



**Newsnotes: 2CUL Russian, Eurasian & East European Studies Resources.
No. 11, Fall 2015.**

Dear Colleagues:

As we begin a new semester, I want to call your attention to several anniversaries in the life of the Slavic, East European and Eurasian community that fall within this academic year.

The year 2016 will mark the **132nd anniversary** of Slavic language collecting at Cornell (a mere nineteen years after the founding of the university!), and the **110th anniversary** of Slavic-language collecting at Columbia University Libraries. It will also be the **70th anniversary** of the creation of the full-time position of Slavic & East European Librarian, created with the support of the then-Russian Institute.

The collections of both institutions began modestly—three hundred volumes donated to Cornell by the historian, translator (of Turgenev and Tolstoy) and diplomat Eugene Schuyler (1840-1890), and (over time) some 1,000 volumes donated to Columbia by Count Sergei Witte (1849-1915). These “seed” gifts were followed on by formal exchange agreements with learned societies in an ever-expanding range of countries, ensuring a steady flow of new materials. From humble beginnings, both university libraries grew steadily through the years of war and revolution, intensified during the interwar period, and exploded in the decades after World War II.

Columbia has received a very valuable gift of some six hundred Russian public documents, that is books containing statistics of trade, agriculture, commerce, etc. (from the Russian Minister Witte. Minister Witte will continue to send these documents until Columbia possesses a complete set.

Columbia *Daily Spectator*, 30 January, 1906 (left), and Cornell *Daily Sun*, 18 Nov. 1884.

Hon. Eugene Schuyler, brother of Lieutenant Schuyler, and U. S. Minister to Greece has presented to the library a collection of about three hundred volumes, consisting mainly of the authorities used in preparation for his "Turkestan" and "Peter the Great"; the latter, it will be remembered, appeared serially in the *Century* about three years ago. The collection comprises histories and general works on Russia, and treatises on the Russian languages and its dialects and materials for the study of Russian folk-lore. These books have been shipped and a partial list of them received but, as they have not yet arrived, a detailed account of the gift is impossible.

A cup is to be offered at Columbia next spring for an inter-class base-ball tournament.

Today, our collections in the languages of, and pertaining to, the cultures and countries of Eastern Europe and the diverse peoples of the former Soviet Union are among the largest and most comprehensive in North America. As of May 2015, there were 450,428 records for Columbia’s Russian, Eurasian & East European vernacular-language holdings in WorldCat. The

Slavic and East European vernacular-language holdings Cornell University Library in all formats presently number 247,923 records. Cornell actively collects in seventeen languages of Eastern Europe; Columbia, twenty-eight, including languages of the Caucasus, Central Asia, and Mongolia. Both libraries also collect materials produced in diaspora.

This year alone, 2CUL added some 13,996 titles via approval vendors, with materials spanning diverse subject areas in the humanities and social sciences.

The acquisitions and cataloging professionals of Cornell and Columbia libraries take great pride in their contributions to the national research resource base, serving present and future generations of students and scholars from across the country and around the world.

Archival Collections

Cornell added once again to its holdings of publications from the shortlived 1919 Hungarian Soviet Republic or Republic of Councils, (*Tanácsköztársaság*) which lasted from March 21 to August 6 of that year. After ousting the Hungarian Democratic Republic of 1918 led by Mihály Károlyi the nascent Soviet Republic was crushed by the Romanian army which occupied Budapest. Publications issued by the 1919 Communist government were destroyed at the time of the Romanian Army occupation and subsequent Horthy government through 1945. After the Communist regime seized power in 1948 it also destroyed and suppressed documents from the time that they found offensive or not conforming with current Stalinist dogma. Many of the leaders of the *Tanácsköztársaság* were executed in the mass purges of 1938 in the USSR. All these publications are scarce, and rarely found in libraries outside of Hungary. The collection is catalogued as: Magyarországi Tanácsköztársaság Archive, #8053. Division of Rare and Manuscript Collections, Cornell University Library.

