

Jessica Merrill

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EMPLOYMENT

Columbia University

Assistant Professor, Department of Slavic Languages (2016-present)

Stanford University

Fellow, Andrew W. Mellon Fellowship of Scholars in the Humanities and Lecturer, Department of Slavic Languages and Literatures (2013-16)

Rutgers University

Postdoctoral Fellow, Center for Cultural Analysis (2012-2013)

EDUCATION

University of California, Berkeley

Ph.D. in Slavic Languages and Literatures (2012). Dissertation: *The Role of Folklore Study in the Rise of Russian Formalist and Czech Structuralist Literary Theory*. Committee: Irina Paperno (Chair), Harsha Ram, Alan Timberlake, John Connelly

M.A. in Slavic Languages and Literatures (2007)

Northwestern University

B.A. in Slavic Languages and Literatures, with Honors (2003)

GRANTS AND FELLOWSHIPS

Harriman Institute First Book Subvention Award (2019)

Harriman Faculty Publication Grant (2018)

Lenfest Junior Faculty Development Grant. Funding to organize event: "Plots in Time: A Symposium on Historical Poetics" (Columbia University, 2018)

Junior Faculty Summer Research Support Grant (Columbia University, 2017)

Russian Scientific Fund Grant "Sovremennye modeli poetiki" [Contemporary approaches to poetics]. Primary Investigator Evgenii Kazartsev (2016-2021)

Fulbright-Hays Doctoral Dissertation Research Abroad Fellowship (2010-2011). Funded nine months of archival research in Russia and the Czech Republic

ACTR Summer Russian Language Teachers Program (U.S. Department of Education, Summer 2008)

Foreign Language and Area Studies Fellowship (Czech Language, UC Berkeley 2005-06, 2006-07)

Foreign Language and Area Studies Fellowship (Czech Language, Summer 2007)

PUBLICATIONS AND RESEARCH

Book

The Origins of Russian Literary Theory: Folklore, Philology, Form. (Forthcoming, Northwestern University Press, July 2022)

Articles, *indicates peer reviewed

“Folk Genres.” *The New Cambridge History of Russian Literature*, Eds. Simon Franklin, Emma Widdis, Rebecca Reich (Forthcoming, Cambridge University Press)

“The North American Reception of Russian Formalism.” *Literary Theory between East and West: Transcultural and Transdisciplinary Movements from Russian Formalism to Cultural Studies*, Ed. Michał Mrugalski, Schamma Schahadat, Danuta Ulicka, Irina Wutsdorff (Forthcoming, Walter de Gruyter, 2021)

“Historical Poetics and Poetic Language: Rethinking the Concept of Autonomy for Modern Literary Theory.” *Poetics Today* 38 (September 2017)*

“High Modernism in Theory and Practice: Karel Teige and Tomáš Baťa.” *Slavic Review* 76 (Summer 2017)*

“The Stalinist Subject and Mikhail Bulgakov’s *The Master and Margarita*.” *The Russian Review* 74 (April 2015)*

“Fol’koristicheskie osnovaniia knigi Viktor Shklovskogo ‘O Teorii Prozy’” [The Folkloristic Foundations of V. B. Shklovsky’s *Theory of Prose*]. *Novoe literaturnoe obozrenie* [New Literary Review] 133 (June 2015)*

Book Reviews

“‘Dal’nee chtenie’ v Rossii” [‘Distant Reading’ in Russia] Review of “*Dal’nee chtenie*” trans. A. Vdovina, O. Sobchuka, A. Sheli, by Franco Moretti. *Novoe literaturnoe obozrenie* [New Literary Review] (No. 2, 2018). English version published as “Distant Reading in Russia: Franco Moretti and the Formalist Tradition” *Eurozine* (May 2, 2018)

Na cestě k modernosti. Umělecké sdružení Osma a jeho okruh v letech 1900-1910, by Nicholas Sawicki in *Slavic Review* (Winter 2015)

Pëtr Bogatyřev et les débuts du Cercle de Prague: Recherchés ethnographique et théatrales, eds. Serguei Tchougounnikov and Céline Trautmann-Waller in *Slavonic and East European Review* (April 2015)

Petr G. Bogatyrev: Funkcional-strukturnale Ethnographie in Europa, eds. Klass-Hinrich Ehlers and Marek Nekula in *Journal of Folklore Research Reviews* (2012)

Publications in Progress

Circling in Time and Space: Modern Temporalities and the Narration of Experience. Monograph in

progress. History of a plot device analyzed through case studies drawn from 20-21st c. Russian and English-language literature, film, folklore, and digital media

“The Sociological Poetics of the Moscow Linguistic Circle: Recovering a Lost Path in Modern Literary Theory.” Article manuscript to be submitted to *History of Humanities* as part of a cluster.

