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Collecting Contingency:

Soviet *Samizdat* and Printing by Other Means

A thesis submitted in partial satisfaction

of the requirements for the degree Master of Library

and Information Science

by

Michaela Mallory Telfer

2024

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2024

ABSTRACT OF THE THESIS

Collecting Contingency:

Soviet *Samizdat* and Printing by Other Means

by

Michaela Mallory Telfer

Master of Library and Information Science

University of California, Los Angeles, 2024

Professor Robert D. Montoya, Chair

Collecting Contingency argues that the means of *samizdat* production during the classic Soviet *samizdat* period (1950s-1980s) introduced a different ontological understanding of print, publication, and the book than did official forms of printing in the same era. This alternative ontology resulted in a return to the ambiguous status of print in the early European print era and established forms of authorization, printing, and publication based in collaborative circulation and creative piracy. However, the standards that organize libraries and archives are built on the values of the official printing industry and cannot adequately contextualize the fugitive *samizdat* text. Due to this shortcoming, *samizdat* texts are delegitimized and misrepresented by current Western library and archival standards of authorization, description, provenance, and fixity.

Failing to adapt standards to take fugitivity into account does not just reify narrow, hegemonic standards of print and knowledge organization, but also risks significant cultural loss.

The thesis of Michaela Mallory Telfer is approved.

Cindy Anh Nguyen

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Robert D. Montoya, Committee Chair

University of California, Los Angeles

2024

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INTRODUCTION

> *"I burned it in the stove."*
> *"Forgive me, but I don't believe you," said Woland. "That cannot be. Manuscripts don't burn." He turned to Behemoth and said, "Well now, Behemoth, let's have the novel."*
> *The cat jumped off the chair instantly, and everyone saw that he had been sitting on a thick pile of manuscripts. The cat handed the top one to Woland with a bow. Again, almost in tears, Margarita started trembling and shouting, "There it is, the manuscript! There it is!"*
> *She threw herself at Woland and added rapturously, "He's omnipotent! Omnipotent!"*[1]

What is the place of fugitivity and fugitive texts in the archive and library? While Bulgakov's figurative claim that "manuscripts don't burn" speaks to the ways in which fugitive materials find unexpected means of escape and survival despite their vulnerability, archivists and librarians know very well that physical manuscripts *do* burn, tear, get lost, are destroyed, are confiscated, mold, and find other ways to disappear. Their vulnerability often leads to gaps in the bibliographic universe and difficult cataloguing and description decisions in the face of missing information or texts. However, these vulnerabilities, while they threaten the preservation of fugitive manuscripts, are also born out of the defining features of those same materials; they are an integral element of what makes the fugitive manuscript what it is. Fugitive materials, in this case, can be considered "as materials and records of communities that are fleeting, ephemeral, illegal, or lack a home whether it be institutional, private, or otherwise."[2] In the case of *samizdat*[3]

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1. Mikhail Bulgakov, *The Master and Margarita*, trans. Diana Burgin and Katherine Tiernan O'Connor (New York: Vintage International 1995), 245.

2. Kevin Adams, "Slavic, East European, and Eurasian Punk Alternative Publications: Challenges to Fugitive Materials," *Slavic & East European Information Resources* 22, no. 1 (2021): 45n.7.

texts, which were books that were self-published and circulated through social circles after they were banned, censored, or refused by the official state-owned publishing sector, we can also see the ways in which *samizdat* publication and distribution was driven by flight. Their distribution through underground networks or tendency to burst out of the USSR in search of a more amenable publishing environment occurred through a continuous act of fleeing: from censors, from KGB agents, from the desk drawer or trash bin, from the Soviet Union itself, and from the constrictions that often trapped the authors that originally penned their words in place.

The period usually given for classic *samizdat* production in the context of the Soviet Union, which is where I will be focusing, starts in the 1950s and extends into the mid-1980s, with high activity in the 1960s in particular.[4] I will also be focusing on *samizdat* texts originally written in Russian for the sake of scope as *samizdat* texts were created in various pockets of the USSR and its satellite states in local languages, including in Poland, Ukraine, Czechia, Romania, and other locations, and each of these areas have their own particularities that I do not want to risk flattening or over-generalizing. While much of the common mythos around *samizdat* that considers *samizdat* texts and authors as inherently genius or heroic[5] may overly romanticize the reality of their production and while their level of political impact within the Soviet Union is likely impossible to parse and contested, it is worth considering what kinds of possibilities *samizdat* texts open up when defining what it means to print or what constitutes (a) print culture.

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3 Understood as self-published or, literally, self-publishing house from *sam* (self) and a shortened version of *izdatel'stvo* (publishing house). As Ann Komaromi explains, the term comes out of the poet Nikolai Glazkov's term "Samsebiaizdat" (something like "I myself publish" or "me myself publishing house" from *sam*, *sebia* (myself, reflexive), and *izdatel'stvo*) to mimic the names of official state publishers like Gosizdat, the State Publishing House. See Ann Komaromi, *Soviet Samizdat: Imagining a New Society* (Ithaca: Northern Illinois University Press, 2022), 4.

4. Ann Komaromi, "The Material Existence of Soviet Samizdat," *Slavic Review* 63, no. 3 (2004): 598. doi: 10.2307/1520346.

5. See Ann Komaromi, "Samizdat as Extra-Gutenberg Phenomenon," Poetics Today 29, no. 4 (2008): 630. doi: 10.1215/03335372-080.

In this sense, my focus is not so much on the content of *samizdat* texts, which could vary widely including taking on vastly opposing worldviews and political beliefs depending on the location, decade, and author, but on the materiality of *samizdat* texts, and particularly the fluidity of that materiality. That is, I want to focus specifically on how *samizdat* texts existed and continue to exist physically in the world, what they're made out of and how they were created. *Samizdat* texts could take different forms—"newspapers, newsheets, pamphlets, journals, letters, manifestos"[6] and, of course, books—and were most often created on typewriters with carbon paper and circulated among trusted social circles, often going through handwritten revisions or alterations in the course of their circulation. As I will discuss further in Section I, it was these unofficial, contingent material forms and fugitive modes of circulation that made *samizdat* possible and allowed *samizdat* participants—who might be political dissidents, urban intellectuals, ethnic or religious minorities, or even reformist party members[7]—to navigate around and outside of oppressive official institutions.

Now, however, many *samizdat* texts are held in institutions, both inside and outside of Russia. As a result of their official collection and preservation, *samizdat*'s fugitive qualities introduce a tension between the realities of the materials themselves and the institutional standards that work to make them more widely accessible. Modern libraries and archives, which focus on standardization, documentation, and preservation precisely require the close surveillance and tracking of any text, or possible versions of a text, that enter the collection as well as the creators and contributors who produced that text. They aim to fix a text in one place

6. Gordon Johnston, "What is the History of Samizdat?," *Social History* 24, no. 2 (1999): 122. doi: 10.1080/03071029908568058.

7. Johnston, "What is the History of Samizdat?," 128, 129.

and state, and rely on set Euro-American-dominant standards to classify and assign value to a text. But fugitive texts are specifically created under the radar, in liminal, illegal spaces where that kind of surveillance and tracking would have resulted in the text's, or even the author's, seizure or destruction. They remain unfixed as a means of quick escape and build untraceable provenances that connect in unexpected and uncontrollable ways across seemingly closed national borders. They adopt print methodologies that don't look like print, authorize the unauthorized, and legitimate the illegitimate. In the era of linked data, we are realizing more and more that texts ought not to be collected and preserved as discrete, singular objects that are fully described and made relevant through their self-contained content and individual metadata alone. Rather, texts, like anything else, are created through networks of participants making specific decisions that are linked to other political, economic, or cultural decisions which all work together to create the material reality into which these same texts emerge. While gaining full knowledge of the networks created by *samizdat* circulation is nigh impossible, we can still use the information we do have, and the gaps in information, to preserve, catalogue, and make accessible *samizdat* texts according to their own unique qualities rather than by imposing dominant library and information studies (LIS) standards that often work to delegitimize *samizdat* texts. To do so, we first need to consider the print world of *samizdat* literature and how it relates to official print culture in the 20th century.

Setting Up the Argument

Scholars working on the history of the book, like Elizabeth Eisenstein[8] and Adrian Johns,[9] have delved into the effects of the development of printing and how a shift in the material qualities of texts over time produced concrete influences on the spread of information. However, a piece of the printing sphere that is often missing in broad histories of the book are self-published and specifically illicitly printed and circulated texts created after the concretization of an official global publishing industry but before the major shift to digital publishing.[10] In recent years, Slavic scholars like Ann Komaromi[11] and Josephine von Zitzewitz[12] have particularly examined the ways in which Soviet *samizdat* created alternative publics or textual cultures within the USSR. As these authors contend, while *samizdat* did not always position itself in opposition to the state directly, it did create an alternative to official state-sponsored literary culture and forged new reading communities and social networks. As Komaromi and Zitzewitz discuss, and as I will elaborate on further in Section I, these kinds of developments came about

8. Elizabeth L. Eisenstein, *The Printing Press as an Agent of Change: Communications and Cultural Transformations in Early-Modern Europe: Volumes I and II* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009).

9. Adrian Johns, *The Nature of the Book: Print and Knowledge in the Making* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1998).

10. There are, of course, more specialized monographs that focus on self-publishing. For example, Suyoung Son's *Writing for Print: Publishing and the Making of Textual Authority in Late Imperial China* or John B. Thompson's *Book Wars: The Digital Revolution in Publishing* both discuss legal self-publication extensively in more contemporary periods, although they don't seem to engage with illicit materials. See Suyoung Son, *Writing for Print: Publishing and the Making of Textual Authority in Late Imperial China* (Cambridge: Harvard University Asia Center, 2018) and John B. Thompson, *Book Wars: The Digital Revolution in Publishing* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2021). Similarly, Johns' *Piracy: The Intellectual Property Wars from Gutenberg to Gates* does focus on illicit texts through the specific lens of the development of piracy and, by extension, IP and copyright. See Adrian Johns, *Piracy: The Intellectual Property Wars from Gutenberg to Gates* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2009). Broad histories, however, like Eisenstein's *The Printing Press as an Agent of Change* or *The Book: A Global History* don't engage meaningfully with self-published works or illicit texts and Johns' *The Nature of the Book* discusses illicit texts but does not go past the 18th century. See *The Book: A Global History*, eds. Michael F. Suarez and H. R. Woudhuysen (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013).

11. Komaromi, *Soviet Samizdat*.

12. Josephine von Zitzewitz, *The Culture of Samizdat: Literature and Underground Networks in the Late Soviet Union* (London: Bloomsbury Academic, 2021).

not just as a result of the contingent status of *samizdat* texts, but also out of their particular material qualities. With these developments in mind, as Komaromi and University of Toronto librarian Ksenya Kiebuzinski[13] have suggested, there is room for more analysis of the material qualities of *samizdat* texts and their role in the history of the book and in print culture in the twentieth century.

Due to the ephemerality and instability of *samizdat* texts, as well as the political barriers to their preservation, collections holding *samizdat* materials are scattered and face significant challenges regarding authority control, preservation, and access when dealing with these materials. Relatively little work has been done on the status of *samizdat* texts in archives but Olga Zaslavskaya[14] and Kiebuzinski[15] have focused on the incompleteness of *samizdat* archives and their inaccessibility due to the fact that they are typically fragmented and scattered in various international locales. The vulnerability of *samizdat*—both physical and political—continues to contribute to these ongoing issues and brings up crucial questions about how these kinds of texts might nuance definitions of printing and print culture as well as the role of concepts like 'authority' and 'fixity' within archival or special collections spaces. Building on Zaslavskaya's and Kiebuzinski's work, I particularly want to address the conceptual frictions between what *samizdat* texts are and the concepts that guide how archival and library materials are classified, described, and organized which serve as the root of these more practical concerns.

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13. Ksenya Kiebuzinski, "Samizdat and Dissident Archives: Trends in Their Acquisition, Preservation, and Access in North American Repositories," *Slavic & East European Information Resources* 13, no. 1 (2012): 3-25.

14. Olga Zaslavskaya, "From Dispersed to Distributed Archives: The Past and the Present of Samizdat Material," *Poetics Today* 29, no. 4 (2008): 669-712. doi: 10.1215/03335372-081.

15. Kiebuzinski, "Samizdat and Dissident Archives."

Focusing in particular on the material qualities of *samizdat* texts and their specific modes of printing and circulation, I argue in Section I that *samizdat* materials redefine what it means to print and what constitutes a print culture in the twentieth century by simultaneously adopting techniques from the Christian manuscript era and modern technology and by relying on collaborative forms of text creation. These forms of text creation allow a text to effectively be printed in the course of its circulation through piracy which, in this case, enacts an authorizing function rather than a deauthorizing function. Furthermore, I argue that this specific approach to printing is an ontological difference, not just a methodological difference. That is, while official printing is typically defined by publisher and book seller-controlled commercial book markets or state-controlled publishing bodies, fixed and standardized print editions with clearly notated contributors, and careful legal regulations around intellectual property rights, *samizdat* printing was multimedial, intentionally contingent and fugitive, primarily distributed and created through free circulation, collaboratively authorized by its readership, created unique copies like in the manuscript era, and relied on piracy as a printing and authorizing methodology rather than a deauthorizing threat. Through its reimagining of what print could look like, realized through technological hybridity and collaborative authorship, *samizdat* printing offers a material demonstration of what printing might had readers and industry professionals turned away from a desire for a standardized book format, commercial book market, authorial credit, intellectual property, and copyright.

Given these differences, *samizdat* printing fundamentally comes into friction with the standardized frameworks that guide authorization[16] and require object fixity in libraries and

16. When I refer to authorizing a text throughout this thesis, I mean the process whereby a particular text is recognized officially by a library, archive, or other institutional body as what it is and connected to recognized creators and contributors where possible through cataloguing or other forms of documentation. That is, an official

archives. To address this tension, in Section II I will argue that information professionals risk erasing some of the core contingent qualities of *samizdat* materials that give them meaning and value through LIS ontologies and standards of classification, description, fixity, and authority. As a part of this argument, I will examine the ways in which Euro-American library and archival standards collapse ontological differences across official and *samidat* print practices. In particular, typewritten *samizdat* materials are typically treated as archival, manuscript materials rather than printed, published books, while officially published *tamizdat*[17] materials are treated as printed, published books because they mirror a particular expectation of an official codex. These kinds of definitional moves deauthorize typewritten *samizdat* materials and present only officially published texts, like *tamizdat* editions and *samizdat* published officially in the late- or post-Soviet era, as legitimate and accurate versions of a particular text. This kind of deauthorization and delegitimization of typewritten *samizdat* books obscures the collaborative, creative authorship involved in *samizdat* texts, invalidates the ways a text transformed through its circulation and expanded into varying types of legitimated versions, and devalues unofficial typewritten *samizdat* materials in comparison to officially published versions which violates the original ethos of *samizdat* texts that were created and circulated illegally and legitimated

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body has established that the text is allowed to bear a particular title and creator name which are linked to a particular work and agent through authority control. Typically, this kind of authorization would occur through a process of authentication and tracing authorial intent to establish whether or not a particular text were actually a reliable manifestation of a given expression of a work, just a part of the work, or an unauthorized or inaccurate version. In this sense, while authorization does at its root come from the primary creator—for books, the author—it is also typically supplemented by publishers, printers, provenance, and libraries and archives.

17. Like the word *samizdat*, the word *tamizdat* also pulls from the word *izdatel'stvo* (publishing house) but replaces the *sam* (self) with *tam* (over there). The term *tamizdat* was used to refer to *samizdat* texts that had been smuggled out of the USSR by authors or readers for publication abroad, many of which then appeared in translated, officially published copies particularly in Western Europe or North America. For more detail on *tamizdat* specifically, see Friederike Kind-Kovács, *Written Here, Published There: How Underground Literature Crossed the Iron Curtain* (Budapest: Central European University Press, 2014).

specifically *because* of their fugitivity and contingency. To address these forms of delegitimization, I will examine specific standards and models like Describing Archives: A Content Standard (DACS), Resource Description and Access (RDA), and Functional Requirements for Bibliographic Records (FRBR), as well as guiding LIS concepts like fixity, authority, and provenance. Amidst important ongoing conversations around improving representation and incorporating new cultural ontologies into archival and library spaces and practices—especially Indigenous ontologies[18]—there is also space to reconsider how current standardized approaches to classification and description can delegitimize fugitive materials.

Limitations

One of the major limitations around working with *samizdat* texts also highlights one of problems with archival *samizdat* that I will discuss in Section II. Namely, that it is difficult to gain access to certain kinds of *samizdat* texts without significant time and resources depending on where a scholar is located. While the University of Toronto's online Soviet Samizdat Periodicals archive[19] is an impressive and useful resource, it only includes exactly that: periodicals. There are *samizdat* collections in the United States—primarily at the Hoover Institution[20] and The George Washington University[21]—that include other kinds of *samizdat*

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18. See for example Marisa Elena Duarte and Miranda Belarde-Lewis, "Imagining: Creating Spaces for Indigenous Ontologies," *Cataloging & Classification Quarterly* 53, no. 5-6 (2015): 677-702. doi: 10.1080/01639374.2015.1018396.

19. Ann Komaromi, *Soviet Samizdat Periodicals*, University of Toronto Libraries, accessed on 10 May, 2024, https://samizdat.library.utoronto.ca/.

20. "Soviet Union," *Hoover Institution*, accessed 10 May, 2024, https://www.hoover.org/library-archives/collections/soviet-union.

