

Title: History and Historiography in Grigorii Gorin's *Zabyt' Gerostrata*
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In an interactive game written for *Gazeta.ru* Grigorii Gorin publicly pondered questions of “historical truth” versus “artistic truth.” In his introductory statement he discussed the power of artistic truth and concluded that perhaps it was worthwhile to record the details of certain events while those who had witnessed them directly were still alive. He ironically suggested that this should be done as a preemptive strike against “artistic truth” - “A vdrug oni, eti siuzhetы, vdokhnoviat poetov i dramaturgov budushchego?” The rules to his proposed game were simple; readers should respond to each of his stories with one of three possible answers: “veriu,” “ne veriu,” “znaiu, kak bylo na samom dele.”

Gorin’s brief introduction to a game highlights many of the issues surrounding the concepts of history that he raised in *Zabyt' Gerostrata*. The author builds a story around an event, the details of which have been lost, and in doing so questions the fragile nature of truth – historical and artistic – on multiple levels. He reveals the limitations of “znaiu, kak bylo na samom dele” and the ways in which “veriu” and “ne veriu” can be manipulated.

The primary vehicle for this exploration is *chelovek teatra*, a character who purportedly arrives from contemporary time in order to better understand the events of the past. In this paper I will focus on the dramatic and literary functions specific to *chelovek teatra* and the changing role he plays in the presentation of and challenge to concepts of history. Through *chelovek teatra*’s interaction with the other characters Gorin explores such issues as the power and corruptibility of recorded memory, the potential gap between historians’ writing and events, and the conscious crafting of one’s reputation for posterity. In addition, *chelovek teatra*’s attempts to influence events and alter the historical record of his time reveal the irony inherent in a fictional text based on a historical event that addresses the creation and distortion of both fiction and history.