



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

***Resources.*** No. 20, Winter/Spring 2020

Dear Colleagues:

Although I assiduously avoid marking my *own* birthdays, when it comes to these remarkable collections that I have the great good fortune to curate, I *love* to trumpet the institutional mileposts we zoom past in the course of an academic year. By my reckoning, this is the 114<sup>th</sup> year of [Columbia](#)'s active collecting of Slavic, Eurasian & East European materials, and [Cornell University Library](#)'s 136th! It has been 74 years since the founders of Columbia's Russian Institute established the full-time position of Slavic Librarian, hiring the eminent antiquarian bookman Simeon J. Bolan (1896-1972).<sup>1</sup> And finally, this coming September will mark a decade of the Columbia-Cornell "2CUL" collaborative relationship.

This partnership has been transformative, particularly in the expansion of available materials to students and scholars. By way of example: of the 43,290 items in the Russian language by Columbia and Cornell since 2010, only 1,383 were duplicates! The past ten years have seen many significant antiquarian purchases, gifts, and e-resources added as well. (Indeed, I am in the process of compiling all of my past *Newsnotes* into one anniversary document—it currently runs over 146 single-spaced pages!).

In uncertain times, it is reassuring that these two great academic institutions have maintained and redoubled their efforts to serve their age-old role of collectors, organizers, purveyors, and preservers of the human record of all mankind—not just these who speak and read English—and in all subjects and fields—not just those that are "trending" or "hot". I am thankful that the administrations of these two institutions, with all the challenges they face, have committed themselves to building truly global collections. As always, I encourage you to exploit these tremendous resources in your study and research.

I will be in Ithaca on February 6-7. Hopefully I will see some of you then!

With all best wishes for a healthy and successful 2020.

*Rob Davis*

### **Current Collecting**

As noted in the last issue, sharing an offsite storage facility with NYPL, Princeton, and now Harvard allows for significantly enhanced and streamlined collection development activity with

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<sup>1</sup> On Bolan, see: Irina Tarsis. "Cultural Record Keepers: Simeon J. Bolan, Dealer in Russian Books," *Libraries & the Cultural Record*, 42(2): 192-195 (2007).

these institutions. Collectively, I can think of no more formidable institutional collectors in the country in the Slavic and East European area. Once Harvard's catalogue is visible in CLIO, Columbia affiliates will be able to request materials directly from the Harvard Depository, in addition to ReCAP. Although, via BorrowDirect we already have access to Harvard holdings (as do our Cornell colleagues), Harvard's full integration will save an additional step in the request process.

### Gifts



- Columbia received a significant group of publications documenting the Czech Legion in Russia, donated by Kent McKeever, the recently-retired Director of Columbia's Arthur Diamond Law Library. The collection includes a number of heavily-illustrated titles: *Památce pětiletého výročí bitvy u Zborova : 2 VII 1917-1922* [In Memory of the fifth anniversary of the battle of Zborov] (Praha, 1922), shown above; *K vítězné svobodě, 1914-1918-1928* [Towards securing freedom] (Praha, 1928); *Návrat československých legií kolem světa do vlasti* [The Return of Czech Legionnaires to the homeland] (Praha, 1921); and *Československé legie v Rusku: malířské dokumenty* [Czechoslovak Legions in Russia: documentary paintings] (Praha, 1922).
- Columbia received some 162 titles of Polonica from the library of the historian, writer and translator Metchie Jozef Edward Budka (1917-1995). He received his PhD in Slavic languages & literatures from Harvard, and received the Mieczyslaw Haiman Award from the Polish Historical Association in 1979. He was the translator and editor of *Under their vine and fig tree: travels through America in 1797-1799, 1805 with some further account of life in New Jersey* by Julian Ursyn Niemcewicz (Elizabeth, NJ, 1965), and editor of *Autograph letters of Thaddeus Kosciuszko in the American Revolution: as well as those by and about him connected with that event found in the Collections of The Polish Museum of America and published with the aid of The Legion of Young Polish Women as part of The Bicentennial Publications* (Chicago, 1977). An annual book award was established in his name by the Kosciuszko Foundation here in New York.
- Columbia, and Cornell received fifty Nabokov-related titles from the collection of the late Professor Stephen Jay Parker (1939-2016), a professor of Russian literature at the University of Kansas, one of the world's preeminent experts on Vladimir Nabokov, with whom he studied at Cornell as both an undergraduate and graduate student. Representing duplicates from his gift to the University of Michigan, the works selected represent

additions to the holdings of the ReCAP partners, as well as second copies of often-requested titles.

