

Title: Modernist Archaeology: Khodasevich, Pompeii, and the Russian Necropolis
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This paper analyzes the Russian émigré writer Khodasevich's reliance on a form of modernist archaeology in two texts on Pompeii and nearby Sorrento: the travel sketch "Pompeiskii uzhas" (1925) and the narrative poem *Sorrentinskie fotografii* (1926). Whereas many nineteenth- and early twentieth-century literary works on Pompeii are structured around the resurrection of the past, embodied in the animated statue or plaster cast of a woman, Khodasevich eschews this decadent archaeology. Rather than envisioning Pompeii as a site of desire where ancient statues come to life, Khodasevich sees it as a necropolis filled with Fiorelli's lifeless plaster casts of human figures formed from depressions in the volcanic ash—casts that evoke the horror of a repressed childhood memory of a mummy. In identifying Pompeii with petrified and mummified figures, Khodasevich's sketch approximates photography—a modern art form that Bazin associated with embalming and that becomes the dominant trope for the excavation of prerevolutionary Russian culture in *Sorrentinskie fotografii*. While referencing the Petersburg text that predominated in imperial Russia, this poem inverts the myth of the moving statue central to Pushkin's *Mednyi vsadnik* (1833) and to decadent representations of Pompeii, culminating in a modern photographic excavation of the immovable, fallen statue.

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