“World Literature” and Russia

Anne Lounsbery
Department of Russian & Slavic Studies, New York University
19 University Place, 206 New York, New York, 10003, U.S.A
Email: anne.lounsbery@nyu.edu

Abstract Russian literature challenges both Paris-centered accounts of “world literature” like Pascale Casanova’s and what Arjun Appadurai terms “Eurochronology.” It often does so by interrogating Russia’s supposed provinciality (*provintsial* “*nost*”) — a word that carries especially complicated resonances in Russian. Russia’s unique situation — peripheral but not small, European but also Asian, Christian but perhaps not exactly “Christendom” — helps explain the importance of the *provintsiia* trope, in which Russia’s provincial places are characterized by an ambiguous, mixed-up temporality that reveals Russia itself to be neither “modern” nor straightforwardly “backward.” When writers like Gogol represent *provintsiia* as a mishmash of objects, styles, words, and times, they suggest that Russia may exist permanently outside of normative (European) chronology. By drawing a connection between chaotic simultaneity and creative potential, they contradict Casanova, who (drawing on Wallerstein) represents peripheries as fundamentally sterile and dependent. Thus Russia’s insistence on its own provinciality helps illuminate how its tradition resists assimilation into “world literature.”
Key words Russia; cosmopolitan; provincial; periphery; Casanova
Author **Anne Lounsbery** is Associate Professor and Chair of the Department of Russian & Slavic Studies at New York University. She holds a PhD in Comparative Literature from Harvard. She is a specialist in 19th-century Russian, European, and American novels. In 2007 she published *Thin Culture, High Art: Gogol, Hawthorne and Authorship in 19th-Century Russia and America* (Harvard University Press), and she is currently completing a book about how Russian novels imagine geographic space (*Life Is Elsewhere: Symbolic Geography in Russian Literature*).

Pascale Casanova’s *World Republic of Letters* is one of the most influential accounts of what has come to be called world literature.[1]The book is certainly not

without its problems: since the study's initial publication (in French) in 1999, critics have taken Casanova to task for failing to address the many nuanced analyses of trans-national literary dynamics that have come out of postcolonial studies. But what has been less widely noted — in fact, what has gone virtually unnoted in western responses to the book — is that *The World Republic of Letters*utterly fails to account for Russian literature. Why is Russiaabsent from "world literature"as this phenomenon is described in a work of scholarship that has provoked a decade of conversation in Europe and North America? Or to put the question somewhat more provocatively, why *must* Russian literature be absent from the "system" that Casanova imagines?

One would of course expect any analysis of world literature to be able to deal with Russia: because really, who is more "world lit" than the Great Russian Writers of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, a time period to which Casanova devotes much attention? In fact the baggy-monster Russian novelists can be seen as precursors of Rushdie and the other big, messy, hybrid — and mostly male — geniuses who perch at the top of the World Lit canon.[2]But with the exception of a few passing references, Russia is nowhere to be found in *The World Republic of Letters*. Rather than viewing this omission as a mere lapse — because truly, forgetting about Dostoevsky is too major an ellipsis to be incidental — might we identify a reason why any serious acknowledgement of Russia would, it seems, throw a wrench in the system?

One way to answer this question is to think about Russia's own symbolic geography, focusing particularly on the *stolitsa/provintsiia* binary that has long structured images of Russian space. Casanova sets up a system that leaves writers — and national literary traditions — two options: you can be cosmopolitan, or you can be provincial. But in Russian culture, I would argue, these categories do not carry precisely the same meaning that they do in other traditions.Casanova's provincial/cosmopolitan opposition *seems* to recapitulate Russia's *stolitsa/provintsiia* binary, but in fact *provintsiia* in the Russian tradition has a much more complicated and ambiguous resonance than does "la province" in French, or terms like "periphery" in English. This complexity can help explain not only why it is so difficult to assimilate Russian literature to Casanova's system, but also how Russian literature ends up mounting a kind of resistance (sometimes passive, sometimes less passive) to a Paris-centered map of the literary world.

