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Guide to the Georgii Adamovich Papers

GEN MSS 92



by Halyna Lobay

May 1987

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Table of Contents

Collection Overview	3
Requesting Instructions	3
Administrative Information	3
Immediate Source of Acquisition	3
Conditions Governing Access	3
Conditions Governing Use	4
Preferred Citation	4
Processing Information	4
GEORGII ADAMOVICH (1894-1972)	4
Scope and Contents	5
Collection Contents	7
Series I: Correspondence, 1926-1960	7
OUTGOING	7
INCOMING	7
Series II: Miscellaneous Papers, 1951, n.d.	8
Selected Search Terms	9

Collection Overview

REPOSITORY: Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library
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CALL NUMBER: GEN MSS 92

CREATOR: Adamovich, Georgii, 1892-1972

TITLE: Georgii Adamovich papers

DATES: 1926-1960

PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION: 0.5 linear feet (1 box)

LANGUAGE: Russian

SUMMARY: The Georgii Adamovich Papers contain correspondence and printed works which provide information about Adamovich's literary life.

ONLINE FINDING AID: To cite or bookmark this finding aid, please use the following link: <https://hdl.handle.net/10079/fa/beinecke.adamovi>

Requesting Instructions

To request items from this collection for use in the Beinecke Library reading room, please use the request links in the HTML version of this finding aid, available at <https://hdl.handle.net/10079/fa/beinecke.adamovi>.

To order reproductions from this collection, please send an email with the call number, box number(s), and folder number(s) to beinecke.images@yale.edu.

Key to the container abbreviations used in the PDF finding aid:

b. box
f. folder

Administrative Information

Immediate Source of Acquisition

Purchased with Library Associates Funds, 1964.

Conditions Governing Access

The materials are open for research.

Conditions Governing Use

The Georgii Adamovich Papers are the physical property of the Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Yale University. Literary rights, including copyright, belong to the authors or their legal heirs and assigns. For further information, consult the appropriate curator.

Preferred Citation

Georgii Adamovich Papers. General Collection. Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library.

Processing Information

Slavic names, titles, and quotations in their original languages have been transliterated in accordance with Library of Congress guidelines.

GEORGII ADAMOVICH (1894-1972)

Georgii Viktorovich Adamovich was born on April 19, 1894, in Moscow, the fourth child of Viktor Viktorovich, a physician and general, and of Elisabeth Semenovna. When his father died in 1903, the family moved to St. Petersburg, where he attended "gimnaziia" (the secondary school) and became interested in literature. In 1912 he enrolled in the Faculty of History and Philosophy at St. Petersburg University. Not drafted, he was able to graduate in five years. In 1915 he wrote his first short story, *Vesëlye koni* (The Merry Horses), which appeared in *Golos zhizni* (The Voice of Life). The next year he published his first book of poetry, *Oblaka* (The Clouds). The same year he joined the TSeKh poetov (The First Guild of Poets), which was established in 1911 but lasted only for five years. There he met Georgii Ivanov. After the Revolution, they founded the Second Guild of Poets, which survived for two years. In 1919 Adamovich left Petrograd for Novorzhev, to assume a teaching position. After two years he was back in Petrograd, where he published another book of poetry, *Chistilishche* (Purgatory), and took part in literary gatherings attended by such writers as I. Odoevtseva and A. Remizov.

His mother and sister had already left Russia for Riga. With Latvian passports, they arrived in Nice. Georgii visited them in 1923 and remained in France for the rest of his life. He soon settled in Paris, where he continued his literary career by writing poetry, critical essays, newspaper columns, journal articles, and book reviews, and contributing to various publications, such as *Zveno* (The Link), *Novyi korabl'* (The New Ship), *Novyi dom* (The New House), *Illustrirovannaia Rossiia* (Russia Illustrated), *Chisla* (The Numbers), and *Poslednie novosti* (The Last News). In addition to his own name, Adamovich sometimes used the pseudonyms of "Pengs" and "Kamen Sizifa" (The Stone of Sisyphus). He also signed work with his initials. Among the many reviews he wrote in Paris was one about Z. N. Gippius's book *Zhivye litsa* (The Living Portraits). They met in Cannes in 1926, where Adamovich also met her husband Dmitry Merezhkovsky, a well-known writer. After that, they saw each other at least once a week in Paris or in Cannes. In 1939 Adamovich published another book of poetry, *Na zapade: stikhi* (In the West: Poems).

