

University of Bath



PHD

Nina Katerli: the discovered chameleon

Zafft, Tara Wilson

Award date:
1999

Awarding institution:
University of Bath

[Link to publication](#)

General rights

Copyright and moral rights for the publications made accessible in the public portal are retained by the authors and/or other copyright owners and it is a condition of accessing publications that users recognise and abide by the legal requirements associated with these rights.

- Users may download and print one copy of any publication from the public portal for the purpose of private study or research.
- You may not further distribute the material or use it for any profit-making activity or commercial gain
- You may freely distribute the URL identifying the publication in the public portal ?

Take down policy

If you believe that this document breaches copyright please contact us providing details, and we will remove access to the work immediately and investigate your claim.

Download date: 13. May. 2019

UNIVERSITY OF BATH

School of Modern Languages
and International Studies

NINA KATERLI: THE DISCOVERED CHAMELEON

submitted by Tara Wilson Zafft

for the degree of PhD/Mphil

of the University of Bath

1999

Attention is drawn to the fact that copyright of this thesis rests with its author. This copy of the thesis has been supplied on condition that anyone who consults it is understood to recognize that its copyright rests with its author and that no quotation from the thesis and nor information derived from it may be published without the prior written consent of the author.

This thesis may not be consulted, photocopied or lent to other libraries without the permission of the author for ten years from the date of acceptance of the thesis.

Tara Wilson Zafft

UMI Number: U132667

All rights reserved

INFORMATION TO ALL USERS

The quality of this reproduction is dependent upon the quality of the copy submitted.

In the unlikely event that the author did not send a complete manuscript and there are missing pages, these will be noted. Also, if material had to be removed, a note will indicate the deletion.



UMI U132667

Published by ProQuest LLC 2013. Copyright in the Dissertation held by the Author.
Microform Edition © ProQuest LLC.

All rights reserved. This work is protected against
unauthorized copying under Title 17, United States Code.



ProQuest LLC
789 East Eisenhower Parkway
P.O. Box 1346
Ann Arbor, MI 48106-1346

ABSTRACT

Nina Katerli: the Discovered Chameleon is the first comprehensive study of the life and works (until May 1998) of Nina Katerli, the contemporary Russian woman writer and political activist. The study will begin with a discussion of Katerli's life and the major political and social incidents that affected her life and subsequent writing career, including the purges, the thaw, stagnation, Gorbachev's reforms, the fall of the Soviet Union, and the current political and social scene. This study will also provide a textual analysis of Katerli's five writing periods until May 1998: fantasy prose of the 1970s, underground works, realistic prose of the 1980s, non-fiction writings, and contemporary works. In addition, the study will discuss Katerli's work against a background composed of numerous subjects, including Soviet and post-Soviet politics, feminist theory, postmodernism, fantasy literature, and general Russian and Soviet literary criticism.

A stylistic chameleon, Nina Katerli has eschewed all literary, philosophical, ideological, and political classifications, except that of 'shestidesiatnik'. The purpose of this study will be to place Katerli's works within the context of Soviet and Russian literature and to determine whether such categories as feminist, New Women's Prose, critical realism, fantasy, and postmodernist among others, can be applied either to Katerli or her works, in essence, to ascertain whether this stylistic chameleon can be discovered, and, if not, why not.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I owe the greatest thanks to my supervisor, Professor Rosalind Marsh, for her inspiration and for the extraordinary time, attention, and effort she spent guiding me on the long journey culminating in this thesis.

I am deeply grateful to Nina Katerli for her trust in sharing with me the personal papers, unpublished manuscripts, and reminiscences of an exceptional woman.

Thanks must also go to the staff at the Slavonic Library at Oxford University, for their cheerful and professional assistance.

Finally, I would like to thank my mother and my husband for their love, encouragement, and support.

PREFACE

This study will provide the most comprehensive bibliography of Nina Katerli's works to date, including prose fiction, non-fiction, autobiographies, and unpublished works, such as an unpublished play, a poem (which is discussed in Chapter One), and several conference papers. This study will also include information gathered from four personal interviews with Katerli from 1993 to 1998 (contemporaneously audio-taped), as well as from written and electronic correspondence with the author. In addition, reference will be made to secondary literature pertaining to Katerli. These include numerous published materials (western, Soviet, and Russian), and unpublished works, such as several documents written by Katerli's editors (suggesting and often demanding changes to many of her stories), personal letters, and Elena Efros's (Katerli's daughter) Master's Thesis from the University of Petrozavodsk (1988), which discusses Katerli's first two books—Okno (The Window) (1981) and Tsvetynye otkrytki (Coloured Postcards) (1986). I have also included telephone interviews with Katerli's editor, Frida Germanovna Katsass, and Natal'ia Kaksho, the Head of the Philological Faculty at Herzen Pedagogical Institute in St. Petersburg. Additional sources for this study include various works on feminism, general Russian literature, Russian and Soviet politics and history, fantasy writing, science fiction, underground writing, postmodernism, fascism, anti-Semitism, and nationalism.

Although, this study has attempted to provide the most extensive collection of Katerli's writings to date, it does not claim to be exhaustive. Katerli herself is unable to establish a complete bibliography of her own work. Every attempt has been made to

establish the full citation of articles by and about Katerli, but in many cases this has not been possible, as several of the articles provided by Katerli herself lacked sufficient bibliographic information. Thus, full citations were in many instances unavailable, and the resulting ellipses have been noted in the bibliography and footnotes of this study.

Transliterations for references and untranslated Russian words (such as 'shestidesiatnik' and 'byt') will be in the American Library of Congress system. Political, literary and historical terms (such as 'thaw' and 'youth prose') will appear in lower case, except where the originator of such terms has used upper case (such as 'New Women's Prose,' a literary categorization coined by Helena Goscilo).

As this study will discuss, Nina Katerli's works comprise a variety of literary styles. Moreover, in describing her fiction, Katerli disclaims any particular ideological or moral point of view. A principal assertion of this study is that reviewing the totality of Katerli's fiction does reveal a definite normative framework. The term 'chameleon' thus describes Katerli's stylistic mutability and her desire to 'camouflage' the personal and moral convictions that infuse her fiction. The nature of these convictions and the reasons Katerli might seek to camouflage them are what this study will attempt to 'discover'.

Portions of this study served as the basis for the following conference papers: 'Nina Katerli's Prose and "Publitsistika"', Annual Conference of the British Association of Slavic and East European Studies (Cambridge, England, April 1997); 'The Evolution of a "Shestidesiatnitsa"', Wisconsin Regional Conference for the American Association of Teachers of Slavic and East European Languages (Madison, Wisconsin, April 1997); 'The Biography of Nina Katerli', Women's Conference at the Summer Research Programme at the University of Illinois at Champaign-Urbana (Urbana, Illinois, June

1997); 'The Search for Legitimacy in Nina Katerli's Prose', Missouri Regional Conference for the American Association of Teachers of Slavic and East European Languages (St. Louis, Missouri, November 1997); and 'Passion and Passivity: Nina Katerli's Underground Works' for the, Annual Conference for American Association of Teachers of Slavic and East European Languages (Toronto, Canada, December 1997).

TABLE OF CONTENTS

| | |
|---|------------|
| Introduction | 1 |
| Chapter One: Nina Katerli (1934 -) | 25 |
| Chapter Two: Fantasy Prose, 1973-1981 | 81 |
| Chapter Three: Underground Works | 129 |
| Chapter Four: Realistic Prose, 1981-1991 | 185 |
| Chapter Five: Non-fiction Works | 231 |
| Chapter Six: Contemporary Prose, 1989-1998 | 262 |
| Conclusion | 307 |
| Bibliography | 322 |

INTRODUCTION

Я просто пишу о жизни.¹

For centuries, Russian women have been subject to the patriarchal nature of Russian and Soviet society.² More so than in other European countries, their situation has substantiated Simone de Beauvoir's observation that: 'Condemned to play the Other, woman was also condemned to hold only uncertain power: slave or idol, it was never she who chose her lot.'³ Despite the fact that Soviet women obtained the right to vote in 1918, and that shortly afterward new laws granted these women the right to choose their own place of residence, the right to maintain their maiden name after marriage, equal rights to education, divorce, equal pay and the right to legalised abortion, Soviet women could hardly consider themselves emancipated.⁴ In practice, their newfound rights forced them to bear a 'double burden' of employment and domestic duties. Encouraged to enter the workforce, Soviet women were still expected to fulfil the traditional roles of nurturer, mother, wife, caretaker, and servant.

Russian and Soviet women writers have also been subject to the patriarchal nature of Russian and Soviet society. Notwithstanding I. Grekova's statement that Soviet women writers were not been 'discriminated against in any way',⁵ Russian and Soviet women writers have indeed suffered greatly as a result of patriarchal social structures. Russian cultural perceptions of woman as caretaker, mother, and nurturer, and the perceived feminine characteristics of weakness and sensitivity have affected how male critics

conceive of 'women's literature', a term that has always been viewed pejoratively in Russia and the former Soviet Union as meaning sentimental, emotional, and second class.⁶ As a result of the negative perception of female writers, many Soviet and Russian women writers, the most famous being Anna Akhmatova, have themselves rejected the classification 'woman writer'. As Beth Holmgren has remarked: 'To achieve a primary rank in this culture, a woman had to assume the role of honorary man—to project her image as poet or author, not as a derivative, less-talented poetess or authoress.'⁷ Similarly, Helena Goscilo has observed: 'All too aware that any association with that brand of writing [i.e., women's writing] automatically consigns them to the status of disenfranchised secondariness, women authors disavow the role of gender in art.'⁸ In fact, Nina Katerli, the subject of this study, has herself commented: 'Наивысшим комплиментом для женщины-писателя является признание ее сильной мужской руки.'⁹

Refuse as they might to be perceived as 'women writers', however, Russian women writers are unable to escape this cultural label. As Catriona Kelly has aptly noted: 'The bitter fact is this: even those women writers who are in terms of their own subjectivity not "women writers" are, in terms, of their own culture's general values, exactly that.'¹⁰ Some critics have likened this reaction on the part of the literary establishment to an intentional suppression of women's writing. Joanna Russ notes:

The trick thus becomes to make the freedom [to write] as nominal a freedom as possible and then—since some of the so-and-so's will do it anyway—develop various strategies for ignoring, condemning, or

belittling the artistic works that result. If properly done, these strategies result in a social situation in which the 'wrong people' are (supposedly) free to commit literature, art or whatever, but very few do, and those who do (it seems) do it badly, so we can all go home to lunch.¹¹

Thus, the possibility of suppression, intentional or unintentional, male-generated or self-imposed, lends an importance, and even urgency, to the study of Russian and Soviet women authors. As Helena Goscilo has additionally remarked:

It is the feminist revisionary imperative necessitated by women's ubiquitous cultural alienation, their social marginality and exclusion from 'the great parade of culture,' that confers significance and validity upon women's literature as an independent object of study.¹²

Until relatively recently, the contributions of many Soviet and Russian women writers to the canon of Russian and Soviet literature have gone unrecognised.¹³ Xenia Gasiorowska commented in 1985: 'Women writers, though widely read in Russia, contributed but little to the greatness of Russian literature, which has no George Sand, Jane Austen, or George Eliot.'¹⁴ Similarly, N.N. Shneidman remarked in 1989: 'The number of Soviet women writing today is indeed small. The index of any history of Soviet literature does not list many female authors who merit critical attention.'¹⁵ Shneidman's statement, which Rosalind Marsh has referred to as 'a masculinist version

of the Russian canon', may be challenged on two grounds.¹⁶ Firstly, the number of women writing in the late 1980s was not small.¹⁷ In fact, only three years after Shneidman's statement, Barbara Heldt noted: 'There is such a range of women's writing in Russia alone today that any list one makes of promising poets and prosaists will be obsolete in months.'¹⁸ It is highly unlikely that a plethora of women writers suddenly appeared in a period of three years. Secondly, Shneidman assumes that the absence of numerous women writers from the indices of Soviet literary history means that there are no good women writers. He fails to acknowledge the fact that many women writers have been overlooked and ignored. As Dale Spender has noted:

Men of letters are not blind to the achievements of women but instead of according to them validity in their own right, men take from women what they want and leave the rest—which they determine to be of no value—to fade from view.¹⁹

Of course, this is not to say that every Soviet or Russian woman writer, by the simple fact that she was ignored or overlooked, is necessarily talented. But, in order to assess the talent, or lack of talent, of Soviet and Russian women writers, and whether or not they should be added to the indices of literary history, they first must be 'rediscovered'.

Fortunately, since the early 1980s, there has indeed been increasing scholarly interest in Soviet and Russian women's studies, and, in particular, in Soviet and Russian women's writing.²⁰ In the last few years, a number of academic surveys devoted to Russian and Soviet women authors have appeared. These works include: Dichterinnen

und Schriftstellerinnen in Russland (1992), by Frank Göpfert; Dictionary of Russian Women Writers (1994), edited by Marina Ledkovsky, Charlotte Rosenthal, and Mary Zirin; A History of Russian Women's Writing 1820-1992 (1994), by Catriona Kelly; Women in Russia and the Soviet Union—an Annotated Bibliography (1994), edited by Rochelle Goldberg Ruthchild; 'Afterword: Histories and Fictions' in Dialogues/Dialogi: Literary and Cultural Exchanges between (ex) Soviet and American Women (1994), by Adele Barker; Women Writers in Russian Literature (1994), edited by Toby W. Clyman and Diana Greene; Engendering Slavic Literatures (1996), edited by Pamela Chester and Sibelan Forrester; and Dehexing Sex: Russian Womanhood During and after Glasnost (1996), by Helena Goscilo.²¹

While the field of Russian and Soviet literary research has thus very properly brought to prominence many talented but previously neglected Soviet and Russian women writers, this scholarship has at the same time overlooked the writings of individual Russian women authors whose work was entirely written or published in the post-Stalin period, and in particular, women writers of the so-called 'generation of the 1960s', the 'shestidesiatniki'.²² Literary criticism of women writers of the post-Stalin period has primarily produced general surveys of contemporary Soviet and Russian women's literature, as well as numerous articles on such popular authors as Liudmila Petrushevskaja and Tat'iana Tolstaia.²³ These works have added greatly to the study of Soviet and Russian women's literature, but many gaps still exist.

In an effort to help fill these gaps, this study will examine the life and works of a single post-Stalinist Russian woman author, and self-proclaimed 'shestidesiatnik', Nina Semenovna Katerli (1934 -). Like many Soviet women writers, such as I. Grekova, and

Liudmila Petrushevskaja, Katerli began writing relatively late in life, publishing her first story at the age of thirty-nine. The author of four collections of stories: Okno (The Window) (1981), Tsvetnye otkrytki (Coloured Postcards) (1986), Kurzal (1990)²⁴, and Sennaia Ploshchad' (Haymarket Square) (1992), Katerli has also written three autobiographies, as well as several conference papers, and 'publitsistika' (socio-political journalism), encompassing human-interest articles and articles on purely political subjects.²⁵ Her longest work to date, Isk (The Lawsuit) (1998), chronicles her court case against the right-wing historian Aleksandr Romanenko. As will be discussed below, this event, which gained Katerli considerable notoriety, has hitherto been overlooked among western historians and political scientists.

Nina Katerli's writing falls roughly into five thematic and chronological periods: (i) fantasy prose of the 1970s; (ii) underground works; (iii) realistic prose of the 1980s; (iv) non-fiction works; and (v) recent prose of the 1990s. These periods are not sharply delineated, however, and writing styles or devices predominant in one period sometimes spill over into or appear unexpectedly in others. For example, although I have called Katerli's first period of writing 'fantasy prose' and her second period of writing 'realistic prose', Katerli continued to incorporate nuances of fantasy into her realistic prose. Furthermore, one of her most recent works, 'Iz zhizni luchshego goroda' ('From the Life of the Best City') (1996), is, in fact, one of her most fantastical. Concurrent with the development of her fiction writing, Katerli has also written a range of non-fiction works, such as her human interest articles, which she began publishing in the early 1980s. As Katerli's prose style became more realistic, her non-fiction took on an increasingly political cast, focusing primarily on the issues of anti-Semitism, nationalism, and fascism.

The central characters of Katerli's prose are 'sovki', average Soviet people. Katerli has remarked: 'Моя проза – об искалеченных и обманутых людях, выросших в перевернутом мире,'²⁶ and through the depiction of this world, the Zeitgeist of the late Soviet and early post-Soviet era emerges. The majority of Katerli's stories are set in Leningrad and Moscow, and more specifically, in these cities' communal flats, workplaces, food shops, buses, and streets. Katerli's stories focus on the daily lives, moral dilemmas, and spiritual crises of the 'sovki'. Carl Proffer has stated that by reading Katerli, we may find out 'exactly how different people live from day to day in Soviet capitals.'²⁷ The primary focus of Katerli's stories, however, is not on daily life itself, but rather on the individual characters in her stories. As Deming Brown has aptly written of Nina Katerli:

Although she immerses her characters in the atmospheric detail of city life...Nina Katerli is primarily concerned with issues that transcend time and place—the relationships between men and women, women and women, parents and children, the fears and anxieties of middle-age, the onset of illness and approach of death, the cruelty or indifference of one person to another, the motives that bring people together and tear them apart, the sources of misunderstanding.²⁸

Katerli's focus on the minute as well as on the eternal resembles many of the aspects of 'byt' (everyday life) literature. According to Teresa Polowy 'byt' literature is noted for:

all the details and activities of daily life that taken together constitute its practical or mundane side—as well as for its themes that reflect the host of problems found in the popular press and in rudimentary sociological surveys, and for its treatment of interpersonal and familial relationships.²⁹

Similarly, Monika Katz defines 'byt' literature:

a retreat of the protagonists into the private sphere remote from politics and economics. Social reality is represented with regard to its effect on people's consciousness; important questions are presented from the viewpoint of the individual...Of central importance is the individual, who strives for self-realisation beyond the working world.³⁰

As stated earlier, this study will include an analysis not only of Nina Katerli's prose fiction, but of her non-fiction writings as well. Unfortunately, relatively little attention has hitherto been paid to the non-fiction writings of Russian women authors of the post-Stalin period.³¹ Female writers of this period, who have written non-fiction works, such

as Iuliia Vozsenskaia, Natal'ia Gorbanevskaia, and Irina Ratushinskaia have primarily written about their own experiences, rather than about general political or social issues. In contrast to the numerous male 'voices for the nation', such as Evgenii Evtushenko and Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn, there are very few, if any, female 'voices for the nation'. An exception to this is, perhaps, Tat'iana Tolstaia, a well-known prose fiction writer, who has written virulent anti-feminist articles that have attracted a great deal of attention.³²

Nina Katerli's non-fiction writings have been overlooked, both by literary critics who focus exclusively on her fiction, and by political scientists and historians, who appear unaware of her extensive commentary on the recent rise in fascism, nationalism, and anti-Semitism in Russia. In fact, William Korey has incorrectly written: 'The criticism of Romanenko did not extend beyond academia to the broad arena.'³³ This lack of recognition may arise from the fact that St. Petersburg has always been placed second in terms of political importance in the Soviet Union and, within Russia, women writers (and women in general) are not usually taken seriously as political actors, an element contributing to Boris Eikhenbaum's view of women as the preservers of history. One goal of this study will thus be to bring Katerli's non-fiction work to light, to place it in the context of its time and of Katerli's overall body of work, and, perhaps, to help redress the gender imbalance in the analysis of political writings that have sustained the inaccuracy of Eikhenbaum's observation of women solely as *preservers*, rather than the *makers*, of history.

PREVIOUS LITERATURE ON NINA KATERLI

It is both surprising and disappointing that Nina Katerli, who has published several works of fiction and non-fiction, and who has had her works translated into German, Bulgarian, Polish, Hungarian, Macedonian, Japanese, English, and other languages, has received little critical attention in the West. Most of the prominent surveys of Russian literature, such as Wolfgang Kasack's Dictionary of Russian Literature since 1917 (1988), Edward J. Brown's Russian Literature since the Revolution (1982), and Viktor Terras's The Handbook of Russian Literature (1985) fail to mention her. Similarly, references to Katerli are absent in numerous recent books on Russian literature, such as N.N. Shneidman's books Soviet Literature in the 1980s: a Decade of Transition (1989) and Russian Literature 1988-1994: The End of an Era (1995), and Nadya Peterson's book Subversive Imaginations: Fantastic Prose and the End of Soviet Literature, 1970s-1990s (1997).³⁴

Although often overlooked in the West, Katerli is not completely unknown there, first coming to attention in 1981 with the American publication of her underground work 'Treugol'nik Barsukova' ('The Barsukov Triangle'). However, the critical attention Katerli has received, both in the former Soviet Union and abroad, has been primarily with respect to individual works mentioned within the context of a general discussion of Russian literature, social trends, or women's writing, without taking into account the entire corpus of her work. For example, Carl Proffer, in the Introduction to his anthology The Barsukov Triangle, the Two-Toned Blond, and Other Stories (1984), mentions 'The Barsukov Triangle' within a discussion of Soviet literary history from 1961 to 1984. Similarly, Nicholas Zekulin, in his article 'Soviet Russian Women's Literature in the

Early 1980s' (1993), mentions Katerli's story 'Polina' (1984) alongside other stories, such as I. Grekova's 'Kafedra' ('The University Department') (1983) and Tat'iana Tolstaia's 'Ogon' i pyl'' ('Fire and Dust') (1987), written by Soviet women authors in the 1980s. 'Polina' is also mentioned in the Introduction of Sexuality and the Body in Russian Literature (1993), edited by Jane T. Costlow, Stephanie Sandler and Judith Vowles, as one of many Russian stories containing the themes of sexuality and death.³⁵

The lack of attention to Katerli's complete works has contributed to an overgeneralization and over-simplification of her style, techniques, and artistic choices. For example, Carl Proffer classified Katerli as a 'byt' writer, solely based upon his reading of 'The Barsukov Triangle'.³⁶ While it may be true, as mentioned above, that Katerli's writing in many respects resembles 'byt' literature, her writing also has elements of fantasy. Thus, Proffer's statement is not incorrect; rather it is incomplete. In her recent book, A History of Russian Women's Writing 1820-1992, Catriona Kelly comments that Katerli's prose fiction is filled with male protagonists and, in contrast, only 'cameos' of female protagonists. Kelly writes:

Nina Katerli...is the author of clever stories which, though often including striking cameos of women characters (see especially her long tale 'The Farewell Light', ['Proshchal'nyi svet'] 1982[sic]), are composed of the fragmentary and vacillating recollections of nondescript middle-aged men, who yet display a serendipitous capacity for wayward and fantastical observation.³⁷

Kelly's statement regarding Katerli's preference for 'cameos of women characters' as portrayed through middle-aged male recollection may not fully take into account such Katerli stories as 'Polina', 'Solntse za steklom' ('The Sun Beyond the Glass') (1989), and 'Dolg' ('Duty') (1989), all of which have female protagonists and focus on the female experience.

Also referring to 'Proshchal'nyi svet', Deming Brown states: 'On the whole, Katerli seems to like her teen-age characters and those in their early twenties more than their parents.'³⁸ Brown's statement is incorrect with respect to 'Proshchal'nyi svet', in particular, as Katerli's sympathies strongly lie with the main character, a man in his mid-forties, as well as with his elderly mother.³⁹ Both Brown's and Kelly's statements exhibit a close reading of one particular story (the same story in fact), but, unfortunately their generalisations do not accurately describe Katerli's writing as a whole. As will be demonstrated over the course of this study, and contrary to Brown's assertion, the majority of Katerli's characters are middle-aged men and women, her peers. Furthermore, Katerli herself has stated that she prefers to depict characters 'своего возраста и почти никогда не пишу о молодых людях.'⁴⁰ Finally, false statements have been made with regard to Katerli's publication history. In the Introduction to his anthology Out Visiting and Back Home: Russian Stories on Aging (1998), Thomas Hoisington stated that Katerli 'only began publishing since the recent political changes in Russia.'⁴¹ On the contrary, Katerli began publishing in the early 1970s.

While issue may be taken with some of Brown's observations regarding Katerli's writing, he has in fact contributed a great deal to the study of her prose fiction, commenting on several of her stories—'Chudovishche' ('The Monster') (1977),

'Treugol'nik Barsukova', 'Polina', 'Proshchal'nyi svet', 'Mezhdu vesnoi i letom' ('Between Spring and Summer') (1983), and 'Tsvetnye otkrytki' ('Coloured Postcards') (1986)—in his book The Last Years of Soviet Russian Literature: Prose Fiction 1975-91 (1993). Brown has both praise and criticism for Katerli. He considers her to be sensitive and perceptive, but at the same time, criticises her portrayal of her male protagonists.⁴² Additional contributions to understanding Katerli's writing have been made by Helena Goscilo, who has written about Katerli in her anthology of Soviet women writers, Balancing Acts (1989), which also includes a small bibliography of some of Katerli's works. Furthermore, Goscilo contributed the entry on Katerli for the Dictionary of Russian Women Writers, which provides a general survey of Katerli's writing.

In contrast to the West, literary critics in Russia and the Soviet Union, have been writing about Nina Katerli's prose fiction since the late 1970s. Overall, their conclusions have been favourable, portraying Katerli, as Brown does, as a perceptive humanist and student of the human psyche. Iakov Gordin writes that Katerli 'прикидывающаяся наивной; на самом деле весьма хитроумна.'⁴³ Similarly, I. Prussakova writes of Katerli: 'Ее задача: выразить свое отношение к миру.'⁴⁴ She also notes that Katerli has great compassion for her characters: 'Ее любовь направленная, как лазерный луч. Это любовь-страдание, любовь-жалость к самым слабым и бессловесным, к тем, кто не в силах за себя постоять.'⁴⁵

As a result of the apparent 'humanism' of Katerli's writing, some Russian critics consider her to be a typical 'woman writer'. For example, in a personal letter to Katerli, Inna Soloveva writes that Окно is 'привлекательная, сердечная, женственная'.⁴⁶ In reference to 'Zhara na severe' ('Heat in the North') (1988), V. Lavrov writes:

‘сочувствие автора к женской незадачливой судьбе.’⁴⁷ In contrast, A. Zhitinskii has remarked:

Сострадая герою, Нина Катерли не опускается до утешительной жалости, не стремится к примирению с ним, если его душевные качества не выдерживают проверки. В этом, пожалуй, основные отличия рассказов от так называемой ‘женской прозы’.⁴⁸

At first glance, Zhitinskii’s comment appears to be laudatory of Katerli’s writing. The compliment, however, only expresses the literary establishment’s negative and disapproving perception of women writers and ‘women’s prose’.

Perhaps more than western critics, Soviet and Russian critics have attempted to place Katerli’s prose fiction within a specific literary genre or classification. V. Musakhanov calls Katerli a ‘byt’ writer, stating: ‘автор за обыденными событиями текущего дня всегда стремится постичь бытие, увидеть свет человечности за морочащей суетой текучки.’⁴⁹ T. Khmel’nitskaia concludes that Katerli writes ‘byt’ and what Khmel’nitskaia refers to as ‘психологический реализм’, stating: ‘В странный сказочный, но знакомый и близкий по множеству точных повседневных деталей современного быта, входим мы, читая рассказы Катерли.’⁵⁰ In contrast, I. Prussakova, in reference to ‘Tsvetnye otkrytki’, suggests that Katerli’s writing is ‘личная’ rather than ‘byt’ literature.⁵¹ Referring to Katerli’s early works, A. Romin states that Katerli writes pure fantasy, and notes: ‘Нина Катерли пишет о самых, казалось бы, обыденных вещах, но умеет увидеть привычное в невероятном фантастическом

ракурсе'.⁵² Similarly, Katerli's friend and mentor, the prominent writer Veniamin Kaverin, has remarked that she 'пытается соединить жизненный опыт с незаурядным воображением.'⁵³ Musakhanov compares Katerli's fantasy works to the 'традиция петербургской повести – от Гоголя через Достоевского до А. Белого.'⁵⁴ I. Prussakova states that Katerli's fantasy works resemble those of Evgenii Shvarts, and both Prussakova and Andrei Ar'ev liken Katerli's works to the fantasy and satire of Mikhail Bulgakov.

Although such labels, classifications, and analyses may be incomplete or lacking in depth, critics' contribution to the study of Katerli's works must not be disregarded. Many critics, such as Goscilo, Brown, and Kelly, offer insightful analyses of specific works as well as essential background biographical and bibliographical information. Other critical writing serves as a starting point, and perhaps even a springboard to a more comprehensive understanding of Katerli's writings. For example, Zekulin's refers to 'Polina' as a 'new phenomenon' in Russian literature, which raises the question of whether Katerli's writing can be understood as mainstream 'women's prose', or whether her writing represents a new development altogether.⁵⁵ The fact that numerous critics (western, Soviet, and Russian) have written about Katerli's prose fiction, indicates that, at least, Katerli is being taken seriously as a writer. This study will attempt to synthesize the various commentary surrounding Katerli's writings and to offer the fuller analysis made possible by an in-depth review of her entire body of work.

METHODOLOGY

This study will adopt a feminist life and works chronological analysis of Katerli's prose fiction and non-fiction works from 1973 to May 1998. It has been noted above that many Russian women writers have rejected being labelled 'women writers'. Moreover, many Russian women writers have rejected the 'feminist' label.⁵⁶ Katerli has referred to herself as 'не феминистка'. At the same time, however, she has also referred to herself as a 'сочувствующая идеям феминизма',⁵⁷ and a 'писатель с, возможно, подсознательным феминистическим восприятием'.⁵⁸ Regardless of her apparent 'unconscious feminist sensibilities', Katerli does not appear to assume an explicit feminist agenda in her prose fiction or non-fiction works. As Toril Moi has commented: 'Being *female* does not necessarily guarantee a feminist approach.'⁵⁹ However, Katerli's apparent rejection of a specific feminist agenda, which she considers to be similar to the intentional didacticism of socialist realism, does not necessarily mean that feminist themes are absent from her writing. 'In fact, paradoxically, the portrayals of many of Katerli's male and female characters might appear to reflect her 'unconscious feminist sensibilities'.⁶⁰ As Helena Goscilo has rightly noted: 'Any discussion of feminism in literature, of course, is well advised to take into account an elementary critical distinction between intention and reception.'⁶¹ Similarly, Catriona Kelly has justly stated: 'It is arguable that feminist criticism should concentrate precisely on such paradoxes, searching for hidden motifs in inner contradictions rather than following the obvious linear schematism of the narrative.'⁶²

Although it is not within the scope of this study to discuss feminist theory at length, it is necessary at least to attempt an understanding of feminism. However, it is not, and may not ever have been, possible to speak of one *homogeneous* feminism. As Mary Eagleton has rightly noted: ‘It is probably more appropriate to talk of feminist theories rather than feminist theory.’⁶³ Toril Moi has similarly commented: ‘Given the feminist insistence on the dominant and all pervasive nature of patriarchal power so far in history, feminists have to be pluralists: there is no pure feminist or female space from which we can speak.’⁶⁴ This issue of feminist diversity calls to mind the proverbial story of four blind persons, each of whom feels a different part of an elephant—tusk, trunk, leg, and side—each of whom thereby arrives at a different conclusion regarding the animal’s shape. The moral of the story is that without a certain commonality of definitions and approach, the result is not diversity but confusion.

For the purposes of this study, therefore, I have chosen to apply the concise definition of feminism advanced by Gayle Greene, in her book, Changing the Story—Feminist Fiction and the Tradition (1991). Green quotes Adrienne Rich, stating: ‘Feminism is a renaming of the world.’⁶⁵ Feminism challenges the tradition, the literary canon, and the numerous sociological, political, historical, economic and literary structures, in which women have repeatedly been allotted the subordinate and inferior position. Sydney Janet Kaplan has noted the two directions in which feminist literary criticism can venture—one that focuses on the rediscovery of neglected women authors, and the other which assesses ‘*who* establishes the literary canon and *whose* interests it serves.’⁶⁶ According to Gayle Austin, the process of rediscovering women writers, also known as *gynocriticism*, has three stages: ‘Working Within the Canon’, ‘Expanding the Canon’, and ‘Exploding the

Canon'.⁶⁷ By examining the works of Nina Katerli, we are 'expanding the canon' of both Russian and post-Soviet literature.

Assessing '*who* establishes the literary canon and *whose* interests it serves', is exposing the phallocracy and patriarchy of the existing canon, in essence, as Gayle Greene has also remarked: 'deconstructing predominantly male cultured paradigms and reconstructing a female perspective and experience in an effort to change the tradition that has silenced and marginalised us.'⁶⁸ Such an approach is reminiscent of such franco-feminists as Luce Irigaray, Julia Kristeva, and Helene Cixous, whose work focuses on the binary relationships of men and women and attempts to deconstruct existing patriarchal structures in society, language, and culture.⁶⁹ An essential element of French feminism is the attention paid to omissions or *silences*, by reading 'between the lines for desires or states of mind that cannot be articulated in the social arena and the languages of phallocentrism'.⁷⁰ The feminist critic must become, as Greene has also noted, a 'myth decipherer'.⁷¹ Thus, my particular feminist approach in this study will incorporate the direction 'of feminist literary criticism, as purported by Sydney Janet Kaplan, which focuses on the rediscovery of neglected women authors, as well as elements of French feminism, namely that of omissions or *silences*.

The current trend in literary criticism appears to be departing from the New Criticism of the 1960s, in which literary texts were analysed in isolation, in essence, without additional biographical, cultural, or historical information about the author or his or her background. Instead, many critics seem to be employing a life and works approach. Especially with regards to Soviet and Russian literature, an understanding of the writer as a human being and the cultural, historical, political context in which he or she worked

would appear essential to a full understanding of his or her work. As David Shepherd has commented: ‘We are compelled by Soviet meta-fiction to recognise that contexts are no less important than texts.’⁷² Furthermore, as a result of the patriarchal persecution and subjugation experienced by Soviet and Russian women authors, it would be careless to study the works of Soviet or Russian women writers without taking their particular historical, cultural, and political context into account.⁷³ In light of this interconnectedness, the first chapter of this study will recount the life and background of Nina Katerli.

In proceeding with an analysis of Katerli’s works, however, I have not abandoned certain Formalist methods of textual analysis, namely the Formalist theory of the importance of ‘fabula’ and ‘siuzhet’ in an analysis of plot.⁷⁴ Consequently, Chapters Two, Three, Four and Six will provide a textual analysis of Katerli’s prose fiction in terms of plot, theme, narration, and characterisation. Chapter Five will look at the themes and narrative style of Katerli’s non-fiction works.

As noted above, Chapter One will discuss the most significant political and historical events, as well as literary trends, which affected Katerli personally. The rest of this study will then discuss Katerli’s works roughly in chronological order. Chapter Two will review Katerli’s fantasy prose of the 1970s. Chapter Three will examine Nina Katerli’s underground works—‘Treugol’nik Barsukova’ and ‘Chervets’ (‘The Worm’) (1990).⁷⁵ Chapter Four will investigate Katerli’s realistic prose of the 1980s. Chapter Five will analyse Katerli’s non-fiction works. Chapter Six will discuss Katerli’s recent works, in other words, her prose fiction from the early 1990s to May 1998. Finally, the Conclusion of this study will draw together the various historical, literary, and ideological strands

discussed in prior chapters in order to assess Katerli's writing style, themes, and her place among post-Stalinist writers, particularly post-Stalinist women writers. An essential aspect of this last assessment will be an evaluation of feminist themes and sensibilities over the course of her career.

It has been said that change is the price of survival. As the following pages will show, Nina Katerli is something of a literary chameleon. Her writing style has evolved in response to the changing background of the post-Stalinist literary and political environment. At the same time, however, certain other aspects of her writing, particularly characterisation and theme, have remained relatively consistent throughout her career. In describing and rediscovering this literary chameleon, this study will not only bring to light the life and career of a fascinating Russian woman, but explore the Zeitgeist of the post-Stalinist and post-Soviet periods.

Notes

¹ Nina Katerli, personal interview, 1993, stating the subject matter of her prose fiction.

² For further study on the history of Russian and Soviet women, see Mary Buckley, Women and Ideology in the Soviet Union (New York and London, 1989); Barbara Evans Clements, Barbara Alpern Engel, Christine D. Worobec, eds., Russia's Women: Accommodation, Resistance, Transformation (Berkeley, 1991); Elizabeth Walters, Women in Post Revolutionary Russia (London, 1988), Rosalind Marsh, ed., Women in Russia and Ukraine (Cambridge, 1996).

³ Simone de Beauvoir, The Second Sex, trans. and ed. by H.M. Parshley (Harmondsworth, 1988), p.77.

⁴ See Carol Nechemias, 'Women's Participation: From Lenin to Gorbachev', in Russian Women in Politics and Society, ed. by Wilma Rule and Norma C. Noonan (Westport, CT and London, 1996), pp.15-33.

⁵ I. Grekova, 'Introduction', in Soviet Women Writing: Fifteen Short Stories (London, 1991), p.11.

⁶ I have chosen to incorporate the conventional feminist understanding of 'feminine' and 'female', whereby the former denotes the cultural perceptions of woman and the latter refers to the biological nature of woman. For further reading on this subject, see Toril Moi, 'Feminist, Female, Feminine', in The Feminist Reader: Essays in Gender and the Politics of Literary Criticism, ed. by Catherine Belsey and Jane Moore (London, 1989), pp.117-132.

⁷ Beth Holmgren, 'For the Good Cause: Russian Women's Autobiography in the Twentieth Century', in Women Writers in Russian Literature, ed. by Toby W. Clyman and Diana Greene (Westport, CT and London, 1994), p.136.

⁸ Helena Goscilo, 'Skirted Issues: the Discreteness and Indiscretions of Russian Women's Prose', Russian Studies in Literature, vol.28, no.2, 1992, p.9.

⁹ Nina Katerli, personal interview, 1993.

¹⁰ Catriona Kelly, A History of Russian Women's Writing, 1820-1992 (Oxford, 1994), p.352.

¹¹ Joanna Russ, How to Suppress Women's Writing (Austin, 1983), pp.4-5. Russ's comment does not refer specifically to Russian or Soviet women's writing.

¹² Helena Goscilo, ed., Balancing Acts (New York, 1989), pp.xvi-xvii.

¹³ On the neglect of women writers in British and American culture, see: Tillie Olsen, Silences (London, 1980) and Joanna Russ, How to Suppress Women's Writing.

¹⁴ X[enia] G[asiorowska], The Handbook of Russian Literature, ed. by Victor Terras (New Haven and London, 1985), p.520.

¹⁵ N.N. Shneidman, Soviet Literature in the 1980s: A Decade of Transition (Toronto, 1989), p.169.

¹⁶ Rosalind Marsh, 'Introduction', in Gender and Russian Literature: New Perspectives, ed. by Rosalind Marsh (Cambridge, 1996), p.3.

¹⁷ One only needs to refer to the Dictionary of Russian Women Writers (1994), edited by Marina Ledkovsky, Charlotte Rosenthal and Mary Zirin to observe the wealth of Russian and Soviet women writers, past and present.

¹⁸ Barbara Heldt, 'Gynoglasnost: Writing the Feminine', in Perestroika and Soviet Women, ed. by Mary Buckley (Cambridge, 1992), p.168.

¹⁹ Dale Spender, 'Women and Literary History', in The Feminist Reader: Essays in Gender: The Politics of Literary Criticism, ed. by Belsey and Moore, p.29.

²⁰ For general surveys of recent feminist studies of Russian literature see: See Barbara Heldt, 'Feminism and the Slavic Field,' The Harriman Review, no. 7 (November, 1994), pp.11-18 and Rosalind Marsh, 'A New Agenda for Russian Women's Literary Studies', Irish Slavonic Studies, no.16, 1995(1996), pp.83-92.

²¹ For a more comprehensive list of secondary literature dealing with women's literature, see the Bibliography, section II C, entitled 'Works Dealing Specifically with Women'.

²² There are numerous monographs of individual women writers, but these have mainly focused on the poets Anna Akhmatova and Marina Tsvetaeva. These include: Michael Makin, Marina Tsvetaeva: Poetics of Appropriation (Oxford, 1993) and Susan Amert, In

a Shattered Mirror: Akhmatova's Later Lyrics (Stanford, 1992). Other monographs focus on writers of the pre-Stalin period, such as Ella Bobrova, Irina Odoevtseva: poet, prozaik, memuarist: literaturnyi portret (Moscow, 1995) and Diana Burgin, Sofia Parnok: The Life and Work of Russia's Sappho (New York, 1994).

²³ Notable exceptions to the above general statement include: Beth Holmgren, Women's Works in Stalin's Time: On Lidiiia Chukovskaia and Nadezhda Mandelshtam (Bloomington, 1993), Helena Goscilo, The Explosive World of Tatyana Tolstaya's Fiction (Armonk, NY, 1996), and Ketchian, Sonia I., The Poetic Craft of Bella Akhmadulina (University Park, PA, 1993).

²⁴ The word 'kurzal' is short for 'kurortnyi zal', meaning 'resort hall', and refers to pavilions or dance halls where people would socialise.

²⁵ Citations to Katerli's stories refer to first journal publication dates, where available. Where unavailable, citations refer to a story's republication in one of Katerli's four collections of stories.

²⁶ Nina Katerli, 'Sovok—moi geroi i moi chitatel'' (unpublished paper for 'Women in Russia and the Former USSR' Conference, University of Bath, March-April, 1993), p.1.

²⁷ Carl Proffer, 'Introduction', The Barsukov Triangle, the Two-Toned Blond and Other Stories, ed. by Carl and Ellendea Proffer (Ann Arbor, MI, 1984), p.xviii.

²⁸ Deming Brown, The Last Years of Soviet Russian Literature: Prose Fiction 1975-91 (Cambridge, 1993), p.132.

²⁹ Teresa Polowy, 'Russian Women Writing Alcoholism: the Sixties to the Present', in Post-Communism and the Body Politic, ed. by Ellen E. Berry (New York and London, 1995), p.269.

³⁰ Monika Katz, 'The Other Woman: Character Portrayal and the Narrative Voice in the Short Stories of Liudmilla Petrushevskaiia', in Women in Russian Culture: Projections and Self-Perceptions, ed. by Rosalind Marsh (Oxford, 1998), p.195.

³¹ Exceptions to this statement include the literary memoirs by Nadezhda Mandelshtam, Evgeniia Ginzburg, and Lidiiia Ginzburg.

³² See Tatyana Tolstaya, 'Notes from the Underground', Review of Francine du Plessix Gray, Walking the Tightrope (New York and London, 1990), New York Review of Books, 31 May 1990, vol.37, no.9, pp.3-7.

³³ William Korey, Russian Antisemitism, Pamyat, and the Demonology of Zionism, Studies in Anti-Semitism, vol.2, Published for the Vidal Sassoon International Center for the Study of Anti-Semitism (SICSA) (Jerusalem, 1995), pp.119-20.

³⁴ See the Bibliography for full references.

³⁵ Jane T. Costlow, Stephanie Sandler, and Judith Vowles, 'Introduction', in Sexuality and the Body in Russian Culture, ed. by Jane T. Costlow, Stephanie Sandler, and Judith Vowles (Stanford, 1993), p.32.

³⁶ Carl Proffer, 'Introduction', in The Barsukov Triangle, the Two-Toned Blond and Other Stories ed. by Carl and Ellendea Proffer, p.xi.

³⁷ Catriona Kelly, A History of Russian Women's Writing, 1820-1992, p.362. 'The Farewell Light' was first published in 1981. See the Bibliography for a full reference.

³⁸ Deming Brown, The Last Years of Soviet Russian Literature, p.133.

³⁹ 'Proshchal'nyi svet' will be discussed at length in Chapter Four.

-
- ⁴⁰ Nina Katerli, personal interview, 1994.
- ⁴¹ Thomas Hoisington, 'In Place of an Introduction', in Out Visiting and Back Home: Russian Stories on Aging, ed. and trans. by Thomas H. Hoisingting (Evanston, IL, 1998), p.xiii.
- ⁴² Brown refers to Katerli's understanding of her male protagonists as 'condescending'. See Deming Brown, The Last Years of Soviet Russian Literature, p.134.
- ⁴³ Iakov Gordin, 'Litsa i maski', Smena, 30 July 1988, p.4.
- ⁴⁴ I. Prussakova, 'Iasnost' avtorskogo chuvstva', Zvezda, vol.12, 1987, p.198.
- ⁴⁵ I. Prussakova, 'Iasnost' avtorskogo chuvstva', p.198.
- ⁴⁶ Inna Soloveva, personal letter (unpublished, 1982).
- ⁴⁷ V. Lavrov, 'Gorod i pamiat', Leningradskaja pravda, 30 April 1988, p.3.
- ⁴⁸ A. Zhitinskii, 'Svoe okno', Neva, vol.1, 1982, p.163.
- ⁴⁹ V. Musakhanov, 'Nina Katerli "Tsvetnye otkrytki"', rasskazy i povesti, 330 str.' (unpublished editorial critique, 1982), p.1.
- ⁵⁰ T. Khmel'nitskaia, V glub' kharaktera: o psikhologizme v sovremennoi sovetskoj proze (Leningrad, 1988), p.199.
- ⁵¹ I. Prussakova, 'Iasnost' avtorskogo chuvstva', p.199.
- ⁵² A. Romin, 'Nina Katerli: "Inogda fantastika neobkhodima..."', 23 February 1990 (full reference unavailable).
- ⁵³ V. Kaverin, 'V krughe chteniia', Literaturnaia gazeta, 19 August 1981, p.1.
- ⁵⁴ V. Musakhanov, 'Nina Katerli "Tsvetnye otkrytki"', rasskazy i povesti, 330 str.', p.6.
- ⁵⁵ Nicholas Zekulin 'Soviet Russian Women's Literature in the Early 1980s', in Fruits of Her Plume, ed. by Helena Goscilo (Armonk and London, 1993), p.53.
- ⁵⁶ The majority of Russian women reject the notion of feminism altogether, which has often been caricatured as a movement of man-hating radical lesbians. For more information on western and Russian notions of feminism, see Beth Holmgren, 'Bug Inspectors and Beauty Queens: The Problems of Translating Feminism into Russian', in Post-Communism and the Body Politic, ed. by Ellen Berry (New York and London, 1995), pp.15-31.
- ⁵⁷ Nina Katerli, personal interview, 1995.
- ⁵⁸ Katerli made this comment to Rosalind Marsh during the 'Women in Russia and the Former USSR' Conference in Bath, England in 1993.
- ⁵⁹ Toril Moi, 'Feminist, Female, Feminine', p.118.
- ⁶⁰ Katerli's eponymous character of 'Polina' rejects the traditionally accepted notions of woman and womanhood. In addition, many of Katerli's male characters, such as Aleksandr Gubin in 'Zhara na severe' and Barsukov in 'Treugol'nik Barsukova' are adulterers, liars, and alcoholics, who hurt the women in their lives.
- ⁶¹ Helena Goscilo, The Explosive World of Tatyana Tolstaya's Fiction (Armonk, NY, 1996), p.4.
- ⁶² Catriona Kelly, A History of Russian Women's Writing, 1820-1992, p.73.
- ⁶³ Mary Eagleton, 'Introduction', in Feminist Literary Criticism, ed. by Mary Eagleton (London and New York 1991), p.2.
- ⁶⁴ Toril Moi, 'Feminist, Female, Feminine', p.118.

⁶⁵ Gayle Greene, Changing the Story—Feminist Fiction and the Tradition (Bloomington, 1991), p.9.

⁶⁶ Sydney Janet Kaplan, 'Varieties of Feminist Criticism' in Making a Difference: Feminist Literary Criticism, ed. by Gayle Greene and Coppelia Kahn (New York, 1985), p.41.

⁶⁷ Gayle Austin, Feminist Theories for Dramatic Criticism (Ann Arbor, 1991).

⁶⁸ Gayle Greene and Coppelia Kahn, 'Feminist Scholarship and the Social Construction of Woman', p.1.

⁶⁹ For further reading on franco-feminism, see Ann Rosalind Jones, 'Inscribing Femininity: French Theories of the Feminine', in Making a Difference: Feminist Literary Criticism (London and New York, 1985), ed. by Greene and Kahn, pp.59-79 and Mary Eagleton, 'Introduction', in Feminist Literary Criticism, pp.8-12.

⁷⁰ Ann Rosalind Jones, 'Inscribing Femininity: French Theories of the Feminine', p.99.

⁷¹ Gayle Greene and Coppelia Kahn, 'Feminist Scholarship and the Social Construction of Woman', in Making a Difference: Feminist Literary Criticism, p.4.

⁷² David Shepherd, Beyond Metafiction: Self Consciousness in Soviet Literature (Oxford, 1992), p.191.

⁷³ Pamela Chester and Sibelan Forester, eds., Engendering Slavic Literatures (Bloomington, 1996), p.xiii.

⁷⁴ See Chapter Two for a discussion of 'fabula' and 'siuzhet'.

⁷⁵ The word 'chervets' is derived from the Russian word 'cherviak', meaning worm. In actuality, 'chervets' is a colloquial derogatory term for a person, but in this story, it refers to a science project involving a worm. Henceforth, 'Chervets' will be translated as 'The Worm'.

CHAPTER ONE

NINA KATERLI (1934-)

*Политическая ситуация может отразиться на
психологии человека.¹*

INTRODUCTION

As stated in the Introduction, a life and works chronological approach acknowledges the importance of analysing both *text* and *context*, namely incorporating an appreciation of an author's biographical background, as well as relevant historical, political, and cultural information into the study of a literary text. This approach is particularly applicable with regard to the study of Russian and Soviet women writers, as their writing, as well as their conceptions of themselves as writers, have been influenced by numerous historical, political, and cultural factors. Nina Katerli is a fascinating individual and political activist whose life deserves careful consideration for several reasons. A study of her life, combined with an examination of her prose fiction and non-fiction writings, will add to our knowledge of Soviet women writers of the post-Stalin era. Moreover, Katerli is one of very few Russian women who writes both fiction and non-fiction and is a political activist.² Her documentation of her experiences as an activist against Russian nationalist and anti-Semitic organizations will enrich our understanding of the contemporary social and political situation in Russia. Finally, broadening our study of Nina Katerli to include an analysis of her life and times until May 1998 will deepen our understanding of Katerli's prose fiction and non-fiction writings.

This chapter will discuss the most significant political and historical events, as well as literary trends, which affected Katerli personally. They include principally the purges, the Leningrad Affair, the Doctors' Plot, the marginalisation of Soviet Jews, and the anti-cosmopolitan campaign. This chapter will also examine Nikita Khrushchev's secret speech of 1956 and its effect on Katerli, as well as on the 'shestidesiatniki' (the generation of the 1960s). This chapter will then consider Katerli's disillusionment with Leonid Brezhnev, particularly following the 1966 Siniavskii-Daniel' trial, as well as the subsequent proliferation of 'samizdat' (self publishing), and its influence on her writing. I will include an analysis of 'perestroika' and 'glasnost'' and their effect upon Katerli, discussing whether she, like many of her contemporaries, suffered from a spiritual and artistic crisis in the aftermath of Gorbachev's reforms. In addition, I will examine how these reforms encouraged Katerli to take political action, and how such action affected her prose fiction. Finally, I will attempt to analyse how Katerli the writer has been influenced by the fall of the Soviet Union.

The principal sources for this chapter's analysis will be Katerli's own autobiographical works.³ Like many Russian and Soviet writers, Katerli documented and recorded not only the changes taking place in her country, but also the role these changes played in her own development.⁴ Nina Katerli has written three autobiographies, two of which have been published. 'Kto ia?' ('Who Am I?'), written in 1993, and published two years later, is Katerli's first autobiographical work.⁵ She also wrote an autobiographical essay, entitled 'Sovok—moi geroi i moi chitatel'' ('The Average Soviet Person—My Hero and My Reader') in 1993 for the 'Women in Russia and the Former USSR' Conference held

in Bath, England. Katerli's third autobiography, 'Odin iz variantov' ('One of the Variations') was published in 1996.

An analysis of Katerli's autobiographical writings will contribute to a general understanding of autobiographies by Russian women, and in particular, of women of the post-Stalin period.⁶ According to Beth Holmgren, the interest in autobiographies by Russian and Soviet women has risen in recent years. Holmgren comments: 'Over the last two decades, feminist scholars have been engaged in a massive project of recovering and reinterpreting the autobiographical writings of women.'⁷ This interest is partially a result of the abundance of autobiographies and memoirs by women. As Barbara Heldt has remarked: 'Russia has more powerful women poets and autobiographers than women novelists.'⁸ Among the earliest and most famous of these works are the memoirs of Catherine the Great, published in France in 1850, and of Princess Dashkova, published in London in 1858.

As will be demonstrated throughout this chapter, Katerli's autobiographical works provide a detailed self-examination of her personal development, as well as the political and social environment and its effect upon her life. In this respect, Katerli's autobiographies run contrary to the tradition, if one can speak of a tradition, of women's autobiographical writings. In particular, critics have noted the Russian woman autobiographer's sense of marginalisation and fragmentation.⁹ In this regard, Catriona Kelly has commented that female autobiographers rarely 'made women's subjectivity and psychology the centre of analysis.'¹⁰ At the same time, however, Katerli avoids subjects and themes in her autobiographies pertaining specifically to her understanding of herself as a woman and the role it played in her individual and artistic development, which,

according to Beth Holmgren, is typical of autobiographical texts written by Russian women. Holmgren states:

The problematic status of female selfhood in Russian society—its secondary value, adjunct roles, conformist virtues, convention-bound sexuality—remains, for the most part, a muted or non-issue, a concern that many women writers sense and circumvent, but choose not to confront.¹¹

Also like other autobiographical texts written by women, Katerli's autobiographies evidence a positive and hopeful attitude. As Barbara Heldt has commented: 'In autobiography, women view the significance of their own lives, usually after most of it has been lived and they reshape its disappointments into gains of experience.'¹²

It should be noted that the goal of this chapter is to provide a *cultural/literary*, rather than an *historical* analysis of Katerli's autobiographical works. This approach requires us to recognise that autobiography acts not only as a lens through which to observe people, places and events, but also as a mirror reflecting the writer's own self. This approach also requires us to acknowledge that no lens or mirror is free from distortion. In fact, several of Katerli's friends have refused to accept her autobiographies as true analyses of her character. Boris Strugatskii, the well-known Soviet science-fiction writer and friend of Katerli, remarked that 'Kto ia?' was not an accurate portrayal of Katerli, and that she was far too critical of herself. Katerli responded by saying: 'Я знаю кто я. Он, должно

быть, видит кого-то еще... как и многие другие, которые думают, что я хороший человек, но мне кажется, что я их ввела в заблуждение.’¹³

Strugatskii’s and Katerli’s comments call to mind Jane Gary Harris’s broader observation: ‘What is most important for autobiographical discourse is the perceived evolution or attitude or the transformation of mood that emerged through the self-reflective process, not the fictionality of narration or lack thereof.’¹⁴ Similarly, Shari Benstock has noted: ‘Autobiography reveals the impossibility of its own dream: what begins on the presumption of self-knowledge ends in the creation of a fiction that covers over the premises of its construction.’¹⁵ As will be discussed in later chapters, Katerli’s narrative style, that of the introspective and ‘self-reflective’ narrator, is perhaps very much related to Katerli’s own contemplative and pensive personality, so apparent in her autobiographies, which calls to mind Dorrit Cohn’s statement: ‘The vanishing point of the autobiographical genre is the precise starting point for interior monologue as a fictional genre.’¹⁶

As the above quotations suggest, it is important to remember that Nina Katerli’s life story is, above all, a story.¹⁷ In many instances, the same themes and issues that arise in Katerli’s autobiographical works find their way into her prose fiction and non-fiction writings. As a result, Katerli’s recounting of her life and of the political and social environment in which it has taken place forms as much a part of her literary canon as her ‘non-autobiographical’ works. Thus, to understand the prose and non-fiction of Nina Katerli, it is necessary to review the political forces at play during her life, not only from the standpoint of their influences on her, but of her perception of them.

What are the themes and issues that figure prominently in Katerli's autobiographies? One is that of labels and classifications. With one exception, Nina Katerli refuses to be categorised, wishing to distance herself from the many historical and literary groups and movements of the post-Stalin era. The one term, however, which Katerli embraces, is that of 'shestidesiatnik'. It is this identification that has most affected Katerli's personal and artistic development, and that features prominently in her autobiographies. Other recurring themes in Katerli's autobiographies include filial relationships and anti-Semitism. Finally, the title of Katerli's first autobiography, 'Kto ia?' ('Who Am I?'), expresses the search for meaning and identity that is at the heart of both her autobiographical writings and her personal interviews. For Katerli, this sense of self is very much connected to her place within her political and social environment. As Sarah Pratt has noted: 'The Russian concept of the self...is very often a concept of self in relation to others, a self informed by a sense of community.'¹⁸ Thus, in these three autobiographies, Katerli embarks upon a series of psychological journeys in which she observes how various people and circumstances, as well as the socio-political climate of the Soviet Union, have played a role in her psychological and artistic development.

EARLY YEARS

Born on 30 June 1934, Nina Semenovna Katerli spent the first twenty years of her life living in her parents' communal flat in Leningrad's Petrogradskii Region, well known as the city's intellectual and artistic centre. Katerli's parents were members of Leningrad's cultural and literary elite, and as the only child of two established writers, Katerli enjoyed a privileged childhood. She spent her early years attending literary conferences at the

Union of Writers' Building, going to classical music concerts, visiting museums, reading both Russian and western classics, and observing gatherings of Leningrad's most successful and famous writers.

Katerli, like many other Russian women autobiographers, attributes greater influence on her childhood and development to her mother rather than to her father.¹⁹ As Susan Stanford Friedman states: 'The child's ego develops as it comes to realize its difference first from the mother and then from the eternal world in general.'²⁰ In addition, Barbara Heldt argues:

The mother-daughter relationship, which is often written about extensively in Russian women's autobiographies, has a complexity rarely found in works of fiction...understanding one's mother is, for better or worse, the preface to self-understanding in many Russian female autobiographies.²¹

Nina Katerli writes extensively about her mother, Elena Iosifovna Katerli (1902-1958), examining her character, background, and the influence she had upon her daughter's life.²² A Communist Party member and prolific writer, Katerli's mother enjoyed such privileges as a private car, a servant, and a summer home in a prestigious district. Katerli's mother filled the house with her friends, co-workers, and literary circle, and it was this atmosphere—and her mother's values—that dominated and defined both the home and Katerli's childhood. Although Nina Katerli now opposes the ideological positions held by her mother, she refuses to criticise her, speaking in her memoirs only of

her mother's strength and citing her mother as the role model upon which she based her own character and morals. Katerli describes her mother as:

Одаренный литератор с врожденным чувством правды и коммунистка, отстаивающая партийную 'правду', - вот кем была моя мать, от природы честная, смелая, красивая и обаятельная женщина. Все это несомненно повлияло на то, какой выросла я.²³

Elena Katerli, the daughter of a provincial doctor, was raised in a cultured and intellectual home, where she spoke French and played the piano. It was this privileged lifestyle that Elena Katerli 'abandoned' in 1921 to work in a Leningrad cooperative. Nina Katerli has written little of her mother's first marriage, only remarking that it ended in divorce, and shortly after, she married Nina Katerli's father, Semen Farfel'. Nina Katerli does mention that her mother decided to retain her maiden name, but denies any claims that this decision was related to Farfel' being a Jewish surname. Rather, as Nina Katerli states, her mother's decision was due to the fact that she had already changed her name once, for her first husband, and she simply wanted to retain her maiden name. Elena Katerli began publishing her works in 1927, at the age of twenty-five, and went on to publish several novels and over three hundred articles. In 1931, Elena Katerli became an official member of the Communist Party. She was the Deputy Editor-in-Chief of the journal Leningrad, from 1938 to 1941, and she worked at the front as a war correspondent for the journal Na strazhe rodiny (Guarding the Motherland), from 1942 to 1945. Her

final position was that of Second Secretary of the Governing Body of the Leningrad Section of the Union of Writers, from 1942 to 1955.

The period 1942-1955 was one of the most difficult and repressive for Soviet writers. The most significant incident occurred in 1946, when the writers Mikhail Zoshchenko and Anna Akhmatova were expelled from the Union of Soviet Writers as examples of the new tough line taken by Andrei Zhdanov, Stalin's advisor on cultural and ideological affairs. Nina Katerli states that she is uncertain of her mother's true political opinions, what she thought about the situation of the Jews, Stalin's purges, and the 'zhdanovshchina', or Andrei Zhdanov's strict cultural and ideological policies. Nina Katerli explains, or perhaps even justifies her mother's participation in the system and position in the Union of Writers by describing her mother as a 'дореволюционный романтик из интеллигенции, верившая в то, что предназначением литературы является образование народных масс.'²⁴ Elena Katerli was an advocate of socialist realism, which is evident in the themes of many of her stories.²⁵ She died in 1958, only two years after Nikita Khrushchev delivered his secret speech, exposing some of the truth behind Stalin's purges and other acts of terror, and speeding up the process of de-Stalinisation. Nina Katerli claims that, due to her mother's untimely death, the two of them never had the opportunity to discuss her mother's true beliefs about these issues.

In contrast to Nina Katerli's detailed description of her mother, she does not even mention her father's name in her autobiographies, and refers to him only sparingly throughout the works. When asked in a 1994 interview why she had not written or talked about her father, Katerli stated that they were very different people, and never understood one another. Perhaps the largest impact her father had on her life was his identity as a

Jew, which, it appears, Katerli's parents did not want to pass on to their daughter. Katerli's father, a Jew by birth, was a committed atheist and Communist. Although Katerli carried her father's surname, Farfel', she adopted her mother's nationality, having 'Russian', rather than 'Jewish' written in the nationality section of her passport.²⁶ Katerli remembers her parents telling her: 'Ты родилась и живешь в России, кто же ты еще?'²⁷ Even as a young child, however, Katerli was aware of her father's identity, and even more, she was aware of blatant anti-Semitism. She remembers that once, while at a restaurant as a child with her father, they were refused service because they were Jewish. Moreover, Katerli claims that because of her Jewish surname, and restrictions on Jewish entry into higher education, she was unable to study at Leningrad State University.

Nina Katerli's parents met while working as journalists at Leningradskaja pravda. After leaving the newspaper, Katerli's father served as a correspondent during World War Two, and wrote documentary prose under the pseudonym F. Samoilov, in memory of his grandfather, Samuil, who was also a journalist. Semen Farfel's writing career was drastically altered by the infamous Leningrad Affair, which occurred in 1948, after the death of Andrei Zhdanov, when a power struggle ensued to determine which of Stalin's lieutenants would succeed him.²⁸ Charges were fabricated in order to arrest and execute many of Leningrad's most prominent politicians, such as A.A. Kuznetsov, the former Secretary of the Communist Party in Leningrad. The Leningrad Affair also led to the arrests and executions of several Leningrad academics. Executions of Leningrad's leading local governmental officials were carried out in July 1949. Katerli's father was spared, but lost his position at the Military Pedagogical Institute, most probably because

of his friendship with many of the intellectuals and writers who were arrested. After losing this job, he never quite regained the stature he had previously enjoyed.²⁹

Most of Katerli's earliest memories recall the less positive aspects of her childhood, reflecting Pamela Chester's view that: 'Some women writers, debarred from many aspects of their culture's discourse, created a rival tradition of an anti-Edenic childhood garden.'³⁰ One of Katerli's earliest childhood memories is of an event that took place in the kitchen of her communal flat when she was three years old. While her mother was cooking, the young Katerli, who was cuddling her kitten Kuzia, innocently substituted the kitten's name for Stalin's name in a song praising Stalin as a good Communist. She sang: 'И смотрит с улыбкою Кузя, советский простой человек!'³¹ Her mother, most likely afraid of what eavesdroppers might think or say, openly and harshly reprimanded her child: 'Молчи... Как тебе не стыдно?! Это же песня про товарища Сталина! Знаешь, как он обидится, если узнает, что ты поешь ее о каком-то коте?!'³² Katerli felt incredibly ashamed, and immediately wrote a letter to Comrade Stalin, to beg his forgiveness, a letter that her parents immediately destroyed.

As the above story demonstrates, Elena Katerli raised her daughter to have a strong moral code, a sense of duty to her country, and a firm belief in communism. However, Katerli states that even at a young age, although most likely not on a conscious level, she was aware of the discrepancy between propaganda and reality. She writes that she grew up believing:

Родилась в самой прекрасной в мире стране, прекрасной
потому, что в ней победил социализм, что только здесь живут

счастливые, свободные люди, что Сталин – гений человечества, отец трудящихся и лучший друг детей... я была счастлива: мне не о чем не надо было думать – что хорошо, что плохо, знала за меня Власть, я гордилась этой самой справедливой в мире Властью... и панически боялась ее. Боялась не угодить, совершить позорную ошибку, нанести стране вред, а тогда... А тогда к нашему дому ночью подъедет ‘черный ворон’, и меня увезут в тюрьму. А потом отправят в ледяной лагерь, где я окажусь среди таких же как я, преступников, ‘врагов народа’ .³³

The fears and anxieties of the young Katerli were neither irrational nor unjustified. Katerli’s parents, as members of Leningrad’s literary elite, had experienced the ‘zhdanovshchina’ and knew all too well how dangerous the political situation was in the Soviet Union in the late 1930s and 1940s.³⁴ Thus, fearing for their daughter’s safety, Katerli’s parents most likely taught her to believe that these ‘enemies of the people’ existed everywhere, and that in the struggle against them, it was also possible that mistakes might be made and innocent people unjustly punished.

Two innocent people who were punished as ‘enemies of the people’ were Nina Katerli’s aunt and uncle. Katerli’s uncle, a high ranking military officer, was arrested in 1937, and shot soon thereafter. Following her husband’s arrest, Raia, Katerli’s aunt, feared that she would be arrested and her three children sent to an orphanage. Katerli recalls that a few months after her uncle’s execution, the police did in fact come to collect Raia and her children. As the police struggled to round up the children, Irina, the eldest

of the three children, held up a little doll to one of the policemen, and begged him to take the doll instead of her mother. The policeman shoved the young girl aside. Raia was taken away and arrested for being a 'Ch.S.I.R'. (Member of the Family of a Traitor to the Homeland), and the children were taken to an orphanage. The nursemaid discovered where the children were being kept and immediately informed Elena Katerli, who, after managing to collect some money, made her way to the orphanage, bribed the officials, and rescued the three children.

From June 1941 to May 1944, Nina Katerli, along with her mother, Raia's children, and other family members, lived at her grandfather's house in Komarovo, a small town just outside of Leningrad. One evening during the winter of 1942, one of the workers from the railway station delivered a note. Elena Katerli and her sister quickly gathered up a few things, grabbed Irina and went off to the railway station. Katerli was told later that Raia was on a train filled with other prisoners that had stopped for just a short while in Komarovo. Raia had thrown a note out of the window, asking to see her daughter for possibly the last time, as the train was taking her to a prison camp and her fate was uncertain. When the two women and Irina arrived at the station, they ran along the platform, trying to find Raia. It was very dark, and the snowstorm made it difficult to see anything. Finally, they heard Raia's voice and they pushed Irina up to window to see her mother. Raia screamed out, saying that she could not see her daughter's face because of the darkness. One of the railway workers quietly went up to Irina, and put a lantern above her head, so that she would be visible to her mother. Fortunately, this was not the last time that Raia would see her daughter. Raia was released from prison the next year,

but was forbidden to leave the city where the prison was located and spent her remaining years working at the prison and living just opposite it.

Several years later, Katerli experienced another unfortunate incident. In 1948, as a schoolchild, Nina Katerli remembers coming home one day to her mother, who was sitting naked at her dressing table, nervously smoking a cigarette. Ekaterina Boronina, a writer and family friend, had been arrested for writing a story about an unhappy orphan child. Katerli's reaction to the news of Boronina's arrest was one of a young girl wishing to be a strong and committed Communist like her mother. Katerli, in fact, often reprimanded herself for not having her mother's strong will and determination. As a fourteen-year-old schoolgirl, Nina Katerli wrote in her diary:

Мне не привелось быть участницей Великой Отечественной войны, но в мирное время предстоит немало борьбы. Как хочется поскорее стать взрослой, чтобы приносить хоть какую-то пользу. И вот сейчас, сегодня, 5 января 1949 года, я клянусь своей жизнью и своим комсомольским билетом, что сделаю для Родины все, что могу, и никогда не изменю ей.³⁵

The young Katerli promptly expressed her agreement with the government's decision to arrest Boronina—it was not good to write such lies about society. The young zealot along with her mother immediately set forth to burn every book Boronina had given them in order to eliminate any trace of their contact with her. Looking back, Katerli comments how she rationalised such acts by telling herself:

Случаются ошибки, они неизбежны, пока вокруг нашей Родины
клокочет капиталистическое окружение, пока через границу
забрасывают гнусных шпионов, а внутри страны действуют
диверсанты, готовые на все, чтобы погубить молодую
социалистическую республику... 'лес рубят – щепки летят',
приходится иногда сажать невинных, чтобы не упустить
врагов.³⁶

UNIVERSITY YEARS

From a very young age, Nina Katerli had a strong desire to be a writer. As soon as she could read and write, she was keeping a diary and writing poems. The seven-year-old Katerli, missing her mother terribly while she was staying with her grandfather in the countryside, wrote the following poem to her mother:

Первыми крикнули черные птицы

Грустно стало мне

Горе, как птица, на сердце садится

Грустно в чужой стороне

Грустно без мамы, без папы родного

Грустно без родины мне.

Горе, как птица, на сердце уж село,

Грустно в чужой стороне.³⁷

Despite her love for writing, however, Katerli's parents had tried to dissuade her from pursuing a writing career as soon as she began expressing such a desire:

Я считала, что вообще-то дети литераторов не должны заниматься литературным трудом. Все они, как правило, бездарны... Но почему-то воображают себя талантами – так мне с детства твердили родители, не желавшие, чтобы я пошла по их стопам.³⁸

Furthermore, in order to write and pursue a liberal arts degree, Katerli would have had to study at Leningrad State University, and, as mentioned earlier, Katerli knew that studying at the University was out of the question because her father was a Jew. She writes:

Когда я училась еще только в седьмом классе, родители профилактически объяснили мне, что таких, как я, в Университет не принимают. Почему? А потому. И все. Значит так надо.³⁹

In this regard, Mark Popovsky noted in 1980:

There is no legislative basis for Soviet measures which prevent Jews from entering universities, institutes, and even secondary schools of languages and mathematics. It is known, however, that there are many places of higher learning to which Jews are not admitted at all, particularly military and party schools and those connected with diplomacy and foreign trade. It is also very difficult for a young man [or woman] of Jewish extraction to enroll in a university faculty of journalism, history, philosophy, or philology.⁴⁰

Thus, the young Katerli never entertained any serious ideas of becoming a writer. By the late 1960s, when Nina Katerli decided to write, her mother had been dead for over a decade, and she was estranged from her father. It was Katerli's friends, colleagues, and husband who supported and encouraged her decision. In fact, Nina Katerli knew that her mother, as a writer of Socialist Realist prose, would most likely have disapproved of her daughter's writing.

In 1952, Nina Katerli enrolled at the Lensovet Technical Institute. Disliking both physics and chemistry, and being terrified of mathematics, Katerli decided to study chemical engineering. Katerli's first year at the Institute was also the year of the infamous Doctors' Plot, Stalin's last great purge.⁴¹ In 1953, a number of Kremlin doctors (most of whom were Jewish) were charged with conspiring to assassinate top Soviet officials on instructions from the West. Following the arrest of these doctors, an anti-

Semitic fury swept the nation. Fortunately, Katerli's father was again spared, but the anti-Semitic campaign would have other effects on her.

Katerli recounts coming down the stairs of the Institute one afternoon, at the height of the anti-Semitic frenzy, and overhearing students calling out the names of the Jewish students enrolled at the Institute and deciding their fate and future at the Institute. When they arrived at Katerli's name, they decided to allow her to remain at the Institute, due to the fact that, in their eyes, she was not really Jewish, because, as mentioned earlier, 'Russian' was written under the nationality section on her passport. Katerli recounts that, outraged, she marched up to the students and screamed:

Я сейчас же пойду в Комитет Комсомола! Вы клевете на Советский Союз! На партию! Что мы – при Гитлере живем?! Только нацисты преследовали людей за национальность, у нас такого быть не может! Эти врачи – преступники, при чем здесь все евреи?!⁴²

When Katerli returned home that evening, she explained the situation to her mother. Quietly, so that no one in their communal flat could hear, Elena Katerli warned her daughter never again to speak so boldly, saying that such statements could easily land her in prison. For the next few days, every car, every taxi Katerli heard out the window, she imagined to be the secret police car coming to escort her to a Siberian labour camp.

Apart from Nina Katerli's relationship with her mother, Katerli writes and speaks very little about her family or personal life. She does write that soon after finishing school,

she accepted the first marriage proposal she received, afraid that it might be the last. She married a man named Shardianovich in 1952 and they divorced in 1957. The marriage left her with her first child, a son. In 1959, Katerli married her second and current husband, Mikhail Efros, a fellow student at the Institute, and soon after had her second child, a daughter, whom she named Elena after her mother.

It is unclear exactly when Katerli began questioning her political, religious, and ideological beliefs. A few months after the Doctors' Plot, on 5 March 1953, Joseph Stalin died. Katerli remembers:

Горько рыдала перед его портретом, увив рамку черной лентой.

Точнее, все-таки не рыдала а пыталась зарыдать. Слез почему-

то не было, было горделивое чувство причастности к Великой

Общей Бедѣ. Были мысли о том, что если бы можно было

сейчас же отдать за него жизнь – отдала бы. Но слез – не было.