- Adam Drozdek, Associate Professor of Computer Science at Duquesne University donated additional titles in Polish on philosophy and linguistics to Columbia.

### Antiquarian Purchases

With generous assistance from the Primary Resources Fund, **Columbia** acquired four important examples of Eastern European modernism from three distinct traditions: Hungarian, Georgian, Polish, and Czech.



From l. to r.: Szabad írás, Merreksi, Almanach Nowej Sztuki F24, and Slavík svatého Bonaventury.

- *Szabad írás: Irodalmi és művészeti kritikai beszámoló* [Free writing. Critical review of literature and art] (Budapest, 1934), No. 1 (Feb. 1934 and No. 2 (May 1934), all published. A leftist magazine, with a linocut by Lajos S. Szönyi (shown above), the second number was banned by the authorities and most copies were destroyed. No other copies in WorldCat.
- Alio Bumerangi (pseud. of A. Mirtskhulava), *Merreksi: Ieksebi* [Merreksi: poems] (Tbilisi, [1924]). With original wrappers by David Kutatladze, an artist heavily influenced by Ilia Zdanevich (whose work was the subject of a recent Chang Octagon show, and two Columbia-faculty organized international conferences—one held at Columbia and the other at the Bibliothèque Nationale de Paris). No copies in WorldCat.
- *Almanach Nowej Sztuki F24* [Almanac of new art F24] (Warszawa, 1924), with Constructivist wrappers and typography by Mieczysław Szczuka. This first issue, found in no other collection in WorldCat, includes futurist texts by Bruno Jasienski, Alexandr Wat, Anatol Stern, Stefan Gacki, Mieczyslaw Braun and Stanislaw Brucz.
- Josef Vachal's *Slavík svatého Bonaventury* [The Nightingale of St. Bonaventure] (Praha, 1910), no. 163 in an edition of 250 copies, with four full-page woodcut illustrations, 15 vignettes, five headpieces and five Gothic initials all designed and printed by Josef Vachal, a founder of the Sursum Art Association.



Columbia also acquired three first editions (covers shown above) of works by the poet, musician, essayist and philosopher Tadeusz Bochenki, whose career began in Lublin in 1918, where he became associated with the members of the avant-garde Reflektor group. They are: *Olga i inne nowele* [Olga, and other short stories] (Cieszyn, 1923); *Przekład Hezjodowej Tarczy Heraklesa* [Translation of Hesiod's Shield of Heracles](Cieszyn, 1924) with wrappers designed by Krakow artist Ludwik Leszko; and *Rzeźbiarz* [The Sculptor] (Cieszyn, 1922) in wrappers designed by Bohdan Kelles-Krausze, a prolific architect and painter. None of these works are in American libraries, save for a single copy of *Rzeźbiarz* at Wayne State.

Also notable among Polish antiquarian purchases is Dr. Feliks Burdecki's *Życie Maszyn* [Machine life](Lwów & Warszawa, 1934), with wrappers that are an outstanding example of Polish photomontage (below).



The Human Sexuality Collection at **Cornell's** Rare Book & Manuscript Library acquired:

- Frantisek Kratochvíl's *V Dolní sněmovna* [In the Lower house] (Praha, 1923). A humorous look at the erotic underworld of inter-war Prague;
- Three illustrated Czech translations of risqué novels by Paul Morand: (*Zavřeno celou noc!* [Closed all night!] and his *Otevřeno celou noc* [Open all night] (both Praha, 1925), and Camille Lemonnier's *Adam a Eva* [Adam and Eve] (Praha, 1925). All three have color lithographic wrappers by the artist Václav Mašek.