LECTURES AND CONFERENCES

Conferences Organized

Archaists & Innovators: Re-Reading Group on Russian Formalism, Harriman Institute, New York, NY, April 29-30, 2019 (Co-organized with Serguei Oushakine and Mark Lipovetsky)

Plots in Time: A Symposium on Historical Poetics, Columbia University, New York, NY, December 10, 2018

Russian Formalism and the Digital Humanities, Stanford University, Stanford CA, April 13, 2015

Invited Lectures

“Personal Experience Narratives as a Folk Genre” University of California-Berkeley, Slavic Colloquium, April 5, 2021

“Studying the Living Word: Oral Performance and the Formal Method” Department of Comparative Literature and Linguistics, Higher School of Economics, St. Petersburg, May, 2017

“‘The Soul of all Devices’: Viktor Shklovsky on the Psychology of Literary Form” Department of Slavic Languages and Literatures, Princeton University, February 16, 2016

“Why Viktor Shklovsky Collected Dirty Jokes, or The Folkloristic Origins of Russian Formalist Theory” Department of Russian and Slavic Studies, New York University, February 11, 2015

“From *slovesnost*’ to *literaturnost*’: Russian Formalism and Nineteenth-Century Philology” Department of Slavic Languages and Literatures, Stanford University, May 7, 2014

“Folklorizing Literature: Viktor Shklovsky’s Open-Ended Theory of Prose” Department of Slavic Languages and Literatures, University of Pennsylvania, March 12, 2013

“Procreation and the Plot: The Anthropological Foundations of Viktor Shklovsky’s *Theory of Prose*” Slavic Languages and Literatures Department, University of California-Berkeley, October 29, 2012

Selected Conference and Workshop Presentations

Roundtable Member for Book Discussion: “The Birth and Death of Literary Theory: Regimes of Relevance in Russia and Beyond” by Galin Tihanov (2019). National Convention of the Association for Slavic, East European, and Eurasian Studies, Online, November 7, 2020.

“Plot Schemas and Personal Experience in Contemporary Russian Memorates” Literature and the Historical Condition, University of California, Berkeley, April 30, 2020

“The Perception of Plot” The Society for the Study of Narrative Annual Conference, University of Navarra, Pamplona (Spain), June 1, 2019

“The Origins of Modern Literary Theory” Department of Russian and East European Studies Kruzhek

Workshop Series, University of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia, PA, April 15, 2019