Чувство утраты – не было. И когда в актовом зале нашего

института на траурном митинге я слышала чьи-то рыдания, я

завидовала. И стыдила себя за то, что не могу плакать.⁴³

Katerli's feelings with respect to Stalin's death are conflicting. She appears almost to be more disconcerted by her lack of tears than she is by the death itself. Katerli does not comment on these conflicting feelings in her autobiographies, but perhaps they signify a growing sense of disquiet or discontentment with the system. However, even a year later, when her first child was born on the anniversary of Stalin's death, Katerli remembers thinking how unfortunate it was for her son to be born on such a sad day. After expressing this sadness to her midwife, the woman said to Katerli: 'Твой сын родился в самый счастливый для народа день.'⁴⁴ At the time, Katerli did not agree with the midwife.

THE KHRUSHCHEV YEARS

Following the death of Joseph Stalin, state controls over literature were relaxed to some degree.⁴⁵ What followed was the period that subsequently became known as the thaw (otpepel') 1953-1964, so named after the 1954 novel by Il'ia Erenburg, and a period that was to have a great impact on the development of Katerli's worldview and socio-political ideas.⁴⁶ The thaw was a political phenomenon that came about as authorities attempted to preserve an equilibrium between contending conservative and liberal forces in the period after Stalin's death.⁴⁷ Notwithstanding a liberalisation of writing and publishing, censorship and repression were prevalent. As Alec Nove has remarked: 'While the scene was not wholly bleak, and repression was neither massive nor bloody, the arts did suffer a decline.'⁴⁸

This decline, as well as the repression that helped to induce it, were neither steady nor gradual. As Ronald Hingley has noted, it may be more appropriate to think of the 1953-

64 period as 'a series of thaws separated by intervals of re-refrigeration.'⁴⁹ In this regard, historians and political scientists have written of three distinct thaws. The first thaw occurred in the years immediately following Stalin's death, when such works as Vladimir Pomerantsev's essay 'Ob iskrennosti v literature' ('On the Sincerity of Literature') (1953) were published. The second thaw occurred three years later, when Nikita Khrushchev began a policy of de-Stalinisation, culminating in the secret speech on 25 February 1956, in which he denounced Stalin for his abuse of power within the Party. Consistent with Hingley's statement regarding 're-refrigeration', that same year the Soviet Union and its satellites invaded Hungary. One year later, in May 1957, Khrushchev met with a group of writers, warning them to adhere to the principles of socialist realism and to remember that they were servants of the Party. The third and final thaw occurred in 1961, when Khrushchev launched his official anti-Stalin policy at the Twenty-First Party Congress. It was shortly afterwards that Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn was permitted to publish his novella Odin den' Ivana Denisovicha (One Day in the Life of Ivan Denisovich) (1962) and his story Matrenin dvor (Matrena's House) (1963).

The political climate of the 1950s and 1960s had an enormous impact upon Nina Katerli. As stated above, Katerli is a self-proclaimed 'shestidesiatnik'. The term, 'shestidesiatnik', first used in 1960 by Stanislav Rassadin, has generated a great deal of controversy in the last ten to fifteen years.⁵⁰ Although it is not within the scope of this dissertation to examine fully the varying definitions of 'shestidesiatnik', it is necessary to discuss it in the context of its significance for Nina Katerli. The literal definition of 'shestidesiatnik' is 'a person of the 1960s', but there is no consensus on the characteristics of this generation.⁵¹ In fact, 'shestidesiatnik' has been used to signify

anything from a dissident, to a liberal, to a conformist. Svetlana Carsten has defined a 'shestidesiatnik' as 'a man, an intellectual in his late fifties or early sixties, prominent during the time of Khrushchev's reforms and emerging again during Gorbachev's "glasnost" era.'⁵² Hedrick Smith has referred to the members of this group as the 'Khrushchev generation'⁵³ and the 'Children of the Twentieth Party Congress',⁵⁴ while the critic Lev Anninskii, somewhat condescendingly, refers to them as daydreamers.⁵⁵ N.N. Shneidman defines 'shestidesiatniki' as 'moderately liberal intellectuals who believed in the social function and the ethical essence of literature...they were sympathetic to the literary dissidents but refused to join them.'⁵⁶ In Katerli's words, 'shestidesiatniki' are 'люди, выросшие при Сталине, и в 60-х годах осознавшие, что на самом деле все было не так, как они думали, что все было ложью, и захотевшие узнать правду.'⁵⁷

The unifying characteristic of the 'shestidesiatniki' is their reaction to Khrushchev's secret speech, which included a sense of betrayal, disillusionment, and a desire to develop a 'true' understanding of themselves and their country. As Svetlana Carsten has written:

On the whole, from the mid-1960s there began an evolution for the 'shestidesiatniki' who gradually came to realise, often independently of each other, that they had so far been participating in a kind of mass hypnosis or collective lie as they later came to refer to it...From then onward they started to 'squeeze drop by drop the slave out of themselves'.⁵⁸

Carsten's comment is reminiscent of Katerli's statement:

Я видела, где живу, поняла – как жила раньше, поднялась с колен, став нормальным человеком. Но это не значит, что я полностью избавилась от советского подхода к действительности – просто из просоветского человека я стала антисоветским.⁵⁹

Katerli also has written:

Разоблачение 'культа' я приняла легко, ни на секунду не усомнившись, что все злодеяния Сталина – правда. Ощущения, последовавшие за этим, можно сравнить с ощущениями человека, с рождения привыкшего сидеть в темноте – в тесном ящике, где шея согнута, ноги скрючены, подбородок прижат к коленям. Человек выбрался из ящика, расправил затекшее тело, широко открыл глаза, вздохнул – и только тут впервые понял, насколько ужасным было его положение и какое счастье – свобода.⁶⁰

Katerli's sense of awakening and freedom was shared by many others from her generation. The dissident Liudmila Alekseeva has written:

Young men and women began to lose their fear of sharing views, knowledge, belief, questions. Every night we gathered in cramped apartments to recite poetry, read 'unofficial' prose, and swap stories that, taken together, yielded a realistic picture of what was going on in our country. That was the time of our awakening...to us the thaw was the time to search for an alternative system of beliefs. Our new beliefs would truly be ours; having gone through Stalinism once, we could not stand for another 'progressive' doctrine being imposed on us from above.⁶¹

In addition, the acute western critic, Max Hayward, has noted of Andrei Siniavskii:

The process set off by Stalin's death, and the revelations about him at the Twentieth Party Congress in 1956 had affected most intellectuals of Siniavsky's generation in much the same way: disillusionment, not to say disaffection, was all but universal.⁶²

In addition, it is significant to note that the effect of Khrushchev's secret speech and the further revelations of the early 1960s specifically on the lives of women and women intellectuals and writers has not received much critical attention. This raises the question of whether the 'shestidesiatniki' are a generation solely of male writers with male concerns. In fact, except for Bella Akhmadulina and Irina Rodnianskaia, there are very few women who have been classified as 'shestidesiatniki'. As Stephen Lovell and

Rosalind Marsh have remarked: 'It has not been generally acknowledged that Khrushchev's revelations at the Twentieth Congress had a considerable impact on women writers as well as the men in [this] generation.'⁶³ Even Katerli, when asked to name any well-known female 'shestidesiatniki', was unable to do so.⁶⁴

Although all of the 'shestidesiatniki' were have been affected by the secret speech, their reactions varied, and it is this diversity which makes it difficult to establish a single definition for this generation.'⁶⁵ Many 'shestidesiatniki' became dissidents. These include: Joseph Brodskii, Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn, Lidiia Chukovskaia, Georgii Vladimov, Vladimir Voinovich, and Natal'ia Gorbanevskaja, to name a few. Roy Medvedev has defined a dissident as

someone who disagrees in some measure with the ideological, political, economic or moral foundation that every society rests on...but he does more than simply agree and speak differently; he 'openly proclaims his dissent and demonstrates it in one way or another to his compatriots and the state.'⁶⁶

Ronald Hingley, in contrast, has a less radical and more passive image of the Soviet dissident. He writes: 'Few dissidents have been out-an-out revolutionaries anxious to overthrow the Soviet system. Rather they have sought to reform it from within, and largely by an insistence on legality.'⁶⁷ This definition is similar to Katerli's: 'Диссидент – это человек, который каким-либо образом проявлял активность, направленную против режима.'⁶⁸ According to Medvedev's definition, Katerli would not be a

dissident, but according to Hingley's definition and as well as her own, she could be classified as a dissident. As will be discussed later in the chapter, Katerli states that she was questioned numerous times by the KGB after publishing 'Treugol'nik Barsukova' ('The Barsukov Triangle') in the United States in 1981 and 'Chervets' ('The Worm') in 'samizdat' in 1982. She considers her artistic independence to have been a defiant stand against the System.

This apparent inaction or lack of radical dissident action on the part of the 'shestidesiatniki' has generated a great deal of criticism regarding their importance or significance to Soviet and Russian history, literature, and culture. Most iconoclastic younger Russian critics, such as Viktor Erofeev, claim that since the 'shestidesiatniki' were able to publish their works in the Soviet Union, they were part of the system that oppressed, tortured, and arrested dissidents—those with enough courage to speak out and challenge the Party and government. Milan Kundera expressed a similar sentiment in his novel The Unbearable Lightness of Being: 'Whether they knew or didn't know is not the main issue; the main issue is whether a man is innocent because he didn't know. Is a fool on the throne relieved of all responsibility merely because he is a fool?'⁶⁹ As Svetlana Carsten has noted:

The younger critics applied such labels [to the 'shestidesiatniki'] as 'liberal dissidents' and 'Leninist romantics' or 'proponents of pure Marxism' because too often the term 'shestidesiatniki' evoked in the 1980s the image of someone who stood close to politics and came

once again, as back in the 1960s, to advocate a Leninist version of socialism.⁷⁰

The writer and critic Aleksandr Terekhov echoes this sentiment, stating that following the reforms of 'perestroika', the 'shestidesiatniki' reappeared to claim their role in society as the spiritual leaders of the nation, similar to their behaviour following the Twentieth Party Congress.⁷¹

The 'shestidesiatniki' have also been criticised for continuing the literary traditions of socialist realism, insofar as their stories generally have an explicit moral or message.

This calls to mind an observation made by Max Hayward, who noted in 1964:

Most of Soviet literature in both Stalin's time and after him would be meaningless purely in terms of aesthetic or general literary value, which has traditionally been secondary to the extra-literary functions 'which Soviet writers have had imposed on them or which they impose on themselves.'⁷²

The writer Varlam Shalamov, famous as a chronicler of the worst camps in Stalin's time, echoes the assessment of many critics of this didactic style of writing: 'Есть какая-то глущайшая неправда в том. Что человеческое страдание становится предметом искусства. Что живая кровь. Мука. Боль выступают в виде картины. стихотворения, романа. Это всегда фальшь, всегда. Никакой Ремарк не передаст боль и горе войны.'

Хуже всего то, что для художника записать – это значит отделаться от боли, ослабить боль – свою внутри, боль. И это тоже плохо.’⁷³

However, it may be impossible to expect the ‘shestidesiatniki’, who were trained as writers in a system that strictly enforced the didacticism of socialist realism, suddenly to eliminate utopian or sermonic elements from their writing. As Nadya Peterson has remarked specifically of elements of socialist realism in contemporary Russian literature: ‘It is premature...to proclaim that the traditional ways of Russian literature in the Soviet period are no longer operative; in order for that to happen a new generation of writers untainted by the Soviet experience would have to appear.’⁷⁴ Similarly, it is unfair to expect those born and raised under the terror of the Soviet regime not to be influenced by an environment characterised by terror, persecutions, and fear. It may be equally impossible then to expect the ‘shestidesiatniki’ to eliminate all elements of socialist realism and a sense of didacticism from their writing. Perhaps the ‘shestidesiatniki’ deserve more sympathy and understanding than the young critics give them. As Max Hayward has commented:

The majority of Soviet writers have acquitted themselves with honour in a situation which required more courage, patience, intelligence, and fortitude than could ever be imagined by people who live in more fortunate circumstances. One day it will perhaps be shown that not only in Russia, but the whole world is indebted to Soviet literature for keeping alive, in unimaginable conditions, that indefinable sense of freedom which is common to all men.’⁷⁵

After finishing her studies, Katerli performed scientific experiments and research at a secret scientific institute. Due to the top-secret nature of this work, and the fact that Katerli's father was Jewish, she had difficulty obtaining the position. As Mark Popovsky has noted of Jews in the Soviet science industry: 'As a Jew, he [or she], will find it hard to get a job at a research institute, even as a laboratory assistant.'⁷⁶ Katerli's husband phoned a friend and asked him to ignore the fact that Katerli's father was Jewish, and she got the job. Katerli has describes those years as ordinary and simple. Although she was a model worker and often had her portrait on the wall as 'Worker of the Month', she was quite dissatisfied with her job. She knew that she was not meant to be an engineer.

Работу химика я старалась выполнять добросовестно, считая, что быть плохим работником стыдно. Но, Боже, как это было тоскливо и неинтересно! Технические способности отсутствовали у меня абсолютно, я знала, что ошиблась в выборе профессии, что я никудышный инженер.⁷⁷

She became so unhappy with her job at one point that she decided to pursue a doctoral degree, but she quickly gave up the idea. Notwithstanding Katerli's dissatisfaction with her job, her career as a chemical engineer did influence her writing in significant ways. It enriched her understanding of the average Soviets ('sovki') who would eventually become the heroes and heroines of her prose.

BREZHNEV YEARS

Leonid Brezhnev rose to power in October 1964, and Khrushchev's thaw was replaced by a period that became known as stagnation ('zastoi')—a term denoting the unyielding conservatism of the protracted Brezhnev period.⁷⁸ The years 1964 to 1966 were relatively calm as Brezhnev was consolidating his power; but by 1966, Brezhnev had begun a tightening of governmental controls and a strengthening of censorship that formed part of a plan of 'discreetly rehabilitating the great dictator [Stalin].'⁷⁹ It was during this period, that, as Carl Proffer has remarked, liberal reforms were replaced with a 'neo-Stalinist isolationist position'.⁸⁰ In pursuing his aims, Brezhnev primarily relied upon Mikhail Suslov, Chief Party Ideologue, and Iurii Andropov, Chairman of the KGB. As Stephen Cohen states:

By the end of the 1960s, Stalin had been restored as an admirable leader. Serious criticism of his wartime leadership and of 'collectivisation was banned, rehabilitations were ended and some even undone, and intimations that there ever had been a real terror grew scant. People who criticized the Stalinist past...could now be prosecuted.⁸¹

Brezhnev himself did not have much interest in literature, but the literary freedom that intellectuals had experienced during the thaw had given rise to widespread dissident activity, and he felt compelled to crack down on this rebellion.⁸² A clear example of Brezhnev's conservative policies was the trial of Andrei Siniavskii and Iulii Daniel' in

February 1966, in which both writers were convicted of having published works abroad and were sentenced to seven and five years imprisonment, respectively. Siniavskii and Daniel' were among many writers and intellectuals who were persecuted in the late 1960s and 1970s. In 1969, Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn was expelled from the Writers' Union. One year later, Aleksandr Tvardovskii lost control of Novyi mir, which was, at that time, the last vehicle for liberal expression and dissent in the Soviet Union. In 1974, Andrei Sakharov won the Nobel Peace Prize, but was refused an exit visa to receive the award. Whereas, in the early 1960s, writers such as Evgenii Evtushenko, Andrei Voznesenskii, Vladimir Vysotskii, and Bulat Okudzhava had been able to publish their works in the Soviet Union, by the 1970s and 1980s, they could only publish abroad. These and other repressive policies compelled many writers and intellectuals to emigrate. In 1972, Joseph Brodskii emigrated; in 1974, Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn was exiled abroad and Viktor Nekrasov emigrated, and in 1980, Vladimir Voinovich was forced to emigrate. Katerli herself did not wish to emigrate, a theme, as will be discussed throughout the study, that figures prominently in her prose fiction.

By the mid 1960s, Katerli writes, she had lost her faith in and fear of the government, the Party and the KGB, and had already formed her own independent beliefs:

Тогда я уже знала – с кем я. И против кого – знала тоже.
Эйфория хрущевской оттепели кончилась, было ясно, что
тоталитаризм никуда не ушел вместе со Сталиным. Сталин
умер, но дело его живет... Теперь я гордо читала запрещенные

книги...прежде чем главным для меня стали не идеологические,
а нормальные, человечески ценности.⁸³

Katerli also began reading 'samizdat' and 'tamizdat' (published abroad) manuscripts.⁸⁴ Stephen Cohen has remarked that 'samizdat' 'sprang up to express the uncensored views not only of political dissidents but of a larger segment of the Soviet intelligentsia that had been emboldened, after Stalin's long reign of terror, by Khrushchev's reforms of 1953-1964, and then frustrated by the conservatism of Khrushchev's successors.'⁸⁵ It was actually at her workplace, pretending that she was reading top-secret materials, that Katerli read Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn's Gulag Arkhipelag (The Gulag Archipelago) (1973-5) and Lidiia Chukovskaia's Protsess iskliucheniia (The Process of Expulsion) (1979), as well as works by Andrei Siniavskii, Boris Pasternak, Osip Mandel'shtam, Anna Akhmatova, and Mikhail Zoshchenko.

THE WRITER EMERGES

Katerli became increasingly dissatisfied with her career. In the late 1960s, she began writing, mostly out of a need for self-affirmation and self-expression: 'Пусть я плохой инженер, зато я умею сочинять.'⁸⁶ She began by writing 'parables', as she calls them, in the 1960s, and informed only her closest family members and friends of her decision to write. Neither of her parents could share in this decision. Katerli's mother had been dead for over a decade, and her father had moved away. When asked in a 1994 interview why she waited until the late 1960s to begin writing, Katerli stated that it was not until she had

been released from the 'chains of slavery' that writing became possible. She has also commented:

Мне было уже за тридцать, и я от природы инфантильная, начинала взрослеть душой. До того я жила в основном эмоциями, теперь принялась размышлять, открывая для себя общеизвестные истины... мне хотелось говорить о своих открытиях, но произнесенные вслух они звучали банально, и тогда я начала писать притчи, где любая мысль может быть преподнесена так, что не выглядит скучным морализованием.⁸⁷

Because Katerli's stories departed from socialist realism, she initially found it difficult to publish her works. She showed some of her stories to Dmitrii Khrenkov, an editor and family friend. His response was:

Ну зачем тебе это? У тебя же есть хорошая специальность, ты инженер! А...это... Ну, может быть, и мило. Для того, чтобы почитать вслух дома... и почему это писательские дети вечно норовят... Нет, печатать это нельзя. И не буду. Между прочим, ради тебя!⁸⁸

Nevertheless, Katerli was undeterred and she was determined to write despite the warnings of Khrenov. However, another friend and fellow writer, David Dar, had a

different reaction to Katerli's writing, encouraging her to continue writing. Dar told Katerli: 'Печатать Вас, учтите, не будут. И не надо. И слава Богу. Тех, кто прилично пишет, не печатают. По крайней мере, здесь.'⁸⁹

Katerli claims to have been influenced by a number of authors, western and Russian: William Faulkner, John Cheever, Graham Greene, Lev Tolstoi, Fedor Dostoevskii, Marina Tsvetaeva, Boris Pasternak, Anna Akhmatova, Iakov Gordin, Bulat Okudzhava, and Daniil Granin. This influence, however, Katerli claims, has been on her life and personality, rather than on her writing style. Katerli states that the greatest influence on her writing has come from the writer Veniamin Kaverin. Kaverin, who had been a member of the Serapion Brotherhood, an independent literary grouping of the 1920s, believed in preserving a writer's creative freedom and individuality. Katerli has commented: 'Моим литературным учителем был Вениамин Карелин. Мы с ним дружили, и его моральная позиция в отношении литературы всегда является для меня примером.'⁹⁰ It was Kaverin's insistence that literature be treated as a profession, rather than a hobby, that Katerli admired. Taking Kaverin's words to heart and encouraged by her husband, Katerli left her job in 1976 to pursue a full-time writing career. Katerli recounts that many of her friends applauded her decision, but feared that she would be unable to support herself, but by this point in time she was devoted to her writing and, she claims, was unswayed by material concerns.

During the 1970s, Katerli renewed her commitment to Christianity, which, she states, has had the greatest influence on both her life and writing.⁹¹ In 1973, Katerli decided to be baptised. As a child, her mother, Elena Katerli had also been baptised in the Russian Orthodox Church, and in a certain sense, Katerli felt that she was continuing the family

tradition. After her baptism, Katerli did not begin attending church regularly, but life, she states, was much easier for her. She writes: 'Теперь уже никакая идеология не могла бы сбить меня с толку, никакая власть не сумела бы заставить отступить от вечных христианских заповедей.'⁹²

ANDROPOV/CHERNENKO PERIOD

In 1981, Brezhnev became ill, and that same year Iurii Andropov replaced Mikhail Suslov as Chief Ideologue, quickly establishing himself as the most influential member of the Politburo. One year later, in November 1982, Brezhnev died, and Andropov succeeded him as General Secretary of the Communist Party. However, a change in leadership brought no change in the government's cultural policies. Thus, the years of Iurii Andropov and his successor Konstantin Chernenko were dominated by a conservative approach to literature. Andropov imprisoned outspoken dissidents, sent them to psychiatric hospitals or forced them to emigrate. Criminal penalties were even established for reading dissident works.

Although Katerli began publishing regularly in 1976, she rose to prominence only in 1981 with the publication of her first collection of stories, Okno (The Window), which received positive reviews. It was also in 1981 that Katerli published her two underground works: 'Treugol'nik Barsikova' and 'Chervets', and that she decided to join the Union of Writers. The Writers' Union, as Geoffrey Hosking has noted: '[was] part of the writer's bloodstream and acceptance of the doctrine of socialist realism was not only a matter of security and a quiet life. It also offered certain definite, if meretricious, spiritual rewards of its own...The writer felt himself part of a society, a useful person.'⁹³

Due to the positive reception of her first book, Okno, Katerli believed that she would definitely be accepted into the Union, her only defect being the fact that her father was Jewish. Katerli was a bit sceptical at first about joining the Union, but she believed that membership in the Union ‘давало социальный статус – настоящим писателем считался только член Союза.’⁹⁴ Kaverin urged her to join, and wrote a letter of recommendation on her behalf. The process was long and arduous: the Union scrutinised every aspect of her life and literary career, attempting to ascertain a great deal of information—what her true thoughts about the government were, who her friends were, how and what she wrote, and her family background. Katerli was first scrutinised by the Leningrad Section of the Union of Writers and then by the National Board in Moscow.

During the summer of 1981, while Katerli awaited the decision from the Union of Writers, her story ‘Treugol’nik Barsikova’ appeared in the American literary journal Glagol, published by Ardis Publications. Katerli had no foreknowledge of the story’s publication. She found out in July of 1981, listening by chance to a ‘Voice of America’ broadcast: Through the fuzz and static, Katerli heard an excerpt from ‘Treugol’nik Barsikova’ being read. At that moment, Katerli realised that her life would never be the same. Friendships with certain official people would cease, and she could bid farewell to any hope of joining the Union of Writers.

The next morning, Katerli received a telephone call from the Union, advising her to go to the KGB office and state that the Ardis publication of her story had been against her wishes. She then received a telephone call from Kira Kulikova, an author who had just written an as yet unpublished article from the Leningrad journal Zvezda praising Katerli’s book Okno. Kulikova informed Katerli that after the ‘Voice of America’ broadcast, three

people with printed copies of the broadcast had come to warn her that a positive review of a book by an anti-Soviet writer would compromise the reputation of Zvezda. Kulikova's article on Katerli was never printed.

Katerli received other telephone calls from friends and family, congratulating her. The KGB itself phoned and requested that Katerli immediately go to its Leningrad headquarters for questioning, but she refused. The Union of Writers phoned again and said that she was officially invited to meet with the leadership of the Leningrad Writers' Union. The leadership suggested that she write a letter of protest to the newspaper, Literaturnaia gazeta, stating that the publication of 'Treugol'nik Barsikova' in America had been against her will. She refused, and was denied admission to the Union. After this incident, Katerli could not publish anywhere in Leningrad. Despite these obstacles, Katerli was undeterred, and with a sense of inner freedom, continued to write. Her story, 'Chervets', for example, was circulated in 'samizdat' in 1981.

An incident that figures prominently in 'Kto ia?' occurred one year later, in the summer of 1982. Katerli recounts that she received another telephone call from the KGB, requesting that she meet one of its officers. Believing the caller to be a friend and the call itself a practical joke, Katerli agreed to meet in the park just near her Leningrad home. Katerli remarks that when she realised that the officer was not a friend, and that the meeting was not a joke, she was not frightened, only curious. The officer questioned Katerli first about her story 'Treugol'nik Barsukova'. She quickly realised that he had not wanted to meet with her to discuss this story but rather her 'samizdat' story—'Chervets'. Somehow the manuscript had been given to a woman named Inga, and had fallen into the hands of the KGB. The officer asked Katerli if she knew this woman.

Katerli was aware of who the woman was, but had no idea that she had obtained a copy of the manuscript. One of Katerli's friends must have carelessly given the manuscript to Inga. Not wanting to implicate her friends, or to appear absent-minded, Katerli lied and said that she had herself given the manuscript to Inga.

The officer then referred to the story as 'klubnichka', a Russian slang word usually denoting pornographic material. Katerli could not understand what the officer meant. The story was about a science research laboratory; there was nothing pornographic in the work. What the officer had meant was that both the work and Katerli were anti-Soviet, and he threatened Katerli with a court trial to determine whether she was anti-Soviet or not. He then softened his approach, saying that the KGB only wanted to help guide writers in the right direction, lest they unknowingly go down a path that could lead to imprisonment.

Katerli writes that she was not afraid. She believed that he was bluffing, trying to break her spirit. When the agent saw that his tactics were not working, he tried flattery, stating that the KGB recognised her talent, as did the entire world. When that did not work, he said that of course the Union of Writers would want nothing to do with her, if they discovered that the KGB was interested in her. She told him that she would inform the Union herself about their meeting. He could see that he was getting nowhere with her, and finally asked, out of curiosity, how she felt when she learned that the KGB was interested in her. 'любопытство' was her answer.⁹⁵ He looked disappointed, and Katerli asked if he had wanted her to say that she had been afraid. He answered: 'Ну... а как же тогда работать, если не будут бояться?'⁹⁶ She writes that she was the victor in this battle.

Katerli's retelling of this incident, with its use of terms like 'victor' and 'battle', is highly dramatic. Whatever embellishment there may have been, it is a fact that following this informal meeting with the KGB, Katerli was unable to publish. She was not given any angry or harsh responses; her submissions were simply set aside. Finally, at the end of 1983, Kaverin wrote a letter to the Secretariat of the Union of Writers, requesting them to reconsider her application, and she was accepted.

THE GORBACHEV AND YELTSIN YEARS

The biggest change in Katerli's personal career was precipitated by events on the national level. Mikhail Gorbachev rose to power in 1985, and realised that, in order to achieve his goals, he would need the assistance of writers and other intellectuals.⁹⁷ The first stage of 'glasnost' took place in the years 1984-1987, when Aleksandr Yakovlev, Gorbachev's ideological advisor, initiated the publication of works by several previously banned and controversial authors, such as Andrei Bitov, Iurii Trifonov, Vasilii Shukshin, Viktor Astaf'ev, Vladimir Makanin, Anatolii Pristavkin, Franz Kafka and George Orwell. Soon works appeared by deceased Russian writers who had written in the period of Russian Modernism in the 1920s. These writers included Anna Akhmatova, Nikolai Gumilev, Osip Mandel'shtam, Evgenii Zamiatin, Boris Pasternak, Boris Pil'niak, and Andrei Platonov. In addition, works appeared that had been written by contemporary and recently deceased writers, who were known to have experienced various kinds of censorship, such as Lidiia Chukovskaia, Iulii Daniel', Vladimir Dudintsev, Vasilii Grossman, Fazil Iskander, Vladimir Voinovich, Andrei Siniavskii, Vladimir Maksimov, and Vasilii Aksenov.

In the mid- to-late 1980s, Katerli became more involved in the political sphere. Like many of her generation, she embraced the newly found freedom offered by the Gorbachev reforms of 'perestroika' and 'glasnost'. She attended meetings of 'Klub perestroiki' ('The "Perestroika" Club'), and participated in the political process, from which she and her contemporaries had been excluded for their entire lives. Katerli writes: 'Мы всегда в той или иной степени были подпольными людьми...с началом перестройки появилась восхитительная возможность громко говорить правду...'⁹⁸ In 1989, Gorbachev created a two-tiered parliament of the Congress of People's Deputies, and Katerli was nominated as a candidate for the lower house. She states that she had only agreed to run because she was promised that she would not make it to the final round. Although the democrats were behind her, the local Party committee politely requested that she not run, wishing for another person to run—ostensibly a local dairy-maid. Katerli refused. Ironically, neither she nor the dairy-maid received enough votes to be elected.

After Katerli's brief experience in the political arena, she decided to become politically involved in other ways, namely by writing political articles. One of these articles resulted in a very long and arduous court trial. In 1988, the journal Leningradskaia pravda asked Katerli to write an article about the nationalist group 'Pamiat' (Memory). She was not very interested in writing the article, but her husband encouraged her. On 9 October 1988, Katerli published the article 'Doroga k pamiatnikam' ('The Road to Monuments'), in which she accused Aleksandr Romanenko's book, O klassovoi sushchnosti sionizma (About the Class Essence of Zionism), published in 1987, of containing Nazi ideology.⁹⁹ Romanenko immediately

filed suit for libel, and thus began a two-year-long court trial, which ended with Romanenko dropping the charges. There were nasty proceedings that at times became dangerous for Katerli. She received threatening letters and telephone calls and had obscenities and threats shouted at her in public. She relates that she even considered emigrating. She ultimately decided that she could never leave her homeland as it would kill her spiritually to leave her country and her people.

During the course of the trial, experts were called in to define 'anti-Semitic' and 'Nazi ideology'. After they supported Katerli's use of such terms in reference to the ideological nature of Romanenko's books, he had no hope of winning his case, and withdrew his accusations. The next year, Katerli wrote a 333-page book *Isk (The Suit)*, in which she elaborated upon her anti-fascist and anti-Nazi views and detailed the entire trial process. Subsequent to the trial, Katerli has had no further contact or problems with Romanenko.¹⁰⁰

Although the most celebrated political event of Katerli's life revolves around anti-Semitism, she ascribes her convictions to general, humanistic sentiments, advocating individual freedom regardless of race, gender, religion, or belief. Katerli contends in 'Kto ia?', for example, that she fights against anti-Semitism 'не как еврейка, а как русская, выступающая в защиту прав евреев и не только, любых людей, чьи гражданские и человеческие права попираются, чье национальное достоинство уничтожено.'¹⁰¹

She equates xenophobia with spiritual sickness, and opposes all political groups that advocate such ideals. For Katerli, this sickness has taken the form of fascism and nationalism in contemporary Russia, and she writes political articles in order to warn her fellow citizens of these dangerous ideologies. She has commented:

Существует столько видов фашизма, что мы до конца не знаем – что есть фашизм. Сегодня люди думают только о своих насущных проблемах, о том, чего они хотят. Они совсем забыли о войне [Вторая Мировая Война] и Гитлере.¹⁰²

In addition, in 1993, Katerli, along with several other political activists, began publishing an anti-fascist magazine called Bar'er (Challenge), but due to lack of funds, they have ceased publication.

From 1988 to 1993, Katerli occupied herself mostly with political activity and political writings, and almost abandoned her fiction writing.¹⁰³ The political situation was in a state of chaos and turmoil, and she states that she could not sit and passively watch the constant turn of events. Her only hope was that she could return to prose fiction writing when the situation in Russia became more stable. In 1993, believing that the political situation had sufficiently stabilised, Katerli once more began regularly writing and publishing prose. In a 1995 interview, she stated that she never again wanted completely to abandon prose writing.

Prior to 'perestroika', the greatest obstacle faced by Soviet writers was the censorship exercised through the government organ Glavlit. In the late 1980s, however, the State lost control of literature and literary organisations. The elimination of state censorship and the establishment of a new era of literary pluralism were made official through the Law on the Press, of August 1990, which granted all journals the right to register as independent organs. It was hardly surprising in this new atmosphere that many literary

journals chose instantly to reject the patronage of official writers and other related organisations, whose chief aim had been to defend mediocre writers against change. However, the ramifications of the journals' opting out from the long established bureaucratic system were complex to say the least. The most unpleasant and destructive battle was fought between Vladimir Karpov, the First Secretary of the USSR Writers' Union and Fedor Burlatskii, the Chief Editor of Literaturnaia gazeta, over the right of ownership and control of the paper.

The thick monthly journals, such as Novyi mir, Znamia, and Druzhba narodov, which had enjoyed an increase in print-run immediately after the rise of Gorbachev, began to experience financial problems. Without state support, these journals could not afford paper, and the malfunctioning postal system impeded delivery. The dilemma concerning the thick monthly journals presented significant difficulties for the future of Soviet and Russian literature, as well as for the future of intellectual debate and discourse, as the journals had historically provided a means for literary and socio-political expression, unless, of course, the government disapproved. As Ytsak Brudny states:

In Russia and the Soviet Union the 'thick journals' were and are (a) well-recognized means of shaping public opinion, (b) accepted arenas of permitted socio-political debate, and (c) important institutional bases of informal groups of politically like-minded members of the intellectual elite, usually headed by its leading representative.¹⁰⁴

Alec Nove has also noted:

Periodicals are...vitaly important as organs of opinion, expressing (whenever it is allowed) the ideas of various intellectual stratae. Also, it has been the case for many decades that they have devoted space to challenging ideas on history, economics, the village, sociology, and politics, which did not find a welcome in the specialist professional journals.¹⁰⁵

New journals such as Aprél (April), Vest (News), and Zerkala (Mirrors) sprang up in order to fill the void created by the decline of the older journals. This in turn encouraged the creation of a parallel press in the form of such journals as Chasy (Clock), Predlog (Pretext), 'Glasnost', and Referendum.¹⁰⁶ Subject to the demands of a market economy, writers had to be sensitive to the tastes and interests of a mass, rather than an intellectual, readership. These tastes and interests often ran to non-'literary' subject matter that had previously been banned: pornography, astrology, and detective fiction.

As a result of the numerous political and cultural changes, several Russian authors discovered that their new freedom limited, rather than liberated, their creativity. Viktor Erofeev writes: 'At the end of the 1980s...Soviet literature...met with a violent death.'¹⁰⁷ Similarly, Rosalind Marsh has noted: 'Writers and critics began to imply that 'glasnost' had not helped Soviet literature, but, paradoxically had helped to destroy it.'¹⁰⁸ Faced with such problems, many writers, such as Tat'iana Tolstaia experienced a crisis of creativity, and found themselves unable to write. Katerli, however, has apparently not

experienced such a crisis. Without completely transforming her writing style, she has, as will be discussed further in Chapter Six, somewhat adapted her contemporary prose fiction by incorporating such current subject matters and themes as AIDS and foreign travel.

Another problem faced by writers was increased dissension within literary organisations. Many liberal writers grew restless with the Union's refusal to change. In 1988, the Union still regarded socialist realism as an integral component of Soviet literary theory. Frustrated, in March 1989, a group of writers, including Ales' Adamovich, Bulat Okudzhava, Anatolii Rybakov, Vladimir Dudintsev, and Anatolii Pristavkin, formed 'Aprel', a pro-'perestroika' writers' organisation.¹⁰⁹ The same year, the Federation of Women Writers was created as a separate division within the USSR Writers' Union, a division which Katerli herself did not join. The Leningrad branch of the Writers' Union finally split up at the end of 1989, when a tiny minority of extreme reactionaries left the Union in disgust, claiming that the branch had been overrun by Jews. In reaction to the politicisation of literature, in June 1990, a group of writers established an apolitical association of writers that included such authors as Viktor Astaf'ev, Viktoriia Tokareva, and Anatolii Kim. By December 1991, there were two national writers' unions, and three local unions each for St. Petersburg and Moscow. After the formal dissolution of the USSR in December 1991, yet another organisation was formed. The founding conference of the new Commonwealth of Writers' Unions was held on 10-11 January 1992.¹¹⁰

By the end of 1991, the Soviet Union was gone, Boris Yeltsin was in power, and the writers' community was completely fragmented. Russian literature had become an eclectic mix of alternative prose, coarse prose, and New Women's Prose, to name a few

of the numerous literary styles and movements.¹¹¹ Robert Porter has defined Russian literature of the 1990s as ‘literary pluralism—a juxtaposition not just of genres and philosophies, but of high-, middle-, low-brow, not to say, trashy literature.’¹¹² Although, as stated above, Katerli incorporates some contemporary subject matter into her current prose, she has, as will be discussed in Chapter Six, stayed away from ‘popular’ graphic themes, such as violence, and murder. Katerli’s themes and preoccupations remain the same throughout her various writing periods—namely the ‘sovok’ and his or her various concerns.

CONCLUSION

An overview of Nina Katerli’s life presents in miniature a sweep of much of Soviet history. On the intellectual front, there is movement from extreme censorship to freedom; on the political front, from brutal dictatorship to indifferent anarchy. For the purposes of this study, of course, these grand movements—deserving of study in their own right—serve as a backdrop to the simpler questions posed by this chapter: What can we learn from Nina Katerli’s autobiographies and her recounting of her life, and what can it teach us about her prose fiction?

The fact that Katerli has written three autobiographies suggests at the least an interest in or fascination with her own identity and development. As the psychologist Jacques Lacan has stated: ‘The human being has a special relation with his own image—a relation of gap—of alienating tension.’¹¹³ A similar opinion has been expressed by Sigmund Freud:

Another procedure...regards reality as the sole enemy and as the source of all suffering with which it is impossible to live, so that one must break off all relations with it if one is to be in any way happy...one can try to re-create the world, to build up in its stead another world in which its most unbearable features are eliminated and replaced by others that are in conformity with one's own wishes.¹¹⁴

Nina Katerli's search for identity and meaning, as will be seen in the following chapters, parallels her characters' search for meaning in a chaotic and confusing world.

Katerli's autobiographies recount her story in her own voice. Thus, in addition to analysing the texts of the autobiographies themselves, it is important to discuss the way in which Katerli chooses to retell her life story. For instance, it is interesting to note the absence, as well as the presence, of certain items in Katerli's autobiographies. Nina Katerli never criticises her mother for the fact that she was a member of the Communist Party and a participant in a system that persecuted and killed millions of people. The absence of any criticism of her mother may be related to the fact that Katerli herself was a product of and participant in that system, and criticising her mother would be, in a sense, criticising and judging herself. Her stated inability to cry at Stalin's death and her recounting of her confrontation with the KGB officer in 1982 might similarly be seen as an effort to portray herself as an opponent of the system, and a dissident, and may be a subconscious attempt at repentance for having belonged to—and supported—a system that she now rejects wholeheartedly.

Another notable omission is Katerli's failure to discuss her relationship with her father. This omission suggests a strained relationship that may be reflected in the prevalence of the father-daughter conflict in many of her stories. In fact, Katerli's autobiographies only identify one significant male influence in her life, Veniamin Kaverin. At the same time, the majority of Katerli's narrators are male and many of her stories revolve around male characters. This is unusual for Soviet and Russian women authors. The predominance of male protagonists in her prose fiction, taken together with Katerli's eschewing of the feminist label, indicates that issues of gender and gender conflict may play a larger role both in her life and her stories than might appear solely from a reading of her autobiographies.

The fact that Katerli refuses to be labeled a feminist is consistent with her general rejection of categorisation and classification. Like Aleksandr Galich, whose original surname is Ginzburg, Katerli does not consider herself Jewish.¹¹⁵ Furthermore, she claims that she currently struggles against anti-Semitism, as stated earlier, 'не как еврейка, а как русская, выступающая в защиту евреев.'¹¹⁶ Despite Nina Katerli's refusal to label herself a Jew, the issue of anti-Semitism is very significant and important to her, as is seen in her current political struggles against neo-fascism and anti-Semitism, as well as the presence of numerous Jewish characters, and the themes of anti-Semitism and emigration in her works. Anti-Semitism is of course only one example of a phenomenon that runs through Nina Katerli's life and times: the fact that classification may be not only unwelcome but lethal. The persecution and liquidation of classes of people—bourgeoisie, anti-Soviet elements, cosmopolitans—was a reality hammered into

Nina Katerli from the age of three when her childhood rhyme could have resulted in her family's arrest and execution.

As will be discussed in subsequent chapters, the unremitting changes in the Soviet political and social climate have affected Katerli's personal and artistic development. Katerli declares that she has assumed several roles throughout her life: the child who was a devout Communist, the rebellious student, the mother, the wife, the writer, and the political activist. She states, however, that these changing roles have ceased, and that she is finally at a state of self-knowledge and self-awareness. She has commented: 'Говорят, что с возрастом человек становится хуже. Я не согласна – он просто становится самим собой, без манер.'¹¹⁷ At the same time, however, Katerli believes that she is still evolving. She concludes 'Kto ia?' with the rhetorical question: 'Но где гарантия, что и это – не очередная роль?'¹¹⁸

It is upon this issue of change, and human beings' response to it, that Katerli's autobiographies and prose fiction fuse into a single body of work. Existing within a constantly changing literary and political environment, she has become a stylistic chameleon, assuming, adapting and mixing various writing styles. As subsequent chapters will show, this preoccupation with classification, evolution, self-transformation, and discovery finds expression in the issues and themes of anti-Semitism, images of men and women, relationships between fathers and daughters, and the universal themes of morality, personal integrity, love and family.

Notes

¹ Nina Katerli, personal interview, 1996.

² There were, of course, many Soviet and Russian women who were both writers and political activists, such as Anna Akhmatova, Lidiia Chukovskaia, Natal'ia Gorbanevskaja, and Irina Ratushinskaia, to name a few. However, there are very few contemporary Russian women writers, except for perhaps Tat'iana Tolstaia, who have either become politically prominent or have written non-fiction works dealing with current social or political issues.

³ In addition to Katerli's three autobiographies, I will include in this chapter information gleaned from four personal interviews conducted with Nina Katerli between 1993 and 1996.

⁴ Victor Terras states that the first Russian autobiographical work dates back to the twelfth century. See Victor Terras's discussion of autobiography in The Handbook of Russian Literature, ed. by Victor Terras (New Haven and London, 1985), pp.27-29. Other Russian and Soviet autobiographies include: Nadezhda Durova, Kavalerist—devitsa. Proisshestvie v Rossii (The Cavalry Maiden: It Happened in Russia) (1836); Afanasii Fet, Rannie gody moei zhizni (The Early Years of My Life) (1893); Vladimir Nabokov, Speak, Memory: a Memoir (1951); and Lidiia Chukovskaia, Pamiati detstva (To the Memory of Childhood) (1983).

⁵ For the purposes of this study, I will be referring to the unpublished manuscript of 'Kto ia?' given to me by Katerli in 1993, rather than the text published in 1995.

⁶ Several women writers have published their autobiographies and memoirs in the post-Stalin period. Some of these include: Nina Berberova's Kursiv moi (The Italics are Mine) (1972); 'Evgeniia Ginzburg's Krutoi marshrut, vol.1 (Into the Whirlwind) (1967) and vol.2 (Within the Whirlwind) (1979); Nadezhda Mandel'shtam's Vospominaniia (Hope Against Hope) (1970) and Vtoraia kniga (Hope Abandoned) (1972); Lidiia Chukovskaia's Pamiati detstva (To the Memory of Childhood) (1983); and Irina Ratushinskaia's Seryi—tsvet nadezhdy (Grey is the Colour of Hope). These autobiographies, like many written in the post-Stalin period, were first published in the West and subsequently in Russia during the 'glasnost' era.

⁷ Beth Holmgren, 'For the Good Cause: Russian Women's Autobiography in the Twentieth Century', in Women Writers in Russian Literature, ed. by Toby W. Clyman and Diana Greene (Westport, CT and London, 1994), p.127.

⁸ Barbara Heldt, Terrible Perfection: Women and Russian Literature, (Bloomington, 1987), p.7.

⁹ Barbara Heldt has compared the different concepts of self in the autobiographical writings of Evgeniia Ginzburg and Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn, and characterised Ginzburg's portrayal of herself as a 'real Russian heroine who has no extremes of anger or self-pity', in contrast to Solzhenitsyn's expression of 'ultimate male autobiographical certainty'. See Barbara Heldt, Terrible Perfection, p.153.

¹⁰ Catriona Kelly, A History of Russian Women's Writing, 1982-1992 (Oxford, 1994), p.369.

-
- ¹¹ Beth Holmgren, 'For the Good Cause: Russian Women's Autobiography in the 20th Century', p.140.
- ¹² Barbara Heldt, Terrible Perfection, p.120.
- ¹³ Nina Katerli, personal interview, 1995.
- ¹⁴ Jane Gary Harris, 'Autobiographical Theory and Praxis', in Autobiographical Statements in Twentieth-Century Russian Literature, ed. by Jane Gary Harris (Princeton, 1990), p.5.
- ¹⁵ Shari Benstock, 'Authorizing the Autobiographical', in The Private Self: Theory and Practice of Women's Autobiographical Writings, ed. by Shari Benstock (Chapel Hill, 1988), p.11.
- ¹⁶ Dorrit Cohn, Transparent Minds—Narrative Modes For Presenting Consciousness in Fiction (Princeton, 1978), p.181.
- ¹⁷ For further discussion of autobiographies, see: George Gusdorf, 'Conditions and Limits of Autobiography', in Autobiography: Essays Theoretical and Critical, ed. and trans. by James Olney (Princeton, 1980), pp.28-48; and Jane Gary Harris, ed., Autobiographical Statements in Twentieth-Century Russian Literature.
- ¹⁸ Sarah Pratt, 'Angels in the Stalinist House: Nadezhda Mandel'stam, Lidiia Chukovskaia, Lidiia Ginzburg, and Russian Women's Autobiography', Engendering Slavic Literatures, ed. by Pamela Chester. and Sibelan Forrester (Bloomington, 1996), p.158.
- ¹⁹ See Barbara Heldt's discussion of mother-daughter relationships in Terrible Perfection, pp.77-86. An exception to this is, of course, Lidiia Chukovskaia's Pamiati detstva (1983), in which she attributes the greatest influence on her life to her father, the writer Kornei Chukovskii.
- ²⁰ Susan Stanford Friedman, 'Women's Autobiographical Selves: Theory and Practice', in The Private Self: Theory and Practice of Women's Autobiographical Writings, ed. by Shari Benstock, p.36.
- ²¹ Barbara Heldt, Terrible Perfection, p.77. Julia Kristeva argues that the maternal relationship challenges the patriarchal and phallogocentric paternal domination. Thus, perhaps it is the female child's search for identity and self, that causes her to cling to the maternal, in contrast to the paternal, relationship. See Ann Rosalind Jones' discussion of Julia Kristeva in 'Inscribing Femininity: French Theories of the Feminine', in Making a Difference: Feminist Literary Criticism (London and New York, 1986), pp.85-7.
- ²² Despite the apparently Jewish name of Iosif, Nina Katerli's grandfather, she claims, was not Jewish.
- ²³ Nina Katerli, 'Kto ia?', p.8.
- ²⁴ Nina Katerli, personal interview, 1996.
- ²⁵ Many of Elena Katerli's works treat typical socialist realist themes of dutiful labour and working toward a Communist utopia. For example, see Elena Katerli Bronzovaia prialka (1950) and Dal'niaia doroga (1954).
- ²⁶ All Soviet passports indicated the person's nationality. Being Jewish was considered a nationality, rather than an ethnic or religious affiliation.
- ²⁷ Nina Katerli, 'Kto ia?', p.39.

-
- ²⁸ For further reading on the Leningrad Affair, see Alec Nove, Glasnost' in Action: Cultural Renaissance in Russia (Boston, 1989) and Robert Conquest, The Great Terror: Stalin's Purge of the Thirties (London, 1968).
- ²⁹ For a recent evaluation of the Leningrad Affair, see Moskovskaia Pravda, 18 February 1994, p.5.
- ³⁰ Pamela Chester, 'The Landscape of Recollection: Tolstoy's Childhood and the Feminization of the Countryside', in Engendering Slavic Literatures, p.161.
- ³¹ Nina Katerli, 'Kto ia?', p.3
- ³² Nina Katerli, 'Kto ia?', p.3.
- ³³ Nina Katerli, 'Kto ia?', p.1.
- ³⁴ Katerli's childhood fears bring to mind the statement made by the dissident Irina Kakhovskaia of her experience in a prison camp: 'I have seen lots of prisons in my long experience, but I never came across cells like these before or since, or experienced such horrendous prison conditions. Here everything was aimed at breaking prisoners' spirits immediately, intimidating and stupefying them, making them feel that, they were no longer human, but "enemies of the people", against whom everything was possible.' See Irina Kakhovskaia, 'Our Fate', in An End to Silence: Uncensored Opinion in the Soviet Union, ed. and with introductions by Stephen F. Cohen, trans. by Vera Dunham (New York and London, 1982), p.82.
- ³⁵ Nina Katerli, 'Kto ia?', p.1.
- ³⁶ Nina Katerli, 'Kto ia?', p.1.
- ³⁷ Nina Katerli, personal interview, 1996.
- ³⁸ Nina Katerli, 'Kto ia?' p.13.
- ³⁹ Nina Katerli, 'Odin iz variantov', Mansarda, no.1, 1996, p.10.
- ⁴⁰ Mark Popovsky, Manipulated Science: the Crisis of Science and Scientists in the Soviet Union Today, trans. by Paul S. Falla (London, 1980), p.136.
- ⁴¹ For further reading on the Doctors' Plot see Richard Sakwa, Russian Politics and Society, second edition (London and New York, 1996) and M. McCauley, The Soviet Union since 1917 (London and New York, 1981).
- ⁴² Nina Katerli, 'Kto ia', p.4
- ⁴³ Nina Katerli, 'Kto ia?', p.6.
- ⁴⁴ Nina Katerli, 'Kto ia?', p.10.
- ⁴⁵ George Gibian writes of the years 1946-53: 'All literary independence and originality disappeared.' See George Gibian, Interval of Freedom: Soviet Literature during the Thaw, 1954-1957 (Minneapolis, 1960), p.6. For further reading on literature in the Khrushchev years, see also Ronald Hingley, Russian Writers and Soviet Society 1917-78 (New York, 1988) and Max Hayward Leopold Labeledz, eds., Literature and Revolution in Soviet Russia 1917-62 (London, 1963).
- ⁴⁶ Part II of Ehrenburg's novel appeared in 1956.
- ⁴⁷ For further reading on the Thaw, see S. Bialer, Stalin's Successors (London, 1980) and Giuseppe Boffa, Inside the Khrushchev Era (New York, 1959).
- ⁴⁸ Alec Nove, Glasnost' in Action: Cultural Renaissance in Russia, p.11
- ⁴⁹ Ronald Hingley, Russian Writers and Soviet Society 1917-78, pp.46-7.

⁵⁰ Svetlana Carsten, 'The Generation of the 1960s in Soviet Literature', *Slavonica*, vol.2, no.1, 1995-6, p.59. The article referred to is: Stanislav Rassadin, 'Shestidesiatniki: knigi o molodom sovremennike', *Iunost'*, 1960, no.12, pp.58-62.

⁵¹ Svetlana Carsten has commented: 'Even in the 1990s the precise definition of the 'shestidesiatniki' was still being debated.' See Svetlana Carsten, 'Divided Loyalties: the Generation of the 1960s in Soviet Literature', Ph.D. dissertation (University of Bradford, 1998), p.7

⁵² Svetlana Carsten, 'In the Shadow of a Prominent Partner: Educated Women in Literature: Literature on the Shestidesiatniki', in *Women in Russian Culture: Projections and Self-Perceptions*, ed. by Rosalind Marsh (Oxford, 1998), p.263. According to this definition, Katerli would not be considered a typical 'shestidesiatnik', since she did not begin writing until the 1970s, but it was the Khrushchev period that was formative in her psychological and artistic development.

⁵³ Hedrick Smith, *The New Russians* (New York, 1990), p.20.

⁵⁴ Hedrick Smith, *The New Russians*, p.20.

⁵⁵ Lev Anninskii, 'Shestidesiatniki, semidesiatniki, vos'midesiatniki...k dialektike pokolenii v russkoi kul'ture', *Literaturnoe obozrenie*, vol.4, 1991, p.11.

⁵⁶ N.N. Shneidman, *Russian Literature 1988-1994: The End of an Era* (Toronto and Buffalo, 1995), p.48.

⁵⁷ Nina Katerli, personal interview, 1996.

⁵⁸ Svetlana Carsten, 'Divided Loyalties: the Generation of the 1960s in Soviet Literature', p.22.

⁵⁹ Nina Katerli, 'Sovok—moi geroi i moi chitatel'' (unpublished paper for 'Women in Russia and the Former USSR' Conference, University of Bath, March-April, 1993), p.3.

⁶⁰ Nina Katerli, 'Kto ia?', p.10.

⁶¹ Liudmilla Alexeyeva and Paul Goldberg, *The Thaw Generation—Coming of Age in the Post-Stalin Era* (Boston, Toronto, and London, 1990), p.4.

⁶² Max Hayward, *Writers in Russia, 1917-1978*, ed. by Patricia Blake (London, 1983), pp.269-70.

⁶³ Stephen Lovell and Rosalind Marsh, 'Culture and Crisis: The Intelligentsia and Literature after 1953', in *Oxford Cultural Studies: An Introduction*, ed. by C. Kelly and D. Shepherd (Oxford, 1998), p.59.

⁶⁴ Nina Katerli, personal interview, 1998.

⁶⁵ Svetlana Carsten has noted: 'The 'shestidesiatniki' are not a homogeneous group as some young critics imply by treating them all in the same way, and it is only natural that the ideological development of individuals within this group was uneven.' See Svetlana Carsten, 'Divided Loyalties: the Generation of the 1960s in Soviet Literature', pp.18-19.

⁶⁶ Roy Medvedev, *On Soviet Dissidents—Interviews with Pierro Ostellino*, trans. by William A. Packer, ed. by George Sanders (New York, 1980), p.1.

⁶⁷ Ronald Hingley, *Russian Writers and Soviet Society 1917-78*, p.237.

⁶⁸ Nina Katerli, personal interview, 1998.

⁶⁹ Milan Kundera, *The Unbearable Lightness of Being*, trans. by Michael Henry Heim (London and Boston, 1984), pp.170-71.

⁷⁰ Svetlana Carsten, 'Divided Loyalties: the Generation of the 1960s in Soviet Literature', p.2.

⁷¹ Aleksandr Terekhov, 'My vpitaem vsiu pyl', Literaturnaia gazeta, vol.24, 1990, p.4.

⁷² Max Hayward and Edward L. Crowley, Soviet Literature in the Sixties (New York, 1964), p.203.

⁷³ Varlam Shalamov, 'Novaia proza', Novyi mir, vol.12, 1989, p.3. See also Varlam Shalamov, Kolymskie rasskazy (London, 1978).

⁷⁴ Nadya Peterson, Subversive Imaginations: Fantastic Prose and the End of Soviet Literature, 1970s-1990s (Boulder, Colorado, 1997), p.1.

⁷⁵ Max Hayward, Writers in Russia, 1917-1978, ed. by Patricia Blake (London, 1983), p. 117.

⁷⁶ Mark Popovsky, Manipulated Science: the Crisis of Science and Scientists in the Soviet Union Today, p.137. Similarly, William Korey has written: 'A secret 1970 Party directive—as reported by Roy Medvedev—recommended that Jews not be employed at "responsible levels" at various advanced scientific and security institutions. The directive even applied to those who were listed as Russian in their internal passport or other documents, but whose father or mother had been Jewish.' See William Korey, Russian Antisemitism [sic], Pamyat, and the Demonology of Zionism, Studies in Anti-Semitism, vol.2, Published for the Vidal Sassoon International Center for the Study of Anti-Semitism (SICSA) (Jerusalem, 1995), p.118.

⁷⁷ Nina Katerli, 'Kto ia?', p.14.

⁷⁸ For further reading on the Brezhnev period, see G. Breslauer, Khrushchev and Brezhnev as Leaders (London, 1982).

⁷⁹ Ronald Hingley, Russian Writers and Soviet Society, 1917-1978, p.49.

⁸⁰ Carl Proffer and Ellendea Proffer, eds., The Barsukov Triangle, the Two-Toned Blond and Other Stories (Ann Arbor, 1984), p.ix.

⁸¹ Stephen Cohen, ed. and with introductions, An End to Silence: Uncensored Opinion in the Soviet Union, trans. by Vera Dunham, p.44.

⁸² Brezhnev's crackdown on intellectuals coincided with the 1968 invasion of Czechoslovakia, an event that some Soviet intellectuals protested against in Red Square.

⁸³ Nina Katerli, 'Kto ia?', pp.12-13.

⁸⁴ Mark Slonim has noted: 'Samizdat activities reached their summit between 1955-1965.' See Mark Slonim, The Epic of Russian Literature: From Its Origins Through Tolstoy (New York, 1964), p.376.

⁸⁵ Stephen Cohen, An End to Silence: Uncensored Opinion in the Soviet Union, p.7

⁸⁶ Nina Katerli, 'Kto ia?', p.13.

⁸⁷ Nina Katerli, 'Kto ia?', p.13.

⁸⁸ Nina Katerli, 'Odin iz variantov', p.13.

⁸⁹ Nina Katerli, 'Odin iz variantov', p.813

⁹⁰ Nina Katerli, personal interview, 1993.

⁹¹ Nina Katerli, 'Author's Questionnaire' (unpublished questionnaire for 'Voices of Russian Women' tour of Southern England, February-March, 1993), p.1

⁹² Nina Katerli, 'Kto ia?', p.16.

- ⁹³ Geoffrey Hosking, Beyond Socialist Realism: Soviet Fiction since Ivan Denisovich (London, 1980), p.8.
- ⁹⁴ Nina Katerli, 'Kto ia?', p.18.
- ⁹⁵ Nina Katerli, 'Kto ia', p.25.
- ⁹⁶ Nina Katerli, 'Kto ia', p.25.
- ⁹⁷ See John and Carol Garrard, Inside the Soviet Writers' Union (New York and London, 1990), p.195. For further reading on the Gorbachev period, see R.W. Davies, Soviet History in the Gorbachev Revolution (Basingstoke, 1989) and Moshe Lewin, The Gorbachev Phenomenon—A Historical Interpretation (Berkeley, 1988).
- ⁹⁸ Nina Katerli, 'Kto ia?' p.35.
- ⁹⁹ For further discussion of this incident, see Chapter Five.
- ¹⁰⁰ Isk was published in 1998. For further discussion of Isk, see Chapter Five.
- ¹⁰¹ Nina Katerli, 'Kto ia?', p.38.
- ¹⁰² Nina Katerli, personal interview, 1994.
- ¹⁰³ Katerli's three other collections of books were published after 'perestroika': Tsvetnye otkrytki (Coloured Postcards) (1986), Kurzal (1990), and Sennaia Ploshchad' (Haymarket Square) (1992).
- ¹⁰⁴ Ytsak Brudny, 'The Heralds of Opposition to Perestroika', in Milestones in Glasnost' and Perestroika: Politics and People, ed. by A. Hewett and Victor H. Winston (Washington D.C., 1991), p.154.
- ¹⁰⁵ Alec Nove, Glasnost' in Action: Cultural Renaissance in Russia, p.ix.
- ¹⁰⁶ See Julian Graffy and Geoffrey A. Hosking, eds, Culture and the Media in the USSR Today (London, 1989), p.197.
- ¹⁰⁷ Viktor Erofeev, 'Pominki po sovetskoi literature', Aprel', vol.2, 1990, p.274.
- ¹⁰⁸ Rosalind Marsh, 'The Death of Soviet Literature: Can Russian Literature Survive?', Europe-Asia Studies, vol.45, no.1, 1993, p.120.
- ¹⁰⁹ On 18 January 1990, 'Pamiat'' disrupted an 'Aprel'' meeting, and injured several 'Aprel'' members. The police at first ignored the incident, but finally the perpetrators were brought to justice.
- ¹¹⁰ In the late Gorbachev period, there were, of course, periods when state bodies attempted to assert some level of control over the media. On 5 February 1991, Soviet television was once again subjected to severe censorship. In December 1991, a Commission was set up at the initiative of the President to devise urgent measures to stop the importation of pornographic and erotic materials.
- ¹¹¹ See Chapters Four and Six for a discussion of these terms.
- ¹¹² Robert Porter, Russia's Alternative Prose (Oxford, 1994), p.19.
- ¹¹³ Jacques Lacan, The Ego in Freud's Theory and the Technique of Psychoanalysis, 1954-1955, ed. by Jacques-Alain Miller, trans. by Sylvana Tomaselli (New York and London, 1988), p.323.
- ¹¹⁴ Sigmund Freud, Civilization and Its Discontents, trans. by James Strachey (New York, 1961), p.28.
- ¹¹⁵ According to traditional Jewish law, Katerli would not be considered Jewish, as her mother was not Jewish. In a 1998 interview, Katerli stated that she is not certain whether she feels Jewish. More than anything, she commented, she feels Russian.

¹¹⁶ Nina Katerli, 'Kto ia?', p.38.

¹¹⁷ Nina Katerli, personal interview, 1995.

¹¹⁸ Nina Katerli, 'Kto ia?', p.42.

CHAPTER TWO

FANTASY PROSE: 1973 – 1981

*Фантастика и реальность едины. Это две
разноязычные страны одного неделимого мира.
Фантасмагория лежит в основе цивилизации и
естественно проявляет себя в музыке, в живописи, в
литературе.¹*

Nina Katerli's fantasy prose period comprises the years 1973-1981. This chapter will describe the historical background of Katerli's fantasy writing, and will question whether, and to what extent, 'fantasy' is a valid definition for Katerli's prose fiction of the 1970s, as well as consider whether this period of Katerli's work falls neatly within the category that Nadya Peterson has called the 'fantastic decade'.² Through a textual analysis of Katerli's main fantasy works, this chapter will demonstrate how her particular writing style draws upon many Russian and western traditions of fantasy and the fantastic, while at the same time displaying its own unique features. I will discuss how Katerli's works compare to other Soviet writers of fantasy, such as Evgenii Zamiatin, Evgenii Shvarts, Mikhail Bulgakov, and the science-fiction writers Boris and Arkadii Strugatskii, and to what extent her works reflect the views of Andrei Siniavskii on the value of fantasy. In addition, I will confront the larger questions arising from Katerli's decision to write fantasy, including whether this decision was merely a means of circumventing censorship or whether it was a stylistic choice permitting sharper comment on the absurdity of Russian society.

Nina Katerli began writing in the late 1960s, just over a decade after Nikita Khrushchev delivered his Secret Speech, which, as discussed in Chapter One, had a significant impact on her artistic development. In essence, Katerli felt as if, for the first time in her life, she was free to think for herself and to form her own convictions and beliefs, and she wanted to express these personal observations through the written word. In general, she was not concerned with ‘profound’ political and philosophical issues.³ Rather, Katerli was, and still is, fascinated with the ‘sovok’ (average Soviet person) and his or her daily concerns, as well as with the eternal themes of love, marriage, happiness, the elderly, and death. In this respect, Katerli’s fantasy prose writing fits the definition of ‘feminine writing’, as postulated by Barbara Heldt. Heldt writes: ‘Feminine writing is about how all the little things in life go wrong.’⁴ The focus on personal and daily difficulties, rather than ‘big’ philosophical and political themes, Heldt states, began in the 1960s with the youth prose writers as a direct reaction to the didacticism of socialist realism. Similarly, Svetlana Carsten has noted:

By choice or artistic impulse, they [youth prose writers] started addressing problems of a more personal nature...They turned to the typical dilemmas of life: love, personal relations, relationships with parents, disillusionment with society’s values.⁵

Fantasy literature, in particular, provided a powerful tool for a critical examination of the realities of Soviet life. As Robert Porter has noted specifically of alternative prose writers:

Some writers included elements of folklore, myth and parable in their works. Others made use of a variety of symbolic devices and supplemented their narratives with fantastic subplots, placing them in a realistic setting....They explored new vistas by creating allegorical narratives in which they drew hidden parallels between the fantastic world and Soviet reality.⁶

Similarly, as Charles Rougle has stated: 'Fantasy...has been used from time immemorial as a means of capturing and holding the attention of readers in order to cajole and exhort them to adopt and act upon the author's vision of reality.'⁷

Katerli's particular 'vision of reality' reveals a world of confusion, uncertainty, and constant change. Katerli states that her fantasy stories 'выражают убеждение в том, что мы не понимаем жизненных событий, что никто не может их нам объяснить, и что жизнь, в целом, странная вещь.'⁸ Katerli's statement supports Robert Porter's comment with regards to intellectuals' response to Soviet life:

A feeling for what is 'normal' is...a difficult thing to define; many intellectuals in Russia under the old regime no doubt felt that in their private fragmented world—their 'atomised' society, to use a term from political science—their personal lives were normal, what was abnormal was public life, with all its rituals and rhetoric. In effect,

Brezhnevite public life at all levels had become a parody of real life.⁹

For the purposes of this study, I have adopted Nadya Peterson's definitions of 'fantasy' and 'the fantastic' as 'any narrated instances that cannot be explained rationally.'¹⁰ Another essential, and seemingly contradictory, aspect of fantasy, and even more importantly, of Russian and Soviet fantasy, is its close relationship to reality. As Amy Mandelker and Roberta Reed have remarked:

One hallmark of Russian literature...in almost every important work is the close relationship of the fictional world to the everyday empirical world we live in. However, in Russian works, employing the supernatural does not dominate the pattern even when it may form an important part. Typically, the great works of Russian literature are firmly fixed in recognizable everyday reality.¹¹

Similarly, as Marilyn Minto has commented of Russian fantasy in the nineteenth century:

Russian writers of the fantastic tales were so obsessed with such philosophical and social dilemmas, that they found it virtually impossible to conjure up a world of pure make-believe. Incursions into the supernatural, into 'other worlds', provided them with a prism through which to see and interpret reality.¹²

The common thread running through the above observations is that fantasy distorts the *form* of the 'real' world, in order to depict the *substance* of that world more precisely. It is perhaps Tzvetan Todorov who has provided the definition of fantasy that can best be applied to Nina Katerli's fantasy works:

In a world which is indeed our world, the one we know, a world without devils, sylphides, or vampires, there occurs an event which cannot be explained by the laws of this same familiar world. The person who experiences this event must opt for one of two possible solutions: either he is the victim of an illusion of the senses, of a product of the imagination—and the laws of the world then remain what they are; or else the event has indeed taken place and is an integral part of reality—but then this reality is controlled by laws 'unknown to us....The fantastic is that hesitation experienced by a person who knows only the laws of nature, confronting an apparently supernatural event.'¹³

Critics, however, are divided over how to label Katerli's first period of writing. Katerli herself refuses to label this period, referring to it simply as 'реалистическая и психологическая проза'.¹⁴ She has also remarked: 'Просто я пишу прозу и пользуюсь теми приемами, которые мне необходимы на данный момент.'¹⁵ A. Zhitinskii has called Katerli's early works 'реалистическая фантастика'.¹⁶ A. Romin and Elena Efros

have referred to these works as ‘фантастические притчи’.¹⁷ In a personal letter to Nina Katerli, praising her book Okno (The Window) (1981), Leonid Panteleev referred to these stories as science fiction.¹⁸ Finally, Katerli’s friend and mentor Veniamin Kaverin referred to her early works as ‘психологическая проза’.¹⁹ I have chosen to classify Katerli’s first period of writing as ‘fantasy’, primarily based upon Tzvetan Todorov’s definition of fantasy as the hesitation experienced when confronted with elements of both the normal and absurd worlds.

PUBLICATION HISTORY

Katerli’s fantasy period began in 1973, with her first publication, ‘Nash petukh’ (‘Our Rooster’) in the Leningrad journal Koster (Bonfire), and ended with the publication of her first collection of short stories, Okno, in 1981.²⁰ During the course of the eight years of Nina Katerli’s fantasy writing period, she published several stories which she did not include in Okno, such as ‘Dobro pozhalovat’ (‘Welcome’) (1974), ‘Groza’ (‘Thunderstorm’) (1975), ‘Osen’ (‘Autumn’) (1975), ‘Kontsert’ (‘Concert’), and ‘Pobeda’ (‘Victory’) (1976).²¹

Within Nina Katerli’s fantasy period, there exists a gradual transition away from fantasy, to a more realistic style of writing. I have placed Katerli’s fantasy works into three groups, which follow both a thematic and chronological pattern. Katerli’s earliest works, which are the most fantastic include: ‘Groza’, ‘Osen’, ‘Kusok neba’ (‘A Piece of Sky’) (1981), ‘Prokhor’,²² ‘Okho-kho’ (‘Oho-ho’) (1976), ‘Nagornaia desiat’ (‘Mountain Street, Number Ten’) (1976), ‘Bezotvetnaia liubov’ (‘Unrequited Love’) (1976), ‘Vse chto ugodno’ (‘Whatever Is Best’) (1981), and ‘Ozero’ (‘The Lake’) (1977). These

works feature characters such as talking insects and animals, magicians, the sky, and even Death. The plots are very simple, usually with a very simple moral at the end. They are very short in length. 'Ozero', 'Groza', and 'Osen', for example, are each two pages long.

Toward the middle of the 1970s, Katerli began introducing more realism into her stories, focusing more on the daily lives and inner struggles and emotions of her protagonists. Elena Efros has commented of Katerli's later fantasy works:

В этих рассказах соединяются бытовые реалии с фантастическими допущениями; сказочные события происходят с реальными людьми в конкретное время в конкретном месте; персонажи получили имена, профессии, их окружает хорошо знакомая читателю действительность, выписанная до мельчайших подробностей.²³

Such works include: 'Volshebnaia lampa' ('The Magic Lamp') (1981), 'Chudovishche' ('The Monster') (1977), 'Sorokopud' ('Forty Poods') (1981)²⁴, 'Kollektsiia doktora Emil'ia' ('Doctor Emil's Collection') (1979), 'Den' rozhdeniia' ('Birthday') (1981), 'Chelovek Firfarov i traktor' ('The Man Firfarov and the Tractor') (1978), 'Pervaia liubov'' ('First Love') (1981), 'Zel'e' ('Greenery') (1979), and 'Okno' ('The Window') (1977). The final period of Katerli's fantasy writing, includes only one story, 'Doroga' ('The Road') (1981), which serves stylistically as a bridge to her realistic period.

It took Katerli five years to publish Okno, largely due to amendments and additions suggested or demanded by critics, editors, and censors. Frida Germanovna Katsass, Katerli's editor, recalls the difficult process of compiling stories for the book: 'Некоторые рассказы были сочтены проблематичными, опасными и должны были быть исключены.'²⁵ Katsass has also remarked: 'С одной стороны – фантастика явилась непосредственным отражением нашего общества. В то же время, публиковать ее все же было легче из-за аллегоричности сюжета, неопределенности во времени и пространстве. Без использования фантастики Катерли никогда бы не смогла опубликовать свои работы.'²⁶ Katerli claims that her choice to write fantasy was simply an aesthetic decision. She stated in 1990: 'Проблемы, которые меня интересовали – хотя и противно говорить затертые слова – но проблемы нравственные... Говорить об этом в реалистическом жанре мне казалось неловким, потому что это начинало походить на какие-то проповеди. И поэтому я стала писать притчи.'²⁷ However, eight years later, Katerli stated that censorship had figured in her decision to write fantasy: 'Да, цензура сыграла роль в моем решении писать в жанре фантастики. Я просто хотела писать о жизни, но социалистический реализм не давал такой возможности. Поэтому я писала фантастику.'²⁸ It is unclear whether Katerli's statement in 1998 was a reversal of her previous statement, or whether the two statements are simultaneously true. It is likely that Katerli's reasons for writing fantasy prose fiction were aesthetic as well as political.

The most significant change to Okno was its title. The original title of Okno was Chudovishche, the name of one of the stories in the collection. The title was changed because the editors feared that the title 'Chudovishche' would cause the book to be

viewed as depressing, dark, grotesque, and hopeless, and that the heroes would be perceived as evil monsters. Katerli heeded their suggestions and changed the title to Okno.

