



Newsnotes: 2CUL Russian, Eurasian & East European Studies

Resources. No. 9, Fall 2014

Dear Colleagues:

Welcome back! As we commence our fourth year of “2CUL” I thought I would provide an update as to how we closed out the old Fiscal Year (ending June 30), and the kinds of new resources on tap for the fall semester.

New Imprints

This was a banner year for the acquisition of new (2013-2014) imprints, with some 15,054 Slavic and East European vernacular titles obtained from our regular network of some seventeen in-country vendors between July 1, 2013 and June 30, 2014.

Purchases of Collections & Antiquarian Titles

At the end of August, Columbia purchased a large portion of the personal library of Nobel prize-winning poet **Joseph Brodsky**. Comprising more than 1,300 volumes from the shelves of his former residence in Brooklyn Heights, the collection includes works presented to Brodsky by contemporaries, as well as volumes reflecting his interest in American literature—for example, Russian translations of the poet Robert Frost—as well as examples of *tamizdat* and publications from the early years of *glasnost*.

This acquisition complements the **Loseff-Brodsky** book and archival collection purchased last spring for the Rare Book & Manuscript Library. It is expected that additional manuscript and archival acquisitions from the Brodsky Estate will be made in the near future. The book collection will be processed over the course of the next two semesters.



Part of the collection acquired by Columbia, prior to packing, in Brodsky's Pierrepont Street, Brooklyn home.

Cornell's Kroch Library acquired a rare pamphlet concerning the 1924 Russian science fiction flick "**Aelita: Queen of Mars**," a silent film directed by filmmaker Iakov Protazanov: *Aelita: kino-lenta na temu romana A.N. Tolstogo*. (Moskva, [1924]). This 47-page work is heavily

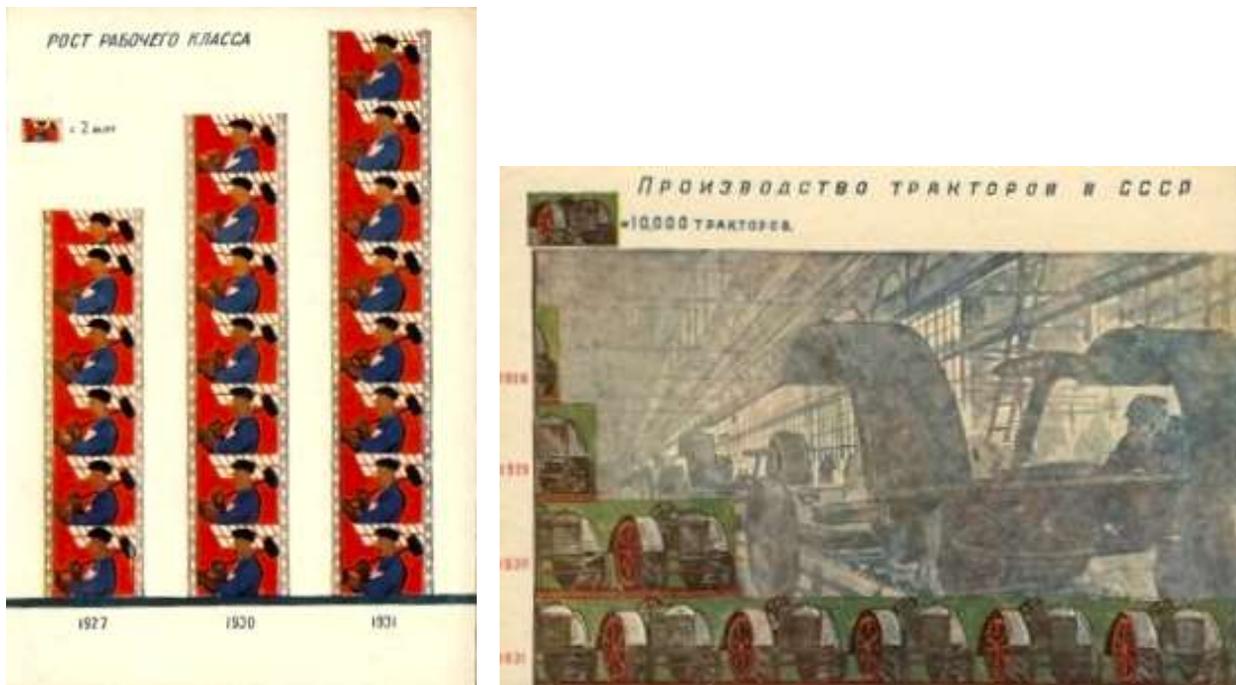


Queen Aelita!

