

# Summary

## The Language of Witness, the Language of Catastrophes

**Nikita Bystrov's** article "Dan Pagis' Poem 'Written with a Pencil in the Sealed Railway Car': A Review of Interpretations" discusses some interpretations of the famous poem by the Israeli poet Dan Pagis that offered by literary critics and historians of Hebrew poetry. These interpretations, concerning mainly the linguistic (grammatical and semantic), conceptual and intertextual features of this Pagis's text, make it possible to read it as a poem that contradicts the classical paradigm of understanding Jewish sacrifice, representing a tragic journey in a sealed railway car (actually, the Catastrophe of European Jewry, the Shoah) is still unfinished and requires the it's reader to become a "participant" of the described events.

In the article "The Pitiful Star of Hope': Ingeborg Bachmann's Artistic Universe in the Light of Hannah Arendt's Socio-Political Reflections" **Oxana Koval** and **Ekaterina Kriukova** discuss some aspects of the poetic and prose heritage of Ingeborg Bachmann, one of the brightest figures of the German-language literary

scene of the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. The socio-critical intentions of her oeuvre are analyzed in light of the works of Hannah Arendt, a renowned political theorist and researcher of totalitarian regimes. It is conceivable to identify a specific ethical program in Bachmann's writings, announcing the need for fundamental changes in a society where violence still reigns. This ethical program can be found as a result of Arendt's conceptual constructions being projected onto Bachmann's literary texts.

**Handan Demir** in her essay "Psyche, Archive, Art: On the Poetry of Ingeborg Bachmann" examines the archaic and utopian dimensions of Ingeborg Bachmann's poems, as well as its archival function of the poetry. In doing so, the author uses primarily, but not exclusively, the psychoanalytic conceptual tools. She shows how, by capturing what cannot be recorded in the archives of events and facts, that is, the inadequacy of speech, the poet invites the readers into the productive field of creativity, where the new and the repressed meet.

## Soviet Philosophy: Contexts and Influences

**Michail Maiatsky's** article "Education Through Philosophy, Education to Philosophy (On Some Late Soviet Pedagogico-Philosophical Initiatives)" examines the pedagogical dimension of late-Soviet philosophy and especially such aspects of it as protreptic (as opposed to ideologised propaedeutic) philosophy books

(e.g. by Evgeny Bogat), the pedagogical ideas of the Moscow Logical Circle, Evald Ilyenkov's circle, and the philosophical aspects of the communards' movement. The common element of these phenomena was the idea of educating a person capable not of adapting to the existing society, but of improving

it in accordance with communist ideals, which were formulated as consonant with world culture, the longing for which acted as a kind of anti-ideological dissidence, soft enough to be accepted within the framework of the brezhnevian doctrine of culturality.

Discussions among Russian Marxists of the 1920s continued the discussions between G.V. Plekhanov and V.I. Lenin, on the one hand, and A.A. Bogdanov, on the other. Plekhanov and Lenin represented the so-called “orthodox” Marxism, and their opponent believed that Marxist teaching was subject to creative development. **Maja Soboleva** in her article “Marxism in Valentin Voloshinov’s ‘Marxism and the Philosophy of Language’” sees the main difference in the fact that the “orthodox” perceived Marxism as a complete theory, while their opponent perceived it as a method. After analyzing the main directions along which Bogdanov modernized Marxism, the author examines the Marxist approach proposed by Voloshinov. It is shown that Voloshinov’s main ideas largely coincide with the ideas of Bogdanov, and in his “sociological poetics” Marxism is used as

a method for studying language in the spirit of the latter.

**Alyssa DeBlasio**’s article “Alexander Piatigorsky and Buddhism as Object and Approach” looks at the problem of “thinking” in the work of philosopher, linguist, scholar of Tamil literature and Buddhist thought, and fiction writer A.M. Piatigorsky (1929—2009). It begins by addressing the influence of Iurii Reikh and Bidia Dandaron on Piatigorsky’s intellectual trajectory within the broader context of the study of Buddhism in Russia during the late Soviet period. It then turns to the central theme in Piatigorsky’s work — the problem of “thinking” and “thinking about thinking” — which sat at the core of his method (developed together with David Zilberman) of *nablyudatel’naya filosofiya*, and which Piatigorsky developed through the lens of the Buddhist experience. The article concludes by addressing how Piatigorsky’s applied his philosophical approach to what he called the “methodological problems” of Russian literature, thereby extending the insights of “yogic thinking” as a mirror in which Russian culture might reflect upon itself.

