

Title: History and the Poetics of Renewal in the Work of Aleksei Parshchikov
Author: Anthony Topoleski, Northwestern University

Abstract:

Beginning in the late 1970s and '80s, a new wave of Russian poets emerged with their own distinct styles and relations to the state and the "stagnation" of Soviet society under Brezhnev. Aleksei Parshchikov, one of the major voices of this new wave and the Metarealist group that helped advance it, developed a poetics that frequently took the immediate objects, myths, and experiences of late socialist reality as its base material to meditate on broader concerns. Using his poetic "intuition" to overcome the limitations and alienation of the post-utopian, "eternal" moment of late socialism, Parshchikov's early poetry sought to renew the expressivity and vitality of Russian poetic language with a richly complex, non-teleological sense of time. This paper examines a number of Parshchikov's poems from the early 1980s that engage with the concepts of time and history to meditate on meaning and value beyond the stultified utopian teleology of the state. The paper will furthermore consider the poet's attempted renewal of language and time through a poetics of the intuition within the context of Bergson's own "intuition" and Heidegger's notion of art as a "beginning" or opening of history.