The Bakhmeteff Archive has received the personal papers (correspondence, writings and printed materials) of the writer Boris Nosik (15 linear feet); additions to the Vladimir Vereshchagin Papers, including correspondence, drawings, writings, and photographs, including two of the Imperial family (two linear feet); additions to the papers of Barbara and Joel Halpern relating to the Serbian Census, as well as various articles and printed materials on Bosnia and Serbia (one linear foot).

Antiquarian Monograph & Serial Purchases

Using Tsinghua Funds, Cornell was able to obtain the following rare serial runs on microfilm: *Carigradski glasnik* = *Le Messenger de Constantinople* = *Tzarigradski glasnik* (1895-1904) and *Beogradske novine* (1915-1918).

Columbia's Avery Architectural & Fine Arts Library added to its growing holdings of Baltic and East Central European modernist publications. Thirteen Latvian, Lithuanian, or Estonian titles (including six serials), and sixteen Hungarian titles were purchased. The vast majority are unique additions to WorldCat, or are held by only one or two other libraries in North America. Among the Baltic titles are *Elegiski moment* [Elegiac Moment] (Riga, 1925); and *Karavane* [Caravan](Riga [1920]), both illustrated by Niklāvs Strunke (1894-1966), one of the major artists

of the Latvian avant-garde; and the satirical journals *Hallo!* (Riga, 1927-1928), and *Ho-Ho* (Riga, 1922-1924) containing graphics and articles by prominent Latvian modernist artists and writers. Other titles include works illustrated with linocuts by the Hungarian architect, writer, graphic artist, ethnologist, publisher and politician Károly Kós (1883-1977); an exhibition catalogue (Budapest, 1919) of art seized by the Hungarian Soviets from private collectors during the abortive revolution of 1919; the Hungarian Dadaist Ödön Palasovszky's (1899-1980) *Reorganizacio* [Reorganization] (Budapest, 1924) a collection of poems and declarations; and *Világanyám: Versek* [My World-Mother: Poems] by the avant-garde poet, novelist and artist Lajos Kassák (1887-1967) published in 1921 in Vienna during his exile from Hungary. This latter title is characterized by the use of *képarchitektúra* (pictorial architecture), in which words and images hold equal compositional value in the page design.

Interesting Czech antiquarian acquisitions included collection of poems by Bretislav Mencák (1903-1981), *Romance počestného clowna* [Romance of an Honorable Clown] ([Prague], 1929).



Illustration to *Romance počestného clowna* by Augustin Tschinkel (1905-1983)

Polish acquisitions included two one-act plays by the noted Futurist artist, poet, and playwright Tytus Czyżewski (1880-1945) *Osiol I słońce w metamorfozie* [Donkey & the Sun in Metamorphosis] (Kraków, 1922), and Stanisław Przybyszewski (1868-1927) *Matka: Dramat w IV aktach* [Mother: A drama in 4 acts](Lwów & Warszawa, 1903).

Another unusual acquisition was a five-volume limited edition of the collected works of the polymath Jan Potocki's (1761-1815) (Louvain-Paris, 2004-2006). This set comes from an edition of only fifteen printed on special paper for Count Marek Potocki, a descendant.

Gifts

Dr. James Niessen of Rutgers University provided two boxes of Hungarian antiquarian titles lacking in Columbia's rich holdings.

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In May the Columbia library was contacted by Marcella Matthaei, the daughter of the late Gay Humphrey Matthaei, an author, film producer, interior designer, and 1954 graduate of the School of International Affairs and the Russian Institute. At Mt. Holyoke, Gay graduated Phi Beta Kappa, Magna Cum Laude, and was a student of cultural historian Peter Viereck.

Following her mother's death in 2010, Marcella discovered a cache of materials connected with Gay's travel to the Soviet Union in August and early September of 1954. The collection includes miscellaneous documents and clippings pertaining to the trip, some seventy still photographic prints depicting Soviet street life, and, remarkably, reels of 16mm film shot during her journey. This gift, coming from "out of the blue," has opened up an interesting chapter in the historical narrative of the Russian (now Harriman) Institute. Marcella Matthaei also put the Libraries in touch with Francis Randall, living on Riverside Drive, and who subsequently donated his set of the films, along with a copy of his travel diary that has proven invaluable in situating the locations and subjects encountered in the films. The *Gay Humphrey Matthaei and Francis B. Randall collection of photographs, films and clippings* is now available in the Rare Book & Manuscript Library under the call number MS#1773. The Libraries will seek to create a digital copy of the films in the near future, to better facilitate use by researchers.

