most countries (Bronzi and Rosenthal 1537). There has also been a massive increase in specific areas of the industry; China has become a key player, reporting a sturgeon meat harvest of over 44,000 tons in 2011, which is equal to about 86% of the world's entire sturgeon meat production (Bronzi and Rosenthal 1537). The beginning of aquaculture's growing relevancy began in the mid-2000s, though farmed caviar products began to enter the market in the early 1990s, and fishery production dropped significantly around the same time (Bronzi and Rosenthal 1538). In 2014, there were around 640 known sturgeon farms across the world. Russia takes the number one spot as the country with the most sturgeon farms with 340, and it is followed by China with 135 (Bronzi and Rosenthal 1540).

In 2014 there were an estimated 262 tons of caviar produced globally using aquaculture (Bronzi and Rosenthal 1538). However, data around illegally fished caviar must be added to this figure in order to accurately estimate total caviar production. Bronzi and Rosenthal conservatively estimate that the amount of poached caviar produced was between 100 and 150 tons, making the realistic global production approximately 350 to 400 tons that year (1538-1539). This number sharply contrasts the recorded caviar production of the Caspian Sea at its peak in 1936, at 2,300 tons (Watson 137). Aquaculture is a step in the right direction for ethical caviar, but it is unable to replicate the scale of production that existed less than a century ago.

The primary goal of sturgeon hatcheries is to build up populations of endangered species of sturgeon. Unlike caviar harvesters, in many sturgeon hatcheries biologists use non-lethal methods of collecting eggs from sturgeon. They first capture males and eject their sperm, then capture a female, massage out its eggs, and mix the eggs and sperm together in a bucket with water. Then they stir the mixture by hand for several minutes to fertilize the eggs. The young fish that hatch live at the hatchery for a year and are then released into streams (Raloff 138).

Still, efforts to save declining sturgeon populations have not been able to successfully prevent the perpetuation of harmful trends related to the caviar industry. According to Rachel Ehrenberg, this can be explained by the misallocation of resources to the correct focus groups. A conservation assessment conducted in 2010 stated that saving adult female sturgeon, not young hatchlings, is crucial in order to prevent sturgeon extinction (Beluga in this specific case) (Ehrenberg 9). Many efforts made in the 21st century have relied mostly on introducing young farm-raised fish into the wild, which the study team led

by Phaedra Doukakis considers unlikely to succeed. According to a study at the Institute for Ocean Conservation Science at Stony Brook University in New York, saving mature females is ten times more effective than focusing efforts on hatchlings (Ehrenberg 9). Ehrenberg also states that for fishing to have as small an effect on populations as possible, sturgeon shouldn't be harvested until they are more than 31 years old, to give females a large window in which to produce eggs (Ehrenberg 9).

Impressive efforts in fish conservation have been seen before, but for salmon and their roe, not for sturgeon. In the early 2000s there was a poaching epidemic in the Kamchatka Peninsula region in Russia's Far East that posed a significant threat to the genetic integrity of river salmon populations living there (Webster 1167). A quarter of all the wild salmon in the Pacific Ocean spawn at Kamchatka, and the region boasts the greatest diversity of salmonids in the world (Webster 1167). Poachers in the Kamchatka region exported approximately \$1 billion worth of salmon caviar annually, and officials were paid such low salaries that refusing bribes from poachers was not an option (Webster 1167). In 2003 the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) launched a 5-year, \$13 million dollar effort to promote ecological conservation in four major rivers of Kamchatka. The money included funds for research and support for enforcement officers (Webster 1167). In 2009 the International Union for Conservation of Nature assessed sturgeon to be the most critically endangered animals in the world (Ludwig 587). An initiative of this scale directed at saving sturgeon populations could make an enormous difference in the fight against their extinction.

Several recent studies have given scientists hope that their work is producing changes in the market. Phaedra Doukakis et al. set out to test the effectiveness of CITES in a study using mitochondrial DNA to "compare mislabeling in caviar and meat purchased in the New York City area pre and post CITES listing" (Doukakis 1). Since being listed under CITES in 1997, the legal protections regarding the sale and importation of sturgeon and paddlefish have been frustratingly difficult to navigate for conservationists (Doukakis 1). To analyze the changes, Doukakis and her team compared a market survey conducted between 1995 and 1996 with one conducted from 2006-2008 (Doukakis 3). From the earlier market survey, the group found that 19% of the commercially available caviar in New York City was mislabeled in respect to species origin (Doukakis 3). In the later survey, this figure was nearly halved, with only 10% of the caviar being mislabeled (Doukakis 4). The group's findings suggest that the disappearance of incorrectly labeled tins of "American sturgeon" between the two surveys indicates better regulation of US-labeled caviar products (Doukakis 4). Encouragingly, mtDNA derived from ship sturgeon (*A. nudipectus*), a critically endangered species hailing from the Black Sea, was also absent in the later survey (Doukakis 4).

