

© Institut d'études slaves, 2025
ISBN 978-2-7204-0689-8



XVII^E CONGRÈS INTERNATIONAL
(EXTRAORDINAIRE) DES SLAVISTES

Livre des résumés

III

BLOCS THÉMATIQUES
TABLES RONDES
POSTERS
INTERVENTIONS EN COMMISSIONS

Paris 2025

BLOC 1.14

HUMOUR. PERSPECTIVES LINGUISTIQUES / HUMOR.
LINGUISTIC PERSPECTIVES

Organisateur : HOLGER KUBE

Holger Kuße Humour as a Linguistic Topic. Introductory Words	1
Liana Goletiani Russian administrative culture through the prism of humor	2
Tatiana Ostakhova Online humour in the Russian protest songs of the last decade: linguistic aspects	6
Valery Efremov Humor as protest: Covid dissidents and Covid skeptics	9
Swietlana Gaś Humor between the lines. Intertextuality in Polish protest songs and their commentaries	13
Alla Nedashkivska Social Activism Through Humour: Language Branding by Youth in Ukraine	17
Olena Pchelintseva, Johannes Gutenberg Humor is serious!	24
Lyudmila Tokatova Humor And Justice In Kazakh Folklore. A Universal Phenomenon	28

HUMOR AS A LINGUISTIC TOPIC. INTRODUCTORY WORDS

HOLGER KUSSE (GERMANY)
Dresden University of Technology

Humor can be paradoxical. It can be an expression of pleasure, emotional relief. Conversely, humor often expresses disagreement and dissatisfaction. In the latter case, humor reveals the nature or the cause of the negative emotion being expressed, such as injustice, incompetence, stupidity or even aggression from those against whom the humor is directed. In addition to its negative and demarcating function, humor can act as a phenomenon that binds a group. The papers will focus on this functional diversity. Attention will be paid to historical forms of humor in Slavic and Central Asian cultures. Humor in relation to current events, such as the pandemic and language conflict discourses, will be considered. Forms of humor are diverse and range from jokes to songs, and from hidden intertextuality to open protest. These different forms of humor will be analyzed from various linguistic perspectives.

RUSSIAN ADMINISTRATIVE CULTURE THROUGH THE PRISM OF HUMOR

LIANA GOLETIANI (ITALY)
University of Bergamo

The paper is devoted to the “Letter of an experienced official of the 40s to a younger colleague entering the service” (hereinafter – Letter). The author of the text is a prominent figure of the era of the Great Reforms, Sergej Ivanovič Zarudnyj (Russian: Сергей Иванович Зарудный, Ukrainian: Сергій Іванович Зарудний). In a short text, the author ridicules the vices of Russian bureaucracy, using the epistolary form.

The publication of the Letter was initiated by Sergej Ivanovič Zarudnyj's son, the lawyer Aleksandr Sergeevič Zarudnyj, who, like his father, made a significant contribution to the modernisation of Russian law and courts. 12 years after the death of his father, Aleksandr Sergeevič Zarudnyj sent the text of the Letter to the editorial office of the magazine “Russkaja starina” (Russian Antiquity). The publication took place at the end of the year, in the 12th issue of the magazine for 1899. The text of the Letter has repeatedly become the subject of consideration by sociologists and historians, (Schattenberg 2007, Čevtaeva 2009) but has remained outside the attention of linguists and literary scholars. Our paper proposes to consider the Letter not only as an accusatory testimony from the first person, but also as a satirical text that, with the help of brilliant humor, affirms moral values and protests against established vicious social practices.

The work of this genre and form in the legacy of S. I. Zarudnyj is singular, and the length of the letter is extremely short compared to dozens of volumes of official documentation, works of comparative law and volumes of translations from Italian. Nevertheless, it seems that both the moral and ideological content and the choice of form cannot be considered accidental.

The main content, consisting of two parts, is devoted to the disclosure of this thesis.

The first part is devoted to the figure of the author, S. I. Zarudnyj, who was not a professional writer, but an official who began his career in the Ministry of Justice in the early 40s and reached the rank of Privy Counsellor in 1864.

Both G. Džanšiev (2008) and R. S. Wortman (1976) assign S. I. Zarudnyj an important place among those noble bureaucrats without whom the Great Reforms of Alexander II would not have been possible. Their contribution to the development of spiritual culture, according to Ju. Lotman (1994: 27), was incomparably smaller: “The Russian bureaucracy, being an important factor in state life, left almost no trace in the spiritual life of Russia: it did not create

its own culture, its own ethics, or even its own ideology. When, in the post-reform life, journalists, activists of the renewed court, lawyers were needed, then they, especially in the first decades after the abolition of serfdom, appeared from a completely different environment, primarily from that which was connected with the church, with the white clergy.” The case of the family of S. I. Zarudnyj deviates significantly from this characterisation due to several factors: firstly, they did not come from the clergy, but from the Cossack Colonels (polkovnyk) of Slobids’ka Ukraine; secondly, the fate of many of them shows commitment to high ethical principles; finally, public service did not become an obstacle to active pursuit of art and literature. The system of ideological and ethical values and aesthetic interests of S. I. Zarudnyj himself can be judged by letters, surviving testimonies of contemporaries and, not least, by the cultural and social activities of children and nephews raised in his family. Of interest to our case are, among other things, the fates of his son Aleksandr Sergeevič Zarudnyj and his daughter Ekaterina Sergeevna Zarudnaja-Kavos. A.S. Zarudny’s (1875-1933) went down in history as the Minister of Justice in the Provisional Government of Aleksandr Kerenskij and a bright representative of the young post-reform advocacy. He has brilliant defense in many famous show trials in the Russian Empire in the pre-revolutionary period. His daughter E. S. Zarudnaja-Kavos (1861-1917) was involved in artistic and educational activities and published the opposition satirical magazine “Lešyj”. A comparison of various biographical facts, episodes from the family and work life of S. I. Zarudnyj allows us to conclude that the accusatory pathos of the Letter fully reflects the firm and consistent deontological code of the author.