21. "Peter Reddaway Samizdat Collection," *GW Libraries*, George Washington University, 2017, https://searcharchives.library.gwu.edu/repositories/2/resources/805.

texts, but these resources are not digitized and so it is necessary to travel to the collections to use them. Similarly, the OSA Archivum in Budapest, which holds Radio Liberty's/Radio Free Europe's collections, have primarily only digitized audiovisual files, usually political in nature as Radio Liberty specifically focused on collecting political materials,[22] and other *samizdat* resources are primarily only retained in physical copies. There are also Russian organizations that hold physical *samizdat* materials from the classic *samizdat* period, notably Fond Iofe, but it is difficult to find these organizations or to determine if there are significant collections of *samizdat* from this era in larger official institutions that might be more accessible, including online. Fond Iofe, for example, describes itself as a "неформальное сообщество" [informal association or community].[23] It's also difficult to know how many materials are held in private collections and, thus, not made available to the public. These challenges have made it challenging to find direct examples of *samizdat* texts given the limited scope of this project. My own experience with these challenges support Kiebuzinski's concerns about the practical difficulties of using *samizdat* collections that are fragmentary and broadly dispersed. It's also worth noting that digital copies of *samizdat* texts do not always give an adequate sense of their materiality and can still be limiting for researchers even if they provide a base level of access. However, in conjunction with these difficulties, there is also a larger fundamental difficulty of *samizdat* examples that is inherent to the ways in which they were created and circulated.

That is, one of the difficulties of identifying examples through which to analyze *samizdat* circulation, is that even those participating at the time, and even well-known authors whose work

22. Zaslavskaya, "From Dispersed to Distributed Archives," 695.

23. "Кто мы," *Фонд Иофе*, accessed on 14 May 2024, https://iofe.center/about.

was also published officially in *tamizdat* and within the Soviet Union, could not get a full view of the *samizdat* readers' and collaborators' networks. The Russian *samizdat* writer and political dissident Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn, for example, talking about his semi-autobiographical novel *Cancer Ward* in his memoir *The Oak and the Calf* claims that "*Cancer Ward* has had an extremely wide circulation" and, in confirmation of the question as to whether it might be published abroad, continues that "I shouldn't be surprised if it appeared abroad."[24] When asked how this wide circulation came to be, Solzhenitsyn explains that he gave copies to a few writers to get feedback and then started handing it out more widely to publishing houses or anyone who requested.[25] His claim that he "shouldn't be surprised" if *tamizdat* versions of *Cancer Ward* came out suggests that while he initiated the circulation of his text, he didn't have a clear vision of where that circulation extended and what versions it may or may not have produced. When talking about *The First Circle*, he also claims that he "learned that it was being passed around behind my back" before he intentionally initiated its circulation.[26] In this case, he wasn't even the first to know about his own text's circulation among the reading public and would have no real way to track the extent of that existing circulation and what happened to the text, how it may have morphed or become fragmented, along the way. At this point, he admits that he started agreeing to share the text, explaining that "I decided that an author's rights in respect of his novel are no less than anyone else's."[27] The phrasing here reflects to some extent what seemed to be a prevailing ethos of the *samizdat* community: the author's rights "*are no less than anyone else's*"

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24. Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn and Harry Willetts, "From 'The Oak and the Calf:' Memoirs of a Literary Life," *The Kenyon Review* 2, no. 2 (1980): 58.

25. Solzhenitsyn and Willetts, "From 'The Oak and the Calf,'" 58.

26. Solzhenitsyn and Willetts, "From 'The Oak and the Calf,'" 59.

27. Solzhenitsyn and Willetts, "From 'The Oak and the Calf,'" 59.

but they're also, apparently, no *more*. Solzhenitsyn may have been the original author of the work that began circulating among readers, apparently unbeknownst to him, but after that circulation started, he became a participant. Part of the reason his books were circulated so widely was that he had experienced state violence firsthand as a political prisoner and discussed these experiences in his books which did give him some level of status among the *samizdat* community. However, this status was based on witnessing and truth-telling and theoretically any participant could both achieve a similar status through dissident activities and could feel free to retype and pass on his work without diminishing it. Solzhenitsyn could supply the original expression of the work in terms of how he created it, but it's unclear if this same expression was the original expression that was circulated or if it survived intact once he released it into the network of readers, collaborators, and copiers.

These are the kinds of snippets of the lives of *samizdat* texts that we do know, and in this case part of that knowledge is because Solzhenitsyn is an internationally well-known author who chose specifically to record this information. But mostly what these snippets of knowledge reveal is the vastness of what is unknown, what examples we can't point to because a record of how they were printed and circulated doesn't exist and perhaps couldn't exist because who could keep track of the various expressions of the text, which ones might count as original, and the ways in which the text may have changed (or not) when it was being copied and passed around? In this sense, the best examples are perhaps the lack of examples: absence is a product of *samizdat* networks specifically because of how they function and the ways in which texts and participants interacted with each other to create, print, publish, and circulate. It is the absence of examples that truly defines the printing, publication, and circulation practices of *samizdat* texts and creators and that illuminates the issues of archival preservation that I will address in Section II.

Making these absences visible is, in this sense, a necessary step for researching *samizdat* printing and archiving practices—the absences need to be traced in order to give a full picture of what such a series of printing networks might have looked like in actuality. Given these difficulties, I have attempted not just to zoom into the details of what examples are available where possible, but also to zoom into the details of what is *not* there.

Conclusion

Despite these limitations, the goal of this project is not only to trace the ways in which *samizdat* texts put pressure on dominant definitions of printing and standards for knowledge organization, but also to highlight the need for tailoring LIS practices to the specificities of collected materials. Rather than attempting to fit fugitive texts into institutional spaces, standards, or classifications anathema to the ontologies that created them, LIS professionals need to instead think through collecting and preservation practices that serve the materials themselves and the communities and ontologies that created them. *Samizdat* serves as a key test case for this kind of argument because the Soviet state's extreme control over official publishing required *samizdat* participants to redevelop every part of the printing process in a new way and because the significance of texts created in response to, and as records of, political violence is likely evident. Drawing on the case of *samizdat* texts to rethink our dominant definitions and practices can only serve to help other categories of fugitive texts, including those that have not yet been created, thrive.

SECTION I: Printing by Other Means: *Samizdat* and Piratical Collaboration

The fugitive qualities of *samizdat* texts allowed them to fly under the radar but also to escape the boundaries of official printing and publication. While some *samizdat* texts and creators did attempt to follow state guidelines for Soviet texts, the majority challenged state definitions of print and publication through small-scale, illicit printing practices that relied on hybrid technologies and methodologies. These practices and the circulation of *samizdat* texts, despite never truly posing a direct threat to the institutional supremacy of state publishers, did establish a new print universe that made room for writing about state violence and bucking the topical and stylistic limitations required by party publishing organizations and censors. It is a combination of the unique materiality and printing methodology of *samizdat* texts that create an alternative print universe in tension with the official state print culture in the USSR. *Samizdat* creators relied on cheap, contingent materials and adopted a blend of methodologies taken simultaneously from the medieval manuscript era and modern typewriting to avoid censors and secret police attempting to suss out writers violating the ideological commitments of the state. Through these methodologies, *samizdat* authors and readers—who both served as creators of the texts—established an alternative print universe that relied on piracy and circulation to complete the printing and publication processes. These practices were, in part, necessary given the fugitivity of *samizdat* texts, but they were also only made possible because creators chose an alternative cultural path to that taken by mainstream modern printing, choosing instead to create texts collaboratively and in a primarily non-commercial space. These specificities of *samizdat* printing culture ultimately make it ontologically distinct from official modern printing and highlights the agency of *samizdat* texts which created vital and contingent forms of printing and publication that were typically impossible to achieve in the well-ordered official print culture of the 20th century. In particular, unlike official printing practices which focused on

commercializing book markets, creating standardized editions, clearly noting contributors, and creating legal regulations around intellectual property rights, *samizdat* printing created multimedial, contingent, freely circulated, collaboratively authored, unique, and piratical texts. These texts did not fit the dominant material or conceptual categories that defined print or the book due to their materiality and modes of publication and so redefined these categories into something new. In particular, *samizdat* approaches to creating a fugitive print culture highlight how printing might have been otherwise had it developed with different values at its core and different methodologies, undermining traditional teleologies of printing and offering insight into the ways that fugitive texts can put definitional pressure on the concepts of modern printing and publishing.

In this first section, I am, in part, arguing that *samizdat* materials should be understood as both printed and published. With that argument in mind, I want to unpack a bit up front what is typically meant by the terms 'print' or 'printing' in libraries, archives, and history of the book scholarship, and offer a troubling of 'print' and 'printing' that can gesture towards better and more accurately describing the production of *samizdat* texts. The term manuscript most literally refers to handwritten materials as implied by the word's etymology, but is also typically used in publishing and archival contexts to refer to an unpublished or unfinished text.[28] Manuscripts can come in many formats, but physical manuscripts are often unbound and typescripts are typically labeled as manuscripts. The concept of an unpublished or unfinished text is where the term 'manuscript' becomes misleading in the context of *samizdat* in particular. That is, while the definition of 'print' or 'printing' is often ostensibly tied to the technology or means used to create

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28. Dictionary of Archives Terminology, s.v. "manuscript," accessed on 12 May 2024, https://dictionary.archivists.org/entry/manuscript.html.

it (e.g., a press), it is often in practice much more tied up with publishing and distribution than one might expect. For example, the Online Dictionary for Library and Information Science defines printing as "the production of identical copies of written or graphic material by means of a printing press or other mechanical device," a definition that, by all accounts, appears to include typewriting with carbon copy paper.[29] However, the dictionary's definition of 'typewritten' is "text produced by hand, using a typewriter or computer keyboard […], *not mechanically printed* or handwritten," a difference that can be explained through the fact that typewriters do not inherently produce identical copies, but a definition that also assumes a) that printed copies of a text are always identical and b) that typewriting is not a mechanical form of printing despite the use of a machine—the typewriter—to create impressions on paper with type.[30] In this sense, while the text that a typewriter produces may typically be considered 'print,' as opposed to handwriting, the act of typewriting is not typically defined as the act of 'printing.' This distinction tends to mean that typescripts are defined as, or treated as a parallel to, manuscripts rather than printed texts in the larger landscape of print culture and in the context of libraries and archives. In fact, Zitzewitz assumes a distinction between printed texts and typescripts when discussing *samizdat*, placing *samizdat* in between manuscript and print because *samizdat* typescripts, "unlike printed texts," did not "[ensure] that all copies are identical."[31] In this case, standardization is a given quality of print and anything that is not standardized does not fit under the umbrella of print.

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29. Online Dictionary for Library and Information Science, s.v. "printing," last modified 2014, https://odlis.abc-clio.com/odlis_p.html.

30. Online Dictionary for Library and Information Science, s.v. "typewritten," last modified 2014, https://odlis.abc-clio.com/odlis_t.html#typewritten

31. Zitzewitz, *The Culture of Samizdat*, 17.

The assumption of this use of the term 'manuscript' is that the only means by which to properly publish a text is through official means, by going through a publisher and distributor. However, given the level of state control over publishing in the USSR and the strictness of state censorship, official publication was not an option for *samizdat* texts, at least not at the time of their creation, and authors were forced to find other means of printing and publication. It's also worth noting that the manuscript—that is, handwritten—elements of *samizdat* texts were often meant to solve printing problems introduced by the limited resources available to *samizdat* creators as can be seen in the first issue of the journal *Optima* [*Оптима*]—linked in the following footnote—which is typewritten except for styled headers and illustrations which would have been impossible to produce on a typewriter.[32] The use of manuscript elements, in this case, does not change the fact that the periodical is a print object, it just offers a supplementary methodology for addressing the particularities of *samizdat* print culture. In this context, then, the definition of printing has to expand in order to accurately reflect the hybrid modes of textual creation undertaken in the *samizdat* era. Here, the distinction between fully handwritten manuscripts and mechanically printed materials remains, but the definitions of print and publication must also expand to include hybrid, small-batch forms of mechanical reproduction, in this case typescripts, that do not take the form of a typical codex or periodical because typewriters were being used to create print runs of texts, even if small, which were circulated to a readership for the purpose of consumption.

32. Ann Komaromi, "Оптима [Optima] 1960 № 1," *Вниписвоё самиздат Project for the Study of Dissidence and Samizdat*, 2015, https://samizdatcollections.library.utoronto.ca/islandora/object/samizdat%3A10660. For all digitized examples of *samizdat* that I reference in this thesis, I have linked to the host webpages directly in my footnotes so that readers can flip through entire issues.

With these troubled definitions in mind, we can now dive into the contingency of *samizdat* printing methodologies. The fugitivity and contingency of *samizdat* texts begins first with its material qualities, qualities that emerged more through necessity than anything else due to *samizdat*'s banned status. The basic process of reproducing and distributing a *samizdat* text involved: securing a copy of the text (or, in some cases, attempting to recall it from memory), loading a typewriter with several pages of carbon copy paper, and typing the text out by hand. Typewriters could not exert enough pressure to make more than a handful of copies at a time and, even then, the bottom copies would often be so faint as to border on illegibility.[33] Carbon copy paper served as a useful medium both because it was cheap, easier to obtain than paper, and because it allowed the typist to create multiple essentially identical copies, even if only a handful, at one time without access to an actual press.[34] The thinness and poor quality of the paper allowed for more extensive circulation in that sense, but it also made *samizdat* texts more vulnerable to wear and tear. *Samizdat* texts were not always typed or solely typed, although using a typewriter and carbon paper was one of the most common methods for creating them. The single-issue *samizdat* serial *Zhurnal mod* [*Fashion Journal*], for example, was largely written by hand and filled with drawings[35] because a means for printing images for distribution cheaply and covertly was not as readily available. When *samizdat* texts were typewritten, it was also not uncommon for them to have handwritten elements. Other serials, for example, may have included hand-drawn covers like the journal *Transponans*, which focused on and continued the

33. Komaromi, "Extra-Gutenberg," 635.

34. Komaromi, "Material Existence," 599.

35. You can view the issue online at the Project for the Study of Dissidence and Samizdat website: Ann Komaromi, "Журнал мод [Fashion Journal] 1972-74 № 1," *Впишисвоё самиздат Project for the Study of Dissidence and Samizdat*, University of Toronto Libraries, last modified 21 March, 2024, https://samizdatcollections.library.utoronto.ca/islandora/object/samizdat%3A10616.

avant-garde tradition in Russia,[36] and it was common for texts to include handwritten additions or corrections.[37] These technological and methodological particularities were developed out of necessity as paper was expensive[38] and larger or more advanced printing technologies were unavailable to most people working outside of the official print sphere.[39] Both the material qualities and the illegal status of *samizdat* meant that *samizdat* texts could not circulate as extensively or offer the same level of standardization as officially printed objects. However, it was also exactly these unique printing methods and material qualities that lent the *samizdat* text its flexibility and its ability to proliferate and circulate, even internationally, despite its legal status.

Early Print Methodologies in Samizdat

The covert proliferation of *samizdat* texts, their ability to move through the liminal spaces of the Soviet intellectual sphere, and their particular materiality came out of a reliance on blended technologies. The *samizdat* model of production relied on newer technologies like the typewriter and carbon copy paper but combined those technologies with older methodologies that might more typically belong to the European pre-printing manuscript era. *Samizdat* texts were created effectively by copying 'by hand' (whether through typing or writing) in small

36. Илья Кукуй (Мюнхен), «Предисловие: «Сохранить нить поэтического авангарда»: журнал теории и практики «Транспонанс,»» *Впишисвоё самиздат Project for the Study of Dissidence and Samizdat*, University of Toronto Libraries, 2015, https://samizdatcollections.library.utoronto.ca/content/%D0%BF%D1%80%D0%B5%D0%B4%D0%B8%D1%81%D0%BB%D0%BE%D0%B2%D0%B8%D0%B5. Unsurprisingly, the style of *Transponans* covers is reminiscent of Russian avant-garde art books from the early 20th century.

37. Komaromi, "Material Existence," 609.

38. Komaromi, "Extra-Gutenberg," 636.

39. Komaromi, "Material Existence," 599.

quantities of copies and distributed 'by hand' through networks of trusted friends and allies.[40] They may have relied on the low-tech but modern printing technology of a typewriter and carbon paper in most cases, but their fugitive status required the small scale of the manuscript era to avoid detection and handwritten corrections or additions to save time and materials. As Zitzewitz argues, the typewriter itself is a hybrid technology precisely because of its mix of small-scale production with the ability to standardize copies up to a certain amount.[41] *Samizdat* reader-creators added to this hybridity by combining typing with handwritten elements and using the typewriter as a means for printing, publication, and circulation to a public audience rather than just personal use. By drawing on technologies from both the modern printing and pre-printing era *samizdat* reader-creators put pressure on what printing and publication—and more broadly the book—could look like in the modern era.