- “Shklovsky’s *Zhili Byli*” Archaists & Innovators: Re-Reading Group on Russian Formalism, Harriman Institute, New York, NY, April 29-30, 2019 (Conference organizer)
- “What is a Plot? Veselovsky, Shklovsky and Propp on *siuzhet*” Plots in Time: A Symposium on Historical Poetics, Columbia University, New York, NY, December 10, 2018 (Conference organizer)
- “Viktor Shklovsky’s Ambivalent Treatment of Matvei Komarov as an Author” Archaists & Innovators: Re-Reading Group on Russian Formalism, Princeton University, Princeton NJ, July 11-12, 2018
- “The American Reception of Russian Formalism in the Context of the Cold War” National Convention of the Association for Slavic, East European, and Eurasian Studies, Chicago, November, 2017
- “Russian Formalism in America: The Cold War Reception of Revolutionary Ideas” Conference Without A Hero, University of California, Berkeley, October 14, 2017
- “Literature and Philology” The Disciplines of Literature, University of Chicago, Chicago, IL, May 27-28, 2016
- “The Verbal Mass and the Database: Defining the Text in Formalist Literary Analysis” Russian Formalism and The Digital Humanities, Stanford University, Stanford, CA, April 13 2015 (Conference organizer)
- “From the Language of Poetry to Poetic Language: The Emergence of a Concept in Early Russian Formalism” Formalism/Idealism: Comparative Literary History, 1860-1960, University of Chicago Center in Paris, Paris, France, April 7-8 2015
- “Collective Creativity and the Sources of V. B. Shklovsky’s Theory of Plot Construction,” On Strangeness and the Factory of Life: Viktor Shklovsky Then and Now, The Harriman Institute, Columbia University, February 26-27, 2015
- “Generative vs. Reconstructive Philology: Folklore study and Textual Criticism,” Annual Meeting of the American Comparative Literature Association, Seattle, Washington, March 26-29, 2015
- “P. G. Bogatyrev’s Contributions to Modern Literary Theory,” National Convention of the Association for Slavic, East European, and Eurasian Studies, San Antonio, TX, November 20, 2014
- “Anti-Capitalist Utopias and Roman Jakobson’s Poetic Language,” Annual Meeting of the American Comparative Literature Association, New York, NY, March 20-23, 2014
- “Russian Formalist and Futurist Responses to Folk Theater in the Civil War Period,” National Convention of the Association for Slavic, East European, and Eurasian Studies, Boston, MA, November 22, 2013
- “Zlín Functionalism: Modernism Outside the Metropolis,” Fourteenth Annual Czech Studies Workshop, Columbia University in New York, April 27, 2013
- “Zlín Functionalism: Modernism outside the Metropolis,” The Working Group on the Culture and History of East Central Europe (Kroužek), University of California-Berkeley, Berkeley, CA, October 3, 2013
- “Roman Jakobson and Claude Lévi-Strauss in New York in the 1940s,” Annual Conference of the American Association of Teachers of Slavic and East European Languages, Boston, MA, January 5, 2013

“Viktor Shklovsky’s use of Folklore and Folkloristics,” National Convention of the Association for Slavic, East European, and Eurasian Studies, Washington, D.C., November 20, 2011 (Panel organizer)

“Two Varieties of One Genus: Roman Jakobson’s Poetics and Folkloristics,” National Convention of the Association for Slavic, East European, and Eurasian Studies, Los Angeles, November 18, 2010

“Panoptic Vision and Narrative Voice in Bulgakov’s *Master and Margarita*,” American Association for the Advancement of Slavic Studies, Philadelphia, PA, November 21, 2008 (Panel organizer)

Interviews

Interview with Robert Harrison on Russian Futurism for Radio Program “Entitled Opinions” (<http://web.stanford.edu/dept/fren-ital/opinions/>), May 28, 2014

TEACHING

Columbia University, Graduate

Proseminar in Literary Studies, (GR8001, Fall 2016 co-taught with Valentina Izmirlieva, Fall 2017, Fall 2020) Introduction to theoretical discourses of literary study required for graduate students in Slavic Languages

Russian Formalism (GR6111, Spring 2021) Graduate seminar on Russian Formalism

Slavic Literary Theory: Formalism and Marxism (GR6121, Spring 2017) Graduate seminar on 20th c. literary theory, special focus on the relationship between Marxist and Formalist approaches

Columbia University, Undergraduate

Folklore Past and Present (UN3100, Fall 2018, Fall 2020) Undergraduate discussion-based course on traditional, oral folk genres (Slavic, East European, and Eurasian). Students learn how to conduct an ethnographic interview and analyze contemporary folklore. Revised to fulfill Global Core requirement in 2021.

Literature Humanities (CC1001, CC1002 Fall 2016, Fall 2017, Fall 2018, Spring 2017, Spring 2018, Spring 2019) Year-long undergraduate seminar in a canon of influential Western literary texts required for Columbia freshman

Literature and Revolution (UN3221, Spring 2018, Spring 2019, Summer 2021) Undergraduate survey of major literary and cultural movements of the revolutionary period

Narrative and Repetition: Circling in Time and Space (GU4111, Spring 2021) Advanced undergraduate/graduate discussion course dedicated to narrative theory and a thematic selection of Russian and English-language literature, film, and digital media

Slavic Cultures (UN3001 Fall 2021 co-taught with Christopher Harwood). Lecture course devoted to the history and culture of the Slavic peoples of Central, Eastern and Southeastern Europe. Fulfills the Global Core requirement.

