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Cultures et sociétés d'Europe orientale, balkanique et médiane



**Centre d'études
franco-russe**

International Conference

Call for papers

Publishing “differently”

Small publishers, independent journalists and bloggers in Russia

Paris, 1-2 October 2015

Since the first decade of the 2000s, political and economic change in Russia has favoured the concentration of editorial and media resources into a few major groups (holding companies) linked directly or indirectly to the government. The production from these operators (major television channels, print press, major publishing companies), intended for the general public, dominates Russian public space. But facing them are alternative media in journalism (independent radio stations and newspapers), with the development online of web publications and blogs that help to diversify sources of news. In book publishing a host of small and mid-sized “independent” companies are energising the publishing world. In Russia they speak of the difference between the “big” ones with the resources, supported by the government and broadcasting a consensus mass culture, and the “little” ones, often on a shoestring, producing dissident cultures on and off the internet. This division, which is not specific to Russia, is part of the professionals’ common discourse and enables them to construct their differences in the current state of Russia.

The purpose of the conference entitled “Publishing ‘differently’: Small publishers, independent journalists and bloggers in Russia”, to be held in Paris on 1-2 October 2015, is to analyse these independent, critical channels of publication in present-day Russia. Who produces this different material? What civic and political alternatives do they represent? What conflicts and compromises exist between them and the dominant players? To answer these questions, we invite contributions that seek to document and analyse alternative publishing channels in Russia, in journalism, publishing or blogs. The aim is to analyse not only their break with the dominant patterns but also the compromises and hybrid situations that arise from their mutual relationship. Contributions with a historical dimension, examining the

emergence of alternative publications since the final decades of the Soviet Union, are welcome, in order to trace the family tree of current developments.

Contributions are invited under four major headings

1 - Differentiation and resistance

This involves documenting alternative media practices that relate differently to economic rules (by looking for production models other than the market one), institutions and legal norms (by escapism and informal relations), government-backed political models (whatever the ideological background to these alternatives), technical constraints by the new or alternative use of technology (how to invent, fabricate and legitimise a “quality” cultural content able to resist the digital), dominant gender relations (what influence do feminism and the LGBT movement have on publishing?), and culture (what about “fanzines”, for example, and other forms of publishing linked to particular aesthetic values and artistic genres and how these are connected to, or indeed form the foundation of, fan/activist circles?)

2 - Sociability and meanings of communication

In addition to alternative publishing channels, there are the players in these channels, their biographies, trajectories and divergences. Papers might address how they belong to wider networks and collectives, the places (editorial teams, “independent” bookshops, book shows) and forms of cooperation (from informal mutual support to professional “unions”) that help create environments extending beyond local settings and state borders. How much is individual emancipation reshaping the ways in which social bonds are created in contemporary Russia? Can these players be defined as producers of new meanings, alternative political, ethical and aesthetic meanings? Addressing these questions may include the genesis of new forms of subjectivation and even the construction of a new subject in an era of communication changes based on the internet and, not least, social media.

3 - Conflict, compromise and hybridisation

Conflicts between the competing models of dominant and alternative players and also the forms of compromise and hybridisation that arise between opposing practices will be studied. Are there movements back and forth, borrowings and mutual influences between the “giants” and the “independents”? How are the technical, economic, political and legal constraints that bear upon editorial choices taken on board, or evaded? Papers might examine the dynamics of innovation and hybridisation engendered by new independent channels that are moving into the dominant media.

4 - Historicity of independent editorial practice

The conference title harks back to those who “thought differently” during the dissident period. This section resituates current changes within their historical context, traces the family tree of the arts of publishing differently in Russia, and analyses breaks and continuity with the Soviet past. The current book-publishing world may be seen both as breaking with and following on from that of the Soviet period. How did the shift to current publishing conditions occur? Did the “independents” present themselves as successors to *samizdat*, and do they still do so? All questions that examine the influences and bridges between past and present.

Proposals, length 5,000 characters, should reach the organisers by 1st March 2015 at the latest, together with a brief author biography. Authors will be notified of the outcome on 15 April 2015. Selected authors will be required to send in the full text of their papers by 1st September 2015.

Adresse pour l'envoi des propositions : publier.autrement@gmail.com

The organisers will do their utmost to refund travel expenses for speakers from outside France, as far as the conference budget allows.

Working languages: English, French, Russian.

International scientific committee : Olga Bronnikova (U. Paris-Sorbonne / Eur'Orbem), Françoise Daucé (EHESS / CERCEC), Ilya Kiria (Higher School of Economics, Moscow), Bertrand Legendre (U. Paris 13, LabSIC), Cyril Lemieux (Institut Marcel Mauss/EHESS/CNRS), Markku Lonkila (U. Jyväskylä, Finlande), Svetlana Pasti (U. Tampere, Finlande), Bella Ostromooukhova (U. Paris-Sorbonne / Eur'Orbem), Vlad Strukov (U. Leeds, United Kingdom), Alexandra Zapolskaya (Higher School of Economics, Moscow), Anna Zaytseva (U. Paris-Sorbonne / CERCEC).