Sellers can command sky-high prices for caviar sourced from the Caspian Sea due to the prestige and respect it has garnered in the market over centuries. American farm-raised caviar, meanwhile, is at a distinct disadvantage when it comes to marketing and public perception. Sellers of aquaculture-sourced sturgeon caviar cannot ask anywhere near the same price for it as imported Russian caviar, despite its freshness and comparable taste and quality of the two (Saffron 227). This is a substantial issue for American farms, as their inability to demand higher prices for their caviar products prevents them from using more of their profits for conservation and repopulation.

With sturgeon populations under siege worldwide, sturgeon caviar alternatives have begun to receive more attention. The roe of paddlefish, the less popular cousin of sturgeon, has risen in popularity as a comparable option. Until recently, paddlefish were the ugly ducklings of the Acipenseriformes family. However, in recent years they have been catapulted into the global spotlight as countries wring their sturgeon stocks dry and turn their gaze to other sources of caviar. For a price comparison between high-end Russian caviar and American paddlefish roe, caviar dealer Marky's sells paddlefish roe for \$20 an ounce, but an ounce of their Caspian Beluga caviar goes for \$300. According to Mark Spitzer, if true sturgeon roe is the pure cocaine of the caviar industry, then paddlefish roe is the "cheaper-grade street

crack” of it (Spitzer 67). Before American fishermen turned to domestic paddlefish and their roe at the end of the 19th century, there were paddlefish populations in 26 states. Today, they can only be found in 22 (Spitzer 63).

There are many caviar-like products on the market to choose from if Beluga caviar is far from being within the consumer’s budget. According to a 2014 market survey conducted by Bronzi and Rosenthal, there are over 38 species of fish that are utilized as caviar substitutes (1541). The substitutes often look quite different from true sturgeon caviar in terms of their size and color, but this is remedied in certain cases by adding a black tint to the substitute caviar (Bronzi and Rosenthal 1541). Though less closely related to sturgeon than paddlefish, eggs from rainbow trout and other fish species have shown some promise in terms of their marketability.

There are many exciting breakthroughs in producing alternatives and substitutes for authentic sturgeon caviar, but to focus on finding a new fish species to exploit or algae that tastes just like caviar misses the point. It is not enough to find new sources; the same underlying issues that we choose to ignore will continue to haunt our endeavors. Waste management *must* be a key factor in the fight to save sturgeon and their caviar. The Caspian Sea is not the sole body of water affected by landfill dumping and plastic debris. Regardless of the successes of sturgeon hatcheries and farm-raised caviar, it is imperative that long-term changes occur in the way that all natural marine and freshwater ecosystems are treated. This applies for the future of all types of fish, not only sturgeon. Repopulation efforts will be pointless if there are no native waters to return hatchlings to.

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Too Young to Make a Difference? The Representation of Greta Thunberg by Three Russian Online-Newspapers

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Introduction

When it comes to politics, women, especially the young ones, have been held silent until recently. With the advent of the new media, lots of people from all over the world have got the opportunity to spread their ideas globally. Specifically, the Internet has significantly contributed to empowering Generation Z female activists, providing them an opportunity to set the political agenda. Among such role models one can emphasize the Pakistani Malala Yousafzai, the youngest Nobel Peace Prize winner, Marley Dias who launched a campaign called #1000BlackGirlBooks, feminist activist Julie Zeilinger and many others (Kimball, 2019). One of the most influential examples of such a young female activist is Greta Thunberg, an 18-year-old climate defender from Sweden and the youngest ever Time's Person of the Year. Because of her age and unquenchable passion to change the mindsets of global political leaders, she often gets twofold media coverage.