## Media Spaces of the Historical Avant Garde

**Sven Spieker**’s article “Some Additions to Malevich’s Texts about Cinema” shows that Malevich’s later figurative work of the 1930s should not be viewed as a revisionist “return to figurativeness.” Instead, it is suggested that we take seriously Malevich’s claim that his late paintings are an organic continuation of his Suprematist style, and not a break with it. The article examines Malevich’s later paintings compared to the artist’s earlier works on cinema. In the spirit of his contention that Suprematist painting is not painting (in the conventional sense), the article considers the artist’s late paintings

as an expanded form of cinema. Obviously, this argument presupposes an understanding of cinema that does not draw the line between painting and cinema on the basis of their technical differences — a view that is very much in line with Malevich’s.

**Jurij Murašov** in his article “Economy, Language, and Writing in Russian Avant-Garde: Shklovsky, Lenin, Malevich” analyzes three very different mutual constellations of (anti-)economy and domination of the verbal: Viktor Šklovskij’s formalistic poetics of *ostranenie*, Vladimir Lenin’s

politico-economic statements on the *New Economical Policy* he himself initiated and Kazimir Malevič's enthusiastic discovery of (anti-)economy as "fifth dimension" and as inherent principle of his suprematism in painting and writing. As the analysis shows, both political economy, painting practice, and aesthetic theory seek to solve the problems of the new age by broadly defined desemiotization, that is, by moving from sign/image representation to the realm of verbal performativity and sensual experience.

In the article "Surface and Support: Two Notions of the Medium" **Boris Groys** states that the concept of "medium" can be interpreted in two ways: either as a means of transmitting a message, or as its material carrier. In relation to painting, an example of the second approach is the work of Wassily Kandinsky "On the Spiritual in Art," while the first was adopted by his constructivist opponents, who understood a work of art as a technically manufactured utilitarian object. This idea was criticized by Alexandre Kojève, who insisted on the need to separate pure form from content, or the material and utilitarian basis. At the same time, the form receives a new material basis provided by the historical humanity, which recognizes it as valuable and worthy of preservation.

**Margarete Vöhringer's** article "Socialism Spun Around: Vertov's Cinema in the Context of Scientific Management" examines Dziga Vertov's film work in the

1920s, contextualizing it with avant-garde projects such as factography and relating the developments to the scientific work management of the time. The author focuses on Vertov's groundbreaking film *Man with a Movie Camera* and its significance in the context of the realities of Soviet Russia in the 1920s. Vertov's innovative approach to cinema, based on avant-garde ideals and experimental psychology, challenges traditional notions of filmmaking. The article explains how Vertov's cinematic experiments made it possible to manifest and demonstrate largescale social changes. An important point is to determine the moment of intersection of art, technology and culture in the Soviet Union.

The name of Alexander Rodchenko is associated mainly with his photographic and design projects. His abstract paintings created at the turn of the 1910s and 1920s are overshadowed by his later work and are often seen as a manifestation of a kind of aesthetic positivism, reducing the painting to its literal parameters. The article "The Canvas and Everything Else" by **Andrey Fomenko** attempts to reconsider this idea by conducting a careful analysis of one painting, *Non-Objective Composition* (1918). What Rodchenko achieves with it is the maximum ambiguity of the interpretation of each of the elements of the pictorial language and their general relationships that exclude literalism and at the same time affirm the value of a blank canvas.

## From Underground to Actionism

The article "Avant-garde in the Post-modern Era: The Case of Vladimir Erl'" by **Ilja Kukuj** examines the juxtaposition of Vladimir Erl' (pseudonym of Vladimir Ivanovich Gorbunov, 1947—2020) poetic neo-avantgarde experiments with the

"postmodern condition" (J.-F. Lyotard), the discursive understanding of which began only at the very end of the Soviet era. Erl's case is especially interesting in that we are dealing here with a researcher and follower of the avantgarde

in the same person, who was quite reflexive about his creative practice. Thus, the ways in which the avant-garde tradition was assimilated and transformed in Erl's work and publishing were dictated not only by the characteristics of his remarkable personality and interests, but also by the specifics of the cultural situation in the post-war USSR.

