

International Conference

„CONTEMPORARY RUSSIAN UTOPIANISM: GEOPOLITICS AND IDENTITY”

September 19-20, 2013, Falun (Dalarna University) & Uppsala (Uppsala University)

Organizers: Dr. Maria Engström, Dalarna University, and Dr. Irina Karlsohn, Uppsala University/Dalarna University

This conference examines late-Soviet and post-Soviet utopian thought in literature, art and politics. It is organized jointly by the School of Languages and Media at Dalarna University, Uppsala University's Centre for Russian and Eurasian Studies, and the Department of Modern Languages at Uppsala University.

Contemporary Russian culture is concerned with ideas of government, dictatorship and empire. Since the dissolution of the Soviet Union in 1991, Russian writers have created a bewildering number of futuristic and post-apocalyptic novels which focus on questions dealing with new Russian identity and geopolitics. Russian intellectuals and artists are preoccupied with the same crucial questions, and these questions are highly visible in the public debate.

What role do geopolitical narratives and nationalist utopias play in the formation of the Russian political agenda? How does contemporary Russian art represent the ambiguity between national and imperial Russian identity? What role does Russia play in the alter-globalization movement? Which of the concepts associated with Soviet utopian ideas are still developing and nourishing the formation of post-Soviet identities? What role does the border concept have in the new geopolitical narratives?

The aim of this conference is to explore the range of postmodern Russian utopias, such as neo-Soviet utopia, conservative utopia, Eurasian utopia, nationalist and radical Orthodox utopia.

Programme

Day 1

Thursday, September 19, Falun

Dalarna University, Lugnet, FÖ2

- 11.00-11.15** **Coffee**
- 11.15-11.30** **Welcome and Opening Remarks**
Dr. Maria Engström (Dalarna University)
Dr. Irina Karlsohn (Dalarna University/Uppsala University)
- 11.30-12.15** **Keynote**
Dr. Mikhail Suslov (Uppsala University)
“Stop Arguing, Let’s Go and Decide How We’ll Divide the Planet...”:
Spatial Imagination in Post-Soviet Narrative Utopias
- 12.15-12.45** *Andrei Rogatchevski* (University of Glasgow)
Limonov’s Other Russia
- 12.45-14.00** **Lunch break**
- 14.00-14.30** *Dr. Julie Hansen* (Uppsala University)
Putevoditel’ po proshlomu: Artur Klinau's Post-Soviet Travel Guide to Soviet Utopia
- 14.30-15.00** *Dr. Sanna Turoma* (University of Helsinki)
Roman Senchin’s Novel *The Yeltyshev’s* and the Trauma of De-modernization
- 15.00-15.30** *Dr. Kåre Johan Mjør* (University of Helsinki/Uppsala University)
The ‘Russian Idea’ and ‘Russian Civilization’: The Transformation of Two Utopian Concepts in Post-Soviet Russia
- 15.30-15.45** **Coffee**

Day 2

Friday, September 20, Uppsala

Museum Gustavianum, Auditorium Minus

- 10.30-10.45** **Welcome and Opening Remarks**
Dr. Maria Engström (Dalarna University)
Dr. Irina Karlsruhn (Dalarna University/Uppsala University)
- 10.45-11.30** **Keynote**
Prof. Mark Bassin (Södertörn University)
Низы – Верхи, Этнос – Суперэтнос: Reading Russia's Eurasian Identity
- 11.30-11.45** **Coffee break**
- 11.45-12.15** *Dr. Igor Torbakov* (Uppsala University/Södertörn University)
The "Middle Continent" or the "Island Russia"? Geopolitical Imagery and the Debates on Russian National Interest
- 12.15-12.45** *Dr. Irina Kotkina* (Södertörn University)
Utopia of Russian Culturalness – Re-branding Russian Identity
- 12.45-14.15** **Lunch break**
- 14.15-14.30** *Professor Vyacheslav Shestakov* presents the new book *Russkaia utopiia v kontekste mirovoi kul'tury* (Aleteia, 2013)
- 14.30-15.00** *Dr. Matthias Schwartz* (Freie Universität Berlin)
Putin's Matrix: Trivializing and Subverting Geopolitical and National Utopias in Contemporary Russian Literature
- 15.00-15.30** *Prof. Per-Arne Bodin* (Stockholm University)
Russian Language in Contemporary Russian Conservative Dystopias
- 15.30-15.45** **Coffee and fruit break**

- 15.45-16.15** *Dr. Fabian Linde* (Uppsala University)
Pavel Zarifullin's Sacred Russian Geography
- 16.15-16.45** *Prof. Elena Namli* (Uppsala University)
The Russian Orthodox Church – Fighting Political Utopia or
Forgetting Justice?
- 16.45-17.15** **Concluding discussion**