The topicality of this research is necessitated by the fact that the increasing number of authoritative newspapers from all over the world (e.g. The Guardian (UK), The Wall Street Journal (USA), The Sydney Morning Herald (Australia), etc.) unanimously write about so-called 'The Greta effect', which implies an increase in people's awareness of climate issues. The phenomenon of Greta Thunberg resonates within Russian society as well. According to the results of a survey by the Russian Public Opinion Research Center for October 2019, 40% of Russians perceived Thunberg's efforts to save the planet's ecology positively, yet about 30% of respondents shared a negative opinion about Greta stressing that there is no place for children in politics (WCIOM, 2019). There is no doubt that such a polarity in opinions is a consequence of dual representation of Greta Thunberg by Russian media. The issue of portraying Greta Thunberg in Russian media discourse seems to be especially topical due to the ecological context of Siberia wildfires that broke out in summer 2019 (Rudnitsky, Kravchenko & Warren, 2019).

This study aims to identify the main features of rhetorical frames employed by Russian media to construct the image of Greta Thunberg. Specifically, the paper aims to describe and analyze the representation of the climate activist by three Russian online newspapers: Rossiyskaya Gazeta (RG), Komsomolskaya Pravda (KP) and Meduza. The study employs framing theory and is based on qualitative content analysis of 19 news-articles about Thunberg from the aforementioned Russian online newspapers.

The research question I examine in this work may be stated as *How was Greta Thunberg presented in Russian media discourse after her speech at the UN on September 23, 2019 through the lens of three online newspapers?*

The key findings reveal that the image of Greta Thunberg constructed by Russian newspapers greatly depends on media-state relations and the dominant ideology of each newspaper. Specifically, RG and KP expressed conservative pro-Kremlin stance, framing Greta as an immature girl with mental health issues. In contrast, Meduza's representation of Greta Thunberg was framed rather positively in accordance with liberal approach, which is based on principles of diversity and inclusiveness of young women in politics. The study provides a detailed empirical analysis of the Russian media discourse construction around Greta Thunberg, which can be applicable in media and gender studies on representation of female activists in Russian media context.

The research starts with a section providing theoretical background of the present topic. It is followed by the analysis of academic literature relevant to the topic of my study. The next section to be

covered is methodology, which contains information and samples of the empirical data. The last section of this work reveals the most important findings from the analysis of selected news articles and is followed by discussion.

Conceptual framework

The research employs framing theory, elaborated by Dietram Scheufele and David Tewksbury. It focuses on interpretive schemas imposed on the meaning of media message (news articles, in particular) by those, who produce it (Scheufele, 2000). The essence of the framing theory is that the language design of a news story affects its perception by the audience. By using a particular set of primary frameworks, media producers invoke different cognitive schemas, stereotypes and attitudes contained in people's minds. In this research, the main media producers are three Russian online newspapers: RG, KP and Meduza.

In terms of my case study, I focus primarily on macro-framing media concept. It includes “modes of presentation that journalists and other communicators use to present information in a way that resonates with existing underlying schemas among their audience” (Scheufele, 1999). Specifically, it emphasizes such frames, as airtime of news, or text size of news articles, as well as more abstract frames – conceptual and ideological schemas. These frameworks shape the meaning of media message, reducing complexity in understanding of a newsbreak and making it easier for media consumers to comprehend and interpret the information.

The present research also employs Scheufele's and Tewksbury's concept of so-called applicability and accessibility effects (Scheufele & Tewksbury, 2007). The first one is connection between two similar media concepts (in my case – persons) and the second one is an effect that implies person-agenda relations, and their constant repetition in media texts (for example, Greta Thunberg and school strike in August 2018).

Academic literature related to the present topic can be divided into two main groups. Kimball (2019), Sarikakis (2013), Bent (2013) and Harris (2012) explore the empowering media images of young women activists and female leadership positions with the advent of the new media. Specifically, Kimball (2019) argues that through social media women activists can start uprising and lead revolution. He considers Greta Thunberg one of the greatest examples of such a changemaker. Sarikakis (2013) claims that media image of women and representation of female sexist stereotypes are linked to oppression of and violence against women in everyday life. She concludes that media representation of women is uneven and deviates across different countries. As for my research topic, Sarikakis's work (2013) is of particular interest, since it proves the hypothesis that a media portrayal of Greta Thunberg in one country may be different from how she is represented in another country. This difference is also noticeable across media institutions (in my case – Russian online-newspapers). Harris (2012) describes the paradigm of women's “resistance”. In this way, the author identifies media, as well as behavioral, frameworks constructed by society, which shapes the possibilities of women (especially young activists) for new kind of “resistance”. From this perspective, Greta Thunberg's emotional speech at the UN that was addressed to political leaders, is supported by the idea of “resistance” described in Harris's work.