In Russian, *provintsiia* designates the non-exotic, non-borderland, "native" spaces that are outside of and symbolically opposed to Petersburg and Moscow, all those nameless *Gorod N*'s that literature most often represents as devoid of life and

meaning. Yet despite the supposed meaningless of these no-place provincial places, authors return to them again and again: and this continuing focus on *provintsiia*, I would argue, reflects anxieties about the peripheralness and "provinciality" of Russia as a whole. The fear that motivates these writings is that the Russian capitals, always trying to catch up to and imitate the west, might be no less provincial than the provinces in comparison to the real center, that is, Europe. If this is true, then the provinces attract so much attention — and provoke so much horror and revulsion — not because they are different from the capitals, but because they might be the same: peripheral, backward, imitative, inauthentic. Writing about *provintsiia* becomes a way of interrogating Russian identity itself.

The noun *provintsiia* entered Russian from Polish with Peter the Great's reforms, when it was used to designate a large administrative and territorial unit of the empire. Under Catherine another round of reforms did away with the term, replacing it with *guberniia*.[3] *Guberniia*and *provintsiia* coexisted and shared overlapping connotations throughout much of the nineteenth century, but it was *provintsiia*that eventually came to serve as a qualitative judgment: having lost its concrete administrative meaning, it became simply the not-capital, the embodiment of lack. The word persisted as a "phantom" category, taking on rich cultural meaning precisely because it was without any physical referent, living on and accumulating associations. It is this "semantic mobility" that distinguishes Russia's *provintsiia* from other traditions' provinces and peripheries.[4]

Provintsiia's symbolic import in literature can be traced to the early decades of the nineteenth century, when writers began to depict the provinces as a featureless void, a series of markedly anonymous places (*gorod N*). In many instances these places are not merely drab and philistine or behind the times, as are, say, Balzac's provinces in the French tradition; rather, they stand as a mysterious embodiment of cultural and psychic deficit. This vision of *provintsiia* was to remain strikingly constant from Gogol through Turgenev, Dostoevsky, Chekhov, Sologub and even beyond; a full three decades after *Dead Souls*, for example, Dostoevsky's *Demons* presents us with another nameless city, another place characterized by the same overdetermined anonymity signaling the meaninglessness and indistinguishability of all provincial places.[5] In literature *provintsial* "*nost*" became a kind of metaphysical attribute, albeit one that could be cast in geographic terms. Most importantly, I will argue, the Russian provinces as they are represented in literature are not simply "behind": rather, they exist in a strange and ambiguous temporality — a temporality that poses a challenge to totalizing systems like Casanova's.

Analyzing relationships between centers and peripheriesrequires us to think

about how these relationships condition ways of thinking about time, cultural hierarchies of "highness" and "lowness," what counts as ahead and what counts as behind, and so on. This is often what Casanova is writing about: *The World Republic of Letters* identifies Paris both as the virtually undisputed center of the literary world and as the vanguard of a literary "progress" that is essentially linear. Casanova argues that France's preeminence long served to divide the high-culture world into what was French, what was consecrated by the French, and what was neither of these.

She marshals a long list of quotations in which writers from the non-center bemoan their peripheralness and genuflect to the power wielded by Paris.[6]Swiss artist RodolpheTopffer wrote in the 1830s, for example, that if a man "values being illustrious," "it is therefore wholly necessary … that this man bring to the capital his bundle of talent, that he lay it out before the Parisian experts, and that a reputation is then made for him that from the capital is then dispatched to the provinces, where it is eagerly accepted" (Casanova 126). Serbian writer DaniloKis said virtually the same thing a century and a half later: "in order to exist it is necessary to pass through Paris" (qtd. in Casanova 129). One might also cite here Milan Kundera's rather infamous *New Yorker* essay in which he claimed that a Polish writer needs to know French literature, but a French writer does not need to know Polish literature: simply because "[a French writer's] own culture *contains* more or less all the aspects, all the possibilities and phases, of the world's evolution" (Kundera 30).

With statements like this one, Kundera joins a group of deracinated cosmopolitan intellectuals — Nabokov, Brodsky, and T.S. Eliot all come to mind — who most long to be *universal*, to rise above the merely local and particular. In fact they often argue that real art is defined above all by its universalness. This plays well in Casanova's version of France, which is entitled to transcend all *particularity* on the basis of its centrality. Kundera would love the quotes marshaled by Casanova — like Valery Larbaud's claim that "every French writer is international … a writer for all Europe … [and] All that which is 'national' is silly, archaic." Or Harold Rosenberg's: "Paris was the opposite of the national in art, [and thus] the art of every nation increased through Paris."