Background

Inspired by the post-Stalin "opening" of the USSR to Americans, in the spring of 1954, encouraged by their professors Mosely, Robinson, and Hazard, eight Institute students wrote to request visas (their affiliation with the Institute, and their knowledge of the language was not mentioned). Four were contacted over the summer that their visas were approved—Gay Humphrey, Ted Curran, Jeri Lidsky, and Francis B. Randall. (Two of the original eight applicants—Peter Juviler and George Sherman—traveled to Russia the following year). Their month-long journey was notable, as the first Russian-speaking graduate student group to visit the

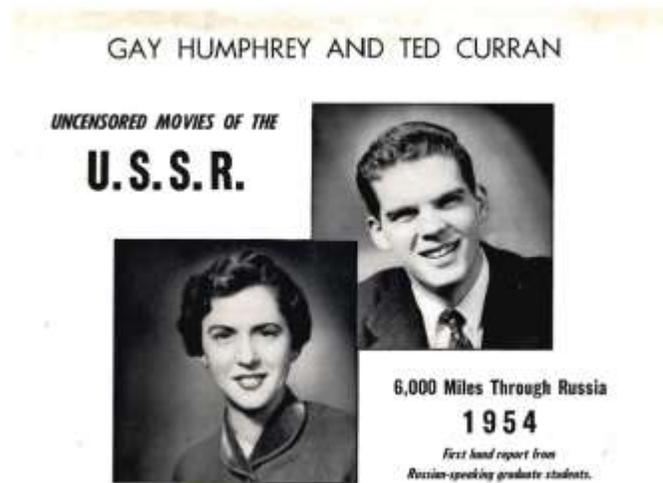


At Idlewild; l. to r., Ted Curran, Gay Humphrey, Jeri Lidsky, and Francis Randall.

USSR after the death of Stalin. Yet what made it particularly noteworthy was the relative freedom with which they interacted with, and filmed Soviet citizens. Although photography was carefully controlled in the USSR, they were allowed more or less unfettered access to film what they chose, save for military and other secure installations (broadly defined!). Supplied with a movie camera and 4,000 feet of 16mm film by CBS, and a still camera and Kodacolor film by Kodak, they captured for Americans a new and unusual perspective on Soviet daily life. In the words of Francis Randall, "We saw cities that only one other American has seen in the last 10 years... We were four holes in the Iron Curtain."

During their 6,000-mile journey, not every official they encountered got the memo that they were allowed to film, and they were arrested (and fairly quickly released) some sixteen times during their sweep through Moscow, Samarkand, Tashkent, Tbilisi, and Leningrad. Only a handful of reels were confiscated (in Uzbekistan); the rest of the unexposed movie films made it back to the USA. Unfortunately, the unprocessed Kodachrome was confiscated from Ms. Lidsky before her flight out (a hair-raising travel story described in her memoirs), and returned later, poorly processed in sepia by the Soviets.

Following their return, the students became celebrities, with Ms. Humphrey appearing with Eric Sevareid on CBS's "The American Week," and articles in *The New York Times*, *Ladies' Home Journal*, and other publications. Ms. Humphrey and Mr. Curran went on the lecture circuit, with well-received presentations at many universities throughout the country.



Flyer produced by the National Concert & Artists Association, the organization that marketed the post-trip lectures by Gay Humphrey and Ted Curran.



Photo prints from Gay Humphrey Matthaei's collection.