illustrated, and depicts aspects of the production, including the costume and set designs by avant-garde artist Aleksandra Ekster (Exter). Only four copies are listed in Worldcat: at the Getty, Harvard, USC, and the Bayerische Staatsbibliothek. Cornell also acquired an example of contemporary **sheet music** with an illustrated cover likely influenced by Aelita's futuristic aesthetic.

Cornell and Columbia are both members of the venerable Center for Research Libraries (CRL) in Chicago, a circulating collection of materials acquired through collaboration with other academic and public libraries. This year, both libraries contributed to the purchase of two *Gubernskie vedomosti*, further expanding the range of Russian imperial districts available in North American research libraries. The *Kurskie gubernskie vedomosti* (1838-1918) was obtained on 33 microfilm reels, and the *Kaliszskie gubernskie vedomosti* (1867-1914) on 26 reels. These extensive (read: *expensive!*) runs are available for loan to CRL member patrons.

You may recall that last year Columbia acquired a large collection of illustrated imperial and **early Soviet sheet music**. The collection was augmented by the purchase of twelve additional items at the New York Antiquarian Bookfair. This collection resides in the Rare Book & Manuscript Library. At the same bookfair, the Avery Classics Library and the 2CUL librarian pooled resources to acquire a set of **seventy(!) postcards** from the 1930s titled *Dognat' i peregnat* [Overtake and Surpass] depicting increases in Soviet productivity in various industries—from chemicals to canned goods!



Examples from the collection of postcards: Growth of the working class, 1927-31 (left), and tractor production in the USSR. Images courtesy of the dealer, !Productive Arts!

Columbia purchased a collection of eight-two miscellaneous items connected with the 2013-2014 **EuroMaidan** protests, including newspapers, leaflets, postcards, booklets, a flag, banners, calendars, a CD, buttons and magnets. Columbia also purchased seventy-six items of ephemera pertaining to the 2014 **Ukrainian Presidential elections**.

Former Avery Classics librarian Carolyn Yerkes (now teaching at Princeton) and the 2CUL librarian acquired *Studijní cesta do Paříže* [Scrapbook of a Study Trip to Paris]. This remarkable item dates from 1937, and was prepared by noted Czech architects and designers by **Karel Lodr** and **Bohumil Kříž**. Lodr was known for his modernist photomontages, and this is an outstanding example.



Cover (left), and section on Le Corbusier.



Studijní cesta do Paříže on prominent display at the Avery's "new acquisitions" show in the Spring of 2014

Gifts

The death of Professor Emeritus **Robert Lamont Belknap** this past spring was a great personal tragedy for many of us, and a great loss to the Slavic studies field. Bob's erudition, good humor, and many kindnesses to friends and colleagues are sorely missed. Yet while Bob is no longer among us, much of his vast working library—the raw material that shaped the man we



Robert L. Belknap (1929-2014)

knew and loved—lives on, to the benefit of current and future generations of Slavic studies colleagues. Thanks to the generosity of his widow Professor Cynthia Whittaker and the



Views of two rooms in the famous “Belknap Annex” on 91st Street before packing.

Herculean efforts of current Slavic Department Chair Liza Knapp, the bulk of his personal working library now resides at the department he once headed—Slavic Languages & Literatures—with the rarest materials destined for the Rare Books & Manuscripts Library in Butler.



Bob's desk in situ, at 91st Street

Peter Lukic donated to 2CUL some 200 volumes in Serbian and Croatian from the collection of his father **Professor George Lukić**, as well as a nearly complete run of the émigré serial *Serb World*. The collection is especially rich in works on Serbian provincial churches and monasteries, Byzantine art, and books published in the diaspora.