Paradoxically, though, this new image of printing in the modern era was directly informed by an adoption not just of older technologies, but also the kinds of textual instability present in the pre-printing era and the early years of printing. Komaromi suggests that the distribution of the *samizdat* text resembled oral culture[42] and cites the poets Anna Akhamatova and Lev Rubinstein in describing *samizdat* as "pre-Gutenberg" and "extra-Gutenberg," respectively.[43] These descriptors address the ways in which *samizdat* printing and 'publication' practices both drew on previous modes of printing in the early days of its development, and even on pre-printing forms of text creation, and went beyond the culturally constructed limitations of

40. Komaromi, "Material Existence," 599.

41. Zitzewitz, *The Culture of Samizdat*, 14.

42. Komaromi, "Extra-Gutenberg," 634.

43. Komaromi, "Extra-Gutenberg," 632.

what constituted print and printing as a practice. To begin with the designation of *samizdat* as "pre-Gutenberg:" its materiality, mode of creation, and mode of circulation particularly come out of something akin to the manuscript culture of the European Christian pre-printing era. Drawing this comparison allows a fuller and more specific explanation of the writer and translator Natal'ia Trauberg's assertion that "the fate of manuscripts in samizdat is perfectly medieval."[44] Trauberg adopts this description in order to talk about the ways in which texts took on a life of their own after their creation, added to unexpectedly by other readers or even altered significantly in other copies as I will discuss further on. However, it also rings true when referring to the materiality of *samizdat* texts and the ways in which they come into being.

The content and physical material of *samizdat* texts expanded and shifted uncontrollably through their copying and distribution much like the Scriptures created by scriptoria and individual copyists in the pre-printing manuscript era. After 1100 especially, these kinds of manuscripts often went through transformations through their various stages of creation and circulation wherein the commentaries and citations contained within "had a tendency to expand and spread out over the page in the form of glosses, as readers and commentators added more material in the margins and between the lines."[45] Furthermore, because manuscript creators copied texts by hand, it was common for mistakes to appear, "and very many pages of medieval manuscripts show evidence of corrections, either by erasing and rewriting words, or by inserting omissions in margins, or by crossing out repetitions."[46] Like these pre-Gutenberg texts, *samizdat* texts went through iterations of reader revisions and additions, and were also liable to errors, as

44. Qtd. in Komaromi, "Extra-Gutenberg," 635.

45. Michael Clanchy, "Parchment and Paper: Manuscript Culture 1100-1500," in *A Companion to the History of the Book*, eds. Simon Eliot and Jonathan Rose (Hoboken: Wiley, 2020), 225.

46. Christopher de Hamel, *Making Medieval Manuscripts* (Oxford: Bodleian Library, 2018), 89.

they were circulated, typed, retyped, and written on. These qualities are materially visible on their pages in the form of handwriting or stricken type text. Several examples of this kind of correction or alteration can be seen in the periodicals digitized by Komaromi and the University of Toronto Libraries such as images 17 and 35 in the first issue of *Optima*[47] which show handwritten additions, illustrations, and boxes around the text, or page 4 (image 5) from issue 20 of *Art of the Commune* [*Искусство коммуны*][48] which includes words that have been x-ed out using the typewriter. While specifically talking about the practice of handwriting corrections onto *samizdat* texts, Zitzewitz identifies that "this practice blurs the distinction between manuscript and typescript, placing typescript somewhere in the middle between manuscript, where each copy is unique, and print, where technology ensures that all copies are identical."[49] While modern printing practices cannot necessarily ensure that every single copy of a text is fully identical—there could be printer or computer errors for example—her point stands that texts created on a larger, automated press will allow for much more standardization than batch copying by hand. Due to the difficulties of copying by hand, like *samizdat* texts, manuscripts were functionally unique, even when they were created from the same text. They were at risk of corruption, damage from circulation, and getting lost[50] and they were also similarly distributed by hand, circulating in this case between monasteries for the sake of allowing further copying.[51]

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47. Komaromi, "Оптима," https://samizdatcollections.library.utoronto.ca/islandora/object/samizdat%3A10660.

48. Ann Komaromi, "Искусство коммуны [Art of the Commune] № 20," *Впишисвоё самиздат Project for the Study of Dissidence and Samizdat*, University of Toronto Libraries, last modified 21 March, 2024, https://samizdatcollections.library.utoronto.ca/islandora/object/samizdat%3A16696.

49. Zitzewitz, *The Culture of Samizdat*, 17.

50. Eisenstein, *The Printing Press as an Agent of Change*, 114.

51. Hamel, *Making Medieval Manuscripts*, 74.

Samizdat printing rides the line between the hand-copying and small-scale distribution of the manuscript and the technology (even if on a small scale) and possibilities for greater standardization of official, mass-scale printing. That is, *samizdat* was not especially standardized, as referenced above, but copies made on the same typewriter at the same time with carbon copy paper were functionally identical, differing primarily in the faintness and legibility of the text or any amendments added later by hand during their circulation. This level of standardization across several copies was only possible through the use of modern technology, in this case the typewriter. By relying on technology like the typewriter to create copies of a text for publication and circulation, even if outside the official print industry, *samizdat* production created a form of printing that did not rely on standardization and, in fact, flew in the face of standardization to some extent, and coexisted with and took inspiration from manuscript methodologies. The ability to create several, relatively identical, copies mechanically simultaneously on a typewriter for circulation to the public made *samizdat* a printing practice, but adopting the scale of manuscript creation and the expectation that the text would undergo further amendments, often handwritten ones, made that printing practice much more flexible and materially unstable than official printing. In this sense, the *samizdat* text brings to the surface within the USSR a kind of rebirth of the transitional print space of the late medieval manuscript era in Europe and the early print era in Russia, producing both a level of instability and contestation around bookmaking methodologies and technologies as well as around sanctioned and popular content.

It was, then, this instability, contestation, and contingent materiality that drove *samizdat* printing and that legitimized *samizdat* texts through different means than official modern forms of print. Material instabilities of the *samizdat* text and its means of circulation helped to establish fetishized understandings of the text as a cultural and political object, paralleling in a secular

setting[52] some of the religious forms of fetishization from the European manuscript era. Generally speaking, while there were peculiarities of the Russian adoption and production of print and the book, in particular a different timeline of developments than in Western Europe, "the Slavic book developed within the Christian European tradition." In particular, Catholicism served as a major influence on book culture in Russia and sacred Russian texts were produced in Latin before the Reformation.[53] Through the 17th century, "it was the Church, rather than the government, that provided the main impetus for printing" as "decrees and other government documents were not printed" resulting in a print landscape primarily made up of Orthodox texts in Church Slavonic.[54] Despite the influence of early Western European printing practices, however, anyone taking the progression of writing and printing culture in East Asia and Western Europe as ideal or natural models would likely assert that Russia turned primarily to printing 'late' and 'slow.' While Russia's first printing press appeared in 1553, behind much of Europe but not inordinately so,[55] the major role of manuscripts in written Russian culture continued on for a relatively long time despite the uptake of printing. That is, in Russia, handwritten works remained relevant well past the advent of print, continuing alongside newer print media.[56] In

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52. It's worth noting that *samizdat* texts were not inherently secular. Because religion as a concept was opposed to the ideological values of the Soviet state, Katerina Clark notes that religious beliefs, which represented a "traditional Russian (as distinct from Soviet) point of view" appeared in *samizdat*. See Katerina Clark, *The Soviet Novel: History as Ritual* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2000), 235. As Komaromi points out, in this kind of cultural context, "religion possessed liberating force for a whole generation of Soviet liberal intelligentsia" because it served as a means to oppose the enforced dominant ideology of the state. Ann Komaromi, "Samizdat and Soviet Dissident Publics," *Slavic Review* 71, no. 1 (2012): 88.

53 Ekaterina Rogatchevskaia, "The Slavic Book," in A Companion to the History of the Book, eds. Simon Eliot and Jonathan Rose (Hoboken: Wiley, 2020), 335.

54. Christine Thomas, "The Slavonic Book in Russia, Ukraine, and Belarus," in *The Book: A Global History*, ed. Michael F. Suarez and H. R. Woudhuysen (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), 487.

55. Miranda Remnek, "Introduction," in *The Space of the Book: Print Culture in the Russian Social Imagination*, ed. Miranda Remnek (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2011), 4.

fact, early administrative documents were often “technological hybrids” as the presence of handwritten additions were key for lending printed documents authority.[57] While the religious manuscript—Christian topics and texts being the most common subject for copying throughout much if not all of the manuscript period in Europe—perpetuated the image of monks inscribing the holy Word of God onto parchment, thus lending the codex an aura of authenticity and spiritual importance,[58] *samizdat* has often served as a symbol of “the repressed truth about current events, history, and social issues, on the one hand, and […] the stifled genius of artistic discovery, on the other hand.”[59] Similarly, in the Russian context in particular, although there was no sharp divide between manuscript and print forms in terms of their potential validity—except in the case of Old Believer communities wherein there was a “distrust of post-schismatic official printed books”[60] —there were visual distinctions between “iconic and noniconic representations of the authoritative sacred texts”[61] meaning that only certain versions of texts carried recognized religious value depending on who was creating and reading them. Like the Christian texts of the manuscript era that derived their value from the dearness of their materials,

56. Simon Franklin, “Mapping the Graphosphere: Cultures of Writing in Early 19th-Century Russia (and Before),” *Kritika* 12, no. 3 (2011): 533.

57. Franklin, “Mapping the Graphosphere,” 544.

58. Clanchy, “Parchment and Paper,” 221.

59. Komaromi, “Extra Gutenberg,” 630.

60. Franklin, “Mapping the Graphosphere,” 535. The term ‘Old Believers’ refers to Russians with traditionalist Orthodox beliefs. In the mid-17th century, the church Patriarch, Nikon of Moscow, attempting to reform Russian Orthodoxy to bring it more in line with the Greek Orthodox Church. However, many Russians rejected these reforms “as both an invalidation and a corruption of the purity of Russia’s Orthodoxy” and when the tsar adopted the reforms officially, he created the impetus for a schism of the Russian Orthodox Church which created the religious groups referred to as Old Believers who adhere to pre-reform versions of Russian Orthodoxy. Peter T. De Simone, *The Old Believers in Imperial Russia: Oppression, Opportunism, and Religious Identity in Tsarist Moscow* (London: I. B. Tauris, 2018), 2.

61. Franklin, “Mapping the Graphosphere,” 540.

the fact that they were created in scriptoria, and the import of the biblical text they bore, the hand-production of the samizdat text, its illicit circulation, and its association with political dissidence, even when only by virtue of its lack of officialdom, lent it an aura of deeper cultural meaning and transformed it into a fetishized cultural object, representing an arcane knowledge about the Soviet world that went beyond the basic fact of information typed out on a page. In the unstable world of pre-/early printing or *samizdat*, illicit forms of information, obtained through illegal copying, could, then, hold as much or more value than originals or officially printed texts that limited their contents to a particular worldview.

Part of this fetishization grew out of the fact that, unlike much of the official print material created during this time, *samizdat* texts were often not made to last—*samizdat* was not a printing methodology of preservation and fixity, but rather one of extreme contingency. In this sense, the kind of printing that created *samizdat* had different goals and existed in different material realities than official print which aimed for fixity in both materiality and content. Some of the ephemerality of the *samizdat* text came out of the technological limitations of creating texts outside of official presses. Namely, poor quality paper that bled through, faint copies created on the carbon copy paper on the bottom of the typewritten stack, small batches worn down through person-to-person distribution and held together by staples or other damaging forms of unofficial binding: all qualities of *samizdat* that don't generally make for lasting objects expected to survive long past the moment of their creation. These issues were only exacerbated by the cultural and political context around these texts which made them vulnerable to seizure and unlikely to be collected, preserved, and made available by official institutions, at least inside the USSR or its satellites. Because *samizdat* texts were often not made to last and could more easily disappear in their distribution, they were that much more valuable when circulated,

especially if they were circulated widely. That is, through their unlikely circulation and proliferation, a *samizdat* text paradoxically increasingly gained the value of a rare original "in proportion to the quality and abundance of its copies" although, in this case, the idea of "quality" is flipped a bit on its head.[62] The poorness of the materials indicated the cultural status of *samizdat* texts and their likelihood to convey the truth about the Soviet state. In an era where modern printing had advanced enough that most copies could be created with little individual effort, and therefore lost the aura of something like an original illuminated manuscript, *samizdat* texts required individual effort and personal risk to create. This effort and risk displaced the markers of value typically assigned to printed books that were based on the author's autograph, or the text's edition, printing run, or binding since these differences were rarely marked on *samizdat* texts. Instead, the valuation and fetishization of *samizdat* texts focused on the reader's ability to get a hold of a copy and, thus, participate in a covert circulation of cultural truths.[63] With the effort involved in merely creating a handful of copies and moving them around without punitive consequences and the cultural link between a copy of a *samizdat* text and revelatory information, each copy served as part of a lineage set off by the original[64] that would "continue to trigger new copies"[65] so that, in each copy "the origin is there anew, even if vastly different from what it was."[66] Through this framework of material and cultural fetishization, the qualities that made *samizdat* texts valuable flipped concepts of authorization, fixity, and originality on

62. Bruno Latour and Adam Lowe, "The Migration of the Aura, or How to Explore the Original through Its Facsimiles," in *Switching Codes: Thinking through Digital Technology in the Humanities and the Arts*, ed. Thomas Bartscherer and Roderick Coover (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2011), 279.

63. Latour and Lowe, "The Migration of the Aura," 283.

64. Latour and Lowe, "The Migration of the Aura," 279.

65. Latour and Lowe, "The Migration of the Aura," 278.

66. Latour and Lowe, "The Migration of the Aura," 280.

their head. Publishing fixed, official copies of *samizdat* texts would have both undermined their purpose and their value as they would become merely—perceived or in reality—extensions of state ideology and, presumably, conform to the restrictions of approved generic guidelines. That is, the materiality of *samizdat*, which marked it as different than state-sanctioned, officially published texts, even if a particular *samizdat* text happened to echo the party line, and the mere fact that a *samizdat* text managed to circulate among a group of readers without getting seized or destroyed despite that materiality meant that, for many participants, the *samizdat* text represented a form of cultural truth and freedom of expression that could not be achieved in official print.

Perceiving the value lent to *samizdat* texts through the fact of their circulation isn't just a question of paying attention to how many people have read or interacted with a given text, however; this kind of metric could be difficult to determine safely at the time depending on one's social circles and is all but impossible to get a clear picture of now. It's also a question of access. Above all, what made a text valuable was its accessibility because access could never be taken as a given and because readers had very little control over what version of a text they might receive and likely wouldn't know to what extent a text differed from the version created by the inciting author. The kind of valuations that arose out of the material and distribution methods necessitated by *samizdat* printing destabilized any hierarchies that traditional printing might impose, whether those come from the materials making up a book, specific editions, prestigious publishers, or originals versus forgeries. Instead, connections were established through the circulation of texts which forged unexpected networks of reader-authors, KGB agents, and foreign publishing houses. Certainly, official printing and publishing can be framed as a network as well, but it is a primarily human-ordered network wherein connections are regulated by industry rules and laws and contributors are assigned specific roles to play with limited boundaries around them.

Samizdat networks were governed more by contingency, dependent upon available materials, social circles, location, chance encounters with secret police, and any other affecting elements. There were few consistent or enforced rules, especially given that state responses to *samizdat* texts could be rather arbitrary. Police might choose to take particular notice of a given author or text—which then might be seized and either destroyed or put into the records of the KGB—or might not.[67] These uncertainties made the successful circulation of a given text a kind of proof of its significance and, thus, an impetus to spread it further.

Circulation as Printing Practice

The means by which *samizdat* circulated, however, were not just a means of distribution but rather a means of publication and printing that took on different values than the standardization and authorization valued in official printing. This form of printing via circulation was undertaken by an unknown number of named and unnamed readers who were also 'authors' or 'creators.' The circulation of a *samizdat* text built a network of reader-creators who worked to produce more and more copies and to spread those copies throughout established intellectual communities. While there were often few copies of a *samizdat* text circulating at any particular time due to the risk of legal consequences, especially when the text in question contained obviously anti-Soviet ideas,[68] the circulation of *samizdat* texts was the means by which *samizdat* texts were simultaneously printed and made available to the public. This public was often made up of a targeted demographic of intellectuals and other writers,[69] but still, "the readers of

67. Zaslavskaya, "From Dispersed to Distributed Archives," 680.

68. Adams, "Slavic, East European, and Eurasian Punk," 33.

69. Clark, *The Soviet Novel*, 235.

samizdat [numbered] at least in the hundreds of thousands."[70] Given that the process for circulating *samizdat* texts included copying and recopying those texts as they were received, participants in this circulation simultaneously became authors, publishers, suppliers, printers, and distributors. What this overlap in roles meant was that, much as in the manuscript era and the early days of printing, readers receiving a copy of a given text could not easily ensure that it was 'authentic' insofar as authenticity might entail that it was the exact words of the commencing author's original expression or the original expression itself, circulated with the author's knowledge, and backed by some kind of regulatory process. As Zitzewitz describes, readers who received and copied *samizdat* texts "took liberties with texts, making decisions that are normally the prerogative of authors or editors" including only copying a portion of a text which could "[lead] to a new version [of the text] becoming established."[71] Some *samizdat* texts might also find their way into new formats by being read and broadcast on the radio or photographed rather than retyped[72] and besides any differences in reader experience introduced by this kind of transformation, it would be equally difficult to pin down if and where alterations were made to the content itself and by whom. In this sense, readers actively published new versions, or perhaps we could say editions, of *samizdat* texts in the act of their circulation which, unlike with much modern official printing, creates a proliferation of different versions and mediations of a given text, rather than idealizing and moving towards standardization and fixity.

