

# EMOTIONAL TURN? FEELINGS IN RUSSIAN HISTORY AND CULTURE

## Introduction

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Recent scholarship in the humanities and social sciences is awash with emotions. Affective social science, the cognitive poetics of emotion, the philosophy of emotions, the history of emotions, and the outer markers of institutionalization and professionalization—conferences, research clusters, dissertations, publications—together create a solid impression: this is a “turn,” if there ever was one.<sup>1</sup>

It appears that this turn has reached Slavic studies.<sup>2</sup> That it has taken so long may seem surprising. After all, in the western European imagination, “the east,” and Russia as a part thereof, has long been linked with emotion—so unmediated and untrammled that an indication of quantity sufficed as a description: too much emotion, extreme emotion, rather

Thanks to Michael David-Fox, Catriona Kelly, Barbara Rosenwein, Mark D. Steinberg, and Ilya Vinkovetsky for very helpful comments.

1. On emotions and the social sciences, see Patricia Ticineto Clough with Jean Halley, *The Affective Turn: Theorizing the Social* (Durham, 2007); on cognitive poetics and emotions, see Keith Oatley, *Best Laid Schemes: The Psychology of Emotions* (Cambridge, Eng., 1992) or Reuven Tsur, *Toward a Theory of Cognitive Poetics*, 2d ed. (1992; Brighton, 2008); on the philosophy of emotions, see Martha C. Nussbaum, *Upheavals of Thought: The Intelligence of Emotions* (Cambridge, Eng., 2001). For signs of the professionalization of one field, the history of emotions, consider in the United States, the Institute for the Study of Emotion at Florida State University (with William Reddy, Peter Stearns, and others as inaugural lecturers in 2002) and a monograph series (“The History of Emotions Series” at New York University Press edited by Peter Stearns and Jan Lewis); in Germany, an Excellence Cluster on “Languages of Emotion” at the Free University (Berlin), directed by Winfried Menninghaus, as well as a Center for the History of Emotions at the Max Planck Institute for Human Development (Berlin), headed by Ute Frevert; and, in Switzerland at Collegium Helveticum (Zurich), a section on “Die Rolle der Emotion: Ihr Anteil bei menschlichem Handeln und bei der Setzung sozialer Normen.” A milestone in the professionalization of the history of emotions was a 1998 conference “The Historicity of Emotions,” which grew out of a half-year seminar at the Institute for Advanced Studies at Hebrew University, Jerusalem. The conference was convened by Michael Heyd and Yosef Kaplan and attended by such historians as Natalie Zemon Davis and Anthony Grafton (e-mail communication from Michal Altbauer-Rudnik, 10 June 2007).

2. Take only conferences, such as Sheila Fitzpatrick’s workshop “History of Emotions in Russia” at the University of Chicago (2003); a roundtable “Thinking about Feelings: Emotions in Russian/Soviet History and Culture” at the annual meeting of the American Association for the Advancement of Slavic Studies (2004); the conference “Emotsii v russkoi istorii i kul’ture” organized by Marc Elie, Schamma Schahadat, and myself in Moscow (2008); the conference “Interpreting Emotion in Eastern Europe, Russia, and Eurasia” convened by Mark D. Steinberg and Valeria Sobol at the University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign (2008).

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than a different kind of emotion. Whence the current emotional turn? Let me briefly map some of the roads that led to it.

