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The Opening of ROSTA Windows

“Mayakovsky Style” and the Culture of Soviet Posters

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Presentation Outline

- Introduction
- Research questions + hypotheses
- The transition of Mayakovsky's poetic language style 1919-1921
- Fieldwork & visual materials
- Contemporary application
- Work-in-progress: Mayakovsky - the new fashion?



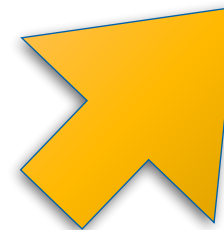
Introduction

Mayakovsky



**ROSTA
Windows**

Soviet Poster





Main questions

- To which importance we should define the “ROSTA” period in Mayakovsky’s work? Why?
- What is the “Mayakovsky style”, and how does it influence the style of Soviet posters? (visual design application)
- How do we read Soviet poster style as a collective text? *

*work-in-progress
(data collection)



Language style - transition: 1919-1921

- ROSTA Windows: a watershed between Mayakovsky's early-later writing period?
- Examples
- Explore the significance: why we study ROSTA?



colour, sounds, structure

...

Mayakovsky has made a lifelong commitment in:

innovative forms of language and poetry

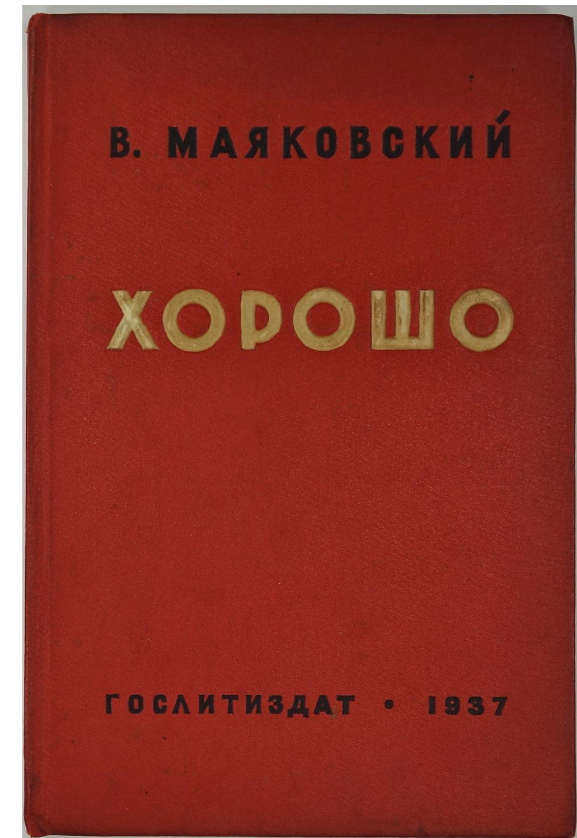
popularisation of poetry

write for the mass!



Watershed
1919-1921

ROSTA
period



Песня рязанского мужика. Роста 6/№

1. Не хочу я быть советск<ай>.
Батюшки!
А хочу я жизни светск<ай>.
Матушки!
Походил я в белы страны.
Батюшки!
Мужичков встречают странно.
Матушки!
2. Побывал у Дутова.
Батюшки!
Отпустили вздутого.
Матушки!
3. Я к Краснову, у Краснова -
Батюшки!
Кулачище - сук сосновый.
Матушки!

4. Я к Деникину, а он -
Батюшки!
Бьет крестьян, как фараон.
Матушки!
5. Мамонтов-то генерал -
Батюшки!
Матершинно наорал.
Матушки!
Я ему: "Все люди братья".
Батюшки!
А он: "И братьев буду драть я".
Матушки!
7. Видно, белый ананас -
Батюшки!
Наработан не для нас.
Матушки!

6. Я поддался Колчаку.
Батюшки!
Своротил со скул щеку.
Матушки!
На Украину махнул.
Батюшки!
Думаю, теперь вздохну.
Матушки!
А Петлюра с Киева -
Батюшки!
Уж орет: "Секи его!"
Матушки!

Не пойду я ни к кому,
Батюшки!
Окромя родных Коммун.
Матушки!



