

## Foreword

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This booklet is a collection of achievements of the “*Sorokiniada*” session, which was held at the Stockholm Congress of the International Council for Central and East European Studies (ICCEES) in 2010. The purpose of the panel was to discuss the specific features of the post-Soviet Russian literature with special attention to the novelist and playwright Vladimir Sorokin.

Born in 1955, Vladimir Sorokin became one of the nonconformist artists and novelists of the late Soviet period. In the 1990s he came to be widely known to Russian as well as foreign readers as one of the symbolic figures of the post-Soviet literary scene.

His novels quite often contain cynical manipulations of Russian/Soviet cultural texts, and sometimes provoke outraged reaction of the readers. It must also be underlined that he is one of the few writers whose works have constantly been the topic of literary discussion in the last twenty years, though he has been changing his style of creation quite drastically.

The authors of this booklet are students of modern Russian literature, and have observed its various phases since the collapse of the Soviet Union. Their evaluation of Sorokin can be quite diverse but all are interested in his creation, which is a quite curious mixture of so-called postmodernist literary devices and the traditional obsession with Russia and Russianess.

The original idea of “*Sorokiniada*” arose in a rather casual conversation between Boris Lanin and Tetsuo Mochizuki, both of whom had the same desire to do *something interesting* at the ICCEES congress. When Tetsuo mentioned the name of Sorokin, Boris immediately named several distinguished specialists, and quite soon we composed a scheme of international conversation on this unique Russian writer. Tetsuo then found a way to incorporate the plan as a part of the cooperative research project “The centripetal and centrifugal forces of culture,” which is itself a part of the “Comparative research: Major regional powers in Eurasia” (headed by Shinichiro Tabata, SRC, Hokkaido Univ., Japan). Boris successfully invited excellent speakers of various generations from three different countries, and, as a result, we were able to put together a fascinating and thought-provoking “*Eurasian*” discussion about Sorokin.

We sincerely hope that this modest booklet will find intuitive and enthusiastic readers in various parts of the world and contribute to a more productive conversation on Sorokin and Russia.

Tetsuo Mochizuki (co-editor)