**Petr Kazarnovskii's** article “‘Vibration of words’: Understanding the Creative Marginality of A. Nick” is dedicated to a poet, writer and artist Nikolai Axelrod (1945—2011), known as A. Nick. He enters the literary and artistic circles of Leningrad during the period of conscious formation of the unofficial movement — in the late 1960s. In the atmosphere of the first “apartment” art exhibitions, happenings and performances, an attitude towards his own marginality was formed, and a special view of being in a borderline situation was developed. With the move to Prague, ties with the circle of like-minded people, which has been left behind and expanded, provide new opportunities and at the same time force to apply new experience to text formation. The attitude to escape from unambiguity is negatively assessed by A. Nick, which is reflected in his late work, marked by an increase in total irony and dark humor.

**Vladimir Feshchenko** in his article “Grapholalia in Poetic Writing. Avant-garde — Underground — Undernet” examines a poetic technique that the author proposes to be called *grapholalia* — orthographically anomalous manifestations of a language experiment in poetic writing. Spelling deviations, alphabetical transformations and other anomalies in the style of handwritten, typographical or computer text in Rus-

sophone poetry from the Avant-Garde to the Internet era are analyzed. The first part of the article provides examples of poetic grapholalia (experiments with letters and alphabet) in the texts of Russian Futurism (R. Jakobson, P. Filonov, I. Terentyev, I. Zdanevich). The second part discusses linguistic examples of grapholalic writing in underground and neo-avant-garde poetry (E. Mnatsakanova, A. Alchuk, L. Berezovchuk). Part three is devoted to contemporary poetic experiences of orthographic radicalism and experimentalism in the digital environment by such authors as N. Skandiaka, I. Krasnoper, S. Kamill, V. Nedeoglo). The considered practices of language decomposition, poetic aphasia, grapholalia, and foreignisms are aimed at moving away from poetic conventions towards the *linguistic underground*, a kind of “language underneath language”.

**Mikhail Pavlovets's** article “‘Poetry Is Me’: Performances of Bonifacius / German Lukomnikov” examines the main corpus of German Lukomnikov's works which may well be attributed to the field of verbal poetry. However, in most works, when they are recorded in writing, the visual form is actualized, and when read aloud, the acoustic form, so that the vectors of visualization and audialization take a number of texts beyond the boundaries of “poetry proper” into the field of performative poetry. The poet directly defines some of his texts as “performance poems”, while emphasizing their poetic, rather than purely actionist basis. At the same time, his poetic performances are a reassembly of traditional ideas about “authorship”, providing the recipient with a meeting with the real author in all his hypostases — both in creative projections and in literal, including physical manifestations.

## In Memoriam

Lev Rubinstein (19.02.1947—14.01.2024)

This block is dedicated to the memory of Lev Semyonovich Rubinstein, poet, essayist, journalist, one of the most significant authors in the field of Russian conceptual poetry and dear friend of *New Literary Observer*. This issue pre-

sents memorial essays by **Olga Sedakova**, **Hélène Henry-Safier**, **Mikhail Lampolski** and **Maxim Dryomov**, as well as a poetic homage to Rubinstein by **Aleksandr Skidan**.

## From the Legacy of Marietta Chudakova

This memorial block presents previously unpublished materials from the archives of Marietta Chudakova. It opens with a memorial article by **Catherine Depretto** and includes excerpts from Chudakova's diary, an article by **Maria V. Mishurovskaya** on letters from Yuri

Lotman, Zara Mints and Boris Egorov to Marietta Chudakova, Alexander Chudakov and Evgeniy Toddés, and also the selected inscriptions from Chudakov's library and Marietta Chudakova's marginalia.

## Alexander Chudakov as a Scholar and Novelist

**Andrei Stepanov's** article "The Imaginary Immortality of a Thing: The Origins and Meaning of Aleksandr P. Chudakov's *Resology*" analyzes the concept of *resology*, proposed by Aleksandr P. Chudakov in his 1970s—1990s works, as a representation of material things in literature. By creating this theory, the scholar tried to unravel the laws of the 19<sup>th</sup> century literary evolution from Romanticism to Realism and further to Symbolism. The author of the article argues that Chudakov's novel *A Gloom is Cast Upon the Ancient Steps* can be regarded as a useful explanation of the *resology* concept.

In the article "Metaliterary Reflection in Idyllic Novel *A Gloom is Cast Upon the Ancient Steps* by A.P. Chudakov" **Alexander Gorbenko** studies the metaliterary reflection of the central character of this novel-idyll. Using various techniques, the author disguised polemical allusions, which appear in a number of episodes of the book that do not belong to the key episodes, to the ideas and concepts of Russian philologists of different generations — the author's workfollows. The reconstruction of these allusions and the analysis of their functions in the structure of the novel are the matter this article is devoted to.

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