- Lucius Apuleius, *Amor a Psyche* [Cupid and Psyche] (Praha, 1926), with graphic design by Karel Teige, a founder of the Devetstil artist's movement in inter-war Czechoslovakia.
- Josef Knap's *Žlutnou stráně: povídka z pobřeží*. [Yellow hillside: Short story from the coast] (Plzeň, 1929), and Josef Sedláček. *Incognito: (pokradmo): peprné verše na všechny stavy*. [Incognito: (Stealthily): Peppery verses of all types] (Plzeň, 1930), both illustrated by Josef Hodek and his wife, the artist and illustrator Marie Hodková. In the same period, Hodek created several other erotic-themed artists' books, several of which were acquired for Cornell in 2017 and 2018.
- *Závišova píseň milostná* [Záviš's love song] (Ostrava, 1931), a reworking of a poem about lust by a 14<sup>th</sup> century theologian, illustrated by erotic lithographs by Bohumil Krs.
- Illustrated limited edition artists books by: Jan Neruda, *Žena: legenda indická* [Women: An indian legend] (Tabor, 1934), with a woodcut and wrappers by Jaro Šedivý; Jindřich Teuchner, *Hudba vrcholného léta* [High summer music] (Praha, 1935) with full-page engravings by Václav Mašek, the first signed; Pravoslav Kotík, *Na motiv ženy* [On the theme of women] (Kladno, 1936), copy 118 of 150, with erotic renderings by a founder of the Dada-esque group *Ho-Ho-Ko-Ko*, with the sculptor Karel Kotrba; Jaromír John's (pseudonym of Bohumil Markalous) *Olivový olej* [Olive oil] (Plzeň, 1935), copy 125 of 170 of a private press book illustrated by Josef Hodek; Ivan Olbracht, translator and transcriber, *Píseň písní* [Song of Songs] (Praha, 1941), illustrated with erotic works by the painter, graphic artist and stage designer František Tichý. Since illustrated erotica was forbidden during the Nazi occupation, this last volume was published under the guise of a biblical theme, and labeled "not for sale".
- A collection of novels by Lída Merlínová (e.g. Pecháčková), considered to be the author of the first lesbian novel published in Czech, *Vyhnaní lásky* [Exiles of love] (Praha, 1929). Her other titles acquired are *Lásky nevyslyšené* [Unanswered loves] (Praha, 1934), *Manžel Lydie Ivanovny: román lékařky* [Lydia Ivanovna's husband: a novel of a female doctor] (Praha, 1935), *Dobrodruzi sexu* [Adventurers of sex], vols. I and II (Praha, [1937]), and *Marie a Marta na universitě* [Marie and Martha at the university] (Praha, [1937]).
- Antonin Melka, *Homosexualita: studie morální* [Homosexuality: a moral study]. (Olomouc, 1933), considered to be the second Czech monograph on homosexuality, issued nine years after a largely tolerant and supportive work by František Jelínek.
- A homoerotic bibliophile series, published by Josef Hladký in conjunction with the Czech Decadent writer Jiří Karásek ze Lvovic, and including the novels *Dionysos s růží* [Dionysus with roses] by Václav Krška, and George Duhamel's *Deux hommes*. (V Hranicích, 1933), in volumes designed by Jaroslav Šváb, and Josef Konůpek..
- *A Collection of Advertising Leaflets for Books on Subjects of Gender and Sexuality* (Praha, ca. 1930-1940) published by František Kodým whose press issued both "self-help" and light erotica. Kodým's press was closed by the communist authorities in 1949.



**Columbia**'s Avery Classics Library acquired a pigment print photograph album by photographer Karel Stoklas (1897-1956), depicting scenes of illuminated modernist buildings at the Pardubice Exhibition of 1931 (shown above, and below). This large-format album consists of two full-sheet silver print preliminaries, followed by 33 mounted pigment print photographs. When planning for the *Výstava tělesné výchovy a sportu* [Exhibition of physical education and sport], eight architects submitted proposals, and in 1927, the dramatic constructivist proposal by the architect Karel Řepa (a student of Jože Plečnik at the Academy of Arts, Architecture and Design in Prague, UMRUM). The last of the structures depicted was demolished in 1970. This album, utilizing the time-consuming and expensive pigment print process, was commissioned by the Board of Directors of the Pardubice Electric Company [PEC], which had become a major stakeholder in the 1931 Exhibition.



### Archival Collections

Columbia's Bakhmeteff Archives recently processed, or has upgraded the finding aids for the following collections:

*Leonide Massine Papers, 1914-1963.* The bulk of the collection consists of letters to the Russian ballet dancer and choreographer from other prominent dancers, composers, writers and artists, such as Alexandre Benois, Naum Gabo, Vernon Duke (Dukelsky), Wassily Kandinsky, Serge Lifar, Nikolai Minskii, Evgenii Zamiatin and others. The collection also includes Massine's lecture, notes for various ballet productions, documents and financial matters.

