



## ***Newsnotes: 2CUL Russian, Eurasian & East European Studies***

***Resources.*** No. 10, Winter 2015

Dear Colleagues:

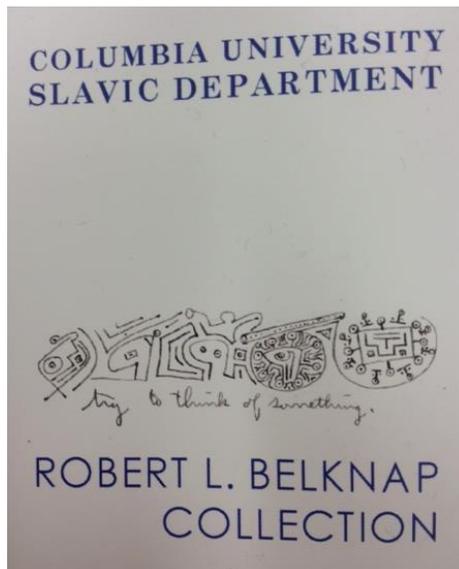
Greetings from a frosty Morningside Heights! I want to pass along information concerning just a few of our significant acquisitions since our last *Newsnotes*.

### ***Gifts***

Professor Elizabeth Kridl **Valkenier** made an additional donation of 84 retrospective Slavic art, music, and literature titles.

Elena Salij, niece of historian, State Department officer, and editor of *Problems of Communism* Sophia **Sluzar** (1938-2013), has donated six additional boxes (on top of the 17 given in 2013) of Ukrainian titles from her aunt's library. Throughout her life, Sophia Sluzar promoted democracy and human rights in Ukraine, the country of her birth, including founding an office of the International Foundation for Electoral Systems in independent Ukraine.

Materials from Professor Robert L. **Belknap**'s working library, donated by his widow Cynthia Hyla Whittaker, continue to be processed into the library, and have been supplemented by books



found on the shelves of the University Seminar's Office in Faculty House. In addition, the many volumes that have joined the Slavic Department Reading Room were labeled with a special bookplate (featuring one of Bob's well-known, whimsical doodles), and are now available for student and faculty use on the 7<sup>th</sup> floor of Hamilton Hall. Bob would be pleased!

### *Antiquarian Purchases*

At the close of 2014, **Cornell** acquired a significant supplement of twenty-one titles pertaining to the Hungarian Soviet Republic of 1919. You may recall that in 2012, Cornell purchased a first convoy of materials pertaining to this short-lived regime, which lasted from March 21 to August 6 before it was crushed by the Romanian army and succeeded by the Kingdom of Hungary. As publications issued by the Communist government were subsequently destroyed, this archive of printed materials includes a number of rare titles. The collection is catalogued as “**Magyarországi Tanácsköztársaság archive, 1919**” in the Kroch Library.

Cornell will also soon add the rare collection *Parnass dybom* [Parnassus Upended] [Kharkiv]: “Kosmos,” 1925), containing parodies and other humorous verse by Blok, Bednyi, Esenin, Mayakovsky, Dante, and others.

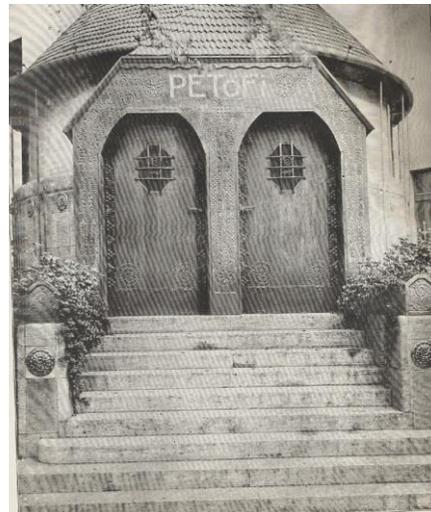
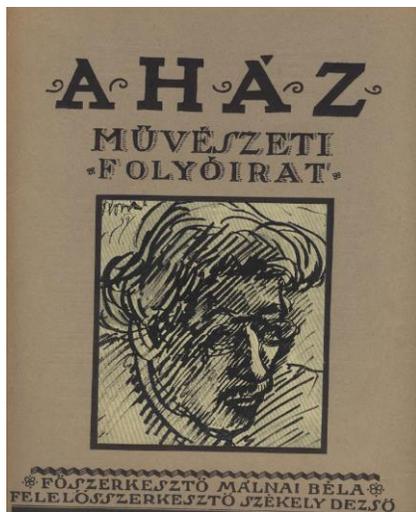
**Columbia** supplemented holdings of rare Russian film programs of the 1920s (catalogued as [Soviet film programs from 1926-1930] in the Rare Books & Manuscripts Library). Five



additional programs were added, bringing total holdings to twenty. Below are programs for *Kto ty takoi?*[Who Are You?] (1927, directed by Iurii Zheliabuzhskii, 1888-1955), and for the Russian release of Paramount's *The Spanish Dancer* (1923) starring Polish-born actress Pola Negri (b. 1897 in Lipno, d. 1987 in San Antonio, Texas).

