

24/03 — 28/03/2014

SWEET 60S GLOSSARY

*Meetings and Lectures*

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ტკბილი 60-იანების  
შეხვედრები და ლექციები

sweet

● Speakers

ZAZA ABZIANIDZE,  
GIORGI CHUKHROV,  
GIORGI MAISURADZE,  
KONSTANTINE NATSVLISHVILI,  
YEHUDA SAFRAN,  
PETER WATERHOUSE

● Project Curators

RUBEN AREVSHATYAN,  
LEVAN ASABASHVILI,  
GEORG SCHÖLLHAMMER

Project Coordinator

MIRJAM PANINSKI

Literature Museum — G. Chanturia st. 8, Tbilisi  
<http://www.literaturemuseum.ge/>

*Glossary Meetings* originally started as a loose series of gatherings. Local and international experts as well as students develop an atlas of terms and paths by which late modernism and the neo-avant-garde reached the respective cultural contexts and the languages of various cities and regions.

On this occasion, *tranzit.at* and *Urban Reactor* work with *VERSATORIUM*, a group of poetry translators linked to the Institute of Comparative Literature at the University of Vienna, local students, scholars and translators, as well as international experts, on a critical and experimental exploration of multi-layered structures and ethnically inhomogeneous landscapes – landscapes for translators on the outskirts of Europe. The event consists of semi-public translation workshops and public lectures on the current political and linguistic situation, along with debate on various approaches. Georgian as well as foreign, translated poetry serves as the initial point of departure for research and the following discussions. The meetings examine which terminologies could have evolved from these events and develop a mapping and critical translation strategies for their translation from and into “minor languages.” These emphases are intertwined with the various focuses of the long-term research project *Sweet 60s*.

*Speakers:* Zaza Abzianidze, Ketí Chukhrov, Giorgi Maisuradze, Konstantine Natsvlshvili, Yehuda Safran, Peter Waterhouse

*Project Curators:* Ruben Arevshatyan, Levan Asabashvili, Georg Schöllhammer  
*Project Coordinator:* Mirjam Paninski

*Sweet 60s* is a long-term trans-regional research initiative working between art, research, media and educational contexts in Europe, the Middle East, West and Central Asia and Northern Africa. Involving a particular group of experimentally oriented arts and research groups as well as particular artists, researchers and media, *Sweet 60s* investigates hidden histories or underexposed cultural junctions and exchange channels in the revolutionary period of the 1960s.

In the 1960s, the landscapes and cities of protectorates and former colonies from India to the Maghreb, from the Soviet republics to the new states in the southern hemisphere were replete with the spirit and forms of modernity, forms that transmogrify and then dissolve into the thin air of the vernacular. The star maps that are used to survey these artificial worlds often serve to navigate the boundaries between private and public domains. The world is full of eerie displacements and gestures of the uncanny, and the constellation of the real exists in a plethora of doubled forms. Question marks and meanderings are all part of this picture. Instruments of communication emerge and are locked away before they have a chance to become immaterial, disappear, and corrode in postmodernity.

The air of the 1960s echoes a spirit of emancipation. And the newly arising art-scapes are interspersed with double agents: diasporas bring their academies; the streams between Soviet, North and South American, Western European, Non-Aligned, etc., are full of interlocations, hidden pathways, and narratives of trade routes, beyond the seemingly stable hegemonies of the blocs.

*Sweet 60s* curators:  
Ruben Arevshatyan, Georg Schöllhammer

[www.sweetsixties.org](http://www.sweetsixties.org)



Sweet 60s was initiated by [tranzit.at](http://tranzit.at). [tranzit.at](http://tranzit.at) is the Vienna hub of [tranzit.org](http://tranzit.org), a network of independent initiatives in Austria, Czech Republic, Hungary, Romania and Slovak Republic. [tranzit.org](http://tranzit.org) operates as a collective of these autonomous local units, cooperating across various borders – between nations, languages, media, mentalities and histories.