If there is a single overarching distinction that has structured all humanities and social science emotions research, it would have to be a variant of the nature versus nurture binary, namely universalism versus social constructionism.<sup>3</sup> Historical writings on emotions can certainly be grouped around these two poles. Medievalist Johan Huizinga in 1919, first-generation *Annaliste* Lucien Febvre in 1941, third-generation *Annaliste* Jean Delumeau in 1978, and psychohistorians (Peter Gay, Lloyd deMause, Peter Loewenberg) during the 1970s all operated with historically invariable emotions concepts, either in a straightforward anachronistic (past emotions are the same as in my own time and culture) or in a psychoanalytical-anachronistic key (culturally specific Freudian concepts work everywhere and always).<sup>4</sup> Emotions, according to the universalists, deserved a place in history, but they did not have a history; they moved through time and space more or less unchanged. By contrast, historical sociologist Norbert Elias in 1939, historian of France Theodore Zeldin in 1973, social historian Peter Stearns in 1985, and medievalist Barbara Rosenwein in the late 1990s and early 2000s imagined emotions in a more relativist way as being culturally variable, while allowing room for some universal aspects.<sup>5</sup> William M. Reddy's trail-blazing *The Navigation of Feel-*

3. Among those who have noted—and bemoaned—the dominance of this binary is Alexander Laban Hinton: “Unfortunately, debates over the emotions frequently lapse into nature/nurture dichotomies.” Alexander Laban Hinton, “Introduction: Developing a Biocultural Approach to the Emotions,” in Alexander Laban Hinton, ed., *Biocultural Approaches to the Emotions* (Cambridge, Eng., 1999), 1.

4. See Johan Huizinga, *The Waning of the Middle Ages: A Study of the Forms of Life, Thought, and Art in France and the Netherlands in the Dawn of the Renaissance*, trans. Fritz Hopman (Haarlem, 1919; London, 1924); Lucien Febvre, “La sensibilité et l’histoire: Comment reconstituer la vie affective d’autrefois?” *Annales d’histoire sociale* 3 (January–June 1941): 5–20 (for an English version, see Febvre, “Sensibility and History: How to Reconstitute the Emotional Life of the Past,” in Peter Burke, ed., *A New Kind of History: From the Writings of Febvre* [New York, 1973], 12–26; on the context from which Febvre’s article arose, see John Corrigan, ed., *Religion and Emotion: Approaches and Interpretations* [Oxford, 2004], 28–29n20); Jean Delumeau, *La Peur en Occident (XIV<sup>e</sup>–XVIII<sup>e</sup> siècles): Une cité assiégée* (Paris, 1978); Lloyd deMause, ed., *The History of Childhood* (New York, 1974); Peter Gay, *The Bourgeois Experience: Victoria to Freud*, 5 vols. (New York, 1984–1998); and Peter Loewenberg, “Emotion und Subjektivität: Desiderata der gegenwärtigen Geschichtswissenschaft aus psychoanalytischer Perspektive,” in Paul Nolte, Manfred Hettling, Frank-Michael Kuhlemann, and Hans-Walter Schmuhl, eds., *Perspektiven der Gesellschaftsgeschichte* (Munich, 2000), 58–78. For overview articles in English, see Adela Pinch, “Emotion and History: A Review Article,” *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 37, no. 1 (January 1995): 100–109; Barbara H. Rosenwein, “Worrying about Emotions in History,” *American Historical Review* 107, no. 3 (June 2002): 821–45; Joanna Bourke, “Fear and Anxiety: Writing about Emotion in Modern History,” *History Workshop Journal* 55, no. 1 (Spring 2003): 111–33; Peter N. Stearns, “History of Emotions: Issues of Change and Impact,” in Michael Lewis, Jeannette M. Haviland-Jones, and Lisa Feldman Barrett, eds., *Handbook of Emotions*, 3d ed. (New York, 2008), 17–31. No one to my knowledge has systematically scoured pre-twentieth-century historiography for writings on emotions.