When France declared war on Germany in September 1939, Adamovich was vacationing in Nice. He enlisted in the French army and was discharged late in 1940 after the armistice. Adamovich remained in Nice until 1946, when he returned to Paris. During the months of service, he kept a journal, which he published in 1947 under the title *L'autre patrie* (The Other Homeland). It is his only book in French.

In Paris, Adamovich resumed his literary activities, making contributions to American and French publications such as *Russkie Novosti* (Russian News), *Opyty* (Experiments), *Mosty* (Bridges), *Novoe russkoe slovo* (New Russian Word), and *Novyi zhurnal* (New Review). He was also engaged in editing and translating projects.

In 1951 Adamovich was appointed lecturer in Russian literature at the University of Manchester, a position he held for almost ten years before retiring at the age of 67. His book of prose, *Odinochestvo i svoboda: literaturnye ocherki* (Solitude and Freedom: Literary Sketches), was published in 1955. After

retirement he taught for one semester at Oxford University before returning to Paris, where he wrote scripts for Radio Liberty and continued to publish books. About three years after his return, Adamovich suffered a heart attack. Upon recovery, he went on a lecture tour in the United States, but was unable to fulfill his obligations because of frail health. Several years later he travelled to Nice, where he suffered a fatal stroke and died on February 11, 1972, at the age of 78.

Adamovich dedicated his life to literature. He was a critic, poet, writer, essayist, columnist, book and movie reviewer, teacher, editor and translator. His publications included 5 books of criticism (1955-67), 4 collections of poetry (1916-67), about 450 critical articles (1923-72), over 600 reviews (1921-72), 4 stories (1925-70), and 3 books of memoirs (1928, 1947, 1959), one written together with Aldanov and Ivanov. Together with M. L. Kantor, he founded and edited a short-lived monthly, *Vstrechi* (Meetings, 1934), and compiled *Iakor'* (Anchor, 1936), an émigré anthology. Adamovich translated three books from French into Russian, including Camus's *L'Étranger*.

Always involved in the literary life of the Russian émigré community, Adamovich became a permanent influence among the great Russian literary figures, especially through his criticism.

(Sources used: Z. N. (Zinaida Nikolaevna) Gippius, *Intellect and Ideas in Action...* comp. [by] Temira Pachmus (München: W. Fink, 1972); Roger Hagglund, *Georgy Adamovich* (Ann Arbor: Ardis, c1985); Roger Hagglund, *A Vision of Unity* (Ann Arbor: Ardis, c1985); George Ivask, "Sobesednik; pamiati Georgiia Viktorovicha Adamovicha," *Novyi zhurnal* 106 (March 1972): 284-88.)

Scope and Contents

The Georgii Adamovich Papers are contained in one box. The papers contain the correspondence from and to Georgii Viktorovich Adamovich, one book by I.A. Bunin, and poems by G.V. Ivanov.

The *Correspondence* includes 57 outgoing letters written by Adamovich to one of his best friends, the well-known Russian poet, prose writer, and literary critic, Georgii Vladimirovich Ivanov and his wife Irina Vladimirovna Odoevtseva, who was also a poet and novelist. (Her real name was Iraida Gustavovna Heinecke.) The letters are arranged chronologically in folders 1-3. Many names are mentioned in this correspondence, such as Aldanov, Bunin, Gul', Remizov, Teffi, Terapiano. Gul' is not presented in a favorable light. In the letter of September 20, 1958, Adamovich writes to Odoevtseva: "... Pisem u menia nikto ne chitaet, i ia vse seichas zhe unichtozhaiu. Esli pomru, budto nikhto nikogda mne i ne pisal! ..." (No one reads my letters, because I destroy all of them immediately. If I die, it will look as if no one ever wrote to me). He scrupulously protected his private life, which probably explains the relative scarcity of extant correspondence.

The correspondence also includes 101 incoming letters of eminent Russian literary figures. They are arranged alphabetically by author and then chronologically in folders 4-15. The incoming and outgoing letters span the dates 1927-60. Prominent correspondents represented in the collection include M. Aldanov, I.A. Bunin, Z.N. Gippius, A. Remizov, A.S. Shteiger, N.A. Teffi, M. TSvetaeva, and B.K. Zaitsev.

In one of his letters to Adamovich, M. Aldanov, whose real name was Mark Aleksandrovich Landau, not only praises, but also criticizes his book *L'autre patrie*.