70. Zitzewitz, *The Culture of Samizdat*, 10.

71. Zitzewitz, *The Culture of Samizdat*, 17.

72. Zaslavskaya, "From Dispersed to Distributed Archives," 678.

One of the key assumptions behind printing as a technology is, as Eisenstein points out, that it is a form of reliable copying.[73] That is, once a text is written and has reached the state of production and distribution, it is merely a matter of recreating that text, hopefully with few errors or variability, and then disseminating the copies of the text on a mass scale. While Johns undermines the idea that printing allows for the exact replication of a text every time without fail, especially in the early years of printing,[74] the official modes of printing that could reuse type or blocks for each print copy of a text, which became more reliable as technology advanced, did tend to offer more textual stability than more manual methods of reproduction might. *Samizdat*, by contrast, is not just a matter of copying and distributing, but rather introduces the act of creation into the printing process in a way that is reminiscent of manuscript methodologies. In earlier periods of European print, manuscript texts were often copied by readers which "could lead […] to rapid textual change" and were often lost to wear and tear. Many of the popular surviving texts came out of "a mixture of both reader-inscribed and professionally written separates," mirroring the kinds of assemblages created by *samizdat* printings of a particular literary text.[75] In this sense, there was a potential model, more akin to that of Soviet *samizdat* printing methodologies, that printing could have taken already built into manuscript culture. It was the conscious buy-in to values like authorial ownership, commercialization of the book trade, IP, and copyright, in large part, that set the industry on a different path by making manuscript models of circulation difficult, punishable by law, or undesirable. Control over official Soviet publications went even further than this due to state censorship and control over

73. Eisenstein, *The Printing Press as an Agent of Change*, 108.

74. Johns, *The Nature of the Book*, 2.

75. Harold Love, "The Manuscript after the Coming of Print," in *The Book: A Global History*, eds. Michael F. Suarez and H. R. Woudhuysen (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), 201.

printing resources. The Chief Administration on Publishing Affairs (Glavlit), established in 1922 and "[operating] as the main organ of censorship until 1990,"[76] worked with other state organs like the Central Committee of the Communist Party and the USSR Writers' Union to "eradicate duplication and to rationalize publishing."[77] Despite a temporary relaxing of censorship immediately following Stalin's death in 1953,[78] in 1963 a reorganization of the publishing sector put control of the press into the hands of the State Committee for the Press (later the State Committee for Publishing, Printing, and the Book Trade), which worked to reduce the number of publishing houses and continue 'rationalizing' printing and publication. Alongside Glavlit, these state controls remained in relatively stable position through at least 1990.[79] For the *samizdat* text, however, similarly to the manuscript text, the alterations or corrections of reader-creators planning to copy the text and pass it on to other *samizdat* reader-creators were a normal part of the printing and publishing process. And these changes could introduce massive variations into texts that could, if extensive enough, alter the text fundamentally. When talking about translating foreign texts for *samizdat* circulation, Trauberg offers as an example of the instabilities of *samizdat* her practice of removing allusions that might not be understood by Russian readers and shortening repetitive passages in manuscripts that she was copying.[80] In an even more extreme example, a released inmate preparing a *samizdat* copy of the American writer Leon Uris's (1924-2003) *Exodus* was told the story by a fellow inmate while imprisoned and, after his release,

76. Thomas, "The Slavonic Book," 496.

77. Thomas, "The Slavonic Book," 497.

78. Thomas, "The Slavonic Book," 497.

79. Thomas, "The Slavonic Book," 498.

80. Qtd. in Komaromi, "Extra-Gutenberg," 635.

wrote down the story from memory.[81] While Uris' book was an officially published foreign work and so an officially legitimized version existed that could theoretically be used to establish his authorial intent, many Soviet *samizdat* texts, like much of the Ukrainian-Russian poet and translator Anna Akhmatova's (1889-1966) poetry, was similarly circulated orally by memory as well as in written *samizdat*.[82] This kind of *samizdat* copy is not simply a matter of editorial freedom, but a retelling of a retelling. It's a double remove from what would be recognized as the original text itself to the point that it might as well be a different text in some cases, even if it's recognized by the title of the story it intended to recreate. These forms of publication and printing present each circulated version of a text to the public as the same text resulting in an uncertainty of provenance that was atypical of modern official printing in the mid-twentieth century. The printing process moved much more organically in the *samizdat* sphere than in the state's official publishing bodies, allowing each reader and distributor of a text to potentially take on the role of an editor or even creator depending on what decisions they made around reproducing the text as well as the role of publisher and distributor by circulating the text to their social circles.

As a result, *samizdat* blends the various steps and roles of Darnton's communication circuit, as Komaromi suggests,[83] and in doing so, transforms what the circuit and the roles that make it up look like. Rather than going through a series of related but separate contributors and

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81. Ann Komaromi, *Uncensored: Samizdat Novels and the Quest for Autonomy in Soviet Dissidence* (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 2015), 137.

82. Maya Vinokour, "The Birth of Soviet Underground Culture in the 1930s," in *The Oxford Handbook of Soviet Underground Culture*, eds. Mark Lipovetsky, Maria Engström, Tomáš Glanc, Ilja Kukuj, and Klavdia Smola (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2021), n.p. Vinokur notes that, while Akhamtova was working on her poetic cycle *Requiem* as early as the 1930s, she "deemed *Requiem* too dangerous to commit to the page until late 1962."

83. Komaromi, *Soviet Samizdat*, 10.

steps, *samizdat* reader-creators took on all of these roles all at once, turning publication and printing into ongoing processes without a clear end goal and with endless possibilities for intervention by any participant in the process. Here, *samizdat* publishers and printers, which include primarily readers, print and publish texts all at once in real time and fundamentally alter the realization and textual life of a given text in the process, creating something that both is and is not the text created by the inciting author. In this sense, the most influential contributors in the printing network shift in the context of *samizdat*. Authors and publishing houses—or state publishers—lose a lot of the control that might otherwise drive the book market and, instead, readers and the texts themselves, in their wanton circulation, take on more influence in driving the continuation of the printing network. *Samizdat* texts were created and recreated, revised and rerevised through the collective action of group authorization and authorship. *Samizdat* printing and publication, then, introduced acts of creation, collaging, and remaking to the printing process that kept each given text in a state of constant flux and made its original content inherently uncertain and always up for contestation. Even if it turned out that most *samizdat* texts were recreated essentially faithfully and major changes were an exception rather than a rule, the uncertainty around how many texts have been lost to time and the ever-present possibility that major changes were made to the extant copies, introduce doubt regardless. Instead of a cycle with set parameters that would create a completed version of a text at the end that could be mechanically copied and distributed through stores or other official organs, the cycle got derailed into an endless series of cycles wherein the steps and actors jumped out of their set order or overlapped. Because *samizdat* circulation was fugitive, it "concealed the links between the origin of a text and its reader, as well as between readers sharing texts"[84] meaning that, unlike official

84. Zitzewitz, *The Culture of Samizdat*, 21.

texts which can at least typically be traced back to an author and publishing house, it is ultimately impossible to know to what extent and by whom a given *samizdat* text was altered and circulated. In this iteration, print is not a technology of copying and mass distribution, but one of artistic collaboration that specifically produces variations of a text rather than an authoritative copy and that, as such, lends each copy an aura of originality. Here, print and print culture become something much less stable and not backed by the same assumptions that Eisenstein might attribute to the printing technologies that undergird the official print culture of the Soviet state.

Authorizing Piracy, Piratical Authorization

One of the major differences of *samizdat* printing and official print culture was that because *samizdat* texts were circulated through copying, and often altered in the process, the relationship between *samizdat* and piracy looked very different than the relationship between officially printed texts and piracy. The alternative relationship to piracy in *samizdat* printing made *samizdat* possible and served as the root for many of the ontological differences between official printing and *samizdat* printing. For officially printed books, piracy served as a threat to credibility and to print control.[85] In order to ensure that readers could consider a particular text to be accurate and reliable, some kind of authorizing body, whether that be the state or commercial publishers, needed to find ways to limit the possibility of piracy and establish the perceived value of a particular text around its connection to its author, that is, around authorial credit. This turn to a need for credit came as a reaction to the mass of piracy undertaken in the early print period

85. Johns, *The Nature of the Book*, 5.

wherein “the proportion of unauthorized to authorized texts was roughly ninety to one” and even major works struggled to compete with pirated versions as in the case of Martin Luther’s German translation of the Scripture which only came out in print after its first pirated version.[86] These issues with piracy could only be addressed through legal or trade regulations beginning with requirements like patents, registration, and licensing which, though not always effective, did set up a certain expectation for original, authorized texts created by identified authors and publishers.[87] Copyright came later, emerging in the 18th century and followed by Intellectual Property rights in the 19th century, both as reactions to piracy feuds that undermined the authorizing power of official means of printing and publication.[88] As Johns argues, “intellectual property exists only insofar as it is recognized, defended, and acted upon” and copyright and intellectual property laws were strategies through which IP could be enforced and piracy could be defined as a threat to the printing industry and curtailed.[89] Printing, then, has gone through various eras of control that worked consciously to frame piracy as a threat to printing as a concept and not a legitimate part of the printing ecosystem. Inherent in this framework for official printing in most parts of modern Europe are the assumptions that the commercial value of a text was its most valuable asset, the circulation of information ought to be controlled by economic markets, and that the only possible motivation for piracy was theft. *Samizdat* texts came out of a different economic and political context and the value of an officially published and sanctioned text in the USSR more often came down to its ability to uphold a particular state

86 Johns, *The Nature of the Book*, 31.

87. Johns, *Piracy*, 12.

88. Johns, *Piracy*, 15, 13.

89 Johns, *Piracy*, 497.

ideology in an authorized form. In the case of *samizdat*, despite the influence of commercial print values from the West and ideological print values from the official organs of the Soviet Union, piracy was specifically a means of production that made publication and dissemination possible and was primarily non-commercial,[90] focusing rather on the need to make possible the circulation of information censored by a state and official publishing industry acting in bad faith. It was not a threat to printing and publishing that needed to be controlled, but rather a means by which publication happened, a necessary and legitimate step in the printing and publishing process.

Furthermore, these kinds of piracy paradoxically gave *samizdat* texts the largest source of their authority. *Samizdat* texts couldn't fall back on the authorizing mark of an official publisher to establish their cultural significance or authenticity or to underwrite the accuracy of the information contained within (although having an official publisher's name on a text was certainly no guarantee of accuracy in practice). Rather, piracy undertook this kind of authorizing work through different means and by applying different values to the printing and publishing process. The circulation, recopying, and redistribution of a text through covert means suggested that it had a large readership, and the implication of a large readership further implied the value of the content within which must convey some important information that the state would prefer hidden. As Zitzewitz points out, the practice of copyright would serve as a barrier to *samizdat* production rather than a protection[91] and, to that point, Johnston explains that *samizdat*

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90. It's worth noting that at the tail end of the *samizdat* period on which I'm focusing, during the perestroika and glasnost' era of the mid-to-late 1980s, *samizdat* printing had at least partially turned to printing practices more akin to official methods, likely due to increased openness in the printing and publishing sphere. As Komaromi explains: "As opposed to the free typescript periodicals of classic samizdat, the alternative periodical press of the perestroika period featured more frequent use of photocopying and printing press technology, as well as regular copyright claims and prices for issues." Komaromi, "Soviet Dissident Publics," 79.

91. Zitzewitz, *The Culture of Samizdat*, 18.

prosecutions were often carried out through reference to international copyright laws accessioned by the Geneva Convention in 1973.[92] These points highlight how central piracy was to *samizdat* printing, not just on a practical level, but also on a conceptual level as it represented the ways in which *samizdat* reader-creators took on printing values directly opposed to those of official printers and publishers. The context in which *samizdat* texts were circulated could also establish the kinds of values attached to them which allowed for different kinds of exchange. Given the limited resources of *samizdat* creators and the limited number of professionals willing to participate, while rates for *samizdat* typists could be high, these rates were often not paid in the form of legal tender: texts themselves were often used as remuneration and objects of exchange to repay labour.[93] This kind of bartering system demonstrates the ways in which *samizdat* texts could take on new meaning or value through the specific methods of their circulation, precisely because that circulation was the source of their creation and, thus, authority. In a cultural context in which art was bent to fit a particular set of ideological narratives, a *pirated* copy could become, in practice, a truer kind of original because it represented, at least symbolically if not in practice, an act of printing that arose through free thought. Despite the fact that piracy unsettles the kinds of provenance and authorization that are valued by official printing and publishing systems and, typically, by libraries and archives, in the case of *samizdat* it simultaneously establishes fugitive kinds of provenance and authorization: the absence of *official* forms of provenance and authorization become a text's source of provenance and authorization.

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92. Johnston, "What is the History of Samizdat?," 123.

93. Johnston, "What is the History of Samizdat?," 121.

In this version of printing and publication, printing and publishing are not means of standardization and control, but rather practices of proliferation and the creation of a textual multiverse. That is, the *samizdat* print culture in the Soviet Union was not just an alternative print culture that operated alongside the official print culture of the state, but rather a reformulation of print and publishing that gives a theoretical image of what printing and publication might have been in the European context had the early proponents of print established different frameworks of valuation. It is a hypothetical of cultural history made physical, if on a microscale, and positioned in competition with more dominant cultural narratives that had been carefully and tirelessly cultivated by printers, publishers, and readers in the West since close to the advent of printing in Europe. In the alternative print universe that might have been, print is inherently multimedial, intentionally contingent and fugitive, primarily distributed and created through free circulation or barter, collaboratively authorized based on readership rather than authorship—because readers in this case are also collaborating authors—, creates unique copies like in the manuscript era rather than more or less standardizing copies, and relies on piracy as a printing and authorizing methodology rather than an ontological threat. In this other printing universe, the very definitions of printing and publication have changed because they are so enmeshed, in their dominant state, with values and practices that *samizdat* disavowed, found impossible, or found undesirable. This is a vision of printing and publication that might have emerged had the early days of printing perhaps blended printing and manuscript technologies into a flexible joint technology or maybe deemphasized authorship and instead focused on collaborative creation and communal cultural property that could only be authorized through shared readership rather than by official authorizing bodies. Here, I don't intend to advocate necessarily for either printing universe as a clear superior to the other. Rather, I mean to

emphasize that, largely out of necessity, *samizdat* creators and readers reimagined the core tenets of printing to create something new that challenged the limitations of official printing and publishing regulations in the 20th century that relied on authority and private property. This alternative "printiverse" was not entirely separate from the printing world as it existed: some *samizdat* texts blended the official state print culture with the *samizdat* print universe by relying on similar literary styles, messages, or methodologies, and many *samizdat* authors either did or tried to have their work published by the official press as well.[94] However, the methodologies that made *samizdat* possible demonstrated a deviation from the assumed teleological development of modern printing and publishing which bent towards publisher and book seller-controlled commercial book markets, fixed and standardized print editions with clearly notated contributors, and careful legal regulations around intellectual property rights. It was a space that necessitated an imagining of new intellectual frameworks that offered competing visions of knowledge creation, textual dissemination, and methods for establishing cultural relevancy or value. What this alternative universe presented was not just a methodological shift in printing practices, but an ontological one. In the case of *samizdat*, the ways in which print objects existed in the world and were engaged with as part of the world fundamentally differed from the ways of being-in-the-world embodied by official print objects.

The Agency of the Text

An alternative print universe and ontology, in this case, creates space for other kinds of creation by shifting the forms of agency that take precedence within printing practices. Through

94. Zitzewitz, *The Culture of Samizdat*, 14.

this transformational form of fugitive printing, the agency of the text takes precedent over that of the author—who immediately loses control upon the text's first foray into circulation as Solzhenitsyn indicated with his reflections on the circulation of *Cancer Ward* and *The First Circle*[95]—and the publisher who, in this case, could be the author or simply a reader who decided to pass the text on to the next potential reader-creator and who may have made authorial changes to the text themselves. Within this space of ambiguous authorship and creatorship, the text itself becomes the source of its own authority, regardless of what version of the 'original' text it is, and that authority builds up through circulation and engagement. The text's status as original or copy and its claims to accuracy don't really matter so long as it is presented as a given text. Thus, while Johns raises concerns about lending too much agency to the technology of printing rather than crediting readers for how they interact with a text,[96] *samizdat* does highlight the importance of nonhuman entities within a print culture and its attendant networks. This autonomous form of circulation is primarily achieved through a methodology that relies on creation over copying and anonymous collaboration over individual credit. A copy of a *samizdat* text was often also a recreation of it given the likelihood of additions or lost or omitted sections or corrections or errors made when typing out the text on the typewriter. These kinds of changes could affect which circles the text passed through or whether it could be published elsewhere or whether the KGB might seize it. While the printing and publishing process as it officially exists, and existed at the time, is collaborative in that it requires the work of a lot of different contributors—the author, editor, publisher, the company producing the physical book itself, and so on—this form

95.. Zitzewitz, *The Culture of Samizdat*, 18. Solzhenitsyn and Willetts, "From 'The Oak and the Calf,'" 58, 59.

96. Johns, *The Nature of the Book*, 20.

of collaboration is siloed and rigid and typically strictly defines each of the individual players who may alter the text and how throughout the process. The whole process is also governed by documentation, such as contracts, that determine who takes on what role and in what capacity. The collaboration involved in *samizdat* production, however, puts every participant into an effectively equal position with very few guardrails guiding what their contribution ought to look like. The result of putting everyone on relatively equal footing is that the process of printing and publishing *samizdat* texts becomes more accessible and creates a different relationship between creator, reader, and text focused on organic, vital becoming rather than legal parameters.