There are over nineteen stories which Katerli was advised to withdraw from Okno. Fifteen of these stories never saw publication either in Katerli's subsequent books, or in literary journals. One of these fifteen stories, 'Den' v Moskve' ('A Day in Moscow'), was altered slightly and renamed 'Proshchal'nyi svet' ('Farewell light') and was published in 1981. V.M. Akimov, an editor, did not like the ending of 'Zver'' ('Wild Beast'), also excluded from Okno, and suggested that Katerli 'make the ending not so harsh'²⁹ Akimov also stated that 'Doroga tuda i obratno' ('The Road There and Back'), another story pulled from Okno, had an unclear ending.³⁰ Another editor, V. Kukushkin, was pleased in general with 'Doroga', but he disapproved of the negative relationship between the father and his youngest son. He suggested that Katerli rewrite several parts, having the father help and encourage the son, rather than criticise and ridicule him.³¹ Katerli did not follow the suggestions regarding 'Doroga', but she did withdraw the nineteen other stories, agreeing with the censors and editors that the reasons for their exclusion from Okno had more to do with their poor literary quality, than their controversial form or content.³²

TEXTUAL ANALYSIS

PLOT

As discussed above, Nina Katerli's fantasy prose deals with the 'sovok' and his or her daily concerns, as well as deeper moral and emotional themes. For this reason, it is necessary to address the Formalist concept of plot. The Russian language has two words for plot: 'fabula' and 'siuzhet'. 'Fabula' concerns the most basic understanding of plot, namely the chronological circumstances or events that occur in any particular story. Ewa M. Thompson has defined 'fabula' as 'the chronological summary of the events of the plot of a novel or short story.'³³ Similarly, the Formalist critic Boris Tomashevskii has observed: 'The story ['fabula'] is the aggregate of motifs in their logical, causal-chronological order.'³⁴ 'Siuzhet', on the other hand, addresses the deeper philosophical issues and significance of the story, or, as Ewa M. Thompson has also noted 'what actually happens within the story of a concrete narrative.'³⁵

By analysing 'fabula' and 'siuzhet' separately, we discover multiple layers of meaning in Katerli's texts, as well as the dichotomy of the everyday and eternal themes. In essence, the 'fabula' is the façade, the framework, the outer world of 'byt' (everyday life), daily survival, trivialities, and difficulties.³⁶ In contrast, the 'siuzhet' addresses the inner world of these characters, and their emotional and psychological reaction to the difficulties of the daily lives represented in the 'fabula'. Thus, it is with 'siuzhet', as Edith Clowes states, that 'plot becomes a subject for moral or aesthetic discussion rather than a moving force for the narrative.'³⁷

Two of Katerli's earliest stories, 'Osen' and 'Groza', represents mankind's mystical battle with the power and might of Nature. In the tradition of supernatural nineteenth-century Russian literature, these two stories are reminiscent of Aleksandr Pushkin's Mednyi vsadnik (The Bronze Horseman) (1833), its protagonist battling the Neva River. The 'fabulas' of these stories are rather short, spanning a momentary period in time. 'Groza' takes place in one afternoon, and tells of a young musician who continues to play his violin throughout a torrential thunderstorm. Nature is portrayed as both sublime and threateningly powerful. The musician is the only person on the street, and thus appears to be the only one to confront, and perhaps defy, the power of the storm:

Туча снова хрустнула молнией. Струны дождя звенели под смычком. Музыкант стоял один посреди пустой огромной площади, вода стекала по его потемневшим плечам.³⁸

The musician defies the storm by adapting it to his purpose, using it to accentuate his music. As Anatoly Vishevsky has stated:

A thunderstorm is music; it brings to life the paved courtyards, buildings, monuments, palaces, trees, and a stone statue of a musician who plays in harmony with the music of nature. Only humanity is not touched by this feast of life; its life is governed by other laws.³⁹

‘Osen’ describes the transition from summer to autumn and its effect upon the physiognomy of Leningrad and upon the daily realities of its citizens: ‘По утрам теперь темно... После работы тоже темно. И опять никто ни на кого не смотрит – всем некогда, все бегут, тащат тяжелые сумки, толпятся у автобуса.’⁴⁰ Like ‘Groza’, ‘Osen’ depicts Nature as all-powerful and somewhat sadistic, and as a force that wreaks havoc and destroys. By using the word ‘again’, the narrator expresses the cyclic power of Nature, and mankind’s continual submission to this force.

These two stories are quite unlike the majority of Katerli’s other fantasy stories and her prose fiction generally. ‘Groza’ and ‘Osen’ are far more symbolic, philosophical, and poetic, in a sense, than the remaining stories which will be discussed in this chapter.⁴¹ Their ‘fabulas’, as stated above, are both rather uncomplicated, focusing on a simple theme, that of Nature. This simplicity, however, raises yet another Formalist concept, that of ‘ostranenie’, which Victor Erlich has defined as ‘making strange.’⁴² This idea was first developed by Viktor Borisovich Shklovskii in ‘O teorii prozy’ (‘On the Theory of Prose’) (1925), in which he distinguished between the material of the story, or raw outline, and the treatment of the story in an actual work of art. In essence, a seemingly ‘normal’ event, such as a thunderstorm, when scrutinised in detail, is no longer accepted as a given, and instead, produces a sense of ‘dislocation’ or ‘strangeness’, in which the protagonist, due to a heightened sense of awareness, is unable to accept a previously accepted ‘normal’ event or occurrence.⁴³

The ‘siuzhets’ of these two stories differ quite markedly from each other. The ‘siuzhet’ of ‘Groza’ focuses on the thoughts and actions of one man assessing his relationship to nature, and perhaps, on a larger scale, assessing the relationship of society

to forces outside of its control. This 'siuzhet' reflects a defiance and resistance to Nature's power, presenting one man—a musician—as a symbol of all mankind and his means of self-expressive defiance, it is important to note, is his music, his art, perhaps expressing the importance and significance of the artist in society. The 'siuzhet' of 'Osen', on the other hand, focuses on the entire city of Leningrad, rather than one individual, and rather than acting in defiance to Nature, this narrator simply accepts the inevitable onslaught of autumnal weather.

'Kontsert' is very different from most of Katerli's prose fiction, in that it is a children's story. The 'fabula' focuses on the experiences of a young schoolgirl in her singing class. The young girl is informed quite bluntly by her teacher that she does not have a good voice and should therefore sing quietly, so as not to upset the other singers in the class. However, during a choral performance at a local hospital, the young girl is overcome with courage and self-confidence and begins to sing very loudly, believing that she is singing better than ever before and even better than many of her fellow classmates. After the concert, she is reprimanded by her teacher so loudly, and she vows never to sing like that again. However, the next day the teacher apologises to the young girl. It appears that the acoustics had been such in the hospital, that it was impossible for the patients to hear the entire choir. The only voice they heard was that of the young girl. If it had not been for her loud, albeit discordant sounds, the patients would have had a silent concert. The 'siuzhet' of 'Kontsert' concentrates on the very positive and uplifting themes of believing in oneself and being true to oneself.

The 'fabula' of 'Pobeda' follows the unfortunate happenings in one day of a very unlucky woman's life. The story begins with the woman frustrated, because the soap

slipped out of her hands and now it is, she surmises, probably wedged somewhere underneath the bathtub, definitely out of her reach. Next, she goes into the kitchen, but can't light a match to light the stove, and then she decides to get dressed, but a button comes off her skirt. The story finally ends when she has decided to board a tram. Realising that she does not have enough money, she suddenly looks down and sees a ticket for the tram, and suddenly 'поняла, что победила.'⁴⁴ The 'siuzhet' of this one-page story appears to be much more complicated and intricate than its 'fabula'. Although concentrating on the 'byt' of one character, the story seems actually to be confronting the deeper issues of life's frustrations, and in that sense, is a vivid example of 'feminine writing', as defined above by Barbara Heldt.

In 1976, Katerli published 'Tri novelly' ('Three Novellas')—a collection of three stories, including: 'Okho-kho', 'Nagornaia desiat'', and 'Bezotvetnaia liubov''. The 'fabulas' of these three stories are reminiscent of the magic folk tale, which Vladimir Propp defines as

a genre with a remarkably consistent and unified structure...every unit is defined not by its external and largely accidental characteristics, as had been the case in earlier classifications of folk-tales, but by its role in relation to the totality of units to which it belongs.⁴⁵

Thus, unlike the two stories previously discussed, 'Okho-kho', 'Nagornaia desiat'', and 'Bezotvetnaia liubov'' are magical, rather than supernatural, stories with intricate and

compact ‘fabulas’. ‘Okho-kho’ tells the story of a tiny insect-like creature named ‘Okho-kho’, who lives in the upholstery of his master’s couch. When the master dies, his daughter and son-in-law proceed to rid the flat of its furniture, and throw the couch, along with ‘Okho-kho’, into the river. ‘Okho-kho’ somehow manages to survive the ordeal and spends the rest of the story wandering about the streets of Leningrad and reminiscing about his master and their happy days together. The ‘siuzhet’ of this story demonstrates Katerli’s focus, as will be seen in subsequent chapters as well, on the ‘little man’ (‘malen’kii chelovek’), as seen in Aleksandr Pushkin’s Mednyi vsadnik, often portrayed as an average, solitary, and somewhat overlooked urban dweller. In addition, Katerli’s insect is reminiscent of Kafka’s arthropod in ‘The Metamorphosis’ (1915), a creature who, like ‘Okho-kho’, is ostracized from, and misunderstood by, society, thus calling to mind the loneliness and solitude of the average person in contemporary society.

‘Nagornaia desiat’’, like ‘Okho-kho’, has fantastical characters, and has an even more intricate ‘fabula’. The title of the story is the address of death—Mountain Street, number ten. Four characters—‘Vliublennyi’ (In love), ‘Nachal’nik laboratorii’ (Head of the laboratory), ‘Zhizneliub’ (Lover of life), and ‘Odinokaia zhenshchina’ (Lonely woman)—receive letters, stating that on the seventh of April at seven o’clock in the morning they must appear at Mountain Street, number ten, signifying the date and place of their death. Reminiscent of the grotesque stories of E.T.A. Hoffmann and Edgar Allen Poe, and Vladimir Nabokov’s Priglasenie na kazn’ (Invitation to a Beheading) (1938), ‘Nagornaia desiat’’ develops an eerie and mysterious tone through its treatment of life, death, and the afterlife.⁴⁶

Nagornaia desiat'' examines four very distinct approaches both to life and death. 'Vliublennyi' loves his life, and does not fear or resent his approaching death. When he realises that he does not have much time left to live, he decides to devote the rest of his life to the woman he loves.

Влюбленный зачем-то взглянул на часы. – Половина одиннадцатого? Что же я стою? В одиннадцать она будет ждать, надо купить цветы... Ах да... Повестка... До седьмого – двадцать два, нет двадцать три дня. Целых двадцать три дня! Вечность! А я ее увижу через полчаса. И мы будем вместе весь день! И завтра! И после завтра...⁴⁷

'Nachal'nik laboratorii' is primarily concerned with finishing his research project. When he discovers the time and date of his death, his only thought is that he must find someone to carry on his research after he has died. 'Zhizneliub', like 'Vliublennyi', loves life. In fact, he loves life itself, rather than any particular person or aspect of life. However, unlike 'Vliublennyi', 'Zhizneliub' refuses to accept that he will soon die. In fact, his self-sacrificing wife volunteers to take his place.⁴⁸ When 'Odinokaia zhenshchina' discovers that she, too, will die on the seventh of April, she is overjoyed. She has lived a dull and unfulfilling life, full of sacrifice and hardship, and is ready to put an end to her misery. Once she discovers that her pain will soon end, she feels a sense of freedom: 'Целых двадцать три дня буду жить как хочу.'⁴⁹

When these four characters all arrive at Mountain Street, number ten at the appointed time, the death experience is described as a walk through a field of flowers, with the sun shining on their journey toward death. Whereas the 'fabula' provides the framework for the story, the 'siuzhet' addresses the significance of these four very distinct views of life and death. Like the force of Nature portrayed in 'Groza' and 'Osen', death is here portrayed a powerful and inevitable part of life. Although no specific 'approach' to life or death is overtly lauded, it would appear that, of the four 'approaches' in 'Nagornaia desiat', 'Vliublenyi's' is presented in the most positive light.. He loves life, but at the same time, accepts, unlike the protagonist in 'Groza', that he is subject to forces beyond his control.

Like 'Nagornaia desiat', 'Bezotvetnaia liubov'' also takes place in an urban setting and has a fantastical 'fabula'; but, unlike the stories described above, it does not contain fantastical characters. 'Bezotvetnaia liubov'' tells the story of a man who suffers when he is rejected by a woman he loves. He finally manages to rid himself of his emotional pain when he sells this 'unrequited love' to a poor sales clerk. The young sales clerk buys the 'unrequited love' because she is desperately lonely, and figures that any love, even if not reciprocated, is better than none at all. When she first meets the object of her love, she is overjoyed and ecstatic. However, when this man fails to return her love, she begins to suffer terribly. She attempts to sell back the 'unrequited love' to the man who sold it to her. When he refuses, she surreptitiously places the 'unrequited love' in his bag and runs out of the store. The 'siuzhet' of this story, like those of many of Katerli's fantasy stories, focuses on a specific moral or emotional dilemma, in this case the value and desirability of love when it is not reciprocated.

The 'fabulas' of Katerli's story 'Ozero' and her play Kazhdyi polden' na ploshchadi are her most fantastic. Both stories take place in unfamiliar times and locales. 'Ozero' begins with a weeping young woman standing on the banks of a dark and grey marsh. She cries because a magician has transformed the man she loves into the grey marsh. Following in the nineteenth-century Russian literary tradition of the self-sacrificing woman, this character begs the magician to undo his magic, and instead to turn her into a marsh⁵⁰. The magician tries to convince the woman that the wicked youth is undeserving of her love. She will not relent, however and the magician agrees to undo his magic, and suddenly the lake is transformed from a grey marsh to a beautiful crystal-clear lake, symbolising the young woman's beauty and innocence. Like the 'siuzhet' of 'Bezotvetnaia liubov', the 'siuzhet' of 'Ozero' addresses the issue of love and, in particular, the fact that love can cause suffering and pain.

The 'fabula' of Kazhdyi polden' na ploshchadi is the most complex and intricate of those discussed thus far in the chapter. Kazhdyi polden' na ploshchadi tells the story of a writer, called the 'Storyteller'. At the beginning of the story, he realises that the characters of his stories have come to life and believe that they are real human beings. Despite the Storyteller's efforts to convince his characters that they are simply figments of his imagination, they continue to believe in their own existence. Fearing that the Storyteller will attempt to destroy them, they devise a plot to take over the city. The characters are eventually destroyed, but only after much bloodshed and destruction. The 'siuzhet' of this story is more philosophical and political than many of Katerli's other fantasy stories, addressing the role of the writer and literature generally in society. The Storyteller learns the costly lesson about the power of words and their capacity to affect

deeply the lives of people, a theme reminiscent of Boris Pasternak's Doktor Zhivago (1957).

Katerli's remaining fantasy stories are set in Soviet urban environments in the 1970s, and like 'Okho-kho', their 'fabulas' focus on the problems of the 'little man', or 'little person'. 'Kusok neba', for example, is about a young woman who is bothered incessantly by a tiny slant of light that comes through her window and shines in her face, preventing her from sitting comfortably at her table and reading. 'Prokhor' tells the story of a man and his friendship with an elephant. The 'siuzhets' of 'Kusok neba' and 'Prokhor' examine the relationships between 'normal' humans and their feelings of tenderness for another—a slant of light, in 'Kusok neba' and an elephant in 'Prokhor'.

Katerli's stories 'Sorokopud', 'Zelev', and 'Vse chto ugodno' are set in the present day in urban settings and have realistic characters, but also contain unexplained or mysterious elements. 'Sorokopud', for example, tells the story of a research scientist who witnesses the death of someone in a metro station: "Это произошло двадцать четвертого апреля в восемь часов утра на станции метро "Невский проспект", и никто ничего не заметил."⁵¹ The incident somehow has given him a heightened understanding and knowledge, and he begins to think in numbers and figures. 'Zelev' is a story about a man who makes herbal concoctions that enable him to predict the future. 'Vse chto ugodno' recounts a man's strange experiences one night in Leningrad. The story begins when the main character, Sergei, decides to leave a noisy party, and, as he wanders along the street, he notices an elderly woman who has passed out on the street corner. He manages to wake the drunk woman up and takes her to her home. He soon discovers that she is a soothsayer and that her home is a place of magic. After leaving her house in the early

hours of the morning, Sergei is unsure of whether the entire incident was real or imagined. The 'siuzhets' of these stories, unlike many of those previously discussed, do not focus on one specific moral dilemma. Rather, these 'siuzhets' appear to be concerned with the human condition and the fact that life is filled with bizarre people and unexplained incidents. On a deeper level, they point to the irrationality and incomprehensibility of society and life in general.

'Chudovishche' (1977) marks a significant change in Katerli's use of 'fabula' and 'siuzhet', with increased emphasis on 'siuzhet' and on deeper emotional and psychological elements. The 'fabula' of 'Chudovishche' is rather simple, unlike the 'fabulas' of Kazhdyi den' na ploshchadi and 'Nagornaia desiati'. It tells the story of the inhabitants living in one communal flat and their bizarre experiences with one of their tenants—a 'chudovishche' (monster). This monster is an angry, spiteful creature, who transforms his fellow tenants into pots and pans, puts warts on their noses, and creates blizzards and heat waves in the kitchen. Although the protagonist is a fantastic creature, the 'fabula' is very realistic in its depiction of the lives of these communal flat dwellers. The monster is simply a personification and combination of all the ugliness and difficulties faced by those living in a communal flat. Eventually the monster begins to age and loses his power over his fellow tenants. However, instead of taking advantage of the monster's declining powers to exact revenge, the tenants simply express pity for the monster and sorrow for his condition.

The 'siuzhet' of 'Chudovishche' is told in flashback and follows the life of one particular tenant—a young woman—as she reflects on her experiences with the monster. Thus, the time sequence of the 'fabula' and the 'siuzhet' are different, corroborating

Elena Efros's statement about Katerli's prose: 'Сюжетное время не совпадает с фабульным.'⁵² The 'fabula' spans the period of time in which the woman lived in the communal flat, whereas the 'siuzhet' encompasses both the 'fabula' time and the flashback. Perhaps the varying lengths of the 'fabula' and the 'siuzhet' express a belief that everyday life is ephemeral and is quickly replaced with new moments and experiences, whereas the inner world of thought and introspection is much more profound and significant. Rather than focusing solely on the living conditions of a communal flat, Katerli explores issues of aging, revenge, anger, and compassion through the character of the 'chudovishche' and its fellow tenants.⁵³

The story 'Chelovek Firfarov i traktor', like 'Chudovishche', focuses less on the narrative action of the story than on the introspective lives of its characters. This approach is reminiscent of Viktor Shklovskii's statement: 'The story ['fabula'] is, in fact, only material for plot ['siuzhet'] formulation.'⁵⁴ Also like 'Chudovishche', 'Chelovek Firfarov i traktor' has a realistic setting, but at the same time contains fantastic characters. 'Chelovek Firfarov i traktor' tells the story of Nikolai Pavlovich Firfarov, a bachelor who lives a quiet but lonely life. When he goes out to his garage one morning to check on his car, he finds a tractor in its place. At first, the presence of this vehicle annoys him, but he soon develops a relationship with it. The tractor takes him to work, wakes him up in the morning, and helps him with his shopping. Soon, however, the neighbours begin complaining about its presence. The tractor, seeing that it is ruining Firfarov's life, decides to leave. This 'siuzhet' is primarily concerned with how the loss of his beloved tractor affects Firfarov. A once lonely man has been transformed into a happy and

contented individual. When the tractor leaves, he returns to the life he once knew.

Knowing that he cannot change his fate, he passively accepts the loss of the tractor.

‘Kolleksiia doktora Emil’ia’ and ‘Volshebnaia lampa’ are about magical belongings and the effect they have on the characters in the story. ‘Kolleksiia Doktora Emil’ia’ is a tender story about a man named Laptev, who is a complete failure in life, and Doktor Emil’, the man who tries to lift him up from his dire condition. A science researcher, Laptev is socially maladroit and friendless. Doktor Emil’ gives Laptev a magical dog; whenever Laptev has the dog with him, he is successful and attractive. Popularity and success, however, transform Laptev into a self-absorbed egomaniac. At the end of the story, an ill Emil’ phones Laptev to ask for help, but Laptev tells his benefactor that he is too busy to assist. In a fitting ending, shortly after hanging up the phone, Laptev loses the dog, and immediately returns to his former state.

‘Volshebnaia lampa’ tells the story of a man named Ivanov, who, when cleaning out the attic of his flat, finds a lamp. Upon being lit for the first time, it changes appearance, becoming beautiful and making everyone happy in its presence. Ivanov dedicates himself to visiting friends who are ill and depressed taking along his magic lamp, which cures all their problems. The ‘siuzhets’ of these stories are similar to those of Katerli’s early fantasy stories in their focus on one specific moral dilemma. Both of these stories are concerned with the issues of kindness, selflessness, and sensitivity.

‘Okno’, like ‘Chudovishche’ is told from the point of view of a young woman who is looking back on her years growing up. The heroine in ‘Okno’ lives in a private flat with her mother and father, and the story focuses on a magic window in her parents’ bedroom, which, when looked through, changes the grey cloudy Leningrad skies into beautiful

scenes of green pastures, sunshine and colourful flowers. The young woman's mother spends most of her days staring out of this window. The father, however, dislikes the window and insists on covering it with a thick blanket. The 'siuzhet' of 'Okno', like that of 'Chudovishche', spans a longer period of time than the 'fabula', as a woman re-examines her childhood. The 'siuzhet' also focuses on an issue not previously seen in Katerli's fantasy works, that of sensitivity to nature. Perhaps the parents' differing attitudes towards nature and light speak to the larger themes of truth and self-deception.

The 'fabulas' of Katerli's remaining fantasy stories focus more on 'byt' than the stories previously discussed.⁵⁵ 'Pervaia noch'' and 'Den' rozhdeniia' are both very brief tales focusing on the thoughts of one central character. 'Pervaia noch'' tells the story of Pavel Il'ich Kravtsov, who mourns the loss of his wife and reminisces about his life with her. As stated above, the 'fabula' includes elements of 'byt' and portrays Pavel's current life through the accretion of small details:

Пил пиво у ларька, минут двадцать в очереди стоял, а куда торопиться? Купил хлеба в булочной без продавца. Вот и все дела. Вечером еще посмотрел газету, включил телевизор – показывали какую-то симфонию, а по второй программе – постановку, кончалась уже. Павел Ильич телевизор выключил и решил лечь спать.⁵⁶

The 'siuzhet' of 'Pervaia noch'', like that of 'Okno' and 'Chudovishche', is told in flashback. It concerns the relationship between Pavel and his wife. We learn that he was

an inattentive husband, who had no respect for his wife. In fact, by ignoring her complaints of aches and pains, he might perhaps have been responsible for her untimely death. 'Den' rozhdeniia' tells the very simple story of a woman's birthday party. The 'fabula' focuses on the planning of the party and the relationship between the woman and her daughter. The 'siuzhet', of 'Den' rozhdeniia' like that of 'Pervaia noch'', is told in flashback, as the woman reminisces about her younger years.

As stated earlier, 'Doroga' is the most 'realistic' story of Katerli's fantasy period. The 'fabula' concerns one family—Vasilii Ivanovich Ekhlov and his two sons, Boris and Ivan. Boris is a successful doctor, while Ivan is an ex-convict. The father, understandably, favours Boris, and disapproves of Ivan. However, throughout the story, it gradually becomes clear that it is actually Ivan, rather than Boris, who demonstrates the greatest love for his father. Ivan lives with his father and cares for him, and, without challenging or confronting him, allows his father continually to verbally abuse him. Boris, on the other hand, lives in the city and rarely travels to the countryside to see his father. Vasilii Ivanovich Ekhalov is unable to see how mistaken is his assessment of his sons and their love for him. However, two days before he dies, he apologizes to Ivan and blames himself for his son's fate, and thanks him for taking care of him. Despite these confessions, Vasilii Ivanovich, in his will, gives everything to Boris, including the house that he and Ivan had been living in, leaving Ivan homeless.

In many respects, the 'siuzhet' of 'Doroga' resembles the 'siuzhets' of Katerli's realistic stories, specifically, in its focus on the inner thoughts of its protagonists—primarily Ivan and his father. By probing into the thoughts and feelings of Ivan and his father, including background history and relevant events, their 'true' natures are revealed.

Stereotypes, such as the 'dutiful' son, the 'useless son', and the 'wise patriarch' are challenged and exploded. Despite the father's assessment of Ivan as a 'good-for-nothing', he is revealed to be the more sensitive, kind-hearted, and loving of the two brothers. Additionally, the father, who at first appears to be intelligent and insightful, has falsely judged both of his sons. The sad fact of this story, is that only the reader, and Ivan, of course, are aware of the father's misjudgment.

THEMES

As discussed above, the themes of Nina Katerli's fantasy works address both the daily concerns of the 'malen'kii chelovek', or 'sovok', as well as the eternal themes of love, happiness, relationships, communication, and death. Katerli's focus is on the individual, whether it is a man, woman, elephant, or insect, which coincides with Charles Roughton's statement that fantasy 'begins with the premise that problems of social reality must be solved not by collective action toward some abstract goal or ideal, but by individuals striving to perfect their emotional and moral sensibilities.'⁵⁷ In the words of Tamara Khmel'nitskaia, Katerli does not attempt a 'глобальное истолкование мира'.⁵⁸ Thus, as stated earlier, the themes of Katerli's fantasy prose do not contain the political and philosophical themes of such fantasy works as Mikhail Bulgakov's Master i Margarita (The Master and Margarita) (1966–67).⁵⁹ For this reason, namely the lack of political content, Katerli's fantasy prose stands in contrast to the anti-utopian works of such writers as Evgenii Zamiatin and George Orwell. In addition, Katerli's works cannot be ascribed to the category of utopian fiction, for reasons outlined by Gary Saul Morson: 'A work is a literary utopia if and only if it satisfies each of the following criteria: (1) it was

written (or presumed to have been written) in the tradition of previous utopian literary works, (2) it depicts (or is taken to depict) an idea about society; and (3) regarded as a whole, it advocated (or is taken to advocate) the realization of that society.’⁶⁰

Katerli’s focus on the individual is evident in her introspective protagonists, who often find solace and meaning through contemplating life, indulging in reverie, and reminiscing about the past. The stories ‘Okno’ and ‘Chudovishche’, for example, are built around their main characters’ adolescent memories. Introspection, of course, does not always draw forth pleasant thoughts. In some stories, characters relive the guilt and pain of past mistakes. In ‘Pervaia noch’’, for example, Pavel Kravstov confronts his feelings of guilt about his wife’s death. The window, a recurring metaphor in Katerli’s fantasy works, perhaps symbolises the introspection of her protagonists, who often find themselves thinking and wondering while staring out the window. They are almost detached, as if they are spectators watching a performance through the square window frame, as if to say that life is confusing and mysterious and only seems to make sense when viewed from a distance. ‘

In this respect, ‘Okno’ begins with a description of the view from the main character’s flat: ‘В нашей квартире все окна выходят во двор.’⁶¹ The main character in this story is a woman reflecting on her childhood and her relationship with both her mother and her father. The two parents’ attitudes to the windows represent their emotional state and their diverse outlooks on the world. The mother is open and sensitive, and stands before the window, staring out onto beautiful scenes of nature. The father, on the other hand, never looks out the window. Another example of the window metaphor is seen at the end of ‘Zelev’ when Mokshin rides on the tram and stares out the window at the city flashing

before his eyes: 'За окном тапились незнакомые окраинные улицы. Серые, осевшие, нежилые дома, сараи, какие-то склады... И город внезапно кончился. Трамвай несся теперь так, что у Мокшина все плыло в глазах.'⁶²

The desire for love and the pursuit of love are recurring themes in Katerli's fantasy prose. For example, the young woman in 'Bezotvetnaia liubov' buys 'unrequited love', which she thinks will save her from a life of loneliness. Similarly, the young woman in 'Ozero' sacrifices her life for the man she loves, by allowing herself to be transformed into a lake. 'Vliublennyi' in 'Nagornaia desiati' spends his last days dedicating himself to the woman he loves. Thus, for many of Katerli's protagonists, finding love is the key to happiness, as Elena Efros' stated: 'По видимому, Н. Катерли считает, что способность к любви, на что или на кого бы это чувство ни было направлено, сама является источником внутренней гармонии и ощущения полноты жизни – того, что делает человека счастливым.'⁶³ This sentiment is also expressed by Dr. Emil' in 'Kolleksiia doktora Emil'ia': 'В идеале необходимо, чтобы каждого человека хоть кто-нибудь любил. Другой человек или животное – не важно.'⁶⁴

Katerli's approach to the theme of love is sometimes untraditional. In 'Chelovek Firfarov i traktor', she tells the story of an ordinary man, who loves and is loved by a tractor. In 'Prokhor', Katerli portrays the tender friendship between a man and an elephant, and in 'Kusok neba', she examines the attitude of one woman toward a piece of light. In 'Kusok neba,' the main character has been tormented endlessly by the sun shining in her face. Gradually, the protagonist's attitude changes from annoyance to pity, as she personifies the sun-filled sky and sees its 'eyes'. She remarks:

Странно, что я почему-то до сих пор еще его как следует не разглядела... глаза серые, печальные, вопросительные брови с сединой, а под глазами – мешки и морщины.⁶⁵

‘Okho-kho’ tells of the friendship and companionship between a man and the insect-like creature ‘Okho-kho’. The monster in ‘Chudovishche’ even engenders compassion and love from the tenants he terrorised. Love, as well as feelings of compassion, pity, and sensitivity, abound in Katerli’s fantasy prose. Love, in any form, and for any individual or creature is a significant theme in Katerli’s fantasy prose.

Another notable theme in Katerli’s fantasy prose is communication, or rather, individuals’ inability to communicate with or to understand one another. In particular, Katerli emphasises the miscommunication that occurs between different generations. After witnessing what he believes to be irrational behaviour, the magician in ‘Ozero’ states, for example: ‘Я давно заметил, что у современной молодежи совершенно отсутствует представление о логике.’⁶⁶ The young woman in ‘Okno’ and her father have different sensibilities, and are unable to understand, or perhaps to accept, the other person’s point of view. Finally, in ‘Doroga’, in addition to his misappraisal of his son Ivan, the father is unable to understand the younger generation: ‘А молодые теперь бывают хуже стариков, ни о чем подумать не хотят.’⁶⁷

Death is also a significant theme in Katerli’s fantasy prose. The characters in ‘Nagornaia desiat’’, for example, must deal with the knowledge of the exact date and time of their deaths. A similar theme is developed in ‘Pervaia noch’’, which focuses on how the protagonist is forced to deal with his wife’s death, and in ‘Okho-kho’ when the

master dies, leaving the tiny creature alone and defenceless. 'Doroga' explores the reactions of two brothers—Boris and Ivan—to their father's illness and eventual death. The young woman in 'Ozero' is, in a sense, mourning the death of the man she loves, and the tenants of the communal flat in 'Chudovishche' witness the gradual physical deterioration of the monster.

In Katerli's stories, death is portrayed as an unavoidable reality and one of life's greatest uncertainties. Katerli's protagonists do not seek to understand or fight death.⁶⁸ Instead, in various ways, they attempt to deal with the ramifications of their own death or the death of a loved one. The themes of 'loss' and uncertainty are also seen in 'Den' rozhdeniia' and the protagonist's acceptance of the fact that she is 'losing' her memory: 'Память – как плотный, липкий ком: только ухватываешь какую-то ниточку, потянешь, а та точно резиновая, вырвется, и нет ее.'⁶⁹ Katerli's protagonists are confused by life's uncertainties. In this respect, Katerli's fantasy works differ greatly from socialist realist texts in their attempt to provide answers and morals.⁷⁰ In view of this fact, Katerli's fantasy prose resembles Andrei Siniavskii's prediction that 'a phantasmagorical art with hypotheses instead of an aim and the grotesque instead of realistic descriptions would replace Socialist Realism.'⁷¹ Rather than espousing a specific political or moral philosophy, Katerli is more interested in an individual protagonist and his or her impression of society, which is laden with the fantastic and supernatural.

NARRATION

Consistent with Katerli's focus on the individual, as discussed in the 'plot' and 'theme' sections of this chapter, many of her protagonists express their thoughts and feelings through narrated monologue. Various terms have been used to describe this particular method of discourse, including: quasi-reflective discourse, represented speech, narrated speech, erlebte Rede, style indirect libre, and free indirect discourse.⁷² As Teresa Polowy has commented: 'In this mode, the viewpoint is limited and the voices of the author, narrator, and protagonist are often blurred.'⁷³ This may derive from Katerli's own desire to express herself. As Edith Clowes has aptly commented: 'Inner monologue frees the imagination and memory from the restrictions of an oppressive ideology.'⁷⁴

The narrative style of Katerli's fantasy prose expresses an atmosphere of hurried confusion. In particular, this is developed through her use of run-on sentences, incomplete sentences, short paragraphs, and in the brevity of her stories.⁷⁵ In addition, Katerli's characters often cut themselves off in mid-thought and wander off in reverie. For example, in 'Doroga', Vasilii Ekhalov ponders his ideas about life, and suddenly returns to the 'real world' and the practical details of his home:

Что они понимают, молокососы – началась бы новая жизнь и опять бы прошел ее тем же путем, в том же строю. А между тем печка-то остыла, холод в комнате собачий, обеда – это уж точно! – в доме нет, а деньги идут, уходят денежки неизвестно на что. Вот где, например, сейчас Ванька, когда работа его в Доме была двадцать минут назад уже кончилась?⁷⁶

Similarly, the main character in 'Kolleksiia Doktora Emil'ia talks to himself: 'Надо было давно сделать ремонт, да руки не дошли. "Надо было..." и почему же, почему именно у него всегда "надо было"?'⁷⁷ It is almost as if neither the author nor the characters have the time or the capacity to elaborate a complete thought.

Katerli incorporates various narrative voices and techniques within her fantasy works, such as combining first- and third-person narration, omniscient narration, and dialogue. These 'dissonant voices' within a single story convey the numerous, often conflicting, voices that exist in society.⁷⁸ 'Doroga', for example, begins in third-person narration from the father's point of view.⁷⁹ By the second page, however, the point of view shifts to his son Ivan. The narrator states: 'Если честно сказать, не хотелось Ивану идти домой, совсем не хотелось, хоть и знал, что чем дольше задержится, тем больше разъярится отец и все припомнит – и тюрьму, и суму...'⁸⁰ By using shifting point of view, Katerli is able to show both sides of the story, and, in effect, reveals the father's incorrect judgements of his son. These multiple voices reveal Katerli's belief, as Tamara Khmel'nitskaia has correctly commented: 'Нельзя смотреть на мир только с самого себя оправдывающими взглядом.'⁸¹ Elena Efros has similarly noted of Katerli's prose fiction generally:

Если в повести или в рассказе две (или более) сюжетные линии, два (или более) главных героя, то происходящие события показаны так, как их видит каждый из них; следовательно, произведение написано двумя (или более) разными языками.⁸²

Katerli also employs the narrative style known as 'skaz', which has been used by such writers as Mikhail Zoshchenko, Mikhail Bulgakov, and Vladimir Nabokov.⁸³ A.B. Murphy has defined 'skaz' as 'a narrative by someone other than the narrator or author, a different character, who puts the whole narrative into popular conversational language.'⁸⁴ Although undefined, the 'skaz' voice acts independently of the narrator. Mikhail Bakhtin has aptly noted: "'Skaz' is not an idiosyncratic use of language, but a special voice created as a counterpoint to others.'⁸⁵ In addition, the 'skaz' voice often plays the same role as the chorus in classic Greek tragedies, calling the audience's attention to the relevant and significant information in the story. Accordingly, Sidney Monas has noted that 'skaz'

is supposed to have a moral, instructional point, to illustrate something; that is the excuse for telling and listening. But the point gets lost along the way: the storyteller is caught up in the story itself or simply succumbs to the delight of having an audience. It is himself he expresses and not the moral.⁸⁶

In Katerli's fantasy prose, often the 'skaz' voice speaks directly to the audience, which in effect, draws the audience into the world of the story. At the end of 'Kusok neba', for example, the 'skaz' voice states:

Вот сейчас вы скажете: 'Так и есть, начинается теперь символизм, интересно знать, что она имеет в виду под этим куском неба, небось, душу там или какие-нибудь еще переживания'. А вовсе нет, напрасно вы это. Речь идет об... натуральном куске нашего осеннего ленинградского неба, довольно грязном, между прочим, закопченном и неприветливом куске, который подозрительно и злобно поглядывает на меня, устроившись между тумбочками письменного стола.⁸⁷

Similarly, at the end of 'Volshebnaia lampa' the 'skaz' voice states:

Вот на этом мы, пожалуй, и закончим наш рассказ, так как сказать нам больше нечего, разве что признаться, что не только у Иванова, но даже у автора вся эта история оставляет чувство растерянности и изумления. Ведь если разобраться, этот Иванов...нет! Все-таки – нет. Но, с другой стороны, если принять во внимание, что род человеческий... но с такими мыслями жить решительно нельзя.⁸⁸

Katerli's use of 'skaz' resembles that of Vladimir Nabokov's in Invitation to a Beheading (1959):

So we are nearing the end. The right-hand, still untasted part of the novel, which, during our delectable reading, we would lightly feel, mechanically testing whether there were still plenty left (and our fingers were always gladdened by the placid, faithful thickness) has suddenly, for no reason at all, become quite meager: a few minutes of quick reading, already downhill, and—O, horrible!⁸⁹

Katerli's 'skaz' narrator frequently uses conversational language. The narrator in 'Volshebnaia lampa', for example, is discussing repairs that should be made to a flat, and then suddenly interrupts itself and states: 'Но речь не об удобствах, а о хламе.'⁹⁰ Similarly, the abrupt narrator in 'Zeke' says: 'Нет, не будем мы сейчас говорить о чертеже, нет в этом смысла.'⁹¹ Katerli's use of conversational language resembles that of youth prose writing. As Geoffrey Hosking has noted of youth prose writing: 'Words and expressions are often employed which come from a specific professional or intellectual milieu: the narrator assumes that the reader will understand them, implying that he is a close associate.'⁹² This narrative technique also resembles that of Soviet ironic writing in the 1960s and 1970s. As Anatoly Vishevsky has stated of Soviet irony in this period:

The writer is usually present in the story as an all-knowing, all-understanding ironic narrator. The writer feels pity for the story's heroes, but also an element of self-pity for common human life makes them one. The special relationship between the writer and the reader and their common ironic worldview brings to life ironic prose that is based on a specific cultural text. This text, though, was limited in its application and identical stories and characters that were created as a result eventually brought the subgenre to its natural end.⁹³

Despite Katerli's use of multiple voices and points of view, some of her stories are told primarily from one point of view. 'Pervaia noch', for example, concentrates solely on Pavel Kravtsov and his thoughts about his relationship with his recently deceased wife. 'Vse chto ugodno' is told from the perspective of Sergei as he relates his perception of his mysterious experiences with the elderly inebriated woman. In addition, 'Okno', 'Chudovishche', 'Kusok neba', 'Prokhor', 'Zeze', 'Kontsert', 'Pobeda', and 'Sorokopud' are told in first-person narration. The first-person narrators of Katerli's fantasy prose are introspective and thoughtful individuals. For example, the central protagonists in 'Sorokopud' states: 'С утра все было вполне обычно, если иметь в виду обычность в простом, житейском смысле, потому что, конечно, в глубине своей это был отнюдь не обыкновенный рядовой день – это был Первый день после того, что со мной случилось.'⁹⁴ Thus, Katerli's focus on one point of view and her use

of first-person narration emphasises her concentration on the individual protagonist, which, as will be seen in Chapter Four, is typical of her realistic prose.

CHARACTERISATION

The characters of Nina Katerli's fantasy prose come from a variety of cultural and educational backgrounds. Many of her protagonists are purely fantastical, such as the magician in 'Ozero', the sky in 'Kusok neba', and 'Death' in 'Nagornaia desiat'. Several of Katerli's characters are animals or creatures, such as the elephant in 'Prokhor', the monster in 'Chudovishche', and the insect in 'Okho-kho'. However, whether her characters are insects, monsters, witches, elderly women, or middle-aged men, they are, with a few exceptions, 'sovki', average Soviet people. In this respect, Katerli's characters, as I. Prussakova has noted, resemble those found in the fantasy works of Evgenii Shvarts.⁹⁵ Similarly, as Amanda Metcalf has noted of Shvarts's characters: 'However "unreal" the setting, there are no "unreal" characters—all live and act in a perfectly rational manner, although the logic governing their actions may be of the fairy-tale variety.'⁹⁶

V. Kukushkin has commented that Nina Katerli has no positive or negative heroes.⁹⁷ She does, however, juxtapose within one story different types of characters with differing responses to life's difficulties and dilemmas. Katerli's characters are as varied and numerous as are her themes. They range from real people with names, families and occupations, to magicians, insects and tractors. Katerli's characters include men and women, both young and old. Some characters do not have names. For example, one of the central characters in 'Bezotvetnaia liubov'' is simply referred to as 'the girl'. Other

characters have names that represents their characteristics, such as those in ‘Nagornaia desiat’’. The characters in ‘Kazhdyi polden’ na ploshchadi’ , are straight out of a fairy-tale with names such as: ‘Old Man’ (‘Starik’), ‘Witch’ (‘Ved’ma’), and ‘Wind’ (‘Veter’). Katerli’s use of fantasy and fairy-tale-like characters portrays the magical and unexplained elements of everyday life. Katerli tells stories of ‘real’ life, but does not develop her characters as whole beings. These human characters are powerless before larger characters and forces: magicians, wind, a piece of sky coming through the window in ‘Kusok neba’.

Nina Katerli does not judge her characters for their lack of success or for their simple lives. On the contrary, she sympathises with their difficulties and struggles. A. Zhitinskii states that Nina Katerli sympathises with her characters.⁹⁸ Katerli sympathises even with her evil and cruel characters. The monster in ‘Chudovishche’ is a miserable, spiteful character, who, toward the end of the story, is portrayed as a lonely, sad creature deserving of pity:

Последнее время с Чудовищем что-то творится, не узнать его: глаз из красного сделался каким-то грязно-рыжим, шерсть поседела – одним словом, стареет наша Чудовище. На службу оно теперь не ходит, сиди целыми днями у себя в комнате и то пищет, то вздыхает. И вот сегодня тетя Иля как раз сказала, что лучше бы уж все оставалось по-старому, а то у нее душа болит смотреть на Чудовище и сил нет больше нет подметать за ним чешую.⁹⁹

This sympathy may arise from Katerli's own strong religious beliefs, which, like the beliefs of Lev Tolstoi's and Feder Dostoevskii's, may affect her attitude towards her characters. In addition, this compassion may arise from Katerli's own desire to come to terms with her past beliefs and allegiance to Communism. Katerli believes that there is always a justification for people's actions. We have no knowledge of what may drive people to commit certain acts unless we walk in their shoes. The difficulty of life has turned many people into monsters, and we are called to have compassion for their plight. One should thus pity the small man with his petty problems and his petty concerns. In addition, it is important to note that Katerli's characters do not exist independent of their origins or environment. The Monster acts monstrously because he is a monster. That is his role in this world. Perhaps peace and happiness in the inner world are found through acceptance of the limitations of the outer world. In essence, the characters are buffeted by fate and life circumstances and, in this light, their actions can neither be praised nor condemned.

Many of Katerli's characters are sensitive, hopeless dreamers, romantics, and defenceless creatures victimised by a harsh and threatening world. Emil' in 'Kollektsiia doktora Emil'ia' is portrayed as an idealist and hopeless romantic. Okho-kho, an even more insignificant creature, was 'совсем маленький, меньше пуговицы от пальто.'¹⁰⁰ One way in which the sensitivity of these characters is depicted is through their awareness and observations of nature. Several of Katerli's heroes find solace in nature, in nature's beauty and strength. These characters quite often find themselves thinking about nature, about the weather, about animals. Their sensitivity to nature is both a metaphor

for their grander thoughts about life and about themselves, as well as a representation of their sensitivity as individuals. After Firfarov and the tractor part ways, for example, Firfarov's thoughts drift to the day's weather: 'Мокрый холодный ветер дунул из подворотни, и он вдруг вспомнил, что завтра-то уже осень, первое сентября, Фирфаров постоял еще немного у ворот, поежился и пошел домой.'¹⁰¹ 'Zelev' begins with a description of nature:

В большой полынье справа от моста с достоинством плавали дикие утки. Со знанием дела они вылавливали из воды хлеб, который поступал туда в изрядном количестве с набережной, где собралась толпа. По краям полыньи мрачно сидели грязные голуби.¹⁰²

'Doroga' ends with Ivan walking through the forest with his dog after hearing the reading of his father's will: 'Солнце село, погасла полоска над лесом. Иван с Альфой отправились домой через мост... Неожиданно закрапал дождь... Дождь был тугой и теплый, совсем еще летний, грибной.'¹⁰³ Pavel Kravtsov in 'Pervaia noch'' ponders his relationship with his deceased wife and other related thoughts about life while on a walk. However, many of his thoughts focus much more on his observations of nature rather than on his thoughts about his life: 'Небо розовело между ветками. Большое дерево, под которым он спасался от дождя, отсюда хорошо было видно.'¹⁰⁴

Katerli's characters do not perform amazing feats or exhibit outstanding strength or courage. A. Zhitinskii accurately describes Katerli's protagonist as "маленького

человека” – бесталанного, неудачливого, стремящегося эту бесталанность и неудачливость преодолеть.’¹⁰⁵ Her protagonists are average people with weaknesses and failings. They have simple and often petty problems, and they have no grand or global statements to express. Katerli’s characters bear no resemblance to the heroes of socialist realist novels. Ivanov in Katerli’s ‘Volshebnaia lampa’ is a simple engineer, whose life changes when he discovers a magic lamp in his attic. The protagonist in ‘Bezotvetnaia liubov’ is a saleswoman who lives an empty and lonely life. Laptev in ‘Kollektsiia doktora Emil’ia’ is a science researcher who has no friends and is a failure in his personal and professional life.

Although Nina Katerli has a few female protagonists and narrators in her fantasy stories, such as in ‘Okno’ ‘Chudovishche’ and ‘Den’ rozhdeniia’, the majority of her protagonists and characters are men. In fact, Katerli’s presentation of women in her fantasy stories follows many of the stereotypes of traditional Russian literature, such as in Karamzin’s *Bednaia Liza* (*Poor Liza*) (1792). For example, the young woman in ‘Ozero’ and the wife of ‘Vliublennyi’ in ‘Nagornaia desiat’ epitomise the self-sacrificing woman, who is willing to die for the sake of the man she loves. Moreover, Katerli’s male protagonists often express traditional as well as negative perceptions of women. For example, commenting on women’s views of romance, the narrator in ‘Sorokopud’ states: ‘Но женщины, все до единой, даже те, которые изображают из себя интеллектуалок, верят этой чепухе безоговорочно.’¹⁰⁶ Katerli does not appear to be concerned with women or women’s issues in particular in her fantasy prose. Although, as will be discussed in Chapter Three, Katerli’s underground works, which were written in the 1970s, have more female protagonists and deal with more issues relating specifically

to women, it was not until the 1980s, during her realistic prose period, that Katerli began to focus specifically on female characters and women's issues.

As stated earlier, by the end of Katerli's fantasy prose period, her works had become much less fantastic and more realistic. In particular, this is evident in her increasing focus on the introspective 'realistic' protagonist. For example, 'Okno' tells the story of a young woman reflecting on her childhood and her relationship with her parents. In 'Den' rozhdeniia' an elderly woman remembers her childhood and contemplates her relationship with her daughter. 'Doroga' focuses primarily on a father and one of his sons, and their inability to understand one another. As these characters become more realistic, with fuller histories, backgrounds, and desires, they are no less buffeted by circumstances, but the element of individual, moral choice may be seen to have a greater role in their lives and fates.

CONCLUSION

Nina Katerli's fantasy prose incorporates many Russian and western traditions of fantasy writing. In particular, the close relation between fantasy and reality in Katerli's stories is reminiscent of works by such authors as Aleksandr Pushkin, E.T.A.. Hoffman, and Nikolai Gogol. The presence of reality in Katerli's fantasy prose, and her depiction of everyday life also calls to mind the 'byt' and urban prose of Iurii Trifonov, the characteristics of which, as will be discussed in Chapter Four, become even more evident in Katerli's realistic prose stories. Her narrative technique style of 'skaz' is reminiscent of the narrative styles of Mikhail Bulgakov, Vladimir Nabokov, and Mikhail Zoshchenko.

In addition, Katerli's fantasy prose reflects Andrei Siniavskii's notion that fantasy has hypotheses rather than aims.¹⁰⁷ Katerli's fantasy works generally reject notions of political, historical, or sociological answers to society's ills. In most cases, she adopts an indifferent response to this world, only posing questions, airing concerns, and exploring the absurdities of life. Many of these absurdities are presented through the use of fantasy—a monster that terrorises his fellow communal flat tenants, a man who falls in love with a tractor, and a young woman who buys and then re-sells her 'unrequited love'. Thus the question remains—did Katerli use such 'Aesopian language' purely for aesthetic reasons, namely her desire to express absurdities and 'hypotheses', to use Siniavskii's term, or does 'Aesopian language' appear in direct response to a fear of censorship? Although Katerli claims that she wrote fantasy purely for aesthetic reasons, the existence of censorship must have been a contributing factor, since she gradually, as the political situation for writers became less dangerous, began to write more realistic, as opposed to fantastic, works. Accordingly, Lev Loseff claims: 'With the use of Aesopian language, Russian and Soviet writers were able to camouflage their political and ideological beliefs.'¹⁰⁸ He has also remarked: 'The existence of ideological censorship is the obvious precondition for the rise of Aesopian language in literature.'¹⁰⁹

At the same time, however, Katerli diverges from the fantasy tradition, if one may speak of a tradition, in many respects. In particular, Katerli's fantasy prose does not fit neatly within Nadia Peterson's definition of the 'fantastic decade', the mid-1970s to the mid-1980s.¹¹⁰ In fact, Joseph Mozur calls into question Peterson's choice of dates. He suggests: 'One could argue that it would be more appropriate to date the beginning of the fantastic era with its appearance [Mikhail Bulgakov's *Master i Margarita* (1966-1967)].

In that case one would speak in the plural—fantastic decades.’¹¹¹ Katerli began writing her first fantasy stories in the early 1970s, and by the early 1980s was already writing her most realistic stories. In fact, even in the mid-1970s, Katerli was writing her two underground works—‘Treugol’nik Barsukova’ (‘The Barsukov Triangle’) (1981) and ‘Chervets’ (‘The Worm’) (1990)—which, as will be discussed in the next chapter, are very realistic. In addition, although Katerli’s use of ‘skaz’ resembles the narrative style of the Moscow scenes in Bulgakov’s Master i Margarita, her fantasy prose lacks the complex plots, the length, and political themes of Bulgakov’s work. Nor do Katerli’s fantasy works bear any resemblance to the dystopian fiction of Evgenii Zamiatin or the science fiction of the Strugatskii brothers.¹¹²

Katerli had begun experimenting with realism in the mid-1970s. Although, it is difficult to know how much her motivation was political and how much was aesthetic. In a certain sense, Katerli found herself at a fork in the road. As Veniamin Kaverin has remarked:

Направо – психологическая проза, современная и одновременно традиционная, налево – фантастическая игра, основанная на перевернутых представлениях. Направо – наблюдение, психологическое исследование, логика характеров. Налево – воображение, алогизм, несоответствие синтаксического и смыслового движения речи. На какой дороге же ждет успех и признание?.¹¹³

Similarly, F. Chirskov has noted: 'Можно сказать, что реальное для Н. Катерли более многозначно, чем фантастическое. Трудно сказать, как будет развиваться ее талант, какие его стороны будут доминировать – фантастика или реализм.'¹¹⁴ With hindsight, it can now be seen that Katerli went down the path of realism, never abandoning, however, her origins in fantasy.

Notes

¹ E. Kanchukova, 'Priem i mirovozrenie', Literaturnoe obozrenie, no.5, 1990, p.37.

² Nadya Peterson, Subversive Imaginations: Fantastic Prose and the End of Soviet Literature, 1970s-1990s (Colorado, 1997), p.4. Peterson refers to the 'fantastic decade' as the mid-1970s to the mid-1980s.

³ As will be discussed below, Katerli's play 'Kazhdyi polden' na ploshchadi' ('Each Mid-day at the Square') (1977) and her story 'Groza' ('Thunderstorm') (1975), unlike the majority of Katerli's fantasy works, contain political and philosophical themes.

⁴ Barbara Heldt, 'Gynoglasnost: Writing the Feminine', in Perestroika and Soviet Women, ed. by Mary Buckley (Cambridge, 1992), p.169. By contrast, Heldt writes: 'Masculine writing is about how all the big things go wrong.'

⁵ Svetlana Carsten, 'Divided Loyalties: the Generation of the 1960s in the Soviet Literature', Ph.D. thesis (University of Bradford, 1998), p.33.

⁶ Robert Porter, Russia's Alternative Prose (Oxford, 1994), p.19.

⁷ Charles Rougle, 'On the "Fantastic Trend" in recent Soviet Prose', Slavic and East European Journal, vol.34, no.3, 1990, p.311.

⁸ Nina Katerli, personal interview, 1995.

⁹ Robert Porter, Russia's Alternative Prose, pp.191-2.

¹⁰ Nadya Peterson, Subversive Imaginations: Fantastic Prose and the End of Soviet Literature, 1970s-1990s, p.4.

¹¹ Amy Mandelker and Roberta Reed, 'Introduction', in The Supernatural in Slavic and Baltic Literature: Essays in Honor of Victor Terras, ed. by Amy Mandelker and Roberta Reed (Columbus, 1988), p.1.

¹² Marilyn Minto, 'Introduction', in Russian Tales of the Fantastic, ed. and trans. by Marilyn Minto (Bristol, 1994), p.xiii.

¹³ Tzvetan Todorov, The Fantastic: A Structural Approach to a Literary Genre, trans. by Richard Howard (New York, 1975), p.25.

¹⁴ Nina Katerli, personal interview, 1994.

- ¹⁵ A. Romin, 'Nina Katerli: "Inogda fantastika neobkhodima..." (newspaper article, full reference unavailable), 23 February 1990.
- ¹⁶ A. Zhitinskii, 'Svoe okno', Neva, no.1, 1982, p.163.
- ¹⁷ Elena Efros, 'O psikhologicheskoi osobennosti prozi Niny Katerli' (unpublished Master's dissertation, University of Petrozavodsk, 1988), p.10 and A. Romin, 'Nina Katerli: "Inogda fantastika neobkhodima..."'.
- ¹⁸ Leonid Pantelev, Personal Letter (unpublished, 1981).
- ¹⁹ Veniamin Kaverin, 'V krughe chteniia', Literaturnaia gazeta, 19 August 1981, p.1
- ²⁰ Neither Katerli nor I have been able to obtain a copy of 'Nash petukh', and thus, an analysis of the story will not be included in this study. In addition, I was unable to find a listing of the story in the Letopis' zhurnal'nykh stat'ei.
- ²¹ Similarly, neither Katerli nor I have been able to obtain a copy 'Dobro pozhalovat'', and an analysis of the story will not be included in this study. As with 'Nash petukh', I was unable to find a listing of 'Dobro pozhalovat'' in the Letopis' zhurnal'nykh stat'ei.
- ²² This title refers to the name of one of the characters.
- ²³ Elena Efros, 'O psikhologicheskoi osobennosti prozi Niny Katerli', pp.29-30.
- ²⁴ A 'pood' is an old Russian measurement, equivalent to approximately 16.38 kilograms.
- ²⁵ Frida Germanovna Katsass, personal interview, 1996.
- ²⁶ Frida Germanovna Katsass, personal interview, 1995.
- ²⁷ A. Romin, 'Nina Katerli: "Inogda fantastika neobkhodima..."'.
- ²⁸ Nina Katerli, personal interview, 1998.
- ²⁹ V.M. Akimov, 'O rukopisi "Nina Katerli. Chudovishche. Rasskazy"' (unpublished editorial critique, 1978), p.2
- ³⁰ V.M. Akimov, 'O rukopisi "Nina Katerli. Chudovishche. Rasskazy"', p.2
- ³¹ V. Kukushkin, 'Retenziia—"Chudovishche"', sbornik rasskazov, avtor N.S. Katerli' (unpublished editorial critique, 1978), p.1.
- ³² Nina Katerli, personal interview, 1995.
- ³³ Ewa M. Thompson, 'Fabula', in The Handbook of Russian Literature, ed. by Victor Terras (New Haven and London, 1985), p.133.
- ³⁴ Boris Tomashevskii, 'Thematics', in Russian Formalist Criticism, ed. by Paul A. Olson, trans. by Lee T. Lemon and Marion J. Reis (Lincoln, Nebraska, 1965), p.68.
- ³⁵ Ewa M. Thompson, 'Syuzhet', in The Handbook of Russian Literature, p.464.
- ³⁶ See the Introduction for a discussion of 'byt'.
- ³⁷ Edith Clowes, Russian Experimental Fiction: Resisting Ideology After Utopia (Princeton, 1993), p.74.
- ³⁸ Nina Katerli, 'Groza', Molodoi Leningrad (Leningrad, 1975), p.261.
- ³⁹ Anatoly Vishevsky, Soviet Literary Culture in the 1970s: The Politics of Irony (Gainesville and Tallahassee, 1993), p.91.
- ⁴⁰ Nina Katerli, 'Osen'', Molodoi Leningrad (Leningrad, 1975), p.262.
- ⁴¹ Unlike the majority of Katerli's fantasy works, these two stories are more about 'ideas', than about character or plot. As two of Katerli's earliest stories, this is perhaps a reflection of her initial burst of personal beliefs and convictions.
- ⁴² Victor Erlich, Twentieth Century Russian Literary Criticism (New Haven and London, 1975), p.82.

⁴³ The most commonly used example for Shklovskii's concept of 'ostranenie' is the scene in Lev Tolstoi's War and Peace, when Natasha visits the opera, and, unable to accept the opera as a work of art, she sees it as a farce.

⁴⁴ Nina Katerli, 'Pobeda', Avrora, no.11, 1976, p.79.

⁴⁵ Vladimir Propp as cited in L.M. O'Toole, Structure, Style and Interpretation in the Russian Short Story, (New Haven and London, 1982), p.114.

⁴⁶ Although Nina Katerli once claimed that she had not been influenced by any other writers, and that she writes in her own particular style, in a 1996 interview she commented that her fantasy prose was perhaps influenced by her readings of E.T.A Hoffmann, Nikolai Gogol, Franz Kafka, and Vladimir Nabokov, although she does not elaborate on the nature of this influence.

⁴⁷ Nina Katerli, 'Nagornaia desiat'', Okno (Leningrad, 1981), p.141.

⁴⁸ See the 'Characterisation' section for a discussion of the 'self-sacrificing' woman and the image of women generally in Katerli's fantasy prose.

⁴⁹ Nina Katerli, 'Nagornaia desiat'', p.145.

⁵⁰ For a discussion of the image of women in eighteenth-century and nineteenth-century Russian literature, see for example Joe Andrew, Women in Russian Literature 1780-1863 (Basingstoke, 1988). Examples of the nineteenth-century self-sacrificing woman can be seen in the characters of Elena in Ivan Turgenev's On the Eve (Nakanune) (1860) and Sonia in Fedor Dostoevskii's Crime and Punishment (Prestuplenie i nakazanie) (1866).

⁵¹ Nina Katerli, 'Sorokopud', Okno, p.72.

⁵² Elena Efros, 'O psikhologicheskoi osobennosti prozy Niny Katerli', p.61.

⁵³ Voices of Russian Women Tour (England, 1993). Katerli has stated that the character of the monster is based on a previous employer, who was domineering, controlling, and despised by his employees, but who, like the monster in Katerli's story, became rather weak and defenceless in his old age.

⁵⁴ V. Shklovskii, 'Sterne's *Tristram Shandy*: Stylistic Commentary', in Russian Formalist Criticism, p.57.

⁵⁵ An exception to this is, of course, 'Pobeda'.

⁵⁶ Nina Katerli, 'Pervaia noch'', Okno, p.189.

⁵⁷ Charles Rogle, 'On the "Fantastic Trend" in recent Soviet Prose', pp.313-9.

⁵⁸ Tamara Khmel'nitskaia, 'Pyl'tsa ot babochki, Nina Katerli "Okno" Sov.pis. 1981' (unpublished editorial critique, 1981), p.xiii.

⁵⁹ As stated above, exceptions to this are 'Kazhdyi polden na ploshchadi' and 'Groza'.

⁶⁰ Gary Saul Morson, The Boundaries of Genre: Dostoevsky's Diary of a Writer and the Traditions of Literary Utopia (Austin, 1981), p.3.

⁶¹ Nina Katerli, 'Okno', Okno, p.250.

⁶² Nina Katerli, 'Zeze', Okno, pp.244-5.

⁶³ Elena Efros, 'O psikhologicheskoi osobennosti prozy Niny Katerli', p.18.

⁶⁴ Nina Katerli, 'Kollektsiia doktora Emil'ia', p.86.

⁶⁵ Nina Katerli, 'Kusok neba', Okno, p.67.

⁶⁶ Nina Katerli, 'Ozero', Okno, p.249.

⁶⁷ Nina Katerli, 'Doroga', Okno, p.3.

⁶⁸ An exception would be the character 'Zhizneliub' in 'Nagornaia desiat'.

⁶⁹ Nina Katerli, 'Den' rozhdeniia', Okno, p.134.

⁷⁰ For examples of socialist realist classics, see Fedor Gladkov's Tsement (Cement) (1925) and Nikolai Ostrovskii's Kak zakalialas' stal' (How the Steel Was Tempered) (1932-4).

⁷¹ Andrei Siniavskii, Fantasticheskii mir Abrama Tertsa (New York, 1967), p.4

⁷² For further reading on 'narrated monologue', see Teresa Polowy, 'Russian Women Writing Alcoholism: the Sixties to the Present', in Post-Communism and the Body Politic, ed. by Ellen E. Berry (New York and London, 1995), p.291; and Rosalind Marsh, Gender and Russian Literature: New Perspectives (Cambridge, 1996), p.244.

⁷³ Teresa Polowy, 'Russian Women Writing Alcoholism: the Sixties to the Present', p.291.

⁷⁴ Edith Clowes, Russian Experimental Fiction: Resisting Ideology after Utopia, p.74.

⁷⁵ As stated above, 'Ozero', 'Groza', and 'Osen'' are two pages long.

⁷⁶ Nina Katerli, 'Doroga', p.4.

⁷⁷ Nina Katerli, 'Kollektsiia Doktora Emil'ia', Okno, p.66.

⁷⁸ L.M. O'Toole has used the term 'dissonant voices' of the numerous discordant voices that often occur in literary texts. See L.M. O'Toole, Structure, Style and Interpretation in the Russian Short Story, p.37.

⁷⁹ This narrative technique, as will be seen in Chapter Four, is more typical of Katerli's realistic prose.

⁸⁰ Nina Katerli, 'Doroga', p.5.

⁸¹ Tamara Khmel'nitskaia, 'Pyl'tsa ot babochki, Nina Katerli "Okno" Sov.pis. 1981', p.6.

⁸² Elena Efros, 'O psikhologicheskoi osobenostoi Niny Katerli', p.42.

⁸³ The narrators of Katerli's fantasy prose are also similar to those of Andrei Siniavskii, whose narrator, as Erika Haber has noted, is 'often a writer himself, who frequently plays a double role as both character and narrator, creating a highly self-conscious text.' See Erika Haber, 'In Search of the Fantastic in Tertz's Fantastic Realism', Slavic and East European Journal, vol.42, no.2, 1998, p.255.

⁸⁴ A.B. Murphy, 'Introduction', in Michail Zoshchenko, Rasskazy dvadtsatykh godov, ed. by A.B. Murphy (Herts, 1976), p.14. See Hector Blair and Militsa Greene, 'Introduction', in Mikhail Zoshchenko, Ludi (Cambridge, 1967).

⁸⁵ Carol Any, Boris Eikhenbaum: Voices of a Russian Formalist (Stanford, 1994), p.134.

⁸⁶ Sidney Monas, 'Introduction', in Scenes From the Bathhouse and Other Stories of Communist Russia, by Mikhail Zoshchenko, trans. By Sidney Monas (Ann Arbor, 1961), p.vii.

⁸⁷ Nina Katerli, 'Kusok neba', Okno, p.66.

⁸⁸ Nina Katerli, 'Volshebnaia lampa', p.62.

⁸⁹ Vladimir Nabokov, Invitation to a Beheading, trans. by Dmitri Nabokov, 1959 (New York, 1956), p.12.

⁹⁰ Nina Katerli, 'Volshebnaia lampa', p.51.

⁹¹ Nina Katerli, 'Zelev', p.201.

⁹² Geoffrey Hosking, Beyond Socialist Realism: Soviet Fiction since Ivan Denisovich (London, 1980), p.25.

⁹³ Anatoly Vishevsky, Soviet Literary Culture in the 1970s: The Politics of Irony, p.91.

-
- ⁹⁴ Nina Katerli, 'Sorokopud', Okno, p.72.
- ⁹⁵ I. Prussakova, 'Iasnost' avtorskogo chuvstva', Zvezda, vol.12, 1987, p.198.
- ⁹⁶ Amanda Metcalf, Evgenii Shvarts and His Fairy-Tales for Adults (Birmingham, 1979), p.2.
- ⁹⁷ V. Kukushkin, 'Retsenziia—"Chudovishche"', sbornik rasskazov, avtor N.S. Katerli', p.1.
- ⁹⁸ A. Zhitinskii, 'Svoe okno', Neva, vol.1, 1982, p.164.
- ⁹⁹ Nina Katerli, 'Chudovishche', p.61.
- ¹⁰⁰ Nina Katerli, 'Okho-kho', Okno, p.138.
- ¹⁰¹ Nina Katerli, 'Chelovek Firfarov i traktor', p.94.
- ¹⁰² Nina Katerli, 'Zeze' p.197.
- ¹⁰³ Nina Katerli, 'Doroga', p.45.
- ¹⁰⁴ Nina Katerli, 'Pervaia noch'', p.195.
- ¹⁰⁵ A. Zhitinskii, 'Svoe okno', Neva, vol.1, 1982, p.164.
- ¹⁰⁶ Nina Katerli, 'Sorokopud', p.199.
- ¹⁰⁷ On the other hand, unlike Andrei Siniavskii's works, Katerli's fantasy works do not appear blatantly or explicitly to overthrow or destroy the genre of Socialist Realism. Siniavskii, as Erika Haber has noted: 'subverts the tenets of Socialist Realism, which sought to relegate, simplify and prescribe the interpretation of literature for ideological purposes.' See Erika Haber, 'In Search of the Fantastic in Tertz's Fantastic Realism', p.254.
- ¹⁰⁸ Lev Loseff, On the Beneficence of Censorship: Aesopian Language in Modern Russian Literature, trans. by Jane Bobko (Munich, 1984), p.1.
- ¹⁰⁹ Lev Loseff, On the Beneficence of Censorship: Aesopian Language in Modern Russian Literature, p.4.
- ¹¹⁰ Nadya Peterson, Subversive Imaginations: Fantastic prose and the End of Soviet Literature, 1970s-1990s, p.4.
- ¹¹¹ Joseph P. Mozur, Review of Nadya L. Peterson, *Subversive Imaginations: Fantastic Prose and the End of Soviet Literature, 1970s-1990s*, Slavic Review, vol.56, no.4, 1997, p.823.
- ¹¹² During the years when Katerli was writing fantasy stories, she attended a literary discussion group, led by Boris and Arkadii Strugatskii. She states that she did not attend this group in order to copy their writing style, only to exchange ideas, to share and be in a literary environment. She did not stay in the group long because she soon realised that her writing was 'fantastic' rather than 'science fiction'. For further reading on Russian and Soviet science fiction women writers, see Diana Greene, 'An Asteroid of One's Own: Women Soviet Science Fiction Writers', Irish Slavonic Studies, no.8, 1987, pp.127-39.
- ¹¹³ B. Kaverin, 'V krughe chteniia', p.1.
- ¹¹⁴ F. Chirskov, 'Zhivoe—k zhivomu, N. Katerlil Okno. Sovetskii pisatel'' (unpublished editorial critique, 1982), p.4.

CHAPTER THREE

NINA KATERLI'S UNDERGROUND WORKS

Я живу в непредсказуемое время в непредсказуемой стране.¹

Nina Katerli, like many Soviet writers of the Brezhnev period, was forced to write and publish in the underground. In this chapter, we will examine her two underground works: 'Treugol'nik Barsukova' ('The Barsukov Triangle') (1981) and 'Chervets' ('The Worm') (1990). As in Chapter Two, this examination will begin with a review of the historical background of these stories, particularly the reasons why Katerli was compelled to publish these two stories outside of official channels. This introductory section will be followed by a textual analysis of these stories. Finally, the chapter will discuss the relevance of these stories to the entire body of Katerli's work.

While Nina Katerli was writing the fantasy stories that would constitute Okno (The Window), (1981), she also began writing her two most controversial works—'Treugol'nik Barsukova' and 'Chervets'. 'Treugol'nik Barsukova' investigates the lives of over twenty inhabitants of one Leningrad communal flat and the various issues—great and small—that make up their lives: relationships, single-motherhood, adultery, the price of fish, prostitution, anti-Semitism, emigration, queues, death, war, and political disillusionment. Katerli has described 'Treugol'nik Barsukova' as: 'правдивое отображение действительности, не пытающееся замаскировать жесткую реальность жизни в семидесятые годы.'² Carl Proffer has called 'Treugol'nik Barsukova' 'an emotional story of love, betrayal, and Soviet mores.'³ In the words of Deming Brown,

'Treugol'nik Barsukova' 'is a harsh episodic portrayal of a neighborhood of ordinary Leningraders as they live rather brutish, occasionally violent lives in close quarters, queue up at food stores, drink and switch sexual partners.'⁴ Katerli's second underground work, 'Chervets', explores corruption, inefficiency, and anti-Semitism in the Soviet science industry, by depicting the daily lives of several science researchers.⁵

'Treugol'nik Barsukova' and 'Chervets' represented both a stylistic and political shift for Katerli. When Katerli had first begun writing, her primary concerns were to produce works not only of a certain aesthetic quality, but ones that would also be published by Gosizdat, the Communist Party's publishing agency. She states, however, that by the mid-1970s, she had acquired sufficient artistic and moral confidence to express her ideas and beliefs more directly, regardless of the consequences:

Я перестала писать для кого-то [для государства]. Я начала писать для себя, чтобы только потом узнать смогу ли публиковаться здесь, публиковаться со скандалом, или мои произведения останутся лежать в столе и будут прочитаны когда-нибудь в другое время.⁶

Katerli states that she knew that she would never be able to publish 'Treugol'nik Barsukova' in the Soviet Union: 'Я знала, что не могу опубликовать его здесь... жизнь в то время была очень трудной, так что я даже не пыталась опубликовать его здесь до перестройки'⁷ Shortly after writing 'Treugol'nik Barsukova', Katerli relates that she gave the manuscript to a friend, hoping to have it published abroad. As

discussed in Chapter One, in 1981, six years after writing ‘Treugol’nik Barsukova’, Katerli learned of its publication in the American journal Glagol. The story was subsequently translated and published as ‘The Barsukov Triangle’ in 1985, in the anthology of Soviet literature The Barsukov Triangle, the Two-Toned Blond and Other Stories, edited by Carl and Ellendea Proffer. It was most likely the 1985 publication of ‘Treugol’nik Barsukova’ that first brought Katerli to the attention of the West. The publication history of ‘Chervets’ is similar to that of ‘Treugol’nik Barsukova’. After several vain attempts to publish it in various Leningrad journals, Katerli finally decided to circulate the story in ‘samizdat’ (self-publishing) in 1981.⁸ ‘Chervets’ was later published in the Soviet Union in 1990, in Katerli’s collection of stories, Kurzal.

Nina Katerli finally published ‘Treugol’nik Barsukova’ in Russia in 1991, re-titled as ‘Sennaia Ploshchad’ (‘Haymarket Square’) and published it again in 1992, as one of the stories in her book of the same title, Sennaia Ploshchad.⁹ Nina Katerli claims that she changed the title at the suggestion of friends and colleagues who believed the new title to be more suitable to the true meaning of the story. She has also stated that the new title ‘не имел ничего общего со скандалом [связанным с заграничными публикациями], потому что время было уже другое.’¹⁰ It is significant to note, however, the difference in the meanings of the two titles. Both of these titles are names of the same geographical area—the town square in the centre of St. Petersburg named ‘Sennaia Ploshchad’. The first title, ‘Treugol’nik Barsukova’, represents the mystical and magical aspect of the story, in which numerous people and things are lost, and so is an allusion to the infamous Bermuda Triangle. The second title, ‘Sennaia Ploshchad’, is the real name of the town square and perhaps reflects Katerli’s stylistic transition from fantasy to reality. The title

change may also indicate Katerli's desire to move with, or to be seen to move with, the times. The present title of 'Sennaia Ploshchad', which is the pre-Revolutionary name of 'Ploshchad' Mira' (Peace Square), is perhaps related to the fact that, in the early 1990s, the Soviet names of many streets, palaces, and town squares were replaced with their pre-Revolutionary names. Because 'Treugol'nik Barsukova' was the story's original title, and because it carries a thematic meaning, I have chosen to refer to the story by its original title.

