Title: The Body Remembers: Loss, Recollection, and Sincerity in Trifonov's Late Works Author: Benjamin Sutcliffe, Miami University

Abstract:

Iurii Trifonov's novella Dom na naberezhnoi (1976) and novel Vremia i mesto (1981) depict the aging body to illuminate the fraught connection between memory, trauma, and loss in the author's late works. Marina Selemeneva argues that these narrative are a culmination of the themes and devices shaping Trifonov's prose from the early 1950s-early 1980s.

Drawing on longstanding patterns in Russian prose, Dom na naberezhnoi and Vremia i mesto use telesnost' to underscore how middle age evokes recollections of betrayal during the Stalin era. As Natal'ia Ivanova notes, protagonist Glebov in Dom na naberezhnoi is desperate to forget how he helped destroyed his fiancée and her father, yet his conformism and cowardice are reflected in his bloated body (and the illness of one of his victims). Vremia i mesto for its part begins with an imperative to remember, a commandment that follows Sasha Antipov through a difficult but ultimately ethical life. At the novel's conclusion his body is aged but resilient.

Dom na naberezhnoi and Vremia i mesto use corporeality to link memory to the sincerity (iskrennost') that Svetlana Boym and Ellen Rutten see as a bedrock but imperilled value of the late-Soviet intelligentsia. Characters such as Glebov equivocate and justify their actions, yet the body cannot lie. Connecting telesnost' and ethics, Trifonov underscores how physical appearance comments on the ideas of memory, betrayal, and resistance than dominate his works in the 1970s-early 1980s.