Given that official modern printing standards are geared towards certain forms of the book, print, or publication which carry with them a certain history of cultural significance that has been built up consciously over time, they are insufficient for understanding the meanings or materiality attached to fugitive texts, which have been systematically culturally and legally devalued since the advent of regulations like copyright due to their unofficial status. The ontological difference between official forms of print and *samizdat* printing means that, ultimately, fugitive texts like *samizdat* will always escape both physically and conceptually from official institutions and definitions of print, publication, and the book unless these institutions and definitions are reassessed and purposefully reshaped. This ability to escape has lent *samizdat* texts vitality and autonomy—a means for living beyond their officialized limits and acting upon reader-creators, censors, KGB agents, other texts, policies, etc. in unexpected ways. By, for example, traveling out to the wider world to become *tamizdat* or via illicit recording becoming *magnitizdat*, *samizdat* texts could live different parallel lives, ending up in unexpected places and becoming a part of the network of influences and actors operating within that new space. At the same time, these traces had to be deliberately obscured to avoid persecution which makes tracing

these networks in their entirety difficult if not impossible. This lack of traces emphasizes the agency of the texts themselves as participants in the printing sphere. The initial author(s) or editor(s) of a text could not control its movements or proliferations after sending it into the network, but the text still found means to branch out in all different directions, seemingly of its own volition or momentum. As the typist Irina Tsurkova asserts in an interview with Zitzewitz, *samizdat* "was able to multiply by itself" and "these copies were alive—they were living a life of their own."[97] Within this framework, the 'self' evoked in *samizdat* (*sam* being 'self' and *izdat* 'to publish') is not primarily the 'self' of the author but rather the 'self' of the text. The text reflexively publishes itself by prompting a need for copying and circulation to keep it alive. It also authorizes itself through its mere existence and circulation which serve as proof of its value and truthfulness. Official forms of printing, however, privilege human agency and rely on external forms of authorization to ensure the reliability and consistency of the text. Such definitions cannot address the forms of authorization, valuation, and materiality inherent to *samizdat*, and many other fugitive texts, without delegitimizing them in comparison to official print objects.

Conclusion

Samizdat generated extensive networks, both inside and outside of the USSR, of copied, recreated, and reformatted texts that could be, and were, constantly shifting in form and materiality as they moved from hand to hand. It is, in this case, not the standardization and fixing of texts that lent influence to the circulating publications, extended the reach of the network, and produced a print culture, but rather the flexibility of the text to proliferate in new ways, to fall or

97. Zitzewitz, *The Culture of Samizdat*, 16, 17.

be taken apart and put back together, or travel orally, in audio recording, or in handwritten form as well as by print, to fly out in different directions and meet a potentially unknown or unforeseen fate. In this case, print culture is not one of official mass distribution—even with a relatively extensive readership, there was a limit to what could be circulated, in what quantities, and how—or standardization, but one in which fixity is the enemy and books are understood to be in a constant state of flux as they interact with their readership. This shift to alternative printing practices, particularly practices based in fugitive practices like piracy, marked an ontological difference between official printing and *samizdat* printing and, in order to engage with these texts, they need to be understood through this ontological difference, not just as an alternative methodology. Now that the classic Soviet *samizdat* period has passed, however, we also need to consider the preservation and futurity of these texts, both for the sake of fugitive texts created in the past and for the sake of those that might appear in the future.

SECTION II: Collecting Contingency: Legitimizing *Samizdat* Ontologies in Libraries and Archives

Given the contingency of *samizdat* both materially and ontologically, it takes on a fugitive character: fleeing from the censors, from the country, or even from the material and conceptual limitations of official printing and publishing. This fugitivity makes it difficult to meaningfully preserve *samizdat* texts in institutional archives, libraries, and special collections without altering the characteristics of the text that were a core part of its creation and cultural status in the mid-20th century. The fugitivity of the texts, both in terms of their materiality and in terms of their content and metadata, makes collecting *samizdat* and identifying their place as a part of the bibliographic universe a difficult if not impossible task, at least as it is currently

undertaken. The focus on standardization, creator- and title-based authorization, and fixity in major knowledge organization spaces in North America, Western Europe, and Russia comes into direct tension with the practices that created and spurred on the circulation of *samizdat* texts. In particular, functional definitions of book and print objects adopted in libraries and archives tend to characterize texts like *samizdat* as unpublished, incomplete, or textual objects that are not books. These frameworks delegitimize *samizdat* texts, which were printed and published just through fugitive methodologies, and misrepresents their original cultural functions. This delegitimization and misrepresentation is then compounded by descriptive standards like DACS and RDA and conceptual information models like FRBR that a) cannot accurately or sufficiently describe *samizdat* materials within the scope of the standard or model, b) cannot give a clear picture of the network of relationships between *samizdat* texts, and c) present only a fixed, static view of textual objects that were made to be fluid. These shortcomings ensure that *samizdat* continue to escape from official definitions of printing and publishing and, as such, cannot be properly or completely preserved within libraries and archives as they currently function. There is a larger discussion, outside the scope of this thesis, to be had about where, how, and whether *samizdat* texts should be officially collected and preserved, especially given that they were purposefully created to escape institutional control. It would be easy to say, for example, that *samizdat* texts should be held in community collections but much harder to actualize given that it would be difficult to identify the rightful community in question and given how extensively texts have spread in both public and private collections. An organization like Fond Iofe, which was founded by Veniamin Iofe, a political prisoner in the 1960s and *samizdat* participant,[98] could be a viable option but it's difficult to say how securely they could carry on this work given that a

98. "Биография," *Фонд Иофе*, accessed on 14 May 2024, https://iofe.center/iofe

similar organization, Memorial, whose work Fond Iofe is now carrying out, was unilaterally disbanded by the Russian Supreme Court as I discuss below. One could also argue that to honour *samizdat* contingency would mean to not collect these texts at all and instead to let them remain ephemeral, but doing so would also result in significant cultural loss as well as a potential loss of evidence or personal narratives of human rights abuses within the Soviet Union and, thus, is not a decision to be taken lightly. In the meantime, if *samizdat* texts are going to be held in institutional libraries and archives as they currently are, we need to take steps towards adopting standards and intellectual frameworks that make space for their textual particularities. In particular, rethinking the FRBR entity of the work as a kind of network and complicating provenance[99] are at least a starting point to thinking about how *samizdat*, and other fugitive texts that defy official printing and publishing standards, might better fit within institutional collections.

Practical Problems in Collecting Samizdat

The practical issues involved in collecting and providing access to *samizdat* materials are many and involve a mix of problems common to other types of materials and specific to *samizdat*. For one, the sheer amount of *samizdat* materials that are, often against many odds, still extant[100] coupled with the fact that archives and libraries often struggle with a lack of resources

99. In a more developed version of this project, I would like to dive more into archival concepts like simultaneous multiple provenance and bibliographic families alongside actor-network theory to better tease out how LIS professionals can more accurately engage with the unpredictable ways in which *samizdat* texts came into being and proliferated uncontrollably. See, for example, Chris Hurley, "Parallel Provenance: (1) What, if Anything, is Archival Description?," *Archives and Manuscripts* 33, no. 1 (2005): 110-145 and Richard P. Smiraglia and Gregory H. Leazer, "Derivative Bibliographic Relationships: The Work Relationship in a Global Bibliographic Database," *Journal of the American Society for Information Science* 50, no. 6 (1999): 481-553. doi: 10.1002/(SICI)1097-4571(1999)50:6<493::AID-ASI4>3.0CO;2-U. Many thanks to Jonathan Furner for these suggested avenues of exploration.

100 Kiebuzinski, "Samizdat and Dissident Archives," 7.

means that many *samizdat* materials remain unprocessed and inaccessible to researchers and the public. Kiebuzinski gives the example of an attempt in the 1990s to catalogue and microfilm the unprocessed parts of Radio Free Europe's *samizdat* collections which did not ultimately come to fruition and was followed in 1992 by the closure of the Samizdat Unit.[101] These issues are, of course, important to address for the sake of proper preservation and access to *samizdat* materials, especially because archives have expanded the scope of their *samizdat* collections to include "personal papers, official documents, and objects—the entire complex of material that relates to samizdat and dissent activities"[102] meaning that the amount and diversity of material has only continued to grow. As with any archival or special collections object created with materials of dubious quality, the material preservation of *samizdat* texts is put at risk due to things like the acidity of the cheap paper used and the wear and tear of handling.[103] In the case of *samizdat*, these concerns are especially amplified by the fact that *samizdat* texts were typically excluded from official attempts at preserving important cultural materials in the USSR during the time of their creation—and still currently in some cases—due to their content and their perceived position opposite the accepted bounds of state ideology.[104] The government that banned these texts did not have any incentive to ensure their preservation in official institutions beyond police files. While there were unofficial attempts within the USSR to preserve *samizdat* materials covertly, these attempts were often unsuccessful, as in the case of the Leningrad collection, formed in the 1970s but dispersed due to arrests, and donated to the archives of the Memorial

101. Kiebuzinski, "Samizdat and Dissident Archives," 12.

102. Zaslavskaya, "From Dispersed to Distributed Archives," 701.

103. Zaslavskaya, "From Dispersed to Distributed Archives," 700.

104. Zaslavskaya, "From Dispersed to Distributed Archives," 680.

Center (now International Memorial) in Moscow in 1991.[105] This collection has recently faced even further destabilization after a 2021 Supreme Court ruling, which was reconfirmed in 2022 when an appeal was dismissed, liquidated the organization after clashes over International Memorial's perceived failure to add legally required "foreign agent" labels to its print and online materials.[106] As a result of the archival contingency of *samizdat* texts, along with their printing and publication methods, even the less physical elements of preservation—like metadata—have been difficult to maintain. As Zitzewitz explains, it is difficult at this point to trace who participated in the creation of a given book, exactly where it was created, or anything about how it was changed or adapted from an original text because written metadata could later serve as evidence against the text's creators and so were often purposefully omitted.[107] While the lack of resources necessary to process a collection or the difficulty of preserving fragile materials are common across many collections, the example of the Leningrad collection does highlight one of the several ways in which the ideological context in which *samizdat* texts were created, and their material fugitivity, create unique challenges for collecting and preserving *samizdat* texts, especially when it comes to issues of authorization, fixity, classification, and provenance.

The issues around the authorization, provenance, and fixity of *samizdat* texts have continued to be difficult for *samizdat* scholars to address considering the state of *samizdat* collections. While Zaslavskaya and Kiebuzinski were writing in 2008 and 2012 respectively, and digital *samizdat* archives have continued to expand over time, most *samizdat* materials remain

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105. Zaslavskaya, "From Dispersed to Distributed Archives," 676n.16.

106. "Russia's Supreme Court Approves Liquidation of International Memorial," *International Memorial*, 28 February 2022, https://www.memo.ru/en-us/memorial/departments/intermemorial/news/690. See also Robyn Dixon, "Russian Court Abolishes Country's Most Prominent Human Rights Group, Memorial," *The Washington Post*, 28 December 2021, https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/2021/12/28/russia-rights-memorial-liquidated/.

107. Zitzewitz, The Culture of Samizdat, 11.

undigitized and unavailable to review except in person. For example, the Hoover Institution's Narodno-trudovoi soiuz samizdat collection,[108] GWU's Peter Reddaway Samizdat collection,[109] and the Samizdat Collection at UMass Amherst,[110] are only available to scholars who visit directly. While this is not an uncommon issue among collections, it is a larger problem than it might be otherwise because *samizdat* collections are so fragmented and scattered due to their printing and publishing methodologies, especially the turn to *tamizdat*. Given these kinds of practices, there are many *samizdat* collections outside of the former USSR and Russia proper in Europe and North America—both in institutions and in private collections—and these collection locations are not recorded in a central place for researchers.[111] In fact, often information on these collections is available primarily in the local language of the institution holding the collection,[112] although greater access to tools like Google Translate may help mitigate this issue despite its imperfections. While this fragmentation creates extensive obstacles for researchers who may want to work with *samizdat* texts, it occurred as a necessary element of *samizdat* publishing as, in many cases, texts that remained in Russia may have ended up in KGB archives where they may have been preserved under lock and key, but may also have been "threatened by physical destruction, whether at the hands of the authorities or of the authors themselves or simply as a result of their own fragile nature and the passage of time."[113] Ultimately, it was often chance that

108. "Narudno-trudovoi soiuz samizdat collection," *Online Archive of California*, Hoover Institution, accessed on 12 May 2024, https://oac.cdlib.org/findaid/ark:/13030/kt138nf1g5/

109. "Peter Reddaway Samizdat Collection," https://searcharchives.library.gwu.edu/repositories/2/resources/805.

110. "Samizdat Collection," *UMass Amherst Libraries*, University of Massachusetts Amherst, accessed on 12 May 2024, http://scua.library.umass.edu/samizdat/.

111. Kiebuzinski, "Samizdat and Dissident Archives," 4.

112. Zaslavskaya, "From Dispersed to Distributed Archives," 702.

determined the fate of any particular *samizdat* text and that determined what version(s) of that text might remain extant. All of these practical archiving concerns are at least in part a result of the materiality of *samizdat* texts and their methods of circulation, but they also speak to some of the ways in which the particulars of *samizdat* printing and publication don't map easily onto current archival practices and can exacerbate some of these practical issues.

Description, Authorization, and Fixity

While exact archival and library practices and policies can vary across international borders, the European and American institutions that primarily hold Soviet *samizdat* texts operate with a relatively similar set of conceptual foundations to guide the ways in which they classify, organize, and preserve paper-based materials. A number of these conceptual frameworks could influence the care of *samizdat* materials, but here I want to particularly focus in on shared ideas about a need for textual fixity, how materials are sorted and described, and authorization, especially in relation to provenance and the FRBR entities.[114] Although discussing records and

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113. Zaslavskaya, "From Dispersed to Distributed Archives," 704. It's worth noting that there's perhaps a fraught conversation around repatriation to be had here. On the one hand, *samizdat* texts created by Russian authors in the USSR that have made their way into international collections could be considered Russian cultural property and returning them to Russia would help to resolve some issues of fragmentation. It would also avoid the unearned paternalism of arguing against the archival capabilities of nations outside of Western Europe and North America. On the other hand, the actions of Putin's regime against International Memorial and his intolerance of political dissent in general certainly offer reason for doubt. And, of course, many of the *samizdat* texts that ended up outside of the USSR, did so because sending them abroad was a necessity, even if a reluctant necessity, for their publication and circulation and some *samizdat* authors did end up living outside of the USSR in forced exile or out of personal, if again reluctant, choice. Similarly, while plenty of *samizdat* texts reified Russian ethnonationalism, it did also allow work from ethnic and religious groups that were systematically oppressed by the Soviet state. See Dina Zisserman-Brodsky, *Constructing Ethnopolitics in the Soviet Union: Samizdat, Deprivation and the Rise of Ethnic Nationalism* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2003). This is all just again to say that the practical issues around collecting and archiving *samizdat* texts come with relatively unique ethical and philosophical nuances that cannot be easily solved.

114. It's worth noting that the BIBFRAME model, meant to replace the MARC encoding standard, reduces the group 1 FRBR entities from work, expression, manifestation, and item (WEMI) down to work, instance, and item which may resolve some of the issues I will address below between work and expression. See "Overview of the BIBFRAME 2.0 Model," *Library of Congress*, 21 April 2016, https://www.loc.gov/bibframe/docs/bibframe2-model.html. However, BIBFRAME has still not been widely adopted according to the Library of Congress

fonds, Terry Cook points to the necessity of "having a clear understanding of the nature, scope and authority of the **creator** of the records involved and of the **records-creating process**" to identifying a fonds and asserts "that creation (reflecting provenance) must be seen as central to the definition of the fonds" and "must be accorded primacy" over other aspects of organizational or descriptive elements of a fonds.[115] Despite the specific focus of his argument, this primacy of the creator does often translate into other kinds of archival and library materials, including individual objects like a book. When cataloguing according to content standards like RDA, for example, the author is a core element of the description of a text, alongside its preferred title, and serves as an authorized access point for the user.[116] While there are guidelines for how to catalogue books that are collaborative or compilations and, thus, created by more than one agent or contributor, the assumption is that this information will come from a record of this creative role on the text itself or provided by reliable outside sources if a given agent's or contributor's name is not provided. While, in the case of *samizdat*, the names of the original authors or other contributors might be represented on a handmade title page, the many reader-creators who brought the text into being through printing and publication were typically anonymous for the sake of safety. While the absence of this kind of information creates practical issues for cataloguers or archivists attempting to accurately describe and enact authority control for a given

BIBFRAME 2.0 Implementation Register and the Library Reference Model (LRM) does retain the original WEMI entities. See "BIBFRAME 2.0 Implementation Register," *Library of Congress*, last modified 28 June 2018, https://www.loc.gov/bibframe/implementation/register.html and Pat Riva, Patrick Le Boeuf, and Maja Žumer, *IFLA Library Reference Model: A Conceptual Model for Bibliographic Information* (IFLA, 2017), 19. https://www.ifla.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/05/assets/cataloguing/frbr-lrm/ifla-lrm-august-2017_rev201712.pdf.

115. Terry Cook, "The Concept of the Archival Fonds in the Post-Custodial Era: Theory, Problems and Solutions," *Archivaria 35: Proceedings of the ACA Seventeenth Annual Conference, Montreal 12-15 September 1992*, no. 35 (1993): 27. Emphasis in the original.

