Graduate Student Conference in Slavic Studies

April 26, 2019

Department of Slavic Languages and Literatures
University of Toronto

121 St. Joseph Street, Alumni Hall, room 404, 4th floor, Toronto
Elena Vasileva | University of Toronto

Music of Tolstoy’s Narrative

This paper examines the notion of linkages (sopryazhenie), which comes to Pierre Bezukhov in a dream after the Borodino battle, maintaining that sopryazhenie is one of the fundamental principles of War and Peace’s narrative structure. A device that allows linkage to acquire a formal significance – is repetition that appear as intrinsic to the novel’s structure. This paper argues that the formal role of repetition in WP – and the larger “labyrinth of linkages” that this device of repetition serves – motivates the comparison of the syntax of the novel’s narrative structure to that of a musical piece.

Alex Averbuch | University of Toronto

Adjusting to the Empire: First Literary Encounters between Jews and Russian Monarchs

This paper discusses the transactional nature of Hebrew poetry written for practical purposes in the Russian Empire. Specifically, it analyses verse that served as barter for material, social, and political benefits in transactions with Russian rulers and government officials. It examines texts that contain specific practical requests, whether written with the expectation of fulfillment thereof, or to generate a sense of unpaid debt; and also, texts given as “payment” for an already-received service or benefit.

Gleb Vinokurov | McGill University

Elisaveta Kul’man: The Poems of a Dead Girl

When in 1825 the life of 17-year-old Elisaveta Kul’man was cut short, suddenly an unknown girl became a poetic sensation. However, in the age of Pushkin her poetry was dismissed for its classicist heaviness. Queer and feminist theories can help reveal Kul’man’s play with gender norms, sexuality of her characters; empowering herself through reinventing the biography of the Ancient poet Corinna; developing a style that her contemporaries saw as different from the so-called ladies’ poetry. This paper will explore the possibilities of discussing and rediscovering texts such as Kul’man’s as subversive through modern theories (gender performativity, écriture féminine).
12:30 - 13:30  Keynote Lecture | Christina Kramer
Ič ne e kul: Anglicisms and Turkisms in the *bombi*, Macedonia's Secret Wiretaps

13:30 - 14:30  Lunch

14:30 - 15:15  Anne Sophie Narod | University of Toronto
Sex and War and Peace

This paper juxtaposes Natasha Rostova’s sexual development against Helene Kuragina’s sexual stasis in Tolstoy’s *War and Peace*. As the heroine of *War and Peace*, Natasha transitions from a thirteen-year-old girl into a middle-aged wife and mother, and this paper, therefore, attempts to evaluate Natasha’s development from the perspectives of nature and biology, and demonstrates how her varied experiences represent her metamorphosis into a sexual creature of experimentation.

15:15 - 16:00  Braxton Boyer | University of Toronto
Beyond the Icon: Princess Marya and Spiritual Growth in *War and Peace*

In *War and Peace*, the word “icon” (predominantly as “образ” and “икона,” but also as “лампадка” and “киот”) appears over seventy times. This fact is interesting in itself: in no other work of Tolstoy’s does the icon appear so frequently. This paper explores the complex representation and function of the icon in *War and Peace*, and does so primarily by focusing on Princess Marya, the character with whom it is most frequently associated.
Olga Khometa | University of Toronto
Between Modernism and Socialist Realism: Rethinking the 1930s through Literature and Art

Experimentation with style and genre complicates the readings of state sanctioned literature and art of the 1930s. Contemporary theories either juxtapose socialist realism with avant-garde (Paperny) or claim that the socialist realist project manifests the radicalization of the avant-gardist ideology (e.g Groys, Gutkin, Golomstock). However, these theories overlook how the artistic works of the 1930s organically combined modernist techniques, which were born out of avant-garde, with the demands of socialist realism, and thus require an exclusive theoretical approach.

Klaudia Rosińska | Cardinal Stefan Wyszyński University in Warsaw
Fake News – The Crises in Media Communication

The paper will present the results of the author’s research devoted to exploring the topic presenting fake news as a consequence of several crises in media communication. Fake news was named the 2017 word of the year by the Oxford Dictionary. This may seem as a natural consequence of the post-truth era, but it is also attributable to problems in the media communication process. I will present crises in journalism in the Polish media market and the question of the citizens’ media literacy in Poland, which could be the main reason for the problem of fake news on the internet. My talk will present a theoretical analysis which will be the basis for further empirical research on this topic.

If you have any questions, contact the conference organizer Alex Averbuch.
alex.averbuch@mail.utoronto.ca