

Title: A Different Kind of Animal: The Image of Werewolf in Soviet and Contemporary Russian Media
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This presentation will explore the image of the werewolf in Soviet lore, starting with the figure of Trotsky during the political trials in the 1930s and ending with the treatment of Boris Berezovsky in the contemporary media as well as in such recent fiction as Victor Pelevin in *The Sacred Book of the Werewolf* and “A Werewolf Problem in Central Russia,” while using Giorgio Agamben’s *Homo Sacer* and Vladimir Propp’s *Morphology of the Folk Tale* as a theoretical backdrop. In *Homo Sacer*, the werewolf is one of the incarnations of the “sacred man,” someone who lives a boundary existence and is not protected by law. In the 1930s, while living in Mexico and proving to exhort anti-Stalinist influence on western communists, Trotsky was treated by Soviet discourse as just such a figure, whose human half was manifested in the “co-conspirators” at the show trials. Following Putin’s accusation of participating in the assassination of Alexander Litvinenko, a wayward former KGB spy, Berezovsky has lately become a modern day Trotsky in the Russian media, especially after his statement to *The Guardian* that one must bring about a revolution against the Russian government by any means possible. This presentation will explore these examples as attempts (in the words of Andrey Sinyavsky, himself a victim of a 1966 show trial) “to abstract the evil” within, and the levels of mystification that accompany this self-fashioning in popular culture.

Agamben, Giorgio. *Homo Sacer. Sovereign Power and Bare Life*. Trans. by Daniel Heller-Roazen. Stanford: Stanford UP, 1998.

Propp, Vladimir. *Morphology of the Folk Tale*. Trans. by Laurence Scott. Austin: U of Texas P, 1968

Sinyavsky, Andrey. *Soviet Civilization: A Cultural History*. Trans. by Joanne Turnbull. New York: Arcade Publishing, 1990.