**Alejandra Isabel Otero Pires**

Department of Slavic Languages & Literatures

University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign

Foreign Languages Building

707 S. Mathews St.

Urbana, IL 61801 MC 173

pires2@illinois.edu

**Research Interests**

I’m interested in 20th and 21st century Russian literature and cinema. My dissertation focuses on the science fictional elements of Soviet culture, emphasizing attitudes to technology, perceptions of reality, and radically transformative cultural events. Other interests include contemporary Balkan literature, art, and cinema, as well as Russian *fin de siècle* literature. More broadly, I’m also interested in examining American, Russian, and international popular culture texts through critical theory, especially science fiction, fantasy, and horror.

**Education**

2014-Present: **University of Illinois** at Urbana-Champaign

PhD Candidate in Slavic Languages and Literatures

Dissertation: *The Dancing Cameras of the Promised Future: The Science Fictional*

*Imagination and the Soviet Experience*

Minor in Cinema Studies

Committee: Lilya Kaganovsky (advisor), Valeria Sobol, Richard Tempest,

David Cooper, and Julie Turnock

2011-2013: **University of Illinois** at Urbana-Champaign

MA in in Slavic Languages and Literatures

2005-2010: **University of New Mexico**, Albuquerque, NM

BA in English – Creative Writing

BA in Foreign Languages and Literatures – Spanish, Russian, and Japanese

*Magna cum laude*

**Fellowships and Awards**

2015-2016 Academic Year FLAS Fellow in Serbian

2015 Summer FLAS Fellow in Russian

2014-2015 Academic Year FLAS Fellow in Serbian

2014 Summer FLAS Fellow in Russian

2012-2013 Academic Year FLAS Fellow in Russian

2012 Summer FLAS Fellow in Russian

2011-2012 Graduate College Fellowship

2006-2009 Lottery Success Scholarship

2005 Bridge to Success Scholarship

**Additional Study**

Summer 2016: Azbukum Centre for Serbian Language and Culture in Belgrade

Summer 2015: The Russian Language Centre at Moscow State University

Summer 2014: Arizona State University’s Critical Language Institute, Summer Program at the Derzhavin Institute in St. Petersburg

Summer 2012: American Councils Summer Program at the Russian State Pedagogical University in St. Petersburg

**Conference Presentations**

(Forthcoming) “Of Imaginary Machines and Mundane Futures: Sigizmund Krzhizhanovsky’s Literary Interface and the Perception of Reality Through Alternate Literature”

The Fifty-First Annual ASEEES Convention, San Francisco, November 2019

“The Tractor as *Novum*: Science Fictionality, Socialist Realism, and the Soviet Experience”

The Annual AATSEEL Conference, New Orleans, February 2019

“The Promised Future: Necrorealism as a Dark Mirror”

The Fiftieth Annual ASEEES Convention, Boston, December 2018

“There’s No Living with the Killing: Borderland Violence and Legacies of Trauma in *Logan*”

The Film and History Conference, Madison, November 2018

“When Science Fiction Becomes Reality: The Transformative Ideals of the Early Soviet Union”

The National Conference for the Science Fiction Research Association, Milwaukee, July 2018

“Between the Ocean Waves and God’s Indifference: Reflections of the Irrational in Konstantin Lopushansky’s *Visitor to a Museum*”

The British Modernities Group: Graduate Student Conference, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, April 2018

“Anticipating the Abyss: Apocalyptic Anxieties in Shakhnazarov’s *Gorod Zero*”

The Forty-Ninth Annual ASEEES Convention, Chicago, November 2017

“Satanic Sacrifices and the Bacchanal: A Reimagining of Good and Evil in Fyoder Sologub’s *The Petty Demon*”

The Forty-Eighth Annual Mythopoeic Society Conference, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, July 2017

“Abuladze’s *Repentance* and the Burden of the Past”

Graduate Student Conference in Slavic Studies, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, April 2017