Casanova's focus, when not on France, is generally on what she calls "small countries," or else on countries so disadvantaged by distance and colonial status that they might as well be small.[7]Russia, of course, is anything but small. In fact, it is probably in part just because the country is so enormous (physically, culturally, historically) that Russians have not tended to see themselves as being simply on a

periphery, as might, say, a Serb like Kis. As one critic has written, "[Casanova's] scenario [is one] of underdog nations battling for a place in a literary sun blocked by the shadow of tyrant languages and literatures" (Prendergast 17): again, not a model that works very well for Russia, especially if you ask a Ukrainian.

Casanova describes the "decentering" and "disadvantaged remoteness" experienced by those on a cultural periphery who feel stranded in what she describes as "a place outside *real time* and *history*" (93, emphasis mine). She quotes Octavio Paz's account of his own coming of age in Mexico: "I felt dislodged from the present. … The real present was somewhere else. … For us Spanish Americans this present was not in our own countries: it was the time lived by others — by the English, the French, the Germans. It was the time of New York, Paris, London"(Casanova 92-93).

This belief, Paz explains, gave rise to his urgent need to find "the gateway to the *present*": "I wanted to belong to my time and to my century. … My search for modernity had begun" (Casanova 93, emphasis mine). Paz's alienation is the result of a geographic localization of cultural authority so intense that it forces those on the periphery to judge their own reality by what Casanova dubs a "Greenwich meridian of literature," a point that is not only *spatial* ("the center of all centers") but also, and more importantly, *temporal* ("a basis for measuring the time that is peculiar to literature" [Casanova 87-88]). Once spatial decentering (being on the physical periphery) is experienced as temporal decentering (being outside of "modern," "real" time), the quest for modernity in literature can take on a desperate urgency. "To be decreed 'modern,'" Casanova writes, "is one of the most difficult forms of recognition for writers outside the center."

Casanova's focus is on those writers who, like Paz, cast the quest for modernness in straightforwardly geographic terms. As we've seen, Paz can confidently locate the present he seeks in real geographic space ("New York, Paris, London").

But this was generally not the case for Russians, who often felt themselves to be "divorced from *time*," in Chaadaev's words, no matter where they were in *space*. For Russians,getting modern could not be simply a matter of going to Paris to seek either edification or consecration. Nor was it a matter of going to Moscow or Petersburg, because thanks to Russia's particular relationship to the standard embodied by European culture, its own capital(s) played a far more ambiguous role in Russian high culture than Paris played in the French-administered empire of world literature.

Thus Russians found it more difficult to embrace wholeheartedly the belief that Petersburg or Moscow or Paris anyplace else might "save [them] from

provincialism," as the Peruvian writer Vargas Llosa once expected Sartre — i.e., Paris — to do for him and his peers (Casanova 94). Gogol's townspeople in *Dead Souls* and *The Inspector General*, Dostoevsky's provincial revolutionaries in *Demons*, and Chekhov's Prozorovsin *Three Sisters*all long for a distant center that represents *now*, wherever they may imagine that center to be — but the narratives in which these characters are embedded make it clear to us that their hopes of locating any geographic ground zero of meaningfulness and modernity are illusory. Rarely can Russians fully embrace the belief that if only they were able to *monteràPeterbourg*, Balzac-style, all of their semiotic problems would be solved.

This is due, I think, to the nature of Russia's own capitals. Quite unlike Paris, that indisputable center of all centers, Russia's elusive capital was, to adapt Luce Irigaray's feminist formulation, "un centre qui n'enest pas un."[8] Even as the Russian capital exerted authority over the provinces, it could not quite be pinned down, either geographically or semiotically; in Lotman's terms, it "[did] not have its own point of view on itself" (Lotman 198). Never fully believing in their own center's centrality, Russians continued to search the distance for what Rimbaud called "la vraie vie [qui] estabsente."[9] Reading Rimbaud we recall both Lotman's and Mikhail Epstein's analyses of Russia's spatial semiotics: in such a system, "what is yet to come into existence … and is 'someone else's' is highly valued" (Lotman); one longs for what is "not here, not at this place, but 'there'" (Epstein).[10]

Russians certainly made pilgrimages to Paris, and they certainly recognized France's cultural preeminence.[11]But what they sought in France was not, I think, an imprimatur that could be used to certify or hasten Russian's own entry into a normative version of modernity.