116. "19.2 Creator," *Original RDA Toolkit*, accessed on 12 May 2024, https://original.rdatoolkit.org/.

samizdat text or collection, it also demonstrates some of the tension between the modes of *samizdat* printing, publication, and authorization that actually created and legitimized these texts in the mid-20th century and the standardized practices of classification and authorization in libraries and archives.

Given the means by which *samizdat* texts were circulated, and the practices of circulation, through recopying and even alteration, "most works of samizdat are 'unstable,' existing in many copies, versions, formats, languages" and "many exist only in the form of reproductions and translations, as the so-called originals were destroyed by the secret service or the authors themselves."[117] As Zaslavskaya notes, this is a problem of access that is constructed specifically through the materiality of *samizdat* texts and how they were created. However, it's also a problem of provenance and, with it, authorization. The need to link a given text to a known creator, or set of known creators, to have a clear handle on which version is the original, or canonical, expression of a work and the most accurate representation of the original author's intentions, and to have a relatively clear sense of what other copies, versions, or formats of a text might exist and where they might be located are all undermined by the nature of *samizdat* printing and publishing. Unnamed creators, or at least editors or revisionists, could enter into the life of the text at any point along the chain of its creation and there would be little chance of confidently tracing the changes a text underwent and by whom throughout that process, especially if the original had been lost, destroyed, or made inaccessible. While this aspect of *samizdat* texts may not always create a direct practical issue when it comes to describing or cataloguing a text given that required, core information like author names, dates, or titles specified by a given content standard like DACS or RDA might be present on the text itself, it

117. Zaslavskaya, "From Dispersed to Distributed Archives," 701-2.

does suggest that the core level of description needed for an item of this kind cannot give a clear, accurate picture of the life and creation of that text—the career or trajectory that sprang up out of the original expression of the text into a bevy of copies that kept it alive and rendered it valuable. Nor could this level of description successfully trace and make visible to a user the complete movement of the text through a network of associated objects, participants, and linkages. The instability of the *samizdat* text due to its many versions also raises important conceptual and practical questions about the point at which the text became 'fixed' and what might constitute a representative version of the text that could reasonably count as the finished manifestation of that expression, knowing that the *samizdat* text was definitionally unfixed in the main period of their creation. How could one know for sure if, for example, the manifestation of a text collected for a particular archive or published officially elsewhere remained the same for the rest of its circulation or whether it went through further mutations as other copies continued to circulate post archivization or official publication? How could one know if the form in which a *tamizdat* text became fixed abroad accurately reflected the ways it became fixed in the USSR or Russia, if it ever did? Even if a version of a text were verified or authorized by the recognized original author of the text, does this author still have the highest right of authorization in a printing and publication system that was run by readers, who could also become co-creators in their own right, and legitimized through the circulation undertaken by those same readers? As Komaromi suggests, "the concept of a text collectively written, altered after the initial authors and editors are done with it, highlights a truth about samizdat: the samizdat system depended on people adding their own imprimatur to texts, at least by passing on a work."[118] Thus, the ability to define a text as authorized, as representing what it claimed to be and coming from the source from

118. Komaromi, "Soviet Dissident Publics," 75.

which it claimed to come, lay with the various reader-creators and not with a publisher or even, practically speaking, an original author who could not personally affirm the text except through word of mouth.

The issue in these cases isn't the practical issue of not having a reliable title page from which to draw preferred information or, in some cases, a known author. After all, in many cases, content standards like RDA, DACS, and DCRM offer alternative or exceptional rules for collections or objects that are missing core information typically found in an archival or catalogue record. Rather, the problem with this standard of description built around author-based authorization is that it creates a false sense of certainty around the text's printing and publishing history and obscures the collaborative work behind the text by emphasizing one primary creator and one primary version of the text. That is, one of the conceptual problems of putting *samizdat* texts into traditional archives or collections is that they become a kind of authorized, representative copy of a given text rather than a node in a network of vital, becoming texts that iterate and echo and transform through the act of circulation and readership. The messy and uncontrollable acts of piracy and creation that establish the expressions of a given work that are distributed to readers in various manifestations, make the *samizdat* text a different thing than a text produced through a standard printer and publisher which creates a clear, unbroken line from one copy originating from the first author and put into standardized publication. That form of becoming, though, tends to be erased in the archiving and collecting processes when *samizdat* texts are authorized through reference solely to the inciting author.

The universal application of official expectations for authorization and fixity, then, further extend to disavow or render invisible alternative forms of authorization or authentication based in cultural values that eschew a strict adherence to private property and copyright. To this

end, one of the major results of officially standardized approaches to authorization and fixity among printed materials like *samizdat* books in particular is that they are typically classified as archival or manuscript materials, rather than books, even when they are bound. This distinction may have rung true to some authors' intentions, but also delegitimizes the versions of the book that actually circulated and made the book known to its reading public. As Michael F. Suarez and H. R. Woudhuysen indicate in the introduction to *The Book: A Global History*, "we might profitably think of 'book' as originally signifying the surface on which any text is written and, hence, as a fitting shorthand for all recorded texts."[119] However, the breadth of this definition is, in practice, and in the imagination of the modern reader, significantly narrowed to a smaller set of formats like the bound codex and eBooks, and institutional distinctions between library books and archival manuscripts reify these narrowed definitions. Such a designation also minimizes the authorial roles that some members of the public took on in the creation of the *samizdat* book which reflected the kinds of manuscript circulation present in the early days of European printing. In these earlier periods, there was less differentiation between books and manuscripts in libraries than in more modern libraries. Books and manuscripts were not separated as rigidly when shelved and in some cases were even "bound together into larger assemblages" as part of the same library object.[120] In this sense, the definitions that libraries adopted around book objects were much more fluid than a strict focus on the modern printed codex and manuscripts could take on, at least in the way they were stored and made available in libraries, the status of the printed book in a way that had become less possible by the 20th century. Classifying *samizdat*

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119. Michael F. Suarez and H. R. Woudhuysen, "Introduction," in *The Book: A Global History*, eds. Michael F. Suarez and H. R. Woudhuysen (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), xii.

120. Love, "The Manuscript after the Coming of Print," 200.

texts as manuscripts, by contrast, characterizes them as unfinished versions or partial versions of a text that do not represent an authorized form of the work. As the SAA Glossary defines it, a manuscript is “a handwritten document,” an “*unpublished* document” [my emphasis], “an author’s draft of a book, article, or other work submitted for publication” or “typewritten documents [that] are generally classified as manuscripts but are more accurately described as typescripts.”[121] While the medium of a typical *samizdat* text certainly endears it to these definitions, as discussed in Section I, the *samizdat* text was not unpublished, but rather, as expressed in the term *sam*izdat, printed and published by unofficial, collaborative means. Similarly, the typical *samizdat* text may not take the form of an officially printed codex—although texts that made it into *tamizdat* often did—but the lack of an official ‘book’ medium was not by choice, but by lack of official publication options.[122] While a typescript may serve as a manuscript medium in most cases, in the case of *samizdat* this was the functional equivalent of the printed and published book format because it was typically the only means by which to turn the text into a book and because it was circulated to readers as a legitimate version of a given book. However, this distinction between *samizdat* manuscripts/typescripts and officially published books/codices, including officially published *tamizdat* copies, is still maintained in archival descriptions of *samizdat* materials.

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121. Dictionary of Archives Terminology, s.v. “manuscript,” accessed on 12 May 2024, https://dictionary.archivists.org/entry/manuscript.html.

122. There were rare exceptions to this rule, but they were few and far between due to equipment seizures, limitations on who could own and operate a press, and the fact that in many parts of the USSR even typewriters needed to be registered with the government. See Louise Shelley, *Policing Soviet Society: The Evolution of State Control* (Taylor and Francis, 2005), 6. Notably, unregistered Baptists who were creating *samizdat* texts within the USSR were able to “put together their own printing presses” because they were located in the provinces and because they needed to keep their religious activities secret as well, making it easier to stay off of the government’s radar. Komaromi, *Soviet Samizdat*, 134.

Both Russian and Western archives holding *samizdat* collections distinguish typed *samizdat* texts as unpublished manuscripts, specifically typescripts, and distinguish them from printed and published materials. Fond Iofe clearly distinguishes whether or not a text is a typescript ["машинопись"] or manuscript ["с рукоп."] like a 19-leaf copy of Akhmatova's *Requiem* which is described as both, or a published, printed text like a book of Akhmatova's poems [*Стихотворения и поэмы*] published by Lenizdat in 1976.[123] It also marks whether texts are bound [сброшюровано] like a couple of Akhmatova's typescript/manuscript copies of *Requiem* in the collection of her texts[124] or unbound [не сброшюровано] like the typescript copy in the Anatolii Sinaiskii collection.[125] Typescripts are also specifically marked as not the first copy ["не 1-й экз."][126] which suggests an inherent removal of copies from the status and value of the original. Similarly, the Hoover Institution, housed at Stanford, distinguishes typescripts, bound typescripts, handmade books, and printed materials, which are defined as inherently published, in their OAC finding aid for Aleksandr Ginzburg's papers.[127] The implication of these distinctions, is that the typescripts or manuscripts are not authorized and not 'books.' While it's important to be specific about the materiality of a given object, classifying typescript *samizdat* as though it's something different than a published book when it was printed, small-batch published, circulated, and read like a book in the Soviet Union, misrepresents what it is and only

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123. "2004. Ахматова А. А. Произведения. Материалы об А. А. Ахматовой," *Электронный архив Фонда Иофе*, accessed on 12 May 2024, https://arch2.iofe.center/case/7064.

124. "2004. Ахматова А. А.," https://arch2.iofe.center/case/7064.

125. Коллекция Синайского Анатолия," *Электронный архив Фонда Иофе*, accessed on 12 May 2024, https://arch2.iofe.center/case/9648.

126. "2007. Бродский И. А. [Собр. Соч.:] 1," *Электронный архив Фонда Иофе*, accessed on 12 May 2024, https://arch2.iofe.center/case/7066.

127. "Ginzburg (Aleksandr Il'ich) Papers," *Online Archive of California*, Hoover Institution, accessed 12 May 2024, https://oac.cdlib.org/findaid/ark:/13030/kt5489r85c/dsc/#aspace_6793f9190440f5f7170a52794f0a40f0.

values the authorization given by the inciting author of a text that was, in many ways, created and authorized collaboratively. Especially given Johns' points about the ways in which readers laboured to make printing what it was,[128] it seems important to value the ways in which *samizdat* readers took a larger role than usual in the modern era of printing to define *samizdat* printing and make it possible by harnessing the fluidity of the early years of printing.

This difference in perceived medium also parallels a difference in presumed fixity. Since modern books are typically expected to come in the form of well-documented and inherently *fixed* and labelled versions, the fluidity of *samizdat* texts and the fact that they were printed as many simultaneous but varied copies seems to put them at odds with the modern idea of the book. But their use of older printing and manuscript methods which ground them in practices associated more with the early printing era also associate them with fuzzier definitions of what a book could look like before the codex became the preferred form. Given these particular contexts, the necessity for objects within archives, special collections, and libraries to be fixed becomes a kind of erasure of what *samizdat* is because *samizdat* is inherently unfixed. As Annet Dekker asserts, "in archival practices, the fixity of documents is necessary (even laid down in law) as a means of verification"[129] and this principle extends to libraries and special collections as well. Once an object is collected, it needs to be arrested in space and time for the sake of assuring the user of its authenticity and research value. But Dekker also acknowledges that documents and texts can be altered during their distribution and that they are, therefore, inherently "both fixed and fluid."[130] In the case of *samizdat* texts, they were generally more fluid

128. Johns, The Nature of the Book, 19.

129. Annet Dekker, *Collecting and Conserving Net Art: Moving Beyond Conventional Methods* (London: Taylor and Francis, 2018), 145.

130. Dekker, *Collecting and Conserving Net Art*, 144.

than fixed: essentially any copy could be altered to any extent at any time with no documentation of the changes made that might indicate, for example, a new version, 'edition,' or even a new expression. While each copy of a *samizdat* text may be put physically on paper in a 'fixed' way, that copy can still face further amendments and revisions and the content of the original version of the text, as it circulates, is not calcified in a way that ensures it's circulated without major changes. The status of the text, then, even if we can acknowledge that there is a version of the text solidified to some extent within the author's mind, is contingent. When versions of the text are created through collaborative circulation and piracy, making the amount and kinds of variations effectively unknowable in their extent, the distance between the original version of the text and its variations and the distance between those variations and further variations also become unknowable. But this contingency and unknowability are also inherent qualities of the *samizdat* text—they become part of the original text itself because they are vital to how it comes into being and is circulated to its readers. The fugitivity of the texts makes their certified fixity all but impossible and that context around their creation, which ultimately determines their form and content, needs to be preserved as well. For one thing, even if a text were published, and thus fixed to some extent, like in *tamizdat*, this level of fixity would not necessarily end its circulation in *samizdat* in the Soviet Union. While the text became fixed at one point, it continued to live alternate lives, which may or may not have differed markedly from the content in its *tamizdat* versions but almost certainly did in terms of its language and format given that *tamizdat* texts were often translations and were usually published officially and, thus, manifested as typical codices.

While these alternate lives are unknown and unknowable at this juncture, they are key to contextualizing the text within its own moment(s) of creation. However, this context is often not

present for *samizdat* materials collected in libraries, special collections, and archives. Even when typescript *samizdat* copies of a given text are available and connected to a particular author through archival documentation or authority control, they are often not connected or contextualized by tracing connections to other copies that might exist in other archives and collections. Because typescripts are treated as manuscripts and, thus, typically archived and described by collection, series, or folder rather than individual resource, archival finding aids tend not to include specialized context connecting individual copies of works together where possible and giving more general background on a text that could highlight its unusual means of printing and publication, likely due to limitations in resources and labour and the international dispersion of *samizdat* materials. Even within one institution, it isn't always guaranteed that connections will be drawn between related texts. The online finding aids for the Fond Iofe, for example, contains a few typescript copies of Anna Akhmatova's *Requiem* but they are separated into different collections or series. Two of them appear in a collection of works by and about Akhmatova[131] and one is in the Collection of Anatolii Sinaiskii[132] which is a grouping of manuscripts that were presumably in Sinaiskii's possession or collected together by him, including one he wrote himself. However, neither of these collection summaries contain a cross-listing indicating that another, different copy of Akhmatova's work exists in another place in the Fond despite the fact that the Sinaiskii copy could provide a clue to the work's circulation and the changes made to it as it circulated since the texts are different lengths. While it's understandable that finding aids would be missing extra context due to a lack of organizational

131. "2004. Ахматова А. А.," https://arch2.iofe.center/case/7064.

132. "98. Коллекция Синайского Анатолия," https://arch2.iofe.center/case/9648.

resources, this lack also indicates a shortcoming in archival standards and classification that are not built to properly account for and preserve fugitive materials like *samizdat*.

The lack of context around *samizdat* texts held in libraries and archives often comes down to the ways in which the texts are categorized—as manuscripts—and the differences in how *samizdat* texts are described in contrast to officially published *tamizdat* or *samizdat* that has been officially published since the fall of the Soviet Union. That is, at least in US institutions, because *samizdat* texts are treated like manuscripts, they are most often collected in archives and either described at the folder or collection level. GWU's Peter Reddaway Samizdat Collection is described at a folder level in a DACS-compliant finding aid and the detail provided in the folder list is dependent on the amount of material in a folder and whether or not a title or author are available. The Belle Lettres series, for example, which contains Russian literature including satirical prose fiction, poetry, and drama, is broken up by date under the title "Anon[ymous] – Belles-Lettres" which gives little indication of the particular materials contained inside.[133] Other series, like the Large Manuscript series, are broken down into folders that have the manuscript title or author name and a date, but folders containing multiple works have just the author name and the dates with no additional description of what the folder contains or are marked as miscellaneous.[134] The collection abstract and series-level descriptions do add some extra material information, but summarize the materials on a broader scale, rather than individually, meaning that, for example, the user just gets the broad idea that the "collection contains original samizdat materials from the USSR, samizdat documents copied for distribution by Radio Free

133. "Peter Reddaway Samizdat Collection," https://searcharchives.library.gwu.edu/repositories/2/resources/805/collection_organization.

134. See, for example, the folders entitled "[Eduard] Kuznetsov, 1970 October 27-1972 March 10" and "Miscellaneous Samizdat 1963 December 9-1975 March 17." "Peter Reddaway Samizdat Collection," https://searcharchives.library.gwu.edu/repositories/2/resources/805/collection_organization.

Europe/Radio liberty, correspondence, petitions, news sheets, articles, memoirs, works of prose and poetry, published and unpublished book manuscripts, press releases, transcripts of trials, bills of indictment, newspaper clippings and other historical documents" and that each series contains a noted subsection of these materials based on topic, genre, or format category.[135] The breadth of these levels of description and the inconsistencies in how individual texts are named in the collection finding aids, although time-saving, obscure what specific texts and other *samizdat* reader-creators, besides Reddaway, are represented in the collection making it difficult to trace paths of circulation, but also giving the impression that these materials are "papers" more so than books and, to that end, are relatively interchangeable. The format of the *samizdat* texts is treated as important here in that it is highlighted in the collection title through the direct reference to "samizdat," but the definitional differences that this format implies are not considered in how the objects are arranged and described. For example, *samizdat* is described in the abstract as meaning "'self published'" and indicating "prohibited publications created in secret and distributed via underground networks during the Soviet era," yet the abstract also lists "works of prose and poetry" and "published and unpublished book manuscripts" without defining the difference between what "published" and "unpublished" indicate in this context, especially given that it also refers to "original samizdat *materials*" and "samizdat *documents copied for distribution*" in other places in the abstract.[136] Are *samizdat* texts published or not in this framework? Which ones count as 'books' and why? Their exact status here is left ambiguous, but

135. "Peter Reddaway Samizdat Collection," https://searcharchives.library.gwu.edu/repositories/2/resources/805.

