

Title: Gone with the Voice: The Strategies of Conformity Under Socialist Realism
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Abstract:

Reverence with which extant scholarship focuses on Mikhail Zoshchenko's peculiar style of narration, described by Cathy Popkin as "an act of insurrection on every count," has resulted in his short fiction coming to symbolize Soviet satire incarnate and earned him the title of "a master of literary *skaz*" (Popkin 122; Mesropova 419). However, not nearly enough attention has been given to the strategies that enabled the writer to *comply* with the expectations set up by the state, despite the fact that examples of such conformity, according to Vera von Wiren, are not in short supply (355-57).

The aim of this paper is to supplement existing findings by demonstrating how removal of the elements of Gogolian *skaz*, evident in Zoshchenko's less humorous stories and feuilletons, combined with a strategic choice of venues for their publication, ensured the writer's survival during the horrors of Stalin's purges in the late 1930s. A combination of close textual analysis and biographic evidence with the historical context of Soviet periodicals published between 1934 and 1941 (*Krasnaia gazeta*, *Leningradskaia pravda*, *Zvezda*, etc.) will provide an empirical framework for tracing the evolution of Zoshchenko's style since the fateful First Congress of the Soviet Writers.

Mesropova, Olga. "Between Literary and Subliterary Paradigms: 'Skaz' and Contemporary Russian 'Estrada' Comedy." *Canadian Slavonic Papers / Revue Canadienne Des Slavistes*, vol. 46, no. 3/4, 2004, pp. 417-33.

Popkin, Cathy. "Zoshchenko and the Politics of Perceptibility." *The Pragmatics of Insignificance: Chekhov, Zoshchenko, Gogol*, Stanford University Press, 1993, pp. 95-124.

Von Wiren, Vera. "Zoshchenko in Retrospect." *The Russian Review*, vol. 21, no. 4, 1962, pp. 348-61, doi:10.2307/126495.