[tranzit.at](http://tranzit.at) was founded in 2004. Its aim is to challenge the post-Fordist idea of cultural production and of the cultural institution in the categories of efficiency and relevance. [tranzit.at](http://tranzit.at) is dedicated to the research of long-term counter- canonical artistic practices and engaging in translocal collaborations beyond the event and across disciplines.  
<http://at.tranzit.org>

Urban Reactor is a platform for socio-spatial research, debate and education. Currently it is busy with building up "The Library for Built Environment Studies." Among the activities of the library are: selecting and accumulating relevant literature, providing the public with translations of key texts important in the current Georgian context, organizing reading groups and round table discussions, networking of the people active in architecture, planning and activism.  
<http://urbanreactor.blogspot.co.at/>

VERSATORIUM is group of young researchers who work together in a so-called *Konversatorium* at the Department for Comparative Literature at the University of Vienna. We ask theoretical questions about a work of poetry or works devoted to poetry and translate these. In 2011 and 2012, we studied the poems and essays of the US poet Charles Bernstein; we are currently working on the oeuvre of Rosmarie Waldrop; future work will lead us to the works of Susan Howe and Marjorie Perloff.  
<http://www.versatorium.at/>

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— SWEET 60S GLOSSARY  
*Meetings and Lectures*

— PROGRAMM —

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LITERATURE MUSEUM  
G. CHANTURIA ST. 8,  
TBILISI

<http://www.literaturemuseum.ge/>

TUESDAY, MARCH 25

19:00 – 19:30  
KETI CHUKHROV  
Apology of “Classical” Art  
in Soviet Aesthetics

19:30 – 20:00  
GIORGI MAISURADZE  
The Cultural Transformation of Soviet  
Georgia in the Post-Stalin Epoch

20:00 – 21:00  
Discussion

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 26

19:00 – 19:30  
ZAZA ABZIANIDZE  
XX-Century Georgian Literature from  
the XXI-Century Perspective:  
Modernist Perspectives

19:30 – 20:00  
KONSTANTINE NATSVLISHVILI  
The Cultural Space of Georgia in the  
Post-Stalin Epoch

20:00 – 21:00  
Discussion

THURSDAY, MARCH 27

19:00 – 19:30  
YEHUDA SAFRAN  
Translation and the Origin of the  
Work of Art

19:30 – 20:00  
PETER WATERHOUSE  
Translation and Demilitarization –  
Speculations on the 1960s in  
Tbilisi and Vienna

20:00 – 21:00  
Discussion

## SWEET 60S GLOSSARY

### *Meetings and Lectures*

#### — SPEAKERS AND TOPICS —

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##### **Zaza Abzianidze**

Zaza Abzianidze is a literary historian, essayist, children's writer, Doctor of Philology and professor, born on October 30, 1940, into a family of litterateurs. He graduated from the Faculty of Humanities at Tbilisi State University in 1963 and earned a PhD at the Institute of Georgian Literature, where he has been working to date as a Senior Researcher.

In different periods Zaza Abzianidze managed the repertory section of the Marjanishvili State Drama Theatre and was head of the Department of Philology at the Georgian State Institute of Theatre and Film. He has been the editor-in-chief of the Russian-language magazine *Literary Georgia* since 1996.

Since his student days, Abzianidze has published numerous critical articles, essays and verses. The title of his PhD thesis was "The Concept of Man in Modern Georgian Lyrics," and his doctoral dissertation was on "The Humanist Ideal of Georgian Prose in the XIX–XX Centuries." He is the author of 20 books and more than 200 articles on literature, cultural studies and children's literature. He also writes literary fairy tales and children's verses, which he illustrates himself. One of the fairy tales, "The Bow," was awarded first prize in a UNICEF literary competition in 2000.

Abzianidze is an initiator and moderator of, and participant in, numerous literary forums and a master-class teacher at poetry festivals and seminars on literary translation.

##### *XX-Century Georgian Literature from the XXI-Century Perspective: Modernist Perspectives*

Half a century's distance is sufficient for viewing the literary panorama in its entirety and in its bypassed phases in order to objectively distinguish the aesthetic revolt from effective but temporary performances.

The dramatism of Georgian literature of the 1960s and 70s is defined by the existence of these two poles, while the tragedy of the critique is its refusal to see them. The dominant literary discourse of the 60s – "thawing" ("Оттепель," named after Ilya Ehrenburg's novel) was constructed on the illusory hopes for inevitable democratic reforms.

My argument is that in Georgian literature of the 1970s the immanent modernist tendency occurred as a spontaneous reaction to the previous decade's overdosed "sweetening," as detraction from the illusions feeding that entire "literary socium" ... This irritation provoked by the optimism of literary predecessors was exposed in the intentional "anti-lyricism" of "small" prose with its overexposed realism couched in Romanticism – with satire and the grotesque, and in the metamorphosis of the historical novel, where the sequence of tragic characters embodies the tragedy of the country conquered by the Bolsheviks.