All four participants went on to distinguished careers. Mr. Randall became a professor of history at Sarah Lawrence, where he taught from 1961 until his retirement in 2002. His January 1955 article from the *Amherst Alumni News* relates some of their experiences. Mr. Curran embarked on a Foreign Service career, and in a November 8, 1998 oral history interview conducted by Charles Stuart Kennedy for the Association for Diplomatic Studies and Training, Foreign Affairs Oral History Project Information Series, he discusses events surrounding the trip. Soon after her return from the USSR, Ms. Lidsky married Austin Laber, and in 1978 she became one of the founders and Executive Director of the human rights group Helsinki Watch. Columbia holds Ms. Laber's papers as a series within the Helsinki Watch records. Accounts of the trip appear in her memoir *The Courage of Strangers* (New York: Public Affairs, 2002), pp. 35-45. Ms. Humphrey married Konrad Henry Matthaei, in 1956. She went on to write prize-winning books about the Lakota Sioux, and produced and directed a film "Where Time is a River," that was selected for inclusion in the MoMA Archive of Films. The Matthaei Family was the subject of an extensive photo shoot by Diane Arbus, subsequently donated to Mount Holyoke, where Gay was a Trustee.

Intrigued by their Russian Institute colleagues' accounts of their trip, Peter Juviler and George Sherman appealed to Khrushchev, and in late 1954 they, too, were granted visas, albeit for two weeks, with travel costs borne by the Ford Foundation. In late March 1955 they traveled to Moscow, Leningrad and Kiev. Like their colleagues from the August 1954 trip, Juviler and Sherman sought to document their journey, and secured a contract for a series of articles, with photographs, for *The Observer* in London. They, too, went on to distinguished careers in academia and journalism, respectively.



The first in a series of articles by George Sherman (l.) & Peter Juviler (r.), from the Gay Matthaei collection.

I am very grateful to Marcella Matthaehi and Professor Francis Randall for their gifts to the Columbia University Libraries, and for introducing me to this fascinating episode in the history of Russian studies on this campus.

New Electronic Resources

Since the spring, Cornell and Columbia affiliates have gained access to the full, searchable backfiles of several new electronic databases.

Cornell & Columbia: *Russkaia literatura*, a journal of literary criticism published since 1958 by Pushkinskii Dom.

Cornell link: <https://catalog.library.cornell.edu/cgi-bin/Pwebrecon.cgi?BBID=5382726&DB=local>

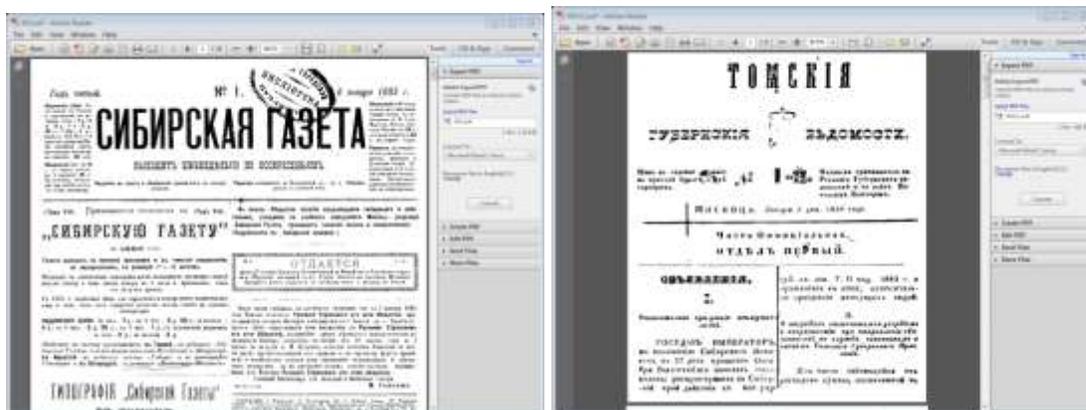
Columbia link: <https://clio.columbia.edu/catalog/4970139>

Cornell: E-book versions of all volumes in the series: *Dostoevskii: Materialy i issledovaniia* (1974-). <https://catalog.library.cornell.edu/cgi-bin/Pwebrecon.cgi?BBID=5373221&DB=local>

Both Columbia and Cornell will soon have access to the complete 33-issue digital file of the iconic journal *LEF* (1923-25) and *Novyi Lef* (1927-29). At press time, the respective URLs for these resources are not yet available, but should be in the next several weeks.

