

Janet Tucker

Preface

The present collection of essays grew out of conference panels on parody and satire in Slavic literatures, presented at two successive annual meetings of the American Association of Teachers of Slavic and East European Languages. While originally incorporating the broader treatment of parody and satire in Slavic literatures generally, the focus has shifted. To maintain thematic and chronological consistency, the present collection encompasses only Russian literature from approximately the 1850s, including such diverse writers as Ivan Goncharov and Fyodor Dostoevsky from the nineteenth century, Evgenii Zamyatin and Andrei Sinyavsky (Abram Tertz) from the twentieth. The purpose of this collection is to underscore the vital role that parody, satire and intertextuality have played historically and continue to play in Russian literature and culture. Not intended to be a comprehensive treatment, it instead incorporates essays that treat specific writers and works and selected themes. For that reason and because of limitations of space, the collection starts with Ivan Goncharov and extends to the present.

While parody, satire and intertextuality can and often do function as political commentary in nineteenth-century belles-lettres as well as in the literature of the Soviet period and beyond, they also touch significantly on such important non-political concerns as aesthetics, societal foibles, human behavior, and metaphysical dilemmas, questions at once culturally specific and universal in scope.

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Ideally, therefore, they provide access to larger cultural issues that define a society as a whole, highlighting coincidental concerns or problems. And parody, satire and intertextuality have special aesthetic interest beyond the scope of the particular culture in which they are embedded, giving the present topic widespread appeal not only for Slavists, but for the general reader as well.

The *Slavonic and East European Review* has graciously allowed us to reprint Julie Cassiday's essay on Mayakovsky. My essay "Skaz and Oral Usage as Satirical Devices in Isaak Babel's *Red Cavalry*" originally appeared in *Canadian-American Slavic Studies*, 34, no. 2 (Summer 2000): 201-10 and has been republished here with their gracious permission. I would like to extend special thanks to Caryl Emerson and Jerzy Kolodziej, whose helpful suggestions strengthened the introduction. The recommendations of the anonymous reader improved the collection immensely. I am especially appreciative of the input of Beth Juhl, Elizabeth McKee, Necia Parker-Gibson, and Donna Daniels of the Mullins University Library at the University of Arkansas, Geoff Husic from the University of Kansas Library, the assistance of Suzanne Smith, Kimberly Chenault and Chad Andrews, and the support, patience and advice of my husband William Tucker and son Robert Tucker. I am particularly grateful to George Fowler, Vicki Polansky, and Timothy Nelson from Slavica Publishers for their patient and able assistance.

The transliteration used in this collection is based on the standard Library of Congress system. However, names commonly known in the West (e.g., Dostoevsky, Gogol, Tolstoy) have been rendered in the text according to accepted practice, except where appended to transliterated Russian texts in endnotes and bibliography.