To the second group of academic literature one can attribute works of Kühne (2019) and Bergmann (2019), who focus mainly on Greta's portrayal in European media discourse. Specifically, Bergmann (2019) highlights the image of Greta in terms of ageist language in public media discourse, who is usually represented in German newspapers as the “young hero”. At the same time, as Bergmann (2019) points out, Thunberg is portrayed by some German newspapers as “*party at fault*”, which indicates heterogeneity of her portrayal in European media discourse. From scientific perspective, Kühne (2019) supports Greta's words with empirical data. His work is important for understanding the objective side of Thunberg's representation in Russian media discourse, since a number of news articles in online newspapers, especially

in RG, ignore Greta's scientifically supported arguments in order to construct a particular meaning of her UN speech.

Nevertheless, in academic field, a little emphasis had been put on Thunberg's media representation after her speech at the UN General Assembly in 2019. Moreover, there are still no research on media coverage of the climate activist by Russian media. The purpose of this paper is to bridge this gap by analyzing the representation of Greta Thunberg in Russian media discourse.

Methodology

This study employed textual analysis focusing on 19 news-articles from RG, KP and Meduza. The research aimed to describe how media framing of Greta Thunberg in the context of the UN speech and her becoming a "Time Person of the year" differs across three Russian online newspapers.

The choice of these online newspapers was not random. The main criteria for the sample were the type of ownership of the media institution and its overall political stance. Specifically, RG is a Russian government-owned press and online newspaper; KP is a pro-Kremlin tabloid, which is often being criticized for the biased presentation of the information; Meduza is private-owned Russian online newspaper, which also produces its own media content, that is often opposed to official government viewpoint.

The study was framed by the following chronological boundaries: from September 23, 2019 (Greta Thunberg's speech at the UN General Assembly) to December 11, 2019 (another major newsbreak – Thunberg was announced "Time Person of the year"). During this period of time, climate activist received wide coverage by all three online newspapers, which was manifested in numerous news articles. It is worth noting that RG and KP each contain, respectively, 8 and 3 opinion articles dedicated to Greta; Meduza has no opinion articles about Greta in a period under review but it has posted *inter alia* 3 articles in "Stories" section, wherein one can read about achievements of young climate activist. Despite the fact that opinion articles in online newspapers give quite vivid (and often negative) portrayal of Greta Thunberg – they are produced by columnists – individual journalists with their own sets of beliefs and values – and thus can barely depict an overall, supported by the whole media institution image of the person. Therefore, analysis is based solely on news articles: 7 articles from Meduza; 7 – from RG; and 5 – from KP. In total, 19 news articles have been analyzed in order to identify the main features of rhetorical frames employed by the Russian media to construct the image of Greta Thunberg (see Table 1).

Table 1. *Selected media texts (news articles)*

№	Date	Title	Link
Rossiyskaya Gazeta			
1	24.09.2019	<i>Greta Thunberg accused world leaders for stolen childhood at the UN</i>	https://rg.ru/2019/09/24/greta-tunberg-v-on-obvinila-mirovyh-liderov-v-ukradennom-detstve.html
2	26.09.2019	<i>Swedish social services suspect Greta Thunberg's parents of violence</i>	https://rg.ru/2019/09/26/socialny-e-sluzhby-shvecii-podozrevaiut-roditelej-grety-tunberg-v-nasilii.html

