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**BIOGRAPHICAL STATEMENT**

Dr. Ladygina is a Visiting Assistant Professor of Russian at Sewanee: The University of the South, where she teaches courses on Russian and comparative literature, film, Russian language, the 19th- and 20th-century Russian intellectual history, and Humanities.  Before coming to Sewanee, Dr. Ladygina was a Research Fellow at the Harvard Ukrainian Research Institute and a Visiting Assistant Professor of Russian at Williams College. Dr. Ladygina’s research interests revolve around the European fin-de-siècle and interwar intellectual history and the state-sponsored informational warfare in contemporary Russia. Dr. Ladygina published articles on Olha Kobylians’ka, one of the most sophisticated Ukrainian modernist writers, and the representations of the recent Russo-Chechen conflict in contemporary Russian cinema. Her monograph, Bridging East and West: Ol’ha Kobylians’ka in the Context of European Intellectual History, 1886-1936, is forthcoming with Toronto University Press.

**PAPER PROPOSAL**

Title: “Ol’ha Kobylians’ka’s Literary Debut and Introduction to Feminism”

Abstracts: The proposed paper examines Olha Kobylians’ka's first attempts at writing, addressing several canonical myths about her becoming a Ukrainian writer. Kobylians’ka’s creative tribute to Eugenie Marlitt, one of the most popular and widely read German novelists of the second half of the nineteenth century, is of particular interest. My analysis of Kobylians’ka’s diaries and personal correspondence of the 1880s and 1890s, along side a close reading of her first major fictional work, *A Human Being* (1894), proves that, like Marlitt, Kobylians’ka’s championed free-thinkers while condemning religious zealots, and created intelligent heroines who meet adversity with strong wills and independent minds, struggling against the prevailing conservative nineteenth-century ideal of women as weak, inactive, and unthinking. At the same time, my close readings of *A Human Being* proves that Kobylians’ka, also like Marlitt, criticized the socialist ideal of self-sufficient emancipationist and advocated instead modernized yet somewhat traditional roles of women within the family as intelligent mothers and supportive spouses. The chapter wraps up with a reflection on Kobylians’ka’s intricate and often provocative fusion of highly unconventional ideas in terms of their intellectual and theoretical vigor with a politically conservative and even reactionary determination to rethink, reclaim, and reassert the value of tradition, a reading that gives considerable merit to viewing Kobylians’ka’s intellectual model as radically conservative.