ROSTA Windows (visual materials)



- Baghdadi, Georgia

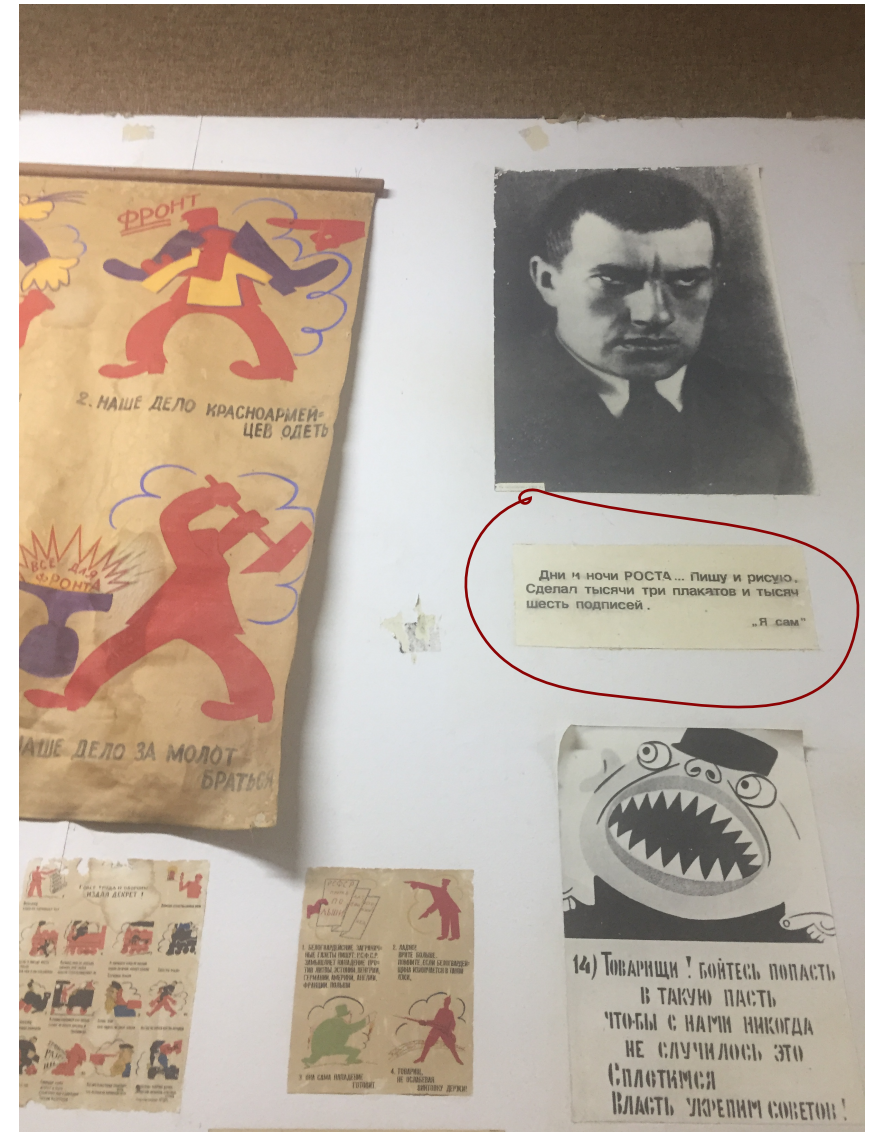
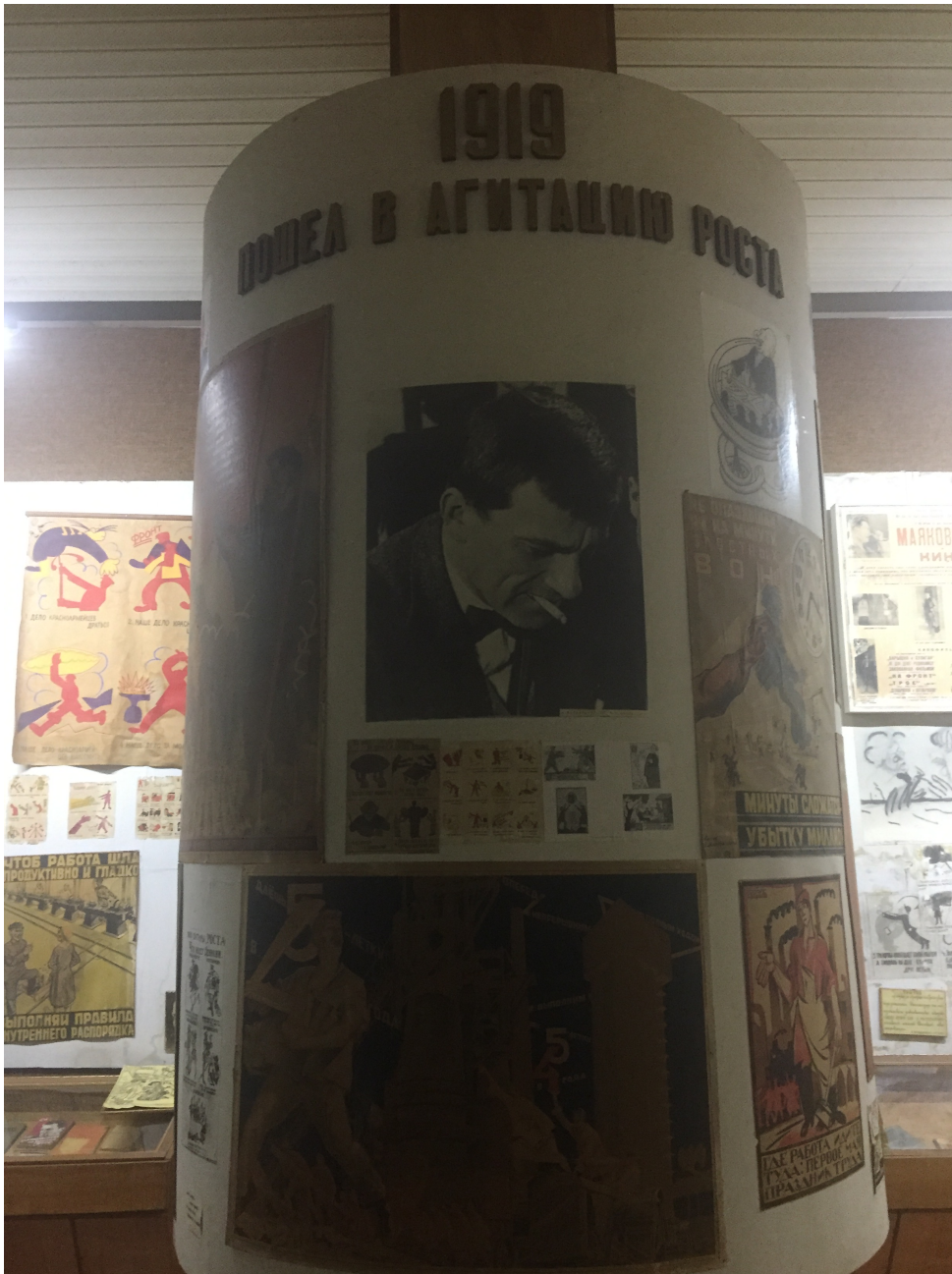


