

Title: Paper-Making and Turgenev's Hunter as a Listener  
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Abstract:

The rural folk in Turgenev's *Notes of a Hunter* include workers from a hand-paper-making factory and people who buy and sell rags to be transformed into paper. This is not surprising, since Turgenev wrote some of the stories while sitting in a space on his brother's estate that had housed a paper factory. Even though the Fourdrinier machine press, which allowed the quick, mechanized production of long rolls of paper, was introduced in the Peterhof Crown Paper Mill in 1816 and spread to private mills from 1835, the number of such hand-papermills on Russian noble estates grew through the 1840s; they declined from 1852 and lost their access to labor with Emancipation. Meanwhile, it was from the 1830s that Russian antiquarians studied watermarks and used them to date paper documents. This paper situates the stories in the context of the history of listening and the history of communications technologies. I argue the representation of listening across social lines in the stories as ideally acousmatic (meaning that speaker and listener cannot see each other) has much in common with hand-paper-making and its representation in the 1840s. Both processes are depicted as providing access – albeit only to the trained ear or eye – to the barely perceptible material traces of other people and of the past.