“A More Perfect Vision: Marxism, Machines, and the Human in Dziga Vertov’s *Man with a Movie Camera*”

Graduate Student Conference in Slavic Studies, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, April 2016

“Flight of the Phoenix: Optimistic Suicide in Larisa Shepitko’s *Wings*”

Midwest Slavic Conference, The Ohio State University, April 2016

“Dominance and Submission: Layers of Truth in *Man with a Movie Camera*”

Interdisciplinary Forum in Slavic Studies, University of Chicago, April 2015

“Gazing into the Void: Shakhnazarov’s *Город Зеро* and the Postmodern Cultural Landscape of Perestroika”

Midwest Slavic Conference, The Ohio State University, March 2015

**Additional Conference Experience**

(Forthcoming) Round Table Participant, *Teaching Slavic Science Fiction in the 21st Century*, The Annual Conference, San Diego, February 2020

(Forthcoming) Panel Chair, *Human, Non-Human, and Beyond: Manipulation of Cultural Beliefs in Soviet and Post-Soviet Literature for Children and Young Adults*, Fifty-First Annual ASEEES Convention, San Francisco, November 2019

Panel Organizer, *Cannibalism, Aliens, and Zombies: The Transformations of the Soviet Body*, The Fiftieth Annual ASEEES Convention, Boston, December 2018

**Teaching Experience**

Russian 101: Elementary Russian I (Fall 2013, Fall 2014, Fall 2016)

Russian 102: Elementary Russian II (Spring 2014)

Bosnian-Croatian-Serbian 101: Elementary BCS I (Fall 2018)

Bosnian-Croatian-Serbian 102: Elementary BCS II (Spring 2019)

Bosnian-Croatian-Serbian 201: Intermediate BCS I (Fall 2018)

Bosnian-Croatian-Serbian 202: Intermediate BCS II (Spring 2019)

Classical Civilization 115: Mythology of Greece and Rome (Fall 2018, Spring 2019)

**Teaching Awards**

Spring 2014, List of Teachers Ranked Excellent

Fall 2014, List of Teachers Ranked Excellent

**Additional Pedagogical Training**

Slavic Languages Pedagogy, Fall 2014, under the supervision of Olekandra Wallo

Practicum in Teaching Literature and Culture, Spring 2018, under the supervision of Valeria Sobol

**Other Experience**

January 2018-August 2018: Graduate Assistantship at the Slavic Reference Service, International and Area Studies Library at UIUC, supervised by Joseph Lenkart

August 2016-August 2017: Editorial Assistantship at *Slavic Review*, supervised by Harriet Murav and Dmitry Tartakovsky

January 2015-May 2015: Research Assistantship, supervised by Anna Stenport

**Service**

**Treasurer and Graphic Designer** of the Conference Organizing Committee: *A Century of Revolution: Culture, Politics, and People*, Graduate Student Conference in Slavic Studies, UIUC, April 2017

**Treasurer and Graphic Designer** of the Conference Organizing Committee: *Decentering Russia: Challenging the Boundaries*, Graduate Student Conference in Slavic Studies, UIUC, April 2016

**Head** of the T-Shirt Committee of the Slavic Graduate Student Association, UIUC, August 2013-January 2014

**Blog Posts**

“Dubravka Ugrešić Visits Campus,” Fall 2018, REEEC Blog,

<<https://reeecillinois.wordpress.com/2018/12/19/dubravka-ugresic-visits-campus/>>

“A Night with Lenin, Joyce, and Tzara: Tom Stoppard’s *Travesties*,” UIUC’s Ten Days that Shook the World, Ten Days that Shake the Campus, Fall 2017, REEEC Blog, <<https://reeecillinois.wordpress.com/2017/12/02/a-night-with-lenin-joyce-and-tzara-tom-stoppards-travesties/>>

**Languages**

English – Native

Russian – Near native

Spanish – Advanced (heritage speaker)

Serbian – Intermediate advanced

Swedish – Intermediate

German – Reading knowledge

Portuguese – Reading knowledge