5. See Norbert Elias, *The Civilizing Process*, trans. Edmund Jephcott (Basel, 1939; New York, 1978); Theodore Zeldin, *France, 1848–1945* (Oxford, 1973–1977), Zeldin, “Personal History and the History of Emotions,” *Journal of Social History* 15, no. 3 (Spring 1982):

ing can be seen as a new synthesis of the social constructionism associated with cultural anthropology, which since the 1970s has been uncovering an ever greater variety of emotion expression, and the universalism of cognitive psychology, which is experiment-based, works with living subjects, and operates with such natural science verification procedures as Karl Popper's principle of falsifiability.<sup>6</sup>

Among Soviet historians and western Russianists it took longer for social constructionist positions to gain ground. In the Methodology Sector at the Institute for General History (Academy of Sciences) in Nikita Khrushchev's time, Mikhail Gefter, Boris Porshnev, and others pioneered the Soviet study of the (social) psychology of individuals and groups in history. Gefter and his colleagues took the lead from the prerevolutionary St. Petersburg school of philologically oriented history, from Soviet psychologists like Aleksandr Lurii and Lev Vygotskii, from Mikhail Bakhtin, from the *mentalités* concept of the French Annales school (mediated through Polish *Annalistes* like Bronisław Geremek), and from the Moscow-Tartu school of semiotics.<sup>7</sup> These were fragile first steps and historians labored hard to package their research in ideologically compatible language, pointing to the centrality of the category of emotion in Vasilii Kliuchevskii and especially Vladimir Lenin.<sup>8</sup> The sector was closed down in 1969 and Porshnev died in 1972, but historians like Aron Gurevich and Iurii Bessmertnyi continued the tradition, first underground and later, since perestroika, openly, resulting in such publications as the volume *Chelovek v mire chuvstv* (Man in the world of feelings).<sup>9</sup> Also during per-

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339–47, and Zeldin, *An Intimate History of Humanity* (New York, 1994) (I am grateful to Stephen Kotkin for first alerting me to Zeldin's work); Peter N. Stearns with Carol Z. Stearns, "Emotionology: Clarifying the History of Emotions and Emotional Standards," *American Historical Review* 90, no. 4 (October 1985): 813–36, as well as Carol Zisowitz Stearns and Peter N. Stearns, *Anger: The Struggle for Emotional Control in America's History* (Chicago, 1986), Peter N. Stearns, *American Cool: Constructing a Twentieth-Century Emotional Style* (New York, 1994), and Peter N. Stearns and Jan Lewis, eds., *An Emotional History of the United States* (New York, 1998); Barbara H. Rosenwein, ed., *Anger's Past: The Social Uses of an Emotion in the Middle Ages* (Ithaca, 1998); and Rosenwein, *Emotional Communities in the Early Middle Ages* (Ithaca, 2006).

6. Consider the arrangement of Reddy's chapters: first there is the universalist thesis (Chapter 1, "Answers from Cognitive Psychology"), then the constructionist antithesis (Chapter 2, "Answers from Anthropology"), which is then *aufgehoben* in a synthesis, the history of emotions (Chapters 3–4, "Emotional Expression as a Type of Speech Act" and "Emotional Liberty"). See William H. Reddy, *The Navigation of Feeling: A Framework for the History of Emotions* (Cambridge, Eng., 2001). In the late 1990s Reddy was one of the first humanities scholars to launch a life science-inspired attack against social constructionism. See William M. Reddy, "Against Constructionism: The Historical Ethnography of Emotions," *Current Anthropology* 38, no. 3 (June 1997): 327–51.

7. See Roger D. Markwick, "Cultural History under Khrushchev and Brezhnev: From Social Psychology to *Mentalités*," *Russian Review* 65, no. 2 (April 2006): 283–301.

8. In their emphasis on the prevalence of emotion talk in Vladimir Lenin they foreshadowed Anna Krylova, "Beyond the Spontaneity-Consciousness Paradigm: 'Class Instinct' as a Promising Category of Historical Analysis," *Slavic Review* 62, no. 1 (Spring 2003): 1–23.

