

The Science of Poetry: Poetic Process as Evolution in Mandel'shtam's "Conversation about Dante"

ALEXANDER SPEKTOR

This article investigates the relationship between the humanities and science by focusing on Osip Mandel'shtam's "Conversation about Dante." Noting the importance of natural science for Mandel'shtam's treatise, I argue that Mandel'shtam makes use of the methods of the natural sciences in developing a complex theory of the poetic process. He encounters the scientific method of analysis in his reading of the natural scientists, written about in his travelogue "Journey to Armenia," as well as various shorter pieces accompanying it. Mandel'shtam begins with a proposition of isomorphism between poetry and nature. Ultimately, I argue that the scientific method allows Mandel'shtam to theorize the poetic process as a dialogue between author and reader in which cultural kinship between its participants is established as a break within their individuality and a recognition of the authority of the "poetic impulse" or "instinct." In turn, envisioning the poetic process as a dialogue that paradoxically suspends and transcends the individuality of its participants allows Mandel'shtam simultaneously to insist on the necessity of submission to the authority of the poetic message and to endow poetry with political autonomy.

Keeping Time: Reading and Writing in "Conversation about Dante"

JACOB EMERY

This article approaches Osip Mandel'shtam's "Conversation about Dante" as a demonstration of and meditation on reading. As such, Mandel'shtam's essay addresses the perennial problems of our relationship to the authority of writing and the preservation of literary culture across time, largely through a cluster of metaphors around the central image of a conductor's baton. The visible instrument of musical measure, the baton figures synesthetic transcription in the arts and, most urgently, the undulating line of script traced by the writing pen that becomes realized as waves of sound in the poem's oral performance. "Keeping Time" elucidates the philosophy of notation and performance to which the figure of the baton alludes, and contextualizes it within Mandel'shtam's efforts to reconcile the political and poetical functions of written authority.

The Borsa: The Black Market for Rock Music in Late Socialist Bulgaria

VENELIN I. GANEV

This paper offers an empirical description and analytical interpretation of the *borsa*—the largest black market for rock music in Bulgaria in the 1980s. The text illuminates the distinct characteristics of the urban locale that became the focal point of rock fans' desires and ambitions, examines how the interactions between the entrepreneurs who supplied the music and their adoles-

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cent clients were embedded in enduring networks of trust, and explores the peculiarities of the bursa as a site where western works of art were mechanically reproduced. It also demonstrates that the place where admirers of rock music met was enlivened by political energies and deliberately demarcated as a space in which ideological differences could manifest themselves, thus contesting Alexei Yurchak's argument that in late socialism it was possible to be loyal to and love "both Lenin and Led Zeppelin."

Pressuring the Politburo: The Committee of the Bulgarian Women's Movement and State Socialist Feminism

KRISTEN GHODSEE

National women's organizations were a ubiquitous feature of all of the eastern European communist nations. Although the specificities of these organizations varied from country to country, they were all state-run mass organizations variously charged with mobilizing domestic women and representing their nations at international forums concerning women's rights. In the west, these state women's organizations were treated with suspicion; they were often viewed as tools of authoritarian control, mobilizing women to fulfill party goals. It is rarely considered that eastern bloc women may have used their privileged relationship with the Communist Party to promote policies that actually helped women, or that they could push back at male patriarchal elites by appealing to higher communist principles regarding the woman question. This article is a case study of the Committee of the Bulgarian Women's Movement. It demonstrates that this organization, despite its entanglement with the state bureaucracy, was relatively successful in pressuring the Bulgarian Politburo into expanding rights and entitlements to women between 1968 and 1990.

Inside the Psychiatric Word: Diagnosis and Self-Definition in the Late Soviet Period

REBECCA REICH

The punitive psychiatric hospitalization of Soviet dissidents and nonconformists spurred the writing and circulation of memoirs of detention, transcripts of conversations with psychiatrists, copies of psychiatric files, handbooks on legal and medical aspects of psychiatric examination, works of fiction, poems, and other related documents. Rebecca Reich draws on this major body of texts to determine how politically unorthodox citizens engaged with psychiatry in life and on the page. Close reading of texts by Vladimir Bukovskii, Semen Gluzman, Aleksandr Vol'pin, and others suggests that unsanctioned accounts of hospitalization did more than expose the abuse of psychiatry; they challenged Soviet psychiatric discourse and promoted *inakomyslie*, "thinking differently," as the psychological norm. By depathologizing themselves and pathologizing the state during encounters with psychiatrists and in samizdat, dissidents and nonconformists engaged in self-definition and asserted their own diagnostic authority.

“In Memory of Our Murdered (Jewish) Children”: Hearing the Holocaust in Soviet Jewish Culture

JAMES LOEFFLER

This article offers the first major investigation of the Holocaust in wartime Soviet music and its connection to questions of Soviet Jewish identity. Moving beyond the consistent focus on Dmitrii Shostakovich’s 1962 Symphony no. 13 (*Babi Yar*), I present an alternative locus for the beginnings of Soviet musical representations of the Nazi genocide in a now forgotten composition by the Soviet Jewish composer Mikhail Gnesin, his 1943 Piano Trio, “In Memory of Our Perished Children.” I trace the genesis of this work in Gnesin’s web of experiences before and during the war, examining Gnesin’s careful strategy of deliberate aesthetic ambiguity in depicting death—Jewish and Soviet, individual and collective. Recapturing this forgotten cultural genealogy provides a very different kind of European historical soundtrack for the Holocaust. Instead of the categories of *survivor* and *bystander*, *wartime witness* and *postwar remembrance*, we find a more ambiguous form of early Holocaust memory. The story of how the Holocaust first entered Soviet music challenges our contemporary assumptions about the coherence and legitimacy of *Holocaust music* as a category of cultural history and present-day performance.

Rejecting Angelina: Bosnian War Rape Survivors and the Ambiguities of Sex in War

ELISSA HELMS

Before Angelina Jolie’s 2011 film *In the Land of Blood and Honey*, about the rape of women in the Bosnian war, was filmed, a group of Bosnian women war rape survivors persuaded local government officials to revoke Jolie’s on-location filming permit. The survivors’ objections were based on a rumor, subsequently refuted, that the plot was a love story between a Bosnian Muslim woman and her Serb rapist. This paper analyzes these objections, their subsequent permutations, and the film itself in light of the relationships between gender and sexuality, nationalist ideologies, and the logics of war. I contextualize the objections raised and argue that the film ultimately fails to challenge conventional patriarchal and nationalist assumptions about wartime rape, sex, and gender roles in war, despite its seemingly provocative focus on violence against women in war. Ultimately, as I show, the film reinforces clear-cut ethnonational narratives of victims and perpetrators while leaving the gendered logics of sex and power unexamined.