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Imagining a post-Russian Transcaucasus: on the fringes of “semiospheres”

The long-lasting Russian hegemony in the Transcaucasus has resulted in a flexible yet coherent set of tropes, motifs, and attributions that affect not only representations of the area in Russian cultural production, but also in local and global imagery. The paper I propose presents literary and graphic works, written in various languages after the year 2000, that aim at overcoming dominant Imperial Russian views of the Transcaucasus and its multiethnic inhabitants.

While gravitating towards Georgia, it strives to transcend the national paradigm by also including literary representations of Azerbaijan and Armenia. My aim is to develop a typology of post-Russian literary imaginations of the region that may consist of 1) a post-Soviet approach that includes the Russian-Caucasian relationship into universalist liberal narratives (for example Aka Morchiladze, Viktoria Lomasko), 2) a global Russian re-assessment of Soviet geocultural and geopolitical thought in its countercultural tinge (Aleksandr Ilichevskii) as well as 3) a transcultural memory work that interweaves Russian imperial, nationalist and Western neocolonial narratives (Nino Haratischwili).