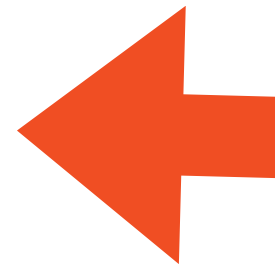
Characteristic:

1. Colloquial - language used in daily conversation; easy to understand. (*target readers)

2. "Visual impact"

target readers -> style formation



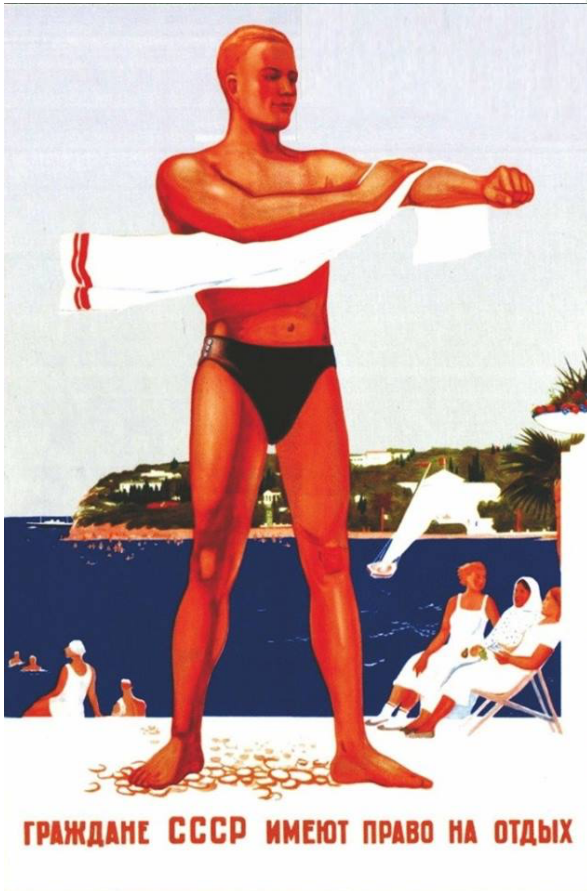


“Meme” of the Soviet time?



Contemporary application

- Case study: “Soviet Visuals”
- Textuality of culture: decoding “*Soviet posters*” as a collective symbol
(or “*why сгущенка became запрещенка*”)



“Visuals from behind the **Iron Curtain**. Soviet (and bits of pre/post-Soviet) photography, architecture & design. USSR **propaganda** art.”



5:24 AM - 13 Oct 2017

Facebook: over 161,9k likes; Twitter: over 85,7k followers. (last access 19 October 2017)



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It has been 25 years after the collapse of the USSR...