George Petar Lukić (1920-2008)

Born in Miloševac, Serbia, Professor Lukić emigrated to Britain and ultimately the U.S., earning his doctorate at the University of Pittsburgh. He went on to a successful professional career at his alma mater, teaching Slavic languages and literatures, and researching Serbian ecclesiastical art.

New Electronic Resources

- Columbia has acquired online access to a number of **East View databases** of election ephemera from Belarus (2010) <http://dlib.eastview.com/browse/publication/18326>; the Russian State Duma (2012) <http://dlib.eastview.com/browse/publication/21166> and Russian Presidential election (2012) <http://dlib.eastview.com/browse/publication/23828>; the South Ossetia Presidential election (2012)

<http://dlib.eastview.com/browse/publication/21446>; as well as Parliamentary election materials from Ukraine (2012) <http://dlib.eastview.com/browse/publication/36327> and Georgia (2012) <http://dlib.eastview.com/browse/publication/39986>.

- East View also supplies Columbia students and faculty with digital access to the full sequence of Soviet-era “**Kul’tura**” weekly newspapers—*Rabochii i iskusstvo* (1929-1930), *Sovetskoe iskusstvo* (1931-1941), *Literatura i iskusstvo* (1942-1944), *Sovetskoe iskusstvo* (1944-1952) and *Sovetskaia kul’tura* (1953-1991)—important sources for the study of Soviet politics, popular culture, and society.
- Finally, Columbia also purchased access to fifty-three Ukrainian e-books published by the **Kyiv-Mohyla Academy**.

Useful Websites

A few notable digital projects that have come to my attention:

- The **University of Chicago** has finished the second stage of digitizing pre-1924 issues of the Czech-American journal *Amerikán. Národní kalendář*. PDFs of the volumes can be accessed at: <http://pi.lib.uchicago.edu/1001/cat/bib/10017213>
- The **Russian Geographical Society** has assembled a nice collection of digitized serials and monographs: <http://lib.rgo.ru/dsweb/View/Collection-10>. The RGS’s main page [<http://lib.rgo.ru/dsweb/HomePage>] includes bibliographic guides, indexes, and expedition reports.
- **Mosfilm** <http://cinema.mosfilm.ru/films/> offers free viewings of full-length feature films (no subtitles) from all genres—dramas, comedies, documentaries, etc.—via an easy to use website. You will have to endure a few seconds of ads (in English) at the start of each feature, but otherwise a great site!

Enhanced Access Beyond 2CUL

Princeton, the **New York Public Library**, and **2CUL** are pursuing collaborative collection development agreements for languages in addition to those already in force for Polish, Czech, and Belarusian. When implemented, these agreements will ensure that the Tristate area remains a key resource hub for the study of these diverse regions, cultures, and languages by marshalling our collection development resources in the most efficient way possible.

Outreach

The **National Endowment for the Humanities** supported yet another prestigious Summer Institute for College & University Teachers, this entitled “America’s East Central Europeans: Migration & Memory” which ran from June 8-29, 2014. Principal Investigator Alan Timberlake,



2014 Summer Scholars in front of Alma Mater; Co-Director Kasinec leading a walking tour of Yorkville.

Director of Columbia’s East Central European Center, was assisted by Co-Directors Edward Kasinec and Robert Davis. This institute brought together some fifty master teachers (including Cornell’s Holly Case, and Columbia’s Alan Timberlake) with twenty-five resident Summer Scholars. These NEH Summer Scholars were competitively selected from a large pool of applicants, and included educators from American colleges and universities, independent scholars, research librarians, and museum curators involved in educational outreach. Videos of the daily lectures are available via the Institute website: <http://nehsummerinst.columbia.edu/>

In Appreciation

At the end of this calendar year, two great friends of Slavic and East European studies will be retiring from their respective posts in the Cornell and Columbia University Libraries: Cornell’s Associate University Librarian for Scholarly Resources and Special Collections **John Saylor**, and Columbia’s University Librarian and Vice President for Information Services **Jim Neal**. Both have been strong advocates for the importance of foreign language collections locally, nationally, and internationally. They have been enormously helpful in all efforts to build

collections in our world area. It has been an honor and a privilege to work with these great library professionals.

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I will visit Ithaca in mid-September, 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/special requests.

Robert H. Davis