Useful Websites

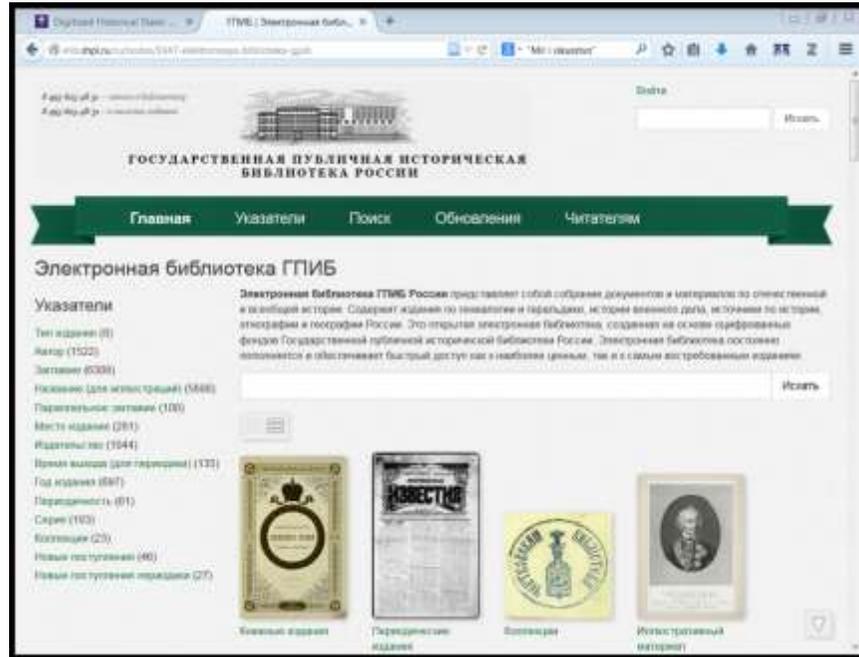
Elektronnaia Sibir' <http://elib.ngonb.ru/jspui/> is a project to digitize serial and monographic publications produced in Siberia. The serial runs are particularly impressive. For example, below are some sample screenshots of *Sibirskaiia gazeta* from January 1885; and *Tomskiiia gubernskiiia vedomosti* from 1846!



gubernskiiia vedomosti from 1846! There are more than 20,000 pdfs associated with the site, which covers the Soviet period as well. This is an excellent source for hard-to-find Russian Siberian titles.

Russian State Historical Library (GPIB) <http://elib.shpl.ru/ru/nodes/9347-elektronnaya-biblioteka-gpiib> (see the screenshot, below) boasts a large collection of digitized books and

serials, including 132 Russian émigré newspapers from around the world, ca. 1910-ca. 1940, and 145 Futurist books, among other collections.



Monoskop <http://monoskop.org/Countries> describes itself as “a wiki for collaborative studies of the arts, media and humanities.” An interesting feature (at least for me) is the way it gathers information and relevant literature on the arts (very broadly) by country, as depicted in the screenshot for ‘Croatia,’ below.



Eternal Memory

Columbia and the entire Slavic & Eurasian studies field lost a beloved colleague this past spring with the death of Catharine Theimer Nepomnyashchy. Cathy's many accomplishments are too numerous to recount here, and are well summarized in the obituary prepared by the Harriman Institute <http://harriman.columbia.edu/news/remembering-catharine-theimer-nepomnyashchy-1951-2015> which she ably led from 2001-2009. Her memorial service will be held on Friday, October 2 at 2:00 p.m., in the James Memorial Chapel at Union Theological Seminary (Broadway at 121st St.).

On a personal note, Cathy was a great friend and enthusiastic colleague, and my presence on the Columbia campus today is due in large measure to her active recruitment and encouragement. Her devotion to libraries and the printed word was profound. I will be forever grateful to Cathy.

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I plan to visit Ithaca in October, 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