East
("real" SU)

West
("fake" SU)

Soviet-in-fashion?



**BIG
OCTOBER
SALE**

UP TO 70% OFF



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Cultural space can be defined as the space of general memory, that is, a space in which certain general texts can be preserved and actualized. And their actualization takes place within the framework of a certain invariant, allowing us to say that despite the variance of interpretations, **the text preserves identity with itself in the context of a new era.**

(Lotman 1985)





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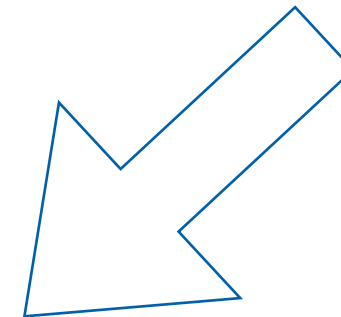


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- Decoding “*Soviet posters*”...

The addresser - The addressee
The audience - cultural tradition
The reader - The reader him/herself
The reader - The text
The text - Cultural tradition

Communication



(Lotman 1990)



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Sign - condensed milk ad in blue and white

Signifiers - an image of “traditional” Soviet style

Signified - case by case

1. condensed milk which are still in production today
(condensed milk as a symbol of “pure flavour”)
2. condensed milk image in Tartu graffiti
(condensed milk as “forbidden”, sign of violence)

Mayakovsky as a sign system

Sign system in culture(s)

Culture in sign system: interpretation and re-interpretation



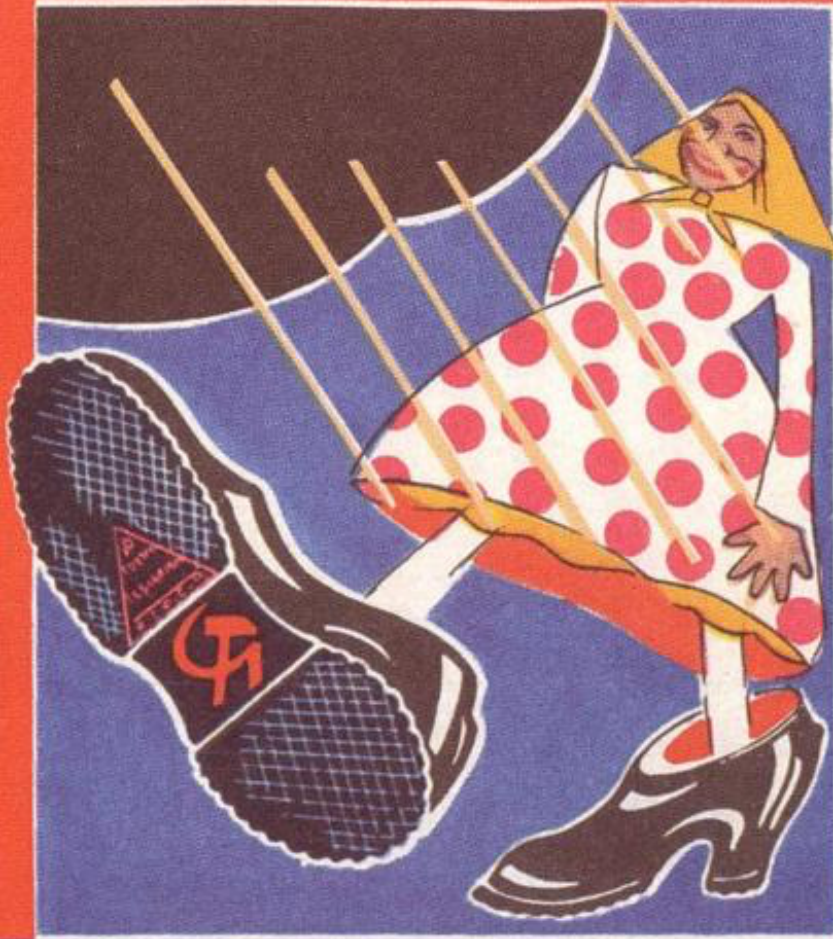
“Soviet-Mayakovsky style” as the new fashion?



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Rodchenko / Mayakovsky, Advertising poster for Moser's watches at GUM, 1920s



ДОЖДИК ДОЖДЬ ВПУСТУЮ ЛЬЕШЬ
Я НЕ ВЫЙДУ БЕЗ ГАЛОШ.
С ПОМОЩЬЮ РЕЗИНОТРЕСТА
МНЕ ВЕЗДЕ СУХОЕ МЕСТО.
ПРОДАЖА ВЕЗДЕ

Will you buy this?



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Thank you! :)

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**Stick in, douce folk. — Pineaiipple, feesant's breast:
stuff till ye boke, for then is your last feast!**