3	29.09.2019	<i>Who gets the coins from Greta?</i>	https://rg.ru/2019/09/29/kto-stoit-za-gretoy-tunberg-i-kto-ee-napravliaet.html
4	08.10.2019	<i>Stuffed Greta Thunberg with a rope around her neck found under a bridge in Rome</i>	https://rg.ru/2019/10/08/chuchelo-grety-tunberg-s-verevkoj-na-shee-nashli-pod-mostom-v-rime.html
5	25.10.2019	<i>A new species of beetles was named in honor of Greta Thunberg</i>	https://rg.ru/2019/10/25/v-chest-grety-tunberg-nazvali-novyj-vid-zhukov.html
6	20.11.2019	<i>Not adult-like: Greta Thunberg refused to come for the Children's Peace Prize</i>	https://rg.ru/2019/11/20/greta-tunberg-otkazalas-priehat-za-detskoj-premiej-mira.html
7	11.12.2019	<i>Greta Thunberg became "Person of the year" according to Time magazine</i>	https://rg.ru/2019/12/11/greta-tunberg-stala-chelovekom-goda-po-versii-zhurnala-time.html
Komsomolskaya Pravda			
1	24.09.2019	<i>From the UN tribune, a 16-year-old eco-activist promised mankind "mass extinction"</i>	https://www.kp.ru/daily/27033/4097362/?utm_source=vk&utm_campaign=social_share
2	25.09.2019	<i>Environmental activist Greta Thunberg is patronized by former US Vice President Al Gore, who earned \$ 100 million from climate scams</i>	https://www.kp.ru/daily/27034.4/4098070/?utm_source=vk&utm_campaign=social_share
3	15.10.2019	<i>The European Parliament suspected Russia of involvement in the protests of Greta Thunberg</i>	https://www.kp.ru/online/news/3639654/
4	06.12.2019	<i>"We have not achieved anything": Thunberg does not see the real results of eco-activism</i>	https://www.kp.ru/online/news/3697255/?utm_source=vk&utm_campaign=social_share
5	11.12.2019	<i>"For sounding the alarm": Greta Thunberg became the "Person of the Year" according to Time</i>	https://www.kp.ru/online/news/3702086/
Meduza			
1	23.09.2019	<i>"We are starting to understand your betrayal." Greta Thunberg speaks at UN Summit on Climate Change</i>	https://meduza.io/feature/2019/09/23/my-nachinaem-ponimat-cto-vy-predateli-greta-tunberg-vystupila-na-sammite-oon-po-izmeneniyu-klimata

2	24.09.2019	<i>Everyone is talking about Swedish schoolgirl Greta Thunberg. She made climate change again at the center of world politics (but she is not the only reason for it)</i>	https://meduza.io/feature/2019/09/24/vse-govoryat-o-shvedskoy-shkolnitse-grete-tunberg-ona-sdelala-tak-chto-izmenenie-klimata-snova-v-tsentre-mirovoy-politiki-no-prichina-ne-tolko-v-ney
3	09.10.2019	<i>How does the speech of Greta Thunberg sound to the song Fatboy Slim? Great!</i>	https://meduza.io/shapito/2019/10/09/kak-zvuchit-rech-grety-tunberg-pod-pesnyu-fatboy-slim-velikolepno
4	25.10.2019	<i>A new species of the tiniest beetles in the world named after Greta Thunberg</i>	https://meduza.io/news/2019/10/25/v-chest-grety-tunberg-nazvali-novyy-vid-samyh-kroshechnyh-zhukov-v-mire
5	30.10.2019	<i>“The climate movement needs no rewards.” Greta Thunberg refused the Nordic Council Prize</i>	https://meduza.io/news/2019/10/30/dvizhenie-za-klimat-ne-nuzhdaetsya-v-nagradah-greta-tunberg-otkazalas-ot-premii-severnogo-soveta
6	13.11.2019	<i>Greta Thunberg will return to Europe from the USA in a catamaran</i>	https://meduza.io/news/2019/11/13/greta-tunberg-vernetsya-v-evropu-iz-ssha-na-katamarane
7	11.12.2019	<i>Time called Greta Thunberg the Person of the year</i>	https://meduza.io/news/2019/12/11/time-nazval-gretu-tunberg-chelovekom-goda

The methodology of this research is based on qualitative content analysis of media messages (news articles) about Greta Thunberg across three Russian online newspapers. The analysis is applied to both text and image, based on the assumption that “images cannot be understood without their captions” (Schudson, 1995). I chose content analysis because in order to answer the research question it is important to interpret the meaning, which was framed within Greta Thunberg’s textual representation by online newspapers.

There are several markers that can be identified as independent variables of this study. They include the manner, or tone, in which Greta Thunberg was portrayed in media discourse, as well as story structure of the article (its title, lead, etc.) and visual content of media text. By manner of media representation I imply negative, neutral or positive connotation of Greta’s mentioning in news articles. These factors constitute the dependent variables – the types of representations that are specific to each online newspaper.

Specifically, positive mentions of Greta Thunberg included those that portrayed the climate-activist as an advocate for the youth, the symbol of the new climate change movement, etc. For example, Meduza’s news-article, posted on September 24, 2019, quoted the former president of the USA Barack Obama, who called Greta “one of the greatest defenders of our planet” (Meduza, 2019). In its news article from

December 11, 2019, Meduza cites Time's article on "Person of the year", where Greta is represented as "*the icon of a generation*" (Meduza, 2019). In these cases, Thunberg's media coverage was framed positively.