And here I will turn to what I think is the other reason (besides "bigness," that is) that Russia had to be omitted from Casanova's system. Russia'spast does not fit comfortably into what Appadurai calls "Eurochronology"[12] in that it is not "modern," but it is not simply and straightforwardly "backward," either. Many Russian writers haveboth understood and made use of that uncomfortable fact. I would contend that Russian literature's frequent focus on *provintsiia* and *provintsial'nost'* is related to this understanding: as I said above, the provinces as they are generally represented in Russian literature are not exactly behind the times. Rather, they are not in *any* (single) time — in fact it is often not at all clear *when* the provinces are. And this, I think, is what makes the idea of provinciality both threatening and fruitful in Russian culture.

According to Casanova, Paris (or rather "Paris") has successfully coerced more or less everyone into measuring their own modernity against the French

capital, the "Greenwich meantime of literature." Russian literature's rather obsessive focus on *provintsial'nost'* suggests otherwise. Literature represents lifein *provintsiia*as a mishmash of objects and styles and words and temporalities, all of it debris washed up on the provincial shore. Think of the estates in *Dead Souls*, or the *provintsialka*Kukshinain *Fathers and Sons'* Town of N who goes on and on about everything from Bunsen burners and Ralph Waldo Emerson. Literary representations of *provintsiia* as hodge-podge — say, a provincial merchant's house where the décor includes a parrot, a bustof Voltaire, and the letter "Ф" cut out of paper, as in a Melnikov-Pechersky story[13] — suggest that anything might appear at any moment. Because as *Dead Souls* tells us, "there [is] no way of knowing how or why" such artifacts have turned up in deepest *provintsiia*; *provintsiia* is a place where you might encounter virtually anything.[14]And perhaps anything might *happen,* too: because in Gogol's words once again, "more events take place in Russia in ten years than occur in other states in half a century.

Provintsiia leaves us with the impression of an utterly disordered temporality — perhaps one that is permanently outside of the normative chronology implied by European history. Thus the *provintsiia* trope represents a way of thinking *not* about backwardness or behind-the-times-ness per se — not about trying to get in line, as Casanova implies everyone feels compelled to do — but about the relationship between cultural syncretism and Russian time. In Monika Greenleaf's analysis, Russian literature worked by ideas that were "sometimes up-to-the-minute but more often chronologically out of sync with European fashion," and having borrowed them, went on to "conflate and play off of [them] *simultaneously*."[15] Literary representations of *provintsiia* as hodge-podgedraw on precisely this sense of simultaneity and non-synchronicity, often (though not always) without even thinking of measuring themselves against any Greenwich Meantime of Literature.

For writers like Gogol and Dostoevsky, simultaneity seems to be linked — somehow, vaguely — to modernity. Both authors begin to imply that there is something about the strange, jumbled-up quality of Russian time that might prove fruitful and modern rather than sterile and behind. This, I think, is where we should look for the utility of the *provintsiia* trope, with its insistence on all that is ad hoc and syncretic in Russian culture. By asking whether the chronological and spatial disorder of *provintsiia*/Russia might not prove to be as barren as Chaadaev's "flat calm" diagnosis would have it, images of *provintsiia* can raise the possibility of a connection between chaotic simultaneity and creative potential. In other words, one might read Russian representations of *provintsiia* as a response to Casanova, who (drawing on Wallerstein) represents peripheries as fundamentally sterile and

dependent because they are *behind*.

If this is so, then perhaps Russian literature's persistent focus on provincial chaos points toward a fundamentally modern insight: *all* culture is syncretic, not just that of the provinces, or that of Russia; and no temporality can claim to be universally valid. In Edward Said's words, "all cultures are involved in one another; none is simple and pure, all are hybrid, heterogeneous, extraordinarily differentiated and unmonolithic" (Said xxv).When Gogol's contemporary Nikolai Nadezhdin describes his era's prose as "a confusion of all the European idioms having overgrown in successive layers the wild mass of the undeveloped Russian word," he is identifying precisely those phenomena from which Gogol's art would draw its greatest power (qtd. in Fanger 30).The *provintsiia* trope, then, signals not just the conflation and out-of-syncness that Greenleaf says are characteristic of Russian literature, but also Russians' *awareness* ofthese phenomena. This is what Andrei Sinyavsky alludes to when he says that all art "has the provinces in its blood" ("art is provincial in principle, preserving for itself a naïve, external, astonished and envious look"), and it is what Platonov hints at when he wonders whether maybe "genuine art and thought can in fact only appear in … a backwater."[16] This is the opposite of Casanova's thinking, and the opposite of Kundera's as well.