I.A. Bunin's letters describe his everyday life and travel plans; they mention a considerable number of names (Tolstoy, Chekhov, Gorky, Zaitsev, Ivanov), discuss his writings and that of others, and include some gossip. They are interwoven with his poems and show Adamovich's and Bunin's closeness and friendship, even while Bunin criticizes *L'autre patrie*. On the other hand Adamovich, in an undated autograph note signed G.A, states that Bunin "...zhalovalsia, chto ego nedostatochno tseniat, kak poeta..." (complained, that he was not enough appreciated as a poet). A selection of Bunin's letters was published in *Novyi zhurnal* (v. 110, March 1973), by professor A. Zveers.

Z.N. Gippius's letters, masterful in content and language, form a valuable part of her literary production, interlacing her intellectuality and deep knowledge of literature. Gippius's selected letters to Adamovich have been edited and published by Temira Pachmus under the title *Intellect and Ideas in Action* (1972).

Next come two calligraphic letters of Aleksei Remizov. Baron Anatolii Sergeevich Shteiger writes to Adamovich from a sanatorium in Leysin, Switzerland, full of hope that he will overcome tuberculosis. Nadezhda Alexandra Buchinskaia, born Lokhvitskaia, is the real name of N.A. Teffi. She is represented by one letter. There is also only one letter of Marina TSvetaeva, who turns to Adamovich for help while preparing a lecture.

The last letters are written by Boris Konstantinovich Zaitsev. He sends Adamovich his new book *Izbrannye rasskazy* (Selected Stories) and asks him to write a review.

Miscellaneous Papers house a presentation copy of Bunin's *Vospominaniia* (Paris, 1950). Folder 17 contains four autograph poems by Georgii Ivanov.

Collection Contents

Series I: Correspondence, 1926-1960

15 Folders

OUTGOING

b. 1, f. 1	Ivanov, Georgii Vladimirovich	1955-57, n.d.
b. 1, f. 2-3	Odoevtseva, Irina Vladimirovna	1955-58

INCOMING

b. 1, f. 4	Aldanov, Mark Aleksandrovich	1927-57
b. 1, f. 5-7	Bunin, Ivan Alekseevich/ V.N. (Vera Nikolaevna) Bunina	1930-53, n.d.
b. 1, f. 8-9	Gippius, Z.N. (Zinaida Nikolaevna)	1926-41, n.d.
b. 1, f. 10	Merezhkovsky, Dmitry Sergeevich	1932
b. 1, f. 11	Remizov, Aleksei	1931, 1947
b. 1, f. 12	Shteiger, Anatolii Sergeevich, baron	1942-43
b. 1, f. 13	Teffi, N.A.	1931
b. 1, f. 14	TSvetaeva, Marina	1933
b. 1, f. 15	Zaitsev, Boris	1929-60

Series II: Miscellaneous Papers, 1951, n.d.*2 Folders*

b. 1, f. 16	Bunin, Ivan Alekseevich. Poem and inscriptions (photocopies), copied from presentation copy of <i>Vospominaniia</i> (Parizh: Vozrozhdenie, 1950), to G. Adamovich Volume removed (Mar 2000) for separate cataloging. Includes Adamovich's ms note, signed, originally laid into the volume ("Bunin quite often, called me a Tartar.")	1951
b. 1, f. 17	Ivanov, Georgii Vladimirovich. Four manuscript poems	n.d.

Selected Search Terms

The following terms have been used to index the description of this collection in the Library's online catalog. They are grouped by name of person or organization, by subject or location, and by occupation and listed alphabetically therein.

Subjects

Authors, Russian -- 20th Century
Poets, Russian -- 20th Century
Russians -- Foreign countries

Occupations

Authors

Names

Adamovich, Georgii, 1892-1972
Aldanov, Mark Aleksandrovich, 1886-1957
Bunin, Ivan Alekseevich, 1870-1953
Gippius, Z. N. (Zinaida Nikolaevna), 1869-1945
Ivanov, Georgii, 1894-1958
Merezhkovsky, Dmitry Sergeevich, 1865-1941
Odoevt's`eva, Irina, 1895-1990
Remizov, Alekseï, 1877-1957
Shteiger, Anatolii, 1907-1944
Tëffi, N. A. (Nadezhda Aleksandrovna),
1872-1952
TSvetaeva, Marina, 1892-1941
Zaiť`s`ev, Boris, 1881-1972