Negative representation of Greta was identified in a number of news articles posted by RG. One of the most distinctive examples is the news article posted on September 26, 2019 with a heading "*Swedish social services suspect Greta Thunberg's parents of violence*" (Samozhnev, 2019). Besides the heading itself, visual components of the news article also indicated negative framing of Greta Thunberg. Media framing of Greta Thunberg by KP, as it can be derived from the headings of its news articles, is quite similar to the way in which she is represented by RG.

However, my case study is not without selection bias in terms of methodology. Since news articles are the only units in the present content analysis, it focuses mostly on textual media messages and cannot be applicable to television or radio media discourse.

All in all, qualitative content analysis of 19 news articles showed that Greta Thunberg received different media coverage depending on the media institutions, who produced the texts and constructed conceptual framing of their meaning. By analyzing both textual and visual constructs, imprinted in media messages around Greta Thunberg, I have identified the main rhetorical and ideological frames, which are revealed in the following section of this study.

Findings and discussion

Frame-building of Greta Thunberg's image

Media framing of Greta Thunberg included various methods of representation, which served either to undermine Greta's statements and even demonize her image, or to demonstrate the climate activist in a more or less neutral way, less often – in a positive connotation.

RG and KP gave critical and sharply negative representation of the Swedish climate activist. Both of these online newspapers constructed their news articles about Greta based on the idea of grand conspiracy behind the girl and her activism. Yet, to shape public discourse about this conspiracy, online newspapers used different approaches.

KP activated applicability effect by suggesting a connection between two media concepts (in my case – persons): Greta Thunberg and those by whom she is controlled. By stressing Greta's young age, her lack of education and Asperger Syndrome, KP produced the meaning that words and actions of environmental activist were dictated by someone else, who has economic and/or political benefit from the "Greta phenomenon". For example, in its article, published two days after Thunberg's UN speech, the newspaper "investigated" that young climate activist was being patronized by the former US Vice President Al Gore (Chesnokov, 2019). Applying his name to Greta's image was aimed to expose "*political technology trick*" or "*theater of the absurd*", created around young environmentalist by political leaders, whom she publicly blamed "*for stolen childhood*" (Chesnokov, 2019). To frame the image of Greta in media message negatively, KP most frequently used such epithets as "*unhappy girl*" and "*messiah girl*" in an ironical manner. The news article is followed by columnists' opinion articles with titles "*Greta is late. Apocalypse has already begun*" and "*Why I don't believe a girl named Greta*".

As for RG, it stated that Greta Thunberg's school strike was sponsored by PR-specialist Ingmar Rentzhog (Dunayevskiy, 2019). So, the newspaper framed Greta's image as a lucrative business/environmental project of Rentzhog, by using both applicability and accessibility effects. That is, the newspaper often associated Greta with Rentzhog and school strike.

Beside Rentzhog, the newspaper stated that Greta was a victim of abuse from her parents (Samozhnev, 2019). Thorough analysis of this news article indicated that it was fake-news. RG made overblown claims about Greta's parents, citing The Daily Dot. However, after searching for confirmation of these words, I found an article on The Daily Dot titled as "*Conservative men are throwing tantrums over Greta Thunberg's UN speech*". The only mention of Greta's parents in the article was in the context of negative Tweet posted by user with a nickname @Education4Libs, who may hardly be referred to as "Swedish social services" (Drayton, 2019).

Moreover, RG often framed Thunberg's image within a framework of her lack of education. In particular, one of its news articles contains nine mentions of Greta's educational level: "*simple, middle-school level slogans*", "*an illiterate fanatic*", "*ill-informed girl*" and the list goes on (Dunayevskiy, 2019). Interestingly, unlike KP, none of the analyzed articles from RG mentioned Thunberg's Asperger syndrome directly – it was represented as "*peculiarities in medical records*" of Greta (Dunayevskiy, 2019). In this way, the uncertainty in definition was aimed to mislead Russian audience by creating a meaning which conceptual framework is too vague.

In comparison with RG and KP, Meduza's representation of Greta Thunberg was the least biased. The newspaper did not intend to construct a negative or a positive framework to media portrayal of climate activist. Meduza avoided giving its own value judgements in the news articles, providing the audience with opinions about Greta from both sides by quoting famous people (Meduza, 2019). Thus, it can be concluded that Meduza left the receivers of their media content to form their own opinion about Greta Thunberg.