'Treugol'nik Barsukova' and 'Chervets' had to be published underground for several reasons. Although Nina Katerli had begun experimenting with several literary techniques during her fantasy prose period, such as shifting point of view and non-linear chronology, 'Treugol'nik Barsukova' and 'Chervets', as will be discussed further in the chapter, were far more experimental, and thus, more likely to invite controversy. As Carl Proffer has summarised the official line on prohibited literary techniques:

'Stream of consciousness is out...detail and self-analysis are impossible. The use of grotesque and fantastic must be held to a bare minimum...chronology cannot be too disorderly let alone obliterated...departures from normal chronology must be reconstructable without much page turning.'¹¹

Likewise, the themes of 'Treugol'nik Barsukova' concern the then taboo political issues of anti-Semitism, emigration, Zionism, and Soviet governmental corruption. 'Chervets' was written in deliberate contrast to Soviet 'science prose', a genre which sought to play

an important role in the Soviet Union's development of its national science industry. As

Rosalind Marsh has remarked of 'science prose':

Since the 1930s, the Soviet authorities have exploited all the means of communication, including literature, in their extensive propaganda campaign for science and technology, which aims at creating an increased supply of scientific personnel and at spreading a knowledge of science among the population.¹²

TEXTUAL ANALYSIS OF 'TREUGOL'NIK BARSUKOVA'

PLOT

'Treugol'nik Barsukova' tells the story of numerous characters living in one communal flat in Leningrad, exploring not only the difficulties of their daily lives, but their deeper philosophical and emotional concerns. As Helena Goscilo has observed generally of Katerli's writing:

Nina Katerli...recreates in concrete detail modern urban settings, against the background of which she explores romantic ties, family problems, communal living, and the inconsistencies and irrational destructive involutions of the human psyche.¹³

Like the 'fabulas' and 'siuzhets' of Katerli's fantasy stories, the 'fabula' and 'siuzhet' of 'Treugol'nik Barsukova' function independently—the former describing the concerns of everyday life and the latter addressing introspective issues.¹⁴ However, unlike the 'fabulas' and 'siuzhets' of Katerli's fantasy stories, the 'fabula' and 'siuzhet' of 'Treugol'nik Barsukova' are less linear, and are therefore more complicated. For example, the 'fabula' of 'Treugol'nik Barsukova' does not focus on a particular character or story line. Rather, the story is a montage or collection of story lines, which at times intersect, and at other times are unrelated. Consequently, rather than having one 'fabula', 'Treugol'nik Barsukova' can be said to contain several 'fabulas'. The story also lacks a clear beginning and end; there is no climax of action or denouement. The 'fabula' simply records the real lives of real people, thereby revealing the monotonous nature of life, suggesting that one day is just like the next, filled with the same joys, sorrows, and difficulties.

In her effort to provide a realistic depiction of everyday urban life, Katerli sets this story within a very specific geographic location—the city limits of Leningrad. Katerli meticulously describes local streets, shops, and buildings—all of which are instantly recognisable to anyone familiar with the city. In fact, as stated above, the title itself refers to a specific location—Leningrad's Haymarket Square:

Этот треугольник расположен в центре города, а именно: на Сенной площади под названием площадь мира. Вершина его приходится как раз на специализированный рыбный магазин “Океан”, где каждое утро толкуются доверчивые любители селедки, не ведающие где они стоят. Другие углы такие: здание станции метро, воздвигнутые на месте упраздненной с лица земли церкви Успения Пресвятой Богородицы – раз, и автобусный вокзал - два.¹⁵

Since the nineteenth century, when the square was the venue of prostitutes, drunks and criminals, it has had a reputation as a dangerous and squalid area. As stated earlier, the story’s original title alludes to the infamous Bermuda Triangle. Also called the Devil’s Triangle, the Bermuda Triangle is an area of ocean just off the southeastern coast of Florida where numerous ships and aircraft have reputedly mysteriously disappeared. Located in the centre of town, the Barsukov Triangle, like the Bermuda Triangle, represents an area of mystery, danger, and disappearance. It acts like a magnet, drawing people toward it, toward the bus stop, the fish store, the metro station, and, amid this commotion of people and activity, people and things disappear.

‘Treugol’nik Barsukova’ consists of three chapters divided into a total of twenty-four subchapters, some of which are as short as a paragraph. This layout enables Katerli, as Helena Goscilo has noted, to employ ‘inexplicable shifts in locale and point of view, radical temporal jumps, [and] unexpected juxtaposition.’¹⁶ It is almost as if Katerli is using a film projector to pan the entire communal flat, taking note of every detail of these

people's daily lives. Her focus on the daily concerns of her protagonists is established in the first few sentences of the story:

Мария Сидоровна Тютинина, по обыкновению, встала в восемь, позавтракала геркулесовой кашей, вымыла посуду за собой и мужем и отправилась в угловой “низок”, где накануне определенно обещали с утра давать тресковое филе.¹⁷

Each of the characters suffers from one or many emotional or physical afflictions. The character Roza L'vovna Kats expresses the story's sardonic sentiment: ‘Каждому когда-нибудь достается настоящее страдание.’¹⁸ Another character, Natal'ia Ivanovna Kopeikina copes with loneliness after her only child has abandoned her. Antonina Bodrova is in love with an alcoholic who dislikes her Jewish son. Aleksandr Petukhov wants to emigrate from Russia. Fira Kats and her husband disagree about the role that their identity as Jews plays in their lives. The Tiutins are an elderly couple struggling to survive on their pensions. Their daughter, Anna Tiutina, is trying to raise her children on her own, after her husband has left her for a younger woman, and Barsukov is an aging alcoholic who is going mad. At times, many of the story's ‘fabulas’ intersect. For example, Aleksandr Petukhov and his neighbour Fira Kats both leave their spouses and emigrate to Israel. Moreover, several of the older women in the flat gather frequently to shop and talk about the dramas and activities that take place in their communal flat.

Throughout the story, however, Katerli develops other ‘fabulas’ that reach neither a climax nor a conclusion. The story ends with the funeral of Petr Tiutin and the narrator's

stream of consciousness thoughts about life, death, and loss. It is significant that Katerli concludes 'Treugol'nik Barsukova' with a funeral. There is finality; there is an end, but there are no answers, no resolution. The survivors are left to ponder unsolved mysteries and quandaries of life until they meet their own end, whenever and however that might come. Until then, life will drag on, day by indistinguishable day, consumed with caring for children and grandchildren, queues, shops, divorce, and adultery.

The 'fabula' of 'Treugol'nik Barsukova' incorporates both fantasy and reality in its depiction of everyday life, primarily, as will be discussed below, in the scenes involving the Barsukov Triangle. It is the presence of fantasy that creates an atmosphere of confusion and uncertainty, which, to these characters, is as 'real' in their lives as are the conditions of their flat and the long queue to buy fish. Thus, rather than being a purely 'fantasy' story, 'Treugol'nik Barsukova' is a realistic story with elements of fantasy. The presence of fantasy in the story does not weaken, but rather intensifies Katerli's themes of disorientation and turmoil, making 'Treugol'nik Barsukova' one of her most powerful stories.¹⁹

As discussed in Chapter Two, the 'siuzhet' and 'fabula' often have different chronologies. In 'Treugol'nik Barsukova', the time sequence of the 'fabula' covers a relatively short period of time, approximately six months. The 'siuzhet', however, takes place over a much broader time span in which, through the use of flashback, we discover the backgrounds of these characters. We learn about Roza Kats's husband, who went to fight in World War Two and never returned. The young Roza assumed that her husband had been killed, and raised her son as the widow of a veteran. Forty years later, she learns that he had simply fallen in love with another woman and decided to begin a new

life with her. We learn the history of Anna Tiutina's relationship with her ex-husband. When the story begins, Anna is a single-mother, struggling to support her children. We learn that her husband left her for a young socialite and now refuses to play any role in the lives of his children.

We also discover the background of Natal'ia Ivanovna Kopeikina's relationship with her son Oleg, who has become a criminal and, after years of verbal abuse, has finally abandoned her.²⁰ Kopeikina spoiled and doted upon her son, and perhaps her selfless attitude played a part in creating a selfish and apathetic individual. The narrator comments:

Наталья Ивановна Копейкина вырастила сына одна. Являясь медсестрой, всю жизнь она работала на полторы ставки и часто брала отпуск деньгами, чтобы у мальчика было все не хуже других детей, которые растут в благополучных семьях с отцами.²¹

Although the action of the story takes place in the present day, Katerli rounds out these characters by detailing their life stories, thereby giving context and understanding to their present actions and emotions and also revealing the narrator's sympathy and compassion for these characters.

THEMES

'Treugol'nik Barsukova' deals with the theme of loss in its various manifestations. As stated above, the title itself represents a 'real' place where, like the Moscow scenes of Mikahil Bulgakov's Master i Margarita (The Master and Margarita) (1967-8), numerous mysterious events occur and several people disappear. Barsukov, an aging alcoholic, is the first person to disappear in the Triangle. Moments before disappearing, he telephones Lazar' Kats:

Алло, - раздался далекий голос Барсукова, когда Лазарь наконец подошел к телефону. – Алло! Слушайте и записывайте для науки. Говорит Барсуков из треугольника. Я гибну. СОС. Местоположения в пространстве определить не могу. Сколько времени – тоже не знаю. Выхода отсюда нету и мгла... мгла необыкновенная. Сплошная. Бело-зеленая. Видимости никакой. Гибну... Темно и выхода нет. Гибну смертью храбрых во славу...²²

Barsukov speaks as if he is a pilot who has lost his way in a terrible storm, and who knows that he will soon die. It is unclear how or why Barsukov disappears. Perhaps he drinks himself to death. Perhaps he is killed, or maybe he simply goes mad. The mystery is never solved. Perhaps his disappearance symbolises life's many inexplicable

happenings, or maybe it is symbolic of the unexplained ‘disappearances’ of intellectuals, politicians, and dissidents that occurred in the Soviet Union.

Oleg, Natal’ia Kopeikina’s son, is another person who disappears in the Barsukov Triangle. A number of the women from the flat are doing their shopping when they see Oleg being taken away by the police. Suddenly, a green mist arises, and amidst the chaos of the people in the busy square, the women appear to experience a momentary fainting spell:

Антонина внезапно почувствовала, что в глазах у нее темнеет, ноги отнимаются, кругом зеленая мгла, как с хорошей поддачи, и что она не соображает, где находится и зачем. Сколько времени продолжалось такое состояние, Антонина никогда потом сказать не могла, но когда очнулась, увидела, что сидит на скамейке около автобусного вокзала, а рядом с ней сидят и Наталья Ивановна, и Дуся, обе бледные, не в себе и без сумок... Посидев с полчаса, придя в себя и переговорив, они решили все же ничего никому не рассказывать, все равно не поверят и еще засмеют.²³

These women, unlike Barsukov, do not disappear themselves. Rather, they are witnesses to Oleg’s disappearance. Like Barsukov, the women are surrounded by a ‘greenish fog’, that obstructs their vision, and that takes away their memory of the entire incident.

Perhaps the green fog is symbolic of their self-deception.²⁴

Death is perhaps the most profound manifestation of loss. Death is portrayed not only as a form of loss, but also as a force that is both incomprehensible and that renders human beings powerless. Petr Tiutin, an aging World War Two Veteran, like 'Zhizneliub' in 'Nagornaia desiat'' ('Mountain Street, Number Ten') (1976), fears the uncertainty of death. Contemplating his own death, Tiutin thinks: 'Думал и вдруг так расхотелось ему помирать, так стало страшно и неохота провалиться из этого уютного, обжитого мира куда-то в тьму, где наверняка ничего хорошего нету.'²⁵ The narrator expresses a similar sentiment after Tiutin's death:

Что ждет нас там, куда мы все попадем, когда наши дела здесь кончатся? Никто ни разу не дал окончательного ответа на этот вечный вопрос, мог бы теперь, в качестве очевидца, ответить на него Петр Васильевич Тютин, но молчит. Не потому ли молчит, что знает такое, чего живым знать раньше времени не положено? И не потому ли, не затем ли, чтоб поставить на место тех, кому постоянно не терпится, всегда так надменно-загадочны лица мертвых?...²⁶

Later, the narrator comments:

Пусть они все вернуться, все кого мы потеряли по собственной вине, по легкомыслию, слепоте, трусости и равнодушию, кого не захотели вовремя понять, не сумели защитить, простить, не

смогли удержать, и вот уже подхватила их и, крутя, засосала черная воронка – прошлое. Сколько таких ‘черных дыр’ на пути, пройденном каждым из нас? Они не зарастают травой, их не заносит песком, не засыпает снегом, они не заживают, становятся рубцами. А между тем, и старость недалеко. Все быстрее проходят долгие зимы и мелькают короткие весны, все чаще и длиннее бессонные ночи.²⁷

The narrator also expresses a sense of regret for mistakes made during the life of a loved one, and a frustration with the inability to correct one's mistakes. Moreover, although death is portrayed as all-powerful, the narrator appears to feel that these mistakes somehow contributed to or were responsible for the death of a loved one. Thus, the narrator's comment represents a tormented inner struggle concerning the issue of death. Mariia Tiutina, on the other hand, accepts the inevitability of death: ‘...сколько жить-то осталось? Ну, год еще, ну – два... Через две зимы... Ничего, она подождет, потерпит.’²⁸ Perhaps Tiutina is resigned to death because she has recently lost her husband, and views death as a return to the man she loves.

Unlike much of Katerli's prose fiction, ‘Treugol'nik Barsukova’ discusses certain political themes. In addition to addressing the ‘byt’ and emotional and psychological concerns of her characters, Katerli also speaks to the political and social difficulties facing them.²⁹ For example, in a reference to the Bermuda Triangle, the narrator comments:

Бермудский треугольник, по счастью, от нас далеко, тысячи миль до него и десятки надежных границ, и поэтому нам на него наплевать, он для нас вроде бабы Яги или как космические пришельцы, про которых мы ничего не знаем. Нам и без Бермудского треугольника есть чего бояться: войны с Китаем, тяжелой продолжительной болезни, бандитов, отпущенных по амнистии, своего непосредственного начальника и еще кого-то неведомого, кто не ест и не спит, а денно и нощно дежурит у нашего телефонного провода, чтобы узнать, что мы говорим о погоде.³⁰

Not only do these characters struggle to put food on their table and to maintain harmonious family relationships, they are also faced with the terrors of living in a system defined by suspicion, secrecy, and intimidation.

As a result, several of the protagonists of 'Treugol'nik Barsukova' are disillusioned with Communism, and, in essence, have lost their belief and hope in the 'system'. In an obvious reference to Iosif Stalin and Lev Trotskii, the narrator states:

Один не очень уважаемый человек говорил, что счастье, мол, это максимальное соответствие действительности желаемому. Если отбросить наши с ним личные счета, то, может быть, он и прав? Все дело в том, что для кого – желаемое. Какая цель? А если не дубленка, а не Коммунизм? То-то. Но, с другой

стороны, есть мнение, что цель – ничто, а движение – все, и это уже не кто попало придумал, а какой-то классик, чуть ли не теоретик перманентной революции.³¹

Aleksandr Petukhov, a high-ranking government worker, is one such protagonist who is disillusioned and dissatisfied with his life in the Soviet Union, and he wants to emigrate.

While on a business trip to Bulgaria, he freely expresses his discontent:

Зачем их возят по заграницам, позорище одно! И изволь сидеть с ними у всех на виду в ресторане, среди немислимых двубортных пиджаков или жутких синтетических платьев с блестками! Изволь улыбаться, пить за то, что, дескать страна Болгария, а Россия лучше всех. Ну и сидели бы в своей России, в грязи и серости по уши! Так нет – им подавай Европу, а ты, как дурак, веселись тут с ними, лови на себе презрительные взгляды западных немцев, сидящих напротив... я не такой, как эти! Я все понимаю, мне смешно и противно смотреть на них так же как и вам... А где-то есть еще и Париж. Есть и Швейцария. И Штаты...³²

Petukhov is disgusted with his life as a government official. He is frustrated because he feels that he is living a lie, and he is frustrated because he has travelled enough to see what is outside the Soviet Union, but he is trapped inside his country. He is ashamed of

being a Soviet citizen, and soon he and Fira Kats plot to emigrate to Israel together. After reading this passage, it is understandable why Katerli did not believe that she would be able to publish 'Treugol'nik Barsukova' in the Soviet Union.

Katerli symbolises the powerlessness felt by her characters in her portrayal of Nature. Like the depiction of Nature in Katerli's fantasy stories 'Groza' ('Thunderstorm') (1975) and 'Osen'' ('Autumn') (1975), in 'Treugol'nik Barsukova' Nature is presented as a controlling and sadistic force which governs the destiny of human beings. The narrator states:

Было лето. Папила жала и взрывались ливни, тяжело тащились по пыльным, засыпанным тополиным пухом улицам 'беременные' поливальные машины, налетал ветер, то душный, то жгучий, то тяжелый и мокрый, будто скрученный холодным жгутом... природа, летом нахлынувшая на город всеми своими красками, звуками и запахами, теперь отступила. Как отлив, ушла далеко за окраины и будет существовать там до весны отдельно и замкнуто, когда в пустых лесах сыплются с деревьев и летят день за днем сухие листья.³³

This force of nature imposes itself upon the city, upon buildings and streets and people, and then, when it decides to, it departs, leaving behind itself, a wake of destruction. These storms exist in the city and in the countryside. They are inescapable. One is unable to combat its powers, and must simply accept and concede.

Another significant political theme in 'Treugol'nik Barsukova' is anti-Semitism.³⁴ As Soviet Jews, Fira and Lazar' Kats have experienced anti-Semitism their entire lives, and it is this issue that finally drives Fira to leave Lazar' for Aleksandr Petukhov, a gentile who is willing to emigrate to Israel with her. Unlike Fira, Lazar' has a resigned and perhaps self-loathing attitude towards Jews. He is fully aware of the fact that anti-Semitism exists in the Soviet Union and comments to Fira: 'Евреям всегда было плохо и должно быть плохо.'³⁵ It is unclear why Lazar' believes that Jews 'должно быть плохо.' Perhaps this is his manner of coping with a situation that is out of his control. Another example of anti-Semitism is seen in Antonina Bodrova's attempts to persuade her alcoholic boyfriend Anatolii to move in with her. She promises him that she will register him if he marries her.³⁶ However, despite his desire to live in Leningrad, Anatolii objects, because 'сына Антонины Валерика он кормить не собирается и считает выблядком с еврейской кровью.'³⁷

How do the characters respond to a world defined by loss, death, suspicion, and hatred? 'Each of the characters 'escapes' in one form or another. Many of these characters retreat into their private intimate worlds. Roza Lvovna Kats, for example, is only happy when her son is happy. Mariia Tiutina finds happiness in her friendships with the other women in the communal flat, and Natal'ia Kopeikina 'человеку хорошо, когда можно делать, что хочешь.'³⁸ For Fira Kats and Aleksandr Petukhov, happiness is found in the dreams they have of life outside the Soviet Union

Another form of escape is resignation, apathy, or self-deception. For example, after Roza Kats has a bad dream, the narrator comments: 'Завтра Роза Львовна и не вспомнит, что видела во сне, встанет в хорошем настроении и по дороге к себе в

библиотеку сочинит стихи для стенгазеты.³⁹ The story's epigraph sets a tone of apathy and compliance: 'Вот это Родина, чего же ты плачешь?'⁴⁰ The statement is condescending and patronising and expresses, clearly and succinctly, that one must simply accept reality and move forward. The epigraph also appears to criticise the reader for his/her naïve beliefs, for thinking, perhaps, that the Motherland is something other than an organ or institution that creates pain and suffering. As will be discussed in Chapter Four, this sense of disillusionment is also evident in Katerli's realistic prose. In fact, the epigraph almost appears to be a personal statement by Katerli, in which she calls the reader to wake up from slumber and blind devotion, to emerge from the enveloping mist.

One set of characters in the story, the Semenov family, has adopted the resigned motto of the epigraph. They do not question their situation or seek to change it. They simply live in the safety, security, and certainty of the inner world of family and friends:

А вот счастье Семеновых как раз заключается в том, что они не ищут этому состоянию никаких определений... Вообще они не занимаются решением проблем, а просто живут. На вопросы знают ответы, знают чего хотят и что надо сделать, чтобы их мечты стали явью. И делают дело, а не ждут, когда придет дядя или детский волшебник Хотабыч.⁴¹

The power of this example is, however, undercut by the fact that the Semenovs do not appear to experience any great misfortune. It would be one thing if they suffered the

same calamities as others in the story, but dealt with these calamities differently. However, one is left wondering whether the Semenovs are happy because they are good or because they are lucky. It is not clear whether this is an intentional ambiguity on Katerli's part or whether this is a weakness in her argument. Perhaps self-deception, intentional or otherwise, is the only means of survival.

NARRATION

In telling her story, Nina Katerli employs various narrative styles and techniques: dialogue, shifting point of view, omniscient narrator, and narrated inner monologue.⁴² The most striking aspect of the story's narration is the third-person omniscient narrator. The language of the narrator is casual and familiar, as if the narrator were a 'real' character, living with and sharing the lives of the residents in the communal flat. As Deming Brown has correctly noted of 'Treugol'nik Barsukova': 'The narration is intimate, as if emanating from one or more persons closely familiar, from long acquaintance, with all of the neighborhood characters.'⁴³ At times, the narrator has omniscient and omnipotent control over the story and expresses beliefs and convictions through inner monologue. At other times, the narrator releases narrative control to the characters and allows them to speak with their own voices and points of view. As Brown has also noted: 'The story is heavily laden with coarse dialogue and interior monologue that discloses the psychology of the characters of various ages.'⁴⁴ This constant shift between the voice of the omniscient narrator and the voices of the characters allows Katerli to examine closely the lives of her characters.

As stated above, the narrator is a 'real' person, in the sense of having biases and emotions, and thus, like much of Katerli's fantasy prose, reflects the narrative style of 'skaz'.⁴⁵ This narrator frequently and openly expresses his or her beliefs and thoughts:

А мы с вами – тоже люди, у нас и дома хватает неприятностей, и на работе, а тут – видели? Сел человек раз в жизни, в свободное от дел, хозяйства и телевизора время почитать книжку – и опять ужасы, разводы, слезы, треугольнички какие-то... остается только окончательно решить, что это так называемое 'сочинение' – просто клевета на нашу действительность. А как вы думали?... Все. Передых. расслабились.⁴⁶

The tone of this statement is both provocative and self-deprecating. On the one hand, the narrator openly vents his/her frustration and dissatisfaction with the present state of the world, clearly expressing the political and sociological themes of story. At the same time, the narrator questions the reality and validity of this statement: 'Остается только окончательно решить, что это так называемое 'сочинение' – просто клевета на нашу действительность.' In the next breath, the narrator asks the reader: 'А вы как думали?' The narrator's confusion is clear and evident, and finally, the narrator concedes, gives up, as if to say that such questions and issues torment the soul.

The narrator is troubled by the disappearance of Barsukov, and the manner in which these concerns are raised demonstrates an intimate and personal response:

Как ему уснуть, когда он один в городе, да что – в городе, может в целом мире, знает то, что никому еще пока узнать не дано. Все мы безусловно правы: нет у бедняги Барсукова ни денег, ни здоровья. А вот насчет ума – это, уважаемые, извините-подвиньтесь со своими дипломами и кандидатскими степенями, это еще поглядим. Потому что, если бы кто-нибудь из нас с вами обнаружил такое, то, возможно, не только бы запил, а сбежал бы прочь, в другое место. Или руки на себя наложил со страху.⁴⁷

The narrator refers to himself/herself as 'Я'. This is an independent being who, in addition to describing the lives of the characters, expresses thoughts and ideas about the situation of the world and the situation of the characters. The narrator also refers to himself/herself as 'мы', perhaps in an attempt to legitimize himself/herself as one of the characters. In addition, the 'we' represents the interactive process occurring between the reader and narrator: 'уважаемые, извините-подвиньтесь со своими дипломами и кандидатскими степенями'. The story is personal and real for the narrator who perhaps wants to bring the reader into this experience.⁴⁸

As stated above, the narrator has an intimate knowledge of the characters. For example, when describing Aleksandr Petukhov, the narrator comments:

Еще три года назад Саня Петухов был обыкновенным молодым человеком, имел мотоцикл с коляской... А потом что-то такое случилось, куда-то выбрали, назначили, а может, повысили, неважно, зато теперь, вместо мотоцикла, Александр Николаевич ездит на службу на черной машине, и часто шофер носит за ним на четвертый этаж большую картонную коробку.⁴⁹

The use of the diminutive 'Саня', instead of Petukhov's full first name Александр, demonstrates the narrator's closeness to this character and desire perhaps to burst the bubble of Petukhov's recently acquired position and prestige.⁵⁰ In addition the narrator is aware of several details of Petukhov's life: the fact that he used to drive a motorcycle, that he now has a chauffeur, and that three years ago he was 'обыкновенным молодым человеком'. In another example, the narrator describes the stress Anna Tiutina experiences as a result of her delinquent husband and her subsequent discovery that her husband is having an affair: 'У Анны же как раз в это время от недоедания и нервов открылся миокардит, и тут случайно выяснилось, что этот мерзавец встречается с другой женщиной, аферисткой и "сотрудницей отца", то есть дочерью другого богатого профессора, такого же прохиндея, как они все.'⁵¹

While in many cases the personality and point of view of the narrator take centre stage, often the narrator of 'Treugol'nik Barsukova', like many of the narrators of Katerli's fantasy stories, permits the characters to express themselves, allowing the reader to observe the characters and their various concerns from differing perspectives. For example, when Anatolii contemplates his marriage to Antonina Bodrova, the narrator

states: 'Анатолий велел ей поторапливаться с решением вопроса и пригрозил, что его обещала прописать дворник Полина, женщина хоть и совсем в годах, но полная и без всякого потомства.'⁵² Fearing that Anatolii might reject her because of her Jewish son, Antonina sends her son off to the town where his deceased grandmother used to live, hoping that someone will adopt him or put him into an orphanage. In this scene, the point of view of the young Valerik is seen:

Мальчик поверил родному человеку, хотя и помнил, что бабушка в прошлом году умерла в Ленинграде от паралича и лежит на кладбище, где растут цветы... Когда поезд с Валериком ушел, Антонина вернулась домой и сказала Анатолию, что можно идти в ЗАГС... а Валерик в это время плакал в детской комнате милиции в Любани и никак не мог вспомнить свой домашний адрес, и только говорил, что ехал к бабушке, которая закопана в земле.⁵³

By depicting the scene of the young child in a police station miles away from his home, and through the child's eyes, his fear and confusion become more gripping, and the emotions of the scene, more vivid.

CHARACTERISATION

'Treugol'nik Barsukova' contains over twenty named characters, men and women, old and young, coming from various religious, economic, and educational backgrounds, with

differing beliefs and convictions. Carl Proffer has commented: 'The lives of the people she [Katerli] describes are precisely the lives of all the Russians we have known for fifteen years.'⁵⁴ Katerli presents a collage, in a sense, of urban dwellers of 1970s Leningrad. The Kats family is Jewish. The Semenov family is Russian Orthodox. The Tiutins are Communist pensioners. Their daughter Anna is a hard-working single mother. Antonina Bodrova is an uneducated anti-Semite. Aleksandr Petukhov is a disillusioned government worker. Fira Kats is a Jewish woman who wants to emigrate to Israel, and Barsukov is an aging alcoholic who disappears at the beginning of the story.

As in her depiction of characters of her fantasy prose, in 'Treugol'nik Barsukova', Katerli does not appear to favour one character over another. They are all flawed individuals, trying to survive the trials and tribulations of daily life in the Soviet Union. There is no one character that is presented as an example, or as the embodiment of the author's or narrator's personal convictions, and except, perhaps, for the unredeemable Antonina Bodrova, each character has at least some positive qualities. Aleksandr Petukhov and Fira Kats leave their spouses, but are perhaps excused because their present situations are unfulfilling and unsatisfying. In another example, Natal'ia Kopeikina allows her son to mistreat her, but she thinks that her actions demonstrate her love for him.

Ironically, Barsukov is himself not a significant character in the story, as his death occurs in its first few pages. However, the fact that the original title carries his name gives him symbolic importance. Barsukov is not a socialist realist hero. He is an alcoholic who appears to be going mad. He is confused and bewildered by society and by people in general, and he dies, or disappears, at the beginning of the story. His death and

disappearance express the mysterious and bizarre elements that occur in the lives of these characters. That the story, in a sense, begins with its ending may also permit us to say that it ends where it begins. For the Barsukov Triangle—and those unfortunate enough to be in it—the wheel of day to day life will come full circle, not to bring resolution, but merely to turn once more.

TEXTUAL ANALYSIS OF 'CHERVETS'

PLOT

Like 'Treugol'nik Barsukova', 'Chervets' is a story about confusion, deception, disillusionment, lack of communication, and the struggle to survive in a Soviet urban environment. However, unlike 'Treugol'nik Barsukova', 'Chervets' has a smaller cast of characters, focusing primarily on the lives of two men—Maksim Likhtenshtein and Pavel Smirnov. The story contains two 'fabulas'—one concerns a mysterious and top-secret science project involving a worm, and the other involves Pavel's discovery that he and Maksim are brothers. 'Chervets' focuses on the private lives of the characters and their attempts to surmount the obstacles placed in their path by the science industry and the Soviet Government.

When the story begins, the Jewish Maksim, a scientist, has been designated as the official janitor for the block of flats where the majority of his co-workers live. Comrade Kashuba, the director of the research institute, explains to Maksim that he is unable to find anyone else to perform these duties, since the other scientists are attending conferences abroad. However, it is clear from the context why Maksim is working as a

temporary janitor, rather than joining his colleagues at these conferences—Maksim’s Jewish identity precludes him from leaving the country because he might emigrate or relay top-secret scientific information.

Maksim is also being kept at home and under the watchful eye of Kashuba because of his involvement with a secret science project. Months earlier, Maksim arrives early to work and discovers a giant tapeworm in one of the laboratories. Before Maksim has time to react, Kashuba walks into the laboratory and the two exchange nervous glances. Remembering that the Science Council is scheduled to meet later that day to discuss research projects for the upcoming year, and aware that he has nothing to propose, Kashuba concocts a plan involving the tapeworm. When the Science Council meets, Kashuba announces: ‘...до сих пор лаборатория, как известно, занималась исключительно вопросами применения пластмасс для изготовления деталей машиностроения, но возросшее значение проблемы охраны окружающей среды...’⁵⁵ He embellishes his story by claiming that he has been conducting research for some time on a very strange creature with the help of Maksim Likhtenshtein, and he adds that the nature of this research is very serious and must remain top-secret.⁵⁶ The Science Council decides to label this research project: ‘The Project of the Chervets’

Maksim immediately begins performing experiments on this worm, measuring its height, width, length, weight, and temperature, and he fills three notebooks with his research and observations. However, after several months, the worm disappears. Maksim is questioned by Kashuba and subsequently summoned before the entire Science Council. Notwithstanding his attempts to defend himself, a pre-determined verdict is

rendered. Maksim is guilty of losing the worm, and, both because of the top-secret nature of this project and because of Maksim's ethnic background, he is suspected of treason.

Maksim is fired and told that he would never work again. Rather than sink into despair, Maksim remarks that he feels free for the first time in his life.⁵⁷ He has grown tired of pretending that he is participating in a supposed top-secret research project, of deceiving others, and most importantly, of deceiving himself. Maksim is ambivalent about his future plans, but he resolves no longer to live a lie. It soon becomes clear, however, that Maksim may never find another job. After months of applying for new positions and receiving only rejections, he begins entertaining thoughts of emigration. One night, Maksim dreams of boarding a train leaving Leningrad. Interpreting this dream as a sign, he registers for an exit visa the next morning.

The plot line of 'The Project of the Chervets' contains several fantastic elements. The story opens with Pavel, an unemployed scientist, standing in the courtyard of his building and seeing 'в своей комнате гигантского ленточного червя, точь-в-точь такого, какой однажды приснился ему в детстве в страшном сне.'⁵⁸ Pavel can not accept this strange occurrence and wonders if he is dreaming or hallucinating. He finally concludes that 'червяк определенно существовал.'⁵⁹ Shortly after Maksim loses the worm, the story seems to evolve somewhat into a science fiction story. The worm escapes and begins to assume the human quality of speech.

Whether this worm is real or imaginary is unclear. Perhaps those who come into contact with the worm are mad. Perhaps the worm, like the Barsukov Triangle, represents the mysterious elements and aspects of life. Regardless of whether the worm is real or imagined, it is perceived as real by those who see it: 'Многие видели по ночам

в небе различные неопознанные объекты, один из которых даже вроде бы опускался на газон в Михайловском саду и сжег вокруг себя траву в диаметре пятнадцати метров.⁶⁰ Suddenly it appears that all those living on the seventh, ninth, and eleventh floors of flats on the outskirts of the city have seen some kind of creature coming up to their windows at night: ‘Существо это – не то гигантский змей, не то чудовище Лох-Несс, не то снежный человек – похоже на ящера с круглой головой и блочно посаженными глазами.’⁶¹ The worm even visits Denisiuk, a locksmith and friend of Maksim, with the purpose of finding out where Maksim is. Again, it is uncertain whether Denisiuk is imagining this, since he is quite drunk, or whether this visit actually takes place. Denisiuk informs the worm that Maksim is leaving for Israel. The worm finally leaves, and when Denisiuk is discovered the next day, he is dead. The plot line involving the worm is never resolved. It simply disappears, as does Maksim.

As stated earlier, the second central plot line concerns the discovery that Maksim and Pavel are brothers. Although Maksim Likhtenshtein and Pavel Smirnov have never had much contact, Pavel feels an odd connection and affinity to Maksim. Pavel meets Maksim for the first time while walking through the courtyard of his building, the courtyard Maksim is charged to clean. Through a series of flashbacks, Pavel remembers his experiences as a child during World War Two. He remembers that his father was killed and that he lost his baby brother. Also through a series of flashbacks, Maksim remembers growing up in an orphanage. He had been abandoned as a baby, and a worker in the orphanage simply gave him the surname of a soldier whose name she had read in a newspaper. Throughout the story, it becomes increasingly evident that Maksim is Pavel’s missing brother. The day before Maksim leaves the country, he decides to visit a friend

at the mental hospital, which is also where Pavel's (and Maksim's) mother is hospitalised. While leaving the hospital, Maksim runs into them. When Pavel's mother sees Maksim, she immediately calls out the name Vania, the name of her late husband and Pavel's father. Pavel does not understand why his mother is calling Maksim by this name. Both men ignore her, assuming that she has gone senile. When Pavel returns home, however, he pulls out a photograph of his father, and realises that his father looks exactly like Maksim, and that Maksim must be his missing brother Gennadii. Maksim, however, unbeknownst to Pavel, is already on a plane to Israel. The story concludes with Pavel's mother crying out: 'Павел! Гена! Дети мои...'⁶²

The 'siuzhet', or rather 'siuzhets', of 'Chervets' addresses the deeper emotional concerns of the protagonists, namely, their relationships with one another. One 'siuzhet', for example, examines Pavel's relationship with his mother. She is initially portrayed as a senile woman who creates problems for the inhabitants of the communal flat. At the suggestion of his neighbours, Valerii and Alla Antokhin, Pavel agrees to put his mother in a convalescent home. Pavel makes the trip every week to Gatchina, a town about an hour's train ride from Leningrad, in order to visit her:

Воскресенье Павел Иванович Смирнов проводил как обычно, как проводил последние полгода все воскресенья: встал в половине седьмого, стараясь не шуметь, вскипятил чай и поджарил яичницу, потом уложил в портфель продукты для передачи, поставил термос с какао и, выйдя из дому ровно в семь сорок, поехал на вокзал.⁶³

As the story nears the end, the plot focuses increasingly on the details of Pavel's life. He is very lonely, misses his mother, and feels guilty for sending her to the home. He spends the majority of his time walking through the streets of Leningrad, thinking about her and about their lives together.

Other 'siuzhets' of the story involve Maksim's relationships with women, all of which are developed through a series of flashbacks. Alla Antokhina and Maksim had a relationship many years before she married Valerii, who is extremely suspicious of Maksim and continually accuses his wife of having an affair with him. A few months before Maksim emigrates, Alla confesses her undying love for Maksim as well as her willingness to go with him, wherever that might be. Not knowing how to respond, Maksim says nothing. He writes a letter to her, asking her forgiveness, knowing that she will receive the letter after he has left.

Maksim also has a relationship with Kashuba's daughter, Vera. Maksim had decided to throw a party for himself after he defended his dissertation and invited Kashuba and his daughter. After a dance and a short conversation at the dinner table, Maksim and Vera leave the party to take a romantic stroll through the streets of Leningrad. Vera decides to come home with Maksim, but, soon after, the beautiful and seemingly sweet Vera reveals a darker side. She moves in with Maksim, staying in the house all day and drinking. On one occasion, Vera drinks too much and has to be sent to the hospital. After being discharged, she goes to Maksim's house, leaves a good-bye note, and returns to her father. Tormented by the fact that Vera has simply left a note, Maksim goes to Kashuba's house. Kashuba takes one look at Maksim and tells him to leave. Maksim

never sees her again. The last thing Maksim does before departing is travel to the hospital where Vera is being treated for alcoholism. By a twist of fate, he arrives after visiting hours and is refused entrance. This is the last battle he will fight in his homeland. Like so many of the characters in 'Treugol'nik Barsukova', Maksim has wearied of fighting and decides to leave.

THEME

The themes of 'Chervets' examine the corruption of the Soviet science industry, and, more specifically, its effects on those involved—directly or indirectly—in that industry.⁶⁴

As stated above, the entire premise of 'The Project of the Chervets' is based upon lies and deception.⁶⁵ Kashuba deceives his colleagues in the Science Council, by telling them that 'The Problem of the Chervets' is a serious research project concerning the preservation of the environment. Katerli, who, as a science researcher for several years, and knew the environment of a research institute, mocks the bombastic official rhetoric through Kashuba's declaration: 'Наш долг делать все возможное и даже больше для сохранения и умножения того, что является гордостью нации и достоянием нашей родной природы!'⁶⁶

In another example, we learn through flashback that the unemployed Pavel had previously held a very high position at a research institute, and on one occasion, he was ordered to make an elderly woman redundant. Pavel was told his superiors that it would be better for her and for the institute if she were made a pensioner, and, in reference to Gogol, his superiors referred to her as a 'мертвая душа'.⁶⁷ But Pavel could not bring himself to make this woman redundant. He knew that she was a single woman who lived

alone; the only joy she found in life was in her job. Nevertheless, believing that he was doing the right thing by obeying his superiors, Pavel acceded. His conscience began troubling him, and he realised that he could not willingly act in ways that he knew brought suffering to others. He finally resigned his position when his superiors asked him to be an informer at work.

In addition, Katerli exposes the laziness and lack of ambition of the Soviet workforce. At the beginning of the story, Maksim employs the services of the heavy-drinking locksmith Denisiuk to help him with research on the worm. However, the only way Maksim can convince this alcoholic to work is to bribe him with vodka. In another instance, Maksim visits Vera in the hospital and is informed that patients are allowed only one visitor per day, and her one visitor has just left. Maksim realises that the nurse is asking for a bribe. He refuses to pay and leaves. At one point in the story, Maksim recites the well-known motto of the Soviet worker: 'Вы притворяетесь, что платите нам, а мы делаем вид, что работаем.'⁶⁸

Deception and misunderstanding in personal relationships also figure prominently in 'Chervets'. The characters misunderstand and deceive one another. Maksim assumes that Vera, as the daughter of the wise and respected Kashuba, should be an equally respectable person. On the outside, Kashuba appears to be the perfect man with the perfect family, but when Maksim begins to go out with Vera, he sees the truth of the Kashuba family. Maksim realises that Vera is an alcoholic when he comes home from work one day to find her drunk and sitting at the table with three equally intoxicated men whom she had met at a wine shop and invited home. A few days later, Maksim arrives home to find Vera both intoxicated and belligerent. She suddenly collapses, and when

the doctors arrive, it becomes clear that Vera has had a heart attack. Afraid to return Vera to Kashuba in such a state, Maksim attempts to take care of her. In the days that follow, he rushes home immediately after work and does all the shopping and cleaning. Maksim also subsequently learns that Vera, whom he had initially considered virtuous and naïve, had been previously married to a man with a high government post, who had abandoned her and their two sons. She subsequently moved in with her parents, who raised her children because she was emotionally incapable of taking care of them. In addition, Maksim learns that the respected Kashuba was himself a negligent father who spent the majority of Vera's childhood working and attending conferences abroad.

Katerli also explores the misunderstandings and conflicts between the Antokhins and Pavel Smirnov. Pavel is initially portrayed as an uncultured slob, while the Antokhins are portrayed as cultured, hard-working people. The Antokhins despise Pavel and his mother, whom they view as lazy and unintelligent. As the story develops, however, it becomes evident that the truth is exactly the opposite. Valerii is a drunk who judges people solely by their ethnicity. Alla lives an empty life and feels that her husband is a stranger, and the couple usually spends their evenings fighting. The outwardly unlettered Pavel, on the other hand, has a flat full of books, art, and antiques. He comes from a long line of cultured and intelligent people that includes a great grandmother who attended university, a rarity for women of that time. Through a series of discussions between Pavel and his mother in which they discuss politics, philosophy, and religion, it becomes clear that the two are perceptive and highly intelligent people.

Another significant theme in 'Chervets' is anti-Semitism, seen primarily through Maksim and his close friends the Gol'dins. From a very early age, Maksim is made

aware of anti-Semitism. For example, as a child growing up in an orphanage, Maksim was told that his father was ‘не иначе, был бандит, хоть и еврейчик.’⁶⁹ In another example, Irina Trofimovna Gol’dina tells Maksim that he, as a Jew, should marry a Jew rather than a Russian:

Ты думаешь, мы сионисты? Можешь не рассказывать!... Есть, конечно, плохие русские и сколько угодно скверных евреев. Но, скажи, зачем, чтобы твоя жена в злую минуту назвала тебя жидом. Но, пусть не жена, так теща.⁷⁰

As stated above, Maksim is aware that he is working as a janitor because he is Jewish, a factor which precludes from traveling abroad. The irony of the situation is that Maksim is not a religious Jew. Before deciding to emigrate, he tries to imagine himself living in Israel, and he is unable to. Russia is his home. Moreover, Maksim’s own response to anti-Semitism is less than laudatory, perhaps, like Lazar’ Kats in ‘Treugol’nik Barsukova’, from having internalised the prejudices of Soviet society generally. For example, while at the Gol’dins’ for dinner, their nephew makes a fool of himself while giving a toast. Maksim thinks to himself: ‘Почему наши еврейские дураки всегда такие активные?’⁷¹ Later in the evening, attempting to communicate his disgust with the nephew’s behavior, Maksim says: ‘Что есть самое печальное зрелище на свете? О’Генри считал, что это – дырка на конце чужого пистолета. А я вот думаю – дебилый еврей.’⁷²

Unable to find a job, Maksim decides to emigrate to Israel. His friends disagree with his decision, and attempt to dissuade him. Before telling Gol'din of his decision, Maksim anticipates what Gol'din will say: 'Сумасшедший вздумал бросить Родину, которая его вырастила, все ему дала.'⁷³ Moreover, when Maksim sees Alla Antokhina for the last time, she says:

Ведь пойми... ты же там [за границей] просто не сможешь!
Ведь ты советский человек, советский! А капиталистический мир – это, как ни говори... Пускай у нас полно недостатков, но в конце концов, мы в них сами же и виноваты! Не кто-то, а – мы: плохо работаем, пьянка у нас, воровство... Нет, нам обижаться надо только на самих себя – страна тут не при чем. И, согласишься, - как бы мы не жили, но мы знаем, что это – наша страна, а там ты будешь кто? Я ничего не говорю, материально там, может, даже и лучше, и в магазинах все есть, и сервис, но ведь найти работу у них тоже трудно, а потерять легче легкого... А главное вся их идеология, весь образ мыслей – на для нас! Там, по сути дела, все сводится к деньгам... А если ты вообразил, что все кругом – антисемиты, так это глупости.⁷⁴

Antokhina's comment seems to express the belief that the 'known', irrespective of its difficulties or negative qualities, is better than the 'unknown'. Maksim has a dream about a conversation with the worm, who also tries to talk him out of emigrating.

Acknowledging that life is difficult for Jews, he tells Maksim that he is giving up, rather than fighting:

Но если жертва имеется, где-то же должен быть и виновник, верно? Где? Кто? Может судьба? Раньше все принято было на судьбу пенять. Можно, конечно, и на власть... да только боязно. А вот на соседа – сколько угодно, и уж если сосед какой-нибудь... чучмек, хохол или, еще лучше, жид – тут вообще полный порядок... А, что главное, та земля, с которой они вас гонят, - тоже ваша. Ваша. Не меньше ваша чем их. Хоть в Антарктиду бегите...⁷⁵

The real irony of the situation, however, is the fact that Maksim is not even Jewish—he is the gentile brother of Pavel Smirnov.

Katerlí reveals the genuine hatred many Russians feel towards Jews mostly through the character of Valerii, who holds to the classic anti-Semitic argument that Jews pollute the environment and should therefore be disposed of. Moreover, Valerii believes that Jews have an easy life, because they have placed themselves in all positions of power and authority. As stated above, Valerii accuses his wife of being in love with Maksim simply because he is a Jew, and tells her that it is a well-known fact that Jewish men are well endowed because they have large noses. Valerii is overjoyed when Maksim is fired and before the Science Council he states:

Таким как он нет, никогда не было и быть не могло дела до нашей науки, для них она только средство, а не цель, средство для получения материальных благ. За чужой счет. И это не удивительно, напротив, в каком-то смысле даже понятно...
Более того...⁷⁶

Valerii despises Maksim: 'Причины? Их более чем достаточно. Начиная с его самомнения, манеры вести себя с этакой барской небрежностью, точно это еврейчик.'⁷⁷

Katerli exposes the inconsistencies and hypocrisy of Valerii's anti-Semitism, showing that his hatred is based more on a personal vendetta against Maksim rather than a fear of a Zionist revolution. Towards the end of the story, Valerii remembers an incident in his childhood that sheds light on his hatred of Jews. Valerii had grown up in a small Siberian town, where two Jewish children—Iura Aksel'rod and Marat Sokolin—were the most popular children in school. Iura actually reminded him of Maksim, hence his hatred of Maksim. Valerii was jealous of them and their popularity, and tried to join their clique. He remembers one occasion when he tried to tell a joke but none of the children laughed, and he felt incredibly humiliated. Valerii would forever let this childhood incident taint his thoughts and ideas about Jews.

Katerli also points out Valerii's capacity for self-deception: 'Валерий Антохин вовсе не считал себя антисемитом, хотя, конечно у него было вполне сложившееся мнение по поводу типичных черт характера лиц этой национальности.'⁷⁸ Katerli

also suggests that many Soviet people are unaware of the reality of anti-Semitism. For example, Pavel states:

Есть антисемитизм у нас сегодня или нет – этот вопрос был как-то вне сферы интересов Павла Ивановича. Наверное, есть, особенно бытовой, - вот, пожалуйста, возьмем хоть Валерия. Впрочем евреями, с их обостренной столетиями выработанной чувствительностью и комплексами, все эти проблемы явно преувеличиваются. Павел Иванович не раз слышал, будто еврейские школьники не могут и думать о поступлении в университет, слышал, но не очень верил, не мог поверить – такая нелепость.⁷⁹

In addition to anti-Semitism, another important theme in 'Chervets' is alcoholism, seen primarily through Vera Kashuba and Denisiuk. Alcoholism, and alcohol itself, is presented as a negative force, one that destroys lives and families. The drunk Deniusok, for example, appears to die from the effects of long-term alcohol abuse. Initially, Vera is presented as a beautiful young woman. Quickly we see her decline, as she is seen inviting strange men to Maksim's flat to drink, through her mad behaviour, and through her eventual heart attack. Katerli's portrayal of a woman alcoholic is an important component of Russian women's writing. As Theresa Polowy has noted: 'An important element in female-authored prose [in Russia] is its acknowledgement of alcohol abuse among women, a phenomenon which is virtually ignored in male texts.'⁸⁰

Another issue addressed in 'Chervets' is the plight of the elderly, presented primarily through the character of Pavel's mother. Although very little is seen from the mother's point of view, her pain is made visible through Pavel, with whom she has a close relationship. Despite this closeness, he recognises the hardships of his own situation. He notes with considerable understatement that: 'Жизнь в одной комнате коммунальной квартиры с больной, потерявшей рассудок, но сохранившей много физических сил старухой была, разумеется, довольно сложной.'⁸¹ When Alla tells Pavel to put his mother in a convalescent home, he refuses, and only relents when she becomes seriously ill and begins to go mad. Pavel tries to exchange his flat for another, but 'никто не хочет ехать в коммуналку, да еще в первый этаж.'⁸² Pavel's mother does eventually go mad, and he moves her—against her will—into a convalescent home. He visits her every week, but she refuses to speak to him, wanting only to die. Pavel despises the Antokhins because they had talked him into this decision. Overall, Pavel comes across as the character as most sympathetic to the elderly. Guilt-ridden, he reflects at length on the tragedy of the elderly, who have spent their lives living for others, only to be abandoned by their loved ones at the end. Pavel asks the fundamental question: 'За что отдавали жизнь?'⁸³ In the world of Katerli's 'Chervets', the answer must be: for nothing.

NARRATION

Like 'Treugol'nik Barsukova', 'Chervets' is told by a third-person omniscient narrator who often allows the numerous characters to speak for themselves and also to talk about other characters. However, unlike the narrator of 'Treugol'nik Barsukova', the narrator of 'Chervets' is not a corporeal being, a local, or a neighbour. Rather, this narrator acts

more akin to a distant entity, an ambiguous presence that is privy to the backgrounds of the characters, but has taken no part in their lives. In addition, the narrator's biases are less conspicuous, allowing the characters to express themselves.

Although the narrator is less prominent than in 'Treugol'nik Barsukova', the narrator does have his/her own thoughts and opinions. Since the story focuses primarily on the lives of Maksim and Pavel, it would make perfect sense for this story to be told in first-person narration, from the point of view of either Pavel or Maksim, or both. However, by choosing to tell the story with a third-person omniscient narrator, Katerli is perhaps suggesting that an individual or individuals are unable to speak for themselves, and are in need of an intermediary. In essence, as a result of the tumultuous political and social climate, people are too confused and bewildered to speak or communicate clearly. This narrator's agenda follows the plot lines of 'The Problem of the Chervets' and Pavel's discovery that he and Maksim are brothers. Thus, the information included in the story is specifically chosen by the narrator, this ambiguous being whose sympathy for Pavel and Maksim drives the development of the story's two plot lines.

Like the narrator in 'Treugol'nik Barsukova', this narrator speaks familiarly with the audience sometimes in a judgmental or profane manner. For example, when Maksim reads Vera's farewell note, which states: 'Пожалуй, хватит',⁸⁴ the narrator responds: 'Хватит, пожалуй... А что "хватит"?!' ⁸⁵ Later, when the narrator describes Pavel's background history, explaining that he had no ambitions and had no desire to find a job, the narrator comments: 'Вы себе представляете? Он 'не хотел!'⁸⁶ Often the narrator addresses the reader directly at length in order to clarify certain themes or issues:

У читателя может создаться впечатление, будто ослепленные высокими окладами и прочими льготами сотрудники института совсем уже не видели и не понимали, что в их учреждении что-то и как-то... не так. Без конца валять дурака, притворяясь, что заняты делом, - это тоже не великая радость. И кое-кому надоело.⁸⁷

At times, the narrator assumes a sarcastic tone. Speaking of Pavel, the narrator comments: 'Он знал, что в глазах многих, в том числе хотя бы соседей Антохиных, выглядит со своим чистоплюйством полным дураком!'⁸⁸

As mentioned earlier, the narrator is familiar with the characters' backgrounds. Concerning Maksim, the narrator comments: 'А Максиму Ивановичу, как мы уже здесь обмолвились, - тридцать семь.'⁸⁹ After Maksim visits Kashuba's house to see Vera for the last time, the narrator remarks: '...Вот вам и личная жизнь Максима Лихтенштейна. Больше с Верой он не встречался не разу, как-то видел издали, но не подошел.'⁹⁰ After Pavel sees the worm, the narrator notes: 'Так вот сегодня как раз и был отгул и, совмещая поход за хлебом с прогулкой, Павел Иванович шел, пытаясь объяснить себе, что это все-таки был за червяк ночью у него в комнате.'⁹¹ Regarding Pavel's and Alla's disagreements, the narrator states: 'Алла ошибалась, когда говорила мужу, что сосед не замечает их с Валерием, не считая за людей, а только за "со своей подметки грязь." Павел, напротив, очень даже их замечал и всегда помнил об их присутствии в квартире.'⁹²

Often in expressing the point of view of a specific character, the narrator assumes the voice and personality of that character. Consequently, when Alla Antokhina sees Vera at Maksim's party, the narrator states: 'Алла Антохина неделю потом объясняла всем желающим, что в платье от Диора любая жердь будет иметь вид. Хорошо, когда твой папочка без передыху гоняет по заграницам!'⁹³ Maksim's impression of Vera was initially quite different:

Через много лет Максим будет вспоминать, что приходило ему в голову, когда они с Верой шли той ночью по городу. Он смотрел тогда по сторонам и думал: 'А ведь это запомнится', светлое ночное небо в воде Мойки, старые тополя, совершенно пустая настороженная Дворцовая площадь, и, главное, никогда раньше не испытанное ощущение тихого восторга.⁹⁴

Likewise, Maksim says about Alla: 'Алла тогда была очень недурна, хорошо одевалась, бойко лепетала на разные темы, а с другой стороны, - черт ее знает, - какая-то была уж очень правильная.'⁹⁵ When expressing Maksim's belief about Russians, the narrator notes: 'Чисто российская наша черта – сентиментальность. И убежденность в том, что тебе до всех дело, и всем – сплошной кайф обсуждать твои семейные обстоятельства...'⁹⁶ Allowing Maksim to speak for himself gives greater depth and complexity to his character and allows the reader to have a more complete understanding of his feelings and thoughts.

CHARACTERISATION

The characters of 'Chervets' are quite different from those of 'Treugol'nik Barsukova'. Rather than representing various backgrounds, these characters are all somehow related to the science industry. Alla and Valerii Antokhin, Kashuba, and Maksim work in the same institute. Pavel Smirnov had previously worked in a research institute, and Gol'din is a retired scientist. The others not directly involved with the science industry, such as Pavel's mother, Gol'din's wife, and Vera, Kashuba's daughter, are related to those who are involved. Thus, the world, backgrounds, and experiences of these characters are similar. The one major distinguishing characteristic is Jewishness, and it is this characteristic, personified by Maksim, Gol'din, and his wife, that generates much of the story's conflict.

Katerli's portrayal of the Jewish characters in 'Chervets' is rather contradictory. On the one hand, the Gol'dins fit into many of the stereotypes of the Soviet Jew.⁹⁷ Gol'din himself is the wise man full of advice, and Irina Gol'dina is also the matronly Jewish woman taking care of Maksim like her son. At the same time, however, they are not religious Jews, and they support the 'system'. Katerli juxtaposes the characters of Pavel and Maksim in order to demonstrate the difference that Jewishness makes in Soviet life. As stated above, the fact that Maksim is not actually Jewish emphasises the fallacy of anti-Semitic racism and the prejudices that stem from it. For instance, both Maksim and Pavel chance upon drunken men on the street. The drunk man whom Maksim encounters immediately asks him if he is Jewish, and when Maksim answers yes, the man tells Maksim to go to hell. However, when Pavel encounters a different drunk man, the man befriends him.

What unites the story's characters is that they are unhappy, paranoid, lonely, dissatisfied, and distraught. Maksim, for example, has a nervous and anxious disposition:

...жизнь прожита в постоянной страхе. Максим всегда считал, что он не трус, а что на деле? Боялся нудных объяснений с руководством. Боялся кашубинской болтовни, от которой тошнило, росла гора, и летел ворон. До увольнения. Теперь - что не удастся найти работу. Боялся злорадных взглядов. И жалостливых – тоже боялся. Боялся всегда, в любой момент, возможной ситуации, в которой придется кому-то бить морду. Знало, что не струсит, но, Господи, как не хотелось! А ведь этот страх не исчезнет, будет с тобой и в Сибири, и на Севере. До последнего дня, до смерти...⁹⁸

Maksim is not the only character to suffer from some sort of malady. Pavel is unemployed and constantly wrestles with his guilt over putting his mother in a convalescent home. His mother's depression has driven her to silence. Alla Antokhina is married to a man she does not love. Vera is an alcoholic with two children and still lives at home with her parents. Kashuba constantly frets over his career, and Vasilii Antokhin hates all minorities and foreigners.

The characters of 'Chervets', like those of 'Treugol'nik Barsukova', struggle to survive in the midst of personal and political chaos. However, most of the characters, like many of the characters in 'Treugol'nik Barsukova', have accepted their

powerlessness. In this light, Katerli ironically begins the story with an excerpt from Anna Akhmatova's poem 'Rodnaia zemlia' ('Native Soil') (1961):

Да, для нас это грязь на калошах
Да, для нас это хруст на зубах
И мы мелим, и месим, и крошим
Тот ни в чем не замешанный прах
Но ложимся в нее и становимся ею
Оттого и зовем так свободно - своею.⁹⁹

This epigraph reflects both the anguish and indefatigability of her characters. As Amanda Haight has stated of Akhmatova's poem: 'She defines her people's feeling for their native soil as something quite apart from the bombastic slogans of conventional patriotism.'¹⁰⁰

These characters suffer, but somehow they will survive.

Many of the characters, like those of 'Treugol'nik Barsukova', seek escape in one form or another from their respective afflictions. Pavel, for example, has withdrawn from society and has become solitary and introspective. Pavel feels that he is different from others, that he does not belong, and he spends most of his time alone: 'По вечерам Павел Иванович ходил гулять... Осенью хорошо было пройтись вдоль Летнего сада по малолюдной ветреной набережной...'¹⁰¹ Pavel's solitude allows him time to think about Nature, his mother, himself, and deeper spiritual and philosophical concerns. While on the train to visit his mother, Pavel thinks: '...Поезд уже шел... Синие зимние пейзажи назойливо липли к окнам. Почему-то безвкусными, вызывающими

казались сейчас расфуфыренные деревья и непристойно яркие фигурки лыжников на засахаренной лыжной целине.’¹⁰² Thinking about Alla Antokhina, Pavel remarks:

Переживания по поводу прачечной, сдачи бутылок, чистки ковров, доставания модных книг и – будь они неладны! – консервирования огурчиков ей нужны. Это... форма духовной жизни. Или душевной? Пусть душевной. Потом появятся переживания по поводу покупки машины, гаража. Обстановки для новой кооперативной квартиры. Это все бессознательная попытка заполнить пустоту в разрытой темной душе, которой никто никогда не интересовался... А вот что стала бы делать такая Алла, если бы не тратила столько времени на быт?¹⁰³

Vera Kashuba, as discussed above, and Denisiuk escape through alcohol, which deadens their minds and hearts to the difficulties of their lives. Alla Antokhin, like Fira Kats in ‘Treugol’nik Barsukova’, wants to leave her husband to emigrate with her former lover Maksim. The Gol’dins, like the Semenovs of ‘Treugol’nik Barsukova’, escape into their interior world. They have accepted their lot in life. They have accepted that nothing will change, and have ceased to find meaning and significance in their outer world. Finally, Maksim, like Fira Kats and Aleksandr Petukhov in ‘Treugol’nik Barsukova’, escapes literally. It is ironic, as stated above, that Maksim, unlike Fira Kats and Aleksandr Petukhov, has no desire to leave his native Russia. However, the situation is out of Maksim’s control, and he is forced to emigrate.

Pavel's mother is perhaps the only character that finds meaning in morality and kindness, and perhaps is presented as an example. She tells her son:

Знаешь, Павлик, нет на свете более бесплодного, опустошающего чувства, душу сжигает. Это неправда, что бывают ситуации, где нужна ненависть. Нигде она не нужна, даже на войне, пускай самой справедливой. Нужно сознание долга: ты обязан выполнить тяжелый, страшный, но - долг.¹⁰⁴

Ironically, Pavel may have fulfilled his 'duty' by sending his mother to the convalescent home. In doing so, he is not praised by his mother, but despised by her. Truly, fulfilling a duty can be horrible and difficult. Pavel's response to this and his crisis at work is to drop out of society because he wanted to live an honest life.

Generally speaking, the images of women presented in 'Chervets' are negative and derogatory, making the story appear at times 'anti-feminist'. For example, the only female scientist in the story is Alla Antokhina, who is portrayed as a materialistic, selfish, and emotionally unstable woman. Vera is a weak and pathetic alcoholic. Irina Gol'dina, although a kind and loving person, is presented in the traditional female role of mother and wife. Gol'dina believes that 'мальчик и так настрадался без домашнего тепла.'¹⁰⁵ Later, her husband comments: 'Женщина – это вам такой предмет, который должен украшать дом своего мужа, лично я так считаю.'¹⁰⁶ Even Maksim expresses intense dislike of women: 'Дуры бабы, жалость у них – первое чувство, пожалела – значит полюбила.'¹⁰⁷

However, some positive portrayals of women do exist in 'Chervets'. Notwithstanding her descent into senility, Pavel's mother, in many respects, is portrayed as an emancipated, independently thinking, and intelligent woman whose life is not dependent upon a man. At one point, she tells Pavel: 'Я уверена, что если бы не встретила твоего отца, то всю жизнь была бы одна.'¹⁰⁸ As will be discussed in Chapters Four and Six, the female protagonists of Katerli's realistic prose and contemporary prose evidence an independence of thought and, in some cases, even an alternative lifestyle, which are not characteristic of the female protagonists of her fantasy prose or underground works. Perhaps at the time she was writing these fantasy and underground works, Katerli was as yet uninterested in portraying or depicting the 'female experience'. On the other hand, she might have intentionally avoided writing about the 'female experience' out of a desire to fit into the male-defined mainstream of Soviet literature.

CONCLUSION

'Treugol'nik Barsukova' and 'Chervets' are Katerli's most experimental and controversial prose works. They represent a period in Soviet history when publishing provocative works could preclude one from ever publishing in the Soviet Union or could land one in prison. These two novellas examine the darker sides of urban Soviet life, exploring the realities of broken marriages, dysfunctional families, alcoholism, the corrupt Soviet science industry, delinquent children, adultery, death, and loss. 'Treugol'nik Barsukova' and 'Chervets' investigate not only external urban realities, but also the internal realities of the soul. These stories focus on the private lives of the characters, revealing their deepest concerns, insecurities, and anxieties.

Beyond the controversy surrounding 'Treugol'nik Barsukova' and 'Chervets', there are several striking similarities between these two stories. They both take place in urban environments and focus on the daily dilemmas and frustrations, as well as their personal, emotional, and psychological concerns. Several of the themes concern important political and sociological issues which were highly topical in the Brezhnev period, such as anti-Semitism and emigration, the Soviet science industry (in 'Chervets') and Communist ideology (in 'Treugol'nik Barsukova'). Both stories blend fantasy and reality to convey the chaos and confusion of 1970s Leningrad. The characters of each story range from the sympathetic and sometimes pathetic to the vile and loathsome. The narrators of both stories communicate directly to the audience, as well as allow the characters to speak for themselves.

There are, at the same time, several differences between these stories. With respect to plot, 'Treugol'nik Barsukova' focuses on the lives of numerous inhabitants of a communal flat and the various issues which touch their lives. 'Chervets', on the other hand, has two plot lines and a much smaller cast of characters. The narrative styles of the two stories also differ. The narrator of 'Treugol'nik Barsukova' is far more emotionally involved in the story than is the narrator of 'Chervets'. The narrator of 'Treugol'nik Barsukova' is an amalgamation of all of the characters in the communal flat, and thus, participates in the life of the story—in the gossip, in the offering of opinions, and in the sharing of personal thoughts. He/she is not an all-wise and divine creature. The narrator of 'Chervets', by comparison, is far less prominent in the story. The narrator does speak to the audience and guide the story through its two plot lines, but also allows the characters more freedom to tell their own stories. Finally, the primary characters in

'Chervets' are men—Pavel and Maksim, whereas several of the significant characters in 'Treugol'nik Barsukova' are women—Mariia and Anna Tiutina, Roza and Fira Kats, Natal'ia Kopeikina, and Antonina Bodrova.

Stylistically, 'Treugol'nik Barsukova' and 'Chervets' serve as a bridge between Katerli's fantasy prose of the 1970s and her realistic prose of the 1980s. As stated earlier, these stories incorporate fantasy, a hallmark of Katerli's 1970s works, in an attempt to express the confusion, frustration, and uncertainty of 1970s Leningrad. In addition, these stories focus on the introspective individual, which is characteristic of Katerli's realistic prose. Moreover, 'Chervets' focuses on male protagonists, which is also characteristic of Katerli's realistic prose. This stylistic transition in Katerli's writing, as we will see in Chapter Four, reflects her movement toward more psychological and introspective fiction.

Beyond the 'how' of this transition, of course, is the 'why'. Katerli's fantasy works deal with relatively self-contained worlds and universal human issues, such as love and friendship ('Chelovek Firfarov i traktor'), aging and compassion ('Chudovishche'), and death ('Nagornaia desiati'). In her underground works, however, the characters are unable to find contentment in their self-contained worlds. The outer world has so broken down that finding one's own separate peace is impossible. In other words, Katerli, like many of her contemporaries, who has become so disillusioned with the state of politics and society that a 'happy ending', in which a character achieves understanding and acceptance of his life and fate, is increasingly implausible. How this disillusionment would develop and what kind of works it would produce, is the subject of the next chapter.

Notes

¹ Nina Katerli, 'Odin iz variantov', Mansarda, no.1, 1996, p.15.

² Nina Katerli, personal interview, 1995.

³ Carl Proffer, 'Introduction', in The Barsukov Triangle, the Two-Toned Blond and Other Stories, ed. by Carl and Ellendea Proffer (Ann Arbor, 1984), p.ix.

⁴ Deming Brown, The Last Years of Soviet Russian Literature: Prose Fiction, 1975-91 (Cambridge, 1993), p.132.

⁵ As will be seen in Chapter Five, the issues of anti-Semitism and Jewish emigration figure significantly in Katerli's non-fiction writings.

⁶ Nina Katerli, personal interview, 1993. This statement does not appear to contradict Katerli's statement from a 1998 interview that censorship played a role in her decision to write fantasy, as she began writing more realistic works in the mid-1970s.

⁷ Nina Katerli, personal interview, 1995.

⁸ See Chapter One for further discussion of the 1981 Glagol publication of 'Treugol'nik Barsukova', the 'samizdat' publication of 'Chervets', and Katerli's subsequent interrogation by the KGB.

⁹ The text in Glagol is identical to the text published in 1991 and 1992, except for the deletion of the epigraph in the 1992 text. Katerli states that the absence of the epigraph, which will be discussed later in the chapter, was the publisher's mistake, rather than an intentional choice.

¹⁰ Nina Katerli, personal interview, 1994.

¹¹ Carl Proffer, 'Introduction', in The Barsukov Triangle, the Two-Toned Blond and Other Stories, p.xiv.

¹² Rosalind Marsh, Soviet Fiction since Stalin: Science, Politics and Literature (London and Sydney, 1986), p.6.

¹³ Helena Goscilo, ed., Balancing Acts (New York, 1989), p.484.

¹⁴ See Chapter Two for a discussion of 'fabula' and 'siuzhet'

¹⁵ Nina Katerli, 'Sennaia Ploshchad'', Sennaia Ploshchad' (St. Petersburg, 1992), p.31.

¹⁶ Helena Goscilo, Balancing Acts, p.484.

¹⁷ Nina Katerli, 'Sennaia Ploshchad'', p.17.

¹⁸ Nina Katerli, 'Sennaia Ploshchad', p.52.

¹⁹ Deming Brown has noted: 'Katerli's strongest stories...are devoid of the supernatural. For example, "The Barsukov Triangle", is a harsh episodic portrayal of a neighbourhood of ordinary Leningraders.' While Brown is correct in identifying 'Treugol'nik Barsukova' as one of Katerli's strongest stories, as will be discussed below, he perhaps overlooks the existence and importance of its fantastical elements. See Deming Brown, The Last Years of Soviet Russian Literature: Prose Fiction, 1975-91, pp.132-3.

²⁰ Katerli's depiction of Natal'ia Ivanovna Kopeikina's relationship with her son resembles that of Anfisa Gromova and her son Vadim in I. Grekova's Vdovii parokhod (Ship of Widows) (1986). For further discussion of Grekova's novella, see David

Gillespie, 'Whore or Madonna: Perceptions of Women in Modern Russian Literature', Irish Slavonic Studies, no.9, 1988, pp.97-99.

²¹ Nina Katerli, 'Sennaia Ploshchad', p.21.

²² Nina Katerli, 'Sennaia Ploshchad', p.34.

²³ Nina Katerli, 'Sennaia Ploshchad', p.40.

²⁴ In a 1998 interview, when asked what the green mist signifies, Katerli answered: 'Я не знаю. Знают мои герои. Я думаю, может быть это значит, что у них потемнело в глазах.'

²⁵ Nina Katerli, 'Sennaia Ploshchad', p.43.

²⁶ Nina Katerli, 'Sennaia Ploshchad', p. 74.

²⁷ Nina Katerli, 'Sennaia Ploshchad', p.78.

²⁸ Nina Katerli, 'Sennaia Ploshchad', p.78.

²⁹ The political themes of 'Treugol'nik Barsukova' most likely contributed to Katerli's decision to publish the text outside of the Soviet Union.

³⁰ Nina Katerli, 'Sennaia Ploshchad', p.31.

³¹ Nina Katerli, 'Sennaia Ploshchad', p.60.

³² Nina Katerli, 'Sennaia Ploshchad', p.37-9.

³³ Nina Katerli, 'Sennaia Ploshchad', p.29.

³⁴ As Jakub Blum and Vera Rich have noted of anti-Semitism in the Soviet Union: 'Its effect was to alienate Jews from society and sharpen nationalistic conflicts...Jews are no longer accused of cowardice or attempting to overthrow the regime, but are represented as a foreign body of second class citizens whose political and social contribution is not to be compared with that of native Russians.' See Jakub Blum and Vera Rich, The Image of the Jew in Soviet Literature: the Post-Stalin Period (Institute of Jewish Affairs, London and New York, 1984), p.69.

³⁵ Nina Katerli, 'Sennaia Ploshchad', p.46. Lazar's statement reflects the self-loathing attitude of many Soviet Jews. As Jakub Blum and Vera Rich have noted: 'A majority of Russians willingly accepted the regime's anti-Jewish campaign.' See Jakub Blum and Vera Rich, The Image of the Jew in Soviet Literature: the Post-Stalin Period, p.69.

³⁶ Due to the overabundance of people wanting to live in the large cities of Moscow and Leningrad, one had to be registered in a flat to be lawfully resident.

³⁷ Nina Katerli, 'Sennaia Ploshchad', p.19.

³⁸ Nina Katerli, 'Sennaia Ploshchad', p.69.

³⁹ Nina Katerli, 'Sennaia Ploshchad', p.30.

⁴⁰ Nina Katerli, 'Treugol'nik Barsukova', Glagol, vol.3, 1981, p.7.

⁴¹ Nina Katerli, 'Sennaia Ploshchad', p.60.

⁴² See Chapter Two for a definition of inner monologue.

⁴³ Deming Brown, The Last Years of Soviet Russian Literature: Prose Fiction 1975-91, pp.132-3.

⁴⁴ Deming Brown, The Last Years of Soviet Russian Literature: Prose Fiction 1975-91, p.132.

⁴⁵ Katerli's use of 'skaz', and her creation of a narrative 'voice' supposedly separate from her own 'voice', was perhaps a reaction to literary censorship. As Hector Blair and Militsa Greene have noted of Mikhail Zoshchenko's use of 'skaz': 'The use of 'skaz'

frees Zoshchenko from any direct responsibility for the opinions expressed and at the same time enables him to reply obliquely to criticisms which had been levelled at his own works.' See Hector Blair and Militsa Greene, 'Introduction', in Mikhail Zoshchenko, Liudi (Cambridge, 1967), p.7.

⁴⁶ Nina Katerli, 'Sennaia Ploshchad'', p.60.

⁴⁷ Nina Katerli, 'Sennaia Ploshchad'', p.30.

⁴⁸ In this respect, the narration of 'Treugol'nik Barsukova' is similar to the Moscow scenes of Mikhail Bulgakov's Master i Margarita (The Master and Margarita) (1966-67). Using language similar to that in the above quotation, the narrator of Master i Margarita states: 'Follow me, reader! Who told you that there is no true, eternal, and faithful love in the world! May the liar have his foul tongue cut out! Follow me, my reader, and only me, and I will show you such a love!' See Mikhail Bulgakov, The Master and Margarita, trans. by Mirra Ginsburg (New York, 1967), p.235.¹ Similarly, the narrator of Mikhail Zoshchenko's story 'What the Nightingale Sang' (1963) states: 'How people will laugh at us some three hundred years from now!...The author does not know and does not wish to guess what their existence will be like. Why harry one's nerves and shatter one's health? It's all useless.' See Mikhail Zoshchenko, 'What the Nightingale Sang', in Nervous People, ed. and with Introduction by Hugh McLean, trans. by Maria Gordon and Hugh McLean (New York, 1963), pp.3-26.

⁴⁹ Nina Katerli, 'Sennaia Ploshchad'', p.24.

⁵⁰ The name Petukhov in fact derives from the Russian word for rooster ('petukh'), lending understanding to the character Petukhov's inflated ego.

⁵¹ Nina Katerli, 'Sennaia Ploshchad'', p.20.

⁵² Nina Katerli, 'Sennaia Ploshchad'', p.19.

⁵³ Nina Katerli, 'Sennaia Ploshchad'', p.20.

⁵⁴ Carl Proffer, 'Introduction', in The Barsukov Triangle, the Two-Toned Blond and Other Stories, p.xviii.

⁵⁵ Nina Katerli, 'Chervets', Kurzal (Leningrad, 1990), p.238.

⁵⁶ With regard to secrecy in the Soviet science industry, Mark Popovsky has written: 'Secrecy is the main product of hundreds of Soviet research and development institutes, and may be called the lifeblood of Soviet science.' See Mark Popovsky, Manipulated Science: the Crisis of Science and Scientists in the Soviet Union Today, trans. by Paul S. Falla (London, 1980), p.70. Similarly, Zhores Medvedev has noted: 'Especially after the War, almost all branches of research had been considered secret, or at least semi-secret...Any research was automatically considered classified until it was completed.' See Zhores Medvedev, Soviet Science (New York, 1978), p.121.

⁵⁷ Maksim's feelings are similar to those of Tomas in Milan Kundera's Unbearable Lightness of Being (1984).