136. "Peter Reddaway Samizdat Collection," https://searcharchives.library.gwu.edu/repositories/2/resources/805. My emphasis.

at least in terms of how and where they're arranged and stored, as well as the level of their description, they certainly give the impression of unpublished manuscript.

If described at the item level, given that a *samizdat* book or periodical can easily take up an entire folder, *samizdat* texts are typically assigned an author, title, date, and possibly format, if this information is available. Occasionally, extra information will be included as well, such as an extra piece of media included or the original language. The OAC finding aid for the Hoover Institution's Ginzburg (Aleksandr Il'ich) Papers, for example, provides the title for "Pochemu i ia khristianin" ["Why I, Too, am a Christian"] with the date 1968 and extra explanatory notes indicating that it is religious *samizdat* and that the format is bound typescript.[137] It seems likely that this text originated with the author Sergei Alekseevich Zheludkov, a Russian Orthodox priest, but this information is not given on the finding aid and so users would need to find this information on their own.[138] There is also the case of box 6, folder 5 which is labeled "Severianin, Igor 1960s" and with the additional explanatory note that it is a "samizdat book of poems created by Ginzburg, in his handwriting."[139] In this case we get the names of the authors involved, Severianin and Ginzburg, and the description indicates something about the creation of the *samizdat* text and how it might have circulated, especially with the added information in the Collection Details explaining further that Ginzburg took the book with him to "prisons and camps," but doesn't give the titles of the poems involved.[140] In box 5, folder 15, the user can find

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137. "Ginzburg (Aleksandr Il'ich) Papers," https://oac.cdlib.org/findaid/ark:/13030/kt5489r85c/dsc/?query=pochemu%20i#dsc-1.2.11.

138. Serge Schmemann, "Sergei Zheludkov, a Dissident," *The New York Times* (New York, NY), Feb. 3, 1984, https://www.nytimes.com/1984/02/03/obituaries/sergei-zheludkov-a-dissident.html.

139. "Ginzburg (Aleksandr Il'ich) Papers," https://oac.cdlib.org/findaid/ark:/13030/kt5489r85c/dsc/?query=Severianin#dsc-1.2.11.

140. "Ginzburg (Aleksandr Il'ich Papers," https://oac.cdlib.org/view?style=oac4;view=admin;docId=kt5489r85c;query=Severianin#hitNum1.

more poetry, but the label only provides the information "Poetry 1967-1970" and that the content within is typescript so that it isn't entirely clear what the poetry is, who wrote it, or whether or not it was likely circulated as *samizdat*.[141] Of course, much of this information may not be known in this case, but it's difficult to say if this is the case or if the lack of information is simply a processing decision based on the finding aid alone and given that it is common to process archival materials at the folder level. Either way, because these materials are documented as part of a finding aid rather than, say, catalogued, there is little room for other descriptive material or access points and the information that is provided is geared towards a base level of access that does not engage with the material and intellectual complexity of the object or the relationships it may have to other texts within and outside of the same institution. Even in the case of finding aids that do provide a bit of extra information, item-level description and descriptive notes that indicate relationships between individual items in the archive or in other institutions go beyond the requirements of major archival standards like DACS and typically require more time and resources than an institution is willing to commit to archival materials. Unlike an RDA-based catalogue record for an officially published book, which requires a certain level of item specific description and subject access points to provide a full picture of the object and its contents, the granularity of archival description in DACS is largely left up to the discretion of the archivist.[142] While this kind of flexibility does offer more options for collections that might need more

141. "Ginzburg (Aleksandr Il'ich Papers," https://oac.cdlib.org/findaid/ark:/13030/kt5489r85c/dsc/?query=poetry%201967#dsc-1.2.11.

142. As the most recent version of DACS explains it "DACS does not attempt to define the proper level of description for any set of archival materials. Archivists should follow the prescriptions of their institutions and apply their own judgment in making such determinations." "Levels of Description," *Describing Archives: A Content Standard Version 2022.0.1.1*, SAA, 2022, https://saa-ts-dacs.github.io/dacs/06_part_I/02_chapter_01.html.

individualized approaches to their documentation, it also means, in practice, that anything designated as an archival object is likely to be less described than library objects.

On the other side of the coin, however, officially published *tamizdat* texts, or *samizdat* texts that were later officially published, are often catalogued using RDA, or similar standards, which do require a certain level of description, subject identification, and linking between works. However, these standards tend to represent a given object as static and only highlight specific kinds of characteristics and connections. For one thing, looking at an RDA MARC-encoded record for a translated publication of Solzhenitsyn's *The First Circle*, there is nothing in the catalogue record to indicate to an uninformed user that the book was originally published and circulated in *samizdat*, or that this publication of the book, which took place in 1968, was a *tamizdat* publication.[143] Solzhenitsyn and the translator, Thomas P. Whitney, are the only creators or contributors listed for the text and, because Library of Congress' Genre/Form Terms controlled vocabulary does not include a term for *samizdat*, the original form of the text goes unacknowledged.[144] The only connection made to another version of the work, another officially published *tamizdat* copy, is to a copy contained in a collection of books from the library of Susan Sontag held in UCLA Special Collections. This note is also made in the 590 field which is used for local notes and is left to the cataloguer's best judgement for inclusion.[145] The flexibility of the

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143. *The First Circle* MARC Record, *UCLA Libraries*, accessed 13 May 2024, https://search.library.ucla.edu/discovery/sourceRecord?vid=01UCS_LAL:UCLA&docId=alma9930855543606533&recordOwner=01UCS_NETWORK.

144. The closest option on LoC GFT appears to be "Underground periodicals" which is inaccurate to many types of *samizdat*, including Solzhenitsyn's novel. "Genre/Form Terms," *The Library of Congress*, accessed on 13 May 2024, https://www.loc.gov/aba/publications/FreeLCGFT/GENRE.pdf. There is a broader option in LoC's Subject Headings in the form of "Underground literature—Soviet Union," but because it is a subject heading, it would only be applied if the text in question was *about samizdat*, not if the book itself took the form of *samizdat*. "LCSH U," *Library of Congress*, accessed on 13 May 2024, https://www.loc.gov/aba/publications/FreeLCSH/U.pdf.

145. "59X – Local Notes (R)," *Library of Congress*, 1999, https://www.loc.gov/marc/bibliographic/bd59x.html.

local note fields, which are determined institution to institution, allow some possibilities for tailoring cataloguing to a particular work that has unusual qualities and adding some of the extra context that a *samizdat* work might require for a fuller picture of its lifecycle, but attempting to build in all of the connections necessary to give a full picture of the work and how it has been published through circulation in time and space would quickly become unwieldy for both cataloguers and users and it's unlikely that an institution would choose to put in this much context, even for rare books and materials, if only out of practicality. In this sense, while the basic format and extent of the object are described according to RDA guidelines by indicating the number of pages of the text and the size of the volume in the 300 field, a key element of the form of this expression of the work is left out, as is the entire lifecycle of the work before it becomes frozen in the MARC record. Certainly, the goal of RDA and MARC records for libraries is to capture an accurate snapshot of the object as it exists in the collection, but this goal only takes into account a snapshot of a given work within a given time and place of its production and circulation. The library's and archives' demand for fixity arrests the fugitive text, forcibly stopping its circulation and, with it, vital becoming, and the description then provided according to the appropriate standards misclassify the *samizdat* text and leave out key details of how to understand what the text is and how it came into being.

Provenance and the Work

In particular, these standards of description and classification cannot speak meaningfully to the unique provenance of *samizdat* texts or to the ways in which *samizdat* text challenge the very notion of the FRBR 'work' entity which sits at the core of most currently used LIS models for framing what books are and how they exist in the world. To begin with the issue of

provenance, official standards of authorization in libraries and archives, which are expressed through authority control, require collected objects to be discrete and knowable, which acts in direct contradiction to the ways in which *samizdat* texts expanded into increasing, iterative branches through their publication. Uncontrolled circulation and printing, particularly through piracy, are key to the creation and character of *samizdat* texts, but, of course, cannot mesh with the kinds of authority structures in place in any major collecting institution. These kinds of circulation would typically undermine the reliability or authority of a text, but in the case of *samizdat*, are the key to creating the texts and allowing them to reach the readers who would then, in turn, authorize them and lend them status as true and authentic. To this end, any collecting practice around *samizdat* texts that seeks to give a fuller, more accurate picture of what they are, ought to deemphasize traditional concepts of authorship and originality as value markers of a given text. While this kind of approach might appear to create a loss of provenance, it is, rather, a part of the provenance of the text at hand. Provenance, in the case of archival materials and books, generally refers to the history of an object's custodianship, origin, authorship, and context, and often serves as proof of an object's originality, and therefore authenticity.[146] Typically, tracing the custodianship of the object allows the archivist or librarian to ensure "that the entity has not been modified, replaced, or corrupted and must therefore be original."[147] It's worth noting that "provenance has traditionally not been standard cataloguing

146. *Descriptive Cataloging of Rare Materials (Manuscripts)* (Chicago: Rare Books and Manuscript Section of the Association of College and Research Libraries, 2016), 145. https://rbms.info/files/dcrm/dcrmmss/DCRMMSS.pdf. Joseph A Dane, *What Is a Book?: The Study of Early Printed Books* (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 2020), 157.

147. Jeff Rothenberg, "Preserving Authentic Digital Information," *CLIR*, accessed on 13 May 2024, https://www.clir.org/pubs/reports/pub92/rothenberg/#:~:text=The%20archival%20principle%20of%20provenance,they%20have%20not%20been%20corrupted.

practice and that it was not done systematically in most libraries or archives until" the early 2000s which has limited which kinds of materials have provenance details attached to them to texts whose provenance could be easily identified.[148] That is, "recording provenance has been heavily focused towards institutionally-significant and historically-significant figures."[149] While there has been some increased focus on recording provenance for hand-press books, typically because it's easier to locate owners,[150] the necessary secrecy around *samizdat* texts would mean that while original authors and editors may be identifiable, depending on the risks they were willing to take, other creators, in this case readers, who printed, published, and remade texts by pirating them and passing them on, would serve as an unknown variable between those original, possibly named, creators and contributors and the form that the text took through the course of its circulation and creation. The bibliographic universe is focused on documenting what is known but focusing solely on the 'known' leaves out key connections and means of creation that operate outside of strict, controlled standards of publication and authorization. That is, because of the ways in which *samizdat* texts were created, certain kinds of gaps in the knowledge we have around a particular text or around the *samizdat* community are meaningful. The absences in this case are not empty, but rather express the very contingency of the text, a key characteristic of its being and source of creation. Within the informational absences gather the possibilities of what may have happened to particular copies of texts, whether that be destruction through over-circulation or policing, or disappearance into police archives, desk drawers, or trash bins.

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148. Lauren Alex O'Hagan, "A Voice for the Voiceless: Improving Provenance Practice for Working-Class Books," *Journal of Librarianship and Information Science* 53, no. 1 (March 2021): 3-207. doi: 10.1177/0961000620909160.

149. O'Hagan, "A Voice for the Voiceless," 19.

150. O'Hagan, "A Voice for the Voiceless," 20.

Because there are no real official trails to follow for *samizdat* texts unless they break out into *tamizdat*, tracing the trails of the absences and the unknowns is necessary for fully understanding the *samizdat* bibliographic universe. Despite these specificities of *samizdat* texts, they are still viewed through a "focus on the sanctity of the original" that comes with provenance research and much archival and special collections collecting and preservation practice and posits the tracing of copies, especially if seen as incomplete, less relevant.[151] However, the anonymizing force of the particular kind of circulation undertaken around *samizdat* texts in reader networks and the myriad of textual versions that exploded through this circulation, are a part of the provenance of every *samizdat* text and an aspect of their creation that defines them in contrast to conventionally printed and published texts.

This issue of the provenance of *samizdat* texts, however, has further implications than just for the preservation of *samizdat* texts or the idea of provenance itself. Rather, these issues of provenance also introduce problems around how texts are identified and grouped together. The conceptual models that typically guide library, special collections, and archival description and classification rely on the ability to clearly identify texts as what they are and to silo them based on who created them. However, the difficult provenance of *samizdat* texts makes these kinds of models inadequate to appropriately framing and describing *samizdat* texts. In particular, the issue of provenance further undermines the FRBR entities which are at the root of most library cataloguing practices. The FRBR conceptual model proposed by IFLA in the 1990s has served as an attempt to address, as the name implies, what bibliographic records should provide information about and what each record should allow users to do.[152] The model defines a set of

151. Rothenberg, https://www.clir.org/pubs/reports/pub92/rothenberg/.

entities that can be used to understand what a particular bibliographic record is representing and support a set of key user tasks. In particular, bibliographic records that follow the FRBR model should allow users to find entities related to their search criteria, identify a particular entity as the entity the user is seeking, select an appropriate entity, and then obtain access to whichever entity the user wants to use.[153] The four main entities that support these tasks, referred to as "group 1 entities" refer to the abstract and concrete elements that make up what a particular bibliographic object is and represents and these entities as hierarchized from the broadest, most abstract entity (work) to the most specific and concrete entity (item). In this case, the four entities relate according to the following model: the work ("a distinct intellectual or artistic creation") is realized through an expression ("the intellectual or artistic realization of a *work*"), which is embodied in a manifestation ("the physical embodiment of an *expression* of a *work*"), which is, finally, exemplified by an item ("a single exemplar of a *manifestation*").[154] These entities are further related to the entities responsible for their creation or ownership—a person or corporate body—and the work entity is also related to another group of entities that it might take as a subject including another particular work, expression, manifestation, item, person, or corporate body, as well as a concept, object, event, or place.[155]

With this set hierarchy in mind, FRBR-based standards, like RDA, which are typically used to catalogue and define officially published library materials, are inherently static in that

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152. IFLA Study Group on the Functional Requirements for Bibliographic Records, *Functional Requirements for Bibliographic Records* (IFLA, 1997), 2. https://www.ifla.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/05/assets/cataloguing/frbr/frbr_2008.pdf.

153. IFLA Study Group, *Functional Requirements*, 79.

154. IFLA Study Group, *Functional Requirements*, 13-14. Emphasis in the original.

155. IFLA Study Group, *Functional Requirements*, 15-16.

they track a work separately item by item, drawing clear boundaries between various manifestations or various new works transformed from the same source work. These kinds of models do not track how works, and their manifestations, have moved and transformed through time and space and made contact with other forms of the work or non-traditional creators nor how these entities might trouble the established relationships that FRBR posits between various entities. That is, items and manifestations are related to each other in the FRBR model in that they connect back up the hierarchy to the same work, but FRBR does not offer a standardized way to indicate how particular items might be in relationship to each other over time (through patterns of ownership for example), or how a manifestation has developed over time. According to the FRBR model, a work could be represented in more than one expression or an expression could be realized in more than one manifestation, but it would be difficult to express the relationship of these multiple expressions or manifestations to each other. That is, the FRBR model is designed to function vertically but not as much horizontally meaning that horizontal relationships are largely left implicit or made indirectly.[156] Drawing horizontal relationships between entities may not be a high priority for fixed, officially published manifestations that are concretized into one form and self-contain a standardized set of identificatory metadata because different items from the same manifestation are guaranteed to be interchangeable. However, *samizdat* texts that emerge from the same inciting work create a network of variations, all of which identifying themselves as the same work, and likely little to no metadata or marks of past ownership. In this case, tracing horizontal relationships and troubling the connections between each of the group 1 entities are important practices for understanding the actual, messy relationships between *samizdat* texts.

156. IFLA Study Group, *Functional Requirements*, 19.

In particular, the lack of documentation and muddled provenance creates problems for distinguishing the borders of a work and expression in the *samizdat* sphere in a rigid, standardized way. Let's return to the example from Section I of the released prisoner who reproduced Uris' *Exodus* after hearing it told to him in prison. This *samizdat* publisher created a version of the text that was around a tenth of its length, as intended by the original author, and which was then further altered through the continued circulation of that new, shorter version.[157] If we take the concept of the work, which is an abstract "distinct intellectual or artistic creation," at face value, it seems difficult to argue that this *samizdat* version of *Exodus* is a new work: it's meant to be Uris' book even if significantly abridged. But when looking at the material manifestation of that work, and how this expression of it, "the [abstract] intellectual or artistic realization of a *work*,"[158] produces and makes the work physical for a reader through the prisoner's manifestation, it seems difficult to argue that they should both be considered expressions of the work *Exodus* when the details of the text are only based on what the prisoner remembered of a translated version of the narrative written in, presumably, a wildly different writing style than might be found in Uris' own expression of the work. That is, it "involves a significant degree of independent intellectual or artistic effort" which suggests that it should be considered a new work.[159] However, this independent effort falls within the bounds of the piratical, undocumented, and creative forms of printing and publication essential to *samizdat*'s production and, within the values of *samizdat* printing, even a significantly different version of a text would not necessarily be considered by its readers a new work. Such fuzziness would be

157. Komaromi, *Uncensored*, 137.

158. IFLA Study Group, *Functional Requirements*, 13.

159. IFLA Study Group, *Functional Requirements*, 18.

even more extreme for texts that were not yet officially published in their original language. Essentially, while there is something to be said for distinguishing the abstract idea of a work as something original, the hierarchy of group 1 FRBR entities ignores the ways in which materiality is fundamental to both bringing a work into existence for publishers and readers, who are the people who do the labour of recognizing and valuing that work, and to defining what the work is.