Similar tendencies occurred in poetry and became symptomatic signs of the spiritual discomfort of the artist. More and more frequent negation of conventional versification and the destructive revision of the entire artistic requisites of poetry are illustrative in this case.

##### **Keti Chukhrov**

Keti Chukhrov holds a PhD in comparative literature and currently works as an associate professor at the Russian State University for Humanities (Department of Art Theory and Cultural Studies). She is head of the Theory Department at the National Center for Contemporary Arts. She is a member of the editorial council of *Moscow Art Magazine* and author of publications on culture, philosophy and art theory for various journals, including *Moscow Art Magazine*, *nlo* (new literary review), *Chto delat*, *brumaria*, *documenta Magazines*, *Sarai Readers*, *artforum*, *springerin*, *e-flux*, Pushkin, *Afterall* and *The Open Space*. From 2008–2010 she worked as researcher for the Gender Check project at the mumok Museum, and as post-doctoral researcher in the Philosophy Department of the Russian State University for Humanities.

Her books include: *Pound & £*, Moscow, Logos Publishers, 1999; *To Be – To Perform. "Theatre" in Philosophical Criticism of Art*, SPB, European Univ. Press, 2011; *War of Quantities*, dramatic poetry, Borey Art Center, SPB, 2003; *Just Humans (Pros- to Liudi)*, dramatic poetry, Translit/Free Marxist Publishers, Moscow, 2010.

Apology of "Classical" Art in Soviet Aesthetics

The domination of classical aesthetics in Soviet post-Stalinist culture is usually regarded as a holdover from authoritarian cultural politics. Hence, the criticism of modernism as part and parcel of bourgeois Western aesthetics is thought to be the consequence of such a reactionary standpoint. This paper attempts to dispute this stereotype and unravels the apology of the "classical" as the epistemological outcome of Hegel's and Marx's demands for art and aesthetics. Soviet Marxist philosophy links the notion of the classical with the convergence of the conceptual and the sensuous in art – the bond that facilitates access to reality, neglected in modernism. The realist and "classical" become the values that are able to overcome the crisis of humanism inevitable in the conditions of the societies of late capitalism. M. Lifshitz for example uses the term "human resignation" to dispute the antihumanism of modernism and to claim the humanism of classical and realist art. But the question remains: Why do art or culture have to be humanist at all?

**Giorgi Maisuradze**

Born in 1970, Giorgi Maisuradze studied in Tbilisi, Saarbrücken and Berlin. He received his PhD in 2009 at Humboldt University in Berlin. From 2008 he has worked as a researcher at the Literature and Culture Research Centre, Berlin, and from 2010 as professor at Ilia State University, Tbilisi.

The Cultural Transformation of Soviet Georgia in the Post-Stalin Epoch

The 20th Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (1956) and the fierce critique of Stalin's "cult of personality" mark wider changes in the nationality and national cultural policies of the USSR. The Khrushchev era, popularly called "warming," made possible hidden critique in the cultural sphere. Such changes in Georgian as well as broader Soviet art and literature gave birth to the specific, parable-like language that became a special feature of the Soviet culture of the Post-Stalin epoch. In Georgian culture this process is depicted based on two main aspects:

1. Reactualization of the national patriotic theme
2. Social critique in parable-like language

**Konstantine Natsvlishvili**

Konstantine Natsvlishvili was born in Kutaisi in 1978. In 2000 he graduated from the Faculty of Economics, Kutaisi State University. From 2001–2006 he studied art history and archeology at Trier State University. He received his master's degree from Basel State University's Faculty of Cultural Policy and Management in 2009. At present he is working on his PhD thesis at Tbilisi State University. His topic is "The Influence of Georgian Cultural Policy on the Management of Museums from 2011." Natsvlishvili has participated in international and regional projects on cultural policy and the protection of cultural heritage. He works at the national agency for monument protection, specializing in the protection of intangible heritage. He also teaches at Tbilisi State University and regularly conducts training and seminars in various regions of Georgia on behalf of cultural organizations.