9. Western social history of private life, including the family and sexuality, left a strong mark on this volume. See, e.g., Natal'ia Pushkareva, "Mir chuvstv russkoi dvorianki kontsa

estroika, ethnographically informed historiography became immensely popular. Lev Gumilev and his “passionarity” (*passionarnost'*) and “passionate peoples” (*passionarnye narody*) belong in this rubric. Emotion here is eminently cultural, in fact so much so that the cultural gets ethnicized and biologized.<sup>10</sup>

It was only when a handful of western (cultural) historians of Russia began to absorb the findings of Stearns, Rosenwein, and especially Reddy, that emotion as a socially constructed concept entered Russian history. Mark D. Steinberg was one of the first, as he excavated an emotionally charged “vocabulary of spiritual affliction” in early twentieth-century worker poetry and stated “the still obvious fact that human experience and action are composed of emotions as well as rational perception, of moral sensibilities as well as ethical conviction.”<sup>11</sup> Catriona Kelly, in her studies on advice literature, problematized—for Russia—Elias’s linear process of increasing emotional control.<sup>12</sup> Sheila Fitzpatrick traced some of the specifically Stalinist notions of happiness (*schast'e*) and yearning sadness (*toska*).<sup>13</sup> Árpád von Klimó and Malte Rolf found that Nazi ecstasy (*Rausch*) differs from Stalinist enthusiasm (*entuziazm*) in its objectlessness: *Rausch* aims at transgressing all boundaries while *entuziazm* is always oriented toward some goal deemed worthwhile.<sup>14</sup> Ronald Grigor Suny explored the emotional coloring of Soviet and post-Soviet ethnic politics.<sup>15</sup>

XVIII–nachala XIV veka: Seksual'naia sfera,” in Iu. L. Bessmertnyi, ed., *Chelovek v mire chuvstv: Ocherki po istorii chastnoi zhizni v Evrope i nekotorykh stranakh Azii do nachala novogo vremeni* (Moscow, 2000), 85–119. On the family history roots of 1980s emotions history more generally, see Stearns, “History of Emotions: Issues of Change and Impact,” 17–31. For works on Muscovite and eighteenth-century honor inspired by western medieval and early modern European studies, see Nancy Shields Kollmann, *By Honor Bound: State and Society in Early Modern Russia* (Ithaca, 1999), and Angela Rustemeyer, *Dissens und Ehre: Majestätsverbrechen in Russland (1600–1800)* (Wiesbaden, 2006).

10. See L. N. Gumilev, *Etnogenez i biosfera zemli* (Leningrad, 1989). This—and the larger tradition of Russian/Soviet anthropology of emotions—is something Catriona Kelly thankfully alerted me to. Consider most recently A. K. Baiburin, “Toska i strakh v kontekste pokhoronnoi obriadnosti (k ritual'no-mifologicheskomu podtekstu odnogo siuzheta),” in A. K. Baiburin, ed., *Trudy fakul'teta etnologii Evropeiskogo universiteta v Sankt-Peterburge*, no. 1 (St. Petersburg, 2001): 96–115.

11. Mark D. Steinberg, *Proletarian Imagination: Self, Modernity, and the Sacred in Russia, 1910–1925* (Ithaca, 2002), 232, 15.

12. Catriona Kelly, *Refining Russia: Advice Literature, Polite Culture, and Gender from Catherine to Yeltsin* (Oxford, 2001); Kelly, “Regulating Emotion: Gender and Sensibility in Russian Conduct Literature, 1760–1820” (unpublished typescript, Workshop “History of Emotions in Russia,” University of Chicago, 24 November 2003).

13. Sheila Fitzpatrick, “Happiness and Toska: An Essay in the History of Emotions in Pre-War Soviet Russia,” *Australian Journal of Politics and History* 50, no. 3 (September 2004): 357–71.

14. Árpád von Klimó and Malte Rolf, “Rausch und Diktatur,” *Zeitschrift für Geschichtswissenschaft*, no. 10 (2003): 877–95. Also see Árpád von Klimó and Malte Rolf, “Rausch und Diktatur: Emotionen, Erfahrungen und Inszenierungen totalitärer Herrschaft,” in Árpád von Klimó and Malte Rolf, eds., *Rausch und Diktatur: Inszenierung, Mobilisierung und Kontrolle in totalitären Systemen* (Frankfurt am Main, 2006), 11–43.