⁵⁸ Nina Katerli, 'Chervets', p.229.

⁵⁹ Nina Katerli, 'Chervets', p.229.

⁶⁰ Nina Katerli, 'Chervets', p.322.

⁶¹ Nina Katerli, 'Chervets', p.322.

⁶² Nina Katerli, 'Chervets', p.372

⁶³ Nina Katerli, 'Chervets', p.277.

⁶⁴ The themes of 'Chervets' are consistent with Rosalind Marsh's statement concerning Soviet science prose of the Brezhnev era: 'Fiction dealing with life and work in scientific institutes displays less political sharpness than that of the Khrushchev period, but lays more emphasis on the moral, psychological and intellectual problems of the individual scientist.' See Rosalind Marsh, Soviet Fiction since Stalin: Science, Politics and Literature (London and Sydney, 1986), p.100.

⁶⁵ Mark Popovsky writes: 'No one in Russia nowadays is astonished or indignant at the widespread fraud practiced in academic matters.' See Mark Popovsky, Manipulated Science: the Crisis of Science and Scientists in the Soviet Union Today, p.122.

⁶⁶ Nina Katerli, 'Chervets', p.253. Rosalind Marsh has written: 'While authors of the post-Khrushchev period have possessed a certain freedom in the treatment of themes and characters, most works do not venture beyond the party line.' The cynical tone of the above quotation suggests that 'Chervets' is one of the exceptions to which Marsh alludes. See Rosalind Marsh, Soviet Fiction since Stalin: Science, Politics and Literature, p.104.

⁶⁷ Nina Katerli, 'Chervets', p.280.

⁶⁸ Nina Katerli, 'Chervets', p.298.

⁶⁹ Nina Katerli, 'Chervets', p.265.

⁷⁰ Nina Katerli, 'Chervets', p.262.

⁷¹ Nina Katerli, 'Chervets', p.257.

⁷² Nina Katerli, 'Chervets', p.258.

⁷³ Nina Katerli, 'Chervets', p.362.

⁷⁴ Nina Katerli, 'Chervets', p.363.

⁷⁵ Nina Katerli, 'Chervets', p.366.

⁷⁶ Nina Katerli, 'Chervets', p.319.

⁷⁷ Nina Katerli, 'Chervets', p. 344.

⁷⁸ Nina Katerli, 'Chervets', p.343.

⁷⁹ Nina Katerli, 'Chervets', p.341-2.

⁸⁰ Teresa Polowy, 'Russian Women Writing Alcoholism: the Sixties to the Present', in Post-Communism and the Body Politic, ed. by Ellen E. Berry (New York and London, 1995), pp.269-70. Polowy also writes: 'In contrast to images of drinking men, the comparatively rare portrayals of women drinkers by women are "positive"; the women drinker is debased (but no more so than others around her), and at times she is openly rebellious or non conformist. A sense of irony and a rejection of patriarchal society and men as validators are key elements in this portrayal, for these heroines are mostly unmarried women, usually divorcees. Additionally, women writers who portray drinking women do not engage in moral statement, and their implied criticism lies elsewhere and is aimed at such targets as the inevitable double (gender) standard in Russian society, normative views of gender roles and at a degenerate society in general.' See Teresa Polowy, 'Russian Women Writing Alcoholism: the Sixties to the Present', pp.283-4. In many respects, Katerli's portrayal of Vera would seem to contradict Polowy's statement, for her portrayal is not 'positive'. However, in concordance with Polowy's statement, Katerli does not appear to 'engage in moral statement'. For further reading on the theme of alcoholism in literature by Russian women, see for example: Liudmila Petrushevskaja, 'Our Crowd', in Glasnost: An Anthology of Russian Literature Under Gorbachev, ed. and

trans. by Helena Goscilo and Byron Lindsey (Ann Arbor, 1990), pp.3-24; Larisa Vaneeva, 'Parade of Planets', in Soviet Women Writing: Fifteen Short Stories, ed. by John Murray, trans. by Diane Nemece Ignashev (London, 1990), pp.317-332.

⁸¹ Nina Katerli, 'Chervets', p.244.

⁸² Nina Katerli, 'Chervets', p.245.

⁸³ Nina Katerli, 'Chervets', p.360.

⁸⁴ Nina Katerli, 'Chervets', p.275.

⁸⁵ Nina Katerli, 'Chervets', p.275.

⁸⁶ Nina Katerli, 'Chervets', p.278.

⁸⁷ Nina Katerli, 'Chervets', p.300.

⁸⁸ Nina Katerli, 'Chervets', p.285.

⁸⁹ Nina Katerli, 'Chervets', p.235.

⁹⁰ Nina Katerli, 'Chervets', p.276.

⁹¹ Nina Katerli, 'Chervets', p.247.

⁹² Nina Katerli, 'Chervets', p.338.

⁹³ Nina Katerli, 'Chervets', pp.263-4.

⁹⁴ Nina Katerli, 'Chervets', p.265.

⁹⁵ Nina Katerli, 'Chervets', p.255.

⁹⁶ Nina Katerli, 'Chervets', p.232.

⁹⁷ For further reading on the image of the Jew in Russian and Soviet literature, see for example: Felix Dreizin, The Russian Soul and the Jew: Essays in Literary Ethnocentrism (Boston, 1990); Ernest J. Simmons, ed., Through the Glass of Soviet Literature: Views of Russian Society (Freeport, NY, 1953).

⁹⁸ Nina Katerli, 'Chervets', p.332.

⁹⁹ Nina Katerli, 'Chervets', p.229.

¹⁰⁰ Amanda Haight, Anna Akhmatova (New York and London, 1976), p.181.

¹⁰¹ Nina Katerli, 'Chervets', p.355.

¹⁰² Nina Katerli, 'Chervets', p.287.

¹⁰³ Nina Katerli, 'Chervets', p.340.

¹⁰⁴ Nina Katerli, 'Chervets', p.285.

¹⁰⁵ Nina Katerli, 'Chervets', p.255.

¹⁰⁶ Nina Katerli, 'Chervets', p.256.

¹⁰⁷ Nina Katerli, 'Chervets', p.330.

¹⁰⁸ Nina Katerli, 'Chervets', p.356.

CHAPTER FOUR

REALISTIC PROSE: 1981-1991

Можно ли сказать, что моя жизнь в общем хороша? ... Много раз в жизни задавал я себе этот вопрос и никогда не мог найти однозначного ответа.¹

By the early 1980s, a significant shift in style and content became visible in Nina Katerli's prose fiction. As discussed in Chapter Two, Katerli's fantasy stories gradually became less fantastic and more realistic. Chapter Three examined Katerli's two underground works, both written in the mid-1970s and both of which serve as a bridge between her fantasy and realistic writing periods. This chapter will discuss Katerli's realistic prose period, roughly comprising the years 1981 to 1991. In so doing, this chapter will address Katerli's use of the introspective male protagonist, as well as her increased interest in the 'female experience'.² After considering to what extent her realistic prose can be considered postmodernist, this chapter will finally contrast Katerli's realistic prose with her fantasy prose and underground works, and will draw certain conclusions about Katerli's evolution as a writer.

During the 1970s, Katerli, like many Soviet women authors, intentionally or otherwise, avoided overtly feminist themes. As discussed in the Introduction, Katerli has emphatically stated that she is not a feminist. In a similar vein, she remarked in a 1993 interview that she has no specific feminist agenda in her writing.³ In the eighties, however, the literary scene for Soviet women writers began to change. As Helena Goscilo has noted: 'The eighties brought not only 'perestroika' but also several remarkable individual female talents in addition to a post-Stalin generation of

young women writers whose sense of self and text clearly signalled a new sensibility.’⁴ As will be discussed below, Katerli’s realistic prose, with its treatment of female protagonists and the ‘female experience’, reflects this ‘new sensibility’, and perhaps signals an evolution or movement toward a feminist consciousness.

In addition to a feminist awakening, the 1980s also saw the proliferation of postmodernism in Russia, which, as Mikhail Epstein has noted, might be considered ‘the most widespread and active movement in contemporary Russian literature.’⁵ A problem immediately arises, however, when one attempts to define postmodernism, postmodern, and postmodernist. Hans Bertens, for example, has noted: ‘Right from the start of the debate, postmodernism has been a particularly unstable concept. No single definition of postmodernism has gone uncontested or has even been widely accepted.’⁶ Similarly, Fredric Jameson has stated: ‘The concept of postmodernism is not widely accepted or even understood today.’⁷ Although it is not within the scope of this study to examine in detail the various meanings of postmodernism, their unifying factor appears to be what Bertens has called a ‘complex of anti-modernism artistic strategies.’⁸

In essence, postmodernism describes the search for a new way in which to understand the world subsequent to the decline of modernism. As Jean-Francois Lyotard has noted: ‘Postmodernism...searches for a new presentation not in order to enjoy them, but in order to impart a stronger sense of the presentable.’⁹ On a purely stylistic level, postmodernism sought to experiment with literary form. The Concise Oxford Dictionary of Literary Terms defines postmodernism as:

A culture of fragmentary sensations, eclectic nostalgia, disposable simulacra, and promiscuous superficiality, in which the traditionally valued qualities of depth, coherence, meaning, originality, and authenticity are evacuated or dissolved amid the random swirl of empty signals.¹⁰

Given the aforementioned definitions, I would argue that Katerli's realistic prose does not express a postmodernist view of the world. Although, as will be discussed further in the chapter, Katerli does experiment at times with literary form, she has not abandoned the 'traditions' of quality, depth, and meaning in her search for a 'new presentation'.

In the early 1980s, Katerli began compiling works for her second collection of stories, Tsvetnye otkrytki (Coloured Postcards) (1986). As with Okno (The Window) (1981), Katerli found it difficult to publish Tsvetnye otkrytki. The original title of the book was Proshchal'nyi svet (The Farewell Light), named after one of the stories within the collection, but the editors and critics feared that this title would make the entire book appear negative and depressing. Katerli acceded and changed the title. In addition, Katerli modified several stories, which had come under criticism. One story in particular, 'Yrvshch' (1986), was considered bleak and depressing.¹¹ Katerli now believes that in changing the story, she destroyed it, and since the publication of Tsvetnye otkrytki, she has refused to republish 'Yrvshch' in any form.¹² Another short story, 'Nes"edobnyi drug Rastorgueva' ('Rastorguev's Inedible Friend') (1982) was considered by the critics to be 'усмешливый и рыхлый.'¹³ However, unlike 'Yrvshch', 'Nes"edobnyi drug Rastorgueva' appeared in its original form. Katerli's

editor agreed with the numerous comments made by the censors and critics, and encouraged her to lessen the melancholy tone of many of the stories in Tsvetnye otkrytki, telling Katerli: 'В Советском Союзе жизнь не так ужасна.'¹⁴

Notwithstanding Katerli's willingness to make alterations, she was unable to publish several of her stories. One such story was 'Solntse za steklom' ('The Sun Behind the Glass') (1994), in which one of the central protagonists is a heavy drinker. 'Starushka ne spesha' ('The Old Woman Slowly') (1994) also could not be published because, according to Katerli, the main character was Jewish. Katerli wrote in 1993: 'О евреях писать не рекомендовалось – так же, как об алкоголиках, наркоманах и проститутках.'¹⁵ Katerli finally managed to publish both of these stories in 1994, and they will be discussed in Chapter Six.

Since many stories were rejected, Katerli had to write a new story quickly in order to complete the collection. The story that filled this missing gap was 'Tsvetnye otkrytki' (1986), which, incidentally, Katerli considers to be her least favourite, as a result of the conditions under which she was forced to write it.¹⁶ Ironically, the title of the story would also become the title of the book. Despite numerous difficulties encountered in publishing Tsvetnye otkrytki, Katerli nevertheless remained intent on publishing the collection, primarily because her story 'Polina' (1984), which will be discussed later in the chapter, was to be included. Tsvetnye otkrytki was finally published in 1986, but was not well received by the critics, which Katerli attributes to the weakness of 'Tsvetnye otkrytki'.

In addition to Tsvetnye otkrytki, Katerli published two other collections of stories in her realistic prose period: Kurzal, which was published in 1989, and Sennaia Ploshchad' (Haymarket Square), which was published in 1992.¹⁷ Kurzal contains four

stories—‘Kurzal’ (1986) ‘Dolg’ (‘Duty’) (1989), ‘Zhara na severe’ (‘Heat in the North’) (1988), and ‘Chervets’ (‘The Worm’) (1990). Sennaia Ploshchad’ is comprised of previously published stories: ‘Sennaia Ploshchad’ (‘Haymarket Square’) (1981), ‘Chelovek Firfarov i traktor’ (‘The Man Firfarov and the Tractor’) (1978), ‘Volshebnaia lampa’ (‘The Magic Lamp’) (1981), ‘Kollektsiia doktora Emil’ia’ (‘Doctor Emil’s Collection’) (1979) and ‘Chudovishche’ (‘The Monster’) (1977). The stories in Sennaia Ploshchad’ and the story ‘Chervets’ in Kurzal have been discussed in previous chapters, and, thus, will not be discussed in this chapter.

PLOT

By the late 1970s, Katerli began writing fewer ‘rasskazy’ (short stories) and more ‘povesti’ (short novels). These short novels were not only longer but more psychologically and emotionally complex. Contemporaneous with Katerli’s shift from fantasy to realism, this shift in the length and depth of her prose fiction reflected a general trend in Soviet literature in the 1980s, perhaps, as Deming Brown has suggested, because longer forms were better suited to capture the prevailing Zeitgeist.

Brown writes:

The short novel seemed to be the most appropriate response to rapidly changing times, when writers could not confidently see the world as a whole. Puzzled and disturbed by accelerating social development and cultural instability, and lacking complete and fully rounded philosophies, writers concentrated on limited segments of human experience, emphasising the local at the

expense of the general, and dramatising moral or ideological problems without attempting to solve them.¹⁸

The plots of Katerli's realistic prose explore these 'limited segments of human experience', examining the psychological dilemmas of her protagonists. Katerli is concerned less with the difficulties of the outside world than with the various human responses to suffering. As Elena Efros has noted of Katerli's prose fiction in the 1980s: 'Автора... интересует не только поступки героев, но и причины этих поступков, не только характеры, но и условия их формирования.'¹⁹ Thus, the 'fabulas' of Katerli's realistic prose fiction, which examine the 'byt' (everyday life) and the daily issues of her protagonists, are less significant than the 'siuzhets', which examine the emotional and moral dilemmas of her protagonists.

'Yrvshch' is a disjointed story about the lonely outcast, Sergei Fomich Kuvaldin. The 'fabula' of this story is almost non-existent, which perhaps accounts for its confusing structure. Kuvaldin is single and lives with his eighty-year-old mother. Although we never learn the reason, Kuvaldin is unable to read and write. While at work one day, Kuvaldin is scribbling on a piece of paper, and his colleagues ask to see what he is writing, knowing that he is illiterate. They see the word 'ырвшц', and immediately assume that Kuvaldin's illiteracy is a ruse and that he is in fact a spy who has been writing secret codes.²⁰ Kuvaldin is terrified: 'Он знал теперь, что нарушил, знал и боялся.'²¹ Kuvaldin's illiteracy is matched by his inability to decipher the rules and norms of his world, and his literal and figurative illiteracies almost land him in prison. In the end, Kuvaldin escapes punishment and the story concludes with him wandering the city and reflecting on his connectedness with all

creation: 'Он был таким же, как все они: темный сад за решетчатой оградой, влажный запах листьев, пристальные дома, и добрые люди, спящие в них.'²²

Kuvaldin looks up at one building and he sees a raven that says 'Hello'.

The 'siuzhet' explores Kuvaldin's sensitive character. Although unable to read and write, Kuvaldin loves to draw. As a child, he would draw the same picture over and over again: 'никому не понятный город с дворцами и башнями, над которыми простиралось, сколько хватало бумаги, ясное голубое небо с мордастой – днем-то! – луной посередине.'²³ Kuvaldin is a romantic, a dreamer, who appears to live more in this imaginary world of palaces and towers than in the real world. Perhaps because of his handicap, Kuvaldin is somewhat of a social misfit.²⁴ In fact, Kuvaldin's only friend is a raven: 'Какую жизнь хотел для себя Сергей Фомич Кувалдин, про это он никому не рассказывал, разве что одной вороне, но она улетела.'²⁵ The interesting juxtaposition at the end of the story of Kuvaldin's conclusion that he is similar to others, with his perception of a raven greeting him, only expresses more profoundly how different he is from the conventional and average person. Kuvaldin, however, is happy and content in this world of imagination, in this world of palaces and towers, made-up words, and talking birds. Perhaps Kuvaldin, like Prince Myshkin in Fedor Dostoevskii's *Idiot* (1868), reflects the Russian literary tradition of the simple and kind-hearted protagonist, whose innocence underscores the evil and corruption of society generally. On the other hand, perhaps Kuvaldin is simply mad. Characteristically, Katerli leaves the reader with no clear resolution, but rather a range of reasonable interpretations.

'Nes"edobnyi drug Rastorgueva' tells the story of Professor Aleksei Emil'ianovich Rastorguev and his pet pig, Kuz'ka. The story begins when Rastorguev, his daughter

Vera Aleksandrovna, and his six-year-old grandson, Dima, decide to spend the summer at their dacha in the countryside. The 'fabula' and 'siuzhet' of this story are not as distinct as many of the 'fabulas' in Katerli's realistic prose stories. In fact, unlike most of Katerli's realistic prose works, it is perhaps the 'fabula' that takes precedence in this story, and also, unlike many of Katerli's stories, 'Nes"edobnyi drug Rastorgueva' follows a chronological pattern, with a beginning, climax, denouement, and conclusion.

The conflict in the story begins when Dima returns from the market one day with a pet piglet. The child becomes bored with his new pet, and Rastorguev decides to assume the responsibilities of caring for it. Towards the end of the summer, Rastorguev decides to stay at the dacha, rather than accompanying his daughter and grandson back to the city. He has become very attached to the pig, and is afraid what fate might befall it if he leaves. Convinced that her father has gone mad, Vera Aleksandrovna resolves to have the pig butchered without her father's knowledge. Minutes before the slaughter is to take place, however, Rastorguev discovers his daughter's scheme. For Rastorguev, Kuz'ka is a valuable living organism, that, like every human being, deserves to live. He considers his daughter's actions to be heartless, and he says to her: 'Это ведь как получается – сперва в друзья, а потом – под нож? И на колбасу?'²⁶ Rastorguev decides to retire from the university where he has worked for forty-five years, and to live permanently at the dacha to care for the pig. The story concludes by skipping a few years into the future, showing Rastorguev living happily in the countryside with Kuz'ka, whom whom he calls his 'несъедобный друг.'

‘Yrvshch’ and ‘Nes”edobnyi drug Rastorgueva’, like Katerli’s underground works, may be viewed as transitional. Although these two stories are realistic, they have retained elements of the fantastic. For example, as noted above, Kuvaldin believes that he can communicate with ravens. Similarly, Rastorguev believes that his pet pig Kuz’ka has special powers, namely that he can understand human communication. Unlike Katerli’s fantasy prose, however, there is an intimation, or at least a suggestion that communication with the raven and the pig is merely a figment of the protagonist’s imagination. Thus, each story might be fantastical, might be realistic, or might be a combination of the two. On a purely structural level, it is worth noting that each of these stories is also shorter than Katerli’s other realistic prose works, further identifying the two stories as transitional.

‘Proshchal’nyi svet’ tells the story of Andrei Nikolaevich Martynov, a forty-seven-year-old man who is reassessing his life and his relationships with the significant women in his life: his recently deceased mother, his wife, and his step-daughter Tania. The ‘fabula’ takes place in a single day over a period of a few hours. The story begins with Martynov walking home from a difficult day at work and reflecting on his day. An elderly woman catches his eye, and he suddenly remembers the last time he saw his mother before she died:

В расстегнутом белом плаще она приближалась к нему по тротуару и была уже довольно близко, но вдруг резко повернула и направилась к павильону метро. Можно было успеть окликнуть, но Мартынов опять с досадой подумал, что испытания на заводе должны начаться через 15 минут. Он растерянно стоял у края тротуара, а мать, миновав метро, уходила от него по бульвару. Листья еще не начинали желтеть, только что наступил сентябрь. Да, это было... шестого сентября, - точно шестого, в четверг, а в субботу она метро.²⁷

Martynov has not been to his mother's flat since her death six months earlier. He decides, for some unknown reason, that he must go to her flat at once. While wandering around the flat and inspecting everything from her kitchen to her medicine, he finds her diary. Martynov begins to read the diary and discovers many things about his mother, her relationship with Tania, her thoughts about him, and her general ideas and reflections on life. When Martynov finishes reading the diary, he walks over to the window and again remembers his last image of his mother in the white raincoat.

The 'siuzhet' of 'Proshchal'nyi svet' examines Martynov's private thoughts and feelings. One issue, in particular, which weighs heavily upon Martynov's heart, and which also affects his sense of self, is obviously the recent death of his mother:

Да, пожалуй, в последнее время иллюзия, что ничего не произошло, бывала иногда полной. И все-таки жизнь стала другой. Вернее, другими становился сам Мартынов. Ему теперь казалось, что до смерти матери он так и не успел по-настоящему сделаться взрослым, с годами менялась только внешность, а начиная с этого сентября процесс внутреннего повзреления, а точнее постарения пошел с невероятной скоростью. Из Андрюши, которым он всегда себя чувствовал, Мартынов вдруг превратился в Андрея Николаевича.²⁸

The above passage portrays Martynov as both introspective and self-absorbed. He examines issues only insofar as they relate to him and his personal development. Because of this, it is very difficult for Martynov to see the other side of an issue. It is only through reading his mother's diary that Martynov becomes aware of certain issues in his life, such as his relationships with his mother and Tania, as well as his fears of growing old. It is tragic that the only voice in the story able to penetrate through Martynov's stubborn heart is the voice of a deceased woman.

We learn that Martynov's mother began keeping the diary because she believed that an elderly person easily forgets essential acts, such as taking medicine and turning off the oven. The early entries are therefore simply reminders to herself: 'Компот закипел в 14.10... выключить в 15.00.'²⁹ However, she gradually begins to write more personal reflections, and explains the change: 'Решила заносить в эту тетрадь некоторые в эту тетрадь некоторые мысли и впечатления. Конечно, не для потомков, кому нужны марзаматические философствования!'³⁰

Through Martynov's reading of his mother's diary, both Martynov and the reader learn the background of many of the issues facing Martynov. The first issue involves Martynov's relationship with Tania. In the first few pages of the story, Martynov expresses his bewilderment at Tania's mourning of his mother's death. On the day his mother died, Tania had cried without ceasing, which Martynov interpreted as excessive and even selfish. After all, from Martynov's perspective, Tania was only her step-granddaughter. Moreover, Martynov disapproves of Tania's friendship with a girl named Liuda, who, in his opinion, depends too heavily upon Tania and monopolises her time.

When Martynov reads of the many intimate conversations between his mother and Tania, he learns that they actually had been quite close. For example, Tania shared her feelings of being misunderstood by her parents. She tells the grandmother: 'Они считают... что если я не грублю и слушаюсь, если готовлюсь к экзаменам и получаю пятерки, значит, все хорошо. А что я давно ни о чем серьезном, ничего про себя не рассказываю, им безразлично... По физике помочь – это пожалуйста, а что у меня на душе, никому не интересно.'³¹ In addition, the grandmother writes about Tania's friendship with Liuda, who, in the grandmother's opinion, is a very good and devoted friend. In this fashion, Tania's severe grief over her grandmother's death becomes justified, and Liuda's previously hidden qualities are brought to light. Martynov is also forced to acknowledge how he failed to understand his mother. For example, he had been in the habit of taking vegetables to her house every week. In reading the diary, Martynov learns that she did not like the vegetables he brought, but did not have the heart to tell him.

The discovery that his mother did not like the vegetables he would bring to her, leaves Martynov doubly chagrined, first in that his small, but regular act of filial duty (and perhaps love) did not have the effect he intended, and second, that his mother was more perceptive about his own feelings than he was. Martynov, a character who heretofore has regarded himself as a rational and logical creature, and who heretofore has been quite self-righteous, is shown to be ignorant of both his own situation and that of others. However, at the story's end, it is unclear to what use, if any, Martynov will put this new information. The story concludes with him walking towards the window thinking of his mother. Perhaps he is overwhelmed with the realisation that he did not truly know her and does not understand his step-daughter. Perhaps this realisation will bring about fundamental changes in his life; perhaps not. Again, Katerli provides no clear resolution. In so doing, she prompts the reader not only to supply his or her own answer but to reflect on how closely Martynov's situation might resemble his or her own.

Like 'Proshchal'nyi svet', 'Mezhdu vesnoi i letom' focuses on the life and concerns of one man, Vasia Panteleimonovich. The story begins with Vasia, a man in his mid-fifties, walking his dog while musing in a stream of fragmented thoughts about his life. Before the story begins, Vasia has had a heart attack, and has been forced to stay at home for a few weeks to recover. The exact period of the 'fabula' of 'Mezhdu vesnoi i letom' is unclear, but most likely encompasses the two-to-three week period of Vasia's convalescence. The 'siuzhet' of 'Mezhdu vesnoi i letom', like that of 'Proshchal'nyi svet', addresses the interior world of a central protagonist. Rather than a diary, the catalyst for Vasia's reflection is his confinement at home on sick leave. Away from the preoccupations and distractions of his job, he is forced to

reflect on his life and on some of its previously un-addressed issues: his marriage, his childhood, and his relationship with his daughter. Vasia, like Martynov in 'Proshchal'nyi svet', does not come to any great conclusions regarding the dilemmas in his life. There are no answers to be found. Or, perhaps no answers are sought. Rather, Vasia ponders deep personal issues, withdrawing into a world where he is safe and secure, a world of memory, reflection, and introspection.

Another story featuring a single male protagonist is 'Tsvetnye otkrytki'. Like the 'fabulas' of 'Proshchal'nyi svet' and 'Mezhdu vesnoi i letom', the 'fabula' of 'Tsvetnye otkrytki' is simple and takes place over a very short period of time. The protagonist, Vsevelod Evgen'evich Dorofeev, is a fifty-year-old man who is travelling from Moscow to Leningrad to visit his son Anton and ex-wife Inga and to attend a thirty-year reunion with his schoolmates. While in Leningrad, Dorofeev meets with his old friends, and has several encounters with Inga and Anton, before returning, or perhaps fleeing, to Moscow.

The 'siuzhet' focuses on Dorofeev's deeper emotional and psychological concerns. Dorofeev is portrayed as a passive individual who escapes, rather than faces, conflicts. More of a spectator than an actor, he only feels content when alone and surrounded by nature. Dorofeev's affinity with nature is first revealed in the story's epigraph, an excerpt from Gorodnitskii's 'Leningradskaia pesnia' ('Leningrad Song'), which is itself a series of reflections and impressions of Leningrad:

Но в плеске твоих мостовых

Милы и слякоть, и темень,

Пока на гранитах твоих любимые чудятся тени,

И тянется хрупкая нить вдоль времени зыбких обличий,

И теплятся белые ночи, которые не погасить.³²

In a similar vein, after Dorofeev visits Alverov, an old friend from school, the narrator says of Dorofeev: 'Теперь в свободном, продуваемом сквозняком вагоне электрички он рассеянно посматривал в окно, а перед глазами вставали точно цветные открытки, яркие, глянцевые петергофские пейзажи.'³³ Dorofeev wants to be separated from life's difficulties, and in particular, from the difficulties of his family.

The catalyst for Dorofeev's introspection is his forced trip home. While on the train, Dorofeev reflects on a telephone call from Inga weeks earlier, asking him to come to Leningrad to speak to Anton. Dorofeev then begins to reflect on the history of his relationship with Inga. The two had met at university, and after dating for a short period of time, Inga convinced Dorofeev that she could not live without him. They married, and soon after, Anton was born. Dorofeev, however, only recalls unhappy memories of Anton's childhood, as a result of Anton's poor health and frequent visits to the hospital.

Similarly, Dorofeev recalls the unhappiness of his marriage, which perhaps, in his mind, justified his affair with a young woman named Lialia. Dorofeev first met Lialia while walking through the park with Anton. Eventually, Dorofeev grew tired of her, but in a repetition of his relationship with Inga, she begged him not to leave her. Consistent with his passive character, Dorofeev relented and agreed to go away on a holiday with Lialia. While away, Dorofeev received a telephone call from Inga asking him to return home immediately because Anton was ill. Upon his return, Inga handed

him a letter she had found, written by Lialia, which read: ‘Дорогой мой человек! Пишу тебе, потому что не могу больше ждать, считать часы и минуты и все надеяться, что ты приедешь... я люблю тебя.’³⁴ The narrator never relates Inga’s reaction or the repercussions of this event; although we learn later that it did not immediately end their marriage. Dorofeev tried once more to end his relationship with Lialia, but she responded by telling him that she was pregnant and threatened him with a paternity suit. Dorofeev ignored her threat, and she finally stopped bothering him. Dorofeev’s marriage to Inga ended shortly thereafter when Dorofeev took a job offer in Moscow. Inga did not try to talk Dorofeev out of his decision, nor did she decide to go with him. She simply told him that she no longer needed him.

When Dorofeev first arrives at Inga’s house, he finds that a great deal has changed. Inga’s mother has become senile and spends most of her time trying to telephone her dead sister. Inga informs Dorofeev that she had wanted to see him because she is worried about Anton. Their son has started drinking and spends most of his time with his girlfriend, Natasha. After blaming these problems on the fact that Anton was raised without a father, Inga asks Dorofeev to speak to Anton’s girlfriend. The next day Dorofeev meets with her, and she informs him that Anton has decided to join the army because he wants to get away from everyone, a motivation that is strangely similar to Dorofeev’s decision to leave Leningrad for Moscow. Dorofeev accepts Anton’s decision and relays the message to Inga, who blames Anton’s pending departure on his girlfriend’s corrupting influence. At the end of the story, Dorofeev happily boards the train back to Moscow, where he, like his son, will get away from his family and past.

'Zhara na severe' also tells the story of a middle-aged man, Aleksandr Nikolaevich Gubin. Unlike the 'fabulas' of 'Proshchal'nyi svet', 'Mezhdu vesnoi i letom', and 'Tsvetnye otkrytki', the 'fabula' of 'Zhara na severe' is rather complex. The story begins with Gubin staring out at the sea, thinking about his wife Masha and their decision to take a cruise together. However, three days before their departure, their daughter falls ill with appendicitis, and Masha is forced to stay home. After twenty-seven years of marriage, Gubin takes his first holiday without his wife. Initially, Gubin, a misanthrope, keeps to himself. Eventually, however, he befriends a group of women, and shortly afterward, begins to have an affair with a young woman named Liza.

As the trip nears its end, Gubin realises that his holiday fling must come to an end, and he convinces himself that Liza also understands that their romance is temporary. Perhaps wracked with guilt, Gubin leaves the boat early and returns home, failing to tell Liza of his early departure. Liza has mistaken her holiday romance with Gubin as 'true love', and when she learns that Gubin has left, she is overcome with depression. The story then jumps ahead, months into the future, at Gubin's New Year's party. Some of the women from the cruise telephone Gubin to wish him a Happy New Year, and to ask him how things ended with Liza. Not wishing for his wife to overhear, Gubin quickly answers that everything is fine and he hangs up the telephone. The story ends with a look at Liza, living a lonely and sad life with her son and her uncle.

The 'siuzhet' of 'Zhara na severe' primarily examines Gubin's relationships with Masha and Liza, as well as his own thoughts on transgression and redemption. From Gubin's descriptions of Masha, we learn that she is a devoted, loving wife and mother, making Gubin's unfaithfulness all the more poignant and inexcusable.

Moreover, Gubin gives no explanation for his affair with Liza, merely noting that the affair had begun when he was drunk. It is unclear whether Gubin is aware of Liza's feelings or her love for him. As stated above, at the end of the story, Liza's story is finally told. Prior to leaving for the cruise, she had been living with her verbally abusive alcoholic mother. By the time Liza returns from the cruise, the mother is in the hospital suffering from liver damage due to her excessive drinking, and Liza lives with her uncle and son, waiting for Gubin to return to her and declare his love to her.

Another story focusing on a male protagonist is 'Kurzal'. The 'fabula', like that of 'Proshchal'nyi svet' is rather simple, taking place on one day: on the way home from work, Alesha—the main character—decides to pass by his childhood flat. The 'siuzhet', on the other hand, spans more than forty years, because while walking, Alesha reflects on significant events and relationships from his youth. The story begins with an anecdote from Alesha's childhood, when as a twelve or thirteen year-old child, he was on his way to an exam at school. The vignette continues, and, in fact, it is unclear until the sixth page that the central protagonist is actually an adult who is recalling his childhood. As he sees familiar buildings and roads, he thinks: 'Я ничего не забыл. Я узнаю каждый дом в нашем длинном переулке.'³⁵ He begins by remembering the two aunts with whom he had lived since he was two. While walking in this old neighbourhood, he sees a sweet wrapper floating in a puddle, and remembers an incident when he was five-years-old and his mother came to visit, bringing a box of sweets. We learn that his mother had run off to the Urals to live with her boyfriend, and his aunts had refused to let her take Alesha until she was settled. Alesha only saw his mother once after that and he grew up believing that she did not love him. His aunts, however, raised him with a great deal of love and care.

They lived solely for one another and for him. So connected were the two aunts that, long after Alesha had married and begun his career, they died only seconds apart.

Alesha also remembers the people from his childhood who had a significant impact on him. For example, he recalls Nikolai Bolotin, a neighbour with very strong political opinions. One day, however, Bolotin mysteriously disappeared. Alesha remembers asking his friends what had become of Bolotin, and his friends replied: 'Болотина забрали. "Черный ворон" приезжал.'³⁶ Alesha reflects that, even as children, he and his friends understood the lesson of such incidents: 'Никаких вопросов и недоумений у меня, как сейчас помню, не возникало.'³⁷

As with the stories mentioned previously in this chapter, the central protagonist does not come to any definite conclusions about his life. In fact, Alesha, unlike Dorofeev, Vasia, and Martynov, does not even have any serious conflicts with his children or wife upon which to reflect. Instead, Alesha spends an afternoon reminiscing and reflecting, dwelling on the past, rather than living in the present. Perhaps, for Alesha, the past makes more sense and brings greater pleasure than the present, with its difficulties and conflicts.

If 'Kurzal' is perhaps the most soothing story in *Tsvetnye otkrytki*, 'Polina' is the most controversial. 'Polina' was initially published in the journal *Neva* in 1984, and immediately afterward was criticised for being anti-Soviet. The situation escalated when the Secretary of the Regional committee of the Communist party ('Obkom') condemned the story, among works by other Soviet authors, for deviating from socialism realism.³⁸ The controversy began when an article written in an army journal condemned the story for its supposed anti-military tone.³⁹ The apparent root of the controversy was that one of the husbands of the title character is an ex-soldier who is

described as 'grey'. Katerli writes in her autobiographical text 'Kto ia?' that the article accused her of 'обвиняла меня в клевете на Советскую Армию, которая спасла мир от фашизма и сейчас денно и ночью защищает меня от врагов.'⁴⁰

Disapproving of Katerli's description of an ex-army officer, the critics and censors also objected to the fact that Polina drinks vodka throughout the story. This abstemious attitude towards alcohol was most likely influenced by Mikhail Gorbachev's campaign against alcoholism in the mid-1980s, in which he encouraged writers to eliminate scenes of alcoholism from their works. As N.N. Shneidman has remarked:

Gorbachev...seemed to call for the development of an ethical, morally stable, and selfless citizen, who does not drink, who places social needs above personal interests, who is also a good family person, and who is, most important, a good and productive worker. Thus the immediate objective of the party ideology is to change the mentality of the Soviet people, with literature assigned a major role.⁴¹

Similarly, Teresa Polowy noted in 1995:

Until recently, Soviet literary censorship tolerated only guarded allusions to the fact that the problem of alcohol abuse was, at least in part, bred and sustained by the system; writers were thus cautious in their treatment of the topic.⁴²

As a result of the controversy, Katerli made two significant changes for the story's 1986 publication in Tsvetnye otkrytki. She changed the occupation of Polina's ex-husband from an army officer to an engineer, and, in the scenes where Polina drinks vodka, Katerli changed 'vodka' to 'water'.⁴³ At the time, Katerli did not feel that these changes were notable. In her mind, 'Polina' was not specifically concerned with the army or vodka, and such changes would not detract from the story's principal themes. However, she now believes that she should not have made the changes.⁴⁴

In addition, the depiction of Polina as a 'sexually adventurous woman' was, for its time and place, scandalous.⁴⁵ Polina is portrayed as a single woman who has numerous sexual experiences and who is very happy and content with her lifestyle. In contrast, Maia, Polina's best friend, is married, has a child, and goes mad at the end of the story. It is this juxtaposition of characters and their fates that caused such an uproar among Soviet critics. As Helena Goscilo has remarked: 'Katerli's gynocentric polarization of two alternative life options ruffled orthodox critics' feathers for Katerli's treatment challenges the value system of Soviet ideology.'⁴⁶ Even western male critics have criticised Polina's behaviour. Deming Brown has described Polina as 'an intellectually gifted, capable, but slovenly disorganised person who has loved many men and been badly used by most of them.'⁴⁷ The public was also outraged at Katerli's characterisation of Polina as a free-thinking and liberated woman. Katerli recalls receiving stacks of letters from angry Soviet readers claiming that she had betrayed her country by writing 'Polina'. While with a group of women factory workers gathering to discuss her writing, Katerli remembers almost being physically attacked as the workers accused her of soiling the image of the woman engineer.

Katerli states that she is unaffected by such criticism, and has very little respect for the general Soviet readership.

Unlike the stories previously discussed in this chapter, 'Polina' places the female experience directly at the centre of the story and focuses primarily on two female characters—Polina and Maia. The 'fabula' of this story encompasses a greater time span—approximately one year—than many of the stories mentioned previously in this chapter. The story begins with Polina and her boyfriend Evgenii, an unemployed poet, running around the house trying to catch a pet rat that has somehow freed itself from its cage. The scene quickly develops into a discussion and then fight between Polina and Evgenii, when Evgenii condescendingly claims that Polina does not understand his poetry.⁴⁸ The 'fabula' follows the ups and downs of Polina's turbulent relationship with Evgenii. The 'fabula' also discusses Maia's life as a housewife and mother, and her discovery that her husband is having an affair.

The 'siuzhet' examines the diverse paths chosen by the two female protagonists, Maia and Polina, both women in their forties. Through these characters, Katerli juxtaposes two very different types of women and views of womanhood and explores their respective consequences and repercussions. Shortly after receiving her doctoral degree, Maia married and gave birth to her daughter, and decided to quit working in order to devote herself to her family. Maia represents the stereotypical traditional woman who fulfils her biological and 'natural' function as mother and wife. Because of Maia's traditional views of women and their role in society, she is relentless in her judgement and chastisement of Polina. She tells Polina: 'В нашем возрасте смешно требовать како-то там безумной любви! Чуть не с первого взгляда... мне тебя просто жалко! Те себя знаешь как ведешь? Как женщина легкого поведения...'⁴⁹

Maia's life, however, is riddled with anxiety. She must constantly attempt to live up to certain ideals of womanhood, including having a perfect family. When Maia discovers that her husband has been unfaithful to her, her fantasy of the perfect family is destroyed and her self respect and identity along with it. Everything she has worked for, sacrificed for, suffered for, and built her life upon, has been ruined. She loses all ability to function in the real world, and, like the eponymous Sofiiia Petrovna in Lidiia Chukovskaia's novel, she retreats into another world, the silent world of her mind.⁵⁰ The story ends with Maia sedated and silent in a mental institution.

In contrast, Polina is a divorced, single, and childless woman, who has had numerous sexual partners, whom, contrary to Brown's comment quoted earlier, she sees as lovers, rather than abusers: 'Всех она их любила. Всех до одного! Только по-разному – каждого по-своему.'⁵¹ Traditionally speaking, Polina is the type of character that should be either despised or pitied. She is, however, indifferent to other people's opinions, including Maia's. Like Dorofeev in 'Tsvetnye otkrytki', Polina most highly values her freedom and independence, which she is able to preserve by remaining unmarried and childless.

Perhaps in a condescending or realistic sense, Polina, unlike Maia, accepts the deficiencies of men, namely their inability to remain faithful in a relationship; Polina accepts them for the companionship they can provide and expects no more. For example, when Polina discovers that Igor has been unfaithful to Maia, she tells her friend: 'А ты хочешь, чтобы он, кроме тебя ни на кого не глядел? Это неестественно, Майка, очнись, нам же сорок лет, не забывай!'⁵² The story concludes with Polina reflecting on her happiness with Evgenii and gazing out of the window, where she sees a bird: 'Ровно в семь пятнадцать Полина вышла из

дома.’⁵³ This final scene is a declaration of Polina’s affinity with the bird. Like the bird, Polina has no ties or commitments, no husband, and no children. For the moment, Polina watches the bird, but at any moment Polina too may fly away.

‘Polina’, like the majority of Katerli’s realistic prose works, ends with no concrete conclusions. Each principal protagonist makes certain choices, and these choices result in certain consequences. Katerli simply tells the story of two women and the lifestyles they have chosen, or perhaps, have had imposed upon them. As stated earlier, Katerli subverts the traditionally accepted role of the Russian woman as caretaker, nurturer, wife and mother, perhaps suggesting that the Polinas of the world, whom we are taught to pity, may be perfectly content with their lives, and the Maias, whom we are conditioned to envy, may be leading dreadful and pathetic lives. The narrator states: ‘Майка – казалось бы, все есть: муж, дочь, квартира, машина, в материальном смысле – никаких трудностей, это вам не Полина, которая вечно в долгах... у Майки жизнь тоже не сахар’⁵⁴ The untraditional Polina, who it might be said acts more like a stereotypical man in her emotional ambivalence and sexual practices, is content with her lifestyle and the story concludes with her happy and content with her fate. In contrast, the conventional Maia goes mad and spends her remaining days in a mental institution.

THEMES

The world of Nina Katerli’s realistic prose is bleak and sombre. Helena Goscilo has correctly stated that Katerli paints

a bleak picture of Russian society...the single strongest impression conveyed by this fiction is that of an overall lack; of an imprecisely grasped loss or simply an absence of a stable secure identity, of experiences to be surmounted rather than captured.⁵⁵

The themes of Katerli's realistic prose reflect the depravity of life in urban Soviet environments in the 1980s, dealing with such issues as alcoholism, adultery, mental illness, and the difficulty of women's lives. As Riitta Pittman has noted, this unflattering depiction of Soviet life was part of a general trend in Soviet literature in the Gorbachev era:

Literature played a crucial role in the required dismantling of the officially fostered illusions about the Soviet past, present and future...literature served to initiate discussion and debate on previously forbidden themes, related, among other things, to history, religion, sex, alcoholism, drugs, criminality, phoney socialist morality and reality, child abuse, shortages, and the homeless.⁵⁶

Literary critics, however, have disparaged the concentration on social and political themes. As Viktor Erofeev argued in 1995:

The new emphasis on social issues is a response to the political changes of the 1980s. It leads to a decline in the significance of literature as a means of artistic re-recreation and self-expression and to the view that prose fiction is most important as a mirror of social interaction and as a tool to transform human nature.⁵⁷

In addition to the treatment of social and political themes, many critics attribute the poor quality of literature in the 1980s to the destruction of traditions. As Viktor Erofeev has suggests: 'The new Russian literature has called absolutely everything into question: love, children, faith, the church, culture, beauty, nobility of character and motherhood.'⁵⁸ Erofeev's statements, and others like it, however, are not applicable to Katerli's realistic prose. As will be discussed below, the themes of Katerli's realistic prose do not focus solely on societal issues for the purpose of 'mirroring' or 'transforming' society, nor do her themes abandon the established traditions of marriage, parenthood, and love.

Alcoholism is a significant theme in Katerli's realistic prose, which, as Teresa Polowy has noted, reflects a general trend in recent Russian prose fiction towards greater exploration of this topic.⁵⁹ The alcoholics or drinkers in Katerli's realistic prose stories, like many of the alcoholics or drinkers in her previous works, are women. Katerli has very little sympathy for alcohol abuse, and presents alcoholism as a destructive force and the alcoholic as a pathetic creature. For example, Liza's mother in 'Zhara na severe', like Antonina Bodrova in 'Treugol'nik Barsukova' ('The Barsukov Triangle') (1981), is portrayed as a negligent mother and a horrible person. She repeatedly drinks with Liza's husband, and because of their intimate relationship,

Liza was convinced that the two were having an affair. Eventually, although the reasons are unclear, Liza's husband leaves, never to return, and Liza's mother blames her, even accusing her of murdering her husband. As stated earlier, much of the controversy surrounding the publication of 'Polina' concerned the eponymous character's supposed alcohol problem. Katerli, however, did not intend to portray Polina as a miserable and hurtful alcoholic, like Liza's mother in 'Zhara na severe'. Rather, Katerli was challenging the stereotypes of male and female drinking practices in Russia, a country where, it is presumed women drink tea and men, to prove their masculinity, drink large amounts of vodka. Polina's drinking is not excessive, which questions the Russian notion that women cannot be social or casual drinkers.

Katerli also addresses the 'generation gap' and the difficulties of communication it engenders. For example, the grandmother in 'Proshchal'nyi svet' feels that the younger generation has no interest in and respect for her generation:

Кажется, будто все, что приходит в голову, очень значительно и важно. И, главное, правильно. Вот в чем беда всех стариков и моя тоже. Ты знаешь, как надо жить, и спешешь поделиться с другими, они-то уж точно не знают, раз постоянно делают глупости! Ты хочешь им помочь, а они пренебрежительно отмахиваются.⁶⁰

The grandmother also states: 'Никогда в жизни мы друг друга не пойдем, нечего и пытаться!'⁶¹ Similarly, Dorofeev in 'Tsvetnye otkrytki' finds it difficult to communicate with his son, Anton. He believes that the source of this confusion

between the generations results from adults having forgotten what it was like to be young. They have forgotten the struggles and emotions they experienced as youths, and their rational adult faculties have made it difficult for them to have compassion for the younger generation. Despite his apparent awareness or enlightenment, Dorofeev, perhaps like the grandmother in 'Proshchal'nyi svet', has little hope: '...Судить легко, а помнить – того... трудно. А помнить надо! Хотя почти и НЕВОЗМОЖНО!'⁶²

The theme of father/daughter relationships also figures prominently in Katerli's realistic prose, a theme not frequently seen in Russian literature. Most of these relationships are strained and dysfunctional, defined by lack of communication and tension. The stories that deal specifically with this issue are 'Proshchal'nyi svet', 'Mezhdu vesnoi i letom', and 'Polina'. The fathers in 'Proshchal'nyi svet' and 'Mezhdu vesnoi i letom', like Dorofeev in 'Tsvetnye otkrytki', have difficulty understanding their daughters. Al'ka in 'Mezhdu vesnoi i letom' and Tania in 'Proshchal'nyi svet' are, in fact, step-daughters. Martynov in 'Proshchal'nyi svet' only refers to Tania as his 'step-daughter', thereby continually reinforcing the fact that he does not consider her his 'real' daughter. Vas'ia, in 'Mezhdu vesnoi i letom', having married his wife when Al'ka was very young, decides to raise Al'ka as his own, and, unlike Martynov, never reveals that he is not her real father. Perhaps Katerli is suggesting that the lack of blood relation contributes to the difficulties and misunderstandings in their relationship. This lack of blood relation may also heighten the sense of estrangement by giving it a physical, as well as emotional quality.

In 'Proshchal'nyi svet', this estrangement manifests itself primarily in Martynov's disapproval of Tania's friendship with Liuda:

Не нравилась, давно уже не нравилась ему эта дружба, хотя на первый взгляд все выглядело – не придерешься – очень благородно. Люда давно и тяжело больна: ревмокардит, большую часть времени вынуждена проводить дома. Татьяна сочувствует – прекрасно. Но вот есть в ее поведении... как бы это точнее сказать? Что-то не вполне естественное, экзальтация какая-то, жертва.⁶³

It is perhaps the grandmother who best expresses the conflict between Tania and Martynov:

Что ей сказать? Как объяснить, что родителям часто так же трудно понять своих детей, как детям – родителей. Что когда говорят банальности, это часто от беспомощности, от невозможности найти общий язык. А то, что все мы часто ‘судим’ других... Но ведь и Таня сама тоже ‘судит’ родителей, причем беспощадно.⁶⁴

Similarly, Vasia's difficulties with Al'ka lie in his inability to accept her relationship with Iurii Petrovich, an older man whom Vasia does not trust. Vasia is stubborn and refuses to understand why his daughter is seeing this man. Remembering a fight he had with Al'ka about Iurii, Vasia reflects: ‘Это было... позавчера. А вчера явилась

в двенадцатом часу, тихая, ласковая, - то ли с Юрием своим повидалась, то ли поняла, что отец прав.’⁶⁵

The relationship between Polina and her father differs greatly from that of the two previously mentioned stories. For example, Polina’s father does not appear in the story until Polina is required to identify his body in a morgue. For Polina, however, seeing her father in the morgue brings neither resolution nor closure: ‘А Полина смотрела на темное лицо среди цветов (странно: человек мертвый, а цветы – живые...) и думала, что ведь совсем не знает, каким он был ее отец.’⁶⁶ Polina, in fact, grew up knowing nothing about her father: ‘Мама не зря говорила, что ему всегда на всех было наплевать?... А если все не так? Если он считал, что не имеет права?... Одно ясно: без нее жил, без не умер.’⁶⁷ The father/daughter relationships in Katerli’s realistic prose do not exemplify love, understanding, and harmony. The fathers either play completely insignificant roles in the lives of their daughters, or they are figures who are unable to understand and communicate with their daughters.

As stated above, Katerli’s realistic prose also discusses the ‘female experience’. Despite the fact that the majority of the characters of Katerli’s realistic prose are men and that most of the stories are told from the male point of view, the female experience is often of primary importance. For example, ‘Zhara na severe’ focuses primarily on Aleksandr Nikolaevich Gubin, but also addresses the concerns and thoughts of two women—Liza, Gubin’s mistress, and Masha, his wife. Likewise, ‘Tsvetnye otkrytki’ focuses on Vsevolod Evgen’evich Dorofeev, but through his flashbacks and reminisces, we learn the background of his relationship with his ex-wife Inga. In addition, ‘Proshchal’nyi svet’, in recounting the thoughts of Andrei

Martynov, simultaneously presents a picture of his step-daughter and mother. What do Katerli's realistic prose works reveal about the 'female experience'? Namely, her choice to tell the stories from the point of view of male characters has the effect of depicting women as disenfranchised beings who are unable to speak for themselves, and thus, perhaps, more deserving of pity than if they told their stories themselves. Put slightly differently, the revelations about the women in their lives by middle-aged male characters suggest an obliviousness, if not indifference, on the part of such male characters towards women and their lives and concerns.

Another significant theme related to the 'female experience' is infidelity. For example, in 'Polina', Maia discovers that her husband, Igor, is having an affair when she sees him on the bus with another woman. When Maia sees Igor, she angrily interrogates him, but he is cold and distant, and admits to nothing. The two sleep in separate rooms that night, and Maia, unable to sleep, runs crying to Igor, but he refuses to speak to her. Rather than rejecting her husband, Maia blames herself: '[Мужчины] врут тому, кого боятся, а в семье должна быть любовь, а не страх и тирания.'⁶⁸ Igor's rejection of Maia and her subsequent breakdown reflect a weakness and perhaps unfortunately submissive behavioural pattern. Perhaps Katerli is suggesting that, in some sense, women by accepting such behaviour are as much to blame for their subordinate situations and victimisation as are the men in their lives.

Inga in 'Tsvetnye otkrytki' and Masha in 'Zhara na severe' also have unfaithful husbands. Although it is not clear from the context of the story, it appears as though Inga forgives Dorofeev, because they divorced some time later, when Dorofeev announced that he had received a job offer in Moscow. Masha, unlike Inga and Maia, is unaware of her husband's infidelity. It is interesting to note that Katerli's realistic

prose stories only confront the issue of male infidelity, perhaps emphasising even more her sympathy with the plight of women.

The theme of death also figures prominently in Katerli's realistic prose. For example, Martynov is terrified of growing old. Moreover, he is afraid of living what he perceives as the dull and monotonous life of elderly people, like his mother.⁶⁹ At one point, Martynov asks himself: 'Что же все-таки осталось? Для души? Телевизор, как у матери?'⁷⁰ Later, he also comments:

Нет, гневить бога нечего, все нормально, но где тот восторг, где замирание души, когда, допустим, где-нибудь на лесной поляне вдруг оглядишься по сторонам и даже слезы к глазам подступят – до того кругом хорошо. Такое ведь бывало не только в детстве. Впрочем, неверное, все правильно, защитная реакция организма: с годами душа покрывается бронированной пленкой, иначе просто нельзя, иначе стопроцентная гарантия инфаркта, потому что свиданий с красотами природы все меньше, а с чиновниками вроде Михеева – все больше.⁷¹

However, later in the story, when Martynov is reading his mother's diary, he discovers a passage in which she writes about a walk they had taken together in the forest, and, ironically, the passage is almost identical to Martynov's reflections on growing old:

Мы вышли на поляну, я остановилась и огляделась. Кругом росли высокие старые деревья, они стояли спокойно и важно, я смотрела на них, на облачное небо, на большую незнакомую птицу, бесстрашно сидевшую на ветке совсем близко от нас, и чувствовала огромное уважение ко всему этому – к лесу, к птице, к муравьям, суетящимся возле высокого муравейника под елкой. А еще я чувствовала благодарность и прямо-таки щенячий восторг... Нет, чувства с годами не слабеют, просто их становится меньше.⁷²

Martynov almost appears 'older' than his mother, thinking more about death and finality than his mother, who attributes this negative or despairing outlook to the hustle and bustle of everyday life. She comments: 'Обычно с годами это приходит, но ведь может случиться, что детские доброта и открытость так больше и не вернутся, потонут в житейской суете, в сиюминутных заботах. Душа отсыхает.'⁷³

Polina is confronted with two deaths. Firstly, she is plagued with recurring dreams of dragging the dead body of her boyfriend Boria through the forest. Secondly, Polina is forced to identify the corpse of the father she never met. In contrast to 'Proshchal'nyi svet', where we have access to the innermost thoughts of Martynov, seeing that the death of his mother has triggered a profound reflection and re-evaluation of both the filial relationship and the character's own life, 'Polina' gives no such information about what is going on in the main character's mind. Is she devoid of emotion? Is she unaware of, or unable to communicate her feelings, or is she as

deeply moved as the characters in the other stories? Katerli does not answer these questions. One would expect that a person would be moved at least to some degree by a parent's death. It is unclear, then, whether the free and alternative Polina should be admired for her strength and upheld as a new 'ideal woman', or whether she should be criticised for her insensitivity.⁷⁴ Without attempting a psychological analysis of Katerli, it should be noted that the silence over Polina's filial emotions more closely resembles the silence of Katerli over her feelings towards her own father than it does the reactions of Martynov or Alesha. One is left wondering whether Katerli leaves Polina silent because Polina's situation hits too close to home or because silence is, to Katerli, the proper response for a woman, in art as well as in life.

Finally, escape—in one form or another—is a prominent theme in Katerli's realistic prose. Like the characters of Katerli's underground works, the characters of her realistic prose are caught in a world of sadness, death, and despair, and each character, in his or her own way, seeks to escape this atmosphere of misery. For example, in 'Zhara na severe', Liza's mother escapes through excessive drinking, perhaps Gubin's affair with Liza is an attempt to deny/escape the fact that he is a middle-aged man, and Liza escapes by fantasising that Gubin will eventually return to her. Polina effects her escape by remaining single and childless, a tactic, which, as Catriona Kelly has written, is reminiscent of the provincial tale of Russian women's writing in the nineteenth century.⁷⁵ Unlike many of the characters of Katerli's underground works, none of her realistic prose characters escapes by physically leaving the country. Rather, these characters are resigned to their respective fates, and accept sadness as an essential element of life.

NARRATION

The narrative style of Nina Katerli's realistic prose reflects the continual fluctuation of her characters between their introspective private worlds and the outer world of 'byt'. As Helena Goscilo has noted: 'One of Katerli's favourite strategies, in fact, is the bifurcated narrative, whereby the story-line proceeds along two distinct but internally related narrative tracks that alternate and occasionally intersect.'⁷⁶ These two worlds are intricately connected, primarily through the fact that the outer world is usually the catalyst for Katerli's characters to slip into reverie and into the inner world of imagination and reflection. In addition, Katerli's realistic prose stories usually focus on one male protagonist, around whose life the story is centred. The fact that most of her protagonists are men distinguishes Katerli among many contemporary Russian women writers.⁷⁷ However, as previously discussed, this fact does not detract from her consideration of the 'female experience'.⁷⁸

Despite the fact that Katerli concentrates on one character, she does include various points of view. Katerli explores the use of multiple voices most profoundly in 'Polina'. Expressing the points of view of Maia and Polina, the narrator states:

‘Не было мужика, и это не мужик’, - так Майя говорит, лучшая Полинина подруга. Все точно и правильно, но как ответишь на Майкин сто раз уже заданный вопрос: ‘Зачем он тебе?’⁷⁹

The point of view alternates constantly between Maia and Polina. Later in the story, and from Polina's point of view, the narrator states: ‘Иногда Полина думала: ‘А

может Майя права, она всегда все знает, все читала, ходит на выставки, кандидат наук как-никак.’⁸⁰ Later, Maia thinks: ‘И что самое характерное – так у Полинки было всегда. Всех своих возлюбленных она... находит и выбирает по одному единственному признаку: чтобы был неполноценный.’⁸¹

In ‘Mezhdu vesnoi i letom’, Katerli evokes various points of view through Vasia’s thoughts and reflections: ‘Утро было такое, что захотелось вымыть окна. Вася и взялся бы мыть, да врачиха вчера ясно распорядилась – никаких физических нагрузок и Кеня, уходила на работу, тоже: “Отлежись”.’⁸² In ‘Proshchal’nyi svet’, Katerli uses the diary to allow the grandmother to express herself. A diary is an honest and direct statement of one’s feelings, assuming, of course, that the author of the diary writes in the belief that no one else will read their secret words and reflections. By including various points of view and allowing these characters to tell their own stories, Katerli suggests the complexity of the human character, as well as the complexity of human relationships and the absence of objective truth.

Like the narrator of Katerli’s previous works, such as ‘Treugol’nik Barsukova’ and ‘Kusok neba’, the narrator of her realistic prose is often personally involved in the story. As Katerli herself has stated: ‘Иногда повествование принадлежит моему герою, а иногда мне самой; иногда обоим в одном рассказе.’⁸³ This narrator often interjects itself into the story to act as an intermediary, speaking for these characters that are either unable or unwilling to speak for themselves. Katerli thus acts as an advocate for her heroes on their introspective journeys. Often, this narrator assumes the duty of telling the story, displaying a great deal of knowledge about the characters. In ‘Yrvshch’, for example, the narrator states: ‘Как Сергей Фомич проводил свою

юность, я не знаю. Знаю (случайно) немного о его детстве, обучении в начальной и средней школе.⁸⁴ Later, the narrator comments:

В общем, ко времени, которого касается наш рассказ, Сергей Фомич был уже далеко не молод, ходил зимой в ватном пальто с воротником из кролика под котик, а во что одевался летом – не имеет значения, ибо речь пойдет о зиме.⁸⁵

Like the narrator in 'Treugol'nik Barsukova', the narrator in Katerli's realistic prose has intimate knowledge of the characters, providing detailed knowledge of their past history. This closeness displays the narrator's sympathy and compassion for the characters, as if the past either justifies or explains present failings or mistakes.

CHARACTERISATION

The characters of Katerli's realistic prose, like those of her previous works, are 'sovki'. Whether her protagonists are men or women, educated or uneducated, young or old, cultured or uncultured, they are introspective individuals trying to make sense of their lives. Most of these characters are lonely and misunderstood. For example, Dorofeev in 'Tsvetnye otkrytki' reflects that his only true friend was a childhood friend who died many years ago. Gubin in 'Zhara na severe' is terrified of solitude, which may explain his affair with Liza. At one point in the story, Liza asks Gubin if he has any real friends, and he is saddened by the realization that his only true friend died several years earlier. Kuvaldin in 'Yrvshch' is a social outcast. When in public, Kuvaldin 'смотрел безбилетником или как гость, которого силком затащили в

час ночи без приглашения в совершенно чужую семью.’⁸⁶ Thus, many of Katerli’s protagonists only find solace and contentment when they are alone. Kuvaldin felt at ease when he was alone: ‘Он был здесь хозяином.’⁸⁷ Similarly, Vasia in ‘Mezhdu vesnoi i letom’ also remarked: ‘Чем плохо катить вот так в пустом трамвае по чистому светлому городу, сидеть на мягком сиденье, глядеть в окно и никуда не торопиться?’⁸⁸

The majority of Katerli’s protagonists are middle-aged men who are absorbed in their own thoughts about themselves and about life generally. Martynov in ‘Proshchal’nyi svet’ constantly finds himself thinking about the meaning of life: ‘...Ну, а все-таки, какие еще-то радости жизни? Сейчас, сегодня?’⁸⁹ Often, they are portrayed as cynical and negative. For example, Gubin in ‘Zhara na severe’ has a very misanthropic outlook on life: ‘Это был вечный их с Машей спор: Александр Николаевич утверждал, что люди все в общем одинаковые и особо приятного в них мало.’⁹⁰ In addition, these men are often depicted as egotistical and self-righteous beings who seek to justify their often disagreeable actions, beliefs and morality. Gubin justifies his relationship with Liza by blaming Masha for allowing him to travel alone, and he convinces himself that his affair will not only not damage his marriage, but will indirectly help it, by making him a happier and more content husband. He also tells himself that infidelity is a fact of life. Evgenii, Polina’s boyfriend, is portrayed as a self-promoting egotistical poet. From his point of view, the narrator states: ‘Поэт такого уровня как Евгений Барвенко, в миру имеет право вести себя как свинья. Запомни. А окружающие должны терпеть и благодарить бога за честь существовать с ним рядом.’⁹¹ Later, Evgenii justifies his behaviour: ‘Я – поэт, а поэты все эгоцентрики.’⁹²

As stated earlier, Katerli's realistic prose portrays several different types of female protagonists. Many of Katerli's female characters are victims, a familiar pattern in Russian literature, which offers relatively few positive sexual images of women.⁹³ For example, Liza, of 'Zhara na severe', is nearly destroyed when her lover Gubin leaves her to return to his family. She is portrayed as a pathetic creature, that allows Gubin to treat her with disregard and indifference, and despite his treatment of her, Liza continues to pine after him and waits for the day when he will return to her. Liza's tragic story is reminiscent of Nikolai Karamzin's Bednaia Liza, (Poor Liza) (1792), and the fact that she shares the name with Karamzin's character is perhaps no coincidence. Similarly, Maia in 'Polina' is victimised by her husband's supposed infidelity, and is driven to insanity. Even the liberated Polina passively accepts the rudeness and selfishness of her boyfriend Evgenii. She remarks: 'Конечно, теперь намного легче, не то, что первое время, два года назад.'⁹⁴

Katerli also depicts many of the difficulties women face in their daily lives. Helena Goscilo has noted that Katerli portrays 'solitary women rearing children amidst emotional uncertainties, financial hardships and social pressures.'⁹⁵ Katerli's female characters experience a wide range of problems: single motherhood, divorce, and infidelity. For example, both Liza of 'Zhara na severe' and Inga of 'Tsvetnye otkrytki' have been abandoned by their husbands and are forced to raise their sons on their own. Another feature of life that imposes particular difficulties on Russian women is the responsibility for performing household chores. For example, Maia's life is filled with numerous household duties. Maia falls victim to the imposed image of the Russian woman as mother and wife. In addition, she believes that she must stay beautiful for her husband, lest he leave her for a younger and more beautiful

woman, a situation she experienced as a child when her father left her mother for a younger woman.

Katerli also explores the image of woman as mother. Many of Katerli's female protagonists are mothers who have devoted their lives to their children. For example, Liza in 'Zhara na severe' appears to live only for the sake of her son. She tells her grandmother: 'За меня... не переживай, все будет о' кей. А насчет счастья, так я его уже получила. На всю оставшуюся жизнь... Мне теперь главное чтобы он... Алешка.'⁹⁶ Katerli also examines the negative aspects of motherhood. For example, Liza's mother in 'Zhara na severe' is a verbally abusive alcoholic who has an affair with her son-in-law. Moreover, Katerli also notes the detrimental effects of blind maternal devotion. For example, in completely dedicating herself to her maternal role, Maia in 'Polina', like Natal'ia Kopeikina in 'Treugol'nik Barsukova', begins to lose her individual identity and is unaware of the fact that her husband is drifting away from her and having an affair.

The characters of Katerli's realistic prose are neither wholly bad nor wholly good. They are individuals who are shaped by their circumstances and who try to find meaning within difficult and dreary lives. As a result, Katerli does not judge the characters of her realistic prose. Nor does she excuse harmful behaviour; rather, she sympathises with her characters, whether they are weak, strong, selfish or giving. As I. Prussakova has aptly commented:

В повестях нет золотого равновесия, когда порок наказан, а добродетель награждается. Напротив, там героям, которые писательнице нравятся живется не очень-то сладко. Нет

здесь ни злодеев, ни святых, есть знакомые нам всем люди с их обиходными проблемами, такими же как у нас.⁹⁷

For example, although Gubin in 'Zhara na severe' is unfaithful to his wife, his actions are described as resulting from loneliness and moral weakness, rather than cruelty directed either at his wife or Liza. Even though Dorofeev in 'Tsvetnye otkrytki' abandons his wife and is an absentee father, he is also portrayed as a sensitive, lonely individual who has no real friends. Perhaps Alesha in 'Kurzal' best conveys Katerli's attitude toward her protagonists: 'Если человек осознал, он искупит.'⁹⁸ Redemption is found through awareness and self-knowledge.

CONCLUSION

Katerli's realistic prose presents a bleak picture of Soviet urban life in the 1980s, and this sense of despair may help to explain her transition from fantasy to realism. Katerli herself commented in 1993: 'К началу восьмидесятых мне уже не была нужна иносказательность для маскировки действительности в моих рассказах.'⁹⁹ Despite this stylistic shift, however, the themes of Katerli's realistic prose bear a close similarity to those of her fantasy prose. Namely, the themes of Katerli's realistic prose focus, like the themes of her previous works, on the human condition, love, death, and lack of communication between the generations.

The most significant new aspect of Katerli's realistic prose is her focus on the 'female experience'. By the 1980s, as Nicholas Zekulin has remarked: 'Women writers had come to question the very concepts that earlier had pointed to the desired goal, especially the concept of personal fulfilment in a happy bourgeois marriage.'¹⁰⁰

Polina, more than any of Katerli's female characters, personifies the 'female experience', albeit one representing an alternative lifestyle. However, Katerli states that she did not intend to write 'Polina' as a specifically feminist work. She stated in 1995 that she wrote 'Polina' 'потому что хотела написать рассказ о женщине, о которой раньше ничего не писалось.'¹⁰¹ Regardless of Katerli's objectives, intentionally feminist or not, 'Polina' was revolutionary in the mid-1980s in its depiction of a very controversial and untraditional woman. As Nicholas Zekulin has also noted:

Such works as 'Polina' ...seem to represent less a further stage of evolution than a substantively new phenomenon. Time will tell if they will come to be seen as reflections of 'glasnost' and 'perestroika' or as harbingers of a new, post-Soviet Russian literature.¹⁰²

I would argue that 'Polina' is an example of New Women's Prose, which Helena Goscilo has defined as 'narratives by the post-Stalinist generation that unhesitatingly transgress against Russia's inbred Victorianism about bodily matters.'¹⁰³

Katerli's realistic prose of the 1980s not only presents a realistic picture of Russian society, but it also represents the plight of human beings of any culture and in any age, dealing with such universal themes as love, marriage, family, death, and growing old. The characters of Katerli's realistic prose are broken people. They are confused and lonely. They are alcoholics, adulterers, victims, single mothers, and forgotten old women. Katerli notes that in difficult situations, some rise to the occasion and some

sink. But neither does she condemn those who sink, nor praise those who rise.

Rather, Katerli seems to call for compassion and understanding.

Notes

¹ Nina Katerli, 'Kurzal', in Kurzal (Sovetskii Pisatel': Leningrad, 1990), p.53.

² For a discussion of the 'female experience' in contemporary Russian literature, see Helena Goscilo, 'Paradigm Lost? Contemporary Women's Fiction', in Women Writers in Russian Literature, ed. by Toby W. Clyman and Diana Greene (Westport, CT and London, 1994), pp.205-228.

³ Nina Katerli, personal interview, 1993.

⁴ Helena Goscilo, 'Introduction', in Present Imperfect: Stories by Russian Women, ed. by Ayesha Kagal and Natasha Perova (Boulder, CO, 1996), p.1.

⁵ Mikhail Epstein, 'The Origins and Meaning of Russian Postmodernism' in Re-Entering the Sign: Articulating New Russian Culture, ed. by Ellen E. Berry and Anesa Miller-Pogacar (Ann Arbor, 1995), p.25. For further discussion of postmodernism, see Peter Brooker, ed. and with introduction, Modernism/Postmodernism (London and New York, 1992); F. Ruland and M. Bradbury, From Puritanism to Postmodernism—A History of American Literature (New York and London, 1991,1992).

⁶ Hans Bertens, The Idea of the Postmodern: A History (London and New York, 1995), p.12.

⁷ Fredric Jameson, 'Postmodernism and Consumer Society', in Modernism/Postmodernism, p.164.

⁸ Hans Bertens, The Idea of the Postmodern: A History, p.3.

⁹ Jean-Francois Lyotard, The Postmodern Condition: A Report on Knowledge, trans. by Brian Massumi (Minneapolis, 1979), p.31.

¹⁰ Chris Baldick, ed., The Concise Oxford Dictionary of Literary Terms (Oxford and New York, 1990), pp.174-5.

¹¹ 'Yrvshch' is a nonsense word.

¹² Katerli recently stated in a 1998 interview that she did not try to publish the story after 'perestroika', because she was involved in other writing projects.

¹³ V. Musakhanov, 'Nina Katerli "Tsvetnye otkrytki", rasskazy i povesti, 330 str.' (unpublished editorial critique, 1982), p.4.

¹⁴ Nina Katerli, personal interview, 1995.

¹⁵ Nina Katerli, 'Kto ia?' (unpublished autobiographical text, 1993), p.31.

¹⁶ Nina Katerli, personal interview, 1995.

¹⁷ Kurzal is short for 'Kurortnyi zal', meaning 'Resort Hall'.

¹⁸ Deming Brown, The Last Years of Soviet Russian Literature: Prose Fiction 1975-91 (Cambridge, 1993), p.9.

¹⁹ Elena Efros, 'O psikhologicheskoi osobennosti prozy Niny Katerli' (unpublished Master's dissertation, University of Petrozavodsk, 1988), p.61.

- ²⁰ Kuvaldin's made-up words call to mind Velimir Khlebnikov's magical theory of language as being connected to the poet's own revelation, as well as larger universal truths.
- ²¹ Nina Katerli, 'Yrvshch', in Tsvetnye otkrytki (Sovetskii Pisatel': Leningrad, 1986), p.42.
- ²² Nina Katerli, 'Yrvshch', p.35.
- ²³ Nina Katerli, 'Yrvshch', p.42.
- ²⁴ Generally, disability is an unusual theme in Russian literature. See, however, Tat'iana Tolstaia's 'Peters' (1986), which tells the story from childhood to adulthood of a person living on the fringe of society.
- ²⁵ Nina Katerli, 'Yrvshch', p.34.
- ²⁶ Nina Katerli, 'Nes"edobnyi drug Rastorgueva', in Tsvetnye otkrytki, p.84.
- ²⁷ Nina Katerli, 'Proshchal'nyi svet', in Tsvetnye otkrytki, p.7.
- ²⁸ Nina Katerli, 'Proshchal'nyi svet', pp.12-13.
- ²⁹ Nina Katerli, 'Proshchal'nyi svet', p.14.
- ³⁰ Nina Katerli, 'Proshchal'nyi svet', p.14.
- ³¹ Nina Katerli, 'Proshchal'nyi svet', p.21.
- ³² Nina Katerli, 'Tsvetnye otkrytki', in Tsvetnye otkrytki, p.182. Born in 1933 and a personal friend of Katerli, Gorodnitskii is a geo-physicist, professor, poet, bard, and author of ten books of poems and two memoirs.
- ³³ Nina Katerli, 'Tsvetnye otkrytki', p.189.
- ³⁴ Nina Katerli, 'Tsvetnye otkrytki', p.257.
- ³⁵ Nina Katerli, 'Kurzal', p.32.
- ³⁶ Nina Katerli, 'Kurzal', p.18.
- ³⁷ Nina Katerli, 'Kurzal', p.19.
- ³⁸ See L.N. Zaikov, 'Iz doklada tovarishcha', Leningradskaiia pravda, 18 October 1984, pp.1-2, p.1.
- ³⁹ When asked in a 1993 interview which military journal had made this claim, Katerli stated that she did not remember the name of the journal. I have also been unable to locate the article and journal in question.
- ⁴⁰ Nina Katerli, 'Kto ia?', p.30.
- ⁴¹ N.N. Shneidman, Russian Literature 1988-1994: The End of an Era (Toronto and Buffalo, 1995), p.31.
- ⁴² Teresa Polowy, 'Russian Women Writing Alcoholism: the Sixties to the Present', in Post Communism and the Body Politic, ed. by Ellen E. Berry (New York and London, 1995), p.269.
- ⁴³ Katerli's change from 'vodka' to 'water' may have been a bit of a jibe, since the Russian word for water is 'voda', very similar to 'vodka' and since Soviets rarely drink water as a social beverage.
- ⁴⁴ Nina Katerli, personal interview, 1998.
- ⁴⁵ See Jane T. Costlow, Stephanie Sandler and Judith Vowles, 'Introduction', in Sexuality and the Body in Russian Culture, ed. by Jane T. Costlow (Stanford, 1993), p. 2
- ⁴⁶ Helena Goscilo, Dehexing Sex: Russian Womanhood During and After Glasnost (Ann Arbor, 1996), p.66.
- ⁴⁷ Deming Brown, The Last Years of Soviet Russian Literature: Prose Fiction 1975-91, p.133.

