Guide to the Lidiia Alekseeva Papers

GEN MSS 91

by Halyna Lobay

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New Haven, Connecticut
# Table of Contents

Paging Instructions 3
Overview 3
Administrative Information 3
   Provenance 3
   Information about Access 3
Ownership & Copyright 4
Cite As 4
Processing Notes 4

LIDIIA ALEKSEEVA (1909-)
Description of the Papers 4
Collection Contents 6
   Correspondence 6
      INCOMING 6
      THIRD PARTY 6
Access Terms 7
Overview

REPOSITORY: Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library  
P. O. Box 208240  
New Haven, CT 06520-8240  
Email: beinecke.library@yale.edu  
Phone: (203) 432-2972  
Fax: (203) 432-4047

CALL NUMBER: GEN MSS 91

CREATOR: Lidii︠a︡ Alekseeva, 1909-

TITLE: Lidii︠a︡ Alekseeva papers

DATES: 1949-1955

PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION: Total Boxes: 1

PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION: Linear Feet: 0.25

SUMMARY: The Lidii︠a︡ Alekseeva Papers consist of correspondence providing information about Alekseeva's literary career.

FINDING AID LINK: To cite or bookmark this finding aid, use the following address: http://hdl.handle.net/10079/fa/beinecke.lidiia.

Administrative Information

Provenance

The Lidia Alekseeva Papers were donated to Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library in 1971 by Aleksis Rannit, at that time curator of Slavic and East European Collections at Yale University.

Information about Access

This collection is open for research.

This collection may be housed off-site at Yale's Library Shelving Facility (LSF). To determine if all or part of this collection is housed off-site please check the library's online catalog, Orbits; material for which the location is given as "LSF" must be requested 36 hours in advance. Please consult with Beinecke Access Services for more information.
Ownership & Copyright

The Lidia Alekseeva Papers are the physical property of The Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Yale University. Literary rights, including copyright, belong to the authors or their legal heirs and assigns. For further information, consult the appropriate curator.

Cite As

Lidia Alekseeva Papers. General Collection. Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library.

Processing Notes

Slavic names, titles, and quotations in their original languages have been transliterated in accordance with Library of Congress guidelines.

LIDIIA ALEKSEEVA (1909-)

Lidia Alekseevna Alekseeva, née Devel, poet, short-story writer, translator, and reviewer, was born in Dvinsk, Latvia, in 1909. Her father, Aleksei Viktorovich, was a Russian officer descended from a French émigré. The family lived in the Crimea, but in 1920 they left Russia for Belgrade. Alekseeva finished the Russian "gimnazium" (high school) and graduated from the Philosphical Faculty of Belgrade University in the field of Slavic philology. Afterwards, she taught Serbian language and literature in the Russian high school.

In 1944 Alekseeva left Yugoslavia, but her husband, the prose writer Ivannikov, stayed behind and died in Belgrade on September 7, 1968. In 1949 Alekseeva came to the United States. She worked in a factory and, for many years, was associated with the New York Public Library.

Alekseeva began to write poems at an early age and started to publish them in the thirties, first signing them with her maiden name but later using the pseudonym Alekseeva. She contributed to Russian periodicals such as Nov', Mech, Literaturnaia sreda, Grani, Novyi zhurnal, Mosty, Literaturnyi sovremennik, and Vozrozhdenie, and to anthologies such as Na zapade, Muza diaspory, and Sodruzhestvo.


Alekseeva herself also reviewed books, for example Sinii mir by Nonna Belavina, Stikhi by Oleg Il'inskii, Uzelok by A. Vasil'kovskaia, TSvety na podokonnik by K. Pestrovo, and others. She published them primarily in Novyi zhurnal.


Description of the Papers
The Lidiia Alekseeva Papers contain 232 incoming letters written by seven correspondents between 1949-55. They are alphabetically arranged by author in twelve folders, and then chronologically. All the letters are in Russian. There is also one letter from Ekaterina Tauber to Grigorii Borisovich Zabezhinski.