Thanks to support from Avery Library Director Carole Ann Fabian, Columbia purchased two very rare Hungarian titles:

*A Ház* [The House] (Budapest: Atheneum, 1908-1911), a journal dedicated to the building and visual arts, which appeared for four years under the directorship of Béla Málnai (1878-1941). It is a major document of the Hungarian architecture of the era, as well as examining the building and design of traditional Hungarian arts and crafts. From the late 19<sup>th</sup> century up to 1918, the territories

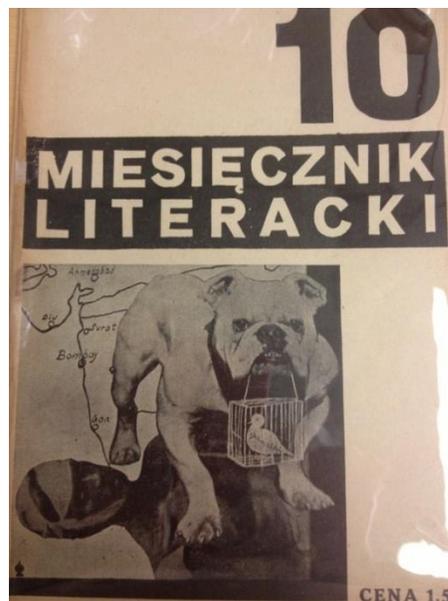


under Hungarian rule employed a unique form of Secessionist architecture. Unfortunately, a number of examples of this style were destroyed in the closing days of World War II, and these pages may provide the only visual record of them. There are only two, incomplete sets of this title in North America.



Dezső Keér's (b. 1905) *Harminc vers* [Thirty Verses] (Budapest: Vajda Janos Tarsasag, 1925) features illustrations by Róbert Byssz (1899-1961), an early contributor to avant-garde and leftist publications. Not found in any other WorldCat location, this title was produced in only 100 numbered copies, with a handwritten dedication by Keér.

Columbia has acquired eight issues of the rare Polish socio-cultural journal *Miesięcznik*

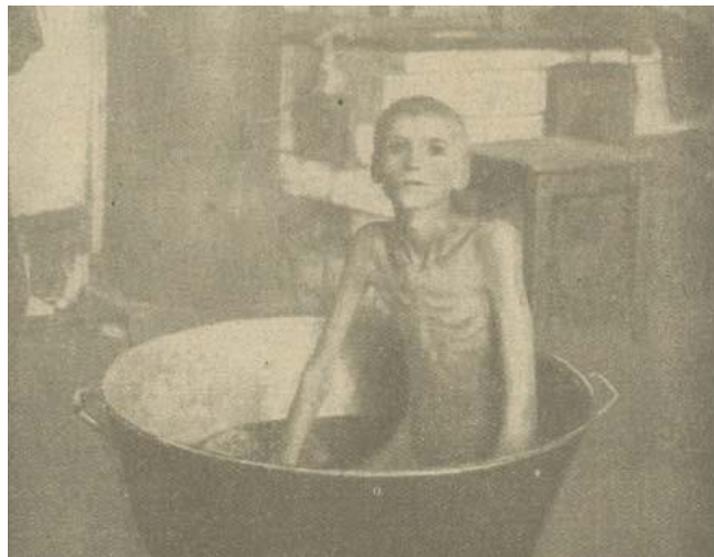
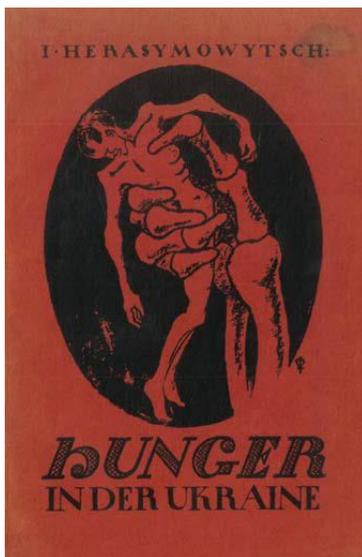


Two illustrated covers: on the left, the Zuev workers' club in Moscow (1928-1931), by Constructivist architect Il'ia Golosov (1883-1945); right, a photomontage of an English bulldog straddling a map of India, an emaciated figure, and clutching a caged bird labeled "Gandhi" in its jaws.

*Literacki* [Literary Monthly] for the year 1930. Published in Warsaw between 1929 and 1931 (at which time, it was shut down by Polish authorities and members of its editorial staff arrested),

this leftist journal was edited by Aleksander Wat (1900-1967). A poet, writer, translator, and theorist, Wat's communist sympathies evaporated after his arrest by the Soviets in 1939 and subsequent wartime exile to Kazakhstan. Returned to Poland in 1946, he emigrated to France in 1959. While Harvard and Stanford have microfilm of the Polish National Library copy, these are the only paper issues of this title recorded in WorldCat.