Maybe embracing a version of provinciality can be a way of refusing normative chronologies — including that of Casanova, who claims that only an *old* tradition can be "rich" enough to make the rules for everyone.[17]And maybe embracing provinciality can be a way of resisting what Pierre Bourdieu calls the "imperialism of the universal."[18]Casanova writes that only France was empowered to "manufacture a universal literature … consecrating works produced in outlying territories — impressing the stamp of *litterarité* upon texts that came from far-flung lands, thereby *denationalizing and departicularizing*them" (Casanova 87, 31). Russians' insistence on their own *provintsial'nost'* might be read as a reassertion of the importance and dignity — or at least the inescapability — of the particular.

Naomi Schor writes that in theories of art and literature, "what is perhaps most threatening about the *detail* [is] its tendency to subvert an internal hierarchic ordering of the work of art which clearly subordinates the *periphery to the center*, the accessory to the principal, the foreground to the background" (20, emphasis mine).Schor's concern is with the gendered nature of the particular (the "subordinate detail," she writes, is repeatedly "singled out as distinctively feminine" in art and literature), but her point is useful for thinking about the mechanisms used to stigmatize cultural peripherality as well: "outdated" forms of writing are often accused of the inappropriate use of detail.It strikes me that writers on the periphery

are often warned that failing to "get a hold of" details, failing to keep them in line, is a sign of artistic backwardness: Brazilian novelists are reproached for "still" writing realist novels full of "irrelevant" detail, Indian writers who do not write in English are accused of "miniaturism."[19] One response to such charges might be to let the details run absolutely wild: you end up with Korobochka's house, or with Dostoevsky's uncontrollably garrulous narrators, or even with Tolstoy's domestic minutiae and his detail-packed plots that baffled contemporary readers (as Konstantin Leontievdescribed *War and Peace*, "a redundancy, a ponderosity of petty details").[20]

The ambiguities of Russia's situation — peripheral but not small, European but also Asian, behind but potentially ahead, Christian but perhaps not exactly Christendom in the sense of "the West," etc. — help explain why the *provintsiia* trope came to play such a complicated and useful role in its literature, and ultimately why this tradition resists assimilation into "world literature." Russians' strange and often excruciating relationship to "Eurochronology" turned out to be productive in part becauseRussian thinkers who came after Chaadaev drew on the sense of being "out of sync" in order to find new ways of thinking about time, history, and modernity.[21]Long before Trotsky elaborated his well-known ideas on "unevenness," "the privilege of historic backwardness," and "the law of combined development" (all of which, he claimed, would allow Russia to make "leaps," "drawing together … different stages of the [historical] journey"), Russians had begun to seek the advantages that might be inherent in their lateness.

But again, *provintsiia*is generally *not* represented as a place where you go back to get ahead; that is, the trope is not another way of developing the familiar (Trotskian) idea that backwardness will allow Russia to line-jump in or into History. In fact rarely does *provintsiia*'s temporal mode imply the possibility of a "straight line" of historical progress: representations of provincial culture reveal no trajectory of development, no chronological *telos*.Nor is *provintsial* "*nost*" an idea that locates value in an idealized version of some coherent past (any such ideal would be located in *derevnia*, not *provintsiia*).

Instead *provintsiia*, in all its shameful and shameless mixing of time periods and cultural categories, can serve not only to make visible Russia's vexed relationship to European models, but also, ultimately, to hint at the irrelevance of these models — an irrelevance that might hold true not just for Russians themselves, but for all modern subjects. As Michael Holquist has argued, some Russians aimed to "universalize [the] dilemma" of being off of any heaven-ordained timeline, outside of any "transcendent system for ensuring order," thereby

redefining what it meant for *everyone* to be modern.[22] Thus we might read a text like *Dead Souls*, with all its focus on loathsome provincial detritus, both as a scandalous rebuke to the idea of cultural purity and as a sustained reflection on how modernity requires us to make art from adulterated materials. In the end, maybe *provintsiia* represents a semi-horrified love song to our mongrel, modern selves.

