

## Dossier: 100 Years of the Russian Revolution

It is with great pleasure that we present this issue of *RUS - Journal of Russian Literature and Culture*. Issue 10, dedicated to the hundredth anniversary of the Russian Revolution, presents a number of contributions on various aspects of this important event in world history which, only eight months after the overthrow of the Russian monarchy, swept aside the provisional government to establish Soviet power and the first socialist state. The radical democracy of the revolutions of 1917, that generated an extraordinary atmosphere of activity and renewal in the social, political and cultural spheres, was subsequently crushed under the severe reality of the civil war that followed and eventually yielded to a bureaucratic dictatorship that lasted until 1991. However, its impact is lasting and can be felt to this day.

We begin this dossier with an article that proposes the category “anti-bourgeois democratic revolution” to describe 1917. The author argues that “soviet power” was already, in fact, proclaimed during the February Revolution in 1917, with its central aim of carrying out a vast program of reform, formerly associated with the “democratic revolution” - and first of all, land reform for the peasantry and elimination the aristocracy as a class.

As an illustration of the great wealth that Soviet culture brought to the world, our second article addresses another aspect of the Revolution - the new conception of art and culture and the many aesthetic experiments that arose during this agitated moment of history. The author presents young Russian artists who became genuine representatives of the new proletarian era. Their works manifested an artistic vision that aimed at building a new world.

The following article relates to a later period, presenting an account of the strike activity of workers between 1922 and 1932 and highlighting the “compromise” reached between

workers and the state in this early period of the Soviet New Economic Policy, a compromise eventually broken by repressive measures against workers in the following period of rapid industrialization. The author presents statistical materials on the frequency of strikes, the number of participants and their outcomes, as well as on worker unrest in the final period.

Moving onto the 21st century, the fourth article addresses the phenomenon of "Soviet nostalgia" in contemporary Russia, that is evident not only in the realm of culture, aesthetics and everyday life, but also in attitudes to the Soviet past as a whole. The author also shows how the authorities use this phenomenon to create a new Russian national idea, promoting national unity and conservative patriotism.

Addressing another aspect of this question, concerning the influence of cultural memory on the politics of memory, the last article of our dossier discusses the complete absence in Russia of official events to mark the centenary of the Revolution. For the author, this shows the important role that the politics of memory acquire as a result of the limitation of public politics, since the evaluation of the revolution's consequences by Russian citizens is contradictory and has changed little since 1990, and most of them deny the possibility of a new revolution.

USP's Russian Literature and Culture Program also celebrated Boris Schnaiderman's hundredth birthday in 1917 as well as the centennial of Victor Shklovsky's "Art as a Procedure", which was observed in many countries. We publish in this issue of RUS an article dedicated to Boris Schnaiderman, in which the author analyzes the differences between marxist and structuralist approaches to the cultural insertion of the literary work of art and also A. K. Jolkovsky's concept of "amplification" and R. Coelho's ideas of "fiction and reality".

This lovely issue also contains an essay on the anthrozoology of Tolstoy's story "Kholstomer", which is about the relationship between a horse and humans, written from the animal's point of view. To analyze this interaction, the author points to the use of the artistic device of estrangement of objects, which, according to the theory developed by Victor Shklovsky in his "Art as device", consists in complicating form,

increasing the difficulty and the length of perception.

We conclude the issue with an interview, also related to the theme of our dossier, with professor and scientist Bernardo Boris Vargaftig, whose research in the field of pharmacology made him a candidate for the 1982 Nobel Prize in Medicine. The interview was conducted on the occasion of the launching of his translation *My Life*, Leon Trotsky's autobiographical work, in conjunction with the celebration of the centenary of the Russian Revolution.

Pleasant reading!

Fátima Bianchi  
RUS editor