Another recent purchase is *Hunger in der Ukraine* (Berlin: Ukrains'ke Slovo, 1923), a German translation of Ivan Herasymovych's 1922 *Holod na Ukraïni*, [Famine in Ukraine], which is also



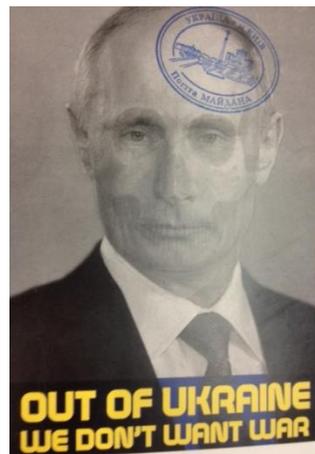
held by Columbia. A report on the devastating Ukrainian Famine of 1921-1923—precursor of the deadly, genocidal *Holodomor* of 1932-1933— this edition contains a new forward and supplemental diagrams and statistics describing crop failures, and evidence of how the Soviet grain redistribution policy aggravated its effects.

Thanks to support from Columbia's Primary Resources Fund, scholars now have access to thirty issues (of 97) of the very rare Soviet wartime "journal" *Front-Illustrierte: Für den Deutschen Soldaten*. This title was air-dropped over German-held territories from 1941-1945, depicting graphically the ultimate consequences of resisting the Allied onslaught. This is the most



extensive collection of issues of this title in North America. The most striking feature of this propaganda journal are the photomontages, the majority of which were the work of Aleksandr Zhitomirskii (1907-1994), an art director for *Illustrirovannaia Gazeta*. Zhitomirsky combines photomontage with layouts reminiscent of the work of Aleksandr Rodchenko (1891-1956), and his contemporary in Germany John Heartfield (1891-1968).

Finally, an additional collection of 2014 Ukrainian Parliamentary election ephemera materials—approximately 240 leaflets, newspapers, flyer, posters—was purchased in January



(l.), Anti-Yanukovych doormat (“Wipe your feet!”); (r.) a postcard of a skeletal Putin, from the collection of *Materials on Protest in Ukraine, 2013-2014*.

2015. This complements large ephemera purchases of Ukrainian parliamentary campaigns from 2012 (235 items), the presidential campaign of 2014 (76 items), and Materials on Protests in Ukraine, 2013-2014 (82 items).

### *Processing of Collections*

Last September, I reported that we had purchased a large portion of the personal library of Nobel prize-winning poet **Joseph Brodsky** (1940-1996). It is my pleasure to report that collection was reviewed, volume-by-volume, and is now being processed. To date, almost 400 titles have been catalogued, including many inscribed to Brodsky. (This collection complements the archival collection of Brodsky biographer and translator Lev Loseff (1937-2009), reported in the No. 8 Winter/Spring issue of *Newsnotes*).

That such a feat could be accomplished in so short a time period is all owing to the knowledge, skills, and hard work of our library catalogers. The quality of the records they produce, as well as the prodigious quantity of material they process each and every year is nothing short of remarkable!

### *New Electronic Resources*

Columbia has acquired the searchable, full-text digital *Krokodil* covering the years 1922-2008 from East View. It is available to affiliates via the Universal Database portal, at <http://dlib.eastview.com/browse/books/2230?searchLink=%2Fsearch%2Fsimple>

### *Transitions*

Last December, the Slavic and East European field lost a superb bibliographer and librarian, Nina **Lenček** (née Lovrencic, 1924-2014). Mrs. Lenček served as Slavic & East European Bibliographer at Columbia University from 1972-1989. Born in Ljubljana, she was the daughter of Antonietta Manzoni and the poet/writer Joža Lovrenčič (1890-1952). She studied Slavic philology at the University of Ljubljana, where she met her future husband, Dr. Rado L. Lenček (1921-2005), Professor Emeritus of Slavic Languages and Cultures, Columbia University. Following World War II, she worked as an interpreter/secretary for the British Red Cross and the Allied Military Government, as a radio broadcaster in Trieste, and, in the United States, in the libraries of the Harvard Museum of Comparative Zoology, the University of Illinois, and

Columbia. A celebration of her life took place at Butler Library on the evening of January 22, 2015, with a program including remembrances of Nina by Edward Kasinec, Harriman Institute Associate; Henry Cooper, Emeritus Professor, Indiana University; and Nina's daughter, Professor Lena Lenček, of Reed College.

\*\*\*

I plan to visit Ithaca in late-February, and when I have a firm date, I will pass it along to my Cornell colleagues. As always, please be in touch with any questions or special requests.

*Robert H. Davis*