The Cultural Space of Georgia in the Post-Stalin Epoch

Georgian as an official state language, approved by the Soviet constitution, defined a cultural space in Soviet Georgia. This space can be analyzed separately from the rest of the USSR's cultural space. The use of the Georgian language in every sphere of high culture gave Georgian artists the impression of reduced state control and independence from the central censorship authorities, although this sense of freedom was illusory. For Georgian artists, the important factor was local censorship, which was directly related to local political processes.

In my talk I'll try to analyze the cultural space of Soviet Georgia in the so-called "standstill" epoch in relation to the contemporary social, economic and political processes, and also in terms of the artistic discourses of the period, throughout the USSR and beyond the Iron Curtain.

Georgian film provides very rich material for analyzing Georgian art and the cultural space of this period. It depicts the processes inside literature, music, choreography and the visual arts. For stronger argumentation, examples from other disciplines will also be presented.

**Yehuda Emmanuel Safran**

Yehuda E. Safran studied at Saint Martin's School of Art, the Royal College of Art, and University College, London, majoring in art, architecture and philosophy respectively. He has taught at the Architectural Association, Goldsmith's College, London University; the



Royal College of Art, London; and the Jan van Eyck Academy, Maastricht. He was a fellow of the Chicago Institute of Architecture and Urbanism and visiting professor at the School of Architecture, University of Illinois, as well as at Rhode Island School of Design and Harvard Graduate School of Design. He has published in *9H*, *Casabella*, *Domus*, *Sight and Sound*, *Paris Match*, *Lotus*, *A+U*, *AA Files*, *Proto-typo*, *Metalocus*, *Abitare*, *The Plan*, *springerin* and *Artpress*, among others. With Steven Holl and others, he was editor of *32 Beijing/New York* and among the editors of *springerin*, Vienna. He is the author of *Mies van der Rohe* (2000). Safran has curated exhibitions including the Arts Council of Great Britain's touring exhibition and publication on *The Architecture of Adolf Loos*, the Frederick Kiesler show at the Architectural Association, and *Adolf Loos: Our Contemporary* at the MAK Vienna and the GSAPP Columbia University Gallery. He was a trustee of the 9H Gallery, a founding member of the Architecture Foundation in London, and a member of the College International de Philosophie, Paris. Currently he lives and works in New York, where he directs the journal *Potlatch* and the Research Lab for Art and Architecture and teaches at Columbia University Graduate School of Architecture, Planning and Preservation. In addition, he is a consultant to Steven Holl Architects.

Translation and the Origin of the Work of Art

Walter Benjamin wrote in "Translation" of figures of posterity: the storyteller, the translator, the critic. He saw a parallel between translatability and reproducibility. "In translation the original rises into a higher and purer linguistic air, as it were." ("Translation," *Illuminations*, p. 75.)

Indeed, this word alone immediately inspires myriad associations, interpretations, etc. In the acts of our everyday lives as well as in the most refined atmosphere of contemplation, we find ourselves taking recourse to the concept of translation: the transportation of something into something or somewhere else. If, as Rudyard Kipling was aware, we are dependent on others – "I keep six honest serving-men (They taught me all I knew);

Their names are What and Why and When and How and Where and Who»

– this prompts us to reflect on the condition of translatability, on the work of art in the era of digital reproduction.

Franz Rosenzweig believed all language to be an act of translation. (*Die Schrift und Luther*, Berlin, 1926)

No doubt his magnum opus, the translation of the Old Testament, with Martin Buber, inspired him to think that language consists of translation and little else.

Could his book *The Star of Redemption* have been written at all from this perspective? Apparently, yes.

When Else Lasker-Schuler was asked, after living in Jerusalem for several years, if she intended to write in Hebrew, she replied: Have I ever written in any other language?

These initial considerations will lead us to ask again: Is translation possible?

**Peter Waterhouse**

Peter Waterhouse is British, born in Berlin in 1956. He studied at the University of Southern California and the University of Vienna and has worked since 1984 as a writer and translator (of Michael Hamburger, Andrea Zanzotto, Biagio Marin, Allen Ginsberg, Charles Bernstein). Recent publications: *Krieg und Welt* (War and World), 2006; *Der Honigverkäufer im Palastgarten und das Auditorium Maximum* (The Honey-Seller in the Palace Garden and the Auditorium Maximum), 2010; upcoming: *Einführung in das Federlesen*.

Translation and Demilitarization – Speculations on the 1960s in Tbilisi and Vienna

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