

**Title:** Reconciling Two Leading Recent Accounts of Russian Syntax  
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On the occasion of this celebration of Leonard H. Babby's career, I would like to take advantage of the recent publication of a new theoretical account of Russian syntax, John Bailyn's *The Syntax of Russian* (Cambridge University Press, 2012), and consider its insights in the light of Babby's still recent Cambridge University Press monograph, *The Syntax of Argument Structure* (winner of the AATSEEL book prize for Slavic Linguistics). The books have somewhat different goals. Bailyn's is an attempt to survey all the major syntactic structures of Russian, both at the clausal level as well as more micro-structures such as NP. Babby's book starts with the semantics of a verb's argument structure and works its way through syntax to morphology, whereas Bailyn essentially lets the semantics take care of itself with minimal commentary. In this paper I consider a rapprochement between the two approaches. It turns out that careful exploitation of the vP shell hypothesis makes it possible to integrate Babby's argument structure with Bailyn's configurational structure to a gratifyingly substantive extent. For example, Babby's treatment of the "absorption" of Accusative case by passive morphology seems to be highly compatible with Bailyn's suggestion of a defective or missing vP in the same examples. I argue that both Babby's and Bailyn's accounts have their own integrity, and, indeed, that they may coexist in separate dimensions on their own terms, much as a transparency containing a diagram of the human muscular system may be overlaid on top of a diagram of the skeletal system. They have points of coincidence, and many problems may be conceived of separately or in terms of the interaction of the two subsystems.

A second aspect to this paper considers the historiography of both books. Bailyn studied at Cornell, where Babby taught until 1990, but the major influence on Bailyn's conception of syntax, aside from the ubiquitous Chomsky factor common to all modern generative syntax, was the work of John Bowers on predication and argument structure. It turns out that Bowers had a significant impact on the thinking of his former colleague Leonard Babby as well, and through the Bowers pivot we can trace additional commonalities between Babby and Bailyn. Thus is the torch passed in American Slavic linguistics. It is a small field, and those of us who are concerned with it recombine and reinvigorate many "xodjachie" ideas to produce unique and valuable individual brands in syntactic analysis. Babby's and Bailyn's books present two distinct views of what is happening in Russian syntax, but the commonality that unites them is far stronger than the theoretical nuances that divide them.