The second part of the report is devoted to the formal and substantive analysis of the text of the Letter. First, the compositional structure of the work is briefly described. Outwardly, it corresponds to the laws of the epistolary genre - the Letter consists of an introductory greeting, the main part and final etiquette formulas of farewell. The main part of the Letter consists of 15 instructions. They are numbered microtexts, containing regulated topoi and formulas of the edifying message, participating in the construction of the text. Each of the instructions is aimed at creating a separate comic situation and meets the three conditions for the perception of humor, identified by T. Veatch (1998): the situation is presented as quite ‘normal’ in the conditions of service of an official of Nicholas’s Russia, and the writer’s instruction on how to behave in this situation is absurd from the point of view of ethics and deontology. Reading this satirical text violates the expectations of a virtuous reader, the picture evokes a range of emotions in him: amazement, laughter, indignation and disgust.

Most microtexts are constructed according to the same scheme: first, a postulate of behavior is synthetically formulated, usually in the form of imperative negative statements, then

it develops into a reasoned instruction. In the course of the development, the absurdity increases, for which various linguistic mechanisms of humor are used - word-formation, grammatical, lexical, and stylistic. The analysis is based on the concept of a script proposed within the framework of the general theory of verbal humor by S. Attardo (2001): the participants of the script (bureaucratic officials and petitioners of departments), their typical features, the relationships that develop between them and the actions they perform are identified. The main comicality lies in the ethical and professional conflict of the participants' goals: successful career advancement with absolute and consciously cultivated professional inconsistency. Further examples show the use of common clerical stamps and clichés, various rhetorical figures aimed at achieving a comic effect. Among them, the technique of comic contrast deserves special attention. It can be regularly traced both on the lexical and stylistic level: diminutive forms are followed by rude and colloquial ones. Such figures as grotesque and hyperbole are abruptly replaced by litotes.

The final part of the paper outlines questions that require further research. The first is the question of the Letter's conformity with the satirical tradition, for which it is necessary to turn to both the history of journalism and fiction. The most relevant questions seem to be the connections with the satirical magazines of the last third of the 18th century (first of all, Novikov's satirical letters), as well as with the literary works of the 19th century (first of all, the works of N. I. Gogol and M. E. Saltykov-Ščedrin). The second unanswered question concerns the dating of the writing of the Letter. After a brilliant career in the State Council and active participation in the work of various commissions for the preparation and implementation of the peasant (1861) and judicial reforms (1864), a period of forced inactivity began in Zarudnyj's career. Zarudnyj turned to scientific and translation activities, paying primary attention to the translation of first codes of the Kingdom of Italy. Having been removed from active practical work and observing the return of the pre-reform practices and the strengthening of reactionary currents, Zarudnyj decided to try a new weapon to combat the administrative methods he had encountered in the early period of his service. And he chose humor.

REFERENCES

- Attardo, S. (2001). *Humorous Texts: A Semantic and Pragmatic Analysis*. Berlin and New York: Mouton de Gruyter.
- Čevtaeva N.G. (2009). Sociologija činovništva v Rossii: dorevoljucionnoe nasledie i sovremennost', in: *Mir Rossii*, № 3, pp. 85–113.
- Džanšiev G.A. (2008). *Epocha Velikich reform. Istoričeskija spravki v dvuch tomah, Territotija buduščego*. Moskva.

- Goletiani L. (2019). O kul'turnych predposylkach 'ital'janskogo' pravovogo diskursa S.I.Zarundnogo, in: M.C. Bragone; M. Bidovec (eds), *Il mondo slavo e l'Europa: contributi presentati al VI Congresso Italiano di Slavistica, Firenze*, pp. 249-260.
- Koni A.F. (1914). *Otcy i deti sudebnoj reformy*. Izd. I. D. Sytina. Moskva.
- Lotman Ju.M. (1994). *Besedy o russkoj kul'ture. Byt i tradicii russkogo dvorjanstva (XVIII – načalo XIX veka)*. Sankt-Peterburg: Iskusstvo.
- Paulson, R. (1967). *The Fictions of Satire*. Baltimora: The Johns Hopkins Press.
- Schattenberg, S. (2007). Korruptes Russland? Russische Verwaltungskultur im 19. Jahr-hundert. In: *Themenportal Europäische Geschichte (2007)*. URL: <http://www.europa.clio-online.de/2007/Article=209>. (Last access: 12.05.2025)
- Veatch T. C. (1998). A Theory of Humor, in: *Humor: International Journal of Humor*. Vol. 11. № 2. New York: Mouton de Gruyter, pp. 161–215. URL: <https://teclub.e-lub.net/wp-content/uploads/2019/08/veatch.pdf> (Last access: 12.05.2025)
- Wortman R. S. (1976). *The Development of a Russian Legal Consciousness*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.