Therefore, all three selected online newspapers provided different media framing of Greta Thunberg. In case of RG and KP, there was a stark ageist language in representation of the climate activist, followed by poorly justified conspiracy theories around the girl. This finding contributes to answering the research question, because it allows me to select these two online newspapers in one category in terms of meaning they wanted to imprint in Greta Thunberg's media image.

At the same time, the analysis would not be complete without describing differences in framing of Greta employed by the Russian media in context of the events, which became major newsbreaks: Thunberg's UN speech and becoming a "Time Person of the year".

Same events – different framing

Thunberg's words from the tribune of the UN General Assembly defined a milestone in youth activism and climate change movement. For being "the most compelling voice on the most important issue facing the planet" she was announced "Person of the year", according to Time magazine (Alter, Heynes & Worland, 2019). These events received profound media coverage in Russian media discourse.

The frames of portraying Greta employed by KP remained almost identical over the period of three months. To specify, by reading the article's title "*From the UN tribune, a 16-year-old eco-activist promised mankind 'mass extinction'*", one can already perceive the evil representation of the girl (Chesnokov, 2019). In this sense, the title of the article from December 11, 2019 ("*For sounding the alarm*": Greta Thunberg became the "Person of the Year" according to Time") is no different, since idiom "*to sound the alarm*" in this context bears rather negative meaning (Gilmanova, 2019). Besides several mentions of ageist language units, the newspaper also accentuated lack of Greta's education ("*girl without education*", "*instead of sitting at their desks*") and emphasized her mental health issues with reference to an expert in adolescent psychology, who stated that Greta was being "*manipulated by adults to escalate the global eco-hysteria*" (Chesnokov, 2019). More remarkable is that the newspaper's comment on Thunberg's speech said that "*it's not worth looking for any meaning in her speech, because it does not have one*" (Chesnokov, 2019). The

news article from December 11, 2019, provides less negative textual framing of Greta Thunberg, however it contains irrelevant mention of the President of Brazil calling Greta a “*brat*” (Gilmanova, 2019).

As for RG, it was found out that the main message of Greta’s speech, more specifically – its representation by the newspaper, has changed from “*blaming the world leaders for stolen childhood*” to “*blaming the world leaders for lack of political will to fight air pollution*”. Thus, across two major newsbreaks, RG constructed different frames of Thunberg’s image, dividing the meaning of her speech into the personal level and the global one (Shilov, 2019).

In its news article from September 23, 2019, Meduza was laconic and posted only brief summary of Greta Thunberg’s speech as a textual framework. However, the article also included one compositionally well-structured picture of the girl, followed by a Tweet of Ana Navaro-Cárdenas – an American political commentator with 1,29 million followers, who posted a gif-animation with Thunberg throwing an incredulous glance at then-President Trump, with a caption “*We are all Greta*” (Meduza, 2019). This post immediately became a meme, which was especially popular among those, who opposed Trump. This marker was one of few indicators of Meduza’s attitude towards Greta Thunberg, which in this case turned out to be positive. The article covering Greta becoming “Person of the year” contains only citation from Times, followed by a picture of magazine’s cover with Thunberg on it from its official Instagram account (Meduza, 2019). However, even in citation one can distinguish positively framed image of Greta, expressed in such metaphors as “*the icon of a generation*” and “*the most compelling voice*”.

All in all, this finding proved that Greta’s representation in Russian media discourse could differ in cross-article comparison even within one online newspaper. Furthermore, the description of Meduza’s approach in framing the most important media events associated with Greta showed that its representation of the climate activist can also be positive and not only neutral.

As it was observed in case of Meduza, its representation of Greta depends significantly on the ideology of this media institution, which is rather liberal. Therefore, it is reasonable to describe the connection between dominant policies of the newspapers, the role of government in functioning of the media institutions and the way they construct the image of Greta Thunberg.