⁴⁸ The poems by Evgenii included in 'Polina' were written by Elena Efros, Katerli's daughter.

⁴⁹ Nina Katerli, 'Polina', p.135-6.

⁵⁰ See Lidiia Chukovskaia, Sofia Petrovna, trans. by David Floyd (London, 1989).

⁵¹ Nina Katerli, 'Polina', p.158.

⁵² Nina Katerli, 'Polina', p.168.

⁵³ Nina Katerli, 'Polina', p.181.

⁵⁴ Nina Katerli, 'Polina', p.143-4.

⁵⁵ Helena Goscilo, ed., Balancing Acts (New York, 1989), p.xvi.

⁵⁶ Riitta Pittman, 'Writers and Politics in the Gorbachev Era', Soviet Studies, vol.44, no.4, 1992,

pp.667-8. Similarly, N.N. Shneidman has noted: 'In the post-Brezhnev era, social issues have been stressed with new vigour and many writers have turned to the exploration of controversial problems and the reassessment of Soviet life. N.N. Shneidman, Russian Literature 1988-1994: The End of an Era, p.19

⁵⁷ Viktor Erofeev, 'Introduction', in The Penguin Book of New Russian Writing, ed. by Viktor Erofeev (London and New York, 1995), p.xii.

⁵⁸ Viktor Erofeev, 'Introduction', in The Penguin Book of New Russian Writing, p.xiv.

⁵⁹ Polowy writes: 'Since the early 1980s, Russian prose fiction has treated the question of alcohol in Russian society even more openly and candidly.' See Teresa Polowy, 'Russian Women Writing Alcoholism: the Sixties to the Present', p.269.

⁶⁰ Nina Katerli, 'Proshchal'nyi svet', p.15.

⁶¹ Nina Katerli, 'Proshchal'nyi svet', p.16.

⁶² Nina Katerli, 'Tsvetnye otkrytki', p.296.

⁶³ Nina Katerli, 'Proshchal'nyi svet', pp.9-10.

⁶⁴ Nina Katerli, 'Mezhdu vesnoi i letom', p.21.

⁶⁵ Nina Katerli, 'Mezhdu vesnoi i letom', p.51.

⁶⁶ Nina Katerli, 'Polina', p.111-112.

⁶⁷ Nina Katerli, 'Polina', p.112.

⁶⁸ Nina Katerli, 'Polina', p.164.

⁶⁹ It is interesting to note that Martynov, who is terribly afraid of growing old, is forty-seven, and his mother, whom he pities, is seventy-four, a simple reversal of the numbers four and seven.

⁷⁰ Nina Katerli, 'Proshchal'nyi svet', p.8.

⁷¹ Nina Katerli, 'Proshchal'nyi svet', p.8.

⁷² Nina Katerli, 'Mezhdu vesnoi i letom', p.17-18.

⁷³ Nina Katerli, 'Proshchal'nyi svet', p.24.

⁷⁴ Jane Costlow suggests that Polina's recurring dreams of Boria, as well as her father's death, indicate that 'the story will not let her avoid the physical encounter with the tangible dead body.' See Jane T. Costlow, Stephanie Sandler, and Judith Vowles, 'Introduction', in Sexuality and the Body in Russian Culture, p.32.

⁷⁵ Catriona Kelly notes: 'The provincial tale placed an emphasis on liberation from marriage, rather than on liberation through marriage—the 'escape plot' as such, that is, a plot illustrating obstacles overcome, was standard.' See Catriona Kelly, A History of Russian Women's Writing, 1820-1992 (Oxford, 1994), p.63.

⁷⁶ Helena Goscilo, Balancing Acts, p.xxxv.

⁷⁷ Helena Goscilo has noted: 'Unlike the majority of Russian women prosaists, Katerli prefers to view events from a male center of consciousness.' Helena Goscilo, 'Entry Katerli, Nina Semenovna', in Dictionary of Russian Women Writers (Westport, CT and London, 1994), p.277.

⁷⁸ Perhaps Katerli's portrayal of the 'female experience' primarily from the male point of view is a result of the difficulty Soviet and Russian women have experienced in 'speaking out.' As Barbara Heldt has commented: 'Speaking out for women in a women's voice has often been a more complicated and dangerous occupation in Russia and the rest of the Soviet Union than in Europe or North America.' See Barbara Heldt, 'Gynoglasnost: Writing the Feminine', in Perestroika and Soviet Women, ed. by Mary Buckley (Cambridge, 1992), pp.160-175.

⁷⁹ Nina Katerli, 'Polina', p.100.

⁸⁰ Nina Katerli, 'Polina', p.100.

⁸¹ Nina Katerli, 'Polina', p.106.

⁸² Nina Katerli, 'Mezhdu vesnoi i letom', p.47.

⁸³ Nina Katerli, personal interview, 1995.

⁸⁴ Nina Katerli, 'Yrvshch', p.35.

⁸⁵ Nina Katerli, 'Yrvshch', p.35.

⁸⁶ Nina Katerli, 'Yrvshch', p.34.

⁸⁷ Nina Katerli, 'Yrvshch', p.44.

⁸⁸ Nina Katerli, 'Mezhdu vesnoi i letom', p.59.

⁸⁹ Nina Katerli, 'Proshchal'nyi svet', p.9.

⁹⁰ Nina Katerli, 'Zhara na severe', p.126.

⁹¹ Nina Katerli, 'Polina', p.97.

⁹² Nina Katerli, 'Polina', p.97.

⁹³ See, for example, Jane T. Costlow, Stephanie Sandler, and Judith Vowles, eds., Sexuality and the Body in Russian Culture, p.50.

⁹⁴ Nina Katerli, 'Polina', p.98.

⁹⁵ Helena Goscilo, Balancing Acts, p.xxxi.

⁹⁶ Nina Katerli, 'Zhara na severe', p.225.

⁹⁷ I. Prussakova, 'Iasnost' avtorskogo chuvstva', Zvezda, vol. 12, 1987, p.198.

⁹⁸ Nina Katerli, 'Kurzal', p.50.

⁹⁹ Nina Katerli, personal interview, 1993.

¹⁰⁰ Nicholas Zekulin, 'Soviet Russian Women's Literature in the Early 1980s', in Fruits of Her Plume, ed. by Helena Goscilo (Armonk and London, 1993), pp.52-53.

¹⁰¹ Nina Katerli, personal interview, 1995.

¹⁰² Nicholas Zekulin, 'Soviet Russian Women's Literature in the Early 1980s', in Fruits of Her Plume, p.53.

¹⁰³ Helena Goscilo, 'Introduction', in Present Imperfect: Stories by Russian Women, pp.8-9. Goscilo also correctly notes in New Women's Prose: 'issues such as ethical choice, the inviolability of the self, generational clashes, family relations, and sexuality are elaborated through women-centred plots...Stylistically, too, New Women's Prose has broken fresh ground, drawing creatively on folklore and myth, engaging in word play, and exploiting the destabilizing potential of irony. See Helena Goscilo, 'Introduction', in Present Imperfect: Stories by Russian Women, p.9.

CHAPTER FIVE

NON-FICTION WORKS

Написание статей на политические и гуманитарные темы позволяет мне непосредственно выразить свои социальные и политические убеждения.¹

As stated in the Introduction, Nina Katerli is one of very few Soviet and Russian women who writes prose fiction and non-fiction and is active politically. This chapter will identify and explore Nina Katerli's non-fiction works. Unlike previous chapters, which each cover a relatively short period of time, this chapter will deal with works and events that span a period of approximately two decades, from the early 1980s to the late 1990s. The chapter is divided into two sections—the first will discuss Katerli's human-interest articles, and the second will examine Katerli's political writings. The second section will analyse the place these articles occupy in her entire body of work. This latter section will also include an overview of Katerli's political activity, including an analysis of her court case against Aleksandr Romanenko, which was the subject of her book Isk (The Lawsuit) (1998). Finally, although it is not within the scope of this chapter to provide a comprehensive historical or political analysis, in order to achieve a better understanding of Katerli's non-fictional writings, the chapter will attempt to place Katerli's political writings within a specific historical and political context.

In the early 1980s, when Katerli began writing human-interest articles, she was as yet uninterested in direct political activity. She writes: 'Мои политические взгляды к тому времени сформировались окончательно, но заниматься политикой я не хотела... Я

– литератор, мое дело писать, считала я.² However, she was concerned with a number of social and moral issues, a fact which in many respects, reflects the general Russian and Soviet tradition of the writer as prophet and conscience of the nation. As N.N. Shneidman has remarked: ‘The writer in the Soviet Union was not only a creative artist, but simultaneously also a historian, philosopher, sociologist, politician, and student of human relations.’³ However, by the mid-1980s, Katerli began to take a more active role in the political sphere. Alluding to the Russian proverb ‘The pig will find its filth’, Katerli writes: ‘Я “нашла грязь” в политической деятельности, которой до того я сторонилась... я старалась делать то, что считала нужным и должным.’⁴

Katerli, like many of her fellow ‘shestidesiatniki’, ‘emerged again’, in the words of Svetlana Carsten, after the onset of Mikhail Gorbachev’s reforms.⁵ With the rise of Gorbachev, Soviet politicians and intellectuals desired to continue the process of liberalisation that had begun during Khrushchev’s thaw. In the late 1980s, as discussed in Chapter One, Nina Katerli joined the movement for democratic reforms, and shortly after, was nominated to run for the Congress of People’s Deputies. Shortly thereafter, she became an opponent of extreme nationalism and fascism, a stance which would ultimately require her to defend herself in a suit brought by one of the Soviet Union’s leading right-wing historians, Aleksandr Romanenko. As also discussed in Chapter One, it was during this time that Katerli began writing and publishing political articles.

Katerli felt an urgency to communicate her political and ideological convictions through the written word. As Nadia Peterson has remarked: ‘Under glasnost’...they [intellectuals] were offered, for the first time, an opportunity to present possible solutions to the problems plaguing their society.’⁶ As a result, Katerli almost completely

abandoned her prose writing during the years 1988 to 1993, following a widespread tendency among the Russian intelligentsia.⁷ As Rosalind Marsh has noted: 'By 1991, the pace of political events in the USSR had become so rapid that writers and critics were more concerned with political debate than with writing fiction.'⁸ Deming Brown has also noted of the Russian literary scene in the late 1980s:

In this climate, aesthetic refinement was less highly prized than information and analysis. What interested both readers and writers was the search for truth, and works were received enthusiastically because of their revelations, even though their artistic quality might be inferior. A key word in critical parlance was 'dokumental'nost' (documentariness) [sic]—which meant the writer's reliance on the display of facts rather than the workings of his imaginations...Many simply felt that the times so urgently demanded a literature of factual disclosure that, for the moment, verifiable truth was more important than finesse and fantasy.⁹

It was always Katerli's intention, however, to resume her prose writing. She wrote in 1993: 'I hope that I will be able to return to prose when the situation becomes more stable.'¹⁰

The unstable political and social climate may not have been Katerli's only incentive to write and publish political and human-interest articles. The market was also demanding a thematic shift. As Deming Brown has also noted: 'As economic pressure forced editors

to become more cautious and market oriented...[they] became inclined to favor non-fictional works of immediate social or political import.¹¹ As stated earlier, Soviet readers were more interested in historical and documentary prose than in prose fiction. Katerli stated in 1990: 'Мне кажется, что сейчас кроме документальной прозы, мемуаров, публицистики, ничего уже не интересно.'¹² As Alec Nove has remarked:

Soon after Gorbachev's election as General Secretary, it was being pointed out that Soviet history was in a very unsatisfactory state: there was Lenin, there is Gorbachev, and in between hardly anyone. Nothing could be said about the actors in the controversies of the twenties; Stalin's name was mentioned only infrequently, Khrushchev's not at all. The 'blank pages' needed to be filled.¹³

HUMAN-INTEREST WRITINGS

The most prevalent theme in Nina Katerli's human-interest writing concerns the plight of the elderly.¹⁴ The current political and economic instability of Russia has made the situation for the elderly, and especially elderly women (since there are more elderly women than elderly men) very difficult.¹⁵ As Luba Racanka noted in 1996:

Older women are especially prone to poverty for two major reasons: in the Soviet Union, women could retire at 55, five years earlier than men, which resulted in their receiving lower pensions, and women's salaries average about two thirds of men's, which also had a negative impact on their pensions with the estimated seventy-two percent of women among pensioners in Russia, a large group of women has been pushed below the poverty line by low pensions and a rapid rise in consumer prices.¹⁶

Similarly, Rosalind Marsh has commented: 'New problems have been created by Yel'tsin's laws on privatization of housing...[which] have encouraged criminal gangs to terrorize, even murder elderly women living alone.'¹⁷ Although the current situation for Russia's elderly is especially dire, Katerli believes that the problem is cultural rather than political, and has always been an unfortunate part of Russian culture. Russians, in Katerli's opinion, do not respect or value the elderly, considering them to be without use or value, in essence, they are perceived as an economic, emotional, and physical drain on those around them. As David E. Powell has noted: 'Older men and women are a major component of the "nonproductive" sphere...they are seen primarily as an economic liability rather than an asset.'¹⁸

Katerli's concern for the elderly is revealed most clearly in her article 'Bespoleznye babushki' ('Useless Grandmothers') (1982), in which she discusses the real-life story of an old woman who is forced into a convalescent home by her children and grandchildren. The article begins with an explanation by one of her grandchildren why he no longer has

the ability to care for his senile grandmother. Perceived neglect and mistreatment drive the poor old woman insane, and she is sent to a convalescent home, where not a single family member visits her. Later in the article, the grandson, who spoke earlier of his inability to care for her, remarks that his grandmother should give her flat to him. Katerli's implication, of course, is that mixed and not very admirable motives lie behind the grandson's actions.

Katerli further addresses the theme of the elderly, albeit in a more journalistic style, in her article 'Gosudarstvo—eto kto?' ('The State—Who is It?') (1988). In this work, written as a 'news' rather than feature article, Katerli begins by stating that elderly people constitute twenty per cent of the population of Russia. She then discusses a letter received from a pensioner, B. Kravchuk, who complains that he feels that he is no longer considered a vital part of society. The Minister of Finance is quoted in the article, stating that it is the government's responsibility to support the army, police, and pensioners. Katerli notes, however, that the government mandate to care for the elderly is not being realised. 'Shedding the impartial tone of a news reporter, she adopts a tone more in keeping with her underground works and declares at the article's end: 'Стыдно становится, как подумаешь, в каком положении у нас сегодня старые люди: ведь если слабый не может за себя постоять, сделать это должен тот, кто сильнее. Есть ли у нас в обществе такие силы? Есть!... И я надеюсь, что все-таки рано или поздно что-то сдвинется.'¹⁹

As discussed in previous chapters, the theme of the elderly, forgotten and misunderstood woman recurs in many of Katerli's prose stories. Pavel's mother in 'Chervets' ('The Worm') (1990), like the grandmother in 'Bespoleznye babushki', goes

mad. The neighbours, having very little sympathy for her situation, encourage Pavel to have his mother committed to a mental hospital. Unlike the family members in the article 'Bespoleznye babushki', Pavel regularly visits his mother, but he is unable to assuage his guilt over having had her committed. The grandmother in 'Proshchal'nyi svet' ('The Farewell Light') (1981) is also misunderstood and often neglected by her son. Only through the reading of her diary, are the loneliness and alienation of her old age discovered. The number of elderly protagonists of Katerli's prose fiction works also attests to her interest in the cultural, as well as economic and political, situation of Russia's elderly population.²⁰

Another important issue addressed by Nina Katerli in her non-fiction writing is the lack of communication between family members. In her article 'Dochki-materi' ('Mothers and daughters') (1982), Katerli recounts the real-life story of a mother and daughter who are estranged because the daughter refuses to accept the mother's decision to leave a high-paying career for a less remunerative but more personally fulfilling position. 'When the daughter rejects the mother's career choice, the mother replies in self-defence: 'Человек имеет право сам выбрать свою дорогу.'²¹ The point of Katerli's article is that communication, peace and harmony within family relationships require toleration of differences and acceptance of individuality.

Similarly, in many of her prose works, Katerli advocates diversity and tolerance. In 'Doroga' ('The Road') (1981), for example, Katerli tells the story of a man and his two very different sons—the eldest, Boris, who is a doctor, and the youngest, Ivan, who is an unemployed ex-convict. The father adores Boris, and abhors Ivan. The story shows that, while Boris fails to reciprocate his father's love and respect, the despised Ivan lives with

and cares for his sick and dying father. Unfortunately, the father cannot see how wrongly he has judged his two sons. In this regard, he is like Maia, in 'Polina' (1984), who repeatedly criticises Polina for her unorthodox lifestyle.

The difficulties of familial conflict and parenting are the topic of the article 'Na perekrestke liubvi' ('At the Crossroads of Love') (1982).²² The article recounts the story of a young woman, who, after getting married and having a child, grows to resent her mother-in-law, with whom she lives. After divorcing her husband, she finds herself in a possible custody battle with her mother-in-law over the child, because the mother-in-law questions the young woman's competency as a mother. The article is basically a debate between the two women, the mother and her daughter-in-law, and their ideas of what qualifies one as a good mother.

Katerli also discusses the issue of parenthood in her later article 'Zhivem dlia rebenka' ('We Live for Our Children') (1992), exploring the danger of selfish parents and the effects they have upon their children. The article tells the story of a man who sincerely believes that he is a good parent, but is revealed by Katerli to be a self-centred person who uses his child to further his own personal gains. For example, the father in the article recounts how he once forced a woman to give up her seat on a bus for him and his child, even though the child was old enough to stand. Rather than caring for the welfare of the child, Katerli argues, parents often are actually concerned for themselves. This is often seen in such seemingly 'selfless' behaviour as pampering or spoiling children, which will eventually, Katerli argues, be to the detriment of both the child and the parent.

As we have seen, the themes of parenting also feature significantly in Katerli's prose fiction. Many of the mothers in Katerli's prose fiction, like the mother in 'Na perekrestke

liubvi', are single parents, coping with the many difficulties of raising a child alone.²³ Unfortunately, as discussed in 'Zhivem dlia rebenka', many of these mothers make the mistake of spoiling their children and then suffer the consequences. Natal'ia Kopeikina in 'Treugol'nik Barsikova', for example, works extra jobs and does without so that her son will have the best clothes. Unfortunately, her sacrifice is unappreciated and her love un-reciprocated, as her son becomes a ruthless criminal who verbally abuses her. Similarly, Tamara makes many sacrifices for her son, who becomes a criminal. In light of Katerli's silence over her own father in her autobiographical works, it is noteworthy that, except for 'Polina', 'Proshchal'nyi svet', and 'Mezhdu vesnoi i letom' ('Between Spring and Summer') (1983), Katerli has little to say about the role of the father.²⁴ The fathers in her stories are usually emotionally and and/or physically absent from the family, like as Dorofeev in 'Tsvetnye otkrytki'. As a result, the mothers are forced to assume a double responsibility.

Although Katerli neither considers herself a feminist nor one who is concerned solely with women's issues or themes, it is interesting to note that many themes of her human-interest articles might be deemed 'feminine': relationships, mothers, child-rearing, and concern for the elderly. Katerli considers herself to be a 'humanist', and thus, she states, she writes about issues from a 'humanist' perspective. However, as a Russian woman, writing about her world and her milieu, Katerli is bound to touch upon the subjects of relationships, mothers, children, and so on, in essence, experiences that reflect or parallel her own. Although Katerli states that she does not necessarily write 'women's literature' or 'women's themes', as a woman she is writing about her own experience, which is obviously different from a man's experience, especially in Russia where the roles of men

and women are very clearly defined. This fact, of course, does not limit or reduce the quality, nor should it influence the reception, of Katerli's writing—both her prose fiction and non-fiction.

The narrative style in Nina Katerli's human-interest articles reveals two specific aspects of her writing. The first is Katerli's desire to show all sides of an issue, which she achieves by allowing the figures in her articles to speak for themselves, reflecting, in a sense, her sympathy with the various difficulties they are facing. The majority of Katerli's human-interest articles are based on real stories, and Katerli presents many of them in the form of an interview, where the voice and expressions of the main characters can be presented most directly. A similar technique is evident in Katerli's prose fiction in her use of multiple points of view and fluctuating narration. In many of Katerli's prose works, such as 'Mezhdu vesnoi i letom', 'Proshchal'nyi svet', 'Treugol'nik Barsukova', and 'Polina' it is unclear at times whose point of view is being expressed, since Katerli allows characters to speak for themselves, in a sense, through a third-person narrator.

The second aspect of the narrative style of Katerli's human-interest works is her willingness to express her specific personal concerns and beliefs. Thus, despite Katerli's desire to allow the subjects of her articles to speak for themselves, she is not an unbiased journalist, and she often directly expresses her perspectives on the matter at hand. In 'Bespoleznye babushki', for example, Katerli states:

Старого человека надо уважать и жалеть, потому что старость –
не радость: и ходить тяжело, и сердце болит, и по ночам не

спится и товарищей почти не осталось, а потому -
одиночество.²⁵

At times, Katerli assumes a strongly didactic tone in her articles. For example, in 'Zhivem dlia rebenka,' Katerli states:

Мы все хотим, чтобы наши дети были счастливы. И не просто хотим – мы отвечаем за это. Именно поэтому мы обязаны помнить – наша к ним любовь должна быть сознательной... если мы хотим видеть наших детей счастливыми, мы должны постоянно помнить, что благополучие, житейский успех, умение 'всего добиться' – вовсе не счастье, счастье – категория духовная, и счастливым по-настоящему может быть только тот, кто умеет ценить доброту и красоту, дружить, любить, работать, верить людям, чувствовать чужую радость и боль. И тут для родителей один путь – постоянная работа над собственной душой, над собственной личностью.²⁶

The interjection of Katerli's personal views does not result in condemnation or praise. She condemns and praises behaviour, rather than people. For example, in 'Dochki-materi', Katerli states:

Обе, и мать и дочь, считают друг друга эгоистками, обе, тем не менее, уверены, что другая сторона опомнится и конфликт разрешится сам собой... Детям трудно понимать родителей: они не были на их месте. А родителям? Ведь это верно, уйдя из 'племени' молодых, мы начинаем видеть их одинаковыми, забываем их язык.²⁷

Similarly, in 'Na perekrestke liubvi', Katerli remarks: 'История типичная, проблема вечная. Каждая из сторон считает себя правой, а другую виноватой... Создать в семье мир не легко. Это равное дело всех членов семьи.'²⁸ Thus, instead of attempting to determine who is the guilty party, Katerli encourages peace and tranquillity at home between family and loved ones.

One need only recall the opinionated narrators of 'Chervets' and 'Treugol'nik Barsukova' in order to see the correlation between the opinionated narrative voice of Katerli's prose fiction and human-interest articles. Moreover, as discussed above, Katerli neither praises nor condemns the characters in her human-interest articles. Similarly, Katerli does not judge the characters in her prose fiction. For example, rather than condemning Aleksandr Gubin in 'Zhara na severe' for being unfaithful to his wife, he is portrayed as morally weak and almost pitied for his insecurity. Likewise, even though Fira Kats and Aleksandr Petiukhov in 'Treugol'nik Barsukova' leave their spouses to emigrate to Israel together, Katerli sympathises with their dissatisfaction with their marriages and their desire to leave the Soviet Union. Thus, Katerli has compassion for her protagonists, viewing their mistakes and deficiencies as normal human imperfections

resulting from the disorder and turmoil of contemporary society, rather than as intentional manifestations of unkindness or evil.

POLITICAL WRITINGS

Nina Katerli began writing political works in the late 1980s, and in the last ten years, she has written over thirty political articles.²⁹ Her largest political work to date is *Isk*, a 333-page book, detailing her trial against Aleksandr Romanenko.³⁰ Additionally, in 1992, she began co-publishing *Bar'er* (*Barrier*), a magazine that printed articles on the rise of fascism and anti-Semitism, but by 1993, the magazine folded, due to financial difficulties.³¹ As previously discussed, on a political level Nina Katerli is primarily concerned with the issues of fascism, nationalism and anti-Semitism. Although it is not within the scope of this chapter to provide a comprehensive historical or political analysis of these issues, a proper understanding of her political writings makes it necessary to place Katerli's political writings within a specific historical and political context.

Katerli became actively involved in the campaign against fascism and anti-Semitism in August 1988, which was triggered by meetings held by the neo-Stalinist, right-wing organisation 'Pamiat'' (Memory) in Leningrad's Rumanevskii Garden.³² 'Pamiat'' first appeared in the Soviet Union in 1979 as part of the All-Russian Society for the Preservation of Historical and Cultural Monuments, under the leadership of Dmitri Vasil'ev. At its inception, 'Pamiat'' was neither radical nor extreme. In fact, in the late 1970s and early 1980s, widespread nationalist or fascist movements were viewed by most people as threatening, dangerous, and evil. Gradually, however, the leadership of 'Pamiat'' fell into the hands of militant neo-fascists and anti-Semites. By the end of

1985, the leaders of the All-Russian Society for the Preservation of Historical and Cultural Monuments began blaming the destruction of historical and architectural monuments on Jews employed by the Administration for Architecture and Planning. As Hedrick Smith has written:

Soon the organisation invited comparisons with German fascism because its members wore black t-shirts and military greatcoats and carried a banner with the double eagle of the Romanov dynasty and zigzag bolts of lightning that evoked Nazi swastikas.³³

Katerli was appalled that 'Pamiat'' was permitted to hold meetings openly and legally, and she was curious how such an organisation could amass such a strong and sizeable following. She recalls that it became clear to her that the key to its maintenance and growth was the dissemination of the propaganda upon which 'Pamiat'' built its ideological bases.³⁴ On 9 October 1988, Katerli wrote 'Doroga k pamiatnikam' ('The Road to Monuments'), an article about the dissemination of fascist and nationalist propaganda. The article discussed the 'Pamiat'' meeting in Rumanevskii Garden, and expressed Katerli's desire to expose the sources of propaganda used by 'Pamiat'' and other nationalist organisations. Katerli specifically attacked Aleksandr Romanenko's 1986 book, O klassovoi sushchnosti sionizma (On the Class Basis of Zionism), claiming that the book was being used as a source of propaganda by right-wing organisations. Katerli states in her article:

А Романенко не брезгует ни фальсификацией цитат классиков марксизма-ленинизма, ни чудовищными искажениями исторической правды, ни использованием идей и чуть ли не раскавыченных выдержек из теоретиков нацизма.³⁵

Nina Katerli recounts that she never regarded Aleksandr Romanenko himself as an enemy. She was not waging a battle against Romanenko's character. Rather, she claims, she was confronting and challenging the theories presented in his book. For Romanenko, however, Katerli's article was a personal attack, and he was determined to defend himself. The battle between Katerli and Romanenko began even before the article was published. Katerli was asked by the editor of Leningradskaia pravda, the newspaper that was planning to publish the article, to withdraw the sections of the article pertaining to Romanenko. Despite Katerli's refusal, the article was printed. Katerli recalls that the day before the article was printed, Romanenko himself phoned Leningradskaia pravda, and asked if it were true that an article about him would shortly be published. The editor, ostensibly having a change of heart, simply remarked that the printing of Katerli's article was a top-secret matter, and he hung up the telephone.

Once the article appeared, the conflict escalated. Romanenko wrote to Katerli, expressing his anger at her accusations. Having fought in World War Two against the Nazis, Romanenko could not understand how she could call him a Nazi. Katerli's statements, he claimed, betrayed both the Soviet Union and the Soviet people themselves. Finally, he stated that the written word was an important tool, and that he would not allow her to get away with such false and dangerous accusations. On 10 November 1988,

Aleksandr Romanenko filed a libel suit against Nina Katerli for her accusations that he had used Nazi theories in his book О классової сущности сionизма, and he made it very clear that he wished for her to be punished to the full extent of the law. Katerli writes that Romanenko felt compelled to 'защитить его чести и достоинство.'³⁶ The trial lasted from December 1988 to the spring of 1990.

As stated earlier, Katerli documented the trial in Isk, which is Katerli's own account of the trial, as well as an explanation of her personal beliefs and thoughts on fascism, nationalism, and anti-Semitism.³⁷ The purpose of the trial was to determine whether Romanenko's theories could be characterised as fascist or Nazi and, if not, whether he had been libeled by Katerli's article. Experts were called in, but Katerli claims that she did not trust them, because their loyalty was to the Communist Party, first and foremost, and because such 'experts' had been used in the past to condemn innocent people.

The year-and-a-half period over which the trial took place was, Katerli recalls, one of the most difficult times in her life. Verbal and physical attacks and threats began on the first day of the trial, when she was greeted by an angry mob of 'Pamiat'' supporters. The attacks continued throughout the trial with 'Pamiat'' supporters yelling: 'Позор защитникам сионизма – фашизма наших дней!'³⁸ and 'Собирай чемодан, Катерли, скоро в Израиль поедешь!'³⁹ Katerli also received threatening letters and telephone calls, but she refused to give up. She writes:

Я не раз решала для себя вопрос: а смогу ли я эмигрировать, если ситуаций здесь станет смертельно опасной. Ответ всегда был такой: только ради спасения жизни. Но это будет концом

жизни, разнообразностью самоубийства. Духовного, по крайней мере.⁴⁰

Aleksandr Romanenko insisted that his beliefs were neither fascistic, anti-Semitic, nor Nazi, nor was he himself a fascist, anti-Semite, or Nazi. His greatest defence, he claimed, was the preface of his book, which states: 'В социалистическом обществе никакого антисемитизма нет и быть не может.'⁴¹ Many of Romanenko's statements in the book, however, contradicted his preface. For instance, he does not distinguish between 'Jew' and 'Zionist', thereby claiming that all Jews owe their first allegiance to Israel. William Korey has noted of Romanenko's book:

Zionist ideology was portrayed as being rooted in reactionary Judaism and as advocating that 'the Jews are superior to other peoples and their vocation is to rule over the whole of mankind'.⁴²

In addition, Romanenko blames Stalin's policy of collectivisation on the Jews and also claims that Jews manipulated statistics regarding the number of Jews killed in the Holocaust. Katerli was particularly disturbed by the fact that Romanenko masked his hatred and xenophobia with scientific terminology, making his claims appear academic and legitimate. In his book, Romanenko writes: 'Гитлер критиковал еврейство вообще, а я критикую только еврейскую буржуазию.'⁴³ Romanenko continued to assert that his book was scientific, not political. Katerli disagreed: 'Он в своей книге не имел целью установить истину, перед нами политическая, пропагандистская, а

вовсе не научная книга.’⁴⁴ Agreeing with Katerli, one expert claimed that Romanenko’s book was political, simply because of the fact that he was a well-known political leader.

As part of his case, Romanenko stated that if he were a fascist or Nazi, then so would be the Provincial Party Oblast’ Committee, as well as the publishing house Lenizdat, since it had agreed to publish the book. Thus, Romanenko claimed that by criticising his book, Katerli had ‘совершила акт морального терроризма, оклеветав его и Ленинградский Обком КПСС, готовивший книгу к публикации.’⁴⁵ Furthermore Romanenko accused Katerli of being a traitor because she was married to a Jew. In fact, throughout the proceedings, Romanenko referred to Katerli as ‘Эфрос – она же - Катерли’, implying that Katerli uses a nom-de-plume, Katerli, rather than her married and legal name, Efros, because she is herself ashamed of the fact that she is half-Jewish and is married to a Jew. Romanenko also claimed that Katerli supported Zionist causes.⁴⁶

Katerli recounts that during the course of the trial, she was curious about the Oblast’ Committee’s role in the publication of O klassovoi sushchnosti sionizma. The Oblast’ Committee claimed that, before publishing Romanenko’s book, it had consulted experts who verified that his book was based upon scientific research rather than political propaganda. However, William Korey has written that in 1987, a Communist Party journal ‘castigated the Romanenko work as replete with “factual inaccuracies, distortions and errors,” including the manipulation of the quotations from the classics of Marx and Lenin.’⁴⁷ Katerli sent numerous letters to newspapers and to the government itself in order to ascertain the truth of the Committee’s statement. In support of Katerli’s efforts, a group of Leningrad writers sent an official letter to the Oblast’ Committee asking the same questions, namely how it had allowed such a book to be published. Despite these

and other efforts, however, their letters went unanswered. It was not until January 1990, months before the end of the trial, that Katerli received an answer from the Department of Propaganda, which finally admitted that Lenizdat had made a mistake in publishing Q klassovoi sushchnosti sionizma.⁴⁸

The first trial ended on 22 June 1989. The court could find no grounds to hold that Katerli had committed libel. On the other hand, while the court did find elements of Nazi ideology in Romanenko's novel, it did not hold that Romanenko was himself a Nazi. Romanenko was furious with this equivocal decision and appealed to the Supreme Court of the Russian Federation, accusing the experts of being incompetent, and accusing Nina Katerli of spreading dangerous Zionist propaganda.

Romanenko called in his own experts and a second trial began in September 1989. After several more months, many of the experts determined that Romanenko's book was anti-Semitic. Romanenko was appalled and maintained that he had Marx, Engels and Lenin on his side. Katerli maintains that once it became clear to Romanenko that he was losing this second trial, he decided to drop the charges. Romanenko's claim that he was acting for the sake of national stability was, in Katerli's view, a fig leaf to cover the baselessness of his complaint and a public relations ploy to portray himself as the winner, a hero, a patriot, and a martyr, while casting Katerli in the role of a traitor and troublemaker. The trial finally ended in the spring of 1990, and Katerli has had no further contact with Aleksandr Romanenko. After the trial, Romanenko formed the Revival of Russia Party, which aims at combating Zionism and capitalism.

Even during the course of the trial, Katerli was writing and publishing articles on the rise of fascist and nationalist organisations in the Soviet Union, which grew rapidly in the

late 1980s, in many respects, as a reaction to Gorbachev's reform policies. Gorbachev's ideas, as John Garrard has noted, were perceived as 'alien notions from the capitalist West.'⁴⁹ Soon, the extreme right and extreme left—the fascists and the communists—began joining forces. As Nina Katerli has written:

They [the fascists and communists] kept in mind one enemy—the democrats. Soon, this [Communist] Commission acknowledged that 'parties of socialist orientation' were as hostile toward the CPSU as the hated democrats and the only prospective allies could be the 'patriots'.⁵⁰

The convergence of extreme left and right became more evident in August 1991 when the archive of the Leningrad Communist Party Headquarters, located at 239 Smolnyi Street, was opened. Although many documents had been destroyed, what Katerli did find confirmed, in her view, 'that the patriotic movement had received help—both in word and deed from the [Communist] Party.'⁵¹ Anti-Semitic books were found, including copies of Adolf Hitler's Mein Kampf. In addition, Katerli discovered documents describing her 'samizdat' and 'tamizdat' works of the early 1980s, as well as copies of papers related to her court case with Aleksandr Romanenko, namely the transcript of an interview she gave to the BBC during the course of the trial.

Katerli has written extensively about the power of the KGB and its connection to nationalist organisations. As Hedrick Smith has noted: 'The ability of right-wing organizations like 'Pamiat''...to get permission for demonstrations near the Kremlin is

widely taken as evidence of support for the right-wing within the police and the KGB.’⁵²

In 1994, Katerli stated that the power of the KGB ‘существует до сих пор и является очень сильным,’ and that its successive organisation, the Federal Security Service, was simply a better organised or better equipped version of its predecessor, the KGB.⁵³ The people in power in the new organisation were ex-KGB people, as are those in almost all the major positions of power in Russia today. Katerli maintains that many of them were able to obtain their high positions of power with the help of ‘Pamiat’ money.

As discussed earlier, Katerli believes that nationalist groups are disseminating dangerous propaganda that is spreading all too quickly. She writes: ‘История учит, что фашизм никогда не ограничивается расправой над только одной нацией, он разъедает, губит все страну, в которой зародился.’⁵⁴ Unfortunately, as Katerli notes, many Russians believe:

Быть фашистом вовсе не позорно, напротив, это – дело чести, доблести. И геройство. И народ еще скажет им спасибо за освобождение от сионистского оккупационного режима, от демократической нечисти, которая постоянно лжет.⁵⁵

Katerli maintains that ‘glasnost’ allowed these groups the freedom to speak their minds and spread their ideas, and despite her general support for freedom of speech, Katerli believes (with no evident sense of irony or inconsistency) that such groups should not have the right to air their beliefs, since ‘В России нет такой истории демократии как в Америке.’⁵⁶ Katerli has written that Russians can no longer close their eyes to the rise in

right-wing movements: ‘Мы не хотим никого пугать, доказывая, что власть в нашей стране вот-вот захватят фашисты, захватят путем переворота или очень спокойно, на выборах как Гитлер. Мы надеемся, что вероятность такой катастрофы пока мала, но она, тем не менее существует, нарастает, и свидетельство тому многочисленные победы, одержанные за последнее время и самыми откровенными нацистами, и их подкладными союзниками.’⁵⁷

Nationalist movements have tapped into an apocalyptic sense of anxiety and dread. With the inflation rate rising every day, the increase of crime and the power of the mafia, many Russians are terrified of the uncertainty of Russia’s economic and political future. As Stephen Carter has noted:

Every great nation faced with retreat from their empire, suffers a crisis of identity and a painful but necessary adjustment to new realities. When that nation is a nuclear superpower which has been imbued for decades with a millennial ideology, with expectations...of ultimate geopolitical leadership and expansionism, that crisis of identity must indeed be incipiently traumatic.⁵⁸

The solution for the nationalists, Katerli claims, is to find a scapegoat, someone to blame for society’s ills. Ironically echoing Lenin’s oft repeated maxim that ‘Communism equals socialism plus the electrification of the entire country’, Nina Katerli has defined fascism as ‘тотальная диктатура плюс ксенофобия.’⁵⁹ Katerli writes of xenophobes: ‘Так человек, проснувшись ночью в своей пустой, запертой изнутри квартире,

вдруг слышит чужие шаги в коридоре.’⁶⁰ She has also commented that such people ‘не развитой душой и рабским сознанием’.⁶¹

Katerli lays the blame for this ‘slave mentality’ on the Communist system. She remarks that the greatest tragedy of Soviet Communism was its suppression of critical thought, both at the individual and societal level. By the time Mikhail Gorbachev came to power, communism had been the ideological foundation of the Soviet Union for over seventy years, defining political, social, economic and literary reality. As this foundation began to crumble, many intellectuals embraced the resulting societal and political changes. For many Soviets, however, the void left by communism’s collapse was frightening, painful, and confusing. Katerli writes:

Мы родились и выросли в насквозь идеологизированной стране. Коммунистические догмы вдалбливались в мозг советского гражданина с того момента, как он появлялся на свет. Прежняя идеология умерла, кумиры разрушены, и в общественном сознании образовался опасный, болезненный вакуум, тоска, ‘ломка’ – наподобие той, что чувствует наркоман, внезапно лишившийся привычного укола.⁶²

As discussed above, an essential element of many nationalist and fascist movements is the belief that Zionism is international fascism and thus a mortal threat to Russia.⁶³ As John Dunlop has convincingly demonstrated: ‘There can be no doubt that anti-

Semitism...is a major current in the ranks of contemporary Russian nationalists.'⁶⁴

Dunlop has also remarked:

Most Russian nationalists countenance two solutions to the 'Jewish problem': the emigration of Jews abroad (Zionists to Israel and harlanders to North America and Western Europe or the establishment of a Jewish republic, perhaps to be located in the Crimea).⁶⁵

The discrimination and persecution of Jews is not new to Russia.⁶⁶ As Robert Brym has commented: 'Russia has a long tradition of anti-Semitism and the largest combined number of Jews and anti-Semites of any country in the world.'⁶⁷ Similarly, David Lane has remarked: 'Culturally, the Jews have fared less well than the other minor nationalities in the USSR.'⁶⁸

Katerlf writes extensively about the numerous anti-Semitic policies of the Soviet Government. She writes: 'We always knew that anti-Semitism was the official policy of the USSR for many years.'⁶⁹ During Stalin's last years, several anti-Jewish campaigns were launched as a result of the so-called Doctor's Plot and the Leningrad Affair, which sent many Jews to prison, internment camps, and to execution. In addition, in the late 1940s, almost the entire Jewish membership of the Soviet Union's Anti-Fascist Committee was arrested and shot, and the Jewish Theatre was closed. One purpose of the 'Anti-Cosmopolitan Campaign', as it was known, was to drive Jews out of cultural and

literary activities. Furthermore, a special KGB organ was devised to 'confront' Zionism at all levels. Katerli states:

The Communists...were anti-Semites, not only for the sake of the system, but because they believed it in their hearts. These party leaders...were, as a rule, the people with the fewest principles, least conscience and culture, for whom anti-Semitism was nutrition, just as manure is for worms.⁷⁰

In Katerli's view, anti-Semitism developed as a 'science' during the 1960s, when the Soviet Union began experiencing economic problems. Between 1969 and 1986, Katerli notes that 9.4 million copies of anti-Semitic books were published in the Soviet Union.⁷¹ The rise of anti-Semitism can also be seen in the re-emergence of a Russian-style Hitler Youth and the presence of Nazi literature. Despite these obvious elements of prejudice and discrimination, the Jewish question, including the Holocaust, remained a non-issue in the Soviet Union. As Alec Nove has noted: 'Jewish questions, including that of emigration, were hardly ever referred to in the press or media, save in the context of denunciations of "Zionism" and Israel.'⁷² Similarly, Robert Brym has commented: 'Despite the obvious significance of the subject, Russian surveys data on anti-Semitism are meager and inadequately analyzed.'⁷³

Katerli writes that the leaders and members of fascist organisations believe that they are at war with Zionism and Zionists, and that Zionists are seductively attempting to work their way into every position of power in society. As Hedrick Smith has observed:

'Right-wing Russian nationalists are obsessed, as their writings and conversations testify, with what they see as the excessive influence of Jews in Soviet society.'⁷⁴ These leaders openly declare their disgust for liberal 'Zionist' newspapers, such as Moskovskie novosti, Leningradskaia smena, and Ogonek. Katerli also writes that they believe that Jewish authors should not be read, including such famous writers as Boris Pasternak and Osip Mandelstam. Some contemporary nationalists blame Russia's current problems on Boris Yeltsin, whom they claim is a Jew, and whose real name, they claim, is Baruch Yel'kin.⁷⁵ They view the Bolshevik Revolution as a Jewish plot led by Jews: Leon Trotskii, and Vladimir Lenin.

Katerli continues to write political articles on nationalism, fascism, and anti-Semitism. In one of her most recent articles, 'Sekretnoe oruzhie russkikh natsistov' ('the Secret Weapons of Russian Nazis'), published in April 1996, Katerli warns: 'Настанет день, и вдруг окажется, что нацистские боевики в Центральной России, на Урале и Сибири опасней чем боевики Дудаева в Чечне.'⁷⁶ Although she calls herself a 'humanist', Katerli is concerned with a very narrow spectrum of political issues. Her writings on the KGB, nationalism, and fascism may reflect her desire to protect democracy, having lived during the repressive times of Stalin, Khrushchev, and Brezhnev. Her works on anti-Semitism may be related to the fact that she is half-Jewish.

CONCLUSION

As discussed earlier, Katerli's non-fiction works reflect a general trend in the 1980s toward documentary prose and political writings. Writing non-fiction works, Katerli has stated, allowed her to convey directly her political, sociological, and moral beliefs and

convictions.⁷⁷ However, these works may also express Katerli's desire to prove herself as a supporter of democratic ideals, primarily evident in the trial against Aleksandr Romanenko, which presented the opportunity for Katerli to portray herself as a democrat and heroine for democracy. This does not, of course, diminish Katerli's contribution to Russian and Soviet non-fiction. She is not a self-promoting opportunist. Rather, she is a tenacious woman with strong beliefs and convictions.

Katerli's non-fiction writings lend understanding to her prose fiction works, and, in a sense, reveal the transparency of Katerli's persona. Many of the themes of Katerli's human-interest articles and political writings, including concern for the elderly, lack of communication, parenthood, child-rearing, and anti-Semitism, also dominate in her prose fiction. In addition, Katerli's narrative techniques, such as expressing multiple points of view, as well as expressing personal convictions, are evident in her prose fiction. The similarities between her prose fiction and non-fiction reveal Katerli's prose fiction to be an expression of her personal moral and political convictions. There are, however, differences between Katerli's prose fiction and non-fiction. In particular, Katerli's prose fiction does not deal with the themes of nationalism, the KGB, or fascism. Furthermore, despite Katerli's preoccupation with historical themes in her political writings, she does not, like Iurii Trifonov, deal with specific historical themes in her prose fiction. However, as stated earlier, despite Katerli's intention to separate her prose fiction and non-fiction writings, it is clear that the two are inextricably linked.

Notes

¹ Nina Katerli, personal interview, 1993.

² Nina Katerli, 'Kto ia?' (unpublished autobiographical text, 1993), p.17.

³ N.N. Shneidman, Russian Literature 1988-1994: The End of an Era (Toronto and Buffalo, 1995), p.35.

⁴ Nina Katerli, 'Kto ia?', p.34-5.

⁵ Svetlana Carsten Svetlana, 'In the Shadow of a Prominent Partner: Educated Women in Literature: the Shestidesiatniki', in Women in Russian Culture: Projections and Self-Perceptions: Projections and Self-Perceptions, ed. by Rosalind Marsh (Oxford, 1998), p.263.

⁶ Nadya Peterson, Subversive Imaginations: Fantastic Prose and the End of Soviet Literature, 1970s-1990s (Boulder, Colorado, 1997), p.25.

⁷ The writers Evgenii Evtushevko and Andrei Voznesenskii also allowed their fiction writing to take second place to their political activities.

⁸ Rosalind Marsh, 'The Death of Soviet Literature: Can Russian Literature Survive?', Europe-Asia Studies, vol.45, no.1, 1993, p.116.

⁹ Deming Brown, The Last Years of Soviet Russian Literature: Prose Fiction 1975-91 (Cambridge, 1993), p.63. For further reading on the literature in the Gorbachev era, see Rosalind Marsh, 'Glasnost' and Russian Literature', Australian Slavonic and East European Studies, vol.6, no.2, 1992, pp.21-39; Alec Nove, Glasnost' in Action: Cultural Renaissance in Russia (Boston, 1989).

¹⁰ Nina Katerli, 'Author's Questionnaire', (unpublished questionnaire for 'Voices of Russian Women' tour, February-March, 1993).

¹¹ Deming Brown, The Last Years of Soviet Russian Literature: Prose Fiction 1975-91, p.6.

¹² A. Romin, 'Nina Katerli: "Inogda fantastika neobkhodima..."' (full reference unknown).

¹³ Alec Nove, Glasnost' in Action: Cultural Renaissance in Russia, p.37.

¹⁴ For further reading on the situation of elderly women in Russia, see Tatyana Gerasimova, 'Elderly Women—A Challenge to Russia', in Women's Voices in Russia Today, ed. by Anna Rotkirch and Elina Haavio-Mannila (Aldershot, Brookfield, Singapore, Sydney, 1996), pp.175-185.

¹⁵ Lyuba Racanka has commented that Russian women outnumber men close to two to one among pensioners. See Lyuba Racanka, 'The Yeltsin Presidency, Economic Reform, and Women', in Russian Women in Politics and Society, ed. by Wilma Rule and Norma C. Noonan (Westport, CT and London, 1996), p.126.

¹⁶ Luba Racanka, 'The Yeltsin Presidency, Economic Reform, and Women', p.126.

¹⁷ Rosalind Marsh, Women in Russia and Ukraine (Cambridge, 1996), p.10.

¹⁸ David E. Powell, 'Aging and the Elderly', in Soviet Social Problems, ed. by Anthony Jones, Walter D. Donner, David E. Powell (Boulder and San Francisco, 1991), p.178.

¹⁹ Nina Katerli, 'Gosudarstvo—eto kto?', Sovetskaia kul'tura, 29 November 1988, p.6.

²⁰ See, for example, the monster in 'Chudovishche' ('The Monster') (1977); Dr. Rastorguev in 'Nes"edobnyi drug Rastorgueva' ('Rastorguev's Inedible Friend') (1982); Inga's mother in 'Tsvetnye otkrytki' ('Coloured Postcards') (1986); and Kepker and Gerasimovich in 'Zemlia Bedovannaia' ('The Profited Land') (1989).

²¹ Nina Katerli, 'Dochki-materi', Leningradskaia pravda, 10 January 1982 (page number unknown).

²² The word 'crossroads' in the title perhaps suggests a collision of two loves—a grandmother's and a mothers, and a crossroads, in the sense of signing the cross ('perekrestit'), symbolic of martyrdom.

²³ See, for example, Natal'ia Kopeikina and Roza Lvovna in 'Treugol'nik Barsukova' ('The Barsukov Triangle') (1981); Liza in 'Zhara na severe' ('Heat in the North') (1988); and Vera in 'Chervets'.

²⁴ See Chapter Four for a discussion of the theme of father/daughter relationships in Katerli's realistic prose.

²⁵ Nina Katerli, 'Bespoleznye babushki', Literaturnaia gazeta, 25 August 1982 (page number unknown).

²⁶ Nina Katerli, 'Zhivem dlia rebenka', Leningradskaia pravda, 17 September 1992 (page number unknown).

²⁷ Nina Katerli, 'Dochki-materi', Leningradskaia pravda, 10 January 1982 (page number unknown).

²⁸ Nina Katerli, 'Na perekrestke liubvi: dva pis'ma klubu molodoi sem'i kommentiruet pisatel'', Komsomolskaia pravda, 2 November 1982, p.2.

²⁹ Katerli has also written conference papers on the rise of fascism and nationalism in the Soviet Union and Russia.

³⁰ Due to the fact that I was not able to obtain a copy of the 1998 published text of Isk, for the purposes of this study, I will be referring to the unpublished manuscript given to me by Katerli in 1994.

³¹ In a 1994 interview, Katerli stated that she did not see a future for the magazine.

³² For further reading on 'Pamiat'', see, for example: Stephen White, Alex Pravda, and Zvi Gitelman, Developments in Soviet and Post-Soviet Politics (Basingstoke and London, 1992, second edition); Stephen White, Graeme Gill, and Darrell Slider, The Politics of Transition: Shaping a Post-Soviet Future (Cambridge, 1993); M. McCauley, Russia's Politics of Uncertainty (Cambridge, 1997).

³³ Hedrick Smith, The New Russians (New York, 1990), p.405.

³⁴ This observation calls to mind Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn's statement on ideology: 'Ideology—that is what gives evildoing its long-sought justification and gives the evildoer the necessary steadfastness and determination. That is the social theory which helps to make his acts seem good instead of bad in his own and others' eyes, so that he won't hear reproaches and curses but will receive praise and honors. See Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn, Gulag Archipelago, trans. by Harry Willetts and Thomas P. Whitney (New York, 1974-1978), p.174.

³⁵ Nina Katerli, 'Doroga k pamiatnikam', Leningradskaia pravda, 9 October 1988, p.3.

³⁶ Nina Katerli, 'Chest' i dostoinstvo: antisemita brali pod zashchitu organy pravosudiiia', Izvestiia, 31 October 1990, p.3.

³⁷ Although Katerli completed Isk in 1991, she was unable to publish the book until 1998. The reason for this, Katerli states, is the book's controversial subject-matter. When asked in a 1996 interview if she thought that Isk would be published, Katerli stated that she did not expect it to be published. However, she was not upset by this, and said that she had moved on to other writing projects and concerns. Finally, in 1998, a publishing house in Samara agreed to publish Isk.

³⁸ Nina Katerli, Isk (unpublished manuscript, 1991), p.108.

³⁹ Nina Katerli, Isk, p.108.

⁴⁰ Nina Katerli, 'Kto ia?', p.41. Katerli's statement is similar to the Epigraph of Anna Akhmatova's poem 'Rekviem' ('Requiem') (1967):

Нет, и не под чуждым небосводом,

И не под защитой чуждых крыл, -

Я была тогда с моим народом,

Там, где мой народ, к несчастью был

See Anna Akhmatova, 'Rekviem', in Sobranie sochinenie Anny Akhmatovi, (Moscow, 1989), p.302.

⁴¹ Nina Katerli, Isk, p.55.

⁴² William Korey, Russian Anti-Semitism, Pamyat, and the Demonology of Zionism, Studies in Anti-Semitism, vol.2, Published for the Vidal Sassoon International Center for the Study of Anti-Semitism (SICSA) (Jerusalem, 1995), p.119.

⁴³ Nina Katerli, Isk, p.172

⁴⁴ Nina Katerli, Isk, p.68.

⁴⁵ Nina Katerli, 'Chest' i dostoinstvo antisemita brali pod zashchitu organy pravosudiia', p.3.

⁴⁶ Nina Katerli, Isk, p.41.

⁴⁷ William Korey, Russian Anti-Semitism, Pamyat, and the Demonology of Zionism, p.119.

⁴⁸ Nina Katerli, Isk, p.207.

⁴⁹ John Garrard and Carol Garrard, Inside the Soviet Writers Union (New York and London, 1990), p.214.

⁵⁰ Nina Katerli and David Raskin, 'The Storming of the Smolny', Challenge: Russia's Anti-Fascist Magazine, vol.1, 1992, p.4.

⁵¹ Nina Katerli and David Raskin, 'The Storming of the Smolny', p.5.

⁵² Hedrick Smith, The New Russians, p.403.

⁵³ Nina Katerli, personal interview, 1994.

⁵⁴ Nina Katerli, 'Shagi po koridoru' (unpublished conference paper), p.6.

⁵⁵ Nina Katerli and Iurii Schmidt, 'Budet li pobeda za nimi?', Vsemirnoe slovo, no.6, 1994, p.82.

⁵⁶ Nina Katerli, personal interview, 1994.

⁵⁷ Nina Katerli, 'Budet li pobeda za nimi?', p.82.

⁵⁸ Stephen K. Carter, Russian Nationalism: Yesterday, Today, and Tomorrow (New York, 1990), p.3.

⁵⁹ Nina Katerli, 'Batsilla fashizma', Bar'er: antifashistskii zhurnal, no.1, 1993, p.3.

⁶⁰ Nina Katerli, 'Shagi po koridoru', p.10.

⁶¹ Nina Katerli, *Isk*, p.2

⁶² Nina Katerli, 'Shagi po koridoru', p.7.

⁶³ Robert Brym has noted: 'Hard-core anti-Semitic attitudes are held by more than forty percent of Muscovites.' See Robert J. Brym and Andrei Degtaryev, 'Anti-Semitism in Moscow: Results of an October 1992 Survey', *Slavic Review*, vol.52, no.1, 1993, p.5. For further reading on contemporary anti-Semitism in Russia, see Michael Kraus, Ronald D. Liebowitz, eds., *Russia and East Europe after Communism: The Search for New Political, Economic, and Security Systems* (Boulder, 1996); Michael Paul Sacks, 'Privilege and Prejudice: The Occupations of Jews in Russia in 1989,' *Slavic Review*, vol.57, no.2, 1998, pp.247-266.

⁶⁴ John B. Dunlop, *The New Russian Nationalism* (New York and Philadelphia), p.40.

⁶⁵ John B. Dunlop, *The New Russian Nationalism*, p.44.

⁶⁶ See Ro'I Yaacov, ed., *Jews and Jewish Life in Russia and the Soviet Union*, The Cumming Center Series (Portland, 1995); S. Ettinger, 'The Jews in Russia at the Outbreak of the Revolution', in *The Jews in Soviet Russia since 1917*, ed. by Lionel Kochan (London and New York, 1970), pp.14-28; S. Ettinger, 'The Position of Jews in Soviet Culture: A Historical Survey', *Jews in Soviet Culture*, ed. by Jack Miller (London, 1984), pp.1-22.

⁶⁷ Robert J. Brym and Andrei Degtaryev, 'Anti-Semitism in Moscow: Results of an October 1992 Survey', p.2. The myth of a Zionist conspiracy dates from the 'Protocols of the Elders of Zion', first published in December 1905. The document, which has since been proven to have been written by the Tsarist Secret Police, links both Freemasonry and Jews in a plot for world domination. 'The Protocols for the Elders of Zion' have been used for propaganda purposes by 'Pamiat'' and were used by the Nazis for similar purposes in World War Two.

⁶⁸ David Lane, *Politics and Society in the USSR* (Oxford, 1978, second edition), p.453.

⁶⁹ Nina Katerli and David Raskin, 'The Storming of the Smolny', p.4.

⁷⁰ Nina Katerli and David Raskin, 'The Storming of the Smolny', p.5.

⁷¹ Nina Katerli, *Isk*, p.127.

⁷² Alec Nove, *Glasnost' in Action: Cultural Renaissance in Russia*, p.9.

⁷³ Robert J. Brym and Andrei Degtaryev, 'Anti-Semitism in Moscow: Results of an October 1992 Survey', p.2

⁷⁴ Hedrick Smith, *The New Russians*, p.405.

⁷⁵ William Korey, *Russian Anti-Semitism, Pamyat, and the Demonology of Zionism*, p.203.

⁷⁶ Nina Katerli, 'Nashe otechestvo mezhdru Romanovym i Ziuganovym: sekretnoe oruzhie russkikh natsistov', *Nevskoe vremia*, 6 April 1996, p.4.

⁷⁷ Katerli's simultaneous writing of prose fiction and non-fiction calls to mind the prose and non-fiction writings of Nikolai Shmelev, a 'shestidesiatnik', who, in contrast to Katerli, first began writing non-fiction and later decided to write prose fiction. Perhaps the interest of the 'shestidesiatniks' in non-fiction and prose fiction may be a reflection of their artistic as well as political and social concerns and interests.

CHAPTER SIX

NINA KATERLI'S CONTEMPORARY PROSE 1989-1998

Все люди разные. Наверное, что-то хорошее есть в каждом человеке.¹

As discussed in Chapter Five, from 1988 to 1993, during the height of her political activity, Nina Katerli almost completely abandoned her prose writing. Although she wrote a few stories in the late 1980s, it was not until the early 1990s that she returned to writing prose fiction on a regular basis. This final chapter will address Katerli's most recent prose fiction, from 1989 to May 1998. Initially, this exploration will involve a brief, general discussion of the historical and social context for Soviet/Russian literature from the late 1980s to the mid-1990s, and then address Katerli's place in contemporary Russian literature. Finally, this chapter will look specifically at Katerli's contemporary works and attempt to place them within the context of the entire body of her writing.

The current Russian literary scene defies strict definition. In fact, many Russian writers themselves reject the notion of literary classification. In a society where both literary form and content were subject to the scrutiny of the Communist Party, the lessening of controls unleashed a plethora of experimental writing. As Olga Khrustaleva has noted of contemporary Russian literature, which she refers to as 'New Prose':

The internal values of New Prose cannot be addressed satisfactorily at present because, from the point of view of new writers, imposing

specific names upon them would be tantamount to killing them.

Values, like truth, exist in a zone of silence. They can be reflected upon and brought into a conceptual framework only upon the final assembly of the system, upon its completion.²

However, it is perhaps this sense of experimentation and the breaking of taboos that best defines contemporary Russian literature. As will be discussed below, Katerli's recent prose fiction addresses such sensationalistic issues as drugs and sexually transmitted diseases, but she usually does so in a subdued and non-explicit manner. In essence, her contemporary prose fiction does not ignore the current realities of life in Russia, but she has not embraced the sexually graphic or violent subject matter of writers such as Valeriia Narbikova or Eduard Limonov.³

This chapter will discuss twelve stories, which were published separately in various Russian journals. 'Starushka ne spesha' ('The Old Woman Slowly') was published in 1989 in the Soviet Union and in 1993 in the United States. 'Dolg' ('The Debt'), 'Solntse za steklom' ('The Sun Beyond the Glass') and 'Zemlia bedovannaia' ('The Profited Land') were also published in 1989.⁴ 'Utrata' ('Loss') was published in 1991.⁵ "Sindrom 'P'" ('Sindrome P') was published in 1994. 'Piramid Tsukermana' ('Tsukerman's Pyramid'), which was placed on the long list of works considered for the Booker Prize, was published in 1995. That same year, Katerli also published 'Sonia,' a story about an elderly Jewish woman, for which she was criticised for being anti-Semitic. Both 'Krasnaia shliapa' ('The Red Hat') and 'Iz zhizni luchshego goroda' ('From the Life of the Best City') were published in 1996. 'Poshlaia istoriia' ('An Indecent Story') and 'V-

4-52-21' were both published in 1997 and 'Vozvrashcheniie' ('The Return') was published in May 1998.

PLOT

Although the changes initiated by 'perestroika' and 'glasnost' brought a measure of freedom to the lives of Soviet citizens, they also brought upheaval and uncertainty. The fall of Communism generated a wave of freedom that uplifted some and inundated others. Katerli's recent prose explores the lives of the Russians damaged by the recent economic and political changes, examining 'byt' (everyday life), as well as deeper moral and psychological issues. The 'fabulas' of Katerli's recent prose fiction, perhaps because of their concentration on social and political issues, are generally more complex and elaborate than the 'fabulas' of her realistic prose fiction. The 'siuzhets' of Katerli's contemporary works on the whole, like the 'siuzhets' of Katerli's realistic prose fiction, are rich with introspection and reflection. Thus, both the 'fabula' and 'siuzhet' are significant in the plot formation of Katerli's recent works.

'Solntse za steklom' tells the story of several elderly women. The 'fabula' focuses on the monotonous and mundane lives of these women, most of whom are widows, and who spend their days at the local market trying to sell their wares in order to supplement their insufficient pensions. The character of Natal'ia Petrovna provides a second focus and perspective for the 'fabula'. Also an elderly woman, though not a widow, Natal'ia Petrovna is introduced into the story when she is seen watching from her window the elderly women who sell goods at the market:

Стоят они со своим товаром у ворот рынка, толпы людей проходят мимо, идут и идут, но редко кто остановится хотя бы прицениться. Ну что проку в такой торговле. Так думает, глядя на старух из окна пятого этажа нового дома напротив, Наталья Петровна Сорокина.⁶

Natal'ia Petrovna does not feel a part of their world, a world of loneliness and financial desperation. The 'fabula' quickly shifts to Natal'ia Petrovna's current dilemma: having never eaten in a restaurant before, she tells her husband that she would like to eat at a restaurant before she dies. After several arguments, her husband finally agrees, but ruins the evening by getting drunk and becoming belligerent with the waitress. After this incident, the story skips into the future, after Natal'ia Petrovna's husband has died, and she has now become like the women she would watch from her window—a widowed pensioner.

The 'fabula' of this story is quite simple, focusing on a few specific incidents: the marketplace where the elderly women sell their goods and the scene in the restaurant involving Natal'ia Petrovna and her husband. The 'siuzhet', on the other hand, explores the deeper issues facing the elderly widows and, in particular, the concerns of Natal'ia Petrovna. For example, after her husband's negative response to her request to go to a restaurant, Natal'ia Petrovna begins to reflect on the history of her relationship with her husband, and recalls that she has lived in a state of constant fear of her alcoholic and physically abusive husband for several years. After he dies, she wonders who is better off—she, because she has been freed from her tormenting husband, or he, because he has

left this cruel world. She comments: 'Иногда даже вроде завидовала: у нее все это еще впереди, кто знает, как там получится, может с муками.'⁷ Natal'ia Petrovna, like many of the protagonists of Katerli's realistic prose, does not solve her problems or answer her questions. She simply resigns herself to a life of loneliness:

Наталья Петровна проголодалась и озябла, но домой совсем не хочется. А тут шумит рынок, люди мимо проходят, болтает Вера Павловна... и солнце, хоть и холодное, а живое.⁸

The 'fabulas' of 'Starushka ne spesha', 'Sonia', and 'Zemlia bedovannaia' also focus on the lives of the elderly. As with the 'fabula' of 'Solntse za steklom', the 'fabulas' of these stories focus primarily on the 'byt' of the elderly in urban Russia. The lives of these elderly people, like those of the women in 'Solntse za steklom', are rather monotonous and uneventful. For example, the first line of 'Starushka ne spesha' reads: 'Сегодня' Лидия Матвеевна встает по радио ровно в шесть, как вставала всю жизнь, пока работала в своей бухгалтерии.'⁹ The rest of the story focuses on Lidiia's Matveevna's daily activities, as well as her thoughts of her son, who emigrated to America. The 'siuzhets' of these stories are rich with introspection, exploring the protagonists' fears of aging, as well as their thoughts of past events. For example, 'Sonia', primarily told in flashback, examines the eponymous character's thoughts on her life as a young woman. She remembers struggling to survive during and after World War Two. She also remembers her relationship with a young man named Pavel, and how she suffered terribly when he left her. Later, Sonia had discovered that Pavel had been

arrested for being an 'enemy of the people.' She also recalls that, although she was convinced of his innocence, she declined to offer any help because of the pain he had caused her. It is unclear from the text, however, whether Sonia regrets this decision.

'Zemlia bedovannaia' is similar to 'Starushka ne spesha' and 'Sonia' in the simplicity of its 'fabula' and focus on a few central characters. However, the two central characters in 'Zemlia bedovannaia' are men. Kepker and Gerasimovich are two eccentric elderly men who live lonely and depressing lives. Gerasimovich dies at the end of the story, and Kepker is left to care for Gerasimovich's cat and to ponder the meaning of his life and the death of his friend.

'Utrata' tells the story of one woman, Valentina, who, like Martynov in 'Proshchal'nyi svet' ('The Farewell Light') (1981), is coping with the recent death of her mother. The 'fabula' takes place over a very short period of time, possibly two or three days, beginning with the day of or the day after her mother's death, and includes various episodes of Valentina seeking emotional support from her boyfriend, an alcoholic who is unavailable and distant. Towards the end of the story, Valentina begins to go mad, though it is unclear if this results from her grief over her mother's death or her boyfriend's rejection, or a combination of the two. The story concludes with Valentina's boyfriend arriving at her house, finding her in a depressed and emotional state. He consoles her and tries to bring her back to health.

The 'siuzhet' of 'Utrata', primarily told in flashback, explores Valentina's feelings about her mother, her childhood, and her boyfriend. In particular, Valentina recalls the difficulty of growing up with a sickly mother. She remembers never being able to enjoy her summer holidays or evenings with friends because of her filial duties:

Вот вся она тут. Во многом из-за этого Валентина и осталась одна. В юности, еще студенткой, никого к себе позвать не могла. Сидеть и трястись – вот сейчас маменька что-нибудь выдаст? Да и вообще антураж – иконы, лампадка, портрет царского офицера с крестом: ‘Прикажешь стыдиться родного отца?! Не дожدهшься!’ Испортила жизнь... и ушла. Впрочем, что теперь...¹⁰

The ‘siuzhet’ also addresses Valentina’s thoughts about growing up without a father. Valentina remembers an incident when, as a young child, she visited her aunt and overheard her talking about a man named Misha, who had left her mother when he discovered that she was pregnant. It is unclear why Valentina suddenly recalls this incident, or, more importantly, what her reaction is to this revelation. Perhaps, because it is too painful, Valentina, has kept this knowledge buried deeply within the recesses of her memory. Finally, Valentina is troubled by her relationship with her alcoholic boyfriend, who often ignores her. Like so many characters in Katerli’s prose fiction, Valentina does not resolve her personal issues. She quickly pushes away any thoughts of the mysterious Misha. Unable to deal with her mother’s death and her boyfriend’s rejection, Valentina has a nervous breakdown.

Like ‘Utrata’, ‘Dolg’ tells the story of one woman, Tamara. The story’s ‘fabula’ explores the life of Tamara, whose sole desire is to marry and have children. Shortly after finding a suitable candidate for marriage, Tamara marries him and has a child. Soon

afterwards, Tamara discovers that her husband has been unfaithful to her, and she decides to divorce him. Thus, like Natal'ia Kopeikina in 'Treugol'nik Barsukova' ('The Barsukova Triangle') (1981) and Ol'ga Ivanovna in I. Grekova's Vdovii parokhod (Ship of Widows) (1981), Tamara raises her son on her own, devoting herself entirely to his welfare. Despite her selfless efforts, however, her son becomes a selfish and egotistical person, who, as a young adult, commits a crime. Notwithstanding the evidence against her son, Tamara refuses to believe he is guilty. Moreover, in order to save her son from punishment, she commits perjury, testifying that she saw another person commit the crime. The story ends with Tamara justifying her actions to herself—such is the duty of a mother. Unfortunately, the story ends here and there is no indication of the son's response to his mother's testimony or what the consequences of perjury are to Tamara.

'Pyramid Tsukermana', tells the story of Iosif Moiseevich, also known as Tsukerman. The 'fabula' unfolds as Tsukerman wins a trip to Egypt, a place he has always dreamed of visiting. Before leaving, he asks his best friend Valentin to marry his wife Anna if he does not return. When Tsukerman does in fact go missing, Valentin and Anna are told that, while on a day trip visiting the pyramids, Tsukerman was sitting on top of a camel in order to be photographed when the camel ran wild, carrying its rider off into the desert, never to return. After several years, Tsukerman is presumed dead. Valentin complies with his friend's wishes and marries Anna. Valentin, however, is tormented by Tsukerman's mysterious death, and decides to travel to Egypt to discover for himself the circumstances surrounding his friend's disappearance. The story is thus a murder mystery, Katerli's first, and may have been inspired by the current popularity of detective and mystery novels in Russia.

When Valentin travels to Egypt, he learns that, five years earlier, in the same year that Tsukerman disappeared, a pyramid had been ransacked, and everything in it had been stolen, including a mummy. The thieves had demanded a ransom of one million dollars, and when the police refused to pay, they supposedly discarded the mummy somewhere in the desert. After a long and exhaustive search, local archaeologists had found a decomposed body, which they assume was the mummy, and had re-interred it in the pyramid. Valentin believes that Tsukerman had died somewhere in the desert and that the decomposed body was not the mummy's, but rather Tsukerman's. When Valentin returns to Anna, he brings a piece of sand near the pyramid, as a token of Tsukerman.

Both 'Dolg' and 'Piramid Tsukermana' have detailed 'fabulas'. Their 'siuzhets', however, are rather unclear, as the stories focus more on the details of the stories than on the protagonists' reaction to them. This is not true, however for all of Katerli's recent prose fiction. For example, 'Krasnaia shliapa', like 'Proshchal'nyi svet' and 'Mezhdu vesnoi i letom' ('Between Spring and Summer') (1983) explores the life of one man, Iura Miachin, discussing his thoughts and feelings about the significant women in his life: his mother-in-law Alla Arkad'evna, his wife Irina, his mother, and his mistress, Iana. The 'fabula' of 'Krasnaia shliapa' is rather disjointed, focusing on various events—some that are related and some that are not—that take place in Miachin's life over a period of a few years. In actuality, the story is marked by two significant deaths—the story begins when Miachin and his wife Irina return to St. Petersburg from New York to attend the funeral of Alla Arkad'evna, and the story ends some time later, after the death of Iana.

The 'siuzhet', through a series of flashbacks, follows Miachin's thoughts and reflections about various people and events in his life. In particular, the 'siuzhet' relays

Miachin's special memories of Alla Arkad'evna, whom he meets on a train journey to Leningrad. After this first meeting, Alla Arkad'evna introduces Miachin to her daughter Irina, and shortly afterwards, Miachin and Irina are married. We also learn a great deal about Alla Arkad'evna, particularly, the fact that she had been a well-known and respected doctor and that she raised Irina on her own. This information is most likely told from Miachin's point of view, suggesting that he and Alla Arkad'evna had a rather intimate emotional relationship, and explaining perhaps why her death affected him so deeply.

The 'siuzhet' also explores Miachin's relationship with Iana. Their liaison begins at the birthday party of his son, Aleksei. Aleksei had invited Iana, a fellow student at the university, and shamelessly, Iana asks Miachin to dance with her, and the next evening, the two begin seeing each other. Several months later, Miachin goes to Iana's flat, but she does not answer the door. After waiting for several hours, he becomes agitated and worried, and frantically searches her favourite spots throughout the city, hoping to find her. Unable to find her, he finally goes home. A few days later, Miachin learns from his son that Iana had been a drug addict and that she died by overdosing on a bottle of pills. The story concludes with Miachin deeply troubled by Alla Arkad'evna's death, Iana's death, and by his ignorance of Iana's addiction.