After Lidiia Alekseevna Alekseeva arrived from Europe, she lived in New York, as did her friend Ol’ga Nikolaevna Anstei. In 1954 Ol’ga married Boris Andreevich Filippov and moved to Washington D. C., where he worked for the Voice of America and other literary institutions. The twelve letters written by Ol’ga, or Ol’ga and Boris, cover just one year, since Ol’ga soon returned to New York. They write about trivial family matters, literary business, and politics. Another six letters were written by Boris, who stayed in Washington and lived with his mother. They reflect his loneliness, overwork, and unhappy state of mind.

The next twenty-nine letters, written by Nina Grinevich, married Grebenshchikova, writing from East Germany between 1949 and 1954, reflect her difficult situation and poor health. She feels unhappy and lonely in the unfriendly surroundings, misses her countrymen, and longs to return home, but having a small child prevents them from making that move. The bright lights in her monotonous life are Alekseeva's poems, her avid reading, and news she receives of Russian literary figures. She does not understand Alekseeva's separation from her husband Mischa and asks for an explanation.

The next major correspondent is Dmitrii Iosifovich Klenovskii, a poet, essayist, and journalist. His constant complaints, doubts, and preoccupation, his wife's sicknesses, and his critical attitude toward others, are all reflected in his letters. He frequently mentions such prominent literary figures as Bunin, Berberova, Ivask, Rzhevskii, Teffi, Struve, Ofrosimov, Terapiano, Neimirok, and Anstei. He received Alekseeva's poems for reading, but decided not to send her his because he did not want to provoke her criticism. Thinking of death, he gives her all the rights to publish, after he passes away, those poems in hands of people in America. They hope to emigrate, but his wife's poor health chains them firmly to the Old World.

IUrii Viktorovich Ofrosimov, an old friend of Alekseeva, writes from Switzerland, where he resides with his wife. The twenty-three letters in the collection, written between 1949 and 1954, describe the difficulties of everyday life and his wife Doris's health problems, which caused them to miss all opportunities to emigrate. Since they also touch his literary interests, many familiar names are mentioned. He likes Alekseeva's poems and encourages her to publish them. Ofrosimov also shows a keen interest in the fate of Alekseeva's husband. He suggests that she encourage Misha to begin to write again.

The collection contains twenty-seven letters from IUrii Viktorovich Neimirok, a friend from Yugoslavia who was a poet, story writer, critical essayist, and translator. These letters, spanning the years 1949-55, were written from West Germany. Neimirok is interested in Alekseeva's situation and tells her "to keep smiling and take it easy." He does not, however, apply the same rule to himself, complains about the difficult life of an emigrant, and allows mood changes to interfere with his writings. He often inquires about the news from Yugoslavia and discusses literary matters.

Another eighty-six letters are from one of Alekseeva's close friends from Yugoslavia, Ekaterina Tauber. They were written from southern France between 1949 and 1955, where she moved before World War II and where she married I. Starov. Tauber describes their hard life and struggle for survival, seldom mentioning joy and contentment. Tauber, the compiler and editor of a self-produced literary newsletter Pereklichka, also discusses literary matters. She received many contributions from friends and corresponded with others. As a result, she was well informed, always had some lively news to tell, and gives quotations from poems. The center of her interest is Mishel', Alekseeva's husband. One encounters such expressions as "Ochen' ego liubliu" (I love him very much), "on moia bol'shaia simpatiia" (I like him very much), and "on -- nastoiashchii pisatel'" (he [is] a true writer). The last letters show their uncertain future—the existence of Pereklichka is in doubt—but Tauber starts a new job, a teaching position in Russian language at the Lycée Carnot in Cannes.

The Lidiia Alekseeva Papers provide insight into Alekseeva's life and generous spirit. The letters, written by major Russian émigré writers, add primary information to the history of post-World War II Russian émigré literature.
## Collection Contents

### Correspondence

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Access Terms

This collection is indexed under the following access points in Orbis, the Yale University Library online catalog.

Subjects

Alekseeva, Lidii⌈a⌉a⌈a⌉.
Filippov, Boris Andreevich, 1905-
Klenovskii, Dmitri⌈i⌉ l, 1892-
Rosimov, G.
Tauber, Ekaterina.
Anstei, Ol’ga Nikolaevna, 1912-
Grinevich, Nina, 1909-.
Authors, Russian --20th century.
Poets, Russian --20th century.
Russians --Foreign countries.

Authors

Lidii⌈a⌉a⌈a⌉ Alekseeva, 1909-

Occupations and Functions

Authors.