15. Ronald Grigor Suny, “Why We Hate You: The Passions of National Identity and Ethnic Violence” (paper delivered at Berkeley Program in Soviet and Post-Soviet Studies,

Glennys Young gave the 1962 Novocherkassk riots an emotions-centered reading that joins political science literature on “contentious politics” with the history of emotions.<sup>16</sup> And Alexander Martin, following Alain Corbin’s lead, hinted at the emotional dimensions of the olfactory experience of Moscow in the late eighteenth to late nineteenth centuries.<sup>17</sup>

More obviously than in the case of history, feelings have long been a staple of scholarship on Russian culture.<sup>18</sup> For more than a century, literary scholars and others have been reconstructing the rich heritage of emotion talk in Russian poetry, prose, theater, cinema—from Nikolai Karamzin’s *Poor Lisa* to Lidiia Ginzburg’s *On Psychological Prose*, from the novels of psychological realism to the Stanislavsky method, from symbolist love to Sergei Eizenshtein’s films.<sup>19</sup> Or they have been exploring emotion’s active suppression and absence—from *ideinost’* in nineteenth-century literary criticism to socialist realism, from the suspicion of emotions in modernism (Russian and general) to formalist criticism (Boris Eikhenbaum on Mikhail Lermontov).<sup>20</sup> However, emotion as an analytical—and variable—unit has only recently come into play. Emotion was, as it were, hidden in plain view. In the new emotion research on Russian culture, the binary of universalism versus social constructionism has also held. Cultural studies and students of rhetoric have tended toward more social constructionist positions.<sup>21</sup> Psychoanalytically inspired scholarship

1 February 2004), at [http://repositories.cdlib.org/iseees/bps/2004\\_01-sunyr](http://repositories.cdlib.org/iseees/bps/2004_01-sunyr) (last accessed 26 February 2009).

16. Glennys Young, “Emotions, Contentious Politics, and Empire: Some Thoughts about the Soviet Case,” *Ab Imperio*, no. 2 (2007): 113–50.

17. Alexander M. Martin, “Sewage and the City: Filth, Smell, and Representations of Urban Life in Moscow, 1770–1880,” *Russian Review* 67, no. 2 (April 2008): 243–74; Alain Corbin, *The Foul and the Fragrant: Odor and the French Social Imagination* (Cambridge, Mass., 1986). Also see Vladimir V. Lapin, *Peterburg: Zapakhi i zvuki* (St. Petersburg, 2007). More generally, see the thematic issue on the history of the senses, *Journal of Social History* 40, no. 4 (Summer 2007).

18. For the following survey I am much indebted to Schamma Schahadat, “Psikhologizm, liubov’, otrashchenie, razum: Emotsii s tochki zreniia literaturovedeniia i filosofii,” in Jan Plamper, Marc Elie, and Schamma Schahadat, eds., *Rossiiskaia imperiia chuvstv: Podkhody k kul’turnoi istorii emotsii* (Moscow, 2009).

19. See Olga Matich, “The Symbolist Meaning of Love: Theory and Practice,” in Irina Paperno and Joan Delaney Grossman, eds., *Creating Life: The Aesthetic Utopia of Russian Modernism* (Stanford, 1994), 24–50. For a juxtaposition of Russian sentimentalist *khandra* with Czech *veselost*, see Gudrun Langer, “Russkaja Chandra-Česká veselost: Melancholie und nationale Identitätsmuster in der russischen und tschechischen Literatur der ersten Hälfte des 19. Jahrhunderts,” *Germanoslavica* 7 (2000): 147–75, 237–49. On Stanislavsky and emotions, see Peta Tait, *Performing Emotions: Gender, Bodies, Spaces, in Chekhov’s Drama and Stanislavski’s Theatre* (Burlington, Vt., 2002).