Like 'Dolg', 'Sonia', and 'Utrata', "Sindrom "P"" focuses on one female protagonist. As with the 'fabula' of 'Krasnaia shliapa', the 'fabula' of "Sindrom "P"" is rather disjointed, tracing the life of the main character Tat'iana. The 'fabula' begins by describing Tat'iana's humble beginnings in a country house, where she spends her first years with her mother. After her mother's death, the young Tat'iana moves in with her

uncle and his family. Later, she decides to study medicine, and shortly after her arrival, she meets her future husband, Valentin, with whom she lives and has a relatively contented and peaceful life. “Синдром “P”” contains numerous digressions from the main plot, including descriptions of neighbours, Tat’iana’s first date, and growing up with her aunt and uncle. Tat’iana recounts various incidents, often bringing her readers up to the present day. ‘Прошло на свете много лет. Нет на свете бабушки и дяди Толи, тетя Юля на пенсии, девчонки выросли и повыскакивали замуж.’¹¹

The ‘siuzhet’ of “Синдром “P”” is rich with reflection and introspection, exploring Tat’iana’s psychological and emotional development. Tat’iana is strong, and at a very young age, decides that she will endure and persevere through life’s difficulties. She survives by denying her emotional pain and suffering. The title of the story derives from the name of a character, Pogankina, who had been a friend of Tat’iana’s mother when Tat’iana was quite young. Early in her life, Tat’iana developed what she called “Синдром “P””—the ‘P’ signifying Pogankina—which was a method of detaching herself from difficult emotions and situations in life by shutting off her emotions. Tat’iana, however, is an expert at self-deception. Despite her attempts to detach herself from pain, she is constantly reflecting on her emotional and psychological state. For example, she comments on her married life:

Мы живем хорошо, спокойно. Пятнадцать лет прошло, а я просыпаясь каждое утро, радуюсь, что я – здесь, что это – мой дом, что Валентин... поднялся, и теперь они с Марьей Афанасьевной дружно готовят на кухне завтрак.¹²

At the end of the story, Tat'iana travels to Leningrad to visit her mother's grave, where she sees a woman who reminds her of Pogankina. It is unclear whether Tat'iana sees the 'real' Pogankina, or whether she has created this event in her head. Regardless of whether this is 'real' or imagined, perhaps this event reflects Tat'iana's desire to terminate the "Синдром "P"" and finally face her emotional pain.

'Iz zhizni luchshego goroda' has a complex and fantastical 'fabula' and a political 'siuzhet', and represents Katerli's return to fantasy.¹³ 'Iz zhizni luchshego goroda' tells the story of one city that entered a contest to be named 'The Best City': 'Месяца так за полтора-два до Нового года Управляющий наш господин Краст собрал народ на центральной площади... он указал, что нам представилась редчайшая возможность стать лучшим городом в государстве.'¹⁴ If this city wins, Lord Minister Krast has promised to place a beautiful pine tree in the central square and give presents to everyone. Krast determines that the largest obstacle to his city winning this honour is the enormous number of unhappy people who inhabit the city, and decides to rid the city of these negative and unhappy people, many of whom are hospitalized with an illness known as 'lovesickness'. The story describes Krast's tactics to rid the city of these and other undesirables. He warns his citizens to be diligent and aware of these negative people, and to inform the police of all those who could possibly be deemed unhappy, and, above all, to avoid falling in love.

The majority of the characters in this story are city dwellers who appear to be paralysed by fear. There are, however, a few significant characters, in particular, 'the Teacher', who falls in love with Krast-the-Younger, Lord Minister Krast's son. She soon

finds in a dilemma, because she knows that she is disobeying the order of Lord Minister Krast by falling in love, and, even worse, by falling in love with his son. As the two grow closer, Krast-the-Younger confides in the Teacher, telling of his unhappiness and even ridiculing his father. Afraid of encouraging such dangerous behaviour, the Teacher begs him to be quiet. Disgusted with the Teacher's conformity, Krast-the-Younger leaves her. After being abandoned by the only man she had ever loved, the Teacher falls into a deep depression.

As the Teacher is a prominent figure, Lord Minister Krast quickly becomes aware that she is unhappy and he decides that he must punish her and make an example of her. Not long after, in a moment of goodwill, Lord Minister Krast grants a pardon to those who have been convicted of being unhappy, on the condition that they come to the main square prior to the time of their sentencing. Relieved, the Teacher goes to the main square, along with hundreds of men, women, children, and elderly people. When Krast appears, a commotion suddenly arises, and several of the people are crushed to death, the Teacher being one of them. Although Krast declares the death toll to be eleven, the narrator, who appears to be one of the city-dwellers, points out that the true figure was closer to forty, all of whom were immediately buried.¹⁵ The story ends with the narrator's description of the Teacher's untimely death and an attempt to convince the reader that peace and stability have resumed in the city, which allows it to carry the honour of being known as 'The Best City.'

The 'siuzhet' of 'Iz zhizni luchshego goroda' is highly symbolic, open to a variety of interpretations and readings. Whether the city and its leader, Lord Minister Krast, represent a specific city and mayor is unclear. Katerli stated in 1998 that the city in this

story does not represent any one city in particular, but rather represents any city defined by dictatorship and fear.¹⁶ The character Lord Minister Krast is not a full or developed character. He is a type—the selfish and destructive political leader. He is evil incarnate. The story is based on contrasts—the amoral Krast and the pure and innocent Teacher. Whereas Kazhdyi polden' na ploshchadi dealt with the importance of the author in society, 'Iz zhizni luchshego goroda' confronts the issue of dangerous leadership and its effects upon the governed. Katerli does not offer any utopian alternative to the governing practices of this city, only examining the dangerous effects of dictatorship.

'Poshlaia istoriia' tells the story of Viktor, his wife Vera and his lover Sveta. The 'fabula' of 'Poshlaia istoriia', like that of 'Piramid Tsukermana' and "Sindrom "P"", is rather detailed, focusing primarily on Viktor's affair with Sveta. The 'fabula' begins when Vera falls ill and goes to the hospital. Sveta, a rather simple-minded, but kind-hearted family friend, agrees to look after her home, which eventually includes looking after Viktor. Viktor decides that he wants to extend the bounds of his relationship with Sveta and says to her:

Я люблю Веру... Я люблю ее, и она со мной счастлива и всегда будет счастлива!... Теперь следи за мыслью... Вера любит меня и хочет мне добра. Когда любишь, счастье любимого всегда на первом месте. Просекаешь?... А теперь скажи: кому мы с тобой причиним зло, если наши отношения станут... ну, более близкими? А?¹⁷

Vera agrees, most likely out of fear or lack of judgement, rather than out of selfishness or malice. Shortly afterward, Vera returns from the hospital and the guilt-ridden Sveta is unable to face her. Viktor, on the other hand, is shameless, and can not fathom why Sveta feels the least bit guilty. He thinks: ‘Черт с ней! Придумала себе безумную, романтическую любовь и страдает.’¹⁸ Sveta, however, can no longer keep the truth hidden from Vera, and confesses, disclosing the additional fact that she is pregnant with Viktor’s child. Viktor tries to deny it, and then adds: ‘Если даже... Допустим. Только допустим: если бы даже и было что-то, при чем здесь ты? Тебе плохо жилось? Я был невнимателен? Неласков?’¹⁹ Unable to comprehend her husband’s lack of remorse, Vera punches Viktor. However, while Viktor is in the bathroom cleaning his bloody nose, Vera has a change of heart and decides to give her marriage a second chance.

Two additional stories of Katerli’s recent prose period, ‘Vozvrashchenie’ and ‘V-4’52-21’, are closer to documentary prose than her prose fiction. ‘V-4-52-21’ is the telephone number of Katerli’s childhood flat: ‘...Если я наберу этот номер, телефон зазвонит в прежней жизни, в старой квартире на Петроградской.’²⁰ The story discusses Katerli’s childhood, in particular, her thoughts about her mother: ‘Мама занимала в моей жизни очень большое место. Но поняла я это только теперь.’²¹ As in ‘Kto ia?’ (‘Who Am I?’) (1995), Katerli describes her mother in ‘V-4-52-21’ as a strong, kind and moral woman. At the same time, Katerli appears to be justifying the fact that her mother was a member of the Communist Party. Katerli explains: ‘Повторяю: не из страха, не из желания угодить, не потому, что иначе не станут печатать. Не из-за куска хлеба. Не только – из-за куска хлеба. Нет, это был долг. Так надо!’²² Similarly,

'Vozvrashchenie' tells of a trip Katerli took in the summer of 1997 to Shar'ia, the town where her mother was raised, to participate in a celebration honouring her grandfather. Like 'V-4-52-21', 'Vozvrashchenie' is a nostalgic story, discussing Katerli's love for her mother, as well as her love for Russia.

THEMES

The themes of Katerli's recent prose fiction explore the dark and dismal side of contemporary urban life in Russia. Each of Katerli's characters—in one form or another—are confronted with discomfort, anguish, and misery. Tat'iana's mother in "Sindrom "P"", for example, is unable to find accommodation near her place of work, and must commute two hours each way. Tat'iana remembers: 'У матери ее работа выглядела как мучение, насада, отбирающая все силы без остатка. Другие жили нормально – после смены ходили бодрые и веселые, копались в своих огородах, надевали к вечеру нарядные платья, покупали новую мебель.'²³ Other characters, such as Tamara in 'Dolg' and Alla Arkad'evna in 'Krasnaia shliapa', are single mothers who struggle—financially and emotionally—to raise their children on their own. Although not faced with economic hardship, Miachin in 'Krasnaia shliapa' feels troubled, alone and depressed. On his way to New York for a business trip, he remarks: 'Через несколько часов он будет в Нью-Йорке! Если бы только он мог радоваться...'²⁴

Perhaps due to the recent rise in fascism and nationalism, as well as Katerli's own interest in these issues, the theme of the 'other' or the 'outsider,' especially with regard to racial prejudice and anti-Semitism, figure significantly in her recent prose fiction. In particular, Katerli addresses the issue of anti-Semitism in 'Piramid Tsukermana'. After

Tsukerman disappears, Valentin is interrogated by the police. Since Tsukerman is Jewish, the police presume that he may have been a spy for Israel, and Valentin, as Tsukerman's closest friend, may have been involved in Tsukerman's Zionist espionage.

Valentin is disgusted with his interrogators, and refuses to cooperate: '...плевал он на них, не посадят, не тридцать седьмой, даже не "застой", а перестройка, ускорение и демократизация.'²⁵ Katerli also addresses the theme of anti-Semitism in 'Sonia', when Sonia, a Jew, recalls the 1930s and 1940s: 'Было время – втихомолку жалели, считали пострадавшей, и не зря: в сорок девятом уволили приказом, не посчитались ни с опытом, ни с заслугами, ни с орденами. Время было такое, всех, у кого непорядок с пятым пунктом вычистили.'²⁶

Katerli also addresses the theme of 'the outsider' in 'Krasnaia shliapa'. Alla Arkad'evna, an educated and intelligent woman, expresses the 'scapegoat' opinions held by many Russians, that Russia's problems can be attributed to 'outsiders'. She comments:

'Наши' – это все честные, порядочные и полезные обществу люди. 'Никакие' – ничтожества, которые и вреда не причинят, но ни пользы, ни радости от них никому никакой, так что пусть живут себе сами по себе, желательно, где-нибудь подальше. А вот 'не наши' – убежденные бездельники, попрошайки, пьяницы и, разумеется, вся эта сволочь... все это были враги.'²⁷

In 'Iz zhizni luchshego goroda,' the scapegoats are not geographical outsiders; they are ideological outsiders. The narrator comments: 'А Новый год приближался быстро-быстро, и становилось ясно, что не достанется нам звание Лучшего города, а значит, не видать подарков. Да и елки. А все из-за них!'²⁸ Fearing that their city might lose the 'Best City' contest, Lord Minister Krast declares:

Надо, чтобы любой порядочный горожанин – патриот издали мог услышать, когда ему навстречу идет один из этих... Из сплонтяев. Услышать и избежать встречи. Обойти стороной. Чужое несчастье – штука заразная, вот что я вам скажу. От него лучше держаться подальше, запомните это до конца дней своих... Поэтому общение с... с ними не в ваших интересах... здоровая ненависть к тем, кто готов сознательно испортить нам праздник и всего лишит, достигла предела.²⁹

In response, many city dwellers divorce disconsolate spouses and throw elderly parents out of the house.

In certain respects, Katerli's treatment of the themes of anti-Semitism and geographical or ideological 'outsiders' in her recent works is similar to her treatment of these themes in her previous works. In particular, this is evident in the overtly prejudiced behaviour and expressions of many of her protagonists and narrators. In 'Sonia', for example, the eponymous character is referred to as 'Старой суетливой еврейкой, вот в

чем беда!’³⁰ Even Sonia, like Lazar’ Katz in ‘Treugol’nik Barsukova’, expresses little sympathy for those affected by anti-Semitism, and even justifies her own persecution:

Соня видела: принятые партией меры вызваны суровой необходимостью, многие евреи не сумели стать подлинными интернационалистами. И, что самое отвратительное – не захотели!... Сионизм – это фашизм, тут нет вопросов, и не стоит поднимать шум и крик из-за отдельных проявлений антисемитизма, увы, неизбежного, пока не покончено с мировым сионизмом.³¹

As seen above, Alla Arkad’evna in ‘Krasnaia shliapa’ and the narrator in ‘Iz zhizni luchshego goroda’ express a ‘scapegoat’ mentality similar to that of Antonina Bodrova in ‘Treugol’nik Barsukova’ and Valerii in ‘Chervets’ (‘The Worm’) (1990). The Jews and other outsiders of Katerli’s previous texts have few advocates, forcing some, like Fira Kats in ‘Treugol’nik Barsukova’ and Maksim in ‘Chervets’, to emigrate and flee their oppressive environments. Although anti-Semitism and other forms of prejudice are equally apparent in her recent works, there is one advocate to be found in her recent works. In ‘Piramid Tsukermana’, Valentin, whose ethnicity is unclear, is disgusted with the obvious anti-Semitism of his interrogators. Valentin, however, appears to be the only opponent of anti-Semitism and bigotry, perhaps expressing Katerli’s belief that the bigots and anti-Semites outnumber those promoting ethnic, religious, and ideological harmony.

Three of Katerli's stories—'Krasnaia shliapa', 'Piramid Tsukermana', and 'Starushka ne spesha'—address the issue of foreign travel. In 'Piramid Tsukermana', Tsukerman had dreamed for years of travelling to Africa. It is ironic that Tsukerman's wish leads to his mysterious disappearance and supposed death, suggesting that the foreign land, in addition to being exotic and fascinating, is also dangerous. On the other hand, Tsukerman's supposed burial in a pyramid perhaps suggests that Tsukerman's death and burial as a king in Egypt is preferred to his life in Russia. In 'Krasnaia shliapa', Miachin represents the social class of 'novye russkie' (new Russians), who frequently travel abroad on business. Miachin, in particular, travels frequently to America, and comments both on the positive and negative aspects of his travels: 'В Штатах ему жилось хорошо. Спокойно и комфортно. Нравилась работа, нравились коллеги, улыбочивые, контактные, простые ребята без вечных наших комплексов.'³² Thus, unlike 'Piramid Tsukermana', 'Krasnaia shliapa' does not present the foreign land as dangerous or mysterious. Rather, Miachin openly comments on the good aspects of the foreign land and foreigners. In addition, Miachin's travels have changed his perceptions of Russia. After returning home, he notices many negative aspects of life in Russia, such as his dark stairwell, which is probably dark because the light bulbs had been stolen. However, despite the material comforts of America, Miachin is never quite content with his life abroad, and when he arrives at the airport in Leningrad after a business trip to America, his first thought is 'Хотелось скорее оказаться дома.'³³ Like many Russian emigrants, Miachin is unable to feel at ease outside of his native Russia.³⁴

Foreign travel is only mentioned briefly in 'Starushka ne spesha', and does not figure significantly in the story. Lidiia Matveevna's son, Grisha, much to his mother's chagrin,

has emigrated to America. The reasons for Grisha's emigration are never discussed; only his mother's responses are explored. As Nina Katerli remarks on the story: 'Только одно горе тревожит старушку: Гриша совершил преступление, предал Родину – эмигрировал в Америку. Конечно, теперь – Лидия Матвеевна уверена – он осознал свою ошибку, мучается.'³⁵ The theme of foreign travel is not new to Katerli's prose fiction, seen primarily in her two underground works—'Treugol'nik Barsukova' and 'Chervets'. One character, Aleksandr Petukhov in 'Treugol'nik Barsukova', travels for business to Bulgaria, and like Miachin in 'Krasnaia shliapa', his travels make him aware of the deficiencies of his own society. However, unlike Miachin, Aleksandr realises that he can no longer live in Russia, and resolves to emigrate. None of Katerli's previous main characters have the privilege of simply travelling abroad for pleasure, like Tsukerman in 'Piramid Tsukermana'. For most of them, like Maksim in 'Chervets' and Fira Kats and Aleksandr Petukhov in 'Treugol'nik Barsukova', foreign travel represents the hope for a better life.

The theme of death also figures prominently in Katerli's contemporary prose fiction. Like the themes of anti-Semitism and foreign travel, the theme of death is not new to Katerli's prose fiction. Like the portrayal of death in Katerli's previous works, her contemporary works portray death as a powerful and destructive force. Many of the protagonists of Katerli's recent prose are elderly, and think a great deal about death. For example, in 'Zemlia bedovannaia', a story about two elderly men, one character (Gerasimovich) dies, and the other (Kepker) appears to be doing everything he can to avoid death. In addition to death, the story also deals with the issue of the after-life,

which, like death, is depicted as a perplexing and unavoidable reality. The narrator comments:

А кем они оба будут потом, когда исчезнет и холмик с надписью ‘Борух Мордухович Кепкер’?... Как их будут называть, и нужны ли там вообще имена? Как встретятся и узнают ли они друг друга, когда тела обоих станут уже землей... Вот какие странные вопросы приходят в голову иногда, но ответа на них искать не нужно.³⁶

The narrator openly admits to having no answers to these questions, simply accepting death and after-life as enigmatic realities.

In ‘Utrata’, Valentina reflects a great deal on the death of her mother, as well as reflecting on death in general. Perhaps accepting the inevitability of death better than Valentina, her boyfriend replies: ‘Ну – чего? Что теперь? Вечно никто не живет.’³⁷ Similarly, in “Синдром ‘P’”, Tat’iana’s mother dies when she is a child, and it is this event that shapes her entire life, making it difficult for her to love or trust another person. Tat’iana almost personifies death, fearing, hating, and resenting it for taking away her mother and destroying her life. When studying at medical school, she remembers finding it difficult to work with corpses, in essence, to be so close to death. Years after medical school, on her birthday, Tat’iana makes a house call to a sick and dying old woman, and she realises that no one can avoid death. The story ends with Tat’iana’s annual visit to her mother’s grave and her supposed sighting of Pogankina, perhaps symbolising

Tat'iana's desire to bid farewell to the "Синдром "Р""—her system of self-deception and denial—and to bid a final farewell to her mother, as well as her own fear of death.

Death is also a significant theme in 'Krasnaia shliapa', which, as stated earlier, is marked by two deaths—the death of Alla Arkad'evna and the death of Miachin's lover, Iana. Ironically, Miachin appears to grieve more for his mother-in-law, than her daughter does. Miachin reflects:

Сидим в доме, где она прожила всю жизнь. Но дом уже не тот.
И не потому, что холодно и грязно, бывало, когда все летом на даче, Алешка разводил и не такой хлев... А из этого дома ушла хозяйка. Насовсем. И дом исчез с ней вместе. Здесь нет души, здесь нельзя продолжать жить...³⁸

In addition, Miachin is constantly tormented with images of his mother, who had been killed when Miachin was a baby, as she was crossing the street, while holding the baby Miachin in her arms:

Проклятая красная шляпа, которая всю жизнь мерещится в страшных снах... В доме ни у кого никогда не было красной шляпы... Или была? Давно, когда он был совсем маленьким? Он помнит, или это только кажется, что помнит? Он на руках у матери, мать – в красной шляпе с большими полями. Он почему-то боится этой шляпы. И кричит от ужаса и тоски.³⁹

Death has taken three significant women from Miachin: his mother, his mother-in-law, and his mistress. Even more tormenting to Miachin, like the narrator in 'Treugol'nik Barsukova', is the fact that he feels responsible for these deaths. Is he responsible for his mother's death? Did she die protecting him? Why was he not aware of his mother-in-law's illness? Could he not save her? Why was he not aware of Iana's drug problems? If he had known, could he have saved her? Unfortunately, Miachin never resolves these issues. For him, death is not only a destructive force, but also something he contributed to.

The theme of love figures significantly in Katerli's recent prose fiction. Like the portrayal of love in Katerli's fantasy works, love in her recent works is unrequited, unhealthy, and destructive.⁴⁰ In 'Iz zhizni luchshego goroda', love, or more specifically, love-sickness or unrequited love, is not only criticised; it is a punishable offence. Thus, the inhabitants of this city are brainwashed to believe that love is unreal. Lord Minister Krast comments: 'Тьфу! Любовь – это счастье, все знают, в книгах написано.'⁴¹ Anna in 'Piramid Tsukermana' has a very cynical view of love. She recalls that she did not marry Tsukerman because she fell in love with him. On the contrary, while at a party, she proposed to him as a joke, and when he refused, her pride compelled her to convince him to marry her. Tamara in 'Dolg' has a similar outlook on love. After divorcing her husband, Tamara refuses to have a relationship, despite the numerous proposals by men that she works with or that she meets while on holiday. Like Polina, Tamara prefers to be independent. The narrator comments: 'Любовь – зависимость, а она привыкла во все зависеть от себя.'⁴²

Self-deception is another significant theme in Katerli's contemporary prose fiction. Many of Katerli's characters are only able to cope with their various difficult circumstances by deceiving or lying to themselves. For example, Tamara in 'Dolg' refuses to believe that her son is a criminal. When she lies under oath to save her son from prison, she tells herself: 'Неправды тут не будет никакой, потому что, в конце концов, не важно, видела она это собственными глазами или просто точно знает, что все было именно так. А видели другие, которым она верит.'⁴³ In 'Iz zhizni luchshego goroda', the city dwellers learn to deny feelings, fears, and intuition. In 'Sindrom 'P'', as stated above, Tat'iana develops the "Sindrom 'P'"—a system of denying and suppressing her emotions. Thinking about her mother's death, she reflects: 'Мне всю жизнь нужен был только один человек. И... хватит об этом.'⁴⁴

Similarly, in 'Poshlaia istoriia', Viktor refuses to see any fault in his relationship with Sveta, and believes that Vera's angry reaction—punching him in the nose—is unjustified:

·В ванной комнате он смыл кровь, намочил холодной водой полотенце, вернулся и лег на диван, запрокинув голову... 'Так, между прочим, можно и умереть, если кровотечение не остановится. Но ей плевать, закрылась в спальне вместо того, чтобы помочь, позвонить в неотложку. Жестокость, неблагодарность – забыла, как он бегал к ней в больницу, в заразный барак. Глупая бабья ревность.'⁴⁵

Viktor is not the only character who deceives himself. After Vera calms down, she realises that she has been blind to her husband's egoism, and recalls a conversation she had with her father just before marrying Viktor:

Покойный отец сокрушался: 'Что делаешь? Он же пошляк, зоологический эгоист! Обрати внимание, с каким восторгом он ест, всегда схватит лучший кусок' ... А теперь что? Да, отец был прав, видел то, чего она не хотела видеть.⁴⁶

Despite her revelation or new-found awareness of her husband's deficiencies, she resolves to stay married to Viktor. Vera also realises that the only way she can accomplish this is to forget, to deny that Viktor ever had an affair with Sveta: 'Надо поскорее забыть всю эту дурацкую историю. И жить как раньше. Точно не было ничего.'⁴⁷ It is unfortunate that Vera does not use her discoveries of her husband's true nature to liberate herself. Perhaps for Vera, as for many of Katerli's protagonists, the familiar—even if it is harmful or unpleasant—is better than the unknown.

NARRATION

The narrative style of Katerli's recent prose fiction blends many narrative techniques of her previous works, such as shifting point of view, first-person narration, 'skaz', and omniscient third-person narration. The omniscient third-person narrator of Katerli's contemporary prose fiction, however, is more bold, direct, and opinionated than the third-

person narrator of her previous works. For example, in 'Zemlia bedovannaia', the narrator remarks:

Жил Петр Герасимович (тогда еще Нил) в небольшом жилом доме красного кирпича в переулке неподалеку от чинной и строгой улицы Воинова и загадочной и опасной улицы Каляева. Впрочем, насчет того, будто она опасная, факт тоже не вполне проверенный, и, возможно, для Кепкера она и опасна, для нас же с вами – мать родная.⁴⁸

Later in the story, the narrator comments: 'Конечно же, эта история сентиментальная.

Но читатель вовсе не обязан распускать нюни – ох, дескать, какая жалость: доживают свой век в каком-то паршивом домишке, наверное, без удобств, два одиноких брошенных старика. Мол, бедные, несчастные, добрые старики.'⁴⁹

Similarly, in 'Starushka ne spesha', the narrator remarks: 'Веселый тон Грипиных писем не обманывает Лидию Матвеевну. Несчастный, глупый мальчик!.'⁵⁰ Later, the narrator comments: 'Сейчас многие с образованием, но культуры никакой!'⁵¹

At times, it is difficult to discern whether Katerli's third-person narrator is a distant being, unrelated to the action of the story, or whether the narration is more akin to 'skaz', as if the narrator is actually a character in the story. For example, in 'Solntse za steklom', the narrator simultaneously defends Natal'ia Petrovna and confronts the author: 'Позвольте, автор. Да вы что, в самом деле? Робкая, забитая старуха, покорная, как дворняга. Собственному мужу не смеет слова сказать.'⁵² It is unclear who exactly this

narrator is meant to be. Perhaps it is Natal'ia Petrovna's suppressed subconscious feelings and thoughts. The 'skaz' is also seen in the use of such words as 'us' and 'we'. For example, in 'Solntse za steklom', the narrator comments: 'Когда человек нам безразличен, заботы его, обиды и даже несчастья всегда кажутся пустяком, ерундой, а переживания – глупой паникой.'⁵³

Katerli's use of 'skaz' is also seen in 'Iz zhizni luchshego goroda'. The narrator of this story appears to be a city dweller. At the beginning of the story, the narrator describes the fact that the city only has one road: 'Нам до этой дороги дела нет, мы ею не пользуемся, откуда она взялась и куда девается, не имеем понятия. Порядочный человек на нее не ступает. Да и вообще стараемся не выезжать из нашего Города.'⁵⁴ The narrator's use of 'we' clearly identifies him or her as an inhabitant of this nameless city. But this narrator is not simply an average person. He or she also knows the history and background of the city and its inhabitants. The narrator says about the Teacher: 'Надо вам сказать, что к двадцати годам стала она настоящей красавицей: тоненькая, стройная, глаза синие, волосы темные, длинные, шелковистые. Многие у нас на нее заглядывались.'⁵⁵ The narrator also comments:

Правда, один из отвергнутых влюбленных, прыщавый сын нашего Смотрителя Флюгера, вечно болеющий малярией, вдруг заявил, что чувство его угасло, на эту гадюку ему чихать, и, стало быть, он теперь самый счастливый человек на свете.⁵⁶

narrator is meant to be. Perhaps it is Natal'ia Petrovna's suppressed subconscious feelings and thoughts. The 'skaz' is also seen in the use of such words as 'us' and 'we'. For example, in 'Solntse za steklom', the narrator comments: 'Когда человек нам безразличен, заботы его, обиды и даже несчастья всегда кажутся пустяком, ерундой, а переживания – глупой паникой.'⁵³

Katerli's use of *skaz* is also seen in 'Iz zhizni luchshego goroda'. The narrator of this story appears to be a city dweller. At the beginning of the story, the narrator describes the fact that the city only has one road: 'Нам до этой дороги дела нет, мы ею не пользуемся, откуда она взялась и куда девается, не имеем понятия. Порядочный человек на нее не ступает. Да и вообще стараемся не выезжать из нашего Города.'⁵⁴ The narrator's use of 'we' clearly identifies him or her as an inhabitant of this nameless city. But this narrator is not simply an average person. He or she also knows the history and background of the city and its inhabitants. The narrator says about the Teacher: 'Надо вам сказать, что к двадцати годам стала она настоящей красавицей: тоненькая, стройная, глаза синие, волосы темные, длинные, шелковистые. Многие у нас на нее заглядывались.'⁵⁵ The narrator also comments:

Правда, один из отвергнутых влюбленных, прыщавый сын нашего Смотрителя Флюгера, вечно болеющий малярией, вдруг заявил, что чувство его угасло, на эту гадюку ему чихать, и, стало быть, он теперь самый счастливый человек на свете.⁵⁶

As stated earlier, the narrative style of Katerli's contemporary works also utilises shifting the point of view between the third-person narrator and the central protagonist. 'Utrata', for example, begins with the commentary of an omniscient third-person narrator, remarking on Valentina's dilemma of whether she should telephone her boyfriend and tell him that her mother died:

Зато теперь она имеет право позвонить. Конечно, не сию минуту, сейчас... Сколько там? Четверть пятого? Вот сволочь, тьмущая тьма, транспорта никакого, такси не поймаешь, это значит – пешком на Петроградскую, на мосту, конечно ветрище... Утром можно позвонить, ровно в девять... на законном основании: 'У меня несчастье, скончалась мать.'⁵⁷

Later, Valentina's perspective is heard, as she wonders what she should do with her mother's 'body': 'Ну и что делать?... Рыдать у тела?... С похоронами, допустим, помогут не работе.'⁵⁸ Katerli's use of shifting point of view allows her to show various points of view, adding depth and complexity to the narrative.

Perhaps reflecting a growing feminist consciousness, "Синдром "P"", a type of abbreviated 'Bildungsroman' about one woman, is told in first-person narration, as the central protagonist, Tat'iana, explores the events that shaped her life: the poverty of her childhood, her first date, her mother's death, her education, and her marriage. The story begins with Tat'iana's memories of her childhood. At time, the narrative voice appears to

be the voice of the young Tat'iana, rather than the adult looking back and reflecting on her childhood. For example, Tat'iana remembers her first date:

Не пойти вечером в клуб я не могла никак. Во-первых, обещала Васе, а нарушать обещания подло. Кроме того, прощаясь, Вася сказал, что ему нужно со мной серьезно поговорить. И отказываться от этого, может, главного в жизни разговора я не собиралась.⁵⁹

At other times, it appears as if the story is told in flashback. For example, after her mother dies, Tat'iana goes to live with her uncle, and remembers: 'Я жила в Москва, в дядиной семье, в Сокольниках. Там я окончила школу, медучилище, а потом институт. Мы жили дружно в темной двухкомнатной квартире, где нас было пять человек.'⁶⁰ Similarly, Tat'iana reflects:

Я... давно замужем, шестнадцатый год. Живу отдельно, со своей семьей – с мужем и его матерью Марьей Афанасьевной. Муж старше меня на двадцать три года, мы поженились, когда ему было пятьдесят. Детей у нас нет.⁶¹

Thus, it is unclear whether the narrative style of "Синдром "P"" is meant to be viewed as a diary or journal of Tat'iana's life, chronicling the significant events in her life as they occur, or whether the story is simply the memories of an adult.

CHARACTERISATION

The characters of Katerli's recent prose fiction, like those of her previous works, are varied. They range from the very cultured and educated to the uncouth and illiterate. For example, Tamara in 'Dolg' is a simple, working class woman, who

Культура не в одних книгах. Правда... вообще-то читать, конечно, любит, но предпочитает в основном про войну и остросюжетные, потому что там – люди, а не хлопикки.⁶²

Other characters are educated intellectuals, like Valentin in "Синдром "P"", who divorced his first wife, because she neither shared, nor appreciated his love and thirst for knowledge. Some characters are poor, like Tat'iana's mother in "Синдром "P"", and others are wealthy, like the successful Iura and Irina Miachin in 'Krasnaia shliapa', who frequently travel abroad on business. Nevertheless, all of these characters are 'sovki' (average Soviet people). Despite the fact that democracy and capitalism have replaced communism, Katerli's characters have maintained a Soviet mentality, and many find themselves unable to cope with the social, cultural, and political transformation of their country.

As seen in Chapter Four, Katerli's realistic prose dealt with the 'female experience', focusing on realities of women's lives in Russia. However, most of her realistic prose works, like 'Proshchal'nyi svet', 'Tsvetnye otkrytki' ('Coloured Postcards') (1986), 'Mezhdu vesnoi i letom', 'Zhara na severe' ('Heat in the North') (1988), focus primarily

on one introspective male protagonist. By comparison, in Katerli's contemporary prose, female protagonists outnumber the male protagonists, perhaps, as stated above, suggesting a growing interest in the 'female experience.' Katerli presents her female protagonists as enigmatic creatures, full of inconsistencies and contradictions, who are often the sources of their own suffering. Thus, it is difficult to say whether Katerli's growing interest in the 'female experience' necessarily indicates a growing feminist consciousness, primarily because the portrayals of her female protagonists are often less than favourable.

Many of Katerli's female protagonists are 'babushki' (literally 'grandmothers', but figuratively 'elderly women'). On the one hand, Katerli portrays these elderly women as pitiable creatures, who have to survive the harsh realities of life in Russia. In 'Starushka ne spesha', for example, the narrator comments on Lidiia Matveevna's life as a pensioner: 'Завтра Л. Матвеевна получит свои ежемесячные шестьдесят пять рублей. Сорок лет стажа, это вам не шуточки! Не очень-то густо, но кто жалуется?'⁶³ Other elderly women, such as the protagonists in 'Solntse za steklom', must work at the local market in order to supplement their pensions. In addition to financial difficulties, many of these elderly women feel forgotten by their families and generally disregarded by society. This sentiment is clearly expressed in the fantastical story 'Iz zhizni luchshego goroda', where thoughtless children kicked their elderly parents out of their houses: 'В эти дни резко возросло количество разводов: сознательные веселые мужья выставили за порог плаксивых жен, не пожелавших взять себя в руки. Многим даже пришлось отказаться от упрямых стариков. Родителей. А что поделаешь? Дряхлые люди бывают на удивление нудны, в особенности старухи.'⁶⁴

Katerli also portrays the stereotype of the old woman as caretaker. For example, in 'Krasnaia shliapa', when Alla Arkad'evna first meets Miachin, she takes one look at him, notices that the buttons on his light-coloured shirt are sewn with black thread, and immediately presuming that he is single, she takes pity on him. If he had a woman in his life, Alla Arkad'evna thinks, she would have mended his shirt with the correct colour of cotton wool. Perhaps it is at this moment, when she decides that he must marry her daughter, Irina. Ironically, however, it is Alla Arkad'evna rather than Irina who looks after Miachin, and it is Miachin, in fact, who appears to mourn the death of Alla Arkad'evna more deeply than Irina. At one point in the story, Miachin learns that Alla Arkad'evna is ill, and he immediately rushes to her house. However, when Miachin arrives, Alla Arkad'evna notices that Miachin looks ill, and begins to look after him, forgetting about her own illness. Perhaps by portraying her elderly female characters generally either as victims of the system or as wise and caring individuals, Katerli is challenging the traditional Russian stereotype of the elderly woman, who, as Rosalind Marsh has noted, is 'generally presented in grotesque, caricatured terms.'⁶⁵

Many of Katerli's female protagonists, as stated above, are contradictory and paradoxical. For instance, in 'Utrata', Valentina has no interest in marrying her boyfriend, but at the same time, she has an emotional breakdown because he ignores her. Tat'iana in "Sindrom "P"" unreservedly describes her first sexual experience, which, contrary to the image of the pure and modest virgin, she is eager to experience. She remarks: 'Если первый поцелуй был с каким-то Лопухом, то почему бы не первая ночь с красавцем Лешкой? Надо же когда-то...'⁶⁶ Later, Tat'iana falls pregnant by a government minister, who asks her to marry him. Despite the fact that he would be a

perfect match, Tat'iana knows that she does not love him, and refuses his marriage proposal and has an abortion. At the same time, however, after finally marrying, the supposedly liberated and free-thinking Tat'iana tells her husband that she would rather be a housewife than continue working as a doctor. Her submissiveness becomes so extreme that, after a discussion in which she contradicts her husband and he becomes angry, she vows never to interrupt him again.⁶⁷

Tamara in 'Dolg' likewise behaves in a contradictory manner. On the one hand, she is a free-spirit, who, unlike Maia in 'Polina' and Inga in 'Tsvetnye otkrytki', divorces her husband because of his infidelity. When she discovers that he has been unfaithful, she boldly tells him: 'Ты бы посоветовал своей любовнице скромнее духами пользоваться.'⁶⁸ On the other hand, Tamara is easily manipulated by her son, and, as discussed above, agrees to perjure herself in court in order to save him. The narrator comments on Tamara's behaviour: 'А у Тамары – свое, долг перед ребенком, долг на всю жизнь, до последнего дня.'⁶⁹ In 'Poshlaia istoriia', when Viktor denies Vera's accusations of infidelity, she punches him on the nose. This seemingly self-assertive act is diminished when Vera resolves to forget the affair and stay married to Viktor. Katerli's women are anything but liberated. They are a mass of contradictions. They are strong and weak, antagonistic and submissive.

As stated above, Katerli has fewer male protagonists in her contemporary works than she does in her previous works, and unlike the flawed but somehow redeemed male protagonists of her previous works, the men in her recent works generally have no redeeming qualities. In 'Solntse za steklom', for example, Natal'ia Petrovna's husband is an alcoholic and a physically and emotionally abusive tyrant. The narrator comments: 'С

мужем Наталья Петровна разговаривала редко, потому что пустой брехни Николай Петрович резко не признавал. Давал, конечно, указания: что готовить на обед, когда заклеивать на зиму окна или – что лампочка в передней чересчур яркая ни к чему, надо купить двадцатипяти свечовую.⁷⁰ Many of Katerli's male protagonists are unfaithful to their wives, such as Tamara's husband in 'Dolg' and Viktor in 'Poshlaia istoriia'. Viktor's infidelity, in particular, is presented as an expression of weakness and egoism: 'Он ведь не злой, в сущности. И очень хочет думать, что порядочный... Слабый, вот главное, обожает себя, любимого, вкусненькое: женщин, пиво, красивую жизнь, жареное мясо с кровью...'⁷¹ Many of her male protagonists are alcoholics: Natal'ia Petrovna's husband in 'Solntse za steklom', Valentina's boyfriend in 'Utrata', and Gerasimovich in 'Zemlia bedovannaia'. Katerli's contemporary works comment on the current state of Russian society, and do not evolve into an intentional feminist exercise in disparaging or criticising her male characters. In the 1990s, her focus simply appears to have shifted from men to women, exploring various types of women: elderly women, strong women, single mothers, submissive women, among others. As a consequence, her depiction of male characters is not as complete as in her previous works.

CONCLUSION

Nina Katerli's contemporary prose fiction embraces the freedom and experimentation heralded by today's generation of Russian writers and reflects the eclectic blend of writing styles and genres currently flooding the Russian literary scene. On a thematic level, Katerli's recent prose grapples with many current and 'popular' issues, such as

inflation, drugs, and female sexuality. Moreover, one of her contemporary works, 'Piramid Tsukermana' is a murder mystery, which, as stated earlier, is currently a popular literary genre. Finally, the themes of Katerli's contemporary prose fiction question many of the accepted 'truths' of Russian and Soviet society, namely that anti-Semitism does not and never did exist and that the elderly are well-taken care of by the state, which corroborates Nadya Peterson's apt comment:

Deconstruction of Soviet myths in recent literature mirrors the collapse of the ideological edifice supporting the structures of the Soviet state. It is inevitable that fiction writers of today would bid farewell to the Soviet experience and would search for new experiences and new ways for expression.⁷²

In many respects, however, Katerli has refrained from completely embracing a number of current and popular literary trends. Despite her interest in the 'female experience' and the number of female protagonists in her contemporary prose works, she has not adopted the graphic depiction of bodily functions as seen in New Women's Prose.⁷³ In addition, Katerli has not completely 'bid farewell to the past.' Her contemporary works are not only a blending of many current literary trends; they also appear to be a blending of her own literary techniques—both past and present. For example, having abandoned fantasy for almost a decade, Katerli returned to fantasy with 'Iz zhizni luchshego goroda', which supports N.N. Shneidman's statement regarding 'older' Russian writers writing in the post-perestroika era: 'Today most writers of the older generation continue to produce

narratives similar in style to their earlier works.’⁷⁴ In many respects, Katerli has come full circle—returning to fantasy. In addition, Katerli’s two documentary prose works—‘V-4-52-21’ and ‘Vosvrashchenie’—evidence a renewed interest in autobiographical writing, and, in particular, in themes related to her childhood and her relationship with her mother, as seen in ‘Kto ia?’ (‘Who Am I?’) (1995) and ‘Odin iz variantov’ (‘One of the Variations’) (1996). As always, Katerli’s writing style is full of contradictions and inconsistencies, as well as a visible desire to set herself apart from the mainstream.

Notes

¹ Nina Katerli, ‘Sindrom P’, *Zvezda*, no.11, 1994, p.8.

² Olga Khrustaleva, ‘New Literature: a Polystylistics of Stereotypes’, in *Re-Entering the Sign: Articulating New Russian Culture*, ed. by Ellen E. Berry and Anesa Miller-Pogacar (Ann Arbor, 1995), p.204.

³ See, for example: Eduard Limonov, ‘The Night Souper’, in *The Penguin Book of New Russian Writing*, ed. by Victor Erofeev, trans. by Arch Tait (London and New York, 1995), pp.257-269; and Valeriia Narbikova, ‘In the Here and There’, in *Half a Revolution: Contemporary Fiction by Russian Women*, ed. and trans. by Masha Gessen (Pittsburgh, 1995), pp.183-230.

⁴ ‘Zemlia bedovannaia’ was published in the United States in 1998 in *Out Visiting and Back Home: Russian Stories on Aging*, edited by Thomas Hoisington. Hoisington has noted that ‘Zemlia bedovannaia’ is a corruption of ‘zemlia obetovannaia’, ‘the Promised Land’. See Thomas Hoisington, ed., *Out Visiting and Back Home: Russian Stories on Aging* (Evanston, IL, 1988), p.63.

⁵ Katerli’s story, ‘Utrata’, has no obvious similarities with Vladimir Makanin’s 1987 short historical novel of the same name.

⁶ Nina Katerli, ‘Solntse za steklom’, *Zvezda*, no.4, 1989, p. 102.

⁷ Nina Katerli, ‘Solntse za steklom’, p.112.

⁸ Nina Katerli, ‘Solntse za steklom’, p.113.

⁹ Nina Katerli, ‘Starushka ne spesha’, in *Vest’*, ed. by L. Gutman, I. Evfrafov, I. Kalugin, I. Kutik (Moscow, 1989), p.173.

¹⁰ Nina Katerli, ‘Utrata’, *Ogonek*, no.37, 1991, p.12.

¹¹ Nina Katerli, ‘Sindrom P’, p.19.

¹² Nina Katerli, ‘Sindrom P’, p.23.

¹³ 'Iz zhizni luchshego goroda' is similar to Katerli's 1977 unpublished play Kazhdyi polden' na ploshchadi (Each Mid-day at the Square). Although the themes and plots of the two stories are different, both of the stories are fantastical, and some of the characters, such as Lord Minister Krast, occur in both stories. See Chapter Two for a discussion of Kazhdyi polden' na ploshchadi.

¹⁴ Nina Katerli, 'Iz zhizni luchshego goroda,' Neva, vol.4, 1996, p.101.

¹⁵ This event resembles the cover-up immediately following the Chernobyl incident, as well as the cover-up following Iosif Stalin's funeral, when approximately 500 people were crushed to death by a crowd in panic. For a discussion of Stalin's funeral, see Rosalind Marsh, Images of Dictatorship: Stalin in Literature (London and New York, 1989), p.58.

¹⁶ Nina Katerli, personal interview, 1998.

¹⁷ Nina Katerli, 'Poshlaia istoriia', Zvezda, no.3, 1997, p8.

¹⁸ Nina Katerli, 'Poshlaia istoriia', p.10.

¹⁹ Nina Katerli, 'Poshlaia istoriia', p.14.

²⁰ Nina Katerli, 'V-4-52-21', Zvezda, no.10, 1997, p.41.

²¹ Nina Katerli, 'V-4-52-21', p.42.

²² Nina Katerli, 'V-4-52-21', p.44.

²³ Nina Katerli, 'Sindrom P', p.7.

²⁴ Nina Katerli, 'Krasnaia shliapa', Zvezda, no.4, 1996, p.34.

²⁵ Nina Katerli, 'Piramid Tsukermana', Zvezda, vol.10, 1995, p.67.

²⁶ Nina Katerli, 'Sonia', Vsemirmoe slovo, no.8, 1995, p.8. The 'fifth point' refers to the fifth section or fifth part of all government questionnaires or documents, which required the listing of one's nationality. All Jews, regardless of the Soviet republic they were born in or lived in, were required to write 'Jew'.

²⁷ Nina Katerli, 'Krasnaia shliapa', p.18.

²⁸ Nina Katerli, 'Iz zhizni luchshego goroda', p.103.

²⁹ Nina Katerli, 'Iz zhizni luchshego goroda', pp.103-4.

³⁰ Nina Katerli, 'Sonia', p.4.

³¹ Nina Katerli, 'Sonia', p.9.

³² Nina Katerli, 'Krasnaia shliapa', p.34.

³³ Nina Katerli, 'Krasnaia shliapa', p.16.

³⁴ For further reading on Russian women émigré writers, see, for example, Marina Ledkovsky, 'Russian Women Writers in Émigré Literature', in Women Writers in Russian Literature, ed. by Toby W. Clyman and Diana Greene (Westport, CT and London, 1994), pp.249-59.

³⁵ Nina Katerli, 'Sovok—moi geroi i moi chitatel'' (unpublished paper for 'Women in Russia and the Former USSR' Conference, University of Bath, March-April, 1993), p.6.

³⁶ Nina Katerli, 'Zemlia bedovannaia', Isskustvo, vol.3, 1989, p.109.

³⁷ Nina Katerli, 'Utrata', p.15.

³⁸ Nina Katerli, 'Krasnaia shliapa', p.23.

³⁹ Nina Katerli, 'Krasnaia shliapa', p.41.

⁴⁰ See, for example, 'Bezotvetnaia liubov'' ('Unrequited Love') (1976).

⁴¹ Nina Katerli, 'Iz zhizni luchshego goroda', p.102.

-
- ⁴² Nina Katerli, 'Dolg', p.79.
- ⁴³ Nina Katerli, 'Dolg', p.91-2.
- ⁴⁴ Nina Katerli, 'Sindrom P', p.10.
- ⁴⁵ Nina Katerli, 'Poshlaia istoriia', pp.13-14.
- ⁴⁶ Nina Katerli, 'Poshlaia istoriia', p.14-15.
- ⁴⁷ Nina Katerli, 'Poshlaia istoriia', p.15.
- ⁴⁸ Nina Katerli, 'Zemlia bedovannaia', p.103.
- ⁴⁹ Nina Katerli, 'Zemlia bedovannaia', p.107.
- ⁵⁰ Nina Katerli, 'Starushka na spesha', p.176.
- ⁵¹ Nina Katerli, 'Starushka ne spesha', p.173.
- ⁵² Nina Katerli, 'Solntse za steklom', p.107.
- ⁵³ Nina Katerli, 'Solntse za steklom', p.107.
- ⁵⁴ Nina Katerli, 'Iz zhizni luchshego goroda', p.101.
- ⁵⁵ Nina Katerli, 'Iz zhizni luchshego goroda', p.109-110.
- ⁵⁶ Nina Katerli, 'Iz zhizni luchshego goroda', p.103.
- ⁵⁷ Nina Katerli, 'Utrata', p.12.
- ⁵⁸ Nina Katerli, 'Sindrom P', p.13.
- ⁵⁹ Nina Katerli, 'Sindrom P', p.14.
- ⁶⁰ Nina Katerli, 'Sindrom P', p.18.
- ⁶¹ Nina Katerli, 'Sindrom P', p.19.
- ⁶² Nina Katerli, 'Dolg', p.62.
- ⁶³ Nina Katerli, 'Starushka ne spesha', p.172.
- ⁶⁴ Nina Katerli, 'Iz zhizni luchshego goroda', p.103.
- ⁶⁵ Rosalind Marsh, 'An Image of Their Own?' *Feminism, Revisionism and Russian Culture*, in *Women and Russian Culture: Projections and Self-Perceptions*, ed. by Rosalind Marsh (Oxford, 1998), p.13. Even such contemporary stories as Marina Palei's 'Evgesha i Annushka' ('Evgesha and Annushka') (1990), and Liudmila Petrushevskaiia's 'Vremia: noch' ('Time: Night') (1994), present a less than favourable depiction of elderly women. For other stories about Russia's elderly population, see Thomas Hoisington, ed. and trans., *Out Visiting and Back Home: Russian Stories on Aging*. For further reading on the image of the elderly woman in literature generally, see, for example, Norman Cohn, *Europe's Inner Demons* (London, 1975), and Erich Neuman, *The Great Mother: An Analysis of the Archetype*, trans. by Ralph Manheim (Princeton, 1955).
- ⁶⁶ Nina Katerli, 'Sindrom P', p.19.
- ⁶⁷ Nina Katerli, 'Sindrom P', p.25.
- ⁶⁸ Nina Katerli, 'Dolg', p.65.
- ⁶⁹ Nina Katerli, 'Dolg', p.79.
- ⁷⁰ Nina Katerli, 'Solntse za steklom', p.103.
- ⁷¹ Nina Katerli, 'Poshlaia istoriia', p.14.
- ⁷² Nadya Peterson, *Subversive Imaginations: Fantastic Prose and the End of Soviet Literature, 1970s-1990s* (Boulder, Colorado, 1997), p.2.
- ⁷³ Helena Goscilo, 'Introduction', in *Present Imperfect: Stories by Russian Women*, ed. by Ayesha Kagal and Natasha Perova (Boulder, CO, 1996), pp.2-3.

⁷⁴ N.N. Shneidman, Russian Literature 1988-1994: The End of an Era (Toronto and Buffalo, 1995), p.45.

CONCLUSION

И порядок в собственной душе: здесь все должно быть просто и ясно. С каждым годом проще и яснее¹

In assessing Nina Katerli's career, Deming Brown has concluded that Katerli does not display 'tendencies with sufficient prominence to warrant an exclusive categorization.'² In one sense, Brown's comment is accurate. For the last thirty years, Nina Katerli has written in a range of genres, including fantasy and realistic prose fiction, autobiography, political and human-interest articles, and underground works. Since the late 1980s, she has been a political activist, both in the courtroom and in the press, against fascism and anti-Semitism in Russia. In addition, Katerli has eschewed all labels and classifications, with the exception of 'shestidesiatnik', even at the risk of remaining on the literary and cultural fringe. In another sense, however, Brown's comment completely misses the point: it is Katerli's very 'unclassifiability' that has made her such an unusual writer and such an interesting object of study.

Katerli's 'unclassifiability' may have its roots in both personal and literary considerations. As discussed in Chapter One, Katerli was born and lived her formative years during the time of Stalin, an era when falling (or being placed) into the wrong category could result in dismissal, imprisonment or death. Just as a chameleon changes its colour as a means of camouflage and, hence, survival, so might Katerli's shifting of genres have been a means of maintaining her artistic—and perhaps even personal—freedom. For example, it is uncertain whether Katerli published fantasy stories purely

due to aesthetics, or rather because only the guise of Aesopian language and fantasy offered her themes sufficient camouflage for her works to be published. As stated in Chapter Two, Katerli's decision to write fantasy was most likely influenced by both aesthetic and political reasons.

Political practicalities, notwithstanding, I would argue that Katerli's 'unclassifiability' is the result of a conscious artistic choice. In a recent interview, Katerli stated that she has never written for a specific audience. Rather, she claims, she writes to 'справиться со своими собственными демонами'.³ However, despite Katerli's aversion to classification and despite the variety in her writing, it is possible to identify recurring themes and literary techniques. Just as a chameleon can change its colour but not shape, so are there many features in Katerli's writing that have adapted and changed over the years while certain constants exist; in fact, it is the otherwise variable nature of Katerli's writing which makes these constant features all the more prominent.

The characters of Nina Katerli's prose fiction are 'sovki', average Soviet men and women. They are neither grand nor epic. Rather, Katerli's characters resemble the petty bureaucrats of Nikolai Gogol's Petersburg stories and the urban dwellers of Iurii Trifonov's works.⁴ In addition, Katerli focuses primarily on the inner world of her characters, on their concerns, hopes, anxieties, and joys. This is evident in the thoughts and reminiscences of the young woman in 'Okno' ('The Window') (1977), the soul searching of Martynov in 'Proshchal'nyi svet' ('The Farewell Light') (1981), and the introspective reflection of Miachin in 'Krasnaia shliapa' ('The Red Hat') (1996). In this respect, Katerli's writing resembles alternative prose writing. As Robert Porter has noted of alternative prose:

At a most fundamental level, Russia's alternative prose has achieved a great deal...Yet the finest accomplishments of this school have been in the area of personal liberation in the broadest sense; the individual with all his contradictions and imperfections, now holds centre stage.⁵

In addition to exploring the inner world of average Soviet people, Katerli's prose fiction explores the outer world of her characters. The drama of the outer world is not played out in the grand salon, the courtroom or the battlefield, however, but in the realm of 'byt' (everyday life). Again like Iurii Trifonov, Katerli's presentation of the numerous details of daily life demonstrates an awareness of her surroundings. The majority of her stories take place in Leningrad or Moscow, where she portrays ordinary people in ordinary situations. So, for example, while the characters of 'Treugol'nik Barsukova' ('The Barsukov Triangle') (1981) deal with issues such as death, adultery, and emigration, they do so within lives circumscribed by standing in queues and struggling to put food on the table. Carl Proffer writes that Katerli's characters, like other characters of Soviet prose fiction in the 1970s and early 1980s,

try to do things in the face of resistance, but it is seldom that their tests are anything more than the tests of everyday life and Soviet 'byt'...put before them. They are ordinary people trying to do

something hard—live...it's as if 'byt' were the central Russian problem and the determinant of character.⁶

Thus, notwithstanding Katerli's statement in a 1994 interview that she is not a 'byt' writer, her prose fiction contains many elements of both 'byt' literature and urban prose.

At the same time, however, Katerli's style or use of 'byt' and urban prose in certain essential respects differs from that of many 'byt' and urban prose writers. For example, Katerli's 'byt' does not include the historical and political themes of Iurii Trifonov's writings, nor do her stories present only the negative aspects of life.⁷ Rather, many of Katerli's characters seek beauty, love, and happiness in the midst of their difficult circumstances. The grandmother in 'Proshchal'nyi svet' expresses this sentiment: 'Любовь к жизни – она ведь не самом-то деле и есть самая последняя наша любовь, которая "и блаженство и безнадежность".'⁸ Katerli's characters also deviate from many of the typical characters of urban prose, which, according to David Lowe, 'revolves around the intelligentsia.'⁹ Many of Katerli's characters, such as Tamara in 'Dolg' ('The Duty') (1989) and Ivan in 'Doroga' ('The Road') (1981), are simple folk, unenlightened, or uncultured.

Katerli's characters are flawed and often commit terrible acts out of weakness. At the same time, many of her characters are kind, loving, and selfless. Whether Katerli's characters are adulterers, like Dorofeev in 'Tsvetnye otkrytki' ('Coloured Postcards') (1986), pathetic figures like Kuvaldin in 'Yrvshch' (1981), or devoted wives and mothers, like Masha in 'Zhara na severe' ('Heat in the North') (1988), Katerli portrays most of her characters with compassion and with an understanding of their situations and

dilemmas. Grief and sadness in Katerli's world are caused by uncontrollable circumstances or understandable human weakness, rather than by moral turpitude arising from free will. Katerli portrays the vile and negative behaviour of her characters as the consequences of a life full of difficulties and struggles that drive these characters to courses of action which they might not otherwise pursue. In essence, the chaos and upheavals of life have driven them to desperate measures. Thus, Katerli's perspective is more that of a compassionate observer trying to understand her characters' pain than of a judge seeking to condemn their actions.

Thus, Katerli's works exude a humanistic spirit, perhaps reflecting of her self-identification as a 'shestidesiatnik'. As discussed in Chapter One, the 'shestidesiatniki' advocated change, but did not initially look beyond or outside socialism or the Soviet system. Many writers sought 'socialism with a human face' and in this respect militated for reformation rather than revolution. When, however, as a result of Leonid Brezhnev's stagnation neither reformation nor revolution occurred, many 'shestidesiatniki' fell into disillusionment and despair. Katerli states that her response to stagnation was to distance herself from political concerns and to become a 'humanist', and, in her writing, to focus exclusively on the lives of average Soviet people. For Katerli, then, the term 'shestidesiatnik' would appear to be more a philosophical than a literary affiliation. Consequently, her self-identification as such may explain some of her humanistic themes, but sheds little light on her literary techniques.

Another significant aspect of Katerli's prose fiction is her use of fantasy. Although Katerli was primarily occupied with fantasy in the 1970s, she continued to incorporate fantastic elements into her subsequent writing periods. In her realistic prose period, for

example, Kuvaldin in 'Yrvshch' communicates with birds and Rastorguev in 'Nes'edobnyi drug Rastorgueva' ('Rastorguev's Inedible Friend') (1982) believes that his pet pig can converse with him. Perhaps the best example of Katerli's 'return' to fantasy is in her 1996 story 'Iz zhizni luchshego goroda' ('From the Life of the Best City'). Katerli's use of the fantastic, as well as her sudden shifts in chronology, locale, and her use of *skaz* narration, convey a certain sense of confusion and mystery, perhaps, like Andrei Siniavskii, in response to the enforced didacticism and simplicity of socialist realist literature.

Despite Katerli's continual rejection of the label 'feminist', her depiction of many numerous male and female protagonists evidences a sensitivity towards the plight of women in Russia and the Soviet Union.¹⁰ Many of her stories are filled with images of women as victims of men's adultery, cruelty, and abandonment. For example, in 'Zhara na severe', Gubin has a holiday romance with the naïve Liza, and then carelessly abandons her. In 'Treugol'nik Barsukova', Anna Tiutina's husband is unfaithful to her and leaves her for a younger woman, and in 'Poshlaia istoriia' ('An Indecent Story') (1997), Viktor has an affair with his wife's friend. In 'Utrata' ('The Loss') (1991), Valentina, who is grieving the recent loss of her mother, is neglected by her alcoholic boyfriend. When asked why many of her male protagonists are negative and disagreeable, Katerli responded: 'Я пишу о людях такого типа, потому что они существуют. Я точно это знаю, так как видела их собственными глазами.'¹¹ In this respect, Katerli may not have been interested in 're-naming the world', recalling Gayle Greene's definition of feminism, but was fearless in taking the preliminary step of 'naming' the world she knew with all of its sadness, cruelty, and injustice.

In the last few years, however, Katerli has become increasingly receptive to feminism. As stated in the Introduction, after speaking at the 1993 'Women in Russia and the Former USSR' Conference in England, Katerli stated that she might have always been a feminist without being consciously aware of it. In a 1995 interview, she stated: 'Я не феминистка, но симпатизирую феминистическому движению.'¹² Recently, in a 1998 interview, she explained that when she first began writing (in the late 1960s), she thought that women's prose was 'second class', and therefore sought to distinguish herself from what many critics refer to as 'damskaia proza' (ladies' prose). Now, however, she has concluded that she cannot deny her womanhood, and believes that it has affected her writing, primarily the way in which she views the world. As stated above, Katerli's sympathy towards women is evident in her prose fiction, as well as in her non-fiction articles about elderly women.

Moreover, an evolving feminist consciousness may arguably be evident in her later works, in particular, in 'Polina' (1984) and 'Sindrom "P"' ('Sindrom "P"'). In these two stories, for example, the female protagonists are sexually liberated. Polina refuses to marry and have children, and Tat'iana in 'Sindrom "P"' chooses to have an abortion and live on her own, rather than marry her lover and have his child. In this respect, some of Katerli's works reflect certain trends in New Women's Prose, in which, as Helena Goscilo has noted: 'Perhaps the single greatest innovation...is its discovery of the body as an authenticating locus of female experience and a source of powerful rhetoric.'¹³ Similarly, as Teresa Polowy has noted:

Contemporary Russian literature now has a small body of iconoclastic texts by women authors who present their heroines through non-stereotypic points of view and engage in non-traditional life-styles which give a fuller and more complete picture of women's lives in late Soviet and post-Soviet Russia.¹⁴

While two stories cannot be used to characterise a writing career spanning three decades, nor to establish a definite trend in a writer as stylistically elusive as Katerli, it is possible that in the characters of Polina and Tat'iana, a 'renaming' of Nina Katerli's world may have begun.

How then does Katerli's prose fiction figure in the tradition of Soviet and Russian women's writing? Like many Soviet and Russian women authors, Katerli's plots and themes focus on the everyday lives of average Soviet people, confirming Nicholas Zekulin's statement concerning contemporary Russian women writers: 'There is a striking coincidence between the themes they [Russian women writers] treat and the official concerns of the day.'¹⁵ Stylistically, Katerli's stories are told primarily in third person narration with interior monologue, which as Catriona Kelly has noted, is reminiscent of women's writing in the 1890s and 1900s.¹⁶ The most significant similarity of Katerli's prose fiction with that of other women writers lies in her combination of fantasy and reality, or, what Kelly has called 'realism' and 'anti-realism'. Kelly writes: 'The most stimulating and diverse writing of post-thaw women writers has had a re-examination of the binary opposition between 'realism' and 'anti-realism' at its base.'¹⁷

For the most part, Katerli's prose fiction resembles that of the older generation of women writers, such as I. Grekova and Natal'ia Baranskaia, rather than the 'new wave' of women writers, such as Liudmila Petrushevskaia, Nina Sadur, and Valeriia Narbikova, or formerly dissident writers like Irina Ratushinskaia and Iuliia Voznesenskaia.¹⁸ It is Katerli's perennially humanist concerns that bear a striking resemblance to the critical realism of I. Grekova's Vdovii parokhod (Ship of Widows) (1981) and Natal'ia Baranskaia's Nedelia kak nedelia (A Week Like Any Other Week) (1969). At the same time, however, perhaps Katerli's eternal themes of love, compassion, and understanding are more typical of the 'shestidesiatniki'. At times, she appears to write with the pen of a feminist, and at other times she seems to write like a 'shestidesiatnik'. Although Katerli displays some features of 'New Wave' women writers and New Women's Prose—namely a depiction of female characters as victims of their male counterparts, and a frank portrayal of the sexual behaviour of some of her female protagonists, as stated above—she does not embrace the eroticism and hyper-realism of such writers as Liudmila Petrushevskaia and Valeriia Narbikova.¹⁹ Is it possible then, to classify Katerli as a feminist or a feminist writer? True to her (non) colours, the chameleon Katerli does not fit neatly into any one category, and should simply be understood as a writer who combines a multitude of styles, techniques, and themes—including feminist themes—without adhering to a specific political or literary agenda. Thus, as some might wish to classify Katerli as a feminist, Elaine Showalter writes: 'The pages of the ongoing history of women's writing will have to give up the dream of a common language and learn to understand and respect each sister's choice.'²⁰

In many respects, Katerli, like many of the writers known as the 'forty-year-olds', can be seen as a social commentator and a chronicler of the post-Stalin period.²¹ Deming Brown has written of the 'forty-year-olds':

As interpreters for the most part of a period (the 1970s and early 1980s) in which social stagnation had deprived their countrymen of belief in the future and fostered attitudes of futility and cynicism, they wrote largely about individuals who had learned to adapt to a way of life they could not hope to change, the means by which such individuals made the necessary accommodations.²²

Katerli confronts such political and social themes as anti-Semitism, the plight of the elderly, emigration, and economic difficulties. As Deming Brown has noted of Nina's Katerli's prose fiction in particular:

The world of Nina Katerli is authentically Soviet Russian in its social, psychological and moral dimensions; although many of her stories have elements of the fantastic, even these are fundamentally realistic in their characters and settings. Her writing is factual and critical, but it is also compassionate and leavened with humor. Her stories constitute a sensitive chronicle of life in the post-World War II Leningrad and in general, in the complicated late twentieth century.²³

In this respect, it is possible to see the similarities between the themes of Katerli's prose fiction and the concerns of her non-fiction and autobiographies.

The difficulty of classifying Katerli or of placing her within one specific literary movement or genre does not, on the other hand, make her a stylistic innovator. While remaining on the fringe of various literary movements, she has adopted and utilised themes and literary techniques similar to those of other writers from various literary movements. In this respect, Katerli can be seen as one whose personal and artistic development has reflected rather than influenced the development of the Russian and Soviet cultural intelligentsia from the 1950s to the 1990s. As has been discussed earlier, many of Katerli's writings call to mind the works of such writers as Vladimir Makanin, Iurii Trifonov, I. Grekova, and Natal'ia Baranskaia. In addition, Katerli's works often seem to resemble 'byt' literature, urban prose, New Women's Prose, and alternative prose.

Katerli has commented that, in her mid-sixties, she finds herself at the end of a journey. Having spent years as a chameleon, changing both her political and ideological beliefs, as well as her writing styles, she states that she has come to rest, that she has, perhaps, ceased being a chameleon. She writes:

В своей жизни и переиграла множество ролей... похоже они закончились ... и теперь я свободна, в мире с собой и действительностью. Есть только жизнь... В этой новой жизни больше свободы и мира.²⁴

Katerli has lived and pursued a literary career in one of the most difficult and turbulent periods in Soviet and post-Soviet history. Following the fall of the Soviet Union, many Soviet and Russian writers experienced a crisis of creativity, finding it difficult to re-orient themselves in a society where the writer no longer appears to be needed to perform the duty of 'conscience of the nation'. As David Gillespie has noted:

Literature too is at a crossroads, for the traditional civic role of the writer has now all but vanished. As society democratizes, the gulf between the rulers and the ruled narrows, and so the place the writer occupies in that gulf—an alternative government as Solzhenitsyn memorably put it—becomes increasingly invalid.²⁵

Katerli, however, does not appear to have experienced a crisis of creativity. Since she began publishing in the early 1970s, she has continued to write and publish. Thus, on the surface Katerli can be seen to have made a smooth transition from a Soviet to a post-Soviet writer. On the other hand, as stated earlier, Katerli has in the main been a chronicler of the post-Stalin period and much of the emotional impact of these works arises from the fact that Katerli has seen the world of her characters 'with...[her] own eyes' and therefore can portray it so accurately and intimately. Her works have depicted the world of the 'sovok' in its political, sociological, and psychological manifestations. It is a flawed world filled with flawed people, a Golgotha in the form of queues, petty jealousies, betrayals, drunkenness, indifference and loneliness. But it is also a place

where, amid the suffering, true serenity, compassion and human dignity—redemption—can be achieved.

Like many of the characters of 'Barsukov Triangle', though, the world in which Nina Katerli was raised and lived has disappeared. Katerli was a faithful and powerful chronicler of that world, but her most recent stories evidence a certain distance from the contemporary generation and its world. Many of Katerli's recent stories, such as 'Zemlia bedovannaia' ('The Profited Land') (1989), 'Starushka ne spesha' ('The Old Woman Slowly') (1989), 'Sonia' (1995) and her most recent and as yet unpublished story 'Tot svet' ('That World') depict the lives of elderly pensioners, who reminisce about their lives as young people and struggle to survive on their pensions, but the works have little to say or show about the lives of the rest of the population.

On a stylistic level, Katerli's most recent works evidence a 'return' to many styles of her earlier prose fiction periods, rather than an experimentation with new or innovative techniques. For example, as stated above, after having apparently abandoned fantasy in the 1970s, Katerli recently published 'Iz zhizni luchshego goroda', one of her most fantastical stories. In addition, two of Katerli's most recent stories—'V-4-52-21' (1997) and 'Vozvrashchenie' ('The Return') (1998)—are both autobiographical/documentary prose stories. Similarly, when Katerli first began writing, she wrote semi-autobiographical stories about both her and her husband's childhood. Thus, Katerli appears to have come full circle, returning to fantasy and returning to autobiography. Whether this return represents the 'second childhood' that precedes the end, or whether it represents a new beginning, only time will tell. But, Katerli is still relatively young, and has many years ahead of her to write and pursue both her political agenda and her literary

interests. Some of Katerli's latest works evidence a developing Russian feminist consciousness that promises to make contributions to women's issues and women's literature. Whether Katerli will take an active part in this development, of course, remains to be seen. Katerli herself has stated that there are 'no more roles...only life.' But, if she is a woman who has made a life out of playing roles, why should she be believed? And, if she is a writer who has enlightened and entertained by playing such roles, why should we wish to believe her?

Notes

¹ Nina Katerli, 'Kto ia?' (unpublished autobiographical text, 1993), p.42.

² Deming Brown, The Last Years of Soviet Russian Literature: Prose Fiction, 1975-91 (Cambridge, 1993), p.124.

³ Nina Katerli, personal interview, 1998.

⁴ See, for example, Nikolai Gogol, Nos (The Nose) (1836) and Shinel' (The Overcoat) (1842); Iurii Trifonov, Dom na naberezhnoi (The House on the Embankment) (1976).

⁵ Robert Porter, Russia's Alternative Prose (Oxford, 1994), p.189.

⁶ Carl Proffer, 'Introduction', in The Barsukov Triangle, the Two-Toned Blond and Other Stories, ed. by Carl and Ellendea Proffer (Ann Arbor, 1984), p.xii.

⁷ N.N. Shneidman describes *byt* as portraying the negative aspects of daily life. See N.N. Shneidman, Soviet Literature in the 1980s: a Decade of Transition (Toronto, 1989), p.34.

⁸ Nina Katerli, 'Proshchal'nyi svet', Iunost', no.9, 1981, p.26.

⁹ David Lowe, Russian Writing since 1953: A Critical Study (New York, 1987), p.96.

¹⁰ Katerli's simultaneous refusal to call herself a feminist and her numerous depictions of non-traditional female protagonists appear to be typical of many Russian women writers. As Barbara Heldt notes: 'Although creative artists seem to feel it is bad for business to say that they are feminists (in spite of their being feted in the West by women who feel they are), they certainly seem to be creating believable women in recognisable settings rather than icons in incrustated frames.' See Barbara Heldt, 'Gynoglasnost: Writing the Feminine', in Perestroika and Soviet Women, ed. by Mary Buckley (Cambridge, 1992), pp.167-8.

¹¹ Nina Katerli, personal interview, 1995.

¹² Nina Katerli, personal interview, 1995.

¹³ Helena Goscilo, 'Introduction', in Lives in Transit: A Collection of Recent Russian Women's Writing, ed. by Helena Goscilo (Ann Arbor, 1995), p.xvi.

¹⁴ Teresa Polowy, 'Russian Women Writing Alcoholism: the Sixties to the Present', in Post-Communism and the Body Politic, ed. by Ellen E. Berry (New York and London), p.286.

¹⁵ Nicholas Zekulin, 'Soviet Russian Women's Literature in the Early 1980s', in Fruits of Her Plume, ed. by Helena Goscilo (Armonk and London, 1993), p.34.

¹⁶ Catriona Kelly, A History of Russian Women's Writing, 1820-1992 (Oxford, 1994), p.362.

¹⁷ Catriona Kelly, A History of Russian Women's Writing, 1820-1992, p.381.

¹⁸ In the past few years, many anthologies of works by contemporary Russian women writers have been published. See, for example: Masha Gessen, ed., Half a Revolution: Contemporary Fiction by Russian Women (Pittsburgh, 1995); Helena Goscilo, ed., Balancing Acts (Bloomington, 1989) and Lives in Transit: A Collection of Recent Women's Writing (Ann Arbor, 1995); Ayesha Kagal and Natasha Perova, eds., Present Imperfect: Stories by Russian Women (Boulder, CO, 1996); Kelly, Catriona, ed., An Anthology of Russian Women's Writing, 1977-1992 (Oxford and New York, 1994). See the 'Anthology' section of the Bibliography for a more comprehensive list of recent anthologies of works by contemporary Russian women authors.

¹⁹ Melissa T. Smith defined Petrushevskaja's style as 'hyperrealism' in her article 'In Cinzano Veritas: The Plays of Liudmila Petrushevskaya', Slavic and East European Arts, Winter-Spring, 1985, p.120.

²⁰ Elaine Showalter, Sister's Choice: Tradition and Change in American Women's Writing (Oxford, 1991), p.175.

²¹ For reading on the 'forty-year-olds', see 'The "forty-year-olds"', in Deming Brown, The Last Years of Soviet Russian Literature: Prose Fiction, 1975-91, pp.100-123.

²² Deming Brown, The Last Years of Soviet Russian Literature: Prose Fiction, 1975-91, p.101.

²³ Deming Brown, The Last Years of Soviet Russian Literature, 1975-91, p.134.

²⁴ Nina Katerli, personal interview, 1996.

²⁵ David Gillespie, The Twentieth-Century Russian Novel: An Introduction (Oxford, Washington, D.C., 1996), p.5.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

I. WORKS WRITTEN BY NINA KATERLI

A. BOOKS

- Katerli, Nina, Okno (Sovetskii Pisatel': Leningrad, 1981).
- , Tsvetnye otkrytki (Sovetskii Pisatel': Leningrad, 1986).
- , Kurzal (Sovetskii Pisatel': Leningrad, 1990).
- , Sennaia Ploshchad' (Pozisoft: St. Petersburg, 1992).

B. INDIVIDUAL WORKS OF FICTION

- Katerli, Nina, 'Groza', Molodoi Leningrad (Leningrad, 1975), pp.261-2.
- , 'Osen'', Molodoi Leningrad (Leningrad, 1975), pp.262-3.
- , 'Tri novelly', Neva, no.3, 1976, pp.95-108.
- , 'Pobeda,' Avrora, no.11, 1976, p.79.
- Katerli, Nina and Iurii Dimitrin, Kazhdyi polden' na ploshchadi (unpublished play, 1977).
- Katerli, Nina, 'Chudovishche', Neva, no.8, 1977, pp.42-46.
- , 'Okno', Neva, no.8, 1977, pp.38-40.
- , 'Ozero', Neva, no.8, 1977, pp.41-42.
- , 'Chelovek Firfarov i traktor', Avrora, no.1, 1978, pp.77-79.

