

Title: “Somewhere there is Europe...”: Boris Pil'niak and Modernist Stratigraphy
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This paper examines Russian modernist stratigraphy in two guises: first, as a formal principle of particular Russian modernist literary texts; and secondly, as the modernist reponse to archaeological discoveries begininng in the latter half of the nineteenth century. Against this background, the paper considers the recurrent figure of the archaeologist in Boris Pil'niak's prose of the 1920s, focusing primarily on *The Naked Year*, in which we find a robust description of archaeological excavation challenging models of historical progress; and in *The Volga Falls into the Caspian Sea*, in which we see Pil'niak grappling with both geological and archaeological metaphors in his articulation of Soviet modernity. The paper then traces how Pil'niak's works served as occassions for debates regarding what Trotsky would have called the *particularities* of Russia's historical development, observing how his penchant for articulating time in terms of layers and strata sought to give aesthetic form to the experience of the obdurate persistence of, and fascination in the past into the 1920s.

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