Stanford University

Slavic Literary Theory: Formalism, Structuralism, Semiotics (Slavic 200, Spring 2016) Graduate seminar on Slavic contributions to 20th c. literary theory

The Great Russian Novel: Tolstoy and Dostoevsky (Slavic 146, Winter 2015) Intensive writing course

based on close reading of *War and Peace* and *The Brothers Karamazov*

Artists and Power: Eastern European Literature and Film from 1945 to 1991 (Slavic 242, Winter 2014)
Graduate/undergraduate seminar on writers' and filmmakers' responses to state privilege and censorship in the USSR and Eastern Bloc states

Rutgers University

Narrative Form in Theory and Practice (English/Russian 353:389, Spring 2013) Upper-level, formalist-inspired survey of narrative theory

University of California, Berkeley

Advanced Czech (Slavic 116A & 116B, 2011-2012)

Reading and Composition: The Modernist Short Story in East and Central Europe (Slavic R5B, Fall 2009)

Beginning Russian (Slavic 1, 2008-2009)

Beginning Czech (Slavic 26A & 26B, 2007-2008)

SERVICE

Columbia University

Director of Undergraduate Studies (Department of Slavic Languages, 2018-19, 2020-21, 2021-22)

Advising for Barnard Slavic Majors and Minors (Department of Slavic Languages, 2020-21)

Placement Officer (Department of Slavic Languages, 2016-17)

Curriculum Committee (Department of Slavic Languages, 2016-17, 2017-18)

Student Faculty Committee (Department of Slavic Languages, 2021-22)

Promotion and Review Committees, Member (2018, 2020, 2021)

Review of Slavic Applications for Society of Fellows in the Humanities (2016, 2017)

Review of Submissions for Pushkin Poetry Translation Prize (2018)

Columbia University, Graduate Advising

Dissertation Committee, Second Reader (Sophie Pinkham 2019, Erica Drennan 2021, Vera Senina, Elaine Wilson)

Dissertation Committee, External Reader (Therese O'Neil, 2020)

MPhil Advisor (Yulia Kim 2020-, Madeline Tingle 2020-)

Major Field Colloquium Committee (Yulia Kim 2021, Veniamin Gushchin 2021)

Minor Field Colloquium Committee (Mie Mortensen 2016, Ben Hooyman 2019, Claudia Kelley 2021)

MA Thesis, Second Reader (Anna Pershikova 2018, Claudia Kelley 2019, Madeline Tingle 2018,

Yevgen Gutman 2021)

Columbia University, Undergraduate Advising

Senior Thesis Advisor (Wanzhen Jun 2020, Katherine Corrigan 2021)

Laidlaw Faculty Mentor (Courtney Fulcher 2019, Kristoff Smith 2019))

To the Profession

Review of Article Submissions for *Canadian Slavonic Papers*, *International Studies in Humour*,
Modernism/Modernity, *Russian Literature*, *Slavonic and East European Review*, *The Russian*
Review, *Poetics Today*

PROFESSIONAL TRAINING

Center for Teaching and Learning (Columbia University), Consultation and videotaping (Fall 2017)

Folklore Expedition to Kuitunskii region, Irkutsk Oblast (Summer 2014)

Summer Russian Language Teachers Program (Hosted by Moscow State University, Funded by
American Council of Teachers of Russian, 2008)

Summer School of Slavonic (Czech) Studies (Masaryk University, Brno, Funded by Foreign Language and
Area Studies Fellowship, 2007)

PROFESSIONAL AFFILIATIONS

Association for Slavic, East European, and Eurasian Studies (2008-)

American Association of Teachers of Slavic and East European Languages (2012-)

American Comparative Literature Association (2013-)

Modern Language Association (2017-)

Slavic & East European Folklore Association (2014-)

Historical Poetics Working Group (2017-)

Archaists & Innovators Working Group (2018-)

LANGUAGES

Russian – near native fluency

Czech – near native fluency

German – advanced

French – intermediate

English – native