[https://findingaids.library.columbia.edu/ead/nnc-rb/ldpd\\_12954458](https://findingaids.library.columbia.edu/ead/nnc-rb/ldpd_12954458)

*Harriman Institute Oral History Collection* documents the history of the Institute, the changes in its intellectual currents over seventy years, and the state of academic study and policy around Russia. The collection-level record can be seen [here](#). All interview-level records are now in [CLIO](#) and the [Oral History Portal](#). All interviews are in the stacks and requestable in the RBML reading room. Digital audio is available in the reading room with two business-days notice.

*Serge Hollerbach papers, 1914-2019* consist of correspondence, photographs, sketchbooks and artworks, writings, notebooks, biographical materials, documents related to the life and career of Serge Hollerbach, Russian émigré artist, critic and author. This collection complements the extensive print collections on Hollerbach at the NYPL.

[https://findingaids.library.columbia.edu/ead/nnc-rb/ldpd\\_7227044](https://findingaids.library.columbia.edu/ead/nnc-rb/ldpd_7227044)

*Ol'ga Ivanovna Subbotina Papers, 1846-1954* include correspondence, documents, diaries and notebooks, photographs, printed materials and memorabilia of Subbotina (or Soubbotine, 1886-1963), her grandmother, Mariia Sergeevna Benckendorff, and her sister, Elizaveta Ivanovna Taube (Mrs. Harold Roberts). The correspondence includes letters and telegrams of Aleksandra Fedorovna, Empress of Russia. The letters of Mariia Benckendorff's son, Vasilii Dolgorukov, provide information about the Imperial family in 1916-1918.

[https://findingaids.library.columbia.edu/ead/nnc-rb/ldpd\\_4078104](https://findingaids.library.columbia.edu/ead/nnc-rb/ldpd_4078104)

*Russian Expeditionary Forces in France and Macedonia Records, 1914-1930* now has an encoded finding aid. [https://findingaids.library.columbia.edu/ead/nnc-rb/ldpd\\_4078000](https://findingaids.library.columbia.edu/ead/nnc-rb/ldpd_4078000)

## Digitization Projects

One of the many un-accessioned “hidden collections” that have emerged from the stacks in recent years is a large number—nearly 700 titles—of early post-Soviet newspapers. Though the origins of this collection are a bit murky today, it appears to have been a conscious project likely initiated by a combination of Evgenii Veniaminovich Beshenkovsky (one of my predecessors in this position), and the late Professor Edward Allworth, given the large number of non-Russian titles in the mix. Likely they were acquired by wandering grad students and faculty *in situ*, and brought back to safe haven on Morningside Heights.

Essentially this is a “samples” collection of often short-lived titles, from a variety of perspectives—anarchist, monarchist, Stalinist, nationalist—and every political gradation in between. This presented many practical challenges. First, because the material is on newsprint, preservation is an immediate concern. So was processing, as very few of these titles appear in WorldCat.

Tackling this collection began with two successful grant applications (in partnership with my Widener colleagues at Harvard) to the Center for Research Libraries (CRL) in Chicago, which funded microfilming and cataloging for more than 60 titles. This fall, I was contemplating yet a third grant application, when I was contacted by Professor Martha Brill Olcott of Michigan State University, who has secured support to create a digital “Living Archive on the Collapse of the USSR and Beyond” documenting the years immediately preceding and following the collapse of the USSR.

This *digital* archive will present material from this period, offering exhibits with narrative and bibliographic support, all in searchable formats, and use Story Maps and Omeka S, allowing users to access materials by reading through the main project narrative, or by reading the various republic and country narratives. In the words of her [initial project presentation](#) to the Central Eurasian Studies Society conference in October 2019:

“This archive is intended to be a “living” document, adding materials from project members, their home institutions, materials harvested from the internet, personal archives of event participants, including private citizens identified through crowdsourcing in English and Russian, and by outreach to libraries in the U.S. and in the region.”

### Internet Resources

Two interesting projects that have come to my attention this semester are:

**Princeton** has digitized 3,827 issues of the interwar Parisian émigré newspaper *Vozrozhdenie*, covering the period June 1925-June 1939. The [site](#) is easy to use, with excellent quality scans.