Notes

1. Pascale Casanova, *La républiquemondiale des lettres* (Paris: Editions du Seuil, 1999); English translation *The World Republic of Letters* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2004).

2. See John Burt Foster, Jr., *Transnational Tolstoy: Between the West and the World* (New York: Bloomsbury, 2013), for an examination of Tolstoy's place in a "globalized" literary world.

3. For a more detailed history of this terminology, see YevgeniaKirichenko and Yelena Shcheboleva, *Russkaiaprovintsiia*(Moscow: Nash dom, 1997), 11, 46-48; L. O. Zaionts, "Istoriiaslovaipoiniatiia 'provintsiia' v russkoikul'ture," *Russian Lit LIII* (North-Holland, 2003); Ia. E. Akhapkina, "Provintsiia, periferiia — problem nominatsii," *Provintsiiakakreal'nost' iob''ektosmysleniia,* eds. A.F. Belousov, M.V. Stroganov, A. Iu. Sorochan(Tver': Tverskoigosudarstvennyiuniversitet, 2001), 6-8 and 22; [no author], introduction, 9-14, *Russkaiaprovintsiia:mif - tekst - real'nost'*, eds. A.F. Belousov, T.V. Tsivian, and V.N. Sazhin, (Moscow and Petersburg: Nauchnyisovetpoistoriimirovoikul'turyRossiiskoiAkademiiNauk, 2000); E.N. Stroganova, "'Miniatiurnyimir': provintsiia v russkoiproze 1830-kh-pervoi poloviny 1840-kh gg. Ekskiz," 196-9, *Russkaiaprovintsiia:mif - tekst - real'nost'*; Zaionts, "'Provintsiia' kaktermin," *Russkaiaprovintsiia:mif - tekst - real'nost'*.

4. Zaionts, "Istoriiaslovaipoiniatiia 'provintsiia' v russkoikul'ture," 314, 315. By the turn of the twentieth century Stoian's dictionary, for example, defines *provintsiia* first as what it is not ("all of the country except the capital and a few large cities," i.e., the not-capital), and second as "an area with little culture." Chudinov's dictionary of 1900 defines *provintsiia* as "a separate part of the country … in opposition to the capital." Akhapkina, "Provintsiia, periferiia — problemanominatsii," 6.

5. Two clarifications are in order here: First, this trope is bizarrely counterfactual. We have no evidence to prove that real life in the provinces was hellish, and nineteenth-century intellectuals outside the capitals tried over and over to defend their localities against metropolitan slurs (they did so especially in the local press beginning in the 1870s). But the *idea* of the provinces seemed to live its own life, virtually ignoring those who tried calling attention to obvious divergences between reality and literature. Second, the label "provincial" does not refer to rural life, and only sometimes does it refer to the life of the gentry estate. Rural life is the village (*derevnia, derevenskii*), whereas *provintsial'nyi*generally refers to provincial cities and towns, and sometimes to gentry estates failing to attain to *tsivilizovannost'*. Peasants, then, are never

provincials, and peasant culture is not provincial culture. Peasants are not trying and failing to follow the mode of the capital; they are simply not implicated in the semiotic system that has been described as "fashion, this great metropolitan idea … this engine that never stops, and makes the provinces feel old and ugly and jealous — and seduces them forever and a day." Franco Moretti, *Atlas of the European Novel, 1800-1900* (London and New York: Verso, 1998), p. 65.

6. Note the selection bias here: Casanova is not quoting all the writers who simply did not care about Paris enough to mention it.

7. Nor does Casanova, for all her attention to translation's impact on literature as a world system, acknowledge the massive work undertaken in this field by the Soviets. The American experience, too, is underplayed, since Casanova focuses almost exclusively on examples of U.S. writers for whom Parisian cultural authority played a key role in their canonization (Poe, Whitman, Faulkner).

8. Luce Irigaray, *Cesexe qui n'enest pas un* (Paris: Minuit, 1977).

9. Arthur Rimbaud, "Délires I: Viergefolle, l'Époux infernal," 1873. http://www.mag4.net/Rimbaud/poesies/Vierge.html

10. Lotman, *Universe of the Mind*, 192; Mikhail Epstein, "Provintsiia," *Bog detalei: Narodnaiadushaichastnaiazhizn' v Rossiinaiskhodeimperii*(Moscow: Izdanie R. Elinina, 1998), 24-30.