Conservative VS liberal approach in representation of Greta Thunberg

The way pro-Kremlin online newspapers represented Greta Thunberg reflected not only the media image constructed by their editorial offices, but also the image that Russian government wanted to convey to its population. This pro-government position in media portraying of Greta was reinforced after the official statement of Russian President on Thunberg’s UN speech. On the panel of the Russian Energy Week in October 2019, Putin dismissed Greta: “*I don’t share the common excitement*” (Pitalev, 2019). His statement triggered many state-owned Russian media, including RG and KP, which continued to follow the defined narrative line. The negative representation of Greta Thunberg was thus framed in larger Kremlin’s narrative against global warming (The Economist, 2019). For example, RG didn’t give a counterargument against Greta’s statements about climate change – instead, it attacked the girl based on her age, education and mental health (Dunayevskiy, 2019). By trying to find conspiracies behind Greta’s activism, both RG and KP intended to deliver a message that was quite popular among Russian conservatives: Greta is a political tool against Russia and a puppet of green energy giants. The framework of Greta being a victim of child abuse underpinned the Russian myth about the “rotting West”. This stereotype correlates with Hall’s concept of representation of “other”, which is used by Russian state-owned media in order to sanitize the image of Russia in the eyes of Russian audience (Hall, 1997).

Meduza did not share the common conservative narrative in representation of Greta Thunberg. Neither did it frame Greta as a tool of western propaganda and grand conspiracy, like it did RG and KP.

Instead, Meduza employed wide conceptual frames in representing Greta, based on the principals of diversity and inclusiveness in global politics, which correlates with Bent's idea of girl activism in solving global problems (Bent, 2013).

The connection between media formats (conservative vs liberal) of media institutions and their representation of Greta Thunberg lies in the idea of what a typical teenage girl should say and do. The supposition that a young girl can be a global changemaker and lead a peaceful protest is unacceptable in pro-Kremlin media discourse. Therefore, Russian state-owned media often represent Greta as an illiterate little girl with "*peculiarities in her medical records*", who is manipulated by adults.

In connection with Greta, some bear resemblance with other girls who addressed their words to global leaders. One of the most frequent comparisons is the one with Samantha Smith and her letter to the Secretary General of the USSR Andropov (Smith, 1982). This is very demonstrative because it is precisely such a comparison that shows the difference between what was before and what is happening now. But if back to then, children turned to adults, asking naive questions ("*Why is this happening?*" or "*Are you going to conquer my homeland?*"), nowadays Greta Thunberg is not asking anything from anyone - she demands: "*How dare you?!*". And this is a fundamentally different rhetoric, which ruins all the stereotypes of how an ordinary girl of her age should act like. Still, in Russian media discourse, state-owned newspapers uphold the idea that young girls cannot have their own opinion on global issues, and if they speak to adults with any requirements, they must be puppets in adult hands. Russian liberal media institutions, like Meduza, accepted this change and supported it through positive representation of Greta Thunberg in its news articles.

As this section demonstrates, the image of Greta Thunberg constructed by online newspapers greatly depends on the media-state relations, the dominant format and ideology of a newspaper. It was identified that the approaches in representing of Greta by RG and KP are similar and are both based on conservative stereotype of girls in politics. The manner of Greta's rhetorical framing across the selected news articles appeared to be the most stable in Meduza, whereas the frame of meaning encoded in Russian state-owned online newspapers has changed over the 3 months period, yet always remained within a negative scope.

Conclusion

This research has described the media representation of Greta Thunberg by RG, KP and Meduza. As the qualitative content analysis of 19 news articles demonstrated, media coverage of Greta Thunberg by different Russian media online newspapers resulted in different frames. These conceptual frameworks, which included both textual and visual constructs (meaning of article's titles, ageist language, mentions of Greta's education, agenda-setting features and so on) indicated at fundamental differences in media coverage of Greta Thunberg by three Russian media online newspapers. The research identified a strong correlation between media portrayal of the Swedish climate activist and the main ideology and media-state relations of media institutions, which construct her image for the Russian audience. Specifically, RG and KP expressed conservative pro-Kremlin viewpoint, framing Greta as a little aggressive girl with serious mental health issues, who is being manipulated by Western political elites. In contrast, Meduza's media representation of Greta Thunberg was framed more positively following the liberal approach, which is based on principles of diversity and inclusiveness of youth in solving global problems.

However, textual analysis, on which the study is based, has obvious limitation, as it is isolated from audience, who consume media texts. Moreover, the findings could have been different if I selected other online newspapers due to the fact, that, as it was already revealed, media representation of a person greatly depends on the editing policy and ideology of media institutions. In perspective, this research may be developed to a cross-cultural analysis of representation of Greta Thunberg by conservative and/or liberal media. This paper may also be applied to a broader study of representation of female activists in Russian and/or international media discourse.

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