20. Boris Mikhailovich Eikhenbaum, *Lermontov: Opyt istoriko-literaturnoi otsenki* (Leningrad, 1924). Also see Eikhenbaum, “Razmyshleniia ob iskusstve. 1. Iskustvo i emotsiia,” *Zhizn’ iskusstva*, no. 11 (11 March 1924): 8–9. This is a point I owe to Catriona Kelly.

21. On emotions and gender, see Barbara Heldt, *Terrible Perfection: Women and Russian Literature* (Bloomington, 1987); Svetlana Boym, “Loving in Bad Taste: Eroticism and Literary Excess in Marina Tsvetaeva’s ‘The Tale of Sonechka,’” in Jane T. Costlow, Stephanie Sandler, Judith Vowles, eds., *Sexuality and the Body in Russian Culture* (Stanford, 1993), 156–76. I owe these references to Catriona Kelly as well.

has operated with more universalist concepts. The impact of universalist life science has so far been marginal in the Russian literary field; while many of their colleagues in English departments are “going neuro” and studying brain scans of readers, Russianists have generally been more hesitant. Perhaps the Bazarovs and Rakhmetovs, the nihilists and materialists, Ludwig Büchner’s *Kraft und Stoff* during Fedor Dostoevskii’s time, and the Soviet scientific experiments of the 1920s have resulted in a greater skepticism about “bio-revolutions.”

Historically informed skepticism toward the life sciences is something Russianists could contribute to the wider field of humanities emotions research. Yet there are more general grounds for such skepticism.<sup>22</sup> First, humanities scholars rarely access the primary life science research on emotions, and if they do, they are hardly in a position to judge its quality. For the most part they rely on such life science popularizers as Antonio Damasio and Joseph LeDoux as “translators,” yet all of these translators are players in the life science field with distinct interests and idiosyncrasies.<sup>23</sup> Second, on many questions life science research is just getting off the ground; it would be fatal to step—once again, after eugenics and Aleksei Zamkov’s rejuvenation experiments in the Stalinist elite—into this pseudoscience trap.<sup>24</sup> Third, even if certain universal life science findings on emotions do hold, they are, as Daniel Gross has written, only “trivially true,” for the gist of humanities research is variation across culture and time.<sup>25</sup> The historian of fear, for instance, is not so much interested in the universally true brain chemical reaction to a source of threat but rather in the fact that fear of being buried alive was rampant among Britons in the late nineteenth century, as evidenced in the engineering of coffins with breathing tubes and bells and wills that stipulated the cutting of throats after death, and that this fear object vanished around 1914.<sup>26</sup>

Just as the overarching binary of universalism versus social constructionism is only one possible way to group what has been done so far, so the list of roads leading up to the emotional turn is far from exhaustive. One could also have retraced the impact of Pavlovian psychology (and that of Vygotskii and Luriiia) on the development of western neuroscience;<sup>27</sup>

22. For a critique of an attempt to validate Norbert Elias’s civilizing process with a peculiar brand of evolutionary psychology, see Barbara H. Rosenwein, “The Uses of Biology: A Response to J. Carter Wood’s ‘The Limits of Culture?’” *Cultural and Social History* 4, no. 4 (December 2007): 553–58.

23. See, e.g., Antonio R. Damasio, *Descartes’ Error: Emotion, Reason, and the Human Brain* (New York, 1994); Joseph E. LeDoux, *The Emotional Brain: The Mysterious Underpinnings of Emotional Life* (New York, 1998).

24. On Zamkov, see Eric Naiman, “On Soviet Subjects and the Scholars Who Make Them,” *Russian Review* 60, no. 3 (July 2001): 308–9.

25. Daniel M. Gross, *The Secret History of Emotion: From Aristotle’s Rhetoric to Modern Brain Science* (Chicago, 2006), 34.