11. As early as 1778 Fonvisin wrote that "Paris is not a city at all; it must in truth be called an entire world." But Russian travelers also considered French belief in French preeminence to be a bit ludicrous, even once we correct for a good dose of *ressentiment*: as Glinka wrote in 1814, "the residents of Paris consider themselves their city to be the capital of the world and the world to be their provinces. They consider Burgundy, for example, a near province and Russia a far one. A Frenchman coming here from Bourdeaux and a Russian from Petersburg are both called foreigners." Sara Dickinson, *Breaking Ground: Travel and National Culture in Russia from Peter I to the Era of Pushkin* (Amsterdam and New York: Rodopi, 2006), 150.

12. Arjun Appadurai, *Modernity at Large: Cultural Dimensions of Globalization* (University of Minnesota Press, 2000), 30; qtd. in Prendergast, "The World Republic of Letters," 6.

13. P. I. Mel'nikov (Andrei Pecherskii), "Krasil'nikovy," *Sobraniesochinenii v vos'mitomakh* , ed. M. P. Eremin (Moscow, 1976), 1: 56-57.

14. N. V. Gogol', *Polnoesobraniesochinenii* (Moscow, 1952), 6: 95.

15. Monika Greenleaf, *Pushkin and Romantic Fashion* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1994), 15-16. Greenleaf is referring to the Romantic period, but her insights shed light on the tradition as a whole.

16. Abram Terts [pseud. of Andrei Sinyanvsky], *V teniGogolia* (Moscow: Agraf, 2003; orig. pub. 1981), 328. Platonovqutd in Thomas Seifrid, *Andrei Platonov: Uncertainties of Spirit* (Cambridge:

Cambridge U. P., 1992), 18. Here Thomas Seifrid's remarks on Platonov's relationship to modernism are suggestive for trying to understand how a provincial perspective might benefit an artist: Platonov, according to Seifrid, represents "a kind of de facto modernism developed, at a remove from the centers of Russian modernist culture, out of the satirical-grotesque tradition of Gogol, Leskov, and Saltykov-Shchedrin and emphatically preserving the 'crude' perspective of the semi-literate provincial masses."

17. "The age of a national literature testifies to its 'wealth' — in the sense of number of texts — but also, and above all, to its 'nobility,'" and therefore to its right to serve as arbiter in all comparisons and as embodied standard of literariness. (Casanova 14).

18. Pierre Bourdieu, "Deuximpérialismes de l'universel," in *L'Amérique des Francais*, ed. Christine Fauré and Tom Bishop (Paris: Francois Bourin, 1992), 149-55.

19. Roberto Schwarz, "The Importing of the Novel to Brazil and its Contradictions in the Work of Alencar," in Roberto Schwarz, *Misplaced Ideas: Essays on Brazilian Culture* (London and New York: Verso, 1992), 41-77. Francesca Orsini, "India in the Mirror of World Fiction," Prendergast, ed., *Debating World Literature*, 319-333.

20. Leontiev cited in Gary Saul Morson, *Hidden in Plain View : Narrative and Creative Potentials in* War and Peace (Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University Press, 1987), 53.

21. See Michael Holquist, *Dostoevsky and the Novel* (Evanston, IL: Northwestern University Press, 1986).

22. Holquist, *Dostoevsky and the Novel*, 15-16, 30-31.

Works Cited

Fanger, Donald.*The Creation of Nikolai Gogol*, Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1979.

Lotman, Yuri M.. *Universe of the Mind: A Semiotic Theory of Culture*, trans. Ann Shukman, ed. Umberto Eco London and New York: I.B. Tauris, 2001.

Kundera, Milan. "Die Weltliteratur: How We Read One Another," *New Yorker*, Jan. 8, 2007.

Prendergast, Christopher. "The World Republic of Letters," in *Debating World Literature*.Ed. Prendergast, ed.

Said, Edward,*Culture and Imperialism*, London: Vintage, 1993.

Schor, Naomi.*Reading in Detail: Aesthetics and the Feminine*, Methuen Press, 1987.

责任编辑：郑　杰