My colleague Dr. Brendan Nieubuurt of the **University of Michigan** Library recently announced the availability of a new digital collection of materials held by the Mikhail Bulgakov Literary-Memorial Museum in Kyiv. The URL for the [Mikhail Bulgakov Digital Collection](#) may be reached by clicking [here](#). The project is the work of Grace Mahoney, a PhD candidate in the University of Michigan's Slavic Languages & Literatures department, who recently interned at the Museum.

“The open access resource publishes the Museum's archive of personal photographs and letters, along with other objects relating to Bulgakov and the members of his family. Since Bulgakov's Kyiv museum is much lesser known than its Moscow counterparts, for many interested parties the primary sources in this collection will be entirely new.”

### A Bit of History

The digitization of such basic campus resources as the *Columbia Daily Spectator*, and the *Cornell Daily Sun* make forays into the history of Slavic and East European studies at these two august institutions easy! As I come across such documentation of our collections' histories, I like to make a few more widely known. Herewith, a few such random “clippings” documenting the longstanding presence of Slavic, Eurasian & East European studies in Ithaca and Morningside Heights.

*“Prof. H.W. Van Loon '05 of the Department of History, will deliver an illustrated lecture on the ‘Development of the Slavic States in the Balkans and Their Neighbors, Rumanian, Greece and Turkey,’ in Goldwin Smith A at 11 a.m. today.”*

*Cornell Daily Sun*, 36(20): 19 Oct. 1915 (above). Hendrik Willem van Loon (1882-1944), a 1905 graduate of Cornell, was an Associated Press correspondent in Russia during the 1905 Revolution, and lectured at the university from 1915-1917. He became a U.S. citizen in 1919.

*“Dr. Panaretoff, of Bulgarian in an interesting and exhaustive [sic] lecture on Panslavism yesterday devoted most of his discourse to an exposition of the rise and progress of the movement to reunite all the Slavic races...”*

*Columbia Daily Spectator*, 67(51): 20 Nov. 1903 (above). Stefan Panaretov (1853-1931) was a Bulgarian diplomat and educator with long ties to the U.S., having graduated from the American-funded Roberts College in Constantinople, and marrying (in 1892) Lydia Gile, a North Andover, MA graduate of Holyoke College.

*“To supplement ist courses on the Russian language and Russian civilization, Cornell is offering for the first time this fall a course in Polish and one on Old Church Slavic, under the newly-created Department of Slavic Languages... one of the few in American universities... Two new instructors, Charles Malamuth and Peter Pertzoff, both native Russians, have been added to the staff.”*

*Cornell Daily Sun*, 62(3) 29 Sept. 1942 (above). Although many universities established organized departments for Slavic studies after World War II—most especially after the launch of Sputnik in 1957—Cornell was well ahead of the curb, as this article suggests.

I first encountered Peter Pertzoff (1908-1967) when researching my *Slavic and Baltic Library Resources at The New York Public Library: A First History and Practical Guide* (New York & Los Angeles, 1994). A graduate of Harvard and Columbia’s School of Library Service, he subsequently became best known as a distinguished translator of Nabokov’s Russian stories—collaborating with Nabokov himself. (See Maxim Shrayer’s “Nabokov: Letters to the American Translator,” *Agni*, 50(1999): 128-145.) Charles Malamuth (1899-1965) was a well-known Slavic linguist and translator who taught at Berkeley during the 1920s, before working with the journalist Eugene Lyons (whose archives are at the Hoover Institution) during his days as Moscow Bureau Chief of United Press, joining Lyons for his interview with Stalin in 1930. Born in Łodz, Malamuth translated into English works by Valentin Kataev, Evgeny Petrov, and Boris Pilnyak. He was also wed to (and later divorced from) Joan London, daughter of Jack!

*“Prof. Mark [sic] Szeftel, chairman of the Russian studies committee, has announced that the expansion of the Russian and Slavic studies program... will be continued during the spring academic term. The curriculum of this department now includes Russian literature, Slavic History and Russian literature. It will be further broadened by the addition of a new course in Soviet Economics.”*

*Cornell Daily Sun*, 66(77): 4 Jan. 1949 (above). The historian of Russia Marc M. Szeftel (1902-1985) was a Cornell contemporary and colleague of Nabokov, and is thought to be a prototype for the character of Prof. Timofey Pnin. He taught at Cornell from 1945-1962.