26. Joanna Bourke, *Fear: A Cultural History* (London, 2005), 34–43.

27. For Ivan Pavlov’s impact, see, for example, Eric R. Kandel, “From Metapsychology to Molecular Biology: Explorations into the Nature of Anxiety,” *American Journal of Psychiatry* 140, no. 10 (October 1983): 1278–79; LeDoux, *The Emotional Brain*, 142–48 (Pavlov), 356 (Luriiia).

early (and late) twentieth-century Russian Freudianism;<sup>28</sup> the eastern European field;<sup>29</sup> the cultural anthropology of postsocialist everyday life in the eastern bloc writ large;<sup>30</sup> the comparative linguistics of emotion in which the Slavicist Anna Wierzbicka has been leading;<sup>31</sup> the nonverbal semiotics of the Moscow school of applied linguistics;<sup>32</sup> the political science and nationality studies on emotional-ethnic conflict;<sup>33</sup> musicology;<sup>34</sup> dance studies;<sup>35</sup> and many more.

Or one could have pointed to some of the perspectives of future emotions studies. A sustained analysis of emotions in history and culture often resembles, not venturing into a new world, but rather putting a new lens on the objective through which one views one's own world. Once the new lens is on, one asks incredulously: How is it we have no study of the emotional impact of the psychological realist novel on the reader? How could we study the Russian gentry without an eye for its notion of disgust toward others (persons, things, times)? Where are the comparative histories of national emotions stereotypes, such as Russian *khandra* or *toska* (and Portuguese *saudade*, German *Angst* or *Weltschmerz*, the British "stiff upper lip")? How could the history of the Russian revolutionary movement have been written without some idea of its constructs of hatred and anger? And how could a history of the Great Terror of 1937–38 have been written without attention to fear?

The articles in this forum try to give an inkling of the range of vistas that open up when the emotions lens is put on. Chronologically, they range from the late eighteenth century when Andrei Turgenev started keeping the diary Andrei Zorin writes about to the Stalin era Adi Kuntsman's gulag memoirists chronicle. As for disciplinary background, Zorin and Olga Matich are literary scholars with a keen eye for the literary strategies of emotion talk—the tricks writers use to represent and evoke

28. See Aleksandr Etkind, *Eros nevozmozhno: Istoriia psikhoanaliza v Rossii* (St. Petersburg, 1993); Martin A. Miller, *Freud and the Bolsheviks: Psychoanalysis in Imperial Russia and the Soviet Union* (New Haven, 1998).

29. See Maruška Svašek, ed., *Postsocialism: Politics and Emotions in Central and Eastern Europe* (New York, 2006); Noah W. Sobe, "Slavic Emotion and Vernacular Cosmopolitanism: Yugoslav Travels to Czechoslovakia in the 1920s and 1930s," in Anne E. Gorsuch and Diane P. Koenker, eds., *Turizm: The Russian and East European Tourist under Capitalism and Socialism* (Ithaca, 2006), 82–96.

30. On post-Soviet Omsk, see Dale Pesman, *Russia and Soul: An Exploration* (Ithaca, 2000).

31. Anna Wierzbicka, *Emotions across Languages and Cultures: Diversity and Universals* (Cambridge, Eng., 1999); Jean Harkins and Anna Wierzbicka, eds., *Emotions in Crosslinguistic Perspective* (Berlin, 2001).

32. See, e.g., I. A. Sharonov, ed., *Emotsii v iazyke i rechi: Sbornik nauchnykh statei* (Moscow, 2005); Grigorii Efimovich Kreidlin, *Neverbal'naiia semiotika* (Moscow, 2002). Also see V. M. Kruglov, *Imena chuvstv v russkom iazyke XVIII veka* (St. Petersburg, 1998).

33. See Roger D. Petersen, *Understanding Ethnic Violence: Fear, Hatred, and Resentment in Twentieth-Century Eastern Europe* (Cambridge, Eng., 2002).

34. David MacFayden, *Songs for Fat People: Affect, Emotion and Celebrity in the Soviet Popular Song, 1900 to 1955* (Montreal, 2002).