The original physical text(s) then needs to be recognized as a defining characteristic of the work, establishing a clear essential connection between the idea of the work and how it exists recognizably in the physical world. That is, the work of William Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet* is an abstract idea that can be physically realized in many ways, but the idea itself could not exist in Shakespeare's head in the exact same way that it exists on paper or on stage and it is only on paper or on stage that the work can be shared and recognized as a work that exists in the world. Furthermore, while the work could theoretically take any expression, there is a particular expression primarily associated with it and this expression works, in part, backwards to define what the work is. *Romeo and Juliet* becomes a new work when it becomes a song, or film, or sculpture,[160] because its materiality, its physical manifestation as a play in part defines what it is. The emergent Library Reference Model (LRM) attempts to address this issue of materiality by bringing in the concept of the canonical expression. Based on research with users, IFLA considers canonical expressions to be those "said to best represent the initial intention of the creators of that work" while "other expressions can, if the full history of the work is known, be seen as taking shape from a network of derivations or transformations starting from the original expression."[161] While the canonical expression is often the "first or original expression of the

160. IFLA Study Group, *Functional Requirements*, 18.

work," given an unusual publishing history, including if a text is published simultaneously or first in translation, it would be possible for a work "to have multiple 'original' expressions, or either not to have 'an original' expression at all."[162] Similarly, the means by which *samizdat* becomes text obscures the creation of the work and makes the identification of the original expression of the work, at least in some cases, almost impossible. In the case of *tamizdat*, the work's first official expression is typically not even produced in the original language of the work and, while it is then the same work conceptually, it does not preserve the original qualities of the work and its original expression. In the case of *samizdat*, the original might be altered many times over, with no record of that alteration or the authors of that alteration, as it is being circulated. This kind of circulation would then produce many different versions that could be taken as the original expression because they are a part of the initial 'print run' of the text, so to speak. Provenance, in this case, could be based on oral forms of community knowledge and trust rather than on verifiable documentation even if original author's autographed copies survive given that these versions could represent the text as intended or in a form meant to ease past the censor or to be published abroad.

The IFLA report on FRBR in relationship to the LRM gives an example of the difficulties sometimes involved in sorting out authorial intent based on the fact that J. R. R. Tolkien's publisher's decisions about the canonical expression of *The Lord of the Rings* clashed with Tolkien's intentions as the author.[163] However, establishing a canonical expression can be even more difficult when the author's intentions remain unclear or even contradictory even outside of

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161. Pat Riva, Patrick Le Boeuf, and Maja Žumer, *FRBR-Library Reference Model* (IFLA, 2016), 62. https://www.ifla.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/05/assets/cataloguing/frbr-lrm/frbr-lrm_20160225.pdf.

162. Riva, Boeuf, and Žumer, *FRBR-Library Reference Model*, 62-63.

163. Riva, Boeuf, and Žumer, *FRBR-Library Reference Model*, 63.

samizdat publications. For example, Fedor Dosteovskii's novel *Demons* has long been a site of contestation for Slavic scholars because one of the intended chapters of the novel, "At Tikhon's," was not included in the novel's publication during his lifetime, despite its importance to the narrative, in large part due to censorship. Scholars have debated whether or not the chapter should be included at all and, if so, where it should be included with most opting to restore it to its inferred original placement in the text or to include it as an appendix.[164] This confusion stems from the fact that, although Dostoevksii originally intended for the chapter to appear in his novel and undertook several failed attempts to convince his editor to include it in the initial publication of the novel in *The Russian Messenger*, he himself did not include the chapter in later copies of the text that came out during his lifetime despite continuing to share the chapter with other intellectuals in his circle.[165] In such a situation, the canonical expression of the text could be one of the three versions—with "At Tikhon's" in its originally planned place based on external documentation, with the chapter in an appendix, or without the chapter at all—or it could be all three, or an unknown, depending on user perception.

In the case of *samizdat* texts, the focus on authorial intent could be equally fraught due to similar issues with censorship. Solzhenitsyn, attempting to fit his novel *In the First Circle* to the requirements of the Soviet censor, produced "an 'ersatz truncated'" version of the novel. While that version was still rejected in the USSR, he ultimately authorized it for publication in the West under the title *The First Circle* in 1968. In the same year, though, he had "returned the novel to

164. Geir Kjetsaa, "The Suppressed Chapter in *The Devils*," in *Celebrating Creativity: Essays in Honour of Jostein Børtnes*, eds. Knut Andreas Grimstad and Ingunn Lunde (Bergen: University of Bergen, 1997), 186.

165. Joseph Frank, *Dostoevsky: A Writer in His Time* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2010), 625.

its authentic form, following as well his lifelong pattern of tinkering with the text."[166] The necessities of publishing under censorship kept his text fluid throughout his life. And while Ericson identifies the 2009 English translation of *In the First Circle* as "the definitive text" of the novel and "now […] finally available in the West as the author envisioned it,"[167]—the book cover even reads "The First Uncensored Edition" above the title[168]—this definitive version is appearing in translation abroad and may not represent the versions of the text that were actually circulating in *samizdat* within the Soviet Union which were authorized among *samizdat* reader-creators. The focus on the author's intentions and the authenticity of the text reveals these values as a key part of official publishing, especially in the Western publishing world, and while it does offer a reparative form of the text so far as censorship is concerned, it also offers a stark contrast to the smudged, annotated typescripts that Solzhenitsyn lost control over in the USSR in the 1960s.[169] With the official LIS focus on preferred forms of authorization and access, usually the title and/or author of a work, archival practices create a problem of originality that undermines the kinds of authority that defined *samizdat* texts through their own creation. A copy of a text collected within a library or archive gains the kind of authority privileged by this kind of space which focuses on the original creator and expression, or at least on a canonical expression from the original creator. However, in the world of *samizdat* publishing, which functioned through piracy, even a copy altered by its reader-creators could retain the status of the original or

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166. Edward E. Ericson, "Re-Entering the 'First Circle:' the Authoritative Text of Solzhenitsyn's Novel is Finally Available in the West," *Wall Street Journal* (New York, N.Y.), 2009.

167. Ericson, "Re-Entering the 'First Circle.'"

168. Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn, *In the First Circle*, trans. Harry T. Willetts (New York: Harper Perennial, 2009).

169. Edward E. Ericson, Jr., "Foreword," in Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn, *In the First Circle*, trans. Harry T. Willetts (New York: Harper Perennial, 2009), xv.

canonicity. That is, authorial intent was not a core value of *samizdat* printing and publishing in the same way as in official printing and publishing or, at the very least, was shared with readers responsible for revising, printing, and publishing the text as they wished and as was possible. The focus was more on what was accessible and if the content of the text was perceived to contain authentic truths in contrast to the propaganda of the Soviet state.

This isn't to say that readers didn't care about who wrote the text or the source of the information. There were, in fact, real concerns about KGB infiltration of dissident *samizdat* circles and, with it, the circulation of state messaging posing as hidden dissident *samizdat* revelations.[170] However, retrieving an 'official' copy of a *samizdat* text was, by definition, impossible and so it was necessary to value and focus on the copies to which one did have access and to rely on trusted personal networks to avoid KGB influence. *Samizdat* was perceived to convey cultural truths from people who had lived them, such as Solzhenitsyn's experience in the gulags, but there was no real control over how many changes the text experienced before reaching a reader unless they received it from the author themselves. This meant that, theoretically, any copy of a *samizdat* text was the canonical copy for a given reader if it was the only copy to which they had access. As such, a massive collection of slightly to very different canonical versions of a *samizdat* text could exist within the USSR at one time depending on the approaches of the typists distributing it. The original was valuable primarily as a starting point, as the point of fecundity in a network of copies that took on the aura of the original.[171] IFLA does recognize the possibility for multiple expressions of a work to count as "representative" and

170. Komaromi, *Uncensored*, 140.

171. Latour and Lowe, "The Migration of the Aura," 279.

therefore to “form a network or cluster of canonical expressions.”[172] However, presumably, materials officially identified as manuscripts, typescripts, or otherwise unpublished texts would not be eligible candidates as canonical expressions due to this unpublished status. Even if *samizdat* typescript expressions were given the status of canonical expressions, the idea that one expression could serve as canonical in the case of *samizdat* texts, or even a select few, seems like an endless task of somewhat arbitrary selection, especially for texts that were widely circulated or whose originals have been lost or destroyed.[173] A given expression of a *samizdat* book might, in fact, be represented physically and simultaneously by a host of typescript manifestations, some from the original author, some from recognized editors, some from trusted friends of the author, some from other readers who chanced to receive a copy, that are all printed, published, and legitimized as part of one whole just through fugitive means. That is, an expression in this case can be a kind of textual rhizome, or a network of textual and human agents that help to trace the *samizdat* text as it is created through its piratical printing and publication. In this case a growing group of individual manifestations make up one larger abstract expression that serves as the canonical, material representation of the work in the world. In this understanding of the work and expression FRBR entities, a work or expression is not one self-contained abstract idea, but rather made up of a network of shared and competing abstractions from various known and unknown creators that proliferate through group authorization and creation. Here the idea of the work or expression cannot be appropriately encapsulated by the officially authorized title of the

172. Riva, Boeuf, and Žumer, *IFLA Library Reference Model*, 92.

173 There also remains the question of whether or not the version authorized by the original author is the only authorized canonical version or if the original author is the only person able to authorize expressions and manifestations of the work. Given that *samizdat* was created and legitimized through collaborative printing and revision practices which could, in some cases expand into forms of collaborative authorship, *samizdat* raises the possibility of collaborative authorization as well.

work, but rather need to be understood through a series of relationships that tie together various physical manifestations.

Why Accommodate Fugitive Texts?

All of these practical and conceptual difficulties have made it difficult to properly preserve the context around fugitive texts like *samizdat* or to understand the place of *samizdat* texts in printing and the history of the book. And while these kinds of texts are not collected on a broad scale in modern institutions, it seems important to acknowledge the ways in which forms of fugitive printing and publishing have been legitimized outside of institutions and to lend value to those forms of legitimation given that these kinds of text often arise out of necessity due to oppressive political regimes. This kind of recognition is especially important given that these kinds of publications continue to be significant in other contexts and become even less fixed and more ambiguous to track with the help of the internet. That is, the digital revolution has made this kind of fugitive collaboration even more accessible in many cases, making the revision of a text or its circulation, as easy as editing it in a word processor or sending it out on social media. With this turn in mind, and in response to discussions around decolonization, more institutions have begun to acknowledge other kinds of authority, especially when dealing with materials about which community members might be the major authorities.[174] However, these kinds of turns to alternative authorities still often rely on traditional concepts of fixity and standardization, a limitation that scholars, community members, and information professionals working on

174. For example, see Doyle, et al.'s discussion of the X̲wi7x̲wa Knowledge Organization (KO) framework which draws on Indigenous principles to establish the kinds of warrant used to make decisions about KO praxis. Ann M. Doyle, Kimberley Lawson, Sarah Dupont, "Indigenization of Knowledge Organization at the X̲wi7x̲wa Library," *Journal of Library and Information Studies* 13, no. 2 (Dec. 2015): 107-134. doi: 10.6182/jlis.2015.13(2).107.

decolonization and Indigenization of libraries and archives have been quick to address.[175] Similarly, the materiality of *samizdat* texts requires a reexamination of what fixity and current forms of authority and standardization allow and what they take away. Doing so allows us to imagine what alternative kinds of collection, description, and classification might look like, and how we might find our own fugitive methodologies to preserve *samizdat* not just in the ways they best fit into current standards, but with a close attention to their material and cultural particularities.

Conclusion

Ultimately, the result of current Euro-American LIS standards like DACS, FRBR, and RDA, for classification, description, and preservation is that fugitive materials, like *samizdat*, are defined as less legitimate or as unpublished or not printed when they don't fit narrow definitions of these characteristics. These kinds of models narrow the field of what can count as printing or publishing, what can count as a book in modern forms of print culture, and how even physical materials can remain fluid. Qualities like a lack of fixity are a part of the ontology that created *samizdat*—primarily out of necessity rather than ideology—as is the lack of institutional or official authorization. If these qualities of *samizdat* that provide necessary context around what these texts are and that are key to how these texts were made and circulated cannot be properly accounted for within current frameworks for description, preservation, and authorization, then major elements of what these materials are have not been preserved. If they have become fixed

175. For example, see María Montenegro's review of the ways in which standardization might serve to "[obscure] knowledge diversity and identity differences" (736). María Montenegro, "Subverting the Universality of Metadata Standards: The TK Labels as a Tool to Promote Indigenous Data Sovereignty," *Journal of Documentation* 5, no. 4 (2019): 731-749. doi: 10.1108/JD-08-2018-0124.

objects for the archive or special collection when they couldn't be truly fixed in their creation and circulation, then they have been fundamentally transformed in order to meet a particular standard that wasn't made for them and that erases their particularities. Libraries and archives tend to emphasize what is known—to the extent possible given available information and standard requirements—about a given object in order to increase its accessibility and usefulness as a research object and to better preserve it. But certain kinds of objects, in this case *samizdat*, contain a certain level of material unknowability due to the very qualities that define them. They were made, to some extent, to be unknowable, to be fugitive, because doing so was the safest option and made it more difficult for legal authorities to enact consequences on participants. Failing to trace the relationships between *samizdat* texts and how they proliferated, known or not, is at best a partial loss of key cultural context and at worst a fundamental misrepresentation or misunderstanding of how these kinds of materials challenge narrow definitions of printing, publication, and the book, and escape institutional legibility because library and archive standards are ontologically incompatible with their materiality and means of creation.

CONCLUSION

Regardless of what hoops we may jump through to try to match *samizdat* texts to current LIS definitions of print and the book, or descriptive standards, we are ultimately attempting to fit pentagonal pegs into round holes. The means by which *samizdat* texts were created and authorized came out of a different, often oppositional, set of fundamental values than official printing in the 20th century, values that resulted in a return of the fuzzy relationships between manuscripts and print in the early print era and in forms of authorization, printing, and publication based in collaborative, simultaneous group creation and generative piracy. While

official books are meant to be traceable and backed by external, credentialed authorities, *samizdat* texts attempted to fly under the radar, to erase the traces of their own existence, and to multiply in all directions with little regard to intellectual property or standardization. The ontologies and standards that primarily organize libraries and archives are built on the official values of print and, as such, cannot account for the vital and illicit proliferation of the fugitive *samizdat* text. Any attempts to fully preserve *samizdat* materials in official institutions, a prospect which is certainly an opportunity for debate in the era of the community archive, cannot settle for applying the current standards imperfectly to materials for which they are not suited. Rather, the archivist or librarian must start with the particularities of the materials themselves and build standards that speak to those particularities and to the ontologies that shaped them.

While these concerns are important to the state of *samizdat* collecting, classification, and cataloguing and description specifically, they also resonate into collections of other kinds of fugitive materials that don't fit current standards. Furthermore, these concerns are especially relevant to the present moment wherein Russia's invasion of Ukraine and Israel's ongoing apartheid and genocide of Palestinians, both of which have been accompanied by the destruction of cultural heritage sites and materials,[176] have continued to create new fugitive publishing spaces by imposing increasingly restrictive limitations on what kinds of materials are printable and publishable physically or digitally.[177] While the most urgent matter at hand is the

176. Pavlo Shydlovskyi, Ian Kuijt, Viacheslav Skorokhod, Ivan Zotsenko, Vsevolod Ivakin, William Donaruma, and Sean Field, "The Tools of War: Conflict and the Destruction of Ukrainian Cultural Heritage," *Antiquity* 97, no. 396 (2023): 1-7. Chloe Veltman, "More than 100 Gaza Heritage Sites Have been Damaged or Destroyed by Israeli Attacks," *NPR*, December 3, 2023, https://www.npr.org/2023/12/03/1216200754/gaza-heritage-sites-destroyed-israel.

177. As an example, see Anna Murashova's study of Runet, the Russophone part of the internet, and particularly the website litnet.com, which demonstrates the instability that the war introduced into online self-publishing spaces in 2022. As she suggests in a coda, it seems that the self-publishing sphere has adapted to some extent and is growing, but there were still concerns about future restrictions and the war is still ongoing making it difficult to retrieve reliable information about the state of publishing in occupied Ukraine. Anna Murashova,

preservation of human life, the destruction of cultural heritage is a major strategy of cultural genocide. In the face of this destruction, finding ways to appropriately assist in the preservation of fugitive materials created as a form of cultural survival or political dissidence is one small part of mitigating this violence. These kinds of materials are also often the most vulnerable to destruction or to contextual loss and often carry direct evidence and narratives of human rights abuses significant for acknowledging past trauma and building future social justice projects. Failing to adapt standards to take fugitivity into account does not just reify narrow, hegemonic standards of knowledge organization, but also risks real cultural and historical loss, the erasure of atypical creators and creations that accomplished the impossible task of making space for collaboration and free thought within oppression. In other words, adhering to current standards risks proving Bulgakov wrong: eventually, some manuscripts might burn.

"Reconsidering Ru(li)net: Russian Literary Self-Publishing Platforms and the War in Ukraine. A Case Study of Litnet.com," *First Monday* 28, no. 12 (Dec. 2023): n.p. doi: 10.5210/fm.v28i12.13224.

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