- , 'Kollektsiia Datora Emil'ia', Neva, no.2, 1979, pp.97-118.
- , 'Zel'e', Neva, no.10, 1979, pp.65-90.
- , 'Doroga', Neva, no.1, 1981, pp.120-140.
- , 'Treugol'nik Barsukova', Glagol, no.3, 1981, pp.7-69.
- , 'Proshchal'nyi svet', Iunost', no.9, 1981, pp.53-61.
- , 'Nes"edobnyi drug Professora Rastorgueva', Avrora, no.3, 1982, pp.59-66.
- , 'Mezhdru vesnoi i letom', Neva, no.14, 1983, pp.67-84.
- , 'Polina', Neva, no.1, 1984, pp.11-60.
- , 'Tsvetnye otkrytki', Neva, no.5, 1986, pp.56-110.
- , 'Kurzal', Zvezda, no.11, 1986, pp.88-115.
- , 'Zhara na severe', Zvezda, no.4, 1988, pp.3-73.
- , 'Zemlia bedovannaia', Isskustvo, no.3, 1989, pp.102-110.
- , 'Solntse za steklom', Zvezda, no.4, 1989, pp.100-113.
- , 'Dolg', Neva, no.10, 1989, pp.54-87.
- , 'Starushka ne spesha', in Vest', ed. by L. Gutman, I. Evgrafov, I. Kalugin, I. Kutik (Moscow, 1989), pp.172-185.
- , 'Sennaia Ploshchad'', Zvezda, no.7, 1991, pp.5-35.
- , 'Utrata', Ogonek, no.37, 1991, pp.12-15.
- , 'Sindrom "P"', Zvezda, no.11, 1994, pp.6-38.
- , 'Sonia', Vsemirnoe slovo, no.8, 1995, pp.1-27.
- , 'Piramid Tsukermana', Zvezda, no.10, 1995, pp.63-70.
- , 'Iz zhizni luchshego goroda', Neva, no.4, 1996, pp.101-116.

-----, 'Krasnaia shliapa', Zvezda, no.4, 1996, pp.16-41.

-----, 'Poshlaia istoriia', Zvezda, no.3, 1997, pp.5-15.

-----, 'V-4-52-21', Zvezda, no.10, 1997, pp.41-5.

-----, 'Vozvrashchenie', Zvezda, no.5, 1998, pp.64-82.

C. FICTION PUBLISHED SEPARATELY IN ENGLISH

Katerli, Nina, 'The Barsukov Triangle', in The Barsukov Triangle, the Two-Toned Blond and Other Stories, ed. by Carl and Ellendea Proffer, trans. by David Lapeza (Ann Arbor, 1984), pp.3-71.

-----, 'Between Spring and Summer', in Balancing Acts, ed. by Helena Goscilo, trans. by John Fred Beebe and Regina Snyder (New York, 1989), pp.336-376.

-----, 'The Farewell Light', in Balancing Acts, ed. by Helena Goscilo, trans. by Helena Goscilo and Valeria Sajez (New York, 1989), pp.211-241.

-----, 'The Monster', in Soviet Women Writing: Fifteen Short Stories, ed. John Murray, trans. by Bernard Meares (New York, 1990), pp.107-116.

-----, 'The Old Woman Slowly', in Lives in Transit, ed. by Helena Goscilo, trans. by John Fred Beebe (Ann Arbor, 1993), pp.111-122.

-----, 'Victory', in Soviet Literary Culture in the 1970s: the Politics of Irony, ed. by Anatoly Vishevsky, trans. by Michael Biggins and Anatoly Vishevsky (Tallahassee, Florida, 1993), pp.232-4.

-----, 'The Profited Land', in Out Visiting and Back Home: Russian Stories on Aging, ed. and trans. by Thomas H. Hoisington (Evanston, IL, 1988), pp.63-84.

D. NON-FICTION WORKS

Katerli, Nina, 'Ideia ne po profilii', Literaturnaia gazeta, 5 November 1980, p.11.

-----, 'Dochki-materi', Leningradskaia pravda, 10 January 1982.

-----, 'Na perekrestke liubvi: dva pis'ma klubu molodoi sem'i kommentiruet pisatel''', Komsomolskaia pravda, 2 November 1982, p.2.

-----, 'Bespoleznye babushki', Literaturnaia gazeta, 25 August 1982, p.12.

-----, 'O deiatel'nykh bezdel'nikakh i rabochei sovesti: razmyshleniia pisatel'ia', Leningradskaia pravda, 2 October 1983, p.2.

-----, 'Peizazh posle bitvy', Vechernii Leningrad, 14 May 1988, p.2.

-----, 'Doroga k pamiatnikam', Leningradskaia pravda, 9 October 1988, p.3.

-----, 'Gosudarstvo: eto kto?', Sovetskaia kul'tura, 29 November 1988, p.6.

-----, 'Kak ia sletala v Ameriku', Leningradskii literator, 2 January 1989, p.7.

Katerli, Nina and D.M. Verevkin, 'Gr. Katerli i dr. gr.', Literator, 8 June 1990, p.2.

Katerli, Nina, 'Popalsia!', Teatr, no.7, 1990, pp.122-125.

-----, 'Chest' i dostoinstvo: antisemita brali pod zashchitu organy pravosudiia', Izvestiia, 31 October 1990, p.3.

Katerli, Nina and David Raskin, 'Poslednie tainy Smol'nogo', Literaturnaia gazeta, 27 November 1991, p.7.

Katerli, Nina, 'Fashisty: eto ne politicheskie protivniki, eto prestupniki', Nevskoe vremia, 21 December 1991, p.4.

Katerli, Nina and David Raskin, 'The Storming of the Smolny', Challenge: Russia's Anti-Fascist Magazine, no.1, 1992, pp.4-5.

Katerli, Nina, 'Voron voronu glaz ne vykliuet', Vsemirnoe slovo, no.2, 1992,
pp.81-86.

-----, 'Stoit starushka?', Vechernii Peterburg, 16 August 1992, p.2

-----, 'Zhivem dlia rebenka', Leningradskaia pravda, 17 September 1992.

-----, 'Kniga na moem stole', Knizhnoe obozrenie, vol.10, 1992, p.5.

-----, 'Shagi po koridoru' (unpublished conference paper, 1993).

-----, 'Batsilla fashizma', Bar'er: antifashistskii zhurnal, no.1, 1993, pp.3-5.

Katerli, Nina and Iurii Schmidt, 'Stalo modno zastupat'sia za palachei', Izvestiia,
27 November 1993, p.8.

-----, Untitled Statement in Chto dal'she: Rossiia posle referendum, ed. by

A. Afinogenov, V. Oskotskii, V. Savel'ev (Moscow and St. Petersburg, 1993), p.48.

-----, 'Net naroda malogo pered bogom', Vechernii Peterburg, 14 April
1994.

Katerli, Nina and Iurii Schmidt, 'Budet li pobeda za nimi?', Vsemirnoe slovo, no.6,
1994.

Katerli, Nina, 'Detskie igry na kovre', Vechernii Peterburg, 28 June 1994, p.2

-----, 'Byvshii drug moego druga', Vechernii Peterburg, 29 August 1994, p.4.

-----, 'Rasprava', Vechernii Peterburg, 27 October 1994, p.228.

-----, 'Napadnaia, zashchishchaiiasia', Vechernii Peterburg, February, 1995, p.1.

-----, 'Immunitet: prilichestvuet li rossiiskomu patriotu byt' fashistom v kanun

50 g. nashei velikoi pobedy nad gitlerovskoi Germaniei!', Vechernii Peterburg, 24
March 1995, p.2.

-----, 'O psikhologii naglykh nishchikh', Nevskoe vremia, 27 October 1995, p.3.

-----, 'Politika stuchitsia v dver'. Ne speshite otkryvat'!', Obshchaia gazeta, 28 March 1996, p.15.

-----, 'Nashe otechestvo mezhdou Romanovym i Ziuganovym: sekretnoe oruzhie russkikh natsistov', Nevskoe vremia, 6 April 1996, p.4.

-----, Isk: dokumental'naia povest' (Samara, 1998).

E. AUTOBIOGRAPHICAL WORKS

Katerli, Nina, 'Sovok—moi geroi i moi chitatel'' (unpublished paper for 'Women in Russia and the Former USSR' Conference, University of Bath, March-April, 1993).

-----, 'Author's Questionnaire' (unpublished questionnaire for 'Voices of Russian Women' tour, February-March, 1993).

-----, 'Kto ia?', in Kliuch literaturnykh al'manakhov, (St. Petersburg, 1995), pp.123-44.

-----, 'Odin iz variantov', Mansarda, no.1, 1996, pp.10-15.

II. SECONDARY LITERATURE

A. ARTICLES DEALING SPECIFICALLY WITH NINA KATERLI

- Akimov, V.M., 'O rukopisi "Nina Katerli. Chudovishche. Rasskazy"' (unpublished editorial critique, 1978).
- Ar'ev, Andrei, 'Otzyv na povest' Niny Katerli "Chervets"' (unpublished editorial critique, 1982).
- , 'N. Katerli, Tsvetnye otkrytki', Literaturnoe obozrenie, no.1, 1988, pp.78-9.
- Arlan, D., 'Rasskazyvaet Nina Katerli', Iurmala, 14 May 1983, p.1.
- Chirskov, F., 'Zhivoe—k zhivomu, N. Katerli. Okno. Sovetskii pisatel'' (unpublished editorial critique, 1982).
- Efros, Elena, 'O psikhologicheskoi osobennosti prozy Niny Katerli', (unpublished Master's dissertation, University of Petrozavodsk, 1988).
- Gordin, Iakov, 'Litsa i maski', Smena, 30 July 1988, p.4.
- Katsass, Frida, Editorial letter (unpublished letter, 16 May 1978).
- , Editorial letter (unpublished letter, 18 September 1978).
- Kaverin, V., 'V krughe chteniia', Literaturnaia gazeta, 19 August 1981, p.1
- Khmel'nitskaia, T., 'Pyl'tsa ot babochki, Nina Katerli "Okno" Sov.pis. 1981' (unpublished editorial critique, 1981).
- , 'Bytovaia fantastika', in Vglub' kharaktera: o psikhologizme v sovremennoi sovetskoi proze, ed. by T. Khmel'nitskaia (Leningrad, 1988), pp.197-206.

- Kholshevnikova, E., 'Slovo pisatel'ia', Leningradskaiia pravda, 29 November 1986.
- Kukushkin, V., 'Retseziia—"Chudovishche", sbornik rasskazov, avtor N.S. Katerli',
(unpublished editorial critique, 1978).
- Lavrov, V., 'Gorod i pamiat'', Leningradskaiia pravda, 31 January 1984, p.3.
- , 'Zhizn', dokument, slovo', Leningradskaiia pravda, 30 April 1988, p.3.
- Musakhanov, V., 'Nina Katerli "Tsvetnye otkrytki"', rasskazy i povesti, 330 str.'
(unpublished editorial critique, 1982).
- Panteleev, Leonid, Personal letter (unpublished, 1981).
- Prussakova, I., 'Iasnost' avtorskogo chuvstva', Zvezda, no.12, 1987, pp.198-199.
- Romin, A., 'Nina Katerli: "Inogda fantastika neobkhodima..."', 23 February 1990 (full
reference of newspaper article unknown).
- Repina, A., 'Nina Katerli byla prava', Chas pik, 17 September 1990.
- Soloveva, Inna, Personal letter (unpublished letter, 1982).
- Startseva, Natal'ia, 'Damy s sobakami i bez segodniashnikh otvetov na vechnye
voprosy', Literaturnaia gazeta, 27 July 1988, p.4.
- , 'Sto let zhenskogo odinochestva', Don, no.3, 1989, pp.158-165.
- Zaikov, L.N., 'Iz doklada tovarishcha', Leningradskaiia pravda, 18 October 1984, pp.1-2.
- Zhitinskii, A., 'Svoe okno', Neva, no.1, 1982, pp.163-4.
- Zolotonosov, Mikhail, 'Svintsovoe slovo "tsenzura"', Moskovskie novosti, 24 April-1
May 1994, Section B, p.2.

B. THEORY, CRITICISM AND HISTORY OF LITERATURE

Alcorn, Marshall W. Jr., Narcissism and the Literary Libido: Rhetoric, Text and Subjectivity (New York, 1994).

Anninskii, L., 'Shestidesiatniki, semidesiatniki, vos'midesiatniki: k dialektike pokolenii v russkoi kul'ture', Literaturnoe obozrenie, no.4, 1991, pp. 10-14.

Any, Carol, Boris Eikhenbaum: Voices of a Russian Formalist (Stanford, 1994).

Ashley, Kathleen, Leigh Gilmore and Gerald Peters, eds., Autobiography and Postmodernism (Amherst, 1994).

Bakhtin, M.M., Rabelais and His World, trans. by H. Iswolsky (Cambridge, MA, 1968).

-----, Problems of Dostoevsky's Poetics, trans. by R.W. Rostel (Ann Arbor, 1973).

-----, The Dialogic Imagination, ed. and trans. by M. Holquist and C. Emerson (Austin, 1988).

Baldick, Chris, The Concise Oxford Dictionary of Literary Terms (Oxford and New York, 1990).

Barthes, Roland, Critical Essays (Evanston, IL, 1972).

Belknap, Robert, 'A Likely Story, Puskin's [sic] *Bronze Horseman*: A Study in Verisimilitude', in The Supernatural in Slavic and Baltic Literature: Essays in Honor of Victor Terras, ed. by Amy Mandelker and Roberta Reed (Columbus, 1988), pp.26-33.

- Benstock, Shari, ed., Authorizing the Autobiographical (London, 1988).
- Bertens, Hans, The Idea of the Postmodern: A History (London and New York, 1995).
- Blair, Hector and Militsa Greene, 'Introduction', in Mikhail Zoshchenko, Liudi
(Cambridge, 1967), pp.1-8.
- Blum, Jakob and Vera Rich, The Image of the Jew in Soviet Literature: the Post-Stalin
Period (Institute of Jewish Affairs, London and New York, 1984).
- Boyne, Roy, Foucault and Derrida: The Other Side of Reason (London, 1990).
- Brooker, P., ed. and with introduction, Modernism/Postmodernism (London and
New York, 1992).
- Brown, D., Soviet Russian Literature since Stalin (Cambridge, 1978).
- , The Last Years of Soviet Russian Literature: Prose Fiction 1975-91
(Cambridge, 1993).
- Brown, E.J., Major Soviet Writers—Essays in Criticism (Oxford, 1973).
- , Russian Literature since the Revolution, revised and enlarged edition
(Cambridge, MA and London, 1982).
- Brumberg, A., In Quest of Justice: Protest and Dissent in the Soviet Union Today
(New York, 1979).
- Bruss, Elizabeth W., Autobiographical Acts: The Changing Situation of a Literary Genre
(Baltimore, 1976).
- Carsten, Svetlana, 'The Generation of the 1960s in Soviet Literature', Slavonica, vol.2,
no.2, 1995-6, pp.59-70.

----- 'Divided Loyalties: the Generation of the 1960s in Soviet Literature', Ph.D. thesis
(University of Bradford, 1998).

Choseed, Bernard J., 'Jews in Soviet Literature', in Through the Glass of Soviet Literature: Views of Russian Society, ed. by Ernest J. Simmons (New York, 1953), pp.110-158.

Chuprinin, S., 'Drugaiia proza', Literaturnaia gazeta, no.6, 6 February 1989, p.4.

Clark, Katerina, The Soviet Novel: History as Ritual, second edition (Chicago, 1985).

Clowes, Edith W., Russian Experimental Fiction: Resisting Ideology After Utopia (Princeton, 1993).

Cohn, Dorrit, Transparent Minds—Narrative Modes for Presenting Consciousness in Fiction (Princeton, 1978).

Cornwell, Neil, The Literary Fantastic: From the Gothic to Postmodernism (Hemel Hempstead, 1990).

Crouch, M. and Robert Porter, eds., Understanding Soviet Politics through Literature: A Book Of Readings (London, 1984).

Dedkov, Igor', 'Mezhdu proshlym i budushchim', Znamia, no.1, 1991, pp.231-40.

Derrida, Jacques, Margins of Philosophy (Brighton, 1982).

Dewhirst, Martin, 'The Jewish Question in Present-Day Russian Literature', East European Jewish Affairs, no.2, 1994, pp. 103-108.

Dreizin, Felix, The Russian Soul and the Jew: Essays in Literary Ethnocentrism (Boston, 1990).

Dunham, V., In Stalin's Time: Middle Class Values in Soviet Fiction (Cambridge, 1976).

Dunlop, John B., Richard S. Haugh, Michael Nicholson, eds., Solzhenitsyn in Exile: Critical Essays and Documentary Materials (Stanford, 1985).

Eikhenbaum, Boris, Teoriia, kritika, polemika (Leningrad, 1927).

-----, 'The Theory of the "Formal Method"', in Russian Formalist Criticism, ed. by Paul A. Olson, trans. by Lee T. Lemon and Marion J. Reis (Lincoln, Nebraska, 1965), pp.99-141.

Emerson, Caryl, The First Hundred Years of Mikhail Bakhtin (Princeton, 1997).

Erlich, Viktor, Russian Formalism: History-Doctrine (The Hague and Paris, 1969).

-----, ed., Twentieth Century Russian Literary Criticism (New Haven and London, 1975).

-----, Modernism and Revolution: Russian Literature in Transition (Cambridge, 1994).

Erofeyev, Viktor, 'Pominki po sovetskoj literature', April, no.2, 1990, pp.274-282.

-----, 'Introduction: Russia's Fleurs du Mal', in The Penguin Book of New Russian Writing, ed. by Viktor Erofejev (London and New York, 1995), pp.ix-xxx.

Epstein, Mikhail, 'The Origins and Meaning of Russian Postmodernism', in Re-Entering the Sign: Articulating New Russian Culture, ed. by Ellen E. Berry and Anesa Miller-Pogacar (Ann Arbor, 1995), pp.48-61.

Folkenflik, Robert, ed., The Culture of Autobiography: Constructions of Self-Representation (Stanford, 1993).

- Foucault, Michael, The Archaeology of Knowledge and the Discourse on Language (New York, 1972).
- Friedberg, Maurice, A Decade of Euphoria—Western Literature in Post-Stalin Russia, 1954-1964 (Bloomington, 1977).
- Garrard, John and Carol Garrard, Inside the Soviet Writers Union (New York and London, 1990).
- Gibian, George, Interval of Freedom: Soviet Literature During the Thaw, 1954-1957 (Minneapolis, 1960).
- Gillespie, David, The Twentieth-Century Russian Novel: An Introduction (Oxford and Washington, D.C., 1996).
- Glad, John, Extrapolations from Dystopia: A Critical Study of Soviet Science Fiction (New Jersey, 1984).
- , ed., Conversations in Exile: Russian Writers Abroad (Durham and London, 1993).
- Graffy, Julian and Geoffrey A. Hosking, eds., Culture and the Media in the USSR Today (London, 1989).
- Graham, Sheelagh D., ed., New Directions in Soviet Literature (New York, 1992).
- Gusdorf, Georges, 'Conditions and Limits of Autobiography', in Autobiography: Essays Theoretical and Critical, ed. by James Olney (Princeton, 1980), pp.28-48.
- Haber, Erika, 'In Search of the Fantastic in Tertz's Fantastic Realism', Slavonic and East European Journal, vol.42, no.2, 1998, pp.254-267.

- Harris, Jane Gary, ed., Autobiographical Statements in Twentieth-Century Russian Literature (Princeton, 1990).
- Hayward, Max and Leopold Labedz, eds., Literature and Revolution in Soviet Russia 1917-62 (London, 1963).
- Hayward, Max and Edward L. Crowley, eds., Soviet Literature in the Sixties: an International Symposium (London, 1965).
- Hayward, Max, Writers in Russia, 1917-1978, ed. by Patricia Blake (London, 1983).
- Hingley, Ronald, Russian Writers and Soviet Society 1917-78 (New York, 1988).
- Hodgson, Katharine, Written With the Bayonet: Russian Poetry of World War Two (Liverpool, 1996).
- Hoisington, Thomas H., 'In Place of an Introduction', in Out Visiting and Back Home: Russian Stories on Aging, ed. and trans. by Thomas H. Hoisington (Evanston, IL, 1998), pp.ix-xiv.
- Holquist, Michael, Dialogism: Bakhtin and His World (London and New York, 1990).
- Holthusen, Johannes, Twentieth-Century Russian Literature: A Critical Study (New York, 1972).
- Hosking, G., Beyond Socialist Realism: Soviet Fiction since Ivan Denisovich (London, 1980).
- , A History of the Soviet Union (London, 1985).
- Hume, Kathryn, Fantasy and Mimesis: Responses to Reality in Western Literature (New York, 1984).

Hutcheon, Linda, Narcissistic Narrative: The Metafictional Paradox (New York, 1984).

-----, The Politics of Postmodernism (London, 1989).

Jackson, Rosemary, Fantasy: The Literature of Subversion (London, 1981).

Jameson, Fredric, Postmodernism; or, the Cultural Logic of Late Capitalism

(Durham, NC, 1992).

-----, 'Postmodernism and Consumer Society', in Modernism/Postmodernism, ed.

and with Introduction by Peter Brooker (London and New York, 1992), pp.163-179.

-----, The Seeds of Time (New York, 1994).

Johnson, Priscilla and Leopold Labedz, eds., Khrushchev and the Arts: The Politics

of Soviet Culture, 1962-1964 (Cambridge, MA, 1965).

Jones, Malcolm, ed., Jews in Russian Literature After the October Revolution

(Cambridge, 1995).

Kanchukova, E., 'Priem i mirovozzrenie', Literaturnoe obozrenie, no.5, 1990, pp. 37-42.

Kazack, Wolfgang, Dictionary of Russian Literature since 1917, trans. by M. Carlson

and J.T. Hedges, with revisions by R. Atack (New York, 1988).

Kerr, Stephen T., A Bibliographical Guide to Soviet Fantasy and Science Fiction, 1957-

1968 (New York, 1969).

Khrustaleva, Olga, 'New Literature: A Polystylistics of Stereotypes', in Re-Entering the

Sign: Articulating New Russian Culture, ed. by Ellen E. Berry and Anesa

Miller-Pogacar (Ann Arbor, 1995), pp.189-207.

Kuritsyn, Viacheslav, 'Postmodernizm: novaia pervobytnaia kul'tura', Novyi mir, no.2,

1992, pp. 225-232.

- Lacan, Jacques, The Ego in Freud's Theory and in the Technique of Psychoanalysis 1954-1955, ed. by Jacques-Alain Miller, trans. by Sylvana Tomaselli (New York and London, 1988).
- Lakshin, Vladimir, Solzhenitsyn, Tvardovsky, and Novyi Mir (Cambridge, MA, 1980).
- Latynina, A., 'Kolokol'nyi zvon: ne molitva k voprosu o literaturnykh polemikakh', Novyi mir, no.8, 1988, pp. 232-44.
- Leiderman, N, Lipovetskii, M., 'Zhizn' posle smerti, ili novye svedeniia o realizme', Novyi mir, no.7, 1993, pp. 233-52.
- Lindsay, Byron, 'On the Strugackij Brothers' Contemporary Fairytale: *Monday Begins on Saturday*, in The Supernatural in Slavic and Baltic Literature: Essays in Honor of Victor Terras, ed. by Amy Mandelker and Roberta Reed (Columbus, 1988), pp.290-302.
- Lipovetskii, M., 'Diskussiiia o postmodernizme', Voprosy literatury, Nov.-Dec., 1991, pp.3-36.
- , 'S'ovok-bliuz: shestidesiatniki segodnia', Znamia, no.9, 1991, 226-36.
- Lodge, David, After Bakhtin: Essays on Fiction and Criticism (London and New York, 1990).
- Lord, Robert, Russian Literature: An Introduction (New York, 1980).
- Loseff, Lev, On the Beneficence of Censorship: Aesopian Language in Modern Russian Literature, trans. by Jane Bobko (Munich, 1984).

- Lovell, Stephen and Rosalind Marsh, 'Culture and Crisis: The Intelligentsia and Literature after 1953', in Russian Cultural Studies: An Introduction, ed. by C. Kelly and D. Shepherd (Oxford, 1998), pp.56-87.
- Lowe, David, Russian Writing since 1953: A Critical Study (New York, 1987)
- Lyotard, Jean-Francois, The Postmodern Condition: A Report on Knowledge, trans. by Scott Bennington and Brian Massumi, (Minneapolis, 1979).
- Mandelker, Amy and Roberta Reed, eds., The Supernatural in Slavic and Baltic Literatures: Essays in Honor of Victor Terras (Columbus, 1988).
- Manuel, Frank E and Fritzie Manuel, Utopian Thought in the Western World (Cambridge, MA, 1979).
- Markov, Dmitri F., Socialist Literatures: Problems of Development (Moscow, 1984).
- Marsh, Rosalind J., Soviet Fiction since Stalin: Science, Politics and Literature (London and Sydney, 1986).
- , Images of Dictatorship: Stalin in Literature (London and New York, 1989).
- , 'Glasnost' and Russian Literature', Australian Slavonic and East European Studies, vol.6, no.2, 1992, pp.21-39.
- , 'The Death of Soviet Literature: Can Russian Literature Survive?', Europe-Asia Studies, vol.45, no.1, 1993, pp.115-139.
- , History and Literature in Contemporary Russia (Basingstoke and London, 1995).
- Masaryk, T.G., The Spirit of Russia, 2 vols., (New York, 1918).
- Matthewson, Rufus, The Positive Hero in Russian Literature (Stanford, 1975).

- McGuire, Patrick L., 'Russian SF', in Anatomy of Wonder: A Critical Guide to Science Fiction, second edition, ed. by Neil Barron (New York, 1981).
- , Red Stars: Political Aspects of Soviet Science Fiction (Ann Arbor, 1985).
- McHale, Brian, Postmodernist Fiction (London, 1987).
- Medvedev, Roy, On Soviet Dissidents—Interviews with Pierro Ostellino, trans. by William A. Packer, ed. by George Sanders (New York, 1980).
- Metcalf, Amanda, Evgenii Shvarts and His Fairy-Tales for Adults (Birmingham, 1979).
- Minto, Marilyn, trans. with introduction, Russian Tales of the Fantastic (Bristol, 1994).
- Monas, Sidney, 'Introduction', in Scenes From the Bathhouse and Other Stories of Communist Russia, by Mikhail Zoshchenko, trans. By Sidney Monas (Ann Arbor, 1961), pp.v-xvii.
- Morson, Gary Saul, The Boundaries of Genre: Dostoevsky's Diary of a Writer and the Traditions of Literary Utopia (Austin, 1981).
- Moser, Charles A., The Russian Short Story: a Critical History (Boston, 1986).
- , ed., Cambridge History of Russian Literature, second edition (Cambridge, 1992).
- Mozer, Joseph P., 'Review of Nadya L. Peterson, *Subversive Imaginations: Fantastic Prose and the End of Soviet Literature, 1970s-1990s*', Slavic Review, vol.56, no.4, 1997, pp.822-24.
- Murphy, A.B., 'Introduction', in Mikhail Zoshchenko, Rasskazy dvadtsatykh godov, ed. by A.B. Murphy (Hertfordshire, 1976).
- Nakhimovsky, Alice Stone, Russian-Jewish Literature and Identity (Baltimore and London, 1992).

Nemzer, Andrei, 'Strast' k razryvam', Novyi mir, no.4, 1992, pp.226-38.

Neuhauser, Rudolf, 'The Russian Short Story, 1917-1980', in The Russian Short Story: A Critical History, ed. by Charles A. Moser (Boston, 1986), pp.147-190.

Nicholson, Michael, ed., Solzhenitsyn Studies: A Quarterly Survey (Hamilton, NY 1980-1981).

Olney, James, ed., Autobiography: Essays Theoretical and Critical (Princeton, 1980).
-----, Studies in Autobiography (New York, 1988).

Olson, Paul A., ed., Russian Formalist Criticism, trans. by Lee T. Lemon and Marion J. Reis (Lincoln, Nebraska, 1965).

O'Toole, L.M., Structure, Style and Interpretation in the Russian Short Story (New Haven and London, 1982).

Pascal, Roy, Design and Truth in Autobiography (London 1960).

-----, The Dual Voice: Free Indirect Speech and its Functioning in the 19th Century Novel (Manchester, 1977).

Peterson, Nadya, Subversive Imaginations: Fantastic Prose and the End of Soviet Literature, 1970s-1990s (Boulder, Colorado, 1997).

Pittman, R., 'Leningrad Loyalties', Soviet Analyst, vol.19, no.19, 26, September, 1990, pp.5-6.

-----, 'Writers and Politics in the Gorbachev Era', Soviet Studies, vol.44, 1992, pp.665-86.

Porter, Robert, Russia's Alternative Prose (Oxford, 1994).

- Proffer, Carl, 'Introduction', in The Barsukov Triangle, the Two-Toned Blond and Other Stories, ed. by Carl and Ellendea Proffer (Ann Arbor, 1984), pp.vii-xxxiv.
- Propp, Valdimir I., Morfologija skazki (Leningrad, 1928).
- Rabinow, Paul, ed., Foucault Reader (New York, 1984).
- Rabkin, Eric, The Fantastic in Literature (Princeton, 1976).
- Rassadin, Stanislav, 'Shestidesiatniki: knigi o molodom sovremennike', Iunost, 1960, no.12, pp.58-62.
- Ricoeur, Paul, Lectures on Ideology and Utopia, ed. by G.H. Taylor (New York, 1986).
- Roberts, Graham, The Last Soviet Avant-Garde: OBERIU—fact, fiction, metafiction (Cambridge, 1997).
- Rougle, Charles, 'On the "Fantastic Trend" in Recent Soviet Prose', Slavic and East European Journal, vol.34, no.3, 1990, pp.308-321.
- Sergin, Anna, 'Jews and the October Revolution in Recent Soviet Literature', Soviet Jewish Affairs, no.2, November, 1971, pp.68-79.
- Shalamov, Varlam, 'Novaia proza', Novyi mir, no.12, 1989, pp.3-71.
- Schreiber, Maera Y., 'The End of Exile: Jewish Identity and its Diasporic Poetics', PMLA, no.3, 1998, pp.273-87.
- Shepherd, David, Catriona Kelly, Michael Makin, eds., Discontinuous Discourses in Russian Literature (London, 1989).
- Shepherd, David, Beyond Metafiction: Self Consciousness in Soviet Literature (Oxford, 1992).
- Shklovskii, Evgenii, 'Idushchie vosled', Znamia, no.4, 1988, pp.217-226.

Shklovskii, Viktor, Isskustvo kak priem (Moscow, 1917).

-----, O teorii prozy, 1929, (Moscow, 1925).

-----, 'Art as Technique' and 'Sternes's[sic] *Tristram Shandy*: Stylistic Commentary', in Russian Formalist Criticism, ed. by Paul A. Olson, trans. by Lee T. Lemon and Marion J. Reis (Lincoln, Nebraska, 1965), pp.3-24, 25-60.

Shneidman, N.N, Soviet Literature in the 1970s: Artistic Diversity and Ideological Conformity (Toronto, 1979).

-----, Soviet Literature in the 1980s: a Decade of Transition (Toronto, 1989).

-----, Russian Literature 1988-1994: The End of an Era (Toronto and Buffalo, 1995).

Simmons, Ernest J., ed., Through the Glass of Soviet Literature: Views of Russian Society (Freeport, NY, 1953).

Slonim, Mark, The Epic of Russian Literature: From Its Origins Through Tolstoy (New York, 1964).

-----, Soviet Russian Literature: Writers and Problems 1917-1977 (New York, 1977)

Stites, Richard, Revolutionary Dreams: Utopian Vision and Experimental Life in the Russian Revolution (New York, 1989).

Svin, Darko, Russian Science Fiction 1956-1974: A Bibliography (New York, 1971).

Svirskii, G., A History of Post-War Soviet Writing: the Literature of Moral Opposition, trans. and ed. by R. Dessaix and M. Ulman (Ann Arbor, 1981).

Swayze, Harold, Political Control of Literature in the USSR, 1946-59 (Cambridge, MA,1962).

Terekhov, Aleksandr, 'My vpitaem vsiu pyl'', Literaturnaia gazeta, no.24,

13 June 1990, p.4.

Terras, Victor, ed., The Handbook of Russian Literature (New Haven and London, 1985).

Timofeev, L., Teoriia literatury (Moscow, 1945).

Todorov, Tzvetan, The Fantastic: A Structural Approach to a Literary Genre, trans. by

Richard Howard (New York, 1975).

Tomashevskii, Boris, 'Thematics', in Russian Formalist Criticism, ed. by Paul A. Olson,

Trans. by Lee T. Lemon and Marion J. Reis (Lincoln, Nebraska, 1965), pp.61-98.

Tynianov, Iurii, Problema stikhotvornogo iazyka (Leningrad, 1924).

Urnov, Dmitri, 'Plokhaia proza', Literaturnaia gazeta, no.6, 6 February 1989, p.4.

Vail, Petr, Genis, Aleksandr, 'Novaia proza: ta zhe ili "drugaia"?', Novyi mir, no.10,

1989, pp.247-57.

Vickery, Walter N., The Cult of Optimism: Political and Ideological Problems of

Recent Soviet Literature (Bloomington, 1963).

Vishevsky, Anatoly, Soviet Literary Culture in the 1970s: The Politics of Irony

(Gainesville and Tallahassee, 1993).

Wachtel, Andrew, An Obsession With History: Russian Writers Confront the Past

(Stanford, 1994).

Wizzell, Faith, ed., Russian Writers on Russian Writers (Oxford and Providence, 1994).

Zolotusskii, Igor', 'Krushenie abstraktsii', Novyi mir, no.1, 1989, pp.235-46.

C. WORKS DEALING SPECIFICALLY WITH WOMEN

Amert, Susan, In a Shattered Mirror: Akhmatova's Later Lyrics (Stanford, 1992).

Andrew, Joe, Women in Russian Literature 1780-1863 (Basingstoke, 1988).

-----, Narrative and Desire in Russian Literature, 1822-1849: The Feminine and the Masculine (Basingstoke, 1993).

Atkinson, Dorothy, Women in Russia (Stanford, 1977).

Attwood, Lynne, "'Hearing a Woman's Voice": Female Perspectives on Change in Russia and the Former Soviet Union', Journal of Women's History, no.8, 1996, pp.181-90.

Austin, Gayle, Feminist Theories for Dramatic Criticism (Ann Arbor, 1990).

Barker, Adele, 'Women Without Men in the Writing of Contemporary Soviet Women Writers', in Russian Literature and Psychoanalysis, ed. by D. Rancour-Laferriere (Amsterdam and Philadelphia, 1989), pp.431-449.

-----, 'Afterword: Histories and Fictions', in Dialogues/Dialogi: Literary and Cultural Exchanges between (ex) Soviet and American Women (Durham, NC and London, 1994), pp.357-92.

-----, 'Reading the Texts: Rereading Ourselves' in Women in Russian Culture: Projections and Self-Perceptions, ed. by Rosalind Marsh (Oxford, 1998), pp.42-58.

- Barta, Peter, 'Gaps in the Cosmogony: Witchcraft Imagery in Andrei Bely's *Kotik Letaev*' in Women in Russian Culture: Projections and Self-Perceptions, ed. by Rosalind Marsh (Oxford, 1998), pp.212-226.
- Belsey, Catherine and Jane Moore, eds., The Feminist Reader: Essays in Gender and the Politics of Literary Criticism (London, 1989).
- Benstock, Shari, ed., The Private Self: Theory and Practice of Women's Autobiographical Writings (Chapel Hill, 1988).
- , 'Authorizing the Autobiographical' in The Private Self: Theory and Practice Of Women's Autobiographical Writings, ed. by Shari Benstock (Chapel Hill, 1988), pp. 10-33.
- Berry, Ellen, ed., Post-Communism and the Body Politic (New York and London, 1995).
- , 'Introduction', in Post-Communism and the Body Politic, ed. by Ellen Berry (New York and London, 1995), pp.1-11.
- Bridger, Sue, 'Young Women and Perestroika', in Women and Society in Russia and The Soviet Union, ed. by Linda Edmondson (Cambridge, 1992).
- , ed., Women in Post-Communist Russia, Interface, Bradford Studies in Language, Culture, and Society, no.1 (Bradford, 1995).
- Browning, G., Women and Politics in the USSR (New York, 1987).
- Bruss, Elizabeth W., Autobiographical Acts: The Changing Situation of a Literary Genre (Baltimore, 1976).
- Buckley, Mary, ed., Soviet Social Scientists Talking—An Official Debate About Women (London, 1986).

- , Women and Ideology in the Soviet Union (Hemel Hempstead and Ann Arbor, 1989).
- , 'Gender and Reform', in Perestroika: the Historical Perspective, ed. by Catherine Merridale and Chris Ward (London, 1991), pp.67-81.
- , ed., Perestroika and Soviet Women (Cambridge, 1992).
- , ed., Post-Soviet Women: From the Baltic to Central Asia (Cambridge, 1997).
- Burgin, Diana, Sophia Parnok: the Life and Work of Russia's Sappho (New York, 1994).
- Carsten, Svetlana, 'In the Shadow of a Prominent Partner: Educated Women in Literature: on the Shestidesiatniki', in Women in Russian Culture: Projections and Self-Perceptions, ed. by Rosalind Marsh (Oxford, 1998), pp.259-74.
- Chao, Paul, Women Under Communism: Family in Russia and China (New York, 1977).
- Chester, Pamela and Sibelan Forrester, eds., Engendering Slavic Literatures (Bloomington, 1996).
- Chester, Pamela, 'The Landscape of Recollection: Tolstoy's Childhood and the Feminization of the Countryside', in Engendering Slavic Literatures, ed. by Pamela Chester and Sibelan Forrester (Bloomington, 1996), pp.57-79.
- Chodorow, Nancy, Psychoanalysis and the Sociology of Gender (Berkeley, 1978).
- Clements, Barbara Evans, Barbara Alpern Engel, and Christine D. Worobec, eds., Russia's Women: Accommodation, Resistance, Transformation (Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1991).
- Clyman, Toby W. and Diana Greene, eds., Women Writers in Russian Literature (Westport, CT and London, 1994).

Clyman, Toby W. and Judith Vowles, eds., Russia Through Women's Eyes:

Autobiographies from Tsarist Russia (New Haven, 1996).

Cohn, Norman, Europe's Inner Demons (London, 1975).

Cornwell, Neil, 'Women Memoirists on Pasternak', in Women in Russian Culture:

Projections and Self-Perceptions, ed. by Rosalind Marsh (Oxford, 1998), pp.163-72.

Corrin, Chris and Hilary Pilkington, eds., Superwoman and the Double Burden (London, 1992).

Costlow, Jane T., Stephanie Sandler, and Judith Vowles, eds., Sexuality and the Body in Russian Culture (Stanford, 1993).

-----, 'Introduction', in Sexuality and the Body in Russian Culture, ed. by

Jane T. Costlow, Stephanie Sandler, and Judith Vowles (Stanford, 1993), pp.1-40.

Dalton-Brown, Sally, 'The Time is Always Night: Ludmila Petrushevskaja "Dark Monologues"', in Women in Post-Communist Russia, Interface, ed. by Sue Bridger, no.1, Bradford Studies in Language, Culture, and Society (Bradford, 1995), pp.148-59.

de Beauvoir, Simone, The Second Sex, ed. and trans. by H.M. Parshley (New York, 1989).

Dunham, Vera, 'The Changing Image of Women in Soviet Literature', in The Role and Status of Women in the Soviet Union, ed. by D.R. Brown (New York, 1968), pp.60-97.

Eagleton, ed., Mary, Feminist Literary Criticism (London and New York 1991).

Edmondson, Linda, Feminism in Russia 1900-1917 (Stanford, 1984).

-----, ed., Women and Society in Russia and the Soviet Union (Cambridge, 1992).

Einhorn, Barbara, Cinderella Goes to Market: Citizenship, Gender and Women's Movements in East Central Europe (London, 1994).

Engel, Barbara Alpern and Anastasia Posadskaya-Vanderbeck, eds., A Revolution of Their Own: Voices of Women in Soviet History, trans. by Sona Hoisington (Boulder and Oxford, 1998).

Engel, Barbara Alpern, Mothers and Daughters: Women of the Intelligentsia in Nineteenth Century Russia (Cambridge and New York, 1983).

Friedan, Betty, The Feminine Mystique (New York, 1963).

Friedman, Susan Stanford, 'Women's Autobiographical Selves: Theory and Practice' in The Private Self: Theory and Practice of Women's Autobiographical Writings, ed. by Shari Benstock (Chapel Hill, 1988), pp.34-62.

Funk, Nanette, Magda Mueller, eds., Gender Politics and Post-Communism: Reflections from Eastern Europe and the Former Soviet Union (New York and London, 1993).

Gasiorowska, Xenia, Women in Soviet Fiction, 1917-1964 (Madison, 1968).

-----, 'Women and Russian Literature', in The Handbook of Russian Literature, ed. by Victor Terras, (New Haven and London, 1985), p.520.

Gerasimova, Tatyana, 'Elderly Women—A Challenge to Russia', in Women's Voices in Russia Today, ed. by Anna Rotkirch and Elina Haavio-Mannila (Aldershot, Brookfield, Singapore, Sydney, 1996), pp.175-185.

Gilbert, Sandra M. and Susan Gubar, The Madwoman in the Attic: the Woman Writer and the Nineteenth-Century Imagination (New Haven, 1984).

- Gillespie, David, 'Whore or Madonna: Perceptions of Women in Modern Russian Literature', Irish Slavonic Studies, no.9, 1988, pp.95-110.
- , 'Is Village Prose Mysogynistic?', in Women in Russian Culture: Projections and Self-Perceptions, ed. by Rosalind Marsh (Oxford, 1998), pp.234-43.
- Gilligan, Carol, In a Different Voice: Psychological Theory and Women's Development (Cambridge, 1982).
- Gilmore, Leigh, Autobiographics: A Feminist Theory of Women's Self-Representation (Ithaca, 1994).
- Göpfert, Frank, Dichterinnen und Schriftstellerinnen in Russland (Munich, 1992).
- Goscilo, Helena, 'Introduction', in Balancing Acts, ed. by Helena Goscilo (New York, 1989), pp.xv-xxxviii.
- , 'Skirted Issues: the Discreteness and Indiscretions of Russian Women's Prose', Russian Studies in Literature, vol.28, no.2, 1992, pp.3-17.
- , ed., Fruits of Her Plume—Essays on Contemporary Russian Women's Culture (Armonk and London, 1993).
- , 'Paradigm Lost? Contemporary Women's Fiction', in Women Writers in Russian Literature, ed. by Toby W. Clyman and Diana Greene (Westport, CT and London, 1994), pp.205-228.
- , 'Mother as Mothra: Totalizing Narrative and Nurture in Petrushevskiaia', in A Plot of Her Own: The Female Protagonist in Russian Literature, ed. by Sona Stephan Hoisington (Evanston, IL, 1995), pp.102-113.

- , 'Squaring the Circle', in Lives in Transit: a Collection of Recent Russian Women's Writing (Dana Point, CA, 1995), pp.xi-xx.
- , 'Introduction', in Present Imperfect: Stories by Russian Women, ed. by Ayesha Kagal and Natasha Perova (Boulder, CO, 1996), pp.1-10.
- , Dehexing Sex: Russian Womanhood During and After Glasnost (Ann Arbor, 1996).
- , The Explosive World of Tatyana Tolstaya's Fiction (Armonk, NY, 1996).
- Gray, Francine du Plessix, Soviet Women—Walking the Tightrope (New York, 1990).
- Greene, Diana, 'An Asteroid of One's Own: Women Soviet Science Fiction Writers', Irish Slavonic Studies, no.8, 1987, pp.127-39.
- Greene, Gayle, Changing the Story—Feminist Fiction and the Tradition (Bloomington, 1991).
- Greene, Gayle and Coppelia Kahn, eds., Making a Difference: Feminist Literary Criticism (London and New York, 1985).
- Grekova, I., 'Introduction', in Soviet Women Writing: Fifteen Short Stories, ed. by John Murray (London, 1990), pp.9-14.
- Haight, Amanda, Anna Akhmatova (New York and London, 1976).
- Heldt, Barbara, Terrible Perfection: Women and Russian Literature, (Bloomington, 1987).
- , 'Gynoglasnost: Writing the Feminine', in Perestroika and Soviet Women, ed. by Mary Buckley (Cambridge, 1992), pp.160-175.

-----, 'Feminism and the Slavic Field', The Harriman Review, vol. 7, nos. 10-12,

November 1994, pp.11-18.

Hodgson, Katharine, 'Under an Unwomanly Star: War in the Writing of

Ol'ga Berggol'ts', in Women in Russian Culture: Projections and

Self-Perceptions, ed. by Rosalind Marsh (Oxford, 1998), pp.134-47.

Hoisington, Sona Stephan, ed., A Plot of Her Own: The Female Protagonist in

Russian Literature (Evanston, IL, 1995).

Holland, Barbara, ed., Soviet Sisterhood (Bloomington, 1985).

Holmgren, Beth, Women's Works in Stalin's Time: On Lidiia Chukovskaia and

Nadezhda Mandelshtam (Bloomington, 1993).

-----, 'For the Good Cause: Russian Women's Autobiography in the 20th Century', in

Women Writers in Russian Literature, ed. by Toby W. Clyman and Diana Greene

(Westport, CT and London, 1994), pp.127-48.

Holmgren, Beth and Helena Goscilo, eds., Russia: Women: Culture (Bloomington,

1996).

-----, 'Bug Inspectors and Beauty Queens: The problems of Translating Feminism into

Russian', in Post-Communism and the Body Politic, ed. by Ellen Berry (New York and

London, 1995), pp.15-31.

Hyman, Tom, Russian Women (New York, 1983).

Ignashev, Diane Nemecek and Sarah Krive, eds., Women and Writing in the USSR: A

Bibliography of English-Language Sources (New York, 1992).

Jancar, Barbara Wolfe, Women Under Communism (Baltimore, 1978).

- Jones, Ann Rosalind, 'Inscribing Femininity: French Theories of the Feminine', in Making a Difference: Feminist Literary Criticism, ed. by Gayle Greene and Coppelia Kahn (New York, 1985), pp.59-79.
- Kaplan, Sydney Janet, 'Varieties of Feminist Criticism', in Making a Difference: Feminist Literary Criticism, ed. by Gayle Greene and Coppelia Kahn (New York, 1985), pp.37-58.
- Katz, Monika, 'The Other Woman: Character Portrayal and the Narrative voice in the Short Stories of Liudmila Petrushevskaja', in Women in Russian Culture: Projections and Self-Perceptions, ed. by Rosalind Marsh (Oxford, 1998), pp.188-97.
- Kelly, Catriona, A History of Russian Women's Writing, 1820-1992 (Oxford, 1994).
- Ketchian, Sonia I., The Poetic Craft of Bella Akhmadulina (University Park, PA, 1993).
- Kolchevska, Natasha, 'A Different Journey: Evgeniia Ginsburg and Women's Writing Of Camp Memoirs', in Women in Russian Culture: Projections and Self-Perceptions, ed. by Rosalind Marsh (Oxford, 1998), pp.148-62.
- Kristeva, Julia, The Kristeva Reader, ed. by Toril Moi (New York, 1983).
- , 'Women's time', in The Feminist Reader: Essays in Gender and the Politics of Literary Criticism, ed. by Catherine Belsey and Jane Moore (Basingstoke, 1989), pp.197-217.
- , Strangers to Ourselves (New York, 1991).
- Lapidus, Gail Warshofsky, Women in Soviet Society: Equality, Development, and Social Change (Berkeley, 1978).

Ledkovsky, Marina, Charlotte Rosenthal, and Mary Zirin, eds., Dictionary of Russian Women Writers (Westport, CT, and London, 1994).

-----, 'Russian Women Writers in Émigré Literature', in Women Writers in Russian Literature, ed. by Toby W. Clyman and Diana Greene (Westport, CT and London, 1994), pp.249-59.

Liljestrom, Marianne, Eila Mantsyaari, and Arja Rosenholm, eds., Gender Restructuring in Russian Studies: Conference Papers—Helsinki, August 1992 (Tampere, 1993).

Lionnet, Françoise, Autobiographical Voices: Race, Gender, Self-Portraiture (Ithaca, 1989).

Makin, Michael, Marina Tsvetaeva: Politics of Appropriation (Oxford, 1993).

Mamonova, Tatyana, Women in Russia (Boston, 1983).

-----, Russian Women's Studies: Essays on Sexism in Soviet Culture (Oxford, 1989).

Mandel, William M., Soviet Women (New York, 1975).

Marsh, Rosalind, 'The Birth, Death and Rebirth of Feminist Writing in Russia', in Textual Liberation: European Feminist Writing in the Twentieth Century, ed. by H. Forsas-Scott (London, 1991), pp.130-163.

-----, "'From Problems to Strategy'?" Impressions of the Second Independent Women's Forum in Dubna', Rusistika, no.7, 1993, pp.16-19.

-----, 'A New Agenda for Russian Women's Literary Studies?', Irish Slavonic Studies, no.16, 1995(1996), pp.83-92.

-----, ed., Gender and Russian Literature: New Perspectives (Cambridge, 1996)

-----, ed., Women in Russia and Ukraine (Cambridge, 1996).

-----, ed., Women in Russian Culture: Projections and Self-Perceptions (Oxford, 1998).

-----, 'An Image of Their Own? Feminism, Revisionism and Russian Culture', in

Women in Russian Culture: Projections and Self-Perceptions, ed. by Rosalind Marsh (Oxford, 1998), pp.2-41.

Mason, Mary Grimley, and Carol Hurd Green, eds., Journeys: Autobiographical Writings by Women (Boston, 1979).

Meek, James, 'Weakest Are Sacrificed on Altar of Privatised Homes', Guardian, 1 June 1994, p.10.

Millinship, William, Front Line: Women of the New Russia (London, 1993).

Moi, Toril, Sexual/Textual Politics: Feminist Literary Theory (London and New York, 1985).

-----, 'Feminist, Female, Feminine', in The Feminist Reader: Essays in Gender and the Politics of Literary Criticism, ed. by Catherine Belsey and Jane Moore (London, 1989), pp.117-132.

Nechemias, Carol, 'Women's Participation: From Lenin to Gorbachev', in Russian Women in Politics and Society, ed. by Wilma Rule and Norma C. Noonan (Westport, CT and London, 1996), pp.15-33.

Neumann, Erich, The Great Mother: An Analysis of the Archetype, trans. by Ralph Manheim (Princeton, 1955).

- Nicholson, Linda J., ed., Feminism/Postmodernism (London and New York, 1990).
- Olsen, Tillie, Silences (London, 1980).
- Pilkington, Hilary, “‘For the Sake of the Children’: Gender and Migration in the Former Soviet Union”, in Post-Soviet Women: From the Baltic to Central Asia, ed. by Mary Buckley (Cambridge, 1997), pp.119-140.
- Polowy, Teresa, ‘Russian Women Writing Alcoholism: the Sixties to the Present’, in Post-Communism and the Body Politic, ed. by Ellen E. Berry (New York and London, 1995), pp.267-95.
- Posadskaya, Anastasia, ed., Women in Russia: a New Era in Russian Feminism, trans. by Kate Clark (London and New York, 1994).
- Pownall, Helen, ‘Sordid or Sublime? The Problem of Sex and Sexuality in Recent Russian Women’s Prose’ (unpublished BASEES Conference paper, 1997).
- Pratt, Sarah, ‘Angels in the Stalinist House: Nadezhda Mandel’stam, Lidiia Chukovskaia, Lidiia Ginzburg, and Russian Women’s Autobiography’, in Engendering Slavic Literatures, ed. by Pamela Chester and Sibelan Forrester (Bloomington, 1996), pp.158-173.
- Proffer, Carl, The Widows of Russia and Other Writings (Ann Arbor, 1987).
- Pushkareva, Natalia, Women in Russian History from the Tenth to the Twentieth Century, ed. and trans. by Eve Levin (New York and London, 1997).
- Racanka, Lyuba, ‘The Yeltsin Presidency, Economic Reform, and Women’, in Russian Women in Politics and Society, ed. by Wilma Rule and Norma C. Noonan (Westport, CT and London, 1996), pp.120-31.

Racioppi, Linda and Katherine O'Sullivan, Women's Activism in Contemporary Russia
(Philadelphia, 1997).

Rai, Shirin, Hilary Pilkington, and Annie Phizacklea, eds., Women in the Face of
Change: the Soviet Union, Eastern Europe and China (London and New York, 1992).

Register, Cheri, 'American Feminist Literary Criticism: A Bibliographical Introduction',
in Feminist Literary Criticism, ed. by Josephine Donovan
(Lexington, Kentucky, 1975).

Rotkirch, Anna and Elina Haavio-Mannila, eds., Women's Voices in Russia Today
(Aldershot, Brookfield, Singapore, Sydney, 1996).

Rotkirch, Anna and Anna Temkina, 'What Does the (Russian) Woman Want?—Women
Psychoanalysts Talk', in Women's Voices in Russia Today, ed. by Anna Rotkirch and
Elina Haavio-Mannila (Aldershot, Brookfield, Singapore, Sydney, 1996), pp.49-68.

Rule, Wilma and Norma C. Noonan, eds., Russian Women in Politics and Society
(Westport, CT and London, 1996).

Rule, Wilma, 'Introduction: Equal Players or Back to the Kitchen?', in
Russian Women in Politics, ed. by Wilma Rule and Norma C. Noonan
(Westport, CT and London, 1996), pp.1-12.

Russ, Joanna, How to Suppress Women's Writing (Austin, 1983).

-----, To Write Like a Woman: Essays in Feminism and Science Fiction
(Bloomington, 1995).

Ruthchild, Rochelle Goldberg, Women in Russia and the Soviet Union: An Annotated
Bibliography (New York, 1994).

- Showalter, Elaine, The New Feminist Criticism—Essays on Women, Literature, and Theory (New York, 1985).
- , Sister's Choice: Tradition and Change in American Women's Writing (Oxford, 1991).
- Smith, Sidonie, A Poetics of Women's Autobiography: Marginality and the Fictions of Self-Representation (Bloomington, 1987).
- Spender, Dale, 'Women and Literary History', in The Feminist Reader: Essays in Gender The Politics of Literary Criticism, ed. by Catherine Belsey and Jane Moore (London, 1989), pp.21-34.
- Stanton, Domna, ed., The Female Autograph (New York, 1984).
- Stites, Richard, The Women's Liberation Movement in Russia: Feminism, Nihilism, and Bolshevism 1860-1930 (Princeton, 1978).
- Tolstaya, Tatyana, 'Notes from the Underground, Review of Francine du Plessix Gray, Walking the Tightrope (New York and London, 1990), New York Review of Books, 31 May 1990, vol.37, no.9, pp.3-7.
- Walker, Nancy, Feminist Alternatives: Irony and Fantasy in the Contemporary Novel by Women (Jackson, FL, 1990).
- Walters, Elizabeth, Women in Post-Revolutionary Russia (London, 1988).
- Warhol, R. and Diane Price Herndl, eds., Feminisms (New Brunswick, NJ, 1991).
- Wyatt Jean, Reconstructing Desire: The Role of the Unconscious in Women's Reading and Writing (Chapel Hill, 1990).
- Woolf, Virginia, A Room of One's Own (New York, 1957).

Yedlin, Tova, Women in East Europe and the Soviet Union (New York, 1980).

-----, Women and Russia in the Soviet Union (Ottawa, 1985).

Zakharova, N., I. Rimashevskaiia, and A. Posadskaia, 'Kak my reshaem zhenskii vopros',

Kommunist, no.4, 1989, pp.56-65.

Zekulin, Nicholas, 'Soviet Russian Women's Literature in the Early 1980s', Fruits of

Her Plume, ed. by Helena Goscilo (Armonk, NY and London, 1993), pp.33-58.

Zirin, Mary, 'Butterflies with Broken Wings?: Early Autobiographical Depictions of

Girlhood in Russia', in Gender Restructuring in Russian Studies: Conference Papers—

Helsinki, August 1992, ed. by Marianne Liljestrom, Eila Mantsyaari, and Arja

Rosenholm (Tampere, 1992), pp.255-66.

D. RUSSIAN AND SOVIET POLITICS, HISTORY, AND SOCIETY

Adelman; Jonathan R., Torrents in Spring: Soviet and Post-Soviet Politics (New York and St. Louis, 1995).

Agursky, Mikhail, The Third Rome: National Bolshevism in the USSR (Boulder and London, 1987).

Alexeyeva, Liudmilla and Paul Goldberg, The Thaw Generation: Coming of Age in the Post-Stalin Era (Boston, Toronto, and London, 1990).

Bialer, S., Stalin's Successors (London, 1980).

Boffa, Giuseppe, Inside the Khrushchev Era (New York, 1959).

- Breslauer, G., Khrushchev and Brezhnev as Leaders (London, 1982).
- Brown, A. and M. Kaser, The Soviet Union since the Fall of Khrushchev, second edition (London, 1978).
- Brown, A., ed., Political Leadership in the Soviet Union (London, 1989).
- Brudny, Yitzak, 'The Heralds of Opposition to Perestroyka', in Milestones in Glasnost and Perestroyka: Politics and People, ed. by A. Hewett and Victor H. Winston (Washington D.C., 1991), pp.153-189.
- Brym, Robert J and Andrei Degtaryev, 'Anti-Semitism in Moscow: Results of an October 1992 Survey', Slavic Review, vol.52, no.1, 1993, pp.1-12.
- Carter, Stephen K., Russian Nationalism: Yesterday, Today, and Tomorrow (New York, 1990).
- Cohen, Stephen F, Alexander Rabinowitz, and Robert Sharlet, eds., The Soviet Union since Stalin (Bloomington, 1980).
- Cohen, Stephen F, ed. and with introductions, An End to Silence: Uncensored Opinion in the Soviet Union: From Roy Medvedev's Underground Magazine Political Diary, trans. by George Saunders (New York, 1982).
- Conquest, Robert, Power and Policy in the U.S.S.R.: the Study of Soviet Dynamics (London, 1968).
- , The Great Terror: Stalin's Purge of the Thirties (London, 1968).
- Crouch, Martin and Robert Porter, eds., Understanding Soviet Politics Through Literature (London, Boston, and Sydney, 1984).

- Davies, R. W., Soviet History in the Gorbachev Revolution (Basingstoke and London, 1989).
- , Soviet History in the Yeltsin Era (Basingstoke and London, 1997).
- Dunlop, John B., The New Russian Nationalism (New York and Philadelphia, 1985).
- , The Rise of Russia and the Fall of the Soviet Empire (Princeton, 1993).
- Eatwell Roger, Contemporary Political Ideologies (London and Boulder, CO, 1993).
- , Fascism: A History (London, 1995).
- , European Political Cultures: Conflict or Consequence? (London, 1997).
- Ettinger, S., 'The Jews in Russia at the Outbreak of the Revolution', in The Jews in Soviet Russia since 1917, ed. by Lionel Kochan (London and New York, 1970), pp.14-28.
- , 'The Position of Jews in Soviet Culture: A Historical Survey', in Jews in Soviet Culture, ed. by Jack Miller (London, 1984), pp.1-22.
- Friedberg, Maurice, Russian Culture in the 1980s (Washington DC, 1985).
- Gitelman, Zvi Y., Jewish Nationality and Soviet Politics (Princeton, 1972).
- Jones, Anthony, Walter D. Conner, and David E. Powell, eds., Soviet Social Problems (Boulder, CO and San Francisco, 1991).
- Hammer, Darrell P., USSR: The Politics of Oligarchy (Hindsdale, IL, 1974).
- , A History of the Soviet Union (London, 1985).
- Kagarlitsky, Boris, The Thinking Reed: Intellectuals and the Soviet State, trans. by Brian Pearce (London and New York, 1988).
- Kelley, D., ed., Soviet Politics in the Brezhnev Era (New York, 1980).

- Kochan, Lionel, ed., The Jews in Soviet Russia since 1917 (London, 1970).
- Kohn, H., The Idea of Nationalism (New York, 1967).
- Korey, William, Russian Antisemitism [sic], Pamyat, and the Demonology of Zionism,
 Studies in Anti-Semitism, vol.2, Published for the Vidal Sasoon International
 Center for the Study of Anti-Semitism (SICSA) (Jerusalem, 1995).
- Kraus, Michael, and Ronald D. Liebowitz, eds., Russia and East Europe after
 Communism: The Search for New Political, Economic, and Security Systems
 (Boulder, 1996).
- Lane, David, Politics and Society in the USSR, second edition (Oxford, 1978).
- Lewin, Moshe, The Gorbachev Phenomenon—A Historical Interpretation (Berkeley,
 1988).
- Linden, Carl A., Khrushchev and the Soviet Leadership, 1957-1964 (Baltimore, 1966).
- Medvedev, Roy and Zhores Medvedev, Khrushchev: The Years in Power (New York,
 1976).
- Medvedev, Zhores, Soviet Science (New York, 1978).
- McCauley, M., The Soviet Union since 1917 (London and New York, 1981).
- , The Soviet Union under Gorbachev (London, 1987).
- , Russia's Politics of Uncertainty (Cambridge, 1997).
- Nove, Alec, Glasnost' in Action: Cultural Renaissance in Russia (Boston, 1989).
- Popovsky, Mark, Manipulated Science: The Crisis of Science and Scientists in
 the Soviet Union Today, trans. by Paul S. Falla (London, 1980).

- Powell, David E., 'Aging and the Elderly', in Soviet Social Problems, ed. by Anthony Jones, Walter D. Conner, David E. Powell (Boulder, San Francisco, 1991), pp.172-193.
- Rothberg, Abraham, The Heirs of Stalin: Dissidence and the Soviet Regime, 1953-1970 (Ithaca, 1972).
- Rothenberg, Joshua, An Annotated Bibliography of Writings on Judaism Published in the Soviet Union, 1960-1965 (Waltham, MA, 1969).
- Sakwa, Richard, Soviet Politics: An Introduction (London and New York, 1989).
-----, Russian Politics and Society, second edition (London and New York, 1996).
- Segal, Boris, The Drunken Society: Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism in the Soviet Union: A Comparative Study (New York, 1990).
- Smith, Hedrick, The New Russians (New York, 1990).
- Snyder, L.L., Macro-nationalisms: A History of the Pan-Slav Movements (Westport, 1984).
- Taras, Ray, ed., Post-Communist Presidents (Cambridge, 1997).
- Tatu, Michal, Power in the Kremlin: From Khrushchev to Kosygin (New York, 1968).
- Tucker, Robert C., The Soviet Political Mind, revised edition (New York, 1971).
- White, Stephen, Gorbachev in Power (Cambridge, 1990).
- White, Stephen, Alex Pravda, and Zvi Gitelman, Developments in Soviet and Post-Soviet Politics, second edition (Basingstoke and London, 1992).
- White, Stephen, Graeme Gill, and Darrell Slider, The Politics of Transition: Shaping a Post-Soviet Future (Cambridge, 1993).

White, Stephen, Alex Pravda, and Zvi Gitelman, Developments in Russian Politics—4
(London, 1997).

Yanov, Alexander, The New Russian Right: Right-Wing Ideologies in the Contemporary
USSR (Berkeley, 1978).

III. RELATED LITERATURE

A. ANTHOLOGIES

Aiken, Susan Hardy, Adele Marie Barker, Maya Koreneva and Ekaterina Stetsenko,
Dialogues/Dialogi: Literary and Cultural Exchanges between (ex) Soviet and
American Women (Durham and London, 1994).

Boguslavskaja, Zoia and Svetlana Vasilenko, eds., Novye amazonki: sbornik (Moscow,
1991).

Erofeyev, Victor and Andrew Reynolds, eds., The Penguin Book of New
Russian Writing (London and New York, 1995).

Gessen, Masha, ed., Half a Revolution: Contemporary Fiction by Russian Women
(Pittsburgh, 1995).

Goscilo, Helena, Russian and Polish Women's Fiction (Nashville, 1985)

-----, ed., Balancing Acts (Bloomington, 1989).

Goscilo, Helena and Byron Lindsay, eds., Glasnost: An Anthology of Russian Literature Under Gorbachev (Ann Arbor, 1990).

Goscilo, Helena, ed., Lives in Transit: A Collection of Recent Russian Women's Writing (Ann Arbor, 1995).

Harper, Kenneth, Galina Koulauff, and Margarita Gisetti, New Voices: Contemporary Soviet Stories (New York and Chicago, 1966).

Kagal, Ayesha and Natasha Perova, eds., Present Imperfect: Stories by Russian Women (Boulder, CO, 1996).

Kelly, Catriona, ed. and trans., An Anthology of Russian Women's Writing, 1977-1992, (Oxford and New York, 1994).

Kupriianova, Nina, ed., Always a Woman (Moscow, 1987).

Ledkovsky, Marina, ed., Russia According to Women: Literary Anthology (Oxford, 1996).

Matich, O., ed., The Third Wave: Russian Literature in Emigration (Ann Arbor, MI, 1984).

McLaughlin, Sigrid, ed. and trans., The Image of Women in Contemporary Soviet Fiction: Selected Stories from the USSR (New York, 1989).

Murray, John, ed., Soviet Women Writing: Fifteen Short Stories (London, 1990).

Pachmuss, Temira, ed., Women Writers in Russian Modernism (London, Urbana, and Chicago, 1978).

Proffer, Carl and Ellendea Proffer, eds., Contemporary Russian Prose (Ann Arbor, 1982).

-----, eds., The Barsukov Triangle, the Two-Toned Blond and Other Stories (Ann Arbor, 1984).

Shavkuta, Anatoly, ed., Chisten'kaia zhizn'—molodaia zhenskaia proza (Moscow, 1990).

Simmons, C., ed., Their Fathers' Voice: Vasily Akyonov, Venedikt Erofeev, Eduard Limonov, and Sasha Sokolov (New York, 1993).

Stepanenko, L.V. and A.V. Fomenko, eds., Zhenskaia logika—sbornik zhenskoi prozy (Moscow, 1989).

Trofimova, Elena, ed., Chego khochet zhenshchina (Moscow, 1995).

Vaneeva, L.L., ed., Ne pomniashchaia zla—novaia zhenskaia proza (Moscow, 1990).

Vilenskii, Semen, ed., Dodnes' tiagoteet (Moscow, 1989).

B. WORKS BY RUSSIAN AUTHORS

Akhmatova, Anna, 'Rekviem', Sochinenie, vol.1 (Germany, 1967), pp.361-370.

-----, 'Rbdnaia zemlia', Sochinenie, vol.1 (Germany, 1967), p.327.

Baranskaia, Natal'ia, 'Nedelia kak nedelia', Novyi mir, no.11, 1969, pp.23-55.

Belov, Vasilii, 'That Kind of War', in Out Visiting and Back Home: Russian Stories on Aging, ed. and trans. by Thomas H. Hoisington (Evanston, IL, 1998), pp.85-107.

Berberova, Nina, The Italics Are Mine (translation of Kursiv moi), trans. by Philippe Radley (New York, 1969).

-----, Kursiv moi (Munich, 1972).

Bulgakov, Mikhail, Master i Margarita, Moskva, 2 volumes, 1966, no.11, pp.6-147, 1967,
no.1, pp.56-144.

-----, The Master and Margarita, trans. by Mirra Ginsburg (New York, 1967).

Berggolts, Olga, 'Days of Shame and Sorrow', in An End to Silence: Uncensored
Opinion in the Soviet Union, ed. and with introductions by Stephen F. Cohen, trans.
by Vera Dunham (New York and London, 1982), pp.91-2.

Bitov, Andrei, Pushkinskii dom (Ann Arbor, 1978).

Chukovskaia, Lidiia, Protsess isklucheniia, (Paris, 1979).

-----, Pamiati detstva, (New York, 1983).

-----, Sovia Petrovna, trans. by David Floyd (London, 1989).

Daniel, Iulii, Govorit Moskva (Washington, DC, 1962).

Dashkova, E., The Memoirs of Princess Dashkova, trans. by M. Bradford, 2 volumes
(London, 1958).

Dudintsev, Vladimir, Ne khlebom edinyim, Novyi mir, 3 volumes, 1956, no.8, pp.31-118,
no.9, pp.37-118, no.10, pp.21-98.

Durova, N., Kavalerist—devitsa. Proisshestvie v Rossii (St. Petersburg, 1836).

Erenburg, Il'ia, Ottepel': povest' v dvukh chastiakh, two volumes (Moscow, 1954 and
1956).

-----, The Thaw, trans. by Manya Harari (London, 1955)

Ginzburg, E., Krutoi marshrut, vol.1 (Frankfurt-am-Main, 1967), vol.2 (Milan, 1979).

-----, Journey into the Whirlwind, trans. by Max Hayward and Paul Stevens
(Russia, 1988).

-----, Within the Whirlwind, 1967, trans. by Paul Stevens and Manya Harari

(Russia, 1988)

Ginzburg, L., 'Zapiski blokadnogo cheloveka', Neva, no.1, 1984, pp.84-108.

-----, Chelovek za pis'mennym stolom (Leningrad, 1989).

Gladilin, Anatolii, The Making and Unmaking of a Soviet Writer: My Story of the

'Young Prose' of the Sixties and After, trans. by David Lapeza (Ann Arbor, 1979).

Gorbanevskaja, Natal'ia, Red Square at Noon, trans. by Alexander Lieven (London, 1972).

Grekova, I., Vdovii parokhod, in Porogi (Moscow, 1986), pp.270-401.

Grossman, Vasilii, Vse techet (Frankfurt-am-Main, 1970).

-----, Zhizn' i sud'ba: roman (Lausanne, 1980).

Ivinskaia, O., A Captive of Time: My Years with Pasternak, trans. by M. Hayward (London, 1978).

Kakhovskaia, Irina, 'Our Fate', in An End to Silence: Uncensored Opinion in the Soviet Union, ed. and with introductions by Stephen F. Cohen, trans. by Vera Dunham (New York and London, 1982), pp.81-90.

Kaverin, Veniamin, Sobraniia sochinenia, 6 volumes (Moscow, 1963-6).

Kim, Anatolii, 'Double Star', in Out Visiting and Back Home: Russian Stories on Aging, ed. and trans. by Thomas H. Hoisington (Evanston, IL, 1998), pp.189-208.

Kopelev, Lev, The Education of a True Believer (translation of I sotvoril sebe kumira), trans. by Gary Kern (London, 1981).

Lert, Raissa, 'The Charms of the Whip', in An End to Silence: Uncensored Opinion

In the Soviet Union, ed. and with introductions by Stephen F. Cohen, trans. by Vera Dunham (New York and London, 1982), pp.189-200.

Mandelshtam, Nadezhda, Vospominaniia (New York, 1970, Moscow, 1990).

-----, Vtoraia kniga (Paris, 1972, Moscow, 1990).

Medvedev, Roy, K sudu istorii: genezis i posledstviia Stalinisma, second revised edition (New York, 1974).

-----, Let History Judge: The Origins and Consequences of Stalinism revised and expanded edition, ed. and trans. by George Shriver (New York, 1989).

Nabokov, Vladimir, Priglasenie na kazn' (Paris, 1938).

-----, Speak, Memory: a Memoir (London, 1951).

-----, Invitation to a Beheading, trans. by Dmitri Nabokov, 1959 (New York, 1965).

Narbikova, Valeria, 'In the Here and There', in Half a Revolution: Contemporary Fiction' by Russian Women, ed. and trans. by Masha Gessen (Pittsburgh, 1995), pp.183-230.

Palei, Marina, 'Evgesha i Annushka,' Znamia, no.7, 1990, pp.10-45.

Panova, V., Sentimental'naia roman, in Izbrannoe, by Vera Panova (Moscow, 1972), pp.181-334.

Petrushevskaiia, Liudmila, Vremia: noch', Novyi mir, 1992, no.2, pp.65-110.

-----, The Time: Night (translation of Vremia: noch'), trans. by Sally Laird (London, 1994).

- , 'Our Crowd', in Glasnost: An Anthology of Russian Literature Under Gorbachev, trans. and ed. by Helena Goscilo and Byron Lindsey (Ann Arbor, 1990), pp.3-24.
- Pomerantsev, Vladimir Mikhailovich, 'Ob iskrennosti v literature', Novyi mir, 1953, no.12, pp.218-245.
- Ratushinskaia, Irina, Seryi—tsvet nadezhdy (London, 1989).
- Sadur, Nina, 'Touched', in Half a Revolution: Contemporary Fiction by Russian Women, ed. and trans. by Masha Gessen (Pittsburgh, 1995), pp.231-269.
- Shalamov, Varlam, Kolymskie rassказы(London, 1978).
- Siniavskii, A., Fantasticheskii mir Abrama Terts'a (New York, 1967).
- , Fantasticheskie povesti (New York, 1967).
- Solzhenitsyn, Arhipelag Gulag, 3 volumes (Paris, 1973-5)
- , Gulag Archipelago, trans. by Harry Willetts and Thomas P. Whitney (New York, 1974-1978).
- Tvardovsky, Aleksandr, 'Za dal'iu-dal': iz putevogo dnevnika' (Moscow, 1958).
- Ulitskaia, Ludmilla, 'March 1953', in Present Imperfect: Stories by Russian Women, ed. by Ayesha Kagal and Natasha Perova, trans.by Arch Tait (Boulder, CO, 1996), pp.10-24.
- Vaneeva, Larisa, 'Parade of the Planets', in Soviet Women Writing: Fifteen Short Stories, ed. by John Murray, trans. by Diane Nemeč Ignashev (London, 1990), pp.317-332.