35. See Irina Sirotkina, "Pliaska i ekstaz v Rossii ot Serebrianoogo veka do kontsa 1920kh gg.," in Plamper, Elie, and Schahadat, eds., *Rossiiskaia imperiia chuvstv: Podkhody k kul'turnoi istorii emotsii*.

feelings. Kuntsman, a social anthropologist by training, draws on cultural theory, queer theory, and literary scholarship to alert us to the linkages between disgust, metonymy, and same-sex sexuality in gulag memoirs. I am a historian and my article constitutes an attempt at analysis of a scientific discourse that revolved around emotion.

Let us take a closer look at the articles and the numerous connections between them. More generally, all confirm both the clichéd but fundamentally true dominance of literature in Russia and the well-known “life imitates art imitates life . . .” pattern.<sup>36</sup> Early nineteenth-century noblemen learn to feel with German, French, and British writers (Zorin); the key text of disgust *à la russe* is Russia’s most celebrated modernist novel (Matic); highly literary memoirs reached a status of objective (and ethically impeccable) historical documentation of the gulag and abused this status to slip in and buttress a brand of heteronormativity that sits uncomfortably with the tradition of human rights these memoirs are seen to belong to (Kuntsman); and soldiers learn to express their fear after, and with, Lev Tolstoi (Plamper).

I want to close with a few words on figurative speech and how metaphors are employed to evoke emotions. Zorin, whose larger project is to put sentiment back into sentimentalism, presents a proliferation of thermic metaphors when his young diarist turns to the emotion of love: “cold,” “hot,” “burning,” “flame.”<sup>37</sup> These metaphors are marked by their binary nature. The metaphors in Andrei Belyi’s *Petersburg*, as detailed by Matic, and in prominent gulag memoirs, as described by Kuntsman, are of a different order: they are metonymies and rest on relations of contiguity. It is precisely the proximity of an abominable object and the sign that draws the reader close and creates a reaction of disgust, of away-movement, of *ot-vrashchenie*. Humans are brought into close, too close, contact with the not-quite-human — animals like pigs in Belyi’s novel, *blatari* and *kobly* in the gulag memoirs. Same-sex sexuality is represented as disgusting, and this representation is intended to evoke disgust in readers. Dudkin and Lipanchenko in *Petersburg* are brought into homosexual closeness, and so are criminal camp inmates and homosexuals. In their transgressiveness and contiguity, the metaphors of disgust are in fact meant to reinforce the binaries of life and death, human and nonhuman, heterosexual and homosexual, valorizing the first item and thus being ultimately conservative, in the sense of conserving hierarchy and difference. In the end, then, they are not that different from Andrei Turgenev’s thermic binary metaphors outlined by Zorin.

One way out might lie in the very act of analysis that these articles perform. While Matic demonstrates how Belyi mobilizes disgust’s transgressive potential and by means of a baroque poetics of disgusting excess breaks through the cyclical temporal concept of the high classicist city-

36. On this pattern, see Irina Paperno, *Chernyshevsky and the Age of Realism: A Study in the Semiotics of Behavior* (Stanford, 1988).

37. For another study in this vein see I. Iu. Vinitiskii, *Utekhi melankholii* (Moscow, 1997).



text that is St. Petersburg, Kuntsman lays bare the perfidious imbrication of underclass criminality with homosexuality via metonymies of disgust. Kuntsman's work of making this transparent suggests how we, the unassuming readers of Ginzburg's morally righteous, heroic memoir, might resist being glued to this imbrication by means of sticky metaphors, how we might break out of the dissident icon Ginzburg's cycle of homophobia-as-disgust we are otherwise prone to repeat. *Ad nauseam*.

Figurative speech, poetics, and scientific discourse—these foci are the stuff of literary scholarship and cultural history. They also mark a certain distance from neurobiology, brain science, evolutionary biology, and other life sciences that currently dominate many public and academic debates traditionally in the domain of the humanities (free will, intentionality, selfhood, love). While it remains to be seen whether future humanities emotions research with a Russian focus keeps this distance, it seems fair to predict that there will be such research—beyond the four articles to which we now turn.